

AN INTRODUCTION
TO THE ARCHITECTURAL
HERITAGE *of*

COUNTY KILKENNY



Foreword



COUNTY KILKENNY
A field graveyard enclosure makes a picturesque impression in the rural landscape at the border between County Kilkenny and County Tipperary. A flat iron gate attests to the skills of the local blacksmith.

County Kilkenny has for centuries been widely regarded as one of the most important historic centres in Ireland. An appreciation of the early built heritage of the county can be traced back to nineteenth-century publications including *The Travellers' Directory through Ireland...* (1801), *The Post Chaise Companion* (1805), and Samuel Lewis's *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* (1837); earlier still, County Kilkenny featured prominently, if not entirely favourably in Elstob's *A Trip To Kilkenny From Durham...* (1779).

The evaluation of the built legacy of the county continued in the mid nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century with the publication of *The Antiquities and Scenery of County Kilkenny* in 1851, *The History, Architecture and Antiquities of the Cathedral Church of Saint Canice, Kilkenny* in 1857, and the foundation of the Ecclesiastical Archaeological Society of Ossory in 1874. Meanwhile, the Kilkenny Archaeological Society, the precursor to the Royal Society of Antiquities of Ireland has been active since 1849.

And yet, beyond Kilkenny City's internationally-renowned early sites, which include Kilkenny Castle (originally 1207-19), Rothe House (1594-1610), and Saint Canice's Cathedral (begun 1203), the architectural heritage of the post 1700 period of the entire county has been unjustly neglected.

County Kilkenny boasts a wealth of architectural treasures dating from the eighteenth century to the present day. Wealthy patrons were traditionally drawn to build stately country houses in the county by the picturesque

landscape; the same landscape, being rich and fertile, historically supported such estates through agricultural ventures. The great rivers of the region have encouraged milling and other industrial enterprise since medieval times, while the banks of the Suir were traditionally an indigenous source of thatch for vernacular cottages. The country enjoys a diverse ecclesiastical heritage with chapels and churches surviving as the legacy of Catholic, Church of Ireland, Methodist, and Presbyterian communities. The advent of the railways introduced new forms of architecture to the area including signal boxes and impressive viaducts. Meanwhile, the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of more innovative building types like cinemas and motor garages.

Although not a comprehensive catalogue, the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) undertook, in 2004-5, the largest survey of the post 1700 built heritage of County Kilkenny. It is hoped that, through a survey such as this, a greater awareness of and appreciation for the architectural legacy of County Kilkenny can be fostered. As custodians of this valuable resource, it is the responsibility of the present generation to ensure that it survives as a sustainable legacy for generations to come.

The NIAH survey of the architectural heritage of County Kilkenny can be accessed on the Internet at:
www.buildingsofireland.ie

Introduction



County Kilkenny lies in south east Leinster, bordering on County Laois to the north, Carlow and Wexford to the east, Waterford to the south, and Tipperary to the west. The landscape is predominantly agricultural, cut through by deep and fertile river valleys. Despite centres of population of remarkable historical distinction, the county remains predominantly rural with the overall impression being pastoral rather

than urban. While there are areas of poorer land, it was the very fertility of the deep river valleys along the Suir, Barrow and Nore that encouraged early settlement. In the early months of summer the landscape along these valleys assumes an almost startling lushness, all the more welcome because we come upon them almost by accident in a county without dramatic scenery. Kilkenny lacks distinctive moun-

KILKENNY CITY
A view of Kilkenny City from Windgap Hill overlooks the River Nore. The remnants of the mid eighteenth-century Ormonde Woollen Mill or Castle Mill (pre 1758) are visible in the foreground. The mill was established by the Butler family on the site of an earlier corn and tuck mill (pre 1654/5).

tain ranges although upland stretches, such as the Castlecomer Plateau, add variety to the topography. Graiguenamanagh, overlooked by Mount Brandon and the Blackstairs Mountains of neighbouring counties, benefits from a picturesque setting on the River Barrow, and distant prospects of Slievenamon add to the scenic effect in the south west of the county. Like some of its architectural heritage, much that is attractive comes by surprise and needs to be sought out.

Kilkenny rests on a bed of grey carboniferous limestone that has, through the ages, been used extensively in the buildings of the county, especially for decorative elements like window sills and surrounds. When used on a large scale, as at Saint Mary's Catholic Cathedral (1843-57), Kilkenny, it can appear flat and somewhat dull, but in the brilliant sunlight of a frosty morning or in the setting summer sun

the stone presents a luminous quality. Other materials also occur: the valley of the Nore near Thomastown is mostly old red sandstone. The county is also known for its 'marble' quarries which were developed most actively by William Colles (*fl.* 1702-30) when he established a hugely profitable marble works at Maddockstown, near Kilkenny City, in 1730.

The general effect of Kilkenny is of a county at ease with its past and enjoying its present. In many respects the overall prospect has changed little since in 1801 when *The Travellers' Directory through Ireland...* noted:

'The soil is rich and fertile, being proper for tillage, it produces plenty of corn, wool, coal, and marble; and the country abounds with fine plantations, and is from the purity of the air, esteemed extremely healthful...' (Dublin, 1801).

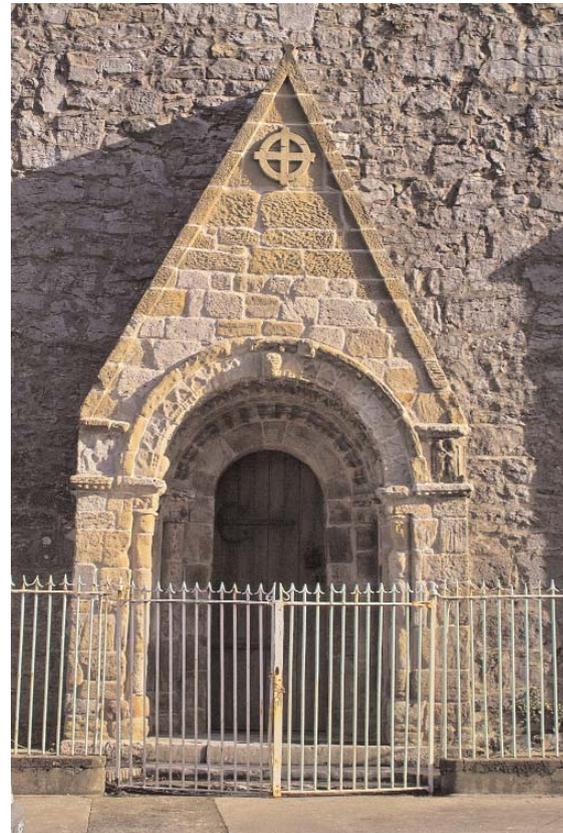


COUNTY KILKENNY
A topographical view, characteristic of the south-west of the county, shows flat fields giving way to rolling hills in the distance.

Pre 1700

(fig. 1)
SAINT LACHTAIN'S
CHURCH
New Bridge Street/
Kilkenny Street,
Freshford
(1730)

An early eighteenth-century Gothic-style church incorporates a salvaged twelfth-century Romanesque doorcase (1133), together with a number of smaller artefacts carved from a honey-coloured local sandstone.



(fig. 2)
SAINT LACHTAIN'S
CHURCH
New Bridge Street/
Kilkenny Street,
Freshford

A richly-ornamented doorcase shows high quality stone masonry in the saw tooth detailing; an inscription records the original patron as MacRoen.

Tourism in Kilkenny has placed a heavy emphasis on the county's extensive medieval heritage. Guide books, from the popular *Shell Guide to Ireland* of the 1960s to more recent publications, accentuate the number and importance of Kilkenny's medieval sites. This legacy, largely the product of Anglo-Norman interventions, remains a strong 'selling' point for the county, but many earlier settlements also exist. *Cill Chaimig* itself was a sixth-century settlement centred on the church of Saint

Cainneach (pre 599), and archaeological finds have even confirmed Viking activity in the area of Dunmore Cave around 928 AD. The physical fabric of Freshford incorporates the entire area of an Early Christian site. This includes the Late-Romanesque doorway (1133) at Saint Lachtain's Church (1730), which supports an inscription recording the name of its patron as MacRoen (figs. 1-2).

The Anglo-Normans founded a range of towns in the county; among them Callan, dat-



(fig. 3)
KELLS PRIORY
Kells
(founded 1193)

An aerial view of Kells Priory clearly demonstrates the perimeter wall, which incorporates the familiar tower houses known as the 'Seven Castles'. The ruined priory, occupying the inner monastic precinct, remains an imposing landmark on a bank overlooking the Kings River.

ing from 1217, was the largest walled town in medieval Ireland. The concurrent arrival of new continental religious orders, including the Augustinians, Benedictines, Cistercians, and Grey Friars, encouraged not only new religious norms, but also diversity in agricultural practice and an ambitious architectural programme. This was most marked with the establishment of abbeys and priories. The Priory at Kells was founded in 1193 by Geoffrey de Monte Marisco (fl. 1169-93) for the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine (fig. 3). It remains one of the most

extensive and imposing of its kind in Ireland. But, for all its scale and impressiveness, it should be recalled that the fortified nature of the external walls reflects the turbulent period in which it flourished, and the manner in which such sites were integral to a colonising process. Kilkenny City retains much of its former defensive wall, which encompasses an area that includes Saint Mary's Church (c.1200), now Saint Mary's Hall, Saint Mary's Lane, and an abbey dedicated to Saint Francis of Assisi, off present-day Horse Barrack Lane, the chancel of

(fig. 4)
JERPOINT ABBEY
Jerpointabbey
(1180-1200)

A substantial ecclesiastical complex established by the Cistercian order, overlooking the Arrigle River. The cloister and crossing tower illustrated were introduced in the fifteenth century. Jerpoint Abbey is now a National Monument in the care of the Office of Public Works.



which dates from 1331. Other significant sites include the Cistercian abbeys of Duiske (founded 1204-12), at Graiguenamanagh, and Jerpoint (1180-1200), Jerpointabbey, near Thomastown. Jerpoint is a Cistercian foundation and slightly predates the Augustinian foundation at Kells (fig. 4). Although it incorporates planning and features typical of the rich Cistercian tradition in Ireland, including an arcaded cloister, its surviving form and distinctive tower date largely from the fifteenth century. The tower of Saint Mary's Church (c.1225), off Main Street, Gowran, is equally characteristic of the period and marks the former crossing of what was once a large 'collegiate' church for a community of clerics.

Such medieval sites feature prominently in the psyche of the wider public in defining Kilkenny as a distinctive county and region, but

apart from the occasional narrow lane or alleyway this medieval character is hard to discern at first glance; even the 'medieval' appearance of Kilkenny Castle (founded 1207-19), one of the best-known visitor attractions in Ireland, dates largely from the nineteenth century. Closer scrutiny of the castle, and of many buildings of the city itself, reveals a more extensive medieval legacy. The city derives from the earlier monastic foundation and from the strategic importance of its castle, which remain the fixed points of reference to this day. All distant views highlight the castle tower on one hill with the ridge of the town running parallel to the River Nore, and rising again to Saint Canice's Cathedral (begun 1203; completed pre 1285) and the adjoining round tower (849), the intervening rooftops relieved by occasional spires and the cupola of the Tholsel (1761) (fig. 5).



(fig. 5)
A PANORAMA OF
KILKENNY
(Irish School,
c.1760-1800)

A late eighteenth-century oil painting illustrates the topography of Kilkenny City from Windgap Hill, with Kilkenny Castle on an elevated position to the left (south). The tower of Saint Mary's Church (now Saint Mary's Hall) is also visible, as is a cupola not unlike that of the Tholsel, the medieval Magdalen or

Maudlin Castle, and ground rising to Saint Canice's Cathedral, with the round tower on the right (north).

(Oil on canvas,
95.2 x 150.5cm)

*Courtesy of the National
Gallery of Ireland*



SAINT CANICE'S STEPS
off Church Lane/
off Saint Canice's Place,
Kilkenny
(1614)

A flight of twenty-six steps in County Kilkenny limestone, sponsored by Robert Wale or Wall (fl. 1614) represents a unique artefact in the archaeological heritage of Kilkenny City. In the background the gable wall of a reconstructed house (1882) incorporates the fabric of a procurator's or sexton's house (c.1525), featuring medieval carved limestone plaques.

Some of the city's medieval properties, like the Shee Almshouse (1582), the Archer Mansion (1582/4), and the late sixteenth-century Rothe House (1594-1610), are much documented. Others such as the 'Hole in the Wall' (pre 1700), behind 17 High Street, are not so well known. In many instances later buildings have fronted others, and it is only when a rear elevation is glimpsed above a perimeter wall or garden building that some inkling of the long provenance of the site can be established. Examples are found on Parliament Street and elsewhere: Berkeley House, 5 Patrick Street Lower, dates from around 1769 but incorporates structures dating back to the turn of the seventeenth century (fig. 6). The repeatedly re-fronted Shee House (reconstructed 1928), 91-93 High Street, incorporates elements that date back to around 1580, while the rear elevation of 19 and 20 Parliament Street reveals a house from the 1600s retaining original stonework and interior

fixtures. The site also indicates the splitting of the original burgage plot divisions determined by William Marshall (c.1147-1219) in his Charter of 1207.

Tower houses were once plentiful in the county, although comparatively few survive. The fourteenth-century Dysart Castle (c.1350), Dysart near Thomastown, was the birthplace of the celebrated philosopher George Berkeley (1685-1753). Many later significant properties have disappeared and, at some sites, comparatively little from the medieval period survives. The former Ormond property Dunmore House (pre 1700; demolished pre 1840) was already ruinous by the early eighteenth century, although evidence suggests that the original building was comparatively ornate. Kilcreene House (c.1675; demolished post 1947), Kilcreene near Kilkenny, was erected in the Classical style but with the fenestration, high pitched roof, dormer windows, and dominant



BUTTER SLIP
High Street,
Kilkenny
(c.1600)

One of the last of the Kilkenny City 'slips' to survive in a recognisable medieval form, the alley takes its name from a niche at the midway point where a butter stall was historically located.



(fig. 6)
BERKELEY HOUSE
5 Patrick Street Lower,
Kilkenny
(1769 with c.1600)

Having been entirely reconstructed in the Classical manner in the mid eighteenth century, Berkeley House retains medieval features including mullioned window frames, indicating the longstanding popularity of County Kilkenny limestone for decorative detailing.



ABBEY VIEW HOUSE
Lady's Well Street,
Thomastown
(c.1725)

An early eighteenth-century house expresses former, possibly late medieval, origins in the close grouping of the openings about a Classical doorcase and the stout gable-ended chimney stacks rising into diagonal flues.

chimney stacks typical of late seventeenth-century styles and not dissimilar to elements of Beaulieu House (1660-6), County Louth.

Kilkenny boasts a wide variety of small towns and villages. Many, in scale and form, suggest an affluence often at variance with the harsh reality of rural existence in past generations. Some, like Castlecomer and Johnstown, retain an impressive layout revealing the aspirations of landlords in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as well as the influence of wider European ideas on urban design. Other communities, like Gowran, Inistioge and Thomastown, show a combination of architecture and landscape that typifies an idealistic image of Irish rural settlement. In their combination of picturesque settings with medieval ruins, attractive shopfronts, and characteristic dwellings they support a sense of what an Irish town should look like, if one that is seldom

ever realised. The topography of Inistioge, a medieval and once walled town, has been compared by Patrick Shaffrey to the 'character of European hill towns' (Dublin, 1984). Cullen notes that it has an integrated character and a sense of age-old continuity rare in Irish villages and small towns (Dublin, 1979). Inistioge was used by director Pat O'Connor in *Circle of Friends* (1995) to represent a typical Irish town. Smaller settlements, such as Licketstown, display a seemingly random informal layout. Mullinavat was a roadside development and the curve of its main street seems to echo an easy meandering route of some long forgotten track. In keeping with the norm across Ireland most of these towns and villages grew significantly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the period from which their surviving form and pervasive architectural character derive.

The Eighteenth Century

The comparative political stability of the eighteenth century created a favourable climate for building, much of which has survived. Kilkenny, being at the heart of Ireland and supporting a ducal seat, was closer to sources of power and influence than might be imagined. Political allegiances assured that the newly affirmed leaders in the region were in touch with, and open to, shifts in architectural taste, and many of the larger buildings of the period show evidence of new styles of architecture, rich with references to British and Continental parallels. The military architect Jacques Wibault (fl. 1695-1727) dedicated his *Traité de l'Architecture Militaire* to James Butler (1665-1745), 2nd Duke of Ormonde, in 1701. Figures like the duke were familiar with some of the most innovative European design of the period but, apart from work at the Castle, no grandiose schemes emerged to challenge the medieval character of the city. Due to an absence of significant public architecture the reputation of Kilkenny City did not always live up to the expectations of travellers, especially when one considers the enormous growth in sophisticat-

ed townscapes elsewhere in this era. A contemporary guide noted how:

'...on recollecting the common phrase, 'Kilkenny streets are paved with marble' serve to fill the traveller's head with great expectations — he looks for a little less than a paradise — but he finds himself wretchedly disappointed...' (Dublin, 1779).

However, incremental change was already much in evidence by the middle of the century, as recorded in John Rocque's *A Survey of the City of Kilkenny* (1758). Subsequent developments included the layout of Castle Road in 1769, and some later houses that assumed an air of metropolitan sophistication. A terrace of four houses (1791) on the Parade is as grand and substantial as anything of the period found in Dublin (*fig. 7*), and the fanlight doorcase of the former Kilkenny College (1782), John Street Lower, compares favourably with those on the capital's Merrion Square (*fig. 8*). Bridge House (post 1763), 88-89 John Street Lower, incorporates sections of a sixteenth-century dower house (c.1600) that still survive in recognisable form. The building consists of two separate



(*fig. 7*)
PARADE HOUSE
11 The Parade,
Kilkenny
(1791)

The largest of a group of four houses would not be out of place in Merrion Square or Mountjoy Square, Dublin. An elegant carriageway featuring an attractive surround in County Kilkenny limestone originally allowed access to a range of attendant coach houses or mews buildings.

(*fig. 8*)
KILKENNY COLLEGE
OR SAINT JOHN'S
COLLEGE
John Street Lower,
Kilkenny
(1782)

An elegant doorcase (installed 1784-5) attributed to John Lowe (d.1789/90) forms the centrepiece of a large-scale Classical-style college built to designs prepared by Charles Vierpyl (fl. 1782-8). The building superseded an earlier college established by James Butler (1610-88), 1st Duke of Ormonde, in 1667. The college is now the headquarters of Kilkenny County Council.



(fig. 9)
BRIDGE HOUSE
88-89 John
Street Lower,
Kilkenny
(post 1763 with
c.1600)

The shared doorcase (pre 1850) in County Kilkenny limestone is one of the few external alterations of the eighteenth-century reconstruction to the medieval Bridge House by Thomas Barnes (fl. post 1763). The doorcase was introduced as part of the subdivision of the house and shows gunshot markings, reputedly dating from the Civil War (1921-5).



(fig. 10)
40-41 PARLIAMENT
STREET
Kilkenny
(c.1800)

Along with the 'Kilkenny Window', a characteristic of the built heritage of Kilkenny City is a shared doorcase in richly-carved limestone, featuring the engaged Tuscan order

supporting a frieze and moulded archivolt, all framing an elaborate peacock tail-style fanlight.

dwellings: the one that adjoins the river is the more ambitious with a distinctive three-bay bow front that adds an attractive sculptural quality to the composition, as if echoing the substantial drum towers of the nearby castle. The ceiling of the room that fronts onto the river is perhaps the finest in the region, and has been commented upon as such by a range of sources. Bridge House reveals a number of local idiosyncrasies, notably the sharing of fanlights and doorcases (fig. 9). This is a motif employed at other properties in the city: on Parliament

Street (fig. 10) and John Street, among others. Similarly, a bipartite grouping of windows is a familiar feature in the locality, with extensive employment of County Kilkenny limestone that adds, quite literally, a touch of local colour to details such as doorcases and window sills. Otherwise the city showed little in the way of architectural distinctiveness although, historically, some houses employed tin funnels on top of their chimneys, which were remarked upon by visitors.

The much-photographed Tholsel (1761) stands on a site on High Street that had been used for the same purpose since around 1579 (fig. 11). In its present form it provides a distinctive element on the skyline and streetscape, although it was already somewhat provincial at the time of its execution. Nonetheless its street level arcade adds a touch of Continental ambience to the heart of the city, which may account for the local tradition of attributing its design to an Italian. It acknowledges the

Classical tastes of the age — an arcade resting on Tuscan columns — and the overall composition is balanced in keeping with the prevailing sense of order and correct architecture. The Tholsel was topped off with its distinctive cupola in 1790.

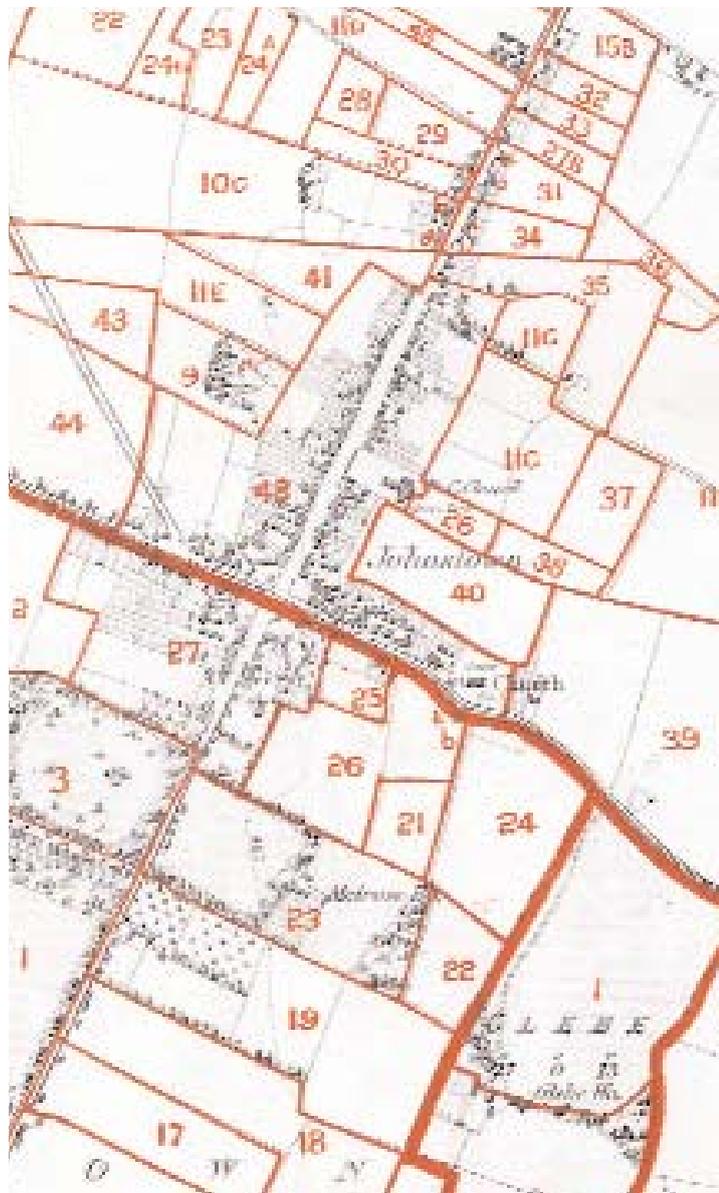
Our present impression of many towns derives from the eighteenth century, even where an earlier streetscape may have existed. Smaller towns allowed landlords to plan afresh and to benefit from ideas on spacious and 'ele-

(fig. 11)
KILKENNY CITY TOWN
HALL (THE THOLSEL)
High Street,
Kilkenny
(1761)

An old photograph from the Poole Collection (1884-1954) illustrates High Street with the projecting arcaded ground floor of the Tholsel as a focal point. The distinctive tiered cupola was rebuilt following a fire in 1985.

Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland





(fig. 12)
JOHNSTOWN

The Valuations Office Map Sheet 08, prepared (1872-6) by Lieutenant Colonel Wilkinson, shows an example of idiosyncratic Irish nomenclature. An octagon, laid out in 1770 by John Healy of Foulscourt House, is designated as Johnstown's village 'Square'.

