2009-10-01

The Origin of the Curvilinear Plan-Form in Irish Ecclesiastical Sites: A Comparative Analysis of Sites in Ireland, Wales and France

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THE ORIGINS OF THE CURVILINEAR PLAN-FORM IN IRISH ECCLESIASTICAL SITES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SITES IN IRELAND, WALES AND FRANCE

(VOLUME 1/2)

SUBMITTED BY

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TO SCHOOL OF FOOD SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AT DUBLIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR THE AWARD OF PHD.

SUPERVISOR: DR PAT DARGAN

OCTOBER 2009
DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis which I now submit for examination for the award of PhD, is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

This thesis was prepared according to the regulations for postgraduate studies by research of the Dublin Institute of Technology and has not been submitted in whole or in part for an award in any other Institute or University.

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Signature  Clare Crowley

Date 21/10/09

Clare Crowley
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This has been a game of two halves, and so I must first acknowledge those who were with me at the beginning – my fellow postgrads at Rathmines House and all who worked there. A special tribute must be made to the late Leo Swan, without whom this project would not have begun.

The Everest-like task of finishing what I started could not have been done without the support and encouragement of my former colleagues and friends in Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd, who also kindly allowed me to make use of their archaeological database and anything else I needed – thank you Lisa, Siobhan, Seana, Lindsay, Kieron, Gary, Dave, Ben, Ed and Mags.

Thank you also to my friends Kate, Gemma, Niamh, Maria, Mary, Aoife, Anne, Sue, Nodlaig and Toril for supporting me and accepting that I would be off-grid for a while!

The support and boundless enthusiasm of my supervisor Dr Pat Dargan has been an inspiration from the beginning and was instrumental in the completion of this thesis. A special mention also to Dr Kevin Griffin – for his friendship and encouragement over many cups of coffee! Both Pat and Kevin have been of immense help in all ways, including academic.

Last, but by no means least, I want to thank my family - they gave me the courage to take the step back onto the ladder and keep climbing until I reached this point! So I say thank you with much love to Mir (a study-buddy for the last two years), Ruth (l’éponge! For keeping me sane), Hel (yoga-buddy, all-round cheerleader and tireless printer and proof-reader), Mam and Dad (for everything, but mostly for believing), Denis (bodyguard services in Provence much appreciated), James, Clodagh and Lauren. A final thank you to my brother Paul, who died too soon, but who I know has been with me from the start – he would be amused by the sports analogy at the beginning of these acknowledgements!
This thesis looks at the origins of the curvilinear plan-form in ecclesiastical sites in Ireland, through the detailed examination and comparative analysis of a selection of field study sites in Ireland, Wales and France. It asks the fundamental question: is the concept of the curvilinear plan-form in Ireland home-grown or an import?

Curvilinear ecclesiastical settlements that appeared to be originating in the Early Medieval period in Ireland, conform to what looks like a universal pattern. The characteristics of this pattern commonly include an inner and outer curvilinear enclosure, with a church, burial ground and other ecclesiastical structures and features (for example the round tower and high crosses) located within the inner enclosure. Swan had proposed that these curvilinear Irish ecclesiastical sites had evolved in a unique manner and the pattern found at Irish ecclesiastical sites is commonly viewed as different to the rest of Europe. In 1989, Swan attended a conference at which there was a presentation of research undertaken on a group of villages in Languedoc (southwestern France). These villages bore a remarkable similarity to the Irish ‘pattern’. To date there has been no investigation of these apparent similarities. There is a lack of knowledge with regard to the origins of these sites – how such similarity in plan evolved and when – and there has been no examination of the physical characteristics and plan of ecclesiastical settlements in France or elsewhere in relation to the Irish sites. The lack of comparative archaeological and documentary investigation in this area provided an opportunity to offer a real and significant contribution to the study of the evolution of Irish ecclesiastical sites, the origins of the curvilinear plan-form and its role in the formation of settlement.

There are known trade and communication links between Ireland, Britain and the Continent (including southern France) in the prehistoric and Early Medieval periods. As Ireland’s closest neighbours, it was considered most likely that if this curvilinear ecclesiastical settlement pattern was not unique but had spread either to or from the Continent, it should manifest in these areas. Could the pattern of ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland be a product of a non-Roman non-urban environment, in other words, a localised phenomenon? In order to identify any potential differences or shared characteristics a detailed study was undertaken of curvilinear settlements with ecclesiastical origins in Ireland, in the thoroughly Romanised southern France (to
include those sites noted by Swan in Languedoc) and in south Wales, an area on the margins of the Roman Empire but which came under substantial Roman influence and later Irish monastic influences.

Where urban centres grew up around the Irish ecclesiastical foundations, the lines of the original enclosures are often still visible in the property boundaries and street-plan of the modern town or village. Once laid down, property boundaries and streets are remarkably resilient to change and as such they represent a significant category of evidence for the curvilinear plan-form. For this reason it was decided to examine field study sites where the ecclesiastical site was incorporated within a modern town or village. The investigation uses a multi-disciplinary approach, with each site examined using a combination of detailed historical investigation, available archaeological evidence, field survey and plan-analysis.

The results of the investigation demonstrated that while the Irish ecclesiastical 'pattern', with all its components was a product of a native settlement layout, the concept behind its most recognisable element, the curvilinear ecclesiastical enclosure, was not. The curvilinear ecclesiastical enclosure was almost certainly a product of the cross-cultural transference of ideas, notably those of asylum, sanctuary and the symbolic importance of the circle. The use of the curvilinear enclosure in the context of ecclesiastical settlements also appears to have been a deliberate act, rather than a convenient re-use of existing settlement or burial forms. In conclusion, it can be stated that ecclesiastical sites had a profound influence on the formation of settlement in all three of the study areas. It is clear that the church played a significant role in the genesis of Early Medieval and Medieval settlement in all three study areas, perhaps even in the sense of a nascent 'town planning', with the curvilinear plan-form being part of a pan-European movement.
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## Glossary of Terms

### General / Ecclesiastical

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annals</td>
<td>Records of religious and secular events, generally maintained at church sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullaun stone</td>
<td>Hollowed stones – generally an un-worked boulder, with a roughly circular hollow – most likely used for grinding food, but associated with many traditions and beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atrium</td>
<td>In general, an open area, either physically within a building or in terms of access (i.e. open to all). It is interpreted as an open area attached to but outside of an Irish ecclesiastical settlement. In the Gaulish church it was also a place of sanctuary and in Ireland church law courts were held there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canons</td>
<td>Church laws.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolingian</td>
<td>The Carolingian dynasty was a Frankish noble family that grew increasingly powerful from the late seventh century onwards. In 751, Pepin the Short, a Carolingian, was crowned King of the Franks. The greatest Carolingian monarch was Charlemagne, who was crowned Emperor by Pope Leo III at Rome in 800. His empire, ostensibly a continuation of the Roman Empire, is referred to historiographically as the Carolingian Empire. Carolingian rule lasted into the tenth century in parts of France, though it had been displaced elsewhere in the late ninth century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cenobic/coenobic</td>
<td>Monastic - coenobite/cenobite refers to a member of a monastic community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civitas</td>
<td>In Ireland, a term used to refer to monasteries. In Roman and Medieval culture it pertains to a community of citizens or a ‘city’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremitic</td>
<td>Hermit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familia</td>
<td>Those descended or claiming descent from a common ancestor – used in the context of church sites with a common founder in Ireland and Wales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fosse</td>
<td>Ditch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franks</td>
<td>The Franks or Frankish people were a West Germanic tribal confederation first attested in the third century AD as living north and east of the Lower Rhine River. Under the Merovingian dynasty, they founded one of the Germanic monarchies which replaced the Western Roman Empire from the fifth century. The Frankish state consolidated its hold over large parts of western Europe by the end of the eighth century, developing into the Carolingian Empire and its successor states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glebe Land</td>
<td>A piece of land which served as part of a Protestant clergyman’s benefice and provided income.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hagiographer</td>
<td>Writer of a saint’s life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hagiography</td>
<td>Accounts of a saint’s life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merovingian</td>
<td>The Merovingians were a Salian Frankish dynasty that came to rule the Franks in a region (known as Francia in Latin) largely corresponding to ancient Gaul from the middle of the fifth century to the mid-eighth century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monasterium</td>
<td>Term used to refer to monastery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murage/Mural charter</td>
<td>Medieval – granting of permission to erect town defences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppidum</td>
<td>Civic/urban site or town, possibly fortified – generally used for Iron Age settlements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O.S.</td>
<td>Ordnance Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paruchiae</td>
<td>Monastic families or confederations of monasteries with common ideals/allegiances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platea/Plateola</td>
<td>A courtyard which provided a walking or assembly area for monks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomerium</td>
<td>The sacred boundary of a Roman town or settlement, demarcated during the foundation ceremony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincia</td>
<td>Roman administrative region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolution</td>
<td>Refers to the French Revolution and the dissolution of the monarchy in 1789.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMP</td>
<td>Record of Monuments and Places.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule</td>
<td>Code of practice and discipline for a religious community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saracen</td>
<td>Also ‘Arab’. A term used by Europeans in the Early Medieval and Medieval period for Fatimids at first (the dynasty ruling over the northern, coastal region of Africa), then later for all who professed the religion of Islam. Church writers of the period commonly describe Saracen raids on monasteries and their killing of monks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMR</td>
<td>Sites and Monuments Record.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vallum (monasterii)</td>
<td>Church enclosure or wall around an ecclesiastical site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitae/Vitae Sanctorum/Life</td>
<td>Accounts of a saint’s life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visigoth</td>
<td>The Visigoths were one of two main branches of the Goths, an East Germanic tribe; the Ostrogoths being the other. Together these tribes were among the barbarians who disturbed the late Roman Empire during the fourth and fifth centuries AD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRISH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clochan</td>
<td>Small circular stone-roofed building – commonly called beehive hut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloigthech</td>
<td>Name used for round tower – literally meaning ‘bell house’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culdees/Cèile Dé</td>
<td>An austere reform movement, the Irish example of which is generally accepted as having been in Tallaght, County Dublin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damhliag</td>
<td>An ancient Irish word signifying a stone edifice – usually used in reference to a church.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Faithche

A large area outside of an ecclesiastical settlement which could be used for communal activities, a habitation area or an area for grazing and tillage.

Ogham

The earliest form of writing in Ireland (fourth to sixth centuries AD), carved on stone and used for funerary and memorial inscriptions (hence Ogham Stones). It is formed of a series of lines and notches, essentially a kind of cipher based on the Latin alphabet.

Snádud

Irish legal term meaning 'sanctuary' or 'protection'.

Trian

A district or 'third'.

Termonn

Most sacred part of a church site, usually demarcated by the inner enclosure.

FRENCH

Barri

Word used in the Languedoc region to refer to suburban development.

Cadastre

Cadastral map (based on a cadastral survey, produced to accompany a register of all taxable lands).

Carte

Map.

Chemin

Road.

Commune

The smallest of the French administrative districts, a subdivision of the Département.

Cours

Avenue.

Département

French administrative district.

Église

Church.

Faubourg

Suburb.

Place

An open area within a town, encompassing the English terms ‘plaza’, ‘square’, ‘area’ or ‘place’ (as in ‘market place’).

Plan

Map or plan.

Porte/Portail

Literally door or doorway, but in this context it refers to a defended gateway.

Rue

Street.

Ruelle

Lane.
Ville  

Town.

**Welsh**

*Lan/Lann/Llan*  
Ecclesiastical enclosure or church site.

*Nawd*  
Welsh legal term meaning ‘sanctuary’ or ‘protection’.
NOTES ON CONVENTIONS USED IN THE TEXT

LANGUAGE

Non-English words are shown in italics, with a translation provided alongside or in a footnote as deemed appropriate. A Glossary of Terms, provided above, includes Latin, Irish, French and Welsh terms used in the text. Place-names and street names, though they include foreign words, are proper nouns and as such are not italicised.

CHRONOLOGICAL TERMS

In this thesis the generally accepted term ‘Early Medieval’ is used to refer to the period between the early fifth and the eleventh centuries AD, rather than the ambiguous ‘Early Christian period’. All chronological divisions are capitalised in the text to avoid confusion. For convenience, Early Medieval and Medieval will be used in the discussion of all of the study areas, rather than ‘Middle Ages’ (and its various subdivisions) which is commonly used by historians.

CHRONOLOGICAL DIVISIONS

Chronological divisions can only ever be approximate. The table below contains the archaeological chronology used throughout the text, with variations in the chronology for Ireland, Britain and France indicated where applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARCHAEOLOGICAL CHRONOLOGY</th>
<th>Ireland</th>
<th>Britain</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mesolithic</td>
<td>c.5000-4000BC</td>
<td>c.10,000-4000BC</td>
<td>c.10,000-5000BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neolithic</td>
<td>c.4000-2500BC</td>
<td>c.4000-2300BC</td>
<td>c.5000BC-3000BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze Age</td>
<td>c.2500-500BC</td>
<td>c.2300-700BC</td>
<td>c.3000-600BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron Age</td>
<td>c.500BC-500AD</td>
<td>c.700BC-43AD</td>
<td>c.600-50BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>c.43-450AD</td>
<td>c.50BC-486AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Medieval</td>
<td>c.500-1171AD</td>
<td>c.450-1066AD</td>
<td>c.486-1095AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medieval</td>
<td>c.1171-1600AD</td>
<td>c.1066-1547AD</td>
<td>c.1095-1498AD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though both Britain and France experienced human activity during the Palaeolithic period (c.2.5 million-8500BC) to varying degrees, the specific division for each is not included as the term does not appear in the text. Chronological divisions after the Medieval period are not specified; such specifics are not relevant in this thesis and are referred to generically as either ‘Post-Medieval’ or ‘modern’ where appropriate.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION
1.0 INTRODUCTION

It has recently been suggested by O'Keefe and Clinton that the origins of Irish round towers and souterrains can be found in Continental Europe\textsuperscript{1} – could the same be said for the curvilinear plan-form in Irish ecclesiastical sites?

Curvilinear ecclesiastical settlements that appeared to be originating in the Early Medieval period in Ireland, conform to what looks like a universal pattern. The characteristics of this pattern commonly include an inner and outer curvilinear enclosure, with a church, burial ground and other ecclesiastical structures and features (for example, the round tower and high crosses) located within the inner enclosure.\textsuperscript{2} These sites were often, though not exclusively, monastic and for this reason they are referred to as simply ‘ecclesiastical’ throughout this text. Many of these early Christian sites survived to become the core of modern cities, towns and villages and are believed to have contributed to the origins of early urbanisation in Ireland, which has led to their being described as ‘monastic proto-towns’.\textsuperscript{3} Where urban centres grew up around these ecclesiastical foundations, the lines of the original enclosures are often still visible in the street-plan of the modern town or village.

Swan had proposed that these curvilinear Irish ecclesiastical sites had evolved in a unique manner and the pattern found at Irish ecclesiastical sites is commonly viewed as different to the rest of Europe.\textsuperscript{4} In 1989 Swan attended a conference at which there was a presentation of research undertaken on a group of villages in Languedoc (southwestern France).\textsuperscript{5} These villages bore a remarkable similarity to the Irish ‘pattern’ and led Swan to question whether the plan observed at the Irish sites had

\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
extended beyond Ireland or were imported. To date there has been no investigation of these apparent similarities. There is a lack of knowledge with regard to their origins — how such similarity in plan evolved and when — and there has been no examination of the physical characteristics and plan of ecclesiastical settlements in France or elsewhere in relation to the Irish sites. A discussion with Swan about this matter brought my attention to this tantalising gap in the existing body of knowledge. Having previously studied French and Roman archaeology, with a focus on the emergence of Christianity in the Roman Empire, I was intrigued by a possible connection between Irish and French Christian sites.

1.1 RESEARCH

In order to assess the presence and extent of the settlement pattern, a brief overview of research in the field of ecclesiastical settlement in Britain and France was undertaken by the researcher. There are known trade and communication links between Ireland, Britain and the Continent in the prehistoric and Early Medieval periods. These contacts extend as far as Narbonne and Marseilles in southern France and beyond into Italy and Spain. As Ireland's closest neighbours, it was considered most likely that if this pattern was not unique, but had spread either to or from the Continent, it should manifest in these areas. The literature review confirmed that there was some evidence for ecclesiastical sites in Wales and southern France with a similar curvilinear topographical layout to those in Ireland. The lack of comparative archaeological and documentary investigation in this area provided an opportunity to offer a real and significant contribution to the study of the evolution of Irish ecclesiastical sites and their role in the formation of settlement, in the context of similar sites in both south Wales and southern France.

1.2 STUDY AREA

Could the pattern of ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland be a product of a non-Roman non-urban environment — in other words, a localised phenomenon — or was it imported? In order to identify any potential differences or shared characteristics a

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7 See Section 3.2.
detailed and comparative study was undertaken of curvilinear settlements with ecclesiastical origins in Ireland, in the thoroughly Romanised southern France and in south Wales, an area on the margins of the Roman Empire but which came under substantial Roman influence and subsequently, Irish monastic influences. Ireland was geographically and politically independent of the Roman Empire, although it would be simplistic to presume that this meant Ireland existed in a vacuum. Trade with British tribes occurred both before and after the Roman conquest of Britain and there were raids on the Welsh coast by the Irish, particularly in the late Roman period. It is fair to say that influences, either of a Christian or Roman nature (they were both much the same thing at this period), were taken back to Ireland with the raiders.

As will be demonstrated in the literature review, investigations into ecclesiastical sites in Ireland, Wales and France have been undertaken within the framework of either individual studies or micro-regional studies. There has been no exploration of the sites in a wider framework. A detailed examination of a selection of these sites in each of the study areas will provide an opportunity to assess the influences of the curvilinear settlement pattern in these areas and the degree to which the original ecclesiastical site played a role in the formation of settlement. There are enormous regional differences even within each of the study areas and taking into account the diversity of each country in terms of their historical background and geography, it is expected that there would be a similar degree of variation in the settlement patterns. That being said, a series of repeated phenomena (particularly the curvilinear enclosures) make it clear that a common background was in existence at some level, in this case it would appear to be the Christian Church.

1.3 Field Study Sites

Once laid down, property boundaries and street patterns are remarkably resilient to change and can often be traced directly backwards in time; as such the town plan represents a significant category of evidence for the curvilinear plan-form. For this reason it was decided to examine field study sites where the ecclesiastical site was incorporated within a modern town or village. The field study sites were deliberately chosen to be arbitrary, with no known or obvious historical or ecclesiastical

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connections. The selection of southern Wales and southern France were chosen for the potential similarities in settlement pattern, i.e. presentation of a curvilinear pattern with an ecclesiastical nucleus, and for their historical and geographical differences. This part of Wales was relatively well-Romanised yet developed a Church tradition more like Ireland than France during the Early Medieval period. Southern France formed one of the earliest Roman provinces and was thoroughly absorbed into the Roman Empire. It continued to hold onto many of the Roman traditions and customs in the form of Christianity that developed there. If there is a universal pattern or plan that is common to most Christian church sites, then variables such as foundation date and previous settlement patterns should not matter. Whether or not a site is monastic or diocesan, founded at the start of the Early Medieval period or as late as the ninth or tenth century, in a Roman or non-Roman part of the world, these factors should have little effect if the site is laid out according to this ‘universal’ plan. By the same token, if the curvilinear layout is derivative of topographic factors, then sites selected from a basic cartographic survey alone should prove to have similar topographical constraints.

1.4 Investigative Techniques
This investigation uses a multi-disciplinary approach, with each site examined using a combination of detailed historical investigation, available archaeological evidence, field survey and plan-analysis. Such an approach is crucial to this investigation, for reasons noted by Stout in his article ‘Early Christian Ireland, settlement and environment’:

"The fragmentary nature of evidence for the Early Christian period makes an interdisciplinary approach essential for the reconstruction of past landscapes and settlement patterns."

For most archaeologists, it is generally accepted that excavation provides the best (and sometimes the sole) answer to certain questions about the past. The number of archaeological excavations undertaken across Ireland increased manifold during the economic boom of the 1990s and early 2000s, as excavations were carried out in advance of development. Much of the large-scale development in the past decade (such as road schemes, large business parks and shopping centres) has been

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greenfield, i.e. in previously undeveloped areas, allowing equally large-scale excavations and producing some spectacular results. There has also been a relatively large amount of excavation within towns and villages, but these are by necessity much smaller in scale, within existing plots and tight urban spaces. Many of these have also produced interesting and significant results (for example, part of an Early Medieval ecclesiastical enclosure may have been identified at Peter Row in Dublin City), but the excavation areas provide glimpses rather than the full extent or the full picture, rather like keyhole surgery. This serves to illustrate one of the main problems in the archaeological study of ecclesiastical settlement patterns in an urban context – the possibility of using excavation as an investigative tool in these cases is rare and is confined to very small areas that are chosen by opportunity rather than through a research framework.

The technique of plan-analysis is one that is rarely used by Irish archaeologists, though the methodology has been used with some success by historical geographers and others in the investigation of Dublin City and a number of Irish towns. Given the cost and time-implications inherent in archaeological excavation and the continued and increasing importance of identifying areas of archaeological potential in advance of development, the technique of plan-analysis could provide additional and more accurate information than existing methodologies and for this reason will be used and assessed in this investigation. A more focused approach to non-invasive archaeological investigations could assist in the identification of areas where there is the most potential for below-ground archaeological remains. Most significantly, it could offer new insight into the origins and historical development of towns and villages, particularly with reference to the role played by Early Medieval ecclesiastical sites in the formation of these settlements.

1.5 AIMS
The following aims have been identified for the investigation of the origins of the curvilinear plan-form in ecclesiastical sites in Ireland:

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• To establish common characteristics of Early Medieval ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland, Wales and France through the detailed examination and comparison of field study sites within the defined study areas;

• To investigate the direction of ecclesiastical influences between the three study areas, with a view to exploring whether or not the curvilinear plan of Irish ecclesiastical settlement was influenced by the early Church on the Continent and to examining the relationship between this pattern and the Continental Church later on, when Irish monks began their peregrinations.

• To evaluate plan-analysis as a useful technique in the archaeological investigation of ecclesiastical settlement patterns in towns and villages.

Though this investigation is undertaken from an archaeological perspective, the approach is multi-disciplinary, encompassing archaeology, ethnography, human geography and historical geography. Chapter 2 discusses the broad range of approaches that influence this work and presents a conceptual framework for the study of settlement patterns. A review of the current literature on Christianity and ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland, Wales and France is set out in Chapter 3. This provides a background for the investigation of the selected field study sites and a context for their interpretation. The main focus of this work is on field studies and analytical investigation: A detailed examination of each field study site is contained in Chapter 4 and a comparative analysis of all of the sites is presented and discussed in Chapter 5. An assessment of the aims outlined above is undertaken in Chapter 6, which also contains a summary of the discoveries made during the course of the investigation.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
2.0 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A conceptual framework is best described as a set of interrelated concepts which define the nature, subject, purpose and broad content of a thesis. Once developed and completed it can then be presented for testing a particular theory or hypothesis. The purpose of this chapter is to present such a theoretical framework within which a study of settlement and settlement patterns can be conducted. This chapter has been divided into three sections. The first section looks at the transformation of archaeology and the growth of the discipline in methodology and theory, with particular reference to the development of settlement pattern research. Three different theoretical and methodological approaches are reviewed in the second section. The final section considers the various theories and approaches together and puts forward an appropriate conceptual framework for an examination of particular ecclesiastical settlement patterns within the study areas.

2.1 THE HISTORY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY

Until about 1960, archaeology was primarily concerned with establishing chronological sequences as well as classifying and describing the material culture of the many civilisations that had been discovered in the preceding centuries. This traditional archaeology tended to narrate archaeological material and culture as a chronicle of events, in much the same way as did history.

2.1.1 NEW ARCHAEOLOGY

In the 1960s, a new approach was proposed, led by the American archaeologist Binford, which professed an interest in the processes of cultural change (why and how things change, not simply what and when). Binford and other proponents of the ‘New Archaeology’ (also called ‘processual archaeology’) introduced a new set of aims, core ideas and values that adhered more to the philosophy of science than to that of history.

This new method of studying the past focused on explaining what happened in the past and not simply describing it. In this more scientific atmosphere it became

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3 Renfrew, C. and Bahn, P., op.cit., p.39.
important to test theories and conclusions before they were considered valid. Another key concept in the New Archaeology was a ‘neo-Darwinian’ concern with variability instead of with ‘norm’ within societies and cultures. Both of these concepts had implications for methodological approaches in archaeological research.

2.1.2 NEW CONCEPTS AND APPROACHES
Several new approaches, grouped together under the heading ‘postprocessual archaeology’, followed the advances made by the ‘processual’ archaeologists. These new approaches, inspired in the 1970s by ethnoarchaeological research, looked at the role of non-economic factors in the development and shaping of societies and material culture. One of the more important contributions of postprocessual archaeology was to emphasise the symbolic and cognitive aspects of societies as important areas of research.

As early as 1968, the British archaeologist Clarke stressed the importance of employing more sophisticated techniques and advocated the use of computers and the advantage of drawing on other disciplines. The theoretical movements made by the ‘New Archaeology’ owed much to advances being made in other disciplines, for example, advances in geography and ecology which provided new concepts which could be applied to archaeological studies. One such concept is found in the ecological approach which states that satisfactory answers to many major questions are only forthcoming if whole regions and their environments are looked at rather than single sites in isolation.

The ensuing decades saw contentious debate about the proper goals, methods, applications and philosophies of archaeology. They also saw numerous technical developments, such as, microstratigraphy and Geographical Information Systems (G.I.S.), that have allowed and enhanced the exploration of a wider range of archaeological data. It has recently been argued, however, that ‘the single most

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4 Renfrew, C. and Bahn, P. op.cit, p.37.
6 Ibid, p.4.
7 Renfrew, C. and Bahn, P. op.cit, p.37.
8 Johnson, M., op.cit., p.28.
9 Sabloff, J. and Ashmore, W. op.cit, p.4.
critical theoretical or methodological innovation in archaeology since World War II’ is that of settlement pattern studies.\textsuperscript{10}

2.2 \textbf{SETTLEMENT PATTERNS}

Settlement patterns are defined most simply by Sabloff and Ashmore as ‘the distribution across the landscape of material traces of human presence’.\textsuperscript{11} Settlement pattern studies are regarded as significant for the understanding of past societies and Renfrew and Bahn argue that it is rarely enough to locate an individual site, survey it and then excavate it in isolation; rather, whole regions need to be explored, to better understand settlement in the past.\textsuperscript{12} A number of terms are used by scholars in various disciplines to describe settlement pattern studies including: ‘settlement pattern approach’, ‘settlement archaeology’, ‘spatial or locational analysis of settlements’, and ‘distribution of population aggregates’.\textsuperscript{13}

The use of settlement pattern studies as a “focused methodological concept of archaeological research” only came to light in 1953, with the publication of Willey’s research in the Virú Valley, Chile.\textsuperscript{14} Willey’s research was groundbreaking and brought settlement pattern studies to the forefront of archaeological research.\textsuperscript{15} Willey considered settlement pattern studies to be an integral part of archaeological research and believed that “an awareness of settlement data simply extends the net of archaeological interest to take in a larger and legitimate part of the record”.\textsuperscript{16}

Settlement pattern studies were quickly accepted by the New Archaeologists as an important methodological tool; one that allowed fuller examination of cultural variability. This was an important consideration since archaeological research was now as much concerned with cultural variability as it was with homogeneity.\textsuperscript{17} It must be noted, however, that settlement pattern studies are useful only in a particular context. Their effectiveness depends on the nature of the study: for example, questions relating to the date of a settlement’s foundation, the type of food consumed

\textsuperscript{10} Sabloff, J. and Ashmore, W. op.cit, p.4.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{12} Renfrew, C. and Bahn, P. op.cit., p.70.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} Sabloff, J. and Ashmore, W. op.cit. p.5.
by the inhabitants or indeed the containers in which food was served or cooked, can often only be answered by excavation.

2.3  THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES
2.3.1  ARCHAEOLOGY
As a result of Willey's pioneering research and other settlement studies which followed in his footsteps, there has been a growing emphasis on settlement research on a regional scale.¹⁸ In keeping with the New Archaeologists' concern with the study of variability and differentiation, settlement research on a regional scale meant that variability could be seen beyond individual sites and could be observed in relation to multiple features and zones.¹⁹

2.3.1.1 NEW APPROACHES IN SETTLEMENT ARCHAEOLOGY
Research on a scale larger than individual sites necessitated a new type of methodological approach. Traditional approaches in archaeology use individual artefacts or other categories of remains as the primary unit for consideration, and these units then form the archaeological database from which interpretations are made and an overall picture of the past is created. In settlement archaeology, as the research is often carried out on a regional scale (or larger), the approach takes individual sites themselves as the primary unit for consideration.²⁰ This allows a site to be considered in the same way as other categories of archaeological remains, forming a database with other sites from which interpretations can then be made.

2.3.1.2 CHANG'S METHODOLOGY
Chang, in contrast, proposed a methodology for settlement archaeology in which "settlement components, considered as loci of past activities, serve as the primary units for classification"; settlement pattern study in archaeology being essentially a classificatory process.²¹ The sequence of research adopted by Chang follows a straightforward methodology: firstly, it requires definition of the settlement units;

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¹⁷ Sabloff, J. and Ashmore, W. op.cit., p.7.
¹⁸ Renfrew, C. and Bahn, P. op.cit., p.71.
²⁰ Chang, K. C. op.cit., p.10.
²¹ Chang defines a component as an archaeological entity within a continuous space and within a meaningful time period. A component did not exist in vacuum or isolation but was always a 'component' of a larger system in space and/or in time. Chang, K. C. op.cit., pp.10 and 3.

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second, the units must be articulated in space and time; third, contemporary groups and diachronic changes should be obtained; and fourth, explanation for the statistics and the dynamics of the phenomenon must be sought and the interrelationship of the settlement data with other data must be studied.\textsuperscript{22}

2.3.1.3 SURVEY AS A METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Frequently, the specific methodological approach used in settlement archaeology is survey. Survey has traditionally been employed as a preliminary stage in field-work (finding appropriate sites to excavate), but with the growing importance of settlement pattern research and regional studies, it has evolved to become an independent area of research.\textsuperscript{23} Settlement pattern and regional studies often seek answers to questions that excavation could not answer. Such questions revolve around the spatial distribution of human activities, an area for which excavation is often unsuited; for example, the examinations of variations between regions, changes in population through time, and relationships between people, land, and resources.\textsuperscript{24} This is of paramount concern in this study, which assesses the efficacy of other techniques (notably plan-analysis) at sites where the archaeological evidence is slight and excavation is in all cases unsuitable, given that each of the sites is occupied by a modern village or town.

Further, for questions formulated in regional terms, Renfrew and Bahn note \textit{ipso facto} that it is necessary to collect data on a corresponding scale.\textsuperscript{25} This is more efficiently and practically done through a program of survey than through individual excavations, whereby a surface approach can provide maximum information for minimum cost and effort. The cost, time, destruction and disruption caused by archaeological excavation is increasingly a major factor in deciding a strategy for a study. Conservation and heritage are key concerns worldwide and political and/or economic obstacles often deter the invasive investigation of a site by excavation. Consequently, surface settlement surveys are both efficacious in the context of broad, regional studies and are becoming more important to archaeology in general.\textsuperscript{26}

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\textsuperscript{22} Chang, K. C. op.cit., p.20.
\textsuperscript{23} Renfrew, C. and Bahn, P. op.cit., p.70.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{26} Sabloff, J. and Ashmore, W. op.cit., p.13.
\end{flushleft}
2.3.2 GEOGRAPHY

The development of the settlement pattern approach in archaeology owes much to research carried out in other disciplines, where settlement pattern studies have been prominent in research. Several fields besides archaeology have concerned themselves with landscape issues, of which settlement patterning is but one; these include geography, history, anthropology, ethnography, and urban planning. Methodologies and models developed in geography and ethnography have proved to be especially helpful in the study of settlement patterns. At the core of each of these two sciences is their concern with the study of the earth’s inhabitants; hence their usefulness to settlement archaeology. It is undoubtedly advantageous to try to understand the settlement patterns of living peoples (as studied by geographers and ethnographers), before attempting to interpret settlement patterns in an archaeological context.

2.3.2.1 HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

The distribution of settlement has long been studied by researchers in human geography. A number of the approaches employed and the models which were subsequently developed have some application in settlement archaeology. Probably one of the oldest interpretive traditions in human geography as applied to settlement (particularly urban forms) is ‘site and situation’. Ratzel, a dominant force in the newly emerged ‘human geography’ of the nineteenth century, subscribed to the Darwinian view that man had to adapt to the dictates of the environment in order to survive. 27 This view, when applied to settlement studies by the early human geographers, allows that town form was the product of the settlement’s adaptation to site conditions (i.e. towns needed to adapt to their environments).28

Another approach, used by Jones, expands on this view. It distinguishes three separate aspects of settlement (for the convenience of analysis) and can be applied in archaeological studies. These are a) site, ‘the relationship between a dwelling or a group of dwellings and the immediate physical environment’ (i.e. site and situation), b) pattern, ‘the relationship of one dwelling to another, sometimes irrespective of

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28 Ibid.
site', and c) distribution, 'the much wider aspects of the settlement', for example, the location of the settled areas and the limits of settlement. 

2.3.2.2 GEOGRAPHIC MODELS

In geography, as in ethnography, the word 'model' denotes an ideational construct, modelled after and intended to approximate the reality. Two geographic models can be outlined as examples. The first is the 'regular lattice' model. In this model there is an assumption of uniform distribution of population, terrain, resources etc. and under these circumstances there are certain patterns of settlement: horizontal (arrangement on the ground) and vertical (hierarchy of groups). An approach based on this model regards settlements as clusters of activities and groups them horizontally into networks and vertically into hierarchies. The second model is the 'regular cluster' model, the theory being that settlements form regular clusters. What this means, theoretically, is that the spacing of settlements is largely governed by the size and function of the settlement. For archaeology, this is helpful when considering the influence and interaction spheres of settlements of various sizes and functions.

2.3.3 HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

The discipline of historical geography offers much to the study of settlement in the past, using cartography to study settlement history and past settlement patterns. The early histories of towns have left physical signs in modern urban landscapes and scholars in the field of historical geography have developed new theoretical concepts and methodological approaches to further the study of this history. Foremost among these was the use of settlement (urban) morphology, which had long been used by geographers and archaeologists, to develop a transferable methodology suitable for the mapping of Medieval urban landscapes. 

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31 This basic model for locational analysis in human geography is discussed in Garner, B. J., 1967, 'Models of urban geography and settlement location', in Chorley, R. J. and Hagget, P. (eds.), Socio-Economic Models in Geography, pp.303-360.
32 Chang, K. C., op. cit., p.4.
33 This model was developed by Kolb and Brunner; Kolb, J. H., and Brunner, E. de S., 1946, A Study of Rural Society.
34 Chang, K. C. op. cit., p.5.
2.3.3.1 PLAN-ANALYSIS

A combination of morphological analysis and cartographic representation provides a way of conceptualising, measuring and interpreting the changing urban landscape.\textsuperscript{36} Palliser divides the sources for the study of Medieval urban topography into three broad categories: historical documents; buildings and the physical fabric of towns, or 'above-ground archaeology', and; traditional archaeology, i.e. excavation.\textsuperscript{37} Where excavation is not possible, the study of documents and the use of 'above-ground archaeology' can help reveal the genesis of a settlement. This is especially important in the context of this investigation, where ecclesiastical sites form the core of modern villages, towns and cities and excavation is neither possible nor practical. The technique of 'plan-analysis', introduced by Conzen in the 1960s and subsequently developed by Slater, offers a specific methodology which can be used to map the spatial development of a Medieval settlement.\textsuperscript{38} This technique is based on the concept that the form of streets and plots revealed on a large-scale plan of a settlement can provide clues about their origin and development.\textsuperscript{39} Through the use of this technique and the interpretation of these 'clues', it should be possible to gain new insights into the role played by ecclesiastical sites in the formation of settlement.

2.3.3.2 METHODOLOGY

Along with a new concept and approach, Conzen devised a specialist language, which could be used when following his methodology: for example, 'plan element' (streets, plots and buildings) and 'plan unit' (different patterns identified within the plan elements).\textsuperscript{40} In essence, Conzen's work provides a procedure and a proper terminology for the study of the form on the ground.\textsuperscript{41}

The methodology itself relies heavily on the town-plan, a 'cartographic representation of a town's physical layout to a predetermined scale'.\textsuperscript{42} Conzen's approach uses large-
scale plans of towns, such as the late nineteenth century O.S. plans. From this three ‘plan elements’, that is, streets, plots and buildings, can be identified, thus revealing different patterns of the plots and streets. Of these plan elements, the most persistent is the street system, which offers a link to the early history of a town. According to Conzen, the form of the various patterns can be taken as evidence for the historic plan-development, or morphogenesis, of a settlement.

**Figure 2.3.1: Example of Plan-analysis, Coventry, England (After Lilley)**

Conzen’s plan-analysis technique has been criticized as lacking a definitive methodology, though this was addressed by Lilley in his work on Coventry in England for which he devised an explicit methodology (Figure 2.3.1). In his article ‘Mapping the Medieval city: plan-analysis and urban history’, published in 2000, Lilley provides a methodological outline of ‘plan-analysis’ comprising the following four stages:

- A base town plan is prepared, using the earliest, most accurately surveyed and detailed cadastral plan of a town. In this first stage, the town’s ‘morphological skeleton’ is extracted by tracing streets and plot patterns to create the base plan.

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43 Ibid.
The second stage involves the identification of ‘plan units’. The plots and streets derived from the town plan are examined in terms of their form (i.e. size, shape and orientation), in order to highlight areas sharing similar morphological characteristics. The boundaries of these plan units or areas which display a morphological coherence are termed ‘plan seams’ and each one is numbered and named. The units are then used as the basis for analysing historical evidence (Figure 2.3.2).

In the third stage, historical and archaeological evidence is carefully integrated by mapping it on to the town plan. By interpreting this evidence, it is possible to provide some, if not all, dates for the fabric and the development of the plan unit. This in turn allows a relative chronology to be developed for the features within each plan unit.

The final stage pieces together the individual plan units and their morphological histories to create a map of the “changing form of the Medieval urban landscape” and to interpret what this changing form represents. The plan units are essentially interpreted as a “physical expression of the formation of an urban landscape”.46

The process of selecting streets and plots to create the base town plan is subjective and relies heavily on intuitive decision making.47 The production of the base plan is described by Lilley as a “reflexive and hermeneutic process”, where many rough drafts undertaken during the course of the analysis of the town’s plan feed into its final form and interpretation.48 It is the process itself that allows an understanding of the landscape, or in other words, “plan-analysis should be viewed as a means to an end rather than an end in itself”.49 This aside, it should be acknowledged that such a subjective process is very much open to interpretation; the plan units at the junction of Earl Street and Much Park Street in Figure 2.3.2, for example, appear ambiguous and might be interpreted differently.

45 Lilley, K. op.cit., p.9.
47 Lilley, K. op.cit., p.15.
48 Ibid.
49 Lilley, K. op.cit., pp.15-16.
2.3.3.3 A VALID FORM OF EVIDENCE?

Slater notes that archaeologists, with some notable exceptions, do not make use of this technique and indeed have been slow to accept it as a valid form of evidence in the study of early towns. Furthermore, archaeologists preach caution in the use of this technique, stressing that plans of Medieval towns do not take us back to the original layout at the time of foundation but instead to a Medieval phase. Should a plan of streets and plots, derived from nineteenth century maps, be used to assess the physical development and history of a town? The usefulness and validity of this technique in an archaeological study is under review in this thesis.

Although the validity of the plan-analysis approach has been questioned, there exists a certain amount of archaeological and historical evidence which supports the use of this methodology. Lilley used Coventry as a case study to test Conzen’s approach precisely because the city has an obscure Medieval history and little surviving fabric. The results show that the plan-analysis technique maximises the potential of such fragmentary evidence, binding together the disparate information and creating a coherent account of the historical development of the urban landscape. Archaeological excavations carried out in the 1970s in the British towns of York, Norwich, Bristol, Lincoln and Winchester, revealed that boundary walls shown in situ on nineteenth and twentieth century plans could be traced back to the Middle Ages (even as early as the tenth or eleventh century). Further evidence is found at Kilkenny, County Kilkenny and Armagh, County Down (Ireland): in both cases the street system of the present town has preserved the line of the Early Medieval monastic enclosures, attested by historical sources and archaeological evidence.

Thus the efficacy of plan-analysis as a method of studying the history and physical growth of a settlement lies in a multi-disciplinary approach. Conzen himself called for interdisciplinary co-operation and the development of comparative study in urban morphological research in order to further conceptual thinking. Plan-analysis, used alongside archaeological and historical evidence, provides a useful spatial context for interpreting this evidence of the Medieval urban landscape.

2.3.4 ETHNOGRAPHY/ETHNOLOGY

Ethnography is the study at first hand of individual living cultures whereas ethnology sets out to compare cultures using ethnographic evidence to derive general principles about human society. Ethnoarchaeology is the study of material culture in the present by archaeologists and involves the use of ethnographic models and approaches in archaeology.

53 Lilley, K. op.cit., p.10.
54 Ibid.
55 Lilley, K. op.cit., p.9.
58 Lilley, K. op.cit., p.9.
Like all other branches of archaeology, ethnoarchaeology uses analogies to explain and interpret data. In ethnoarchaeology, analogies are used in the following way: information is derived from one context (the present) and used to explain data found in another context (the past). In an archaeological context, this constitutes the study of both the present-day use and significance of artefacts, buildings, and structures within the living societies in question, and the way these material things become incorporated into the archaeological record.

2.3.4.1 ETHNOGRAPHIC MODELS

According to Chang, the principle use of ethnographic models for archaeological interpretation is as heuristic models, for learning purposes. These models work to allow a more realistic interpretation of the archaeological data because they provide information on specific associations (for example, use and ethnic continuity) as well as suggesting general associations among diverse social and cultural variables. In other words, the models can be of value in suggesting or prompting new hypotheses or possible interpretations of data.

Ethnographic models of settlement pattern permitted Chang to make at least two methodological generalisations for archaeological research in this area. The first is that there are two main areas where patterns of settlement can be formulated: the variable and hierarchical interrelationship of settlement units and the accompanying variables of space and culture. The second is that the definition of settlement units is determined by the level of the hierarchy and the nature of the interrelationship.

2.3.4.2 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES AND THEORIES

Other studies by ethnographers have offered focus for the research of settlement patterns, in terms of approach and methodology. Garner, for example, observed that settlements are spatially separated from one another and linkages between them are

59 Defined in Renfrew, C. and Bahn, P. op.cit., p.11.
60 Johnson, M. op.cit., p.48.
61 For example, studies carried out by Binford in the 1960s.
62 Chang, K. C. op.cit., p.5.
63 Ibid.
64 Johnson, M. op.cit., p.38.
65 Chang, K. C. op.cit., p.5.
essential; thus one framework for their study is to view each settlement as a node or focal point within a network.\(^{66}\) Vogt detailed five forms of local groupings of settlement, where the smallest grouping is the individual domestic house type and the largest is the spatial relationships of the villages or communities to one another over as large an area as possible; this allows easier analysis of settlement patterns.\(^{67}\)

Binford looked to ethnography for a way to bridge the gap between the past and the present. In his *Middle-Range Theory*, Binford argued that archaeological data form a static record in the present, whereas archaeologists are interested in how this material relates to the past and the dynamics of past societies (how they functioned, developed and were transformed).\(^{68}\) The 'middle range' is the 'space' between the statics and the dynamics, where inferences and assumptions are made.\(^{69}\) Binford believed that studying the relationship between statics and dynamics in a modern setting (an ethnographic study) would allow more 'actualistic' and accurate interpretations of the past.\(^{70}\)

### 2.3.5 SUMMARY OF EXISTING APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

There are significant differences, as characterised by Chang, between settlement pattern study in geography/ethnography and in archaeology. Unlike geographic and ethnographic studies, archaeology is solely concerned with the past. Thus in the study of settlement, the people concerned (the settlers) and their activities are often a subject for inference and are not simply a given. Discussion by geographers/ethnographers of settlement (markets, settlement complexes and networks etc.) is carried out contemporaneous with the activities that characterise these networks. In archaeology, on the other hand, the time dimension of the data is not fixed and in some cases is unknown; the ruins of settlement and the remains of activities accumulated over a period of time that may be long or short.\(^{71}\)

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\(^{68}\) Johnson, M. op.cit., p.49.

\(^{69}\) Johnson, M. op.cit., pp.51-2.

\(^{70}\) Johnson, M. op.cit., pp52-3.

\(^{71}\) Chang, K. C. op.cit., p.7.
In spite of these distinctions/limitations, settlement research in the fields of geography and ethnography, as noted above, can indicate possible approaches and methodologies which might be effectively applied to research in settlement archaeology.

Both geographical and ethnographical models emphasise the place of settlements within particular networks. Settlement archaeology also takes this approach. The archaeological study of settlement patterns considers individual settlements as ‘artefacts’ or units of data. In Chang’s methodology, the interrelationship of these ‘units’ are analysed. In the context of an archaeological study, before placing the settlements within a network, the settlements must be set in a time-frame, in order to assess whether the activities or settlements are contemporaneous.

Historical geography is particularly useful in archaeological settlement studies, as it too is concerned with past settlement. In settlement archaeology research, it is acknowledged that the surviving landscapes of earlier settlement would probably have had a great impact in shaping subsequent inhabitation, with settlement traces comprising a palimpsest record. The plan-analysis approach permits the study of the development of urban settlement, also relying on the concept that the landscape (in this case urban) is a palimpsest, a record to be interpreted and read.

Many of the models, approaches and methodologies outlined above can act as a basic framework, so long as they are adapted to the particular considerations (archaeological or otherwise) of the study in hand. Section 2.5 below outlines which of these approaches can be adapted and used to develop a theoretical framework for the study of ecclesiastical settlement patterns in Western Europe in an Early Medieval context.

2.4 A WORKING CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The objective of the study is to assess the pattern of ecclesiastical settlement within defined study areas – Ireland, southern Wales and southern France – in order to establish the origins of the curvilinear plan-form and its role in the formation of

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72 Sabloff, J. and Ashmore, W. op.cit., p.13
ecclesiastical settlement. For the purposes of attaining this objective, it is intended to take a three-pronged approach, using the aims outlined in Chapter 1:

1. Establish the characteristics of Early Medieval ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland, Wales and France through the detailed examination and comparison of field study sites within the defined study areas;

2. Investigate the direction of ecclesiastical influences between the three study areas, with a view to exploring whether or not the plan of Irish ecclesiastical settlement or any of its individual elements was influenced by the early church on the Continent and to examining the relationship between this pattern and the Continental church later on, when Irish monks began their peregrinations;

3. Evaluate the use of plan-analysis as a useful technique in the archaeological investigation of ecclesiastical settlement patterns in towns and villages.

The theoretical framework outlined below will provide a contextualisation for this research and it is within this framework that each of these aims will be addressed.

2.4.1 THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

The theoretical concepts and methodological approaches that form the conceptual framework for this investigation are outlined below.

2.4.1.1 SETTLEMENT PATTERN RESEARCH AS METHODOLOGICAL CONCEPT

A central assertion in the theoretical foundation of this work is the importance of settlement pattern research as a methodological concept in the study of the past. The advances made in archaeology, both in terms of methodology and theory, in the latter half of the twentieth century, highlight the ‘centralising and integrative potential’ of the settlement pattern approach in archaeology.\(^{73}\)

2.4.1.2 VARIABILITY

The evolution of the New Archaeology introduced an important concept: that an awareness of variability within society and culture was crucial to archaeological studies (and settlement pattern studies in particular). Understanding variability

\(^{73}\text{Willey, G. R. op.cit., p.154.}\)
implied a basic understanding of data in statistical terms. This in turn entailed the development of sampling theory and techniques.

In the context of a study concerning three very distinct areas, this concept is especially prominent. It is hoped that this concept, which expresses the diversity and differentiation that is inherent in all societies and cultures, will help explain the patterns of settlement that may emerge in the course of this study. The investigation of ecclesiastical settlement covers large areas, often without known boundaries. The concept of variability necessitates using sampling strategies in smaller areas so that reliable general conclusions can be drawn about the whole area.

2.4.1.3 CULTURE
One further concept was introduced to archaeological theory, this time as part of the postprocessual approach. This concept allowed that both symbolic and cognitive aspects of culture were significant areas of research in archaeology (and in settlement patterns). An awareness of these aspects of culture and how they might impact on the landscape and settlement is essential in an examination of sites with a religious focus, as is the case in this study.

2.4.1.4 SETTLEMENT ARCHAEOLOGY: A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH
For the purpose of this investigation of ecclesiastical settlement patterns, a multidisciplinary approach will be taken, drawing on theories and models used in settlement research in archaeology, geography, history and ethnography.

Such a multidisciplinary approach to settlement pattern research has recently been argued by Johnson, who believes that "a diversity of approaches to the archaeological record is a good thing, as the interaction of different approaches tends to produce interesting and fruitful results, a more truthful and more stimulating account of the past". 74 Although Johnson is here referring to approaches within archaeology itself, 75 this also holds true when using approaches taken from different disciplines, such as historical geography, history, archaeology and ethnography. Less recently the so-called 'English landscape tradition' (that views landscape as both very old and as

74 Johnson, M. op.cit. p.187.
75 Ibid.
complex documents on which many phases of settlement are ‘written’) stressed the integration of history, archaeology and geography using an inductive model to study settlement.  

76 More useful for this particular study, Stout acknowledges that “the fragmentary nature of evidence for the Early Christian period makes an interdisciplinary approach essential for the reconstruction of past landscapes and settlement patterns”.  

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2.4.1.5 ECOLOGICAL APPROACH

An intrinsic part of this model for the investigation of ecclesiastical settlement patterns is taken from the ecological school of thought, whereby the study of a whole region and its settlements should provide more satisfactory answers to questions of settlement, society and culture in the past than would that of individual sites or sites of particular or special importance. Accordingly, a number of ecclesiastical settlements from each region under study will be investigated, in order to better understand not only ecclesiastical settlement patterns but Early Medieval settlement in general.

2.4.1.6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPROACH: IDENTIFICATION OF EVIDENCE

An archaeological approach is taken in the overall methodology, whereby the sites are considered artefacts, the primary units for classification and consideration in the study. Following Chang’s methodological program, each of the ecclesiastical settlements (units) under investigation will be defined and articulated in space and time, diachronic changes will be noted and an explanation of the dynamics of the phenomenon and the interrelationship of the settlement data with other data will be presented.

2.4.1.7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPROACH: EXCAVATION EVIDENCE

The results of archaeological excavations, both published and unpublished, will be used where available and accessible to provide valuable information on the selected field studies. Archaeological excavation is costly, both time-wise and financially. Where archaeological excavations have taken place within an urban context, they are

76 Johnson, M. op.cit., p.160.

frequently limited in scale and the locations are subject to opportunity rather than a dedicated research framework, i.e. the result of development-led excavation. Although it is often the only way to provide certainty with regard to sequence and dating, it is a methodology that is not practical – nor is it possible in most cases – to adopt in the case of large-scale settlement research focused on urban sites.

2.4.1.8 GEOGRAPHICAL APPROACH: ANALYSIS OF DATA
Analysis of the sites will follow the plan-analysis technique as devised by Conzen and developed by Slater. Using cartographic sources and morphological analysis, the spatial development of the ecclesiastical settlements in an urban context will be analysed. The plan-analysis technique will be adapted to focus on the identification of the primary ecclesiastical plan unit for further investigation. The technique then leads to the identification of common characteristics of the sites, such as enclosures, approach roads, market areas and overall settlement patterns. It will provide an accessible and accurate means by which to examine and compare ecclesiastically influenced settlements in Ireland, southern Wales and southern France.

2.4.1.9 ETHNOGRAPHICAL APPROACH: ESTABLISHING A PATTERN
The ecclesiastical settlements have, until this point been examined and analysed individually or within small micro-regional groups, i.e. as archaeological artifacts or units. In order to understand the settlement pattern and distribution, these units will be situated within a network. The interrelationships and vertical and hierarchical groupings will be established, thus enabling assessment of the pattern and the strength of the connection between the ‘units’, if any.

2.4.2 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH
In terms of methodological approaches, this study will be drawing on archaeology, history, geography and ethnography. It is clear from the review of methodological approaches above that settlement pattern research should not be confined to one field of study; it should not be a purely archaeological, geographical, or ethnographical concern. Rather, as is the case in this study, it should be approached on a multi-

78 The term ‘urban’ is often an emotive term in the context of ecclesiastical settlement or indeed Early Medieval settlement generally. In this context it is used to refer simply to those ecclesiastical sites that
disciplinary level and set within a conceptual framework which will provide an explicit linkage between the theory, the literature, and the informed methodology and practice of this thesis.

evolved as villages, towns or cities at some point in their development and to distinguish them from rural church sites or deserted settlements.
CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW
3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 IRISH ECCLESIASTICAL SITES IN THE EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD

3.1.1 INTRODUCTION
This chapter will look at current scholarship on the subject of Early Medieval ecclesiastical sites in Ireland. In particular, consideration will be given to the work of St Joseph, Swan and Griffin. Norman and St Joseph's book *The Early Development of Irish Society* is primarily concerned with the Irish landscape as seen through the lens of the aerial photographer (i.e. that of St Joseph). It includes a chapter on early Christian sites that was instrumental in drawing attention to the survival of elements of monastic settlements and their layouts. While the accompanying text provided by Norman is out-dated, the use of aerial photography in this context was seminal. Swan’s research has made significant contributions to this field of study, especially in its identification of a probable pattern of ecclesiastical layout or planned site design. This pattern was subsequently re-assessed by Griffin’s spatial model of an ecclesiastical site and in conjunction with Swan’s work offers an understanding of the process of early ecclesiastical settlement.

3.1.2 TECHNIQUES OF SITE IDENTIFICATION

3.1.2.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AERIAL SURVEY
In 1951, St Joseph embarked upon a series of flights, which were to continue intermittently until 1968, with the express purpose of obtaining aerial photographs from all parts of Ireland. Until this programme began there had been very little archaeological exploration of this kind in Ireland. St Joseph’s work constituted the first real archaeological air reconnaissance and yielded ‘an unexpected wealth of new knowledge’. One chapter in Norman and St Joseph’s book is devoted to early Christian sites, despite the fact that ‘the study of the early Celtic Christian church did not seem a promising field for research by air photography’. Though the terminology is out-moded, i.e. the use of the term ‘Celtic’, this comment is significant in the light of the results of St Joseph’s survey. The aerial photographs taken by St Joseph led to the discovery of a surprising amount of new information regarding early Christian

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2 Ibid.
settlements and included details of early ecclesiastical sites and previously unknown sites. As one of the first scholars to draw attention to the unique layout of Irish early ecclesiastical settlements, St Joseph’s pioneering aerial survey work has proved very important in the study of the early Christian church in Ireland.4

The early Christians in Ireland were faced with a unique situation when they came to establish ecclesiastical settlements. As Ireland lay outside the Roman empire, it did not have the urban centres and administrative organisation that would usually accommodate the new religion in a Roman city. Instead, Irish contemporary settlement appears to have been made up of isolated ring-forts (or raths), crannogs and other types of dispersed settlement. The most significant component of early medieval secular settlement is the ringfort. These sites consist of circular areas defined by banks and external ditches, and excavation often reveals associated field systems as well as the remains of dwelling houses and outbuildings for extended families.5 Both documentary and archaeological evidence suggest that the ringfort was usually inhabited by a single family and its dependants and that the enclosure acted both as a physical means to manage livestock and demarcated an area over which the owner had exclusive rights.6

The very early churches erected when Christianity was first introduced to Ireland in the fifth century AD have left no surface remains. Norman and St Joseph propose that this is because of expansion of the sites and the erection of new structures when the early church sites became monastic communities in the sixth and seventh centuries AD.7 It is more likely, however, to be due to the nature of the earliest Irish churches. The earliest church buildings are described by later Irish writers as rectangular timber structures – the duirtheach or dairthech (literally ‘oak house’)8 – generally of modest proportions.9 The majority of the other structures in the earliest monasteries were also

4 Cf. discussion of Swan’s work in the next section.
5 For example, the ringforts (Early Medieval enclosurescomplexes) excavated at Roestown, Dowdstown and Castlefarm in County Meath as part of the advance archaeological works for the M3 Motorway Scheme. www.excavations.ie: Roestown (2005:AD16, A008/002) Dowdstown (2005:AD7, A008/033), Castlefarm (2005:AD5, A017/001).
made of wood, leaving little trace in the archaeological record.\textsuperscript{10} The common practice of building churches in wood continued through the ninth century. The annals record, for instance, that in the year 868 Queen Flanna had many men in the wood felling and cutting timber in preparation for the erection of a church at Kildare in honour of St Brigit.\textsuperscript{11} The widespread use of stone on monastic sites did not occur until the early tenth century, when the occurrence of \textit{damliac} (literally ‘stone church’) becomes much more frequent in the annals.\textsuperscript{12} There are two earlier examples are known from the annals, recorded in the eighth century: the \textit{damliac} of Duleek, County Meath and the \textit{oratorium lapideum} (literally ‘an oratory made of stone’) at Armagh.\textsuperscript{13}

One intact early example of a corbelled stone church, Gallarus Oratory, survives on the Dingle peninsula in County Kerry, on the west coast of Ireland.\textsuperscript{14} Another such oratory, St Colmcille’s House, survives in Kells, County Meath. Examples of early monastic sites are also recorded in County Kerry, where their stone construction and their remote and isolated location meant a much better chance of survival in this area on the western sea-board. The use of stone on these sites was not typical of the period; good timber was in short supply in this region and the exposure to Atlantic gales made stone construction a more durable proposition.\textsuperscript{15} Stailey stresses the importance of the differing status and type of community involved; comparing these early ascetic sites to the later populous monasteries or even to other contemporary ecclesiastical sites is a simplification of the situation.\textsuperscript{16} That being said, these sites on the western seaboard provide some of the best examples of the layout of monastic settlements from this early period and of the type of structures found there.

Norman and St Joseph use three case-studies as examples of where it is possible to see the design of these early sites most completely: Skellig Michael (Figure 3.1.1) and Illauntarmig Island (Figure 3.1.2) in Kerry and Inishmurray in Sligo (Figure 3.1.3a).\textsuperscript{17}

In both Figures 3.1.2 and 3.1.3a the circular enclosure is quite clear, although it is

\textsuperscript{11} Harbison, P., 1971, op.cit., p.48.
\textsuperscript{12} Manning, C., 2000, op. cit., pp.38, 41 & 51.
\textsuperscript{13} Manning, C., 2000, op. cit., p.51.
\textsuperscript{14} Edwards, N. 1990, op.cit., p.124.
\textsuperscript{15} Stailey, R.A., 2005, op.cit., p.715
\textsuperscript{17} Norman, E. R. and St Joseph, J. K. S., op.cit., pp.95-96.
noticeably missing from Skellig Michael, no doubt because of the irregular terrain on which the settlement was built. It is interesting to note that the site on Inishmurray (Figure 3.1.1) has features consistently found on later sites, for example, the circular walls enclosing a number of ecclesiastical structures, with a well outside the enclosure and an entrance on the northeast (later site entrances are directly on the east). Features found on all three include a church, a number of clochan (bee-hive huts), an oratory and crosses, while graves appear only on Illauntannig and on Skellig Michael.

**FIGURE 3.1.1 : PLAN OF SKELLIG MICHAEL**

![Plan of Skellig Michael](image)

Source: Edwards (1990), p.120 [after de Paor 1955]

**FIGURE 3.1.2 : AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF ILLAUNTANNIG ISLAND, COUNTY KERRY**

![Aerial photograph of Illauntannig Island](image)

Source: Norman and St Joseph (1969), p.94
The subdivision of the monastic enclosure at Inishmurray is clearly visible at another early ecclesiastical site, Reask in County Kerry (Figures 3.1.3a & 3.1.3b). Excavations undertaken at Reask have dated the lintelled grave cemetery, stone oratory and circular enclosure to the fifth to seventh century, with the cemetery and its enclosure pre-dating the oratory. While these sites are not necessarily typical or representative of other ecclesiastical sites of the same period, many of the elements surviving at Skellig Michael, Illauntannig, Inishmurray, Reask and others consistently appear on the majority of later ecclesiastical sites.

Norman and St Joseph suggested that the typical early monastery was always situated within circular enclosing walls or earth-banks and that where the ecclesiastical centres were housed in former rath settlements, the earlier fortification wall, or walls, would remain, enclosing the monastery in one or more concentric circles. They cited Nendrum, County Down as an example, believing it to be a pre-Christian multi-vallate ring-fort, the plan of which was retained when the site was occupied by the monks. The enclosures of the monastic site at Nendrum have since been shown to date to the Early Medieval period, indicating that the site was laid out for use as a

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18 Fanning, T., 1981. 'Excavation of an Early Christian cemetery and settlement at Reask, County Kerry', in Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy Section C, 81 Section C, p.152.
20 Ibid.
monastery and not for an earlier, secular purpose (the evidence for this is discussed further in Section 3.1.6).

**Figure 3.1.4: Plan of Nendrum, County Down**

Source: McErlean (2007), p.336 [Fig.12.8: Plan of 2004 with some information derived from the ASCD plan]

When settlements were built on previously uninhabited sites a pattern of circular enclosures appears to have been followed. Whether or not the inspiration came from the plan of ring-forts or through other means is discussed later in this thesis, though it appears to be the case that a circular pattern was adopted into the design of ecclesiastical settlements from an early date. This may be supported by a drawing on the last page of the eighth century Book of Mulling or Moling, which is thought to show a contemporary ecclesiastical enclosure – possibly of the monastic site with which the gospel book is associated, *Teach Moling* (‘the house of Moling’) in County Carlow. The illustration provides what appears to be a schematic representation of a monastic site and shows two concentric circles enclosing ‘Christ with his apostles’

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22 *St Mullin's: An early ecclesiastical site and Medieval settlement in County Carlow*, Archaeology Ireland Heritage Guide No.5 (March 1999).
and the 'Holy Spirit' [presumably the church] as well as named crosses at cardinal points around the outer enclosure (Figure 3.1.5). The colophon drawing and its origins and significance were examined in depth by Nees who argues for a later, mid-ninth century date for the drawing. Nees considers it plausible that there is a connection between the circular configuration depicted in the drawing and the layout of Irish monasteries. Nees proposes that the plan of the monastic enclosures was used as a device to show an iconographic arrangement of crosses and apostles that was closely modelled on a Carolingian miniature (possible a Touronian page). Rather than a model for monasteries to follow from that point out, it is more likely that this is a highly schematic plan and a sort of recording of an existing pattern of circular monastic enclosures with which the scribe was familiar (in this case those at St Mullins where the book was written).

FIGURE 3.1.5 : ILLUSTRATION FROM THE BOOK OF MULLING (AFTER NEES)

Source: St Mullin's: An early ecclesiastical site and Medieval settlement in County Carlow, Archaeology Ireland Heritage Guide No.5 (March 1999).

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24 Nees, L. 1983, op. cit., p.68.
26 Nees, L. 1983, op. cit., p.70.
One very important aspect of the work of Norman and St Joseph is that it illustrates the way in which aerial photography can be used to identify the location, size and general layout of the ecclesiastical settlements. This is particularly valuable where little or nothing remains of the original settlement on the ground. For example, in the case of the numerous isolated single-chamber churches in Ireland where there is no other indication of ecclesiastical settlement, aerial photographs have picked out faint traces of circular enclosing walls surrounding the church. At one such site, Tarramud in Galway, the area within the enclosure was large enough to indicate that there must have been a much more substantial ecclesiastical settlement here at one stage (Figure 3.1.6).27

In the above cases the outline of the enclosure is often the only extant evidence of a monastic settlement, but this is not always the case. The monastic settlement at Clonard, County Meath (Figure 3.1.7a) is mentioned by Medieval writers; it is described as having had as many as three thousand inhabitants and was prestigious and famed for its school, attracting students from abroad.28 All that remained at the time of St Joseph's survey was a Church of Ireland church and some farm buildings, so this figure may have seemed unlikely. The aerial photograph of the ecclesiastical site at Clonard revealed that this was indeed the location of the settlement, and also how extensive it was; it identified the site and numerous features not evident on the first edition six-inch O.S. map (Figure 5.3.5, p.293). The original enclosure is still visible in the circle of trees, banks and ditches surrounding the Church of Ireland church, and there are also traces of an outer enclosure. The most interesting discovery is the rest of the site, which consists of numerous access-ways, square enclosures and disturbed ground. Norman and St Joseph suggest that Clonard had evolved into an 'ecclesiastical city', the original monastic site gradually being surrounded by the huts (probably of wattle-and-daub) of students, craftsmen, lay-dependants and clients,29 and while the term 'ecclesiastical city' is a stretch, the growth of the site into a substantial settlement is clear. A similar evolution, showing an expansion of the

27 Another example can be found near Liscarroll in County Cork; Norman, E. R. and St Joseph, J. K. S., op.cit., p.112.
original site, is suggested by the disturbed land near to the monastic site at Drumacoo, County Galway.\textsuperscript{30}

Archaeological aerial survey also proved useful in detecting the presence of an ecclesiastical settlement in built-up areas, such as in modern towns and villages. In these cases, it is again the circular enclosure which stands out. The example given by Norman and St Joseph is Armagh,\textsuperscript{31} where the aerial photograph quite clearly shows how the modern street plan has preserved the circular shape of the ecclesiastical enclosures (Figure 4.3.7, Volume 2). Although Norman and St Joseph mention only one, there are in fact many such cases where the early Christian settlement has survived as the core of the modern town or village, such as Clondalkin in County Dublin, and Kells and Duleek in County Meath.

It is clear from all of the examples discussed by Norman and St Joseph that the circular enclosure was not only a common element of the ecclesiastical sites, but also the feature which best survives the passage of time. These enclosures survive in banks, ditches, the remains of stone-work, crop-marks, hedges and field fences, as well as in the property boundaries and street- and road-patterns of modern towns and


\textsuperscript{31} Norman, E. R. and St Joseph, J. K. S., op.cit, p.117.
villages. In an aerial photograph it will most often be the line of the early monastery's enclosing walls which will provide indication of its existence.

3.1.2.2 A NEW APPROACH IN THE IDENTIFICATION OF EARLY ECCLESIASTICAL SITES

St Joseph readily admitted that his work, although quite extensive, was only generally representative and that many important sites remained undiscovered or 'their significance not fully appreciated'.32 He acknowledged that his work would pose new questions and suggest further subjects of study.33 Swan takes up where St Joseph left off, but whereas St Joseph's aerial photographs encompassed sites ranging in date from the prehistoric to the Early Medieval period, Swan concentrates on the early Christian sites.34

Swan was one of the first Irish scholars to look at exclusively ecclesiastical sites from the air, beginning in 1971 with a paper titled 'The recognition and recovery of ecclesiastical enclosures by aerial observation and aerial photography'.35 In this and subsequent articles,36 Swan focuses on enclosed ecclesiastical sites, a phenomenon which we first encounter in St Joseph's aerial photographs. Swan's study is, however, more exhaustive for two reasons. Firstly, he looks only at ecclesiastical sites and focuses all his efforts in this one specific area. Second, he uses a different, more comprehensive methodology to Norman and St Joseph who rely solely on aerial photography in locating sites.

Swan uses a combination of aerial photography, plan-analysis of the six-inch O.S. maps and field work to study the sites.37 He also looks at the documentary evidence available for the church in the Early Medieval period. Despite there being a 'surprisingly wide selection' of contemporary or near contemporary sources, Swan notes that this type of evidence is quite limited unless combined with evidence

33 Ibid.
34 Norman, E. R. and St Joseph, J. K. S., op.cit, pp.2, 54 and 93. Examples include the prehistoric settlement site, Dundrum Sandhills, County Down; Staigue Fort, County Kerry; ecclesiastical settlement on Illauntannig Island, County Kerry.
obtained using the techniques mentioned above.\textsuperscript{38} There is no doubt that Swan considers aerial photography to be of primary importance as it has provided 'the means whereby increasingly large numbers of ecclesiastical enclosures are being recognised for the first time'.\textsuperscript{39}

According to Swan, it is possible to identify hundreds of sites which conform to a visible pattern (see below for discussion of this pattern) but which lack associated documentary evidence, for example Duleek, by interpreting the evidence obtained through aerial photography.\textsuperscript{40} He also notes that where the enclosure is poorly preserved, aerial photography is often the only way to recover the plan, for example at Attirory, County Leitrim.\textsuperscript{41} He does acknowledge that in some cases careful analysis of maps alone can prove fruitful; a good example of this is Oldtown, County Roscommon.\textsuperscript{42}

In a preliminary survey carried out in 1969-71, Swan conducted an examination of the six-inch O.S. maps.\textsuperscript{43} This and other similar surveys yielded around four hundred sites with evidence of enclosure. As vindication of his chosen methodology, another two hundred such sites were revealed by aerial photography and fieldwork on the ground which showed a similar distribution to the earlier survey, proving that the combination of aerial photography, field-work and map analysis is extremely effective.

3.1.3 SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The map search carried out by Swan revealed a frequently recurring phenomenon: the circular pattern of many town and village street plans, focusing on a churchyard in the centre, for example Kells, Duleek, Lusk and Ratoath.\textsuperscript{44} The study of aerial photographs and the results of field surveys confirmed the existence of this pattern, visible in the line of roads, property boundaries and field fences.\textsuperscript{45} These lines indicate the outline and dimensions of the original enclosure, be it circular, oval or

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{38} Swan, D. L., 1985. op.cit., p.77.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Swan, D. L., 1985. op.cit., p.80.
\item \textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{41} Swan, D. L., 1983. op.cit., p.273.
\item \textsuperscript{42} Swan, D. L., 1985. op.cit., p.81.
\item \textsuperscript{43} Swan, D. L., 1983. op.cit., p.273.
\item \textsuperscript{44} Swan, D. L., 1983. op.cit., p.269.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
sub-rectangular. Quite often a double enclosure (consisting of an inner and an outer enclosure) can be recognised, with the inner enclosure containing the church and burial ground. Although the enclosure is only one of a number of elements which survive, Swan states that it is frequently the best or the only clue to the existence of a previously unsuspected Early Medieval ecclesiastical site. Its importance becomes even more apparent when Swan suggests that ‘it is unlikely that any site of ecclesiastical significance of this period was without its enclosure’. Sites with curvilinear enclosures have been noted by other scholars, most notably by St Joseph who recognised the circular enclosure as a consistent feature of early monastic settlements.

The evidence from the examples discussed by Swan revealed a remarkable consistency in the basic planning and format of early ecclesiastical sites. Swan found that there were certain features which are consistently found on these sites and lists them more or less in order of frequency of occurrence:

1. Evidence of enclosure.
2. Burial area.
3. Place-name with ecclesiastical element.
4. Structure, or structural remains, such as the church and round tower.
5. Holy well.
7. Carved, shaped, inscribed, or decorated stone cross or slab.
8. Line of townland boundary forming part of the enclosure.
11. Founder’s tomb.
12. Associated traditional ritual or folk custom.
13. Radiating road network.
14. Triangular market area, commonly but not always on the east.

In almost all cases there will be four or five of these features surviving, no site will have less than three and few, if any, will show all. Thus Swan found that there was a general pattern – that of a double enclosure with the inner enclosure containing the

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46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
important ecclesiastical remains - of settlement lay-out to which the majority of the early monastic sites conformed.

In addition to this pattern, Swan found that the various features and structures had each their allocated positions.\(^{54}\) The church and burial ground were centrally located in larger sites and within the southeast quadrant in smaller sites; the round tower was situated to the west of the church, its doorway facing east towards that of the church; the burial area was located to the south of the church; a holy well is seldom found within the enclosure, but usually some distance away; the site entrance, where identifiable, is located mainly on the east and is often marked by a cross.\(^{55}\) Swan believes that this reinforces the concept that all of the features were planned in association with each other.\(^{56}\)

Swan's inclusive methodology encompassed a wider range of ecclesiastical sites than St Joseph and added considerably to the body of knowledge, revealing further evidence for Early Medieval ecclesiastical settlement elsewhere in the country. The site of Oldtown, County Roscommon (Figure 3.1.8) is used by Swan to illustrate the fact that careful analysis of the six-inch O.S. maps can provide evidence for enclosed ecclesiastical sites, even without aerial photography or field survey.\(^{57}\)

**Figure 3.1.8 Plan of Oldtown, County Roscommon (After Swan)**


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\(^{55}\) Ibid.
Although it exhibits the pattern described above, of an enclosure containing an ecclesiastical structure and burial ground, it is one of many such sites where there is no associated documentary evidence indicating a monastic tradition.\textsuperscript{58} In his study of enclosed ecclesiastical sites, Swan found that there were many settlements of linear pattern contained within enclosures defined by field-fences, of which Oldtown is a typical example.\textsuperscript{59}

Duleek, County Meath (Figure 3.1.9) is another large site which has been identified by Swan as conforming to the pattern but which is not supported by documentary evidence.\textsuperscript{60}

\textbf{FIGURE 3.1.9 PLAN OF DULEEK, COUNTY MEATH (AFTER SWAN)}

Source: Swan 1994, p.52.

