

NC 0021061 7



The National College of Art & Design
Faculty of Fine Art sculpture.

**The Ecclesiastical
Buildings at Lusk.**

by
Nigel King.

Submitted to the Faculty of History of Art
and Design and Complementary Studies in
Candidacy for the Joint Honours Degree in
Fine Art Sculpture.

1996.



Lusk Church & Round Tower

(Fig.1) Lusk church and round tower. (O.P.W.)

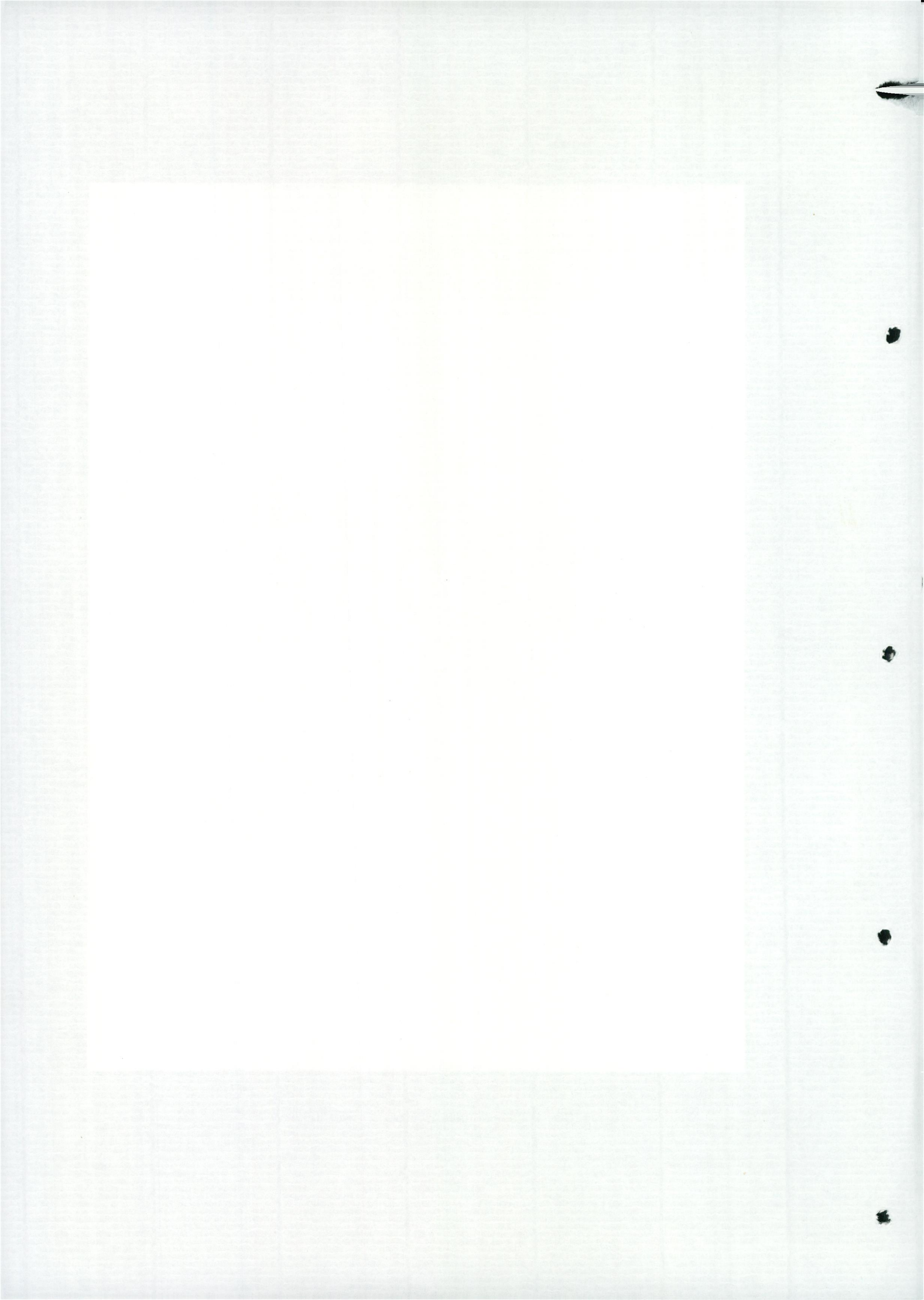


Table of contents.

List of illustration	P.5
List of plates	P.6
Acknowledgements	P.7
Introduction.	P.9
- What this thesis intends to say.	
-Interests and reasons for writing on the subject.	
-access to the finds from Lusk	
Chapter 1. <u>Background and general history</u>	P.10
-Old tales and legends.	
-History as a pagan site, early Christian to the present.	
Chapter 2. <u>Architecture and building characteristics.</u>	P.14
-Early Christian monastery and its enclosure.	
-Early church building in Ireland.	
-The old Norman church.	
-The round towers and facts concerning them.	
-The round tower at Lusk.	
Chapter 3. <u>Castle building in the Anglo Norman world.</u>	P.35
-Keeps and strongholds.	
-Fortified buildings with the Pale.	



- The Gothic church on the site.
- Similar structures; Duleek and Balrothery.

Chapter 4. Objects found on the site.

P.49

- Tiles, inlaid relief and line.
- History of Irish Medieval tiles, their distribution
manufacture and decoration.
- Norman tombs.
- Disembodied heads

Conclusion.

P.78

Bibliography.

P.79



Illustrations.

Fig. 1	Lusk church and round tower (O.P.W.).	P. 2
Fig. 2	Map of Fingal.	P. 8
Fig. 3	Remains of Grace Dieu.	P. 12
Fig. 4	The enclosure at Lusk.	P. 15
Fig. 5	Reconstruction of north elevation of fifteenth century structure at Lusk, showing original height of round tower and present ground level.	P.17
Fig. 6	Reconstruction of east elevation of fifteenth century structure at Lusk, showing original height of round tower and present ground level.	P.18
Fig. 7	Reconstruction of west elevation of fifteenth century structure at Lusk, showing original height of round tower and present ground level.	P.19
Fig. 8	Ogee headed windows.	P.22
Fig. 9	Interior of the round tower at Lusk.	P.26
Fig.10	Plan of site at Lusk.	P.31
Fig.12	Interior of the belfry and round tower at Lusk.	P.40
Fig.13	Architectural drawing of the church at Duleek.	P.44
Fig.14	Architectural drawing of the church at Duleek.	P.45
Fig.15	The church at Balrothery.	P.45
Fig.16	Extract from the Drogheda Independent.	P.55
Fig.17	Irish cresset stones.	P.62
Fig.18	Three bronze pins found at Lusk.	P.64
Fig.19	Stone Axe head found at Lusk.	P.65
Fig.20	Medieval tile pavement panel found at Swords.	P.65
Fig.21	Line impressed mosaic tile from Lusk.	P.66
Fig.22	Possible pattern the mosaic tile at Lusk was part of.	P.70
Fig.23	Line impressed mosaic shapes from Lianfaes.	P.70
Fig.24	Lion rampart sinister in the 4-foil found at Lusk.	P.73
Fig.25	Vine scroll border found at Lusk.	P.74
Fig.26	4-foil in the clockwise scroll found at Lusk.	P.75
Fig.27	Line impressed tile found at Lusk.	P.76
Fig.28	Two counter velvet unidentifiable tile fragments	

found at Lusk	P.77
Fig.29 Line impressed tile from Grace Dieu.	P.78
Fig.30 Distribution of medieval tiles.	P.79
Fig.31 Head at Lusk.	P.80
Fig.32 Stone head from Grace Dieu.	P.81
Fig.33 Penny magazine of May 11th, 1881.	P.81

Plates.

Pl. 1 Castle Dermot friary church.	P.22
Pl. 2 Round tower at Lusk.	P.27
Pl. 3 Picture of the church at Lusk.	P.32
Pl. 4 Stained glass in the present church at Lusk.	P.34
Pl. 5 Blocked-up entrance from the round tower to the belfry in Lusk.	P.48
Pl. 6 The Barnewall tomb.	P.57
Pl. 7 Detail of the Barnewall tomb.	P.59
Pl. 8 James Ber ming ham tomb.	P.60
Pl. 9 Pavement found in site of Lion rampart 4-foil from Swords.	P.73
Pl.10 Vine scroll baiden found in site at Swords.	P.74
Pl.11 Pavement found in site of clockwise scroll with 4-foil from Mellifont Abbey.	P.75
Pl.12 Head at Lusk.	P.80
Pl.14 Head at Balrothery.	P.80
Pl.15 Stone head from Grace Dieu.	P.81

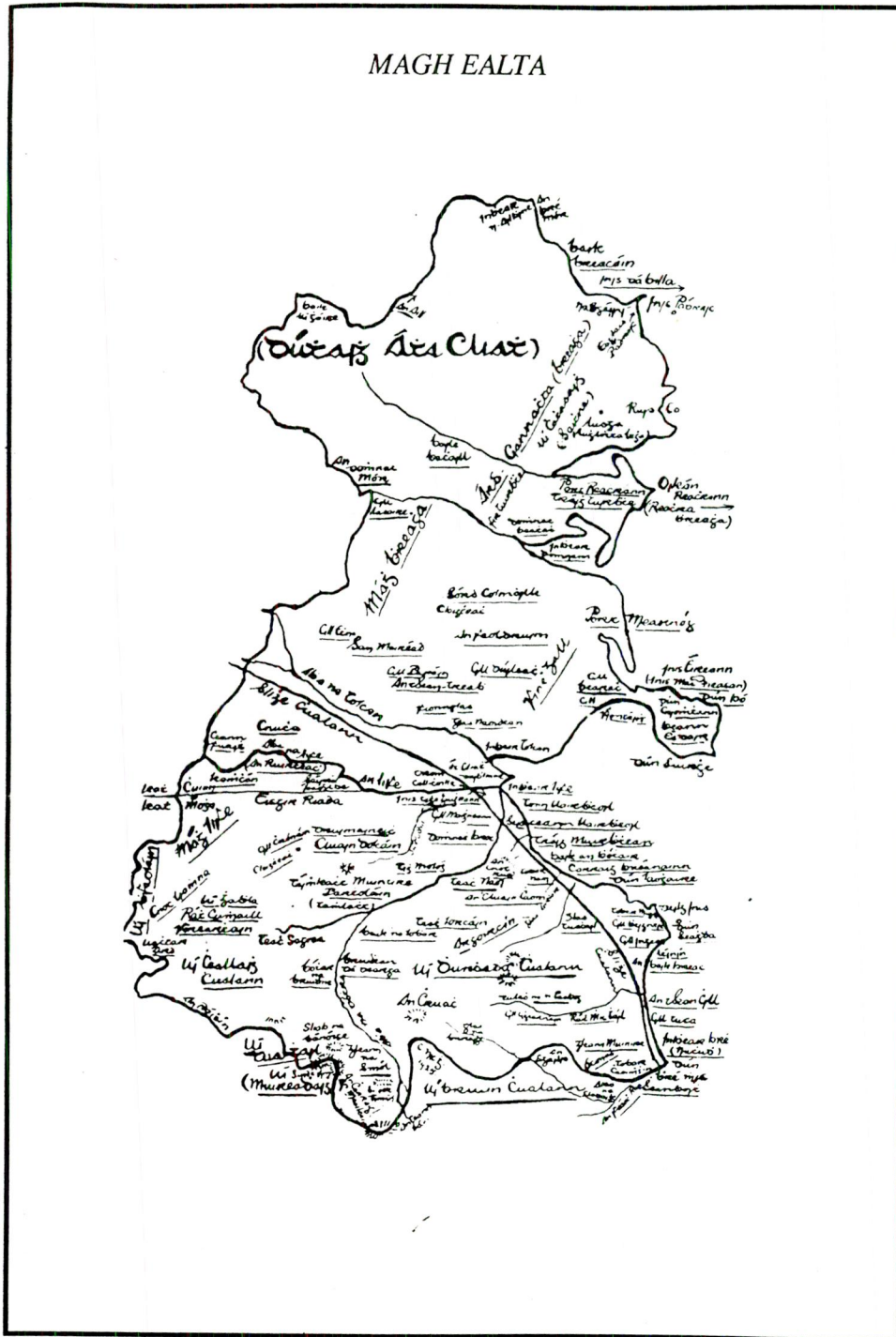


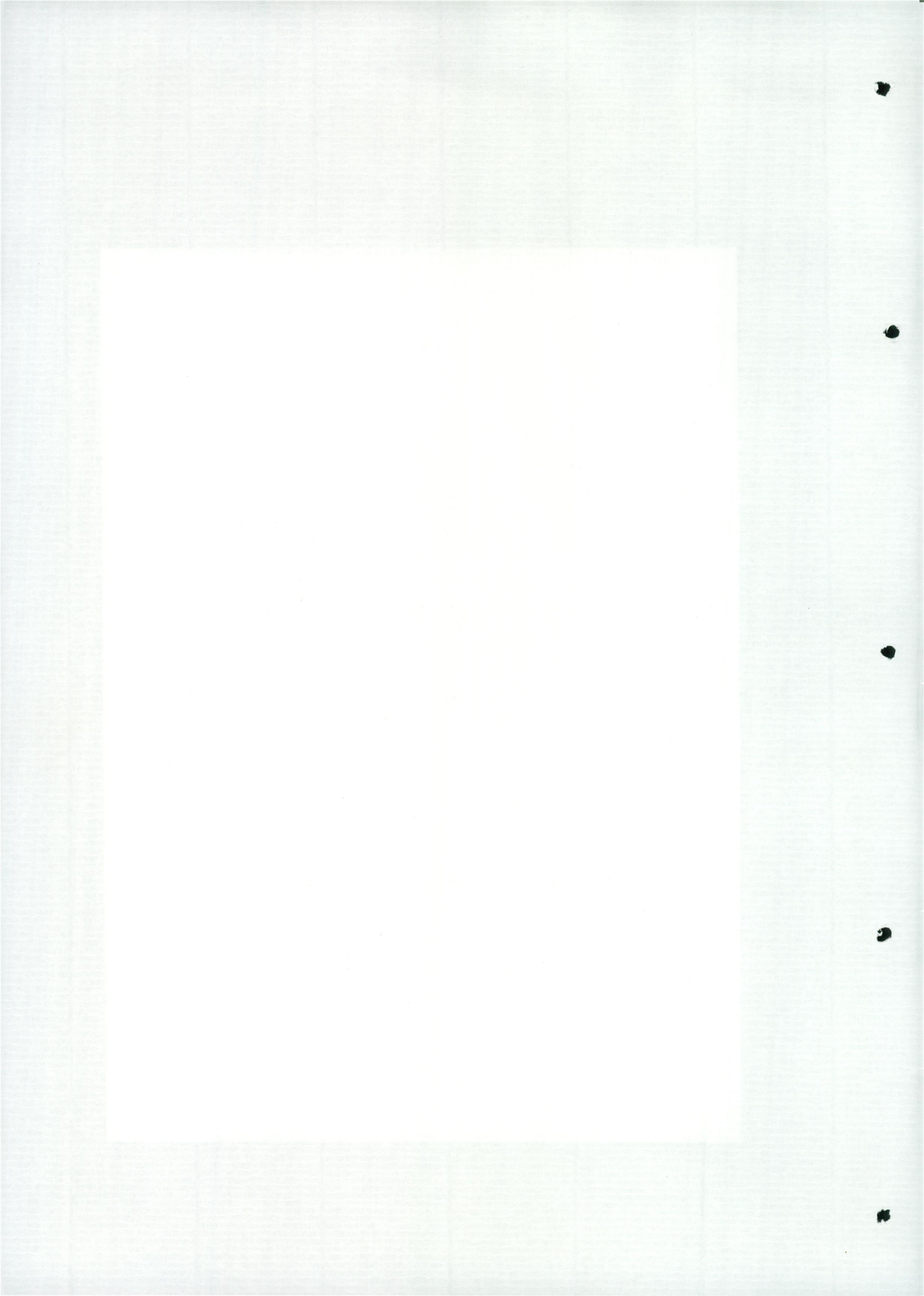
Acknowledgements.

I would like to greatly acknowledge the help of the following, Trinity college library, Mr. Andy Halpin of the National Museum, to Mr. Comming of the Office of Public works, to Colm Culleton of Lusk, to Ms.Pat. Kelly of Lusk and also to Dr. Sue Mac Nab of the National College of Art and Design. This Thesis is dedicated to Ms.Valerie King.



(Fig.2) Map of fingsal, (ARCHER,1975,P.1)





Introduction

In the north of Co. Dublin, in a north easterly direction from the centre of the city to be exact, lies an area which extends from the river Tolka which flows into the sea at Clontarf and which rises from above Dundoyne in the county of Meath to the Delvin river which separates Meath from Dublin flowing into the sea above Balbriggan. This area was known as 'the land of the strangers,' Finegall or Fingal as it is called today. It was called this because it was a special settlement of the Viking invaders of this country. It was favoured by the Danes but also by their successors the Anglo Normans, who settled in greater numbers in Fingal than in the south of Dublin. This is an areas which is extremely rich in ecclesiastical settlements. It formerly contained fifty five churches and chapels most of which can still to be seen or traced. This thesis focusses on Lusk which is one of the most ancient ecclesiastical settlements in Ireland.

It is located fifteen miles north of Dublin. From an early age, growing up in the area, I have had an interest in the old church and in historic buildings in general. This interest has grown over the years. On beginning to research the site, I found that only a very scattered and limited body of information exists. Through my research I aquired most of my written publications from the library at Trinity college Dublin and most of my drawings from the Office of Public Works. The majority of the finds from Lusk are in the warehouse of the O.P.W. and the national museum making access to them difficult. However, I succeeded in seeing the cresset stone in the office of Public Works. The other finds are personally owned.

I feel that it is possible to discuss the church at Lusk in a relevant historical and architectural framework within its surroundings. It will be examined from its earliest days (as a pagan site), through the medieval period and right up to the present day.

Chapter 1

General and Background History

The Annals of the Four Masters mention, Maccuillinn the first bishop of Lusk who died 497 A.D.. But this site can be traced right back, through old tales and legends, to at least the first quarter of the first century B.C. . It was called Lugh Louha Logo then because it was the site of an important sanctuary dedicated to the Celtic Sun God Lugh (MONKS. P.28). It was also said to be the sixth chief bruden or place of hospitality in Leinster, (the Bruden in Celtic times represents a place associated with the underworld), and was known to be located on the Slighe cualann, the highway of Cuala passing from Tara to south east Leinster. So when Christianity was introduced by St. Maccuillinn at Lusk, it was no accident that he chose this particular site.

In the year 226 A.D. a battle took place at Crinna near the Boyne between Cormac Macart, the Ard Ri and northern soldiers under Fergus. The Ard Ri was helped by the king of Munster, Olioll Olum, who sent his son and grandson with troops to assist him. The king of Munster's son was called Cian, and as a token of gratitude and partly to assist in preventing further invasion from the north, Cian's son, Tady was made prince of the Tolka river to Dromiskin. The territory was named Cianachta from the Cian Clan, who when surnames were adopted became the Caseys. St. Maccuillin was a member of the Cian Clan and was a local man and he belonged to distinguished family and he was an early convert to Christianity. It was customary at this time to erect Christian churches over the sites of old Druidic or pagan places of worship and St. Maccuillinn must have commenced his preaching around 460 A.D. so this gives great antiquity to the roots of Christianity at Lusk, far beyond that of any other district



in the Fingal area. The name Lusk is said to date from this time. Lusca is the origin of the present name, from the story that St. Mac cuillinn lived in a cave hollowed out of a side of a hill. Before he died he had attracted several devoted disciples, who learned from his teaching and example the monastic rules and customs and went out through the surrounding country preaching and baptising. By the time of the the saint's death on the sixth of September 497 almost the entire north eastern portion of what is now Co. Dublin had been converted to the Christian faith. After Lusk was established, other churches were founded from it and they include Hollywood, Grallagh, Balrothery, Balscadden, Kenure and others which are mentioned in the Annals. Two other churches founded in the area, Bremore and Inispatrick were not offshoots of Lusk, but came under its jurisdiction later. It was given the position of Mother church and throughout the whole early Christian period, from the days of St. Patrick right down to the time of the Anglo Normans to around the time of the reign of Elizabeth, the whole north east of Co. Dublin up to the Delvin, owed spiritual allegiance to the Mother church of Lusk. There is an almost complete list of abbots and bishops of Lusk recorded from St. Maccuillinn's time to after the coming of the Normans.

In 695 St. Adamnan held a synod in Lusk, to discuss and try to fix a time for the celebration of Easter. In 825 the Norsemen pillaged and destroyed the church and in 854 the church and the whole town was burned (R.S.A.I. 1914 P. 253). It was probably around this time that the name Fingal was given to the district, stretching from the Tolka to the Devlin. At about the end of the eight hundreds the round tower is thought to have been built, because of the continuing attacks by the Vikings. This is debatable but it may have had a defensive function. In 1067 and 1069 the town was burned and again in 1098 it was burned by the ' people of Munster ' when 180 people died in the stone church. In 1053 Donough son of Brian, marched with his army into Fingal and the men of Teffie (the

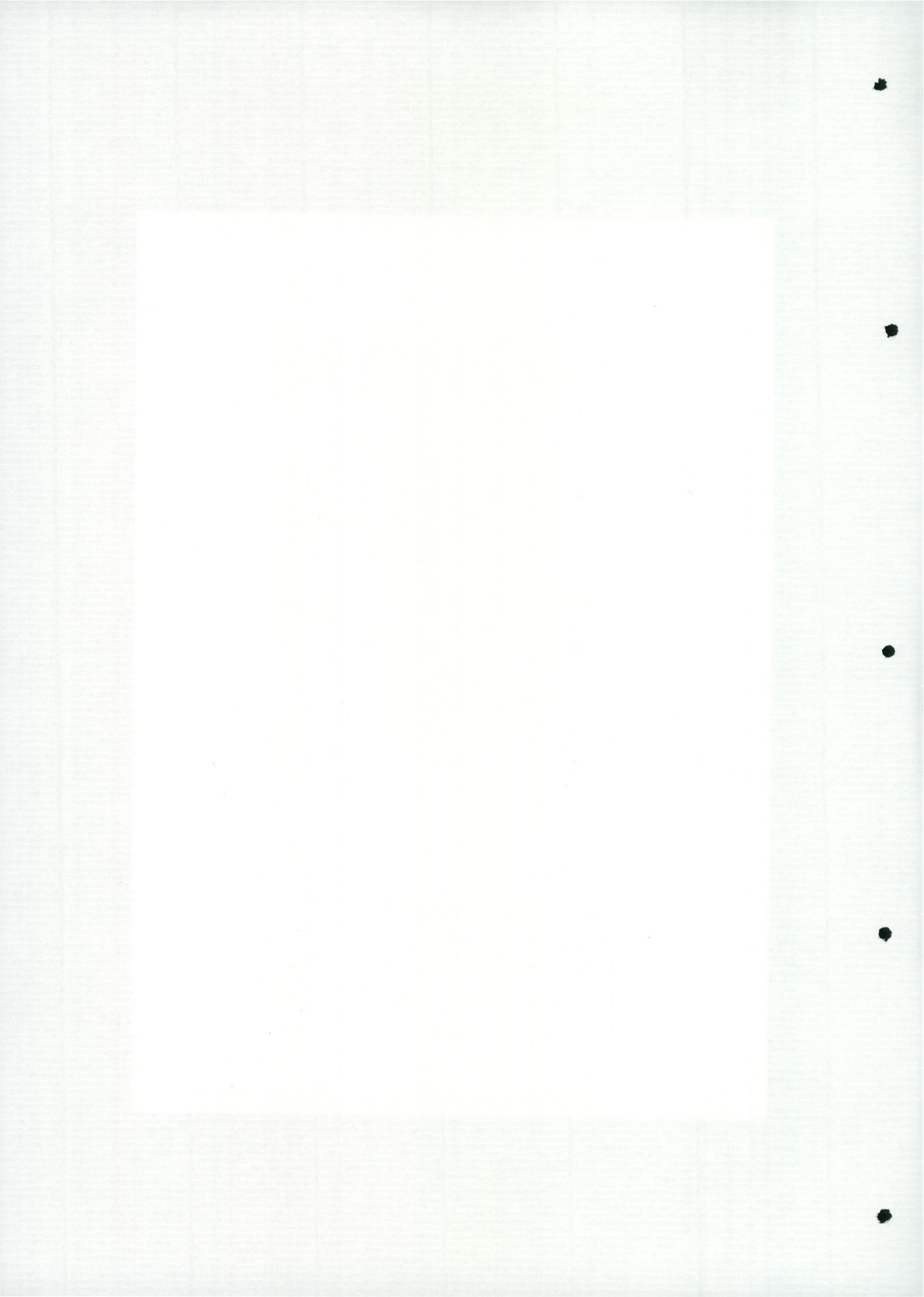
foxs) took captives from the church. Willie Monks states that this mention of a stone church at Lusk in 1053 or in 1098, and if this is true, must have made it amongst the first in the country. In 1133 Conor, son of the Roydamha of Tara, was slain by Donogh son of the Roydamha of Leinster. In revenge for Conors death, Lusk with its churches and people were burnt.

Because of these repeated assaults Lusk began to decline in importance towards the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries. When John Comyn a Norman was made Archbishop of Dublin, one of his first alterations was to transfer the convent at Lusk to Grace Gieu in 1190 and place it under the rule of the cannonesses of St. Ausgustine. It is not known why the site at Grace Dieu was chosen. The convent was used for the education of girls from Norman families until it was suppressed following the reformation in 1539. When Archdall wrote in 1907 he said that a wall of a church said to have been the ancient nunnery at Lusk can still be seen but it no longer exists asl have failed to locate it (ARCHDALL, 1786 P. 252). In about 1480 the present belfry was built together with a very large church consisting of a nave and two aisles. It was taken over following the next reformation and turned into a Protestant church, but as a result of the few numbers in the district it gradually fell into ruins. The big winds of 1839 completed the destruction, blowing off the roof of the church. It was taken down after reported to be unsafe. The present church was erected in 1847 on almost exactly the same site but it only consists of one aisle. It is now the house of the Lusk heritage centre run by the Office of Public Works.



(Fig. 3) Remains of Grace Dieu. (ARCHER, 1786 P. 53)



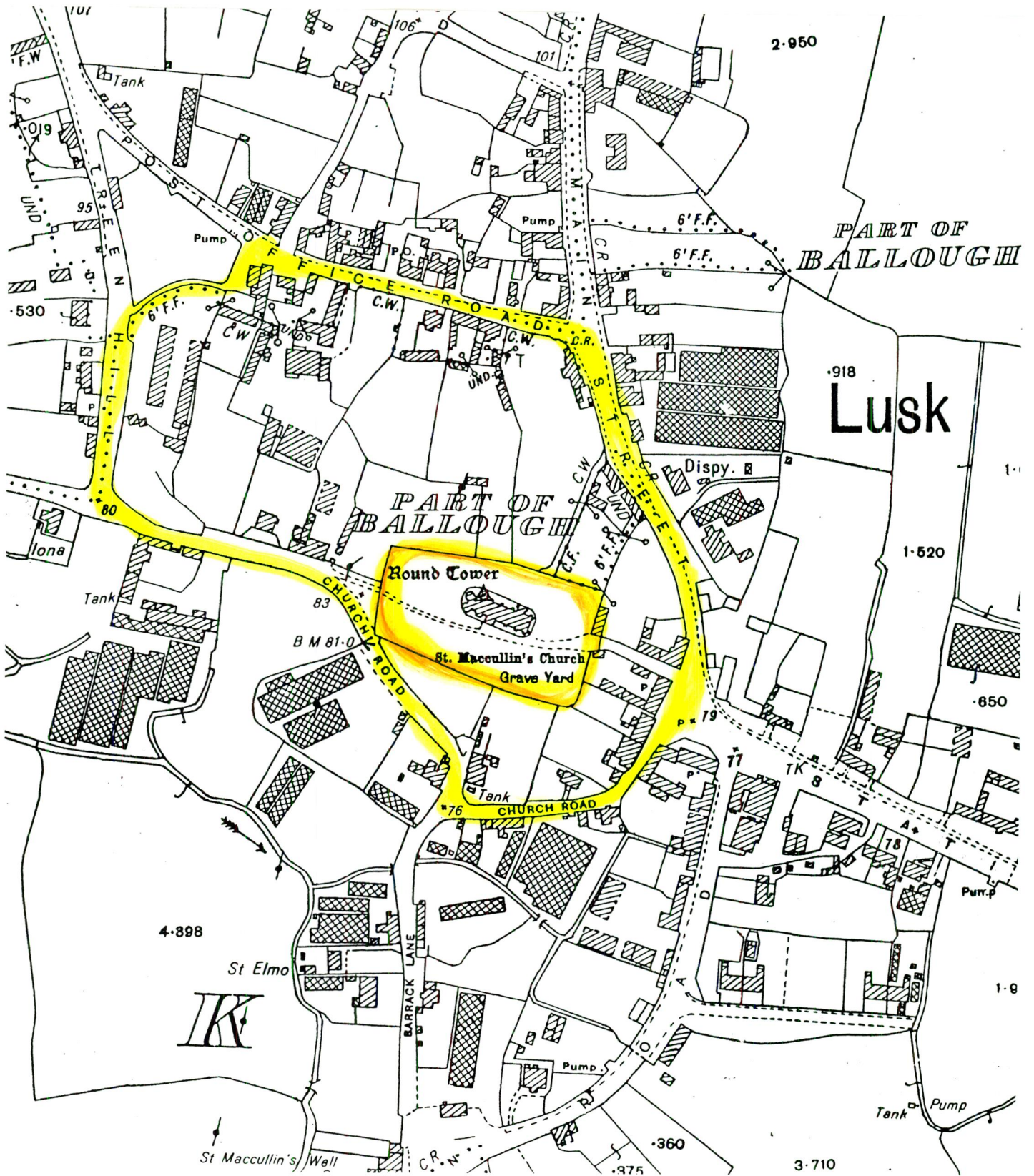


Architectural and Building Characteristics.