Ordnance Survey
Valuations Office edition
(1872-6) based on the
first edition Ordnance
Survey (June 1842)

gant' planning, with examples at Ballyragget, Castlecomer, Freshford, and Johnstown. The 'square' at Johnstown dates back to 1770 and, ambitiously for the period, follows an octagonal plan (fig. 12). The Urban Archaeological Survey records that, in the 1650s, Ballyragget had already been laid out on a triangular green. Under George Butler and his grandson, Robert (d. 1788), Ballyragget prospered between 1700 and 1800 and, by the mid eighteenth century, substantial houses had been added to the square. Butler House (1753), The Square, Ballyragget, most recently Phelan's Hotel and not to be confused with Butler House (1768), 16 Patrick Street Lower, Kilkenny, has a scale worthy of a much larger town and implies an unwritten competition with neighbouring landlords such as those in Durrow, Queen's County (now County Laois). In spite of such 'improvements' social unrest was never far beneath the surface, and Butler House was subject to assault during Whiteboy activity in 1775.



(fig. 13)
BALLYDUFF HOUSE
Ballyduff
(1760 with pre 1700)

A mid eighteenth-century classically-composed country house reveals its medieval origins in the fifteenth- or sixteenth-century tower house terminating a lower wing.

The consolidation of a new political establishment encouraged the construction of fine new country residences, mostly without an overtly defensive component. As elsewhere there is much evidence of new trends sitting side-by-side with medieval buildings; the new sometimes integrating fabric from the old, and in other instances existing cheek by jowl. Ballyduff House (1760), Ballyduff near Thomastown, incorporates an earlier tower, dating from before 1700 (fig. 13). The bawn of Clonmantagh Castle (c.1425 and c.1750), Clonmantagh Lower, includes a twelfth-century church, an early fifteenth-century tower house and an eighteenth-century farmhouse (figs. 14-15). Sometimes earlier residences that did not actually adjoin a property were located close by, as at Bonnetstown Hall (1737-8), Bonnetstown, where the remains of an adjacent pre 1559 tower house survive.



(fig. 14)
CLOMANTAGH CASTLE,
Clonmantagh Lower,
Clonmantagh
(c.1425 and c.1750)

A site clearly showing two distinct periods of construction with a farmhouse abutting an early fifteenth-century medieval tower house: a further, intermediary phase is evident in the outline of the gable of a banqueting hall (pre 1700) occupying the position of the present house.



(fig. 15)
CLOMANTAGH CASTLE
Clonmantagh Lower,
Clonmantagh

A view of the interior, sensitively restored by the Irish Landmark Trust, exhibits the cut-stone spiral staircase that accesses the upper floors of the tower house.



(fig. 16)
BONNETSTOWN HALL
Bonnetstown
(1737-8)

An eighteenth-century country house makes an elegant impression in a rural setting at the end of a formal avenue. Stylistic comparisons have been noted between Bonnetstown Hall and the nearby contemporary Castle Blunden (c.1750); the families of both houses were connected by marriage.



(fig. 17)
BONNETSTOWN HALL
Bonnetstown

A detail of the tooled or dragged cut-limestone quoin records the builder of Bonnetstown Hall as 'Sam:ll Mathews Esq.'.



(fig. 18)
BONNETSTOWN HALL
Bonnetstown

A view of the garden front shows a symmetrical composition with an expressed entrance featuring an elegant perron surmounted by distinctive paired lights, retaining the original small-pane glazing pattern.

Kilkenny retains a handsome array of houses illustrating the diversity of Classical styles. Houses such as Ballysallagh House (1722), Ballysallagh, or Ballyconra House (1724), Ballyconra near Ballyragget exemplify the new domestic type, being of substantial size and following Classical tastes of balance and proportion, with 'effect' achieved through the centrally placed entrance door and the application of some Classical detailing. In some, not unexpectedly, such detailing can appear almost rustic, if not unappealing. The portico at Castlefield House (c.1725), Castlefield, ambitious in theme but naïve in execution, incorporates Tuscan columns with carved garlands and cornucopias.

Neo-Palladianism soon emerged as a popular variant on Classicism. It is a term derived from the theories of Andrea Palladio (1508-80) whose planning was based on a complex series of mathematical formulae with many extant examples of his work in the then Venetian Republic. Palladio's designs became influential in Ireland, usually taking a distinctive form that involved a centralised main residential block linked to pavilions. These wings tended to house stables and kitchens, not unlike the Venetian prototypes. Bonnetstown Hall was built for Samuel Matthews, Mayor of Kilkenny (fl. 1744-5), and must have once appeared palatial (figs. 16-18). In a variant of the Palladian type it is based on an elevated residential block with quadrant walls screening service outbuild-



(fig. 19)
CASTLE BLUNDEN
Castleblunden
(c.1750)

A Classically-composed substantial country house built for the Blunden family to designs attributed to Francis Bindon (c.1698-1765) features a somewhat squat pedimented tetrastyle Roman Doric portico as a centrepiece. Castle Blunden remains one of the very few eighteenth-century houses in County Kilkenny to survive in the original family ownership.

ings and yards from public view. It retains much of its original appearance with impressive windows, and finely carved detailing on its County Kilkenny limestone window sills and doorcase. The elevation reveals a fondness for the so-called 'Gibbsian surround', where blocks of stone are inserted into the architrave, made popular in the work of the Scottish architect James Gibbs (1662-1754). Castle Blunden (c.1750), Castleblunden, recalls elements of

Bonnetstown Hall, not inappropriately, as the families were intertwined through marriage (fig. 19). It is however a larger house and makes more extensive use of Classical references, again employing County Kilkenny limestone.

Although some designers can be identified from earlier periods, in the eighteenth century a more rounded picture emerges of definite figures who can be credited with the design of a building. Through stylistic comparison it is



(fig. 20)
BESSBOROUGH HOUSE
Kildalton,
Piltown
(1744-55)

An engraving by H. Hobson from a drawing included in J.P. Neale's *Views of Seats* (1823) illustrates the garden front of an impressive Palladian mansion. Bessborough house was built for Brabazon Ponsonby (1679-1768), 1st Earl of Bessborough, to designs by Francis Bindon. The screen walls and attendant outbuilding ranges, which ought to be present in the background of such a depiction, are curiously absent.

Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive.

sometimes possible to build an overview of a designer's work, despite the absence of records. Francis Bindon (c.1698-1765), for example, studied under Sir Edward Lovett Pearce (fl. 1699-1733). His design for Bessborough House (1744-55), now Kildalton College, Piltown, was originally an exercise in neo-Palladianism with a large central block linked by quadrants to sub-

servient wings (fig. 20): the flanking ranges were replaced when the house was adapted as a convent in 1929. In a house like this we can see a combination of the local and the international; the overall form shows the influence of metropolitan centres and theories but compositional details such as the entrance front are more provincial in handling. Woodstock House



(fig. 21)
WOODSTOCK HOUSE
Inistioge
(1745-7 and 1804-6)

A photograph from the William Lawrence Collection (1880-1900) illustrates the entrance front of Woodstock House prior to its destruction during 'The Troubles' (1922-5). Sadly, the entrance frontispiece has collapsed in recent years.

Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland

(1745-7), Inistioge, also by Bindon was, up to the date of its destruction in 1922, regarded as among the finest houses of its type in Ireland. Designed for Sir William Fownes, the house remains as a picturesque ruin amidst its fine landscaped surrounds (figs. 21-23).



(fig. 22)
WOODSTOCK HOUSE
Inistioge

Another photograph from the William Lawrence Collection illustrates the house and setting prior to the destruction of the house by fire (1922) and the subsequent decline of the landscaped gardens.

Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland



(fig. 23)
WOODSTOCK HOUSE
Inistioge

Having fallen into ruin, the shell of Woodstock House survives as a Romantic landmark in a wooded setting overlooking the River Nore. The once-renowned gardens are presently (2006) undergoing restoration to the 1840-90 scheme, under the supervision of Kilkenny County Council.



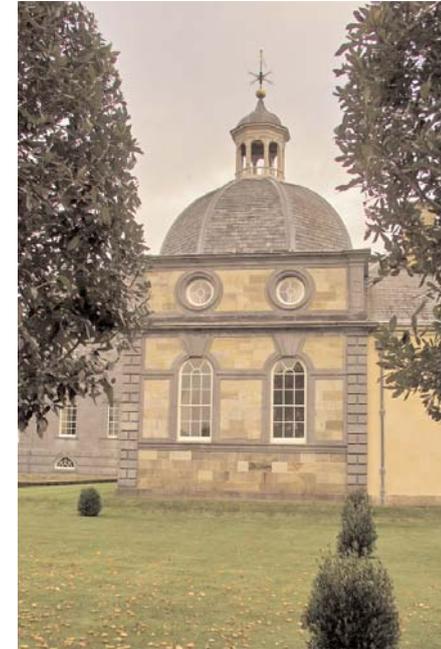
(fig. 24)
CASTLETOWN HOUSE
(CASTLETOWN COX
HOUSE)
Castletown
(1767-71)

An impressive country house built for Michael Cox, Archbishop of Cashel, to designs by David Ducart (*fl.* 1767-71) 'after' Buckingham House, London, by William Winde (c.1647-1722). Castletown House is often regarded as second only to its earlier namesake (begun 1722) in County Kildare as the prime exemplar of the Palladian tradition in Ireland.



(fig. 25)
CASTLETOWN HOUSE
(CASTLETOWN COX
HOUSE)
Castletown

An illustration of the elegant garden front displays a design treatment similar to the entrance front, with the symmetrical configuration centred on a Composite frontispiece. Following a period of neglect, and an uncertain future in the late twentieth century, the house was saved and restored by Brian DeBreffny (1931-89).



(fig. 26)
CASTLETOWN HOUSE
(CASTLETOWN COX
HOUSE)
Castletown

A detail of one of the ornamental pavilions marking the angle of the wings; the construction in yellow sandstone with County Kilkenny limestone dressings produces an appealing palette, and octagonal domes rising into arched cupolas make a striking impression in the skyline.

WHITECHURCH CHURCH
(CASTLANE CHURCH)
Whitechurch
(1766)

An elegant rural church built with a combined loan of £500 from the Board of First Fruits (*fl.* c.1711-1833). The refined quality of the design stems from its original status as the estate chapel of Archbishop Cox of nearby Castletown House (Castletown Cox House). As with the main house, David Ducart is widely regarded as responsible for the design of the church, which has been out of use since before 1973.



Castletown House (1767-71), known as Castletown Cox House, Castletown near Piltown, is an urbane example of neo-Palladianism (*figs.* 24-26). It was designed by David Ducart (*fl.* 1767-71) for Michael Cox (b. pre 1729), Archbishop of Cashel. It was executed with a flair and authority sometimes lacking in other houses and betrays, arguably, the architect's Continental origins and training. The central residential block is given added effect through the use of giant fluted Composite pilasters. This detail, in addition to the arched wings terminating in domed pavilions with diminutive cupolas, brings an almost Rococo flair to the sometimes dour sobriety of neo-Palladianism. The panache of the exterior massing was matched by that of the interior stucco work executed by Patrick Osborne from nearby Waterford, revealing an ability in the medium that compared with celebrated European practitioners.



(fig. 27)
MOUNT JULIET HOUSE
Walton's Grove or
Mountjuliet
(completed 1768-71)

An elegant country mansion built for Somerset Hamilton Butler (1718-74), 8th Viscount and 1st Earl of Carrick, over the River Nore. The original entrance front, illustrated, was adapted to use as the garden front after 1914.



(fig. 28)
MOUNT JULIET HOUSE
Walton's Grove or
Mountjuliet

A view of the elegant stairwell featuring a bifurcating staircase; the richly-detailed entrance hall is visible through an Ionic arcaded screen.



(fig. 29)
MOUNT JULIET HOUSE
Walton's Grove or
Mountjuliet

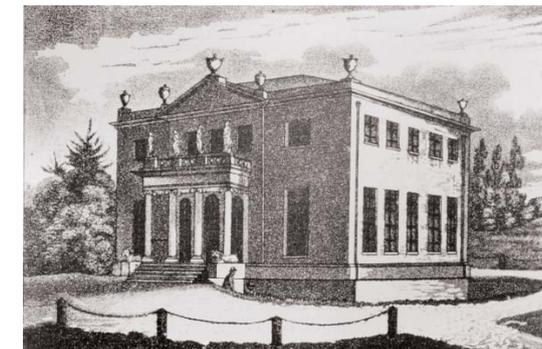
A detail of the delicate plasterwork ceilings completed in the manner of Michael Stapleton (c.1747-1801).

The finest houses were part of an integrated concept of a planned environment, with a contrived landscape setting off the architectural effect. There was a marked shift from early formality, inspired by Franco-Italian traditions, to a more lyrical concept of the landscape in the English manner. Belle Vue (c.1775), Borrismore near Urlingford, is bow-ended in plan — which is sometimes acknowledged as a characteristically Irish feature — and retains contemporary details including an array of its original windows. The survival of its contemporary parkland setting adds to the overall effect, as is the case at Mount Juliet (1768-71), Walton's Grove of Mountjuliet, near Thomastown, where the location has always impressed (figs. 27-29). The *Post Chaise Companion* referred to it as:

'...a very magnificent seat of the Earl of Carrick, with extensive demesnes. It is beautifully situated on a fine declivity on the banks of the Nore, commanding some extensive plantations that spread over the hills, which rise in various manner on the other side of the river' (Dublin, 1805).

Given the position in society of Somerset Hamilton Butler (1718-74), 1st Earl of Carrick, the house displays an exterior form that was far from fashionable, although its interior detailing is not without charm. Some relief-style neo-Classical plasterwork is not unlike the plasterwork found at Dunmore Cottage (c.1775), Dunmore near Kilkenny, and Butler House (1768), in Patrick Street Lower, Kilkenny. Such detailing reveals the influence of contemporary trends that emanated from Dublin and London in the work of the Adam brothers, Robert (1728-92) and James (1713-94). The earl's townhouse, on Gardiner Row, Dublin, was close-by Belvedere House (1786) which afforded dazzling

Adamesque plasterwork by Michael Stapleton (c.1747-1801). Similar neo-Classical style plasterwork featured in the decoration of Grange House (c.1800), Grange near Ballyragget. By contrast the later re-decoration of Uppercourt House (1798), Upperwood Demesne, near Freshford, was more florid in style with a display of plasterwork by Italian craftsmen.



UPPERCOURT HOUSE
Upperwood Demesne,
Freshford
(1798)

An early aquatint of Upperwood House or Upperwood Manor, originally built for the Ryves family to designs attributed to John Roberts (1712-96), who practised prolifically in neighbouring County Waterford. The house quickly passed into the ownership of the Montmorency family and the rendering is inscribed 'The seat of Sir William de Montmorency Baronet'. Subsequently enlarged in 1820, the house underwent further redevelopment in 1944 and 1950 when a chapel and dormitory wing were added for the Mill Hill Missionaries. The house is presently (2005-6) undergoing restoration back to residential use.

Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive



GOWRAN CASTLE
Gowran Demesne,
Gowran
(1817-9 with 1713)

An ink-and-wash drawing (c.1800) by R. Gibbs depicting Gowran Castle prior to its redevelopment in 1817-9 for Henry Welbore Agar-Ellis (1761-1836), 2nd Viscount Clifden: the rendering is inscribed 'Gowran Castle Seat of the Earl of Clifden'. Curvilinear gables marking the roofline suggest a Dutch influence in the original scheme.

Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive

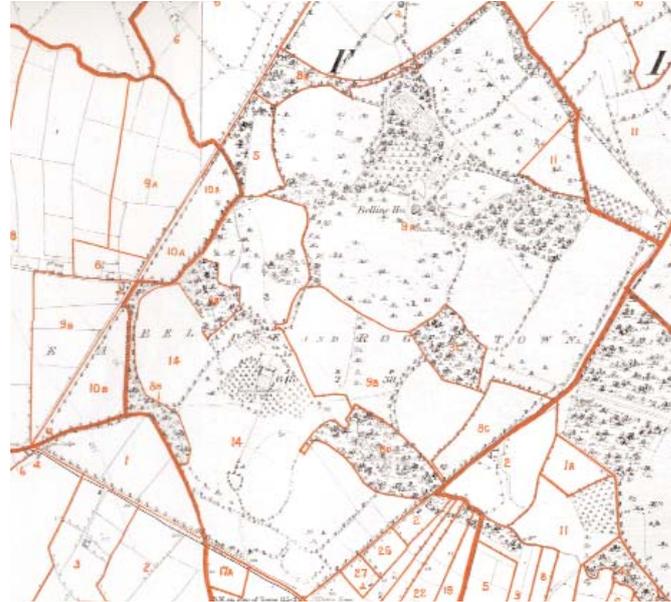
BELLINE HOUSE
Belline and
Rogerstown,
Piltown
(c.1775)

The Classically-composed country house was originally built for Peter Walsh (c.1747-1819), although ownership was transferred to the nearby Bessborough Estate shortly following completion; a pair of flanking cylindrical 'turrets' or dovecotes make an appealing ensemble in the landscape.

BELLINE HOUSE
Belline and
Rogerstown,
Piltown
(c.1775)

A composite of the Valuations Office Map Sheets 38 and 39, prepared (1872-6) by Lieutenant Colonel Wilkinson, illustrates the primary components of the Belline Estate. The house and dovecotes are visible just above centre, the outbuildings — including a drawing school — to the north, the 'Inkbottle' lodge to the west, and the rustic lodge on a winding avenue leading to the main gateway to the east.

Ordnance Survey Valuations Office edition (1872-6) based on the first edition Ordnance Survey (June 1842)



Outbuildings, farmyards and stables were part of the wider aesthetic vision and on larger estates could aspire to great sophistication and adventurousness. Grand estates could also have a range of lodges and follies affording architectural interest in the landscape, and acting as eye catchers and distinctive landmarks. Mark Elstob remarked in 1776 that:

'on the right a little before you enter Kilkenny, is a small building on a hill called the Gazebo, or Helsham's Folly. It commands an extensive prospect, and seems to have been designed for a Summer or banqueting house...' (Dublin, 1779).

The grounds of Belline House (c.1775), Belline and Rogerstown, Piltown, retain a rustic lodge of the same date with a portico of tree-trunks akin to primitive Doric columns (fig. 30). The portico may reveal the legacy of



(fig. 30)
BELLINE HOUSE
Belline and
Rogerstown,
Piltown
(c.1775)

A rustic temple-style gate lodge makes a picturesque impression on the winding avenue approaching the main house. The lodge has been attributed to the Swedish-born Sir William Chambers (1723-96) who was responsible for a number of projects on the Bessborough estates in England, including one of his first commissions at Parkstead House (1760s), Roehampton.



BELLINE HOUSE
Belline and
Rogerstown,
Piltown
(c.1775)

A distinctive octagonal gate lodge sometimes identified as the 'Turret' but known locally as the 'Inkbottle' marks the one-time west entrance to the grounds of the Belline House estate. Archival drawings illustrate a scheme where two such lodges flank a central gateway; however, it is not known if the second lodge was ever realised.



BELLINE HOUSE
Belline and
Rogerstown,
Piltown
(c.1775)

A refined gate screen in limestone ashlar with simple iron work makes an understated impression at the Piltown entrance to the grounds of Belline House.



BELLINE HOUSE
Belline and
Rogerstown,
Piltown
(c.1775)

Following a restoration programme (after 1984) the original elliptical-headed carriageways of a Classically-composed stable block were reinstated, complementing the Diocletian or lunette windows overhead. The construction in red brick with limestone dressings echoes the original appearance of the main house, before the brick was concealed by paint.



PONSONBY MEMORIAL TOWER (PILTOWN TOWER)
Piltown
(begun post 1808)

Initiated by Frederick Ponsonby (1758-1844) as a memorial to a son presumed killed-in-action in the Peninsular War (1808-14), construction on the distinctive tower was halted when the soldier subsequently returned home from battle unharmed. Having stood incomplete or truncated for the next two centuries, the memorial was adapted to utilitarian use in the mid twentieth century by the addition of a water tank in a quasi-Brutalist style.



(fig. 31)
CASTLE BLUNDEN
Castleblunden
(c.1750)

A small-scale artefact fulfilling two important roles in the Castle Blunden estate with its primary purpose as an icehouse competing with a secondary function as a picturesque Gothic-inspired folly.

Abbé Marc-Antoine Laugier (1713-69) who, in his widely influential *Essai sur l'architecture* (1753), emphasised the parallel between the logic of nature and the logic of neo-Classical architecture. Howley (New Haven and London, 1993) draws a parallel with a comparable project by Sir William Chambers (1723-96) at Windsor Castle. Chambers received his first important commission at Parkstead House (1760s), Roehampton, from the Bessborough family who took over ownership of the Belline estate shortly after completion of the house. Although few now survive, such follies were once widespread. By 1837 Samuel Lewis's *A Topographical Dictionary...* could note that in the grounds of Woodstock were:

'various picturesque rustic cottages, and several banqueting-rooms commanding from different positions the rich, bold, and varied scenery which here adorns the banks of the river Nore' (London, 1837).

The 'rustic' woodland gardens (1790s) at Kilfane House, Kilfane Demesne, similarly incorporated a range of garden buildings in keeping with the contrived wilderness. At Castle Blunden a circular-planned icehouse (c.1750) survives, erected in an early version of the emerging Gothic Revival style; visible from the main house it fulfilled not only a practical function but acted as an eye catcher (fig. 31). The icehouse is still in good repair and retains many original features including its original slate roof and red brick vaulted chamber.



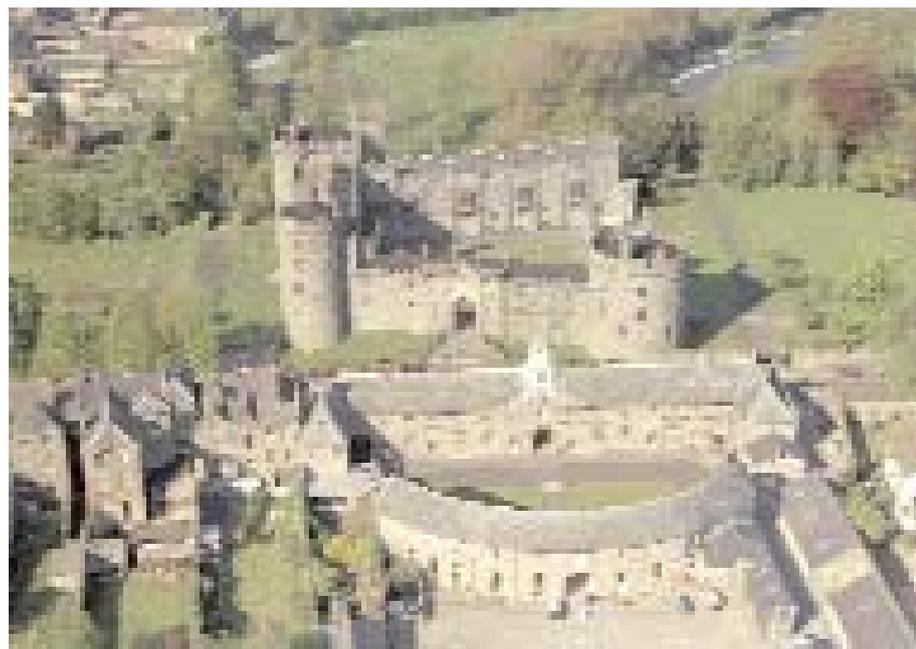
GRANGE HOUSE
Grange
(c.1800)

A Classically-composed substantial country house centred on a plain break-front with a reserved decorative quality; an expressed doorcase features a particularly fine overlight, while an octagonal dovecote (c.1800) makes a picturesque eye-catcher in the grounds.

Stables could also meet both functional and ornamental requirements. By far the finest range in the county was executed in the 1790s for Kilkenny Castle (*figs. 32-34*). It stands across the Parade from the main entrance to the castle and adds greatly to the urban effect of the complex, forming a visual link between the castle and nearby Butler House. The crescent plan is comparatively ambitious for such schemes in an Irish context although its detailing, showing the influence of James Gibbs, was already dated at the time of execution. In addition to work and transport, horses were also synonymous with the hunt, and hunting lodges became occasional features in the landscape. Belmore House (1790), Jerpointchurch, a surviving

example near Thomastown built for the Earl of Belmore, manages to combine elements of vernacular taste with the Classical influence of the age along with local Kilkenny features such as its ground floor bipartite windows. In a period when horses were essential to both agriculture and transport, forges were important buildings. Few survive, but that at Graigue (Hartford) dates from around 1800 and retains a vernacular dwelling with the original smithy. Its prominent location on a crossroads serves to emphasise the importance of such structures in day-to-day life (*fig. 35*).