Both the aerial photograph and the plan of Duleek clearly show a complete enclosing pattern, defined by the modern streets and a disused laneway. The outer enclosure is a large oval shape, approximately three hundred and twenty metres in diameter, and the inner enclosure contains the important ecclesiastical remains.\textsuperscript{61} There is also a network of lanes and property boundaries radiating outwards from the inner enclosure.

\textsuperscript{59} See also Duleek which was mentioned earlier. Swan, D. L., 1983. op.cit., p.270. 
\textsuperscript{60} Swan, D. L., 1985. op.cit., p.80. 
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.
which create a series of subdivisions within the settlement, and what appears to be three larger divisions similar to the *triana* at Armagh. The surviving ecclesiastical remains include those typically found on such sites, such as a recent church, an Anglo-Norman church tower, the remains of an abbey, one carved cross and fragments of another, early carved grave-slabs and the matrix of a collapsed round tower.

Monasterboice, County Louth is a very good example of the value of aerial photography in this field of study (Figure 3.1.10). This was an important monastic establishment and was frequently mentioned in the annals.

**FIGURE 3.1.10 AERIAL VIEW OF MONASTERBOICE FACING SOUTH TAKEN IN 1978 BY SWAN, SHOWING CROPMARK RUNNING EAST/WEST ACROSS THE FIELD.**


Norman and St Joseph dismissed this site as one of a number of famous monastic sites that have no remaining signs of their earliest buildings and walls, namely because of extensive building carried out over the original structures and continuous use of the

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63 Ibid.
area for burial or for agricultural purposes. Swan, however, found that an aerial photograph of the site revealed the line of an enclosing bank and ditch, which was continued in a modern field fence, laneway and old townland boundary. From this it was possible to reconstruct the probable outline of the original outer enclosure as large, regular and oval. The inner enclosure was centrally located within this and contained the remains of two Medieval churches, a round tower and some richly carved crosses and slabs, while the outer enclosure contained two souterrains and a holy well.

One element missing from Swan’s list of features consistently found on or associated with enclosed ecclesiastical sites has come to light in recent years. Excavations at two monastic mills, one at Nendrum, County Down and the other at High Island off the coast of Galway, have provided significant new information on Early Medieval monasteries. At Nendrum, the tidal mills were substantial and early in date, with tree-ring analysis dating the first tide mill to AD 619-21. It was possible to equate the history of Nendrum’s mills with a general history of the monastery; when the fortunes of the monastery were at their height the mill was an essential part of its organisation and the ultimate abandonment of milling on the site may be linked to the decline, both economically and culturally, of the monastery. On High Island, a horizontal wheeled mill is directly associated with the extensive remains of an Early Medieval monastic community. The mill site includes the remains of a water-powered mill, an enlarged natural pond, a hill-side reservoir and mill-races. Such a large-scale building project suggests that the monastic community on High Island was equal to many of the mainland sites, which is contrary to the formerly held belief that this was a small eremitic community.

Milling was of no small importance in European monastic organisation; there is specific mention of the mill in the sixth-century Rule of St Benedict. 74 Documentary and growing archaeological evidence suggests that this was also the case in Irish monastic organisation. Cogitosus' *Life of St Brigit* contains the earliest description of the construction of an Irish monastic watermill at Kildare in the late seventh century AD and a late eighth / early ninth century law tract refers to the use of church-owned mills. 75 The inference from such evidence is that the mill, like the enclosure, should be seen as a "characteristic component of an early Irish monastery". 76 The biggest problem with this component, however, is one of association. In most cases, a mill was generally not built within the visible monastic precincts, but on the nearest available watercourse. This was not an issue at High Island as the island itself, which was uninhabited by later generations, act as the confines of the monastery. 77 Thus if a mill is discovered, for example, near both a known monastic site and a ringfort, with which should it be associated? While mills form an important part of the study of Early Medieval monasteries, they may only assist in the recognition of previously unknown sites in conjunction with other features.

3.1.4 SITE MORPHOLOGY

A number of the enclosed ecclesiastical sites developed into towns and large villages. 78 These were the most successful of the monastic centres, such as Kells, Armagh and Kildare, which ‘took on true urban functions as the centuries progressed and large numbers of people, both lay and ordained, were attracted both to their thriving religious centres and to the increasing economic activities surrounding them’. 79 The date at which these sites took on urban functions (and whether this pre-dated the Norman boroughs) is a subject of some discussion, as is the extent of urbanisation at these sites. Based on his analysis of the documentary sources in the 1980s, Doherty proposed a model of a ‘monastic town’ that became ‘urban’ in the tenth century following the adoption of a standard format in the seventh or eighth century.

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century. Swift’s re-examination of the documentary evidence in the late 1990s, along with new information from archaeological excavations, indicates that while many of the elements of a ‘standard model’ can be supported by the evidence, there is nothing to support the theory that the Irish monastic sites were urban centres in the tenth century or earlier. In many examples of ecclesiastical sites there is an inner and outer enclosure visible with the significant ecclesiastical features and structures within the inner enclosure. According to Swan, this confirms that the inner enclosure was reserved for sacred activities and all commercial, industrial and domestic activity took place in the outer enclosure. Swan points to Doherty’s examination of the literature which refers to the layout of the early monasteries. The plan was based on an idealised form, with the holiest place in the centre and areas of sanctuary decreasing in holiness as they moved outwards. Swift’s re-examination of the documentary sources and of Doherty’s interpretation of these sources, concluded that there was no urbanisation or even nucleation of these sites. Her analysis of the documentary sources did provide further evidence for a certain organisation of the site layout, particularly with regard to enclosures and internal divisions. Swift identified further examples in the canons which also appear to divide the ecclesiastical settlement into three separate areas (as at Armagh and Duleek), essentially: tabernaculum (church), atrium (place of habitation for the priests of the settlement) and faíthche or platea (an open space which could be used for communal activities or a habitation area for inhabitants of the settlement). There are also references to the tabernaculum and its suburbana, i.e. ‘suburban’ development but in its simplest sense, as development beyond the church ‘zone’. An example of this might be seen at Killeigh, County Offaly, where a sub-

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55 Swift discusses the use and meanings of tabernaculum, intervallum, atria, platea and faíthche, which imply a similar layout to Doherty’s sanctus, sanctior, sanctissimus (holy, holier, holiest). Swift, C. op.cit., p.111
56 Swift, C. op.cit., p.118
rectangular enclosure, named the 'Nun's Enclosure', is appended to the southeast side of the outer enclosure (Figure 3.1.11).87

Though the terms differ from Doherty's, the idea is the same, with specific areas designated for ecclesiastical and secular activities. The texts also indicate that the boundaries delimiting each area were visible on the ground; whether as a wall, palisade, earthen bank or ditch is not clear.88 The concept of the faithche is not well defined in terms of its physical extent and Swift's interpretation of the texts is that much of the associated settlement and agricultural buildings were spread out in a wider area, rather than being clustered around the ecclesiastical centre as suggested by Doherty's model.89 The references to crosses and other signs as boundary markers indicating different zones of settlement may well have been used in place of a physical boundary, as at Kildare for example. The archaeological and other evidence is sufficiently strong for physical enclosures around the ecclesiastical settlement (see above) that these markers were perhaps used for the faithche or wider lands associated with the church or monastery.

**FIGURE 3.1.11: ARTIST'S IMPRESSION OF EARLY CHRISTIAN ENCLOSURE AT KILLEIGH**

As these sites developed, they appear to have done so in an easterly or southeasterly direction.90, though this is demonstrably not the case at Finglas, County Dublin (see Section 5.3.7, Figure 5.3.4). Swan suggests that this was not accidental but was connected to the crosses and market-places which were located to the east, within or

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87 Boyle, K. et al., 2006. Historic Landscape Character Assessment – Killeigh, County Offaly, p.18.
88 Swift, C. op.cit., p.109
89 Swift, C. op.cit., p.112
just outside the outer enclosure. Swan claims that there is enough evidence to establish a link between the cross at the entrance and the growth of the market-place, and supposes that a permanent market-place developed in the area around the entrance, the cross marking the entrance being identified as the market-cross. In Armagh, Market Street and Market House mark the original entrance to the monastic enclosure. This is also where the ‘cross of the gate of the rath’ was situated. Thus we have the location of an early cross marking the entrance to the enclosure, which also marks the site of the present day market-place. Until very recently, the market cross in Kells was still in position on the eastern perimeter of the outer enclosure and the street here is named Market Street. This pattern is repeated in Kildare, Tuam, Downpatrick and at Glendalough where the original gatehouse survives, an elaborate structure which stands on the north-east of the perimeter. This was the entrance of the settlement and the Market Cross stood directly in front of it.

The early monastic site at Downpatrick, County Down is an interesting case, fitting as it does into two categories of site. In his article on monastic proto-towns, Swan distinguished between two types of site: those which developed to form the cores of modern towns and villages and those which ceased to develop and were progressively abandoned, as at Kilkenny, County Kilkenny. At Downpatrick the site developed eastwards from the entrance and the market-place like the sites mentioned above, but the difference here is that urban development took place alongside the early site instead of around it. Swan has traced the outline of both the original inner and outer enclosures and has placed the broad street, known as Market Street, on its eastern

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97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
99 Swan uses the term 'proto-town', an expression coined by urban geographers such as R. A. Butlin to describe those monastic sites which subsequently developed into large urban settlements. See Barry, T. D., 1987. op.cit., p.26. See also Swan, D. L., 1985. op.cit., pp.77-102.
The Medieval and modern town developed from here, while the early ecclesiastical site evolved separately as a site of worship and burial.

Swan points out that the extensive urban development of some of these early ecclesiastical sites is mentioned in documentary sources. Cogitosus’ *Vita st Brigitae* describes the ‘monastic city’, presumably Kildare, which was the ‘greatest and most celebrated monastery of St Brigit’. This was apparently a ‘vast and metropolitan city’ with suburbs and the church at the centre surrounded by an ‘ornate cashel’, probably the inner enclosure. Although the text states that there was no surrounding wall (outer enclosing wall) it infers that this was a most unusual matter, thus implying that such a feature was common.

Whether or not these ecclesiastical sites are monastic in origin is commonly debated, though whether or not this would have affected their plan is not apparent. Swan suggests that the demarcation between church and monastery may be one of perception, a matter of terminology, imposed retrospectively. A short description of the monastery at Iona by Bede mentions “an abbot in priest’s orders... in accordance with the example of Iona’s first teacher, who was not a bishop but a priest and a monk”. As the founder of Iona was the Irish St Columba, this has been the principal source of the idea that the early Irish Church, as a whole, was peculiarly monastic. When the documentary evidence begins to emerge from c.600 AD onwards, the Irish church is by this time organised on lines that differ markedly from the church in Gaul. The Irish church appears to have developed in a unique fashion and was centred around the great monastic houses, organised in *paruchiae* or confederations of lesser daughter houses under the control of the abbot of the mother church. In contrast to the Continental pattern, the *paruchia* was not a territorial unit with fixed boundaries, but could be widely scattered. The transformation from diocesan to

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106 Ibid.
107 Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, III.4
110 Ibid.
111 Ibid.
monastic is unlikely to have been a radical event, but rather one that took place slowly and less uniformly than has been believed previously.\[112\]

Swan’s analysis of the early ecclesiastical sites revealed a consistency in dimension, layout, structures and features indicating that there was a general pattern (if not a plan) that was almost universally accepted and to which the early monastic sites seem to have conformed.\[113\] He also notes that ecclesiastical sites with this same general plan and associated features and structures have been found outside of Ireland, in areas of Irish Christianity, such as Iona in Scotland and Jurby in the Isle of Man.\[114\] From the evidence that he amassed over a number of years, Swan concluded that there was a populous community of religious foundations, with considerable diversity in origin and form, but unity in function, organisation and plan.\[115\] Swan’s contribution to our knowledge of Early Medieval ecclesiastical settlements is great. The evidence which he provided offered a new perspective on these sites, one which was contrary to the widely-held view that Irish monastic settlement had a haphazard development.\[116\]

### 3.1.5 A Spatial Model

In order to assess the pattern of settlement proposed by Swan at Irish ecclesiastical sites, Griffin, as part of his PhD research, took fifteen of the known early ecclesiastical settlements and from these he created a spatial model of a typical site.\[117\] The following are the sites used by Griffin: Glendalough, Clonmacnoise, Armagh, Kells, Kildare, Nendrum, Duleek, Tuam, Lusk, Cashel, Killala, Finglas, Monasterboice, Lorrha and Downpatrick. Although none of the sites listed above are exactly alike they do possess many similar characteristics and the model was based on those features which were most common.

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\[116\] Swan, D. L., 1994. op.cit., p.55, and 1985,op.cit., p.97, Swan acknowledges that M. Herity’s proposal (1977, 66-8) was contrary to this widely held view.

The sites were assessed according to a number of criteria, which Griffin has laid out in chart form. Griffin judged the sites on the following criteria: church alignment, the shape of the inner and outer enclosures, radiating approach roads, market area, additional crosses, round tower and any additional indications of early ecclesiastical settlement, such as other ecclesiastical enclosures, holy wells, etc.

**FIGURE 3.1.12: GRIFFIN'S SPATIAL MODEL OF EARLY CHRISTIAN SITES**

Griffin's model (Figure 3.1.12) can act as a template of the morphology of a monastic site, permitting easier identification of sites possessing elements of Early Medieval ecclesiastical settlement. The model shows two concentric circular enclosures. The shape of the enclosure actually varies from site to site but usually forms some type of curvilinear pattern: oval, circular, sub-rectangular, or variations of these.

Source: Griffin 2003, Figure 2.17, p.90.
Glendalough, for example, has a circular inner enclosure while the outer enclosure is a horizontal-oval and at Armagh both enclosures are vertical ovals. Nearly all of the settlements have a number of approach roads radiating outwards but it is the eastern approach road which is of primary importance as it is often associated with the later development of a market-place. The entrance of a monastic settlement was often situated on the eastern side of the settlement, indicated by the eastern approach road, and can sometimes be seen to have been marked by a cross. Griffin’s model shows the positions of this and other crosses: note that some of them correspond to cardinal points of the plan - this can also be seen on the illustration in the eighth-century Book of Mulling (Figure 3.1.5, p.36). Almost without exception the sites are associated with a burial ground, invariably situated inside the inner enclosure, as seen earlier in both Swan’s and Norman and St Joseph’s work.

### 3.1.6 Dating

The dating of Early Medieval ecclesiastical sites merits some discussion, as there are a number of problems, notably with the dating of the ecclesiastical fabric and enclosures. There has not been sufficient archaeological excavation at any one site to allow a clear understanding of the sequence of activity on these sites. While the archaeological evidence is indeed quite patchy, aerial and field surveys have provided new evidence for ecclesiastical settlements. Unfortunately, these techniques have little to offer on the subject of dating, being most productive in the discovery of new sites and new or additional features around church sites.

Place-name evidence can in some cases assist in the dating of sites, albeit a general rather than a specific date. Swan has examined place-name elements in Early Medieval ecclesiastical sites and points out that the most common place-name elements are those most strongly associated with the Early Medieval period and which also have a firm ecclesiastical connection, for example the elements *kil(l)*, *desert* and *donough*. He states that none of these terms are likely to have been attributed to new foundations after the twelfth century, suggesting that their origins are earlier, while other common

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elements, such as *dar* (oak) and *lubhar* (yew), indicate a non-Christian or pre-Christian origin.\(^{120}\)

Another element which can help to date a site is the organisation evident in the plans of many of the early monastic settlements. Numerous sites, which to all intents and purposes had ceased to exist by the twelfth century, nevertheless show signs of having followed a universal plan for their layout. This has been taken to suggest that the planning and organisation took place at an early stage in the development of the settlements.\(^{121}\) A level of organisation is clear from the position of the chief remaining structures, such as churches, oratories and round towers, which are not arranged haphazardly and which quite often occupy similar positions on different sites.\(^{122}\)

This organisation and planning can be shown to have taken place, at most sites, before the twelfth century AD, which might help to date some of the sites to the Early Medieval period.\(^{123}\) The example given by Swan is the monastic settlement at Monasterboice: the layout of the site exhibits signs of planning, but as the settlement was burned in 1097 and is never referred to in the records after 1122, Swan surmises that this planning can confidently be said to have taken place well before the end of the eleventh century.\(^{124}\) An example of this organisation in site layout is the concept of the round tower and church having been planned in association with each other: the church is almost always aligned east-west, with the doorway facing west, while the round tower is located to the southwest, west or northwest of the church, with its doorway invariably facing that of the church.\(^{125}\)

The main problem with using features such as these to date ecclesiastical settlements is that there is virtually no agreement among scholars as regards the dating of such structures. A good example is the controversy surrounding the dating of round towers. Work carried out in the 1970s on round towers pointed towards an earlier rather than a later date, but few authorities would now place their origin earlier than the early ninth

\(^{120}\) Swan, D. L., 1983. op.cit., p.274.
\(^{123}\) Ibid.
\(^{124}\) Ibid.
or tenth centuries AD, with most constructed during this period. 126 This is mostly based on documentary evidence: the annals contain 62 references to cloictheach (literally "bell tower"), providing a terminus ante and post quem for the towers, from AD 950 to 1232. 127 Exacerbating the problem of chronology is the continued use of many ecclesiastical sites, whereby the origin and date of some features may now be impossible to determine, while the context of other clearly Early Medieval features may have been lost or changed. 128 Recent work on radiocarbon dating of lime mortars used in the construction of historic buildings has proved useful in the dating of specific features in medieval tower houses. 129 Similar work undertaken by the OPW in the early 1990s focused on national monuments in state care, most of which were ecclesiastical buildings, ranging from round towers to various church buildings over a wide geographical area. 130 The dates seem to show that mortar was first used in Ireland between the seventh and ninth centuries AD, thus indicating that none of the mortared buildings tested belong to the earliest phase of Christianity in Ireland. 131 The specific date ranges for each building was very broad, however, as the earlier radiocarbon counting method used did not produce as tight a date range as modern accelerator mass spectrometers (AMS). 132 The application of the more precise AMS to mortared ecclesiastical buildings may answer some of the questions surrounding the dating of these sites.

Along with round towers, churches and place-names, there are high crosses and, to some extent, ogham stones. High crosses also tend to fit into a particular layout and conform to a fairly strict arrangement, and this can hint at the date of sites. 133 Crosses are found at cardinal points on the perimeter of a number of monastic enclosures, while the eastern cross seems to have some connection with the existence and location


of a market, as mentioned previously. The illustration in the *Book of Mulling* (Figure 3.1.5, p.36) shows the plan of a monastic enclosure with its crosses, each of which was noted by Henry as being positioned at a cardinal point on the periphery of the enclosure. Henry also identified the entrance cross here as being on the south-east boundary, corresponding closely enough to what has been observed at Armagh, Kells, Tuam and Downpatrick. Accepted dating for high crosses would place them in the period from the mid-eighth century AD onwards, which thus represents the latest date for the initial lay-out and organisation of many monastic establishments. The limited evidence from excavations at Armagh and Downpatrick tends to confirm this and even suggests a pre-Christian origin for these settlements, indicating continuity in the development of these sites that may well have spanned almost two millennia.

Ogham stone inscriptions represent the only contemporary body of information available for the first centuries of Christianity in Ireland, though much of the information is secular with only around 12 out of over 300 stones showing any trace of Christian influence. The use of ogham stones for dating is problematic as it has proved difficult to date the stones themselves. It is thought that they were first used in the fourth century and use then continued into the seventh and eighth century AD, but they were at their most popular during the fifth and sixth centuries AD. Those ogham stones, dated to the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries, which can be shown to have Christian associations, might constitute the earliest identifiable evidence of Christianity in Ireland in the archaeological record. Indeed, Edwards believes that these stones may provide the key to the identification of the earliest Christian sites in Ireland.

As very few ecclesiastical enclosures have been surveyed in detail and almost none excavated fully the problem of chronology remains unsolved. Extensive excavations

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138 Swan, D. L., 1985. op.cit., p.100. This is discussed further in the field study of Armagh in Chapter 4 of this thesis.
140 Edwards, N. 1990. op.cit, p.103.
141 Ibid.
were carried out at Nendrum, County Down in 1922-4, which constituted the first excavation of a large ecclesiastical site. The recording of evidence was unsatisfactory compared to modern standards and while Edwards has commented that the results are now almost impossible to interpret, McErlean has shown it possible to gain more information from a re-examination of the evidence. McErlean’s reassessment of the earlier excavation results was undertaken following the excavation of the tidal mills discovered in 1999 at Nendrum and both sets of evidence have now been integrated. The dating horizons provided by the new evidence from the tidal mills have established that the monastery went through a strong building phase in AD619-21 and again towards the end of the eighth century. The integration of the new evidence from the recent excavations with those from the 1920s suggests a probable early seventh century date for the enclosure system. Although Nendrum is a multi-period site, the present dating evidence places the enclosures early in the development of the site if not as a primary feature. The construction of a large tidal mill in AD619 demonstrates that centralised organised planning capable of such a project existed at the monastery at that early date. This allows speculation that the triple enclosure plan laid out around the same horizon, at the beginning of the seventh century. Problematic though it may be, Nendrum is of crucial importance because it remains the only major monastic site to have undergone large-scale excavations which have been subsequently published.

Excavations have also been carried out at Armagh, in the southeastern section of the enclosure which runs round the summit of the hill (between the churchyard wall and Castle Street; See Figure 4.3.5, Volume 2). These excavations undertaken in 1968-9 revealed a curving ditch, 6.4m wide and between 2.28m to 3m deep, between the street and the modern graveyard wall that closely followed the inside curve of the street at this point. Materials and artefacts recovered from this ditch have been dated by radiocarbon dating to before the mid-seventh century, the first phase of the ditch being

placed between the late second and mid-sixth centuries (cal. AD 180-560).\textsuperscript{148} At a later stage, some time between the fifth and eighth centuries (cal. AD 430-770), the ditch was filled in with material from the outer bank and then used as a tip for metal-working debris.\textsuperscript{149} This might indicate expansion of the site beyond the original enclosures by this date.

The archaeological evidence thus suggests a very early date for activity on the site, that is, before AD 180-560, but does not necessarily indicate pre-Christian activity.\textsuperscript{150} Although there is no evidence that the enclosure was used for a ritual purpose, the earliest enclosure ran around the top of the hill and seems to have had an inner ditch and outer bank, in the manner of pagan ritual complexes, such as Navan Fort.\textsuperscript{151} Edwards sees the site as having a gradual evolution over many centuries, with several different phases of enclosure, particularly round the summit of the hill.\textsuperscript{152} There have been a number of small-scale excavations at other ecclesiastical sites. At Downpatrick, for example, the evidence revealed a series of successive occupations dating from prehistoric to Early Medieval periods, showing a continuity which mirrors that at Armagh.\textsuperscript{153}

As regards the general dating of ecclesiastical settlements, Swan contends that although contemporary documentation is virtually non-existent, there is little to doubt the attribution of the majority of these sites to the initial phase of Christianity in Ireland, that is the fifth or early sixth centuries AD.\textsuperscript{154} Both Doherty and Edwards on the other hand attribute the beginning of the use of ecclesiastical enclosures to the seventh century, when the concept of areas of sanctuary was first attested.\textsuperscript{155} In other words, as an ecclesiastical settlement grew and attracted increasing numbers of lay people, monks, clerics, pilgrims and students, organisation and layout became essential. It became increasingly important to protect the sanctity of the holy area at the centre and to prevent the violation of graves, and also to organise the site so that it could cope with the constant influx of people and with its new roles. The role played

\textsuperscript{150} Edwards, N. 1990. op.cit., p.111.
\textsuperscript{151} Edwards, N. 1990. op.cit., p.111
\textsuperscript{152} Ibid.
by sanctuary in the evolution of ecclesiastical sites may have been significant and also appears in both the Welsh and French sources.

3.1.7 SUMMARY

According to Doherty the Irish concept of sanctuary was based on the biblical "city of refuge", that is, he believes the monastic site consisted of a "holy of holies at the core, around which were areas of sanctuary that decreased in importance the further they were from the centre". This idea fits well with the picture as painted by the evidence provided by Norman and St Joseph, Swan and other scholars. The model created by Griffin illustrates this point, by demonstrating how the most important ecclesiastical remains were almost invariably located within the inner enclosure, while the outer enclosure was reserved for less holy activities, such as commerce and craft-work. That this may be so is recorded in one of the earliest historical references to an enclosure or vallum: during his visit to Clonmacnois during the abbacy of Ailither (AD 586-99), St Columba noted that some of the brethren were working in the fields outside the vallum of the monastery. The location of the oratory of St Comcille's House at Kells, outside of the inner enclosure, is one clear exception to this picture.

The enclosure plays a very important part in the recognition of many previously unknown sites. Norman and St Joseph noted that the extent to which earthworks survive at the early monastic centres was surprising. This is apparent in the aerial photographs taken by St Joseph of early Christian sites, which revealed the line of many of the original ecclesiastical enclosures and yielded "abundant new knowledge of their physical remains beyond hope or expectation". This quote indicates that Norman and St Joseph, like many other scholars of the time, had not previously realised just how valuable aerial photography would prove to be in the study of the early ecclesiastical sites. Their chapter on the early Christian sites, though it is now very much out-dated, drew attention to the phenomenon of enclosed ecclesiastical settlements in Ireland and provided much opportunity for further research.

Swan expanded on the theme of enclosed ecclesiastical sites and added considerably to the body of work on this subject. His methodology combined the use of aerial photography with that of field-work and plan-analysis and proved most effective. It revealed, for example, the lines of the original enclosures at Glendalough and Clonmacnois; Norman and St Joseph had dismissed these two famous centres as sites where aerial photography was not profitable, because of the changed ground surface.\footnote{Norman, E. R. and St Joseph, J. K. S. op.cit., p.12.} Swan's most significant discovery, however, was probably that there appears to have been a universal pattern or layout to which nearly all of the monastic sites conformed. This general pattern is illustrated in Griffin's spatial model of ecclesiastical sites.

Although there are undoubtedly many questions that remain to be answered about enclosed ecclesiastical settlements, particularly with regard to dating, the research carried out by recent scholars has gone a long way towards explaining the physical appearance of these sites and some of the reasons behind this. One element of the sites that has thus far been ignored, however, is the change in the nature of the enclosure – when, where and why did the enclosing wall or the bank and or ditch change to a road or pathway? The preservation of the line of the inner and/or outer enclosure in the pattern of roads, streets or field boundaries is often considered the best indicator of enclosure at many Irish urban ecclesiastical sites,\footnote{Swan 1985, op.cit., p.77.} which raises a number of questions. For example, at how many sites are one or both enclosures preserved in the street pattern? At how many sites is the inner enclosure formed by a churchyard wall or by property boundaries rather than a street and if so, is this important? This element may have some significance and may represent a pattern not as yet identified and as such will be examined at each of the field study sites.

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{Norman, E. R. and St Joseph, J. K. S. op.cit., p.12.}
\item \footnote{Swan 1985, op.cit., p.77.}
\end{itemize}}
3.2 IRISH ECCLESIASTICAL INFLUENCE IN BRITAIN AND FRANCE

3.2.1 INTRODUCTION
This section will review early ecclesiastical contacts between Ireland, Britain and France, with a particular focus on the ecclesiastical influences brought to these areas by Irish monks in the centuries following the introduction of Christianity to Ireland.

3.2.2 COMMUNICATION AND TRADE ROUTES
The antiquity of the communication routes between Ireland, Britain and the Continent is supported by both historical and archaeological evidence. Classical writers attest to travel by land, sea and river, from Britain and through France, before the expansion of the Roman Empire into these areas: Diodorus Siculus, a first century BC Greek historian, describes merchants travelling from Cornwall to the mouth of the Rhône, crossing overland from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean coasts of France in the process; Strabo, a Roman geographer writing at the start of the first century AD, noted that vessels sailed to Britain from the estuaries of the Loire and the Garonne rivers in France.¹

Knowledge of the western seaways was greatly increased by Bowen; he brought together the work of earlier archaeologists who had been mapping the locations of archaeological finds and sites in various parts of Britain and Ireland during the first half of the twentieth century.² By bringing together these cartographic representations of archaeological material, Bowen provided a picture of the western seaways during the Early Medieval period and showed the presence of important 'marine highways' that had been in use since the Mesolithic period.³ Bowen's research into the western seaways has shown that the examples cited above in the Classical sources are not unusual and that the use of these and other sea routes stretches back into the prehistoric period.⁴

² For example, Crawford in 1912 was the first to recognise the importance of the western seaways in prehistoric times; cited in Bowen, E. G. 1977. op.cit., p.3.
More recent work by Wooding has refined our understanding of these trade and communication routes. While there is no maritime reason why there would not be a direct seaborne link between Gaul and Ireland prior to the sixth century, there is little evidence for this and "historical and economic" reasons why such links were not previously maintained. The western sealanes throughout the Roman period were most likely operated by the Veneti tribe of Armorica (Brittany), primarily focused on the tin trade, and there is no evidence that they traded into the Irish sea-basin. According to Wooding, Ireland's conversion to Christianity is more likely to have

6 Wooding, J.M., 1996. op. cit., p.34.
come from Gaul via Britain as direct contacts between Ireland and Gaul cannot convincingly be shown to begin before the mid- to late sixth century. Figure 3.2.1 illustrates the various marine and land routes between Ireland, Britain and the Continent as illustrated by Crawford in 1936. It is interesting in the context of this investigation to note that a direct sea-route travels from the southeast coast of Ireland to the west coast of France, from which point it travels by river southwards to Narbonne and Marseilles (this can be seen in Figure 3.2.2), although as Wooding has noted, this is more likely to have been in use in the mid- to late sixth century.

That these sea routes were active during the Early Medieval period is best illustrated by the distribution of imported Mediterranean pottery (Figure 3.2.3), first noted during excavations at a site in Tintagel, Cornwall and analysed by Radford in the 1950s. Although originally interpreted as a monastery by Radford, Tintagel is now more generally accepted as the fortified residence of a local ruler, albeit with a possible religious element. It represents the major site for imported Mediterranean pottery in Britain. Excavations have produced a clear sequence of deposits and small stone-walled structures dating from the Romano-British fourth century AD to the sixth or even seventh century, all with associated Mediterranean pottery. Some of the types of pottery found at the site date to the late fifth and sixth century AD and have also been recovered at St Blaise, near Marseilles, Bordeaux and Toulouse in France, showing definite links with southern Gaul.

Much of our recent information on imported goods in this context comes from Campbell’s detailed examination of the finds of imported glass and pottery in Atlantic Britain and Ireland. It covers their provenance, typology, dating and distribution and has identified two successive trading systems that brought this material to insular

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10 Wooding, J.M., 1996. op. cit., p.34.
sites: the first brought Roman pottery from the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa in the late fifth to mid-sixth centuries AD; the second brought glass vessels and pottery from western France in the later sixth and seventh centuries.\textsuperscript{16} The distribution pattern of E ware pottery has been shown to have a western distribution in Britain, exclusive of the Romanised areas (Figure 3.2.4).\textsuperscript{17}

\textbf{FIGURE 3.2.3: SUGGESTED TRADING ROUTES FOR E WARE (AFTER CAMPBELL 2007)}

\textbf{FIGURE 3.2.4: CONTOURED DISTRIBUTION MAP FOR E WARE (AFTER CAMPBELL 2007)}

This suggests the use of a post-Roman trade route on the western seaways, which allowed the traders to avoid other routes by land and sea that were blocked by the

\textsuperscript{17} Campbell, E., 2007. op. cit., Figure 84, p.134.
Germanic tribal conquests to the east and southeast. The possibility of such a change in the post-Roman period has been identified by Wooding as one of the questions that must be asked regarding the history of transport. The fifth century sources unequivocally depict a time of great change in western Europe, indicating a high level of piracy, political change and Christian missionary activity, though it is possible that old trade and communication routes carried on despite this. Wooding notes, however, that as Roman control over the land declined, the sea might have become even more important as a means of communication simply because it bypassed borders and hostile lands.

Imported Mediterranean pottery has also been recovered from the hill-fort site of Dinas Powys near Cardiff in Wales and occurs on several sites in Ireland, including Lagore in County Meath and Garranes, Ballycatteen and Garryduff in County Cork. The patterns of distribution are markedly coastal overall but the Irish Early Historic sites with imported wares are the most numerous of all the Atlantic regions. Some of these sites are not coastal, as unlike other western Atlantic areas, the best arable land in Ireland is more widespread. Similar material has been found at the monasteries at Clonmacnois, Inishcealtra and Armagh in Ireland and at Dinas Emrys, a hill-fort in Caernarvonshire in northwest Wales.

Campbell has proposed that there is no direct relationship between early religious sites and imported pottery in southwestern Britain, but that the major religious sites appear often to be situated close to possible major secular settlements; a similar picture might be suggested by the Irish and Welsh distribution pattern. Campbell’s analysis of Continental and Mediterranean imports has allowed the construction of a model of trade and redistribution in the Atlantic West: merchants from western France undertook trading voyages directed towards royal sites, the centres of power in the

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20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
23 There are almost 50 known sites, including Dalkey Island, Clogher, Garryduff, Garranes, Lagore and Dunnyneil Island; Campbell, E., 2007. op.cit. pp.109.
26 Such as Glastonbury Tor and Abbey, Dinas Powys and Llandough, Padstow and Padstow Cove; Campbell, E., 2007. op.cit. p.122.
Atlantic areas; trade took place at or near these centres and luxury goods were then kept by the rulers but also redistributed as gifts to lesser aristocrats or (it could be extrapolated) to important monastic foundations. The evidence, taken as a whole, paints a picture of trade and contact between secular and ecclesiastical sites in Ireland, Wales and southern France and the use of sea routes along the Irish Sea and either directly southwards to France or crossing via Britain during the Early Medieval period.

3.2.3 THE CONVERSION OF THE IRISH TO CHRISTIANITY

While Ireland was not conquered by the Romans, the links existing between Britain and Ireland since the prehistoric period brought the Irish into the cultural province of the Roman Empire. This was most likely achieved through continued trade and commerce (including slave raids by the Irish), though the relative paucity of Roman finds in Ireland does not point to a substantial level of trading throughout the country. There has been much discussion -- and controversy -- in the past regarding the possibility that the archaeological monument at Drumanagh in North County Dublin constitutes a Roman trading post or fort and that it indicates Roman military activity in Ireland. The site is as yet unexcavated though there have been stray finds of Roman material here, including Samian ware and coinage dating to the first and second centuries AD. There is, however, no reason to believe that the promontory fort is anything other than a native Iron Age construction, providing a coastal fort and base for Irish traders. Similar instances of Roman finds have occurred at Dalkey Island on the south side of Dublin Bay and Colp, near the mouth of the River Boyne. Charles-Edwards presents a plausible argument for *.emporia* or "gateway communities" on the central span of the east coast, that allowed Roman merchants

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24 Patrick tells that he was only one of many thousands who were carried off in Irish raids on Britain. Ó Cróinin, D., 1998, op. cit., p.20.  
28 Mytum, H., 1981. 'Ireland and Rome: the maritime frontier', in King, A. and Henig, M. (eds) *The Roman West in the third century: contributions from archaeology and history*, pp.445-9; p.445. Though Mytum was writing almost thirty years ago, the situation is little changed, with few Roman finds and no confirmed Roman sites uncovered in Ireland in the interim.  
30 An article that appeared in the *Sunday Times* newspaper in January 21, 1996 -- and which sparked much of this discussion -- made the controversial claim that Ireland had been subject to a military invasion by the Romans.  
32 Raftery, B., 1996. 'Drumanagh and Roman Ireland', in *Archaeology Ireland*, Vol. 10, Issue No.1, pp.17-19. This article was written as a rebuttal to the Sunday Times article cited above.  
access to Ireland’s resources through trading sites defined by political agreement, such as those at Drumanagh, Dalkey Island and Colp.\textsuperscript{34}

By the time of the late Empire, it appears that control of the Irish Sea was coming under the control of the Irish and the emergence of Irish sea-power is attested both archaeologically and in documentary sources. The Roman government in Britain was investing heavily in coastal defences at this time, on the east coast (against the Saxons) and to the west (against the Irish).\textsuperscript{35} Ammanius, a contemporary, records that in AD360 a treaty was broken, resulting in devastation in areas adjacent to the frontier of Britain and threats to the provinces themselves by the Scotti and Picti (i.e. the Irish).\textsuperscript{36} This suggests that there had been some kind of peace treaty, which in turn implies a Roman involvement in diplomatic contact with the Irish.\textsuperscript{37}

It was through such contact with the Roman world that both Christianity and literacy were brought into Ireland, though knowledge of writing probably preceded the introduction of Christianity.\textsuperscript{38} By the late fourth century AD, when the power of the Roman Empire was on the wane, Irish incursions had been made into Wales, Cornwall, Scotland and the Isle of Man.\textsuperscript{39} These links were intensified and widened by the activities of the early Christian proselytisers who came to Ireland, Palladius from Gaul and Patrick from Britain.\textsuperscript{40} The contact and communication between Britain and Gaul that existed during the Roman period had never been completely severed, despite the turmoil of the fifth and sixth centuries AD.\textsuperscript{41} The early British Church traditions that were brought to Ireland owed much to the Church in Gaul, with which it maintained a strong connection.\textsuperscript{42} To name but one example, the abbot of Lérins monastery in Provence in 433 AD, Faustus, is thought to have been British.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{34} Charles-Edwards, T.M., 2000, op. cit., p.156.  
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.  
St Patrick, a Briton, arrived in Ireland as a captive, reputedly one of many thousands carried off in Irish raids on Britain.\(^4^4\) He is traditionally acknowledged as being wholly responsible for the conversion of the pagan Irish to Christianity, though it is certainly not the case that Ireland would have remained untouched by Christian influences until St Patrick’s arrival. There are no known dates associated with Patrick, though his arrival is generally agreed to post-date Palladius’s in 431AD. It is not known precisely how much later, though scholars postulate the second half of the fifth century as a best guess.\(^4^5\) St Patrick himself attests to the fact that there were Christians in Ireland before he arrived on his mission; in his *Confession* he speaks expressly of districts of Ireland in which there had been no-one before him to baptise, confirm or ordain, insisting that he was the first to take Christianity “even to remote parts, where no one lived any further”.\(^4^6\)

That this is so is attested by the fact that there was a mission in the early fifth century that preceded Patrick’s and was the first known mission to a country beyond the frontier of the western Roman Empire.\(^4^7\) There had been some attempt at conversion earlier in the fifth century AD, when a Bishop Palladius of Auxerre was sent by Pope Celestine from Gaul to the small colonies of Christians in the southeast of Ireland.\(^4^8\) Prosper of Aquitaine’s *Chronicle* records a contemporary account of the mission describing that “To the Irish [*Scotti*] believing in Christ, Palladius, having been ordained by Pope Celestine, is sent as first bishop”.\(^4^9\) Palladius represented one of the established elite of the Gallic church and that Celestine sent him supposes that there were Christian communities of some importance or of significant number in Ireland.\(^5^0\) Pope Celestine had decreed that no bishop was to be sent to a community unwillingly and it is likely that a group of Irish Christians had signified their willingness to

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\(^4^3\) Doble, G.H. op.cit., p.3.
receive a bishop to their British contacts, perhaps around the time of Germanus' expedition to Britain.\footnote{Charles-Edwards, T.M., 2000, \textit{op. cit.}, p.205.}

3.2.4 EARLY ECCLESIASTICAL CONTACTS WITH FRANCE

There was considerable turmoil in Western Europe in the fifth century AD, with the break-down of the Roman Empire facilitating incursions by Germanic tribes into both Britain and Gaul. The modern region of Brittany in northern France was colonised by Romano-British migrants – hence its name – who fled the Anglo-Saxon invasions of eastern and southeastern Britain. Other Germanic tribes occupied the remainder of Gaul, with the Franks in the north, Visigoths in the south and the Burgundians in the east.\footnote{This is described in further detail in Section 3.4 and in the individual historical backgrounds to the French field studies in Chapter 4.} The Romans had not yet relinquished the provinces but by the mid-fifth century AD Roman culture and Roman order survived chiefly in the south, where it was associated with the bishops – new representatives and power brokers of the old Roman order.\footnote{Ibid.}

Patrick reputedly travelled through parts of Europe before he returned to Ireland on his Christian mission. A \textit{dictum} attributed to him states:

"I have had the fear of God as the guide of my journey through the Gauls and Italy, and also in the isles which are in the Tyrrhenian Sea".\footnote{In the fifth century AD the Gulf of Genoa and even part of the Mediterranean on the coast of Provence was regarded as being part of the Tyrrhenian Sea. It is now confined to a much smaller area: Gougaud, \textit{L.}, \textit{op.cit.}, p.36.}

In his \textit{Confession} he expresses a desire to return to Gaul "to visit my brethren and to behold the faces of the saints of my Lord".\footnote{Gougaud, \textit{L.}, \textit{op.cit.}, p.36.} While on his travels Patrick is said to have visited a number of islets in the Tyrrhenian Sea such as Caparia, Gorgona, Palmaria, Gallinaria (the Tyrrhenian Sea is part of the Mediterranean off the west coast of Italy). It has been traditionally held that Patrick stayed at the monastery of Lérins and at Auxerre in France, possibly for as long as fifteen years, where he trained (probably under Amator and Germanus, both bishops).\footnote{Gougaud, \textit{L.}, \textit{op.cit.}, p.37.} De Paor considers a sojourn at Lérins to be doubtful, however, though he acknowledges that the tradition arose
from close contacts with the monastery there.\textsuperscript{57} It is equally uncertain whether or not the description of Patrick’s travels is a true account nor if it was indeed written by him. Whether by him or another writer, it presumably reflects known contacts between Ireland and the Continent at that time. Ó Cróinin notes the significance of Patrick’s writings (the \textit{Confession} and \textit{Letters}) for the modern historian but cautions that they cannot be entirely relied upon, the principal difficulty being that the text was heavily tampered with by Armagh propagandists.\textsuperscript{58}

The influential island monastery of Lérins, located off the French coast near Cannes, supplied bishops, most of them aristocratic, to the principal cities in southern France (Cf. Section 3.4.2 below). It acted as a sort of national academy and centre of administration for the Church in Gaul and is likely to have had a role in the initial organising of the Church in Ireland.\textsuperscript{59} Segetius, who attended the Council of Orange in Vienne in 441 AD, was a priest in Carpentras and may be the Segitius mentioned in Muirchú’s memoir of St Patrick.\textsuperscript{60} A deacon, Auxilius, is also mentioned by Muirchú in the same context – he was present at both the Council of Orange in 441 AD and the Council of Vaison in 442 AD. This is probably the same Auxilius that the Annals record was sent with bishops Secundinus and Iserninus to help St Patrick in 439 AD. Though the real date is more likely to have been later and the reference more appropriately Palladius than Patrick, this points to a clear Gallic involvement in the early Irish Church.\textsuperscript{61} The Gallic influence can be seen in the inclusion of the \textit{Life} of St Martin (a fourth century French monk) in the Book of Armagh; the saint’s cult clearly enjoyed some popularity in Ireland in the Early Medieval period (see Sections 3.2.6 and 3.4.2).\textsuperscript{62}

3.2.5 IRISH MONKS IN WALES

The Pictish tribes in Scotland were first introduced to Christianity by Ninnian, an early fifth century AD monk who established a monastery at Whitehorn (\textit{Candida}

\textsuperscript{59} De Paor, L. 1997. op.cit., p.66.
\textsuperscript{60} De Paor, L. 1997. op.cit., p.70.
\textsuperscript{61} There is general agreement among scholars on this point: see De Paor, L. 1997. op.cit., p.70; Charles-Edwards, T.M., 2000, op. cit., p.239; Ó Cróinin, D., 1998, op. cit., p.22.
\textsuperscript{62} Bowen, 1977, op.cit., p.129.
Casa), off the coast of Galloway. Christianity had been introduced to Wales at an earlier date, whilst it was still part of the Roman Empire and there is evidence for continued contact with the Church in Gaul in the late fifth and early sixth centuries AD prior to the arrival of the Irish missionaries. Significantly, the most famous of the monastic founders from the northern half of Ireland received their training at Whitehorn (Enda of Aran, Tigernach of Clones, Finnian of Moville and Coirpe of Coleraine) and many of the early monks in southern Ireland were trained in Welsh monasteries, especially by Illtud at Caldey Island (Finnian of Clonard, Aidan of Ferns, Senan of Scattery Island and Brendan of Clonfert), in the late fifth and early sixth centuries AD. Evidence for British influence in and contact with the early Irish church abounds: Columbanus wrote to Pope Gregory c.600AD about the sixth-century British writer Gildas, telling that Finnian (probably of Clonard) had written to Gildas about the problem of wandering monks and Gildas had sent a “most elegant reply”.

During the sixth century AD there was a constant stream of emigrants leaving Ireland for Britain and the Continent. These emigrants were mostly monks and they called themselves peregrini, essentially missionaries intent on spreading the Word, though their primary motivation was to seek out more penitential surroundings far from home. According to Ó Fiaich, the activities of these missionaries constitute “one of the most important religious and cultural phenomena on the European mainland during the early middle ages”. The earliest stages of these wanderings saw the settlement of St Columba (Colmcille) on Iona in Scotland in 563 AD. Columba chose to settle with the Dál Riata, an established Irish colony in western Scotland, to convert the “northern Picts”; Ninian is said to have converted the southern Picts on an earlier mission. Other Irish monks followed St Columba to Scotland, including Finnian of Moville, Brendan of Clonfert and Findbarr of Cork.

64 Arnold, C. J. and Davies, J. L. 2000. Roman and Early Medieval Wales, p.180. This is discussed in more detail in Section 3.1.1.
65 Walsh, J. R. and Bradley, T. op.cit., pp.53-54.
68 Ibid., p.101.
Irish missionaries continued southwards where they made a significant contribution to the expansion of Christianity in the pagan kingdoms of the Saxons, the Angles and the Jutes (the later Anglo-Saxon Britain). The contacts fostered during these missions continued into the seventh century and beyond. The letters of the Anglo-Saxon abbot Aldhelm at Malmesbury are the source of much of our information regarding scholarly contacts between Ireland and southern England (and elsewhere) in the seventh century AD: Aldhelm studied under an Irish teacher at Malmesbury, but was also in contact with Irish scholars at home (i.e. Wessex), Canterbury, Northumbria, northeastern Gaul and probably Ireland itself.

It is generally accepted that migrations from northeastern Ireland to western Scotland in the fourth and fifth centuries AD were paralleled by similar movements from the southeast of Ireland to Wales and to the Devon-Cornwall peninsula. In Wales, as in Scotland, it is likely that the first Irish missionaries settled in areas already colonised by the Irish. In fact it has been argued that the kinship ties between the Irish in Britain and the Irish in Ireland are important for their general role in the transmission of techniques and ideas and for the assistance they presumably gave to the process of conversion.

Irish secular settlement in Wales during the fourth and fifth centuries AD is most marked in the northwest and southwest of the country, presumably the result of sustained raids by the Irish throughout this period. These settlements were well established by the sixth century in areas both within and outside of Roman territory: Argyll, Man, Gwynedd in northwest Wales, Dyfed in southwest Wales, Brycheiniog in central southern Wales, in the west of Glamorgan in southern Wales and in southwest Britain.

Irish ogham stones are predominantly found in these locations and represent the most significant archaeological evidence for the Irish in Wales in the Early Medieval

That being said, examples are found in southwest Wales, where an Irish presence in the post-roman period is also attested by place-name evidence. Thomas notes that the relative accessibility of the whole south Wales coastal plain must have resulted in Irish settlement, albeit less dense, in this area. He cites the place-name of the county of Brecknockshire, a former kingdom named Brecon, traditionally named for an Irish king Brychan (Brocgagnus). Irish personal names appear in the Dyfed genealogy, in a context which suggests not just the presence of Irish here but also a measure of political control over these lands in the fifth century AD.

Wales was on the route for Irish monks travelling to the Continent and their presence is attested in literary sources, which record Irish monks passing through the monastery of Caldy Island and through the Welsh king Merfyn’s court in Gwynedd. Contacts are also implied by the Irish material at St David’s and Llanbadarn in south Wales, by the influence of Irish decorative styles on ninth and tenth century AD crosses in west Wales and by the spread of some Irish saints’ cults. Connections between Irish and Welsh monasteries are attested in the Lives of the saints. The Life of the Welsh saint Cadoc, for instance, tells that Cadoc was trained by an Irish monk, Tatheus (Tathai), at Caerwent in Gwent. It also describes how Cadoc left Wales for Ireland in search of further instruction, travelling to Lismore in County Waterford to study under St Mochuta (Carthach). Cadoc reputedly founded a monastery by the River Liffey before returning to Wales with three Irish disciples.

3.2.6 IRISH MONKS IN FRANCE

In the late sixth century, monastic and missionary migrations to the Continent began in earnest, many of whom first crossed to Britain and then proceeded to one of the ports there. The evidence for direct-trading contacts between Ireland and the Continent would suggest that the peregrini also travelled directly there using the
western seaways. St Columbanus stands out from the large number of monks who left Ireland, though he was by no means the first. The Irish saints in Brittany are numerous (e.g. Briac, Fiac, Maudez, Ninnoc and Ronán) and some have their origins in the fifth century AD.

St Columbanus' success is characterised by his extraordinary impact on the young Frankish nobles, many of whom became patrons of monasteries which followed the Rule of Columbanus. The date of his arrival in Gaul was traditionally held to be AD575, based on an erroneous reference in the Life by Jonas. In fact, Columbanus left Ireland for Gaul sometime around AD 590/591, where he was to travel via Brittany to the Merovingian kingdom of Burgundy. Columbanus and his disciples managed to secure the support of the Merovingian Frankish kings and by doing so would instigate a fundamental change in Frankish Christianity. They settled initially at Annegray, in the Vosges mountains, before founding a second monastery at the Roman ruins at Luxeuil. When political wrangling forced him from Burgundy in 612 AD, Columbanus went to Italy where the Lombardian king Agilulf gave him a ruined church dedicated to St Peter at Bobbio in the Appenines; this was to become an important Columbanian monastery. The significance of Columbanus' mission lies not only in his influence on the Frankish kingdoms but also in the writings that survive to describe it, not least of which are his letters to popes and Frankish bishops. As noted by Charles-Edwards, Columbanus' own letters and the Life written by his near contemporary Jonas "constitute the only body of evidence about

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88 E ware importation is one example cited by Wooding; it continued throughout the seventh century and is indicative of continued direct trade links. Wooding, J. M., 2002. 'Trade as a factor in the transmission of texts between Ireland and the Continent in the sixth and seventh centuries', in Proceedings of the fifth international colloquium on Ireland and Europe in the early Middle Ages held under the joint auspices of Konstanz University and University College Dublin, Ni Chathain, P. and Richter, M. (eds), p.26.
89 Ibid.
91 This was stated as fact by earlier scholars, such as Gougaud and Février; cf. Gougaud, L., op.cit., pp.140-141 and Février, P. A., 1988. 'Religiosité traditionnelle et christianisation', in Le Goff, J. and Rémond, R. (eds), Histoire de la France Religieuse, p.134.
93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid.
Irish monasticism before the late seventh century that is both varied in content and considerable in extent".97

**Figure 3.2.5: Irish Monastic Foundations or Settlements in Europe (Fifth to Eighth Centuries AD)**


Figure 3.2.5 illustrates the extensive network of Irish monastic foundations and settlements in Europe from the fifth to the eighth century AD and the routes connecting these areas. Significantly, one of the routes travels directly from Ireland to the southwest coast of France and then inland to Narbonne (possibly not until the sixth century as suggested by Wooding),98 where it could connect with an important route between Italy, France and Spain. This route, the *Via Domitia* (Domitian's Way or Road), ran from the Rhône valley (in Provence) via Narbonne into Spain and was the first Roman road to be constructed in Gaul, following the course of the prehistoric

98 Wooding, J.M., 1996. op. cit., p.34.
route utilised by Greek traders.\textsuperscript{99} Thus, the Irish monastery at Narbonne was established at the junction of two principal communication and trade routes that pass through the areas in which the field study sites are located: Languedoc and Provence.

Monasticism in sixth century Gaul was remarkably diverse and encompassed the varied rules of Saint Martin and of the Rhone Valley.\textsuperscript{100} Saint Eligius of Noyon is recorded as saying that before the foundation of Luxeuil by Columbanus, monasticism in Gaul was tired and corrupt.\textsuperscript{101} Gregory of Tours, however, who promoted the cult of Saint Martin to a national level, must also have helped in the revival of Gallic monasticism.\textsuperscript{102} Christianity in pre-seventh century AD Gaul, in contrast with Christian Ireland, was a predominantly urban phenomenon which, for centuries, hardly penetrated rural areas, where the inhabitants remained staunchly pagan.\textsuperscript{103} It was the Carolingian Church in the late eighth and early ninth centuries AD which made a serious attempt to bring Christianity to the rural population, but Columbanus' foundations in the early seventh century started this process.\textsuperscript{104}

During the seventh century AD, after the founding of Luxeuil by Columbanus, monasteries were more frequently situated in rural areas.\textsuperscript{105} Columbanus brought a different style of Christianity to Gaul. As Wallace-Hadrill has noted, the piety of the Gallic church was 'centred upon relics and the patronage of local holy men, and the piety of Columbanus, focused upon God and the relationship of God with man'.\textsuperscript{106} The structure of the Merovingian Church took over directly from its Gallo-Roman predecessor.\textsuperscript{107} Most of the early Gallic monasteries were in southern and central Gaul, that is, in the more urbanised and Romanised areas.\textsuperscript{108} The move towards rural monasteries and away from urban sites also involved a move towards the more Frankicised and less urbanised north.\textsuperscript{109} The dominant trend by the end of the sixth

\textsuperscript{100} Albret, D. \textit{et al.} op.cit., p.35.
\textsuperscript{101} James, E., 1982a. \textit{The Origins of France from Clovis to the Capetians}, p.110.
\textsuperscript{102} Wallace-Hadrill, J. M., 1983. \textit{The Frankish Church}, p.56.
\textsuperscript{103} James, E., 1982a. op.cit., p.53.
\textsuperscript{104} James, E., 1982a. op.cit., p.98.
\textsuperscript{105} James, E., 1982a. op.cit., p.110.
\textsuperscript{106} Wallace-Hadrill, J. M., op.cit., p.63.
\textsuperscript{109} James, E., 1982a. op.cit., p.110.
and into the seventh century AD was a kind of estate-based monastery, founded by the Frankish aristocrats of the northeast on their own private estates.\textsuperscript{110}

An important aspect of Columbanus' monasticism was its independence from the bishop.\textsuperscript{111} The Irish monastic tradition had developed in a non-urban and non-Roman society and offered the Franks a model of a rural monastery which was effectively outside the jurisdiction of the bishops.\textsuperscript{112} The position of bishops, and of the diocesan church, in the Frankish kingdom was one of absolute authority over the monasteries.\textsuperscript{113} At the first Frankish Council held in AD 511, Canon 19 stated that:

> "By reason of religious humility, abbots are to remain under the authority of bishops and should they do anything contrary to their rule, they are to be corrected by the bishop".\textsuperscript{114}

An episcopacy offered a position of power, which was invested with a spiritual authority as well as holding status as an elected office.\textsuperscript{115} Frankish bishops sought the monopoly of religious and political authority.\textsuperscript{116} According to Gregory of Tours, King Chilperic (AD 561-84) was perpetually heard to remark:

> "My treasury is always empty. All the royal wealth has fallen into the hands of the Church. There is no one with any power left except the bishops. No one respects me as king: all respect has passed to the bishops in their cities".\textsuperscript{117}

Columbanus founded and organised his monasteries in the Irish tradition and without reference to the bishop and the independence of these monasteries was confirmed and protected by royal command.\textsuperscript{118}

Columbanus made a series of important acquaintances and allies among the Frankish royalty and aristocracy.\textsuperscript{119} Many of these nobles became founders and patrons of monasteries which followed the Rule of Columbanus.\textsuperscript{120} Rather than having a bishop

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[111] James, E., 1982. op.cit., p.111.
\item[112] James, E., 1988. op.cit., p.131.
\item[114] Geary, P. J., op.cit., p.147.
\item[115] James, E., 1982a. op.cit., p.50.
\item[116] Geary, P. J. op.cit., p.148.
\item[117] Gregory of Tours, \textit{History of the Franks}, VI. 46.
\item[118] James, E., 1982a. op.cit., p.111.
\item[120] James, E., 1982a. op.cit., p.111.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
in charge of property which had been donated to the church, Frankish aristocrats could treat these foundations as ‘family monasteries’.\textsuperscript{121} Founding a monastery was the means by which an aristocratic family could increase its prestige and influence, as well as providing a reservoir of wealth and land which, because it belonged to the church, could not be alienated or fragmented.\textsuperscript{122} The ‘family monastery’ could also be used as a place where surplus children could be sent and relations could be given positions of power, such as that of abbot or abbess.\textsuperscript{123} It also provided the founders with a spiritual satisfaction and imbued them with a sense of piety.\textsuperscript{124}

Columbanus went to the north of Gaul after conflict with Queen Brunhildis.\textsuperscript{125} The saint had become an object of veneration and his influence in the north led to numerous foundations being established by Frankish nobles.\textsuperscript{126} Chagnoald, the future bishop of Laon, for example, received Columbanus at his father’s house and his sister subsequently founded the abbey at Farmoutier.\textsuperscript{127} Similarly Adon and Dadon, sons of Authaire, founded abbeys at Jouarre and Rebais and both followed the Rule of Columbanus.\textsuperscript{128} These young nobles, many of whom became bishops, were profoundly affected by Columbanus and worked at introducing Columbanian monasticism into their dioceses.\textsuperscript{129} From around AD 630-40, the Benedictine Rule gradually took over, replacing the Rule of Columbanus. At Solignac, for example, Walbert (the second successor of Columbanus as abbot at Luxeuil, AD 625-65) introduced Benedictine Rule and usages.

Irish influence continued throughout the seventh century despite the introduction of the Benedictine Rule. The number and quality of the manuscripts which can be attributed to the scriptorium at Luxeuil, for example, indicate that the monastery still played an important part in the religious life of the seventh century AD.\textsuperscript{130} Although Columbanus died at his monastery in Bobbio, Italy, the Frankish Church had absorbed

\begin{footnotes}
\item[121] James, E. 1988. op.cit., p.130.
\item[122] James, E. 1982a. op.cit., p.111.
\item[123] James, E. 1988. op.cit., p.131.
\item[124] Ibid.
\item[125] Gougaud, L., op.cit., p.141.
\item[126] Ibid.
\item[127] Ibid.
\item[128] Ibid.
\item[130] Février, P. A. 1988. op.cit, p.137.
\end{footnotes}
much of his traditions and teachings. There were more such foundations in later years; even after Columbanus' death, Wandrille founded Fontenelle around AD 649, Philibert founded Jumièges around AD 654 and Amand founded Elnone during the reign of Dagobert. The list of continental monasteries with Irish associations is a long one, but includes, in France, monasteries at Nantes, Angers and Tours in central France and Bordeaux and Narbonne in the south (see Figure 3.2.2). Work had continued after his death with the foundation of more monasteries by his non-Irish disciples – the Franks from northern Gaul and the Burgundians in the more 'Roman' valley of the Rhône (i.e. Provence). The earliest form taken by the monasteries founded in France by Irish monks is unknown; any monastery in Gaul which was of any importance underwent a continual process of restoration and rebuilding over the centuries (this is discussed in further detail in Section 3.4.3).

3.2.7 SUMMARY

The fact that communication and travel by monks between Ireland, Britain and the Continent was commonplace is best illustrated in the Life of St Samson of Dol. Samson was originally a Welsh saint, but is also claimed by tradition in Cornwall and Brittany where he established monasteries during his travels. The Life was written in the sixth century not long after the saint's death and records that Samson was visited at his monastery in Wales (on Caldey Island) by some Irish monks who were returning from Rome. Samson was then invited to go to Ireland with them, where he remained for a short time as abbot of a monastery. It is clear from this example that contact between the Early Medieval Church in Ireland, Britain and the Continent was well-established by this time. It is equally obvious that the oft-told tale of Irish monks travelling to the Continent in the seventh century AD represents only one facet of the contact between these areas – the ecclesiastical contact began at an earlier date and was a two-way movement.

132 Ibid.
137 Ibid.
138 Ibid.
3.3 Welsh Ecclesiastical Sites in the Early Medieval Period

3.3.1 Introduction

It is probably the case that Christianity first arrived in Britain in the first or second century AD, as it did in the rest of the Roman provinces. Bede, for example, describes that in 156 AD "while the holy Eleutherus ruled the Roman Church, Lucius, a British king, sent him a letter, asking to be made a Christian by his direction. This pious request was quickly granted, and the Britons received the Faith and held it peacefully in all its purity and fullness until the time of the Emperor Diocletian". While this story is a clear embellishment, designed to reflect well on the Medieval church in England, it serves to illustrate that incursions were made by the Christians in the provinces prior to the conversion of Constantine.

Wales formed part of the Roman province of Britannia, but it was the lowland southeastern area that was especially Romanised. The road network, forts, towns and villae allowed both administrative and military control, as well as exploitation of the mineral resources and fertile agricultural land. The major foci atVenta Silurum (Caerwent) and Moridunum (Carmarthen) were both in the lowland area, the former in the coastal plain to the west and the latter in a major river valley to the east. As in other parts of the Empire, the incipient Christian religion was first housed in private chapels, often simply a converted room in a town-house or villa. Those Roman garrisons that were still in Wales in the second century AD (albeit not many) appear to have been withdrawn by the late fourth century and formal contacts between the central Roman government with the provincial administration of Britain appear to have ended by the start of the fifth century AD. The extent of Christianity's survival and evolution in the post-Roman period is largely unknown, but there is evidence that its growth (particularly in the southeast of Wales) was encouraged by continued

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1 Bede, Ecclesiastical History of the English People, I.4.
2 There is a concentration of high status villa sites (comprising residence and farm buildings) in south Wales, but principally in the southeast, probably a mark of agricultural productivity as well as social attitudes and control of land. Not all were constructed and occupied by Romans; some excavated sites show evidence of continuity from a pre-Roman farm; Arnold, C. J. and Davies, J. L., 2000. Roman and Early Medieval Wales, pp. 65 & 82.
4 Davies, W., 1982, Wales in the Early Middle Ages, p.2.
contact with southern Gaul in the late fifth and sixth centuries AD. The evidence also suggests that by the middle of the sixth century AD the British were largely Christian.

Wales remained outside of the zone colonised by the Germanic tribes and so free from Anglo-Saxon influences, which were initially non-Christian. An essentially east / west division ran along the north/south boundary formed by Offa’s Dyke until the eighth century AD when the western fringes of England were also conquered. The Welsh church, however, would remain separate from the English church until the arrival of the Normans in the eleventh century AD (Brook’s study outlined below is interesting from this perspective). This meant that Christianity continued to grow, with decidedly less input from the Roman church than occurred on the Continent. Edwards and Lane have commented that the role of the early church in Wales in the development of Christianity in Britain and Ireland requires investigation. The extent of the influence of the Irish Church in Wales during the Early Medieval period is commonly referenced from the Medieval Vitae onwards. There has been some research, however, showing that early Christian influences from South Wales extended to Cornwall, Brittany and Ireland (witness the story of St Patrick). These earlier and less well attested ventures are frequently overshadowed by the Irish monastic foundations after the sixth century AD.

Settlement and settlement patterns in the immediate post-Roman period are not well understood. Iron Age hill-forts in Wales were occupied during the Roman period, but whether or not this represents a continuity of occupation from the first millennium BC or a reoccupation after a period of abandonment is not clear. The issue is not helped

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5 The sources suggest that there was contact between the Christians in Caerwent and Caerleon and those in Gaul and the Mediterranean in the late Roman period, as well as with the Irish who had settled in West Wales during the Roman period. Archaeological evidence for this continued contact into the post-Roman period survives in the earliest inscribed Christian monuments and imported ceramics and glass. Arnold, C. J. and Davies, J. L. op.cit., p.180.
6 The is supported by the contemporary writings of the sixth century British cleric Gildas; Brook, D., 1992. ‘The Early Christian Church East and West of Offa’s Dyke’ in Edwards, N. and Lane, A. (eds), The Early Church in Wales and the West: recent work in early Christian archaeology, history and place names, p.77.
7 Brook, D. op.cit., p.77
8 Edwards, N. and Lane, A. op.cit., p.3
10 Arnold, C. J. and Davies, J. L. op.cit., p.87.
by the general lack of agreement among scholars over the role of the hill-fort during the Iron Age and the difficulties with the archaeological evidence. The evidence does suggest that at least some of the larger sites were permanent settlements, with streets, communal defences and densely packed buildings, and that these sites acted as centres for trade, commerce, religion and administration. Settlement during the Roman period had provided a number of small towns as well as two cities, Caerwent and Carmarthen, but most activity at these sites appears to have ceased by the beginning of the fifth century AD (although it did continue in some form at some of these sites, they were greatly reduced in size and had lost their urban functions).

The turmoil and subsequent collapse of the Roman Empire in the late third and fourth century AD resulted in the withdrawal of the colonial power and all that went with it. This affected the economy, defence and administration in the towns and in the countryside, where many of the villae were abandoned. Early Medieval Wales was a primarily non-urban landscape and Davies has argued that the larger monasteries may have performed some proto-urban function, in much the same way as they appear to have done in Ireland. The absence of markets and of local trade that was apparent in Early Medieval Wales may have resulted in the minimal trend towards urbanisation, in contrast to the situation found in England and Europe. Thus it is possible that in the absence of other urban foci in their vicinity, the large monasteries provided the context for nucleation of people, commerce and industry.

As Christianity continued to flourish there was a greater need for religious institutions, which in turn led to the development of a system of bishops with territorial dioceses in post-Roman Wales. Davies describes the available documentary evidence as 'inadequate for the writing of a history of Early Medieval Wales', with very little written material surviving from the pre-Conquest period and

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11 Hill-forts were often considered as defensive sites, only occupied in times of emergency but evidence from archaeological excavations and aerial surveys have shown large numbers of presumably contemporary farmsteads in the landscape surrounding hill-forts. Evidence from southern Britain shows that dense settlement and internal divisions within hillforts was widespread; Aston, M and Bond, 1987. The Landscape of Towns, pp.35-36.
12 Arnold, C. J. and Davies, J. L. op.cit., pp.57 & 75-76.
13 Davies, W., 1982, op.cit., p.58.
14 Ibid.
15 Arnold, C. J. and Davies, J. L. op.cit., p.180
even that is often corrupt and fragmentary.\textsuperscript{16} That being said, a detailed analysis of the Llandaff Charters allowed Davies to extract some significant insights into the church in Wales prior to the twelfth century AD, when the charters were inserted into the Book of Llandaff (\textit{Liber Landavensis}).\textsuperscript{17} There are, for example, many hints within the Llandaff Charters and other available evidence that the situation of the Church in pre-Conquest Wales was a unique one. It is not strictly comparable to either the Irish or the English pattern, that is, it was neither purely monastic as in Ireland, nor did it take on the characteristics of the episcopal Roman Church, as in England and the Continent.\textsuperscript{18}

Based on the evidence from the charters, Davies has suggested that the early Church in Wales may have had both a species of monastic federation (similar to the Irish \textit{parochiae}\textsuperscript{19}) and of bishoprics of the Roman diocesan type found in England.\textsuperscript{20} The charters indicate that bishops had a clearly defined administrative function and authority in the Church in Wales, but abbots had discretion and influence over their communities and dependants.\textsuperscript{21} Some abbots had more power than others and some monasteries were clearly more prominent, but Davies proposes that this prominence was rooted in the powers which it exerted over its lesser monasteries and the number of such communities so dependent on it.\textsuperscript{22} Difficulties with the charters, for example a lack of consistency in terminology describing the monasteries and churches, render it difficult to determine how truly 'monastic' these communities were.\textsuperscript{23} As is true of the early monasteries in France (see Section 3.4.2), there is no knowledge or evidence of what if any rules were followed nor which vows or commitments were undertaken by the members of the communities. Pryce summarises the situation as presented by the evidence, that from the sixth century onwards there were 'communities to which a monastic vocabulary was applied, but which also contained ordinary clergy who could have performed pastoral work'.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{16} Davies, W., 1982, op.cit., p.1
\textsuperscript{17} The Book of Llandaff is discussed more fully below in the case study of Llandaff. Davies published a detailed analysis of the charters in 1978: Davies, W., \textit{An early Welsh microcosm: studies in the Llandaff Charters}.\textsuperscript{18}
\textsuperscript{18} Davies, W., 1978, op.cit., p.139.
\textsuperscript{19} See Section 3.1.4 and Glossary of Terms.
\textsuperscript{20} Davies, W., 1978, op.cit., p.139.
\textsuperscript{21} Davies, W., 1978, op.cit., p.162.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{23} Davies, W., 1978, op.cit., p.122.
\textsuperscript{24} Pryce cited in Edwards, N. and Lane, A. op.cit., p.3.
The usual monastic pattern in Wales consisted of a *clas* or community of monks or nuns, with an abbot at the head and other officers, including a *presbyter* or *sacerdos*, a *doctor* or *magister* and canons.\(^{25}\) The establishment of numerous ecclesiastical sites was one of the functions of the Welsh *clas* system, whereby a mother church would have a number of subsidiary chapels, or daughter houses, attached or associated with it. The head of the community was the abbot and the *clas* community itself was made up of *claswyr*, seculars, who shared the responsibility for worship, pastoral work and economic benefits accruing to the church.\(^{26}\) Marriage was the norm and members of the *clas* could pass on their share of the church and revenues to an heir.\(^{27}\)

This type of Welsh monastic federation is somewhat similar to that found in contemporary Ireland (e.g. the monastery at Lismore, County Waterford) and examples of such ‘federated communities’ are proposed by Davies (based on dedication patterns of saints), usually regionally confined to areas within easy reach of the main house: e.g. St Cadoc, Llancarfan; St Teilo, Llandeilo Fawr; St Illtud, Llantwit Major; St David, St David’s.\(^{28}\) This monastic pattern of federation is certainly in place in the seventh century AD.\(^{29}\) Given the scant and difficult nature of the documentary evidence for this period in the history of the Welsh Church, however, several questions are left unanswered: Did these ‘federated communities’ pre-date the similar monastic federations found in Ireland? Could they have provided a template for the Irish Church to follow or did they model themselves on a pattern introduced by Irish monks in the sixth century?

### 3.3.2 Evidence for Early Ecclesiastical Sites

The principal evidence for Early Medieval ecclesiastical sites in Wales relies on archaeological sources (sculpted and inscribed stones, burials, curvilinear enclosures, metal-work, springs and topography), documentary evidence, place-name evidence

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\(^{25}\) For example, the *Vita Cadoci* describes that ‘Cadoc appointed thirty-six canons, who should continually and by their rule serve Nantcarfan church’: *Vita Cadoci*, 48.2-3; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.120-1. Pryce has recently suggested that the term *monasterium* is more appropriate than *clas*, as the use of the latter can be somewhat ambiguous (cited in Edwards, N. and Lane, A. op.cit., p.3) but as it is the term generally used to describe the early Welsh monasteries, it will suffice for this purpose.


\(^{27}\) Ibid.

\(^{28}\) Davies, W., 1982, op.cit., p.162.

\(^{29}\) Ibid.
and church dedication evidence. There is a general agreement among scholars that much of this evidence is either relatively scarce, in the case of documentary and archaeological evidence, or has suffered from a lack of proper investigation. Ongoing work is beginning to rectify this problem and most recently there has been a new study of Early Medieval inscribed stones in Wales.\(^\text{30}\) This is significant as these stones are considered by almost all scholars of the Welsh Church to be the best indicator of the early-Christian origins of a church.\(^\text{31}\) Some of the earliest, for example, are inscribed using \textit{Ogham} which shows clear Irish associations;\(^\text{32}\) other inscriptions, in the script and commemorative formulae, indicate Gaulish and African/Spanish influences, showing a merging of Irish and other influences in Wales.\(^\text{33}\) The stones, which include stone tombstones and crosses, sometimes decorated and sometimes inscribed, were first catalogued in detail by Nash-Williams in his seminal publication \textit{The Early Christian Monuments of Wales} in 1950.\(^\text{34}\) The publication of a variety of studies in \textit{The Early Church in Wales and the West} presented both new evidence emerging from ongoing scholarship in the 1990s and provided a stark picture of how little is yet known of Welsh ecclesiastical sites in this early period.

There is little or no evidence for dedicated church buildings in the late Empire and immediate post-Roman period in Wales and every reason to presume (as in Ireland) that most were timber structures.\(^\text{35}\) There have been few excavations of church sites in Wales and only one which was excavated to a scale large enough to be useful, but even then there are no comparable excavations.\(^\text{36}\) The excavated site at Capel Maelog

\(^{30}\) The second of the three volumes on the Early Medieval inscribed stones in Wales was recently published (2007). \textit{A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales: Volume I South East Wales and the English Border} (M. Redknap and J. M. Lewis, 2007); \textit{Volume II South-West Wales} (N. Edwards, 2007).

\(^{31}\) They are divided into four broad groups: I – fifth to seventh century, simple inscribed stones, concentrated mostly in the southwestern and northwestern peninsulas; II – seventh to ninth century, cross-decorated stones, usually without words, found mostly in the southwest; III – ninth to eleventh century, sculptured crosses and cross-slabs, mostly in the southeast; IV – eleventh to thirteenth century transitional Romanesque monuments, of which there are only 26 examples (Davies, W. 1982. op.cit., p.217).

\(^{32}\) See Glossary of Terms.