At Lusk only the round tower remains from the early christian monastery. There is no visible evidence of any earlier structure or foundation , but what there is evidence of is an enclosure. Most monastic sites had enclosures constructed around them which were generally subdivided. The inner enclosure generally contained the most important ecclesiastical buildings. There is no information today as to what type of enclosure existed at the site at Lusk, whether it consisted of surrounding banks and ditches like a rath or whether it had a stone wall as at Cashel. We can trace the former boundaries of the monastic enclosure which have been preserved in the modern street pattern. (Fig.4) In a map of the village one can see an obvious curving street to the east which indicates the outer enclosure, and which continues around to the south west by a somewhat irregular property boundary. Similarly in the northwest the subrectangular churchyard marks the general location of the inner enclosure. In Lusk the enclosure was generally entered from the east side, and it is interesting that a similar enclosure can be traced at Swords.

Little is known about the exact type of monastic buildings at this time. It is generally accepted that the builders or makers of the church would use the materials nearest to hand and this was often timber which was plentiful not only in the Fingal area, but throughout most of the country and used by the people for their own dwellings. Timber was used for the posts and other main structures, hazel and willow as well as other pliable materials were used to weave the panels of the walls and roof structure. Clay was used to cover the wicker work and reeds or shingles were used for roof covering. These building material

(Fig. 4) Enclosure at Lusk





used until at least the middle of the tenth century. Due to the perishable nature of these materials the various Annals contain records of the total destruction of the monastic settlements. They were used up to at least the middle of the tenth century. .In Lusk the first recorded destruction was in 825 A.D. when the church was destroyed by the Norsemen. This destruction continued until the twelfth century. The importance of this settlement is emphasised by a fair which was held in Lusk from as early as 800 A.D. The fair provided a sales outlet for the craftworkers and other skilled people of the area, people also found it attractive to live and work within the environs of the monastery. Gradually the fair would have developed into a proper market , with a fixed market place. There is known to have been a cross at Lusk which is referred to in the fifteenth century. It was probably the market cross which would most likely have been situated in the triangular area east of the entrance into the graveyard.

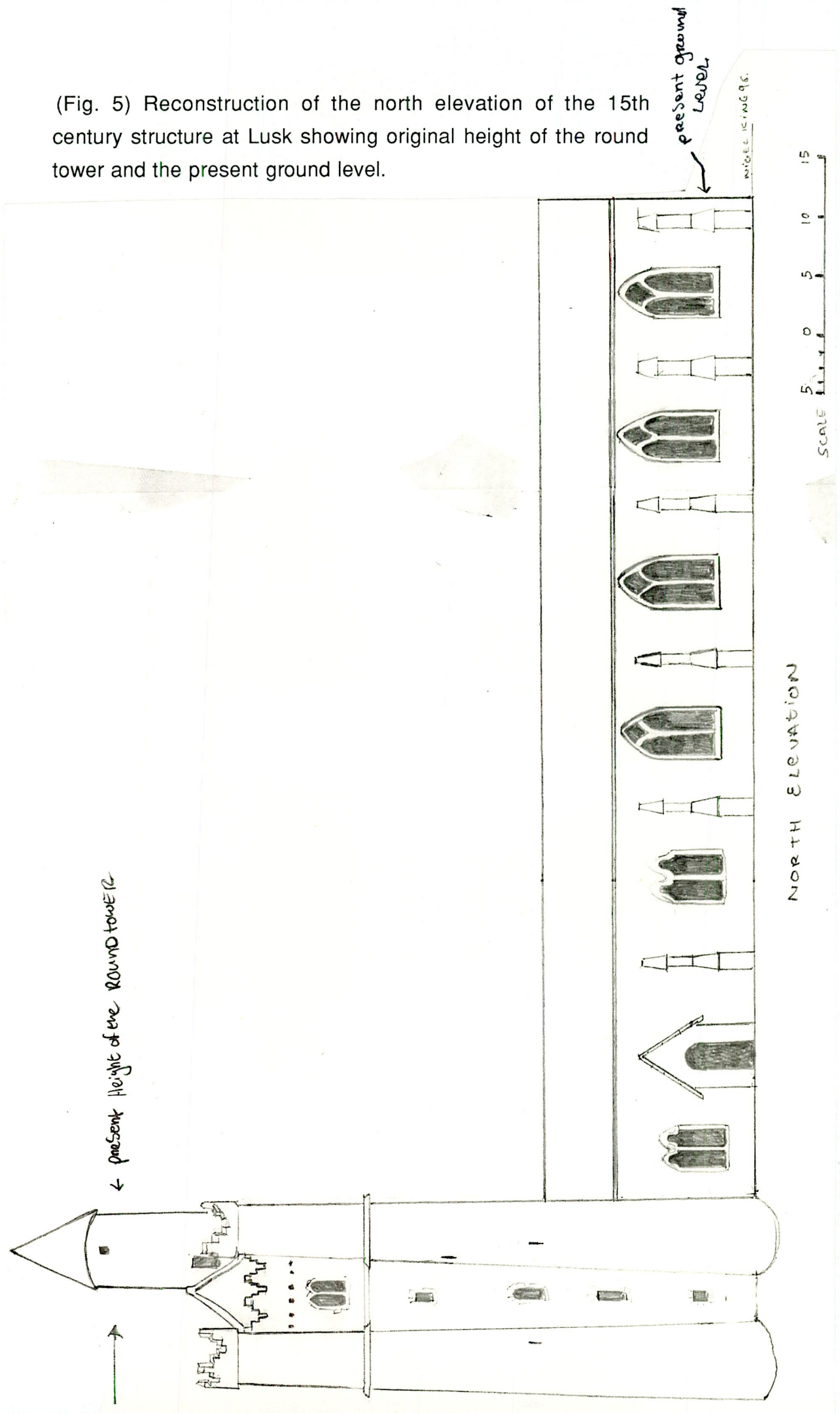
Lusk is thought to have acquired its first stone church in 1053 , and if this is true it would have probably have been one of the first in the country and, most likely the first in Fingal. Evidence of stone architecture from this period can only be seen in the survival of beehive huts or clochans and small oratories in the southwest of Ireland and other windswept areas which would not have been able to develop structures made of wood, but where stone was in abundance. Frequent raids by foreigners in the ninth and tenth centuries must have led to the replacement of perishable buildings materials with stone and lime mortar. The use of mortar made it possible to construct corbelled roofs of straight form, triangular within as well as without. An example of this can be seen at St. Lua's church, Killaloe which measures 6.5 feet across with the slope of the roof 3 foot in thick. The mortar gave the stone mason more roof stability and strength. The result was buildings with thinner walls and bigger interiors compared to those made as dry-



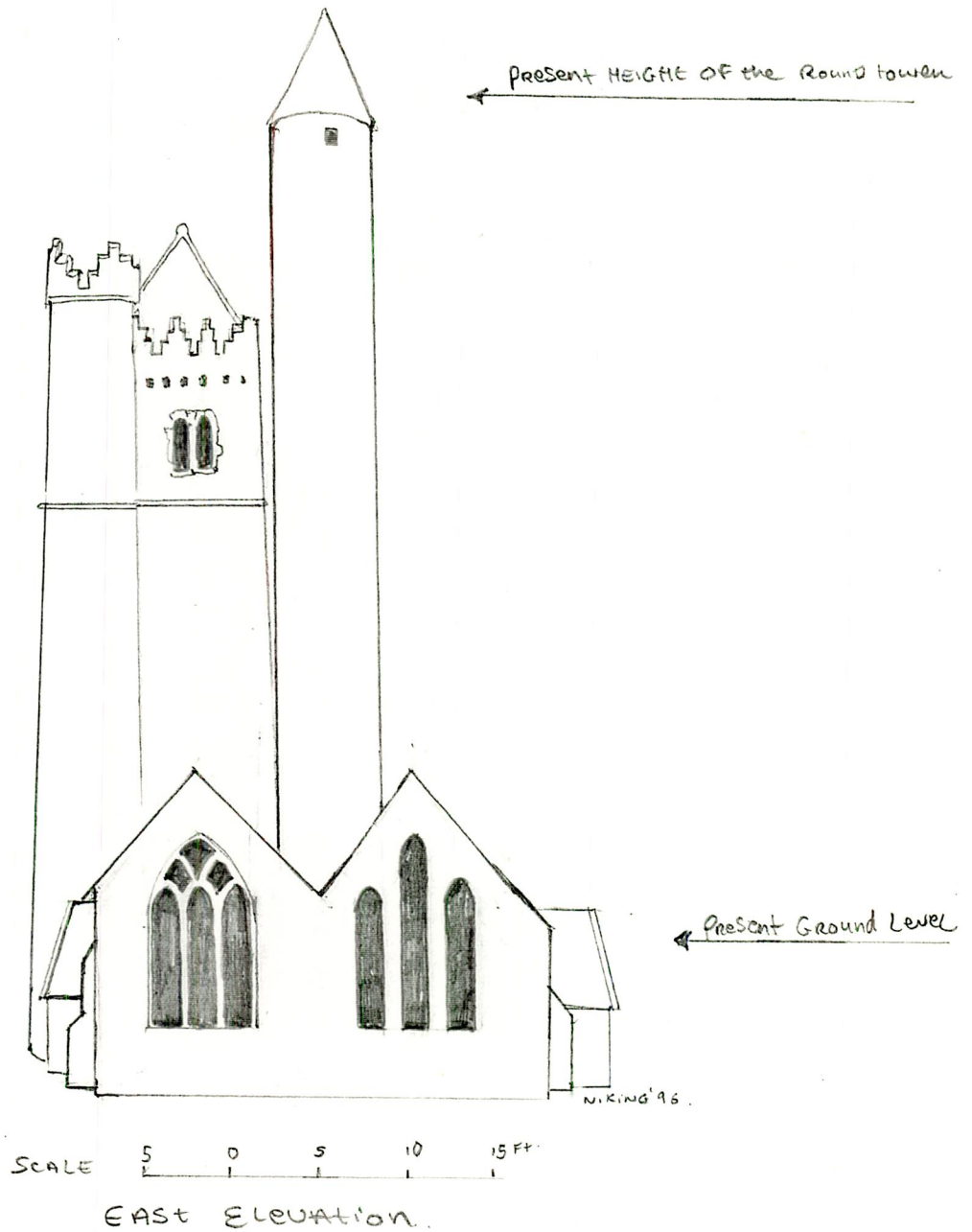
stone structures like the oratory of Gallarus. The first type of stone churches built with mortar probably could have been seen at Lusk. Although no remains exist today on the site at Lusk of the earlier church, we can assume that it would have been on or near the site of the present church, as invariably at other monastic settlements the round tower is located with the west of the church facing the door of the round tower.

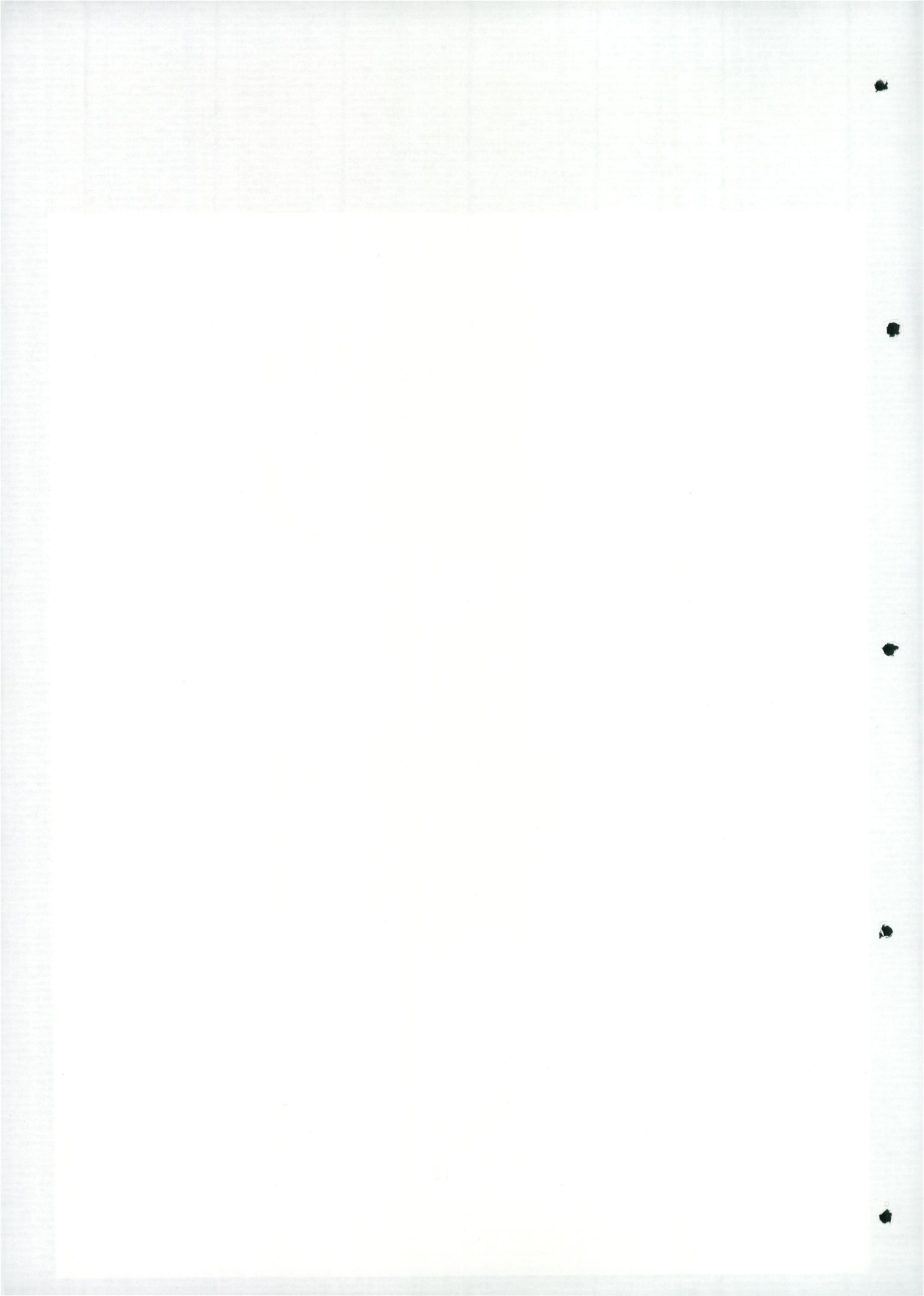
The first pictures of the 15th Century church at Lusk were taken by G. Petrie in 1819 and in 1833. A view from the north may be seen in the Irish Penny Magazine of May 11 of 1833. (Fig33) The old church which can be seen here was in use up until 1847. It consisted of two long aisles divided by a range of seven pointed arches. It was 156 Ft. long and 39 Ft. wide. (Figs.5-8) When Austin Cooper wrote about it in 1783, he stated that four of the seven arches were blocked up and that there were in the south aisle six handsome glazed Gothic windows and there was also a small porch (BARROW, 1979 , P. 83). He also said that the ancient church, built about the fifteenth century to the east of the massive tower, seems in position and that the architecture seems to have resembled the church of St. Audoen in Dublin when it was in its full glory. The church was in ruins, at the time when Mr. Cooper wrote the aisles at Lusk were blocked up and were used as a lumber room. In the aisle there were various ancient tombs and a hideous stone figure reputed to be a stone idol, formerly worshipped by the pagan Danes of this area. Stories are told of a past vicar of the parish who secretly buried the stone idol, because he thought that that it might lead the people of the district back to their ancient paganism (MONKS, P. 86). It has been described by Cooper as representing the human features in a fancifull hideous manner, the face being about seven inches broad and the head without a neck or a body attached to a pair of kneeling thighs and legs. It is accepted that this was a shelagh na gig. He also described the building as twice the size of the

(Fig. 5) Reconstruction of the north elevation of the 15th century structure at Lusk showing original height of the round tower and the present ground level.

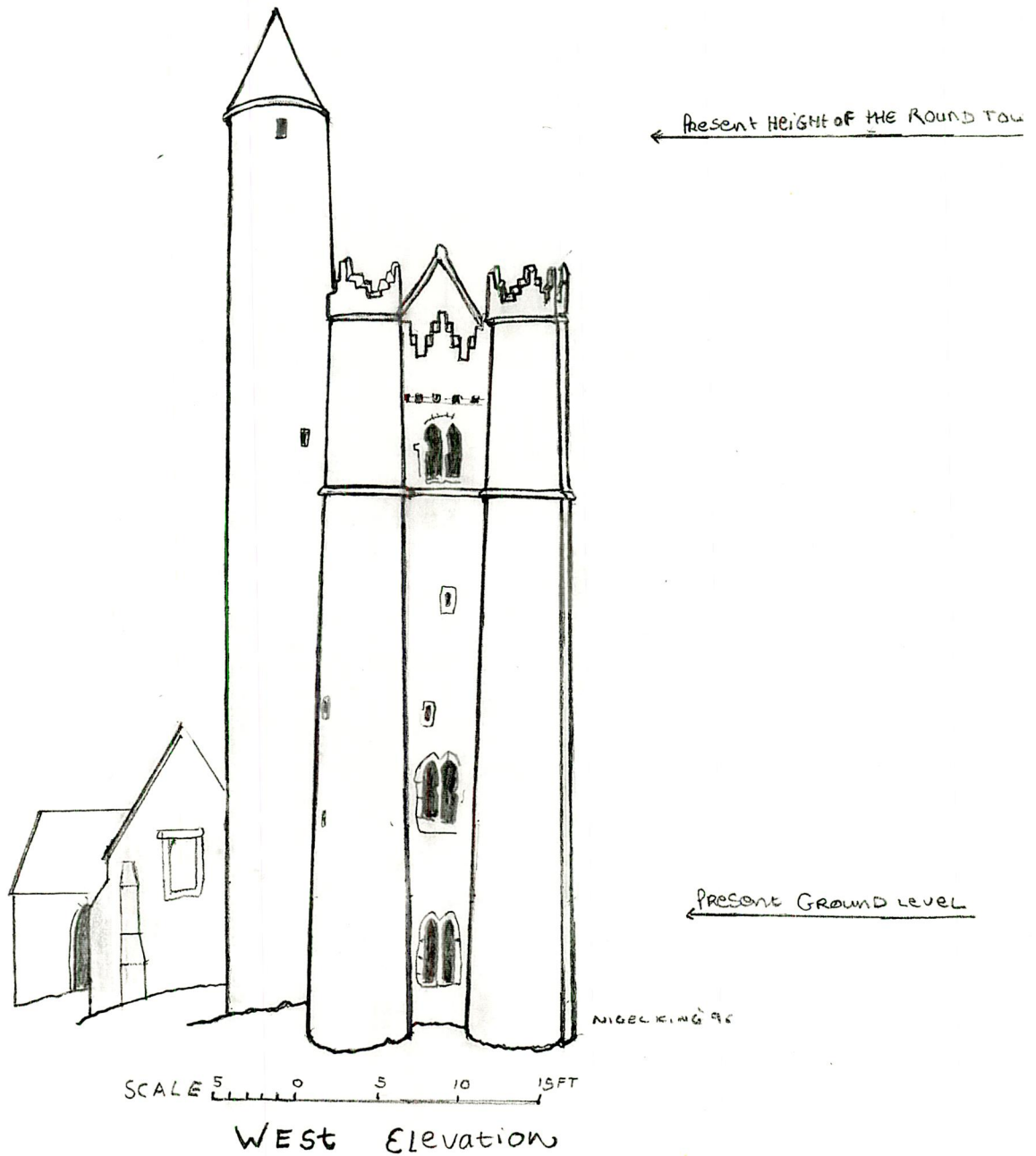


(Fig 6) Reconstruction of the east elevation of 15th century structure at Lusk showing original height of the round tower and present ground level.





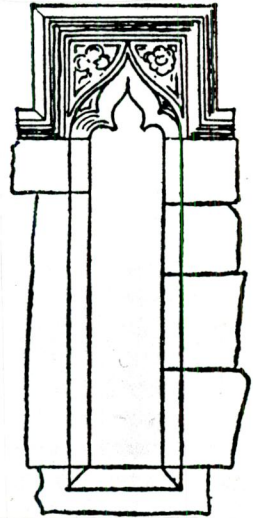
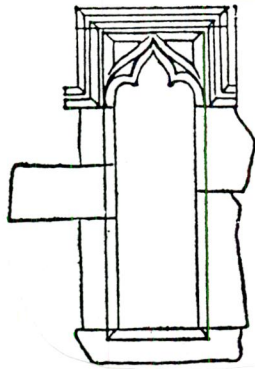
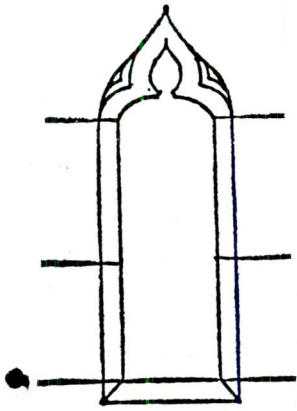
(Fig. 7) Reconstruction of the west elevation of the 15th century structure at Lusk showing the height of the round tower and present ground level.



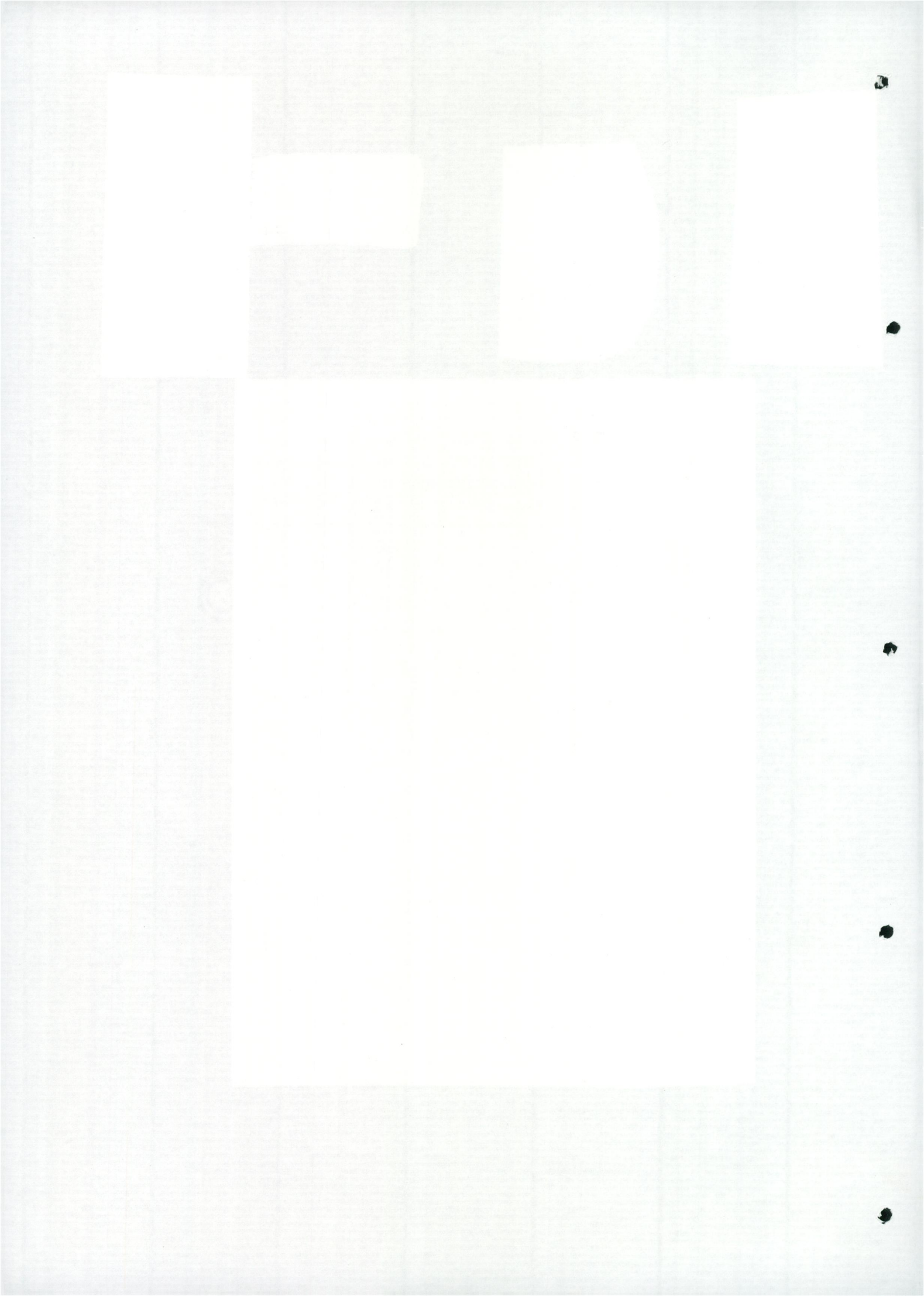
present church and as being a waste, only used as a burial place in the same manner as the church yard: "consequently it is all rubbish, bones, skulls etc... only preserved entire by a good roof covering the whole"(BARROW, 1979 P.85). The old church was probably built at same time as the square belfry and it is thought that it could have been built in different stages because of the different style of windows it possesses in the old drawings. We can see in the old church evidence of two pairs of square top ogee-headed windows and four examples of a switch line, Y-shaped tracery windows.(Fig.6) There is not enough evidence from the sketches of the old church to see any fine decoration or detail which may have been an element of the windows in their original state, or indeed of any other part of the church. The evidence of a switch line Y-shaped tracery windows on the north elevation (Figs.7-8) and the more elaborate tracery design on the east elevation provoke an interesting discussion about the date of the church. The design of each mullion, branches into curves of exactly the same radius as the enclosing arch against which each curved bar terminates. This tracery design, because of its simplicity, is thought to date from the early 1400's. More flamboyant and elaborate designs of the curvilinear style only appear in the later buildings of the fifteenth century. Examples of this kind of tracery are called 'intersecting bars' or 'switchlines'. Switchline tracery was to become the standard form for windows of two or more panes. Examples of mid-thirteenth century tracery possess much thicker mullions than the more elaborate versions of the fifteenth century. An example of a surviving tracery of this kind can be seen in the east windows of the three chapels of the large transept added to Castledermot friary church, which appears to be the earliest Irish example of three light windows (which may date back to 1302, when the church was well-endowed, LEASK, Vol 2, 1966, p.125) (Fig.9). The tracery, or open stonework, as then described, made an appearance in Ireland (from the influences by English



(Fig.8) Ogee headed windows. (LEASK. 1966 P. 124)



(Pl.1) Castledermot Friary church. (LEASK, 1966, P. 163).



architecture) just before the middle of the thirteenth century, with a marked increase in the width of the window. The roof of this church was blown off in the great storm of January 1839 which is still being talked about today within the parish. This left it in ruins, and it was destroyed to make way for the present church. The old church had strong architectural links with the church at Duleek Co. Meath which will be discussed later.

Of the old monastic settlement at Lusk, there is only one survivor, the round tower which is a source of great pride in the district. The importance of round towers or the Cloig teach as some may say, can be seen in the Annals, the only historical record of these times. There are twenty three entries directly referring to them. Of these entries, one speaks about a death of a builder (Tuamgrainey 964), one to a killing in a round tower (Kells 1075), another to a completion of one (Clonmacnoise 1124) and the next thirteenth entries refer to accidents or damage caused by fire or storm. The last reference is to a construction of a round tower, they appear to be no further writing on the subject until the seventeenth century where we can see drawings and descriptions. 1699 provides the earliest known drawing of Antrim's round tower in the Lhuyd collection. The first description dates to 1725 by Thomas Molyneux professor of Physics in Dublin University, in an article concerning Danish Mounts, Forts and Towers in Ireland. (Barrow, 1979, p.20) Since that time keen historians have been adding their opinions, facts and sketches. The one name which stands out on the subject is George Petrie, who wrote the book entitled "The ecclesiastical architecture of Ireland anterior to the Norman invasion,". There have been many writers since then who have documented round towers.

The book which has the most descriptive information and the one I will be using is Barrow's book, a complete documented history of all the sixty seven towers which are in existence in some shape or form in Ireland.