Gateways combined the prosaic task of entrance and security with a roadside proclamation of a family's presence and aspirations.



(*fig. 32*)
THE PARADE
Kilkenny

An aerial view of The Parade illustrates the visual harmony of Kilkenny Castle and the associated stables.



(*fig. 33*)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny
(between 1780-1800)

A view of the Kilkenny Castle stable complex from an elevated position on the Parade Tower shows the elegant arrangement of the two primary ranges together with ancillary secondary ranges. Built to designs

attributable to an obscure architect by the name of Charles Vierpyl, the entrance block incorporates a pedimented break-front echoing the gateway of the castle on the opposite side of The Parade.



(*fig. 35*)
GRAIGUE FORGE
Graigue Crossroads,
Graigue (Hartford)
(c.1800)

An appealing ensemble makes a positive impression on a prominent corner site with a cottage, originally thatched, standing alongside a contemporary forge or smithy.



(*fig. 34*)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

A view of the stable building shows an elegant crescent plan enclosing an inner courtyard. A central arcade of elliptical-headed carriageways was glazed in 1965 as part of the programme to adapt the complex to use as the Kilkenny Design Workshops (KDW) (1965-88), established by Paul Hogan. Oculus window openings on the first floor feature a spoked glazing pattern alluding to the carriage wheel.

KILFANE FORGE
Kilfane West,
Kilfane
(c.1875)

A picturesque small-scale rural forge or smithy, possibly established by the Bushe or the Power family of nearby Kilfane House, exhibits very fine detailing in County Kilkenny limestone with a central horseshoe-profiled arch indicating, on the exterior, the nature of the business carried out within.



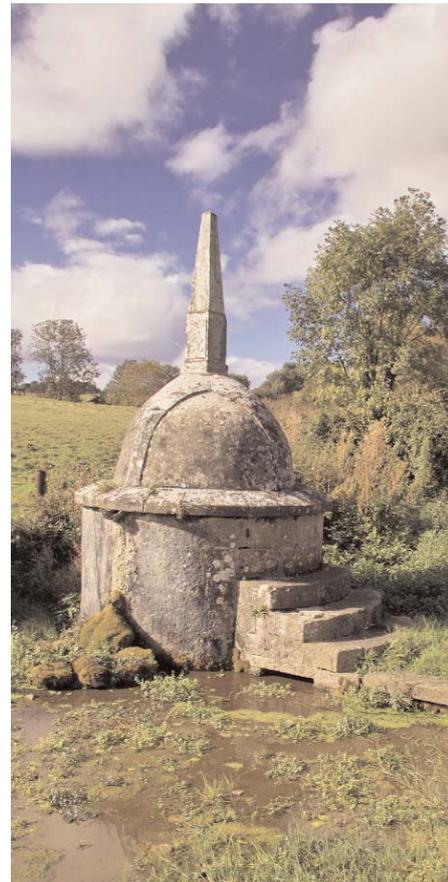
The great gateway (under construction 1709) of Kilkenny Castle itself was appropriately the grandest, suggesting an aesthetic and political agenda to the medieval setting. It exerted an elaborate and overblown presence in the manner of a contemporary frontispiece, and has fortunately survived various attempts at alteration. Others, if less ornamental, must have featured as beacons in the landscape for the owners, while suggesting an air of mighty authority to those passing by. For many travellers the countryside was perceived as a series of landed estates. The *Post Chaise Companion* referred to its routes as a progression from one seat to another. Typically:

'At Freshford, on the R. is the seat of Mr. Warren; and on the L. is Upper-court, that of Sir William Morres, Bart. near which is Ballylurkan, belonging to Lord De Montalt...' (Dublin, 1805).

Entrances were undoubtedly important to such travellers but surprisingly few were impressive in scale. The entrance at Belline House (c.1775) was more typical and remains intact with finely detailed wrought iron gates. The gateway (c.1800) of Castle Blunden incorporates fine stonework piers of ashlar limestone and bordering railings, together with a later set of central gates.

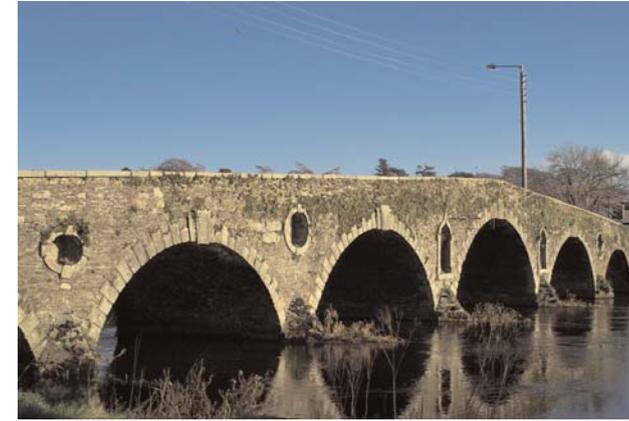
Transport systems of the time were poor, although a highly organised coaching system was developed as the century progressed. Kilkenny's great rivers assured an important means of communication and they, together with their tributaries, encouraged a legacy of fine bridges. Many display an aspiration to a civic grandeur and acknowledge international influences including the Swiss engineer Charles Labely's (d. 1781) Westminster Bridge (1734-

50), or published elevations from Palladio's *Quattro Libri* (1570), of which there were many contemporary editions. The 'great' flood of 1763 damaged a range of existing crossings, although various bridges were rebuilt with the support of the Dublin Parliament in 1765. The bridge at Thomastown, originally rebuilt post 1763, suffered further damage in 1787 and was re-erected and repaired in 1792.



STROAN FOUNTAIN
Stroan,
Kilfane
(1766)

A highly distinctive fountain commonly attributed to Thomas Seigne 'after [Giovanni Lorenzo] Bernini' (1598-1680), but reminiscent of antique military headgear such as the *Pickelhaube* or Prussian Helmet. The fountain was established by Colonel Bushe of nearby Kilfane House as a water supply for tenants on the surrounding estate.



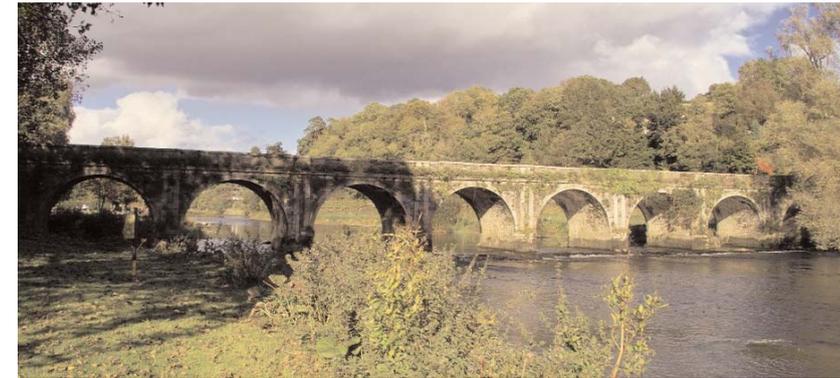
(fig. 36)
GRAIGUENAMANAGH BRIDGE
Graiguenamanagh
(1764-7)

Having been rebuilt by George Smith (*fl.* 1763-7) in the mid eighteenth century, a bridge over the River Barrow connecting Graiguenamanagh with Tinnahinch, County Carlow, underwent further repairs when damaged by Crown Forces during the 1798 Insurgency.



(fig. 37)
GRAIGUENAMANAGH BRIDGE
Graiguenamanagh

A detail of the bridge illustrates the ogee-headed niches reputedly inspired by the nearby Duiske Abbey Catholic Church. Oculi between the outer arches produce a contrasting Classical quality in the composition.



(fig. 38)
INISTIOGE BRIDGE
Inistioge
(1763)

Designed by George Smith in the mid eighteenth century, the bridge at Inistioge incorporates a level profile as opposed to the slightly humped deck seen in his work elsewhere. Conceived with two clearly defined elevations, the bridge features the Classical order on the downriver front with tapered cut-water piers on the opposite front.



(fig. 39)
INISTIOGE BRIDGE
Inistioge

A detail of the fine cut-granite dressings includes paired Ionic pilasters supporting a frieze and cornice, producing an attractive contrast against the comparatively unrefined quality of the rubble stone construction.



(fig. 40)
INISTIOGE BRIDGE
Inistioge

An illustration of the upriver elevation of the bridge highlights the triangular cut-waters rising into elegantly tapered piers.



(fig. 41)
CASTLECOMER BRIDGE
Castlecomer
(1763)

Making an elegant visual impact at a crossing over the Dinin or Deen River, a Classically-composed bridge reveals details shared in common with further bridges rebuilt by George Smith across the county. Such detailing includes round-headed recessed niches incorporating block-and-start surrounds in County Kilkenny limestone.



(fig. 45)
DININ BRIDGE
Ardaloo/
Dunmore West
(1792)

A late eighteenth-century rural bridge with elliptical-headed arches on squat piers makes an elegant visual impact at a crossing over the Dinin or Deen River.



(fig. 43)
BENNETT'S BRIDGE
Bennettsbridge
(1763)

Once again incorporating the Classical motifs recurrent in contemporary bridges devised by George Smith, Bennett's Bridge features tapered cut-waters recalling the composition at Inistioge, and block-and-start voussoir surrounds to the arches reminiscent of the schemes at Green's Bridge and Graiguenamanagh.

(fig. 42)
GREEN'S BRIDGE
Kilkenny
(1766)

Green's Bridge was one of many bridges rebuilt by George Smith following the 'Great Flood' of the Nore in 1763. At one time it shared stylistic similarities with the contemporary Saint John's Bridge (1765-72; replaced 1910), further down the river, on account of the incorporation of Classical features including pedimented aedicules. Raised parapets were added in 1835 with one parapet subsequently removed in 1969.

(fig. 44)
BALLYLINCH BRIDGE
Cottrellsbooly/
Ballylinch Demesne
(c.1775)

A lengthy eighteenth-century bridge features broad arches rising elegantly into an elevated central position over the river and smaller, comparatively rustic, arches spanning the flood plains on either side of the Nore.

George Smith (*fl.* 1763-7), a pupil of George Semple (c.1700-82) designer of Dublin's Essex Bridge (1753-5), was responsible for many bridges in the 1760s. Smith was familiar with Palladio and also with the contemporary designs for Blackfriar's Bridge (1760-9), London, by Robert Mylne (1734-1811). Smith was responsible for the seven-arch bridge (1764-7) at Graiguenamanagh, incorporating niches and blind oculi together with arches of various heights rising towards the centre to produce an elegant profile (*figs.* 36-37). In contrast the arches of the rebuilt bridge (1763) at Inistioge are all semi-circular and of equal height, the whole surmounted by a horizontal parapet (*figs.* 38-40). His bridge (1763) at Castlecomer also incorporates Classical detailing such as string-courses and niches (*fig.* 41). Palladio's description and illustration of the Rimini Bridge (3 BC) would appear to have provided a direct inspi-

ration for the form and elevation of Green's Bridge (1766), Kilkenny, erected under the control of Smith; parapets were added at a later date (1835) (*fig.* 42). The attractive and stately bridge (1763) at Bennettsbridge retains a regiment of small carriage guards to prevent the bridge being damaged by passing vehicles (*fig.* 43). Others are no less impressive, even where the present traffic route affords little opportunity to admire the architectural effect, as at Ballylinch Bridge (c.1775), Cottrellsbooly, on the River Nore near Mount Juliet, which enhances the picturesque quality of an already pleasing setting (*fig.* 44).

The abundant supply of fast-flowing rivers resulted in a wealth of fine mills, with those at Bennettsbridge and Kells among the best known and of enormous size even by modern standards. Mullins Corn Mill (established 1782), Kells, on the Kings River is a modest-scale complex with origins reputedly dating back to the



(fig. 46)
**KELLS FLOUR MILL
 (MULLINS CORN MILL)**
 Kells
 (1782)

A modest mill complex, opened by the Mullins family on the bank of the Kings River, reputedly has origins in a mill established in 1204-6 by Geoffrey de Monte Marisco FitzRobert (c.1197-1242), 1st Baron FitzRobert. Having been put out of use in the 1960s, the mill was restored in 1997 as an occasional heritage centre.



(fig. 47)
**KELLS FLOUR MILL
 (HUTCHINSON'S
 CORN MILL)**
 Kells
 (c.1800)

Making an imposing presence felt on the bank of the Kings River, a large-scale flour mill retains a regular pattern produced by the almost monotonous arrangement of small-scale openings on each floor. Camber-headed openings incorporating red brick dressings enliven the external expression of an otherwise forbidding edifice.



KELLS BRIDGE
 Kells
 (c.1725 and c.1775)

An eight-arch early eighteenth-century bridge at a crossing over the Kings River, widened later in the century, with the five arches of the additional portion overlapping to produce a highly distinctive rhythmic pattern.

early thirteenth century (1204-6) (fig. 46). Meanwhile, the nearby Hutchinson's Corn Mill (c.1800), Kells, remains an imposing focal point in the landscape (fig. 47). Although put out of use by the late twentieth century, each mill retains an array of milling machinery including mill wheels. Such mills were, and remain, impressive, often overshadowing the engineering achievements of the systems of weirs and culverts required to control the flow of water to turn the great mill wheels. Another large-scale project undertaken in the mid century was the Kilkenny Canal (1755-65), devised as part of a river improvement scheme (1755-75) executed under the supervision of William Ockenden (d. 1761). It was briefly considered the wonder of the locality, but by 1778 it was clear that the canal would never be completed. The failure to complete the project, which would have provided direct access to seaborne trade, has been identified as a factor in the city's economic decline.

The political and religious upheavals of previous centuries had enormous consequences for the architectural legacy of the church. In effect, the Catholic tradition went underground. Only the sporadic collections of ecclesiastical vestments and church silver give some indication of what might have been manifested architecturally. Places of Catholic worship were few and far between. Intact examples have all but disappeared or have been incorporated into later buildings. Surviving families of Catholic gentry, such as Viscounts Mountgarret, were in a position to circumvent the laws of the period and support small-scale church ('chapel') building, and Robert Butler funded the Old Chapel (1774) at Ballyragget. The Church of Ireland, although the Established Church, was in no economic position to forge ahead with an adventurous building campaign; for the most part existing churches or ruins were adapted for new use. Saint Lachtain's Church (1730), New Bridge Street, Freshford, incorporated the fabric of the

FIDDOWN CHURCH Fiddown

In contrast to the unadorned exterior, the interior of the church at Fiddown boasts a wealth of exuberant Classical detailing. The interior is dominated by a Baroque pedimented monument erected in 1858 in memory of the Earl and Countess of Bessborough. Flanking the east window, a wall-monument (1747) records the provenance of the church together with the patronage of Reverend Robert Watts.

FIDDOWN CHURCH Fiddown (1747)

The diminutive rural parish church was originally intended as the chancel of a larger composition built by Reverend Robert Watts, as indicated on early editions of the Ordnance Survey.



medieval abbey and its Romanesque doorway (figs. 1-2), while Saint Mary's Church (pre 1837), Green Street or Edmund Ignatius Rice Street, Callan, integrated the chancel of a fifteenth-century Augustinian Friary (1460). Such 'visual signifiers' emphasised a sense of continuity for the Church.

Saint Canice's Cathedral, Church Lane, Kilkenny, having been described in 1756 as ruinous, was in 1776 considered by Twiss as 'not beautiful'; it had, he noted, 'a neatness, but is destitute of grandeur' (Dublin, 1777). Alterations under Richard Pococke (1704-65),

Bishop of Ossory (1756-65), with the intervention of Saunderson Miller (1716-80), were in the Classical taste of the period and described as Grecian Doric style. Little survives although the Robing Room (1756/60) may date from the project. It retains the aspect of an ornamental garden building and, while attractive, is surprisingly sedate, unlike the adventurousness occasionally applied to such incidental buildings. Its basement retains the masonry of a small defensive tower of the medieval town wall, while its rear elevation on Church Lane also reveals traces of the medieval wall.

The Nineteenth Century

With the benefit of hindsight, the eighteenth century appears as a comparatively golden age for Kilkenny. The nineteenth century was, by contrast, punctuated by political and social change, each event more dramatic than the next. The Act of Union (1800), rebellion, and ongoing insurgency maintained a political ferment, while religious change such as Catholic Emancipation (1829) and the Irish Church Disestablishment Act (1869; implemented 1871) had lasting consequences. The ravages of poverty and famine were relentless and various land reforms, like the Irish Land Act (1881), resulted in the break up and ultimate demise of great estates. All these events had an impact on the county's architectural heritage. Few buildings were designed by the

'great' names of Irish nineteenth-century architecture, and there were no projects by British architects of the quality of John Nash (1752-1835) and Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-52), both of whom worked in neighbouring counties. There was, however, a marked embrace of local architects and a confidence in their ability to address a wide range of projects in a competent and informed, if not always the most exciting style. The two dominant practitioners were William Robertson (1770-1850) and William Deane Butler (d. 1857), the latter acting, in effect, as a diocesan architect for the Catholic Diocese of Ossory.

Political union had repercussions for the status of towns and villages, and small towns that had held municipal rights found those ancient



THE SQUARE Freshford (1878)

A cast-iron waterpump belonging to a rare, if not unique, design group incorporates an elegantly-swept pedestal, a decorative cap, and a distinctive wheel. The waterpump was installed by Thomas Eyre (b. c.1821) of nearby Upper Court House for the benefit of the residents of Freshford.



KNOCKTOPHER
(c.1750)

A mid eighteenth-century inn represents part of the historic core of Knocktopher; although altered at ground floor, the original small-pane sash windows survive in place to the first floor.

entitlements abolished. Knocktopher, at one time a parliamentary borough with a corporation styled the 'Sovereign, Burgesses and Commonality' was, by 1837, merely a village where both the market and fair had been discontinued! Political union stifled the leadership role of the aristocracy and gentry in local communities, but they still influenced architectural developments and patronage. As members of Grand Juries, 'the gentry' remained involved in the administration of justice. On the other hand, the Catholic Church established a growing influence evidenced by an increasing array of building types: churches, convents, hospitals, and schools. Comparably, the cradle-to-grave influence of the state gained momentum, and this had consequences for the diverse architectural forms that addressed the promotion of education, health, and justice.

The shape and characteristic form of most towns and villages was confirmed in this period. Economic decline assured that most remained largely unchanged until the growth of recent years. A distinctive template developed, if unwittingly, to include a range of public buildings of varying prominence: a church, a police station (generally known as 'the barracks'), perhaps a courthouse, and a market

house in larger towns. Most typically a fashion emerged for carved and colourfully painted shopfronts, the most distinctive, if now much neglected, decorative feature of an Irish town.

Urban growth implied social stability and Lewis's *A Topographical Dictionary* was at pains to celebrate the number of houses and inhabitants in any given community. Some appeared to flourish while others survived as occasional centres for fair days or, as at Mullinavat, stopping places between larger towns. Typically Lewis noted how Ballyragget was situated on the Nore:

'over which is a good stone bridge of 10 arches; it consists of one principal street, with several smaller streets diverging from it and contains about 300 houses...' (London, 1837).

In 1788 Ballyragget had been inherited by Thomas MacMorrough Kavanagh (1767-1837) of Borris, County Carlow. Much of its improvements were carried out by his son Arthur (1831-89):

'...for he undertook to reconstruct the town and plant it with magnificent lime and beech trees, laying it out in the best tradition of English villages, with square and fair green'.

A sense of 'Englishness' seems to have suggested a quality of improvement and this was certainly the case in Gowran, which underscored this effect through the use of Tudor Revival architecture. In many respects Gowran exemplifies the Irish small town, reflecting all the cultural and social influences of the age. Described, early in the century, as '...a place of no great magnitude or trade...' it had 'improved' considerably by the time it was alluded to by William Mackpeace Thackeray (1811-63) in *The Irish Sketchbook*:

'The first place we passed through was the little town of Gowran, near which is a grand, well-ordered park, belonging to Lord Clifden [Henry Agar Ellis (1825-66), 3rd Viscount Clifden], and where his mother [Lady Georgina Howard (d. 1860)] resides... The kind English lady has done the greatest good in the neighbourhood, it is said, and the little town bears marks of her beneficence, in its neatness, prettiness, and order' (London, 1843).

Near its highest point a Tudor Revival gate lodge (1855), with attractive limestone and granite detailing and bargeboards, marks the entrance to the otherwise Classical Gowran Castle (1817-9), designed by William Robertson. The gate piers and railings (c.1850) are attractive additions to the character of the streetscape. In the town, substantial houses stand close by terraces of smaller houses, both dating from the 1850s. One group in Main Street incorporates elements of the Tudor Revival taste typical of the mid century, and some of their decorative bargeboards have been retained (*fig. 48*). Saint Mary's Church (1871) stands at the heart of the community; it employs the Gothic Revival style of the era and



GOWRAN CASTLE
Gowran
(1855)

Known as 'Forester's Lodge', a picturesque composition in the Tudor style represents one of two individual lodges, built to designs by William George Murray (1822-71), which embellish the entrances on to the grounds of the Gowran Castle estate.



(*fig. 48*)
MAIN STREET
Gowran
(c.1850)

A picturesque small-scale estate worker's house expresses a Tudor quality reminiscent of the contemporary gate lodge (1855) and Forester's Lodge (1855) at the entrances to the grounds of the Gowran Castle estate, thereby suggesting William George Murray as the architect common to each scheme.



(fig. 49)
SAINT MARY'S CHURCH
(SAINT MARY'S ABBEY)
off Main Street,
Gowran
(c.1225 and 1871)

Forming a prominent focal point in the centre of Gowran, the remains of an early thirteenth-century abbey meet with a reconstructed nineteenth-century church at a reused crossing tower where Irish battlements punctuate the skyline. In the grounds, a graveyard contains pretty cut-stone markers spanning a number of centuries.



(figs. 50-51)
SAINT MARY'S CHURCH
(SAINT MARY'S ABBEY)
off Main Street,
Gowran

Having fallen into disrepair, the interior of Saint Mary's Church was restored (before 2004) by the Office of Public Works, retaining the character of the original scheme by Thomas Henry Wyatt (1807-80). An impressive pedimented tetrastyle fluted Doric memorial dominates the crossing; the dedication on a plaque is no longer legible.

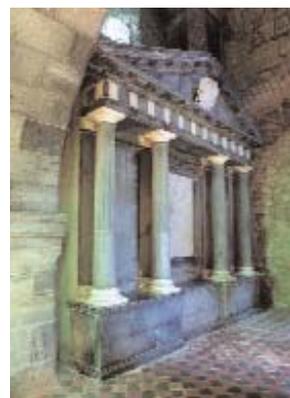
abuts the old medieval abbey (c.1225), thereby asserting continuity and authority (figs. 49-51). The main street still retains a number of characteristic shopfronts, admittedly of a later date, although these now are increasingly threatened. Some, such as Loughlin's pubfront (house c.1850; pubfront c.1875), act as plain but important focal points; others, through the use of simple lines and traditional forms, enhance the appearance of the town as a whole. Outside the town proper, the Catholic Church of the Assumption (1881-9) and an adjoining substantial parochial house (c.1900) show a pairing of architectural elements that has long been a distinctive feature of rural Irish communities.

Lewis described Viscount Clifden's town of Callan, the second town of the county, as 'very indifferently built' (London, 1837). Yet, by the second half of the nineteenth century, the juxtaposition in Green Street, now Edmund Ignatius Rice Street, of its Catholic Church of the Assumption (1836-45) by John B. Keane (d. 1859), courthouse (pre 1840) and Bank of

Ireland (between 1870-9) combined to exude an air of urbanity worthy of a larger centre. The individual buildings are visually linked through shared materials and the use of a Classical style. In 1839, and in contrast to nearby County Carlow, Eugene O'Curry in Ordnance Survey letters noted of Castlecomer that:

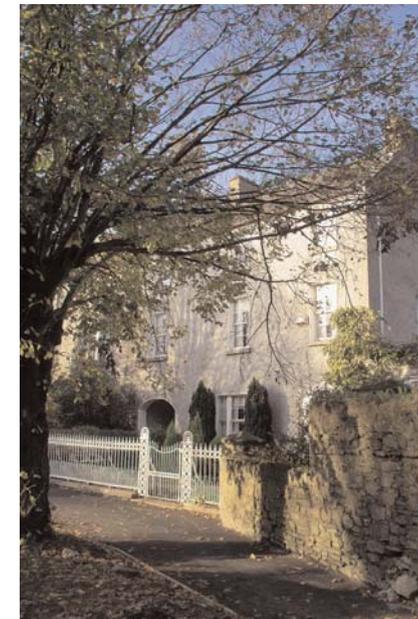
'in short here is all good manner and custom, that ought to distinguish a decent country town in Ireland' (Dublin, 2003).