\(^{33}\) Davies, W. 1982. op.cit., p. 217

\(^{34}\) Nash-Williams, V.-E., 1950. \textit{The Early Christian Monuments of Wales}. Almost all scholars use the term 'Early Christian Monuments' or its abbreviation ECM, which also appears in the Sites and Monuments Records of the Welsh Archaeological Trusts.

\(^{35}\) The only evidence for a pre-Norman ecclesiastical structure is at Presteigne (Powys in mid-Wales) and is built in the Anglo-Saxon tradition; Arnold, C. J. and Davies, J. L. op.cit., p.181.

\(^{36}\) The church and cemetery site of Capel Maelog, Llandrindod Wells, was excavated in the 1980s by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust; James, H. 1992. \textit{‘Early Medieval cemeteries in Wales’}, in Edwards, N. and Lane, A. op.cit., p.101.
(Llandrindod Wells) had two main phases of activity, beginning with a small enclosed cemetery in the sixth century AD which was subsequently overlaid by a larger enclosing rectangular bank in the eighth century AD, containing a Medieval church and further burials, a sequence similar to the church site at Reask in County Kerry. Based on her analysis of the available archaeological evidence, James has suggested that there were enclosed cemeteries which remained ‘undeveloped’ after the Early Medieval period, some of which have shown a continuity of use from Iron Age and Roman burial sites. There is evidence enough to suggest that in some cases the circular or curvilinear churchyards originated as defensive sites in the late prehistoric period. This is similar to the picture emerging in Ireland, where there is documentary and archaeological evidence for the continued use of pre-Christian burial rites, such as burial within a circular enclosure (i.e. ring-ditches and ring-barrows), with such practices continuing into the seventh century AD. It has been suggested that these sites may have been abandoned eventually in favour of designated Christian burial grounds and church cult sites.

The potential for the use of curvilinear churchyards as an indicator of a probable pre-Norman ecclesiastical site was first identified by Thomas in the late 1960s, although the basic premise draws heavily on the theories proposed by Allcroft in the 1920s. Allcroft’s publication in 1927 first proposed the idea of ‘circular churchyards’ as the ‘normal form’ of Christian burial grounds prior to the tenth century and that these represented a re-use of prehistoric burial monuments and then an imitation of the same. He believed that the circular churchyard occurred throughout Britain but that

37 Arnold, C. J. and Davies, J. L. op.cit., p.186
38 James, H. op.cit. p.101
39 Ibid.
40 For example, a site excavated in 2005 at Ardsallagh in County Meath where a probable Bronze Age ring-ditch with cremation burials was re-used for Christian inhumation burials (Site Director Linda Clarke, pers.comm). This site is discussed more fully with other emerging evidence in the discussion section of this thesis.
41 This has been suggested by H. James’s work in Wales, who cites similar results in Ireland (O’Brien, E. 1984. Late Prehistoric – Early Historic: the burial evidence reviewed, unpublished MPhil thesis, UCD); James, H. in Edwards, N. and Lane, A. op.cit., pp.90-103. O’Brien discusses the evidence for the continued use of Iron Age burial practices, such as ring-barrows and ring-ditches, in the early Christian period in Ireland and as late as the seventh and eighth centuries (‘Pagan and Christian burial in Ireland during the first Millenium AD: Continuity and Change’, in Edwards, N. and Lane, A. op.cit., pp130-137).
43 Allcroft, A. H. op.cit., pp.1-2
it only survived in those areas where ‘Latin Christianity’ did not interfere and which were ‘less progressive’, i.e. in the ‘mostly Celtic districts’ of Cornwall, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. In contrast to Allcroft’s almost theoretical (and rather simplistic) debate on the origins of the form, Thomas used both archaeological and documentary evidence in his investigations. In essence, he proposed a sequence whereby a circular cemetery enclosure, representing the earliest Christian form in post-Roman Britain, developed into a church site (although not all sites did develop). The cemetery would contain internal timber structures (shrines or oratories) by the late sixth or seventh century AD, essentially becoming a church and burial ground, an early equivalent of the later parish church.

The results of a much more recent study of early Christian churches and church sites located to either side of Offa’s Dyke have proved interesting in terms of a possible date for such curvilinear enclosures in Wales. The area to the west of the Dyke (along the Welsh border) did not become ‘English’ until the end of the eighth century AD at the latest, thus providing an opportunity to investigate the possible survival there of British church sites that were presumably in situ when the Germanic tribes invaded.

The study identified a considerable number of sites with curved enclosures which may date back to the period between the seventh and ninth centuries AD, although there was less evidence for any earlier dates. The distribution of these sites is shown in Figure 3.3.1, which also illustrates what appears to have been a geographic bias: 38 out of 52 major churches (i.e. monasteries, minsters and ‘mother’ churches) were situated west of the Dyke; over half of these had surviving curvilinear enclosures, but only one of the 14 to the east had such an enclosure. Based on her analysis of the sites, Brook has determined that there is a strong case to be made that largely curved churchyards to the west of Offa’s Dyke are overwhelmingly pre-Norman in date.

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44 Allcroft, A. H. op.cit., pp.5-6
46 Brook, D. op.cit., pp.77-89.
47 Brook, D. op.cit., p.85
48 Brook, D. op.cit., p.87
An aerial photographic survey of ecclesiastical sites in Wales was undertaken by T. A. James and illustrates the variety in type, size and location of church sites and also the preponderance of the curvilinear churchyard or ecclesiastical enclosure. While not ignoring urban sites, the survey concentrates on those sites which were abandoned and where, arguably, aerial photography has the most to offer. James’ survey was by no means comprehensive and he highlights the need for and value of further work throughout Wales. That being said, the results of the survey suggested that the sites fell into a number of different categories (but not always exclusively one), these
being: defended sites with evidence for possible Christian use or burial, but without surviving churches; sites with surviving churches within presumed defended enclosures and/or within very large enclosed areas; church sites in close proximity to defended enclosures or hill-forts; segmented churchyard enclosures; rectilinear enclosures; island sites; urban and village church sites.\(^50\)

**FIGURE 3.3.2 : ENCLOSURES AT LLANGAN (AFTER JAMES)**

![Part of Llangan Tithe Map]


**FIGURE 3.3.3 : ENCLOSURES AT LLANWINIO (AFTER JAMES)**

![Part of Llanwinio Tithe Map]


Although the presence of large outer enclosures in Welsh ecclesiastical sites is frequently dismissed, James’ survey shows that they do seem to occur at some sites (such as Llangan and Llanwinio, Figures 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 above), where they are visible as cropmarks and in field boundaries.\(^51\) He proposes that their apparent absence in many cases may be the result of more intensive farming in Wales than in Ireland.

With regard to place-name evidence, the element *llan* is the most common of all Welsh ecclesiastical place-name elements and is also associated with curvilinear


\(^{50}\) James, T. A. op.cit., pp.65-75.
churchyards in Cornwall.\textsuperscript{52} The etymology of \textit{llan} is the Celtic root word \textit{landa}, meaning 'land', which came to mean 'enclosed land' or 'enclosure'. This was followed quickly by ecclesiastical associations, with the subsequent and successive meanings in Wales of 'enclosed cemetery', 'church within an enclosed cemetery', 'monastery', 'the area of land served by the church' (i.e. a parish) and also became a common noun meaning 'church'.\textsuperscript{53} The meaning of \textit{llan} became so restricted in the ecclesiastical sense that whenever it was used to denote any other sort of place, a noun was prefixed to mark the difference, as \textit{yddllan} 'the place of corn', \textit{coedllan} 'the place of wood' etc.\textsuperscript{54} The place-name element is problematic, often replacing other ecclesiastical and secular elements, sometimes quite late.\textsuperscript{55} Davies has noted that many sites termed \textit{podum} (denoting a monastery or a religious settlement) in the seventh or eighth centuries, became \textit{llan} in their later place-name (see Llancarfan field study in Chapter 4, Section 8).\textsuperscript{56} Given its popularity in later times it cannot alone be used to prove an Early Medieval foundation or the presence of an ecclesiastical enclosure, but should be used judiciously along with other indicators.

3.3.3 \textbf{SUMMARY}

The European models of monasticism that arrived with the Normans had an impact on existing monastic communities, while in the church as a whole territorial dioceses with fixed boundaries emerged: Llandaff in 1107 AD, St David's with the election of the Norman Bernard as bishop 1115 AD, and Bangor 1120 AD.\textsuperscript{57} It is probably only from this point onwards that there is a true distinction between a monastic and a secular church, of the kind not evident in the early Welsh church.\textsuperscript{58} The development and importance of the ecclesiastical settlements in Wales after the twelfth century AD was dictated by the actions of the new Norman ruling class and whether or not the

\textsuperscript{51} James, T. A. op.cit., pp.67 & 70.
\textsuperscript{52} It appears as 'lann' and is a demonstrably early element in place-names, implying an Early Medieval religious enclosure. Where it is contained in the name of a church site, these sites are commonly found to have a curvilinear churchyard; Preston-Jones, A. op.cit., pp.115-116
\textsuperscript{53} Roberts, T., 1992. 'Welsh ecclesiastical place-names and archaeology', in Edwards, N. and Lane, A. op.cit., pp.43-44.
\textsuperscript{54} Wade-Evans, A. W., 1923, \textit{Life of St David by Rhigyfarch}, p.97 (notes).
\textsuperscript{55} Roberts, T., op.cit., p.44 cites the example of the placename \textit{Llandarcy}, which commemorates the twentieth century oil magnate William Knox D'Arcy. Pierce, Appendix II (Glamorgan County History) p.483 also advises caution and comments on the preponderance of this element in Welsh place-names and its substitution for other elements during the Medieval period and into modern times.
\textsuperscript{56} Davies, W. 1982. op.cit., p.145
\textsuperscript{58} Edwards, N. and Lane, A. op.cit., p.4.
monastery received their patronage. The effect that such actions had is evident in both
the cases of Llandaff and Llancarfan described below and there does seem to be some
relationship between success during the Norman period and the size of the subsequent
settlement.

As noted by James and others, there may be a correlation between a prehistoric burial
or settlement site and the chosen location for an early church site, though this
relationship is by no means clear. There is a similar problem with deciphering the
nature of continuity from Roman sites, such as _villae_ and forts, into the Early
Medieval period and what the relationship between these sites and early church sites
or cemeteries might be. ⁵⁹ Many of the questions regarding enclosures, including their
date and function remain difficult to answer. While Brook’s results for example are no
doubt useful, they unfortunately do not offer any insights into the origins of the form.
It also begs the question, if the curvilinear layout appears mostly from the seventh to
ninth centuries, could it be a result of the Irish influences that were strongest during
this period? It is perhaps most significant that the excavated site at Capel Maelog,
shows evidence of an earlier curvilinear enclosure that pre-dates the eighth century.

⁵⁹ This is discussed in further detail in the Llandeilo case study in Chapter 4.
3.4 FRENCH ECCLESIASTICAL SITES

3.4.1 INTRODUCTION

The origins of Christianity in France are deeply rooted in the history of the late Roman Empire in the West. The earliest written record of Christians in Gaul can be dated to the end of the second century AD when, as Frend describes: "in the summer of 177 there took place at Lyons one of the most terrible dramas in the history of the early Church". This 'drama' is the story of the persecution of the Christians of Lyons and Vienne. It is recorded in Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History, written in the third century AD. Eusebius claims that his account came from a letter sent to the Churches of Asia and Phrygia in the eastern Roman Empire by an anonymous survivor of the Christian community in Gaul.

It is probable that Christianity was first introduced to Gaul through towns on the southern coast. There is some evidence that the early church in Gaul was of a predominantly Greek or Asiatic character, which would be consistent with Christianity having been introduced first into the Rhone valley in the middle of the second century AD. Marseilles, situated on the coast to the east of where the Rhône flows into the Mediterranean Sea, had been an important port on the trade route from the east since the time of the Mycenaeans in the second millennium BC. An inscription from Marseilles, which refers to the probable martyrdom of Volusianus and of Fortunatus, has been dated to not later than the second century AD. This epigraphical evidence, along with the account of the martyrdom of the Christians of Lyons and Vienne, constitutes the earliest evidence for Christianity in Gaul. As Lyons and Vienne are situated to the north of Marseille along the Rhône River, the presence of Christians in these towns at an early date indicates that Christianity spread northwards along this trade route.

The introduction of Christianity occurred while Gaul was still officially under Roman control but, from the late third century AD onwards, the Roman Empire was in a state

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1 The area encompassed by the Roman province of Gaul (north of the Pyrenees and west of the Rhine and Alps) was slightly larger than that of modern France.
3 Eusebius. The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine, V, 1-3.
of turmoil. There continued to be an emperor in the east until the late eighth century AD who exercised control over the western part of the empire, but Roman rule effectively disappeared from the west in AD 476. The incursions made into Gaul by Germanic tribes during the fifth century diluted Rome's hold on the province and prepared the way for the Frankish king Clovis, who was to play an important role in the Christianisation of Gaul. Clovis' conquest of Gaul signalled the beginning the Merovingian dynasty which would hold power for the next two hundred and fifty years.

Although Christianity had been making inroads into the province from at least the beginning of the second century, it had suffered under the rule of the various Arian kingdoms which had been established in Gaul in the fifth century AD. The Church only recovered its authority with the baptism of Clovis around the last decade of the fifth century AD. Clovis' conversion was an inspired move and was to have a profound impact on the future of the Church in France. As the first and only Christian king of the time, Clovis was in a better position than the other Germanic kings to garner the support of the Romans (both of Rome itself and, more importantly, of the Gallo-Roman aristocracy in situ) and ease the way for expansion of the Frankish kingdom.

3.4.2 THE EARLY CHURCH IN FRANCE - MONASTICISM

The early church in France undoubtedly began in the cities, but soon spread to the countryside. Two distinct forms of monasticism had evolved in Gaul in the late Roman and Early Medieval period and while many of the monasteries were rural and assisted in the conversion of the countryside, they also exerted a strong influence over the diocesan church in the cities. St Martin founded his first monastery at Ligugé in southwestern France in the mid-fourth century AD and although he is now considered to be the father of monasticism in France, his influence while alive did not spread very far outside his immediate area of activity, that is, the Loire region and

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5 Frend, W. H. C. op.cit., p.5.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
9 James, E. 1982a, op.cit., p.1.
10 Wood, I. op.cit., p.72.
11 James, E. 1982a, op.cit., p.1.
Aquitaine. St Martin did, however, play a dominant role in the process of conversion in rural areas, where he is known to have founded both rural churches and monasteries. He became bishop of Tours in AD 371 and he carried out his episcopal duties while continuing to live as a monk in a cell outside the town, where he established the monastery of Marmoutier. Martin's biographer, Sulpicius Severus, did much to enhance the saint's popularity and Martin became the patron saint of the Aquitainian bishops. Martin's close connections with his mentor Bishop Hilarius of Poitiers and his own episcopal status is typical of this early period and it is not until much later that there is a clear distinction between the monastic and diocesan churches.

It was during the Merovingian dynasty that Martin's cult gained popularity and provided the inspiration for the establishment of a number of monasteries throughout the Frankish empire. This was not a systematic movement, unlike later monastic orders such as those of St Columbanus and St Benedict. These new monastic communities, much like the monasteries in Ireland and Wales, did not follow a particular rule and had no institutional connection with either of Martin's original settlements at Liguge and Marmoutier.

The monastic tradition begun by Martin continued to flourish in the Aquitaine region in northwest France, but remained separate from the monasticism established in the Rhône valley in Provence, one of the most intensively Romanised areas of France. This took place around the beginning of the fifth century AD, shortly after Martin had established his first monasteries. The monasticism which took root in this area was very heavily influenced by the monastic traditions of the East. It was a disciplined tradition with many aristocratic associations and was to become the accepted monastic tradition of the diocesan church in France. One of the most important of the

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12 Geary, P. J. op.cit., p.141.
13 Percival, J. op.cit., p.4.
15 Geary, P. J. op.cit., p.142.
16 In Severus' writings Martin is presented as the ideal bishop, one who was able to combine a life of monastic observance with an active public life.; Geary, P. J. op.cit., p.141.
17 Geary, P. J. op.cit., p.142.
19 Geary, P. J. op.cit., p. 142.
monasteries in Provence was situated on Ile de Saint Honorat (Lerina), one of two small islands off the coast of Cannes. Ile de St Honorat is only three kilometres in circumference, but is a fertile, well-watered and remote place, thus offering an ideal location for an ascetic existence not dissimilar to that on Skellig Michael. There is some evidence to suggest that the island was inhabited during the Roman period, but certainly by the beginning of the fifth century AD, it was deserted. The monastery of Lérins was founded by St Honoratus around AD 400-410, a young man from a Romano-Gallic consular family in northern Gaul. During the fifth century AD, the monastic centre at Lérins flourished and its population quickly grew; by AD 427, according to John Cassian, there was an ‘enormous community of monks’ living on the island.

John Cassian, a priest, was born on the border of the Roman Empire, in the Lower Danube region. Cassian had been a student of John Chrysostom in Constantinople and had lived for fifteen years among the anchorites in Syria and also with ascetics in the Egyptian desert. Cassian records the monastic traditions of the East in his writings, Institutes and Colloquies, thus providing a model of Eastern monasticism which could be followed by the religious in the West. He imported this version of monastic life and disciplines directly into Gaul, not only through his writings, but through the two monasteries which he founded in Marseilles; one for men (dedicated to St Victor) and the other for women (dedicated to St Sauveur), both examples of an early urban monastery.

The Rhône monasticism established by Honoratus and Cassian seems to have answered a need among the northern Gallic aristocrats for a spiritual and cultural

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20 The second island is known as Ile de Sainte Marguerite (Lero), and together these two islands are known as the îles de Lérins. Local Provençal legend tells that Honoratus’s sister, a nun called Marguerie, retired to the larger of the two islands so as to be closer to her beloved brother and founded a convent there; Decarreaux, J., 1962. Les Moines et la Civilisation en Occident des Invasions à Charlemagne, p.141.
23 Ibid.
24 Decarreaux, J. op.cit., p.140.
26 Geary, P.J. op.cit., p.144.
27 Ibid.
refuge.\textsuperscript{29} The monastic centre at Lérins, in particular, was used as a place of refuge for aristocrats fleeing the political and social upheaval in the north.\textsuperscript{30} Lérins gained a reputation as an intellectual centre, with a strong aristocratic character, and exerted some influence on fifth-century intellectuals with its theological writings.\textsuperscript{31} The influence of Lérins and its monastic traditions was widespread (tradition says that St Patrick visited the monastery) and Lérins became a source of leaders for the church.\textsuperscript{32} The founder and first abbot of the monastery, Honoratus, later became bishop of Arles and many of his successors followed in his footsteps, both as abbot of Lérins and then as the holder of an episcopate.\textsuperscript{33} Many of these bishops, and others who had stayed in Lérins, went on to found similar communities in their own cities.\textsuperscript{34}

3.4.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE – MONASTIC SITES

Some of the most difficult questions to answer about early monastic sites concern the physical layout of the sites and the size and nature of the monastic buildings. This is particularly true in France, where excavation of early monastic sites is rare. Other methods, such as aerial photography and field survey, can be used to determine the location, size and layout of early monastic sites, but they have been little used in France. The archaeology of Christianity in general, and that of monasticism in particular, for the Merovingian period (fifth to eighth century AD) in Gaul is an almost totally undeveloped field.\textsuperscript{35}

Any monastery in Gaul which was of any importance underwent a continual process of restoration and rebuilding over the centuries.\textsuperscript{36} In addition to this, the majority of Gallic monasteries were situated either within or immediately outside pre-existing towns, or they formed the nucleus of the Medieval and modern towns.\textsuperscript{37} These two factors have meant that full excavation of a whole monastic area along with its enclosure, churches and communal buildings is rare. The practice of establishing a

\textsuperscript{29} Geary, P.J. op.cit., p.144.
\textsuperscript{30} Geary, P.J. op.cit., p.144.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{32} Klingshirn, W. E. op.cit., p.20.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{34} Geary, P.J. op.cit., p.145.
\textsuperscript{35} James, E. 1981. op.cit., p.33.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{37} For example, the two monasteries founded by Jean Cassien in Marseilles, the abbeys of Saint Victor and Saint Sauveur; Février, P-A., 1964. Le Développement Urbain en Provence de l'époque romaine à la fin du XVe siècle, pp.69-70.
monastery in a pre-existing town, which was prevalent in the Romanised areas of Gaul, creates further difficulties for the archaeologist and can cause confusion over whether a site is monastic or not.

In many towns and cities across the Empire, buildings of Roman origin were re-used and converted to ecclesiastical or monastic use; Gaul was no exception. During the Merovingian period, existing structures were adapted for monastic use. This may have been a matter of convenience, for economic reasons or for reasons such as a dearth of raw materials in the area. Excavations at Ligugé, where St Martin established his first monastery, indicate that the saint re-used a Roman villa. Many Roman villas fell into ruin and were subsequently used as cemeteries and, at a later date, some had a church built on them. There are excavated examples of villa buildings being re-used as a church or monastery (whether there was continuity from villa occupation to church site is uncertain in many cases), but it was perhaps more common for churches and monasteries to be founded within the boundaries of the private estate but not on the site of the buildings themselves. The existence of buildings capable of being used or adapted for monastic use makes it impossible to trace a clear line of development in monastic layout in Gaul and is one of the major distinctions between Gaul and Britain and Ireland.

The earliest description of a Gallic monastery is preserved in Sulpicius Severus' *Life of Saint Martin*, written in the late fourth or early fifth century, and describes Martin’s monastery at Marmoutier, near Tours:

“This location was so sheltered and remote that it could have been a desert solitude... Martin himself occupied a cell built of wood. While many of the brothers had similar shelters, the majority fashioned lodgings for themselves carved out of the rock of the overhanging mountain”.

The simplicity of the settlement and the provision of individual cells were an obvious imitation of an Egyptian monastery and were in keeping with Martin’s adherence to

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39 James, E., 1981. op.cit., p.36.
40 Knight, J. K., 2005. 'From villa to monastery: Llandough in context', in *Medieval Archaeology* Vol.49, 93-105; 93.
41 James, E. 1981. op.cit., p.47.
42 Percival, J. op. cit., 16
43 James, E., 1981. op.cit., p.34.
Eastern monastic traditions. Descriptions such as this one by Severus point to a lack of monumental architecture in early monastic settlements. Braunfels remarks of Severus' description that the gathering of huts, cells and church gives the impression more of a village or settlement than of a monastery.\(^4\) Braunfels also hypothesises that where surviving Roman buildings did not provide a framework, large monasteries must have been like nomadic encampments, with only the wall marking the area off as hallowed ground.\(^6\) As is the case with any other literary source, Severus' account may not be completely reliable, but some aspects of this description are supported by evidence elsewhere. For example, the fact that caves cut into the low cliffs flanking the Loire are still inhabited gives credence to Severus' description of the monks lodgings carved out of the mountain side.\(^4\) A parallel with Ireland is evident here: this tradition has echoes in 'St Kevin's Bed', a grotto or cave in Glendalough, where St Kevin is reputed to have used as a retreat.\(^4\) Such parallels are unsurprising, given the popularity of St Martin's \textit{Life} in Early Medieval Ireland.\(^4\)

Although there are no archaeological traces of early monastic buildings of wood in Gaul, wooden structures must have been a common architectural form. Documentary evidence, Severus being just one example, suggests that early Christian monastic structures (of the fifth and sixth centuries AD) were made up of less permanent materials, possibly wood or some type of wattle-and-daub. A description of a Gallic monastery in the \textit{Vita Patrum Iurensium}, which is generally dated to the sixth century AD, tells of the burning of Eugendus' monastery at Condat and mentions wooden structures:

"As it had been built of wood a long time before, and as it not only comprised individual cells attached to each other by beams but also had been doubled by finely built upper-storeys, it was so suddenly reduced to ashes that by the morning there remained nothing of the buildings".\(^{50}\)

Bede's well-known contrasting of \textit{more Scotiorum} ('to build in wood') with \textit{iuxta morem Romanorum} ('to build in stone') could easily be taken to mean that the Gallo-
Romans built exclusively in stone.\textsuperscript{51} James stresses that this was not necessarily the case and that Bede's words can be misleading.\textsuperscript{52} Stone was a more expensive raw material than wood and sometimes less readily available in certain regions. It also required a skilled mason to erect anything more substantial than a simple hut. Stone would probably have been used predominantly for important structures, such as churches, undoubtedly the most important building on any monastic site.\textsuperscript{53}

It cannot be assumed that the monastery at Marmoutier was the norm for early Gallic monastic settlement patterns. While a typical monastic foundation of the fifth and early sixth century resulted from the grouping of disciples around a saintly hermit, the seventh century was typified by the monastic foundations of lay aristocrats.\textsuperscript{54} Sixth-century hagiographers describe the squalor in which the monks of the time lived, but later descriptions, from the seventh and eighth centuries AD, tell of the beauty of the monastic buildings.\textsuperscript{55}

This difference is made apparent through the eighth century description of the monastery of Jumièges. This description appears in the anonymous \textit{Life of St Philibert}, written around 100 years after the monastery was founded (c. 654-5 AD). It reveals a very different approach to monastic building and settlement, which may have been the result of a new approach to monasticism itself. The seventh and eighth centuries in Gaul saw a change in monasticism, as it became more organised and powerful, and was subject to the influx of monks from other countries (including the Irish Columbanus). Gregory of Tours hints at a more elaborate architecture introduced at this time, as monasteries were forced to cope with the problems of large numbers of pilgrims.\textsuperscript{56} Jumièges is thought to have been the first monastery with a cloister, for example; it was certainly, according to the description, a large, well-planned, mainly stone-built complex which foreshadowed the Carolingian monastery of St Riquier or

\textsuperscript{51}The use of \textit{Scottorum} suggests that Bede associated this technique with Celtic lands, while the use of \textit{Romanorum} indicating that Bede believed stone to be the preferred material of the Romans; James, E. 1981. op.cit., p.38.
\textsuperscript{52}James, E. 1981. op.cit., p.38.
\textsuperscript{53}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{54}Percival, J. op.cit., p.16.
the St Gallen plan. As James notes, the text is full of obscurities, is hyperbolic in nature and of uncertain date, and thus can neither prove nor disprove these claims, but some aspects of the picture given can be paralleled in the documentary and archaeological evidence.

One of the features mentioned in the passage describing Jumièges is a stone-built enclosure. The Merovingian monastery seems always to have had its wall or enclosure in the same way that the Irish and Anglo-Saxon monasteries had. A short section of wall at the monastery of Nivelles is the only possible physical trace of archaeological evidence in Gaul for monastic enclosures; unfortunately not enough survives to give any indication of the size or shape of the enclosure. Despite this, James suggests that the Merovingian enclosures may occasionally have been similar to the Irish examples. Documentary evidence is more helpful. The Life of Eligius describes the enclosure of the monastery of Solignac, near Limoges, as a circular wall “not of stone but of earth fortified by a hedge” around 1,800 metres in circumference. Eddius Stephanus tells that at the monastery at Oundle the septa was formed by a thorny hedge. According to James, such an enclosure would be almost impossible for an archaeologist to now detect. Other examples include substantial walled enclosures, such as the one at the Farmoutiers nunnery.

The various types of monastic enclosure do not appear to have been intended as fortifications but instead acted as sacred boundaries, the importance of which is noted by many contemporary writers. Jonas, for example, in his Life of Columbanus, notes the importance of the act of both monks and strangers crossing the boundary (septa monasterii). In this respect, the enclosures of French monasteries were no different to those in Ireland, Britain or even the early monastic settlements in Egypt; the enclosures performed the same function as the later cloisters, that of an architectural

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57 James, E. 1981. op.cit., p.40.
59 Ibid; Various terms are used to describe these enclosures: septa, claustra or vallum monasterii.
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid.
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
embodiment of the monastic renunciation of the world.\textsuperscript{67} A later Medieval description of the early monastic buildings at Abingdon in England, refers to the enclosure as an early form of cloister: "for they did not have an enclosure as we do, but were surrounded by a high wall that was for them like a cloister".\textsuperscript{68}

The Jumièges description also mentions a number of churches: one large cruciform church and possibly three smaller churches.\textsuperscript{69} The archaeological evidence for monastic buildings is relatively scarce. Excavations at the monastery at Nivelles revealed the general plan and layout of its churches and constitutes the sole archaeological evidence for layout of a Merovingian ecclesiastical site.\textsuperscript{70} These excavations revealed three churches, although pre-Carolingian texts mention four.\textsuperscript{71} The largest of the three was dedicated to Saint Mary, with the other two dedicated to Saint Paul and Saint Gertrude.\textsuperscript{72} All three churches were, to varying degrees, aligned to the north-east, with Saint Mary's occupying a central position, flanked by the two smaller churches.\textsuperscript{73} Excavation revealed no sign of any planned relationship between the churches, although it did uncover a stone foundation which may have belonged to the enclosure wall.\textsuperscript{74} The evidence available for the Merovingian period reveals a tendency towards small churches with simple plans, usually single-aisled, rectangular structures.\textsuperscript{75} It was during the Carolingian period that church buildings increased in size and developed more elaborate plans.\textsuperscript{76}

3.4.4 ECCLESIASTICAL SITE STUDIES

The distinction between early monasteries and early ecclesiastical sites in the south of France is for the most part clearer than in Ireland or Wales, although the line is blurred somewhat by the pervasive monastic influences on the early church. Almost all of the early bishops of the towns in southern France had trained at the monastery of Lérins. Many of the churches founded by these early monk-bishops were

\textsuperscript{67} James, E., 1981. op. cit., p.41.
\textsuperscript{69} James, E., 1981. op. cit., p.41.
\textsuperscript{70} Mertens, J. op.cit., p.107.
\textsuperscript{71} James, E., 1981. op. cit., p.43.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{75} James, E. 1981. op. cit., p.44.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
established in existing Roman towns and have remained urban centres (be that as town or village) up to the present day. Whether or not these churches were 'monastic' in character may be unanswerable as in all of these cases the original church has not survived and there has been little or no excavation in many of them. This is partly to do with a lack of opportunity for archaeological investigations at urban sites, but has also resulted from the tendency for French archaeologists to concentrate on the Roman period. This tendency only began to change in the latter part of the twentieth century.

The study of Early Medieval ecclesiastical sites in an urban context has received very little attention. There has been no large-scale comprehensive study of the sites of early monasteries and churches and although smaller micro-regional studies in southern France have been undertaken in the varied disciplines of history, archaeology and geography, these focus almost exclusively on the later Medieval period. One of the most prominent archaeologists in the field of urban development in Provence was in fact a specialist in the late Roman period. In 1964 Paul-Albert Février published Le Développement urbain en Provence de l'époque romaine à la fin du XIVe siècle (Urban Development in Provence from the Roman period to the fourteenth century). Février concentrated on a selection of Provençal towns, some of which had undergone limited excavations of predominantly Roman phases of settlement (e.g. Fréjus and Vaison). In his chapter on ecclesiastical topography in the Medieval period, Février noted that the initial phase of Christianisation left little or no trace in either town or countryside, despite the fact that this must have been a period of intense architectural activity. Within the space of two hundred years or so, from the second to the fourth century AD, episcopal groups and baptisteries were constructed in towns while monasteries and chapels were built in the surrounding areas.

Two main difficulties in an examination of the development of towns and villages in Provence were highlighted by Février. The first is the dispersed nature of the archaeological research, which hampers both individual site investigations and the potential for a comparative study. Thus, for example, there has been no large-scale

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78 Février, P-A., 1964. op.cit., p.73. Where an established church, either rural or urban, was endowed with a baptistery this generally became the parish church.
archaeological excavation at an urban site, which makes it difficult to obtain a true picture of how settlement developed and changed over time. The second is the way in which sources for the Early Medieval and Medieval periods are scattered and even when compiled provide little information regarding the layout and development of towns. In an updated version of his work almost ten years later he remarked that "only a comparative study of urban settlement, and one which takes account of its evolution, will produce worthwhile results". The piecemeal nature of urban archaeology is a problem common across the board and is not just restricted to France. Although Février was writing in the 1960s the situation is little changed today, with both archaeological and documentary evidence providing scant assistance in understanding the evolution of towns and villages in southern France.

More recent settlement studies have been undertaken throughout France, although these are almost all individual studies, looking at the evolution of settlement or a phase of settlement in a particular town. A number of publications over the last two decades have sought to bring together some of this information, in an effort to address this issue, notably *Morphogenèse du Village Médiéval (IXe - XIIe siècles)* (*Morphogenesis of the Medieval Village. from the ninth to eleventh centuries*). This comprised the publication of papers presented at a conference on the 'morphogenesis' of Medieval villages. The studies were geographically diverse, ranging from the French / Belgian and French / Italian borders to parts of Languedoc and Provence, and looked at the genesis and morphology of settlements on a micro-regional basis. The most recent discussion of the morphology of Medieval villages and towns in France was published in 2003 and is the first to draw together studies using the technique of plan-analysis as a means of investigating settlements. It is worth noting that this is the first time that the merits of the technique have been assessed, using examples from studies undertaken in different regions of France, and proving successful in the examination of settlement form.

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79 Février, P-A., 1973. ‘The origin and growth of the cities of southern Gaul to the third century AD: an assessment of the most recent archaeological discoveries’, in *Journal of Roman Studies* Vol. 63, pp.1-28; p.1. Although this article concentrated on the prehistoric and Roman periods of settlement only, it is illustrative of the continuing problems with the study of urban development in southern France from the later twentieth century onwards.


It has long been assumed that settlement in the Medieval period was primarily focused on the castle, a result of the encastellation process (incastellamento) that swept through France (and the rest of Europe) from the ninth century AD onwards. Research over the last few decades has begun to question this assertion. A number of studies have been carried out on settlement patterns in the Languedoc region of southwest France, concentrating on the preponderance of villages with a curvilinear plan (though not necessarily ecclesiastical in nature). Some of these villages have ecclesiastical associations, whereby a church is located at the centre of the village and a burial ground is to be found just outside of the circular boundary of houses. As a result of these shared characteristics, these villages have been described, at various times, as 'ecclesiastical villages', 'round villages' and 'circulades'.

The earliest of these studies was published in 1931 and focused on a region south of Carcassonne called Razès. Josserand's study looked at settlement forms in general but was especially concerned with the large numbers of villages in the area which had a circular plan. Although villages of this nature can be found elsewhere in Languedoc, and to some extent in other parts of Europe, Josserand considered those in Razès to be more pure in form and noted that they were present in greater numbers than elsewhere. Unlike later studies, Josserand did not distinguish between those villages where a church formed the nucleus and others that were focused on an open place (which were most common) or a donjon or keep (Figure 3.4.1). Nor did he investigate whether or not these variations might reflect a different origin of the settlement. The study was interesting, as the first to note settlements with a circular plan, but it was a primarily superficial one with little or no reference to archaeological or historical evidence in the village plans, while others have a church as the nucleus of the settlement. Pawlowski believes that the existence of this almost universal plan indicates the existence of a model of spatial planning in the tenth and eleventh centuries AD. Pawlowski's work was criticised by Baudreu on the grounds that it paid little attention to the archaeological and historical evidence and had produced inaccurately homegenic plans of the villages, while ignoring the Napoleonic cadastral maps; Baudreu, D. 1992, 'Comptes rendus bibliographiques', in Heresis, n°18, pp. 95-100.

84 Pawlowski, K., 1994. Circulades Languedociennes de l'An Mille. The 'circulades languedociennes' are a series of towns and villages in the Languedoc region which have a curvilinear plan; some evolved around a castle, while others have a church as the nucleus of the settlement. Pawlowski believes that the existence of this almost universal plan indicates the existence of a model of spatial planning in the tenth and eleventh centuries AD. Pawlowski's work was criticised by Baudreu on the grounds that it paid little attention to the archaeological and historical evidence and had produced inaccurately homegenic plans of the villages, while ignoring the Napoleonic cadastral maps; Baudreu, D. 1992, 'Comptes rendus bibliographiques', in Heresis, n°18, pp. 95-100.
85 Josserand, L., op.cit.
86 Josserand, L. op.cit, p. 5. There are a number of large towns and cities with circular plans in Europe, for example Milan, described as 'radio-concentric' by Lavedan who notes this type of town in his work.
sources. His conclusion was equally superficial, attributing the form to Medieval fortification, an idea which corresponds to a group of circular villages in eastern Germany, known as *Rundling*, which constitute no more than a fortified *place.*

Figure 3.4.1: Alaigne, Aude: Example of village without church as nucleus

Almost fifty years later, two parallel studies were carried out which looked at Medieval settlement in Languedoc, concentrating on the villages located in the Aude basin. The basin of the River Aude encompasses the area between eastern Languedoc and Aquitaine (including Razès), to the south of Carcassonne (see Figure 4.1, Volume 2), and covers a number of very different geographical zones. The two studies revealed a large number of sites with both a circular layout and ecclesiastical associations within this area. The authors highlighted two of the greatest difficulties facing such a study: that research into the evolution of Medieval settlement was a "historiographical lacuna" and that the relationship between the church and Medieval settlement in Languedoc, and in France in general, was at that time a largely unexplored area. This work undertaken in the late 1980s was vital to the study of church and settlement, at least in the later periods, as it introduced the idea that the church might have acted as an attraction for settlement in much the same way as the castle did during the Medieval period in France.

on urban development throughout Europe: Lavedan, P., 1926. *Histoire de l'Urbanisme, Antiquité et Moyen Age.*
17 Josserand, L. op.cit, p.7.
88 The two studies were conducted by D. Baudreu and J-P. Cazes and undertaken in the communes of Fenouillet-de-Razès, Bas-Razès, Pauligne, Lasserre-de-Prouille (Baudreu) and in the Lauragais region (Cazes). Their results were presented at a conference in 1989 and published together in 1994 as 'Les villages ecclésiaux dans le bassin de l'Aude', in Fixot, M., and Zadora-Rio, E. op.cit., pp.80-97.
The Aude basin is a region in which the ‘castral village’ (where settlement grew up around the castle) has historically been recognised as the primary form of Medieval settlement.\textsuperscript{89} The research carried out by Baudreu and Cazes identified a group of villages with a circular plan, which seem to have formed around a church and burial ground and which appeared to pre-date the castral villages (Figure 3.4.2).\textsuperscript{90} Baudreu and Cazes use the term ‘ecclesiastical village’ to describe this phenomenon, although as noted later by Zadora-Rio this rather generic term does not necessarily imply a certain morphology.\textsuperscript{91} ‘Ecclesiastical village’ is a generic term that is analogous with the term ‘castral village’, used to imply nucleated rather than dispersed settlement, as in both cases settlement developed around a centre of attraction, in one instance the church and in the other, the castle.

\textbf{Figure 3.4.2: Loupia, Aude: Example of village with church as nucleus}


The studies conducted by Baudreu and Cazes looked at a variety of Medieval ecclesiastical settlements, which they divided into four categories: churches and dry-stone structures located in areas of scrubland; cemeteries dating to the Medieval period and located well away from the main towns of the commune; isolated or

\textsuperscript{89} Baudreu, D. and Cazes, J-P. 1994. op.cit, p.81.
\textsuperscript{90} Baudreu, D. and Cazes, J-P. 1994. op.cit, p.87.
remote cemeteries with a ditch forming an enclosure around them (Figure 3.4.3), and; villages organised around a church (Figure 3.4.2).\textsuperscript{92}

\textbf{FIGURE 3.4.3: SAINT-JUST, AUDE: EXAMPLE OF CEMETERY ENCLOSED BY DITCH}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.3\textwidth]{figure3.4.3}
\end{center}

Source: Baudreu and Cazes 1994, p.84.

\textbf{FIGURE 3.4.4: GRANS, PROVENCE: EXAMPLE OF VILLAGE WITH CHURCH AS NUCLEUS}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.3\textwidth]{figure3.4.4}
\end{center}


A similar micro-regional study was undertaken by Lagrue in the Bouche-du-Rhone department in Provence.\textsuperscript{93} In contrast to the work done in Aude, Lagrue looked at the genesis and organisation of castral villages. In the course of his research he noted several examples of the 'ecclesiastical village' identified in Aude (Figure 3.4.4). These were rare, with only a very few cases with a church rather than a castle or donjon; in some of these cases there was both, but the church clearly preceded the castle. Though some of the villages presented a curvilinear plan-form, Lagrue commented that in all of these cases the church had little impact on the subsequent plot development in the settlements.\textsuperscript{94} Lagrue's conclusions regarding the relationship between church and settlement in Provence are interesting in the light of the results of the two Provençal case studies, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

Most of these studies focused on villages, in essence looking at the plan-form as a rural phenomenon. Pawlowski used the term 'circulade' to describe the circular or curvilinear plan-form evident in numerous villages and towns in Languedoc, in order


\textsuperscript{93}Lagrue, J-P. 1996. 'Les bourgs castraux en Basse-Provence occidentale: genèse et organisation (Xle-XIIIe siècles)', in Fabre et al., \textit{op.cit}, 97-121.
to avoid this distinction between villages and towns that so often appears, whether explicitly or not, in the research frameworks of French settlement studies. There has been a certain amount of debate regarding the functions of towns and villages in Medieval France and the notion of urbanism, but it has been shown in Provence at least that the boundary between villages and towns at an organisational level during the Early Medieval and Medieval periods is almost impossible to trace.  

3.4.5 The Concept of Sanctuary

Research over the last two decades has also addressed the neglected question of the relationship between the Church and Medieval settlement in this area and has suggested a link between places of worship and early settlement. The concept and the role of the church in the genesis of villages and the forms taken by these villages had remained unresearched and poorly understood and other researchers were also attempting to address this issue in the 1980s. Baudreu and Cazes had tentatively dated their 'ecclesiastical villages' to the tenth or eleventh century AD and proposed that the phenomenon of villages with an ecclesiastical enclosure could be explained by the eleventh century Peace of God Councils, when the concept of the church as a place of asylum was formalised. This concept was examined further in an archaeological research programme that looked at the churches and their landscape in the Medieval period. The results of this research were published in two separate volumes by Fixot and Zadora-Rio. One of the more interesting hypotheses (which no doubt inspired Baudreu and Cazes) was that the limits of space protected by the right of asylum left an indelible mark in the physical evolution of the settlement.

The propensity for places of worship to have a symbolic boundary marking out their functions has long been a widespread phenomenon. Christian sanctuaries from the very beginning, had clearly demarcated areas of sanctuary and the history of the surroundings of the church are intimately linked with the right of asylum. As early as the fifth century AD, Roman legislation records the existence of a boundary around a

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94 Lagrué, J-P. op.cit., p.105.
95 Noted by E. Sauze. A debate on this subject took place following the presentation of papers at the conference on the morphogenesis of the Medieval village. Recorded in Fabre et al., op.cit., pp.264-267.
church, within which it was forbidden to pursue fugitives: a law passed on November 21, AD 419, set the boundary to a circuit of fifty paces (approximately seventy metres) around the place of worship. The constitution of AD 431 supplies a more practical definition and describes the area of sanctuary as stretching from the church to the gates of the atrium. In the middle of the sixth century AD, a decree was passed by the Merovingian kings Childebert and Clotaire, which limited the area of sanctuary to an arpent (approximately half a hectare) of ground on either side of the church. Over the course of the next five centuries, the right of asylum and the extent of the area of sanctuary continued to occupy a place in legislation: the Council of Toledo, in AD 681, defined the area by a radius of thirty paces; the charters of Charlemagne, in the ninth century AD, used the boundary of the cemetery to define the limits.

From the end of the tenth century AD onwards, the right of asylum became a matter of importance once more as war and violence spread throughout France. The Peace of God movement, generated by the southern councils of the mid-eleventh century in response to the on-going wars, formalised the idea of the church as sanctuary and asylum, creating a legal place of refuge for those in need. The councils specified that the 'peace zone' constituted a circuit of thirty paces around the church. In a letter dated to AD 1059, Pope Nicholas II advised the bishops of Gaul, Aquitaine and Gascony that church sites should have a circuit of sixty paces around the majores ecclesiae and thirty paces around the capellae sive minores ecclesiae. A consequence of this decision was a tendency, particularly strong from the eleventh century onwards, to transform the symbolic boundary (of thirty paces) of an ecclesiastical site into a physical boundary, by constructing a wall or enclosure. Documentary evidence indicates that this physical fortification of a church and burial ground required the king's permission.

100 Timbal Duclaux de Martin, P. op.cit., p.79 n.2.
102 An arpent is an old French measure which varied considerably but measured approximately 70 metres in length.
103 Timbal Duclaux de Martin, P., op.cit., p.135 n.3.
3.4.6 EVIDENCE FOR ENCLOSED ECCLESIASTICAL SITES

There is some archaeological evidence for physical boundaries around church sites. Excavations were carried out on an enclosed ecclesiastical site at Hordain in Nord-Pas-de-Calais (near Lille in northern France), revealing a chapel and burial ground surrounded by a ditch. The ditch, dated to the sixth or seventh century AD, demarcates an area measuring fifty metres square. The foundations of three small structures (a type of hut or cell) were discovered within the enclosure. Excavations were also carried out at the church of Lunet-Viel in Hérault (Languedoc). It was found that the church had been enclosed in the seventh or eighth century AD by a water-filled ditch, which was replaced by a stone wall around the tenth century AD. Burial within the enclosure pre-dates the construction of the ditch, after which burial continued only in the area outside the boundary. This suggests that the enclosure had a defensive function, providing protection for the church and burial ground which pre-date it.\(^\text{107}\)

At Le Mont d'Auvet in the Franche Comté department (eastern France), excavations in 1900 provided surprisingly good results. The area within the enclosing ditch measured approximately 90m and contained the cemetery and a church. It was shown that the cemetery pre-dated the church and was in use from the sixth century AD onwards; the church was probably added around the eleventh century AD.\(^\text{108}\) It is interesting that these enclosures pre-date the Peace of God movement, suggesting that at least at some sites the eleventh century movement led to the fortification of existing boundaries, rather than the imposition of new enclosures.

That there is further evidence for enclosed ecclesiastical sites (church and burial ground) which did not evolve into urban settlements, suggests that the practice was more common than previously believed. This is also illustrated by Passelac's aerial survey of sites in Languedoc, the results of which indicate that the church and its circular enclosure (many of which survive only as cropmarks) preceded the associated settlement and that not all of these church sites developed into villages or towns. One such example, La Gleysasso in Generville (Aude), shows an oval platform enclosed by a wide ditch and measuring c. 65m by 45m, with the ruins of a church at the centre.

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\(^{107}\) Excavations at Hourdain were undertaken by P. Demolon and those at Lunel-Viel by C. Raynaud; cited in Fixot and Zadora-Rio, 1990, op.cit, p.13.

The site, located on a hillock, was partially excavated revealing a Medieval silo and cemetery beside the church.

**FIGURE 3.4.5: CROPMARKS AT LA GLEYASSO**

Source: Passelac 1984, p.11 (better quality copy unavailable to researcher).

Similarly, a rescue excavation undertaken in 1980 of a deserted church site at Barrié (Mas-Saintes-Puelles, Lauragais commune just north of Bas-Razès) in the commune revealed a number of huts grouped around a chapel dedicated to St Semin the only stone structure at the site. The chapel was located at a crossroads and was surrounded by burials which continued after the site was deserted sometime around the eleventh century AD.

There has been relatively little research carried out in France using aerial survey, a method which has proven useful in the detection of monastic sites in Ireland and Britain. As mentioned previously, the work of St Joseph and Swan in this area has revealed a large number of monastic enclosures in Ireland which were unknown and unsuspected before they were detected by aerial photography. James cites an aerial photograph of the Auvergnat monastery of Manglieu as the only such example known to him; it shows the size and shape of the monastic enclosure which has been preserved in the street-plan of the modern town. As Passelac’s small-scale study in

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the Languedoc region has shown, aerial survey could prove a useful tool in the investigation of enclosed ecclesiastical sites in other regions of France.

3.4.7 SUMMARY

The introduction and development of Christianity in France was a very different process to that which took place in Ireland or in Wales. This section looked at the origins of Christianity in the Roman province of Gaul and how Christianity spread and developed as Gaul became Francia, ruled by the Merovingian Frankish dynasty. The diocesan church was well established in towns and cities, where it was very much the province of the ruling classes, but monasticism was the most important vehicle for the spread of Christianity throughout France. A lack of research on the relationship between church and the settlement in France, hindered for a long time an understanding of the effect of these changes on urban settlement in the Early Medieval and Medieval periods. The late twentieth century saw an attempt to address this issue and while undoubtedly important and badly needed, the work focused largely on the Medieval period, bringing together numerous small-scale studies and the results of excavations throughout France.

The phenomenon of curvilinear enclosed settlements with an ecclesiastical nucleus was noted in Languedoc as part of this new research drive. Part of the Languedoc region in the southwest benefitted from several micro-regional studies looking at small villages with ecclesiastical associations, many of which exhibit a similar settlement pattern to the Irish ecclesiastical sites (a double concentric enclosure with a church at the centre). Regrettably little has been done in the neighbouring Provence region however, with Février's work on urban development and ecclesiastical topography representing one of the few attempts to examine the subject at a regional level. Several Provençal villages similar in plan to Baudreu and Cazes' 'ecclesiastical village' were identified by Lagrue as part of his study of castral villages, but were considered a rarity. No further work appears to have been undertaken on curvilinear ecclesiastical settlements in Provence. Individual examples of similar curvilinear ecclesiastical settlements were also identified elsewhere in France though there has been no investigation of these sites in the context of an emerging 'pattern' of ecclesiastical settlement.
It became apparent during this literature review that there are conflicting opinions and evidence regarding the dating of the enclosed ecclesiastical sites. Baudreu and Cazes proposed a tentative tenth or eleventh century AD date for the 'ecclesiastical villages' in the Aude valley, but given the lack of archaeological excavation at these sites and the scant documentary evidence an earlier date cannot be ruled out. Archaeological evidence from excavations at enclosed ecclesiastical sites elsewhere in France – discussed in Section 3.4.6 – suggests a much earlier date for the origins of the enclosing ditch, possibly as early as the sixth century AD. The evidence also suggests that boundaries were being replaced around the tenth or eleventh century. This might tie-in with the eleventh century Peace of Gods movement and explain the discrepancy in the dating of enclosed ecclesiastical sites, i.e. there was a fortification of existing boundaries, rather than the imposition of new enclosures at some sites. The hypothesis presented by Fixot and Zadora-Rio regarding the right of asylum and the possibility that it influences the physical evolution of settlements is tantalising and would benefit from further examination, particularly in the case of enclosed ecclesiastical settlements.

CHAPTER 4: FIELD STUDIES
4.0 Field Studies

A detailed examination of nine field study sites is undertaken in this chapter, with a view to establishing the characteristics of settlement and plan-form at each site.

4.1 Identification of Sites for Detailed Study

4.1.1 Selection of Study Areas (Figure 4.1)

There are known trade and communication links between Ireland, Britain and the Continent in the prehistoric and Early Medieval periods. As Ireland's closest neighbours, it was considered most likely that if the ecclesiastical settlement pattern observed at Irish sites was not unique but had spread either to or from the Continent, it should manifest in these areas. It was confirmed during an initial literature review that there appeared to be evidence of ecclesiastical sites with a similar curvilinear topographical layout to those in Ireland, with other possible examples in Scotland, Wales, Cornwall and northern France.

Provence and Languedoc, the two regions forming southern France, were selected for detailed study in order to further examine the possible similarities noted by Swan in the Languedocien villages. The villages in Languedoc were small in scale and had been studied in some detail as part of local and regional research projects. This being the case, it was decided to choose one of these villages for detailed examination, to illustrate the settlement pattern present in Languedoc. This village would be examined alongside two larger sites chosen from the neighbouring Provence region, where the phenomenon of curvilinear ecclesiastical sites is largely unknown or unacknowledged. This was decided for two reasons, the first being to establish whether the sites present in Languedoc were a regional anomaly, common only to areas within Languedoc, which would in turn inform about the spread or otherwise of the Irish pattern. The second reason was to assess whether this pattern in southern France was restricted to small villages or whether it extended to large towns.

The strongest and earliest Irish connections attested in Wales in the Early Medieval period are in the northwestern part of the country, an area where the Roman colonists had made few if any inroads. Southern Wales and southern France had the potential to

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1 The work of Baudreu and Cazes as noted above in Chapter 3, p.97, footnote 88.
offer the most value in terms of the survival of the pattern in the face of the earlier Roman urban influences.

By undertaking research in Ireland, southern Wales and southern France it is intended that sufficient new information will emerge to prompt and guide future research in the examination of ecclesiastical settlements in the areas not encompassed by this work.

4.1.2 SELECTION OF FIELD STUDY SITES (Figure 4.1, Volume 2)

The decision to select three sites within each study area was a practical one, allowing sufficient time and space to thoroughly examine each site. A detailed examination of the topography, history and archaeology of each site and its environs is essential for the application of plan-analysis. Any fewer than three and the comparative assessment would have little value, any more and the opportunity for a detailed analysis would be lost.

As the phenomenon of ecclesiastical sites with a curvilinear layout and their influence on the evolution of subsequent urban centres of varying success and size is relatively well-documented and researched in Ireland, the decision was made to choose three known early Christian sites which had evolved into a modern town or village for detailed assessment. This would provide a sound basis from which to study sites in France and Wales, to assess the characteristics of ecclesiastical site/settlement development and the phenomenon of circular or curvilinear enclosure. It would also allow the evaluation of the plan-analysis technique, which has yet to be applied to these sites in an archaeological context for the assessment of early Christian elements.

The sites chosen included a large urban centre (Armagh), a town (Kells) and a village (Clondalkin), all of which began as a monastic settlement. Though much work has been undertaken in the study of Armagh and Kells, Clondalkin has received less attention than these two more important sites. Each of the sites has retained its ecclesiastical focus, with the church, burial ground and associated features remaining at the centre of the settlement. This would provide a sound illustration of the Irish

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ecclesiastical settlement pattern and would be a strong base from which to begin a comparative analysis.

The sites in Wales were selected following a review of the O.S. first edition six-inch maps in the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth. A list of sites presenting a curvilinear plan-form was compiled and initial research was undertaken to assess whether or not the nucleus was ecclesiastical and if so, whether there were any obvious indicators of early Christian origins (e.g. the place-name ‘llan’). Llandaff, Llancarfan and Llandeilo Fawr were chosen from among those sites with an ecclesiastical nucleus.

In France, the phenomenon of ecclesiastical sites with a circular layout has been observed in the Languedoc region but is less well documented in Provence. The influence of the church in the development of Early Medieval settlement and the evolution of settlement patterns is not often considered. The sites chosen in France include the towns of Vence and Carpentras and the small village of La Digne d’Amont in the Languedoc area. Despite disparities in the origins and the size of the two Provençal towns and the Languedocien village, their layout is remarkably similar: a cathedral/church as the focus of later settlement, which grew up around the ecclesiastical centre. Their selection was based on a review of available town plans (usually twentieth century) in southern France. A list of sites presenting a curvilinear plan-form was compiled and initial research was undertaken to assess whether or not the nucleus was ecclesiastical or castral. The three case studies were chosen from among those sites with an ecclesiastical nucleus.

The selection process was not without its difficulties, particularly given that a curvilinear pattern is often present around a castral focus in France (i.e. a castle or other fortified structure) and that a church is commonly found alongside the castle, patronised by the lord in residence. One such example, Digne les Bains in Provence was investigated during the initial reconnaissance for potential case studies in France, but was subsequently ruled out (Figure 4.1.1). On paper it was promising; with ecclesiastical origins in the Early Medieval period confirmed by archaeological excavation and subsequent development into a town exhibiting a similar pattern to those in Ireland. On closer examination, however, it was apparent that the earliest
church and cathedral along with its bourg did not provide the impetus for settlement beyond the Early Medieval period (Figure 4.1.1b & 4.1.1c). Nor did this earliest bourg exhibit more than the slightest evidence of a curvilinear enclosure. In the case of this town, the need for defence overrode the pull of the church. The nearby château, situated on a natural height competed as a pole of attraction for settlement. The construction of a new cathedral alongside the château led to this site developing into a Medieval town, with a curvilinear street pattern probably more the result of topography than ideology.

FIGURE 4.1.1: Digne-les-Bains, Provence
A. The bourg with curvilinear street pattern and Medieval cathedral.

B. The bourg in relation to the Early Medieval cathedral of Notre-Dame du Bourg.

C. The Early Medieval cathedral of Notre-Dame and earliest settlement.

4.2 METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

4.2.1 FORMAT AND STRUCTURE OF FIELD STUDY SITES

Each site was examined using a combination of detailed historical investigation, available archaeological evidence, field survey and plan-analysis. Each site is assessed in terms of its physical location, place-name evidence, early evidence for settlement and ecclesiastical history. Plan-analysis, using a combination of cartographic, historical and archaeological evidence, is then carried out to understand the spatial arrangement at each of the sites and to identify the principal plan units. The purpose of this detailed examination is to explore the development of each of the field study sites with a view to evaluating the importance of ecclesiastical foundations as a core element of settlement structure and development. This will in turn allow a comparative assessment of the field study sites, with comparative analysis and discussion provided in Chapter 5.

4.2.2 HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

There are regrettably few primary documentary sources for the Early Medieval period in any of the three study areas and this has been acknowledged as a problem by scholars working in this field. Those which are available (such as the hagiographies) and secondary historical sources were consulted in Ireland at the Berkeley and Early Printed Books Libraries of Trinity College Dublin, the National Library of Ireland, the National Archives of Ireland, the Public Libraries of Armagh, Kells and Clondalkin and the Cathedral Library of Armagh.

Desk-based research and field work in Wales took place in October and November 2000. Much of the baseline research and literature review was undertaken in Ireland, utilising the university libraries of Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin. Further baseline research and historic cartographic sources were viewed at the National Library of Wales in Aberysthwyth.

Research and fieldwork in France took place in November 1997, April to August 1998, January 2001 and January 2009, and was part funded by the French Cultural Embassy in Ireland. Primary sources and secondary sources were consulted at the Archives Communales (communal archives), the Archives Départementales (departmental archives), the Bibliotheque Universitaire (University Library) and the
Bibliothèque de l’Archéologie, de l’Art et de l’Histoire of the Université d’Aix-en-Provence (Archaeology, Art and History Library, University of Aix-en-Provence), and the Bibliothèque Municipale d’Aix-en-Provence (County Library of Aix-en-Provence). The system of cataloguing and storing historical information and documents in France is different from that in Ireland and to a certain degree Wales, where much of this information is simply stored in the university libraries, the National Library or the National Archives. In France, each département (administrative division) has its own Archives Départementales (departmental archives), which stores much of the documented history and records of the département. There are also Archives Communales, archives for the communes, the smaller districts within each département.

4.2.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA

Archaeological data in both Ireland and Wales is relatively easy to access, as each have a form of centralised database in a Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). This resource is based on all published and publicly available documentary and cartographic sources. It records known upstanding archaeological monuments, their original location (in cases of destroyed monuments) and the position of possible sites identified on vertical aerial photographs.

In Ireland the SMR sites (as revised in the light of fieldwork in the 1980s and 1990s) formed the basis for the establishment of the statutory Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) in 1996. The topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland (NMI), which identify recorded stray finds held in the museum’s archive, were also consulted. The finds, which have been donated to the state in accordance with national monuments legislation, are provenanced to townland, and the files sometimes include reports on excavations undertaken by NMI archaeologists. The Excavations Bulletins and Excavations Database is an annual bulletin, which contains summary accounts of all excavations carried out annually in Ireland, from 1969 to 2005. It can be accessed both in published form and on the Internet at www.excavations.ie.

In Wales a SMR for each of the four regions has been compiled and is held separately in the respective archaeological trust (Dyfed Archaeological Trust for Llandeilo and Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust for Llancarfan and Llandaff). Each
archaeological trust also holds the excavation reports and records of stray finds for the region.

Archaeological research in France is more difficult. Unless an excavation has been published there is no way to access the information, particularly for the Early Medieval period. Medieval archaeology fares a little better – a chronicle of the previous year’s excavations is published in the annual *Archéologie Médiévale* (*Medieval Archaeology*) journal. The published results of excavations were viewed in archaeological journals held in the library of the *Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l’Homme* (Mediterranean Centre for Humanities) of the *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (National Centre of Scientific Research) in Aix-en-Provence. There is no database, centralised or otherwise, of stray archaeological finds in France.

4.2.4 PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE

Place-name evidence – the names of towns and villages, townland names (in Ireland), street names and field names – is a rich source of information, not only on the topography, land ownership, and land use within the landscape or a town, but also on its history, archaeological monuments and folklore. Where a monument has been forgotten or destroyed, a place name may still refer to it and may indicate the possibility that the remains of certain sites survive below the ground surface. Similarly, street-names can often indicate the historical development of a town or an area within a town, pointing to specific areas of trade, commerce or religion.

4.2.5 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

In both Ireland and Wales, O.S. first edition, six inch and twenty-five inch mapping compiled in the early and later nineteenth century form the basis of the cartographic analysis. Where available earlier historic maps were consulted, such as the early seventeenth century maps of Armagh by Richard Bartlett and of Llandaff by Speed and the earlier nineteenth century tithe maps in Wales. The majority of the O.S. maps could be consulted and studied at the Map Library in Trinity College (for Ireland) and the National Library of Wales in Aberysthwyth (for Wales). Other maps were found to be held in smaller collections, such as those held in the Cathedral Library in Armagh and the County Archives in Cardiff, and were consulted and examined on site.
In France the Napoleonic cadastral maps were consulted. This series of detailed maps of France were commissioned by Napoleon at the start of the nineteenth century and are held in the various Archives Départementales (departmental archives), in this case at Nice (for Vence), Avignon (for Carpentras) and Carcassonne (for La Digne d'Amont). Other maps of various date and source were also consulted, such as the earlier maps of Carpentras at the Bibliothèque d'Inguimbertine (Inguimbertine Library) in Carpentras. Each of the departmental archives had separate rules regarding the consultation of the nineteenth century maps and the copying of same. In both Avignon and Carcassonne it was possible to view the original maps; in the former it was permitted to trace the map and in the latter it was permitted to photograph the map. The cadastral map of Carpentras was in mostly good condition but small areas had been badly damaged. In Nice it was not possible to consult the original maps but a copy was available on microfiche and could be printed; unfortunately the quality was poor. The archives at Nice have recently uploaded the original cadastral map to their internet website and this has been accessed online.

4.2.6 FIELD SURVEY

Each of the chosen case-studies was visited and on-the-ground examination was carried out, which included the recording and surveying of ecclesiastical features and extant physical structures and remains (such as enclosures, churches, crosses). Where appropriate, the surrounding lands were examined from vantage points and roadside where public access was not possible, to identify any low-visibility archaeological features with little surface expression, such as enclosing banks or ditches. In addition, aerial photographs were viewed to examine the surrounding lands for potential archaeological features and the survival of patterns within the urban fabric.

4.2.7 SPATIAL MODEL

Use was also made of Griffin's spatial model to examine and assess the sites used as field studies in this thesis.³ Given the level of detailed analysis already undertaken by Griffin in the preparation of this model, it is unnecessary to repeat the process of detailed investigation of a large number of Irish ecclesiastical sites here. As the model was initially developed for the analysis of Irish ecclesiastical sites, it has been

³ Griffin, K. op.cit.
necessary to adapt and refine the existing model for use in a broader spectrum of sites in Ireland, France and Wales. New indicators have arisen from the comparative approach, so for example, features which are commonly found in Irish ecclesiastical sites, such as round towers, are never present at French or Welsh sites. It was also necessary to be aware of the Roman origins of the French towns and how this affected the later development of the settlement in the Medieval period and whether the Roman urban traditions in Wales affected the evolution of the sites. By carrying out a detailed investigation of each of the chosen field study sites using these characteristics it should be possible to evaluate the level of early Christian influence and also to assess the similarities and differences within the three study areas.

NOTE:
The maps and illustrations for each of the field study sites detailed in this chapter are contained in Volume 2 of this thesis.
4.3 ARMAGH, COUNTY ARMAGH, IRELAND

4.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Armagh occupies a central position in County Armagh in the province of Ulster, Northern Ireland (Figures 4.1 & 4.3.1). It is situated on a prominent hill, as are other major Irish ecclesiastical sites, such as Downpatrick and Cashel. Armagh is only three kilometres from the major royal site and ritual complex of Navan Fort (Emain Macha). The River Callan flows c. 800m to the west of the city. The focus of the modern city is the hill, a substantial rock outcrop, on which the Church of Ireland cathedral stands (Figure 4.3.8c). A cluster of drumlins surround the 70m high rock outcrop and provide a crossing place over the River Callan and the neighbouring marshes.1 Several major routes converge at this point, coming from the south, east and west.

4.3.2 PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE

Armagh’s elevated position is indicated by its old Irish place-name Ard Macha (the height of Macha) and has been a place of human habitation for over two thousand years. Both the ancient place-name of Armagh (Ard Macha) and that of the royal site of Emain Macha incorporate the name of the pagan goddess Macha, who legend says founded a settlement here, and testifies to the possibility that Armagh was a place of religious significance long before the advent of Christianity in Ireland.2 Armagh is not unusual in this as a number of other ecclesiastical sites throughout Ireland appear to have had pagan religious associations before becoming places of Christian worship, suggesting a deliberate continuity of use of ancient sites of worship or gathering. This is further evidenced by the fact that many churches were founded on the borders of kingdoms, boundary zones being associated with the supernatural in pre-Christian times.3

Some monasteries seem to have been connected with sacred trees, evidence for which can be found in place-names, such as St Finnian’s monastery at Movilla (Magh Bile, plain of the tree) and Kildare (Cell-dara, church of the oak wood). Notably, the annals

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2 Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A., 1977. The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church, p.30-32; The authors address the question whether or not monasteries were often founded in places which had pagan religious associations and conclude that early Christians may have been willing to take over sites already sacred in popular regard.
for AD 995 refer to a sacred grove (*fid-nemed*) at Armagh. Some of the stone carvings of bears and humans in the north transept of the cathedral at Armagh may also have belonged to a pre-Christian tradition, though it is not certain whether they came from Armagh itself or from the surrounding countryside. Other evidence for pre-Christian religious associations can be found in the excavated *Teampull na ferta* area (see below) where possible earlier pagan burials were revealed.

4.3.3 **Evidence of Early Settlement: Prehistoric Period**

Armagh lies only 3km west of Navan Fort (*Emain Macha*) the ancient royal capital of Ulster and one of a very small group of royal sites in Ireland, which include Tara in Meath, Cruachain in Connacht and Dún Ailinne in Leinster. Archaeological excavations of the hilltop site have shown a long sequence of occupation, beginning in the Neolithic period and continuing through the Iron Age. The Iron Age stronghold and ritual site was destroyed in the first century AD and finally abandoned some time in fourth or fifth century AD. It has been suggested that the siting of an early (i.e. fifth century AD) church in Armagh was strongly influenced by the proximity to the old royal capital, perhaps being founded to maintain the tradition and prestige of religious worship among the local inhabitants. The site at Armagh was also in use long before the foundation of a church here; extensive excavations at Scotch Street at the base of the hill revealed a Neolithic ring ditch and evidence of settlement during that period, radiocarbon dated to c.2500 BC, as well as Early Medieval and Medieval activity (see below). It has also been suggested that pre-Christian Armagh was associated with a local place of assembly and trading (the *oenach Macha*).
4.3.4 ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

Irish tradition is unanimous in recognising St Patrick as the founder of the church at Armagh and the traditional date given is either AD 445 or 457. Armagh is not mentioned by Patrick in either his Confession or his Epistle. Instead it is Muirchu who relates the story of the foundation of Armagh (Book of Armagh, ff. 2-8): it is recorded here that the hill-top site of the future cathedral was given to Patrick by Daire, a local king. Armagh is traditionally acknowledged as the most important of the ecclesiastical foundations in Ireland, a tradition which has long been based around the legend of St Patrick. Whether or not this tradition is based on fact is not as significant as the belief that it was. The early monastic community at Armagh, and then the later diocesan establishment, built a great ecclesiastical city on this idea that Patrick had not only founded the church, but favoured Armagh above all his other churches.

It is thought, however, that Daire first granted Patrick the land below the hill and a description of this first foundation at Armagh is included in the Tripartite Life, which Ryan claims is “certainly ancient and credible”. According to this record, Patrick allowed seven score feet to the enclosure, twenty-seven feet to the large house, seventeen feet to the kitchen and seven feet to the oratory, and “it was thus that the houses of the ecclesiastical establishment (congbala) were built always”. Thus Bury calculates that the settlement would have been an enclosure, one hundred and forty feet in diameter and surrounded by a high wall of earth.

Armagh is one of the few Irish ecclesiastical urban sites where excavations have been undertaken, which have identified Early Medieval features and activity. The existence of an initial Christian settlement at the foot of the hill, which is recorded in the documentary sources, can be tentatively supported by archaeological evidence. Early maps and seventeenth century documents show that Scotch Street, near the bottom of the hill, crosses an area known as ‘na Ferta’, meaning ‘the graves’ or ‘burial

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16 Bury, J. B., op.cit., p.156.
monuments'. The earliest documentary reference to the site occurs in Muirchu's seventh century life of St Patrick, which refers to a cemetery in this location at that time. In the area of Teampull na ferta, excavations in the 1970s and 1980s revealed 37 graves, all apparently Christian burials, indicating that there was at least a Christian cemetery here, if not an actual ecclesiastical settlement. Wood from a coffin in one of the graves from 48 Scotch Street gave radiocarbon dates in the sixth century AD, placing the cemetery in the century after the reputed foundation of the first church. The site did not survive as a cemetery throughout the Early Medieval period and seems to have become an industrial area by the eighth or ninth centuries.

Thus the archaeological evidence may support the documentary evidence which claims that Patrick first established an ecclesiastical settlement below the hill. It is possible, as Bury suggests, that when Daire granted Patrick the higher ground for his settlement, the older site at the bottom of the hill was devoted to the uses of a graveyard. Furthermore, the cloister which was later built on this site was known as Teampull na ferta. Though traditionally translated as 'Temple of the Graveyard', Stout cites two alternative and more 'convincing' translations for fert, as a 'boundary mound' or 'boundary ditch'. There were also signs of earlier activity and Edwards suggests that there were either earlier pagan burials in the vicinity, or that some of the Christian burials were marked in the pagan manner, by mounds and/or ditches.

As ancient tradition records, Daire eventually granted Patrick the elevated position on top of the hill for the foundation of the settlement of Ard Macha, which was to become the supreme ecclesiastical city of Ireland. Armagh's supremacy over all other churches in Ireland has long been recognised and was stressed in Tirechan's memoir (Book of Armagh, ff. 9-15). It is also suggested by the frequent mention of the lex Patricii in the eighth century annals, that Armagh's claims to primacy were

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17 SMR file, Ref. ARM012-066, NI SMR (DoENI).
19 Ibid.
20 Bury, J. B., op.cit., p.159.
22 Stout, M. op.cit., p.84.
24 Bury, J. B., op.cit., p.159.
25 Hanson, R.P.C., 1983. The Life and Writings of the Historical Saint Patrick, p.16.
being actively pushed during this period. Tradition also has it that of all the churches that he founded Patrick favoured Armagh; Muirchu records that Patrick fixed his episcopal see here and that he spent the last years of his life in Armagh. The surviving texts also indicate that the ecclesiastical settlement at Armagh was drawing up documents in the late seventh century AD in an attempt to establish her position as the most important church in Ireland. Gougaud, however, notes that the authority of the primatial see overall amounted to very little as centralised ecclesiastical organisation probably did not exist.

By the time of the Viking raids in the ninth and tenth centuries, at which time there were also raids by other Irishmen, the monastery’s ‘great church’ and several of the oratories were built of stone. This indicates that the monastic settlement has prospered, being wealthy enough to find stone buildings and to attract raiders. Armagh’s determination to establish its primacy through continued efforts, such as the Book of Armagh, over the other churches in Ireland earned the monastery a great reputation. This Book contained, among all of the information relating to St Patrick, a version of the Life of St Martin of Tours, written by Sulpicius Severus. This ‘marketing’ paid off and by 1162 AD, the synod of Clane decreed that “no one should be lector in a church in Ireland except an alumnus of Armagh before”. Armagh also played a prominent role in the reform of the Church in Ireland in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries AD, in response to the reform movement in the Church in western Europe. When the synod of Raith Bressail divided the Irish Church into two provinces, Armagh and Cashel were designated at the head of the provinces. As occurred elsewhere in Ireland during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries AD, continental religious orders were established at Armagh: a large Augustinian abbey dedicated to SS Peter and Paul was founded in 1126; an Augustinian nunnery was in place possibly as early as 1144; and a Franciscan friary was built in the 1260s. Armagh maintained its place in the Church hierarchy in Ireland until the dissolution

28 Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. op.cit., pp.34-35.  
31 Ibid.  
32 Ibid.  
33 Ibid.  
34 Ibid.
of the monasteries in the mid-sixteenth century AD, after which it lost its formerly important status.\textsuperscript{35}

\subsection*{4.3.5 PLAN-ANALYSIS}

The nature of the original ecclesiastical settlement at Armagh is not certain but it is likely that Patrick would have initially founded a church on the model of churches he had known in Gaul.\textsuperscript{36} Armagh became monastic at an early date, but still adhered to the episcopal constitution, and this can be seen in the fact that the offices of bishop and abbot were combined at Armagh from the sixth to the eighth century AD.\textsuperscript{37}

Until more excavations are undertaken at Armagh, cartographic evidence and aerial photography are the best means by which to obtain an overall idea of how the original monastic settlement may have looked. A map drawn at the start of the seventeenth century (c.1602) by Richard Bartlett shows the ecclesiastical remains in Armagh at that time (Figure 4.3.2). Some of the features of the settlement which are mentioned in the annals from the eleventh and twelfth centuries can be seen depicted on this map. The map shows the Medieval cathedral on the top of the hill, known as the \textit{Ráth} in the annals,\textsuperscript{38} surrounded by a circular enclosure. According to the annals the site was divided into three distinct districts.\textsuperscript{39} Bartlett’s map also indicates the existence of what appears to be three sectors and it has been suggested that these correspond to \textit{Trian Mór}, \textit{Trian Masain} and \textit{Trian Saxan} mentioned in the annals.\textsuperscript{40}

The proposed plan units for Armagh are shown on Figure 4.3.6, which should be referred to when reading the description of each plan unit below.