(Barrow 1979, p.20)

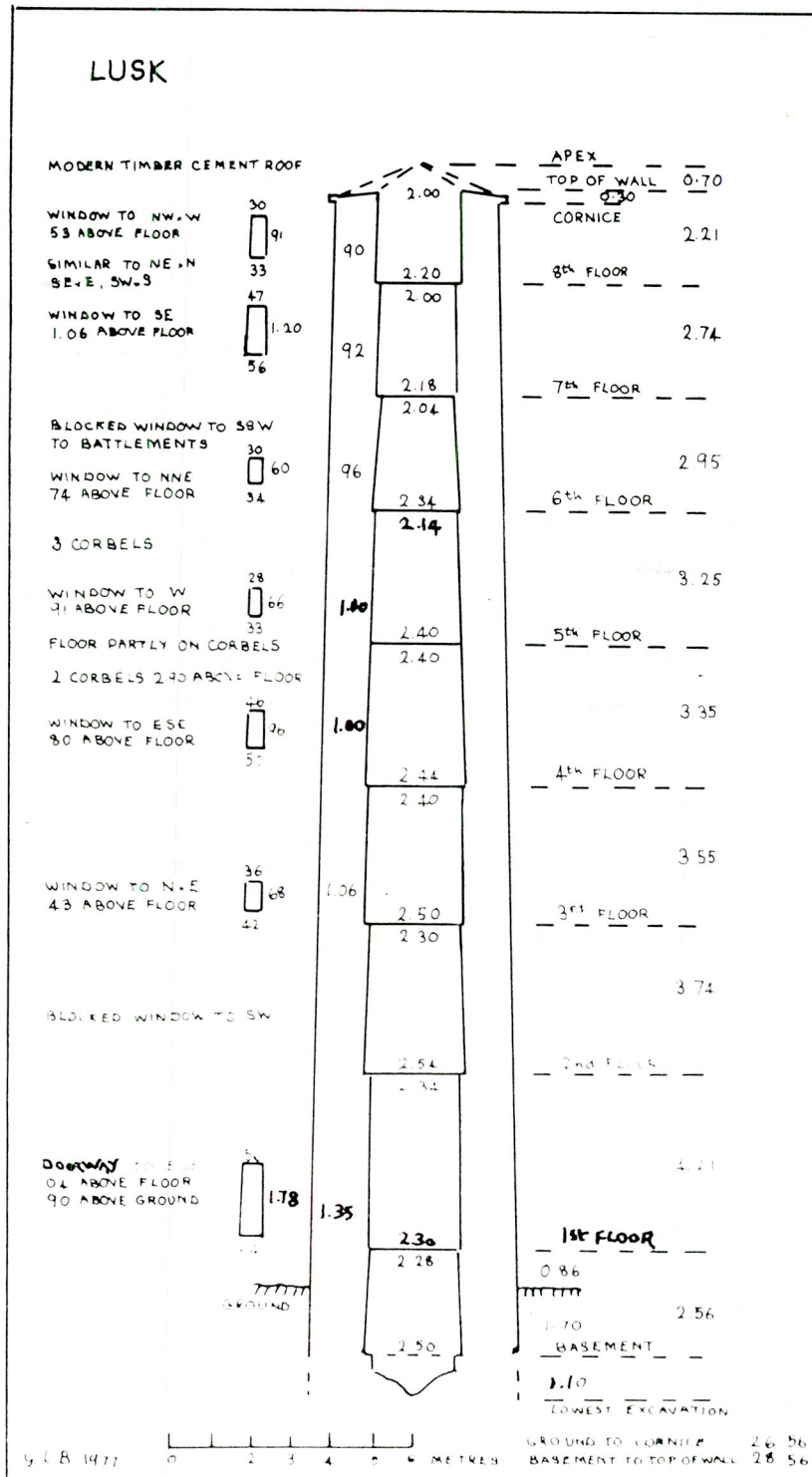
Round towers are a tradition of early monastic times. It is thought that the technique used was derived from the post Roman world in Britain, because of the close contact Ireland had with south Wales and the Severn Valley, and St. Ninians monastery on the shores of the Solway firth in Galloway. The missionaries at this time would have been familiar with Roman masonry which can still be seen today in these parts. In the small portion of Hadrian's wall which is left we can see the use of mortar and stone, and if we applied this to the early Irish building style it would have made it possible for the construction of round towers. The technique used in Hadrian's wall consists of a concrete core of small stones and mortar set between two walls of evenly dressed stones in regular courses, corresponding exactly to the method of building which can be seen in a cross section of a round tower. The similarity of the method of construction suggests that they were built by a team who travelled from place to place, similar to the medieval cathedral builders in Europe. Old folk tales attribute the building to Goban Saor, but whoever built them, they are the works of a genius because they still stand today. As to why they were erected we can only guess. Some say that they were used as burial graves, but there is not enough evidence, a few bones found beneath the towers of Kilkenny and Kilmacduagh which date to a much earlier time. It has also been thought that they were pagan, thus being of a different period. It has been suggested that the origin of these towers was allied to the founding of the monasteries, but then it would have advertised to the invaders a Christian centre of primary importance to the society and thus a primary target. If, as the name tells us in Irish, Cloig theach meaning bell house, hand bell were rung from the tops of the towers. We know that hand bells were used in Irish monasteries and that large bells were definitely hung in many towers in later times, but records indicate that there did

not reach Ireland until the twelfth century. The likely reason for why the towers were constructed was an answer to the Viking assaults. This is very questionable. If the towers are thought to have been built around the ninth century and one must look at this in terms of the Viking activities in and around Dublin. Lusk, Swords, St. Michael Le Pole and Clondalkin were at the centre of Viking initial assaults when they were first recorded in and around the 790's and it was also known that by the 840's the Vikings had control of Dublin. It is a more persuasive suggestion to my mind that the round towers, especially the towers along the east coast date to a much earlier time. This would also clarify the unmistakably primitive quality which they possess. What we do know is that security was a primary consideration of the designers when developing these almost impregnable structures. This can be seen at a glance in the thickness of the walls and the access to the door in position to the ground. We know also from the Annals that they were used for ferugue, but the window size suggest that they were not used for defence. Corbels on the inside can tell us that they used for storage of the monasteries possessions such as manuscripts...etc.

The round tower at Lusk, which is divided into eight storeys plus a basement, is complete to the cornice with internal floors and ladders, giving it a greater number of levels than any other tower around.(Fig.9) It now possesses a trap door which leads to the basement The masonry inside and out is well worked and closely jointed. The sill of the doorway is now 90cm. above the ground. The diameter at that height is 5.06 metres, making the circumference which cannot be measured directly approximately 16 metres. At the top windows the diameter is 4 metres showing a reduction in diameter of 1.08 m, and the Batter (which is an inclination of a wall inwards towards the top) is regular from the ground to the cornice. The tower was measured by the Office of Public. Work's before the grills were attached to the windows and was 26.56 metres. The

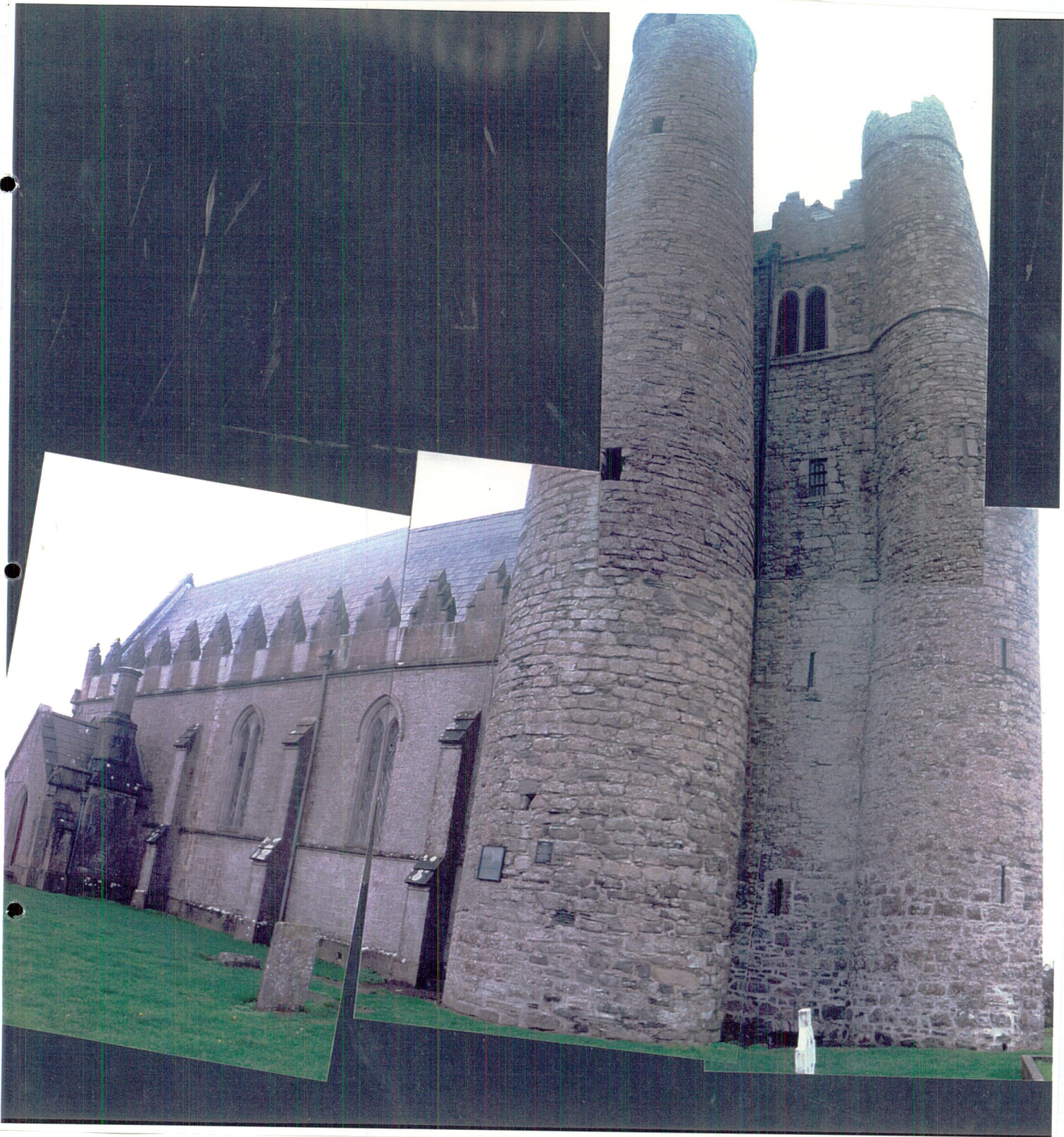


(Fig.9) Interior of the belfry and round tower at Lusk. (BARROW, 1979 P.85)





(Pl. 2) Round tower at Lusk.





O.P.W.'s plans also shows the tower slightly leaning to the east , so much so that the top of the tower is vertically over the foundation on that side. The ground has risen considerably now being 1.7 metres above the basement floor. There is an external offset, this would have probably been the original level. The sill of the doorway is now 90cm. from the present ground but would have been originally anything from 2.6 metres up to four metres up. The height of the round tower from the basement to the top of the normal cap stone before they replaced the top with a cement coated roof in the nineteenth century would have been 32.8 Metres. The highest tower which is standing today is in Kilmacduagh at 34.28 metres (which is measured from the offset), round towers range in heights between 25 metres and 35 metres .

In 1877, when O' Neill wrote about the tower, the interior was full up to the bottom of the doorway with earth. It is thought that it was dug out shortly after that but there is no record of this excavation nor any account that it was ever done. The basement floor is indicated by an offset 15-20 cms. wide which is 1.70 cm. below the present ground. This was the original level and is the same level as the floor at the basement of the belfry. 60 cm. below this again the walls narrow in where one can see the beginning of the foundation of large under cut stones. The full internal height from basement floor to the wall is 28.56 metres and each storey as it rises decreases in size at every floor level except the fifth which is set back by an offset which is between 2-10 cm. wide on which the next floor rests. The fifth floor has a ring projection of corbels. There are two individual corbels projecting from the wall in the fourth floor and three on the fifth, with one of them hooked and has a shape similar to three others seen in the tower at Devenish Co. Fermanagh. The other in the corner of the window is only 90 cm. above the floor indicating that this was probably used for fixing scaffolding or for supporting a hoist. Other round towers have holes surviving on the external walls which may have

been used as putlocks for the use of scaffolding. It is possible that internal corbels were used to hang satchels and may indicate that the monastic treasures were kept in the towers. The doorway has a straight single stone lintel or trabeate facing E.S.E.. It is now fitted with a door, (Petrie's drawing from the nineteenth century reveals no door.) . The stone used in the doorway is of porphyritic stone (Wilson) and has the jambs in level course. The windows are square headed with inclined jambs and they all narrow slightly outwards. In the second storey the window into the belfry facing south is covered up and expanded and would have allowed access between the two towers. O' Neill states that it was still blocked up by 1877 (Barrow, 1985. P. 8529). Outside of the blocked up portion can be seen in the small section of the wall of the round tower that is visible through an opening in the wall of the belfry in the North East corner at the first floor. On the sixth floor also (Pl. 5) there is another blocked window facing S.S.W. which could give access from that floor to the battlements, and was still open in 1845 when Wilson wrote about the church. The unusually large window in the seventh storey is sometimes described as an insertion to lead on to the battlements. This is an obvious mistake, confusing the one at the sixth storey(BARROW, 1979. P.85). This build up of materials is often attributed to the accumulation of later burials and decay but there has been no excavation done on any tower with similar position to confirm this. the most likely explanation would be that the ground level would have been raised when they built the present church. This is also visible with the fifteenth century belfry where one thinks the ground level is in line with the ground floor of the church, but it is actually the first floor. The basement is the ground level outside the ground goes right up to the top of the window frames which was not intended. More evidence to prove this point is that in the present church there is a considerable gap between the floor boards and the ground level. It is as if they built the church up higher than it should



have been in order to link in the first floor of the belfry.

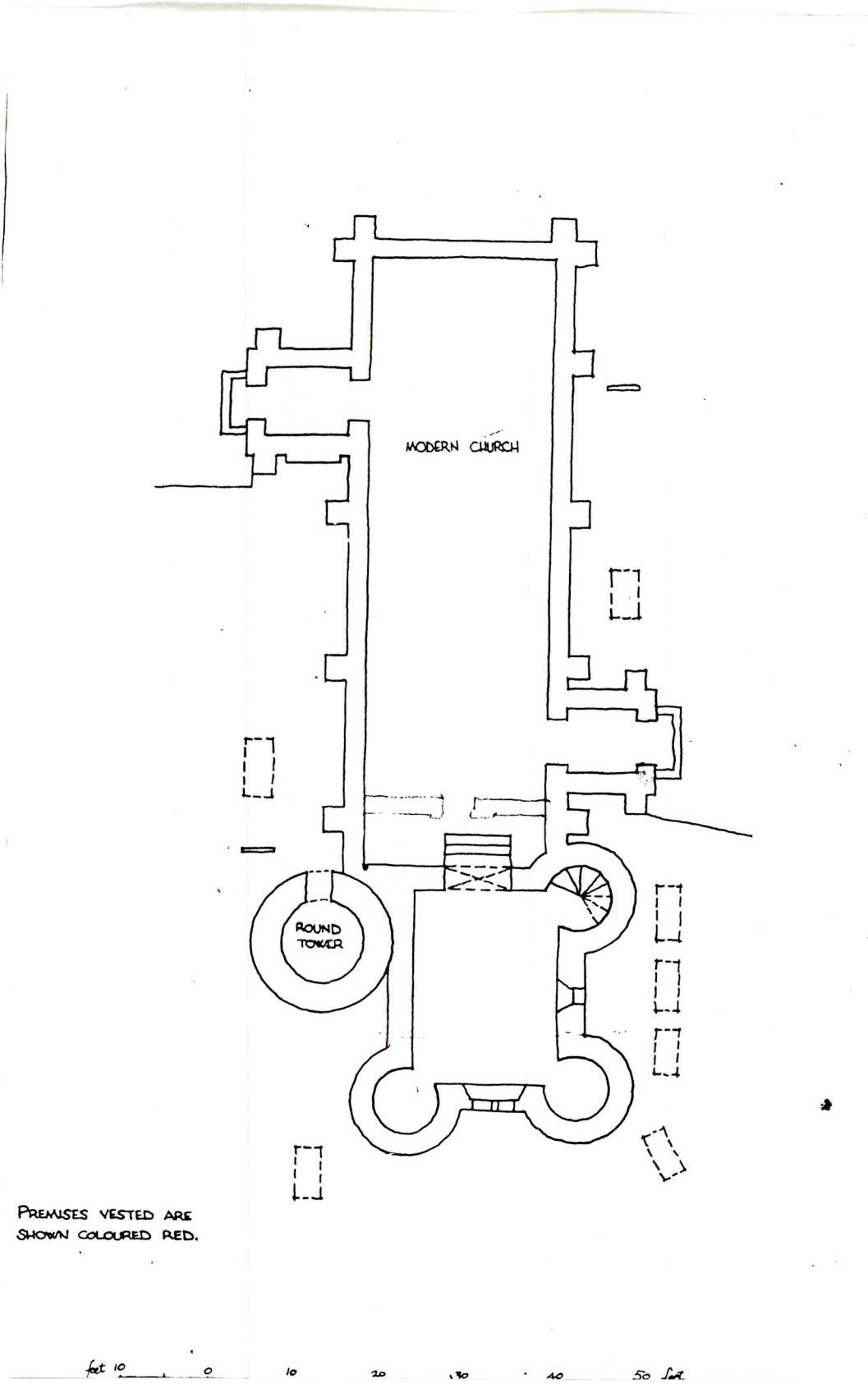
There is no evidence as to what date the tower is but it is thought that it dates to an earil period because of its monastic function and proximity to the sea. When the Vikings came to Ireland and first landed off Lambay island just up the coast of Portrane, it is said that they anchored their long ships in the back wash at Rush a half of a mile from Lusk. It is thought for this reason that the lusk tower dates from prior to the ninth century. Some say perhaps the fifth (Barrow), while others suggest it was built in the troubled periods of the eighth century.

Lusk was definitely in the line of fire for a very long time, so much so that this would probably explain the striking characteristics that this building has, it being primarily designed for defense. In order to understand the reason why the Anglo Normans built such a structure one must understand what was going on at that time, not only in Fingal, but within Ireland as a whole.

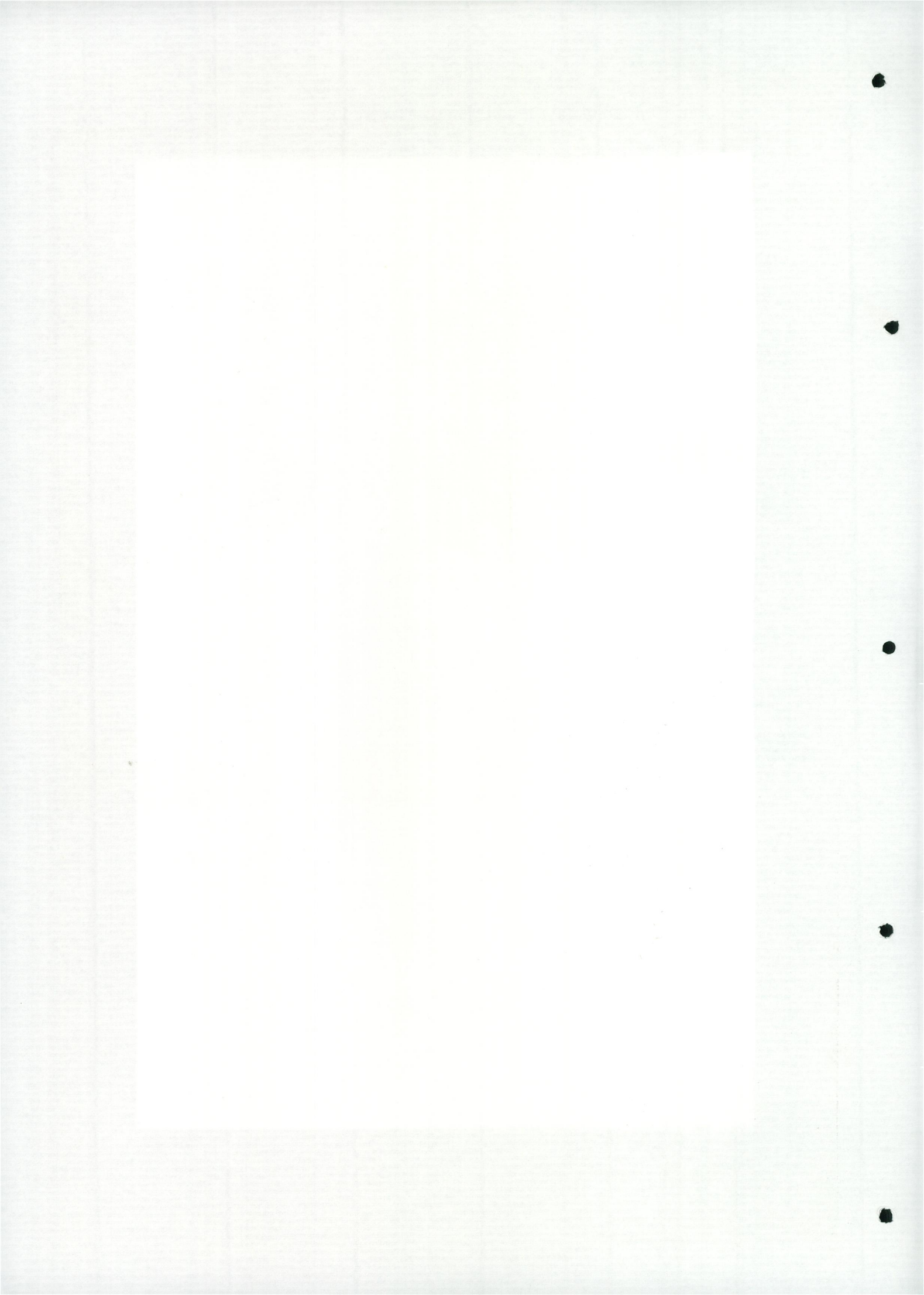
The present Gothic style church is half the size of the old church, measuring approximately 78 ft by 26 ft. The shape of the church indicates that the architect was aware of the design of the old church, and took this into account in his design of the new church. It displays the success of the architect in incorporating the structure of a modern building into that of a medieval belfry. Similarities between the new and the old church include the twin porches (Fig.10), and the lancets on the east elevation of the churches, which comprise of three tall lancets with the tallest in the centre (Fig.6 and plate 1). All of the lancets on the modern church, which include the triple on the east face and the pairs on the north and south faces, present a simple but yet attractive design, with rope-like qualities on the stops of the hood mouldings (these are the points at which hood mouldings terminate, usually projecting slightly with carved of knots and human heads). The three lancets on the present church are situated above the site of the



(Fig. 10) Plan of the site at Lusk. (O.P.W.)



PREMISES VESTED ARE
SHOWN COLOURED RED.



(Pl. 3) Picture of the present church at Lusk





old altar, and consist of panels of stained glass (pl. no.4). The church also possesses two strips of small multi-stepped battlements each side of the roof, these are of the same style as the circular multi-stepped battlements on the belfry, although these are purely decorative as they have no walkway. The multi-stepped buttresses complement the battlements on the church and the belfry and together with the string course, which is situated underneath the window cill, fullfil their role in giving life to the building and indicating strength as well as beauty



(Pl. 4) Stained glass in the present church at Lusk.





Chapter 3

CASTLE BUILDING IN THE ANGLO NORMAN WORLD

One of the main strategies of the Anglo Normans was that "You fortified to advance, you fortified to consolidate and you fortified for the future." In George Cunningham's book we hear of a Norman called Giraldus who wrote about how the country would have been successfully and effectively subdued by the construction of castles from coast to coast and of how the natives must be hemmed in by castles. (P.68)

"A sensible man should secure his position in time of peace and make preparations to counter the dangers of war with which he is always threatened, by building castles and enlarging the forest roads" (Cunningham, G. P.69)

This chapter will discuss the reasons why the Anglo Normans favoured Lusk for its moate-like characteristics to build such a powerful stronghold. When the Normans came to the Pale, buildings of mortared stone would have taken several years of relatively peaceful conditions to construct, and this did not happen until decades after the invasion. The first castles which the Normans built to maintain their stronghold were mostly hasty constructions using earth and wood. The earliest evidence of Norman building around this period is the remains of moates or steeply sided flat topped mounds usually made with an outer enclosure or surrounding ditch. The greatest advantage to a moate is the speed at which it can be constructed, compared to that of a castle even though it requires the handling of hundreds of tonnes of earth. The moate served as the mainline of defence. The enclosure was the quickest way to defend oneself and one's property. Even in earlier times we can see the remains of raths, a similar structure with over 30,000 examples in Ireland. Moates were constructed in various places and periods between the arrival



of the Anglo Normans and the first quarter of the thirteenth century. Now only vague traces remain and we can offer no chronology arising from the surviving features of the moates. Commonly a moate bore a wooden house or tower. This formed the landlords residence and within the outer enclosure usually there was a base court which contained a hall chapel, kitchen, stables, barns, and workshops. This was normally defended by a rampart bearing a stockade and a ditch.

Natural features such as promontories or glacial mounds were used and also they favoured ancient burial mounds as at Knowth and other ecclesiastical sites like Lusk, because of the views of the surrounding area which they command and the enclosures which early monastic sites possessed. At this time in Fingal the Anglo Normans were forever pushing the boundaries outward conquering more land. They took over the church (of economic and political reasons) which had the most important role in society at the time and made it conform to their own rules. At Lusk we can see the list of abbots and bishops before the coming of the Normans. The Irish names are in latin and when the Normans came we see new names of abbots and bishops like, Walter, James and Richard around the early twelfth century onwards.

The art of building a moate and bailey which the Anglo Normans brought to Ireland only really started to take off in the mid twelfth century. Medieval writers mention the word "Magnum turre" or "Donjon" when describing a tower. But since the eighteenth century the word "keep" has been in use. A keep is an ultimate strong point, and tower houses which are self contained houses with the main rooms stacked vertically can be seen throughout Ireland. One should note that when the Normans had firmly established themselves in Fingal after it had been granted to Hugh De Lacy by king Henry the second it was known as "The English land" and as it grew it became known as "The English Pale." In the year 1488 it stretched from the north of the Liffey to as far north as six miles north west of



Ardee and as far westward bordering the towns of Clane, Kilkock, Kells, Syddan, and Ardee.

The Lusk medieval belfry is like a keep or a small tower house, the difference being in social class and its function. There is the same vertical hierarchy of space, more or less the same divisions of rooms on different floors and the same curtain wall around it. However the tower house was more of a family house with security being its main function and with decoration incorporated into the structure. It possesses a balance between the domestic and the defensive whereas the keep is primarily a fortified defensive structure. They both have thick walls, tiny windows, battlements, barbicans (Which are turrets corbelled out from the walls usually at the summit) a murder hole over the entrance, and a spiral staircase. They were brought to Ireland and developed within a feudal social system required a fortified residence which would serve as a stronghold. The original design of the keep was just a two storey building, with the lords residence or chamber and private room above the public room. Entrance into most keeps was reached by a timber ladder which would have been drawn in, in times of danger. At Lusk this is visible as the only entrance to the belfry is through the church on the first floor. (Fig. 12)

In the fabric of these rectangular strong houses keeps castle walls etc.. military architects found vulnerable places to attack. It was at the end of the twelfth century that it was discovered that angles in walls especially on the curtain of castles could easily be destroyed. Before the invention of gunpowder of course, it was known that by picking or removing out the quoin, (which is a dressed stone at a corner of a building) and using wooden planks to support the wall and digging underneath the foundation to make a hole so that a fire of brushwood could be lit, would result in the collapse of the unsupported wall. With this technique it was possible to destroy



half of a tower or a wall and it was for this reason, flanking towers were built at strategic points on the curtain wall, usually at the angles and castle builders began to construct drum shaped Turrets at the corner points of Keeps and Stronghouses, like the three we can see at Lusk. In Lusk the structure possesses three turret towers and the original round tower on the corners of the belfry making this particular structure at the site impregnable. This unique defensive structure cannot be seen in any stronghold or keep and only a few Norman castles have a similar shape like, Ferns castle Co. Wexford, Favour Royal Co. Tyrone, Porttara, Co. Fermanagh and Roughan castle. Most keeps and strongholds only possess one circular turret at the corner, that being for the winding staircase.