Castlecomer had been badly destroyed in the 1798 Rebellion but was largely rebuilt in the early decades of the century. By 1837 Lewis could note that it consisted of one wide main street and several smaller, it having already contained 455 houses by 1831, chiefly inhabited by persons engaged in the nearby collieries. The town still benefits from an attractive layout: the tree-lined main street rises along a gentle slope to The Square, combining a sense of grandeur with charm. It retains many fine premises, both domestic and commercial, with an array of late



HIGH STREET
Castlecomer
(c.1800)

Following the destruction of Castlecomer during the 1798 Rebellion, as noted by Samuel Lewis in 1837, the ranges flanking High Street were replaced with modest and middle-sized houses incorporating a Classical theme, or a derivative thereof. Here, two houses once jointly known as Aher House are considered as a wholly-integrated composition centred on a shared carriageway. Simple iron railings enhance the dignified quality of the formal ensemble in the streetscape.



nineteenth-century shopfronts. It is possible to see the once common arrangement for Irish townhouses, where the main elevation of the house incorporates an archway leading to a rear yard, and the even more widespread arrangement of living quarters above a shop premises. However, not all communities were improved, and most remained rural in aspect with numerous mud cabins. Even large properties were often roughly rendered, as in a surviving house (c.1800) at Main Street, Mullinavat (fig. 52).

Kilkenny City itself more or less stagnated, a state compounded by epidemics of cholera (1832) and famine (1845-8). In *Ireland in 1872: A Tour...* James Macaulay (b. 1817) quoted a source that noted:

'Kilkenny was an important town when Belfast was only a village: it had several factories, eleven watermills, and such a carpet factory that its English rival to avoid competition demanded the repeal of the Union...' (London, 1873).



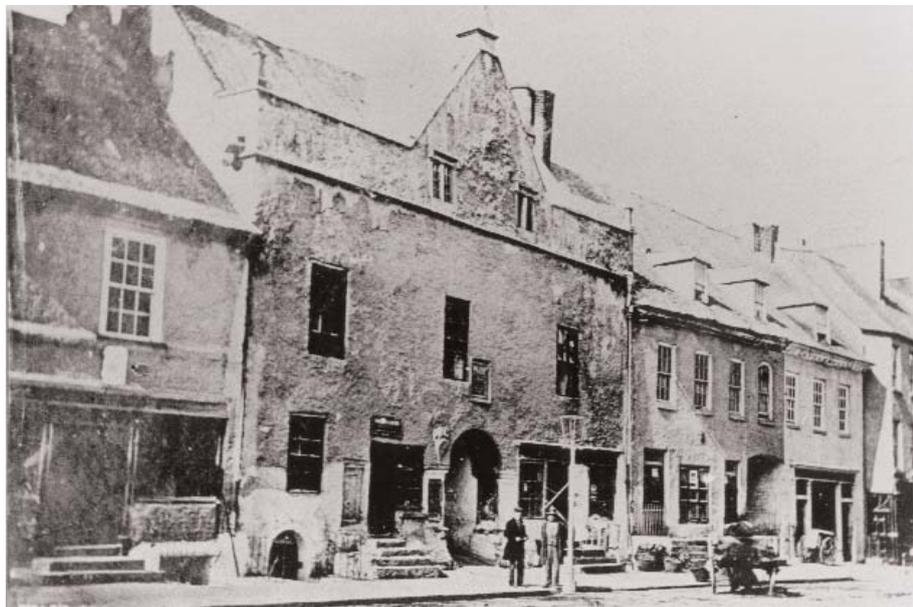
COMERFORD
Barrack Street,
Castlecomer
(house c.1825;
shopfront c.1900)

Archival photography dating to the beginning of the twentieth century indicates that Castlecomer once featured a shopfront genre particular to the town, identified by a cornice brought forward as a canopy. Although no longer in use, this last surviving shopfront of the type in Barrack Street retains most, if not all, of the original detailing, including traditional painted lettering.



(fig. 52)
MAIN STREET
Mullinavat
(c.1800)

Known locally as the 'Bishop's House', a modest dwelling of urban vernacular interest remains as the last house in Mullinavat to retain important early features including sash windows, a timber boarded door, and a whitewashed lime rendered wall surface. The house also reputedly features the original compacted mud floors.



(fig. 53)
ROTHER HOUSE
 15-16 Parliament Street,
 Kilkenny
 (1594-1610)

An early photograph of a somewhat dilapidated Rothe House dates to the last quarter of the nineteenth century: the period when it was accounted for in less than flattering terms by the Sanitary Authority (1884) as being in 'a filthy and dangerous condition'.

Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive

The city declined from a population of 23,000 in 1821, to a little fewer than 11,000 by 1900. Similarly the number of houses declined from around 3,840 in 1821, to 1,941 in 1900. Even then the vast majority of dwellings were essentially mud cabins. A report from the Sanitary Authority in 1884 noted of Rothe House that it was in:

'...a filthy and dangerous condition. There is neither drainage nor privy accommodation two portions of the yard are used as piggeries, and the whole place is full of pig manure and nuisance...' (fig. 53)

The existing network of roads and navigable waterways functioned well into the century. Typically, coal from Castlecomer was transported to the south east by the rivers Barrow and Suir, and by the Grand Canal to Dublin. Roads

continued to be improved with many new bridges. The handsome triple-arched bridge (1792) over the River Dineen at Ardaloo and Dunmore West, much repaired over the years, combines rubble and dressed stone to attractive effect (fig. 45). Massford Bridge (c.1850), Clogh and Moneenroe, incorporates a weir of the same date, both of which attest to the ongoing ability of builders and engineers.

As elsewhere in Ireland, and with an impact now difficult to appreciate, the arrival of railways by mid century had a radical effect. Their social impact was unparalleled and the architectural and engineering consequences remain, in many places, to be admired to this day. The creation of embankments, cuttings, new bridges, and viaducts impacted on the landscape as no transport system previously had. Stations, large and small, dotted the county.



FIDDOWN BRIDGE TOLL HOUSE
 Fiddown
 (c.1850)

The modest impression made in the street by a Tudor-flavoured toll collector's house belies the true scale of the composition, which incorporates a basement and dormer attic. Although replaced in 1983, the associated Fiddown Bridge retains some of the fine stone masonry of its earlier nineteenth-century predecessor.



(fig. 54)
FIDDOWN AND PORTLAOISE RAILWAY STATION
 Fiddown
 (opened 1853)

A compact railway station in a pared-down Classical style, reputedly established on the Waterford and Limerick Railway (WLR) branch extension of the Great Southern and Western Railway (GSWR) line at the suggestion of the Malcomson family of Portlaoise, County Waterford. As major shareholders in the railway companies of Ireland, the Malcomsons supposedly had considerable influence in this sector.



(fig. 55)
THOMASTOWN RAILWAY VIADUCT
 Jerpoint West,
 Thomastown
 (1850)

An elegantly composed viaduct makes a dramatic visual statement over the River Nore on the outskirts of Thomastown. Originally built to designs by Captain William Scart Moorsom (1804-63), the central span was once the longest single span in the British Isles. It was replaced in 1877 by a scheme by Charles Richard Galvey (1840-94).

Kilkenny Railway Station (opened 1847), renamed Thomas McDonagh Railway Station, Dublin Road, now has the effect of a branch siding although it originally played a more centralised role with branch lines leading to Abbeyleix and Maryborough (now Portlaoise) by 1868. The station was designed by Captain William Scarth Moorsom (1804-63) with advice from Sancton Wood (c.1814-86), designer of Kingsbridge Station (1846), renamed Heuston Station, Dublin. Smaller stations at Gowran (opened 1852) and Mullinavat (opened 1853) came with a range of architectural forms: station buildings, signal boxes, and gatekeepers' houses were often attractively executed, as in the crossing master's house (1850) at Gowran. Larger stations such as that at Fiddown (opened 1853) on the Waterford and Limerick Railway (WLR) line served nearby Portlaoise in County Waterford (fig. 54). It has been associated with

the Malcomson family who were shareholders in many railway companies, which may account for its comparative grandeur in such a rural setting. Newhouse Bridge (opened 1848) at Knockbrack and Rathduff crosses the Waterford and Maryborough [Portlaoise] branch of the Great Southern and Western Railway (GSWR) line and is a good example of its type. The Thomastown Railway Viaduct (1850) on the same line was a dramatic engineering achievement being, on construction, the largest bridge span in these islands (fig. 55). Impressively tall twin masonry arches carried the railway above the River Nore. It was designed by Moorsom and constructed by the Dublin firm of John and Robert Mallet. The original viaduct, of timber, was replaced in 1877 with a broad iron expanse constructed by Courtney, Stephens and Bailey of Dublin, to designs by Charles Richard Galvey (1840-94).

Industrial development was small-scale and localised. The occasional chimneystack, as at the old tannery (c.1850), off Lady's Well Street, Thomastown, indicates earlier small-scale industrial activity, but the coalworks at Castlecomer and the Smithwick's Brewery at Kilkenny were among the comparatively few industries of significance. The brewery supported many fine buildings: its gateway (c.1875) on Jenkin's Lane retains attractive ironwork and lettering. The associated maltings (1810), Tilbury Place or James's Sconce, follows the simple but logical arrangement of existing mills and warehouses; until recently the floors were supported on a mixture of cast-iron and timber columns with solid timber beams. The adjoining malthouse retains its characteristic pyramidal roof, complementing the vertical thrust of Saint Mary's Cathedral nearby. The nearby Saint Francis Abbey Brewery building (1882) on Parliament Street, would not appear out-of place in the St. James's Street area of Dublin (figs. 56-57). It manages to combine, and retains, decorative brickwork and patterning suggesting variety and affluence without ever appearing flamboyant.

Many mills and warehouses, characterised by solid masonry with small-scale openings, retain their appearance and, in their functionality, beckoned towards the logical styles of twentieth-century architecture. Killinny Corn Mill (c.1825), Killinny, continued in use until the 1980s and is typical of this style although its severity is relieved through the employment of crow-stepped gables (figs. 58-59). It benefits too from the retention of a range of support buildings including a substantial mill house (c.1825) and rendered gate lodge (c.1850). The malthouse (c.1800) at Barraghcore, Duninga, is one of the most impressive in Ireland (fig. 60). The

huge building is surmounted with crenellated parapets that, together with machicolations (projecting elements on the corners), suggest nothing less than a massive medieval castle. Larger towns supported market houses. That in Market Square, Kilkenny Street, Castlecomer, now the courthouse (c.1800), is among the finest. Executed in the Classical style it consists of a central two-storey block with projecting side pavilions, creating the effect of a compressed neo-Palladian country house in the heart of the town. It retains a later weighbridge but the open quality of the original ground floor was marred when it was converted to a courthouse in the 1870s.



(fig. 56)
SAINT FRANCIS'S ABBEY
BREWERY
44 Parliament Street,
Kilkenny
(1882)

A purpose-built office, designed for the administration of the nearby Saint Francis's Abbey Brewery or Smithwick's Brewery complex, has an urbane quality that befits a larger city such as Dublin. The composition is enlivened by its construction in red brick with limestone dressings, including a robustly-rusticated ground floor incorporating a series of round-headed openings recalling an Italianate arcade.

(fig. 57)
SAINT FRANCIS'S ABBEY
BREWERY
44 Parliament Street,
Kilkenny

A detail of the first floor expresses the variety of ornamentation characteristic of the High Victorian period; the window openings alone incorporate sills on consoles, stepped reveals, keystones, and pretty checkerboard-style overpanels.



(fig. 58)
KILLINNY CORN MILL
Killinny
(c.1825)

An impressive large-scale mill, built as Killinny Flour Mill, makes a dramatic impact on a bank overlooking the Kings River, with crow-stepped gables punctuating the skyline. Having been restored in 1983, the mill was subsequently closed in 1989.



(fig. 59)
KILLINNY CORN MILL
Killinny

A view of the giant water-wheel, sadly exhibiting decay since the mill complex was put out of use.



(fig. 60)
BARRAGHCORE
MALTHOUSE
Duninga
(c.1800)

A massive range, possibly constructed over two periods as Barraghcore Flour Mill, stands out in the local landscape with battlements, machicolations, and a turret, all playfully articulating the skyline.



(fig. 61)
SAINT FRANCIS'S
CAPUCHIN FRIARY
Friary Street,
Kilkenny
(1848)

A view of the interior completed to designs by Patrick O'Toole (fl. 1846-post 1855) revealing a rich Italianate decorative scheme. The interior features a round arcade to the side aisles supporting a clere-storey, a compartmentalised ceiling incorporating rich plasterwork detailing, and a broken segmental pedimented reredos. Curiously, although most of the churches in the county adopt a Gothic-style architectural theme, a great number incorporate a contrasting Classical reredos.

The Gothic Revival, in all its variants, dominated the almost continuous boom in church building throughout the nineteenth century. There were some exceptions influenced by Classical or at least Italianate tastes, as at Saint Francis's Capuchin Friary (1848 and 1897), Friary Street, Kilkenny (fig. 61), but on the whole Gothic tastes prevailed, reflecting contemporary antiquarianism and the widespread influence of Pugin and his Irish followers, notably James Joseph McCarthy (1817-82). Gothic allowed for an apparent continuum between the Kilkenny's medieval past and present. Guidebooks and travellers provided accounts of its medieval sites while the founding of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society in 1849, the precursor of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, gave added momentum

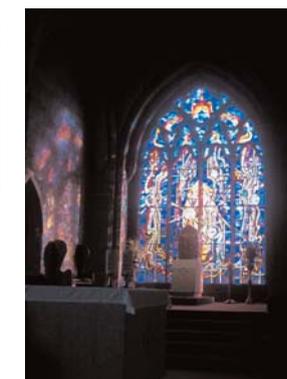
to an assessment of the past. Significant publications indicative of this trend included work by James George Robertson (fl. 1838-51) who painted views of the antiquities of Kilkenny and published *The Antiquities and Scenery of County Kilkenny* (1851). The Reverend James Graves (1815-86) and John George Augustus Prim (1821-75) published *The History, Architecture, and Antiquities of the Cathedral Church of Saint Canice, Kilkenny* in 1857. Francis Moran (1830-1911), Bishop of Ossory (1872-84) founded the Ecclesiastical Archaeological Society of Ossory in 1874, a trend that culminated in the masterful *The History and Antiquities of the Diocese of Ossory* (1905) by Reverend William Carrigan (1860-1924). Such publications, to this day, serve to underpin the links between Kilkenny and its medieval past.



(fig. 62)
THE BLACK ABBEY
Abbey Street,
Kilkenny
(founded 1225)

One of the earliest-surviving ecclesiastical sites in Kilkenny City, the Black Abbey has met with mixed fortunes since the early thirteenth century, with periods of prosperity and expansion intermingled with periods out of use and in decay. The present appearance of the building dates largely from a renovation programme of 1859-66/7 under the direction of James Joseph McCarthy (1817-82).

The restoration and reuse of historic buildings emphasised, quite literally, continuity between past and present. The Black Abbey (founded 1225), Abbey Street, Kilkenny, was re-dedicated as a place of worship in 1778 (figs. 62-64), and the partial restoration of the thirteenth-century Duiske Abbey, Graiguenamanagh, was already underway by 1813 (fig. 176). The ruin of Ballyhale Castle (c.1550) was incorporated as a bell tower in the Catholic Church of Saint Martin of Tours (1804 and 1855) and, at Coolaghmore, the ruinous nave of the medieval church was redeveloped (1818) as the local Catholic church until superseded in 1896.



(fig. 63-64)
THE BLACK ABBEY
Abbey Street,
Kilkenny

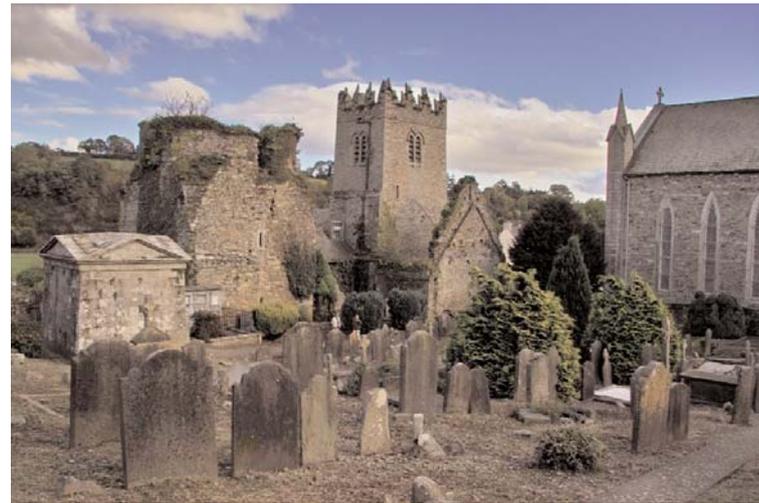
The celebrated Rosary Window, executed by Franz Mayer and Company of Munich in 1892, is framed by a carved County Kilkenny limestone surround dating to 1332. Later stained glass windows (1976-9) display a loose abstract quality in contrast to the figurative tradition of the earlier counterpart.

In the grounds of Saint Mary's Church (1824), Church Street, Inistioge, the Fownes Tighe Mausoleum (1878) was created from an early thirteenth-century tower house (1210). Saint Mary's itself, in the Early English style, is juxtaposed with the local Catholic church (1836-7) in a rare instance of architectural and religious harmony (figs. 65-66).

Saint Mary's, together with the building campaign for the Church of Ireland, was supported by the Board of First Fruits (fl. c.1711-1833). With some exceptions, all such churches are easily recognisable: in addition to their obvious prominent location they reveal a frugal aesthetic, arguably as a result of their state funding. They were sometimes erected using dressed stone, or more usually rendered rubble, and their individuality was derived from subtle details such as window dressings. Their austerity represented a particular view of the Anglican tradition that would be challenged through liturgical reform movements. Nonetheless their simplicity has stood them in good stead, with understated bold forms that make an eloquent statement in the landscape and appeal to a modern aesthetic. Some churches stand starkly against the horizon with a bold, if authoritative, outline as at Kilfane Church (c.1825), Kilfane West, in this instance enhanced with an octagonal turret instead of the usual tower or spire. Others take on a sculptural quality especially when set against the backdrop of now mature trees, like Saint Mary's Church (1818), Athy Road, Castlecomer. Saint Peter's Church (1815), Ennismag, together with a nearby bridge (1827) on the Kings River, a shop and public house, is all that appears to indicate the core distinctive community. Whatever embellishment exists at Ennismag came from later work,

(fig. 65)
CHURCH STREET
Inistioge

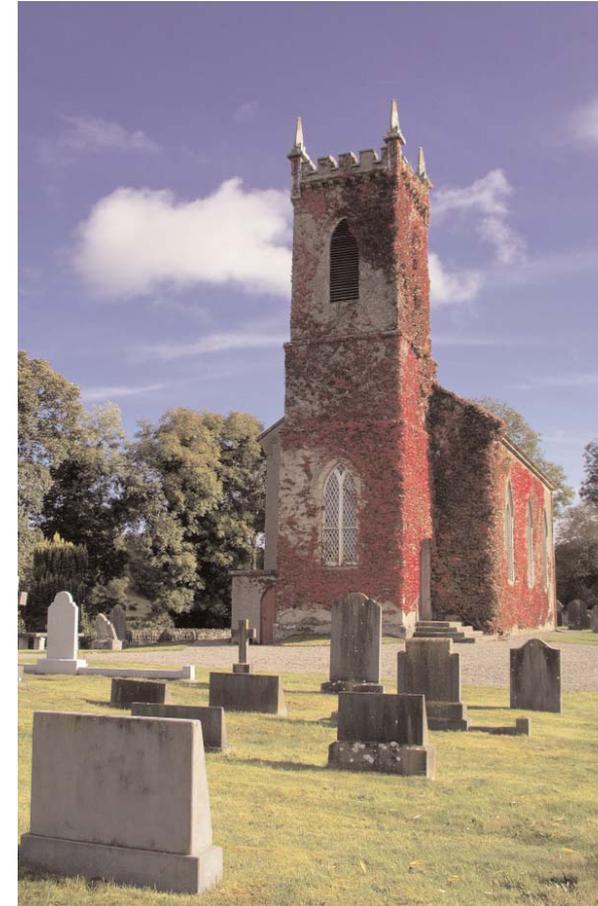
In the centre of Inistioge a rare harmony is evident in the adjacent positioning of Saint Columcille's Catholic Church (1836-7) with the earlier Saint Mary's Church (1824), indicating the long-standing religious tolerance in the village.



(fig. 66)
CHURCH STREET
Inistioge

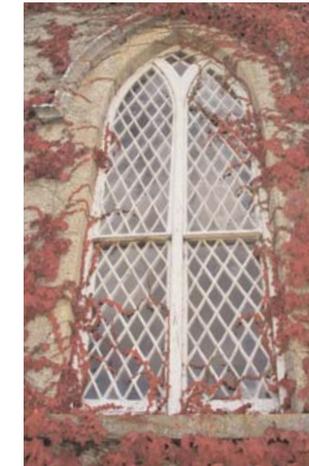
From the grounds of Saint Mary's Church the many stages of the ecclesiastical heritage of Inistioge are readily apparent. These include the nineteenth-century Catholic church; the Board of First Fruits Church of Ireland church incorporating the medieval White Castle (c.1525); the Fownes-

Tighe mausoleum (1878) reusing the tower from a medieval priory (established 1210); and the Greek Revival Mary Tighe mausoleum (1810), all surrounded by cut-stone markers spanning a number of centuries.



(fig. 67)
SAINT PETER'S CHURCH
(ENNISMAG)
Stoneyford
(1815)

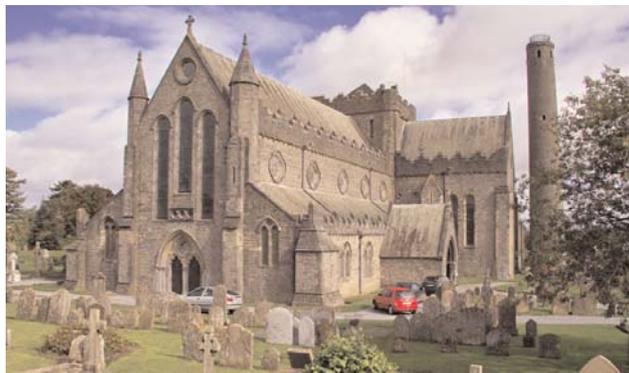
A picturesque rural parish church identified as a standard Board of First Fruits (fl. c.1711-1833) model by the simple arrangement of a single-cell nave and a battlemented West tower.



(fig. 68)
SAINT PETER'S CHURCH
(ENNISMAG)
Stoneyford

One of the original window fittings showing the simple cut-granite surround attractively divided into two pointed lights by a timber Y-mullion, together with delicate lattice glazing panels.

around 1850, when an elaborate east window with attractive tracery was inserted (figs. 67-68). Such churches, as at Kilfane or Castlecomer, frequently acted as estate chapels. Their close proximity to buildings such as entrance gates, gate lodges, or farm buildings enhances the architectural effect of the whole.



(fig. 69)
SAINTE CANICE'S CATHEDRAL
 Church Lane,
 Kilkenny
 (begun 1203)

Occupying the position of a chapel established by Saint Cainneach (515/6-600) in the sixth century, the appearance of the present cathedral, originally established by Hugh de Rous (*fl.* 1202-18), dates largely from 'restoration' projects. These were carried out in the Classical style (pre 1766) and in the Gothic Revival style (1844-77) to designs prepared by Sanderson Miller (1716-80) and Sir Thomas Newenham Deane (1827-99) respectively.

There were, of course, exceptions to the architectural austerity of the Board of First Fruits, among which the embellishment and 'restoration' (1844-77) of Saint Canice's Cathedral, under Dean Charles Vignoles (1789-1877), is paramount (fig. 69). Much of the cathedral's 'historic' effect dates from post 1863 when 'restoration' was under the control of Thomas Newenham Deane (1827-99), and when the incumbent Bishop James Thomas O'Brien (1792-1874) was among the strongest opponents of disestablishment. Saint Paul's Church (1859-62), Piltown, is of exceptional design quality (figs. 70-71). Combining the role of estate chapel for Bessborough House and local parish church, it was erected to designs by the celebrated George Edmund Street (1824-81), best known today for his sprawling Law Courts (begun 1866) in London. Funded largely by John Ponsonby (1809-80) the 5th Earl of Bessborough, Saint Paul's is the essence of accomplished Gothic Revival, presenting simplicity of form with lavish detail restricted to the finesse of the masonry detailing and 'dressed' stonework confined to features such as doors and windows.