\textbf{PLAN UNIT I}

The earliest settlement activity at Armagh appears from existing evidence to have been located at the base of the hill to the east (the present Scotch Street, Figure 4.3.8c). The earliest phases of burial activity (and possibly settlement) dating to the

\textsuperscript{35} McCullough, C. and Crawford, W. H. op.cit., p.1.
\textsuperscript{36} Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. op.cit., p.39.
\textsuperscript{37} A list of its abbots, the coarb of Patrick, is preserved in four ancient manuscripts: \textit{PRIA xxxv} (1919), pp.316-62.; Ryan, J. op.cit., p.102.
\textsuperscript{38} Edwards, N. 1990. op.cit., p.108.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
Neolithic period have left no trace in the town plan. In addition to prehistoric burials on this site, the documentary and archaeological evidence both also indicate the presence of a Christian burial ground here. The curve of the lane (McCrums Court) and property boundary on the north side of Scotch Street is partly echoed by a corresponding curve on Market Street, where the line of properties bulges out from the otherwise straight line of Thomas Street and Upper English Street. The plots on the south side of Scotch Street are laid out directly perpendicular to the street, with the exception of those plots immediately opposite McCrums Court. These plots run at an angle that is not truly perpendicular, and one even forms a slight curve that aligns with the curve of McCrums Court. This may represent the line of the earliest enclosure, used to encircle the first Christian burial ground, measuring c. 80m east/west. The presence of an enclosure around the earliest Christian site at the base of the hill is described in the *Tripartite Life*. Given the evidence for prehistoric burials on this site, it is possible that this enclosure originally formed part of a prehistoric site. It is considerably larger than a typical prehistoric enclosed burial site, such as a ring-barrow or ring-ditch, but a prehistoric ritual or settlement enclosure cannot be ruled out. The possible presence of an enclosure here is interesting in the light of the alternative translations for *fert*, as a ‘boundary mound’ or ‘boundary ditch’.

**PLAN UNIT II**

The six-inch O.S. map from 1835, the twenty-five inch O.S. map of 1907 and the aerial photograph of Armagh all hint at the line of the original ecclesiastical enclosures (Figures 4.3.4, 4.3.5 & 4.3.6). The present sub-circular churchyard contains the majority of the principal ecclesiastical remains, including the present St Patrick’s Cathedral and graveyard and probably follows the line of an inner enclosure (Figure 4.3.8d). Other ecclesiastical structures are mentioned in the documentary sources and would have originally stood within this enclosure in the Early Medieval period: a round tower (see below) and subsidiary churches - the Northern Church and Southern Church, the *Sabhall* (or Barn) and the *Toi* (Church of the Elections).

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41 *Trip. L. i*, p.236; cited in Bury, J. B., *op.cit.*, p.156
42 Stout, M. *op.cit.*, p.84.
43 The position of the *Toi* is uncertain. It is mentioned in the Annals as being burnt by lightening in 916 & burnt again in the great 1020 fire. Reeves’ statement that “it stood on the south side of the present church” seems based on traditions. He admits that “the site of the building is doubtful”. Others have suggested that it was attached to the south side of the cathedral; Barletts map, c.1601 (Figure 4.3.2), shows a chapel against the south aisle of the nave, SMR file, ref. ARM012-099.
The annals tell us something of the buildings of the Early Medieval ecclesiastical settlement at Armagh. They record, for example, that ‘on the fifth of the ides of January 1125, which fell on Friday, the roof was raised on the great Daimh-liag of Ard Macha, after having been fully covered with shingles by Celsus, successor to Patrick, one hundred and twenty years since it had a complete roof’. The annals of AD 789 also mention a great stone church (Daimh-liag) in Armagh. It is likely that the location of these earlier churches is the same as that of the present cathedral (Figure 4.3.8a).

The existence and location of the round tower of Armagh is known, although there are no extant remains. The tower’s existence is substantiated by several references in the annals to a cloig-theach (round tower) at Armagh, which record that it was destroyed by lightening in AD 988, 994, 995 or 996, after which it was presumably rebuilt as it again appears as ‘burnt with its bells’ in AD 1013, 1018 or 1020 and its cap torn off by a storm in AD 1121. Evidence for its location can be extrapolated from a number of sources. Reeves asserts that the tower was situated twelve metres from the northwest corner of the ‘great church’, which was possibly the predecessor of the cathedral. Reeves provides no evidence for this assertion but a sketch map by Hayes-McCoy, dating from 1601, depicts a heap of stones in this approximate position which could arguably be the remains of the round tower. A later plan of Armagh, made in 1886, places the site of the tower as being twelve metres north of the present cathedral.

PLAN UNIT III
The curving lines of the modern street pattern and property boundaries form the lines of a second enclosure which would have originally encompassed the Abbot’s House, the Priory of the Culdees and the later Augustinian abbey of SS Peter and Paul. These lines have been noted by Henry, St Joseph and Swan and form an ovoid enclosure.

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49 The Builder, 27 September 1890, pp.247-249 including plan of 1886 restoration.
measuring 250 metres north to south and 200 metres east to west.\textsuperscript{50} This enclosure can be followed in the present Castle Street and Callan Street as they curve around St Patrick’s Cathedral, forming the southern half of the enclosure, continuing in a property boundary to the northeast. Possible internal subdivisions within this outer enclosure can be traced in the plot boundaries, where they radiate out from the line of the inner enclosure.

A curving ditch was revealed during excavations in 1968-9 within the southeast side of this enclosure, between the churchyard wall and Castle Street and concentric to the inner enclosure that is represented by the churchyard wall.\textsuperscript{51} The ditch was substantial in size, measuring 6.4m wide by between 2.28m to 3m deep.\textsuperscript{52} Materials and artefacts recovered from this ditch have been dated by radiocarbon dating to before the mid-seventh century, the first phase of the ditch being placed between the late second and mid-sixth centuries (cal. AD 180-560).\textsuperscript{53} At a later stage, some time between the fifth and eighth centuries (cal. AD 430-770), the ditch was filled in with material from the outer bank and then used as a tip for metal-working debris.\textsuperscript{54} This might indicate expansion of the site beyond the original enclosures by this date.

Given the size of the ditch and its possible second century date, it may be that the church was placed within a prehistoric sanctuary or settlement site.\textsuperscript{55} Although there is no evidence that the site was used for a ritual purpose prior to its adoption as a Christian site, the earliest enclosure ran around the top of the hill and seems to have had an inner ditch and outer bank, in the manner of pagan ritual complexes (i.e. not defensive), such as Navan Fort.\textsuperscript{56} It is not entirely certain when the original ecclesiastical settlement was moved from the base to the top of the hill, though tradition records that it occurred during Patrick’s lifetime, i.e. in the later fifth century AD. The possibility that the outer ecclesiastical enclosure was already in existence, suggests that the laying out of the inner enclosure within which the church and other ecclesiastical fabric would stand was a deliberate and significant act – rather than

\textsuperscript{50} Swan, D. L., 1985. op.cit., p.84.
\textsuperscript{51} SMR file, ref. ARM012:066, NI SMR
\textsuperscript{52} SMR file, ref. ARM012:066, NI SMR.
\textsuperscript{54} Edwards, N. 1990, op.cit., p.124.
\textsuperscript{55} McCullough, C. and Crawford, W. H. op.cit., p.1
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.
simply carving out a segment of the existing enclosure, a concentric circular boundary was demarcated within it.

As the materials and artefacts recovered from the substantial outer enclosure ditch were dated to before the seventh century AD, when Armagh was well established as an important monastic settlement, it is likely that both enclosures were contemporaneous in their ecclesiastical context (if not in their laying out): one containing the churches, burial ground and round tower (Plan Unit II) and the other to house the monks who serviced the monastery (Plan Unit III). This provides archaeological evidence to confirm the probability that the essential street plan of the modern city follows the boundaries enclosing the original monastic settlement. 57

PLAN UNIT IV
A much larger outer enclosure can be seen on the 1835 and 1907 O.S. maps, although not on Bartlett’s map. It is also oval, its shape retained in the street pattern, north round to southwest, while the rest can be traced west and northwest in some of the property and field boundaries. At 480 metres north to south by 360 metres east to west it is much greater than the inner enclosures. 58 The date at which this enclosure was laid out is not known; whether it was contemporary with the initial ecclesiastical enclosures surrounding the church on the summit or whether it came later, as the monastic settlement grew. As the second enclosure had been filled in some time between the fifth and eighth centuries (cal. AD 430-770), this might indicate expansion of the site beyond the original enclosures by this date.

The Triana which are probably represented by the distinct areas depicted by Bartlett lie within this line, although the enclosure itself is not shown on Barlett’s map; Upper English Street which curves around the northeast section probably represents the location of the Trian Saxan, preserving the former designation in its name (i.e. Anglo-Saxon). The lines dividing these sectors may be traced in Irish Street and Market Street. Possible subdivisions within each trian are suggested by the traces of curving lines of the property boundaries surviving on the east side, running concentric to the enclosures. These lines are markedly different to the later Medieval plot boundaries,

58 Ibid.
which run perpendicular to the principal streets. When the monastic settlement was subdivided into three sectors is not certain, nor is the date of this enclosure, though it is more than likely later than the inner ecclesiastical enclosures and presumably was laid out to encompass the growing settlement as the monastery evolved.

That Armagh was an important and sizeable ecclesiastical community by the twelfth century, if not earlier, is evident in a reference in the annals in AD 1020, which states that the library at Armagh was the only building within the Ráth to escape destruction in a fire and that many houses in the Triana were burnt. This would suggest that the settlement contained streets with numerous timber buildings, which probably would have housed monks, students and visiting workers and families. Great monasteries such as Armagh would have acted as centres for literary production and it certainly had a library. The surviving texts indicate that Armagh was drawing up documents in the late seventh century AD in an attempt to establish her position as the pre-eminent church of Ireland.

Archaeological evidence for secular or indeed ‘ecclesiastical’ settlement in the Early Medieval and Medieval period at Armagh is unfortunately quite scarce and what little there is comes from small-scale excavations and provides only part of the picture. A very limited test excavation on Abbey Street in 1976 uncovered several early features; including what seemed to be part of a wall foundation (timber buildings commonly had stone footings so this would not necessarily represent a large structure). This could not be properly explored as it lay too close to the retaining wall of a nearby garden, but appeared to be Medieval, or earlier. The artefacts recovered were tantalising, suggesting as they do an earlier date for these features; souterrain ware, a glass bead and two coins, one Hiberno-Norse one Anglo-Saxon, although the latter two were from the topsoil. Further excavation on the same site in 1992 revealed an Early Christian ditch, the fill of which was radiocarbon dated the seventh to ninth

60 Ibid.
61 Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. op.cit., p.34-35.
62 SMR file, Ref. ARM012-090
centuries AD. The material from the ditch implies some level of industrial activity in this area before the foundation of the Medieval abbey complex.

At the junction of Cathedral Close to the north of the cathedral and Castle Street to the southeast is a rectangular shaped area, Market Street, with Market House at its western end (Figure 4.3.8d). The eastern approach road is visible on the map as Scotch Street and ends in the market square. In the pre-Christian period, a combination of religious and trade activities seem to have taken place on the border of territories at the tribal oenach or fair. With the growth of Christianity some of the larger monasteries appear to have taken over this role as a gathering place for local exchange and trade. In the ninth and tenth centuries AD the fairs developed into proper markets, with fixed market places indicated by a Market Cross as at Armagh, Kells and numerous other monastic sites. The variety of crafts which were available at these fairs is evidenced in the finds from excavations at Armagh.

The Market Cross of Armagh survives in a fragmentary state in St Patrick’s Cathedral, but is shown in situ on Bartlett’s map of 1602 and is recorded in an early nineteenth century engraving (Figures 4.3.2, 4.3.8a&b). Bartlett’s map shows a cross marking the main eastern entrance of the enclosure, in the approximate location of the present market square. The cross has been dated to the late ninth or early tenth century AD and is similar to other surviving examples such as those at Monasterboice South, County Louth and at Durrow.

PLAN UNIT V

Ecclesiastical and secular activities had extended beyond the curvilinear enclosures in the twelfth century AD, which is a further indication of the size and prosperity of the settlement. The excavations of the Teampull na Ferta area around Scotch Street also revealed Medieval features, the most important of which was the foundation course of a large stone building (Plan Unit Va). It is thought that this formed part of the

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67 Ibid.
68 Henry, F., 1964. Irish High Crosses, p.60; Edwards, N., 1990. op.cit., p.167: the fragments have been dated to the tenth century based on a number of stylistic criteria, such as the predominantly figural iconography and the more complex range of Scriptural scenes which they portray.
Augustinian nunnery known to have stood in this area in the Medieval period.\(^69\) The site of the Augustinian Abbey of SS Peter and Paul, founded in 1126 and demolished some time prior to 1819, lies on the north side of Abbey Street (Plan Unit Vb). A detailed account of the abbey buildings is given in an inquisition of 1614 and it is traditionally said to have been the ancient school of Armagh.\(^70\) Though it had spread beyond the enclosures, the site was by no means densely settled and there is a suggestion of organised spaces. A large area is shown on early maps as lying between the sites of St Brigid's Church (Templebreed), the Priory of the Culdees and the castle (a Medieval tower house). This area is mentioned in the Annals in connection with burnings and raids. Trial trenches in 1976 revealed scattered signs of Medieval occupation, with little evidence for earlier occupation. It would seem that this site was always what it appeared at the end of the Medieval period, an open paddock, with occupation along the northeast.\(^71\)

**PLAN UNIT VI**

Armagh was not incorporated as a borough until the early seventeenth century as part of the Plantation scheme. The settlement had suffered badly during the sixteenth century. The dissolution of the monasteries in the 1540s deprived it of its formerly significant status. It also suffered physically during the disturbances of the second half of the century, with attacks by both Irish and English. In 1586 it was described as 'a small village, having the church and other friaries there, for the most part broken' and by the end of the Nine Years' War in 1603 was even worse.\(^72\) Bartlett's map was drawn in 1602 and shows most of the major religious buildings as damaged and roofless. The incorporation of Armagh as a borough in 1613 granted the right to organise fairs and markets to the archbishop, though these privileges were normally granted to the borough itself.\(^73\) This indicated that the archbishop would retain control over the town in secular matters as well as ecclesiastical, despite the changing fortunes of the previous century.


\(^{70}\) SMR file, Ref. ARM012-055

\(^{71}\) SMR file, ref. ARM012:091, NI SMR.

\(^{72}\) McCullough, C. and Crawford, W.H. op.cit, 2.

\(^{73}\) Ibid.
In terms of the town's development, much of the earlier areas of settlement were consolidated in the reconstruction programme initiated by Archbishop Hamilton in 1615. Areas of the newly designated borough were leased out as part of the 'replanting and re-edifying of the decayed city'. In line with other plantation towns the lots were to be laid out in regular size and were typically long and narrow; houses were to be built 'according to the form of English houses and buildings'. Not all of the proposed lots were built upon; by 1622 only seven of the twenty individuals who had undertaken to build had fulfilled their obligations. Of these, Sir Toby Caulfield had leased the portion of the manor of Charlemont north of the cathedral and had built a 'strong and convenient dwelling house of lime and stone' with a bawn, along with fifteen houses nearby in which he installed English families. The rebellion of 1641 resulted in further attacks on the town. The newly restored cathedral was desecrated and the primate's palace was gutted, as were many other properties in the town. Some of these were never replaced, resulting in a loss of their original boundaries, while others were now occupied by several smaller and poorer properties.

These events make it very difficult to reconstruct the seventeenth century town plan with any accuracy. It is probable that at least some of the new plots were laid out within the area between the original ecclesiastical enclosures, with the majority in the old Triana and north along English Street, where excavation has identified late Medieval period occupation. The extension of settlement beyond the market and along Scotch Street to the east and Callan Street to the west was well-underway by the later seventeenth century, when some substantial new properties were constructed. By 1760 the most substantial area of growth was to the east, culminating in The Mall, with further accretions along the main approach roads.

4.3.6 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A summary of findings derived from the plan-analysis is presented in Tables 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 below.

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74 McCullough, C. and Crawford, W.H. op.cit, 3.
75 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
77 Ibid.
78 SMR file, ref. ARM012:092, NI SMR
79 Ibid.
### Table 4.3.1 Details of Ecclesiastical Elements at Armagh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inner enclosure</th>
<th>Vertical oval formed by churchyard wall. Measures c.115m north-south by 85m east-west.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outer enclosure</td>
<td>Sub-circular in shape. Formed by road from northwest to east and property boundary to northeast, missing to north. Measures c.250m north-south by 200m east-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional enclosure</td>
<td>Vertical oval formed by road, incomplete on west / northwest side. Measures c.480m north-south by 360m east-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church/ Cathedral (orientation)</td>
<td>East / West oriented Cathedral of nineteenth century date, which replaced a Medieval structure on the same site. There is documentary evidence for an Early Medieval church, probably on this site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of burial ground</td>
<td>Within inner enclosure, on south / southeast side of cathedral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation date of ecclesiastical site</td>
<td>Fifth century AD. Traces of the earliest ecclesiastical site were identified in plot boundaries on the north side of Scotch Street at the base of the hill, indicating the presence of a curvilinear enclosure. This is distinct from the substantial development of enclosures on the summit of the hill.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4.3.2 Elements of Settlement at Armagh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market place (orientation)</th>
<th>East</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subdivision of enclosure</td>
<td>The third enclosure is subdivided into three parts – <em>Triana</em> – with the dividing line radiating outwards, perpendicular to the enclosure line. There is evidence of plot boundaries providing further subdivision within each section, echoing the line of the enclosure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annexe/Suburb</td>
<td>Development outside of the enclosures to the north at Abbey Street and to the east/southeast along Scotch Street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiating road network</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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4.4 **KELLS, COUNTY MEATH, IRELAND**

4.4.1 **INTRODUCTION**

The town of Kells in County Meath is situated approximately fifty kilometres northwest of Dublin city (Figures 4.1 & 4.4.1). The town's proximity to the River Blackwater, which flows to the north, was no doubt deliberate and is not unusual. Rivers, passes and ridges have acted as roadways and communication routes since the prehistoric period. For a monastery to fulfill its sociological functions, such as spreading the word of God to as many people as possible and offering hospitality to these same people, it had to be in an accessible position.\(^1\) It is for this reason, for example, that St Cronán is said to have moved his monastery to a less isolated site: 'I will not be in a desert place where guests and poor people cannot easily find me, but I will stay here in a public place'.\(^2\) This is likely to have been one of the reasons for the location of the ecclesiastical settlement at Kells.

4.4.2 **PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE**

Place-name evidence strongly suggests that Kells was formerly the site of a fort, probably Iron Age and/or Early Medieval. Old and Middle Irish tales describe *Cenannus na rig* (*Kells of the kings*) as a royal stronghold which was surrounded by a rampart, although any traces which may remain of this Iron Age fort are now indistinguishable from the later ecclesiastical settlement.\(^3\) The town itself is built upon a ridge of Ordovician strata, rising to about 100m above sea-level. Monasteries were sometimes located on hill-tops or raised ground, as it was at Kells, because the surrounding flat land was very damp and water-logged. An elevated site is also useful for defence and where monasteries have been built on a height, it will usually be found that the site had previously been used as a pre-Christian fort. The monasteries at Armagh and Cashel are typical examples, the name Cashel actually meaning ringfort. This would have proved a very important defensive feature in prehistoric and Early Medieval and Medieval times.

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\(^1\) Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. op.cit., p.26.

\(^2\) Ibid.

4.4.3 Evidence of Early Settlement: Prehistoric Period

There was prehistoric settlement and activity in the vicinity of Kells from the Neolithic period onwards, as evidenced by recent excavations in the immediate environs of the town. Stray finds recorded from the vicinity of the town itself include two stone axeheads of Neolithic date, Bronze Age artefacts such as a copper dagger, bronze halberd and a flat axehead, as well as a bronze fibula of Iron Age date. Their presence attests to activity on the site of the present town, which is unsurprising given the proximity to a fording point on the Blackwater River, but there is no archaeological evidence yet of a settlement here. Probable Bronze Age settlement evidence was identified during excavations on the southwest side of the town, where burnt spreads (typical of *fulacht fiadh*, Bronze Age cooking sites), gullies and ditches were revealed. This site also lies on the main prehistoric route from the east coast to the prehistoric site of Rathcroghan in County Roscommon.

4.4.4 Ecclesiastical History

It is usually thought that the origins of Kells go back to St Columba or Colmcille in the mid-sixth century AD. Ryan proposes that if this is so, then Kells must have been a place of little importance in Christian Ireland as it is not mentioned in the annals until the beginning of the ninth century AD. If there was an early church at Kells, then its insignificance at this time is also suggested by a twelfth century AD description in the Life of Columba: the saint visited Kells in the sixth century AD – then the stronghold of the high-king Diarmait MacCerbaill – and told MacCerbaill that Kells would one day be the most splendid of all his foundations. There is no record of a monastic settlement from this earlier date and the later tradition in the

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4 Archaeological excavations undertaken in 2005 in advance of the M3 motorway construction identified Neolithic houses in Newrath Little townland to the east, while a substantial prehistoric settlement with industrial activity was revealed at Kilmainham to the southeast which showed occupation during the Neolithic period and Bronze Age; Senior Project Archaeologist Shane Delaney for Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd, Pers. Comm.


6 This area slopes to the south where it is bordered by marshy ground, a topography that is characteristic of *fulacht fiadh* sites. Halpin, E., 'Climber Hall / Cannon Street, Kells', Excavation Licence No. 01E1023, in Bennett, I. 2003. Excavations 2001: Summary accounts of archaeological excavations in Ireland., 2001:980.

7 Simms, A. and Simms, K., op.cit., p.1

8 *Columbanus* is the Latin name of the saint who is also known by the names *St. Colmcille* and St. *Columba*. His original name was probably the Irish name *Colum*.

9 Ryan, J., op.cit., p.121.
annals which recorded that “Cenannus was given to Colmcille the musical without battle” is not supported by anything more than circumstantial evidence (see below).\(^{11}\)

Kells is first recorded as a monastery at the start of the ninth century AD. It is known that Kells was a Columban foundation and that it was most probably founded as a place of refuge for monks from Iona who arrived in AD 804. The Columban monastic community of Iona had suffered repeated attacks at the hands of the Vikings in the early ninth century AD. The monastic settlement on Iona was burned in raid in AD 802 and then in AD 806, sixty-eight members of the community were slain in another raid.\(^{12}\) Thus the reference to an ecclesiastical settlement at Kells in AD 804 was probably in context of the arrival of the monks from Iona, who had accepted the donation of land on which to build a new monastery in Kells.\(^{13}\) As the annals also record that the church of Colmcille at Kells was destroyed in AD 807, this indicates that a monastic community was established here at this time which was devoted to Columba.\(^{14}\)

The site granted to the monks appears to have belonged to the monastery at Armagh and it is possible that there was already a church here when the Columban community arrived.\(^{15}\) Archaeological excavation of an area immediately north and west of St Colmcille’s House (a stone oratory) in 1987 uncovered activity from the Bronze Age through to the Medieval period, but of most interest are the features and material dating to the seventh century.\(^{16}\) These included part of a ditch, which it is estimated enclosed an area of approximately 22m diameter, placing it only a few metres from the stone oratory. No conclusively ecclesiastical material was uncovered, but the artefacts are indicative of some form of settlement that was relatively prosperous and in place prior to the arrival of the monks from Iona.\(^{17}\) There is a strong possibility that...

\(^{11}\) Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R., op.cit., p.82.
\(^{14}\) Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R., op.cit., p.82.
\(^{15}\) Bradley, J., 1985, op.cit., p.70.
\(^{17}\) The artefacts include a seventh century plain bronze brooch, a stone spindle whorl, a socketed iron punch or awl, an iron ring, slag, fragments of a bronze ring, a bone cylinder and the head of a bone pin.
this activity is related to a secular settlement associated with the Ceannanus na rig mentioned in the sources.

The increasing number of raids by Vikings during the tenth century AD is indicative of the prosperity of the monastery. The extant remains give some impression of this, for example, the highly decorated carved stone crosses (see below), the production of which would have involved much expense and organisation and indicate that Kells was a prosperous and important settlement. The ecclesiastical settlement at Kells soon became an important house in the familia of Columba in Ireland, and seems to have been the most important of these churches throughout the eleventh century AD. The Book of Kells contains charters from the eleventh and twelfth centuries AD copied in Irish, recording land grants and purchases between 1033 and 1161. These charters relate to the monastery and attest to the existence of an important and largely secular monastery in Kells prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans and the establishment of a Medieval borough.

The Book of Kells, preserved at Trinity College Dublin, is a large vellum manuscript which contains the illuminated gospels in Latin. It is undoubtedly the most famous and celebrated surviving element of the ancient monastic community of Kells. It originally had around three hundred and seventy folios, each measuring fourteen and a half inches by ten and a quarter inches and it has been estimated that it would have required around one hundred and fifty calves to produce this one book. This again points to the monastery at Kells being a large, thriving community, one which could afford such a skilled and expensive undertaking.

Both the date and the provenance of the Book of Kells are uncertain and have provoked much debate. Some scholars believe that the Book was either written or begun at Iona and then brought to Kells for safety, along with the refugees. Although it cannot be proven that it was written in either Iona or Kells, the Book must have its origins in a centre where Irish, Northumbrian and Pictish influences were all

18 Bradley, J., 1985, op.cit., p.70
19 Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R., op.cit., p.82.
21 Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A., op.cit., p.49.
quite strong, as it shows similarities with the Lindisfarne Gospels and with elements in Pictish art; these influences are apparent in the illuminated pages of the Book.\textsuperscript{23} Edwards thinks it likely that the Book was illuminated in Iona, which would place the production of the Book in the eighth century AD, as there are close similarities between the ornament and iconography in the Book and on Iona stone crosses, and that the Book was probably at Kells by the early eleventh century AD.\textsuperscript{24} Brown also suggests a mid-eighth century date on the basis of the palaeography.\textsuperscript{25} Some of the decorative motifs carved on the Tower Cross at Kells seem to have been copied from the Book of Kells and a late eighth or early ninth century AD date has been proposed for both.\textsuperscript{26} Scholarly opinion then seems to date the Book of Kells to the eighth or ninth century AD.

By the mid-twelfth century AD Kells became the bishopric of the new diocese of Bréifne and was the setting for an important reforming synod which took place in 1152.\textsuperscript{27} The church at Kells became a cathedral for the bishop of Kells and the formerly monastic lands passed into the possession of a new Augustinian priory, St Mary’s Abbey at the western side of the town. The wealth of the ecclesiastical site attracted the attention of the Anglo-Normans, much as it had done the Viking raiders in the ninth and tenth centuries AD. It was chosen as the manorial site for the first Anglo-Norman lord of Meath, Hugh de Lacy and the first castle at Kells (probably a motte-and-bailey) was erected in 1176.\textsuperscript{28} While the secular settlement was elevated to borough status in the late twelfth century AD, Kells’ episcopal status did not last long, surviving only until the beginning of the thirteenth century AD when new diocesan boundaries were established.\textsuperscript{29} This originally monastic church became a cathedral church of the diocese of Kells in 1152, and then the parish church once the dioceses of Kells and Meath amalgamated in 1211.\textsuperscript{30}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22} Richardson, H., op.cit., p.206.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A., op.cit., p.10 and Edwards, N., 1990. op.cit., p.155.
\item \textsuperscript{24} Edwards, N., 1990. op.cit., p.155.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{26} Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. op.cit., p.93.
\item \textsuperscript{27} Bradley, J. 1985, op.cit., p.71.
\item \textsuperscript{28} Simms, A. 1990. op.cit., p.2
\item \textsuperscript{29} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{30} Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R., op.cit., p.82.
\end{itemize}
4.4.5 PLAN-ANALYSIS

It is possible to trace much of the original lines of the Early Medieval ecclesiastical enclosures in the modern town of Kells through the use of maps and aerial photographs (Figures 4.4.2 to 4.4.5). Plan-analysis is particularly effective in Kells, revealing the probable extent of the early monastic settlement and its later Medieval development. The proposed plan units for Kells are shown on Figure 4.4.6, which should be referred to when reading the description of each plan unit below.

PLAN UNIT I

The line of the inner enclosure at Kells can only be partially traced where it survives in the present Cannon Street, Church Street and Church Lane (Figure 4.4.7f); the western section of the boundary has completely disappeared. As at Armagh, the inner enclosure at Kells contains the majority of the ecclesiastical fabric, apart from St Colmcille’s ‘House’, which lies just outside the enclosure to the northwest. These include the Church of Ireland church of St Columba and its churchyard, the round tower and a number of crosses (Figures 4.4.7a-e). The present church is late eighteenth century in date with a sixteenth century bell tower. The tower survives from a sixteenth century reconstruction of the Medieval church that had been left in a ruinous state after the dissolution. Significantly, the round tower is located to the southwest of the church with its doorway facing the entrance of the church, a layout that has been noted at a number of other ecclesiastical sites.

The surviving ecclesiastical remains at Kells, as mentioned previously, are to be found within the churchyard (Figures 4.4.7a-e). There are three richly carved high crosses and the base of a fourth now located in St Columba’s graveyard. The oldest of these is dated to the eighth century and is situated between the church and the round tower. These are known as the North, South, East and West Crosses. The South and East Crosses, like the Market Cross, are decorated ringed granite crosses. The West cross is a decorated granite cross with the head and part of the shaft missing, while the North cross only survives as a weathered base. ‘High Crosses’ such as these are the best known of the carved stone monuments found associated with ecclesiastical sites.
and are unique to Ireland and parts of Britain. They are usually free-standing, three-dimensional crosses, often in the form of a tall ringed cross set in a shaped base, though this varies.

The round tower of Kells is situated on the southern edge of the churchyard (Figure 4.4.7b). It stands complete to just above the top windows but lacks a cap, cornice, floors and ladders. The tower was mostly constructed using limestone, except for the round-headed doorway and its surrounding area which used three different types of sandstone (reddish-purple, light brown and grey). It has a diameter at its base of 4.75 metres and stands 26 metres high - it has been estimated that, with a full cap, the tower would have measured approximately thirty and a half metres high. Without cap it stands twenty six metres high. There is only one mention of the tower in the annals, in AD 1076, when Murchadh, king of Tara, was murdered in the cloig-theach of Ceanannus by Amlaeibh. There is much debate around the date of the round tower, with some scholars dating it to the early years of the monastery, that is, the sixth or seventh century AD – though it is unknown whether a monastery existed at this time – or to the beginning of the ninth century when the ecclesiastical settlement was rebuilt. The only certainty is that the round tower was constructed before 1076 AD, when as noted above it is recorded in the annals.

Kells is mentioned in the written sources as having had a stone church in the ninth century AD, when they seem to have been relatively rare on lesser sites. It is recorded that the church of Colmcille at Kells was destroyed in AD 807, but that it was rebuilt and completed by Cellach, the abbot of Iona, in AD 814. Simms suggests that this church of AD 814 is identical with the oratorium of AD 904 and the daimh-liag (stone church) of AD 920, 1007 and 1060. Leask believes that the record in the annals refers to St Colmcille’s ‘House’, a small building north-west of the inner enclosure. Most other scholars, however, believe that the daimh-liag mentioned

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31 Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A., op.cit., pp.87-88.
32 Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A., op.cit., pp.87-88.
34 Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R., op.cit., p.82.
37 Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R., Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R., op.cit, p.82.
refers to a larger church, that is, the predecessor of St Columba’s Church of Ireland church, which was the main church of the monastic settlement at Kells.

**PLAN UNIT II**

The outer enclosure at Kells appears quite clearly on both the six-inch 1836 and the twenty-five inch 1910 O.S. maps, although not in the line of Circular Road as it would appear (Figures 4.4.4 & 4.4.5). This road appears on an early nineteenth century estate map and on the first edition map as a dashed line (Figure 4.4.4), presumably a less formal road or a path running through the Fair Green. An earlier estate map dating to 1762 shows a curve in property boundaries, which is still apparent on the later maps to the east of Circular Road (Figure 4.4.3). The enclosure curves around in an arc from northwest to southeast following these property and plot boundaries, then continues in Carrick Street, Castle Street and Cross Street. The remainder of the enclosure can only be guessed at, but it is thought that the later Medieval town walls followed its alignment along the south, thus creating a sub-circular enclosure. The enclosure has been estimated as measuring 420 metres north to south and a possible 380 metres from east to west. These measurements put Kells on a par with Armagh, which has a similar set of dimensions, and it has been observed that the similarities apparent between the two might be the result of “a deliberate imitation of St Patrick’s city”.

To the northwest of the inner enclosure stands a small, well-preserved stone building with a high pitched roof, known as St Colmcille’s ‘House’ (Figure 4.4.7b). This building, along with St Kevin’s church at Glendalough and St Mochta’s House in Louth, is a typical example of a stone-roofed church which uses the propping arch to support the roof. Stone-roofs had a tendency to sag inwards and the Irish mason’s solution was to use a propping arch. It was placed about half way up the length of

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45 Bradley, J., 1985, op.cit., p.76.
the roof slope and had the double function of completing the inner vault and propping apart the opposing roof slopes. St Colmcille's 'House' was one of the earliest of the larger buildings in which this arch was used. Though Leask suggests that this may be the church completed in AD 814, Bradley notes that the tenth or eleventh century it is a more probable date. Simms thinks it likely that this well-preserved early Christian stone building was the hermitage of Columbanus mentioned in an eleventh century AD Irish charter, and dates the building as contemporary with this charter. Major buildings mentioned in the charters, such as the refectory and guest-house, which have otherwise left no trace probably also stood in the area between the two enclosures.

A vast oval enclosure can be traced in the field boundaries surrounding the town of Kells on the 1836 six-inch O.S. map, with its northern extent formed by the River Callan (Figure 4.4.4). This enclosure measures approximately 2.2km by 2.5km and may represent the extents of the monastic lands. Ecclesiastical associations can be found within this area. St Columba's holy well is located well outside of the original monastic settlement, beyond the outer enclosure to the southwest but within this larger area. A large parcel of land belonging to Archdeaconry House forms the townland of Archdeaconry Glebe (thus designated church land), occupying the area between Kells town and the river but again within the larger enclosure.

The earliest origins of Kells are obscure and it is not clear whether or not the inner or outer enclosure - or indeed both - might preserve the line of an earlier Iron Age and Early Medieval secular settlement. The re-use of one or more existing enclosures as a monastic settlement is most likely to have taken place during the early ninth century AD when the Columban monastery was established. It is possible that an earlier church did occupy the inner enclosure, though this is only supposition. In their ecclesiastical context, the two enclosures are likely to have been contemporaneous in use. The arrival of a community of monks in one recorded incident, rather than an initial foundation by an individual who then built a community or attracted followers is a significant factor. This would require the building of a settlement and not just a

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48 Bradley 1985, op.cit., p.76.
church, thus it can be supposed that the enclosures were either laid out together or at the very least occupied at the same time.

Another feature common to many ecclesiastical settlements is apparent at Kells, as it is at Armagh and Clondalkin, that is, the eastern approach road which ended in a market area, evidence of which still survives. Where this main eastern approach road (Headfort Place) meets the eastern edge of the outer enclosure is Market Street, which joins the outer to the inner enclosure and which was marked by a stone cross. A market at Kells is recorded in the eleventh and twelfth century AD charters, the *margad Cenanndsa*, and probably evolved from the *őenach* or fair which took place on major feast days outside of the outer ecclesiastical enclosure, on its eastern side. This carved granite high cross, which stood at the junction of Cross Street and John Street, may originally have been a *termon* or boundary cross, but over the centuries it became known locally as the Market Cross (Figure 4.4.7e). The Market Cross is no longer in situ, but was removed for conservation and then to its current position outside Kells Heritage Centre at the junction of the Navan and Drogheda Roads. The location of the market square at Kells is significant and illustrates a common element of early Irish ecclesiastical sites, that is, the development of the market place outside of the inner sanctuary, in a secular part of the settlement.

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A reference in the annals to an area south of the enclosure named ‘*Si%ie’* in 1156, possibly remembered in the present Suffolk Street, might indicate the development of some form of settlement in this area prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans. If so, this conforms to the pattern noted by Swan at other ecclesiastical sites where settlement developed to the east or southeast, in proximity to the market.

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52 The Market Cross in Kells (RMP ME017-041) was located on the north-east corner of Cross Street adjacent to the Market Square, at an extremely busy junction where traffic from Market Street, Castle Street and John Street converge. The collision of a school bus with the plinth of the cross in December 1996 resulted in a decision being made to remove the cross to the National Monuments Depot in Trim for conservation. Subsequently excavation took place on the site of the cross in March 1997, but revealed no stratified deposits; Excavator H. King of National Monuments Service (Licence Ref. 97E290), Bennett 1997:423.
The Medieval growth of the town following the selection of Kells for the de Lacy manor in the late twelfth century AD and the establishment of the borough is readily distinguished from the early ecclesiastical settlement. The later accretions followed a linear settlement pattern, extending north, east and south along the main approach roads (Maudlin Street, John Street and Farrell Street), with additional plots laid out along Carrick Street and Cannon Street, along the outer and inner enclosures of the ecclesiastical settlement. Many of the burgages laid out in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century can still be traced in the town plan, particularly along Carrick Street, Maudlin Street, Farrell Street, Cannon Street and Suffolk Street. The 1762 estate map shows that the plots along Suffolk Street, New Market Street and Farrell Street had not yet been subdivided into elongated house-plots, perhaps indicating that the areas to the north and east were more densely inhabited in the Medieval period. The plot pattern is more complex in the areas surrounding the original inner enclosure of the ecclesiastical settlement, where the Anglo-Normans were constrained by existing streets and structures forming less regular, smaller blocks.

The Medieval town defences of stone walls pierced by five gates are depicted on a detailed Down Survey map of 1655, on which the town is named 'Chief Towne' of the Barony and is described as being on the 'Through fare from Dublin to the North Counties'. It is not known when the town was first walled and the first documentary reference to the defences is a murage grant of 1326. The only surviving section of wall runs behind the properties along the south side of Cannon Street and includes a small tower. The original castle or motte-and-bailey constructed by Hugh de Lacy in 1176 was razed that same year in the face of an Irish attack. The castle was re-established and is recorded in 1212 and although its location is uncertain, it may well have stood on the site of the tower-house depicted in an early nineteenth century painting, opposite the market cross in the middle of Castle Street.
The town walls are thought to have followed the alignment of the outer ecclesiastical enclosure for most of their course. They deviate from the line in the southeast, possibly to encompass the nascent settlement in the Siofoic area. The Augustinian Abbey of St Mary was richly endowed by Hugh de Lacy and probably stood outside and west of Cannon Gate.\(^6^0\) The land on the southwest side of the town, circumvented by the town walls, is also marked as 'Abbey Land'. Archaeological test excavation in 2001 revealed the probable remains of a Medieval graveyard, possibly enclosed by a ditch, in the fields to the south of Cannon Street within the area denoted 'Abbey Land'.\(^6^1\) As full excavation was not undertaken at the site the results cannot be conclusive, but it is possible that the graveyard is associated with the Medieval abbey and its presence is perhaps the reason why the walls bow inwards on this side.

### 4.4.6 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A summary of findings derived from the plan-analysis is presented in Tables 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 below.

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<th>TABLE 4.4.1 DETAILS OF ECCLESIASTICAL ELEMENTS</th>
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<td><strong>Outer enclosure</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Additional enclosure</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Foundation date of ecclesiastical site</strong></td>
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\(^6^0\) The abbey is referred to as 'Abbey without Cannon Gate called Lady Abbey' in a seventeenth century survey; Simms, A. and Simms, K., op.cit., p.2.
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<th><strong>TABLE 4.4.2  ELEMENTS OF SETTLEMENT</strong></th>
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<tbody>
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4.5 **CLONDALKIN, COUNTY DUBLIN, IRELAND**

4.5.1 **INTRODUCTION**

Clondalkin is situated approximately five miles southwest of Dublin city, on the road to Naas, County Kildare (Figures 4.1 & 4.5.1). The village lies on the banks of the River Camac, which flows to the north. The village is located within the Barony of Uppercross, the title of which has its origins in the fifth century when districts of the country which were dedicated to the church were known as *Croceae* or Crosslands, and were under the jurisdiction of the local bishop. Crosses were usually used to mark the boundaries of these districts.

4.5.2 **PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE**

The name ‘Clondalkin’ refers to *Cluain Dolcain* or ‘Dolcan’s meadow’.¹ Although the ‘meadow’ is clearly a topographical reference, ‘Dolcan’ is unknown (besides being the proprietor of the ‘meadow’). There is no known association with the monastic settlement. Lewis in his topographical dictionary of Ireland indicates that Clondalkin was “also referred to as ‘Dun-Awley’ by the Danes”, which may be a reference to a ringfort in the vicinity of the present village.²

4.5.3 **EVIDENCE OF EARLY SETTLEMENT: PREHISTORIC PERIOD**

The earliest evidence for human activity in the area of Clondalkin is a Mesolithic flint that was retrieved from tufa (calcium carbonate) in which remains of freshwater molluscs were deposited.³ The flint dates to around 5000 BC and was uncovered during the construction of a dual-carriageway to the south of the village in the 1980s. This evidence for Mesolithic activity, albeit sparse, marked the beginning of an almost continuous habitation of the area over the subsequent millennia, with further stray finds recovered in the area dated to the Neolithic period and the Bronze Age.⁴

There is as yet no evidence of a prehistoric settlement on the site of the later monastery, although its proximity to the river and the artefactual evidence, would suggest that the general area was settled from the Neolithic period onwards.

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⁴ A Neolithic hollow-based flint arrowhead (NMI 1976:24) was discovered in the surface soil of garden 15 Monastery Drive, Clondalkin; two bronze axeheads, one of the flanged variety and dating to the mid-Bronze Age (NMI 1911:242 & NMI 1963:65); Topographical files of the Irish Antiquities Division of the National Museum of Ireland.
4.5.4 ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

The first ecclesiastical settlement was founded here in the seventh century AD by St Mochua, a former pupil of St Kevin of Glendalough and the first abbot of the monastery. ⁵ Documentary sources attest to the existence of a monastery at Clondalkin by 630 AD, when Mo-Chua (Cronan) moccu Lugaedon was bishop and recount that his relics were translated in AD 789.⁶ Little is known of the monastic settlement itself, either its size or its form. A fragment of the Mass Book of Clondalkin, one of the few remaining links with the monastic settlement, is preserved in the Library of Karlsruhe in Germany, while an antiphonary from the monastery is preserved in Trinity College library.

The monastery was sufficiently important (i.e. in its size and wealth) to be plundered by the Vikings in AD 833 and shortly afterwards it became a base for Viking activities in the area. The base established by Olaf the White, the first Norwegian king of Dublin is recorded only once in the annals, when it was attacked and captured in 867 by two Leinster chieftains: ‘Amlaib’s fort at Cluain Dolicáin was burned by Gaithine’s son [Cennetig] and Mael Ciaráin, son of Rónán, and the aforesaid commanders caused a slaughter of a hundred of the leaders [duces] of the foreigners in the vicinity of Cluain Dolicáin on the same day’.⁷ This entry suggests that there were other Viking settlements in the vicinity of Clondalkin, but the exact whereabouts of these and of the fort itself are unknown. The Vikings may have taken over the early monastery and fortified it, as occurred at St Mullin’s in County Carlow, or perhaps the Viking base was located outside the monastery.⁸ Ua Broin comments that the nearby place-name Raheen (from the Irish ráthín meaning ‘fort’; located on the north bank of the Cammock) may be significant in this regard.⁹

It is unknown whether the Vikings returned to settle here in the tenth century or not, though the monastery was certainly still in existence in the eleventh century AD. If

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⁵ Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. op.cit., p.31
⁶ Ibid.
not, then at least their influence may have remained; Bradley cites a tradition that the church lands were given to the archdiocese of Dublin by the MacGilla Mochólmog family, vassals of the later Norse kings of Dublin.\textsuperscript{10} The monastery was burned in 1071 AD but presumably not too badly, as in 1077 a struggle between rival factions for control of the abbacy resulted in the granting of the church to the Culdees (\textit{Céli Dé}, meaning servants of God).\textsuperscript{11} This reforming community of monks had their headquarters at Tallaght and like the other Culdee monasteries the lands of the abbacy at Clondalkin became part of the see lands of the diocese of Dublin.\textsuperscript{12} As this happened before the Anglo-Norman invasion, it presumably reflects the diocesan reorganisation that occurred after the Synods of Rath Bressail (1111AD) and Kells (1152AD).\textsuperscript{13}

The area that now forms County Dublin south of the River Liffey includes the baronies of Uppercross and Newcastle and remained under the control of Leinster rulers until the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in the late twelfth century AD. Early dynasties of the Laigin were well represented in the region; Dál Messin Corb was originally based at Naas and had ecclesiastical interests in Newcastle and Uppercross, as indeed had Úi Bairreche, and lineages of both dynasties were represented at Clondalkin, Saggart and Kilnamanagh. Under the Norman archbishops Clondalkin became the centre of one of the largest manors belonging to the Dublin bishopric and following the foundation of St Patrick’s Cathedral the church at Clondalkin was attached by Archbishop Henry of London to the dean of the cathedral.\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{4.5.5 PLAN-ANALYSIS}

Clondalkin is now a built-up suburb of Dublin city bearing little resemblance either to a village or an ecclesiastical site. That being said, much of its history can still be identified in its ecclesiastical remains, in its street plan and in its road and place-names. Using plan-analysis, it is possible to say something of the shape of the original ecclesiastical settlement. The proposed plan units for Clondalkin are shown on Figure

\textsuperscript{10} Bradley, J., 1998. op.cit., p. 130.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{12} Gwynn, A. and Haddock, R. op.cit., p.31.
\textsuperscript{13} Bradley, J., 1998. op.cit., p.130
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
PLAN UNIT I
The first edition six-inch O.S. map of Clondalkin, published in 1837-43 (Figure 4.5.3), shows the Church of Ireland church and the round tower divided by Tower Road (Figure 4.5.7c). The original inner enclosure of the monastic site probably contained both the round tower and the Church of Ireland church and burial ground. The line of the enclosure is retained in part in the wall at the back of the churchyard, suggesting a horizontal oval shape, measuring approximately 53m north/south by 83m east/west. This is supported by the fact that it is this area which contains the majority of the important ecclesiastical remains.

There is evidence that the church and round tower were planned in relation with each other, an example of the organised planning which appears to have featured at many Early Medieval monastic sites. The church is situated directly opposite the round tower, which is located to the west of the church. As with other sites, the doorway of the tower faces towards that of the church.

Those physical remains which survive from the Early Medieval ecclesiastical settlement are located, for the most part, within the graveyard of the present Church of Ireland church (Figure 4.5.7a). The church is situated on Tower Road, in the heart of the modern village of Clondalkin. St John’s Church was originally built in 1770, then restored in 1838 as the present church building, but there had been an earlier structure on the same grounds which was thought to date to the Medieval period. The extensive ruins of this earlier structure, still extant in the eighteenth century, were destroyed in the Moyle Park Powder Mills explosion in 1787.15 All that remains of this earlier building is a large column of stones which stands at the rear of the graveyard that once formed part of the chancel wall.

The Medieval church was described by Mason as being one of the finest Medieval churches in County Dublin, 120 feet long by 50 feet wide with three altars.\textsuperscript{16} It was called St Mochua’s Church or, simply, the Parish Church of Clondalkin and was united with Kilmahuddrick by Master Osbertus in 1186.\textsuperscript{17} Petrie stated that the church was of considerable architectural importance and therefore was probably built in the thirteenth century.\textsuperscript{18} The date of its construction, however, is not known and the documentary evidence relating to the church can only provide a tentative twelfth century date. A report from Archbishop Bulkeley in the early seventeenth century comments on the church’s poor state of repair, which would be consistent with a church of around five hundred years old.\textsuperscript{19} Then in 1649 it was decided to close St Mochua’s and merge the parish with that of Tallaght.\textsuperscript{20} Given that the church was never fully restored when re-opened in 1729, the old chancel area being left in ruins, this would suggest that the congregation had become smaller over the centuries and had no need of it.

The churchyard contains, besides the remains of the chancel wall, a granite baptismal font which lies against the perimeter wall of the oldest section of the graveyard (Figure 4.5.7e). This hollowed granite basin is quite large and tub-shaped. Medieval baptismal fonts have been much studied in England, unlike their Irish counterparts, and the evidence available suggests that fonts attributable to the period between the eleventh and twelfth centuries AD are variously shaped and decorated.\textsuperscript{21} One of the types of font from this early period are large tub-shaped vessels, obviously versions of wooden proto-types, similar in description to the font at Clondalkin. There is no way to prove either its age or provenance, but the granite font in St John’s graveyard may have been incorporated within the Medieval church.

\textsuperscript{16} Mason cited in Byrne, R. H. and Graham, A., \textit{From Generation to Generation: Clondalkin, village, parish and neighbourhood}, p.3.
\textsuperscript{17} Byrne, R. H. and Graham, A., op.cit., p.3.
\textsuperscript{18} Byrne, R. H. and Graham, A., op.cit., p.3.
\textsuperscript{19} Ball, F. E., 1995. \textit{A History of the County Dublin: the people, parishes and antiquities from the earliest times to the close of the eighteenth century}, Vol.VI., ix, p.112.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{21} Bond, F., 1985. \textit{Fonts and Font Covers}. In this work Bond has formulated a classification in form, in doctrinal illustration and in chronological relationships, which might usefully be applied to fonts in Ireland.
In the graveyard wall beside the font is a piece of carved stone from the apex of one of the Medieval church windows (Figure 4.5.7e). Set into the ground nearby, next to a gate leading into a separate section of graveyard (the graveyard was sub-divided in 1880), is another element from the Medieval church: a stone window support with a hollowed hole on each side.

Also contained within the churchyard are two stone crosses, both of which appear to be of early date (Figure 4.5.7a). One of the crosses is of solid granite and in the early 1880’s it was reported as being nine feet high. It bears a faint carved image on the back which has been eroded over time. Such large crosses are quite common in graveyards of great antiquity and similar ones can be found in the nearby villages of Tallaght, Rathcoole and Newcastle. The crosses are thought to have been placed in fields to mark the boundaries of ecclesiastical settlements, but over time were frequently removed by farmers to the local churchyard due to their apparent religious significance.22

The round tower, located to the west of the Church of Ireland church, is one of the best preserved in Ireland and it is the only complete tower not to have had its cap reconstructed or re-set during the intensive conservation works carried out on round towers in the late nineteenth century (Figure 4.5.7b).23 It also represents one of the earliest and the most visible elements of the Early Medieval ecclesiastical remains in Clondalkin. It was built using the local calp limestone, with granite used for the doorway jams and head. The tower has a number of unusual features which differentiate it from others found around the country. It measures 27.5 metres high and its circumference, being less than thirteen metres, makes it the most slender of the extant towers.24 Its shape is almost cylindrical, instead of tapering towards the top, which is another unique feature. Finally, the odd bulge at the base of the tower, made up of rubble work of smaller stones, is not seen anywhere else but was added after the gunpowder explosions of 1787.25

22 Byrne, R. H. and Graham, A., op.cit., p.17.
Williams believes that the tower's unconventional construction might indicate an early date.26 In his study on the round towers of County Dublin, namely Lusk, Swords, Clondalkin and Rathmichael, he also notes that, as all of these towers are in an area that was plundered and then settled by the Vikings in quick succession, they must predate the period 790-840 AD.27 More recent thinking on the date of round towers makes such an early date highly unlikely: the vast majority are thought to have been built in the eleventh and twelfth centuries AD, with a small number dating to the tenth and thirteenth centuries AD.28 There is little evidence to support the theory of a relationship between the arrival of the Vikings and the construction of the round towers; the towers are more likely to have been used as belfries, as is suggested by their Irish name, cloig-theach (literally 'bell-house').29 Clondalkin's round tower belongs to a group with three others within the greater Dublin area (Dyfinnarski) that fell under Norse control: Lusk, Swords (extant) and St Michael le Pole (demolished).30 Analysis of door and window openings indicates that all four of the towers are early examples, belonging to the late tenth or early eleventh century.31

PLAN UNIT II

Evidence of a large curvilinear outer enclosure can be seen in the pattern of the streets today. Unlike Kells and Armagh, at Clondalkin there is no evidence to suggest that the outer enclosure might have been laid out at the same time as the inner enclosure. It is possible to partially trace the enclosure by following Orchard Lane and Main Street as they curve from north/northeast to southeast (Figure 4.5.7c); a curving field boundary is all that remains of the enclosure line on the northwest side. Enough of the outer enclosure can be traced to suggest that it was originally an oval shape, measuring perhaps c.315m north/south by 190m east/west. Two slightly curved plot boundaries, one to the north and one to the south, may represent some sort of internal division within this enclosure.

27 Ibid.
29 Lalor, B., 1999. op. cit., p.36.
31 Ibid.
PLAN UNIT III

There are a number of roads radiating out from the village and a principal approach road coming in from the east. Where this eastern approach road, Monastery Road, meets the boundary of the outer enclosure, at the junction of Main Street and Orchard Lane, is a triangular shaped area; this may have been the market place, colonised by later development (Figure 4.5.7d). Settlement may have extended during the later Early Medieval period into the area immediately to the south/southwest of the market place, outside of the outer enclosure (Plan Unit IIIa). The main plot boundaries in this area align neatly with those to the north, within the inner enclosure, which appear to form a further subdivision of that area.

Another area of Early Medieval settlement appears to have occurred outside of the village on its northeast side (Plan Unit IIIb). Early Medieval activity immediately outside of this enclosure was identified during archaeological excavations in the 1960s of a church site on the east side of Watery Lane in 'The Chapel Field'. The artefacts recovered included a bronze ringed-pin that is datable to the Early Medieval period (600-1000 AD). It is possible that this church site was a chapel described in the fourteenth century (see Plan Unit IV). Glebe House, which is shown to the north of the village on the first edition six-inch O.S. map occupies the north bank of the River Camac and again suggests an extension of ecclesiastical lands beyond the inner and outer enclosures (Figure 4.5.3).

Holy wells are another feature common to many early Christian settlements and Clondalkin is no exception. St Brigit's Well is situated to the southwest of the main ecclesiastical settlement, outside of the outer enclosure (Figure 4.5.3 & 4.5.7e). Much of the current structure of the well, including the roofed passage over the spring, has been tentatively dated to later than 1761, the dating being based on the symbols used to depict the well on early maps. St Brigit is reputed to have baptised local people in the small stream and an enclosure then constructed to mark the holy site. The well was subsequently believed to have curative properties and a pattern was held at the

33 NMI topographical files Ref. No. 1964:21
well each year until the end of World War II. Ua Broin records the tradition that the site was long used as a burial place for unbaptised infants, though no trace of a cillin was identified during archaeological test excavation alongside the well in 1993.

As at Kells, traces of a vast curvilinear enclosure were identified during this investigation in the field boundaries of the land surrounding Clondalkin on the first edition six-inch O.S. map (Figure 4.5.3). The lines of the enclosure can also be traced on the earlier historic maps of the Down Survey in the mid-seventeenth century and of Rocque in the eighteenth century (Figure 4.5.2). These lines demarcate an area measuring approximately 1.7km north/south by 2.2km east/west, which (like at Kells) contain the holy well.

**PLAN UNIT IV**

A secular settlement at Clondalkin is not indicated until the early fourteenth century, when an extent of the manor of Clondalkin in 1326 notes that the burgesses of Clondalkin held thirty-two and two-third burgages, though it is likely that it was already established in the thirteenth century. The borough was ruled by a corporation and bailiff, an office held in 1276 by Robert Beg. By the late fourteenth century there were at least five streets in the borough of Clondalkin, known as Mill Street, Steeple Street, Pope Lane, New Street, and Mahow Street, which are attested in an inquisition about property assigned in 1393 to the church of Clondalkin by John Shillingford. Bradley attempts to identify the streets, proposing ‘Mill Street’ as the eastern part of Newcastle Road, leading to the mills, ‘Steeple Street’ as Tower Road and ‘New Street’ as New Road, but is uncertain about the remaining two.

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35 Byrne, R. H. and Graham, A., op.cit., p.62.  
37 Bradley in *Dublin and Beyond the Pale*, p. 130; Channing, op.cit.  
38 Ball, F. E. op.cit., iv, p.108.  
39 Ball, F. E. op.cit., iv, p.111.  
40 The manor of Clondalkin had a mill from at least the thirteenth century, presumably at the site of the twentieth century Paper Mills; Bradley, J., 1998, op.cit., p. 130. There is a strong precedent for Medieval mills to occupy the site of earlier milling structures and if the monastery had its own mills, which is probable, they may also have stood on this site.
The remains of Tully’s Castle, a narrow sixteenth century crenellated tower house, survive on the south side of Monastery Road; the monument was first depicted by Taylor in his map of 1811. Austin Cooper recorded another similar fortified house close to Tully’s Castle also at Monastery Road, which Ball claimed could still be identified within standing buildings in the late nineteenth century. If the surviving fortified house is used as an indicator, much of the Medieval borough was probably situated along the axis of Monastery Road (the old road to Dublin), to the east of the church site (Figure 4.5.7d). There is a suggestion of burgages along the north side of Monastery Road on Rocque’s 1760 map and the plan-analysis appears to confirm this, with possible traces of plot boundaries surviving in the small plots to the west of the Roman Catholic ‘Chapel’.

According to Ball, a manor house provided ‘an occasional residence’ for the Archbishop, described in the fourteenth century as ‘a chamber and a chapel badly roofed with shingles, together with a stone stable and two thatched cottages ... valued at nothing “because no one wished to use them.”’ The same survey notes that the curtilage was also worthless, as well as the orchard ‘for want of apple trees’, and that the dovecot was in ruins. Though the exact location of the manor is unknown, given the reference to an orchard, it is possible that it stood on the east side of the outer ecclesiastical enclosure. The early nineteenth century Orchard House occupied the land between Orchard Lane (outer enclosure) and Watery Lane. The Early Medieval church site and activity identified immediately outside of this enclosure (described above in Plan Unit II) may be the site of the chapel described in the fourteenth century.

The wars of the seventeenth century caused the settlement to shrink quite substantially in size leading the antiquarian Cooper to describe the village as ‘very small’ in 1780. In 1642, during the Confederate Wars, the village of Clondalkin had been

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41 DU017-041006 (Castle - hall-house) & DU017-041007 (Castle - unclassified), ASI Sites and Monuments Record.
44 Ball, F. E. op.cit., iv, p.111.
45 Price, L. op.cit., pp.54-6.
burned by a troop of soldiers sent from Dublin.\textsuperscript{46} Though it had been described as a ‘substantial village’ in 1598, clearly having lost its borough status at some point, by the time of the Civil Survey of 1656 it was greatly reduced: ‘There stands at Clondalkin a stump of a castle and some Thatched Houses with a high watch tower [the round tower]’.\textsuperscript{47}

Although Clondalkin has not received the attention that the ecclesiastical sites of Kells and Armagh have, either in the past or the present, this does not lessen its importance as a good example of an Early Medieval enclosed monastic settlement. It incorporates many of the elements commonly found on other such sites, including the round tower and the curvilinear double enclosure. There is as yet no archaeological evidence of Viking settlement and it is not certain that the Viking base mentioned in the documentary sources was on the site of the present village or whether it was constructed nearby.

Though there was a Medieval borough at Clondalkin it has left little trace, either archaeologically or in the plan. The ecclesiastical settlement seems to have left a much stronger mark on subsequent development, particularly the outer enclosure, the line of which is preserved in the curve of Orchard Lane; it was beyond this limit that the Medieval castle, market and burgages were established.

The date at which a road was constructed through the heart of the early ecclesiastical site is not known, but may have been relatively late. The Down Survey map of 1656 depicts a road branching off from the main Dublin/Naas road and entering Clondalkin (probably Monastery Road), though it continues eastward to the Cammac River rather than north and stays south of the ecclesiastical buildings. While the Down Survey maps are not a highly accurate cartographic source in many ways, on comparison with later sources they often provide a remarkably faithful depiction of main road alignments, rivers courses and townland boundaries. It is possible that the separation of the church and round tower did not occur until some time after the seventeenth century (it was in place in 1760 on Rocque’s map) and it may have been this intact core of ecclesiastical (and associated secular?) settlement that led to the laying out of

\textsuperscript{46} Ball, F. E. op.cit., iv, p.117.
the Medieval plots outside of the outer enclosure on the main eastern approach road. The fourteenth century 'Steeple Street', which Bradley equates with Tower Road, may have provided an approach to the churchyard and tower without breaching the original inner enclosure.

4.5.6 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A summary of findings derived from the plan-analysis is presented in Tables 4.5.1 and 4.5.2 below.

### TABLE 4.5.1 DETAILS OF ECCLESIASTICAL ELEMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inner enclosure</th>
<th>Horizontal oval measuring c.53m north-south by 83m east-west. Formed by the churchyard wall, incomplete on the west.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outer enclosure</td>
<td>Horizontal oval measuring c.315m north-south by 190m east-west, incomplete on west side. Formed by roads on north, east and southeast and by road and property boundary on northwest; incomplete to west and southwest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional enclosure</td>
<td>A vast oval enclosure is visible on the first edition six-inch O.S. map and earlier historic maps, formed by field boundaries and measuring approximately c. 1.7km by 2.2 km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church/ Cathedral (orientation)</td>
<td>North/south oriented church, on the site of a medieval church and probably earlier stone church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of burial ground</td>
<td>Within inner enclosure, on the south and east sides of the church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy well</td>
<td>St Brigid's holy well, located outside of the village (and its enclosures) to the south.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation date of ecclesiastical site</td>
<td>Sixth century.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 4.5.2 ELEMENTS OF SETTLEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market place (orientation)</th>
<th>East</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subdivision of enclosure</td>
<td>Possible traces of subdivision identified in the outer enclosure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annexe / Suburb</td>
<td>The extension of settlement outside of the ecclesiastical enclosures is probable in the area south of the market place and on the southwest side of the village, with another area to the northeast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiating road network</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

67 Description of Ireland in 1598 cited in Bradley in Dublin and Beyond the Pale, p. 130; Simmington, Appendix A: 'Book of Reference' to Down Survey Maps AD 1655-56, p.292, 12.
4.6 LLANDAFF, GLAMORGAN, WALES

4.6.1 INTRODUCTION

The village of Llandaff, in the parish and diocese of Llandaff, is situated on the south bank of the River Taff, two miles northwest of the city of Cardiff, in the county of Glamorgan (Figures 4.1 & 4.6.1). It retains the appearance of a self-contained and self-sufficient village, despite being officially absorbed into the boundaries of Cardiff and its encroaching suburbs.

4.6.2 PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE

The place-name Llandaff consists of two elements, one relating to its ecclesiastical past ('llan') and the other to a topographical feature. The second part of the place-name derives from the River Taff or Taf (its earlier form, becoming 'daf' or 'daft' later on), on the banks of which the settlement is situated and which indubitably influenced the genesis of settlement in this location. The combination of 'llan' with a topographical feature, as found in Llandaff ('The church on the River Taff') is not uncommon but it is unusual to find it used with a river name, with only a few examples recorded in Wales.1

According to Pierce, the names of rivers, mountains and hills are considered to be the oldest names in existence and are often adopted as the name of a settlement which is situated nearby.2 River names, in particular, are more frequently recorded in documents in comparatively early historic periods because they often functioned as territorial boundaries.3 In the case of Llandaff, we find that the settlement adopted not just the name of the river itself, but combined it with an element indicating the original nature of this settlement.

The primary element 'llan' is ecclesiastical and the place-name never appears without this element in written records. Nor does it vary or substitute a different element, as is the case with Llancarfan (Cf. Section 4.8.2). Consequently, the name Llandaff cannot

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1 Just as the river-name Taf became Taff, a feature of anglicisation, where the Welsh -f was in time pronounced like the English -f (not as -v) and was written in the accentuated form -ff; Pierce, G. O. 1984. 'The evidence of place-names', Appendix II, in Williams, G. et al. (eds), Glamorgan County History, Vol.II Early Glamorgan: pre-history and early history, p.460.
2 Pierce cites only two others apart from Llandaff: Llandovery and Llanelwy (St Asaph). Pierce, G. O. op.cit., p.459.
possibly pre-date the Early Medieval period and presumably relates to a monastic settlement which had been established there sometime in the seventh century. The name appears in the written records for the first time in the charters of the twelfth century Book of Llandaff as *Landavia*, although the earliest of these charters are likely to date from AD 680.

4.6.3 EXAMINATION OF EARLY SETTLEMENT: PREHISTORIC PERIOD

Prehistoric settlement at the River Taf and in its environs can be traced back to the Neolithic period. Finds from this period include various types of arrowheads, a number of stone implements and pottery, all firmly dated to the Neolithic period. The pottery, along with two arrowheads, was found at the Roman villa site at Ely, a short distance southwest of Llandaff. Recorded stray finds show that activity in the Taf Valley continued into the Bronze Age, with artefacts of Early Bronze Age, such as a flanged axe, and others of Late Bronze Age date (a socketed axe and axe-heads, a fragment of the blade of a leaf-sword, socketed sickles and a Burgundian razor) as well as a Bronze Age arrowhead. An earthwork, probably prehistoric, is also located in the vicinity and is a further indication of settlement in the area during this period.

Most of the finds listed above were found in or around Llandaff, on either side of the River Taf, which points to the river as a focus of human activity, and possibly settlement, for much of the prehistoric period. It also suggests that there has been a crossing point on the river at or close to Llandaff from the prehistoric period onwards. Further finds of possible Neolithic or Bronze Age date were allegedly found under the nave of the present Llandaff Cathedral. It was reported in 1934 that deposits of charcoal and burnt bones (possible cremation burial), along with a ‘stone axe-head’

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6 Leaf-shaped arrowhead found at 179 Mynachdy Road, Gabalfa (NGR ST164789; SMR, GGAT).
7 These implements include an axe-head of spotted hornfels, a flaked chert axe-head and a flint chisel, all found in or around Ely, a short distance south-west of Llandaff (ST142758, ST135769, ST137752); Knight, J. K., 1984b, ‘Archaeology and History of Glamorgan’, Appendix I, in Williams, G. *et al.*, op. cit., p. 422.
8 Knight, J. K., 1984b, op. cit., p. 422.
9 ST13627733, ST1154772, ST139774, ST153765, ST165755: Knight, J. K., 1984b, op. cit., p. 422.
10 PRN 014455, NGR ST1575; SMR, GGAT.
11 NGR ST157778; SMR, GGAT; the condition and date of this earthwork are unknown but it is presumed to be prehistoric in date.
and 'bronze spear head', had been found but were subsequently lost. The veracity of this claim cannot be substantiated but, equally, cannot be summarily dismissed, given that there is clear evidence of activity in both the Neolithic period and Bronze Age in the area surrounding where the cathedral now lies.

4.6.4 EXAMINATION OF EARLY SETTLEMENT: ROMAN PERIOD

There is evidence placing Llandaff in the immediate vicinity of Roman settlement, and, possibly, in the way of a major Roman road. There was a Roman fort and much Romano-British activity in and around Cardiff and somewhat closer to Llandaff is the Roman villa at Ely, c.1km southwest on the banks of the River Ely. The site at Ely was excavated in 1894 and again in 1922, revealing that it had been occupied from the second to fourth centuries AD.

There is little by way of material evidence connecting the Romans directly with Llandaff, with only isolated finds of Roman artefacts. The evidence is insufficient to suggest that there was a Roman settlement on the site of Llandaff prior to the founding of the monastery. It does however correspond with a theory proposed by North, which suggests that the main road connecting the Roman sites at Ely and Caerleon (to the northeast) went through Llandaff, with the road to Cardiff coming later. A more recent study of the Roman road network in southeast Wales provides further evidence that there was a Roman road, but running approximately southwest-northeast in the vicinity of the present Waterhall Road, on the western outskirts of the town. This is more likely to have been a road connecting the forts at Cardiff and Caergwlan (Miskin) to the northwest, but nonetheless would have been an important

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12 Knight, J. K., 1984b, op.cit., p.422.
13 Ibid; ST14727615.
14 Ward mentions in 1908 the discovery of a fragment of a Roman mortarium (a Roman vessel used for pounding or mixing ingredients), amongst other pottery dug up on the crest of the scarp, and, a fragment of flanged roofing tile was found in the steep lane going down to the cathedral, in circumstances indicating that it had been thrown with other rubbish over the wall of an adjacent garden: cited in North, F. J., 1957, The Stones of Llandaff Cathedral, p.11.
15 North, F. J., op.cit., pp.11-13
16 Two areas of possible road metalling noted in section, one in a north-south facing section at ST14147860, during works to a footpath in Llandaff, and the other at ST13717881 during the widening of Waterhall Road. The metalling was 8m wide and 0.5m in thickness with a convex surface. Trott believed them to be parts of the same Roman road, although there is no evidence apart from general similarity to prove they are that parts of the same road, or that they are of Roman date. This has always been assumed to be a minor road, but may possibly represent the road between the forts at Cardiff and Caergwlan (Miskin); RR GGAT 010, Road at Llandaff (PRN(s) 00935.0s), Evans, E. & Sherman, A.
road. There is additional evidence of Roman activity in the area surrounding the present village of Llandaff. The discovery of coarse Roman pottery and a coin (Antoninus Pius, 138-161 AD) in association with ancient iron workings and slag heaps southeast of Llantrisant is indicative of Roman mining activity in the area and further evidence for the smelting of iron was found during excavations at Cardiff and at the Roman villa at Ely.¹⁷

4.6.5 ECClesiASTICAL HISTORY

The church of Llandaff can tentatively trace its ecclesiastical origins to the seventh century, when it is thought a monastic settlement was founded. Its early ecclesiastical history is not well documented and much of our evidence for the ecclesiastical history comes from information recorded in the Book of Llandaff (Liber Landavensis).

The twelfth century AD Book of Llandaff constitutes the most important source and chief authority for the early ecclesiastical history of southeast Wales incorporating, as it does, records from the monastic settlement and later episcopal see of Llandaff. It also contains the Lives of a number of the Welsh saints, including Teilo, Dubricius (Dyfrig), Oudoceus and Samson (the first three being closely associated with Llandaff). The Book was intended as a cartulary for the monastery of Llandaff and was written around 1150.¹⁸ It contains 149 charters which relate to the south of Wales in general and particularly to the area of the twelfth century AD and later diocese of Llandaff.¹⁹ The majority of these charters has been dated to the eleventh century AD and is contemporaneous, or at least close in date, to the compilation of the Book.²⁰ Davies has suggested an earlier, pre-Norman, date for around a quarter of the total charters, which allows some light to be shed on the ecclesiastical history of the area before the Norman Conquest in the eleventh century AD.²¹

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¹⁷ North, F. J. op.cit., p.15.
¹⁹ Davies, W., 1982, Wales in the Early Middle Ages, p.201.
²⁰ Ibid.
²¹ Davies’ extensive analysis of the Llandaff Charters has provided a chronology of the charters that runs from the very late sixth to the late eleventh centuries, with nearly four per cent belonging to the eighth century and twenty per cent to the second half of the ninth century; Davies, W., 1982, op.cit., p.201.
The work was produced at the instigation of Urban, bishop of Llandaff in the early twelfth century AD, in an effort to assert the rights and privileges of the see of Llandaff and prove their antiquity. Llandaff was anxious to prove itself to be the house of Teilo and as such, the rightful possessor of all the associated territories and privileges. Llandaff's claim had to be persuasive enough to counter similar claims for the territories made by Hereford and St David's.22 *Braint Teilo* 'the privilege of Teilo', a document preserved along with the charters in the Book of Llandaff, was closely associated with Urban's efforts to claim St Teilo for the see of Llandaff.23

The appropriation of the Teilo tradition by Urban may be the result of close ties between Llandaff and Llancarfan (the clerks of this monastery were closely involved in the compilation of the charters of Llandaff).24 In order to support this tradition, the twelfth century clerks at Llandaff claimed that all clerics and religious houses between the Rivers Tywy and Tarader, had been subject to the authority of the bishops of Llandaff for nearly seven centuries, which is, according to Davies, a highly suspect premise.25 It was the convention throughout Early Medieval Europe that a saint's property consisted of grants notionally made to that saint (or to the house or houses founded by him). As such if Llandaff could prove its claim to be the house of Teilo, or otherwise have it accepted, then it could also claim the financial benefits of the rents and profits from these properties and exercise ecclesiastical control over the churches and/or monasteries.26 The 37 churches listed in the Book of Llandaff as dedicated to Teilo, as well as other dedications not listed, are distributed throughout south Wales, meaning that Llandaff's sphere of influence its bishop would encompass was extensive.27

According to Newell, writing at the start of the twentieth century, Llandaff owes its foundation to an early missionary, Lucius, whose name and those of other early saints are preserved in clusters of churches around Llandaff.28 Williams, writing around the same time, reports that king Lucius is said to have founded the ecclesiastical

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22 Doble, G. H. op.cit., p.12.
26 Davies, W., 1978, op.cit., p.140.
settlement at Llandaff as early as 180 AD.\textsuperscript{29} A late note in the Book of Llandaff also ascribes the founding of a church at Llandaff to Lucius. The other traditional founding saints of Llandaff are associated with the sixth century and are listed in its cathedral church dedication (Dubricius, Teilo and Oudoceus). The question of the founding saint or saints of the monastic settlement at Llandaff is a controversial one. That for a long time Dubricius, Teilo and Oudoceus were the accepted founders owes much to the propaganda introduced under Bishop Urban in the twelfth century. There is no historic evidence to support the claims of Urban, nor is there any documentary or literary evidence describing either the foundation of the original settlement or its founder.