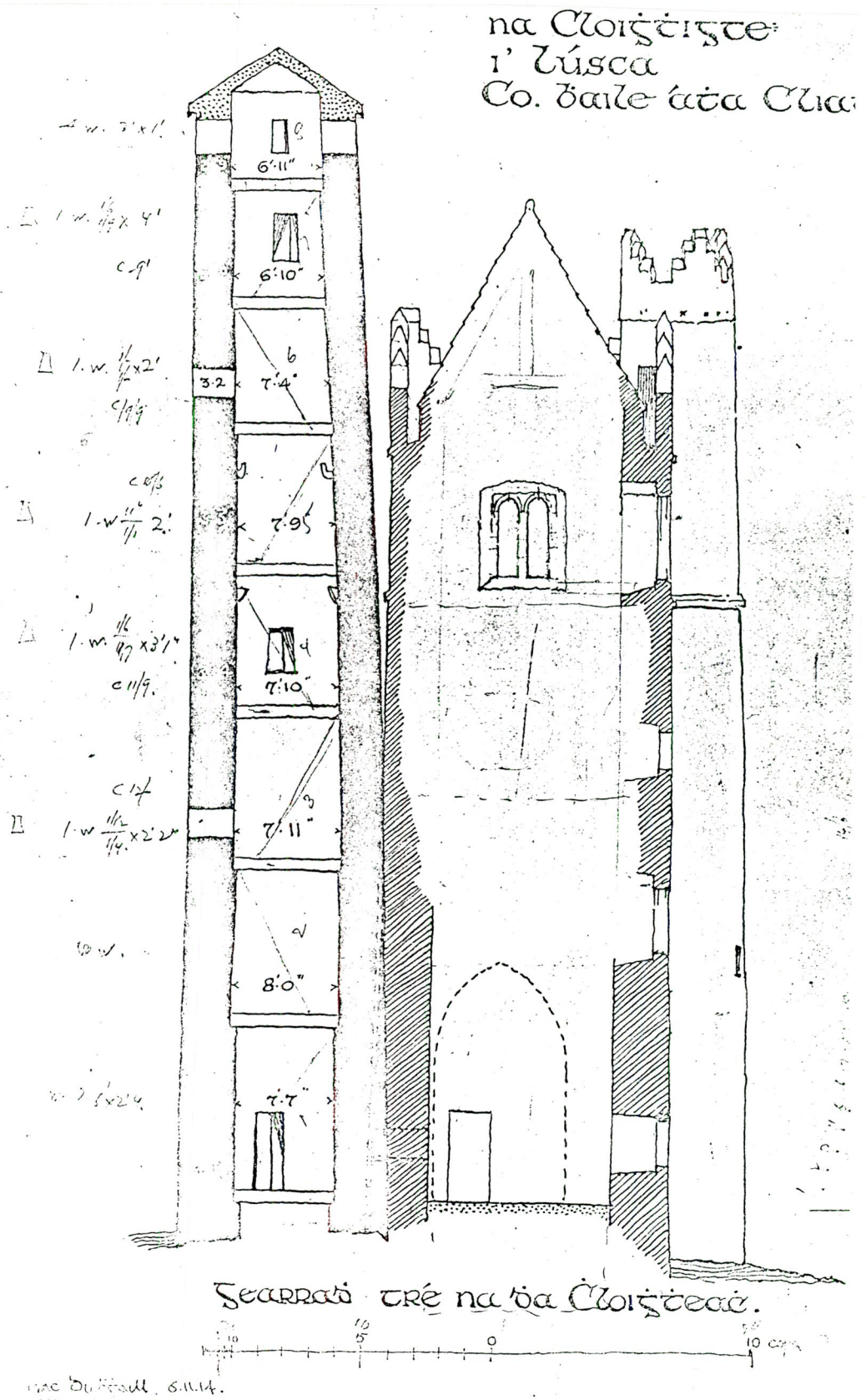
Battlements with their indented skyline or crenellation have become a characteristic of castles and tower house alike. The parapet wall rising above the roof gave shelter to defenders and bowmen during attacks. Behind them was a walkway, a passage along the top of the wall. Its width is usually the thickness of the wall less the parapet. In the fifteenth century a picturesque form of crenellation called the stepped battlement came into use, this type can be seen on most of the buildings within the Pale, at Swords, Duleek and Balrothery. At Lusk we can see at the tops of the D-shaped Turrets circular stepped battlements. The origin of stepped battlements is not known. They can be found in the extreme south west of France and near Spain in Catalonia. Dr. Harold Leask suggests that this style was brought into Ireland by Irish builders or patrons who visited the Shrine of St. James at Compostella which was a popular place for pilgrimage (Leask, 1966 Vol 2 P.152). Building activity declined around the fourteenth century because of the outbreak of the Black Death. When the Irish recovered in the fifteenth century the Anglo Normans were too busy fighting the French and hence during this time the growth

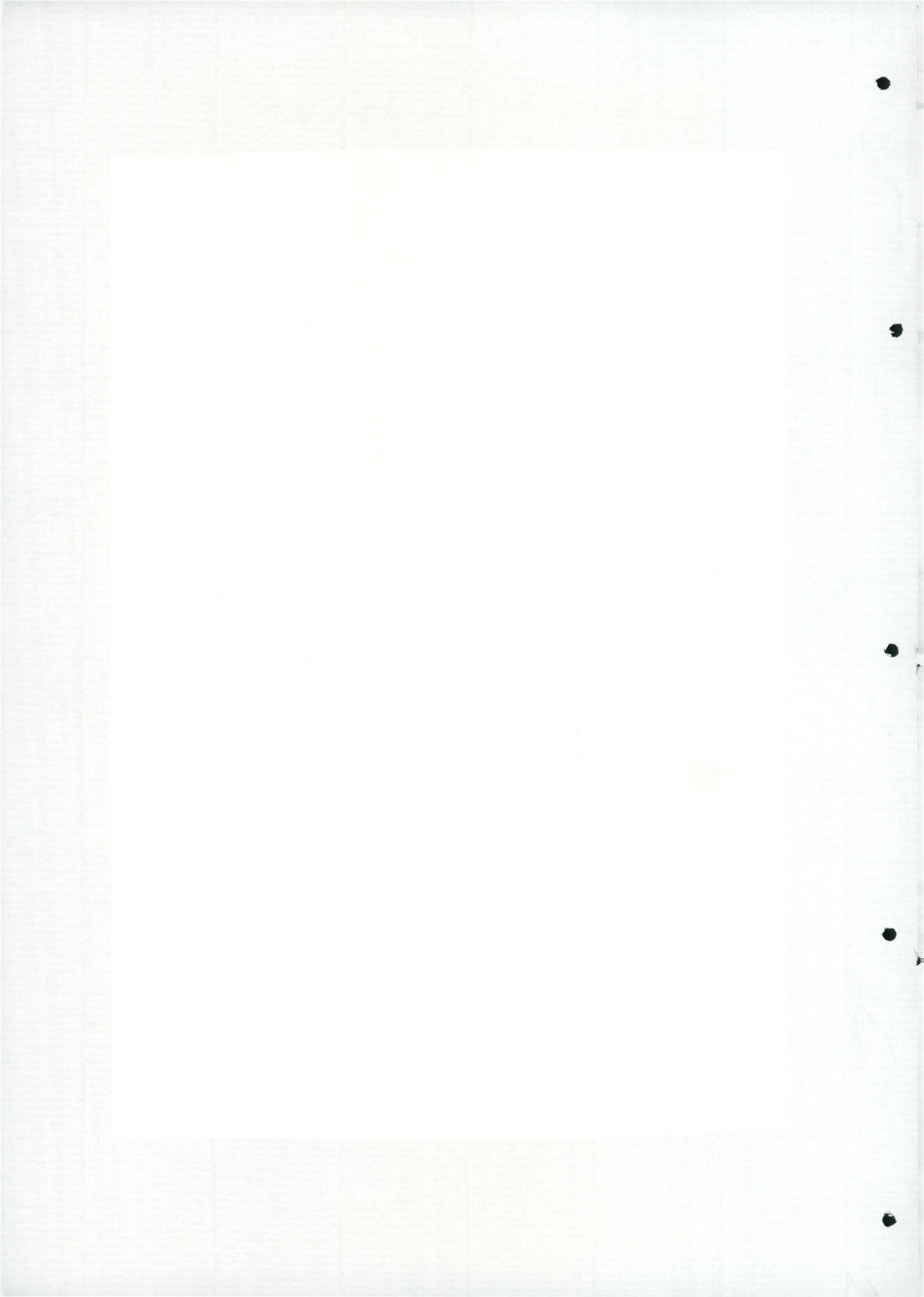
in the power of the Irish rulers increased. Mobile heavy artillery at the end of the sixteenth century saw the end of castle buildings which were otherwise thought to be impregnable. Cromwell's custom which was to dismantle a castle after taking it was to break the parapets and the defence wall to show the uselessness of stone buildings in the face of the cannon fire.

The medieval tower at Lusk is thought to date from between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and has four floors. The belfrey possesses pairs of lancet windows which even though they emerge to a point at the top, are quite round headed. Lancets are narrow windows with pointed heads, or with an equilateral arch. These simple gothic style pointed windows which the Cistercians introduced in the twelfth century are narrow and usually tall. They did not vanish from the Irish churches with the coming of more elaborated forms during fifteenth Century, and so we can see the frequent use of them in pairs and triples throughout Irish Church building up till the present day.



(Fig. 12) Interior of the Belfry and round tower. O.P.W.





Why were fortified buildings constructed in areas of Norman rule? To understand this we must look at the position they put the native Irish in .

When the Anglo Normans took the Pale in 1171 with the defeat of the Dane, Hamund Mac the Normans became rulers of the district. The policy of the Anglo Normans when they firmly established themselves in the area was to conquer the surrounding land. In the space of five years all the district had been allocated to the officers who used force in order to settle on rich soil, building forts and strongholds and evicting the Irish. Some of the fortifications erected were at Malahide, Dunbro, Kilsalaghan, The Ward, Balrothery, Bremore, Naul, Holmpatrick, Portrane, Balgriffin and West Paulstown. One of the earliest efforts of the Normans within the Pale was to Anglicise every Irishman who lived in it. The law of 1465 stated that,

" He shall go like an Englishman in apparel and shaving off his beard above his mouth, and shall be within one year sworn the liege man of the King, shall take to him an English name of one town as Sutton, Chester, Trim, Scrine, Cork, Kinsale or a colour carpenter or Office as Cook, Butler etc... and he and his issue shall use this name under pain of forfeiting his goods, (Archer, 1975 P.61).

They took everything from the Irish, their religion, their land and made them live under their rule, forcing them to embrace a new religion. This must have been devastating to the families who were forced allegiance to English throne. As Lusk was once the most important site within Fingal, it is little wonder that the Normans built it the way they did, because they wanted to secure their hold on it. Fortified churches were a common feature around the fifteenth century within the Anglo Norman kingdom, but most castles and some Keeps had their own chapels. Fortified churches like Clonmacnoise



Co. Offaly, Taghmon Co. Westmeath. On a local level Balrothery and Duleek only display only a fraction of the architectural defence qualities which the contours of this famous church at Lusk command.

Similar Structures

Looking at the Annals of the Four Masters and entries about the church at Lusk one can see strong links between the surrounding monastic sites. In 927 we read about a death of Tuahall son of Mc Oength who was the Bishop of Lusk and of Duleek. We can also see in 965 the death of Alildson of Monenach who was Bishop of Lusk as well as Swords. The church at Duleek possesses very similar architectural qualities to the church at Lusk and at Swords to a lesser extent. The monastic settlement at Duleek is situated approximately fifteen miles as the crow flies in a north easterly direction, or four miles to the south west of Drogheda. It has similar or even more monastic importance than Lusk. The Abbey was built here by St. Patrick who placed Kienan or Cienan over it, who was baptized in the year 450 and who had returned from France where he had been residing and erected a church of lime and stone which was the first in Ireland. It possessed at one point a round tower which is the only evidence that there was a monastic settlement. When the Normans came to Duleek, they built a fourteenth century church with a large nave and south aisle. Dividing these two sections of the church are four Gothic pointed arches similar to the description by Austin Cooper of the old church at Lusk in 1783 except that it had seven pointed arches dividing the two parts of the church and it measured 156 ft. long and 39 ft. wide, whereas in Duleek the church measures approximately 65ft. in length and about 53ft. wide (Fig 13-14). The fifteenth century belfry which is connected to the church has strong architectural links with Lusk. Also the windows on the belfry are a twin pair of Romanesque and ogee headed windows similar to the ones at Lusk. But the most evident similarities are in the remains of the round tower. The belfry obviously has been built to incorporate it in to the tower structure because there is a door that can still be seen within the north wall at a height of 14 metres. This wide open



(Fig. 13) Architectural drawings of the church at Duleek. (O.P.W.)

Duleek

DULEEK CO MEATH

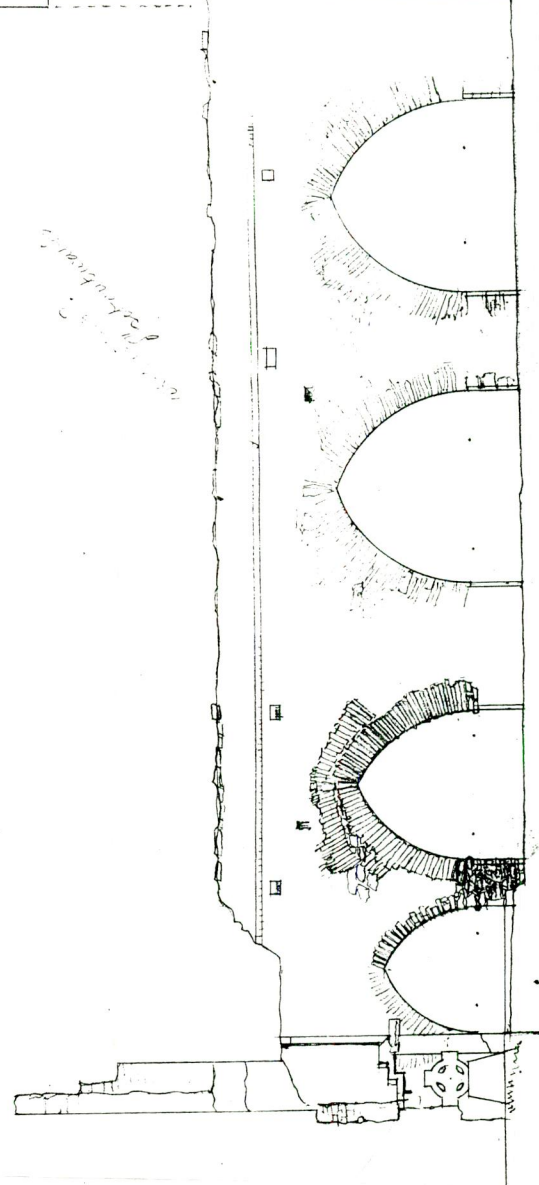
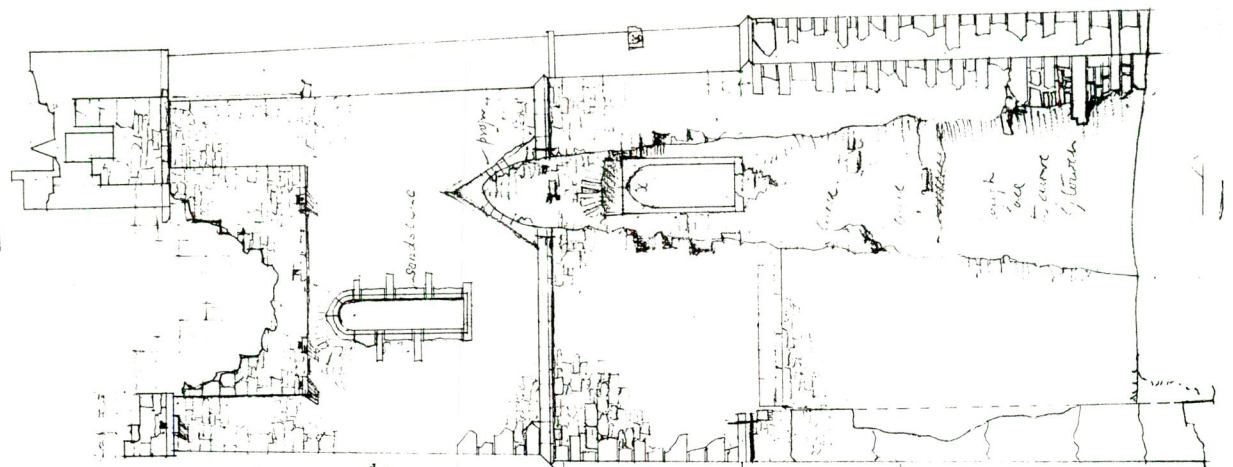
SCALE: 8 FEET TO ONE INCH

North elevation

*1871
1872
1873
1874
1875
1876
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
1885
1886
1887
1888
1889
1890
1891
1892
1893
1894
1895
1896
1897
1898
1899
1900*

*1871
1872
1873
1874
1875
1876
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
1885
1886
1887
1888
1889
1890
1891
1892
1893
1894
1895
1896
1897
1898
1899
1900*

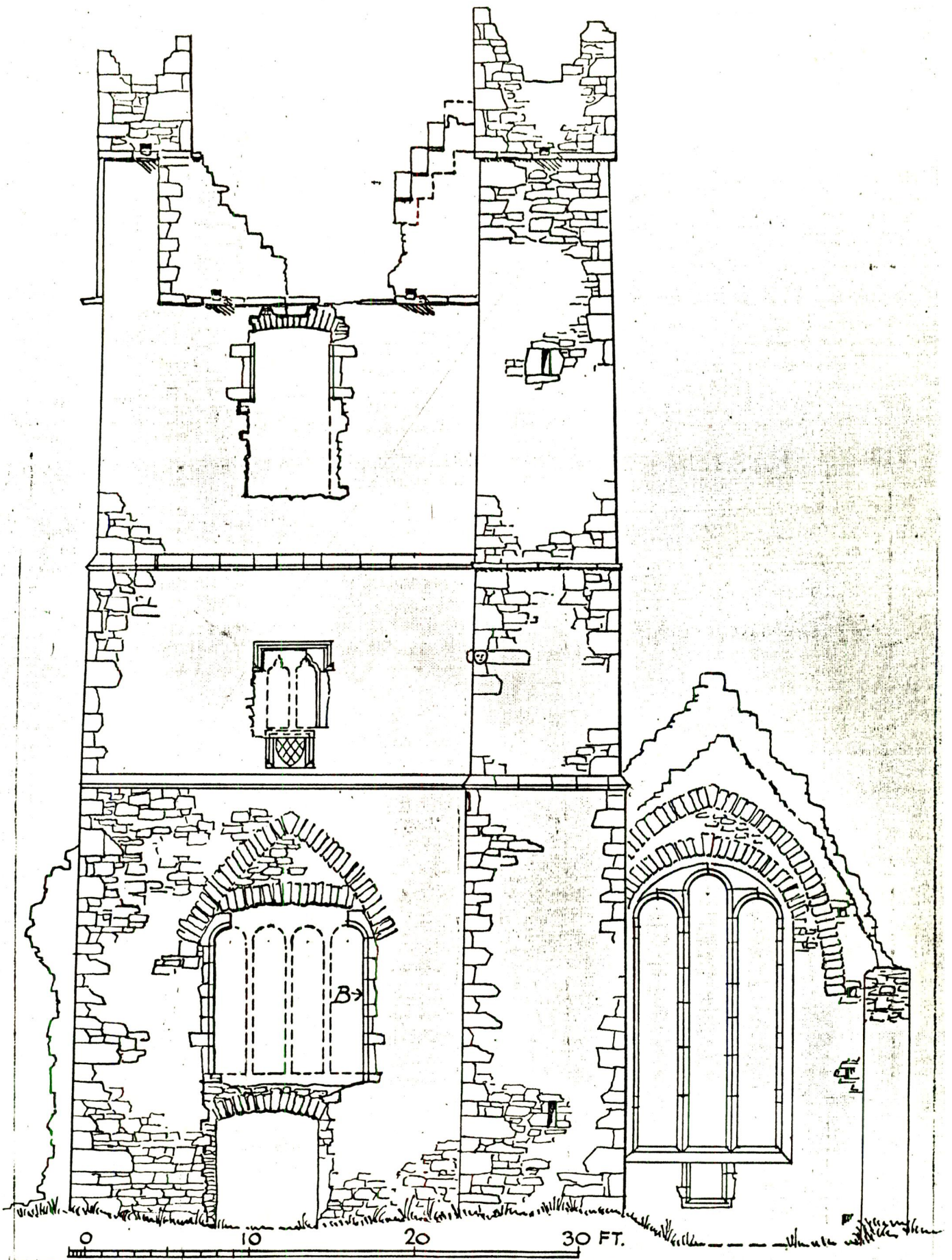
*1871
1872
1873
1874
1875
1876
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
1885
1886
1887
1888
1889
1890
1891
1892
1893
1894
1895
1896
1897
1898
1899
1900*



NORTH ELEVATION

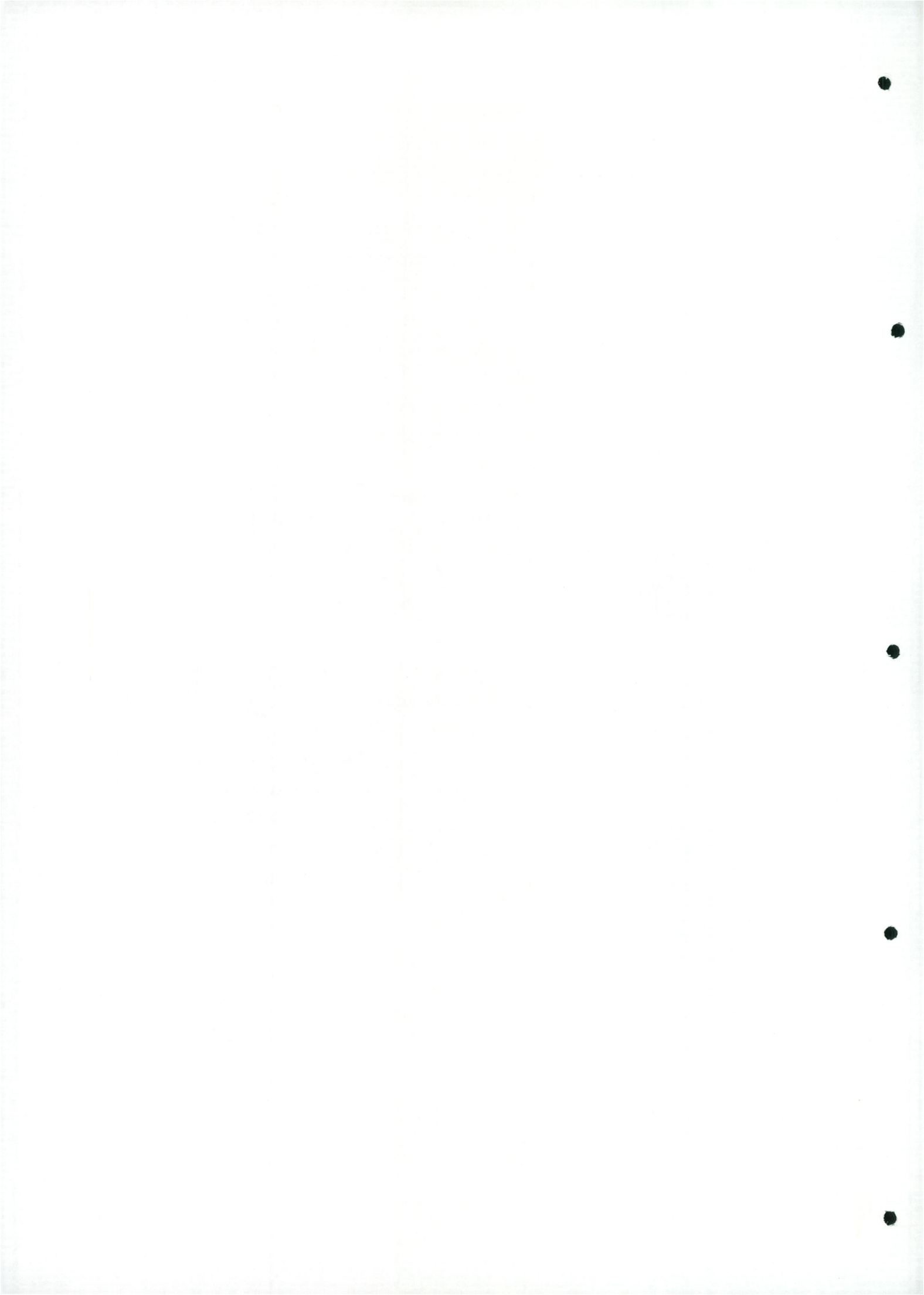


(Fig.14) Architectural drawings of the church at Duleek. (O.P.W.)



large window or door is about 9.6metres from the ground and was thought at one point to have given access between these two buildings, and the second floor of the belfry. This gives us reason to believe that this building and the belfry and church at Lusk could have been the work of the same designer.

Other buildings which incorporate round towers into the structure of a later period are unrecognisable and few. Kilmallack is an example where the shape was changed to accommodate the new building. Kilmallack medieval collegiate church stands on the east side of the town in Limerick. The tower is situated in the north west corner of the nave and the whole upper portion over the doorway has been a castellated top. The sill is 10.5 metres from the ground and its height is 16.9 metres. Boyle provides another example of this type. The tower placed at the south west angle of the external wall of the twelfth century Cistercian abbey has been built into this structure as a corner turret and its top section is a nineteenth century rebuilding. The shape of the tower has been altered to such an extent that it is difficult to tell how much is original, but the dimensions of the base are those of a round tower. The church at Balrothery according to Leask is the work of the same mason as Lusk , because it possesses a round turret containing the winding staircase which rises above the parapet wall. This is thought to give the impression that this church has incorporated a round tower. This in my opinion is questionable (Fig.15). All in all Lusk stands unique in the way it incorporates the original shape into another building without changing it into an unrecognisable form.



(Fig. 15) The church at Balrothery, (ARCHER, P. 1975, P. 38)



BALROTHERY, CO. DUBLIN, "THE TOWN OF THE KNIGHTS"

(Pl. 5) The blocked up entrance from the round tower on the battlements on the belfry.





Inventory of Historic Objects still at Lusk.

The importance of the site at Lusk is heightened by the discovery of a few important finds. Unfortunately excavations at the site have not been properly carried out. The objects found indicate links not only with other important churches in Ireland but as well, ie. Wales. The main topics of this chapter are the medieval tiles discovered as a result of the maintenance work in 1974-5, the Norman tombs which are still present in the belfry today and other finds.

The Barnewall tomb.

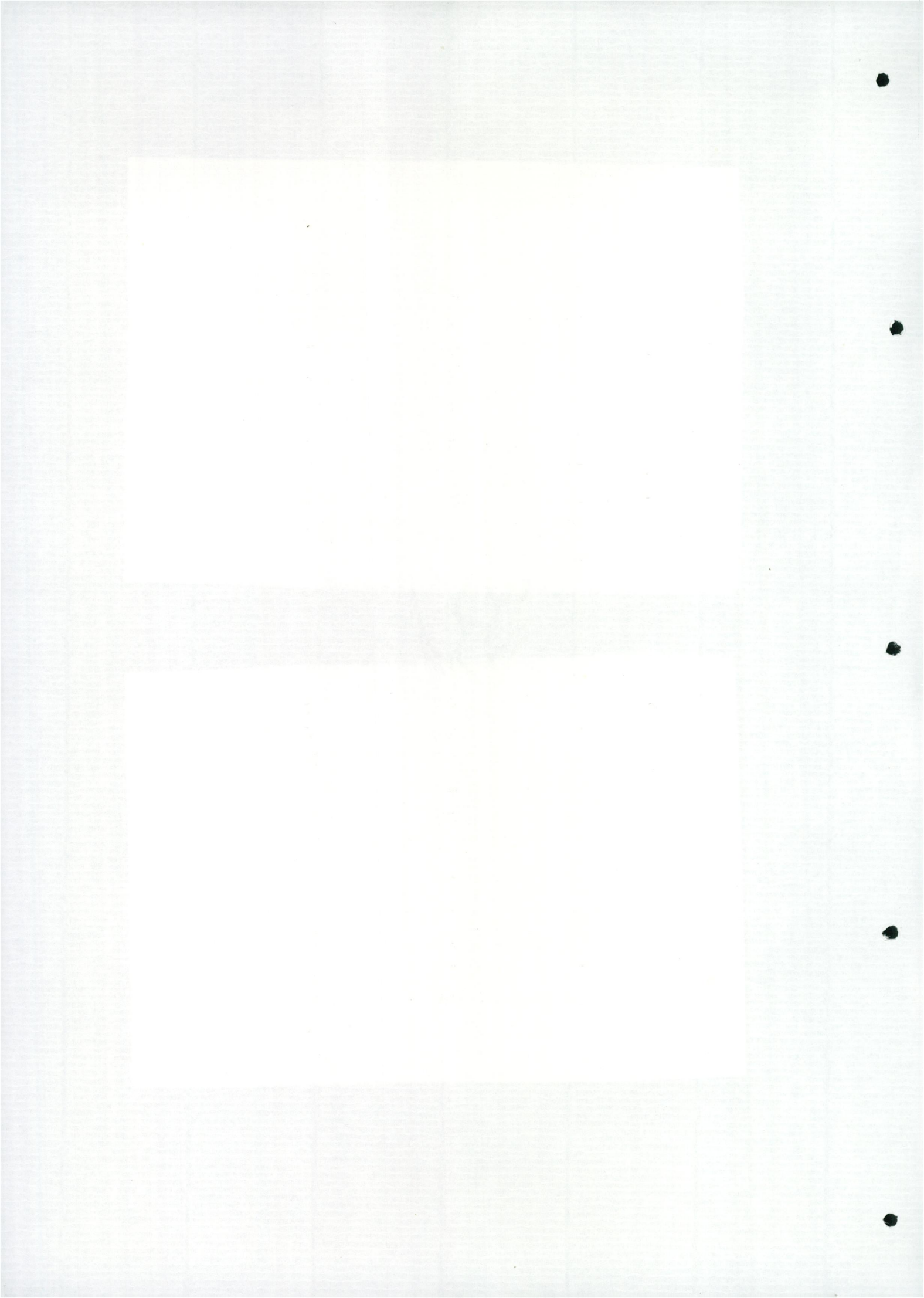
The Barnewall tomb is an effigy, which means that there is no body buried in it. The tomb is thought to have been the best example of its type in Europe and dates from around the late fifteenth century. It is made of two pieces of limestone according to the office of public works, though D'Alton describes the top being grey Italian marble and the bottom as being of Kilkenny marble. This is obviously wrong. On this tomb we can see Sir Christopher Barnewall and his wife Lady Marion Charl. He is presented wearing rich armour which was probably made in North Italy or North Germany. He has, by his side a sword indicating his nobility and his ability to fight for his land. His hands are joined across his chest in a devotional posture. His wife is wearing the long dress of the time with a rounded cap and high ruffles which is thick plated around her waist. Her hands are crossed across her bosom and the pillow on which her head rests is richly embroidered. She is also wearing a pendant, two inches square on a chain which is thought to contain relics of the saints or sweet smelling flowers, because during this period it was thought unhealthy to wash and we also know that Queen Elizabeth only took a bath twice a year. Both of their feet are resting on dogs whose heads are

(Pl. 6) The Barnewall tomb



(Pl. 7) Detail of the barnewall tomb





no longer visible. The two figures are of similar size, and hence it is thought that she was of equal importance. In 1589 when Sir Christopher Barnewall died, Lady Marion Charl married again to Sir Luckas Dillon. He paid for the monument thus explaining his coat of arms on the side of the tomb and inscriptions such as 'wish well to Dillon 1589'. Also on the side panels are Lady Marion Charl's and Sir Christopher Barnewall's coats of arms. The names of their twenty children , consisting of two sets of twins and include four who died at infancy are all commemorated on the side panels of this tomb. On the east end is written, "This monument is made for the rightful Sir Christopher Barnewall of Turvey, Knight by the right worshipful Sir Luckas Dillon of Moymet, Knight and dame Marion Charl, his wife, who married her three years after the death of the sad Sir Christopher, her first and loving husband, who had issue four sons and fifteen daughters dy herr". (Pl. 6 & 7)

The Bermingham Tomb

This tomb is made of black marble, bearing the effigies of a Knight in armour, the visor is open and his hands are joined in an attitude of prayer. His feet are resting upon a dog and his sword is resting across his left thigh. The inscription is thought to read, " For James Bermingham of Ballough and his wife Eleanor Fitzwilliam 1527. Vae tibi peccatori." and the date as 1637. (Westropp). (Pl. 8)

The Archdall tomb.