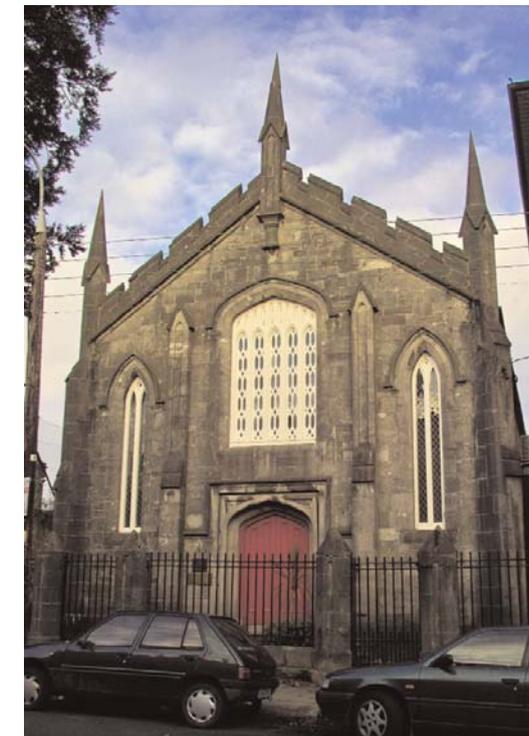
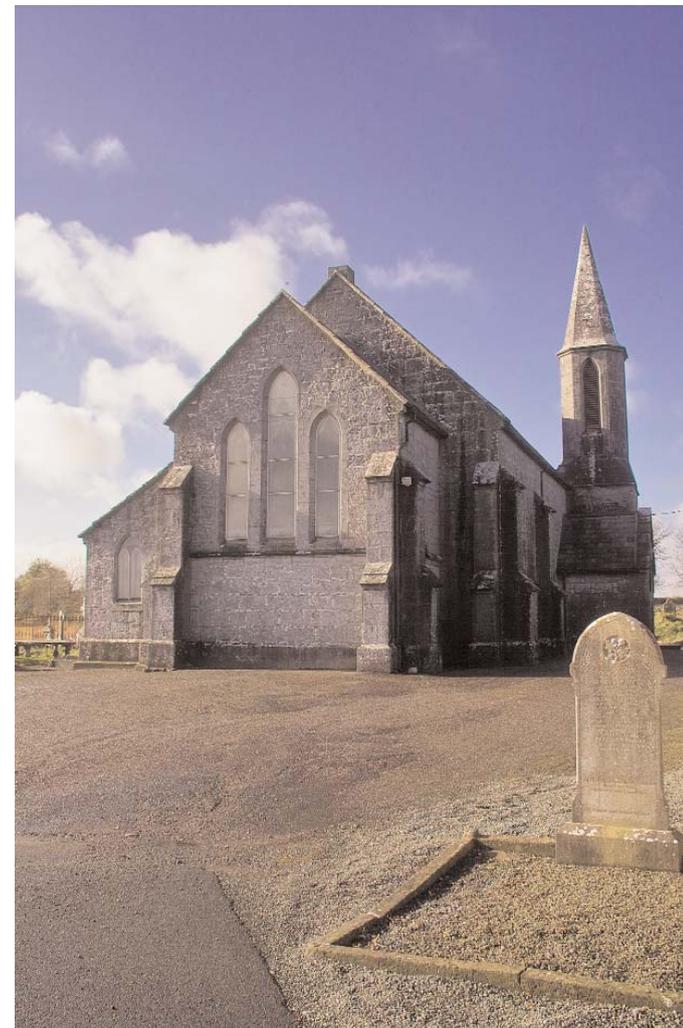
(fig. 70)
SAINTE PAUL'S CHURCH
 Piltown
 (1859-62)

Built to designs prepared by George Edmund Street (1824-81) as the combined Bessborough Estate and local parish chapel, Saint Paul's Church features an elegantly-tiered frontispiece whereby a gabled porch rises into a tapered buttress supporting a rose window, all surmounted by a buttressed bellcote.



(fig. 71)
SAINTE PAUL'S CHURCH
 Piltown

A view of the interior illustrates a particularly lavish chancel scheme producing a marked contrast with the unfinished quality of the exposed stone construction elsewhere.



SAINTE AIDAN'S CHURCH
 Kilmanagh
 (1846)

Following the dissolution of the Board of First Fruits in 1833 the new churches of the Church of Ireland began to adopt individual personalities, forsaking the standard nave-and-tower pattern and recalling contemporary Catholic churches in stylistic ambition, if not scale. The church at Kilmanagh by Joseph Welland (1798-1860) is characterised by a compact quality evident not only in the plan form, but in the somewhat squat turret punctuating the skyline.

KILKENNY CITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 Ormonde Road,
 Kilkenny
 (1839)

A picturesque single-cell chapel features a Gothic theme, severe and playful in equal measure: dour limestone walls are offset by intricate glazing patterns together with an enriched gable. Although no longer serving its original purpose, such churches survive to the present day as a reminder of the religious diversity of Kilkenny City's past.



**SAINTE BRENDAN'S
CATHOLIC CHURCH**
Clodiagh (Clodagh)
(1800)

A compact rural parish church, picturesquely positioned in a sylvan setting on a hairpin road overlooking the Clodiagh River, is one of many unexpected artefacts of considerable architectural heritage interest that characterise the rural landscape of County Kilkenny.



**CATHOLIC CHURCH
OF THE ASSUMPTION**
OLDCOURT,
Templeorum
(1860)

A monumental gateway in a dramatic Gothic style makes a bold statement in the centre of Templeorum. The associated church (1810/2-4; rebuilt 1929) exhibits a sparse architectural quality in comparison.



**SAINTE PATRICK'S
CENTRE**
Reviewfields,
Kilkenny
(1861)

A substantial complex, built as Saint Patrick's Industrial School in an institutional Jacobean Revival style to designs prepared by Frederick Darley (1798-1872), was originally part of a programme of work undertaken by Bishop Francis Moran (1830-1911).



**SAINTE CANICE'S
CATHOLIC CHURCH**
Dean Street,
Kilkenny
(1824-7)

A parish church of medium size, built for Reverend Jacob Gorman, shows a quality of ornamentation uncommon in churches predating Catholic Emancipation (1829). It is possible that some of the decorative detailing may have been introduced as part of improvement works carried out in 1924-6 by William Henry Byrne (1844-1917).

The earliest Catholic churches reveal an austerity comparable to their Protestant counterparts, but are markedly larger in scale. Many have been replaced and those demolished or adapted were seldom recorded. A few were described favourably, with Lewis noting the 'neat' chapel (1815) in Stoneyford and describing the 'chapel' in Thomastown (nave, 1770, destroyed post 1867; tower 1823) as a handsome edifice. Across Kilkenny it is possible to discern the trajectory of Gothic Revival in such

churches for well over a century: from the earliest examples, characterised by simplicity, to later buildings more complex in design and more costly in materials and execution. The Catholic Church of the Assumption (1826), Tullaroan, is a simple hall form, large and commodious enough to house a substantial congregation, but built with insufficient means to support an elaborate structure. Nonetheless fine limestone dressing was employed for window frames and doorcases, and much of this detailing has been retained. Saint Patrick's Catholic Church (1840), Clogh, dominates the surrounding countryside; its brightly painted exterior arguably more distinctive from a distance than at close quarters. It retains three attractive interior galleries with early Gothic Revival detailing and ribbed panelling. Later brass railings on the galleries are the sort of detail that can be neglected, but in this case add to the period feel of the interior. Timber piers carved to resemble stone colonnettes support the galleries: an attractive detail, if representing Gothic on the cheap! As Gothic Revival styles became more archaeologically exacting, architects quarried motifs from the past. McCarthy employed a window motif from Gowran Abbey in his church at Clonea (1860) in neighbouring County Waterford, and supervised the restoration of the Black Abbey in Kilkenny between 1859 and 1866/7. French thirteenth-century architecture influenced his designs for the Catholic Church of the Assumption (1859-67), Chapel Lane, Thomastown. Projects became more elaborate as the century progressed: Saint Joseph's Catholic Church (1866-72), Ballyfoyle, supported an elaborate west front with wall buttresses, a deep recessed doorway, and traceried west windows. Fully accomplished projects such

as Saint Patrick's Church (1896-9), College Road, Kilkenny, designed by Samuel Francis Hynes (1854-1931), rounded off the century.

Individual church leaders were indefatigable builders. William Kinsella (1793-1845), Bishop of Ossory (1826-45) was responsible not only for Saint Kieran's College (1836-9) (figs. 72-73), but also for churches at Inistioge (1836-7), Castlecomer (1836-43), Ballyragget (1842), and Freshford (1844); projects mostly designed by William Deane Butler. Under Bishop Moran it was recorded that:

'...schools were built, convents enlarged, in some case new ones were erected in a grand scale. Two Industrial Schools... Churches were improved and ornamented'.

Despite an initial sense of severity, compounded by the use of sombre grey limestone, Butler's churches reveal a fondness for embellishment. This is evidenced in the window tracery of his church in Castlecomer and the vaults of his church in Ballyragget. Saint Mary's Catholic Cathedral (1843-57), James's Street, Kilkenny, ambitious in scale and audacious in location, reveals an indebtedness to English Gothic tastes, in this instance King's College (founded 1441), Cambridge. The collegial Gothic of Cambridge also influenced Butler's work at Saint Kieran's College which precedes such mid-century (1841) collegial designs at the Queen's Colleges in Belfast, Cork, and Galway. Parallels have been drawn between Gloucester Cathedral (restored 1847-73) and Butler's work at Saint Mary's, a church calculated, according to a contemporary:

'...to inspire the beholder with a sublime awe and reverence in a degree at once absorbing and transcendent...' (figs. 74-75).



The addition of a range of later buildings including the presbytery (1861), designed by William Hague (1836-99), and chapter house (1890-9), by William Henry Byrne (1844-1917), enhance the urban effect of the composition as a whole. Interior embellishment in the late 1880s included the addition of an altar dedicated to the 'Sacred Heart' designed and executed by James Pearse (1839-1900), father of Patrick Pearse (1879-1916). Otherwise plain churches were embellished throughout the century not only in keeping with fashions but, presumably, as funds were made available. The tastes of the faithful — art for the poor and usually funded by the poor — did not always accommodate those of a 'delicate' sensibility. Visitors to the Black Abbey in the 1840s bemoaned the interior decoration, finding it dreadful:

'The gaudiness and glittering finery of modern taste were oddly and painfully mingled with the solemn grandeur of the ancient state...'

(fig. 72)
SAINT KIERAN'S COLLEGE
College Road,
Kilkenny
(established 1836)

Built to a masterplan prepared by William Deane Butler (c.1794-1857), Saint Kieran's College was modified (1875) by George Coppinger Ashlin (1837-1921) when the arcades were added to the wings and the east terminating block was completed. In 1955, the west terminating block built by Simon Aloysius Leonard (1903-76) of W.H. Byrne and Sons of Dublin concluded the scheme, reusing fabric from the demolished Saint John's Church (1840) in nearby Maudlin Street and thereby maintaining the historic quality of the overall composition.



(fig. 73)
SAINT KIERAN'S COLLEGE
College Road,
Kilkenny

The central projecting chapel has many qualities in common with contemporary churches by Deane. These include the octagonal corner turrets and decorative central finial present at Castlecomer (1836-43), Ballyragget (1842), and the Catholic Cathedral (1843-57) in Kilkenny City.



(fig. 74)
SAINT MARY'S
CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL
James's Street/
James's Green,
Kilkenny
(1843-57)

An archival photograph from the Valentine Collection (1930-50) illustrates the commanding presence of William Deane Butler's cathedral with a vertical quality produced by stepped buttresses, pinnacles, and a soaring tower. The later Chapter House (1890-9) by William Henry Byrne lies to the right of the image.

Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland



(fig. 75)
SAINT MARY'S
CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL
James's Street/James's
Green,
Kilkenny

A view of the crossing tower features a *trompe l'oeil* painted scheme on a flat panel, giving the impression of architectural ornamentation rising to a central rose.



(fig. 76)
KILKENNY CITY
MILITARY BARRACKS
Castlecomer Road,
Kilkenny
(1803)

An archival photograph of the Kilkenny City Military Barracks from the William Lawrence Collection (1880-1900) illustrates the principal block identified by a stately pedimented breakfront, together with a number of attendant ranges intended as officers' messes and accommodation for unmarried soldiers.

Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland

If spiritual salvation was guaranteed by churches, a network of sites enforcing law and order underpinned political and social stability. Whereas Gothic dominated the ecclesiastical sphere, public buildings continued in the Classical tradition, albeit with some exceptions. The Barracks (1800-3), now James Stephens Military Barracks, Castlecomer Road, Kilkenny, was erected by the Board of Works (fig. 76). It shares a standardised design idiom with other military barracks of the time, like Templemore

Military Barracks (1783), County Tipperary, and Mullingar Military Barracks (1807), County Westmeath. The Governor's House (c.1800), now Garrison House, stands between John's Green and Upper John Street (figs. 77-78). Ongoing political agitation and social distress assured a need for both gaols and police barracks. Barracks for the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC), were erected in the course of the century, their architecture depending on the scale or importance of the post. The barracks (c.1850)



(fig. 77)
GARRISON HOUSE
Wolfe Tone Street,
Kilkenny
(c.1800)

A modest-scale house, originally intended as the residence of the governor of the nearby military barracks. Classical proportions together with sparse detailing lend the house a dignified, understated quality.



(fig. 78)
GARRISON HOUSE
Wolfe Tone Street,
Kilkenny

A detail of the doorcase reveals the juxtaposition of a Classical-style Gibbsian surround with a Gothic-style tracery fanlight to picturesque effect.



CASTLECOMER MILITARY BARRACKS
Barrack Street,
Castlecomer
(c.1800)

Built, as suggested by Samuel Lewis in 1837, in response to the political tensions in the area following the 1798 Insurgency, a large-scale infantry barracks remains a monolithic presence overlooking Castlecomer. A sober Classical theme, comparable with that in Kilkenny City, is produced by symmetrical planning centred on a breakfront that features attractive surrounds to the openings in local granite, compounding the muted monochromatic palette.



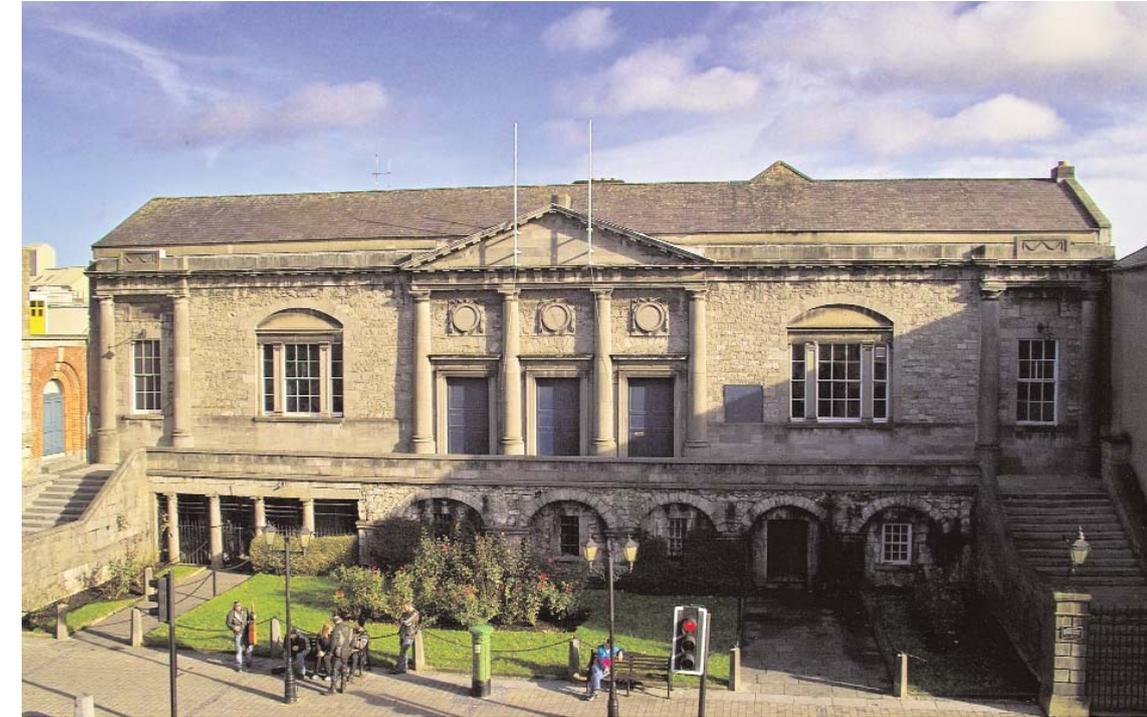
(fig. 79)
**BENNETTSBRIDGE
 GARDA SÍOCHÁNA
 STATION**
 Main Street,
 Bennettsbridge
 (c.1850)

A barracks originally built for the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) makes a prominent impact on the road leading into Bennettsbridge, with corner turrets producing a picturesque 'toy fort' quality in the composition. The barracks was adapted to use as a Garda Síochána Station by the Office of Public Works in 1927.



**CLOMANTAGH ROYAL
 IRISH CONSTABULARY
 BARRACKS**
 Clomantagh Lower,
 Clomantagh
 (c.1850)

A substantial range on an elegantly-swept crescent plan, frequently associated with the nearby Clomantagh Castle, but identified as a 'Constabulary Barracks' on early editions of the Ordnance Survey. A centrepiece incorporating elliptical-headed carriageways recalls the Kilkenny Castle stables, and gives credibility to the building's supposed origins as a stable complex.



(fig. 80)
**KILKENNY CITY
 COURTHOUSE**
 Parliament Street,
 Kilkenny
 (1792 and 1828; with
 1210 and 1566)

Even the most cursory of glances reveals various stages of development in the courthouse. These include traces of the medieval Grace's Castle (1210) to the basement, and the remnants of an early bridewell (1566), all surmounted by William Robertson's (1770-1850) reconceived Classical-style composition centred on an elegant pedimented tetrastyle Tuscan frontispiece.

in Main Street, Bennettsbridge, was perhaps the most playful with terminal turrets adding an air of Gothic Revival gaiety (fig. 79).

In keeping with its own sense of authority the Classical idiom prevailed in courthouse design. The small courthouse (rebuilt 1855-6), Main Street, Gowran, employed a Greek Revival style. The neo-Classical courthouse (1792) on Parliament Street, Kilkenny, parallels James Gandon's (1742-1823) now demolished courthouse (1784) in Waterford and his surviving façade of Nottingham Town Hall (1770-2). Its dominant effect, however, derives from William Robertson's remodelling of the façade in 1828 when he added the distinctive balcony terrace

and stone staircases (fig. 80). Some years earlier (1808) Robertson had undertaken the building of the, now demolished, county gaol. The courthouse (pre 1840), Green Street or Edmund Ignatius Rice Street, Callan, contributes to the municipal aspirations of this quarter of the town. With five bays and built of finely dressed stone, it echoes a generic type of courthouse built across the country in the 1840s and 1850s. These have been attributed to William Francis Calbeck (c.1824-72) with parallel examples as far afield as Carrickmacross (1844), County Monaghan, and Clifden (1845), County Galway. There is a further example in Kilkenny at Urlingford (pre 1840).



(fig. 81)
MOLLOY
Kilkenny Street,
Castlecomer
(house c.1825;
shopfront c.1875)

A nineteenth-century shopfront references Classical influences in features such as the paired pilasters with consoles, and a dentilated moulded cornice over the fascia incorporating raised lettering.



HEIRLOOM ANTIQUES
88 Chapel Street,
Johnstown
(c.1875)

An elegant Classical-style shopfront exudes a sophisticated urban grandeur at odds with the position of the premises in the small crossroads village of Johnstown. The shopfront incorporates bowed plateglass, decorative tile work, iron railings, and pretty glazing panels.



(fig. 82)
WALSH
Dungarvan
(c.1875)

A symmetrically-composed shopfront forms an appealing focal point in the village centre. It retains all of the original fabric, including a fascia incorporating gold lettering together with the glazed timber sliding screens behind the display windows.

F.J. MURRAY
Lower Main Street/The
Quay, Graigueamanagh
(house c.1800;
pubfront c.1875)

Deviating from the more popular or traditional Classical forms, a striking pubfront in Graigueamanagh incorporates features reputedly inspired by the nearby Duiske Abbey Catholic Church. However, rather than a medieval Gothic theme, the resulting composition expresses a distinctly Moorish quality.



POWER (THE IRISH
HOUSE)
Upper Bridge Street,
Callan
(house c.1800;
shopfront c.1875)

A nineteenth-century frontage accommodates two separate commercial spaces within a wholly-unified composition, its refined Classical detailing exhibiting expert carpentry.



FIDDOWN
(c.1875)

A pretty composition expressing two distinct components: the residential space exhibits a muted Tudor style, while the commercial space incorporates a contrasting Classical theme.

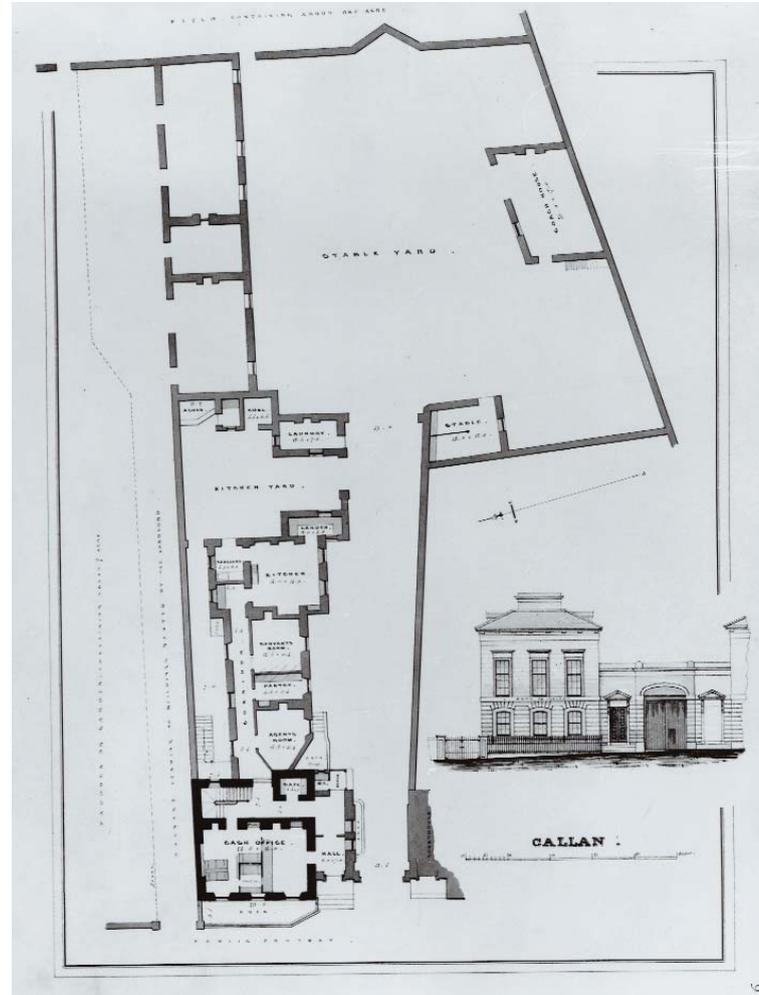


KELLY
Kilkenny Street,
Castlecomer
(house c.1825;
shopfront c.1900)

Following the closure of the collieries in the late twentieth century, Castlecomer experienced economical decline with many independent businesses ceasing to trade. A fortunate side-effect of this depression is the survival of many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century shopfronts, where elsewhere across the county early frontages have been lost in favour of less attractive replacements.