The historic evidence for the existence of a monastery or ecclesiastical settlement at Llandaff is mostly late, dating from the twelfth century and the compilation of the Book. In spite of the difficulties with the Book of Llandaff as a source, the recording of the monastery at Llandaff appears to suggest that there was a monastic settlement at Llandaff from around 680 AD, with episcopal associations from around 955 AD.\textsuperscript{30} Llandaff is one of six Glamorgan churches that can be identified as early monastic sites from the evidence of the Book of Llandaff.\textsuperscript{31} The evidence thus allows a possible foundation date as early as the sixth or seventh century AD, a time during which many other monasteries were being founded throughout Wales. It has been suggested that although Dubricius, Teilo and Oudoceus were not the founders of the original monastic settlement, they may well have been bishops (or abbot-bishops) at Llandaff.\textsuperscript{32}

There is little or no evidence of the physical form taken by the early monastery at Llandaff, either historically or archaeologically. Some sense of the monastery and its settlement can be extrapolated from references in the Book of Llandaff; the term \textit{urbs}

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\textsuperscript{28} Llaneurwg (Lucius), Llanvedw (Medwy), Merthyr Dyvan (Dyvan) and St. Fagan’s (previously Llanffagan). Newell, E. J., op.cit., p.9.
\textsuperscript{29} Williams, W. L., 1908, \textit{The Itinerary Through Wales and the Description of Wales by Giralda Cambrænsis}, footnote p.61.
\textsuperscript{30} Davies, W., 1978, op.cit., p.136.
\textsuperscript{31} The others are Llanilarfan, Llandough, Llantwit Major and Llandaff (the four major sites), plus Bishopston and Rhossili in Gower; Knight, J. K., 1984b, op.cit., p.371.
\textsuperscript{32} Newell, E. J. op.cit., p.17.
is used in the Book of Llandaff to describe the ecclesiastical settlement at Llandaff. The usual translation of the Latin *urbs* is 'city', although it is thought in this instance to mean 'monastery' and perhaps an associated settlement of some size. This less than literal translation is by analogy with the case of Caerwent, the known site of a Roman fort, which is also described in the Book of Llandaff as an *urbs*. It has been suggested that in these two cases the descriptive term *urbs* implies a bigger than average settlement or may be an oblique reference to Roman ancestry and/or the fortification of a Roman site. It is therefore possible that by at least the twelfth century when the Book was compiled, Llandaff was a large and prosperous settlement.

Education was an integral part of the monastic life and the monastic settlement at Llandaff was large and prosperous enough to support a college. Lewis records that 'mention is made of a college here, stated to have been founded by St Teilo, and to have been called after him Bangor Teilo, over which Galfrid, thirty-second bishop of the diocese, presided prior to his consecration; but nothing further is known of its history.' Further indication of the size and possibly the importance of the monastery as a centre of jurisdiction is a reference to some sort of prison at one of the places called 'Llandeilo' and at Llandaff, c. 955 AD and c. 1040 AD. Llandaff is frequently described as an 'archmonastery' and its episcopal abbot as an 'archbishop'; for example, the Book of Llandaff records that the lands of Mathru and Cenarth Mawr were given to St Teilo and the Church of Llandaff and that excommunication was pronounced on those who should separate these lands from the 'archmonastery of Llandaff and its pastors'. This offers a good example of the way in which Urban used the Book of Llandaff to promote the interests and rights of Llandaff, by claiming privileges and territorial rights dating to as far back as the sixth century.

The order and dates of all the bishops before the tenth century AD are unknown. Evidence from the Book of Llandaff suggests that Llandaff was adopted as the new...
home of the Gwent bishopric (i.e. a single bishopric in the southeast) in the late tenth or early eleventh century AD. It is possible that Llandaff gained the bishopric to the detriment of Llandough monastery 4.8km to the south. The monastery at Llandough, situated on the site of a Roman villa, fell into obscurity in the eleventh century and its community became extinct. There is evidence that their two parishes once formed a single unit and that Llandough was ‘asset-stripped’ in order to provide for Llandaff’s new position. The situation before the episcopacy of Joseph in the early eleventh century is unclear but it is certain that there was already a monastery (possibly of Teilo) and a place on the River Taf with episcopal associations in 955 AD. According to Davies, Llandaff was one of many other ecclesiastical sites that began as a monasterium and later became the seat of a bishopric and the evidence indicates that there was no perceived distinction of type between the two communities and there may have been no actual distinction, particularly by the ninth and tenth century.

After the Norman Conquest, the archbishops of Canterbury exercised their jurisdiction over the church in Wales, where previously the Welsh bishops and clergy had maintained an independence from the English church. The factor which made Llandaff a valuable centre for the diocese in the twelfth century was the establishment of the castle and borough at nearby Cardiff. Bishop Joseph (1022-45 AD) was succeeded by Herewald and then Urban (1107-34 AD). From the early twelfth century, the centre of Urban’s diocese of Glamorgan was the cathedral church at Llandaff and Urban was responsible for replacing the existing small church with a much larger and grander building, which would symbolise the importance of his see. The bishops of St David’s and Llandaff are known to have held synods to settle disputes over rights to churches in the earlier and mid parts of the twelfth century,

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39 This evidence includes the endowments which were first received by the bishops in the Llandaff area and Glamorgan under Joseph, especially c. 1030/40; Llandaff had become the house of Teilo by the 1030's and there was a new concentration on the authority of Teilo; Davies, W., 1978, op.cit., p.155.
42 For example, Rhigyfarch, like Asser, still viewed the episcopal community at St. David’s as monastic (monastica classis); Davies, W., 1982, op.cit., p.149.
44 Walker, D., 1990, Medieval Wales, p.70.
46 Walker, D., op.cit., p.69.
many of which concerned the extensive properties associated with the house of St Teilo (generally accepted to have been originally at Llandeilo Fawr).47

Urban was responsible for the re-dedication of the church of Llandaff to St Peter and St Euddogwy and he added St Dyfrig, clearly in the hope of establishing his claims to jurisdiction over the ancient areas of Dyfrig’s churches.48 The new cathedral was also dedicated to St Teilo and while this assisted Urban in his claim, Davies argues that Llandaff was already associated with Teilo by the end of Bishop Joseph’s episcopacy in 1045 AD.49

4.6.6 PLAN-ANALYSIS

Llandaff occupies a striking valley bottom situation, typical of a number of early Welsh monastic sites. The early monastic or ecclesiastical settlement appears to have been established on an important communication/trade route and close to a river crossing, and so was ideally placed to take advantage of these features. Despite the paucity of historical records for the early settlement at Llandaff, the evidence does tend to support the claim that the site housed a pre-Norman religious centre, though this is not as immediately obvious in the plan. The proposed plan units for Llandaff are shown on Figure 4.6.6, which should be referred to when reading the description of each plan unit below.

PLAN UNIT I

The Cathedral of SS Dyfrig, Teilo, Oudoceus and afterwards SS Peter and Paul is situated on the northern edge of the town, nearest to the bank of the river. It is oriented east and, along with the graveyard, is situated within a partially curvilinear enclosure (Figures 4.6.8c&d). The churchyard houses the cathedral, the graveyard, the Prebendary House and a cross (situated on the south side of the cathedral building; Figures 4.6.8a&b). A clearly defined enclosure is depicted on Speed’s plan of 1610, curving from northwest to southeast, and is still partially retained in the present street pattern and partially in the churchyard wall (Figure 4.6.2). This may represent an originally circular ecclesiastical enclosure associated with the Early Medieval

47 Pryce, H., 1993, Native Law and the Church in Medieval Wales, p.155.
48 Walker, D., op.cit., p.70.
49 Ibid.
monastery, now somewhat obscured by later development (such as the nineteenth century housing to the south). It is dominated by the impressive cathedral, which occupies much of the space, and a graveyard to the south. The burial ground also extends beyond the millstream that runs to the north of the cathedral (a later extension) (Figures 4.6.4 & 4.6.5).

The existence of such a document as the *Braint Teilo*, which is contained within the Book of Llandaff, shows that the Welsh clergy were capable of expressing their claims to privileges in terms of native law.\(^{50}\) The rights and privileges of the Church of Llandaff, as described in the *Braint Teilo*, include that it had ‘full right to fines and penalties for violation of sanctuary within or without the enclosure’.\(^{51}\) In other words, it claims jurisdiction for the church over breakers of *nawdd* (the Welsh law of sanctuary) both within and outside the *llan* or church enclosure.\(^{52}\) Whether or not these rights and privileges had been in place since the early days of the monastic settlement, as implied in the Book, is less interesting than the mention of an enclosure, which it assumes to have been in place at that time.

Recent archaeological excavations to the east of the Prebendal House revealed a cobbled surface and wall dated to the Medieval period. It is thought that this may represent the remains of a yard to the west of the cathedral and part of the western boundary wall.\(^{53}\) This would support the premise that the enclosure curved around to the north of the cathedral, rather than continuing in a straight line along the lane as it presently does.

According to Lewis ‘in the year 987, the cathedral church was burned by a large party of marauding Danes’ and when Urban was consecrated to the see in 1108 he ‘found the cathedral in great dilapidation, it having frequently been despoiled by the Saxons and other invaders who had infested the coast, and by the Normans, whose

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\(^{50}\) According to Davies, the text is in two parts: the first is longer and dates to c.1110-1120/9 (during the lordship of Robert of Gloucester); the second c.1022-45 dates to the episcopacy of Joseph; Pryce, H., op.cit., p.26.

\(^{51}\) Newell, E. J. op.cit., p.20.

\(^{52}\) Pryce, H., op.cit., p.168.

subjugation of the native population of Glamorgan had now become permanent.\textsuperscript{54} The only description of any buildings that existed prior to the Urban's cathedral is a reference to the dimensions of the little church that Urban found and some rather contradictory representations on early seals.\textsuperscript{55} It is described that he 'pulled down the old cathedral, dedicated to St Peter, a small edifice only twenty-eight feet in length, fifteen in width, and twenty in height'.\textsuperscript{56} The original church thus appears to have been a small structure, probably more like an oratory than a major church with 'two aisles on either side of but a small height, and with a porch 12 feet long', that Urban then set out to rebuild on a larger scale.\textsuperscript{57}

Six burials dated to the thirteenth century were uncovered beneath the cathedral during the restoration works of the late nineteenth century, at which time the builder also found 'the foundation of an ancient British church'.\textsuperscript{58} The location of these burials beneath the present cathedral indicates that it overlies much of the original graveyard, gradually encroaching upon it as the building was enlarged from the twelfth century onwards.

The building sequence at Llandaff can be traced from the Romanesque church built by Bishop Urban and dedicated in 1120 AD, through various enlargements and additions, to the tower of the west front which took its name from Jasper Tudor at the end of the fifteenth century (the north-west tower 'Jasper's Tower'). The Medieval church showed neglect and the destruction of the nave in the eighteenth century and by the first half of the nineteenth century it was in a ruinous state and was described by Lewis in 1849 as a 'magnificent edifice a great part of which, though in ruins, is still standing'.\textsuperscript{59} This was remedied by nineteenth century restorers, with major


\textsuperscript{55} North, F. J., op.cit., p.27.


\textsuperscript{57} Walker, D., op.cit., p.69.

\textsuperscript{58} PRN 133S (Cathedral) & 128S (cemetery, moved), SMR, Site Gazeteer, GGAT

reconstruction again required after the building was badly damaged during the Second World War.  

A holy well dedicated to St Teilo (*Ffynnon Deilo*) is located on the right-hand side of the old road leading from the east end of Llandaff cathedral to the old ruined palace, immediately east of the inner enclosure (Figure 4.6.8e). As with many other holy wells, this well was once believed to possess miraculous healing powers.  

A second well, known as the 'Dairy Well', is enclosed within ancient masonry at Bishop's Court; the Book of Llandaff tells that St Docheu met women at the well of Llandaff washing butter 'after the manner of the country', possibly a reference to this well.  

A fragment of a sculptured cross of Sutton stone of ninth century AD date, now in the cathedral, was discovered re-erected over St Teilo's Well in 1870 (Figure 4.6.8b).  

This fragment of cross from Llandaff and the high cross at Llandough are both made from Sutton stone and were probably crafted in the same workshop.  

While there is even a possibility that the two pieces were originally part of the same cross, at the very least this implies a close connection between the two churches. This provides the only tangible evidence of an early monastic foundation at Llandaff, with the exception of the possible ecclesiastical enclosures.

**PLAN UNIT II**

The main street curving south of the settlement may follow the line of an outer enclosure; echoed by the curve of the river running north of the town. This outer enclosure is dissected by four streets, all culminating in Llandaff Green and the cathedral. This gives the appearance of five sectors within the enclosure and is reminiscent of Armagh and its *Triana*.

There is also a much larger arc, beginning across the river to the north, and curving down along the east, crossing the river on Llandaff Bridge and continuing as a footpath. A Medieval grange is recorded north of

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60 Walker, D., op.cit., p.85.  
62 In the etymology of well-names, in certain cases when early forms do not exist, evidence of custom may be accepted in lieu, for example, the waters of wells named *Ffynnon Ymenin* (Butter Well) were used by dairymaids; Jones, F., op.cit., p.6.  
63 Jones, F., op.cit., p.17.  
the river, within the line of this possible enclosure close to the nineteenth century Gabalfa House, suggesting that these lands formed part of the monastic extents.66

The curve of Heol Fair is distinct and might represent a major subdivision of the outer enclosure. If so, the change in the plot alignments might result from the differing development of the two sectors, with plots running perpendicular to Llandaff Green to the north (Plan Unit IIa, Figure 4.6.6) and parallel with the Green to the south (Plan Unit IIb, Figure 4.6.6). Large plots to the west of the inner enclosure contain the eighteenth and nineteenth century Deanery and Canonry, possible replacements of earlier ecclesiastical structures and aligned northwest-southeast.

The location of a market place is not documented. Two possibilities were identified during the plan-analysis: Llandaff Green immediately outside of the inner enclosure to the southwest, or; a triangular area to the west just inside the line of the outer enclosure and between the north/northwestern and the western approach roads. Llandaff Green occupies an open space in the middle of the village (Figures 4.6.8a-c). The green itself is occupied by several structures of medieval date, including a Preaching Cross, which brings to mind the tradition of a market cross at Irish ecclesiastical settlements. There is sufficient open space around the green, as depicted on Speed’s map of 1610 (Figure 4.6.2), to provide space for a market. There is no indication that this area was ever built upon and a sense of space is still evident today; apart from the Green and its ruins, the area remains open.

The triangular area to the west is, in the context of the Irish pattern, the more typical location for a market place. It lies away from the inner enclosure, close to two main approach roads. Though occupied by plots on the nineteenth-century tithe and O.S. maps (Figures 4.6.3 to 4.6.5), these are distinct from the adjacent narrow plots, lying on a slightly different alignment and larger and more irregular in size. These may be later accretions within a formerly open area, possibly a market place.

66 Llystalybont Grange, PRN 19242, SMR GGAT.
The dearth of historical and archaeological evidence for the early foundation is in striking contrast to the wealth of material for the Medieval and later bishopric, much of which appears to be contained in the area between the inner and outer enclosures. There are numerous extant ecclesiastical buildings dating to the Medieval period (occasionally Post-Medieval) and connected with the cathedral. Nothing is known, however, of the Archdeacon's Castle. The site of the structure is marked on the 1886 six-inch edition O.S. map on the north side of the mill stream, to the northwest of the cathedral, along with the remains of the Treasurer's House to the southwest of the cathedral. In addition to the Preaching Cross, Llandaff Green to the south/southwest of the churchyard retains several ecclesiastical structures of Medieval date, including a mostly destroyed bell tower and a Lych Gate that now frames the entrance to the cathedral grounds.67

The Old Bishop's Palace is a castellated house probably constructed by Bishop William de Braose after 1266.68 It still looks intact on Speed's map of 1610 (Figure 4.6.2), despite tales of it being damaged during the attacks by Owain Glyndwr (and according to Lewis it was never repaired) and abandoned by the Bishops who moved to Mathern in Gwent at this time.69 The enclosing wall and corner towers remain today, together with the gatehouse (Figures 4.6.8e&f). Nothing is known of the history of the palace or castle; Lewis attributes it to the twelfth century, as one of Urban's structures, but notes that 'a late writer inclines to refer it to the thirteenth century'.70 Given its position in the town it is unlikely to have had any great strategic significance, as it does not guard either the river crossing or the main approach roads.71

There are various crosses associated with the church at Llandaff, both in and ex situ.72 The majority of these date to the Medieval period and include two fragments of

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67 PRN 147S (bell tower), SMR GGAT
68 PRN 148S (Castle, Restored), SMR GGAT
72 PRN 132S, 137S, 138S, 149S, 154S; SMR, GGAT
headstones from graves, with an incised ring-cross, and the upper part of a composite pillar-cross that are now housed in the cathedral. The Preaching Cross on Llandaff Green to the south of the cathedral incorporates a thirteenth century shaft (Figure 4.6.8a).

Later settlement developed to the immediate west and south of the church enclosure. Plot boundaries in the two blocks to the south and southeast (southeast of Heol Fair and High Street) of the churchyard are distinct, running northwest/southeast and for the most part aligned with each other. These contain additional ecclesiastical buildings, such as minor canonries, the site of the Medieval hospital, a school and a vicarage. The plots to the southeast also relate to the pattern of long narrow fields on the opposite side of Cardiff road, outside of the outer enclosure (Plan Unit IIIb, Figure 4.6.6). A change in the plot boundaries is evident in the block bounded by Heol Fair and Heol y Pavin, where long narrow plots run perpendicular to Llandaff Green. These may relate to a later phase of development and a disruption of an earlier pattern (extant at the west end of this block, where northwest-southeast plot boundary aligns with those to the east of Heol Fair); some of these houses have features datable to the sixteenth century, if not before.

**PLAN UNIT IV**

Lewis' description of Llandaff in the mid-nineteenth century illustrates how the formerly important bishopric had been eclipsed by the nearby Cardiff city:

"The city, now reduced to a mere village, occupies a pleasing and retired situation on the western bank of the river Tâf, on the road from Cardiff to Llantrisent. It stands on elevated ground, gently sloping on all sides, except towards the river, where the descent is more precipitous; and in this bottom stands the cathedral, partially embosomed among trees, with the river murmuring beneath its walls. It consists of little more than two short streets of cottages, not lighted or paved, terminating in a square, into which the great gateway of the old palace formerly opened, and where are still several genteel houses."

The settlement depicted on Speed's map of 1610 tallies with Lewis' description and suggests that little had changed in the intervening two hundred years. The town has remained relatively contained within the boundaries of Cardiff Road and Bridge Road.

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73 Knight, J. K., 1984b, op.cit., p.422.
74 PRN 137S, SMR GGAT
to the west/southwest and the river to the north/northeast. There is some evidence of Post-Medieval expansion in the terraces on Bridge Street, but few other accretions. These are mostly related to a renewal of the cathedral in the later nineteenth century and the expansion of Cardiff, which led to the development of Llandaff as a ‘fashionable retreat from Cardiff town’. 75

This regeneration saw the construction of new architect-designed houses for the clergy and wealthy middle classes commuting to Cardiff, as well as small Victorian terraces on Spencers Row off Bridge Street and on Chapel Street and Heol-y-Pavin (Pavement Street). The line of Chapel Street is closely aligned with the adjacent plot and field boundaries, suggesting that it was newly laid out in the Victorian period but fossilised earlier (possibly Medieval) plot boundaries. Several eighteenth and nineteenth century estates were laid out to the west and southwest of the town, including Llandaff House, Rockwood and Ely Court, which also succeeded in restricting development beyond its Medieval extents.

4.6.7 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A summary of findings derived from the plan-analysis is presented in Tables 4.6.1 and 4.6.2 below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.6.1 DETAILS OF ECCLESIASTICAL ELEMENTS</th>
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<td>Inner enclosure</td>
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<td>Outer enclosure</td>
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<td>Additional enclosure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church/Cathedral (orientation)</td>
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<td>Location of burial ground</td>
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Holy well  | St Teilo's holy well, located immediately outside of the inner enclosure to the east.
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Foundation date of ecclesiastical site  | Seventh century.

**TABLE 4.6.2 ELEMENTS OF SETTLEMENT**

| Market place (orientation) | Unknown. Plan-analysis indicates two possible locations: Llandaff Green immediately outside of the inner enclosure to the southwest; or, a triangular area to the west just inside the line of the outer enclosure and between the north/northwestern and the western approach roads. |
| Subdivision of enclosure | Possible traces of subdivision identified in the outer enclosure, similar to the *Triana* of Armagh. |
| Annexed Suburb | No. |
| Radiating road network | Yes. |
4.7 **LLANDEILO FAWR, CARMARTHENSHIRE, WALES**

4.7.1 **INTRODUCTION**

Llandeilo Fawr is a small town in the Vale of Tywi in the county of Carmarthenshire, in Dyfed (Figures 4.1 & 4.7.1). It lies inland and c. 70km to the northwest of Cardiff. It is situated on a height above the north bank of the river Tywi (or Towy), where it is joined by the smaller Cennen river.

4.7.2 **PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE**

As with Llandaff and Llancarfan, the place-name ‘Llandeilo’ is formed of two elements. The first is the ecclesiastical *llan-* and the second is –*deilo* (sometimes – *dilo*)\(^2\), which comes directly from the founding saint Teilo, to whom the church is dedicated. There are numerous Llandeilo place-names in south Wales and Brittany, a result of the spread of the cult of St Teilo from the sixth century AD onwards.\(^3\) This Llandeilo in Carmarthenshire is now generally accepted as the centre of the Early Medieval cult of St Teilo from which other communities were established.\(^4\) It is distinguished by the Welsh –*vawr* or –*fawr*, meaning ‘great’, thus Llandeilo Fawr is ‘the Great *Llan*, or Church, of St Teilo’, the reputed place of the saint’s death and possible burial place.\(^5\)

4.7.3 **EVIDENCE OF EARLY SETTLEMENT: PREHISTORIC PERIOD**

Although there is no evidence that the site of the Early Medieval monastery was previously inhabited in the prehistoric or even Roman period, the topography of the area is indicative of prehistoric settlement or activity. The Medieval castle of Dinefwr stands on an outcrop to the west of Llandeilo and is in a prominent position in the

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1 Henceforth Llandeilo Fawr is referred to as Llandeilo.
3 There are as many as 45 other Llandeilo’s in Wales and Brittany; *Llandeilo Town Guide*, Llandeilo Fawr Town Council, 1994, p.8
landscape, with extensive views over the river valley. Bearing in mind the proximity of the river itself, this would have been an ideal site for prehistoric settlement.

A Neolithic polished stone axe was found in the grounds of Dinefwr Castle in 1876.6 In 1918, a possible Bronze Age hammerhead was recovered from a pool in the castle grounds. This prehistoric activity is not confined to the Dinefwr Castle estate. A possible Bronze Age round barrow is recorded in the SMR in Cae Crug Mawr ('the field of the large tumulus'), close to the find-spots of a Neolithic stone axe and a chert axe.7 This field lies below the town to the east, on the edge of the Twyi flood plain. Recent archaeological investigations within Dinefwr Park have identified a possible Iron Age hill-fort site.8 This would have been part of a wider landscape of Iron Age settlement, which is attested by the large hill-fort of Garn Goch to the north of Llandeilo town.

4.7.4 Evidence of Early Settlement: Roman Period

The site of the possible round barrow in Cae Crug Mawr also lies close to the recorded find-spot of Roman artefacts. The first edition O.S. map (1891) records the location of Roman coins ‘found about AD 1800’ close to St Tyfei’s church in Dinefwr Park (see below). In addition to numerous other stray finds of Roman date, including a third century AD milestone, there is a long held tradition that the church of St Tyfei at Llandyfeisant was the site of a Roman villa or temple.9 Antiquarian references include the assertion that the walls of a temple were found beneath the northern angle of Llandyfeisant church.10 Later twentieth century finds include tesserae (Roman mosaic tiles) in St Tyfei’s churchyard and pottery sherds found in a stream bed in Dinefwr Park and during construction on the Llandeilo Bypass in the 1990s.11

6 PRN 862, Dyfed Archaeological Trust SMR.
7 Round Barrow Possible PRN 903; Neolithic stone axe PRN 904 and chert axe PRN 908 found in 1913. Dyfed Archaeological Trust SMR.
9 Roman coin hoards (PRN 869, noted on OS map & 886) and single coin (PRN 875), milestone bearing an inscription to the Emperor Tactus (PRN 872), Roman Bronze needles found c. 1875 (PRN 910). Documentary references mostly by antiquarians record the as yet unsubstantiated belief that a Roman villa or temple occupied the site of the church (PRN 7367); Dyfed Archaeological Trust SMR.
10 Milne, H. op.cit., p.9.
11 PRN 32105 & PRN 47646; Dyfed Archaeological Trust SMR.
The occurrence of early Christian churches and cemeteries on the sites of Roman *villa*ae, or within their estates, is a phenomenon better known in Continental (western) Europe and is particularly well-represented in southwest Gaul. There is considerable debate regarding the relationship between late Roman *villa*ae and early churches and cemeteries in Britain and whether or not there was continuity from working villa in the late Roman period to early monastery or church site. This is not aided by the comparative lack of archaeological investigation on British sites, although there is more evidence for such sites in areas outside of Wales.\(^\text{12}\) Within Wales itself, there is a small number of excavated examples, notably Llandough (near Llandaff; discussed above) and Llantwit Major. Interestingly, neither of these sites possesses a curvilinear enclosure nor evidence that such existed. These two cemeteries have few close parallels and Knight has suggested that they may relate to specific local conditions within the former tribal territory of the Silures in the Early Medieval period.\(^\text{13}\)

A Roman presence at Llandyfeisant was confirmed by geophysical survey in 2003, which located the site of a Roman fort and *vicus* (associated settlement) in Dinefwr Park.\(^\text{14}\) The survey revealed the outline of two successive forts, the earliest of which probably dates to the conquest of Wales in AD 70-74, as well as a network of Roman roads. Two roads run northeast and east from the fort entrance, probably providing a link to the Twyi valley road to Llandovery (Roman *Alabum*) and to a bridging point on the river below modern Llandeilo. The other two roads lead southeast and northwest, possibly to Llandyfeisant and another river crossing and to the Twyi valley road to Carmarthen (Roman *Moridunum*) respectively. The possible *vicus* located on the northeast side of the fort might represent the development of a first town of Llandeilo and at the very least was the likely impetus for the foundation of a Christian community on the site of the present town.

### 4.7.5 Ecclesiastical History

The documentary sources attest to an Early Medieval monastic foundation at Llandeilo Fawr, although little is known of its nature or extent. The church, probably

\(^\text{12}\) The situation outside of Wales is discussed in Bell's article "Churches on Roman Buildings: Christian associations and Roman masonry in Anglo-Saxon England", in *Medieval Archaeology* 42 (1998), 1-18.

\(^\text{13}\) Knight, J. K., 2005. op.cit. p. 99.

\(^\text{14}\) Sambrook, P. and Hall, J., op.cit., p.22
a monastic *clas* church, is first mentioned in the sixth century AD in the Book of Llandaff and is traditionally held to have been founded by St Teilo at this time.\(^{15}\) Llandeilo appears, like St David’s and Bangor to have been the centre of a bishopric from the eighth century; there are references to a *sacerdos*, clergy, *episcopus* and the *scholasticus*.\(^{16}\) While Llandaff was the mother church of St Teilo’s cult from the eleventh century AD onwards, Llandeilo was probably also a mother church of some importance for a large area in the modern northeast Carmarthenshire, as indicated by its name ‘great church of Teilo’.\(^{17}\) Llandeilo lost its episcopal status in the eleventh century, when the community’s lands were appropriated in a grant to the Abbey of Talley by Lord Rhys of Dinefwr.\(^{18}\)

St Teilo was an important figure in the early Welsh Church and his cult spread over much of southwest Wales.\(^{19}\) The Book of St Teilo and the Book of Llandaff contain the earliest documentary references to the ecclesiastical settlement at Llandeilo.\(^{20}\) From the eighth to the tenth century AD the Book of St Teilo was held at Llandeilo, although probably composed elsewhere; a marginal entry in the Book says that it was given to ‘God on the altar of St Teilo by Gelhi ab Arhtudd, who had bought it for the price of a valuable horse’.\(^{21}\) The sources for the Life of St Teilo are sketchy and at times controversial. For example, the earliest of these two sources, the ninth-century Book of St Teilo does not mention anything about the saint himself but does refer to his monasteries. Entries in the Book describe Teilo as the founder of a monastery in which the altar was called the Altar of *Teilau*, of which the monks were the *familia Teliavi*, governed by an abbot-bishop called the ‘Bishop of Teliau’.\(^{22}\) The Book does not specify either Llandaff or Llandeilo as the location, but it is now generally accepted this monastery was at Llandeilo Fawr.\(^{23}\)

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\(^{15}\) PRN 912, Dyfed Archaeological Trust SMR.
\(^{16}\) Arnold, C. J. and Davies, J. L. op.cit., p.188
\(^{17}\) Sambrook, P. and Hall, J., op.cit., p.24
\(^{18}\) PRN 912, Dyfed Archaeological Trust SMR.
\(^{19}\) Sambrook, P. and Hall, J., op.cit., p.24
\(^{20}\) The Book of St Teilo is also known as the Book of St Chad or the Lichfield Gospels, because of its early eleventh century association with the church of Lichfield Griffiths in James 1991 p.205. It is thought to have been removed from Llandeilo to Lichfield during an English raid at the start of the eleventh century; Sambrook, P. and Hall, J., op.cit., p.24.
\(^{22}\) Doble, G. H. op.cit., p.163
\(^{23}\) Ibid.
As well as its obvious associations with Llandaff, who also claim St Teilo as founder, Llandeilo Fawr had connections with some of the other important monastic foundations further south in Wales. It is told in the Vita Illtuti that Illtud (founder of the royal monastery of Llanilltud Fawr in the sixth century AD, now Llantwit Major) moves to Llandeilo where he is ordained by Dubricius, bishop of Llandaff, and builds an oratory and cemetery dedicated to the Holy Trinity.24

The Early Medieval and Medieval history of Llandeilo Fawr is intimately linked with the nearby town and castle of Dinefwr and probably the small church of St Tyfei at Llandyfeisant.25 The church of St Tyfei is likely to have its origins in the Early Medieval period, although the church prior to its reconstruction in the nineteenth century was Medieval.26 St Tyfei was a member of Teilo’s ‘familia’ and the church at Llandyfeisant fell under the authority of the mother church in Llandeilo.27 The churchyard is polygonal in shape but may originally have been circular and this, along with its proximity to Llandeilo (600m to the west), is suggestive of an Early Medieval foundation. It has been suggested that the church of St Tyfei was an influential foundation in its own right, with detached portions of its parish extending as far north as the boundary with Talley parish.28 In spite of this, it was Llandeilo and not Llandyfeisant that attracted a secular settlement and subsequently developed into a town.

The bishops of St David’s controlled the area from the late thirteenth century and both Llandeilo and the Abbey of Talley became possessions of the diocese.29 It was around this time, in 1280, that Llandeilo was given its first borough charter by Edward I.30 By the early fourteenth century the town was flourishing, despite being one of the smallest and least profitable of the towns within the diocese.31 Development into a larger urban settlement was probably hindered by the urbanisation of the neighbouring settlements at Dinefwr and Newton, two other boroughs in the

24 Knight, J. K., 1984a, op.cit., p.391.
25 Griffiths, R. A. op.cit., p.205
26 PRN 861 & 49272, Dyfed Archaeological Trust SMR.
27 Milne, H. op.cit., p.10
28 PRN 49272, Dyfed Archaeological Trust SMR.
29 Sambrook, P. and Hall, J., op.cit., p.26
30 Ibid.
31 As listed in the Black Book of St David’s in 1326; Griffiths, R. A. op.cit., p. 217.
fourteenth century, located c. 1km west.\textsuperscript{32} These were essentially twin towns, with Dinefwr the ‘old town’ on the hill and Newton or ‘New Town’ to the north on the site of the later Newtown House.\textsuperscript{33} In spite of its proximity to Dinefwr and Newton, Llandeilo survived and prospered where the other two boroughs did not. Llandeilo’s continuing prosperity as a small market town undoubtedly stemmed from its situation; it occupied a convenient crossing point on the River Tywi and at the convergence of several routeways, making it an attractive market centre for the region.

The first historical references to the town of Llandeilo date to the early thirteenth century; Rhys Grug attacked and destroyed the town in 1213, but a mention of a small settlement and bridge in 1289 and the \textit{Villa de Lanteilo} (town of Llandeilo) in 1301 indicates that the settlement recovered well.\textsuperscript{34} By 1326, the town had fourteen fully-fledged burgesses, twelve men and two women, each holding a burgage with some land.\textsuperscript{35} The town also had a mill at this time and was granted three annual fairs and a weekly market.\textsuperscript{36} In 1403, Llandeilo and Dinefwr were both attacked by Owain Glyndwr, and according to the records much of the town was burnt.\textsuperscript{37} Despite this the town proved resilient and survived, in contrast to Dinefwr, which had gone into decline by the fifteenth century, having outlived its defensive function.\textsuperscript{38} The town of Dinefwr had disappeared by the sixteenth century, as had the ‘New Town’, the Medieval borough of Newton (both lay within the grounds of the present Dinefwr Park).\textsuperscript{39}

4.7.6 PLAN-ANALYSIS

The River Towy runs along the east side of the town and curves around to the southwest below the town. There are three main approach roads – from the south, northwest and northeast – the north-south routeway almost certainly of Roman origin. The ecclesiastical agglomeration (made up of the church, the graveyard and at one stage a baptistery) dominates the centre of the town, with the churchyard wall

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{32} Milne, H. op.cit., p.11
\item \textsuperscript{33} Murphy, K. and Ludlow, N., 2000. \textit{Historic Landscape Characterisation: Carmarthenshire}, No. 195: Dinefwr Park.
\item \textsuperscript{34} \textit{Llandeilo Town Guide}, Fawr Town Council 1994, p.9
\item \textsuperscript{35} Griffiths, R. A. op.cit., p. 217.
\item \textsuperscript{36} \textit{Llandeilo Town Guide}, Llandeilo Fawr Town Council, 1994, p.9
\item \textsuperscript{37} Sambrook, P. and Hall, J., p.27
\item \textsuperscript{38} Griffiths, R. A. op.cit., p.220.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Sambrook and Hall, 2004, p.27
\end{itemize}
preserving the line of an Early Medieval ecclesiastical enclosure. Settlement appears to have developed firstly around the church and then spread gradually along the radiating access roads.

There is no evidence for an earlier settlement on the site of the present town prior to the establishment of a monastery here in the sixth century AD. Roman settlement appears to be confined to the area around Llandyfeisant in Dinefwr Park to the west, although the site of the monastery is well-connected via an originally Roman road network. The site lies along the major Roman road, between Llandovery and Loughor (Roman Leucarum near Swansea on the coast), with another Roman road to the north, between Llandovery and Carmarthen (named the ‘Via Julia’ on the first edition O.S. map). Roman military and civilian settlement to the west may have been one of the primary incentives for locating the monastery on this site. A connection between a Roman villa or temple and the site of St Tyfei’s church cannot be ruled out and suggests an even stronger link between the monastic settlement at Llandeilo and the original Roman settlement to the west.

There is very little in terms of archaeological evidence to indicate the phasing of the settlement growth and as yet there has been no excavation within the town. In order to understand the genesis and development of the first settlement and town, the importance of the cartographic sources cannot be underestimated; the existing documentary references date no earlier than the thirteenth century. Thus plan-analysis using the first edition OS map of 1891 and tithe maps of 1840 to trace plot and field boundaries is essential (Figures 4.7.5 & 4.7.6).40

The proposed plan units for Llandeilo are shown on Figure 4.7.7, which should be referred to when reading the description of each plan unit below.

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40 The tithe maps were produced from 1836 onwards by the Tithe Commission, in an effort to compile a full cadastral survey of England and Wales, with all of the advantages that this would offer for resolution of boundary disputes, transfer of property and the development of new community systems; Davies, R. 1999. The Tithe Maps of Wales: a guide to the tithe maps and apporitions of Wales in the National Library of Wales, p.42.
PLAN UNIT I

The line of the Early Medieval monastic enclosure is formed by Church Street to the southeast, Abbey Terrace to the northeast and King Street to the west. These streets frame the oval shaped churchyard and represent the earliest evidence for the original ecclesiastical settlement. Besides the curvilinear enclosure, little remains of Llandeilo's early ecclesiastical importance. The present church of St Teilo was designed by Gilbert Scott and erected in the mid-nineteenth century. It is oriented northeast and situated on the east side of the enclosure, abutting Church Street. The Medieval church on the same site was demolished, leaving only the west tower which dates to the later sixteenth century and some Medieval fabric used in the new structure. Lewis describes the older church in 1833 as 'a large heavy building, consisting only of two aisles, and undistinguished by any peculiar architectural features'.

The church houses fragments of two Early Medieval inscribed stones, of the tenth/eleventh century AD, both of them knotwork-decorated cross-heads (Figure 4.7.9c). One, or probably both, of these crosses was unearthed in the chancel when much of the Medieval church was demolished in 1848. A third Early Medieval stone was recorded by Edward Llwyd in the late seventeenth century. It was thought to date to the sixth century AD and bore the Latin epitaph of Curtagnus, an Irish name, suggesting links between the sixth century foundation and Ireland.

The original ecclesiastical agglomeration is now bisected by Bridge Street, as it runs north to Rhosmaen Street, dividing the churchyard in two (Figure 4.7.9b-d). The Mail Road, which was turnpiked in 1763-71, originally circumvented the enclosure and was driven through the churchyard in the 1840s. Lewis, writing in 1849, commented that 'a new road has been constructed through the churchyard, instead of the old one, which was so steep in this part of its course as to be almost impassable for

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42 The structure retains approximately 15% of its pre-nineteenth century core fabric; Ludlow 1998, p.2
44 Ludlow, N., op.cit., p.3.
45 Milne, H. op.cit., p.11.
46 Murphy, K. and Ludlow, N., op.cit., No.202 Llandeilo.
carriages'. The deliberate lowering of the street level of the new road to that of the surrounding roads, emphasises the height of the churchyard, which appears to stand on a mound above the town. The original ground level within the churchyard is possibly represented by a line preserved in the embanking wall (Figure 4.7.9c).

The present church building dates to 1851, with the exception of the Medieval tower, and in common with most Carmarthenshire churches, it consists of two naves (Figure 4.7.9a-b). In addition to the church building, the churchyard contains the graveyard and once contained a baptistery. The churchyard is well wooded - many of the trees among the graves were planted following the construction of the new church. The site of Teilo's baptistery, which was discovered in 1880 during grave-digging, is marked on the first edition O.S. map of 1891 to the north of the church (Figure 4.7.5). A small circular structure in the same location is depicted on the 1822 town plan, perhaps indicating its survival in some form into the early nineteenth century (Figure 4.7.3). The natural spring that fed the baptistery was culverted and directed to an outlet built into the wall along Church Street (Figure 4.7.9e). A holy well at Llandeilo Fawr (Ffynnon Deilo) is mentioned in Bishop Rudd's will, dated 1614. The location of the well is not known, although the presence of a natural spring within the churchyard (thereby sanctifying the water) would suggest that these are one and the same.

The growth of the town in the Medieval and later periods has obscured any possible traces of habitation or settlement associated with the Early Medieval monastery and both the archaeological and documentary evidence is silent on this point. The Early Medieval inscribed cross-slab and cross-stone housed in the present church, along with the curvilinear churchyard and possibly a holy well, represent scant if convincing physical evidence that the early monastic foundation was on this site.

48 Davies, W. and Samuel, W., op.cit., p.10
50 Jones, P., op.cit., p.164.
51 Lewis for example in 1849 states that the town was served by 'a pure spring in the churchyard, at which St Teilo used to baptize Christian converts in ancient times'; 'Llandewy-Brevi - Llandovery', A Topographical Dictionary of Wales (1849), pp. 524-536. URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=47846 Date accessed: 08 February 2009.
PLAN UNIT II
An outer ecclesiastical enclosure has not yet been confirmed at Llandeilo and the possibility of its existence is frequently dismissed; what appears at first glance to be a larger outer enclosure, formed by New Road and Crescent Road, dates to the later nineteenth century (Figures 4.7.5 to 4.7.7). The first edition O.S. map was not surveyed and published until the late nineteenth century, by which time the railway line and the subsequent development north of the town had masked many of the earlier features. Used in conjunction with the earlier nineteenth century tithe map and a town plan of a slightly earlier date in 1822 (Figures 4.7.3 & 4.7.4), however, it is possible to see hints of one or more outer enclosures in the property and field boundaries.

The possible presence of a concentric outer ecclesiastical enclosure is partially visible to the north, northeast and northwest of the town. This is evident in the field boundaries shown on the 1822 town plan and 1841 tithe maps, particularly the long curving boundary separating Llandeilo from Dinefwr Park and from the Parish of Llandyfeisant (Figures 4.7.3 & 4.7.4). Given the historical separation of the Medieval boroughs of Llandeilo and Dinefwr and of the churches and parishes of Llandyfeisant and Llandeilo before that, the antiquity of this boundary is clear. Some of the field boundaries can still be traced in the new property boundaries within the areas of late nineteenth century development to the northeast, which demonstrates their durability and resistance to change. There are also hints of a third curvilinear enclosure in field boundaries to the north and south, extending far beyond the town and enclosing a substantial area, which may be associated with the early monastic foundation (Figure 4.7.5).

PLAN UNIT III
A possible annexe can be traced between the inner and outer ecclesiastical enclosures on the nineteenth century maps (Figures 4.7.3 to 4.7.6). This is formed by the line of George's Hill, crossing Carmarthen Street, and continuing in an arc from north to east along property boundaries. The Medieval market place, a small triangular area at the junction of King Street, Carmarthen Street and Rhosmaen Street, is located within this annexe and is the probable location of an Early Medieval market place. It lies at the convergence of the northwest and northeast approach roads.
Growth of the town from the thirteenth century onwards resulted from the patronage
of the bishops of St David's. There is no real indication of the size of the pre-
thirteenth century settlement; it was probably concentrated around the churchyard, but
if so it has left little or no trace. By the late thirteenth century the reference to the
bridge and settlement of Llanteilo suggests that settlement was confined to the area
immediately south of the church, along Church Street and Bridge Street. This may
indicate a greater utilisation of the river as a resource and as a means of transport
during this period. While not a planted town per se, plot analysis has revealed traces
of burgages partially preserved along the south side of Bridge Street (these are best
depicted on the 1822 town plan, Figure 4.7.3). These may have been part of a planned
extension of the town by the ecclesiastical authorities, in an effort to increase its
commercial viability. Although the insertion of burgages southwards along Bridge
Street may have been solely to encourage river trade, their situation there may have
been forced by existing settlement already in place around the churchyard. There is a
suggestion of earlier plot boundaries along the south side of Church Street. This area
of settlement is located at the junction of Church Street with Quay Street, a narrow
lane leading south towards the river and which may have early roots. 52

The oldest market place was located just outside the churchyard wall and is
remembered in the name of Market Street which runs along the north side of this
triangular area. The formerly open area is now in-filled with houses. The apparent
absence of Medieval or earlier settlement to the north of the churchyard is interesting;
for example, only one house is depicted on the northeast side of the churchyard in a
mid-eighteenth century painting. 53 If this area was originally a separate annexe within
the monastic settlement, given the location of the Medieval market here, it is possible
that this area continued to be reserved for trade, forcing initial settlement growth
south of the churchyard. The annual fair (St Teilo's Fair), which was authorised by
Edward I in 1290, was held annually in the churchyard itself, which essentially served
in place of a village green and acted as a market place. Some of the agricultural
produce and other goods offered for sale are even recorded to have been displayed on

52 Milne, H. op.cit., p.11.
53 Davies, W. and Samuel, W. op.cit., p.52
the tombstones,\textsuperscript{54} an interesting parallel with the encroachment of the market into the cemetery at Carpentras (see Section 4.9, p.217).

There is little known of a Medieval chapel which stood east of Abbey Terrace, behind the present Ebenezer Baptist Chapel. The mid-eighteenth century painting described by Davies and Samuel a century later shows 'the Old Abbey' in Abbey Terrace lying in ruins.\textsuperscript{55} Its site is marked on the first edition OS map, in a sub-rectangular plot depicted as organised gardens on the 1822 town plan. It was a dependency of the Abbey of Talley and was probably associated with a Tithe Barn; a track to the east is known locally as \textit{Ysgubor Abad}, 'the Abbot's Barn', while the chapel itself stood in \textit{Cae Ysgubor Abad}, 'the field of the Abbot's Barn'.\textsuperscript{56}

\textbf{PLAN UNIT V}

Settlement gradually expanded northwards over centuries with the development of King Street and Abbey Terrace, extending to the areas beyond the old market place immediately to its north and west, along Carmarthen Street and Rhosmaen Street in the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{57} This development is illustrated by the construction of a Methodist Chapel on Rhosmaen Street around 1779; meetings of the Calvinistic Methodists had been held in a 'dwelling house' on the same street prior to the chapel being built.\textsuperscript{58} By 1800 Rhosmaen Street is described as occupied by 'straw-thatched houses of the poorest description'.\textsuperscript{59} This preceded development along Crescent and New Roads, which were constructed in the mid-nineteenth century. The introduction of the Vale of Towy railway line in 1858, encouraged growth to the north along the new Railway Terrace, a continuation north of Rhosmaen Street.\textsuperscript{60} Light industrial activity is evident in the area around the railway station, such as a tannery and saw mill, with associated residential development to the northwest of the old town centre.

\textsuperscript{54} \textit{Llandeilo Town Guide}, Llandeilo Fawr Town Council, 1994, p.8
\textsuperscript{55} Davies, W. and Samuel, W. op.cit., p.52.
\textsuperscript{56} Griffiths, R. A. op.cit., p.16
\textsuperscript{58} The house was adapted for the purpose of the meeting in 1777; Davies, W. and Samuel, W. op.cit., p.11
\textsuperscript{59} Murphy, K. and Ludlow, N., op.cit., No. 202 Llandeilo
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
4.7.7 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A summary of findings derived from the plan-analysis is presented in Tables 4.7.1 and 4.7.2 below.

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4.8 LLANCARFAN, GLAMORGAN, WALES

4.8.1 INTRODUCTION

The village of Llancarfan is situated in a small valley within the wider Vale of Glamorgan and lies in the deanery of Llantwit Major and Cowbridge (Figure 4.1 & 4.8.1). The Vale is a distinctive lowland landscape formed on a coastal plateau that extends from the city of Cardiff in the east to Bridgend in the west. Llancarfan village sits on a level site on the banks of the Nant Carfan brook, a tributary of the River Kenson to the south. The brook is formed by seven small streams which meet nearby; Whitewell, Greendown, Gowlog, Coed-Abernant, Whitton Bush, Walterston and Moulton. The land rises to the east of the village towards the Iron Age hill-fort, Castle Ditches.

4.8.2 PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE

The origins of the name Llancarfan are somewhat obscure. Ecclesiastical place-names in Wales tend to follow a distinct pattern, consisting of 'llan' followed by the founder or patron saint's name. In the case of Llancarfan, however, the ecclesiastical element 'llan' does not appear in the original form of the name 'Nant Carfan'. Despite the presence of an early monastic foundation at Llancarfan, the form containing 'ilan' does not appear until the twelfth century. The use of 'llan' as a later modification is probably the result of popular influence. The preponderance of 'llan' in Welsh place-names has occasionally led to the substitution of 'llan' for other elements of one syllable which bear a resemblance to it, especially phonological (as in 'ilcan' for 'nant'). In the case of Llancarfan and other similar sites, the substitution is not entirely devoid of significance given that an early monastic or ecclesiastical foundation had existed at the site.

In the place-name 'Nant Carfan', nant means valley rather than the later meaning of stream or brook, and this is the 'podum Carbani Vallis' mentioned in the twelfth century Book of Llandaff, where podum refers to a religious settlement. The probable meaning of Nant Carfan is 'Valley of the Stag', though this second element

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1 Anon., 1933, Report of the 87th annual meeting at Cardiff, Archaeologica Cambrensis, 88, p.401.
2 Llancarfan is the best known example of this phenomenon and appears variously as Nancarban, Nantcarfan and Nantcarban; Pierce, G.O., op.cit., pp.483-4.
4 Davies, W., 1982, op.cit., p.145.
'carfan' proves equally resistant to simple translation. There is no known saint of the name Carfan, either at the monastery of Llancarfan or elsewhere. According to Awbery, writing in the 1950s, it is generally accepted that the brook (or valley) was named after St Garman, one of the early saints who settled in the valley with Cadoc, and so Nant Garman became Nant Carfan and Lann Gharban. A different explanation is offered by the eleventh or twelfth century Vita Cadoci (Life of Cadoc), which tells that Cadoc was assisted by two stags in dragging timbers from the forest to re-build his monastery and "from the aforesaid two stags (...) the principal town of St Cadoc took (...) the name of Nant Carwan, that is Stag's Valley"; from nant (valley) and carw (stag).

4.8.3 EXAMINATION OF EARLY SETTLEMENT: PREHISTORIC PERIOD

Historically, the Vale of Glamorgan has been an important farming area; given the rich agricultural land, this no doubt extends back into the prehistoric period. The earliest evidence for settlement in the area around Llancarfan is an Iron Age hill-fort, known as Castle Ditches c.450m east of the village. This univallate fort has a single bank and ditch enclosure with an area of about 4.2 hectare and may have replaced an earlier small walled enclosure. Small defended settlements such as this are common in the Vale and the Gower region, but the uplands of Glamorgan show very little sign of habitation. The case for Iron Age activity in the area is substantiated by small finds, noted in the Sites and Monuments Record, which have been dated to this period. A second Iron Age site was identified at Llanbetherwy c.1km west of Llancarfan village, where geophysical survey revealed a double-ditched rectangular enclosure. This site was long considered to have been the site of a Roman villa and exclusively Roman, but is now thought to have been an Iron Age enclosure later developed by the Romans (see below Section 4.8.4).

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6 Ibid; SMR GGAT PRN s0385.
7 Vita Cadoci, 12.20-1, 12.49-51; Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae, pp.53, 55.
8 SMR-00383S, NGR: ST05907002; Sites and Monuments Record, GGAT.
10 PRN-01867S, NGR-ST0570; Sites and Monuments Record, GGAT.
11 Geophysical survey at Llanbetherwy was undertaken by Stratascan Ltd for GGAT in 1999 as part of a threat-led assessment project on lowland Romano-British settlements in southeast Wales; URL http://www.stratascan.Countyuk/arch-roman.html, accessed 12/02/2009.
Further evidence for early settlement in the area is indicated by the discovery of human remains in 1876. Several small cists containing cremated remains of prehistoric date were uncovered by a group of workmen. Unfortunately, there was no proper archaeological excavation of the site and no record of the burials. The remains were broken up and disposed of by the workmen, leaving no trace for chronological and other analysis. This notwithstanding, these prehistoric burials are a further indication of settlement in the Llancarfan valley before the arrival of the Romans in the first century AD.

4.8.4 EXAMINATION OF EARLY SETTLEMENT: ROMAN PERIOD

Settlement in the area continued during the Roman period. A major Roman road (present A48) runs east/west at the north end of the Nant Carfan valley, connecting the auxiliary forts at Cardiff and Neath. Two other Roman roads run through the parish, one along the west side of the valley and another passing near to the village; traces can be seen at the old flour mills to the north of the village. This was known as the 'old road' and was in use until 1825 when the present 'high road' was built on the opposite (east) side of the brook (following an existing pack-horse route).

There were Roman farms (villae) at the nearby Aberthaw and Llanbethery in the fourth century AD, and probably at Moulton to the east. The site of the Roman villa at Llanbethery was suggested from a rubble layer identified during trial excavation, with finds of pottery of late second to fourth century AD date, roof and box tile, nails and slag, animal bone. A coin hoard was also found nearby. Although the geophysical survey in 1999 revealed no certain evidence for buildings within the double-ditched enclosure, the evidence strongly suggests a Roman

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12 PRN-00395S, NGR-ST06097003; Sites and Monuments Record, Glamorgan Archaeological Trust.
13 More human remains (at least seven are marked on the 1885 O.S. six-inch map) were discovered in the latter half of the nineteenth century in and around Llancarfan, along with finds of silver coins and a sword and cannon ball (at Castle Ditches).
14 Llancarfan, Vale of Glamorgan, Ref No. HLW (SG1) 1. Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales, GGAT
17 Arnold, C.J. and Davies, J.L., op.cit., p.82.
settlement on this site. Liege Castle, about a mile to the north of the village of Llancarfan, may also be of Roman origin.\textsuperscript{19} Nearer to Llancarfan, it has been suggested that the Iron Age fort at Castle Ditches was occupied by the Romans, based on the discovery there of fragments of Roman pottery ranging in date from the second to the fourth century AD.\textsuperscript{20}

4.8.5. ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

The settlement's ecclesiastical origins go back to the foundation of a monastery here in the sixth century AD. According to literary sources, the monastery of Llancarfan was founded in AD 535 by St Cadoc, cousin of St David of Menevia.\textsuperscript{21} The legend of the founding of the monastery is recorded in the \textit{Vita Cadoci}, which constitutes the main source of evidence for the origins of the early monastery. Two principal versions of the \textit{Vita Cadoci} exist, by Lifrís and Caradoc, both of whom studied at the monastery of Llancarfan.\textsuperscript{22} The story of Cadoc's life begins before his conception with the meeting of his parents, the tale of which follows a formula familiar from other folk-tales, such as the Irish story of Cú Chulainn and Emer.\textsuperscript{23} Similarly, the stories surrounding Cadoc's conception and birth have a familiar ring to them. The \textit{Vita Cadoci} relates tales of dreams and visions experienced by Cadoc's parents before his conception and birth, which promised that the child would be saintly in character and that his decision to pursue a religious life was preordained by God himself.\textsuperscript{24}

According to the \textit{Vita Cadoci}, it was Cadoc's search for a secluded place to worship God that led to the founding of the monastic settlement at Llancarfan. He had turned his back on his inherited position and fortune and travelled with a small group of men

\textsuperscript{19} Awbery, S., op.cit., p.86.
\textsuperscript{20} Awbery, S., op.cit., p.85. Also, Site Record NPRN 93040, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales.
\textsuperscript{21} St Cadoc is also known as Cadog and Cattwg. For continuity, the spelling 'Cadoc' will be used throughout this text.
\textsuperscript{22} Lifrís (also Lyfrís or Leofríc) was the son of Herewald, Bishop of Llandaff and Archdeacon of Glamorgan. The \textit{Vita Cadoci} was composed by Lifrís some time between AD 1061 and 1104, but probably in the 1070/80’s rather than at a later date. Lifrís was also a master (\textit{magister}) of the monastery at Llancarfan, the principal house of St Cadoc, and so ideally placed to write a biography of the saint. While much of the work is attributed to him, there are interpolations made in the Vesuvian manuscript from a later \textit{Vita} by Caradoc, while chapters 55 to 68 consist of fourteen charters of the monastery, from a lost Cartulary of Llancarfan; Davies, W., 1982, op.cit., p.208.
\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Vita Cadoci}, 1.18; \textit{Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae}, p.29.
in search of such a place.\textsuperscript{25} The \textit{Vita Cadoci} describes Llancarfan valley as an inhospitable place, covered with ‘thorns and thistles’, marsh and woodland\textsuperscript{26} and was ‘not a little removed from human habitation’.\textsuperscript{27} This account in the \textit{Vita Cadoci} is at odds with the archaeological and documentary evidence. The \textit{Life of St Cadoc}, like other hagiographies, cannot be considered a historical source as the Lives were frequently written to further a saint’s cult or enhance the cause of a church or episcopal see.\textsuperscript{28} It no doubt behoved Cadoc’s biographer to portray the saint as most pious and unworlthy, in search of a place away from others to be alone with God. Such tampering and modification of events in the Lives of Saints is not uncommon, and usually originates in either a desire to paint the saint as the holiest of men or could simply result from the hagiographer’s ignorance of the true events or facts.

Dedications to St Cadoc and St Illtyd (a saint also associated with south Wales) tend to follow the network of Roman roads and Roman sites, a fact that is unsurprising given that these were the main routes for transport, trade and communication in the early Christian period.\textsuperscript{29} Furthermore, the proximity of Castle Ditches, a sizeable Iron Age fort, indicates that the Llancarfan valley had long been the focus of settlement, as does its possible continued occupation under the Romans. In fact, it is more likely the case that Cadoc chose Llancarfan precisely because it was near a former settlement and had access to communication and trade routes. Indeed, had Castle Ditches still been in occupation at the time of the monastery’s foundation, there would have been a settlement full of potential converts to the Christian faith.

The \textit{Vita} tells that the land on which the monastery was founded was granted to Cadoc by his uncle Paul of Penychen who, we are told, owned the land.\textsuperscript{30} It is described that he raised up ‘a huge heap of earth, and to make in the same a very beautiful cemetery dedicated to the honour of God, wherein the bodies of the faithful might be buried round about the temple. Then when the heap was completed, and the cemetery in the same prepared, he made four large foot-paths across four declivities of mountains surrounding his monastery, making passable what was impassable

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Vita Cadoci}, 8.3-5; \textit{Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae}, p.41.
\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Vita Cadoci}, 8.6, 8.87-8; \textit{Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae}, pp.41, 45.
\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Vita Cadoci}, 8.78-9; \textit{Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae}, p.45.
\textsuperscript{28} Doble, G. H. op.cit., p.13.
\textsuperscript{29} Walker, D., op.cit., p.9.
before, following literally and spiritually the teaching of the Gospel.\textsuperscript{31} The description of the monastery he built, as found in the \textit{Vita Cadoci}, is one that could be applied to many other Irish and Welsh monasteries or ecclesiastical settlements. It is described as being made up of buildings of wattle and mud and wood,\textsuperscript{32} with individual cells for the monks and a chapel for gathering, with further cells for the stewards, gardeners and gravediggers.\textsuperscript{33}

As the community grew, both in number and importance, the landscape changed. In order to expand the original foundation, we are told that land had to be reclaimed from the marshes through trench-cutting and roads and footpaths were created; a church, cemetery and cloisters were built.\textsuperscript{34} The monastery itself appears to have been a very substantial foundation. As Cadoc’s monks tell King Rhun, Cadoc owns “a great household, to wit, a hundred clergy, and as many soldiers, and workmen of like number, besides women and children”.\textsuperscript{35} The community prospered and became a fully-fledged monastic settlement, such as one sees in Ireland (for example, Kells and Clonmacnoise), with a college of some repute, the monastery itself, a hospital, workshops and houses.\textsuperscript{36} A passage in the \textit{Vita Cadoci} describes the establishment of another site (now believed to be Llanveithin to the north) that would serve as a place of refuge in the event of political incursions or civil war.\textsuperscript{37} “Also he chose another place for himself, and caused to be thrown up in it from the soil of the earth another round tumulus like a fort, and on the tumulus to be erected what in the speech of the Britons is called Cadog’s Kastil”.\textsuperscript{38} This was to become the college of the monastery, while the settlement at Llancarfan remained the principal residence of the abbot.

The territory of the monastery was small at first but was extended by many gifts; the community, which rivalled in importance those at Llantwit Major and Llandaff, was

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{30} \textit{Vita Cadoci}, 8.29; \textit{Vitae Sanctorum Britannieae}, p.41.
\item \textsuperscript{31} \textit{Vita Cadoci}, 9.8-15; \textit{Vitae Sanctorum Britannieae}, p.47.
\item \textsuperscript{33} \textit{Vita Cadoci}, 48, 50; \textit{Vitae Sanctorum Britannieae}, pp.121, 123.
\item \textsuperscript{34} Awbery, S., \textit{op.cit.}, p.60.
\item \textsuperscript{35} \textit{Vita Cadoci}, 24.32-6; \textit{Vitae Sanctorum Britannieae}, p.77.
\item \textsuperscript{36} Awbery, S., \textit{op.cit.}, p.60.
\item \textsuperscript{37} Bryce, D. \textit{op.cit.}, pp 41-2.
\item \textsuperscript{38} \textit{Vita Cadoci}, 9.19-21; \textit{Vitae Sanctorum Britannieae}, p.47. A late nineteenth century report stating that “the site of the original monastery appears to have been, not at Llancarfan, but at Llanveithin or Bangor Cattwg, three quarters of a mile higher up the valley”; Anon., 1888, \textit{Report of the 43rd annual meeting at Cowbridge, Archaeologia Cambrensis, 5 ser 5}, p.386.
\end{itemize}
maintained by the gifts (often land) of many benefactors. The monastery at Llancarfan was renowned as a centre of learning and religion and seems to have been a powerful foundation, with its authority extending beyond the boundaries of the actual ecclesiastical settlement and over the wider area. The *Vita Cadoci* tells, for example, that Llancarfan was Cadoc’s ‘principal monastery’ and that the abbot also had monasteries in Scotland and the surrounding areas of Wales. The *Vita Cadoci* describes the extent of the abbatial estate presided over by Cadoc as stretching as far as Penmark and down to the Severn Sea, while on the other side the boundary of the monastery’s farm land extended to St Athan and Llanbethery with Llanveithin as the centre.

Llancarfan and Llanbadarn were essentially family churches with a clear line of succession and even St David’s retained this quality long after it had been transferred into a cathedral chapter. The charters contained in the *Vita Cadoci* detail the acquisition of lands by the monastery at Llancarfan, for the purpose of founding daughter houses, many of them some distance away. The charters in the *Vita Cadoci* further expand on the subject of dependants; when Cadoc built a church he then installed a prior/procurator so he could expect hospitality on his travels; Elli (his successor) built a church and monastery and proclaimed them subject to Cadoc and assigned provisions for three nights, summer and winter, to Cadoc and arranged that the abbot of Llancarfan would preside in any change of administration, thus the mother house accrued financial benefits as well as keeping a hand in appointments.

The abbot also had the rights of appointment of successor and of praepositi and principes. Indeed, Cadoc was so powerful that he should have had the authority to call synods; the *Vita Cadoci* relates how Cadoc was angered by St David when he discovered that David had called a synod at Llanddewi Brefi in his absence.

39 The Book of Llandaff records gifts to the monasteries of St Cadoc and St Illtyd; Anon., 1933, Report of the 87th annual meeting at Cardiff, *Archaeologica Cambrensis*, 88, p.401.
40 Davies, W., 1982, op.cit., p.57.
42 Walker, D., op.cit., p.11.
43 For example, *Vita Cadoci*, 59, 60, 61; *Vitae Sanetarum Britanniae*, p.129.
44 *Vita Cadoci*, 58; *Vitae Sanetarum Britanniae*, p.129.
45 *Vita Cadoci*, 63 & 58; *Vitae Sanetarum Britanniae*, pp.131-2 & 129.
46 Davies, W., 1982, op.cit., p.57.
47 *Vita Cadoci*, 17.11-14, 13.18-19; *Vitae Sanetarum Britanniae*, pp.61, 55.
Cadoc's power was legendary and was remarked upon in the *Vita*: "He daily fed a hundred clergy, and a hundred soldier, and a hundred workmen, and a hundred poor men, with the same number of widows. This was the number of his household, besides servants in attendance, and esquires, and guests, whose number was uncertain, and a multitude of whom used to visit him frequently. Nor is it to be wondered at, for being rich in lands he maintained many, for he was abbot and prince over the Gwynyllio after his father".48

The wealth of the monastery can be inferred from passages in the *Vita Cadoci*. The monastic diet at Llancarfan is recorded as having plenty of fish and milk, suggesting a relatively rich diet in comparison with other monasteries.49 When King Rhun and his men came to "Cadog's barn" they knew that "there we may drink milk enough, for milk abounds there always".50 Further, Cadoc is reputed to have given a cask of beer, a fat sow and fifty wheaten loaves to soldiers who came to demand food from him.51 Both the fact that the soldiers knew where to obtain victuals and the fact that Cadoc had such fare on hand suggests that such produce was farmed at Llancarfan. It would seem that the monastery had cultivated the surrounding land, to some success.52

Cadoc's extensive travelling allowed him to make important and influential contacts, such as Gildas and Bishop Dyfrig.53 His renowned talents as a preacher and religious instructor were such that even the Bishop of Rome was reputed to have heard of him.54 Soon students and pilgrims flocked to the monastery, initially from the ancient province of Morgannwg, the monastery's chief sphere of influence and then from farther afield.55 Other evidence survives of Cadoc's connections with the wider Christian world. It is thought, for example, that Cadoc founded a monastery in Brittany, on the island of Ille Cado on the River Estell.56 Although there is some

48 *Vita Cadoci*, 18.4-10; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.63. 
49 Davies, W., 1982, op.cit., p.35. 
50 *Vita Cadoci*, 24.27-9; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.77. 
51 *Vita Cadoci*, 19; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.63. 
52 Davies, W., 1982, op.cit., p.35. 
53 "In that time, when Cadoc...had gone to Rome, and had travelled through all places of saints established throughout Italy and Gaul for the sake of seeing the relics of the saints"; *Vita Cadoci*, 35.3-5; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.97. 
54 Bryce, D. op.cit., p.46. 
55 Awbery, S., op.cit., p.60. 
56 There is an island foundation in Brittany, dedicated to Cadoc, which has been incorporated into Lifris' version of the *Vita Cadoci* (35; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.97). The abbey is first mentioned
controversy over this foundation, it would not be surprising given that links between Wales, Cornwall, Brittany and Ireland were quite strong in the Early Medieval period.

Links between Ireland and Cadoc begin early: Cadoc’s baptism was conducted by an Irish hermit, Meuthi. When Cadoc reached the age of seven he was sent to Meuthi to be educated “in liberal arts and divine doctrine” at his college at Caerwent where he remained for twelve years. As part of his religious education he was also instructed by an Irish anchorite called Muchutu at Lismor monastery (Lismore, County Waterford, Ireland), according to Lifris the “principal monastery of that country”. Cadoc had expressed an “ardent longing” to sail to Ireland to study. Lifris relates how Cadoc spent three years in Ireland. The saint also brought men back with him from his travels there, including Finian, Macmoil and Gnauan. Lifris recounts later in the *Vita* how Cadoc wore a cowl “as is commonly called a certain kind of garment, which the Irish wear out of doors”. These connections with Ireland would continue even after Cadoc’s death; in Lifris’ account of the early abbots of Llancarfan, it is recorded that the abbot Cadifor (died in 883) sent learned men from Llancarfan to instruct the Irish. This early contact and the knowledge that Cadoc spent time in Ireland strengthens the Irish connections of the monastic settlement at Llancarfan, which are already suggested by the physical description of the monastery in the *Vita Cadoci*.

After leaving Ireland, Cadoc visited Brycheiniog (Brecknock/Breconshire) and studied under Bachan, a celebrated rhetorician from Italy. He then founded

in a cartulary written in 1009 in a section titled ‘De sancto Cauodo et de terris ecclesiae ejus’, Cadoc being Catbodu in Breton (a possible reference to St Cadoc and the ecclesiastical lands associated with him). The island in question is now called Ile Cado, previously Inis/Ynys Catbodu, situated on the River Estell. Henken, however, suggests that it is a Breton saint Cadoc and not the Welsh saint, that is associated with the island and that Lifris may have heard of the island and its legends and considered it to belong to his saint (Henken, E. R., op.cit., p.95). That this particular settlement may not be attributable to St Cadoc should not be taken to mean that the saint did not travel in Brittany nor that he had no influence there.

57 *Vita Cadoci*, 1.22; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.29.
58 *Vita Cadoci*, 6.29-31; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.31.
59 *Vita Cadoci*, 10.4-5; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.47.
60 *Vita Cadoci*, 10.4-5; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.47.
61 *Vita Cadoci*, 10.30; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.49.
62 *Vita Cadoci*, 11.4-5; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.49.
63 *Vita Cadoci*, 17.22-4; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.61.
64 Awbery, S., op.cit., p.35.
65 *Vita Cadoci*, 11.7-8; *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p.49.
Llanspyddid in Breconshire and Llangadog Fawr in Carmarthenshire. When Cadoc returned to his original settlement, or town, at Llanearfan after his travels through Ireland and Wales he found it deserted and in ruins: ‘He beheld the principal monastery destroyed, and the timbers of the roofs and the rubbish of the building scattered rudely over the cemetery, he grieved at the downfall, burning to build it anew’. He ordered all his monks to go into the woods and cut timber for a new structure.

Soon after 528, when Gildas is reputed to have visited Llanearfan, Cadoc set off travelling once more, this time to Scotland, leaving Gildas in charge at the monastery. Cadoc's peregrinations took him farther afield than Ireland, Scotland and Brittany where he had sought religious instruction. The saint is reputed to have travelled as far as Rome and Jerusalem in his quest for enlightenment. Cadoc resumed control of his abbey after returning from abroad and remained abbot at Llanearfan for many years, during which he occasionally undertook further journeys, until he was succeeded by Elli.

Even allowing for the exaggeration that persists in hagiographies, it is apparent that the monastery at Llanearfan held a prominent place in the early development of Christianity in Wales and in the continuing development in southeast Wales, along with the nearby monasteries of Llantwit Major and Llandaff. Pilgrims were known to have come from the continent to visit these monasteries, where the founders of their churches and the early saints were taught. Llanearfan's influence and authority spread through south Wales, Ireland, Scotland and Brittany as its missionaries, having first completed their training at Llanearfan, travelled throughout these regions.

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66 Vita Cadoci, 11.58; Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae, p.51.
67 Lifris uses the term oppidum, the Latin 'town', to describe the monastery. This may suggest that the monastery had evolved beyond being a simple monastic settlement in the short space of time between its foundation and Cadoc's return from his travels, although this seems unlikely. In fact, the use of oppidum is probably anachronistic and a reflection of the monastery as it was in Lifris' lifetime some 400 years later.
68 Vita Cadoci, 12.6-10; Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae, p.53.
69 Vita Cadoci, 12.10-11; Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae, p.53.
70 Bryce, D. op.cit., p.45.
71 Vita Cadoci, 26.7; Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae, p.81.
Llancarfan, much like the rest of Wales, suffered raids by Vikings, no doubt attracted by the wealth of the monasteries (as they had been in Ireland): we are told that in 988 the Vikings ravaged the wealthy monasteries at Llancarfan, Llanbadarn, St. David’s, Llanilltud and Llandudoch. Despite the numerous raids during the course of the tenth century, the settlement prospered and grew until the arrival of the Normans in the twelfth century. The wealth and power held by the monastery was undoubtedly one of the attractions for the Norman conquerors in the twelfth century and in 1100 Robert Fitzhammon took the emoluments of Llancarfan and gave them to St Peter’s Benedictine Abbey at Gloucester. The Normans had little reverence for Llancarfan as a church and subsequently dissolved its claus system, as happened elsewhere in Wales; the monastery was reduced to the status of ordinary parish church.

4.8.6 PLAN-ANALYSIS

There are a number of ecclesiastical centres or foundations in the area surrounding Llancarfan, all situated within the monastic lands of the original Cadoc foundation. This is not an uncommon situation; the foundation at Llancarfan would have acted as the mother house, while the others were satellite foundations or daughter houses. The settlement pattern reflects this: Llancarfan village, the site of the original and principal monastery, while small itself, is the most substantial of the settlements in the area, none of which developed beyond a small hamlet. An examination of the nineteenth century O.S. and Tithe maps in conjunction with archaeological and historical evidence allows analysis of the morphological development of Llancarfan, from the foundation of the early monastery to the present day (Figures 4.8.2 to 4.8.4).

Cartographic analysis shows the line of two or possibly three ecclesiastical enclosures that may be associated with the Early Medieval monastery and its lands (Figure 4.8.3). While the accounts of the monastic foundation given in the Vita Cadoci cannot be accepted as historical fact, they nonetheless may reflect some elements of the early monastery and later settlement seen in the plan-analysis, such as the suggestion of curvilinear enclosure. No ruins of the early monastery are extant and the ecclesiastical fabric in Llancarfan is instead confined to a church and churchyard which have their origins in the Norman period. There is a dearth of archaeological evidence for Early

74 Awbery, S., op.cit., p.63.
Medieval or later settlement at Llancarfan and consequently the use of plan-analysis in this case is essential in attempting to determine the location, size and extent of the early monastic foundation and the subsequent development of the secular settlement.

The proposed plan units for Llancarfan are shown on Figure 4.8.5, which should be referred to when reading the description of each plan unit below.