On this tomb the inscription reads, " Below lieth the body of Willian Archdall, citizen of Dublin, Born September 29th, 1683, and died September 6th, 1751. This monument was erected to the memory of her tender husband, an affectionate father, a sincere friend and an honest man by Henrietta his affected widow."



(Pl. 8) The Bermingham tomb





The Echlin Tomb

This tomb is a large table monument of black marble, Enclosed in an iron railing, and bears the following inscription, Here lye the remains of Sir Robert Echlin of Russ in the county of Dublin Baronet who was married in the year 1727 to Elinor Bellingham, one of the co-heiresses of Wm. Bellingham Esqr. of leaving in Westmoreland. Born 13th Nov., 1699. Died 13 May 1757."

Disembodied Heads

High up in the south east corner of the belfry is a carved stone head. It is thought that this stones dates from a earlier church and fitted onto the tower when it was being constructed. Similar heads occur on other medieval churches with in Fingal which are set in the building structures. (Pl.13 & Fig. 31)

Other Finds (privately owned)

Three bronze pins dating to the tenth and twelfth century have been found in the garden of a cottage a hundred yards from the church , (Fig. 16-18). A stone axe head thought to have been made of Irish limestone has also been found.A bullaun stone was also discovered in the ground of the church. The function of bullaun stones is unknown but it is thought that they were used for grinding grain or pounding herbs.

The Cresset Stone. (O.P.W.)

The Cresset stone which was found at Lusk during the course of maintenance work dates to between the tenth and twelfth century. The word Cresset is affiliated to the old French word "Croiset " meaning pot and with the old Dutch word " Krayse " meaning pot or cup. The word which was used in medieval literature was applied to the reservoirs of lamps which were made of stone thus the term " Cresset Stone ". During last thirty years Cressets made

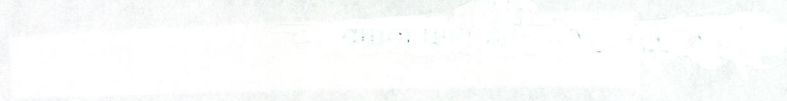




(Fig. 31) Disembodied head from Lusk



(Fig.14) Disembodied head at Balrothery



(Fig. 16) Extract from the Drogheda independent. (National Museum).

Drogheda Independent

An historic Lusk find



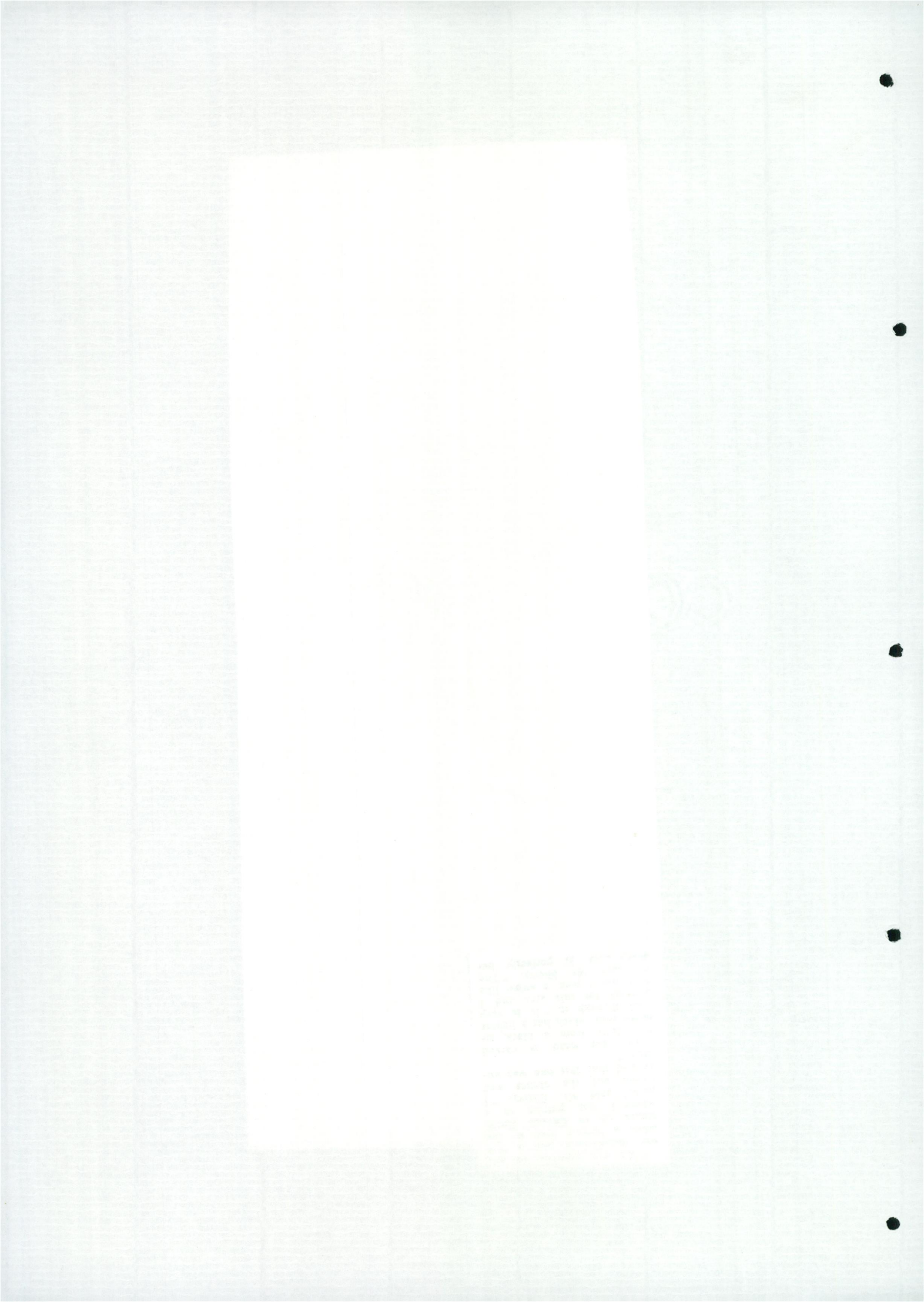
A stone age axe head, which is older than the much-heralded Derrynaflann Chalice, has been discovered by a Lusk man in his native town.

The axe head was discovered by pensioner and member of the Lusk Historical Society, Mr. Dan Sherry, Church Road as he was helping his son to construct a new house on the site of his mother's old house at Barrack Road, Lusk.

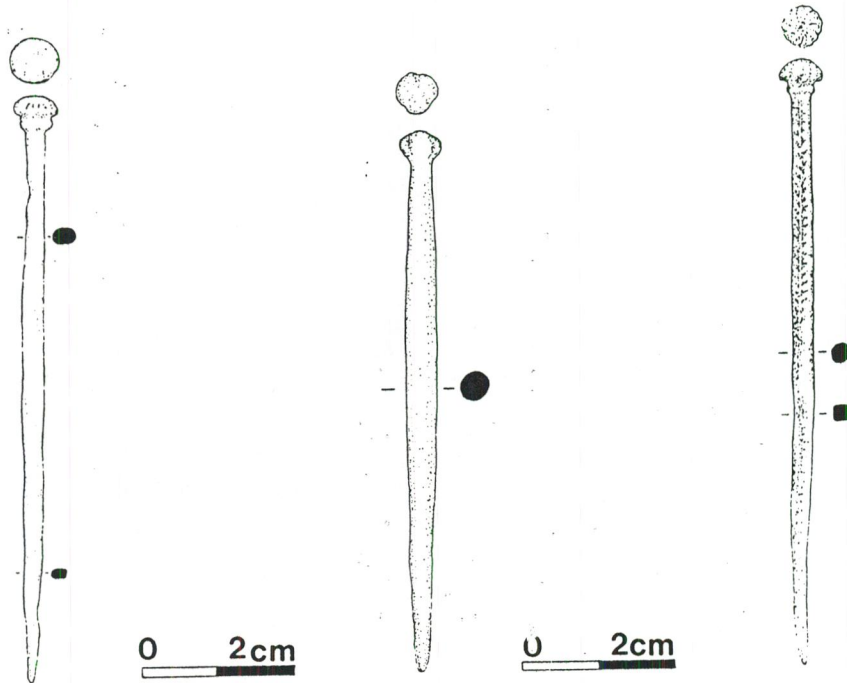
velled and the whole stone is beautifully polished."

Mr. Sherry, who lives virtually in the shadow of the Lusk old church and round tower has also found bronze pins and old coins in the past on his property.

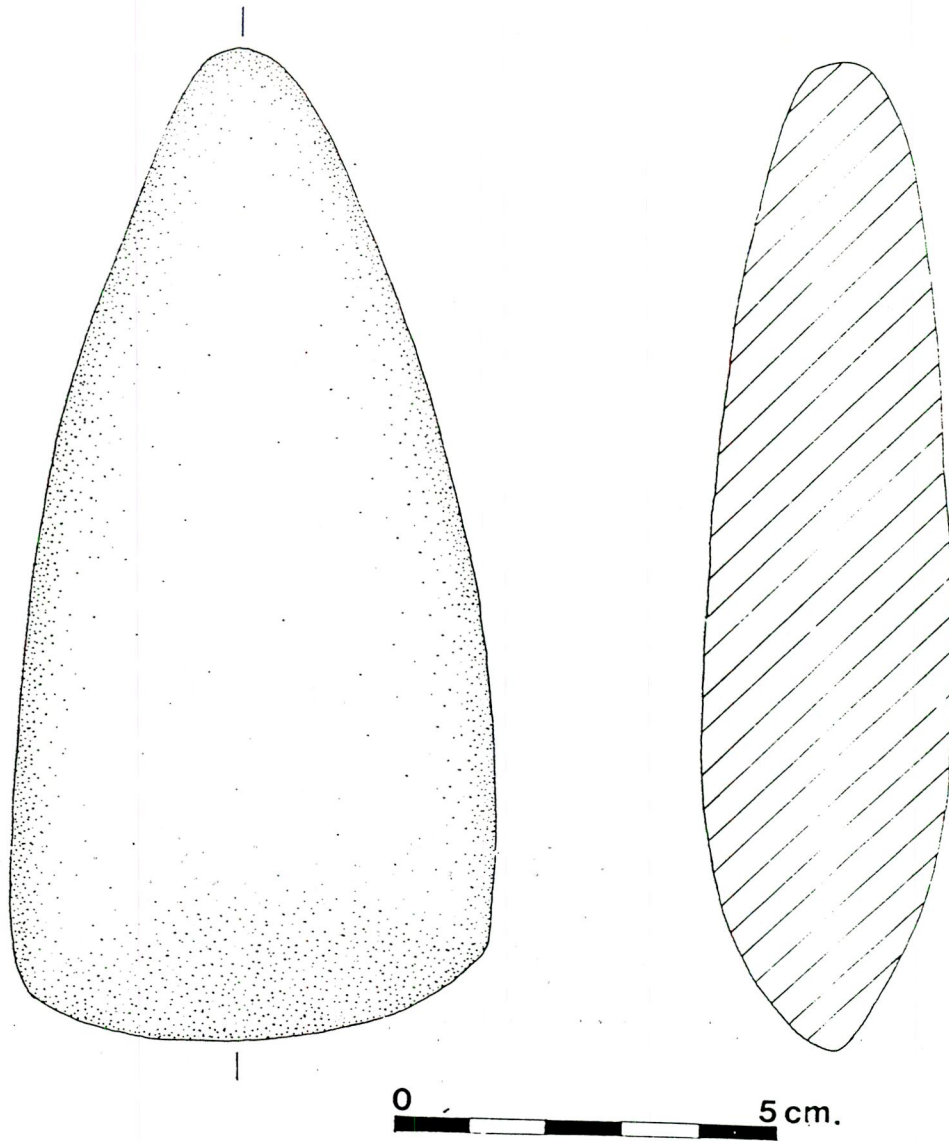
Our picture shows Dan Sherry with his stone age axe head.



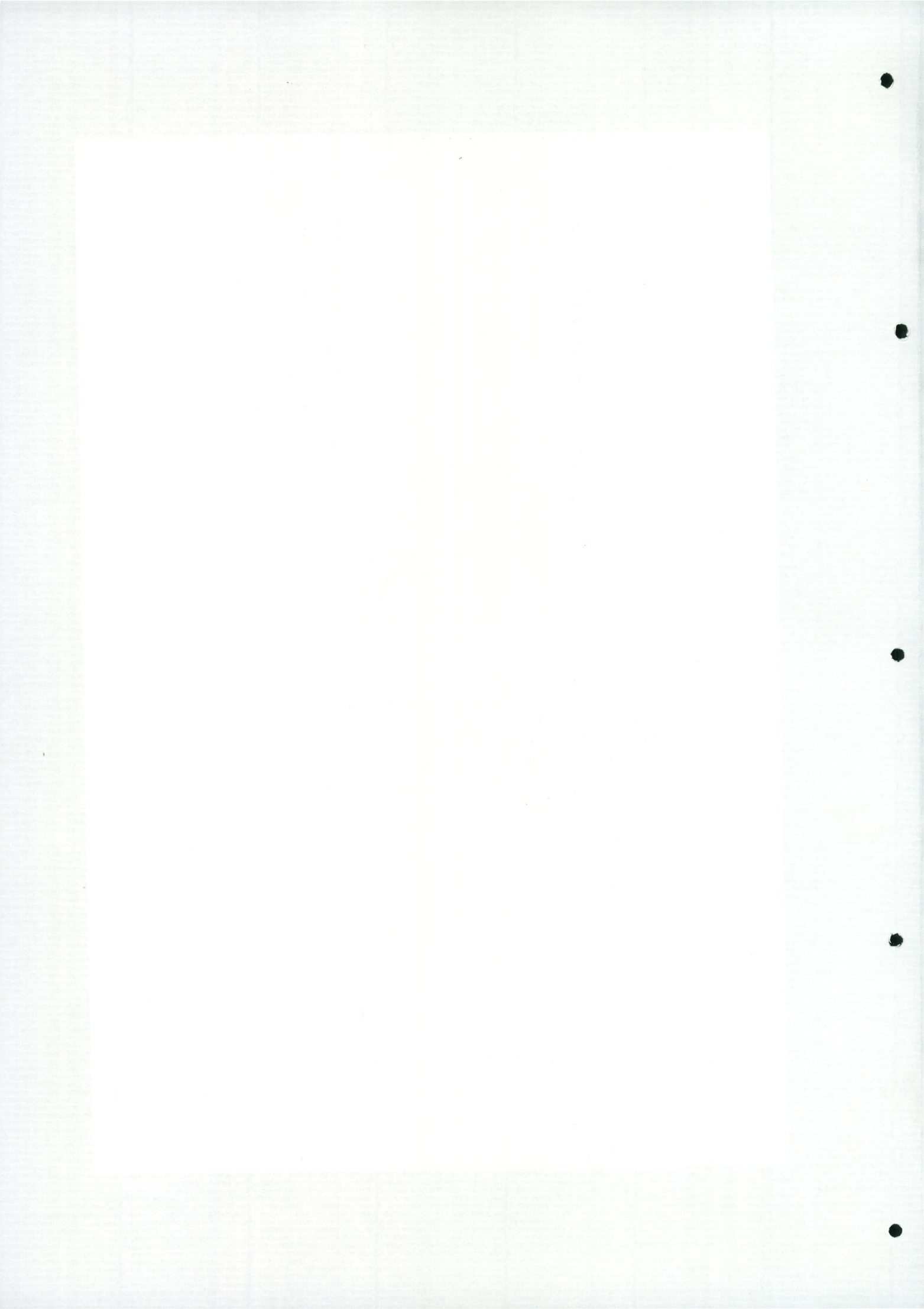
(Fig. 17) Three Bronze pin found at Lusk. (National Museum).



(Fig. 18) Stone Axehead found at Lusk. (National Museum).

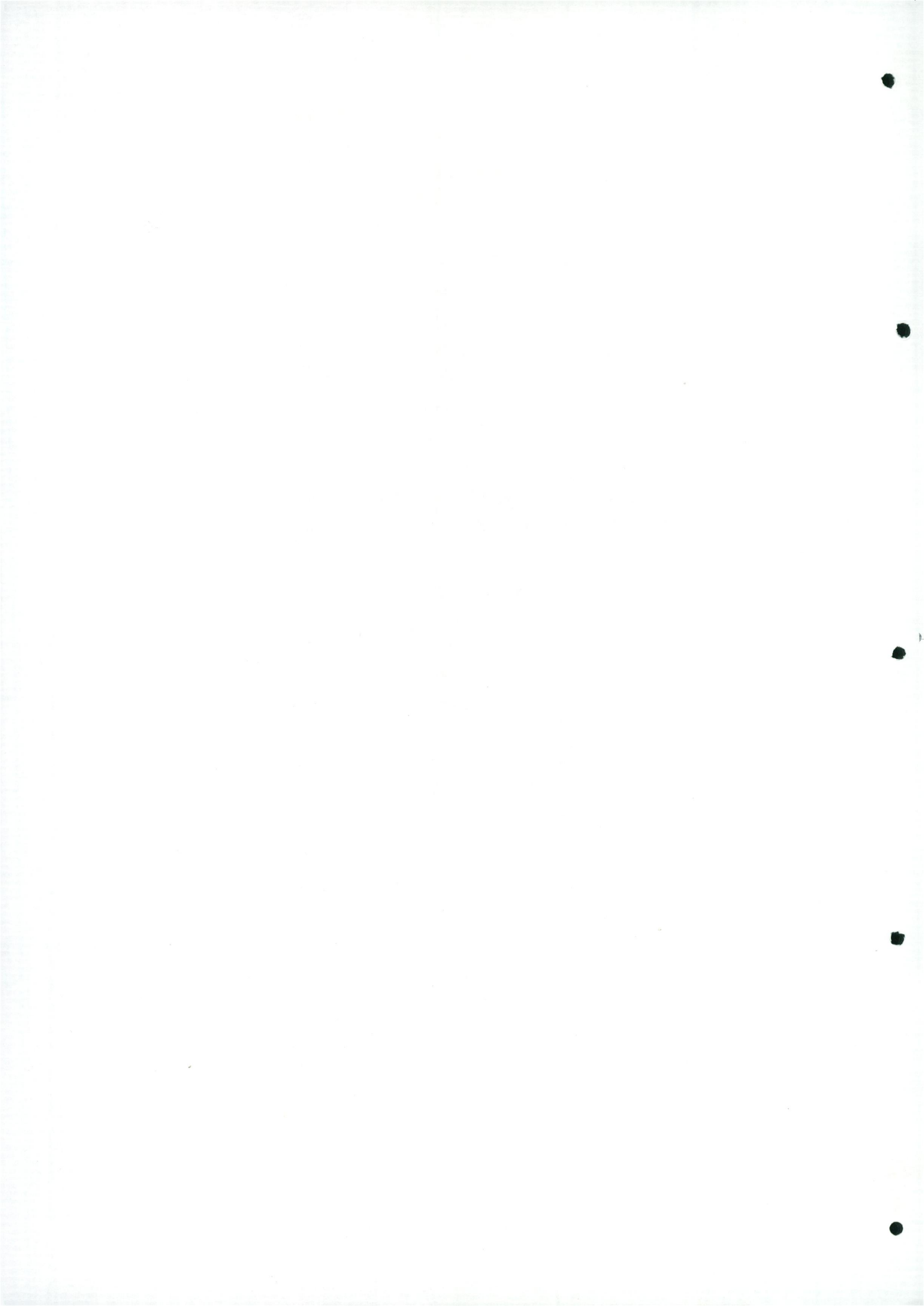


COPYRIGHT
NATIONAL MUSEUM
OF IRELAND
Kildare Street, Dublin 2
Telephone: 01-661 8811



from pottery have been found during many excavations of medieval sites in Britain. These have been called pedestal lamps or double ended lamps. Cresset stones display a lot of variation in form but generally consist of one or two cups joined at their base by a stem so that when the object is standing upright one cup or reservoir serves as a base. The British Cressets are undecorated and are never more than 13 cm. in height. Irish cressets range up to 40cm. in height and may be decorated. They seem to have been used by filling one of the hollows with animal fat or oil and placing a wick over the edge of the cup. There are forty-seven examples recorded in Ireland to date. Evidence of their use can only be seen on the stone from Ballinguile which shows a line of carbon around the inside of the rim of the upper cup. These were generally portable but some of the large ones as at Ballinguile, Sherlain island and Kilgrovan could be moved with effort. The Cresset stone found at Kellinstown West in Co. Carlow is the only example of one which possesses a monkey grip. Most Cressets appear to have been made from granite or sandstone. The stone was first chipped and pocked into shape and then smoothed down except for the interior of the cup which was invisible during use.

The Irish Cresset stones can be may divided into four different classes. There are fourteen examples of the first class. Their principal characteristic is that they have no stem, the two cups gently curve together in a concave fashion (Fig.19) and they range in height from, 13 cm to 27 cm. high which is from Kilcolman. Decoration may only be seen on the stone from Tara which has two horizontal incised lines on both sides of the expansions. The second class includes fourteen examples which range in height from 11cm. to 22cm., with the example from Kilgrovan which is 40 cm. They all have a cylindrical stem with expansions at either end that are evenly porportioned. The third class possesses only twelve examples and have a height of between 14 and 20 cm. Their stems are very slender and this ensures that the cups are free standing. Another feature of this class that the bases are scalloped. It is thought that the purpose



(Fig. 19) Irish Cresset stones

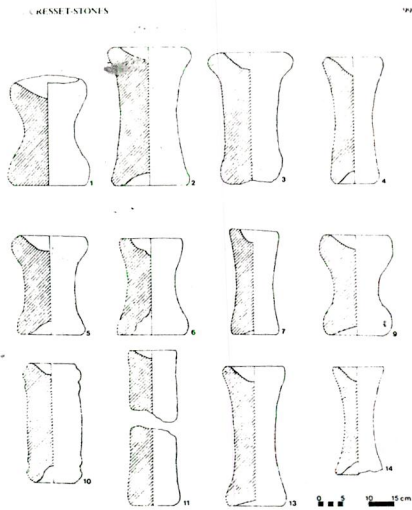


Fig. 37 Class 1 Cressets from: Kellistown West, county Carlow (1), Ballygule, county Cork (2), Labbamolaga, county Cork (3), Ballynalina, county Kilkenny (4), Tara, county Meath (5), Rathruachan, county Roscommon (6), Ballypatrick, county Tipperary (7), Ballinameela, county Waterford (9), Garrnageragh East, county Waterford (10), Kicolman, county Waterford (11), Ballynamaroge, county Wicklow (13), possibly Carrigacurra, county Wicklow (14).

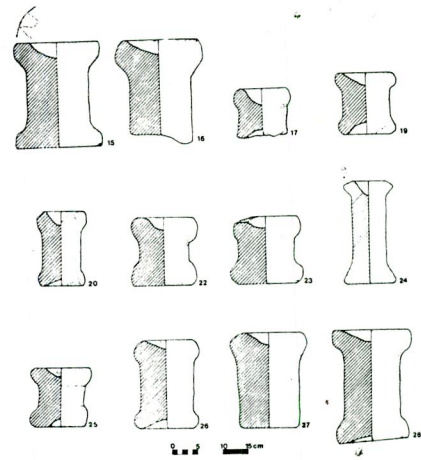


Fig. 38 Class 2 Cressets from: Ballymogue, county Carlow (15), Sherkin Island, county Cork (16), Fishamble St., Dublin (17), Castle Ellis, county Wexford (19), Moneyher, county Wexford (20), Crone, county Wicklow (22), Dunganstown, county Wicklow (23), Money Upper, county Wicklow (24), Rathdrum, county Wicklow (25), Possibly Jerpoint, county Kilkenny (26), Unprovenanced, U.C.C. (27), Unprovenanced N.M.I. (28).

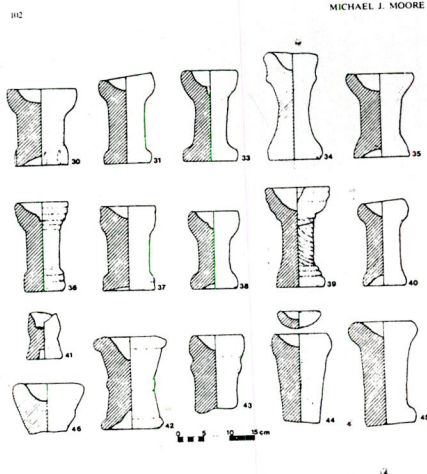


Fig. 39 Class 3 Cressets from: Ballon Hill, county Carlow (30), Kellistown East, county Carlow (31), Ballybetagh, county Dublin (33), Pelletstown, county Dublin (34), Ballickmoyler, county Laois (35), Killincooley, county Wexford (36), county Wexford (37), Ballinatone, county Wicklow (38), Humphreystown, county Wicklow (39), possibly Ballinabolla, county Wicklow (40).
Class 4 Cressets from: Fishamble St., Dublin (41), Ardmulchan, county Meath (42).
Unclassified Cressets from: Newtown, county Dublin (43), Inishickillane, county Kerry (44), Ennisnag, county Kilkenny (45), Money Upper, county Wicklow (46).

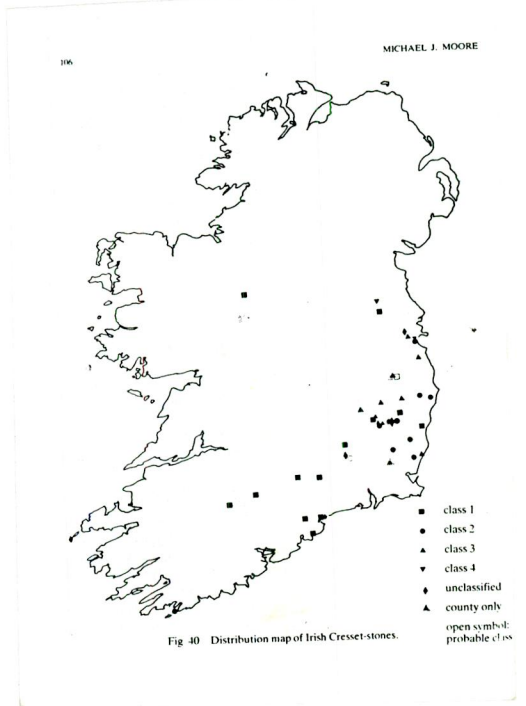
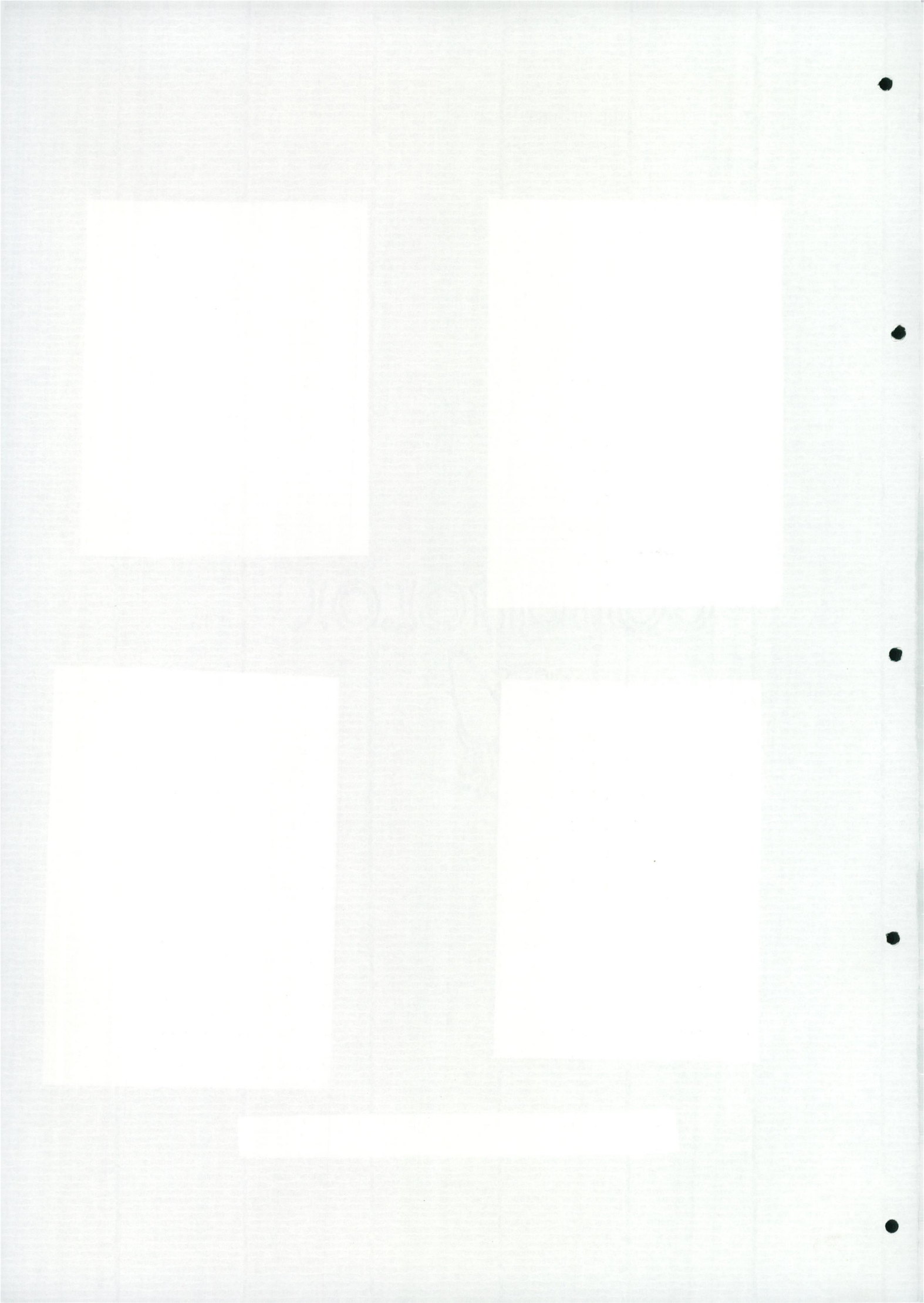


Fig. 40 Distribution map of Irish Cresset-stones.