In spite of poverty and destitution County Kilkenny saw much commercial activity and the nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of a whole new middle class. Shopkeepers and publicans formed the commercial backbone of most towns and their premises reflected their growing confidence. Most properties included living accommodation above the shop or pub, and larger premises incorporated service buildings including stables and small warehouses. In rural towns the 'yard' behind the shop frequently adjoined farm buildings, the shop being part of the family's wider holding of land. The shopfronts throughout the county were part of a larger cultural tradition that showed an awareness of Classical architecture and the forms of late Georgian fine furniture. In many cases specialist craftsmen created an original carving style, while at the same time operating within the recognisable generic type. As evidenced from old photographs, Kilkenny City was once rich with such fronts although only a few survive, mostly from the early twentieth

century. Some were architecturally ambitious or at least employed carving and lettering in a combination that suggested aspirations to grandeur. Such fronts could assume, on occasion, an air of almost civic pomp. Molloy's (house c.1825; shopfront c.1875), Kilkenny Street, Castlecomer, known as the 'Commercial Establishment' must have appeared particularly impressive when first developed (fig. 81). Others, no less attractive, followed simple lines. Interiors were distinctive, if not ornate, but pub interiors could be particularly attractive with the distribution of mirrors and polished fittings adding what must have appeared as comparative luxury. The effect would have been perceived through a haze of candlelight, gaslight, and tobacco smoke, quite differently to how we might view such spaces today. In smaller communities, such as Dungarvan, the brightly coloured and distinctive lettering of 'the shop', in this case the Walsh property (c.1875), could provide the most distinctive element in the townscape, apart from the place of worship (fig. 82).

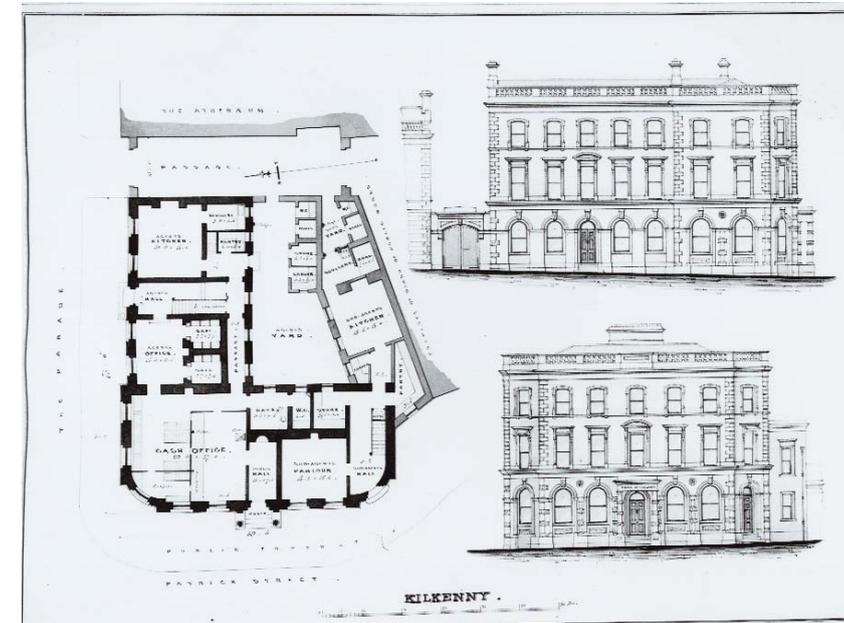


Commercial activity underpinned an unrivalled period of bank building when various competing companies exuded their wealth and security in stone and brick. The Bank of Ireland (between 1870-9), Green Street or Edmund Ignatius Rice Street, Callan, adjoins the courthouse and already indicates the Italianate taste in bank buildings that was to develop through the century (*fig. 83*). The Bank of Ireland (1870) on the corner of High Street and The Parade, Kilkenny, was erected in a comparable Italianate style, much favoured by architects internationally, and probably owing its impetus to the Italian origins of modern banking (*figs. 84-85*). The building was designed by Sandham Symes (1807-94) of Dublin and is a distinctive component in the townscape, signifying large-scale urban aspiration. The later Bank of Ireland (c.1875), Main Street, Urlingford, is simpler in execution and detail but no less evocative of Italianate styles.

(*fig. 83*)
BANK OF IRELAND
Green Street (Edmund Ignatius Rice Street),
Callan
(between 1870-9)

The plan and elevation of the Bank of Ireland reveals the original configuration of the composition, prior to the introduction of an additional wing (c.1900). The domestic quarters and associated facilities set aside for use by the manager are also evident in the plans.

Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive



PROVINCIAL HOUSE
28 Patrick Street Lower,
Kilkenny
(house c.1775;
shopfront post 1860)

A substantial eighteenth-century house features attractive, if somewhat unremarkable, later detailing in the Classical vein. However, to facilitate the operation as a branch office of the Provincial Bank, a particularly memorable shopfront was installed, revealing a wealth of carved detailing in limestone with particular emphasis on an integrated porch incorporating decorative iron dressings.

(*fig. 84*)
BANK OF IRELAND
High Street/The Parade,
Kilkenny
(1870)

A plan and renderings of both primary elevations of the Bank of Ireland built by Sandham Symes (1807-94) illustrate the arrangement of the ground floor spaces centred on a corner cash office. Stylistic similarities with the drawings for the branch at Callan suggest that Symes was responsible for both schemes as a resident architect for the Bank of Ireland.

Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive



(*fig. 85*)
BANK OF IRELAND
High Street/The Parade,
Kilkenny

A view of the completed bank illustrates the façades onto High Street and The Parade, with bowed recessed corners providing an elegant meeting point in the scheme.

A deepening social conscience, with education perceived as the panacea for society's ills, encouraged the private and public, both state and religious, funding of schools and early hospitals. The Education Act 1831 encouraged the development of national schools and designs often emerged from local initiatives. At Stoneyford, schools for boys and girls, and one for infants, were patronised by Mr. and Mrs. Flood of Flood Hall. From 1857 schools were

constructed under the supervision of the Office of Public Works. The basic form remained simple and domestic in scale as in the small surviving example at Castlegannon (1887). Welfare of the infirm and the elderly was of increasing concern, and initially it remained largely within the remit of the landed gentry or affluent individuals to sponsor relief. Sarah Fownes Tighe had founded an almshouse (1788) on The Square at Inistioge. The Saint James's Asylum



STONEYFORD INFANT SCHOOL
Stoneyford
(c.1825)

An attractive edifice recalling, both in plan and elevation, the courthouses of William Caldbeck (c.1824-72), but identified on early editions of the Ordnance Survey as a 'Savings Bank and School'. Varied glazing patterns define each floor as a wholly separate entity, giving credibility to the theory that the profits from a bank at ground floor level were invested in the running of the school overhead, including the salary of the school master.



(fig. 86)
SAINT JAMES'S ASYLUM
Castle Road/
Bennettsbridge Road,
Kilkenny
(1803-4)

A classically-composed gate screen incorporates an elegant symmetrical plan with pedimented terminating frontispieces, corresponding with a monument centrally-placed in the grounds. The monument by Benjamin Schrowder (c.1757-1826) was erected in commemoration of James Switzer (fl. 1774-1804), a local building contractor who established the almshouses using both the fee collected, and surplus materials remaining from the construction of the Kilkenny City Military Barracks complex (1803).



SMITHSTOWN NATIONAL SCHOOL
Smithstown
(1895)

A rural national school with a sparse, functional design aesthetic; the classroom, or classrooms, were typically accessed by a single integrated entrance. County Kilkenny had witnessed an accelerated national school building programme from the mid nineteenth century following the establishment of the Board of Education in 1831.



(fig. 87)
CHAPEL STREET
Graiguenamanagh
(c.1850)

A collection of four widows' almshouses sponsored by Lord Annaly 'of Callan, Dungarvan, Goresbridge, Gowran and Graiguenamanagh' or, put more simply, the Gowran Castle estate, makes a picturesque impact opposite the medieval Duiske Abbey Catholic Church.



(fig. 88)
CHAPEL STREET
Graiguenamanagh

Carved cut-granite surrounds, featuring mullions, pretty glazing patterns, and hood mouldings, give an appealing Tudor quality to the composition.

(1803-4) on Castle Road, Kilkenny, a scheme of almshouses founded by James Switzer (fl. 1774-1804), builder of the military barracks, remained firmly in the Classical tradition; its entrance gates have been little altered and are particularly fine, with urn-topped piers and pedimented pavilions indicating a civic aspiration behind the scheme (fig. 86). Although the visual appearance of the many short-lived enterprises can only be guessed at, many charitable buildings employed medieval styles, perhaps harking back to the heyday of such initiatives in the past. The Ormonde almshouse or hospital (1839), Barrack Street, Kilkenny, was built in a Tudor Revival style but retained a Classical influence in its compositional balance. The widows' almshouses (c.1850), Chapel Street, Graiguenamanagh, exemplify the medieval trend (figs. 87-88).



(fig. 89)
SAINT COLUMBA'S
HOSPITAL
(THOMASTOWN UNION
WORKHOUSE)
Thomastown
(1846)

In contrast to contemporary workhouses across the county, and the country as a whole, the complex at Thomastown adopted an elegant Classical theme centred on an expressed pedimented entrance, with

cut-granite architraves framing small-pane sash windows. The complex was adapted to use as a County Home in 1923 by the Kilkenny Board of Health and Public Assistance.



(fig. 90)
CALLAN UNION
WORKHOUSE
Clonmel Road,
Callan
(1840-1)

The entrance or governor's block to a union workhouse complex built by the Poor Law Commission (established 1834) to a standardised plan prepared by George Wilkinson (1813/4-90). The buildings exhibit the characteristic forbidding institutional style, an effect compounded by the construction in dour limestone with a minimum of superfluous detailing.

Union workhouses attempted to address the needs of the community on a much larger scale but quickly became synonymous with poverty, their negative perception continuing to this day. They were intended to bring relief to the destitute under the Irish Poor Law Relief Act (1838) in a system modelled on the contemporary English poor law system. Built to a high design specification, some one hundred workhouses were erected across Ireland between 1839 and 1841. A further tranche was built between 1849 and 1855 under the Board of Works, mostly to a standardised design by George Wilkinson (1813/4-90). Kilkenny had

workhouses at Callan (1840-1) and Kilkenny City (1840-1) with later examples in Thomastown (1846) and Castlecomer (1853-4). The workhouse at Thomastown, now Saint Columba's Hospital, is largely intact and is distinguished by a Classical style (fig. 89). A substantial portion of the Callan Union Workhouse complex also survives in a good state (fig. 90). Designed by Wilkinson and erected under the supervision of William Walsh and Richard Lewis, it already supported a population of 2,500 by 1851. It features the characteristic H-shaped plan, a reception building, and high stone boundary walls. The Kilkenny District



(fig. 91)
SAINT CANICE'S
HOSPITAL
Dublin Road,
Kilkenny
(1849-51)

An immense hospital in a dramatic Tudor style, built as the Kilkenny District Lunatic Asylum to designs by George Papworth (1781-1855). The elegant symmetrical plan form features numerous projections and setbacks, allowing for the segregation of male and female patients in accordance with the prevailing Victorian moral code. Soaring towers in a French château style (not pictured) were completed in 1893 by Sir Thomas Drew (1838-1910) and/or Richard Langrishe (1834-1922) and represent a familiar Romantic landmark rising above the surrounding landscape.



(fig. 92)
SAINT CANICE'S
HOSPITAL
Dublin Road,
Kilkenny
(1893)

A pair of small-scale Church of Ireland (foreground) and Catholic (background) chapels built to designs by Sir Thomas Drew and/or Richard Langrishe exhibit a shared design aesthetic. The construction in limestone with red sandstone accents produces a polychromatic quality at odds with the sombre nature of the adjacent hospital.

Lunatic Asylum (1849), now Saint Canice's Hospital, designed by George Papworth (1781-1855), opened in 1851 and was further evidence of the provision for healthcare in the age (figs. 91-92). Its 'healthy' location outside the city, together with later additions (1893) by Sir Thomas Drew (1838-1910) and/or Richard Langrishe (1834-1922), added to the impressive effect suggesting, from a distance, some vast Loire Valley château.

Most of the poorest homes were classed as hovels with little scope for architectural embellishment. Nevertheless, the simple lines of the 'traditional' cottage were erected in harmony with their immediate environment, were adaptable to diverse climatic conditions, and were made of renewable sources. Technically known as vernacular architecture, they did not subscribe to any particular architectural rulebook. The Brophy homestead (c.1800), Ballyfoyle, may date back to the late eighteenth century and has been in the one family for generations, retaining its thatch formed of local straw. Its traditional plan remains intact, as does its original roof carpentry. A thatched house (c.1800) at Clogh Bridge has been in occupation since the early 1800s and was originally the home of coalminers at nearby Castlecomer (fig. 93). It is built to a very basic two-room plan, a once common type, with the entrance leading direct-

ly into the kitchen and only one additional living space. The house retains a half door which, although from a much later date, was inserted in keeping with the scale and values of the original design. Its roof is varied, hipped at one end, and gabled at the other; the house was rethatched in the early 2000s. The vast majority of such houses have disappeared through neglect or abandonment. A number have been adapted to use as farm outbuildings, or have been altered to such an extent that the original form may not be easily discerned. Clogh retains a number of thatched houses, which gives us some idea of how such communities originally appeared, and how comparatively impressive the local church and parochial house must once have seemed in scale. The former dispensary dates from around 1875 (fig. 94), while an earlier and larger cottage dates from around 1800.



(fig. 93)
CLOGH
(c.1800)

An early small-scale cottage incorporates part rubble stone, part mud wall construction, as signified by the supporting buttress pier. The cottage was recently (early 2000s) reroofed using an oat thatch.



(fig. 94)
CLOGH DISPENSARY
(CLOGH MEDICAL HALL)
Toortane,
Clogh
(c.1875)

A thatched cottage and a number of associated outbuilding ranges are

arranged in a traditional manner about a shared forecourt. The cottage is recorded as having operated as the local 'dispensary' or medical hall on early twentieth-century editions of the Ordnance Survey.



MOONCOIN
(1757)

A picturesque mid eighteenth-century cottage retains small-pane sash windows together with a thatched roof of water reed.



MAHER
Barnafea
(c.1825)

A thatched cottage, once the social meeting point of a rural outpost, accommodates a public house in part of the long, low range: a simple fascia board, now concealed by the overhanging eaves, identifies the commercial space.



BALLYFOYLE
(c.1800)

A pretty, small-scale thatched cottage represents an increasingly rare example of the previously predominant domestic architectural form of rural County Kilkenny.



RICE HOUSE
(DREHIDEEN HOUSE)
Wescourt North
(c.1750)

A mid eighteenth-century cottage is of note as the birthplace of Edmund Ignatius Rice (1762-1844), founder of the Institute of Irish Christian Brothers in 1802. The cottage, now known as Rice House, was thoroughly restored in the late twentieth century.



WHITEHOUSE
(c.1775)

A charming thatched cottage, originally intended as a small-scale range, has been sympathetically extended in an almost organic manner over the course of the early twentieth century.

KILMACOW LOWER
(c.1800)

Probably originally featuring a thatched roof, a modest house in Kilmacow Lower remains of vernacular importance for the later corrugated-iron or 'tin' roof.



KELLS
(c.1800)

A rural cottage exhibits at least two distinct periods of construction: a modest thatched range terminates in a later (c.1900) taller end bay featuring a 'more permanent' slate roof.





(fig. 95)
GLENGRANT
(c.1800)

Although nearby Licketstown is commonly cited as a prime example of a traditional Irish vernacular settlement, the small cluster of thatched cottages or farm buildings in Glengrant represents one of the best preserved clacháns in County Kilkenny, if not in the whole of Ireland.

The close building together of groups of such dwellings, as a clachán, or farm village, was once commonplace. Examples are now rare and the cluster of rubble stone buildings at Glengrant (c.1800) is of particular historical and aesthetic value, with a number of hipped roof thatched houses remaining (figs. 95-97). The arrangement of houses (c.1800) at Licketstown is an exceptional example of a now rare form. A cluster of buildings there was re-thatched in 2004 with reeds sourced from the River Suir;



(fig. 96)
GLENGRANT
(c.1800)

Reputedly no longer in use as residential accommodation, a modest farmhouse retains important vernacular qualities, including an entrance windbreak, window openings of various sizes featuring small-pane sash windows, and a water reed thatch roof.

(fig. 97)
GLENGRANT
(c.1800)

A collection of small-scale thatched ranges, including a farmhouse alongside limewashed rubble stone outbuildings, exemplifies a traditional arrangement about a shared yard.





LICKETSTOWN
(c.1800)

A picturesque thatched farmhouse incorporates the elliptical bowed entrance windbreak. This attribute, once prevalent in the rural hinterlands of Callan, is considered particular to the vernacular heritage of County Kilkenny.

LUFFANY
(c.1825)

One of a number of cottages forming a clachán in Luffany displays vernacular traits: the construction incorporates a slight batter, and a water reed thatch roof. Although water reed has been imported from Eastern Europe since the late twentieth century, initiatives are now underway to reactivate harvests from traditional indigenous sources, such as the banks of the nearby River Suir.



(fig. 98)
LACY
Loan,
Gazebo
(c.1825)

A thatched cottage, with part of the accommodation adapted to use as a public house, represents an important social outlet in a somewhat remote rural community.

hazel and sally, used for rods and scallops, were sourced at Fiddown and Carrigeen. Lacy's Pub (c.1825), Gazebo, is reputed to date back to the core structure of a penal chapel (between 1670-90). Its distinctive employment of Ionic pilasters, supporting a rendered fascia with the raised lettering of the pub name, represents a quirky embrace, if not a fusion, of the Classical and vernacular traditions (figs. 98-99).



(fig. 99)
LACY
Loan,
Gazebo

A detail of the applied doorcase (c.1825), with Ionic pilasters striving for a sense of sophisticated grandeur, represents the commercial aspirations of the premises, but reveals a charming naïve quality in its execution.



SHEEPSTOWN
(c.1825)

A modest farmhouse, its symmetrical plan centred on a shallow breakfront, belongs to a design group particular to rural County Kilkenny. The form suggests a vernacular interpretation of Classical principles.

As the century progressed, Kilkenny County Council and City Corporation became increasingly engaged in the provision of public housing. Examples include Parnell Terrace (1888) on John's Quay and a terrace of smaller scale housing, now Wolfe Tone Terrace (1900), on Wolfe Tone Street. Similarly, it became more typical for significant industries to erect some housing for labourers. Florence Terrace (c.1900), Kilkenny Street, Castlecomer, was built towards the end of the century; an ambitious scheme named after Florence, wife of Captain Wandesforde (1870-1956) (*fig. 100*). The terrace was built of red brick, a comparatively unusual material that afforded the scheme an urban air more typical of housing schemes in Dublin and Belfast. However, the individualised projecting

porches, decorative bargeboards, and ridges suggested an air of luxury that comparable schemes would not have supported. Inevitably, more affluent farms around the county supported finer residences with elements frequently reflecting tastes evident in the great estate houses. A tendency to prefer Classical balance, and to incorporate a central breakfront, suggests a legacy from 'the big house'. In addition, most significant farms had an accretion of outhouses and farm buildings, the overall effect suggesting a hamlet-like cluster. A handsome barn (c.1850) at Tullaherin, near Dungarvan, with Classical detailing in the form of an open colonnade of cast iron columns, is among the more ambitious outhouses to survive.



(*fig. 100*)
5 FLORENCE TERRACE
Kilkenny Street,
Castlecomer
(c.1900)

A group of small-scale coal miners' houses, built by Captain Wandesforde (1870-1956) of Castlecomer House in honour of his wife, Florence, have an urbane quality due to their construction in mass-produced red brick. Distinctive timber bargeboards, terracotta cresting, and early iron railings enhance the pretty architectural design programme.

BELLEVUE HOUSE
Graiguenamanagh
(c.1850)

A middle-sized house, purchased in 1890 by the Board of Guardians for the town doctor, makes a positive visual contribution to an elevated site overlooking the River Barrow. A collection of well-preserved small-scale out-buildings including a coach house, built of unrefined fieldstone in the traditional manner, exhibit a comparatively rustic quality.





(fig. 101)
SWIFTH'S HEATH
HOUSE
Swiftsheath
(c.1750 and c.1850
with 1651)

A largely mid eighteenth-century country house was transformed a century later when the addition of rendered dressings produced a robust Classical confection.

(fig. 102)
SWIFTH'S HEATH
HOUSE
Swiftsheath

The rendered accents, seen in detail, include fine Corinthian capitals. A discrete datestone records the provenance of the house, which has origins dating back to the mid seventeenth century.



The extent of great estates is readily apparent on the 1839 Ordnance Survey. Many enjoyed an era of unrivalled grandeur supported by cheaply available labour, revenues from land, possibly even from new industries and overseas possessions. But the apparent splendour, now referred to as the 'twilight of the ascendancy' rested on fragile foundations: land reforms, growing democratic and religious rights, together with an underbelly of political agitation hastened their eventual demise. In keeping with the eclectic tastes of the period many architectural styles were utilised at such houses, sometimes within the one property and masking earlier work. The dominant effect at Kilmurry House (c.1750; originally 1691), Kilmurry near Thomastown, derives from this period although the core of the house is much earlier. Additional wings (1814-30) show the legacy of James Wyatt (1746-1813) whose influence was considerable across Ireland. Around 1850, giant stucco Corinthian pilasters were added to the main elevation of Swift's Heath (c.1750), Swiftsheath near Jenkinstown, which already incorporated the fabric of an earlier house (1651) (figs. 101-102).

For the most part the well-established Classical norms of balance, proportion, and detailing prevailed, and even came to influence more substantial farmhouses. Wings (1804-6) added to Woodstock House by William Robertson continued its existing Classical idiom. Rossenarra House (1824), Kilmaganny, continues the legacy of neo-Palladianism, with its dominant central block linked to terminal pavilions (fig. 103). It bears witness to the conservative tastes of its architect, the Callan-born James Hoban (1762-1831). Hoban, having studied in Dublin and emigrated to South Carolina,



(fig. 103)
ROSSENARRA HOUSE
Rossenarra Demesne,
Kilmaganny
(1824)

A substantial country house, built for the Reade or Morris-Reade family to designs prepared by James Hoban (1762-1831), represents one of the last Palladian-style compositions to be built in County Kilkenny. Conforming to an 'Economic Villa' prototype, the house features a central residential block with round-headed arcaded wings leading to pedimented pavilions.

ROSSENARRA HOUSE
Rossenarra Demesne,
Kilmaganny
(c.1825)

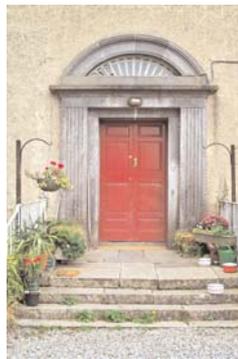
One of a pair of gate screens known as the 'Grand Gates', both attributable to James Hoban. The design, with a central gate flanked by pedestrian gates leading to a pair of terminating gate lodges, recalls the Palladian arrangement of the main house.





(fig. 104)
KELLS PRIORY
 (KELLS GLEBE HOUSE)
 Kells
 (1830)

A dignified house of medium size built as a glebe house by the Board of First Fruits (*fl.* c.1711-1833) to designs by James Hoban who, according to local legend, adapted a rejected proposal for the Executive Mansion or White House in Washington DC.



(fig. 105)
KELLS PRIORY
 (KELLS GLEBE HOUSE)
 Kells

A handsome doorcase in carved County Kilkenny limestone shows a door and attractive fanlight almost overwhelmed by imposing pilasters and a heavy archivol.

went on to design the Executive Mansion (1792-99) in Washington DC, better known as the 'White House'. Hoban was also responsible for Kells Glebe House (1830), Kells (*figs. 104-105*). Kilrush House (1820), Kilrush, and Blanchville House (1800), Blanchville Demesne (*fig. 106*), represent the spread of the tradition to smaller properties. Both were erected in a simple, elegant, and understated style. Consisting of merely three bays and two storeys

they have an air of calm grandeur achieved through some simple details such as the relieving arches on the ground floor windows, fine stonework window sills, and attractive doorcases. Such houses, frequently at the heart of working farms, supported an array of attractive outbuildings. At Blanchville a walled yard and associated farm buildings remain; a coach-house (established 1800) in the outer courtyard is contemporary with the main house.

(fig. 106)
BLANCHVILLE HOUSE
 Blanchville Demesne
 (1800)

An elegant country house built for Sir James Kearney recalls the output of Sir Richard Morrison (1767-1844) in features such as the symmetrical arrangement of elliptical-headed recesses centred on a Classical portico.