**PLAN UNIT I**

The Church at Llancarfan, dedicated to St Cadoc, is situated on the west bank of the Carfan Brook and lies within the probable line of the inner ecclesiastical enclosure.

The present church is a mostly mid-nineteenth century construction and consists of a chancel, nave and tower, with a south-facing porch. A broad south aisle extends the full length of the church, linked to both the chancel and the nave by a series of arcades. This church appears to have been preceded by at least one earlier building and has been heavily restored over the centuries. The earlier structure, of Norman date, probably also consisted of a chancel, nave and tower. This church has left only a small number of elements, including two carved abaci reused in the chancel arch and a small round-headed window reused in the tower, both of which date to the twelfth century and which are often attributed to archdeacon Walter de Mapes.\(^7\) Later modifications saw the south aisle widened and lengthened in the early fourteenth century to form a chapel (named Raglan Chapel after local patrons).\(^7\) The tower was rebuilt around the same time. In the mid-fifteenth century a porch was built at the south door, of which the original roof is retained.\(^7\) The main restoration of the building took place in the nineteenth century, when the chancel was re-roofed and the tower, for the most part, rebuilt.\(^7\)

The only probable relic from the monastic settlement is the shaft of a pillar cross which now stands in the church itself. The cross, of Class E, has been dated to the

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75 SMR, GGAT, Survey of St Cadoc's Church, Llancarfan, carried out on 14/11/97; Anon., 1888, Report of the 43\(^{th}\) annual meeting at Cowbridge, Archaeologica Cambrensis, 5 ser 5, p.387.
76 Anon., 1933, Report of the 87\(^{th}\) annual meeting at Cardiff, Archaeologica Cambrensis, 88, p.400.
77 Ibid.
78 SMR, Glamorgan Archaeological Trust, Survey of St. Cadoc's Church, Llancarfan, carried out on 14/11/97; Anon., 1933, Report of the 87\(^{th}\) annual meeting at Cardiff, Archaeologica Cambrensis, 88, p.400.
ninth or tenth century. It is decorated with interlaced ornament and bears an inscription dated to the eleventh or twelfth century. Orrin maintains that the base of a cross stood on the south side of the church but was removed entirely during grave-digging in 1815 and, according to Awbery, it was common for churches in the Vale of Glamorgan to have a cross in their churchyard. This assertion is supported by a reference in the SMR to a cross standing in the churchyard at Llancarfan, despite the absence of same at the time of site visit. It is possible then, that the shaft of the pillar cross which now stands in the church is the base mentioned by Orrin as extant in the nineteenth century.

The churchyard is sub-rectangular in shape, rounded on the southwest side. It slopes down from west to east and is bounded to the east by the brook and on the remaining three sides by a coursed rubble wall. It appears slightly less regular on the tithe map of 1841, the earliest cartographic representation (Figure 4.8.2). The main entrance to the churchyard is through a double gate positioned in the south wall; the path leads directly to the south porch. Another gate is positioned in the north-west corner of the churchyard. The burial ground appears to be confined to the south of the church, with no visible graves to the north. The Vita Cadoci, when narrating the tale of the foundation of the monastery at Llancarfan, tells of another settlement founded a little further north at Llanveithin which was also circular ('another round tumulus'); suggesting that the foundation at Llancarfan was laid out like its Irish contemporaries, in curvilinear form.

The line formed by the churchyard wall most likely follows that of the original monastic enclosure containing the first church and burial ground. General practice throughout the world would indicate that there is a continuity through time in the use of sacred space and places of worship, where possible, which would include the sanctified or sacred ground used for burial. According to the Vita Cadoci, the cemetery surrounded the original church, but whether this is the same location can only be answered with any degree of certainty through archaeological excavation.

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79 SMR, Glamorgan Archaeological Trust, Survey of St. Cadoc's Church, Llancarfan, carried out on 14/11/97.
A holy well, *Efynnon Llancarfan*, simply meaning the ‘well of Llancarfan’ is situated in a field to the west of the village, outside of the enclosures. The superstructure of the well is Medieval in date and is traditionally known as a holy well, possibly associated with the monastery.\(^{82}\) There are a number of other wells in the surrounding area, two to the east and at least one other (*Efynnon Dyfrig*, near Garnllwyd to the north) is probably directly associated with the monastic site, being close to both Llancarfan and Llanveithin.\(^{83}\)

The radiating access roads, which are a feature of many monastic or ecclesiastical settlements and their evolution into village or town, almost all have a connection to crosses. It has been suggested that when Irish monastic sites were first laid out, crosses were positioned at cardinal points, on the access roads leading to and from the settlement. Each of the following place names, featuring the word ‘cross’, is sited on a road or route (footpath) radiating out from Llancarfan: Crossgreen, Croes-hoel (cross road), Crosstown, Middlecross and Painscross or Pancross (Figure 4.8.3). Sections of a very large enclosure can be traced in the boundaries of the surrounding fields to the north, south, east and west (Figure 4.8.3). The Iron Age hill-fort of Castle Ditches is located outside of this enclosure at its eastern extent, probably representing both a topographical boundary and a territorial one, assuming the fort was still occupied in the sixth century (Figure 4.8.3).

The enclosure line runs close to the ‘cross’ place-names, which may refer to the *termon* or boundary crosses (Figure 4.8.3). At least three of these cross names, Crosstown, Pancross, and Crossgreen, are located both at cardinal points and on a radiating access route (see below for Crossgreen). Crosstown is situated to the east just outside of this enclosure, on what appears to be an old route from Llancarfan to Llanbethery (partially a footpath on the first edition O.S. map, Figure 4.8.3). There is at least one documentary reference to an actual cross at Pancross, on a southern approach road, strengthening the *termon* argument. A gift of land is mentioned in a

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\(^{81}\)This is also suggested in the SMR: the ‘usually (sic) large churchyard, rounded in plan and set in the valley bottom beside a stream, may indicate the monastic enclosure’; PRN-00384S, NGR-ST05157008; Sites and Monuments Record, GGAT.

\(^{82}\) PRN-00391S, NGR-ST06077024; Sites and Monuments Record, GGAT.

\(^{83}\) There are eight in total; Awbery, S., op.cit., p.18.
document of the early thirteenth century, given by Henry de Dumfraville of Brifin, son of Urban. This tract of land was described as being near the cross which stands on the road between Llancarfan and Landili (Llanceadle) and between the two valleys. According to Awbery, this cross is presumed to be "Payns Cross or Pancross", which stood on the crossroads.

The other two names, Middlecross and Croes-heol, are located on approach roads or routes, although not at cardinal points (Croes-heol is situated on a main north-south road, just north of a footpath heading west to Llancarfan). These may simply remember the ecclesiastical origins of this area, now fossilised in place-names, as it is known that the ecclesiastical or abbatial estate/lands probably extended beyond these points.

PLAN UNIT II
There may be some evidence for the growth of the monastic settlement into the area outside of the inner enclosure, within the second concentric enclosure, possibly connected to the growth of the monastery as discussed in the sources. This enclosure is partly preserved in the field boundaries to the east, west and south and to the north along a road to the south of Crossgreen (Figures 4.8.2 to 4.8.5). The ground rises beyond the inner enclosure to the east and west, though not too steeply. Given the topographical constraints of laying out a monastic site in a narrow valley bottom, if this is indeed an outer ecclesiastical enclosure, then it is possible that the pattern of enclosure was one that bore more significance than on a purely practical planned settlement level.

Bordering Llancarfan village at its most southern point is the reputed site of the original monastery (as marked on early O.S. maps, Figures 4.8.3 & 4.8.4). The site, located in an open green field (increasingly encroached upon by modern properties), contains no visible surface remains of the early monastic settlement. Accounts from the nineteenth century describes that 'nothing now remained above ground to bear witness to its pristine renown, though the traditional site of the monastery showed

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84 Awbery, S., op.cit., p.17.
85 Awbery, S., op.cit., p.17.
86 Ibid.
'hills and hollows', with stone rubble exposed in a drainage trench, suggesting that excavation might yield interesting results. A well in the adjacent field is associated with the monastery'.

The field, known locally as Culvery or Calvery Field, is set on a slight rise overlooking the village; possibly the ‘large mound of earth’ referred to in the Vita Cadoci. Trevelyan, writing at the beginning of the twentieth century, says that the meadow in which the monastery stood was connected to the church by a culvert, giving the name Culvery Field. She also remarks that ‘there were in this field foundations of several substantial buildings which some believe to be the remains of an old castle which belonged to the Humphrevelles of Penmark. These stones may have been the foundations of the old abbey’. The mound was partially excavated in 1964, which revealed a substantial north-south aligned mortared foundation wall in association with thirteenth and fourteenth century pottery, debris layer sandstone roofing tile with green glazed ridge tile of fourteenth century type.

The first edition O.S. marks this field as ‘Site of Monastery’ (Figure 4.8.3), but there is no reason to assume that this was the site of the first church or the centre of the monastic settlement. The field lies outside of the inner enclosure, within which the church and cemetery are situated, but still within the outer enclosure demarcating the boundaries of the monastic settlement. The earthworks and stone foundations described in the nineteenth and twentieth century accounts are more likely to have been associated with the other monastic buildings, such as the hospital or college mentioned in the sources. The southern boundary of the field has a curvilinear aspect and may form part of the outer enclosure.

The argument that the area east of the Carfan Brook formed part of the ecclesiastical holdings within an outer enclosure is strengthened by the recorded presence there of a Medieval Chapel. No trace remains of St Margaret's Chapel, formerly located “at the

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88 Vita Cadoci, 9.8-15; Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae, p.47.
90 SMR File No. PRN384s; SAM GM075; RCAHMW 1982.
end of St Margaret's Bridge over the River Carven” and described as ruinous in Lhuyd's *Parochalia*.91

**PLAN UNIT III**

Crossgreen is situated at the northern end of the village, on the main road heading north and at the northern end of the probable outer enclosure. This may be the original fair green, or market place, although there is no documentary evidence of such. The green is triangular in shape, with Llancarfan Brook running along its western side and a corn mill and mill-race immediately to the northeast. It is unclear whether this green acted as a market place during the Early Medieval period, although there is generally a tendency towards continuity of use of market spaces. A triangular market place is frequently associated with monastic settlements in Ireland, so it is not improbable to suggest that this space was used in the pre-Norman period. The name ‘Crossgreen’ might be the only possible evidence to indicate that this space was indeed associated with the monastery, and that a cross situated on the main road leading north from Llancarfan may have given its name to the green.

**PLAN UNIT IV**

The size of the present village, a very small isolated settlement nestled in the Llancarfan valley, belies its prominence as an important and prosperous religious centre during the Early Medieval period. Edward Lloyd, a writer, describes the village as he saw it in the seventeenth century with thirty-eight houses and 115 inhabitants, which suggests that there has been little growth in over four centuries. The principal growth appears to have taken place during the Medieval period.

The present church structure represents later phases of growth at Llancarfan, starting with the Norman period when the newly designated parish church was rebuilt. The Norman conquest of this area at the end of the eleventh century had a direct effect on the future expansion of the monastic settlement at Llancarfan. The settlement clearly did not achieve its earlier potential. It went into decline after the arrival of the Normans, when it was given the status of parish church and all its lands were given to the abbey of St Peter of Gloucester. Its relegation to mere parish church effectively

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arrested its growth. It is quite possible, therefore, that the present plan-form has fossilised many of the elements of the pre-Norman settlement.

The evidence for Medieval settlement in the area surrounding the village ranges from structural remains to stray finds. The Medieval Pen-onn Grange, a remnant of the early monastic properties, lies to the south of the village on land which was given to the Great Abbey of St Peter of Gloucester by the Normans.\(^\text{92}\) Manor House or Court House, a dwelling of Medieval date called Pen-onn and the adjacent Pen-onn Farm, also survive on this Abbey land.\(^\text{93}\) A Medieval barn located close to the village and a Medieval house at Crosstown are recorded in the Glamorgan SMR.\(^\text{94}\) There is also a Medieval ringwork and bailey, with a well-preserved earth and stone bank, on a slight rise of ground within the pasture fields at Middlecross, southwest of the village.\(^\text{95}\) Other small finds recorded in the SMR indicate agricultural activity; four lynchets were found aligned north-south along the slope from which Medieval potsherds were recovered, indicating that the field was ploughed and manured during that period.\(^\text{96}\)

Pottery finds, dated to the twelfth or thirteenth century, were found in the upcast derived from the foundation trenches for new houses in several parts of the village itself, concentrating on the area adjacent to the churchyard.\(^\text{97}\) The cartographic evidence gels with this – the street layout of the main agglomeration to the west of the church appears to be Medieval in date, with a suggestion of burgages along the west side of the street. The predominance of Medieval structures and finds suggests that the settlement developed initially in the immediate vicinity of the church (which itself dates to the Norman period), then along the road leading north from the church. The buildings beyond the church to the north are later in date and include the eighteenth century Fox and Hound Inn, a number of houses dating to the nineteenth century and the early nineteenth century Wesleyan chapel.\(^\text{98}\)

\(^{92}\) PRN-00701S, NGR-ST05306940; Sites and Monuments Record, Glamorgan Archaeological Trust.
\(^{93}\) PRN-00513S, NGR-ST053694; Sites and Monuments Record, Glamorgan Archaeological Trust.
\(^{94}\) PRN-01402S & PRN-01428S, NGR-ST0570; Sites and Monuments Record, Glamorgan Archaeological Trust.
\(^{95}\) PRN-00904S, NGR-ST048700; Sites and Monuments Record, Glamorgan Archaeological Trust.
\(^{96}\) PRN-01417S, NGR-ST05307005; Sites and Monuments Record, Glamorgan Archaeological Trust.
\(^{97}\) PRN-01373S, NGR-ST051701; Sites and Monuments Record, GGAT.
\(^{98}\) PRN-01418S, 01422S, 01419S, NGR-ST051703, 051701, 051703; Sites and Monuments Record, GGAT.
4.8.7  SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A summary of findings derived from the plan-analysis is presented in Tables 4.8.1 and 4.8.2 below.

| TABLE 4.8.1  DETAILS OF ECCLESIASTICAL ELEMENTS |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Inner enclosure** | Vertical sub-oval, measuring c.95m north-south by 74m east-west. Formed by the churchyard wall, with stream along east and road south and west sides. |
| **Outer enclosure** | Partial lines forming a vertical oval, measuring c.295m north-south by 425m east-west. Formed by field boundaries and a small section of road on north side. |
| **Additional enclosure** | Traces of large curvilinear enclosures are visible on the nineteenth century, town plan, tithe and O.S. maps in the surrounding field boundaries; incomplete to east. Marked by 'cross' place-names. |
| **Church/ Cathedral (orientation)** | East-West oriented church, on the site of a medieval church and probably earlier church. |
| **Location of burial ground** | Within inner enclosure, on the south side of the church. |
| **Holy well** | A holy well is situated in a field to the west of the village, outside of the enclosures. Several other holy wells are located in the surrounding area. |
| **Foundation date of ecclesiastical site** | Sixth century. |

| TABLE 4.8.2  ELEMENTS OF SETTLEMENT |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| **Market place (orientation)** | North, at Crossgreen. |
| **Subdivision of enclosure** | No. |
| **Annexe/Suburb** | No. |
| **Radiating road network** | Yes. |
4.9 CARPENTRAS, PROVENCE, FRANCE

4.9.1 INTRODUCTION

The town of Carpentras is situated almost equidistant (c.25km) from Avignon, Orange and Cavaillon, within the ancient Comtat Venaissin¹ (of which Carpentras was the county capital), in the modern département of Vaucluse (Figure 4.1 & 4.9.1). It lies close to Mont Ventoux mountain to the east and on the edge of the Plateau de Vaucluse, a vast plain bordered by the rivers Rhone and Durance. The River Auzon, a tributary of the Ardèche, flows around the town on its north side. A number of routes converge at Carpentras, most notably from Cavaillon, Avignon and Orange, but also from smaller towns such as Apt, Vaison, Sault, Buis-les-Baronnies and from the Mont Ventoux. The site is relatively level, with the ground falling away to the east beyond the town’s limits.

4.9.2 PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE

The name is first recorded in the first century AD as Carbantorate or Carbantoracte, becoming Civitas Carpentarotensium in the fourth century, with a reference to Carpentratensium monast., in 896.² It is Gallic or Celtic in origin and derives from carbanto meaning ‘chariot’ and rate meaning ‘fortress’. This, according to Dauzat and Rostaing, may indicate (literally) a fortress providing safe passage for chariots or, in other words, a fortress positioned to protect a ford on the river Auzon.³

Bimard presents a slightly different translation of the Celtic name, with Carpentoracte deriving from KarlKaer meaning ‘town’, Pen meaning ‘hill’ or ‘elevated ground’ and Toracte meaning ‘passage’, possibly referring to the course of the River Auzon or a

¹ The ancient Comtat Venaissin (often simply ‘the Comtat’) was a province or county around the city of Avignon, comprising roughly the area between the Rivers Rhone and Durance and Mont Ventoux and bordering the Principality of Orange. Avignon and Orange were never part of the Comtat but formed a separate comtat and principality respectively. In the eleventh century the Comtat formed part of the lands owned by the Counts of Toulouse. It was granted to the Papacy by the French kings following the defeat of the Counts of Toulouse in the Treaty of Paris in 1229. It was reclaimed by Count Raymond of Toulouse shortly afterwards but finally became a papal territory in 1274 and remained so until 1791. It gets its name from its former capital Venasque, which was replaced as capital by Carpentras in 1320. Avignon was sold to the Papacy in 1348, after which both comtats were joined together to form a unified papal enclave.


place from which to access the neighbouring provinces. Contantin offers yet another derivation, seeing *Alpentoracte* as the origin of the name, meaning the town ‘opposite the Alps’ or ‘that looks at the Alps’; from *Alpen-eoraten* (with *eoraten* from the Greek verb *oraó* which refers to a town or settlement).

4.9.3 EXAMINATION OF EARLY SETTLEMENT: PREHISTORIC PERIOD

The Vaucluse region has been occupied since the palaeolithic period and there is evidence of Neolithic occupation to the northeast of Mont Ventoux. Carpentras is strategically placed at the convergence of a number of routes leading to and from the major settlements in the region and not surprisingly the town has always been an important market centre. Liabastres posits that the town may even have begun as a Greek market or trading centre, established there after the foundation of the Greek port and trading centre Massalia (Marseilles) in the sixth century BC. Excavations at the La Gardy site in 1965, on the lower slopes of La Lègue hill to the east of the town, produced pottery from as early as the sixth century BC, with Greek and Ionian pottery and Etruscan amphorae.

Evidence for the pre-Roman settlement is scarce and even then is only gleaned from documentary references as no physical trace survives on the site of the present town. The two annual fairs and daily markets held in the town certainly pre-date the Medieval period if not the Roman period; Count Raymond V of Toulouse (bishop and lord of Carpentras) signed a covenant in 1155 AD recognising the antiquity of the markets in the town and forbidding the creation of any other markets in the area contained between the Sorgue and Ouveze rivers.

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5 Contantin cited in Liabastres, J., op.cit., p.7; Mont Ventoux is geologically part of the Alps and lies at their periphery, although it is often considered separate from them due to the lack of mountains of similar height nearby.


7 Liabastres, J. op.cit., p.10

Pliny lists *Carpentoracte* (or *Carbantorate*) *Meminorum* in his list of the *Oppida Latina* in Gaul in the first century AD, referring to the capital of the Memini tribe who occupied this area and is the only direct evidence for a native settlement at this time.\(^{10}\) The settlement named *Carpentoracte*, the fortified settlement or *oppidum* of the Memini tribe was situated in an area of low hills at La Lègue c. 4 km southeast of the present town.\(^{11}\) The site of the present town is the probable location of an important market centre for the Memini tribe, located at the heart of the tribal territory and at the point of convergence of numerous routes. An important market site, taking advantage of regional trade routes, would have been more attractive to the Romans than a hill-fort. Whether or not there was any significant settlement at the site prior to the Roman colonisation is unknown, but the transfer of the name to the site on the plateau indicates a continued association with the tribe. This was usually the case in the Gallo-Roman period, with local tribal chiefs installed in the colonised towns as the Roman representative.

### 4.9.4 Examination of Early Settlement: Roman Period

The Roman province of Gaul Narbonensis,\(^{12}\) although conquered in the second century BC, only began to see peace under the reign of Julius Caesar. There is a reference to the *Colonia Iulia Meminorum* in an inscription discovered near Orange,\(^{13}\) indicating that the native settlement at the market centre was most likely colonised by the Romans during Caesar's reign. Although no written record survives to tell of the transition from Memini tribal centre to Roman colony, the commemorative triumphal arch erected in the Roman colony depicts chained Gallic prisoners among the sculptural decoration, suggesting that the transition was not a peaceful one. The Roman arch is dated to the start of the first century AD and now stands in Place d’Inguimbert at the heart of the town.\(^{14}\) The Greek geographer Ptolemy, in the mid-

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9 Caillet, R., 1949. *Carpentras et le Comtat Venaissin*; p.10; Both the Sorgue and the Ouèzes are tributaries of the River Rhône flowing some 5km to the north and west of Carpentras, creating a substantial area within which Carpentras held the sole market.


12 *Gallia Narbonensis*, which covered much of southern France.


14 Gauthier, N. and Picard, J-Ch. (eds), 1986. *Topographie Chrétienne des Cités de la aule*. III. *Provinces Ecclésiastiques de Vienne et d’Arles*, p.303. According to Caillet, R. op.cit., p.25, the arch owes its preservation to subsequent usage in the Medieval period as a side entrance to the Romanesque...
second century AD, refers to this settlement as *Forum Neronis*.\(^{15}\) It is generally accepted that it was so-named in honour of one of Caesar's lieutenants, Tiberius Claudius Nero.\(^{16}\)

In addition to the arch, evidence of settlement here during the early empire is plentiful and includes inscriptions, funerary stelae (stone slabs), pottery, coins, mosaics and sculptures. Test-pits excavated in the cellars of the synagogue in Carpentras revealed levels dating to the second century BC, attesting to Gallo-Roman occupation of the site at that time.\(^{17}\) This being said, evidence for the layout and size of the Roman town remains absent, with no trace of its plan, its extents or if it was walled, as was the case for example at Fréjus.\(^{18}\) The Romans capitalised on Carpentras as a market centre, constructing a road network which most likely formalised many of the existing pre-Roman routes. In 22 BC, construction began on the principal road network, as well as secondary routes between Carpentras and Cadenet, Cavaillon and Orange.\(^{19}\)

4.9.5 ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

The principal towns of the various tribes in this region kept their importance under Roman rule and subsequently became bishoprics in the early Christian period. In addition to Carpentras, these included Avignon (Cavares tribe), Apt (Vulgientes tribe) and Vaison (Vococes tribe).

This is not surprising given that the large centres of population were obvious first targets for evangelising Christians. Christianity arrived relatively early at Carpentras and according to tradition a bishop (St Valentin) was already in place in Carpentras c. 266 AD. Excepting the bishop lists and the occasional story in the hagiographies,
there is little known of the town or its church in the late Roman Empire or immediate post-Roman period. According to one such story, St Valentin and his fellow clergymen were killed along with many of the townspeople by Crocus, King of the Alamanni (a Germanic tribe). The episcopal seat remained vacant for the next twenty years, as did that in the neighbouring Venasque, undoubtedly a result of continued disturbances and attacks.

The early fifth century saw these earlier disturbances become the great 'barbarian' invasions, with the Germanic tribes taking advantage of the collapsing Roman Empire. By 481 AD the Visigoths had seized the coastal stretch of Provence and the Burgondes took its northern territories (including Carpentras). By the early sixth century the Merovingian kings had taken control of Provence and Carpentras fell under the control of King Théodebert of Austrasie. It is during this period that the first historical bishop of Carpentras appears in the documentary sources: Constantianus (439-451).

The early ecclesiastical history of Carpentras is inextricably linked to that of the nearby fortified town of Venasque, situated c. 10km to the southeast. The bishop lists for the two towns remain separate until the mid-sixth century, when St Siffrein (see below) united the two bishoprics as one, with the episcopal seat at Carpentras. Throughout the sixth century the episcopal titulature used on the conciliary letters varies. Thus, Clematius signs for the first time in 541 as *episcopus civitatis Carpentoratensium et Vindascensium* but in 549 as *episcopus Carpentoratensis*; Boethius signs as bishop of Carpentras in 584 yet his tomb (d.604) is to be found close to Venasque; Ambrosius (614) and Licerius are bishops of Venasque, while Siffrein (as described below) is bishop of Carpentras but was living in Venasque when he died. This was the result of continued unrest in the region, which was exacerbated in the eighth and ninth centuries by the Saracen invasions of Provence.

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20 Liabastres, J. op.cit., p.12.
23 The bishop lists for Carpentras stop after the seventh century; Gauthier, N. and Picard, J-Ch., 1986. op.cit., p.105.
24 Andreoli, E. and Lambert, B.S., op.cit., p.1
and Languedoc. The bishop transferred his seat to the better-defended Venasque, which in addition to being fortified is situated on a height, while still maintaining a ‘dual’ diocese of Carpentras-Venasque from the late sixth to tenth centuries.  

Most scholars place St Siffrein as bishop of Carpentras in the mid-sixth century (c. 555-570 AD). St Siffrein is the patron saint of Carpentras, with his feast day on the day of his recorded death at Venasque, November 27th. The Life of St Siffrein tells that he founded a church dedicated to St Antoine (Antoninus) in the castrum of Carpentras, suggesting that the town was fortified at this time. This church was preceded by an earlier church situated near the Roman arch. The patron of Siffrein’s church, Antoninus, appears in the ecclesiastical council lists and may be the bishop of Carpentras who signed concilary letters in 463. The church is mentioned in a charter of 859, in which Jean II, bishop and lord of Carpentras, gifts the new King Charles of Provence with the ‘church of St Antoine in the city of Carpentras’. 

A cathedral in Carpentras is first mentioned in the tenth century, with a dedication to the Virgin Mary, St Peter and St Siffrein, although it is not clear whether this was an entirely new structure. The return of the bishopric to Carpentras from Venasque in the tenth century no doubt initiated a programme of regeneration of the town and its ecclesiastical core. This may have included the construction of a new cathedral to replace the Church of St Antoine. The present cathedral of St Siffrein (described below) has its origins in the late twelfth century when a Romanesque style cathedral was constructed, replacing the earlier cathedral recorded in the tenth century. The Romanesque structure had to be re-built at the start of the fifteenth century following its collapse. The reconstruction commenced in 1404 on a site slightly south of the

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26 Gauthier, N. and Picard, J-Ch., 1986, op.cit., p.466.
27 Gauthier, N. and Picard, J-Ch. (1986, op.cit., p.105) claim that it is not possible to accurately place St Siffrein to a particular date or period, giving a broad sixth or seventh century possible date. They do not doubt that he existed, however, there being ample evidence for this.
28 Vita S. Siffredi (BHL 7703), cited in Gauthier, N. and Picard, J-Ch., 1986, op.cit., p.106
30 Liabastres, J. op.cit., p.12.
32 Reyne, A. and Brehier, D., op.cit., p.1. The twelfth century structure is traditionally attributed to Geoffroy de Garosse, although he held the bishopric of Carpentras slightly later, from 1211 to 1218.
twelfth century edifice, \(^3\) on the orders of Pope Benoit XIII following a visit to the town. \(^4\) The Gothic cathedral was consecrated in 1531 by Cardinal Jacques Sadolet, who had been named bishop of Carpentras in 1517.\(^5\)

Like many of the Provençal bishops, it is known that Siffrein originally trained as a monk at Lérins, where he was brought as a young boy by his father Ergastulus, a soldier. His name appears in various Latin forms (Siffredus, Sisfredus, Suffredus, Suffrenus, Suffren, etc.) but also as Sigefroi, which perhaps suggests a Germanic origin.\(^6\) As elsewhere within the Roman empire, Gallo-Roman society was very much multi-cultural and included people originally from the northern reaches of the empire, brought to Gaul either by trade or, more commonly, as soldiers in the Roman army.\(^7\)

The town was greatly influenced by the church, through the offices of both the bishop of Carpentras and of the popes seated in nearby Avignon during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In 1270, an act records an agreement between the bishop Raymond de Barjols and the syndics (town representatives) regarding the town ditches.\(^8\) This illustrates that the bishop's authority was not confined to spiritual matters, but extended into such prosaic matters as the town's defences. The control of the church over secular and economic affairs in the town can be seen during the Papacy in Avignon, with ratification of the market privileges by a number of popes from 1416 onwards.\(^9\) It was in advance of Pope Clement V's visit to Carpentras, during his tour of the Comtat around 1313, that a system of canals was constructed to convey

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\(^3\) Biarne in Gauthier, N. and Picard, J-Ch. (1986, op.cit., p.106) cites the clearance works in 1968-69 which revealed that the earlier church was on a slightly different orientation (based on the Romanesque arch against which the later cathedral was leaning).


\(^5\) Reyne, A. and Bréhier, D., op.cit., p.2. Biarne suggests that the fifteenth century cathedral may incorporate the site of the two earlier churches (cited in Gauthier, N. and Picard, J-Ch., 1986, op.cit., p.106).

\(^6\) Andreoli, E. and Lambert, B.S., op.cit., p.16.

\(^7\) Soldiers were, as a rule, posted in units far from their homeland in order to reduce the risk of defection or insurrgency.


\(^9\) For example, a papal bull of Sigismond in 1416 as well as subsequent ratification by Popes Clement VII in 1505 and Paul III in 1540; Caillet, R., op.cit., p.10.
drinking water into the town, supplying a number of newly built fountains. Carpentras regained status as the capital of the Comtat in 1320 and was undoubtedly a prosperous town to warrant such intervention and interest. This is also evident at a local level: in 1616 the then bishop facilitated new business in the town by renouncing his tax on merchandise, while in 1670 the rector of the Comtat Venaissin passed a law confirming the privileges as originally granted by Count Raymond V.

4.9.6 PLAN-ANALYSIS

The Napoleonic cadastral map is the earliest accurate cartographic source for Carpentras, as for many other French towns. Cassini's map of 1750 shows only a schematic representation of a walled town and is too large in scale to show the town in any detail, although it does give some indication of activities on the outskirts, such as water and wind mills to the northeast and northwest along the River Auzon (Figure 4.9.3). Of slightly more use are two town plans, one drawn in the early eighteenth century and the other at the end of the nineteenth century, thus providing a picture of the town before and after the Napoleonic map. The first provides some street names that differ from the later Napoleonic cadastral map, but otherwise provides a rough sketch of the town in 1715 (Figure 4.9.2). The plan records the division of the town by the town council into “quartiers” (quarters), which would incorporate the existing “îles” (islands), of which there were 52. The later map was drafted in 1899 by the Bureau de Bienfaisance de Carpentras and provides a snapshot of the town shortly after the removal of the town walls (Figure 4.9.11).

The morphological skeleton of the town has four principal parts: a clear north-south axis is provided by a Roman street; this acts as a pole of attraction for the Early Medieval ecclesiastical centre, around which there is the suggestion of a possible enclosure; a well-defined oval traces the line of a defensive enclosure in place some

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40 Caillet, R. op.cit., p.17. This water supply system was further augmented by the construction of an aqueduct in 1734; Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.14.
41 The office of rector replaced that of bishop in 1235 when the Holy See took effective possession of the Comtat Venaissin province. He was a direct representative of the Pope and Carpentras became the capital of the pontifical enclave (remaining so until the Revolution).
42 Caillet, R. op.cit., p.10.
43 This plan is reproduced in Dubled's article ‘Carpentras in 1715’ in Rencontres, 1971. Dubled proposes that the îles were in place prior to the larger divisions being imposed, given that some of the îles straddle the boundaries of the quartiers and are administered accordingly: Dubled, H., 1971. 'Carpentras en 1715', in Rencontres No.94.
time before the thirteenth century; and, finally the irregular, almost trapezoidal, shape formed by the defences erected in the fourteenth century. The approach roads that line up neatly with the gateways in the fourteenth century walls also lead directly into the oval enclosure, with the exception of the Route de Mazan on the east side. Here the road no longer leads directly into the inner enclosure, although its alignment would allow it were it not for the subsequent development between Rue Porte de Mazan and Rue Gentille. These are undoubtedly based on the pre-Roman road network that was formalised in the Roman period.

Those street names which survived unchanged after the Revolution and are recorded on the Napoleonic cadastral map can offer some insight into the activities of the town. Within the oval enclosure the later Jewish quarter for example, is distinct, with Rue de la Juiverie (Street of the Jews) running to the north of the fourteenth century Synagogue. Around and approaching the ecclesiastical complex, on the other hand, the street names are mostly either religious or associated with the new French Republic: Rue St Siffrein and Place du Palais, which is in turn approached by Rue Ste Marthe (named on the town plan of 1715 as Rue Antique, the ‘ancient street’); Rue and Place St Jean, which approach the ecclesiastical nucleus from the old Bourg St Jean to the east; and, Rue de la Revolution and Rue de la Liberté.

Some of the street names are more obscure, such as Rue du Château Rouge (literally ‘Street of the Red Mansion/Residence/Palace’), which appears to refer to a mansion or large house in this location. There were numerous private residences constructed in Carpentras, particularly during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, many of them quite substantial. The ornate doorways and façades are still evident throughout the town, albeit somewhat decrepit in many instances.

Between the oval enclosure and the later defences there are also distinct areas, the most obvious of which lies to the east of the Rue de Porte d’Orange. This area contains street names that are almost entirely concerned with trade and industrial activities. Thus we have the Marché aux Chevaux (the Horse Market), Rue du Mouton (Sheep Street), Rue des Tanneurs (Street of the Tanners) and Rue de la Monnaie, which refers to coins, coinage or currency and perhaps not coincidentally runs directly north from the fourteenth century Jewish quarter.
The proposed plan units for Carpentras are shown on Figures 4.9.6 to 4.9.10, which should be referred to when reading the description of each plan unit below.

PLAN UNIT I

The Early Medieval and later urban development has obliterated almost all of the Roman town plan, except perhaps for a north-south orientated street which runs through the oval enclosure and extends north and south to the Porte d'Orange and the Porte de Notre Dame respectively. This line is formed by Rue Ste Marthe, Place Charles du Gaule (formerly Rue du Palais), Rue de l'Éveché and Rue du Porte d'Orange and runs along the west side of the ecclesiastical complex. It most likely represents the Cardo Maximus of the Roman settlement. The presence of the Roman triumphal arch on the north side of the cathedral suggests that this later centre of ecclesiastical power was previously the site chosen by the Roman administration in which to erect their own monuments of power (Figure 4.9.13g). A triumphal arch was by its nature a monument positioned on or close to the principal routeway, through which the victorious Roman general would have marched. The distinct bowing of the north-south line within the oval enclosure to create a curve around the cathedral precinct is unexpected in a Roman road or street. Given that the arch in Carpentras lies adjacent to this main axis rather than on it, suggests that there was a slight reconfiguration of the street line to accommodate the ecclesiastical centre.

There is little trace left of a smaller inner enclosure which may once have surrounded the ecclesiastical complex located within the thirteenth century enclosure, although it does appear to be mostly contained within the sub-ovoid area formed by Place Charles du Gaule and part of Rue de l'Éveché to the west, Place St Siffrein to the south and perhaps Rue Gaudibert (formerly Rue de la Révolution, previously Rue d'Épicerie) to the east and along the Place d'Inguimbert (formerly Place Nouvelle) to the north (Figure 4.9.13c-d). It is possible that this line represents an earlier ecclesiastical enclosure, perhaps a sacred enclosure which demarcated the area of sanctuary and within which lay the first church at Carpentras and the later ecclesiastical complex around the cathedral. This area became the cathedral precinct in the Medieval period and remained so despite extensive reconstruction and redevelopment programmes throughout the centuries. With the exception of Medieval
convents and abbeys outside of the town, the construction of ecclesiastical buildings beyond this compact area is rare. So although this line is less clear than that of the larger oval enclosure, it is nonetheless respected by subsequent development. The plot patterns in this area are for the most part irregular, bearing testament to the ecclesiastical influence, with most of the space devoted to the larger plots required by the Church administration and religious buildings, as well as those to house the clergy.

Unusually the ecclesiastical complex, comprising the cathedral and its dependants to the north (the bishop’s palace and canonical buildings), is not at the centre of either the town as enclosed by the fourteenth century defences, nor of the earlier oval enclosure. It lies slightly west of centre, a location probably dictated by proximity to the original north-south principal Roman road. The ecclesiastical centre underwent substantial redevelopment over time. It is likely that the return of the bishopric to Carpentras from Vénasque in the tenth century wrought substantial changes to the centre from this period onwards, not least of which was the construction of a new cathedral in the late twelfth century.

The Cathedral of St Siffrein is orientated slightly off-east/west, at the south end of the ecclesiastical group, on or around the site of possibly four earlier churches and cathedrals (Figure 4.9.13a-b). The main entrance to the cathedral is on the west side and opens onto the Place Charles de Gaule, formerly Place du Palais (named originally for the Palais Épiscopal, now the Palais de Justice). The doorway is decorated in the Classical style, unlike the rest of the structure, and dates to 1615. According to local tradition, the two columns flanking the main entrance came from the sixth century baptistery or possibly a Roman structure at Vénasque. The bell tower on the southwest corner of the cathedral was constructed in 1899-1902, replacing the old Romanesque bell tower which was destroyed in 1875 and preserving part of the twelfth century cupola. Other vestiges of the twelfth century Romanesque cathedral survive, much of it in the north façade: part of the original nave is visible; damage to one of the existing walls revealed how the Romanesque cathedral was joined to its entrance, the Roman arch; traces of Gothic vaults are also visible in the

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Reyne, A. and Bréhier, D. op.cit., p.34.
north façade, marking the bays of the old cloister which was destroyed at the start of the nineteenth century to make way for a prison (demolished in 1968). One of the bays represents an opening, leading from the cathedral to the cloister.46

In addition to the Bishop, the Church at Carpentras employed canons, curates, 
beneficiaries and hebdomadaires, all of whom had to be housed. The Cure is the only such building named on the cadastral map and is situated to the southeast of the cathedral and is accessed from Place St Siffrein. The ecclesiastical group originally included a second church dedicated to St Etienne, located to the northeast of the cathedral (opposite the present Post Office). The church is depicted in a late eighteenth century drawing, but not in its original form; it was rebuilt in the mid-eighteenth century.47 A mid-seventeenth century account by Barbier may describe the same church in its Medieval incarnation, which he claims, based on its interior and exterior style, must have been built at the same time as the old church of St Antoine.48 A fourteenth century act alludes to a cemetery associated with the chapter house, situated in front of this church. Both this and the clergy houses located around the church and cemetery are long gone, although parts of these structures have been preserved or re-used in some of the later buildings.49

There is also evidence of a cemetery associated with the principal church, the Cathedral of St Siffrein, on its eastern side. The main (and presumably original) market of the town (Marché St Siffrein or St Siffrein’s market) was located close to and southeast of the cathedral. Documentary sources refer to a continuing problem of the market encroaching upon the cemetery, with stalls set up among the tombstones.50 This market was later joined by a second, located in Place des Pénitents Noirs (formerly Place de la Fusterie), to the east/southeast in the fourteenth century in an attempt to resolve this issue (discussed below).

46 Reyne, A. and Bréhier, D. op.cit., p.35
47 Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.9
49 Andréau, E. and Lambert, B.S., op.cit., p.46, describe a rib-vaulted cellar in an old building of the Capiscol.
50 Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.15
A fourteenth century addition to the ecclesiastical group and another symbol of the power of the Church within the town was the Rector's Palace, which was erected around 1320-1330 at the north end of Place Charles du Gaule.\textsuperscript{51} By the seventeenth century, the Bishop of Carpentras maintained control over the twenty-eight parishes in his diocese, drawing substantial revenues. In 1640-48, these revenues funded the construction of a large residence on the site of the earlier fortified Bishop's Palace. The new Bishop's Palace (it became the Palais de Justice in 1801) abuts the cathedral at its northwestern corner and borders the Place Charles de Gaule. It was constructed by Cardinal Antoine Bichi and remained the residence of the Bishops of Carpentras until the Revolution.\textsuperscript{52}

The Bibliothèque and its Place Nouvelle (‘new’ place, now Place d’Inguimbert), along with the slightly earlier Bishop’s Palace and Prison depicted on the Napoleonic cadastral map, quite clearly represent a disruption to the original ecclesiastical complex. The name of the Place Nouvelle does suggest that there was previously a place here, although its size and the layout of the surrounding buildings are unclear.

No Medieval material was identified during the archaeological survey of 2001 (see below) in the cellars and basements of buildings within this ecclesiastical centre, most probably a result of the extensive rebuilding programme in this area.

\textbf{Plan Unit II}

There is both documentary and archaeological evidence for the existence of a defensive enclosure prior to the construction of the substantial walled defences in the fourteenth century. This enclosure can be traced in the town plan as a neat oval shape along the line of (clockwise from southeast): Rue du Collège (formerly Rue Voltaire and Rue Sainte Magne), Rue Raspail (formerly Rue Serrurerie), Place de l'Horloge, Rue des Halles, Rue de la Vigne (formerly Rue de l'Eau Pendante) and Rue Moricelly (formerly Rue Dorée, previously Rue Lafayette; Figure 4.9.13e). The line of the enclosure is interrupted in the southeastern corner, where part of the Medieval town was demolished in the seventeenth century to make way for La Charité, an institutional school run by the Church. One small section of the line of the enclosure

\textsuperscript{51} Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.10.
\textsuperscript{52} Caillot, R. op.cit., p.27.
may have survived the redevelopment in this area, being partly preserved in the line of Rue de la Fournaque.

Although no records survive regarding the origins of this enclosure, documentary references to the enclosure in its thirteenth century incarnation are common, if not terribly informative. The evidence indicates a walled and ditched enclosure, the latter at least partially water-filled, pierced by three gates: one to the east (Guillaume’s gate at Place St Jean) and two gates of Sainte Marie, one at each end of the principal north-south street. One such reference contained in legal records is of a dispute in 1237 between the prior of the abbey of Sainte-Marie du Grès and the bishop, in which the abbey is described as *extra muros* (outside of the walls).\(^{53}\) The abbey lay on or near the site of the present Hôtel-Dieu on Boulevard Albin Durand, outside the enclosure to the west but within the later fourteenth century walls. The defensive nature of the enclosure in the thirteenth century, as well as the authority of the bishop over such matters, is evident in the agreement reached in 1270 between Bishop Raymond de Barjols and the town representatives or councillors regarding the town ditches.\(^{54}\) The Rue de Vigne, which runs along the east side of the enclosure was formerly Rue de l’Eau-Pendante (meaning literally ‘hanging water’), suggesting that at least on this side the ditch may have been water-filled.

Archaeological evidence for the enclosure is equally patchy, although this is to be expected given the frequent redevelopment of, and continuous habitation within, the town. An archaeological survey was undertaken by the Service Régional de l’Archéologie (on behalf of the Minister for Culture) in 2001, in conjunction with the Groupe Archéologique de Carpentras. As part of this survey, an investigation of the old cellars in the town commenced in 2001, with a view to identifying Medieval fabric and any remains of the enclosure.\(^{55}\) The results of the survey confirm the presence of an enclosure along this line. A section of wall, of probable Medieval date, was identified in the basement of a pharmacy on Rue des Halles (No.40)\(^{56}\) and

\(^{53}\) Lavergne, D. *op.cit.*, p.5

\(^{54}\) Ibid.

\(^{55}\) The results of these investigations have been summarised by D. Lavergne of the Service Régional de l’Archéologie in his article in *Bulletin* No.14 (2005) of the GACR; Lavergne, D. *op.cit.*

\(^{56}\) Lavergne notes that although this section of wall does not correspond exactly with the orientation expected of the enclosure at this point, it does confirm the presence of Medieval construction here; Lavergne, D. *op.cit.*, p.8.
part of the enclosing wall was preserved in the elevation of a now demolished house on Rue du Collège.\textsuperscript{57} Within the interrupted section of enclosure in the southeast, the remains of a possible Medieval tower in the cellar of a house on Rue de la Fourniern (No.39) were identified during the survey suggesting that this street did indeed form part of the enclosure.\textsuperscript{58}

The nature of the enclosure prior to it achieving its thirteenth century form is unknown, although the evidence suggests that it was already defensive in nature before the thirteenth century. The documentary reference noted above to an abbey located outside of the walls is not the only evidence for Medieval suburban development (see below). The growth of the town beyond the walls by this time suggests that its use as a defence had diminished. This is also apparent by the need in the fourteenth century to construct new town walls enclosing a much larger area.

The most regular of the plot patterns within the oval enclosure lie along the edges of the line of this enclosure, which does confirm that there was a physical element to the enclosure. It also suggests that the enclosure or boundary was in place before these plots were laid out in the areas beyond the cathedral precinct. The plots are generally long and narrow and are aligned perpendicular to the edges of the enclosure, except in the southeastern quarter where the line has been interrupted and to the north where they have been removed to make way for the town hall or \textit{Mairie}. These may represent the original plots laid out for the houses of the non-clergy in the Early Medieval town.

The \textit{Hôtel de Ville} (town hall) was first erected in the fifteenth century at Place de l’Horloge on the north side of the enclosure, but was destroyed by fire in 1713.\textsuperscript{59} The town hall was re-built and by 1891 was double its original size, with the building and its place occupying part of the original Jewish quarter on the south side of Rue des Halles. The original line of the enclosure and the distinctive plot layout is interrupted where the street has been widened to create the Place de l’Hôtel de Ville. A similar disruption to the enclosure line and the plot pattern occurs along the southeastern

\textsuperscript{57} This was observed by Fr Guyonnet, cited in Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.8.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{59} Caillet, R. op.cit., p.28.
section of the enclosure, where a large plot is occupied by La Charité and an Abbatoir, built in the seventeenth century. There is a hint of the lost section of the enclosure in the line of Rue de la Fournaque, where the plot boundaries also suggest a similar alignment to those surviving along the rest of the enclosure, as do those on the south side of Rue des Marins. Rue de l'Égout (Street of the Sewer, now Rue des Marins), which runs southeast from Rue de la Fournaque and Rue des Marins might have originated as a channel that took waste from the edge of the oval enclosure, perhaps from its ditch.

The street unnamed on the Napoleonic map that runs north/south and joins both the Place Nouvelle and the Rue Gaudiber is the Passage Boyer (or Rue Vitree, literally 'the glazed street', a reference to the glass cover arching over the street). This is a covered gallery of shops that dates to the mid-nineteenth century which represented a 'modern' version of the workshops and stalls in the Medieval arcades on Rue des Halles.

There is a certain amount of disagreement among scholars regarding the presence of a château in the town belonging to the Counts of Toulouse. It was almost certainly not on Rue du Château Rouge or Rue du Château, which is a very narrow street to the north of the cathedral complex. None of the buildings tightly packed along both sides of this street exhibit any evidence of Medieval construction, either in their style or scale. The name of the street was most likely given by the nineteenth century town council to perpetuate the belief that there was once a château in Carpentras. Documentary evidence does not support this, however, and instead illustrates yet again that the authority of the Church within the town from an early stage was almost unlimited.

The Counts of Toulouse did have a residence in the town in the thirteenth century, most probably on Place de l'Horloge and just bordering the line of the oval enclosure. The sixteenth century campanile and belfry (erected in 1572) mark the site of the first town hall, which dated to the fifteenth century, and are also thought to mark the site of the château (most probably simply a residence rather than a fortification) of the
Counts of Toulouse. The site would be suitable for a seigniorial building, similar to that in Vence, located on the outskirts of the enclosure and the ecclesiastical sphere of influence. That it was more likely a residence than a fortified château is well-supported by the documentary sources of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, beginning with the charter of 1155 in which it was written that Count Raymond V of Toulouse and his successors would never build a donjon or other fortification in Carpentras.

Plan Unit III

There is some evidence for a second parish within the town, in addition to that provided by the episcopal see. This parish was focused on the Church of Saint Jean du Bourg, of which very little is known. The exact location of the Bourg Saint Jean (‘bourg’ normally implies a small village or hamlet) is also uncertain, although it is presumably remembered in the names of Rue and Place St Jean, within the east/northeast section of the thirteenth century town. The distinct street and plot patterns contained within the area delimited by Rue and Place St Jean to the south, Rue de la Libérté to the west and along both sides of Rue de la Juiverie, within which the later Jewish quarter was housed, may demarcate the original bourg or part thereof.

The only physical evidence was uncovered in 1800, when the foundations of a small church were revealed during the laying-out of the Place St Jean, within which lay tombs inscribed with epitaphs to members of the stonemason’s guild of St Jean. Andréoli and Lambert propose the existence of a baptistery dedicated to St Jean, located close to the Romanesque cathedral, although there is little evidence of this. Denoves was of the opinion that the church served parishioners of the bourg St Jean quarter, which he locates outside of the thirteenth century enclosure. The church

60 This is posited by Liabastres, J. op.cit., p.23, among many other historians, although there is no physical or documentary evidence that this was the site of the seigniorial residence.
61 Lavergne presents a persuasive case for the absence of a fortified château in Carpentras, Lavergne, D. op.cit., pp.9-10.
62 Both Dubled and Ameye place the church and the bourg within this part of the town; cited in Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.12.
63 Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.12.
64 Andréoli, E. and Lambert, B.S., op.cit., p.81. Lavergne allows that an episcopal city would undoubtedly have had a baptistery in the late Medieval period, but comments that no record of its dedication or location exits; Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.12.
only appears in the documentary sources from the start of the sixteenth century onwards, which does not necessarily rule out an older foundation here. Nonetheless, the existence of a separate parish church in or around Place St Jean underlines the idea of separateness suggested by the plan-analysis, with the episcopal group standing within a defined area, the cathedral precinct or earlier ecclesiastical enclosure.

**PLAN UNIT IV**

It is tempting to see the suggestion of another enclosure surrounding and concentric to the oval enclosure, within which suburbs initially developed, subsequently disturbed by the reorganisation of the suburbs in advance of the construction of the fourteenth century defences. This line can be traced, albeit only partially, in the upper part of Rue du Carmel, Rue Saintes Maries, Rue Vieille Monnaie, Rue Calade and Rue du Vieil Hôpital. If not a defined enclosure, then this is the result of the organic growth of suburbs around the oval enclosure, as these blocks and plots are readily distinguished from the more regular rectangular blocks to the northwest and northeast.

The growth of the town beyond the oval enclosure is attested in the late thirteenth century, with an act of 1276 regarding the administration of the Jewish quarter. The synagogue in Carpentras is one of the oldest in France and still in use. It was constructed in 1367 and attests to the relatively sizeable Jewish population in Carpentras. As a part of the Papal territories, Carpentras offered a sanctuary for Jews fleeing persecution elsewhere in France. The conversion of significant numbers of these Jews to Christianity is evident in the elaborate and dedicated entrance in St Siffrein’s Cathedral. This Gothic style entrance in the south façade of the cathedral, which leads into the fourth chapel, is also known as the Jewish Gate (la Porte Juive), and converted Jews were obliged to enter the cathedral through this door (Figure 4.9.13b).

The first Jewish quarter occupied an area outside of the oval enclosure, to the southeast, although its extent and exact location is not known. Its general location is preserved in the name of the street Rue de la Vieille Juiverie (formerly Rue Cacheé or the ‘hidden’ street), south of Rue du Fournaque, but any trace of the quarter was

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66 Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.5
substantively destroyed by the redevelopment programmes of the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries. The expulsion of the Jews from the Comtat and the destruction of the earlier synagogue in Carpentras were ordered by Pope John XXII in 1322.68

The Jews returned to Carpentras in the 1330s and received permission to rebuild a synagogue of the same proportions as the first. Following serious riots in 1459, Cardinal de Foix, the pontifical legate, ordered that the Jews should henceforth occupy a block between ‘rue de la Muse’ and ‘another street named de Galafe’, where he said they had formerly lived.69 This suggests that the new Jewish quarter established on their return was delimited by Rue and Place St Jean to the south, Rue de la Liberté to the west and along both sides of Rue de la Juiverie but that in the interim period, Jews had begun to inhabit areas beyond these limits within which they would now be confined.70

The expansion and prosperity of the town is well illustrated by the growth of markets, both before and after the construction of the new ramparts in the late fourteenth century. In addition to the extension of St Siffrein’s market noted above during the fourteenth century, another market is referred to in the late fourteenth century documents, the marché neuf (new market), situated just inside the new defences and close to the Porte de Mazan. This was joined by several specialised markets, some of which are fossilized in the street names, such as the Marché au Fer (iron market) at the western entrance to the oval enclosure and the Marché aux Chevaux (horse market) to the east of the Porte d’Orange. The sources also mention a forum pocorum (pig market) and a forum bovum (beef market), in the mid-fourteenth and fifteenth centuries respectively, with the former located close to the Église de l’Observance in the northeast corner of the town and the latter located along Rue les Halles.71

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68 Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.16
69 Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.17. These two streets named in the fifteenth century are, respectively, the present Rue de Saint Jean and approximately Rue de la Liberté. The latter was formed at the same time as the Place de l’Hôtel de Ville, creating a new street (so-named ‘Rue Neuve’ on the 1715 plan) which continued north from the Place Tricadous. The exact line of the Rue Tricadous (the fifteenth century Rue de Galafe) is lost beneath the Place de l’Hôtel de Ville.
70 For example, Rue de la Monnaie, which runs directly north from this later fourteenth century Jewish quarter and may well have been connected with the Jewish community.
71 Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.15
By the time of the Napoleonic cadastral map, Church influence also extends beyond the earlier enclosure, with the Jesuit College (with a seventeenth century Chapel of the Pénitents Blancs) occupying almost the entire southwestern quarter. The Dominican order originally founded a friary in 1312, situated outside of the oval enclosure, at the junction of Boulevard Albin Durand and Rue du Cohorn. It was enclosed within the fourteenth century walls and replaced by the much larger construction to the north, the present Jesuit College (named simply Collège on the Napoleonic map), in the fifteenth century. La Charité, discussed above, was added in the seventeenth century, within the original southeastern corner of the enclosure. The sixteenth century Chapel of Notre Dame de Santé lies outside of the town at a small bridge crossing the Auzon river. A Bernardine convent was also founded outside of the oval enclosure in the mid-fourteenth century along Rue Beaurepaire. Like the Dominican friary and Abbey of Notre Dame du Grès, this marked the extent of the town once enclosed within the new defences later that century.\(^{72}\)

Other Church run institutions are recorded within the Medieval town and its suburbs, including a hospital mentioned in the fifteenth century (l’hôpital de St Sifrein, 1476) and situated somewhere close to the cathedral.\(^ {73}\) Little else is known of this hospital, neither its exact location nor the date of its foundation. Another hospital was located outside of the ditches (extra fossata) and demolished in 1359 at the same time as the abbey of Notre Dame du Grès and was perhaps associated with it.\(^{74}\) The name of the Rue du Vieil Hôpital (Street of the Old Hospital) on the south side of the town recalls the location of a house (l’hôpital de St Pierre) converted by the authorities following the demolition of the hospital in 1359.\(^{75}\)

**PLAN UNIT V**

Construction began in 1357 on the ramparts that enclosed the town until the late nineteenth century. This followed an order by Pope Innocent VI to fortify the towns of the Comtat.\(^{76}\) Towns and cities of the Comtat Venaissin, and indeed France in general, were scurrying to construct new defences or reinforce existing ones at this

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73 Lavergne, D. op.cit., p.18.
74 Ibid.
75 Ibid.
76 Caillet, R. op.cit., p.17.
time. A relative lull in hostilities occurred from 1357 to 1369 during the Hundred Year war between France and England. During this time soldiers were forced to find other ways of making money, resulting in bands of routiers (or brigands) serving mercenary leaders such as Arnaud de Cervole. The routiers would occupy a stronghold and terrorize the surrounding region until paid to go elsewhere, prompting towns and cities to strengthen or renew their defences.77

The sometimes radical defensive measures taken during the Hundred Year war had a long-term impact on urban development in Carpentras, as elsewhere. In order for the defences to be fully effective, the area surrounding and outside of the new walls was to be kept free of buildings. In many cases this involved the clearance of buildings or suburbs that had developed prior to this time. At Carpentras, the destruction of the existing suburbs in advance of the construction of the new town defences began in 1357. Compensation for the houses destroyed was based on the value of the stone, wood and tiles recovered and the inhabitants were re-housed inside the new walls of the town.78 As late as the seventeenth century the areas around the ramparts remained relatively free of development, with dense settlement within the walls,79 a pattern that is still evident at the time of the Napoleonic map survey in the 1830’s.

The new fortifications at Carpentras were completed c.1392 and encircled the town and its suburbs, with stone walls reinforced by 32 towers and pierced by four gateways.80 The fourteenth century defences were demolished in 1891, leaving only the Porte d’Orange, a rectangular gate house c. 27m in height, and a small part of the enclosing wall in Rue des Lices-Menteux (Figure 4.9.13f). The town plan published by the Bureau de Bienfaisance de Carpentras in 1899 depicts the town shortly after the removal of the walls, showing it neatly contained within the line of the old walls, with wide boulevards replacing the ditches.81 The town’s walled defences are depicted, albeit in schematic form, on Cassini’s 1750 map of France and in

79 Butaud, G. op.cit., p.55.
80 Caillet, R. op.cit., p.17
81 Plan général de la Ville, Bureau de Bienfaisance de Carpentras, 1899; Bibliothèque Municipale Inguimbertine.
considerably more detail on the Napoleonic cadastral map (Figures 4.9.3, 4.9.4, 4.9.11).  

Although the description in the sources claim the destruction of the suburbs at Carpentras, the cartographic analysis suggests that by no means all of the suburban streets and buildings were cleared. There is a considerable amount of development, around and close to the oval enclosure, that appears to have developed more organically, as noted above. This pattern contrasts with the blocks formed by the streets to the north, northeast and northwest of the oval enclosure near the new walls. These appear to be the result of considered planning, being mostly rectangular or square with narrow plots, generally subdivided into smaller even units. Perhaps the suburbs had extended along the main roads leading from the town and it was such outlying suburban development that was cleared away. An influx of substantial numbers of Italians fleeing the wars of the fourteenth century undoubtedly led to a considerable expansion of the town. The re-housing of the inhabitants may have resulted in the laying out of new blocks within the plan of the new defences.

The peace and prosperity of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries led to general improvements in the town, such as the erection of new public fountains fed by an aqueduct completed in 1734, but little or no expansion beyond the fourteenth century walls. The latter replaced the Medieval aqueduct bringing water from the Caromb source. The eighteenth century bishop of Carpentras, Monseigneur Joseph-Malachie d’Inguimbert was responsible for much of the new spate of monumental public buildings. He is attributed with overseeing the reconstruction of the Chapel of Notre-Dame de Santé in 1747 outside of the town but his most notable achievement is the Baroque style Hôtel-Dieu, built between 1750 and 1761, which contains the Bibliotheque d’Inguimbertine (a library). The Hôtel-Dieu and library lay close to the western defensive walls and Porte Monteux (now on Boulevard Albin Durand).

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82 The original scale of Cassini’s map, a considerable work, was 1:20,000. It also shows a windmill to the northwest of the town and water mills on the river bank to the northeast.

83 Caillet, R. op.cit., p.17.
A summary of findings derived from the plan-analysis is presented in Tables 4.9.1 and 4.9.2 below.

**TABLE 4.9.1 DETAILS OF ECCLESIASTICAL ELEMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inner enclosure</th>
<th>Possible vertical sub-oval, measuring c.130m north-south by 110m east-west. Formed by road.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outer enclosure</td>
<td>Horizontal oval measuring c.240m north-south by 335m east-west. Formed by road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional enclosure</td>
<td>Possible traces to north and south of outer enclosure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church/Cathedral (orientation)</td>
<td>East-west oriented medieval cathedral on the site of earlier church(es).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of burial ground</td>
<td>Originally within the inner enclosure, on the east side of the cathedral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy well</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation date of ecclesiastical site</td>
<td>Fifth century. (? Mid-third century)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 4.9.2 ELEMENTS OF SETTLEMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market place (orientation)</th>
<th>East. Located within the inner enclosure. It later extended south-eastwards beyond the inner enclosure.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subdivision of enclosure</td>
<td>Possible subdivision - the bourg of St Jean in northwestern section of outer enclosure and later Jewish quarter to southwest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annexe/Suburb</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiating road network</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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4.10 VENCE, PROVENCE, FRANCE

4.10.1 INTRODUCTION

The town of Vence is located c. 12 km north-west of Nice, in the southeastern corner of France, in the department of Alpes-Maritimes (Figures 4.1 & 4.10.1). It lies within the parish of Saint Véran - Saint Lambert, in the deanery of Cagnes-Vence and the diocese of Nice, although historically it lay within the diocese of Vence. Vence is situated on a plateau, which is bordered to the north by the rivers Loubiane and Malvans and to the south by the Mediterranean Sea. The rocky outcrops of the Baou des Blancs and the Baou des Noirs rise above the town to the north. In addition to the nearby rivers Loubiane and Malvans, a spring ("La Foux") provides a natural source of clear mineral water for the town. The town itself sits on level ground, bordered to the north by the steep valley of the Malvan River.

4.10.2 PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE

The place-name Vence is most likely of Celtic or non-Latin origin, probably from the Celtic "vindion". The meaning of the Celtic word 'vindion' is unknown and that of the root 'vin-', 'vind-' or 'vint-' is obscure although probably pre-Indoeuropean. Dallemagne and Castellan both suggest that it derives from a word for a hill or mountain, as in Ventoux or Ventabren. Baudot on the other hand, suggests that the town takes its name from Vintium/Vencion a local Celtic god. Both derivations are given in Dauzat and Rostaing’s etymological dictionary. It is probable that the original settlement was an oppidum, a fortified town or settlement of pre-Roman origin; the Latin word 'castrum' meaning 'fort' is mentioned in documentary sources in association with the place-name Vintium. These two traditions, incorporating both a pre-Christian deity and a hill or height, are similar to the origins of the Irish Armagh, 'Ard Macha'. The first record of the name Ouintion (Vintion) comes from the early second century AD, when Ptolemy mentions it as the capital of the Nerousioi (the

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3 Février, P-A., 1964, op.cit., p.27.
In the fifth century AD, when records show that Vence became an episcopal see, it is referred to in texts of 442 AD as *Vensiensis episcopus*. In 585 AD it is *Ventio* and by the twelfth century, *Ventia*.

4.10.3 EXAMINATION OF EARLY SETTLEMENT: PREHISTORIC PERIOD

Archaeological evidence suggests that the area has been occupied since the Paleolithic period, with signs of habitation in the caves in the hills north of Vence, such as La Grotte de l'Ibis. Evidence indicates that settlement began on the site of the present town of Vence during the first millennium BC, when a Ligurian settlement was founded. There is very little known about the Ligurian settlement, although its status as the capital of the Nerusii tribe is recorded by Ptolemy, indicating that it was important. The Ligurians (one of the Celtic tribes of pre-Roman Gaul) are thought to have occupied the coast of the Mediterranean from around 1000 to 600 BC. A fortified Iron Age settlement (*Oppidum*) in the Baou de Noirs was one of a number of such settlements that started to appear in coastal Provence from the sixth century BC onwards.

The site, on a plateau, is not naturally strong nor easily defended, with only the steep river gully to the north providing a measure of protection from attack. Numerous other sites in the vicinity would have offered a settlement better protection, for example, the nearby hills of Saint-Michel and La Conque. Indeed documentary evidence from the Medieval period makes constant references to the inhabitants of Vence fleeing the town during Saracen attacks and seeking refuge in the hills. The presence of a natural spring (*La Faux*) may have been the impetus for the original settlement at this site, although it is equally possible that the location was chosen for strategic or religious reasons.

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7 Castellan, G. op.cit., p.15
9 Dallemagne, F. op.cit., p.1.
12 Baudot, O. op.cit., p.2.
4.10.4 EXAMINATION OF EARLY SETTLEMENT: ROMAN PERIOD

The importance of the site is suggested by the introduction of settlement during the Roman period. It is thought that the territory of the Roman civitas of Vintium probably corresponded to that of the Vintium of the Nerusii, the Ligurian settlement. Little is known about the Roman occupation of Vintium, but the available evidence suggests that it was a relatively significant foundation. Its importance and indeed the decision to colonise the original Ligurian settlement was undoubtedly based on the presence of two trade routes. The Ligurian settlement was located on the ancient route linking the town with Castellane, Digne and Sisteron (other Provençal towns) and perhaps more significantly, on a trade route linking the southern Roman provinces of Gaul with Italy, a particularly rich and busy route. These routes and the importance of Vence within the network is illustrated by an order in the third century AD by Julius Honoratus, imperial procurator and governor of Alpes Maritimae, for the restoration of the road from Vence to Castellane. While there is a dearth of archaeological excavations within the town and its immediate environs some evidence remains of the Roman civitas or town: parts of the aqueduct built to bring the water of the River Lubiane directly to the town; two columns gifted by the people of Marseilles in 230 AD in honour of the god Mars Vintium (one now stands in front of the cathedral); inscribed stones and plaques which were re-used in the walls of the Medieval cathedral; and villas in the surrounding countryside. The inscriptions suggest a town of some importance, particularly in the second and third centuries AD.

4.10.5 ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

As discussed above, Christianity came relatively early to the southeastern corner of France, arriving in Marseilles by at least the second century AD. Nice and Cimiez, both important Roman towns, were situated on major land and sea communication and trade routes. The new religion would have spread from Marseilles along these communication routes to large towns such as Nice, and from there to smaller towns.

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17 Baudot, O., op.cit., p.2; Dallemagne, F. op.cit., p.1.
such as Vence. Given the town’s location on two important trade routes, it is not improbable that there were Christians in Vence as early as the third century AD, although there is no direct evidence for this. Vence is attested as a bishopric in AD 419, strengthening the probability that the town was a Christian centre since the third or fourth century AD.¹⁹

The history of the church in Provence from the end of the fifth century AD is relatively obscure. The episcopal lists are incomplete and historical documents relating to the church from this time are rare.²⁰ Much of the information available for the ecclesiastical history of Vence before the eleventh century AD is limited to the names of its bishops. The most famous of the bishops of Vence was Véran (Veranus), who succeeded Severus in AD 451 and who is now the patron saint of Vence (feast day on October 19th). He was appointed to the bishopric possibly in AD 446, but was certainly in position by AD 451, when he signed a letter as bishop of Vence. Unsurprisingly, given its prominence in the ecclesiastical development of Provence, the influence of the monastery at Lérins was felt strongly in Vence. Lérins supplied most of the cities of south-east Gaul and beyond with bishops from its monastic school: for example, Eucher of Lyons, Salonius of Geneva, Maxime and Faustus of Riez.²¹ Véran was the son of Eucher, bishop of Lyons, and had trained as a monk at the monastery of Lérins.

According to tradition, Véran was appointed bishop of Vence at the request of the town’s people. His first act as bishop was to sign a letter supporting the anti-entychianism movement, sent by Pope Leo to all the bishops of Gaul in AD 451. The martyrologies record the invasions of the Goths into Provence and the persecution of Christians as Arianism spread and many of the bishops were forced to leave their episcopal sees. Véran, along with the people of Vence, retreated to the Baous, the hills behind the town. In an attempt to alleviate the situation, the saint “filled with faith and

¹⁹ Tisserand claims that Andinus was named bishop of Vence in AD 363 and was succeeded by Eusèbe (Eusebius) in AD 374 (1860, II). Conversely, Duval et al. (1986, op.cit., pp.89-90) state that Vence was a bishopric in AD 419 and Hildesheimer notes that the bishopric of Vence is not recorded in ecclesiastical Council lists prior to the fifth century. The first bishop of Vence whose name is known, is recorded as assisting at the Council of Riez in AD 439 and again at Vaison in AD 442 (Hildesheimer, F., 1977. op.cit., p.2).


²¹ Hildesheimer, F. op.cit., p.27.
courage, went to meet Euric, king of the Visigoths of Toulouse" and legend has it that the church of Vence was saved by Vérán's action. Vérán died in AD 492 and according to the martyrology of the Church of Vence, which dates to the sixteenth century, the saint was buried in the town cemetery. If accurate, this indicates that Vence had both an established church and a cemetery within the town in the late fifth century AD.

The latter half of the sixth century saw continued unrest, with the various tribes of northern Europe fighting for territory. Further attacks on the town are recorded in the sixth century, when the episcopate was held by Deuthère, who replaced Bishop Firmin (AD 529-541) in AD 541. Along with a number of towns in the region, such as Monaco, Olivette, Nice and Cimiez, Vence was pillaged, sacked and almost entirely destroyed. Deuthère and his people retreated to the Baous, just as Véran had done a century before, returning eventually to begin re-building their town. The construction of the fortress of Saint-Laurent-de-la-Bastide in the hills to the north (the Baous) of the town may date to this first wave of attacks; Tisserand states that it was from this time the name of Saint-Laurent dates, 'a name linked to the building of a great fortress'. The fortress itself, however, is not mentioned in the texts until the eleventh century and so may be later, perhaps constructed following the Saracen raids of the eighth and ninth centuries. Some of the ruins on the Baous of Vence are thought to be the remains of this fortress.

The church in Provence grew in importance during the seventh century and continued to be strongly influenced by Lérins. As part of its expansion in the sixth and seventh century, monks from Lérins were sent out into the countryside of Provence where they founded sister houses of the Lérinian monastery. The growth of the church and the power and influence of its clergy in Provence was interrupted at the beginning of the eighth century by the Muslim Holy War, with invasions continuing until the tenth century. The murder of 500 monks at Lérins was only one of the atrocities during the eighth century that resulted in many of the towns of Provence constructing defences

23 Martyrologue de l’Église de Vence, 10 septembre; folio 19, cited in Dailliez, L. op.cit., p.88.
24 Dailliez, L. op.cit., p.91.
against the invading Saracens.\textsuperscript{27} The Saracen invasions of the ninth century left churches, towns and monasteries along the coast destroyed, these included Vence.

4.10.6 PLAN-ANALYSIS

The morphology of the present town of Vence shows a clear and well-preserved curvilinear pattern, with the cathedral at its centre, and a network of radiating roads entering the town from the southeast, east, west and north. An examination of the Napoleonic cadastral map, surveyed at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in conjunction with historical evidence, allows analysis of the morphological development of Vence. The Napoleonic cadastral map represents the earliest accurate cartographic depiction of the town (Figure 4.10.4), with few older maps surviving, none of which provide any detail of the town.

There is no trace left of the Celto-Ligurian settlement and very little survives of the ancient Roman civitas of Vintium. The widespread destruction wreaked on the town by the Saracens and other invading forces also means that little remains from the Early Medieval town, excepting the architectural fragments from an earlier church preserved in the cathedral walls and, possibly, the settlement pattern. As there has been no archaeological excavation to date within the Medieval town, tracing the topographical development of the town prior to the eleventh century is difficult.

The pattern of the streets on the early nineteenth century cadastral map is little changed from the present layout, although the older street names provide valuable, if rare, clues to earlier uses and functions of areas and buildings. Those that survive on the nineteenth century cadastral map include the Place and Rue ‘de la Poissonerie’, literally translated as ‘fish monger’ but perhaps an indication of a market place. Two of the street names refer to ovens, with Rue du Grand Four and Rue du Petit Four, translated as ‘big oven’ and ‘little oven’ respectively and are located away from the central cluster of ecclesiastical buildings. Communal ovens are mentioned in the documentary sources, with the bishop granting the townspeople a bread oven and wheat mill in 1417, in return for an annual fee.\textsuperscript{28} Medieval and later mills typically

\textsuperscript{26} Dailliez, L. op.cit., p.91 & 94.
\textsuperscript{27} Dailliez, L. op.cit., p.94.
\textsuperscript{28} Dalleמגנה, F. op.cit., p.17.
occupy the site of even earlier milling structures. In Vence, the Medieval (and earlier) mills may have stood on the same site as those marked on the cadastral map, on the northwest side of the town. No other economic or craft activities survive in the street names.

The remaining early nineteenth century street names have partly fossilised the ecclesiastical and administrative history of the town, with Rue de l'Évêché (referring to the 'Bishop's Palace'), Place du Cimetièrè Vieux (referring to the 'old cemetery' beside the cathedral) and Place de l'Hôtel de Ville (meaning 'town hall'). Each of these three examples is located at the centre of the town, close to the cathedral. Others outside of the main town walls hint at the town's growth, for example Place Vieille on the east which means 'Old Place', suggesting it became defunct at some point, and Rue du Faubourg, a reference to the faubourg or suburb which had developed on the town's southern side.

The proposed plan units for Vence are shown on Figures 4.10.5 & 4.10.6, which should be referred to when reading the description of each plan unit below.

**PLAN UNIT I**

While the form of the Celto-Ligurian settlement cannot be known, it is possible that the Roman settlement followed the common elements of Roman town planning. Roman towns were, in theory, very ordered and strictly planned, developing from the initial laying-out of the two main roads which crossed each other, the Cardo Maximus and Decumanus Maximus, commonly oriented north/south and east/west. Larger towns grew in a series of rectangular or square spaces, within which houses and public buildings, such as temples, basilicas and baths, were constructed. The street layout formed a grid pattern, enclosing each of the blocks (insulae) of buildings. In smaller towns, the planning was slightly less strict, with one road running through the centre of the town and smaller roads leading off it and the insulae varying considerably in size and shape from town to town and even within each town. It should be noted that not all Roman towns followed this plan, certainly the larger and

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29 Aston, M and Bond, J. op.cit., p.46.
more important a town, the more likely it is that it was laid out according to these criteria.