(MAC NOICAILL & WALLACE, 1988, P. 367-372)



of these scallopings may have been to permit the Cresset to stand within a prepared slot. Five in this class are decorated in some fashion where as in the other classes decoration is very discreet, while here it is very prominent. The Wexford cresset possesses the most attractive stone with wide but shallow grooves cut in the expansion around the stem of the stone. The fourth class is the smallest, with only two examples and these have a biconical form. This is the most popular form of Cresset stone and is found in countries other than Ireland. Parallels with these finds have been found in parts of Scandinavia.

The Cresset Stone found at Lusk is made from sandstone and belongs to the first class. It has a height of under 20cm. and length of 12cm across the top and 10cm across the bottom. It is in good condition and has no decoration but is well crafted. It is shaped similarl to a chalice and has only one cup with a flat under side, chip marks can be seen in the cup and there is evidence at one stage that it was in a fire.

Medieval Tiles (O.P.W.)

Interest in medieval tiles was heightened in 1971 with the discovery of a tiled pavement at Swords castle Co. Dublin. The pavement, which was found in situ, was brought to light within the oratory attached to the Archbishop's chamber (Fig.20). Some time after this discovery medieval tiles were found at Lusk seven miles north east of Swords castle. The finds which consist of a line impressed mosaic, four line impressed tiles and two relief tiles were brought to light during the course of maintenance work in 1975.

None of the tiles found in Ireland date from before the thirteenth century and its possible that none were used before the Gothic architectural style was introduced to Ireland. It is thought that this fashion was derived from England and France because of similarities with those found in Chester, England. Line

impressed tiles and line impressed mosaic tile were the earliest known medieval tiles found in Ireland and date from the first half of the fourteenth century. Line impressed tiles appear to have died out to make way for the lead glazed earthen wear floor tiles of the fifteenth and sixteenth century which were sometimes decorated in relief.

The discovery of a line impressed mosaic at Lusk reveals an interesting connection with the finds at a site in Llanfaes Anglesey in Wales (Fig. 21). Prior to this discovery of the line impressed mosaic at Lusk, this form of mosaic tile had been recorded in Ireland in only four locations: Swords, Christchurch, St. Patrick's Cathedral and St. Canices Cathedral in Kilkenny. In and around the tenth century the monastic site at Lusk was linked with Swords by the same Abbot and they were both subjected to burnings and plundering on at least three occasions. We know that the monastery was under the control of St. Mary's abbey when the area became known as the Pale, but by 1185 the abbey had transferred its rights to the Archbishop of Dublin. By 1219 its revenues were given as a prebend to the precentor of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin with the manor remaining in the possession of the Archbishop. Lusk at this point has contact with two of Dublin Cathedrals showing its importance and explaining the occurrence of such a form of a mosaic flooring.

Lusk dates the medieval belfry tower on a stylistic grounds to around the fifteenth century and the church is thought to date from the same period, but because of the evidence which came to light with the discovery of the line impressed mosaic fragment it seems that the church would date to an lot earlier period to sometime in the fourteenth century. The fragment which was found in 1973, amongst eighty feet of debris removed from the belfry, is thought to have been part of a deliberate clearance probably in 1847 from the floor of the medieval church because the other medieval tiles were found not in situ within the rubble. The tile fragment consists of a seven sided shape similar to a concave sided arm of a cross (Fig. 22). The straight side or edge



faces into the centre of the cross-like a shape with the pointed end resembling an expanded terminal. The piece is damaged on three of the seven sides and measures a length of 70mm. with a thickness of 24mm. Traces of white mortar in which the tile was bedded can still be seen on the underneath of the tile. The decoration on the mosaic tile is line impressed and shows two petals of an encircled rosette at the straight sided edge. The arm is outlined with a line impressed line and the terminal contains a tiny impressed circle. The surface of the tile is coated with a light whitish slip which was glazed a greenish yellow colour before firing. The decoration is stamped though the slip to the body of the tile and is therefore, a darkish brown. The fabric is a reddish brown with small inclusions of mica. So far the discovery of line impressed mosaic are quite rare compared to England where it seems to be common especially north of the Thames and north Wales during the first half of the fourteenth century. Similarities may be due to trade and exchange routes with Chester and other parts of the United Kingdom at this time. The shape of the tile is emphasized by one or two line impressed lines a few millimetres from the edge which similarly can be seen on the mosaic tiles from Christchurch and Swords castle.

Finds from Lianfaes Anglesey present an interesting contrast with the mosaic tile found at Lusk. Amongst the finds are two pieces of mosaic the same shape as the one found at Lusk otherwise unknown to historians. One piece from Lianfaes appears to have been apart of a cross. When four examples of other shapes from Lianface were placed round the complete arrangement would be a square.(Fig.23). There is no indication of the complete arrangement of which the piece at Lusk formed apart of. It is thought the cross design had intersecting circles which formed the square.

Such a repeated pattern arrangement were those most commonly used in England and Wales. All known circular tiles with line impressed decoration in Ireland which come from St. Patrick's cathedral and from Swords castle are too large to

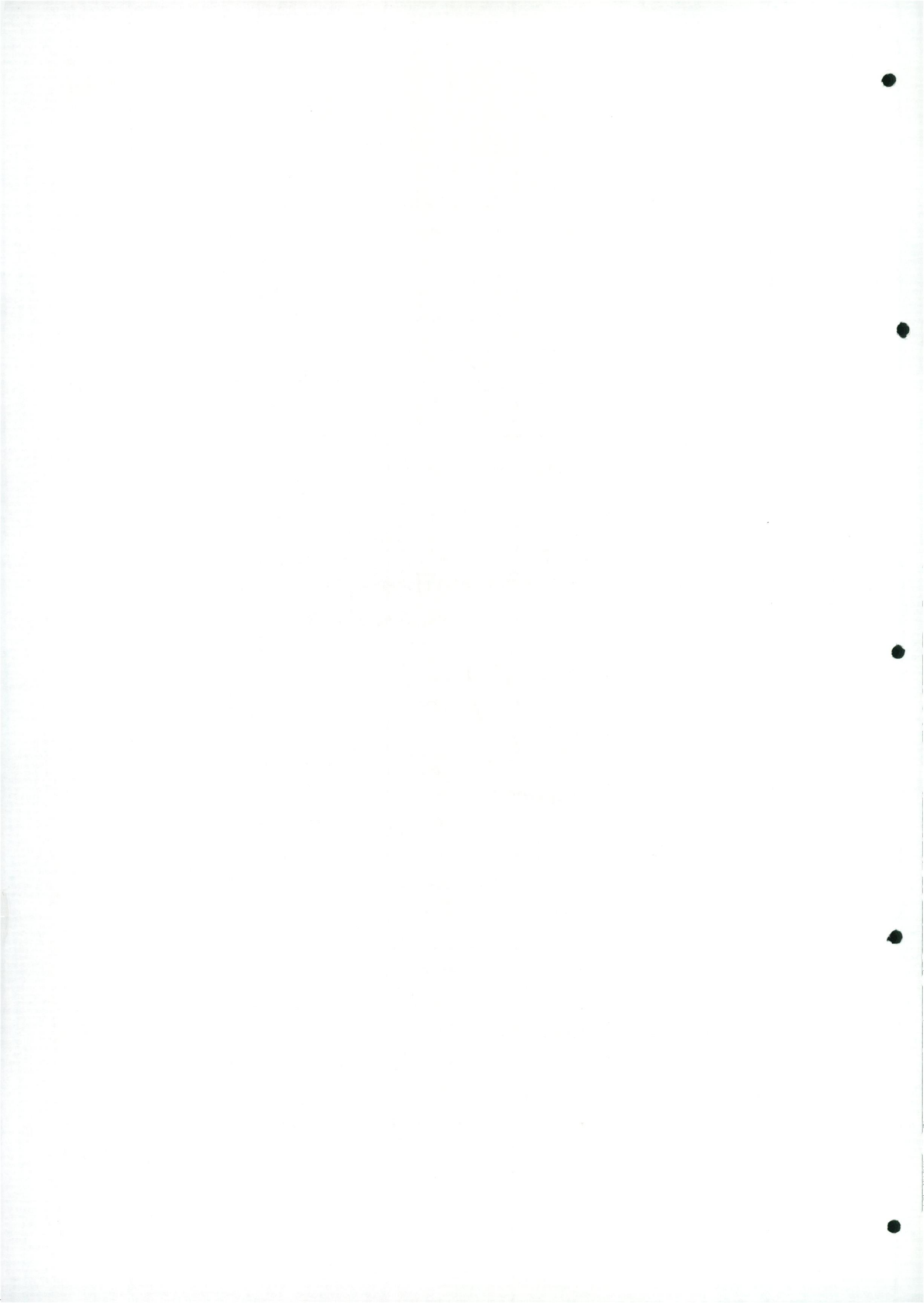


combine with the Lusk cross. But remains are so scarce that it can not be deduced that any circular tile of the correct size was present at the site.

The line impressed mosaics which were discovered in both churches are not identical. The Lianfaes tile is definitely smaller with a length of the half cross being 54mm. where as it is 70mm. in the Lusk example. It is too large a difference to have been the cause of shrinkage during the manufacture process. Decoration on the Lianfaes tile consist of small line impressed quatrefoils of three different sizes. Each quatrefoil was on a separate stamp. Small stamps of different designs and sizes were frequently used and combined in various ways to fit the varied shapes of tiles from this period. There are no-out lining lines on any of these tiles like the ones we can see on the tile at Lusk where the designs are carefully placed. It could be suggested here that the style and shape or even design was passed from Ireland to Wales because the tile at Lusk seems to be a slightly better quality of product. The Lusk line impressed mosaic fragments an important survival from such a panel which was laid down most likely during the early fourteenth century as a part of the decorative furnishing of the large and well endowed church.

Such tiles were produced by a stamp which covered the whole surface of the tile in contrast to small stamps and this utilized in the production of the mosaic pieces. It seems that line impressed tiles became fashionable in Ireland as the fourteenth century progressed and were commissioned for both large and small churches in the Pale.

The fifteenth century line impressed tiles are the most widespread of all the medieval tiles found in Ireland.(Fig.24) They are the most numerous in terms of design and they seemed to have been the most popular. It is thought that they didn't become common until the early fifteenth century when the fashion changed from two colour tiles to line impressed. The influence was clearly from Chester where there was a trade route



from Dublin, Drogheda and Carrickfergus and there is evidence of tiles which were imported from France. Because of the vast quantities of remains of line impressed tiles it is quite possible that most of these tiles were produced in Ireland. Evidence of a medieval tile kiln had been found in Drogheda at Magalene street. tile waste or rejects and stamp designs from the tile making process and kiln debris including kiln furniture and structural tiles were found. This showed that identical and similar line impressed designs which were found in Ireland. Near the Magdalene tower a medieval floor was discovered in 1950 and these were made using the exact same stamps found at the kiln site.

In 'Irish Medieval tiles' (EAMES, S.E. & Fanning, T. 1988), it is stated that fifteen of the Irish examples found are exactly paralleled to the tiles found in Chester and several other sites are very similar. Due to the connection between the line impressed tiles of Chester and the surrounding country it was still thought that most were imported from across seas until scientific tests were carried out in the British Museum by Michael Huges. Tiles were submitted from Kells Priory in Co. Kilkenny and Chester both decorated with identical designs. The result showed that the body fabric from the two sites was entirely different. Those from Kells priory included products of hard rocks absent from the Chester tiles. Other tests done on Irish line impressed tiles reveal that they were locally produced rather than imported. Some line impressed tiles were incised by hand but the majority as at Lusk were applied with a stamp which either covered one or more tiles. Only two glazes were commonly used when they were first introduced. A lead glaze applied over a light slip could produce a yellow colour and a lead copper glaze with a fairly high concentration of copper applied directly to the body of the tile could produce a very dark green. With the use of several shades of these colours we can see a deep chocolate brown colour being achieved.

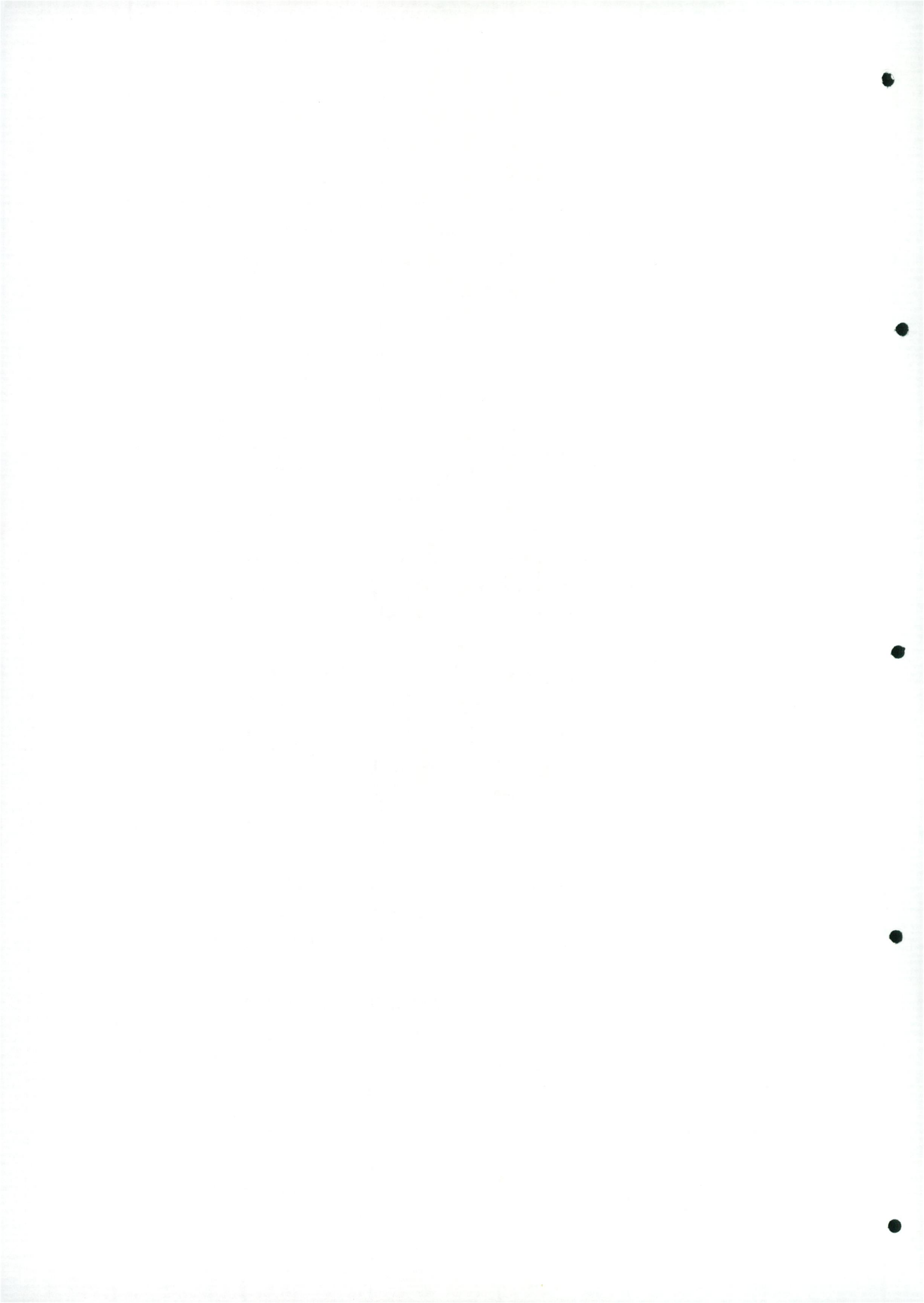
The majority of line impressed tiles were based on the same decorative motifs as the two colour designs which are of



Lions, Lion heads, Rosettes, Flower designs and interesting circles. Other motifs such as heraldic beasts, griffins and dragons were used as decorative motifs chosen without any heraldic significance, most likely by the tile designer. The use of these motifs which were popular in the fourteenth century continued to be fashionable until the early sixteenth century. The use of the lion head seems the most popular in Ireland. Lusk possesses such a tile (Fig.25). This particular design is present in twenty four other sites around Ireland. Other finds such as Vine Scroll border found at Lusk are found at nine other sites (Fig. 26). The clockwise scroll was also found in ten other sites. This design, in my opinion, was a part of a single tile repeating pattern identical to the pavement found in situ in Mellifont abbey Co. Louth (Fig.27). The last impressed tile is the tile (Fig.28). This tile was discovered in four other places. One similar tile which is not written about anywhere is the Grace Dieu tile, which I found documented in the National Museum (Fig.29). These designs were obviously formed with a compass.

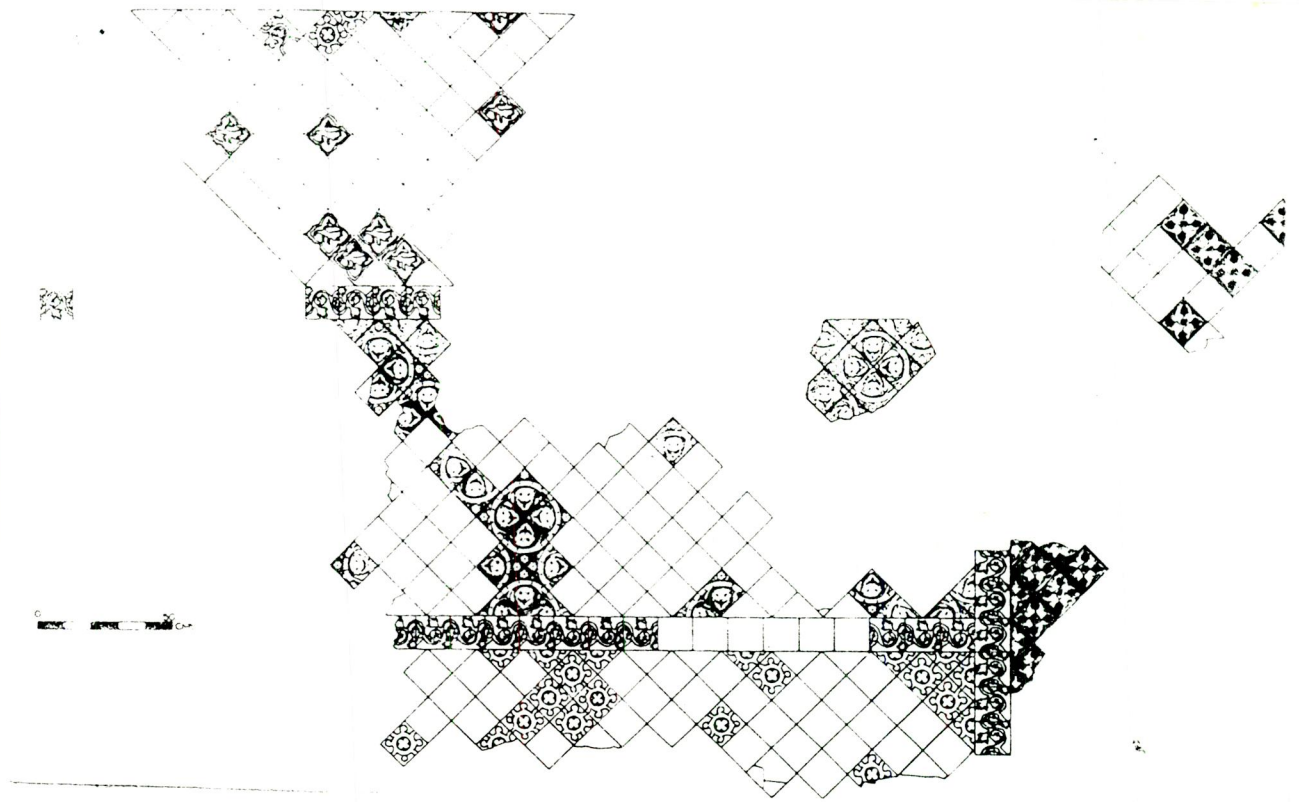
Relief tiles became popular around the sixteenth century and we can see at Lusk two unidentifiable counter relief fragments (Fig.30). Counter relief decoration was sometimes produced when then the tile was stamped with the design and was usually employed for two colour decorative designs. When decoration in relief was applied with a small stamp the top of the relief was level with the surface of the tile and the background was depressed but when the stamp that covered the whole surface was used, the top of the decoration stood up above the surface of the tile. Decoration in relief could be very elaborate with modelling at various levels on the upstanding areas, but many of the designs in Ireland are on two planes only.

The evidence which is available suggests that medieval decorative floors were a fashion which was introduced by the Normans and before this Irish monasteries and abbeys were content the simple with pavements of plain stone floors. this is also emphasized by the fact that floor furnishing during the

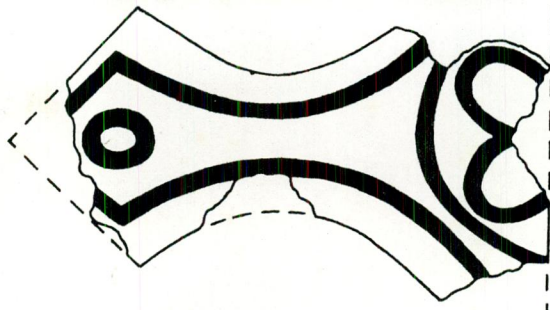


medieval period was exclusively in Anglo Norman areas, especially in the Pale and in South Leinster. The exact site of the kiln in Drogheda has not been located and it has been suggested that it could have been a temporary building, used by travelling craftsmen while they were at work tiling the church floor. Until recent times before the discovery at Swords was found, medieval pavements were not regarded as significant and even when found in situ, it was customary to gather up the tiles without noting the complete design. At Lusk tile finds are so few that it is impossible to say what the decoration was really like. It was a fashionable church possessing the three types of medieval floor tiling. The beauty of medieval tiling can best be seen in its overall layout of pattern and colour and it is such a shame that there is so little to be seen from this once important church.

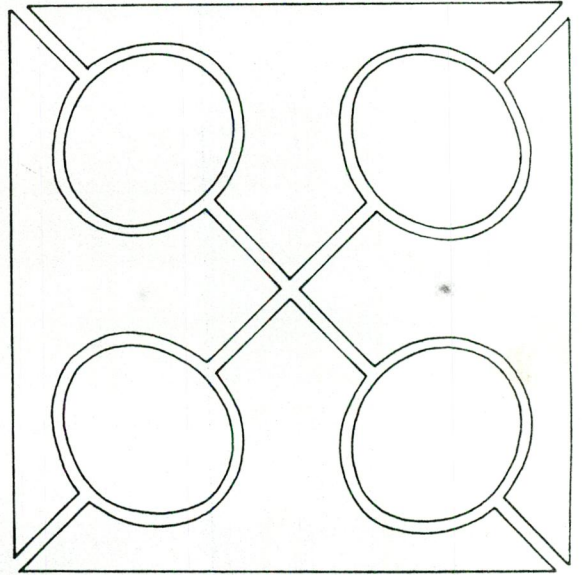
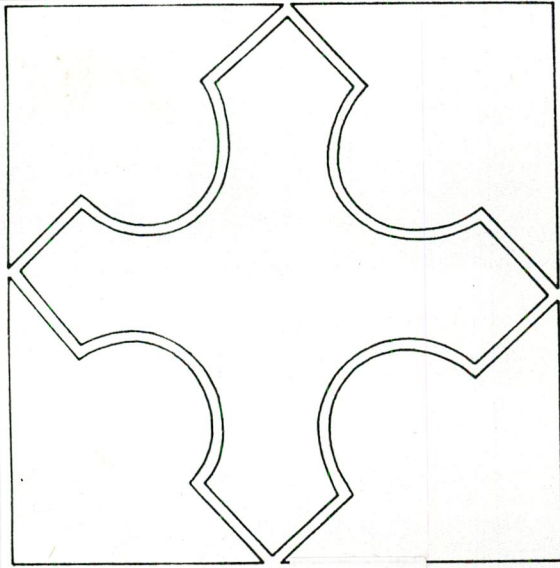
(Fig. 20) Medieval pavement found in situ at swords castle.



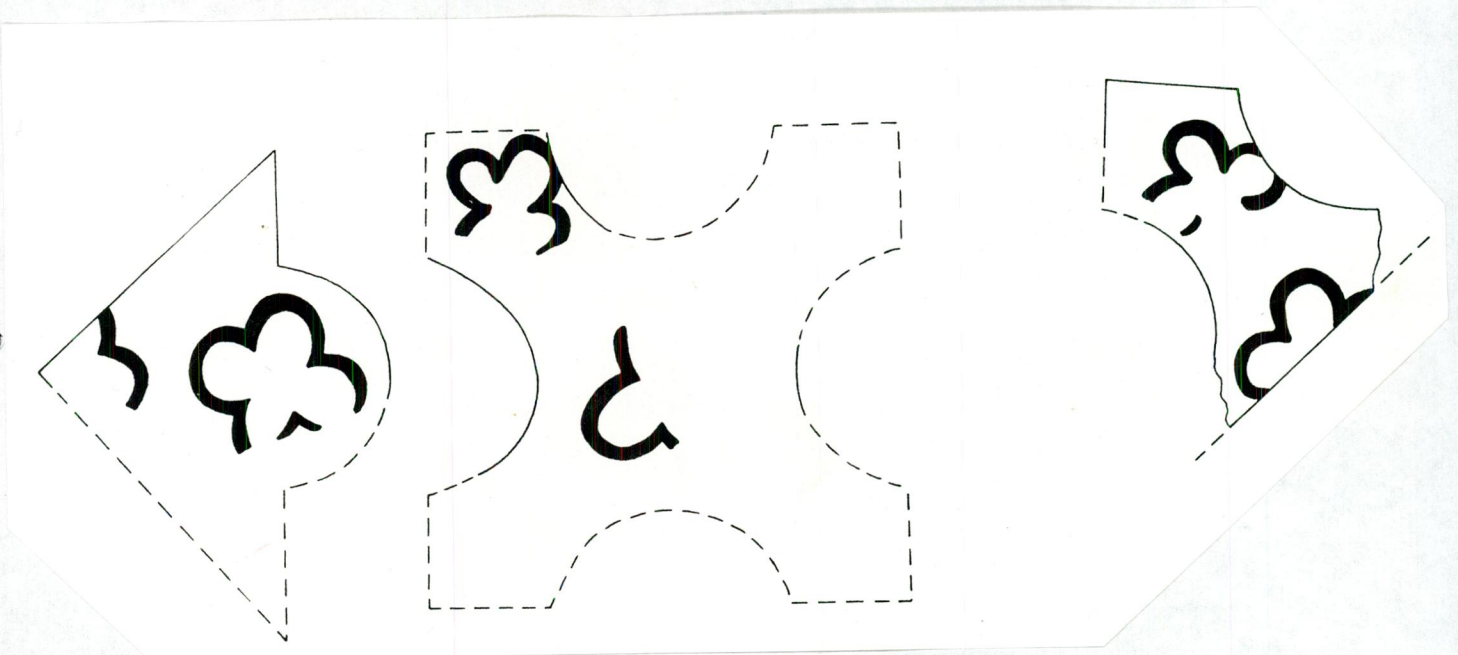




(Fig. 21) Line impressed mosaic found at Lusk.



(Fig. 22) The possible pattern which the mosaic tile at Lusk was a part of.