(fig. 107)
CASTLEFIELD HOUSE
Castlefield
(c.1725 and c.1800)

A distinctive middle-sized house, which shows its origins in a reasonably plain early eighteenth-century composition, was subsequently embellished with a quirky 'tower' featuring a portico and numerous individual window openings. Having fallen into dereliction by 1973, the house was happily restored and retains the original character.

As with church architecture, it is possible to discern an array of Gothic tastes, ranging from early, almost paper thin, decorative effects to more substantially robust compositions. The embellishment (c.1825) of Castlefield House allowed 'Gothick' detailing such as a battlemented parapet, and trefoil and quatrefoil headed windows on the breakfront, to be added to the original house (fig. 107). The 'Gothick' windows on Dunmore Cottage would also appear to date from around 1800 (fig. 108). Such 'quaintness' mirrored the tastes for the cottage ornée, of which Kilferagh House

(c.1800), Kilferagh, represents an example combining tastes for vernacular and formal architecture; the fine ironwork of the veranda is typical of the so-called Regency period. At Jenkinstown House (originally c.1825-50), Jenkinstown, William Robertson embellished the existing neo-Palladian house with a veneer of Gothic-like detailing (fig. 109). Robertson had trained as a painter, and there is something of the painterly and decorative in his application of detailing and form. In his work at Kilkenny Castle in the late 1820s, notably the Picture Gallery, he emphasised not only the



(fig. 108)
DUNMORE COTTAGE
Dunmore
(c.1775)

A picturesque house, originally built as a summer house by the Butlers of Kilkenny Castle, was subsequently used as a dower house. The building features distinctive bowed projections together with later (c.1800) ogee-headed windows, producing a characteristically elegant Regency theme.



(fig. 109)
JENKINSTOWN CASTLE
Jenkinstown
(c.1825-50)

The final remaining fragments of a once-extensive country house complex rebuilt by William Robertson in the early nineteenth century. Having been adapted to general parish use, the chapel was closed when superseded in 1983 by a nearby church. The attached house was reconstructed (post 1988) reusing stone salvaged from the original house on site.



(fig. 110)
SHANKILL CASTLE
Paulstown or Whitehall
(Shankill)
(c.1825 with 1713)

A watercolour depicts an idealised account of the appearance of Shankill Castle (originally 1713) prior to redevelopment by William Robertson. Although attributed to the architect, the watercolour reveals a naive quality,

most notably in the rendering of scale, which is at odds with the general high standard of drawing produced by the master draughtsman.

Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive



(fig. 111)
SHANKILL CASTLE
Paulstown or Whitehall
(Shankill)

As redeveloped by William Robertson, Shankill Castle appears as a compact gentleman's residence nestling organically into the surrounding landscape with the various battlements and chimneys barely impacting on the skyline. Later (1856) additional ranges, completed to designs by William Deane Butler, have been carefully incorporated into a wholly integrated composition.

medieval origins of the Butler family but also enhanced the picturesque effect already inherent in the castle's setting (figs. 112-121). Similarly the largely early eighteenth-century Shankill Castle (1713), Paulstown or Whitehall (Shankill), was 'enhanced' (c.1825) with a range of battlemented bays that seemed to echo its

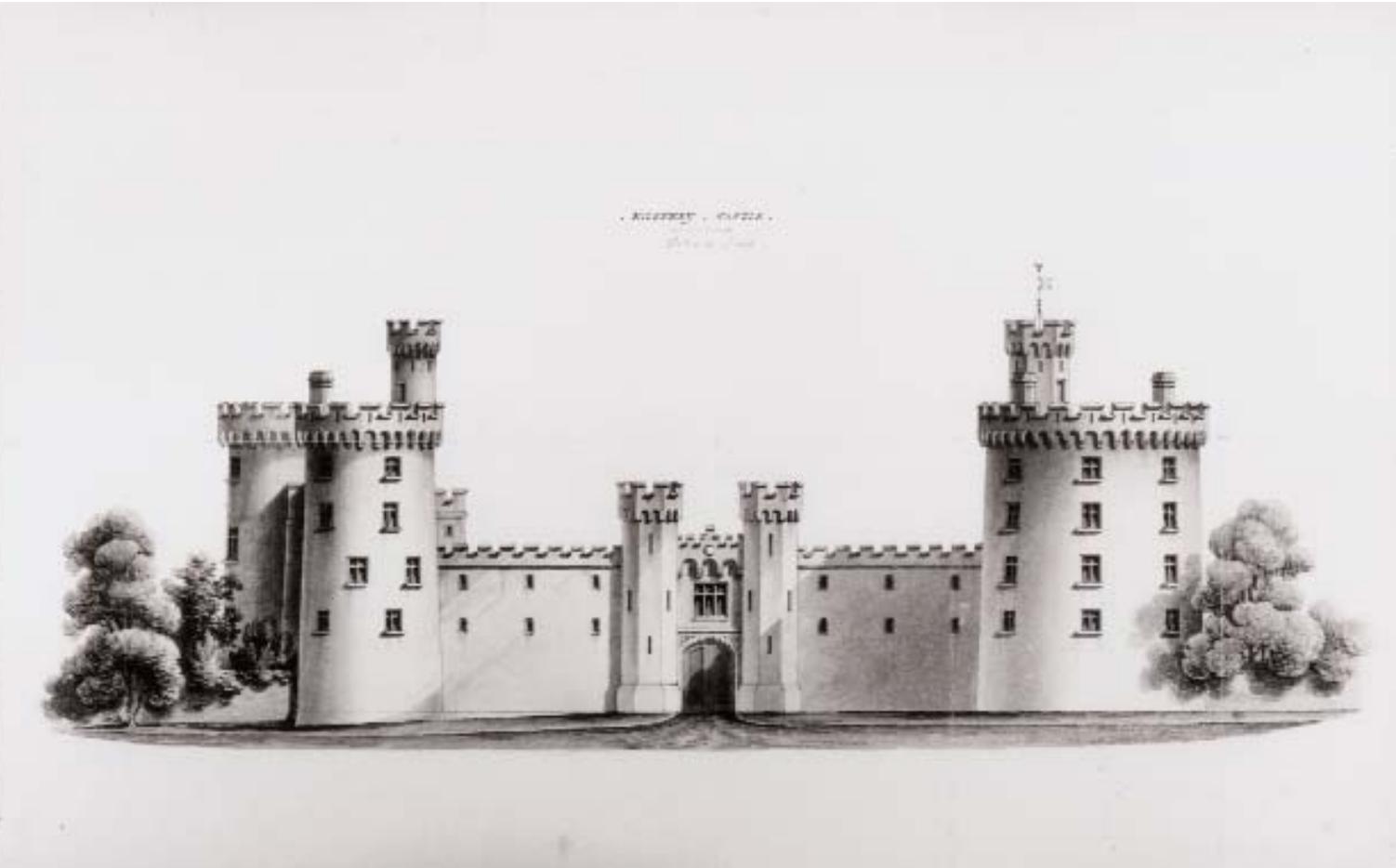
original medieval core (figs. 110-111). At Robertson's own house, the now much altered Rose Hill (1830), College Road, Kilkenny, he employed an entrance porch combining decorative window tracery, bargeboards, miniature battlements, and pinnacles.

(fig. 112)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny
(originally 1207-19)

An old photograph from the Poole Collection (1884-1954) illustrates the appearance of the Parade Wing at the turn of the twentieth century. The gateway in the left foreground leads to an enclosure established in 1867 as the Gravel Walk or Mayor's Walk.

Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.





(fig. 113)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

William Robertson's connections with Kilkenny date back to the 1790s when he exhibited a design for the castle at the Royal Academy. Structural faults in the courtyard walls of the castle were subsequently discovered in 1825, veri-

fied by the Board of First Fruits architect John Semple (1801-82). James Butler (1744-1838), 1st Marquis of Ormonde, then undertook not only the repair of the castle, but substantial additions including the Picture Gallery. A further, unexecuted, suggestion by Robertson involved the reconstruction of the great Parade gateway. Although the proposed

Gothic theme would have integrated well with the medieval qualities of the castle, the project would have involved the unnecessary loss of the existing Classical frontispiece.

Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive.



(fig. 114)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

A view of the commanding gateway (under construction 1709) from the Duchess Boardroom highlights the picturesque contrast of the juxtaposed Classical and nineteenth-century Gothic styles, together with a drum tower expressing medieval origins.



(fig. 116)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

A view of a rare wattle-and-daub domed ceiling represents one of the many features of the original thirteenth-century building uncovered by archaeologists since 1969. Underneath, and visible through a sandstone-dressed arch, a plunging arrow loop was intended for the defence of the castle, in conjunction with the eight metre deep dry moat below.

(fig. 115)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

From the vantage point of the park, the many stages in the development of the castle are readily apparent. The medieval drum towers are prominent on the Parade Wing, as is the central

block exhibiting William Robertson's scheme (begun 1826) featuring a Gothic style reputedly popularised by the royal family at Windsor Castle. Meanwhile the River Wing, constructed over two periods in the nineteenth century, exhibits modifications carried out by the Office of Public Works.



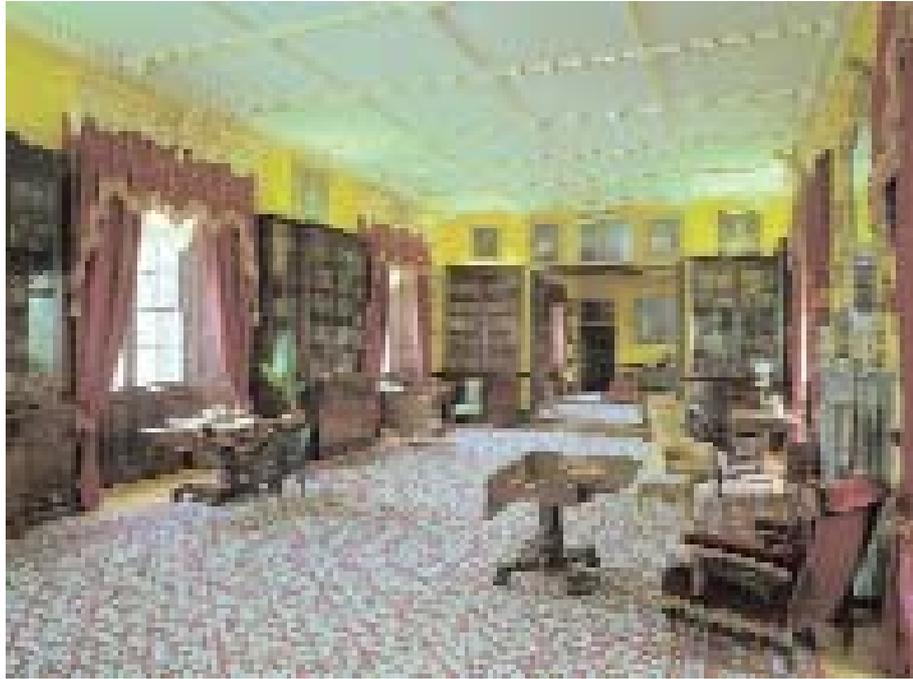
(fig. 117)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

A view of the reception corridor illustrates, at the mid way point, carved limestone piers and archivolts pointing at its earlier origins as a *porte cochère* (a portico brought forward to accommodate a carriage). The portico was incorporated into the glazed arcaded screen introduced by William Robertson to link the Parade (west) and the River (east) wings.



(fig. 118)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

A view of the restored principal stairhall, replacing an earlier stairhall lost during William Robertson's transformation of the central block. Exhibiting a robust Baronial theme, the space is dominated by a commanding mahogany staircase executed by the appropriately-named Banister brothers who had a workshop in The Parade in the nineteenth century.



(fig. 119)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

A view of the library and drawing room as restored in 1990-4 to the original 1830s splendour. Using surviving fragments along with archival documentation and photography, including the Lawrence Collection (1880-1900), all of the features, from book cases to wall hangings and from carpets to pelmets, were faithfully reproduced where the original version was no longer useable.

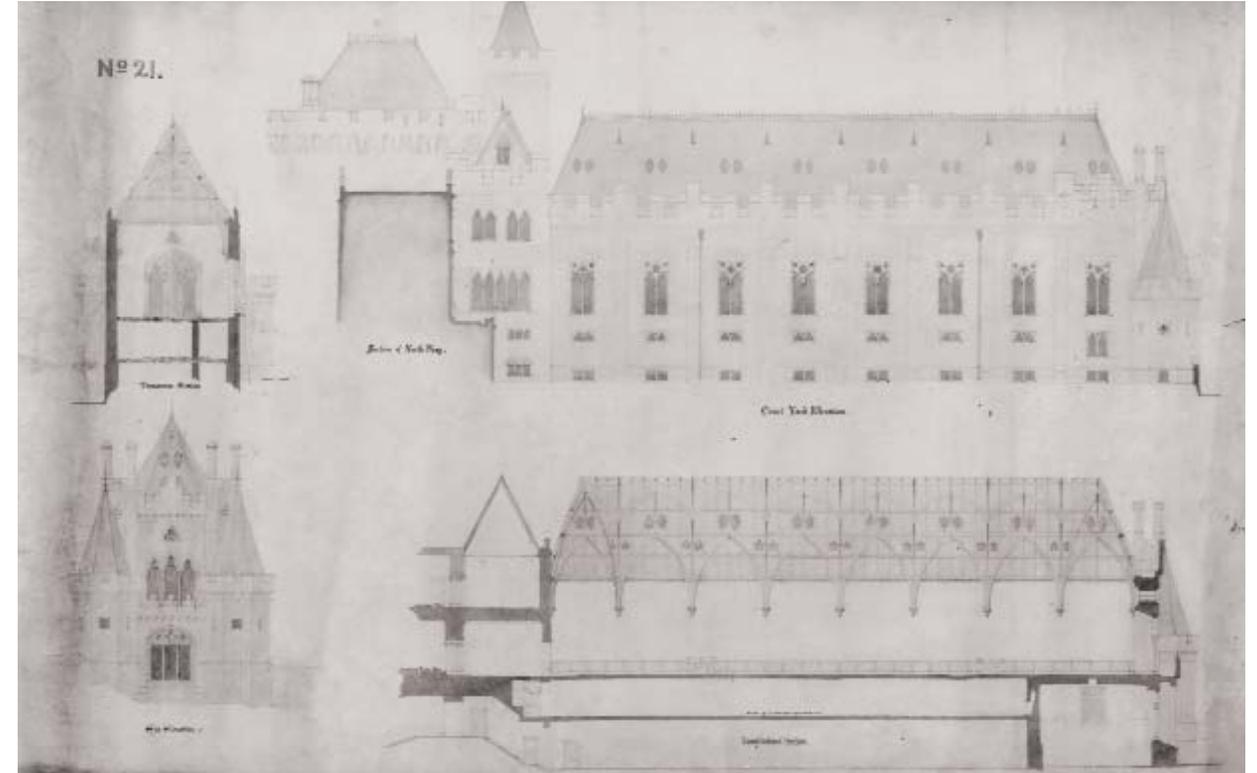


(fig. 120)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

The Blue Bedroom is one of many restored by the Office of Public Works since 1969. The wall covering, reproduced from an original fragment, is reminiscent of William Morris's (1834-96) 'Larkspur' pattern (1872).

(fig. 121)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

A detail of the handpainted wallpaper (1760-80) imported from China to decorate the Breakfast Room expresses an interest in Chinoiserie that was arguably to reach a pinnacle with John Nash's (1752-1835) Royal Pavilion, Brighton (1815-23). Having been damaged by rot and damp, the room was restored in the early 1990s. Salvaged sections of the paper were reinstated, with the remainder of the garden-and-wildlife scheme reproduced by Niamh Lawlor as a 'ghost image' based on archival imagery.



(fig. 122)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

By the 1850s William Robertson's Picture Gallery was described as 'in a bad state of repair', necessitating a programme of work instigated by John Butler (1808-54), 2nd Marquess of Ormonde, and executed following his death by his widow, Frances Jane Butler (née Paget) (1817-1903). As a niece of the Marquess of Anglesey who was in partnership with Lord Dinorben, it has been suggested that Frances was familiar with the work

of Sir Thomas Newenham Dean (1832-99) and Benjamin Woodward (1816-61) at the Dinorben home, Llys Dulas (1856-8; demolished 1975/6), in Wales. A longitudinal section drawing outlining an initial scheme of alterations for the River Wing and Picture Gallery suggests that Robertson's fenestration pattern was to be retained, while a steeply-pitched French chateau roof was to feature paired star-like skylights. Although these openings were cut into the roof timbers, the lights were never fully realised.

Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive.



(fig. 123)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

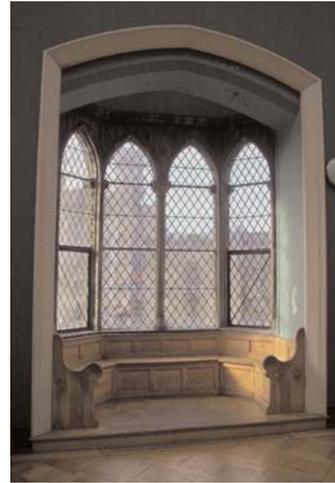
A view of the River Wing as altered by Deane and Woodward from 1858 to 1862. Superseding an earlier counterpart by William Robertson, the new wing included a reduction in the number of windows, the introduction of elegant stepped buttresses,

and the addition of a top-lit pitched roof behind partly-raised battlements. It has been suggested that Robertson's almost-flat lead roofs may have leaked and rotted the supporting structure, thereby accounting for the short period between alterations. A similar fate reputedly befell the architect's contemporary (c.1825-50) scheme at Jenkinstown House.



(fig. 124)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

A view of the Picture Gallery as restored by the Office of Public Works from 1969-76. At the far end the Early English triple lancet window, introduced by Deane and Woodward, replaced the perpendicular Gothic light of William Robertson's scheme.



(fig. 125)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

A view of one of the oriel windows introduced by Deane and Woodward incorporating a pretty diamond-lead glazing pattern, the early glass producing an appealing shimmering effect as the viewer looks out across the castle courtyard. Each window was fitted with a carved window seat covered with Spanish leather.

(fig. 126)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

A view of the Carrara marble chimneypiece carved by Charles William Harrison (c.1835-1903) incorporating six panels depicting episodes from the Butler family history from 1395 to 1661, and centred on a seventh panel bearing the family coat of arms.

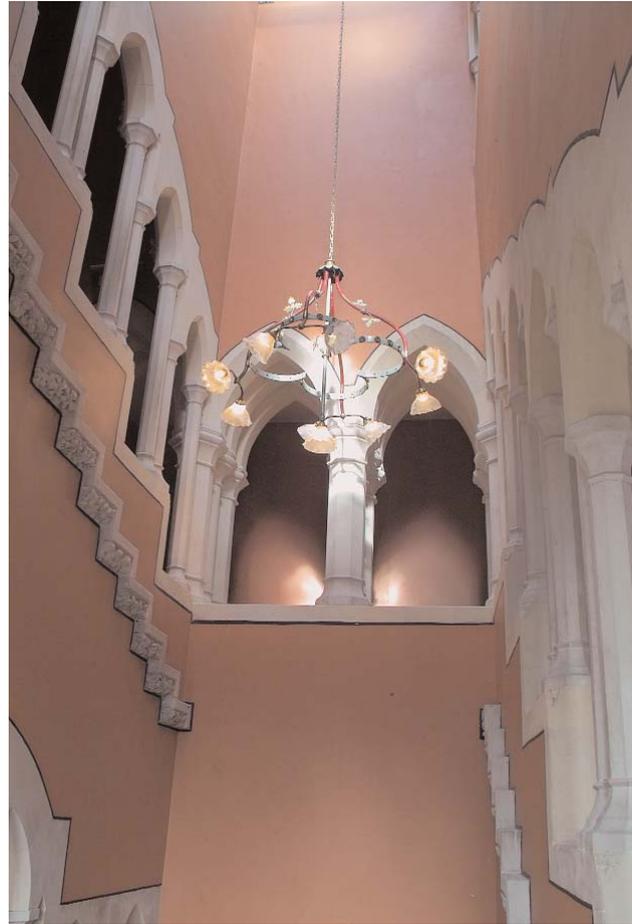


(fig. 127)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

A section of the hammer-beam roof illustrates the repetitive pattern painted in 1861-23 by John Hungerford Pollen (1820-1902), favoured artistic collaborator of Deane and Woodward. The pattern shows a woodland undergrowth

supporting almost leafless trees, birds in flight against an ochre background, and undulating red lines evocative of distant hills. The open roof structure is supported on thirty-two decorative Portland stone corbels attributed to the O'Shea brothers, each hammer-beam terminating in a gilded carved animal mask.





(fig. 128)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

A view of the top-lit arcaded Moorish stairhall designed by Deane and Woodward to allow access to the newly-altered Picture Gallery shows an interest in the effects of

top lighting, possibly spurred by the Great Exhibition of 1851 at the Crystal Palace. In appearance, if not in scale, the stairhall has been compared with the now-lost contemporary hall (begun 1858-61; destroyed 1971) at the Kildare Street Club, Dublin.



(fig. 129)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

One of the innumerable animals in Caen stone which provide light relief in the stairhall scheme. Along with the decorative detailing in the Picture Gallery, carved ornamentation such as this bears witness to the considerable talents of the sculptors Charles William Harrison and the O'Shea brothers, regular collaborators with Deane and Woodward.



(fig. 130)
KILKENNY CASTLE
The Parade,
Kilkenny

Having fallen into disrepair by the time the castle was given to the State in 1967-9, the south tower was redeveloped as a conference centre in 1998-9 by the Office of Public Works, juxtaposing a modern scheme with the historic fabric of the castle. As the Great Council Chamber, it was in this tower that the Confederate Parliament sat in the seventeenth century.



(fig. 131)
BROWNSBARN HOUSE
Brownsbarn
(1856-63)

Regarded as one of the most colourful of the houses built by Deane and Woodward, a shooting lodge or 'vacation house' built for William McDougall JP (c.1810-95) incorporates horizontal bands of silver-grey granite with red sandstone producing a distinctive polychromatic visual effect. The house has been compared with a contemporary (1865) scheme by the partnership at Turlough Park House, Turlough, County Mayo.

Robertson's somewhat sober gallery at Kilkenny Castle was enlivened (1858-62) by Benjamin Woodward (1816-61) and Thomas Newenham Deane (1832-99) who added a top-lit timber roof embellished, somewhat idiosyncratically, by John Hungerford Pollen (1820-1902) (figs. 122-127). Their arcaded staircase (figs. 128-129) evokes the Venetian Gothic taste of their contemporary work in Dublin, and at Brownsbarn House (1856-63), near Thomastown. Brownsbarn, a house unlike any other in Kilkenny, shows extensive use of polychrome (bands of different coloured stone) and details such as the diminutive balcony ornamented with quatrefoils, indicating the influence of the eminent architectural theorist John Ruskin (1819-1900) (figs. 131-132).



(fig. 132)
BROWNSBARN HOUSE
Brownsbarn

Carved dressings, including a balconette in limestone with Caen stone panels, complement the multi-hued scheme at Brownsbarn. Below, a porch incorporates grey marble, pink marble, and limestone accents. A gateway incorporating polygonal-cut granite and sandstone continues the polychrome theme throughout the grounds.



(fig. 133)
KNOCKTOPHER ABBEY
Knocktopher
(1866)

An imposing country mansion, built for the Langrishe family to designs prepared by John McCurdy (1823-85) in a dramatic Gothic style, features an elegant entrance tower with French mansard roof as a focal point. A pre 1840 wing, an element of an earlier house, projects proudly forward from the entrance front.



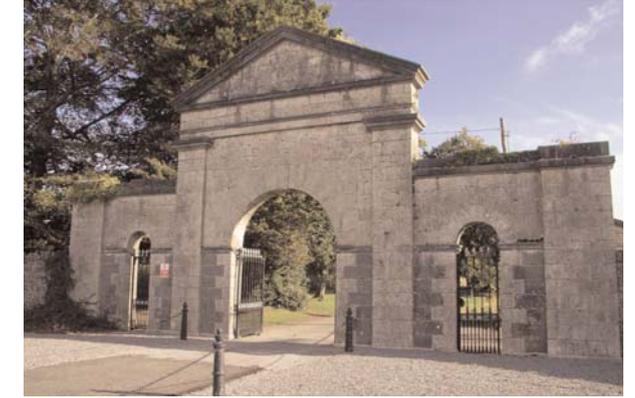
(fig. 134)
KNOCKTOPHER ABBEY
Knocktopher

A view of the garden front clearly illustrates the medieval provenance of the house with a wing featuring stout chimney stacks terminating in a sixteenth-century tower. The remains of a medieval undercroft (1356) reputedly survive in the basement as a final fragment of the first Carmelite settlement in Ireland.