This may have been the case at Vence, with the main street surviving as Rue de l'Évêché (Bishop's Palace Street) and Rue des Portiques (Street of the Arches, now a cul de sac), running on an east/west orientation (Figure 4.10.8d). Possible vestiges of insulae might be traced in the streets running north from Rue de l'Évêché. These four narrow streets, orientated north/south, are distinctive, forming rectangular blocks with short plot boundaries running east/west. The plot boundaries within each block run parallel with Rue de l'Évêché rather than perpendicular to it. Plots laid out perpendicular to a street are typical of all of the other blocks of development, both within the town walls and along the streets in the suburbs which developed outside of the walls.

Although no other elements of the Roman town survive or can be discerned from the town plan, it has been suggested that the forum lies beneath the Medieval ecclesiastical complex. A forum was traditionally centrally positioned in a Roman town, both figuratively and literally, forming the centre of the physical settlement, as well as being the political, religious and administrative centre. It has also been suggested that the present cathedral is situated on or near to the site of a Roman temple (which typically would have stood at one end of the forum) and, quite possibly, the Celto-Ligurian temple that preceded it. Dallemagne thinks it likely that the earliest Christian church would have been on the same site as the later cathedral and suggests that this might also have been the site of a pagan temple, at the heart of the Roman forum (which Tisserand believes was located on the old Place de la Poissonerie, now the Place Georges Clemenceau). Blanc, who also argues for the antiquity of a church on this site, takes the Roman inscriptions contained in the cathedral walls as evidence that this site previously held a pagan temple dedicated to the Roman deities Mars and Cybele (Figure 4.10.8c).

30 Dallemagne, F. op. cit., p.12.
There is a strong precedent for the re-use of sacred sites, both in Roman history and also in the history of Christianity, the latter most probably modelled on the former. As a form of colonisation or conversion it worked particularly well, by using sites already held as sacred by the local populace, where they were accustomed to gathering for worship. In both Roman and Christian religions it was common practice to adopt local gods and rituals, absorbing them into the new religion (and culture) and thus assuring higher numbers of converts more peacefully or with greater ease.

**PLAN UNIT II**

Analysis of the historic mapping indicates the existence of two possible ecclesiastical enclosures preceding the later Medieval walled defences that still enclose the town today. The line of these two enclosures can be traced in the street plan of Vence, representing what may be a double concentric curvilinear enclosure, albeit incomplete (Figure 4.10.6). The first of these two enclosures surrounds the major ecclesiastical buildings (Figure 4.10.8e&g). The origins of the Medieval (and probably the earlier Medieval) town of Vence almost certainly lie within this inner oval enclosure, the line of which survives almost in its entirety. It can be traced in the street pattern of the present town, following (clockwise): Rue de l’Éveché; Place Godeau (formerly Place de la Vieille Cimetière, where the old cemetery (‘la vieille cimetière’) was situated); Rue Saint Lambert (formerly Rue de la Ruelle, _ruelle_ meaning ‘alleyway’); the edge of Place Surian (formerly Place de l’Hôtel de Ville, _l’Hôtel de Ville_ meaning ‘town hall’) and of Place Clémenceau (formerly Place de la Poissonerie, _poissonnerie_ meaning ‘fish monger’); and Rue de la Place Vieille (Old _Place_ Street, formerly Rue de la Poissonerie).

The eleventh century cathedral and its dependants occupy a central position in the town and in the inner enclosure (Figure 4.10.8a&b). The original ecclesiastical buildings include the bishop’s palace, destroyed in 1910 along with its _place_; the canonical building mentioned in the statutes enacted June 16, 1312; the provost’s building which, along with the canonical houses, abutted the bell-tower of the cathedral to the north; and the cemetery, which was located on the site of the present Place Godeau, behind the cathedral (Figure 4.10.8d).\(^{32}\) The bell tower of the cathedral

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\(^{32}\) Dallemagne, F. op.cit., p.12.
is crenelated and appears to have had a defensive function in the fourteenth century, acting as a watch tower (Figure 4.10.8b). The cathedral and the Bishop’s Palace were originally connected by a bridged corridor supported by arches; this was replaced in the fourteenth century and the later construction still stands in Passage Cahours, though the Palace itself is long gone (Figure 4.10.8e). Only two small blocks of short narrow property plots survive within this area, on the western and southeastern sides. This entire central portion is otherwise composed entirely of ecclesiastical and later administrative buildings, like the town hall, and several small places, in addition to the larger Place Godeau and Place Clemenceau.

The historical sources afford the institution of the Church a central role in the genesis of the town, which is unsurprising given that the principal accounts of Vence during the Early Medieval period are provided in the hagiographies and stories of the bishops that presided over the church in Vence. Analysis of the town plan does indicate that this was the case certainly by the Medieval period, if not earlier, with the cathedral and other ecclesiastical buildings, sitting at the centre of the town which developed around it.

The fact that the Medieval cathedral was constructed on a slightly off east-west alignment and has a side rather than front entrance, has been used to bolster the argument that the site was previously occupied. There was certainly a church in the town prior to the construction of the present Romanesque style cathedral in the eleventh century AD and it is likely that this forms the nucleus of both the Early Medieval or post-Roman settlement and also of the inner ecclesiastical enclosure, perhaps providing the genesis for this enclosing element. The archaeological evidence for the existence of the church consists of 17 sculptured slabs and 220 sculptural fragments from an earlier church that were re-used in the building of the present cathedral (Figure 4.10.8c). These artefacts have been dated to the Carolingian period.

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34 Dallemagne, F. op.cit., p.12.
35 Dallemagne, F. op.cit., p.21
of rule in France during the ninth century AD, with decorative interlacings typically Carolingian in style.  

A lack of excavation within the enclosing walls of the town and incomplete documentary sources means that there is no evidence to confirm either the presence of an earlier church on this site or its date of foundation. Even though the site of the cathedral, at the heart of the town, is the most likely place for an earlier church, the fact that the slabs were re-used in the construction of the cathedral does not in itself indicate that the Carolingian church or an even earlier structure was located on the same site. That being said, the re-use of sacred sites is not unusual and it would not be altogether surprising to find that the site of the present cathedral had previously been used as a site for religious worship in the Celto-Ligurian and Roman settlements.

The ecclesiastical buildings are abutted by the remains of the fifteenth century château intra muros or residence of the Seigneurs de Villeneuve 'within the walls' (these were the Counts of Provence and Lords of Vence who ruled Vence in conjunction with the bishop). Together these structures represent the physical manifestations of the two powers in the town during the Medieval period, that is, the 'worldly' power of the coseigneurs (the bishop and the seigneur, or lord) and the spiritual power represented by the bishop. A later château is incorporated into the defensive walls on the west side of the town and dates to the seventeenth century. The Tour du Peyra situated at its southwestern corner is, however, considerably earlier, being most likely twelfth or thirteenth century in date. This tower may have been the original feudal castle (or part thereof). Its position outside of the ecclesiastical centre is significant, suggesting that at least initially, the church occupied the position of power and of influence in the town.

The original physical form taken by the enclosures is, by the Medieval period, almost certainly a wall. The investigation of a number of houses along the line of the inner enclosure has shown that they appear to have been built up against a wall (Figure 4.10.8f). This is particularly noticeable on Rue de l’Èveché and Place Godeau, where

37 Aubert, M. op.cit., pp.65-69.
39 Baudot discusses the dating of the three château of Vence, Baudot, O. op.cit., p.7-8.
the façades have scars from different phases of window and door openings as the use and aspect changed from wall to street. Large stones in some of the wall façades, which are unusual in the house construction may be part of the enclosing wall.

**PLAN UNIT III**

A second enclosure concentric to the first can also be partially traced in the street pattern (Figure 4.10.8g). This larger enclosure is incomplete and where it survives follows Rue Saint-Julien and Rue du Marché (‘Market Street’, formerly Rue du Grand Four), curving from south/southwest to Place du Peyra (from the Latin petra meaning stone) and Rue du Portail Levis along the northwest, before curving around to Rue de la Coste (coste deriving from the Latin costa, meaning ‘slope’\(^40\)) along the north side. Place du Peyra is locally considered to be the place of the Roman forum and the word ‘Peyra’ can be found in the context of ancient ruins.\(^41\)

Whether or not this line once formed a complete enclosure encircling the inner enclosure is unclear. It is possible that it was an annex of the original enclosure, added as the town expanded and similar to an accretion to the inner enclosure at Llandeilo Fawr. If the narrow blocks north of Rue de l’Éveché fossilise Roman insulae, these would have prevented an enclosure continuing eastwards from the end of Rue de la Coste. If these blocks are later, forming part of the regularly laid out and planned Medieval defences that still encircle the town, they may have obliterated all surface trace of an earlier enclosure if it continued along this side. In order to fulfill a defensive function, this earlier enclosure should have extended fully around the existing settlement or, as an annex, it should have been appended to the inner enclosure. Given the plan-form, it appears that secular settlement developed or was laid out outside of the inner enclosure, either concurrently or subsequently, and that this settlement was contained within an enclosing wall. The distinct curve preserved in the streets is unlikely to have developed naturally.

\(^{40}\) Dauzat, A. and Rostaing, C. op.cit., p.215.  
\(^{41}\) Dauzat, A. and Rostaing, C. op.cit., p.528 provide the derivation from the Latin petra and also its use in places which hold or once held ancient ruins. The local Vence Tourisme website refers to this as the ‘ancient’ Roman forum and also state that the ‘peyra’ or ‘pierre’ in question was an execution stone.  
http://www.cote.azur.fr/site-tourisme-vence-1050.htm
The plot boundaries within this second enclosure occupy relatively small blocks, separated by streets providing access to the ecclesiastical centre. These are distinct from both the substantial property boundaries forming the ecclesiastical group in the inner enclosure and also from the long narrow blocks which cling to later Medieval walls running along the outermost boundary of the town to the northwest and south.

Place Surian and Place de Peyra are attested in documentary sources in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Each of these is positioned where a main road enters the town: Place Surian where the route from the southeast/east enters the ‘inner’ enclosure and Place du Peyra where the western route enters the ‘outer’ enclosure. Though the site of a market place in the Early Medieval and Medieval periods is not documented, it would most likely have been in one of the places, perhaps initially at Place Surian in the earlier period and subsequently at Place du Peyra (the modern market is held in Place du Grand Jardin to the southwest of Place du Peyra).

PLAN UNIT IV

The latest and most intact of the enclosures are the defensive walls forming an oval around the town (Plan Unit IVa), with the associated ditch now replaced by the tree-lined avenues Avenue Marcellin Maurel (formerly Rue du Faubourg, ‘Suburb’ Street, which separates the town from its suburbs to the south) and Boulevard Paul-André (formerly Le Boulevart [sic]; Figure 4.10.8h). The walls were pierced by three gates until the eighteenth century, located at the northwest (Porte Levadis), southwest (Porte de la Tour) and southeast (Porte de Saint-Paul), providing access to the main routes to St Jeannet, Grasse/Coursegoules and Nice/Antibes respectively.

The feudal château of the Barons of Villeneuve was incorporated into the western length of the walls at a later date (circa seventeenth century), occupying the space between the Porte Levadis and the Porte de la Tour (Figure 4.10.8i). A second château was constructed south of the cathedral in the centre of the town (château intra-muros) somewhat earlier, in the fifteenth century. According to Février, both the fifteenth and the seventeenth century châteaux were preceded by an earlier

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42 Baudot, O. op.cit., p.15.
43 Baudot, O. op.cit., p.8, opines that this is the earliest possible date for this château.
44 Baudot, O. op.cit., p.8.
structure, the Tour de Peyra, which was most probably constructed in the late twelfth century⁴⁵ (or slightly later perhaps; the first Baron of Villeneuve, Romée de Villeneuve, became the feudal lord of Vence in 1230). The tower is situated at the edge of the southwestern quadrant of the town. It has been incorporated into the walls but is at odds with both their alignment and architectural style, interrupting the regular line of the defences which otherwise form a neat oval shape around the town. Février cites similar architectural examples in other Provencal towns⁴⁶, all dated to the twelfth century and each isolated from the town defences.

It is thought by some that the construction of the town’s ramparts began as early as the twelfth century, possibly connected to population growth in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, prior to the devastating plague of 1348-9.⁴⁷ A fourteenth century notarial deed cites a street ‘hors-les-murs’ (outside of the walls)⁴⁸, indicating not only the presence of town walls at this time but also that settlement had expanded beyond these walls, creating les faubourgs (suburbs) to the south of Avenue Marcel Maurel (formerly Rue du Faubourg) and to the east of Place Vieille, north of the seventeenth century Chapelle des Pénitents Blancs (Plan Unit IVb). While Février dates the walls to the fifteenth century, this may simply represent a date for the present construction, possibly a reconstruction or repair of the earlier walls.⁴⁹ This later activity may represent a consolidation of the town at a time when the population had ceased expanding and in fact had almost halved.⁵⁰ Although it is possible that the fifteenth century walls (if they are so dated) may have replaced earlier walls, Février argues that the earlier architectural style of the Tour de Peyra and its position, which is out of line with the defences, makes it unlikely to have been constructed at the same time.⁵¹ This suggests that the walls were more likely constructed in the thirteenth or fourteenth century than in the twelfth century.

⁴⁶ Antibes, Saint-Paul de Vence, Grasse and Arcs; Février, P-A., 1964. op.cit., p.96.
⁴⁷ Opinions are divided on this matter with Humber (cited Oallemague, F. op.cit., p.16) placing their construction in stages from the 12th century onwards and Février suggesting a much later 15th century date (cited Baudot, O. op.cit., p.13).
⁴⁸ Oallemague, F. op.cit., p.16.
⁴⁹ Cited in Baudot, O. op.cit., p.13
⁵⁰ Records show 256 hearths in Vence in 1316; this fell sharply to 150 in 1392 and 130 in 1471 (cited by Dallemagne, F. op.cit., p.13). While this is not an exact indicator of population numbers (a hearth tax was generally paid by households where the house exceeded a certain value, with a rate paid per hearth in the property), it gives a clear indication of the effect of the plagues on the inhabitants of Vence.

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It is significant in terms of the development of the town that the earliest feudal castle was located outside of the original enclosure(s) and separate from the ecclesiastical sphere of influence. There is little in the town plan to suggest that it had any effect on either the town or street pattern. This suggests that the features described above, in the street pattern and plot boundaries showing earlier enclosures, almost certainly predate the twelfth century and can be attributed to a predominant, if not exclusive, ecclesiastical influence.

The long narrow blocks which run along the inside of the later Medieval walls date to the late fifteenth century, when the inhabitants were allowed to construct houses against the walls. This has had the effect of preserving the Medieval walls, with crenelation and some arrow slits still visible, albeit partially filled in by later construction. The walls remained essentially defensive in function, with no doorways accessing the houses from the exterior, although windows were inserted into the walls. The subsequent breach in security presented by the windows is recorded in the sixteenth century, with documents detailing attempts to combat the problem of people entering and exiting through the windows and causing damage to the walls.

In addition to the construction of houses against the inside of the walls, there is evidence that the defensive ditch which augmented the defences on the south, east and west was partially filled in to create la place vieille (Place Antony Mars) and la place neuve (Place du Frêne) in 1431 and 1441 respectively. This again suggests the town proper had been consolidated by this time, with the reorganisation of public spaces in response to the ‘new’ town plan.

4.10.7 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
A summary of findings derived from the plan-analysis is presented in Tables 4.10.1 and 4.10.2 below.

52 A document dated to 22 April 1494 grants permission for this, cited in Baudot, O. op.cit., p.14.
54 Tisserand, E. op.cit., p.97.
### Table 4.10.1 Details of Ecclesiastical Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inner enclosure</th>
<th>Horizontal oval, measuring c.95m north-south by 70m east-west. Incomplete to northeast. Formed by road.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outer enclosure</td>
<td>Horizontal oval measuring c.120m north-south by 180m east-west. Formed by road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional enclosure</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church/Cathedral (orientation)</td>
<td>East-west oriented medieval cathedral on the site of earlier church(es).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of burial ground</td>
<td>Originally within the inner enclosure, on the east/northeast side of the cathedral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy well</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation date of ecclesiastical site</td>
<td>Early fifth century.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4.10.2 Elements of Settlement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market place (orientation)</th>
<th>Possible locations to the southeast or west, just outside the inner enclosure.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subdivision of enclosure</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annexe/Suburb</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiating road network</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.11  LA DIGNE D'AMONT, LANGUEDOC-ROUSILLON, FRANCE

4.11.1  INTRODUCTION

The small village of La Digne d'Amont is located within the modern commune of Bas-Razès, in the département of Aude in the present Languedoc-Roussillon region (the ancient Languedoc region of southern France). It lies within the basin of the River Aude and close to the small town of Limoux, which is less than 8km to the east. The cities of Carcassonne and Narbonne lie c.25km north and c.70km northeast respectively (Figures 4.1 & 4.11.1). The site is level and lies close to the River Courgaing, which flows along its north side.

4.11.2  PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE

La Digne d'Amont first appears as Ladingana in 959 AD. The similarity of this name and that of its neighbour, La Digne d'Aval, in their Latin and modern French forms, as well as their physical proximity, suggests a shared root. The etymology derives from a male personal name, Latinius or Ladius, with the suffix –ana, thus offering little in terms of the specific history of the villages. The appearance of an anthroponomical Latin root in both names does, however, suggest a Roman origin. This may have been in the form of a landowner during the Gallo-Roman period, whose name continued to be associated with the land after the fall of the Roman Empire. Thus the area came to be named Latianium or Ladianium, evolving to become Landingana and Ladingana, which in French transcribes as La Digne.

Both La Digne d’Amont and La Digne d’Aval are referred to on the Napoleonic cadastral mapping as ‘Digne Haut’ or ‘High Digne’, without any distinction in the name of either. This is also the name of the ancient commune within which they lie and which perhaps represents the extent of the area owned by the original Roman landowner. The genesis of the distinguishing markers is less clear but is more recent in date and no earlier than the sixteenth century. The two villages are first distinguished in 1234, when La Digne d’Aval is described as Villa de Ledinhano Inferiori, becoming Ladinham d’Aval and Ledignan d’Avail by the late sixteenth

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1 Dauzat, A. and Rostaing, C. op.cit., p.246.
2 La Digne d’Aval is recorded as Ladiniannellum for the first time in 1162; Dauzat, A. and Rostaing, C. op.cit., p.246.
3 Dauzat, A. and Rostaing, C. op.cit., p.246
La Digne d'Amont, on the other hand, changes from the Latin Ladiagnium to the French La Digne Supérieure and La Digne du Haut. The distinction of the two villages in the thirteenth century as inferior (La Digne d'Aval) and superior (La Digne d'Amont) is indicative of a distinction between the settlements, perhaps in size, importance and their place in relation to each other.

The descriptive d'Amont and d'Aval that distinguish the two villages are most likely topographical. In La Digne d'Amont 'amont' probably derives from the Latin ad montem, meaning 'towards the height' or 'up high'. The site however is on a plain, so perhaps this is a reference to its position in relation to La Digne d'Aval and its environs. It is further away from the main centre in Limoux, upstream on the Courgain and further up the road leading to the hills in the southwest. La Digne d'Aval, which does sit on a natural height, is also referred to on the cadastral map as 'La Digne en haute', a clear reference to its topographical position. In the case of the descriptive 'aval', the site occupies the edge of a terrace sitting above the valley of the Courgain stream, and perhaps derives from the Latin vallis (French vallée) meaning valley, as appears in other French place-names. The names achieved their current and final form after the Revolution in 1789.

4.11.3 EXAMINATION OF EARLY SETTLEMENT: PREHISTORIC PERIOD

There is nothing at all known of either La Digne d'Amont or its neighbour prior to the tenth century and even then information is scarce. The area around the two villages has been inhabited from at least the Neolithic period onwards, with the river, the fertile alluvial plains and low hills providing an attractive place to settle. There is evidence of extensive settlements of dry-stone houses (at least forty) at Cambous in the Hérault commune to the northeast, which date to the late Neolithic period and

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4 http://mairie.pagespro-orange.fr/digne-aval/pages/decouvertes/patrimoine.htm; official town council site for La Digne d'Aval, accessed on 5/2/09.
5 http://pagesperso-orange.fr/digne.amont/cadres/decouvertes/cadre_patrimoine.htm; official town council site La Digne d'Amont, accessed on 5/2/09.
6 As is the case for Amont-et-Effrency in the département of Haut-Saône; Dauzat, A. and Rostaing, C. op.cit., p.15
form part of the Fontbouisse culture. Regional groups of late Beaker culture have also been identified in the Aude region and in Provence.9

The Aude region formed part of the territories of the Volcae tribes of pre-Roman Gaul, lying on the border between the territory of the Volcae Tectosages or Tolosates and the Volcae Arecomici. The tribal capital of the Volcae Tectosages was in Toulouse (Tolosa), while the Volcae Arecomici had their capital close to the modern city of Narbonne.10 It was called Narbo and was a hill-fort c. 4km north of Narbonne at Montlaurès.11 Another of their tribal towns lay much closer to La Digne d’Amont, Carcaso, a hillfort and forerunner of the modern Carcassonne (Pliny calls it Carcasum Volcarum Tectosagum).12

4.11.4 EXAMINATION OF EARLY SETTLEMENT: ROMAN PERIOD
The Roman province of Gallia Narbonensis (formerly Gallia Transalpina or Transalpine Gaul) covered the modern Provence and Languedoc-Roussillon regions, with the tiny province of Alpes Maritimae at the far eastern end (around modern Nice). It was so-called after its capital, the first Roman colony in Gaul Narbo Martius (Narbonne), which was founded on the coast in 118BC, close to the tribal hillfort of the Volcae Aremomici.13 It became a Roman province in 121BC, allowing the Romans to control the land route between Italy and Spain and the lucrative trade routes of the Rhône valley, where previously Greek trade had flourished.14 The Via Domitia (Domitian’s Way or Road) which ran from the Rhône valley via Narbonne and into Spain was the first Roman road to be constructed in Gaul. It followed the course of the prehistoric route utilised by Greek traders and known as the Via Heraclea.15

The province was thoroughly Romanised by the time of the emperor Augustus (first century AD), with new colonies founded and Narbonne becoming a major trading centre. The elder Pliny even described Narbonensis as ‘more like Italy than a

10 James, S. 1998, Exploring the World of the Celts, p.44.
province'. The Roman presence led to a considerable development of trade in the region, most notably of wine up the valley of the Aude. This was made possible by an important routeway formalised by the Romans, which ran along the Aude valley, travelling south from Carcaso. It crossed the river just south of Limoux, where the remains of a bridge still survive, attesting the presence of a Roman settlement here.

The area within which La Digne d’Amont lies is known to have been well populated during the Gallo-Roman period, with numerous villae sites identified in the vicinity of Limoux. These were essentially private estates or farms, usually entirely self sufficient. They were formed by the pars urbana (residential area) and pars rustica (agricultural complex). Artefacts recovered from the town of Limoux were substantial in number and indicative of an autonomous settlement, perhaps even a vicus (town), occupied from the first to the fourth centuries AD. One of the villae known from the surrounding area, at Fllassian to the north, was excavated between 1983 and 1987. The results of these excavations revealed that the villa and its associated buildings continued in use as a farm in the Early Medieval period (from the sixth to the eighth century).

As suggested by Abbé, it is possible that there is a link between the first places of worship or early church sites in these rural areas and the Gallo-Roman villae. These sites did not just evolve as parish churches, as perhaps is the case at La Digne d’Amont, but also as monasteries. Many of these are found in southwestern France and appear to represent a dominant tendency from the sixth century onwards of founding monasteries on private land. Percival associated this movement with the new type of monasticism introduced by St Columbanus in the late sixth century, replacing the cenobitic foundations pioneered at Lérins and common throughout the south in the fifth century. The villae were progressively abandoned as residential centres as the

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16 Cited in Wells C., 1992, The Roman Empire, p.147.
20 Abbé, J-L., op.cit., p.172.
21 Ibid.
Roman Empire started its decline, but some may have represented a natural centre of attraction from which new villages would emerge. Such continuity of use is not uncommon and there is also documentary and archaeological evidence for the re-use of villae as church sites, cemeteries and as the nuclei for Medieval settlement. The villa site as the nucleus for a Medieval settlement is particularly interesting in this instance, especially when considered in tandem with the development of the villa site as a church site.

Baudreu considers it likely that a Gallo-Roman habitation site at La Digne d'Amont or close by was the genesis of the settlement here, although whether or not there was also an early church site can only ever be supposition. Given the toponymy of La Digne d'Amont and La Digne d'Aval which is indicative of a Roman origin, it is probable that a Roman villa either previously occupied one or both of the sites or was located close by. Archaeological excavations in the Rhône valley have produced evidence that the majority of the Medieval nuclei are located on sites where a villa had once existed. Ripoll and Acre do not provide specific data on those villa church sites that may have subsequently developed into Medieval settlements. The existence of this phenomenon can be inferred however from the sites in the Rhône valley where large cemeteries, generally dated to between the fifth and ninth centuries, were also present around some of the villae.

Février has cautioned that continuity between a villa site and a church may be apparent rather than real, at least in the case of Provence if not here. He nonetheless considers the hypothesis that a large proportion of the tenth to twelfth century churches and priories are located on sites, such as villae or other rural settlements, that date back to the late Roman period. Among the reasons for the transformation of villae to church sites, whether or not these developed into Medieval settlements, is the conversion of landowners to Christianity. This led to an increasing strength and wealth of the Church, as the new converts donated lands where new churches or

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23 Ripoll and Acre's article presents the evidence for the transformation of Roman villae in western Europe during the Medieval period: Ripoll, G. and Acre, J., op.cit.
24 Baudreu, D. 1986, op.cit., p.64.
26 Ibid.
monasteries were then established. The fact that many villae throughout the Roman Empire already housed private chapels, even prior to Christianity becoming the official state religion of the Empire under Theodosius in the late fourth century, undoubtedly encouraged this phenomenon.

4.11.5 ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

La Digne d’Aval and La Digne d’Amont fall within the Pagus Redensis (of which Limoux was the capital), one of six pagi within the Roman diocese of Narbonne. These dioceses as administrative areas were retained by the Church, along with many other aspects of the Roman hierarchical and administrative structure. The smallest of the later Roman administrative units was the pagus (giving the French word pays, meaning in this case a community). The name of the wider area, le Razès, derives from Redensis, with the modern commune of Bas-Razes (lower Razès) occupying the northwestern corner of the Pagus Redensis.

Much of the modern département of Aude is formed of the ancient territories of the dioceses of Narbonne and Carcassonne. The influence of the archdiocese of Narbonne with its see in the city of Narbonne, covered much of southwestern France and Catalonia. The extent of this influence is unsurprising and historic; it reflected, in both its size and administration, the Roman province of Narbonensis Prima. It retained this vast sphere of influence until 1317 when it was divided into a number of smaller dioceses.

The invasions by the Germanic tribes into the Roman Empire in the early fifth century and subsequent invasions by the Visigoths were felt in this region as much as in Provence. The whole area was conceded by the Emperor Zeno to Euric, king of the

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29 This was the case at the villa site of Primuliacum (probably Plassac, Périgueux), which belonged to the fourth century monk Sulpicius Severus and where he founded a church, a baptistery and a monastery. The presence of a baptistery also endowed the church with parochial functions. Cited in Ripoll, G. and Acre, J., op.cit., pp.86 & 110.
30 When the Roman provinces were reformed into dioceses under the emperor Diocletian at the end of the third century AD, Gaul Narbonensis was divided into Narbonensis Prima (Languedoc-Roussillon region) and Narbonensis Secunda (Provence, the eastern extent of which remained Alpes Maritimae). Each diocese was grouped around a vicarius (governor) usually based in the main town; the metropolis of Narbonensis Prima was Narbonne, which is called Civitas Narbonensium at this time; Rivet, A.L.F., op.cit., p.99.
Visigoths, in 475. Despite the fall of the Roman Empire and the retreat of Roman influence from this area in the late fifth century, Christianity was afforded the opportunity to flourish when the Burgundians and Visigoths were converted in 516 and 589 respectively.32

By 870 the Pagus or Comitatus Redensis had passed into the hands of the Counts of Carcassonne, although it remained within the ecclesiastical diocese of Narbonne. In 1318, the Haut-Razes became part of the newly formed Alet diocese while the Bas-Razes area remained an enclave of the Narbonne diocese.33 While the La Digne D'Amont lay within the influential archdiocese of Narbonne, the fortunes of the village, both secular and religious, were undoubtedly closely connected to those of nearby Limoux. The town of Limoux was greatly influenced from the tenth century onwards by the Counts of Razès (based in Rennes-le-Château to the south) and of Carcassonne, but the ecclesiastical influence stemmed from the monasteries and abbeys in the area. The first documentary reference to Limoux is a deed dated to 844, in which the emperor Charles le Chauve confirmed his father Louis le Pieux's grant of the windmills in Limoux to the abbey of St Hilaire.34 By the early thirteenth century, possession of the parish of Limoux was transferred to the new Dominican friary at Prouille.35

The foundation of monasteries and abbeys is referred to in the documentary sources from as early as the sixth century. Legislation was passed on the foundation of abbeys by the Council of Agde in 506 and by the Provincial Council of Narbonne in 589.36 There is little enough known of the early abbeys and monasteries. The Benedictine abbey of St Hilaire may have its origins in the sixth century (c.13km northeast of La Digne d'Amont); it contains the tomb of St Hilaire, a sixth century bishop of Carcassonne who is traditionally named as the founder of this monastery. The plan of this abbey as it survives in the modern town is distinctive, with small sub-circular enclosure around the abbey buildings, which is in turn encircled by a large oval.

31 Griffe, E., 1933. Histoire Religieuse des Anciens Pays de l'Aude: des origines Chrétiennes à la fin de l'époque carolingienne, pp.7-8
32 Rivet, p.108
33 Griffe, E., op.cit., pp.142-145.
34 Abbé, J-L., op.cit., p.172.
35 Abbé, J-L., op.cit., p.172.
A second abbey, Lagrasse, which also grew to prominence in the Medieval period, may also have been founded in the pre-Carolingian period (i.e. before the eighth century).38

Although the wider influence on the area was from the diocesan church, a more immediate influence from at least the tenth century onwards was the abbey of Lagrasse, patron of the Church of Sainte Colombe at La Digne d’Amont. The late eighth century onwards saw the reorganisation of the Gallo-Frankish churches. The Council of Narbonne in 788 ratified an agreement between civil and ecclesiastical authorities regarding the definition of diocesan limits and recorded the foundation or endowment of abbeys, such as Lagrasse in 800 and again in 814, Alet in 813 and St Hilaire in 825.39 The Benedictine abbey of Lagrasse (founded in the Carolingian period) was powerful and by extension wealthy, receiving numerous donations, including fields, vineyards and houses, and this prosperity funded the establishment of dependent priories and rural churches; between the end of the eleventh century and the first half of the twelfth century it counted among its possessions the monasteries of St Polycarpe, St Laurent de la Cabrerisse and St Martin des Puits.40

As noted by Pawlowski, documentary sources for this region in the tenth and eleventh century are rare and where they exist the texts are almost exclusively religious,41 giving us, for example, the names of the churches at La Digne d’Amont and La Digne d’Aval but little else. La Digne d’Amont is first mentioned in the texts in 959, when the church of Sainte Colombe (ecclesia) of Ladingara became the property of the abbey of Lagrasse.42 It was clearly already in existence by this point, although its original foundation date is unknown. The dedication to Sainte Colombe refers to St Colomba of Sens (an abbey south of Paris in the commune of Meaux), a Christian martyred at Meaux in the late third century. She came from Spain into Gaul fleeing

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37 Another abbey in Aude, Caunes, has a similar foundation date and presents similar traces of curvilinear enclosure; Baudreu, D. 1996. ‘Les enclos ecclésiaux dans les anciens diocèses de Carcassonne et de Narbonne: la pluralité des formes’, in Fabre et al., op.cit., pp.189-203; 192-193.
38 C.D.D.P. DE L’AUDE, 1980, p.39
persecution from the Emperor Aurelian. Her route north would no doubt have take her through the Languedoc region, along the main Roman road, the Via Domitia, although her associations with the church at La Digne d’Amont are unknown.

The village and its church appear a further four times in the texts after 959. In 1088 (and again in 1639) the church was consecrated by Dalmace, archbishop of Narbonne, indicating that it no longer formed part of the possessions of the abbey. A reference to a villa (meaning village) at La Digne d’Amont appears in 1228, and in 1351 the village is referred to as a castrum. Place-names associated with the village in local tradition include Le Château (castle), Le Fort (fortress) or more interestingly Le Faubourg (suburb).

4.11.6 PLAN-ANALYSIS

La Digne-d’Amont is a small village with a very clear almost-circular layout formed around the Church of Sainte Columbe. The village is located on a level site on the south bank of the Courgaing river, on the principal routeway from Limoux. As with the episcopal cities of Vence and Carpentras, it is well connected to the main road network, with a number of radiating roads leading to and from the village. Settlement here appears more successful than that at the neighbouring La Digne d’Aval, which is located further away from the principal road and the river, with fewer routes approaching the village.

The village exhibits a curvilinear layout similar to those examined at Vence and Carpentras, albeit on a much smaller scale. La Digne d’Amont, unlike Vence and Carpentras, is far removed physically from the influence of the monastery of Lérins. It lay within the vast territories of the archdiocese of Narbonne, a city more closely linked with St Hilaire of Arles. That being said, important routeways between Provence and Narbonne and Languedoc had been in existence since the prehistoric period. Lérins and its influence and power in Provence was such that it extended to

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45 Ibid.
the episcopal city of Narbonne; one of the earliest bishops of Narbonne, Rustique, had close links with the monastery.\footnote{Griffe, E. op.cit., p.5.}

The plan-form exhibited at La Digne d'Amont is not unusual in this region; take for example its equally small neighbour La Digne d'Aval. As described earlier, the phenomenon of villages with a curvilinear street pattern in Languedoc centred on either a church or a donjon (a tower house or keep) has been the focus of a number of micro-regional studies, with the assumption being that this plan-form (with church as nucleus) is peculiar to the Languedoc region and simply represents a local variant on incastellamento.\footnote{For example, Baudreu, D. 1986, op.cit., p.29.}

The absence of street names on the Napoleonic cadastral map (1809-1810, Figure 4.11.3) and the small scale of the settlement, and consequent lack of historical accounts, makes it difficult to accurately date either the origins or the phases of growth. These difficulties are augmented by the dearth of archaeological evidence, with the exception of one stray find.

The proposed plan units for La Digne d'Amont are shown on Figure 4.11.4, which should be referred to when reading the description of each plan unit below.

**PLAN UNIT I**

The Rue de l'Eglise (Church Street) leads through a wide archway from the Chemin de Ronde (Circular Road) into a small place on the east side of the church, which is in turn partially encircled by the Rue des Trois Colombes (Street of the Three Doves; Figure 4.11.6d). The plot analysis indicates a degree of 'infill' around the church which, once removed reveals an inner enclosure with the early church at its centre. This possible earlier enclosure (measuring c.36m diameter) is formed on the south and east sides by the Rue des Trois Colombes. It confirms the documentary references which are in the first place to a villa cum ecclesia (village with church) and only later in the fourteenth century as castrum, which implies fortification.
The present church dedicated to Sainte Colombe has its origins in the ninth century, although an earlier foundation cannot be ruled out. It is a simple but substantial structure that dominates the centre of the village (Figure 4.11.6a-b). The majority of the structure dates to the thirteenth century, but was modified or repaired during the fourteenth, fifteenth and eighteenth centuries. The current entrance in the east façade opens onto the small place and consists of simple wooden doors framed by an unornamented porch. A second and more elaborate entrance is located in the north façade, within the older part of the building. It has a sculpted arched surround and a niche housing a statue of Sainte Colombe above.

The church retains part of the earlier Romanesque building on its north side; this is distinguished by the Lombard style ornamentation on the apse, suggesting a construction date some time in the ninth century. This earlier Romanesque construction measures c.16.5m east-west and c.6m north-south and is situated at the precise centre of the village. Baudreu and Cazes have proposed that the Romanesque structure replaced an earlier church on the same site.\(^\text{48}\) This is likely given the ancient origins of settlement here and is perhaps an example of an early church site occupying a Gallo-Roman villa site.

Hyvert suggests that the expansion of the Romanesque building to the south replaced a fortified residence,\(^\text{49}\) which would de facto have had to be in place prior to the thirteenth century when the present church structure was begun. Given the continued defensive nature of the site during the Medieval period, when it was encircled by a ditch, this hypothesis is not unfounded. At both Vence and Carpentras for example, the earliest bishop’s palace adjacent the church was fortified and smaller in scale than their successors. The present bell-tower sits on top of an older structure that originally functioned as a watch-tower and forms the apse of the Romanesque church. The old tower was badly damaged c.1210, during Simon de Montfort’s crusade against the Cathars in Languedoc.\(^\text{50}\) It was restored in the late nineteenth century. It was perhaps these upheavals in the first part of the thirteenth century that prompted the fortification of the site.

\(^{48}\) Baudreu, D and Cazes, J-P. 1994, op.cit., p. 86.
\(^{49}\) Cited in Baudreu, D. 1986, op.cit., p.86.
\(^{50}\)
The sole piece of archaeological evidence for Medieval occupation or activity in the village is an almost intact piece of Medieval pottery found during (non-archaeological) excavation works in a house in La Digne d'Amont.\textsuperscript{51} The \textit{pégau}, a small jug or pitcher, is of a style commonly found in the Rhône valley in Provence, often associated with burials. Although this piece has been tentatively dated to the twelfth century, such pieces can be as early as the tenth century. While this is an isolated find and lacks context, as no proper archaeological excavation was undertaken, it is possible that further remains survive \textit{in situ}.

The exact location of the house within the village could not be ascertained, thus the possibility that this represents the remains of a tomb, as suggested by Baudreu, is unhelpful in terms of plan-analysis. The only known cemetery is depicted on the Napoleonic cadastral map in a triangular plot on the east side of the Chemin de Ronde, outside of both enclosures. Whether this cemetery, which is still in use, was preceded by a small burial ground beside the church, as at Vence and Carpentras, can only be resolved by archaeological excavation (Figure 4.11.6c).

\textbf{PLAN UNIT II}

A sub-circular outer enclosure, measuring 84m by 84m, is formed by Chemin de Ronde along the south, east and west and Rue du Mairie (Town Hall Street) along the north (Figure 4.11.6d). These streets are slightly wider than the surrounding streets and are thought to follow the line of a defensive ditch. At La Digne d'Aval, where the presence of a ditch is attested in the \textit{compoix},\textsuperscript{52} the street encircling the inner enclosure is remarkably wide, almost four times the width of the outer enclosing street and approach roads. It might be posited that defence was paramount at La Digne d'Aval, with consequent effects on the village plan and on the scope for the church to expand. This does not appear to be the case at La Digne d'Amont. In addition to the expansion of the church with a new structure appended to its south side, the principal plots surrounding the inner enclosure are larger and except to the south, less regular in size.

\textsuperscript{50} Also known as the Albigensian Crusade, from 1209-1229; Kibler, W.W. and Zinn, G.A., op.cit., p.20.

\textsuperscript{51} Baudreu, D., 1983, 'La Digne d'Amont: Découverte fortuite d'un pégau', Notes et Documents, \textit{Archéologie du Midi Médiéval}, Tome I, p.129
The street running west from the village is named Rue du Barri. A *barri* is a generic term, commonly used in this region prior to the modern era but otherwise of unknown date, probably best translated as a type of suburban development (the French word for suburb, *faubourg*, appears less frequently). In the case of La Digne d'Amont it refers to the area outside of the Chemin du Ronde, particularly along the north and northwest. The plots along the north side of Rue du Mairie and along both sides of Rue du Barri are long and narrow, extending as far as the river to the north. They are also decidedly more organised than those surrounding the church.

The plots to the east, south and southwest are wider and appear to represent a different phase of suburban growth, though whether this is earlier or later than that along Rue du Barri is unknown.

4.11.7 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A summary of findings derived from the plan-analysis is presented in Tables 4.10.1 and 4.11.2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.11.1 DETAILS OF ECCLESIASTICAL ELEMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inner enclosure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outer enclosure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional enclosure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church/Cathedral (orientation)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location of burial ground</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Holy well</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foundation date of ecclesiastical site</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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53 A rudimentary *cadastre* or fiscal register providing a description, survey measurements and valuation of all parcels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market place (orientation)</th>
<th>Possible location to the east, outside the outer enclosure, adjacent burial ground.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subdivision of enclosure</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annexe/Suburb</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiating road network</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS
5.0 **Analysis and Discussion of Findings**

5.1 **Introduction**

During the course of this investigation it became apparent that there were a number of commonalities within the field study sites, as well as significant differences. The spatial relationship between ecclesiastical site and settlement formation was found to be one of the principal commonalities. The results of the plan-analysis showing the ecclesiastical site/settlement relationship at each of the field study sites will be presented. This chapter will then focus on two important but distinct aspects in the comparative analysis of the ecclesiastical settlement pattern. The first is an examination of the elements of ecclesiastical form that survive or are present at each of the nine sites, which may provide evidence for an early ecclesiastical foundation and its form. Second, an assessment of the factors influencing the settlement form within each of the individual sites and study areas. Using this approach it will be possible to identify the ecclesiastical settlement patterns that have emerged and to highlight where, why and how these patterns may have developed. Following this, the use of the plan-analysis in this work is discussed. This will allow an assessment of the technique and whether it is an appropriate or useful method of investigation in the context of a non-invasive archaeological study.

5.2 **Ecclesiastical Site/Settlement Relationship**

5.2.1 **Armagh**

The dominant influence on the initial development and subsequent growth of settlement at Armagh is very clearly the Early Medieval ecclesiastical enclosures (Figure 4.3.6, Volume 2). The essence of the town plan, the concentric enclosures and ecclesiastical nucleus, is very much related to the sixth century monastic foundation on the hill-top. The earliest prehistoric activity attested at the base of the hill also left its mark on later settlement patterns. This was the site chosen for the earliest burial ground and probably the first church at Armagh. Possible traces of the enclosure surrounding this first church, previously unidentified, were noted during the plan-analysis. Though the church was moved to the hill-top, this area at the base of the hill appears to have retained its sacred nature and was the site of a Medieval Augustinian nunnery.
Settlement during the Medieval period very much respected the earlier settlement form, being concentrated within and around the outer enclosures and to the east around the early market place. The town remained relatively contained within these areas until the Post-Medieval period. Incorporation as a borough during the seventeenth century Plantations does not appear to have had a substantial impact on the existing plan, apart from some development to the north, though this again was an expansion of existing Early Medieval settlement in this area. It was not until the eighteenth century that more significant growth took place outside of the earlier areas of settlement, though even these are in a sense a product of the Early Medieval settlement: much of the growth was again to the east and also along the main approach roads.

5.2.2 KELLS
The monastic settlement at Kells had a significant influence on the growth of later settlement (Figure 4.4.6, Volume 2). Whether or not this was itself originally influenced by an existing secular settlement on the site is unknown. The ecclesiastical settlement pattern is evident from the plan-analysis and is readily visible in the street and plots shown on the nineteenth-century maps, with an inner and outer enclosure (probably contemporaneous) and subsequent development with a market place to the east and secular settlement to the southeast. This pattern affected not only the evolution of settlement during the Early Medieval period, when the monastery was at its most powerful and prosperous, but also during the Medieval period. The Medieval town defences appear to follow the line of the outer ecclesiastical enclosure and may even have been extended southwards to encompass the Early Medieval settlement where it extended to the southeast. The market place was retained and the primacy of the eastern entrance and approach road was formalised by the placing of a castle in this area. Settlement growth associated with the new borough followed the main approach roads that were also probably a feature of the Early Medieval settlement.

5.2.3 CLONDALKIN
Though there was relatively little settlement growth at Clondalkin during the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods, some of the disturbances to the early ecclesiastical settlement pattern were substantial (Figure 4.5.5, Volume 2). This can best be seen in the disruption to the inner ecclesiastical enclosure by Tower Road,
which bisects it. Later settlement did have the effect of preserving elements of the ecclesiastical settlement pattern, most especially on the eastern side. The Medieval burgages were apparently laid out along Monastery Road, which runs east from the probable market place at the outer enclosure. This suggests that the area within the enclosures was already occupied by settlement at this time. The presence of an Early Medieval church in the area outside (to the northeast) of the outer enclosure, might explain the later siting here of the Archbishop’s occasional residence. The size of the settlement during the Medieval or post-Medieval period is not known, though it was nothing more than a small village by the eighteenth century. Despite this, what settlement evidence there is indicates that the early ecclesiastical settlement pattern had a significant impact on subsequent development.

5.2.4 LLANDAFF
The earliest ecclesiastical settlement pattern at Llandaff is difficult to reconstruct accurately, with later Medieval regeneration of the ecclesiastical centre resulting in substantial alterations in and around the inner enclosure (Figure 4.6.6, Volume 2). The lines of the inner and outer enclosure can still be partially traced and there may have been internal divisions, much like those at Armagh, which are retained in the street pattern. Much of the settlement attested within the outer enclosure in the Medieval period mostly comprised schools and housing for the ecclesiastical staff, possibly reflecting the earlier use of this area. Prior to its modern incarnation as a suburb of Cardiff city, the village remained mostly contained within the outer enclosure. Subsequent growth and regeneration does not appear to have encroached upon Llandaff Green and the area surrounding it. This may point to a continued use of this space for gathering, e.g. for a village fair, which may strengthen the possibility that this was formerly a market place. Thus while the evidence is not as strong as at some of the other sites (the uncertain evidence for a market for example), the ecclesiastical pattern appears to have dominated settlement growth from the Early Medieval period onwards.

5.2.5 LLANDEILLO FAWR
In spite of an earlier Roman foundation and possible earlier Iron Age hillfort in the immediate environs, the focus for settlement in the Early Medieval period was the monastic foundation of St Teilo (Figure 4.7.7, Volume 2). The sources indicate that
the monastery had achieved a position of some significance by the eighth or ninth century, holding the Book of St Teilo and becoming a bishopric and mother church with its own dependants; one of these is likely to have been the neighbouring church of St Tyfei at Llandyfeisant. It is likely that by the time it lost its episcopal status in the eleventh century it was already a well-established settlement, albeit ecclesiastical in nature.

Plan-analysis suggests that the area north of the churchyard and outside of the inner enclosure may have been in use as an area for trade prior to the record of the Medieval market here. The triangular shape of the market place is also similar to those seen at many Irish monastic settlements. The location of a probable Medieval abbey and associated tithe barn to the east of the churchyard occupies another area outside of the inner enclosure. The slightly less regular plot boundaries along Church Street suggest that the earliest settlement was concentrated around the church, with a natural or forced expansion towards the river under the patronage of the Bishops of St David’s. The late thirteenth century reference to a settlement and bridge probably reflects the extension of the town south towards the river, which is evidenced by the traces of burgages along Bridge Street. The suggestion of an outer enclosure in the line of field and property boundaries is made more likely by the fact that all of the possible earlier Early Medieval settlement and secular activity would have been contained within the circumscribed area.

5.2.6 LLANCARFAN

Llancarfan is comparable to Clondalkin in its size and for its lack of any significant settlement growth after the Early Medieval period (Figure 4.8.5, Volume 2). The original monastic settlement was apparently sizeable enough and contained a college and hospital, though there is little evidence of this in the later plan. The extent of the original monastic lands is suggested by the partial lines of a much larger enclosure and the presence of ‘cross’ place-names at various points along its perimeter. The inner enclosure is retained in the churchyard but there is otherwise no perceptible impact on subsequent settlement growth, with the important exception that later settlement stayed within the bounds of the outer enclosure. Medieval settlement developed in an almost linear fashion along the northern and possibly the western fringes of the enclosure, but was presumably constrained by rising ground on the
eastern side. The northern bias of the settlement is probably related to Crossgreen, the likely site for a market place.

5.2.7 CARPENTRAS

The development of the town owes much to an initial sub-ovoid ecclesiastical enclosure or precinct that may have been established around an early church at Carpentras in the sixth or seventh century (Figure 4.9.6, Volume 2). This was to become and would remain the cathedral precinct throughout the Medieval and later period, retaining its size and approximate shape despite numerous phases of redevelopment. Documentary sources point to the primacy of the Church within the town, with little or no influence exerted by the local seigneurs, the Counts of Toulouse. Unlike in Vence, there was never a château inside the town, possibly because of the town's status as a possession of the Papacy during the later Medieval period.

A second, oval-shaped enclosure, has left a clear trace in the town plan and was almost certainly defensive in nature before the thirteenth century. The origins of this enclosure are unknown although the cartographic analysis indicates that the boundary was in place before the plots were laid out along it. The return of the bishopric to Carpentras in the tenth century is the likely impetus for both the enclosure and these new accretions, with an influx of clergy and lay people to house. In addition to the defined ecclesiastical centre, there was a separate church and possibly a bourg to its east, perhaps a result of the growing number of inhabitants. Medieval suburban development owed much to this larger oval enclosure, with some streets and blocks that survived the fourteenth century clearance echoing the shape of the enclosure. Later development, in neat rectangular blocks appears to have been associated with the consolidation of the town within the new defences in the later fourteenth century, with little or no reference to the earlier ecclesiastical enclosures.

5.2.8 VENCE

As at Carpentras, the Roman town plan appears to have had little impact on the future development of the town. What is apparent is that from the Early Medieval period onwards, the town had developed around the church, gradually forming concentric circles radiating outward from the cathedral complex (Figure 4.10.5, Volume 2). This
process was cemented by the construction of the ramparts, sometime from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, and culminating in the eighteenth century avenues that form a complete oval enclosing the town.

In chronological terms, it is not known whether the two earlier enclosures are contemporary, forming part of a coherent town plan, or whether they represent phases of growth, developing organically from an initial enclosure around the ecclesiastical centre. Similarly, it is not possible to determine if the enclosures originated in the post-Roman or Early Medieval period, when the first church was constructed at Vence. Certainly, the Frankish invasions in the sixth century and the Saracen invasions of the subsequent centuries, might have prompted the construction of an enclosure as a defensive measure if one did not already exist or, alternatively, perhaps led to the fortification of an existing but less substantial ecclesiastical enclosure. The frequency with which the inhabitants fled the town for the hills and the construction of the fortress of Saint Laurent in the eleventh century does suggest, however, that the enclosure or enclosures were not entirely practical or did not operate effectively to defend the town.

As a *terminus ante quem*, the plague that almost halved the population of Vence in 1348-9 suggests that both enclosures must have been in place by this time. With such a decrease in the population there would have been little need to increase the size of the town, while food shortages in the second half of the fifteenth century would have further hindered population growth. Similarly, both Place Surian and Place de Peyra are attested in documentary sources in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Each of these is positioned where a main road enters the town: Place Surian where the route from the southeast/east enters the ‘inner’ enclosure and Place du Peyra where the western route enters the ‘outer’ enclosure. Though the site of a market place in the Early Medieval and Medieval periods is not documented, it would most likely have been in one of the places, perhaps initially at Place Surian in the earlier period and subsequently at Place du Peyra (the modern market is held in Place du Grand Jardin to the southwest of Place du Peyra).

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1 Baudot, O., op.cit., p.15.
The successive raids mentioned in the documentary sources might have wreaked such destruction that there was an opportunity to rebuild the town to a new plan, centred on the ecclesiastical buildings after the first raids of the sixth century. Although the documentary sources speak of the town being razed to the ground and subsequently rebuilt time and again, the details are vague and the stories undoubtedly embellished, as is common in hagiographies and church histories. There is no archaeological evidence to either confirm or dismiss these stories of destruction. It is the case, however, that where such evidence exists across the Roman Empire (particularly in Britain) it has been shown that the ‘devastation’ wrought by the barbarian invaders cannot be demonstrated from an archaeological viewpoint and perhaps was not as catastrophic or as endemic as is sometimes thought. It seems unlikely that the town would have changed dramatically every time it was rebuilt and more probable that the main structure of the town plan remained the same, with repairs and alterations undertaken as required. Based on the street pattern and plan-form of the town, as extracted from historic mapping, the cathedral complex and its enclosure appears central to the development of the town from the Early Medieval period onwards.

5.2.9 LA DIGNE D’AMONT

When compared with La Digne d’Aval, which exhibits a more defensive aspect, the plan of La Digne d’Amont suggests that the placement of the church and the enclosures took priority over the construction of a strictly defensive site (Figure 4.11.4, Volume 2). The appearance of La Digne d’Aval, both in plan and physically, is indicative of a defensive function, with two concentric bands of tightly packed houses. Although plots radiate out from the outer edge of the village, there are few buildings, suggesting either that the settlement contracted or that these plots were never intended for structures. This mirrors the documentary references to La Digne d’Aval as Villa de Ledinhano Inferiori, which might imply a more successful settlement growth at La Digne d’Amont. The success of the village might have been as simple as proximity to both the river and road network. The presence of windmills to the south of the village marked on the Napoleonic cadastral map is also indicative of the relative prosperity of the village.

Given the antiquity of the place of worship and its central position in the village, the church is most likely to have been the principal attractor for both the initial settlement and its development. The nearby abbey of St Hilaire has a curvilinear plan-form and its influence on the church and settlement at La Digne d'Amont should not be underestimated. St Martin's monastery at Ligugé was set up with the help of St Hilaire, apparently on one of his own estates. Was the tradition of the private estate monastery retained by the monks at St Hilaire's abbey and did elements of this tradition (such as the curvilinear plan) spread to the church at La Digne d'Amont?

5.3 ELEMENTS OF ECCLESIASTICAL SETTLEMENT FORM: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

5.3.1 ECCLESIASTICAL FABRIC

The survival of early ecclesiastical fabric or of an early Early Medieval church is extremely rare on sites that have seen continuous occupation and use as an ecclesiastical centre. The original church building is presumed in most cases to have been on the same site as the later and subsequent structures or at the very least close by. Unless a church site is excavated there is little hope of uncovering the site, size or nature of the first church or a possible date of foundation. At the nine sites examined, each has retained its ecclesiastical function and has an existing church on the site and no excavation has been undertaken within the inner enclosure or churchyard at eight of the nine sites. A small excavation within the inner enclosure at Llandaff appears to confirm the presence of a curvilinear enclosure but did not provide any evidence earlier than the Medieval period. The earliest evidence available, where it exists at all, is in the form of documentary references. At Vence, architectural fragments associated with a later Early Medieval church building (ninth century) have survived and at Kells there is the tenth or eleventh century oratory, St Comcille's House (albeit outside of the inner enclosure and presumably not the principal church). At the remainder of the sites the physical evidence for a church relates to the Medieval period at the earliest.

This makes the question of a foundation date incredibly difficult and where there is a proposed foundation date, these can only ever be tenuous. Based on available documentary evidence the ecclesiastical foundation dates for eight of the nine sites range from the fifth to the seventh centuries. With the exception of Armagh, the
French sites of Vence and Carpentras have the earliest foundation dates. The church at La Digne d’Amont cannot be dated to before the ninth century with any degree of certainty but there is a suggestion in the place-name evidence that there was a settlement here from the post-Roman period. The dominance of the church in the settlement may indicate that the ecclesiastical element (as church or burial ground) began in the post-Roman period within a former Roman villa. This was a common occurrence in Roman Gaul and elsewhere in the Empire and would place the church at La Digne d’Amont in the same time-frame as the other sites.

An early ecclesiastical nature is well attested by documentary references for almost all of the sites. In some of the Irish and Welsh cases additional ecclesiastical fabric, such as round towers and high crosses in Ireland and cross-slabs and cross-stones in Wales, also provide an early date for the sites (Kells, Clondalkin, Llandeilo, Llanarfan). A round tower survives at two of the Irish sites, Kells and Clondalkin, and is well attested at Armagh. Edwards has commented that while round towers are essentially Irish, they were almost certainly the product of Carolingian architectural influences reaching Ireland from the Continent. In terms of time-frame for these influences, it is difficult to be precise as bell-towers and belfries continued to be constructed on the Continent throughout the period of the ninth to twelfth centuries. For a terminus ante quem, it is considered likely that bell-towers and belfries only became commonplace in Europe as part of the major church and monastic foundation in the economic upturn and the ‘Carolingian Renaissance’ of c.AD750-825.

The precise origins of these influences are also obscure and it has been suggested that they derive from the detached campanilli of northern Italy or churches with staircase turrets in Germany or even the round towers at the western end of the church at St Gall in Switzerland. The tower on the far left of the photograph of St Michael’s (Figure 5.3.1) in Hildesheim, Germany, for example, is very like the round tower at Kinneigh, County Cork, which is also octagonal in its lower half and cylindrical on the top. O’Keefe agrees that the Irish round tower has a unique physiognomy and is

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4 Christie, N., 2004, ‘On bells and bell-towers: origins and evolutions in Italy and Britain AD 700-1200’ (The sixteenth Brixworth Lecture), in Church Archaeology, 5 & 6, pp.15-16
5 Ibid.
essentially Irish, but also looks to the Continent and specifically to the Mediterranean area for its origins.\textsuperscript{7} With this in mind it is interesting to note the rounded profile of the tower on the church in La Digne d'Amont, one of the oldest parts of the church and ornamented with Lombardic designs (Figure 4.11.6b, Volume 2). The documented use of the bell tower of the cathedral in Vence as a watch tower in the fourteenth century is also noteworthy. Here the cathedral is a symbol of ecclesiastical power, with the additional and practical function of a tower for defence; in this respect the tower is perhaps not unlike the round towers found on the Irish sites, in nature if not in form.

\textbf{FIGURE 5.3.1 : CYLINDRICAL BELL-TOWERS OF ST MICHAEL'S, HILDESHEIM, GERMANY}


5.3.2 HOLY WELLS/WATER SOURCE

The tradition of a holy well does not appear to have survived, if it existed at all, in southern France, although it is present at all of the Welsh and Irish sites examined. Vence had long associations with a spring, sometimes attributed as the reason for the initial prehistoric settlement. That being said, there is no record of veneration at the natural water source and no tradition that the water had special properties or later association with a saint. Swan noted the tendency for the holy well to be located outside of the ecclesiastical enclosures and often some distance away and this was observed at each of the Irish field study sites.\textsuperscript{8} If, as is proposed in Section 5.3.5, there

\textsuperscript{7} O'Keefe, T. 2004, Ireland's Round Towers, p.119.
\textsuperscript{8} Swan, D. L. 1994, op.cit., p.54.
was originally a much larger enclosing element at these sites, then the holy wells would be included within the 'monastic precincts'. In all three of the Welsh sites, on the other hand, the holy well was located within or on the line of one of the enclosures: within the inner enclosure at Llandeilo; on the edge of the inner enclosure at Llandaff, with a second within the outer enclosure; and both within and outside of the outer enclosure at Llancarfan.

5.3.3 BURIAL GROUND

Prior to the detailed examination of the three French sites, and based on an initial review of potential case studies using historical mapping, it was presumed that one of the principal differences between the French, Irish and Welsh sites was the location of the cemetery. The burial ground was invariably located outside the enclosure on the nineteenth century maps, following the Roman tradition of burial outside of the town pomerium, the sacred boundary established at the foundation of a town. It was considered taboo to bury the dead within a town's limits or walls and cemeteries were often located along one of the main roads leading to the town.

In many cases the Roman tradition was fossilised in the later urban growth, with the principal structures of the Church constructed on or near the site of the Roman municipal buildings. As these towns were already well developed in an urban sense, there was often little space for a cemetery around the church, forcing it to remain outside of the town centre. At Vence and Carpentras, however, the cemetery was found to have been originally located within the inner enclosure, next to the church — this despite an existing Roman urban settlement on the site prior to its Christianisation. Vence at least is referenced in the documentary sources as being destroyed and 'rebuilt' on several occasions, perhaps allowing a new approach to the town plan and an opportunity to deviate from its Roman successor and incorporate the new Christian ideals.

Février comments that the introduction of Christian cemeteries within a town or city’s boundaries is an important element in the history of urban topography at the end of the Roman period. Given the scarcity of archaeological and documentary evidence on this issue, it is not clear when or how the rules changed. Even at Fréjus in Provence, one of the few excavated examples where burials begin to appear within the walls at
this time, there are questions. It is uncertain whether this reflects an adjustment of the pomerium (i.e. it was reduced in size and so the dead still lay outside of it) or an abandonment of the custom of burial outside the pomerium altogether.\(^9\) When this transformation took place is also in question, but was certainly creeping in by the early sixth century when it is attested in Arles.\(^10\) In the early seventh century, the large isolated or open-plan cemeteries which had previously been in favour began to be abandoned. Burial groups of smaller size and related to a church, usually with parochial functions, begin to appear.\(^11\) By the Medieval period the transformation was complete and the position totally reversed, with the dead now buried within a church or in a cemetery beside or close to the church.

This chronology may be significant in terms of the field study sites, as it begs the question whether or not an outside influence was at play. The practice is first attested in Arles in the sixth century, at a time when Irish monks were leaving Ireland and travelling through Britain and the Continent. It does seem unlikely, however, that this influence was solely Irish, if at all. In the same way that formal Christian cemeteries only became the norm during the eighth century in Ireland and Britain (see also Section 5.3.3),\(^12\) burial practices throughout the Roman Empire took some time to be fully Christianised. A change began throughout the former Roman Empire in the fifth and sixth centuries and was attributable to the cult of the saints, whereby burial near a holy grave offered the best chance of standing beside that saint (one's protector) on the day of the resurrection.\(^13\) The desire to be buried close to a saint's relics, which were held within a church, resulted in the grouping of Christian graves inside (for those who were richest or most important) and around the church.\(^14\) This was the same influence that was brought to bear on the Irish and British Church, where the 'cult of relics' was used as a device to attract patronage, including burial, to the relevant saint's church during the late seventh and early eighth centuries.\(^15\)

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\(^10\) This is also illustrated by an example in Spain in 563, whereby the Spanish bishops felt it necessary to invoke the rule against burial within the city boundaries in order to prevent the burial of the faithful within in the basilicas); Février, P-A., 1964, op.cit., p.69.
\(^11\) Ripoll, G. and Acre, J. op.cit., p.94.
\(^13\) Brown, P. 2003. op.cit., p.263.
\(^14\) Ibid.
Though the siting of a burial ground within the inner enclosure is therefore not remarkable at the French sites, the location of the burial ground at all of the field study sites was identified to establish if there was a pattern in its exact placement within the enclosure. It was found that the location of the principal or original burial area deviates from the pattern observed by Swan, where it is commonly found to the south of the church in Irish sites. In the case of the three Irish sites examined, the principal burial area was on the south/southeast side of the church at Armagh and Kells, but on the east and south at Clondalkin (Figure 5.3a, Volume 2). The principal burial ground at Llandaff and Llancarfan is on the south side of the church, but to the north at Llandeilo (Figure 5.3b, Volume 2). In each of the three French sites an eastern orientation was predominant, with the original burial area to the east at Carpentras and to the northeast at Vence (Figure 5.3c, Volume 2). The existing burial ground at La Digne d’Amont is also on the eastern side of the village, though there is no way of knowing if this was also the location of the first cemetery. On their own these results revealed little in terms of pattern, but when they were considered alongside the siting of a market place, this indicated a possible connection between the two (see Section 5.2.7; Figures 5.3a-c, Volume 2).

5.3.4 ECCLESIASTICAL ENCLOSURE

5.3.4.1 INNER ENCLOSURE

The inner enclosure at all of the Irish and Welsh sites is indicated, at least partially by the existing churchyard wall. In all three of the French sites (and as observed at other French towns) a defined churchyard enclosing the church and cemetery is not a feature. There is nonetheless a sense of enclosure and of being contained at each of the three sites (albeit to a lesser degree at La Digne d’Amont); on the ground this sense comes from the buildings encircling the ecclesiastical structures, but also from the sense of space created around these structures in the places. Although not a churchyard in the Irish or British sense (in each case the cemetery is no longer within the enclosure), it nonetheless captures the same feeling of separateness that was presumably once a very strong feature at all of the sites.

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Where the line of the inner enclosure appears most disturbed and is hardest to trace is at Llandaff and Carpentras. Unlike the remaining seven sites, both of these towns witnessed a regeneration in the Medieval period and again in the Post-Medieval period. Llandaff became the new Norman bishopric under Urban in the twelfth century, with a building programme to match its status, and prospered again in the nineteenth century as a fashionable suburb of Cardiff. Carpentras began this process in the tenth century when the bishopric returned from Venasque and continued from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries when it regained its status as a capital city under the auspices of the Popes of Avignon. A further spate of public building in the eighteenth century wrought more changes in the old ecclesiastical centre. Though two of the other sites were also bishoprics (Kells and Vence), Kells lost its episcopal status after a very brief period and Vence had been a bishopric since the Early Medieval period and maintained its status throughout.

It appears that a change in the ecclesiastical rather than secular fortunes of the town for the better in the Medieval period affected the survival of the inner ecclesiastical enclosure, as in the case of Llandaff and Carpentras. This may indicate that the original sanctity of the inner enclosure was no longer relevant by the Medieval period, having been superseded by the new ecclesiastical power, which in turn supports an argument for an early date for these enclosures. The construction of a new road through the original inner enclosure can be seen at both Clondalkin and Llandeilo; this was in place at Clondalkin by at least the first half of the eighteenth century and at Llandeilo in the first half of the nineteenth century. This demonstrates the abandonment of the belief in the sacred nature of the ‘inner sanctum’, if such a belief was still held at that time. The pattern of enclosure and settlement as seen at Llandaff and Carpentras suggests that at least at some sites this process of abandonment may have begun much earlier. There is a sense overall that the encroachment onto sites may have paralleled the abandonment of ‘sacredness’, an idea that may also have affected the form taken by the enclosure at a later date (see Section 5.3.4.3).

With the exception of La Digne d’Amont the inner enclosure in all of the sites is ovoid (or sub-ovoid) rather than circular (Figure 5.1, Volume 2). An examination of shape in a study that looks at a small number of sites is undoubtedly less useful than in a large-scale study. By analogy with one such study in Cornwall, however, these
results are interesting and would benefit from further investigation. Preston-Jones found that those sites which were purpose-built early Christian enclosures (rather than a re-use of prehistoric sites or churchyards of a later date) were overwhelmingly oval or sub-rectangular and hardly ever truly circular or rectilinear. Without a widespread investigation of shape in each of the study areas, it is difficult to see whether or not this is significant or how.

It is even less clear whether or not size matters, although there is a remarkable similarity in the size of some of the enclosures, both inner and outer. Swan’s examination of Irish enclosed ecclesiastical sites found that they were considerably larger than contemporary secular settlements (i.e. ringforts), averaging 90-120m diameter, with a significant proportion ranging from 140m to over 400m and a small number between 25m and 50m. Griffin’s work also showed a sorting of sites by size, falling into three groups – small, medium and large – with an average radius of 62.5m, 164m and 390m respectively.

Taking the inner enclosure as the principal measurement (Table 5.2.1) – it probably being the earliest of the enclosures – the following emerges: Armagh, Llandaff and Carpentras are all of a similar size and fit comfortably within the average range; Llandeilo and Kells are slightly larger, while Llancarfan, Vence, Clondalkin and La Digne d’Amont are the smallest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Inner enclosure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>c.115m north-south by 85m east-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kells</td>
<td>c.116m north-south by 168m east-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clondalkin</td>
<td>c.53m north-south by 83m east-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llandaff</td>
<td>c.116m north-south by 105m east-west.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 Swan’s study in Ireland, for example, while thorough did not distinguish between the various curvilinear forms, be they oval, circle or a variant thereof. Similarly, a regional study by Murphy in 1992 looked at the distribution of ecclesiastical sites in County Louth but did not consider the shape of the enclosures; Murphy, D.1992. ‘The distribution of early Christian monastic sites and its implications for contemporary secular settlement in County Louth’, in County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal Vol.22, pp.364-386. Preston-Jones, A. op.cit., p.116.
20 Griffin, K., op.cit., p.311.
5.3.4.2 OUTER ENCLOSURE

A similar picture emerges when the size of the outer enclosure is considered, with the sites falling into three average size ranges (Figure 5.2, Volume 2). More so than for the inner enclosures, the line of the outer enclosures are incomplete in almost all of the cases (La Digne d'Amont being the exception) and as such the measurements in Table 5.2.2 are only estimated for these sites. Some of the enclosures are extremely large, for example Kells and Llandaff, though the measurement of an outer enclosure at Llandaff is at best tentative. Llandeilo, Clondalkin, Llancarfan and Carpentras are all slightly smaller, while Armagh, Vence and La Digne d'Amont are the smallest. What this illustrates best is that there appears to be no one size that is typical of either the French, Irish or Welsh sites examined and no obvious correlation between the size of the inner and outer enclosures or the historical/ecclesiastical importance of a site; they are if anything similar in their diversity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Outer enclosure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>c.250m north-south by 200m east-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kells</td>
<td>c.420m north-south by 380m east-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clondalkin</td>
<td>c.315m north-south by 190m east-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llandaff</td>
<td>c.525m north-south by 740m east-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llandeilo Fawr</td>
<td>c.315m diameter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llancarfan</td>
<td>c.295m north-south by 425m east-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpentras</td>
<td>c.240m north-south by 335m east-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vence</td>
<td>c.120m north-south by 181m east-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Digne d'Amont</td>
<td>c.84m diameter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.4.3 FORM OF ENCLOSURE

There was a change in the nature of enclosures at some point in the evolution of settlement at ecclesiastical sites. This resulted in the total loss, in most cases, of the original form taken by the enclosure, whether that was a wall, a hedge, a bank and
ditch construction or a combination of these. Presumably this occurred when the function of the enclosure became obsolete, either on a practical level or a symbolic one, as indicated above in Section 5.2.4.1. The form subsequently taken by the enclosure was examined at each of the field study sites (Table 5.2.3). This was undertaken to establish whether there is any significance to the adapted form of enclosure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Inner enclosure</th>
<th>Outer enclosure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>Churchyard wall</td>
<td>Road* and property boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kells</td>
<td>Churchyard wall, with road on north, south and east sides</td>
<td>Road and property boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clondalkin</td>
<td>Churchyard wall</td>
<td>Road and property boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llandaff</td>
<td>Churchyard wall, with road on east and west sides</td>
<td>Road and river</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llandeilo Fawr</td>
<td>Churchyard wall, with road on all sides</td>
<td>Property, field and parish boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llancarfan</td>
<td>Churchyard wall, with stream on east and road on south and west sides</td>
<td>Field boundaries and small section of road on north</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpentras</td>
<td>Road - partial</td>
<td>Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vence</td>
<td>Road</td>
<td>Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Digne d’Amont</td>
<td>Road and property boundaries</td>
<td>Road</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Road* is used in all cases, both in this table and in the text below, to refer to a roadway, street, lane or pathway.

It is possible that the different form taken by the inner / outer enclosure may imply a different significance. In the case of all three of the field study sites examined in Ireland, the line of the enclosure is preserved in a variety of forms. At both Armagh and Clondalkin the inner enclosure is formed by the churchyard wall. This is also the case at Kells, although at this site there is also a road on the north, south and east sides. The outer enclosure of each of the three Irish sites is for the most part preserved in the street pattern, though in all cases part of the line of the enclosure can only be traced in property boundaries.
The inner enclosures of the Welsh sites are all formed by churchyard walls, as at the Irish sites. At Llandeilo the churchyard is encircled by a road, but at Llancarfan and Llandaff this only occurs around part of the enclosure. In all three of the Welsh sites traces of the outer enclosures are preserved mostly in field and property boundaries rather than roads, while use is also made of a parish boundary at Llandeilo. Two of the sites make use of a water-course in their enclosing elements: the River Taf forms the northern extent of the outer enclosure at Llandaff and the Carfan Brook flows along the eastern side of the inner enclosure at Llancarfan. Though the course of the river and stream may have changed over time, there is still a distinct curve in both that may have been exploited to emphasise and complete the ecclesiastical enclosure. By contrast, a road is the defining element at each of the French sites, where it forms the line of both the inner and outer enclosures at Carpentras and Vence and the outer enclosure at La Digne d’Amont.

There is no obvious overall pattern in the form found at the field study sites, though perhaps one would emerge in the examination of a larger number of sites. This may suggest that there was no one factor that led to the change from the early enclosing element to a road or to the absorption of the enclosure into the line of property or other boundaries. It is clear that the enclosure was respected both physically and symbolically in the creation of a road around rather than through the enclosure and by the construction of properties along the line of the enclosure rather than over it. It also suggests that when these changes occurred the function of the enclosure was still relevant or at least was remembered, possibly indicating an earlier rather than a later date. It may also fossilise an element of a mural defence associated with the enclosures, where a clear space was left along the inside of the enclosure.

The reasons for the changes in form and function are difficult to ascertain or even to guess at, given the often patchy and sometimes non-existent historical accounts of the settlements, particularly during the Early Medieval period. There were undoubtedly external influences which varied from site to site and resulted not only in an earlier or later date for the change of form and function, but which may also have affected the rate of survival of the enclosure. Witness, for example, the changes evident at Llandaff and Carpentras, where the inner enclosure was disturbed by medieval and later urban
regeneration and at Llandeilo and Clondalkin, where a road was driven through the inner enclosure in the post-medieval period (see Section 5.2.4.1).