(Fig. 23) Line impressed mosaic shapes from Lianfaes priory, Anglesey, Wales
(MACNIOCAILL, G. & WALLACE P.F. P. 336)



PLU 2



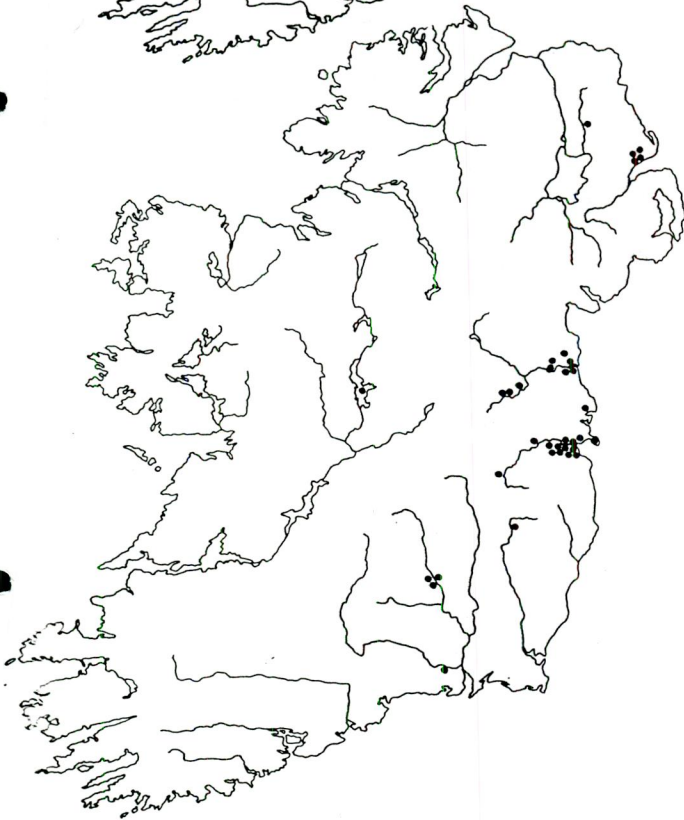
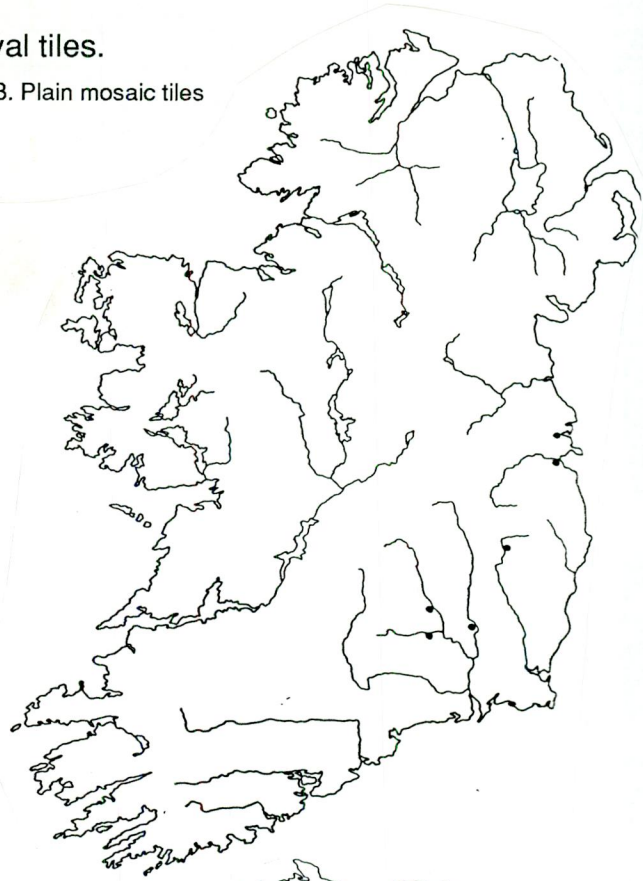
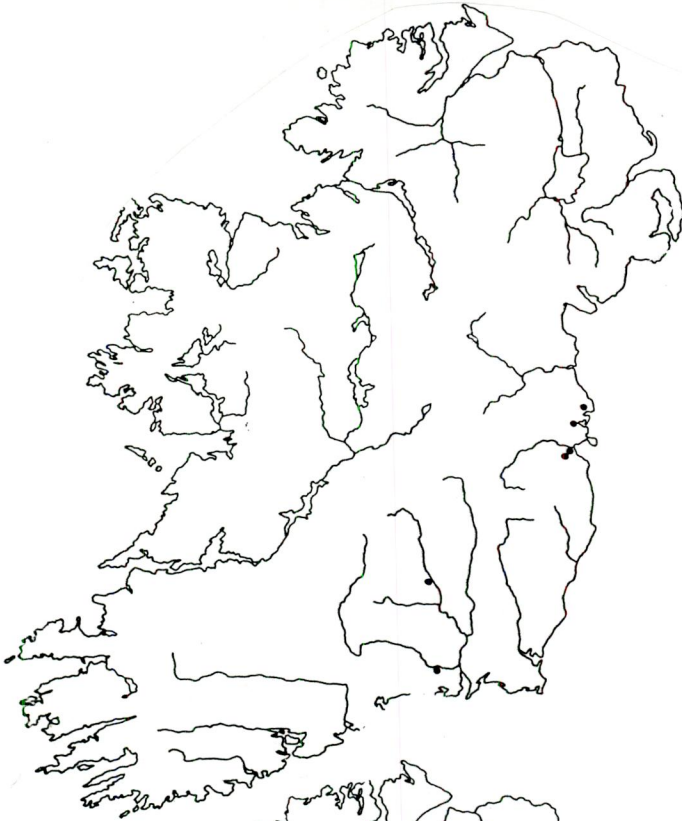
PLU 2



(Fig.24.) Distribution of relief Medieval tiles.

A. Line impressed mosaic

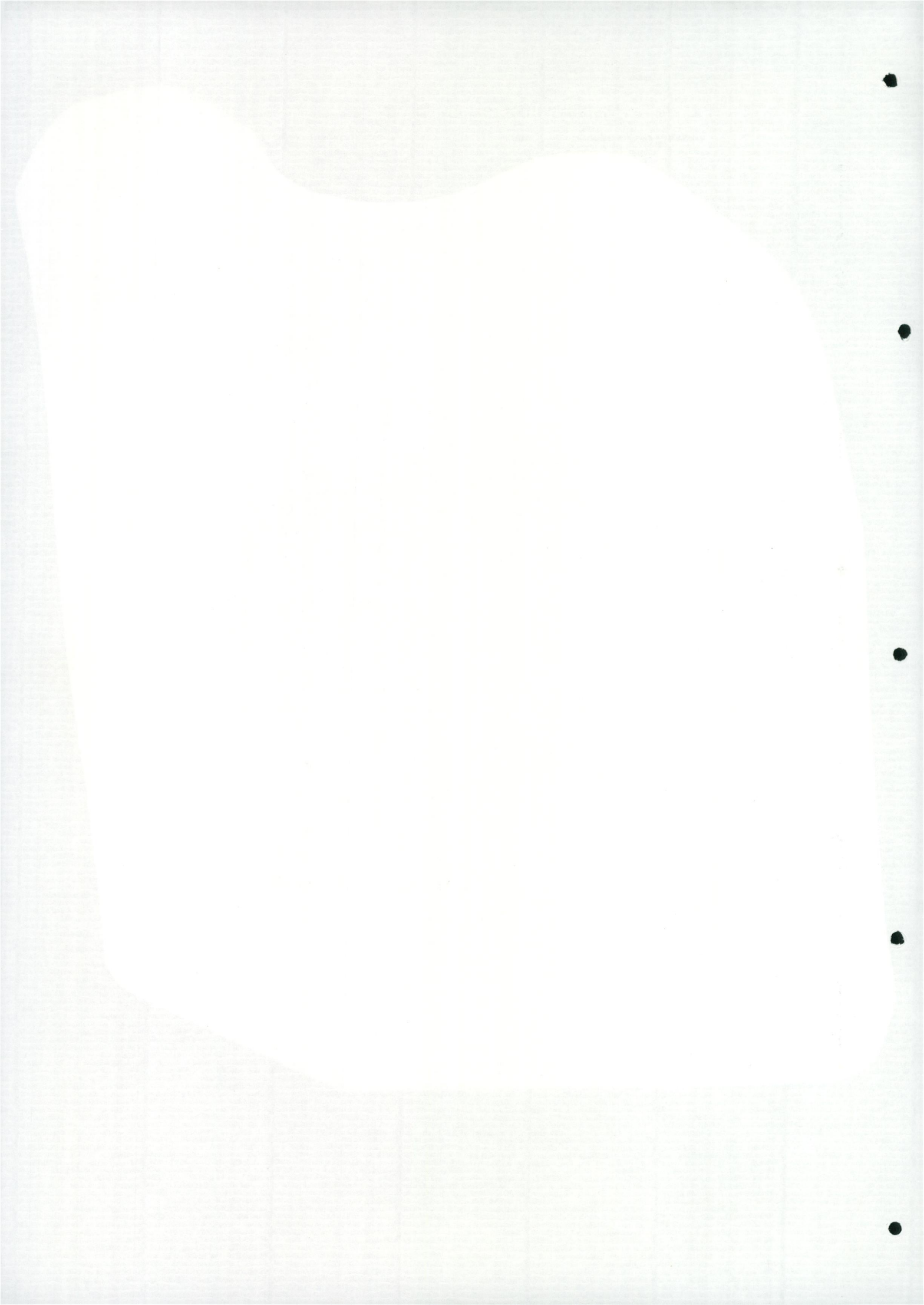
B. Plain mosaic tiles



C. Relief mosaic and relief tiles

D. Line impressed

(EAMES. S.E and FANNING T. 1988 P. 38).



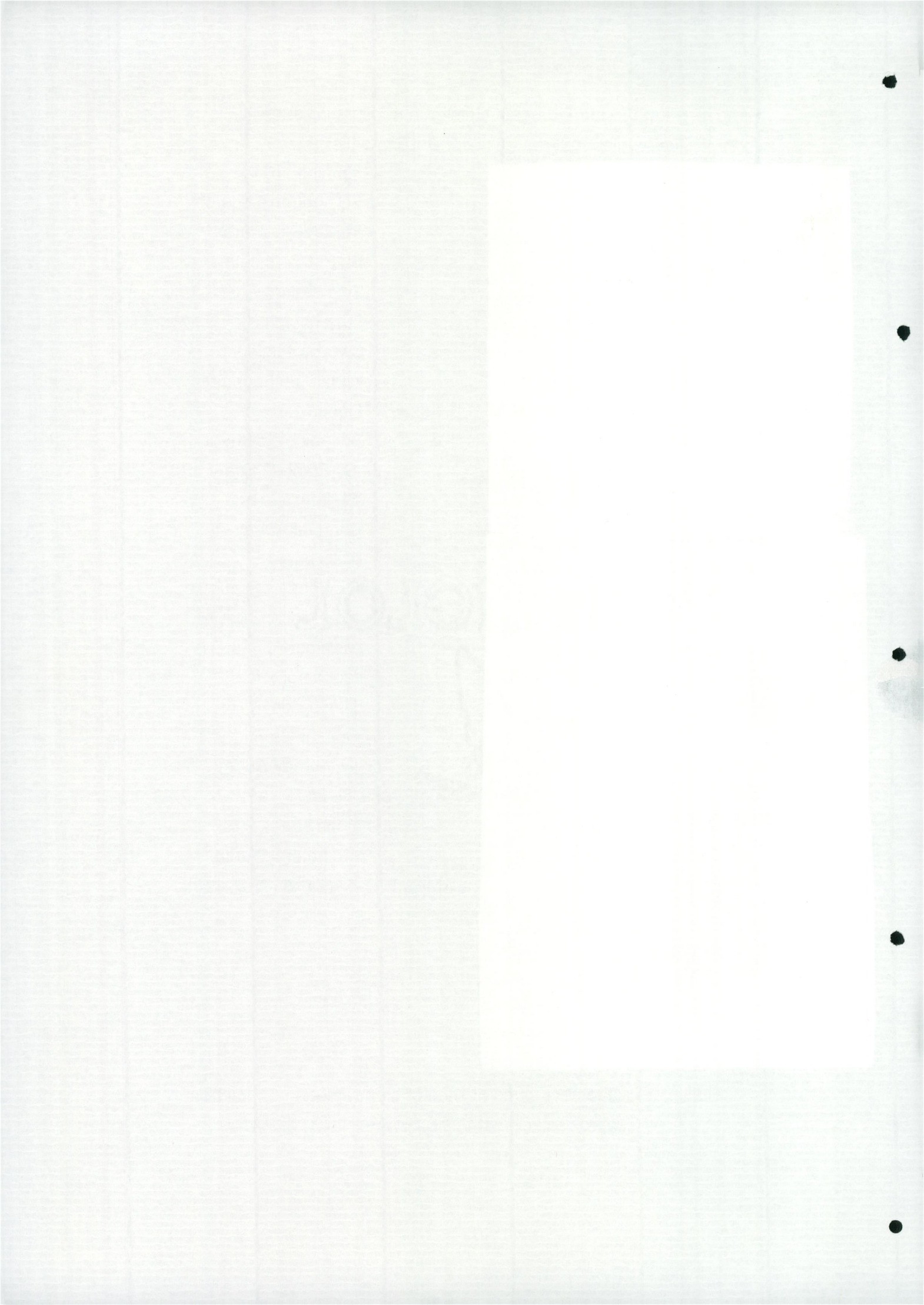
(Fig.25) Lion rampant sinister in 4-foil found at Lusk
 Design also found at: Dublin, Dublin castle.

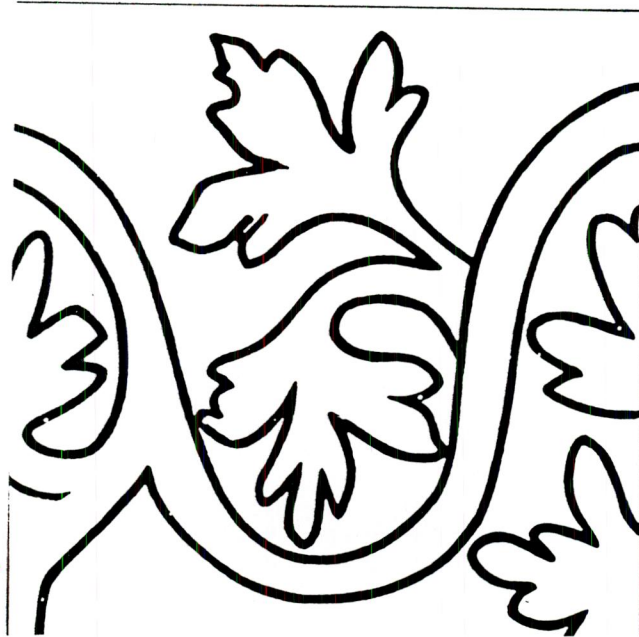


- Klmainham
- St. Audoen's church
- St. Kevin's church
- St. Patrick's cathedral
- Ship street
- Lusk church
- Swords castle
- Klldare cathedral
- Kilkenny, Dominican Friary
- St canice's cathedral
- St. Francis' Friary
- St. john's priory
- Jerpoint Abbey
- Kells priory
- Drogheda,
- Dominican Friary
- Mellifont Abbey
- Monasterboice
- Trim castle
- Clonmines Friary
- Dunbrody Addey
- Waterford, Deanery Yard
- John street
- St. peters church

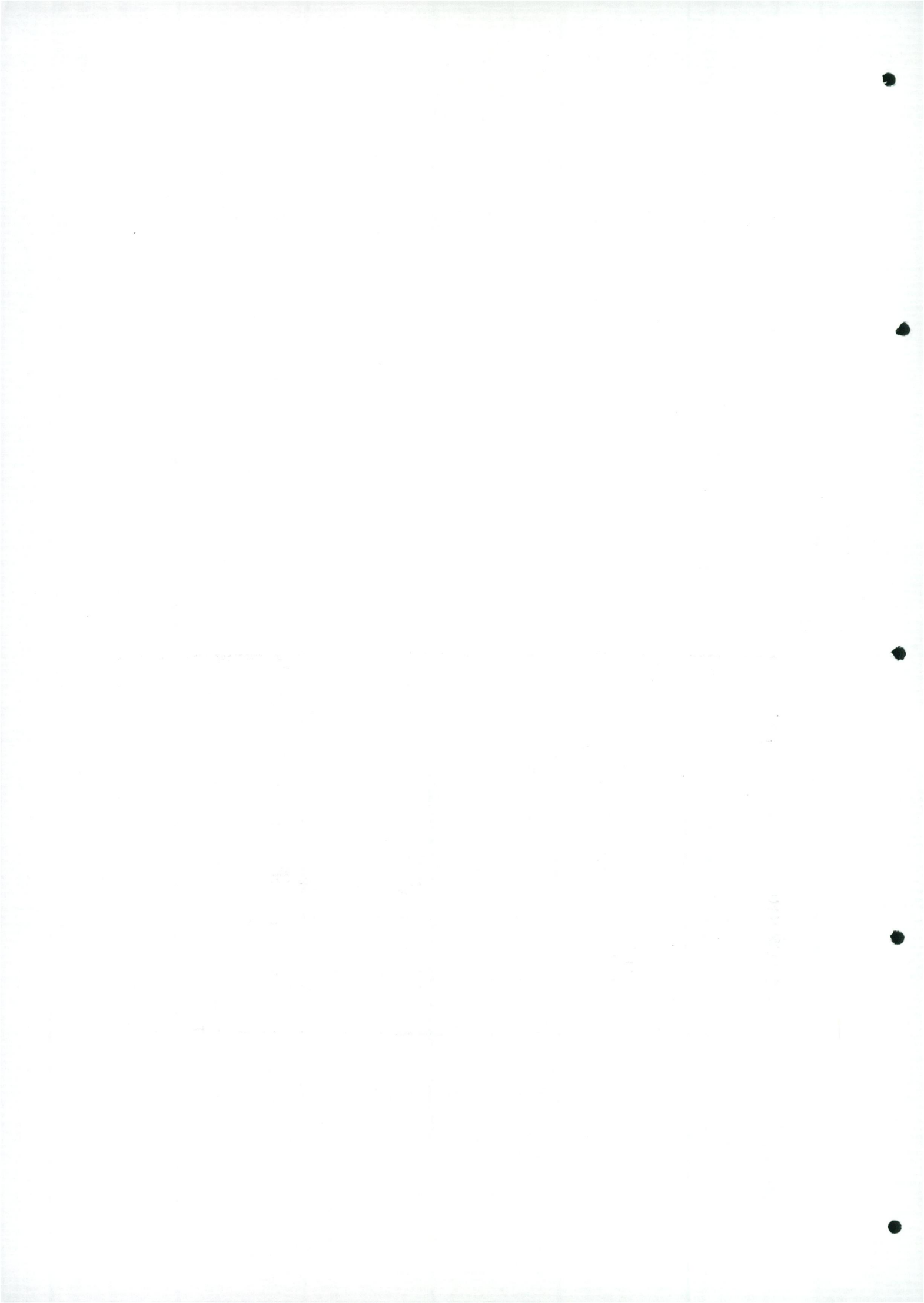
(EAMES,E.S. FANNING T. P. 119)

Pl. No: 9 Pavement found in situe of Lion rampart in 4-foil from
 Sword castle. (JAMES,E.S. FANNING. T. P.40).





(Fig. 26) Vine scroll border. found at Lusk
Design also found at: Dublin, Christchurch cathedral
St. Audoen's church
St. Patrick's cathedral
Swords castle
Jerpoint Abbey
Kells Priory
Mellifont Abbey
Dundrody Abbey
Waterford, St. peter's church
(E. S.EAMES, E. S. FANNING, T. P. 119)



(Fig. 27) 4-Foil in clockwise scroll found at Lusk

Design also found at Dublin, Chirst church cathedral

College street

Dublin castle

St. Patrick's cathedral

St. Audoen's church

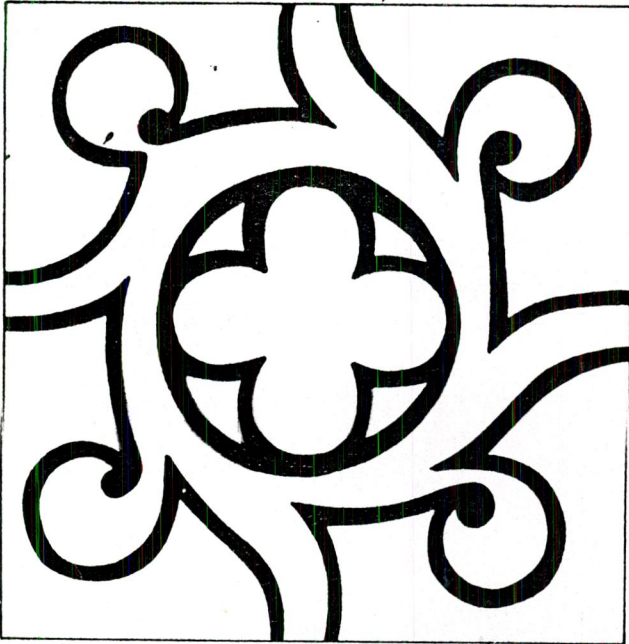
Dalkey, St Begnet's church

Swords castle

Great connell Priory

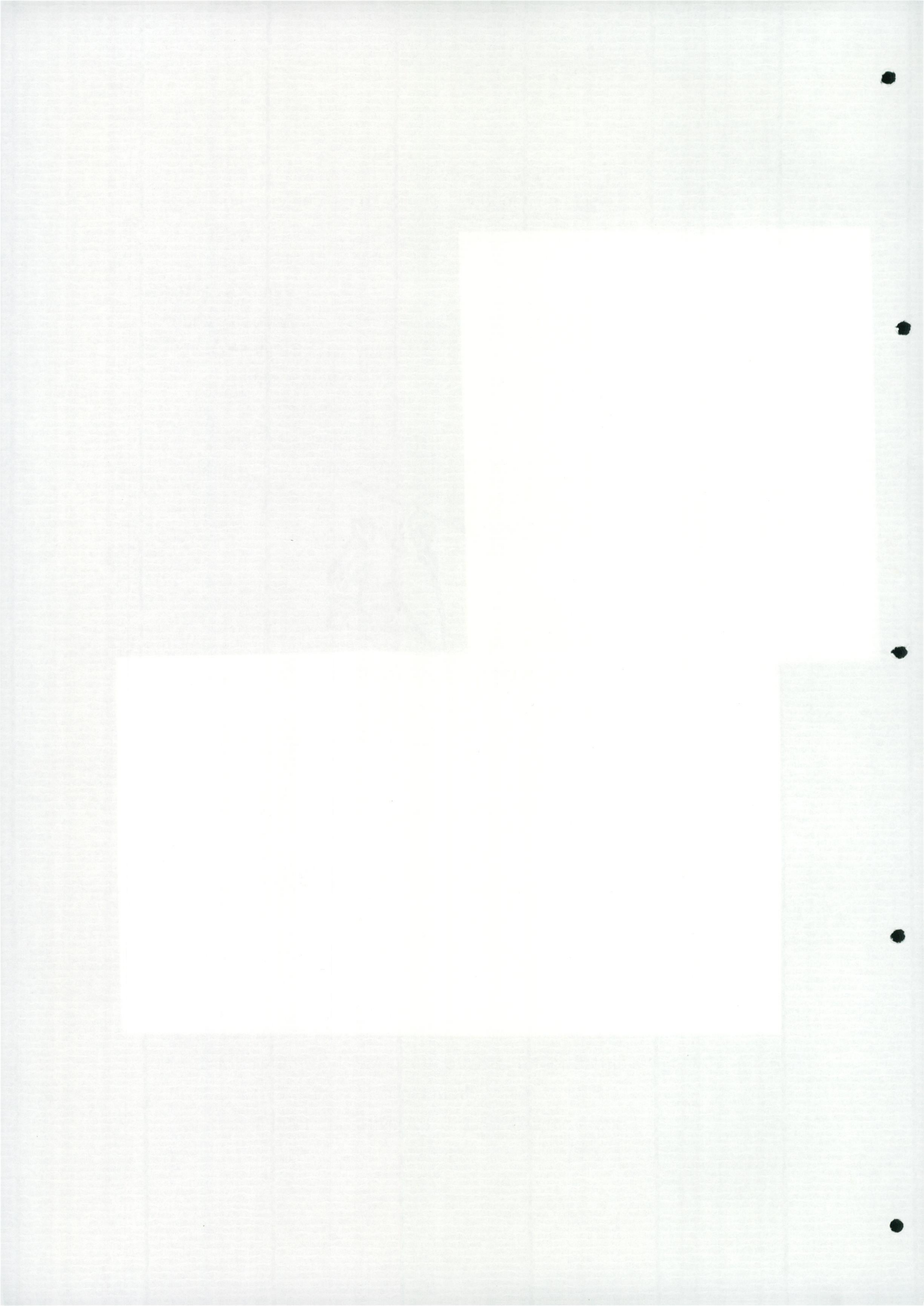
Mellifont Abbey

Waterford, Deanery



Pl. 11 Pavement found in situe of clockwise scroll with 4-foil
from Mellifont Abbey.

(Both from EAMES,E.S. FANNING, T. 1988. P. 112)



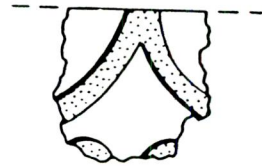
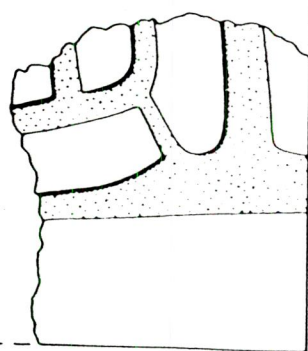
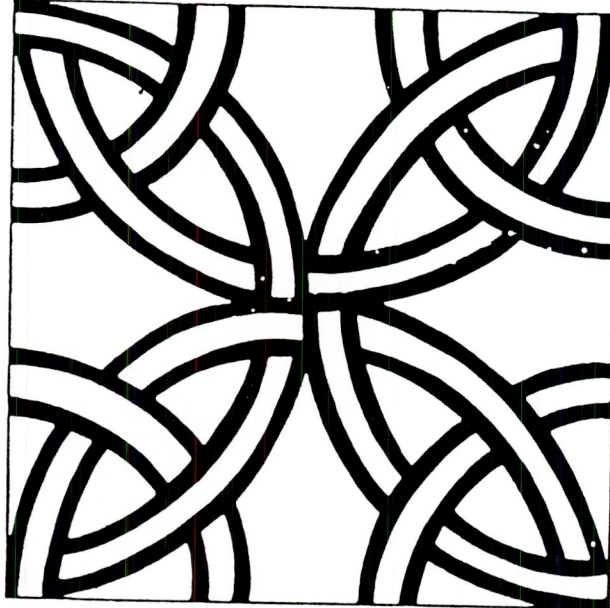
(Fig.28) Line impressed tile found at Lusk

Design also found at Dublin, St. Audoen's church

Malahide church

Great Connell Priory

(EAMES, E.S. FANNING T. 1988 P.123)

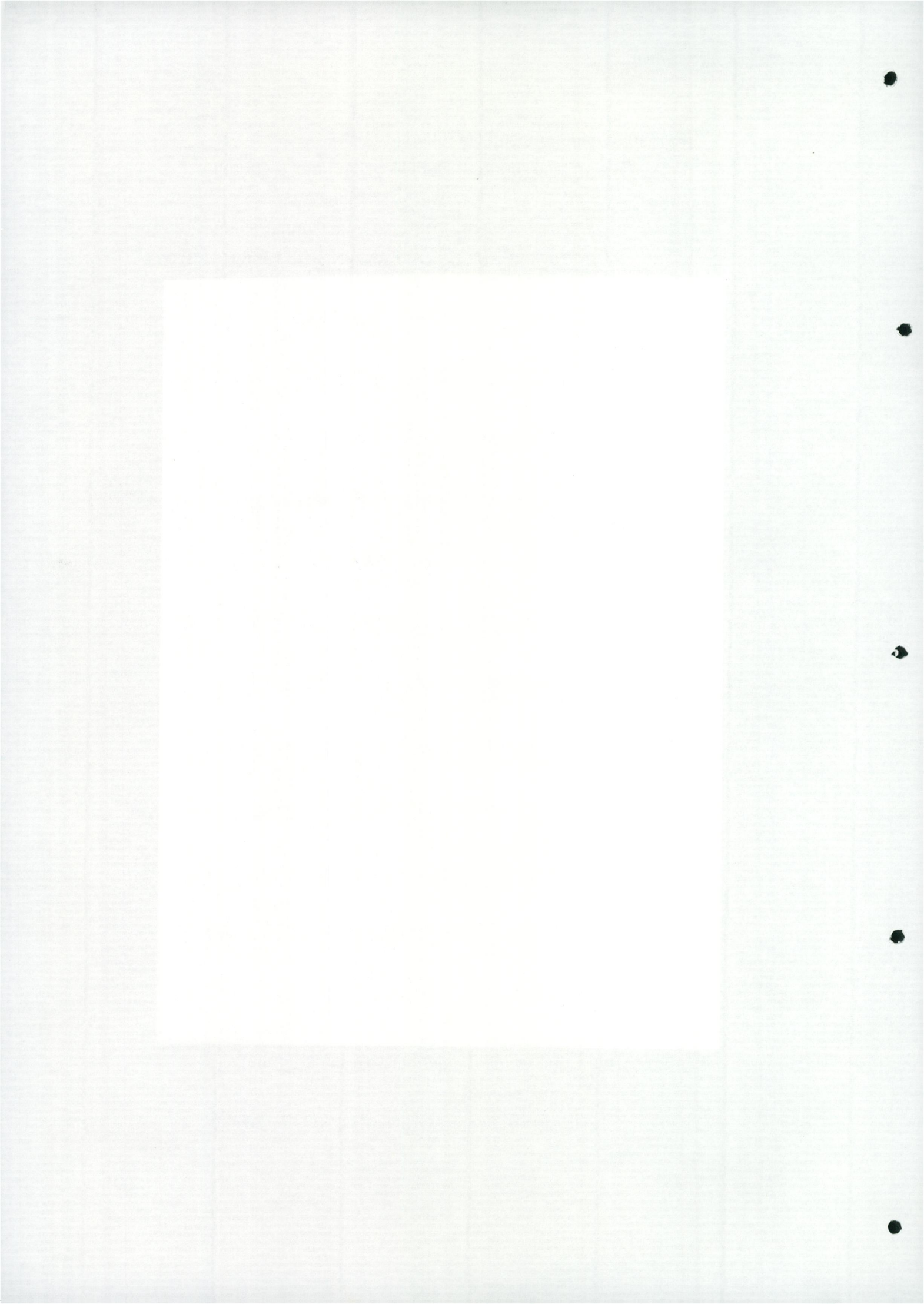


R77

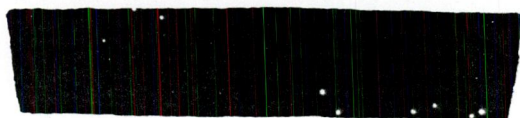
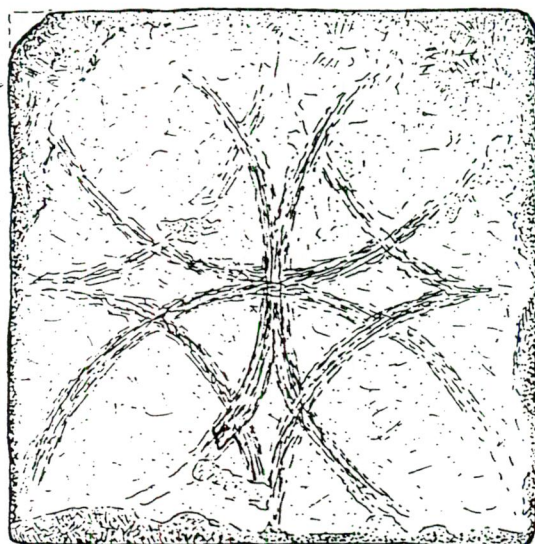
Lusk

(Fig.30) Two Counter relief unidentifiable tile fragments found at Lusk.

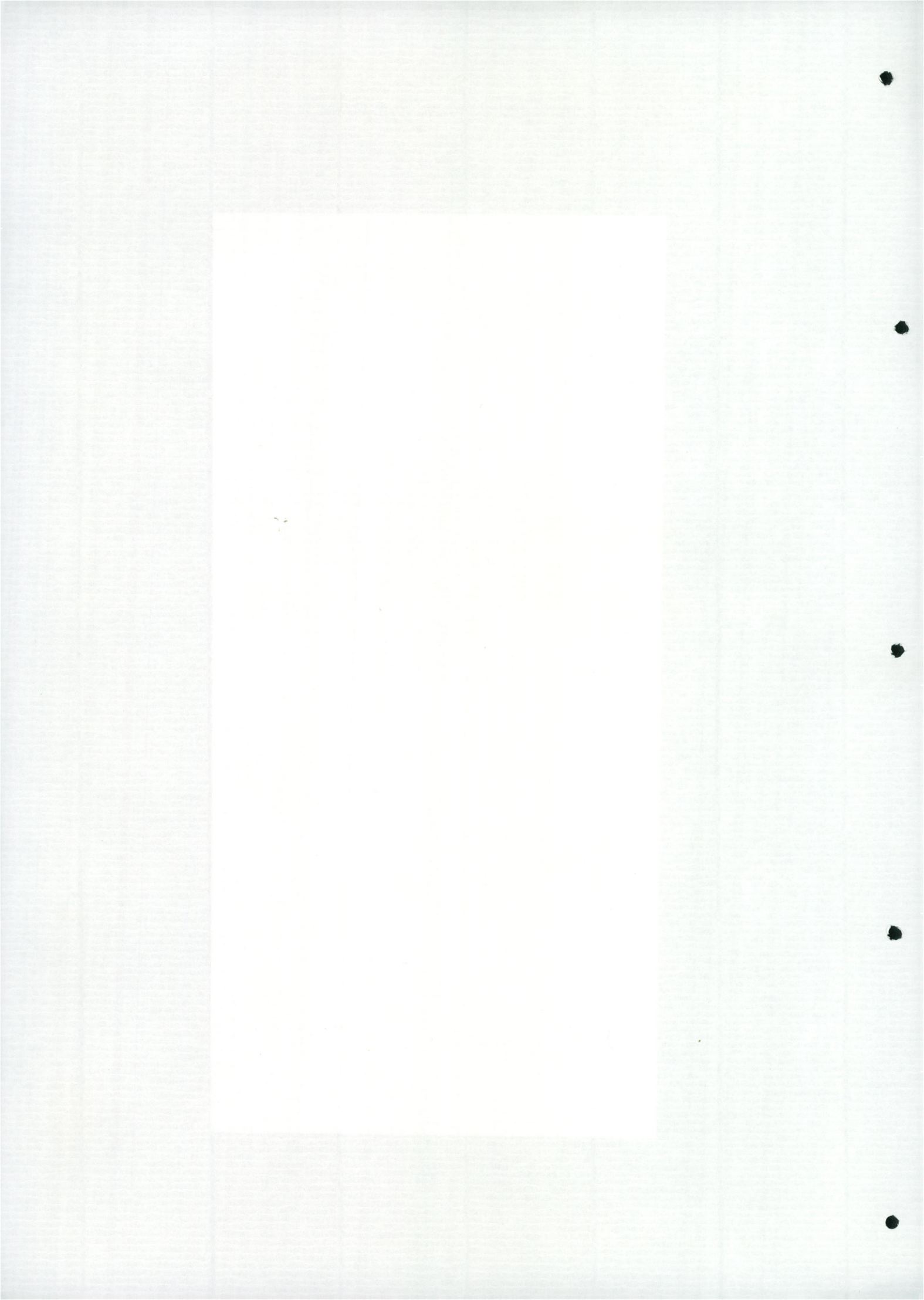
(EAMES, E.S. FANNING T. 1988 P.133)



(Fig. 29) Line impressed tile found from Grace Dieu.



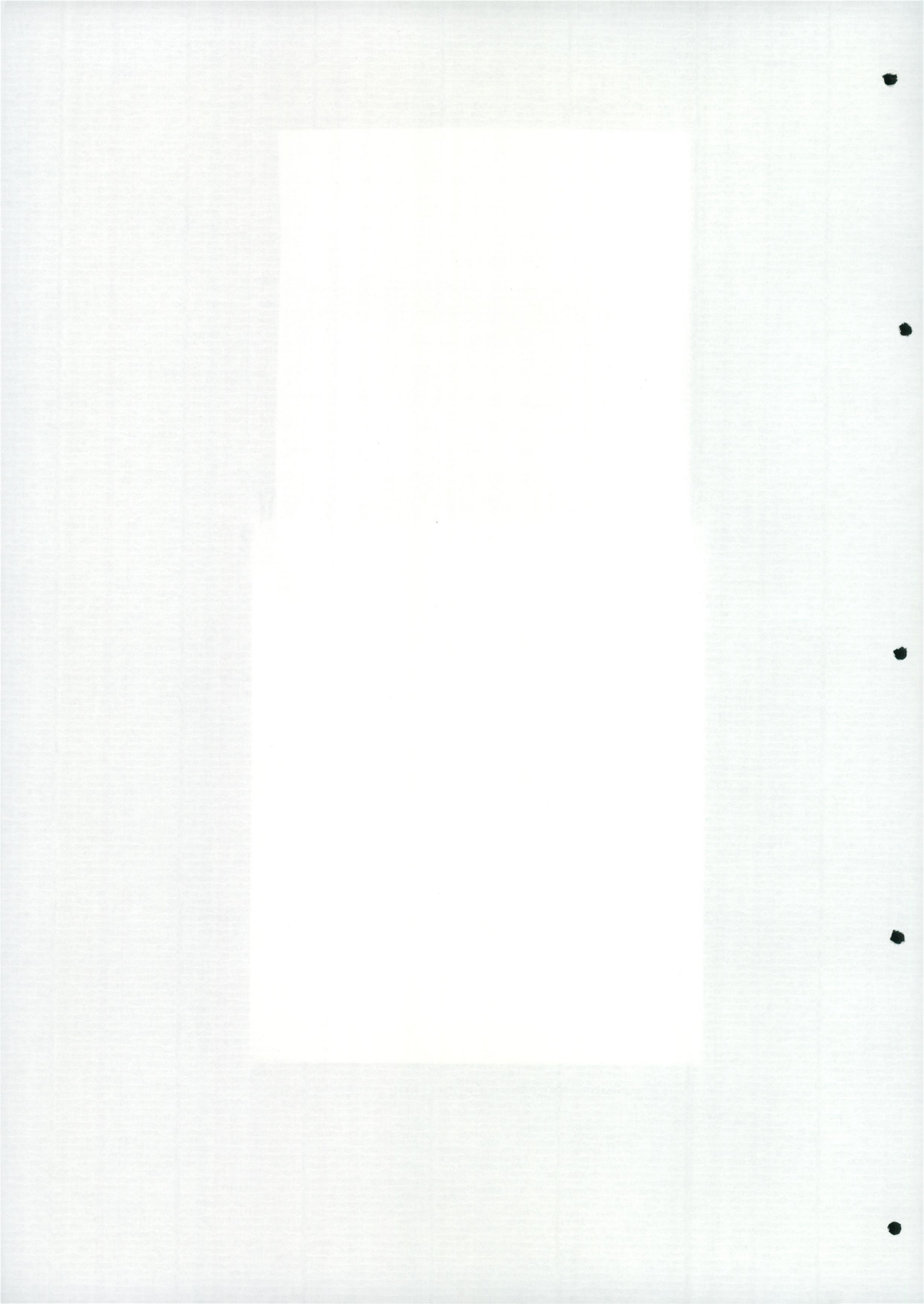
COPYRIGHT
NATIONAL MUSEUM
OF IRELAND
Kildare Street, Dublin 2
Telephone: 01-661 8811



(Fig .31) Stone head from Lusk



Pl.13 Stone head from Grace Dieu which is in the Museum at Lusk



(Fig 31) Cresset stone fom Lusk





Conclusion

The church sites at Lusk holds two exhibitions, the exhibition which was created by the people of the parish within the present church and the Office of public work's exhibition which is housed within the belfry.

The people of Lusk are proud of their National monument and are determined to keep alive the history of the parish. In the last five years historians from the community have emerged to form the ' Lusk Heritage Group' which set up the present exhibition with in the present church. The exhibition consists of historic artifacts from find to documents of every description donated by the people of the area. This exhibition is of such high standard that it sets an example to other historical societies.

In 1992 the Office of Public Works renovated the belfry and reopened it to house the present exhibition and four of the five floors at Lusk. This fantastic exhibition includes the Anglo Norman tombs and details of this historic site on which the viewer stands. A number of the finds from Lusk such as the cresset stone , medieval tiles among others are kept by the O.P.W. in one of their warehouses. These finds are of significant national importance especially within the community and hence the O.P.W. should upgrade their facilities to ensure that these finds are on display. Interest in the exhibition would be heightened if they increased their advertising campaign on a national Level and if they gave the viewer access to the top of the belfry in order to view the surrounding country side.

By documenting the different buildings and finds of Lusk within an historical framework it has resulted in the availability of additional information. I feel a sense of achievement having found the opportunity to raise new questions about such an important national monument and also having contributed to the area in which I was born and raised.



Bibliography

ARCHDALL, REV. Mervyn, monasticon Hibernicum, Dublin, P.F. Moraon and Co. 1786.

ARCHER, Patrick, Fair Fingal, Dublin, An Taisce Fingal 1975.

BARROW, George L., The Round Towers of Dublin, Dublin historical Record, Vol. 28, 1974 P. 57-69.

BARROW, George L., The round Towers of Ireland, Dublin, Academy press 1979.

CAMBELL. K. "Medieval tile kiln site at Magalene St. Drogheda, Co Louth", Archaeological Journal, Vol.21, 1954 P. 48-54.

CUNNINGHAM, George, The Anglo Norman Advance, Roscrea, Parkmore press 1987.

CRAIG, Maurice, Architecture of Ireland from the earliest times, Dublin, Easton & Sons Ltd. 1982

CURTIS, Edmund, History of Medieval Ireland, from 1089-1513, Dublin, Methuen & Co. Ltd. 1938.

DE BREFFINY, Brian, Castles of Ireland, Dublin, Thames and Hudson 1977.

EAMES, Elizabeth S. and FANNING, T. Irish Medieval Tiles, Dublin, Royal Irish Academy 1988.

FANNING, Thomas, "An Irish medieval pavement, recent excavations at Swords castle Co. Dublin", Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Vol. 28, 1893, P. 357-366.

FRAZER, W. "Pavement tiles in Ireland", Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Vol. 28, 1893, P. 357-366

LEASK, Harold G. Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings, Vol. 1, Dundalk, Dundalgan Press, 1955.



LEASK, Harold G. Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings, Vol. 2, Dundalk, Dundalgan press, 1966.

LEASK, Harold G. Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings, Vol. 3, Dundalk, Dundalgan press, 1955.

MAC DONALD, Architecture of the Roman Empire, U.S.A. Yale, Uni. Press, 1986.

MAC GEARAILT, Gearoid, Celts and Normans, Dublin, Gill and Macmillan Ltd., 1969.

MAC NIOCAILL, G, & WALLACE, P.F. (Eds), Keimelia studies in Archaeology and History, Galway, Uni. press, 1988 , P. 363-374.

MC CULLOUGH. Niall & MULVIN, Valerie, The Lost Tradition, Dublin, Gandon Editions, 1987.

MONKS,Willie, "Lusk in early christian Ireland",(unpublished), P.85-95.

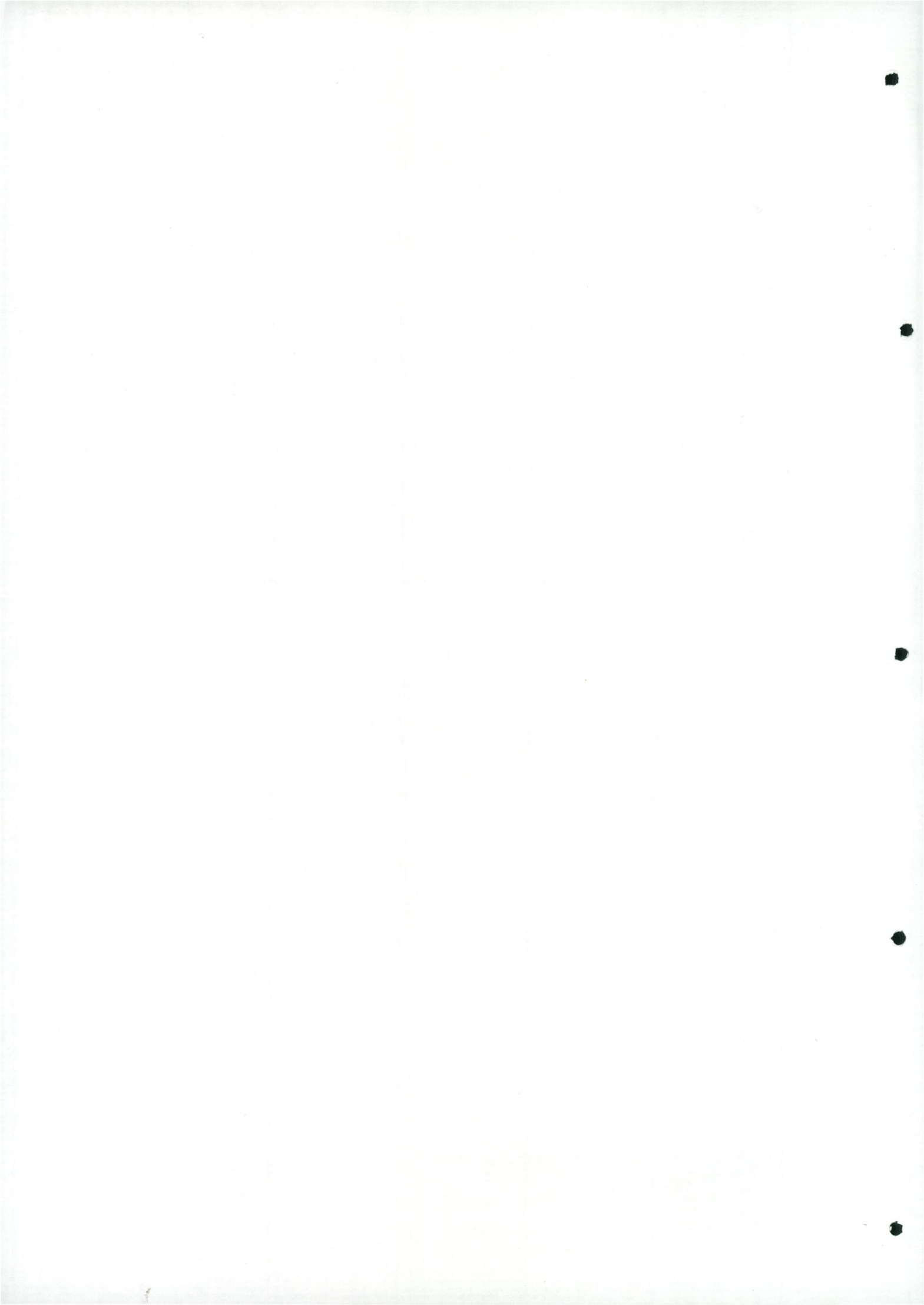
MOORE, Michael J., "Irish Cresset Stones", Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Vol.114 1984, P.98-116.

ROYAL SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF IRELAND,(R.S.A.I.), 'Lusk "', unipress. V. 44 1914, P.251-255.

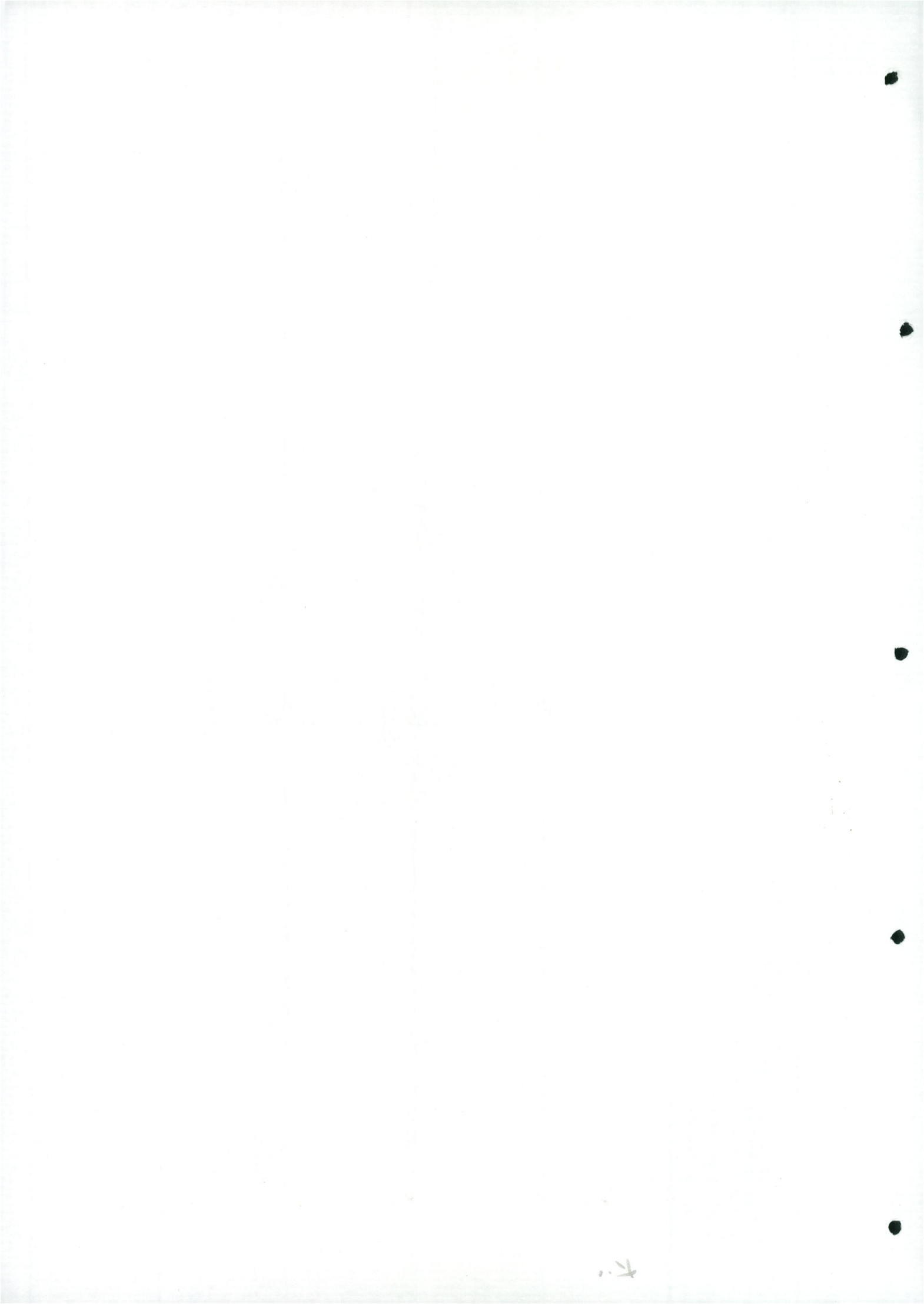
SHORT HISTORIES OF THE DUBLIN PARISHES, (Local publications), 'The parish of Lusk', Trinity college library, P.85-95.

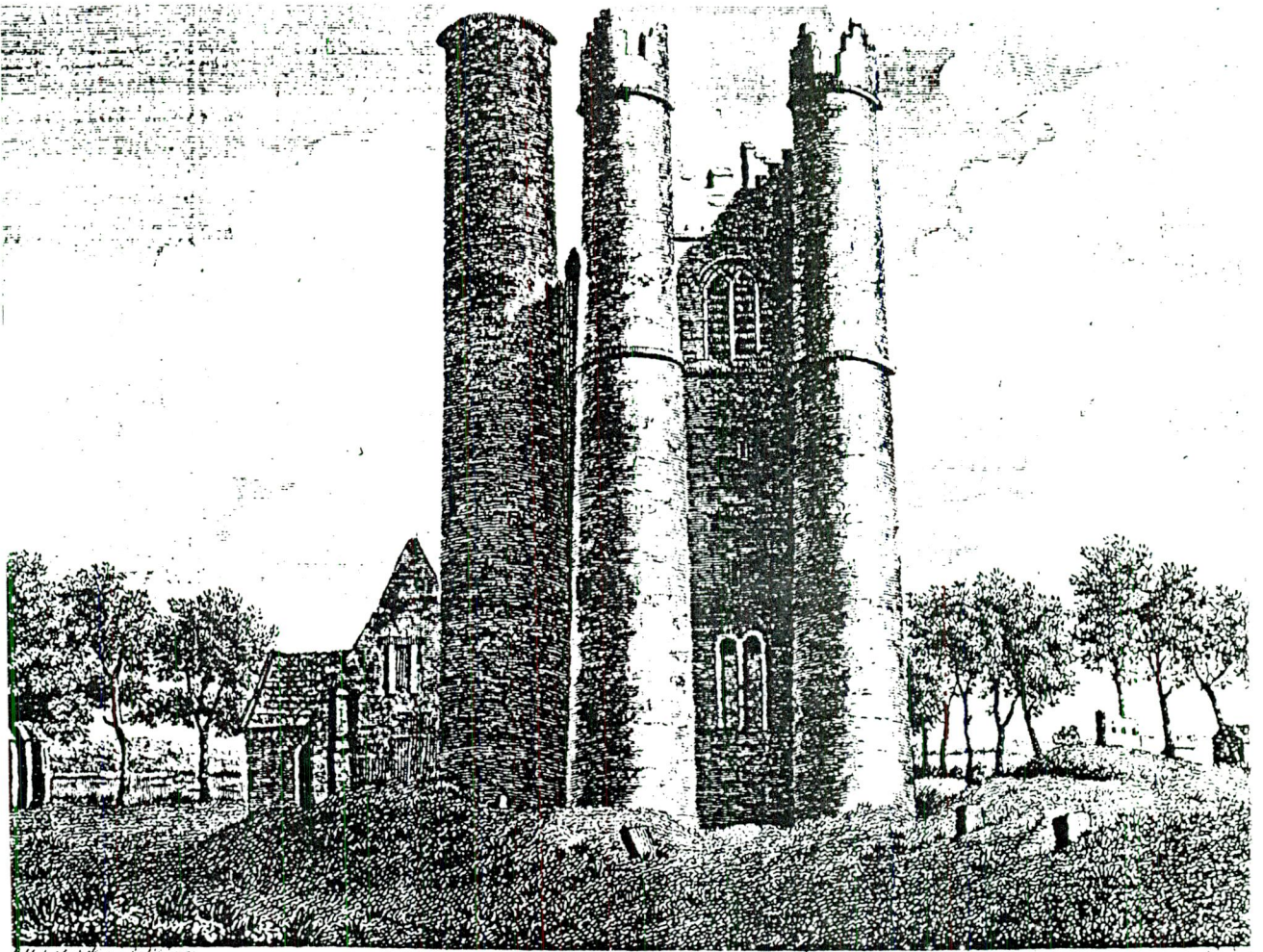
SLATER, Mike, Castles and Stronghouses,Dublin, Folly Publicians, 1993.

STROKES, Rev. D.D, ' Lusk' , ROYAL SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF IRELAND, (R.S.A.I.), Vol.5,1890, P. 501-8



The first sketches of the church at Lusk





Engraved by J. Hooper Sept. 6 1791.

J. Hooper 1791
Sept. 6.

WINDSIE CHURCH, Co. Dublin.

J. Hooper. Sept. 6 1791



George Petrie, View of the village at Lusk with the church in the background
1819

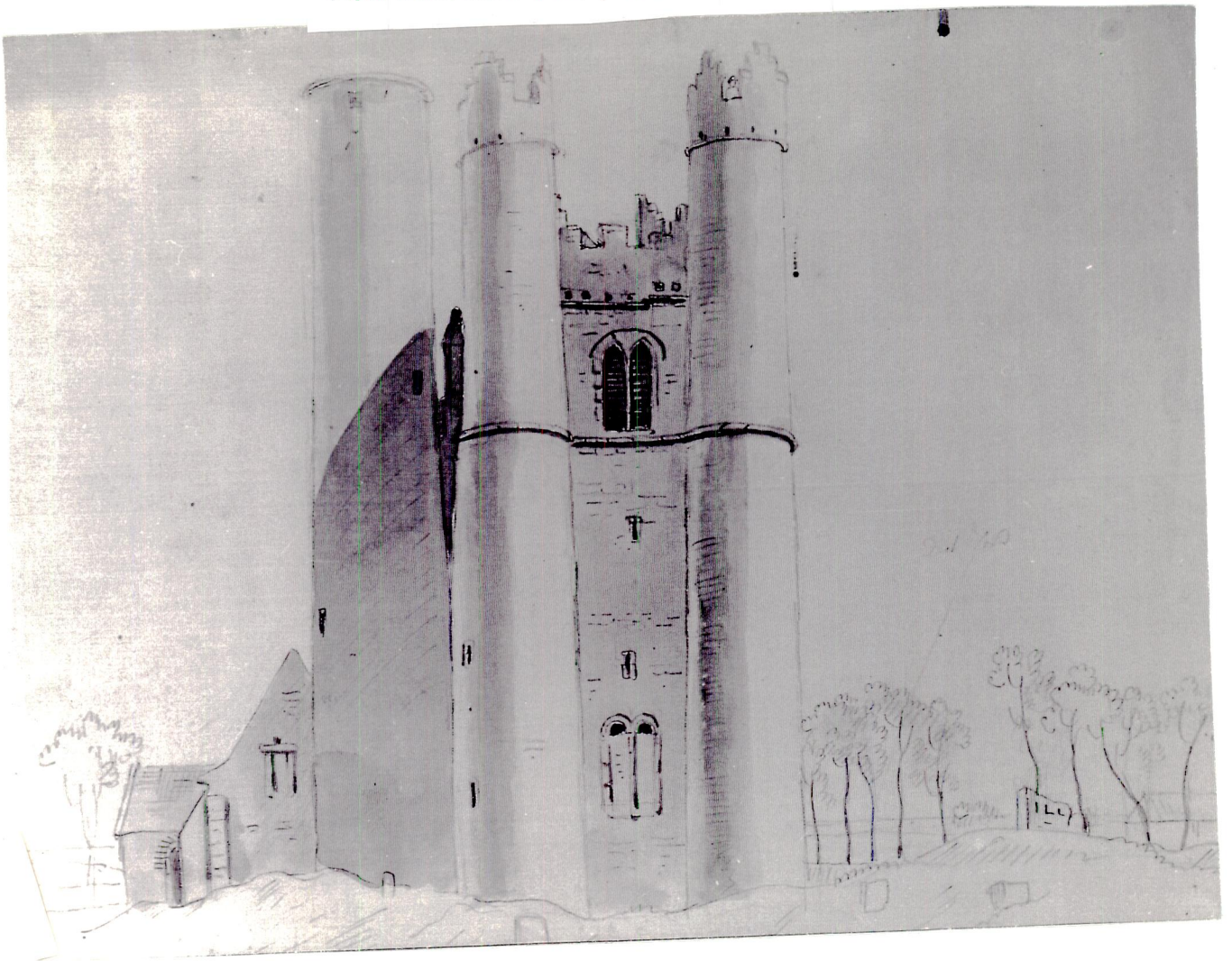
DUBLIN, SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1833.

LUSK CASTLE.

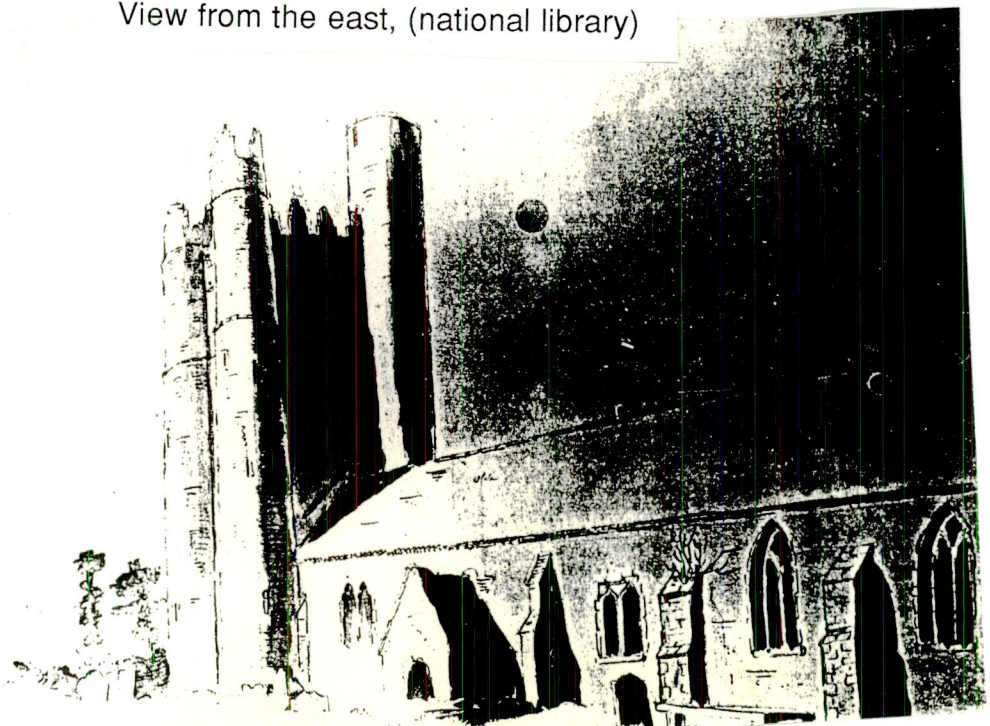


Drawn by Samuel Lover, Esq. R. H. A. for the Irish Penny Magazine.

View from the north, (national library)



View from the east, (national library)





Louis King Bradford, (1807-1862), exhibited in the R.H.A. gallery in 1827