In the majority of the field study sites it is the inner enclosure that is best preserved. Road forms the line of the outer enclosure (albeit not entirely) at all three of the Irish sites but encircles only one inner enclosure (at Kells). Though this could be coincidental, it may confirm a differentiation in the way in which the enclosures were perceived at a given time in the settlement’s history. As discussed in Section 3.1.4, the documentary sources describe a holy of holies at the centre of an ecclesiastical site, with decreasing levels of sanctity as one moves outward. Access to the inner enclosure was restricted to priests, with common people allowed into the outer enclosure and “murderers, adulterers and prostitutes” on the outer perimeter (the possible location of church law courts). In other words, general traffic (pedestrian or otherwise) was kept away from the inner enclosure and routed in and around the outer perimeter instead. When the symbolic nature of the inner enclosure became less important or defunct, this resulted in the construction of a roadway or properties around the inner enclosure. In essence, the change allowed ‘traffic’ in and with the new access to previously segregated areas came the construction of properties and road or pathways along the line of the enclosure.

The rate of survival of the inner enclosure as a churchyard wall, without an encircling roadway or properties, may depend on the occurrence of a significant change in the evolution of the settlement. Kells, for example, became the Anglo-Norman manorial centre of the first lord of Meath in the twelfth century. The town experienced an influx of settlers, new areas of settlement were laid out and a castle, new churches and abbeys were all constructed. Town defences were erected around the town that followed in part the outer ecclesiastical enclosure. The change from ecclesiastical to secular foreign power might have resulted in changes in the way the enclosures were perceived, thus allowing alterations to the core of the ecclesiastical site. Neither Armagh nor Clondalkin was colonised as an important Anglo-Norman town and at both of these sites the inner enclosure is a churchyard wall, with ‘traffic’ kept beyond

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the outer enclosure. This discovery is important and may represent a pattern of evolution in Irish ecclesiastical sites that has thus far been unrecognised.

Alternatively, the change might have been in response to a practical problem, i.e. the need to house a growing population within a town’s defences. The French field study sites illustrate this point well: all were enclosed by walled defences at some point in their evolution and the line of both the inner and outer enclosures are predominantly formed by roadway. This was perhaps motivated by comparatively tight space within which these settlements grew and the need for access to the narrowly packed houses along the lines of the enclosures. The French sites, unlike those in Ireland and Wales, developed in a relatively contained manner, with close concentric enclosures and properties crowded into the areas in between and along the enclosing walls, around which suburban development grew up.

5.3.4.4 DATING AND SEQUENCE OF ENCLOSURE
The dating and sequence of enclosure at Irish ecclesiastical sites has always been uncertain. The layout of ecclesiastical sites (probably settlements), since disappeared, have long been identified as cropmarks in aerial photographs by Norman and St Joseph and by Swan. Geophysical surveys undertaken in recent years have offered even more detailed plans of such sites, confirming the existence of settlements around isolated church sites (e.g. Oldtown, Co. Roscommon and Milverton, County Dublin). Without excavation, however, it is impossible to tell from an aerial photograph or geophysical survey whether the layout was deliberately planned or which of its elements might be contemporaneous (it might be inferred but it cannot be certain).

Unfortunately, the continued use of a large number of ecclesiastical sites which developed into modern towns and villages also creates problems in determining chronology. Edwards remarks that “the origin and date of some features may now be impossible to determine; the context of others, which are clearly Early Medieval, may have been lost or subtly changed”.22 Were the inner and outer enclosures laid out contemporaneously as part of a planned ecclesiastical site or settlement, reflecting the defined areas discussed in the documentary sources? Or did the outer enclosure follow

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as part of the evolution from church foundation to ecclesiastical settlement? These questions have never been asked in regard to French or Welsh sites as it has been presumed that either the enclosure is not ecclesiastical or that there is only one enclosure. As yet unpublished archaeological evidence from recent excavations in Ireland (discussed below) has produced interesting results in terms of the dating and sequence of ecclesiastical enclosure, at both known and previously unknown sites.

Substantial remains of the Early Medieval outer enclosures associated with St Nahi's church and a Medieval farm together with field systems that developed at the site were uncovered during an archaeological excavation in the former grounds of Notre Dame School off the Churchtown Road in County Dublin.

**Figure 5.3.2: Site Plan Showing Excavated Enclosures, St Nahi's Church**

![Site Plan](image)

Source: Edmond O'Donovan (Site Director)

The archaeological excavations revealed three ecclesiastical enclosures dating from the Early Medieval period (AD 600-1000). These enclosures or ditched defensive boundaries defined the outer precinct around St Nahi's church and are likely to have surrounded the priest's house and other settlement related structural remains (Figures 5.3.2 & 5.3.3). This contrasts with the activity within the inner enclosure (the exact

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Excavation 07E0116 Notre Dame des Missions, Dundrum; unpublished summary provided by Site Director Edmond O'Donovan.
line of which is unknown) at the core of the site where the church and graveyard are still located today, beyond the area excavated. The outer enclosures appear to have developed sequentially in phases, gradually increasing in size, although the relationship of the initial outer enclosure to the inner enclosure is unknown. The present churchyard is unlikely to represent the original enclosure, given the disturbances of the modern road network bisecting and surrounding the site. The first of these outer enclosures comprised a simple palisade but by the end of the Early Medieval period the site was enclosed by a substantial ditch and banked enclosure. It could be suggested that the ditch is an indication of the high status of the site; however, the proximity and influence of the church to the Vikings in Dublin may provide a more plausible explanation for such sizable defences. Later settlement remains indicate that the church was the administrative centre for a large farm in the Medieval period (AD 1200-1500).

**FIGURE 5.3.3: AERIAL VIEW OF EXCAVATED SITE, FACING SOUTHEAST TOWARDS ST NAHI’S CHURCH**

Source: Edmond O’Donovan (Site Director)

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24 The first phase of the enclosure comprised a 44.7m long palisade enclosing an excavated area of 25m by 25m. The second phase started when the whole site was defended by a large earth cut ditch measuring 2.8m wide and 1.6m deep. This 85m long defensive ditch would have been further protected by a large bank topped by a defensive palisade (likely to have been a stout timber fence). These defences earthworks or enclosures were expanded and altered later in the Early Medieval period, resulting in a ditch measuring 4m wide and 3m deep.

25 Site Director Edmond O’Donovan pers.comm.

26 Significant artefactual finds include the discovery of an almost complete Flemish Redware jug (thirteenth century), typical of the Medieval period.
Although St Nahi's did not evolve into a town or village and is on a much smaller scale, this is perhaps not unlike the sequence of enclosure at Armagh, where a much larger third enclosure suggested in the town plan may have been added as the monastic settlement expanded. This may also be the case at the other field study sites, with the outer enclosure added to allow for settlement expansion. Whether or not the enclosure was laid out in advance, at the same time as the inner enclosure and in preparation for settlement growth is unclear. It seems more probable that as the need arose, a second (or third) enclosure was laid out, as was certainly the case with Armagh's third enclosure.

There are few known examples of the triple enclosure plan, as seen at Armagh and Nendrum. Kilmacoo near Kanturk in County Cork is a good example, also having three roughly concentric enclosures.27 Others examples are coming to light through recent excavations; witness the multiple enclosures at St Nahi's, at Oldtown, County Dublin (see Section 5.5, Figure 5.4.6, p.316) and at Clonfad, close to Lough Ennell in County Westmeath.28 McErlean has suggested that the scarcity of clear examples may be the result of poor survival, that outer enclosures were more prone to destruction, with many obliterated by the encroachment of cultivation.29 This the same argument put forward by James to explain the lack of a second, outer enclosure at Welsh enclosed ecclesiastical sites.30 In other words, the more ritually important inner enclosure or ‘ritual core’ survives to a greater degree as the church and burial ground frequently continue in use.31 Further surveys and excavations are likely to rectify this situation, as for example, at Lusk, County Dublin (described below), but also as evidenced by the results produced by this researcher’s study of the three Welsh field study sites.

Evidence of the outer enclosure at Lusk has been identified during pre-development archaeological investigations to the southwest of the town (Figure 5.3.4). Archaeological testing identified what was thought to represent the northwestern

section of the outer enclosure which has been preserved in situ. A further section of the ditch was identified during archaeological monitoring of the road widening works on Church Road. This runs under a modern bungalow site, which would provide a weighting to Swan’s location of the western extent of the enclosure which follows the line of property boundaries that radiate westward from the inner enclosure. While dating evidence is not yet available for these sections of the enclosure at Lusk, the archaeological investigations have at least shown the reliability of plan-analysis for identifying the line of ecclesiastical enclosures.

**Figure 5.3.4: Map of Lusk showing monastic enclosures & surrounding archaeological sites (after O’Connell)**

Source: O'Connell, A., 2009, p.58, Figure 11.

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32 Baker, C. Excavation licence 01E0872 ext.
33 O'Connell, A. Pers. Comm. 2007, the findings are as yet unpublished.
35 The numbers 1-14 list the previous excavations in and around Lusk, with the location of each shown on the figure. The symbols on the right hand side are shown alongside the numbers on the figure to indicate what was uncovered during the archaeological excavations or to indicate the presence of an archaeological monument.
5.3.5 LARGER ENCLOSING ELEMENT

The question of larger enclosures encompassing vast areas (up to 2km in diameter) around the ecclesiastical settlement has emerged at some of the Irish and Welsh sites. These can be traced to varying degrees in the boundaries of the fields surrounding Kells, Clondalkin, Llandaff, Llandeilo and Llancarfan. The absence of larger enclosing elements at French ecclesiastical sites cannot be assumed; intensive agricultural practices and/or suburban development have removed any possibility of finding such evidence in aerial photographs (Figures 4.9.12, 4.10.7, 4.11.5, Volume 2). In the case of Carpentras, Vence and La Digne d’Amont, however, there is no such indication in the early nineteenth century maps.

It is possible that these vast boundaries represent certain lands associated with the monastery. Whether this is the immediate monastic extents, the area of agricultural exploitation by the monastic community or some other division is unknown. There is obviously an element of ‘the eye of faith’ in this matter; the human eye will always see patterns, but whether these are merely coincidental or not is hard to establish. The ‘enclosure’ at Kells is probably the most convincing and can be traced almost entirely, with the river as its northern perimeter (Figure 4.4.4, Volume 2). That it also contains a townland named Archdeaconry Glebe (i.e. designated church land) stretching from the town to the river further strengthens this argument, suggesting a strong ecclesiastical continuity.

The case at Llancarfan is also interesting as the partial enclosure lines along the western perimeter correspond quite neatly with ‘cross’ place-names, possibly the locations of boundary crosses associated with the monastic settlement (Figures 4.8.2 & 4.8.3, Volume 2). Swan and Edwards differed in their interpretation of the illustration in the eighth-century Book of Mulling, that shows crosses positioned at cardinal points on the periphery of the monastic enclosure (Figure 3.1.5, p.36); Swan believed that it provided evidence for an early date for this type of lay-out of ecclesiastical settlements, while Edwards saw it as an abstract, visual evocation asking for the protection of the monastery by representing the symbols of that
The intriguing place-names at Llancarfan might support Swan’s more literal interpretation.

Although this element of Irish ecclesiastical sites has not been noted before, such large enclosures are readily identifiable at other sites, suggesting that it is not merely a coincidental occurrence at the field study sites: This can be seen on the O.S. first edition six-inch maps of Lusk, County Dublin and Clonard, County Meath and on the 1656 Down Survey map showing Old Kilcullen in County Kildare (Figure 5.3.5), to cite three such examples known to the researcher. It is interesting to note that a street forming a possible subdivision of the larger enclosure at Lusk is named ‘Treen Hill’, which may derive from the Irish *trian*, which prompts parallels with the ecclesiastical subdivisions of Armagh.

**Figure 5.3.5: Larger Enclosing Elements at Lusk (A), Clonard (B) and Old Kilcullen (C), Based on O.S. First Edition and Down Survey Maps.**

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5.3.6 SUBDIVISIONS, ANNEXES AND SUBURBS

A third enclosure, albeit incomplete on the west, is evident in the street pattern of Arniagh (Figure 4.3.6, Volume 2). This was identified by Swan as the second of the two ecclesiastical enclosures; his inner enclosure equates with the outer enclosure identified by the plan-analysis in this investigation. It is unlike the vast enclosures discussed above and runs concentric to the two smaller ecclesiastical enclosures,
measuring c.480m north/south by 360m east/west. This appears to be delineating the outer boundary of the *Triana*, the three sectors mentioned in the annals and probably shown in Bartlett’s map of 1602 (Figure 4.3.2, Volume 2). The lines dividing these sectors may be traced in Irish Street and Market Street. When the monastic settlement was subdivided into three sectors is not certain, nor is the date of this enclosure. Given the emerging evidence on sequencing of enclosures, it is more than likely later than the inner ecclesiastical enclosures and presumably was laid out to encompass the growing settlement as the monastery evolved.

Internal subdivisions within both of the outer enclosures at Armagh were indicated by the plan-analysis: Plot boundaries radiating out from the line of the inner enclosure may represent radial divisions in the second enclosure, while plot boundaries form curvilinear lines running concentric to the third enclosure. The presence of possible annexes or internal divisions can also be traced within the outer enclosures at Clondalkin, Llandaff, Llandeilo, Carpentras and perhaps Vence (Figures 4.5.5, 4.6.6, 4.7.7, 4.9.6, 4.10.5, Volume 2).

### 5.3.7 Marketplace

Swan noted that the layout of Irish ecclesiastical sites tended towards a market place on the eastern side, often connected to a principal eastern approach road, with subsequent development of settlement to the east or southeast. More recent research by Griffin in Counties Clare and Limerick, however, identified a tendency towards a market area and settlement to the west of the church site. A similar pattern is evident at Finglas in County Dublin (Figure 5.3.6), a well-known early ecclesiastical settlement, where a market place can be identified on the western side of the outer enclosure.

A market place is documented at only some of the sites and is suggested by plan-analysis at almost all of the others. The market place at all three of the Irish sites is on the eastern side of the outer enclosure (Figure 5.3a, Volume 2), but this is not the case at the Welsh sites. Although the evidence suggests a market on the northern side at

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39 Griffin, K., op.cit., p.304.
Llancarfan (and possibly on the west / northwest side at Llandaff) and is documented at Llandeilo, in each of these cases the principal approach road is either from the north or the site is otherwise constrained by the river on its eastern side (Figure 5.3b, Volume 2).

**FIGURE 5.3.6 : O.S. SIX-INCH MAP OF FINGLAS (1837-43, SHEET 14), COUNTY DUBLIN, SHOWING WESTERN MARKET PLACE**

Source: Pat Dargan

At both Vence and Carpentras there is evidence that the earliest market may have been on the eastern side of the ecclesiastical inner enclosure close to the original cemetery, though the eastern approach road at both sites is not necessarily the principal approach road (Figure 5.3c, Volume 2). In Llandeilo and Carpentras there is a very similar development of a market close to the church, but particularly close to the cemetery; both sites document the encroachment of the market upon the graveyard in the Medieval period (Figures 5.3b & c, Volume 2). In each of these cases, the site of the market is on the same orientation as the cemetery, which might indicate a correlation between the burial ground and the evolution of a market place – perhaps at the main entrance to the enclosure?

At La Digne d’Amont there is no documented market and the village in its present size is too small to host one; it uses the market at the nearby town of Limoux.

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Whether it once held a small market is not certain. It is interesting that the only area large enough to accommodate such an enterprise is located at the eastern side of the village, between the cemetery and the arched entrance in the outer enclosure, beside a large empty plot shown on the cadastral map (Figure 5.3c, Volume 2).

5.3.8 Radiating Roads
There is evidence at all of the sites for a radiating road network. This is not particularly unusual, as there is either a settlement or market on the site prior to the establishment of a church at all of the sites bar Clondalkin and La Digne-d'Amont. An established road network was in place at Vence and Carpentras prior to the Roman colonisation of the sites and was presumably one of the principal attractions of the sites. Likewise at the Welsh sites, each is located on or close to a Roman road and also to both Roman and/or native British settlements. There is known prehistoric activity in the immediate environs of Clondalkin and one of the main prehistoric routeways from Dublin is in close proximity to the settlement. Similarly at Kells the site is located on a principal prehistoric routeway.

Even at the tiny village of La Digne d'Amont, which is perhaps more surprising than elsewhere, there is a radiating road network. It is situated beside a river, has a well-developed road network and access to a principal route, as well as evidence of mills to the south. These elements are intriguing given how little there is in the historical record for this site. This evidence might be indicative of a more prosperous settlement in the Early Medieval or Medieval period. Clearly the radiating road network that evolved was building on the presence of an existing route, in this case approaching Limoux to the east and perhaps linking it with the villa estate that was probably located here or close by.

5.4 Factors Influencing Christian Settlement Form: A Comparative Analysis
5.4.1 Topography
In an investigation of why the curvilinear plan-form originated, topography is an obvious candidate for consideration. Specific geographical and topographical factors may have contributed to the re-use of prehistoric settlement or market sites, such as proximity to a river, the presence of natural springs and good communications via an
existing road network. Ignoring all other factors, where a site is located on a hill-top, as at Armagh for example, the curvilinear layout could be seen as unremarkable as it simply follows the contour of the land. On the other hand, there are numerous examples of Christian sites, in Ireland, Wales and France, which follow the same curvilinear pattern but on flat ground.

The topographical features of the sites were not taken into account when selecting the case studies, as the selection was deliberately based on the simple plan-form as it appeared on the nineteenth century maps. Though randomly selected, the nine sites show a considerable variation in terms of their position in the landscape with regard to hill-top location: Armagh, Kells and Llandeilo all occupy a hill-top or ridge; Llandaff and Llancarfan occupy a valley bottom; Clondalkin, Vence, Carpentras and La Digne d'Amont are all situated on a plain or otherwise level ground overlooking or close to a river. The only consistency here is among the French sites, all of which are sited on the edge of a plain where it meets a river valley.

All of these situations demonstrate a deliberate use of the natural landscape by the settlement founders, ecclesiastical or secular, whether for defence purposes or for proximity to natural routeways. In some cases, the natural landscape may have been used to emphasise the curvilinear ecclesiastical boundaries. Two of the sites make use of a water-course in their enclosing elements: the River Taf forms the northern extent of the outer enclosure at Llandaff and the Carfan Brook flows along the eastern side of the inner enclosure at Llancarfan. This can be paralleled at several of the ecclesiastical sites examined by Griffin in Counties Clare and Limerick: Quin, Killaloe, Ennistymon and Kilmallock all exploit a curve in a river to demarcate the church space.41 The site at Armagh on the other hand makes use of its elevated position, with the enclosures following the contour lines of the hill.

There are other topographical factors which are likely to have had more of an influence, the most obvious of which is a riverine setting. The proximity of all of these sites to a river is unsurprising. Such a setting provides a water source, a means of communication and transport and in many cases a strategic position in regard to

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41 Griffin, K. op.cit., p.298.
defence and/or commerce and trade. It also supports industrial activities like milling. Archaeological excavation has shown that horizontal mills are a common feature of early ecclesiastical centres and as they often survive in waterlogged conditions, precise dating from timbers can date them to between AD 581-843.\textsuperscript{42} Based on the results of the excavated tidal mills at the monastic site of Nendrum, McErlean has proposed that “the mill, like the enclosure, should be seen as a characteristic component of an early Irish monastery”.\textsuperscript{43} All of the sites examined are situated overlooking or close to a river. Even those sites which appear to have little strategic or other interest, such as La Digne d’Amont, Clondalkin and Llancarfan, are located on the banks of a river. In the case of La Digne d’Amont, Carpentras, Vence and Clondalkin, milling activities are still a significant feature in the early nineteenth century (demonstrably much earlier at Clondalkin) and serve to illustrate the importance of a riverine setting in the prosperity of an ecclesiastical settlement and later town or village.

5.4.2 PRE-CHRISTIAN SETTLEMENT FORMS

Prior to Roman colonisation, settlements in Iron Age Wales were not necessarily circular (unlike the contemporary ringfort in Ireland), with large Iron Age hill-forts commonly rectilinear in shape. Ireland has the only example of a predominantly circular settlement form, ringforts, which are the most characteristic type of Early Medieval secular settlement.\textsuperscript{44} These are characterised by a circular area defined by earthen or stone banks and external ditches and excavation often reveals the remains of dwelling houses within their interior. Most ringforts are enclosed by a single bank (a ‘univallate’ ringfort) but it is also quite common for them to have two sets of banks (‘bivallate’) or even three (‘trivallate’). There are differences however, most notably in size, as demonstrated by Swan.\textsuperscript{45} It is nonetheless possible that the burgeoning church sought native examples when founding new churches and monastic settlements, using the earlier circular forms as a blue-print for the layout of ecclesiastical sites.

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\textsuperscript{42} Stout, M., op.cit., p.93.
\textsuperscript{43} McErlean, T. and Crothers, N. (eds), 2007. op. cit., p.433.
\textsuperscript{44} Edwards, N., 1990, op.cit., p.11.
\end{flushright}
The matter becomes less clear when the influence of the Roman Empire is taken into account, which affected two of the three study areas: both France and Britain were annexed as Roman provinces. The success of Roman imperialism rested as much on the implantation of the Roman town as it did on military prowess. Roman towns were laid out in a strict grid-pattern, in direct contrast to the curvilinear nature of these later Christian sites. The influence of Rome was particularly strong in southern France. Although native settlements existed in pre-Christian Gaul, the southern region of the province had been under Classical influence from the sixth century BC, beginning with the Greek trading port of Massalia (Marseilles) and continuing until the collapse of the Roman Empire in the fifth century AD. When Christianity became the official religion of Rome in the fourth century AD, the church was assimilated into the existing urban network and infrastructure of the Empire, i.e. the Roman town. Though a dominant settlement form, the Roman town plan appears to have had a negligible effect on the three French sites examined.

Similarly in Wales, Roman urban and rural settlement patterns were in evidence, albeit to a lesser degree than in the more urbanised Gaul. Again there is no obvious Roman urban influence in the Welsh sites examined. The fertile Vale of Glamorgan was intensively Romanised and unlike north and west Wales, there is evidence for numerous Roman villae, some of which seem to be directly associated with Medieval religious sites. 46 There are several examples of this, such as at Llantwit Major and Llandough, with the possibility of a similar continuity at other early monastic sites not yet investigated. 47 This is similar to the phenomenon seen at Gallo-Roman villa sites in Provence and possibly in the Languedoc area and suggests that there may be some relationship between the early ecclesiastical sites in Wales and France that is as yet unrecognised or unidentified.

5.4.3 PRE-CHRISTIAN BURIAL FORMS
It has been argued both in Ireland and Wales that the circular form taken by many church sites derived from the pre-Christian burial sites. Burial sites from the Bronze Age onwards, in contrast to settlements, were often though not exclusively oval or

47 Ibid.
circular (for example the Bronze Age mound burials, ring-barrows and ring-ditches). These monuments and the circular form in general were not confined to either Britain or Ireland but were also common on the Continent; the use of the circle in Bronze Age burials can also be seen in the tholoi in Minoan Crete and Bronze Age mounds and ring-ditches in parts of France and Belgium.48

Curvilinear church sites and cemeteries are attested in both Ireland and Wales, where some have been shown to occupy pre-Christian burial sites. A recent example of Christian burials within a prehistoric enclosure in Ireland was uncovered at Ardsallagh in County Meath. Archaeological excavation revealed a prehistoric and Early Medieval burial site consisting of a ringditch, which enclosed 23 burials. The skeletons were laid on their backs and were oriented east-west, indicating a Christian burial rite. The remains of a pottery vessel containing cremated bone (i.e. a pagan burial) were located a short distance northwest of the ringditch.49 Examples of small curvilinear cemeteries have also been noted in parts of France, though few have been excavated and dated. Their relationship to other curvilinear ecclesiastical sites has not as yet been the subject of investigation and there is no evidence as yet that they represent the re-use of a prehistoric burial site.

Though the evidence for the re-use of prehistoric curvilinear burial monuments for early church or Christian burial sites is strong, it is less convincing in the context of ecclesiastical settlement or the evolution or continuity of settlement. There appears to be a clear distinction between ecclesiastical settlement and simple church or burial ground in this context, though the lack of archaeological evidence where settlements did evolve is scarce, leaving the issue unresolved. There is no evidence to indicate that any of the sites examined were previously a prehistoric burial site. Though prehistoric activity was present on or close to all of the sites, there is nothing to suggest that the ecclesiastical enclosures originated as a pre-Christian burial monument. The possible earlier enclosure identified by plan-analysis at Armagh, contained both early Christian and prehistoric burial activity, but was located at the

48 Pearson, M. P., 2001. The Archaeology of Death and Burial, p.128; Harding, A. L., 2000. European Societies in the Bronze Age, C.U.P. pp.85-6; cites examples in Aisne valley in northeast France, but notes that not nearly as many have been recorded in France as in Britain, Holland or Germany.

base of the hill and was not the progenitor of the later settlement or ecclesiastical enclosures. This is an important finding as it offers support to the argument that although early church and burial grounds often re-used prehistoric burial enclosures, the enclosures at ecclesiastical settlements had a distinct purpose and were laid out specifically to fulfill it.

5.4.4 DEFENCE AND FORTIFICATION

Was the ecclesiastical enclosure a purely defensive feature? A circular plan constitutes the cheapest and easiest form to lay out and build. More importantly for defence purposes, its shape eliminates reflex angles, thus making it easier to protect. The process of *incastellamento* resulted in the fortification of large numbers of towns and villages throughout Europe in the Medieval period and the construction of tower houses and castles in Britain and Ireland. This process is demonstrably later than any of the church foundations and their enclosure. It is probably represented, at least at Carpentras and Vence, by the later walled defences encircling both towns. Notably the later defences at Carpentras are not curvilinear in shape but trapezoidal, illustrating that while the circle is easier to protect, there were often other more complex factors at play.

There is sufficient evidence at Vence to suggest that both of the earlier enclosures were also defensive, or at least were walled. Plan-analysis also suggests that the walls preceded much of the development between the two enclosures. At Carpentras the form of the inner enclosure is unknown and even its line is uncertain, though the outer enclosure was probably encircled by a ditch. Similarly a ditch appears to have run around the outer enclosure at La Digne d'Amont. Given the unrest in southern France in the post-Roman period and into the Early Medieval period, it would be more surprising to find that the enclosures were not defensive.

The nature of the enclosures at the Irish and Welsh sites or the precise form taken by them is unknown. The numerous references in the documentary sources to saints who surround their monasteries with banks or ditches, or both, would indicate that this was the form taken by the early Welsh and Irish enclosures. It is supported by the archaeological evidence (such as it is) in both Ireland and Wales and echoes the secular building tradition of the earthen or stone bank and ditch enclosures around
hill-forts and ringforts, as well as those surrounding the pre-Christian burial sites. Both Ireland and Wales witnessed periods of unrest, notably the Viking raids of the eighth and ninth centuries. There are also records of campaigns waged by native Irish kings on the monasteries during this period, in an effort to control and access the wealth of these sites, as well as monasteries at war with one another. In Ireland there is not a solitary documentary example of a monastery being successfully defended against a raid. Nonetheless, there is insufficient archaeological evidence to be certain that the enclosures were not defensive or 'impressive' in nature, nor would this preclude them from being sacred boundaries. The interpretation of the recent archaeological evidence from St Nahi's suggests that the outer boundaries at least could be defensive.

5.4.5 SANCTUARY AND ASYLUM

Topography and defence are likely to have played an important role in the planning of a new settlement and certainly defence appears to have been a factor in the layout of the French sites, if not in Wales or Ireland. The contemporary documentary sources, however, suggest that the concept of asylum might have had a considerable influence on the physical element of the ecclesiastical settlement as well as the spiritual. The sources also suggest that the influence was not restricted to one site or one area, but to a greater or lesser degree, was common to all of the sites. It would be foolish to ignore this element simply because it cannot be proven or because it appears illogical to modern concepts of planning.

The theoretical radius of the boundary of the area of asylum was thirty paces from the church walls, which should have resulted in a selection of regular circular boundaries. The shape of surviving enclosures, however, tends to vary quite considerably and they are by no means all regular or even curvilinear. In the case of curvilinear enclosures, the church is not always situated in the centre of the circle, as might be expected. If these enclosures are the result of the formalisation of the right of asylum by the Peace of God councils, how can the variations be explained?

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It is probable that the hypothetical ‘thirty paces’ would, in reality, have fluctuating values, the result being radii measuring smaller or larger than the prescribed ‘thirty paces’. Another factor which must be considered is that the circuit of thirty paces would have been applied to widely different topographical areas, which would have affected the shape of the enclosure. Finally, if a theoretical form of circular ecclesiastical enclosure did actually exist, then it would probably have acted as little more than a general rule. The many variations of this theoretical form are probably the result of a compromise between the principle of a physical sacred boundary and the constraints generated by local topography and pre-existing land divisions.

Possibly one of the most important factors in explaining the curvilinear enclosure arises from this concept of sanctuary. The propensity for places of worship to have a symbolic boundary marking out their functions has long been a widespread phenomenon. Christian sanctuaries from the very beginning, had clearly demarcated areas of sanctuary and the history of the church and its surroundings are intimately linked with the right of asylum.

The documentary evidence from France is quite clear on the subject of sanctuary. From as early as the fifth century AD, Roman legislation records the existence of a boundary around a church within which it was forbidden to pursue fugitives and set a boundary to a circuit of fifty paces around the place of worship. By the late seventh century the Council of Toledo had defined the area by a radius of thirty paces and in the charters of Charlemagne, in the ninth century, the boundary of the cemetery was used to define the limits. This subject has already been discussed above in the context of French sites, where it is demonstrably a very real issue, particularly from the end of the tenth century onwards. While the tendency to transform the symbolic boundary (of thirty paces) around an ecclesiastical site into a physical boundary has been argued for French sites as being particularly strong from the eleventh century, earlier examples undoubtedly exist. At La Digne d’Amont, for example, the inner enclosure is approximately 36m diameter, close to the proscribed thirty paces. Though the date of this enclosure is unfortunately unknown, it almost certainly pre-dates the tenth century.
In the case of the Irish ecclesiastical settlements, sanctuary too played a role. According to Doherty, the Irish concept of sanctuary was based on the biblical 'city of refuge', that is, he believes the monastic site consisted of a 'holy of holies at the core, around which were areas of sanctuary that decreased in importance the further they were from the centre'. The concept of a sacred area was also enshrined in the native Irish law of precinct. The church was able to benefit from this secular law that allowed an inviolable area around the house of an Irish lord, its size depending on the owner's rank; a church in the same way had its termon or precinct.\textsuperscript{51} If the size of the ecclesiastical precinct was also related to the importance of the church it protected, then this may provide a possible solution to the variety in sizes of the ecclesiastical enclosures. The seventh century church legislators decreed that the termon of a holy place must be consecrated by king, bishop and people (thus securing public acknowledgement of its inviolability) and clearly marked out by crosses.\textsuperscript{52} An example of this may be preserved in the 'cross' place-names at Llancarfan, which are aligned along the outer enclosure. The early Irish sources are less specific about asylum, though it is implied in Cogitosus' Life of Brigit which describes the ecclesiastical settlement as a place of refuge, with the boundaries delimiting the area of safety.\textsuperscript{53}

In Wales too, the secular sense of 'protection' can be seen in the pre-Christian society. Rules on ecclesiastical sanctuary in the Welsh lawbooks use the word nawdd ('protection') with noddfa ('field or place') to denote 'sanctuary-place'.\textsuperscript{54} Binchy defines the Old Irish snádud as 'the power to accord another person immunity from all legal processes over a definite period of time which varies according to the rank of the "protector"'.\textsuperscript{55} Pryce notes that both nawdd and snádud seem to derive from a Celtic root sná-, 'to protect', and that the concept embodied in both words therefore probably originated in the pre-Christian period.\textsuperscript{56} The Welsh secular concept of nawdd, as in Ireland, depended on its giver's position or status for its extent or duration.\textsuperscript{57} By the early twelfth century there is evidence at Llandaff of the

\textsuperscript{51} Hughes, K. 1966. The Church in Early Irish Society, p.148.
\textsuperscript{52} Hughes, K., op.cit., 148.
\textsuperscript{53} Swift, C. op.cit., p.105.
\textsuperscript{54} Pryce, H. op.cit., p.165.
\textsuperscript{55} Binchy cited in Pryce, H. op.cit., p.165.
\textsuperscript{56} Pryce, H. op.cit., p.165.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
transformation of the concept of refuge or protection into a territorial concept. The Braint Teilo claimed jurisdiction for the church of Llandaff over breakers of its nawdd, both within and outside the llan. This is significant in that it attests to the presence of the ecclesiastical enclosures as something separate from the concept of asylum.

Thus the presence of ecclesiastical enclosures may be understood in terms of the line separating the sacred from the profane and defining a place of refuge. The concept of sanctuary appears to be a common feature in all of the study areas and pre-dates Christianity. The legal concept of asylum, however, first appears in late Roman and early canon law and probably arrived in Wales and Ireland with the early Christians.

5.4.6 SYMBOLISM - THE CIRCLE

According to Tuan, human beings have an "exceptionally refined capacity for symbolisation... [and] attach meaning to and organise space and place". In the study of world religions symbolism has always been acknowledged as an important factor, but one that is decidedly more difficult when the principal evidence is archaeological. The "act of symbolising" is central to religion in society, it "pervades human action and the construction of social organisation". These concepts are no less real in the context of Christianity.

The use of the words "another round tumulus" in the description of the second settlement laid out by St Cadog at Llancarfan indicates that the initial monastic foundation was also a mound, circular in shape and may even suggest the re-use of a prehistoric site. If not, it is interesting to note that both settlements were laid out in curvilinear form; one designated for defence (situated on a hill-top, a naturally defensive site) and the other functioning as a purely religious foundation. Cadoc later refers to "my monastery and fort", making either a clear distinction between the nature of the two sites or possibly describing the dual nature of one site. This suggests that the circle had an importance beyond that of a strategic defensive feature,

58 Tuan, Y. op.cit., p.5
60 Vita Cadoci, 10.17; Vitae Sanctorum Birtanniae, p.49.
the oft mooted explanation for this form of settlement. It is also interesting that the *Vita* tells that the layout was prescribed by God, suggesting that the use of the circle in the laying out of religious sites had a deeper significance, and was perhaps also significant in terms of a kind of spiritual defence.

The idea of the deliberate use of a preconceived circular plan is often rejected by historians, who will admit only that some settlements evolved naturally in a circular plan, for reasons of defence or because of the local topography, for example, if the settlement was located on a hill-top. The identification of towns and villages characterised by a very regular circular or curvilinear form might indicate the real application of a model of spatial organisation and urban planning. The circle is an ideal form and is intimately linked to the development of civilisation. As such it has long been a source of intrigue to those involved in researching the evolution and development of settlement patterns. Lavedan for example, in 1926, was the first to look at European towns and villages with a circular plan. Lavedan theorised that the frequency of the “radio-concentric plan” can be explained by historical means, simply as a fashion, whereby a particular model of urban planning was being copied.61 This theory supposes that Jerusalem served as a general prototype, on which circular cities and smaller urban settlements were based.

The circle has appeared in visual representations of towns since Antiquity and was presented as an ideal by a number of Classical writers. The schematic of an ideal (fortified) town drawn in the fourth century AD by the Roman surveyor Aggenus Urbicus is a particularly important example (Figure 5.4.1). The settlement is located on the banks of a river, at what appears to be a river crossing (bridge?). The settlement itself is shown as a curvilinear walled enclosure surrounding the principal buildings that, significantly, include a church and adjacent tower. This is remarkably similar to the pattern of church and round tower witnessed at many Irish ecclesiastical sites, while the general model of curvilinear enclosure surrounding principal ecclesiastical buildings shown by Urbicus could be applied to all of the field studies in this investigation.

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Such representations become even more numerous during the Medieval period and have, until recently, been considered imaginary or symbolic and connected to the image of the Holy City of Jerusalem (Figures 5.4.2 & 5.4.3). The scarcity of written sources pertaining to this phenomenon means that it is difficult to establish a precise chronology, but the plans of Jerusalem were widespread in

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Europe by the tenth century. These representations are reminiscent of the diagram in the eighth century Book of Mulling (Figure 3.1.5, p.36) and provoke similar arguments regarding the interpretation of this drawing: is it a practical plan or merely a symbol of protection? Yet another intriguing parallel with ancient symbolism can be found in the Irish high cross. The diagram of the Egyptian hieroglyph for a village is particularly close to the design of the Irish high cross (Figure 5.4.4), which at its simplest is a cross within a circle and which typically date to after the mid-eighth century (Figure 5.4.5).

The circle itself is very important in Christian symbolism. For first century Christians, the solar circle became the image of Jesus, long before the Church adopted the cross as its universal symbol. The primacy of the east in Christianity, for example the orientation of churches and burials on an east/west alignment, is another consequence of these earliest associations with the sun. The tenth and eleventh centuries witnessed the construction of a number of churches with domes, as well as circular churches or rotundas, which confirms that the beginnings of Romanesque art coincided with the introduction of circular forms in rural secular settlement. This was even more evident

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63 Pawlowski, op.cit., p.33.
64 The dating of high crosses is discussed above in Section 3.1.6.
in large-scale construction, such as monastic settlements. In France a number of Benedictine abbeys were built according to the principle of a settlement surrounded by a fortified circular enclosure. Thomas sees the circular form in Britain and Ireland as an ideal rarely attained on the ground, due to the vagaries of local topography, but connects it with pre-Christian fortifications and with the 'sacral' circle in a Christian context. 65

The circle, unlike the square or triangle (whose presence indicates human intervention), occurs naturally and is such a rudimentary form that researching the direct origins of this form is difficult. Consequently, a study of the curvilinear early Christian settlements in this context can be problematic. The association of the circular form and its symbolic importance to early Christians with the concept of sanctuary is a logical step. Documentary references abound for the importance of the right of asylum and sacred boundaries in the Irish, Welsh and French sources. These are remarkably similar, perhaps not surprising given that the root of the concept is enshrined in early Roman and canon law. Whether or not this had any direct impact on the ecclesiastical settlement form is uncertain, though the physical evidence, in the plan-form present throughout the study areas is tantalising. Short of specific documentary references in the case of the nine sites examined, neither symbolism nor the concept of sanctuary can be proven to be the influencing factor in the planning or laying out of the site.

An element has emerged at the Irish field study sites, which is intriguing in the context of the symbolism of the circle in Christianity: the round tower at both Clondalkin and Kells measures close to 30 metres (27.5m and 30.5 metres respectively). 66 The average height of a round tower is difficult to calculate, as many do not survive to their original height, though the optimal height for a round tower has been suggested by O'Keefe as being 100 feet (30.48m). 67 Of those that do survive intact or are missing just their cap, a sufficiently large number are in or around 30

66 Clearly the measurement of a 'pace' is subjective, but a metre can be paced out with relative ease in the field (and invariably provides a roughly accurate measurement in lieu of a measuring tape) thus the equation here of a pace with a metre is not inappropriate.
67 O'Keefe, T. op.cit., p.129.
metres high (e.g. Kilkenny, Kildare, Monasterboice, Ardmore and Donaghmore). Could the height of the towers be a symbolic 'radius' of the sacred circle? O'Keefe proposes several functions for round towers – none of which were necessarily exclusive – including a ritual function, a place to house relics and a place of sanctuary. He considers the possibility that the towers were consecrated buildings, sometimes used for masses, which would in turn allow them to be used for spiritual refuge in the same way that churches and enclosures were. Significantly, O'Keefe also argues that the origins of the round tower should be sought in the corpus of cognitive or symbolic architecture that is focused on the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. If this is the case, it is another example of a concept embodying ecclesiastical symbolism and sanctuary that was brought to Ireland from the Continent and which influenced the physical form of Irish ecclesiastical sites. This strengthens the argument that symbolism and sanctuary were the influencing factors in the planning or laying out of the ecclesiastical sites and that the origins of the curvilinear plan-form can be found in these imported concepts, as indicated by this investigation.

5.4.7 TRANFERENCE OF INFLUENCE AND IDEAS

It has been argued that the phenomenon of the circular churchyard or ecclesiastical site is restricted to areas outside of the influence of Anglo-Saxon Britain and the Roman church on the Continent. The idea that there was a 'Celtic Church' has led to the assumption that the shared characteristics of the ecclesiastical settlements of Ireland and Britain are significant. Here the controversial question of Celts and a Celtic Church should be addressed, if only briefly. Davies stressed that “the Celtic Church idea is unhelpful... and positively harmful: if we assume similarities in Celtic countries, we ignore differences and fail to investigate them; we also lack an appreciation of such similarities as did exist in Britain, Ireland and the continent; and we tend to classify the continent as one standardized form, run from Rome”.

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68 O'Keefe, T. op.cit., pp.46-47.
70 O'Keefe, T. op.cit., p.108.
71 O'Keefe, T. op.cit., p.124.
Thomas added that rather than a ‘Celtic Church’ there was merely ‘the Christian church in Celtic-speaking lands’. 73

Terminology aside, if the curvilinear plan-form does represent a feature of the "Christian Church in Celtic-speaking lands", how can the sites in southern France be accounted for? It is not beyond the realm of possibility that these features, if they are indeed a product of a ‘Celtic’ culture, made their way to the south of France, or indeed vice versa. Southern France is not traditionally considered as ‘Celtic’, but there is evidence for both trade and settlement to and from Britain and Ireland.

Classical sources, such as Strabo, mention merchants travelling from Britain as far as the Mediterranean and archaeological evidence supports this. While researching the dedication distribution patterns associated with ‘Celtic’ saints, Bowen mapped locations of archaeological finds and sites. 74 Further work by Campbell and Wooding has refined our information regarding trade and communication routes in the Early Medieval period. 75 The evidence points to the existence of important marine highways on the seas off Western Britain and to intense marine activity in the ocean and the many rivers leading inland. Traffic along these routes goes back to the Mesolithic period and there was much activity in the Early Medieval period, particularly between Southwest France, Northern Spain and Ireland.

There are also very strong ecclesiastical connections during the Early Medieval period between Ireland, Britain and the Continent. These began with Palladius and St Patrick coming to Ireland in the fifth century and reached their zenith in the late sixth and seventh centuries when Irish monks left Ireland to travel through Britain and Continental Europe. The extent of influence in both directions should not be underestimated and there is no doubt that ideas were transported as much as trade goods. Whether one of these ideas included a concept for a planned ecclesiastical site is not known, though the evidence from the sites examined in southern France suggests that the curvilinear enclosure encircling churches probably pre-dates the peregrinations of Columbanus and his fellow monks in the late sixth and seventh

This discovery is important, lending credence to arguments by O'Keefe and Clinton that the origins of Ireland's round towers and souterrains can be found on Continental Europe, in the Mediterranean / Gaul and France respectively.\(^7^6\) In the case of round towers, O'Keefe looks to the Carolingian architecture observed by Irish monks on their travels through Europe in the ninth and tenth centuries. He also stresses a strong association with cognitive or symbolic architecture, where the round tower offers a ritual space; this space is an evocation of the greatest Christian monuments in ninth century Europe and an imitation of their imagery.\(^7^7\) O'Keefe also speculates on a direct Ireland-Mediterranean connection, with regard to the spatial 'dialogue' between the round tower and the church on Irish sites, likening them to small 'church groups'.\(^7^8\) These arrangements of churches were seen in the Mediterranean and in Gaul in the earliest Christian period and throughout Europe in the Early Medieval period.\(^7^9\) Based on the documentary evidence for a cathedral and a second church located to its immediate northeast indicates that such a grouping may have existed at Carpentras.

Clinton notes the association of the earliest form of souterrains with early Church sites in Ireland, as did Swan before him.\(^8^0\) The generally accepted dating for souterrains in Ireland is c.500-c.1200AD, placing them firmly in the Early Medieval period, but being most common after c.750AD.\(^8^1\) The souterrain is not exclusive to Ireland but is also found in Brittany, Scotland, Cornwall and Denmark.\(^8^2\) In addition,
there are over 1000 recorded souterrains in central parts of France but these are of a later, Medieval date. The souterrain is, unfortunately, not a well-known or well-researched archaeological monument in the south of France, with little agreement on dating or function, though they are attested in the southwest and in Provence. Clinton proposes that the association of souterrains with church sites is not merely coincidental, but that it may have been church personnel who first introduced the idea of souterrains to Ireland and that the earliest examples may thus be found in association with early church sites, particularly in the south. The most likely origin for the idea, if it was imported, is Brittany (either directly or through Cornwall) where there are numerous examples of souterrains of a mainly Iron Age date (c.600-100BC).

Although Clinton suggests that it may have been church personnel 'returning from abroad' who brought the idea of the souterrain to Ireland, the Irish peregrinations did not begin in earnest until at least the later sixth century. The early date for the introduction of souterrains, at the beginning of the sixth century, and their associations with enclosed ecclesiastical settlements, could equally indicate that the idea was brought to Ireland with the first proselytisers. Thus, if it was an imported concept, it is likely that it arrived in the same way as the curvilinear plan-form, through the early Christian missionaries from Gaul.

5.5 ASSESSMENT OF PLAN-ANALYSIS AS A USEFUL INVESTIGATIVE TOOL FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDIES

There are many questions that remain to be answered about enclosed ecclesiastical settlements, particularly with regard to dating. More dating evidence would aid considerably in determining both a foundation date for the ecclesiastical site and the sequence of enclosure at a site, which could help in determining the extent to which such sites were planned. The acquisition of accurate dating evidence is reliant on a number of factors, not least of which is the survival of organic material or the

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83 Clinton, M. op.cit. p.179.
85 Clinton, M. op.cit., p.199.
86 Clinton, M. op.cit., p.175.
87 Clinton, M. op.cit., p.199.
presence of datable artefacts. Archaeological excavation can, even without these, often provide a relative chronology, i.e. the sequence of events, if not the exact date at which they took place. Archaeological excavation is not possible at many urban sites (or if undertaken is necessarily piecemeal), nor is it usually carried out within existing burial grounds or churchyards. This greatly limits the potential for archaeological excavation to provide answers to such questions about ecclesiastical sites in an urban context. Thus the question to be answered is whether or not a ‘sequence of events’ – in the case of this thesis, the development of settlement – can be understood through the application of non-invasive techniques.

The most significant results of the plan-analysis in this investigation are the indication that the ecclesiastical enclosures may have been sequential rather than planned. The laying out of two enclosures at the same time, as part of an overall settlement plan, could be argued though not proven for Armagh and Kells. The case for the enclosures being contemporaneous at the other field study sites is weak and presumptive, relying on preconceived ideas of an overall plan. There is no evidence, documentary or otherwise, that could not equally apply to a sequential development. The addition of a third enclosure at Armagh, which appears to be morphologically different and which is probably later, perhaps best illustrates that a settlement plan could be ‘phased’.

Although the laying out of inner and outer enclosures at the majority of the field study sites may not have been contemporaneous, a phased approach to the settlement plan does not mean a lack of overall planning that was strongly focused on the circular form. The outer enclosure at Vence appears to have been in place before the construction of properties along it, which suggests that it was deliberately laid out as a physical boundary to allow an expansion of the settlement. The fact that the second – and in some cases additional – enclosures took the same form as the inner enclosure emphasises the importance of the curvilinear ecclesiastical boundary in the formation and growth of a settlement. It suggests that the curvilinear form was sufficiently important – perhaps for symbolic reasons – that it was repeated when there was no physical reason for it to be so.

The sequential nature of the ecclesiastical enclosure can only be confirmed through archaeological excavation. The recent results from the excavations at St Nahi’s Church
(discussed above in Section 5.3.4.3) demonstrate that enclosures around ecclesiastical sites could be sequential. This confirmation is requisite to a full understanding of ecclesiastical settlements but cannot be provided by plan-analysis, though it should be acknowledged that even with archaeological excavation, dating evidence can prove elusive. The lack of a concrete answer to the question of dating at these sites is undoubtedly one of the main weaknesses of the plan-analysis technique from an archaeological perspective. Similarly, it offers little insight into the form taken by the original enclosures; another question that requires excavation to answer.

The existence of ecclesiastical enclosures and the extent of settlement and other activity surrounding otherwise isolated church sites was originally identified through aerial survey and later through cartographic surveys. Advances in technology — namely geophysical survey — since these discoveries were made have identified new sites. The results of geophysical survey at Oldtown, Co. Dublin — close to Swords village, a known monastic site — revealed part of a previously unknown ecclesiastical site (Figure 5.4.6 below). Earlier archaeological test excavation on the site in advance of development had revealed human burials, pits and enclosure ditches which suggested a more substantial settlement and pointed to an ecclesiastical nature. The church is presumed to have been located alongside the graveyard at the centre of the inner enclosure, although the structure was not uncovered within the limits of the excavation. A large stone cross was noted at the northern edge of the site (though probably not contemporary the cross may represent a memory or tradition of this site as ecclesiastical). Artefactual evidence indicates an Early Medieval date for some of the features, suggesting that at least part of the site was occupied during that time.

The geophysical survey subsequently undertaken confirmed that this was a substantial settlement with three concentric curvilinear enclosures, the outermost of which is subdivided into compartments and an entrance on the north side (Figure 5.4.6). The subdivisions within the outermost enclosure at Oldtown form a radial pattern, similar

to the plot pattern identified by plan-analysis in the second enclosure at Armagh (Figure 4.3.6, Volume 2).

**FIGURE 5.4.6 : ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY RESULTS AT OLDTOWN**

![Image of a map showing archaeological interpretation results](image)

Source: Nicholls, 2003, Figure 4.

The results also indicated that several of the subdivided areas within the outer enclosure were used for industrial activity. An annexe of further enclosures and activity was identified on the northeast side of the outer enclosure, which respected the main enclosures, though whether this or any other feature was contemporary with the original inner enclosure is unknown.\(^9\)

All of the geophysical survey results pertain to rural or otherwise greenfield sites. Geophysical survey is commonly used to provide additional information in large areas where archaeological excavation is not possible or would be too costly, in both time and money, and more specifically to identify areas of potential archaeological interest. In the same way that archaeological excavation is limited in scale within urban areas, there are also difficulties in urban areas for a technique like geophysical survey.
It is for these reasons that a technique such as plan-analysis has a particular value in the investigation of ecclesiastical sites in an urban context. Where other non-invasive techniques, such as aerial and geophysical survey, can provide detailed layouts of ecclesiastical settlements, there is no way to divine whether or not the elements are contemporary. This has led to the assumption that the layout seen at many ecclesiastical sites is part of a deliberate plan, when in fact (as shown by the results of this investigation) the elements may not be contemporary. The application of plan-analysis at urban ecclesiastical sites is crucial. It can illuminate aspects of spatial relationship, identify early ecclesiastical enclosures and provide an assessment of settlement morphology.

The technique proved to be remarkably useful in this investigation. Significantly, it provided new information at many of the sites, such as the identification in Armagh of what may be the earliest ecclesiastical enclosure at Scotch Street. An ecclesiastical enclosure at this location has never before been proposed, despite Armagh having been subject to a substantial amount of investigation in the past. The cartographic survey undertaken as part of the plan-analysis for this investigation, also newly identified vast curvilinear enclosures associated with some of the Irish and Welsh field study sites (as discussed in Section 5.3.5). These may represent boundaries demarcating the monastic lands associated with the site, or a specific division thereof – perhaps the agricultural lands worked by the monks. Such new information offers areas of potential for future excavation should the opportunity arise, acting as a guide to archaeological investigation. It also provided a means by which comparative analysis could be undertaken of ecclesiastical settlement morphology of the Irish, Welsh and French field study sites.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS
6.0 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 DISCOVERIES
The following points summarise the significant discoveries made during the course of this investigation. These findings will then be assessed in the context of the initial aims of the research project.

- The location of the burial ground within the inner enclosure demonstrates a strong similarity between the French, Welsh and Irish sites and is an important discovery, showing that the Christian Church played a large part in the adaptation and usurpation of Roman urban influences (in which burial is restricted to areas beyond the town limits). The location of the burial ground at some of the sites also proved significant, as it suggested a link between the placement of the cemetery and the later development of a market place.

- The rate of survival of the ecclesiastical enclosures and the later form taken by them (such as roadway, churchyard wall or property boundary) as the settlement evolved may be closely linked to the perceived sanctity of the enclosures. The change in the nature and form of the ecclesiastical enclosures within a settlement - and the catalyst for these changes - is an aspect of Irish (or other) ecclesiastical settlement that has previously been ignored. The results from this study are intriguing, suggesting possible patterns thus far unrecognised.

- Swan's contention that the ecclesiastical enclosure is often the best or only clue to the existence of a previously unsuspected early medieval site remains true, but his argument that the Irish 'pattern' or 'plan' of ecclesiastical settlement was unique is flawed. There is no doubt that within the inner enclosure of Irish sites there is evidence for a deliberate organisation of the elements - of church, round tower, high crosses and entrance way - but the double concentric enclosure used for an ecclesiastical purpose was assuredly not a concept that was exclusive to Ireland.

- There appears to have been a transference of ideology from the early Church in France to both Britain and Ireland, which arrived in tandem with Church law and ritual practices in the fifth and sixth centuries AD. This included the concept of sanctuary or asylum, probably realised in a circular enclosure.
• Plan-analysis of Armagh identified what may be the earliest ecclesiastical enclosure at Scotch Street. An ecclesiastical enclosure at this location has never before been proposed, despite Armagh having been subject to a substantial amount of investigation in the past.

• The vast curvilinear boundaries newly identified around the ecclesiastical settlement at the majority of the Irish and Welsh field study sites may represent the monastic extents originally associated with these sites. If so, these are another element of Irish and Welsh ecclesiastical sites previously unrecognised.

6.2 ASSESSMENT OF AIMS

The main findings of this work will be assessed in the context of the aims that were identified in the introduction.

6.2.1 The first of these aims was

“to establish the common characteristics of Early Medieval ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland, Wales and France through the detailed examination and comparison of field study sites within the defined study areas”.

The characteristics of ecclesiastical settlement at each of the selected field study sites were established using a multi-disciplinary approach: a combination of historical, archaeological and cartographic evidence was supplemented by field survey and each site was then examined through the application of the plan-analysis technique. This allowed a comparative analysis of these characteristics and provided the opportunity to assess the individual elements of the ecclesiastical settlement patterns and to evaluate their importance in relation to the formation of settlement at each of the field study sites. This analysis led to several significant findings regarding the characteristics of the ecclesiastical settlement patterns in the three study areas, which have implications for the existing theories on the pattern of settlement at Irish ecclesiastical sites.

Swan remarked that Irish monastic sites seemed to adhere to an almost universal plan or pattern, based on the recurrence of a certain number of characteristics on ecclesiastical sites: including, two concentric curvilinear enclosures (sometimes subdivided internally); an organised and deliberate placement of the ecclesiastical
elements (church, round tower, high crosses, the holy well, burial ground) in relation to each other and to the enclosures; the presence of a main eastern approach road, associated market place and settlement.\footnote{Swan, D.L., 1994. op.cit., p.54.} This ‘plan’ or ‘pattern’ which is so often observed at Irish ecclesiastical sites has been shown to be present in substantial numbers by Griffin in Counties Clare and Limerick, though he also identified variants to Swan’s pattern (e.g. a western rather than eastern bias to the principal approach road and market place).\footnote{Griffin, K. op.cit.}

Does this ‘universal plan’ extend to the Welsh and French ecclesiastical sites? It can be identified at each of the three Irish field study sites examined but not at those in Wales or France, though elements of the ‘pattern’ can be seen. The ‘pattern’ is much more evolved in Ireland where there is evidence of a complex plan-form, involving the orientation and placing of distinct ecclesiastical elements. The rate of survival of this pattern may have depended on later development and so is not evident at every ecclesiastical site. The unique nature of some of the elements of this pattern, e.g. the round tower and high cross, and the lack of early ecclesiastical fabric with which to assess the organisation of the Welsh and French field study sites meant that this element of the ‘pattern’ was not assessed. The results of the comparative analysis nonetheless revealed a number of similarities, as well as differences, in the characteristics of the ecclesiastical settlement sites examined.

The location of the burial ground produced interesting results. The burial ground was invariably positioned within the inner enclosure of all but one of the field study sites (though the possibility could not be ruled out at the remaining site). This was contrary to the initial expectation that the burial ground in the French sites would be located outside of the town, as evidenced on the historic maps, and as suggested by their Roman origins. This demonstrates a strong similarity between the French, Welsh and Irish sites and is an important discovery, showing that the Christian Church played a large part in the adaptation and usurpation of Roman urban influences. The location of the burial ground at some of the sites also proved significant, as it suggested a link between the placement of the cemetery and the later development of a market place.

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\footnote{Swan, D.L., 1994. op.cit., p.54.}
\footnote{Griffin, K. op.cit.}

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The most identifiable element at all of the field study sites is the ecclesiastical enclosure. This is arguably the most important element of the Irish 'pattern', both in the physical sense (i.e. its influence on subsequent settlement) and in the symbolic sense (i.e. the probable ideology behind the form of the enclosure and the layout or pattern of the site). The principal commonality between all nine of the field study sites was found to be the presence of two concentric ecclesiastical enclosures. There was a distinct lack of pattern in the size and shape of the ecclesiastical enclosures, both within each study area and when the sites were compared to each other. This could, admittedly, result from the scope of this investigation – a pattern might emerge in a study of a much larger number of sites. Griffin’s work encompassed a slightly larger number of sites and suggested a grouping according to size, though a much larger sample would be needed to provide a definitive answer. It may also simply reflect the diversity inherent in ecclesiastical sites, where each one evolved in response to individual stimuli.

The presence of an ‘outer enclosure’, which may also be ecclesiastical, at the French sites is tantalising. There is no way of knowing whether or not the two enclosures were laid out at the same time or sequentially, although the results of this investigation indicate that a phased settlement should be considered for many sites. As is demonstrated at all three of the French sites, suburban expansion can and does occur in other forms besides circular, so the likelihood is that at Vence and La Digne d’Amont, if not also at Carpentras, a second enclosure followed the first relatively quickly if they were not laid out contemporaneously. The outer enclosure may well represent a repetition of an ecclesiastical boundary – so too of the town defences – when settlement growth required it. There is no reason to presume that the ecclesiastical boundary and the defensive boundary could not be one and the same. Bearing in mind the concept of sanctuary and asylum was present from an early date in France, having an ecclesiastical ‘sacred’ boundary incorporated into your defences may have been considered prudent – covering all the bases so to speak.

The argument that ecclesiastical enclosures were laid out at the same time as part of an overall plan relies on evidence that could equally apply to a sequential

3 While the sites in Griffin's study appear to fall into three size categories, there was no obvious pattern; Griffin, K., 2003. op.cit., p.311 and Griffin, pers.comm., 2009. 322
development. The results of this investigation indicate that a settlement plan could be ‘phased’. Although the laying out of inner and outer enclosures at the majority of the field study sites may not have been contemporaneous, a phased approach to the settlement plan does not mean a lack of overall planning that was strongly focused on the circular form. The fact that the second – and in some cases additional – enclosures took the same form as the inner enclosure emphasises the importance of the curvilinear ecclesiastical boundary in the formation and growth of a settlement. It suggests that the curvilinear form was sufficiently important – perhaps for symbolic reasons – that it was repeated when there was no physical reason for it to be so. This repetition of the circular enclosure beyond the original inner and even the outer enclosure can be seen at the well-known monastic site of Nendrum, County Down and at the newly discovered ecclesiastical site in Oldtown, County Dublin. At both of these sites, there is a clear triple layout of curvilinear enclosures, as seen at Armagh.

An examination of the ecclesiastical enclosures has also produced some evidence indicating that the rate of survival of the enclosures and the later form taken by them (such as roadway, churchyard wall or property boundary) as the settlement evolved was closely linked to the perceived sanctity of the enclosures. The differences apparent at the sites were in some cases found to be linked to a significant change in circumstances, for example, the creation of an Anglo-Norman manorial centre at Kells and a Norman bishopric at Llandaff and the influence of the papacy on Carpentras. The change in the nature and form of the ecclesiastical enclosures within a settlement – and the catalyst for these changes – is an aspect of Irish (or other) ecclesiastical settlement that has previously been ignored. The results from this study are intriguing, suggesting possible patterns thus far unrecognised.

Another significant finding was the existence of very large curvilinear boundaries enclosing land around the ecclesiastical settlement, identified at the majority of the Irish and Welsh sites. At Llancarfan, this boundary was associated with ‘cross’ place-names, which suggests a connection between these features and the tradition of crosses at Irish ecclesiastical sites that both Swan and Griffin have noted. Examples of similar vast enclosing elements have been noted by the researcher at several other Irish early ecclesiastical sites, namely Lusk, County Dublin, Clonard, County Meath and Old Kilcullen, County Kildare. Those at Kilcullen are formed by the townland boundaries.
and are clearly identifiable even on the mid-seventeenth century Down Survey map. These may represent the monastic extents originally associated with the sites and if so, are another element of Irish and Welsh ecclesiastical sites previously unrecognised.

Swan's contention that the ecclesiastical enclosure is often the best or only clue to the existence of a previously unsuspected early medieval site remains true. This study has confirmed that the survival of the ecclesiastical enclosure in the plan of a later urban settlement provides an identifiable element and is of considerable importance to ecclesiastical settlement pattern research. Swan's argument that the Irish 'pattern' or 'plan' of ecclesiastical settlement was unique is flawed. There is no doubt that within the inner enclosure of Irish sites there is evidence for a deliberate organisation of the elements - of church, round tower, high crosses and entrance way - but the double concentric enclosure used for an ecclesiastical purpose was assuredly not a concept that was exclusive to Ireland.

6.2.2 The second aim was

"To investigate the direction of ecclesiastical influences between the three study areas, with a view to exploring whether or not the curvilinear plan of Irish ecclesiastical settlement was influenced by the early Church on the Continent and to examining the relationship between this pattern and the Continental Church later on, when Irish monks began their peregrinations".

It is clear that there was contact between the three study areas in the Early Medieval period and so a sort of cross-cultural stimulus for the curvilinear settlement form should not be ruled out. The most significant aspect of the activities of Irish monks in Britain and France in the context of this thesis is that the direct influence, in other words the foundation of monasteries by Irish monks, took place from the late sixth to the early eighth century AD. This is very important in light of the discovery that these activities post-date the foundation date of many of the churches (and thus of the ecclesiastical enclosure) both in Wales and in the southern French towns examined in this study. Much of the recorded activity by Irish monks in Britain is found in Scotland, while the majority of their monastic foundations in France remained in the northern half of the country. That being said, there is no doubt that there were Irish monastic associations and traditions in Wales, as well as Irish secular and dynastic

\[1\] Brown, P. op.cit., p.219-220.

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settlements. The influence of St Columbanus in particular on Frankish monastic life, through the active patronage of the Frankish royalty, was probably also felt in the southern half of the country – as evidenced by the Irish associations found at the monasteries of Narbonne and Bordeaux.

So little survives physically of the early Gaulish ecclesiastical structures and layouts that it is unclear what influences of a structural or physical nature may have been brought to Ireland when Christianity was first introduced. One possible influence can be seen in the early stone church structures that survive in the west of Ireland, such as Gallarus oratory (Figure 6.1.1). This oratory is remarkably similar both in style and in its method of construction to structures found in the south of France, known as bories (a particularly good example of these structures can be found in a deserted village in southern France, in the Vaucluse region to the south of Carpentras, Figure 6.1.2). The method of dry-stone wall construction is not unknown in Ireland outside of the surviving early stone churches, being also found in some souterrain chambers and much earlier in the burial chambers in Newgrange, but the style and function of the structure is new and may have been borrowed from similar structures in France and Italy, some of which are thought to date to as early as the Neolithic period. This may demonstrate in a physical sense the exchange of ideas between Ireland and France.

**Figure 6.1.1 Gallarus Oratory, Dingle Peninsula, County Kerry**


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There appears to have been a transference of ideology from the early Church in France to both Britain and Ireland, which arrived in tandem with Church law and ritual practices in the fifth and sixth centuries AD. This included the concept of sanctuary or asylum, probably realised in a circular enclosure. The widespread adoption of the ‘pattern’ in Ireland and Wales is undoubtedly associated with the contemporary and past use of the curvilinear form in both secular settlement and pre-Christian burial practices. There is overwhelming evidence that the curvilinear churchyard in Britain, which has survived best in Wales and Cornwall, dates to before the Anglo-Saxon period. It may represent a hangover from prehistoric burial rites, at least partly, but its early appearance around Christian church and burial sites in France and in Britain is highly persuasive as evidence that it originated in France and was brought over with the first Christians – perhaps as part of the new Christian ideology.

This is an important discovery and lends credence to arguments by O’Keefe and Clinton that the origins of Ireland’s round towers and souterrains can be found on Continental Europe. It highlights the movement of the more physical and tangible aspects of Christianity, such as architecture, with the symbolic, i.e. the significance of a curvilinear form.

The physical and symbolic associations of the enclosures in this ecclesiastical context were imported from the Continental church and appear to have strong connections with the Church in Gaul. This ideology exerted a strong influence on the evolution of a pattern that is so focused on this curvilinear form. That is not to say that the Irish use of the ecclesiastical enclosure was not adapted and incorporated into native beliefs and settlements – this is evident in the variations witnessed at the Irish, Welsh and French field study sites. The adoption of the ecclesiastical enclosure and its use in the study areas may be indicative of a wider pattern throughout western Europe, not yet fully recognised or acknowledged. The settlement form of towns elsewhere which exhibit a similar plan-form, such as the small town of Latera in Italy (Figure 6.1.3), might also be the result of an early ecclesiastical influence.

**FIGURE 6.1.3 LATERA IN LAZIO, ITALY**

Source: Map provided by Pat Dargan

The Irish adoption of the circle as the ideal form for an ecclesiastical site originated in Continental Europe, most probably in the staunchly Roman areas around the Mediterranean where Christianity first took hold. This is evidenced by Roman and canon law regarding sanctuary and the early schematic representations of the ideal form, particularly the fourth century AD drawing by Urbicus (Figure 5.4.1). These early Mediterranean connections are interesting in the context of similar associations that have been made with regard to round towers and high crosses, which show
evidence of Carolingian ecclesiastical architectural and sculptural influences respectively. These later Carolingian influences seen in important elements of the Irish ecclesiastical site represent a continuing practice of adopting and adapting features of Christian sites on the Continent for use in Irish sites.

6.2.3 The third aim was

"to evaluate plan-analysis as a useful technique in the archaeological investigation of ecclesiastical settlement patterns in towns and villages”.

The results of the plan-analysis revealed that the most significant feature at each of the field study sites in terms of plan-form is the curvilinear enclosure and that this had a real impact on the physical growth of the settlements in the Early Medieval and Medieval periods.

The results also indicate that there was a sequential development of enclosures at ecclesiastical sites, which is significant in the light of recent excavation at St Nahi’s Church in Dundrum, County Dublin. The correlation of both sets of results highlights the potential uses of plan-analysis as an investigative technique for archaeologists. This is particularly relevant in urban ecclesiastical sites where there has been little or no opportunity for archaeological excavation and where a more detailed assessment of historical development can assist in the isolation of specific areas of archaeological potential otherwise unknown.

At many of the sites examined the opportunities for archaeological excavation are severely limited. There are similar difficulties in urban areas for a non-invasive technique like geophysical survey. It is for these reasons that a technique such as plan-analysis has a particular value in the examination of ecclesiastical sites and settlement in an urban context. With regard to questions of spatial relationship and the identification of early ecclesiastical enclosures and subsequent settlement development, the technique proved to be remarkably useful. It provided new information at many of the sites, with one of the most significant findings being the identification in Armagh of what may be the earliest ecclesiastical enclosure at Scotch

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Street. An ecclesiastical enclosure at this location has never before been proposed, despite Armagh having been subject to a substantial amount of investigation in the past. The cartographic survey undertaken as part of the plan-analysis for this investigation also newly identified vast curvilinear enclosures associated with some of the Irish and Welsh field study sites, possibly boundaries demarcating the monastic lands associated with the site. Such new information offers areas of potential for future excavation should the opportunity arise, acting as a guide to archaeological investigation. The assessment of plan-analysis as a technique for the non-invasive archaeological investigation of ecclesiastical settlement patterns shows that it has significant value in this area and an as yet unrealised potential for use in other fields of settlement pattern archaeology in an urban context.

6.3 FUTURE WORK

No specific explanation or suggestion could be found for the later form taken by the Welsh enclosures, i.e. road, churchyard or property boundaries. The results from the Irish and French field study sites are intriguing, having raised more questions than they have answered. The change in the nature and form of the ecclesiastical enclosures within a settlement is a subject that merits further investigation and this would best be addressed in a study involving a larger number of sites.

The vast curvilinear boundaries newly identified around the ecclesiastical settlement at the majority of the Irish and Welsh field study sites may represent the monastic extents originally associated with these sites. If so, these are another element of Irish and Welsh ecclesiastical sites previously unrecognised and deserving of further investigation.

It is also the case, as Swan notes, that some of the most famous monastic settlements did not develop into modern towns, such as Glendalough (see below), Monasterboice and Durrow, but their plans are recoverable through aerial photographs.\textsuperscript{10} Norman and St Joseph listed these sites and others as sites where there are no remaining signs of their earliest buildings and walls.\textsuperscript{11} It is not clear why some sites developed and evolved into permanent, successful settlements, and some did not. Take for example

\textsuperscript{11} Norman, E. R. and St Joseph, J. K. S. op.cit., p.117.
the case of two important monasteries, Glendalough and Clonmacnoise: Glendalough is isolated and constrained by its valley location, but Clonmacnoise was located on two important communication and trade routes: the River Shannon and the Slighe Mór, the major east-west land route of the Early Medieval period.\textsuperscript{12}

The initial work carried out for this investigation indicated that Wales and southern Britain had acted as a conduit for Christianity to and from France, both for the personnel and the ideas (of faith, architecture and settlement), in much the same way as they had done for trade and communication since prehistoric times. The detailed investigation of the Welsh and southern French sites and an examination of them in the light of the Irish ecclesiastical ‘pattern’ have produced significant results and new questions. The next logical step would be to investigate areas of southern Britain and northern France for evidence of the same pattern, most notably Cornwall and Brittany, which have many links to both Ireland and Britain.

A cursory look at towns and villages in Brittany showed numerous examples of place-names beginning with ‘lan’ (church or enclosure), as seen in Wales and Cornwall. One such example, Landerneau, appears to have traces of two curvilinear enclosures in its street plan and judging by the street name on the inner ‘enclosure’ (Place de l’Église de Saint-Houardon) there is a church at its centre (Figure 6.2.1). The place-name means the ‘lan’ of St Ternoc’, reputedly a Welsh saint (St Tymog / St Ténénan) who arrived here in the seventh century.\textsuperscript{13} Another tantalising example is an early ecclesiastical site at St Mawgan in Meneage, Cornwall (Figure 6.2.2). The site is mentioned by Preston-Jones as one of three sites having ‘other boundaries’ besides the curvilinear churchyards that her study focused on. These ‘other boundaries’ are reminiscent of the outer ecclesiastical enclosures at the field study sites and in some cases (e.g. Padstow, Figure 6.2.3) are large enough to provide comparanda with the vast boundaries identified at Kells, Clondalkin and Llancarfan.

\textsuperscript{12} Edwards, N., 1990. op.cit., p.105.

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An examination of these sites and similar in Brittany and Cornwall would allow further investigation of the ecclesiastical settlement patterns of Ireland, France and Britain, how they relate to each other, the influence which they have had on urban development and the importance of the curvilinear plan-form and the Church in the genesis of towns and villages across Europe. Further research in this field should help to answer some of the questions which have arisen during the course of this investigation.
Preston-Jones' research in Cornwall found that those sites which were purpose-built early Christian enclosures (rather than a re-use of prehistoric sites or churchyards of a later date) were overwhelmingly oval or sub-rectangular and hardly ever truly circular or rectilinear. Griffin's development of a spatial model using 19 ecclesiastical sites produced no significant findings with regard to shape, though an overall pattern could emerge with additional information. The past 15 years in Ireland has produced a remarkable amount of new archaeological evidence, the majority of which has not been published. Those excavated sites with ecclesiastical associations have yet to be coordinated, a necessary first step in an assessment of this data. An examination of the shape of ecclesiastical enclosures in Ireland, in conjunction with a review of this new information, may provide new insights into possible correlations between sites that reused pre-Christian burial grounds.

6.4 CONCLUSION

This investigation demonstrated that while the Irish ecclesiastical 'pattern', with all its components was a product of a native settlement layout, the concept behind its most recognisable element, the curvilinear ecclesiastical enclosure, was not. The curvilinear ecclesiastical enclosure was almost certainly a product of the cross-cultural transference of ideas, notably those of asylum, sanctuary and the symbolic importance of the circle. The use of the curvilinear enclosure in the context of ecclesiastical settlements also appears to have been a deliberate act, rather than a convenient re-use of existing settlement or burial forms. In conclusion, it can be stated that ecclesiastical sites had a profound influence on the formation of settlement in all three of the study areas. The assumption that the Roman town provided a predominant urban influence, to the exclusion of all else, despite its longevity and widespread adoption under the Empire is clearly wrong. One of the more significant and interesting conclusions is that to a certain extent, and despite their very different urban origins, the Irish, Welsh and French sites examined revealed a very similar pattern of development and layout. It is clear that the church played a significant role in the genesis of Early Medieval and Medieval settlement in all three study areas, perhaps even in the sense of a nascent 'town planning', with the curvilinear plan-form being part of a pan-European movement.

14 Preston-Jones, A. op.cit., p.116
15 Griffin, K. op.cit., p.309
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### APPENDIX A: Comparative Analysis Table

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