(fig. 135)
CASTLECOMER HOUSE
Athy Road,
Castlecomer
(gateway c.1850; gate
lodge c.1900)

Although the main house was lost in stages over the course of the twentieth century, associated artefacts at the perimeter of the grounds survive as a reminder of the extent of the once-illustrious Castlecomer Estate. An elegant gate screen in granite ashlar and early iron forms an appealing ensemble with a later gate lodge, which expresses a distinctive Tudor-meets-Arts-and-Crafts ambience.



(fig. 136)
SWIFTH'S HEATH
HOUSE
Swifts Heath
(1874)

An elegant Triumphal gateway completed to a scheme by Joseph Maguire (fl. 1860-74) reveals a sparse quality, a refreshing foil to the ornamental excess of the nearby house.

Comparably, the sculptural planning evident at Knocktopher Abbey (1866), Knocktopher, betrays the more confident handling of Gothic forms and motifs that had developed by mid century (figs. 133-134). The house was designed by John McCurdy (1823/4-85) to incorporate a fragment of the earliest Carmelite friary in Ireland (established 1356), retaining its lively roof profile and varied groupings of windows.

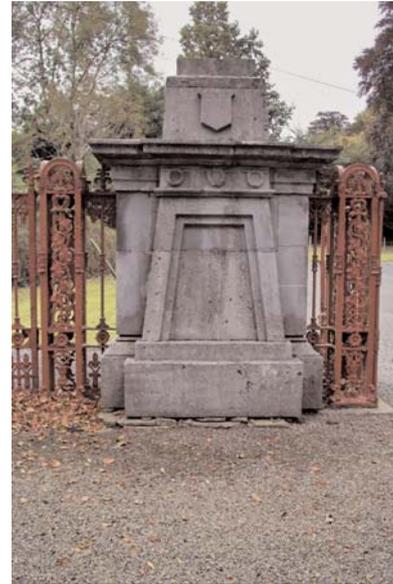
Not infrequently, as at Castlecomer House (c.1750; demolished post 1965), gates (c.1850)

and possibly a gate lodge (c.1900), are all that survive of former grand estates (fig. 135). They acted as a foretaste to the visual impact of a designed landscape and the 'great' house itself. Most lodges were simple in keeping with their prosaic function, as at Swift's Heath (c.1850). The adjoining gateway (1874) accredited to Joseph Maguire (fl. 1860-74) is more impressive than the lodge, taking the form of a triumphal arch parged of columns with a pedimented centrepiece (fig. 136).



(fig. 137)
CASTLE MORRES
HOUSE
Castlemorris
(c.1850)

An attractive gate lodge displays an individual character: a Gothic-detailed dormer attic was added to the otherwise Classical temple-like composition at the turn of the twentieth century. Following the loss of the main house after 1973, the gate lodge survives as a reminder of a once-prosperous country house estate.



(fig. 138)
CASTLE MORRES
HOUSE
Castlemorris
(c.1850)

A detail of the ornamental gate screen features Egyptian or Greek Revival qualities together with decorative cast-iron work, recalling a contemporary (c.1850) composition that originally allowed access to the Castleboro Estate in neighbouring County Wexford.



(fig. 139)
SHANKILL CASTLE
Paulstown or Whitehall
(Shankill)
(c.1825 and pre 1840)

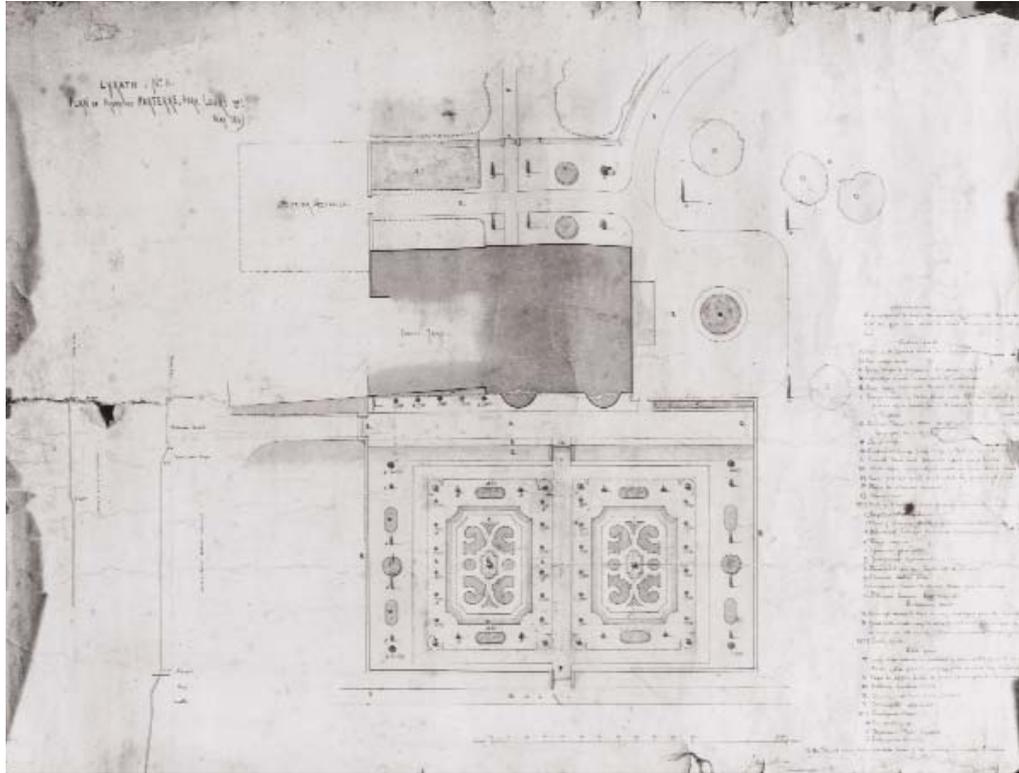
At the entrance to the Shankill Castle estate a gate screen makes a Romantic landmark in the landscape, with a Georgian Gothic gateway by William Robertson (1770-1850) incorporating a later archaeologically-grounded turret by Daniel Robertson (fl. 1812-49) to picturesque effect.



(fig. 140)
SHANKILL CASTLE
Paulstown or Whitehall
(Shankill)

Exuding a monochromatic palette of Kilkenny limestone, the turret is enlivened by dressings in a silver-grey local granite including a battlemented oriel window, representing a 'hallmark' feature recurring in the oeuvre of Daniel Robertson. The contemporary stable building (1834) at Blanchville House is a further example.

Other lodges were more dramatic, like the Greek Temple (c.1850) at Castle Morres, Castlemorris near Kilmaganny (figs. 137-138). Still others assumed a flair and imagination not realised in the main residence, as in the lodge (pre 1840; originally c.1825) at Shankill Castle attributed to Daniel Robertson (fl. 1812-49) and akin to his work at Dunleckney Manor (1835-40), in nearby County Carlow (figs. 139-140).



**LYRATH HOUSE
(LEYRATH HOUSE)**
Lyrath
(1863)

An annotated design for the forecourt and parterre at Lyrath House or Leyrath House, dated May 1863, is variously attributed to James Howe (fl. c.1860-3), Ninian Niven (c.1799-1879), or William Eden Nesfield (1835-88). Although much of the planting has since been lost, the terraces and sunken gardens survive to the present day.

Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive



(fig. 141)
WOODSTOCK HOUSE
Inistioge
(c.1875)

A head gardener's house shows a pronounced Tudor quality, recalling the output of Daniel Robertson.



(fig. 142)
BLANCHVILLE HOUSE
Blanchville Demesne
(1846-7)

A stable building in a handsome Tudor Revival style, attributed to Daniel Robertson, shares stylistic similarities with a number of the smaller country houses designed by the architect in County Carlow. These include Ballydarton House (1833-4) Ballydarton Demesne; Castletown House (1835-6), Castletown; and Mount Leinster Lodge (1836), Raheenkyle. A battlemented oriel window echoes a similar feature in Robertson's scheme at Shankill Castle.

The gardener's house (c.1875) at Woodstock, Inistioge (*fig. 141*), very much suggests the influence of Daniel Robertson, as do the stables (1834) at Blanchville House (*fig. 142*). They are finely detailed with a use of granite and limestone and employ details of the Tudor Revival style, which he favoured for his country houses.

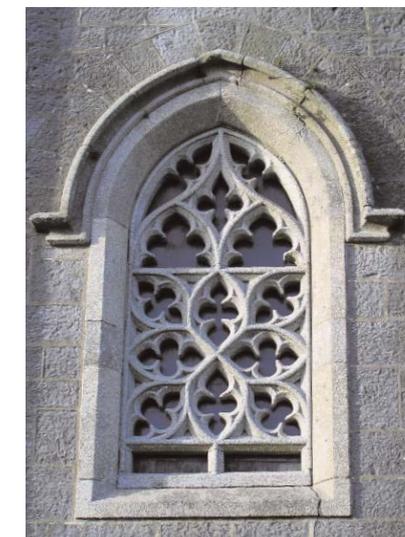
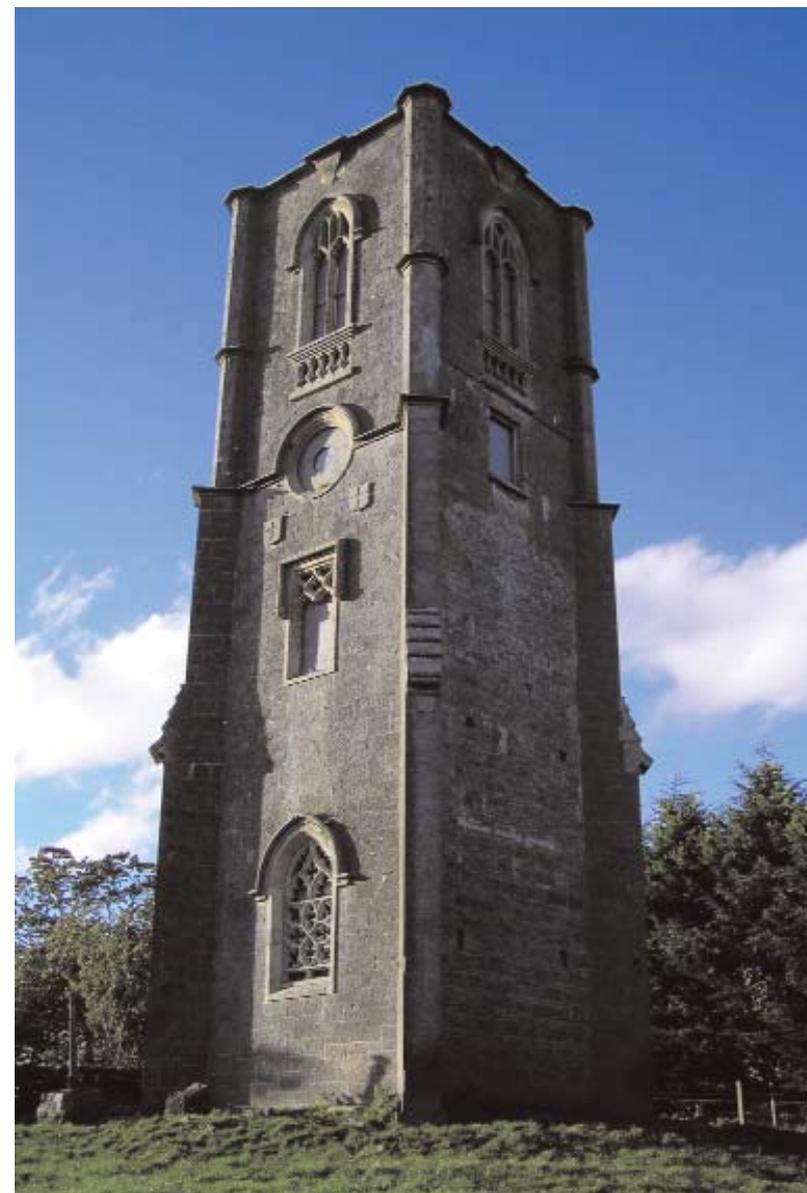
Robertson is also associated with a tower (1834/47) at Blanchville, which subscribes to the Classical taste expressed in the main house in the disposition of its elements, such as the central placed doorway, but is dressed with details recalling the Tudor Revival style (*figs. 143-145*). In a project such as this tower,

essentially a folly, he revealed a theatrical sensibility and an awareness of the dramatic potential of composition and mass. It is known that the owner of Blanchville House maintained a small pipe organ in the house and one may imagine the effect of organ music and a dramatically silhouetted Gothic tower on a moonlit night! In spite of the inherently idiosyncratic nature of such work Robertson spared no attention to detail, which is in places complex,

as in the ground register traceried window. Elements such as the blank elevation on the eastern side suggest the effect of the tower forming at one time part of a complex of buildings; an artful conceit rather than an archaeological fact. It is indicated as a clock tower on the 1900 Ordnance Survey and is known to have had a set of bells, sold to the Augustinians in Limerick in 1930.

(fig. 143)
BLANCHVILLE HOUSE
Blanchville Demesne

A landscape view of the Blanchville House estate illustrates the relationship between the Classical-style house and the Romantic Gothic-style bell tower.



(fig. 144)
BLANCHVILLE HOUSE
Blanchville Demesne
(1834/47)

Rising majestically above the surrounding landscape, the bell tower built to designs by Daniel Robertson reputedly cites Sir Christopher Wren's (1632-1723) Saint Mary's Church (1670), Aldermanbury, as a point of reference. Deliberate discrepancies in the stone work of one elevation, suggesting the outline of a 'now-lost' nave, indicate a playful architectural chicanery rare in the built heritage of County Kilkenny.

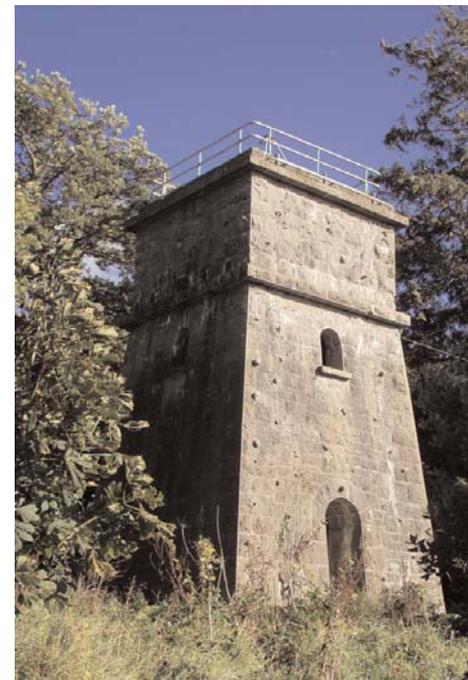
(fig. 145)
BLANCHVILLE HOUSE
Blanchville Demesne

A detail of the decorative panels shows particularly fine stone masonry in the notoriously resistant local granite. The tower is presently (2005-6) undergoing restoration following a grant from the Heritage Council.

The Twentieth Century

The twentieth century opened with what might appear as relative confidence, with Kilkenny part of a powerful United Kingdom and Empire, but beneath the air of Edwardian calm lurked demands for social and political change. The wider Europe of the period prior to World War I (1914-8) has been defined as one part paranoia and two parts impatience. The clouds of war and revolution were to change Europe irrevocably. With the collapse of the ruling order and the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1921-2, Ireland was no different. The change however had limited consequences for architecture. Commercial and ecclesiastical agencies, for example, continued more or less as before. Change, where change occurred, often amounted to little more than the repainting of cast-iron post boxes, and

Kilkenny is fortunate in retaining a selection of these from the reigns of Queen Victoria (1837-1901), King Edward VII (1901-10), and King George V (1910-36), as well as those introduced in the early years of the new state. Taken as a whole, the county has a poor legacy of twentieth-century architecture. Even where fine buildings survive, they are frequently in styles derived from the efforts of previous generations. Architectural Modernism was in short supply and it is only occasionally, especially in buildings like cinemas or garages with no previous parallels, that one can discern the spirit of a new age. The massive concrete forms of once common handball alleys, now largely neglected, assumed a bold sculptural quality and, in their own way, were suggestive of a rude, almost primitive, Modernism.



ARCHERSGROVE HOUSE
Bennettsbridge Road,
Kilkenny
(c.1900)

Although primarily intended to fulfil a functional purpose as a water supply system for the nearby Archersgrove House, a tower built with reference to medieval archaeology serves a secondary role as an eye-catcher, enhancing the designed landscape of the grounds.

The transfer of State responsibility from one administration to another in the 1920s was reasonably smooth, although an increasingly strained economic environment put paid to any overly ambitious architectural plans. Expenditure was limited to refurbishment of former RIC barracks, such as those in Castlecomer (1924) and Callan (1926), and from the late 1920s there were bursts of initiatives in the provision of new Garda Síochána stations and national schools. The station (1939) at Inistioge was erected to a standardised design prepared by the Office of Public Works and followed a symmetrical planning arrangement with the use of sash windows being the most decorative feature of the façade (*fig. 146*). Likewise, the larger Dominic Street Garda Síochána Station (1942), Kilkenny, is not dissimilar to Harcourt Terrace Station (1946), Dublin.

(*fig. 146*)
INISTIOGE GARDA
SÍOCHÁNA STATION
Inistioge
(1939)

A modest-scale rural station, built to a standard plan by the Office of Public Works, exhibits a rather conservative Classical quality for the period with the stepped doorcases and the horizontal bias of the glazing pattern representing the sole allusions to contemporary Modern styles.



Schools were one of the foremost building projects, over many years, by the Office of Public Works, and increasingly came to acknowledge changes in concepts of education. Gradually, Kilkenny built up a complement of school buildings. Most followed a recognisable aesthetic, with simple clear lines, large windows and a disposition of elements that reflected the gender division favoured by contemporary teaching practice: boys on one side and girls on the other. Many aimed to provide a suitable environment in which to teach, and there was an increasing emphasis on fresh air and light-filled classrooms. The old national school (1900) at Gowran survives with its clear delineation of the boys' room and the girls' room: five bays to the left and five bays to the right. Close by stands a now multicoloured 'shelter' that, in its simple concrete form with flat roof, was as near to Architectural Modernism as much of rural Ireland came for many decades. The old national school (1915), Clogh, externally retains the massing of its original use: a central entrance block with projecting wings built to house boys and girls schools respectively. Since 1999 it has functioned as a local Family Resource Centre. A later example, the national school at Ballyfasy Lower (1958) is a good example of the type: it is both modern in construction and form and yet, through a combination of elements including simple elevations and detailing, remains almost traditional in character.

The drive towards enhanced education provision supported the growth of public libraries, although few had a distinctive architectural form. Carnegie Free Libraries were an exception and many were erected across Ireland thanks to

the munificence of the Scots-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919). The Carnegie Free Library (opened 1910), John's Quay, Kilkenny, was designed by E. Stewart-Lowrey (*fl.* 1910) and Son in association with Tyars and Jago (*fig. 147*). Its functional planning reflects Carnegie's own strict prescriptions on how a library should be disposed; the river-front elevation is a simple but evocative feature in the townscape. However, its distinctive small belvedere-like cupola, which adds a sense of metropolitan flair to this stretch of the river, is an embellishment that would not have met with Carnegie's own matter-of-fact approach to architecture. The appearance of cut limestone is misleading as the effect is achieved through the use of concrete blocks, itself a significant achievement. Some years later O'Connell's (1925), Upper Main Street, Graiguenamanagh, a commercial and residential building, similarly used rusticated concrete to suggest the effect of local limestone (*fig. 148*).

With the competition from road transport a distant threat, railways were secure in new developments and the upgrading of existing facilities. The Barrow Railway Viaduct (opened 1906) at Garranbehy Big carried the New Ross branch extension of the Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford Railway (DWWR) line over the River Barrow and was a strictly utilitarian structure of massive steel members, industrial in scale and execution, in the midst of a sylvan setting. Castlecomer Railway Station (1918) opened at the end of the war as a colliery line supporting the local coal works. Roads continued to be improved and, as the century progressed, came to replace railways as the preferred mode of transport. The complete reconstruction of Saint



(*fig. 147*)
KILKENNY CITY
CARNEGIE FREE
LIBRARY
John's Quay,
Kilkenny
(opened 1910)

A modest-scale library built to a symmetrical plan centred on a bowed Doric portico surmounted by a distinctive open cupola or turret. Constructed on a site donated by Ellen Odett

Desart (1857-1933), 4th Countess of Desart, the library originally featured timber fittings manufactured by the Kilkenny Woodworkers Company (removed pre 1996).

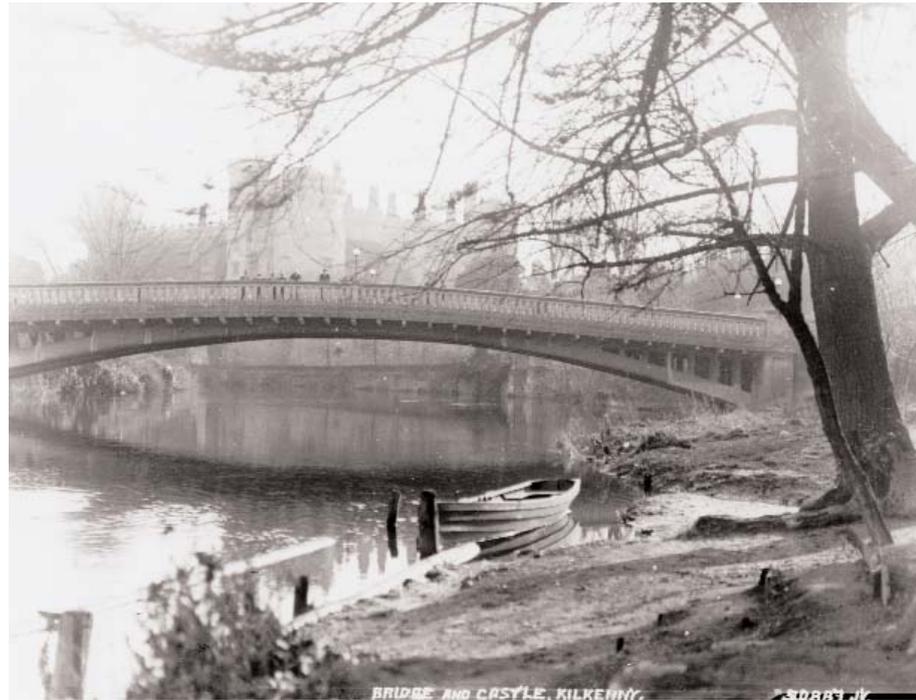


(*fig. 148*)
O'CONNELL
Upper Main Street,
Graiguenamanagh
(1925)

A detail of the façade at O'Connell exhibiting an exposed concrete block construction with a diamond-pointed rusticated treatment continuing the long-established tradition particular to Graiguenamanagh of decorative surface detailing.

John's Bridge (1910), Kilkenny, was in its own way of some significance (fig. 149). It replaced the old three-arch masonry bridge (1765-72) and, at its completion, formed the largest single arch reinforced concrete (then referred to as ferro-concrete) bridge in the United Kingdom. It was designed by Mouchel and Partners of London together with Alexander Burden (1864-1923), the County Surveyor. It was extensively altered and strengthened in 1969-70. The arrival of motor transport not only challenged

the limits of existing bridge and road networks, but also created a whole new building type: the garage. Until the comparatively recent advent of branded 'filling stations', such garages were a distinctive feature of most Irish towns and managed to combine a hint of bold modernity with the simplicity of vernacular traditions. The Callan Motor Garage (c.1950) survives in Lower Green Lane or Fair Green Lane, retaining the characteristic simple lines of the type combined with distinctive lettering (fig. 150).



(fig. 149)
SAINT JOHN'S BRIDGE
Kilkenny
(1910)

A photograph from the Valentine Collection (1930-50) of Saint John's Bridge, its functional aesthetic in marked contrast to Kilkenny Castle, visible overlooking the River Nore in the near distance. At the time of construction the bridge was the longest single span reinforced concrete (then ferro-concrete) road bridge in the British Isles.

Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.



(fig. 150)
CALLAN MOTOR
GARAGE
Lower Green Lane
(Fair Green Lane),
Callan
(c.1950)

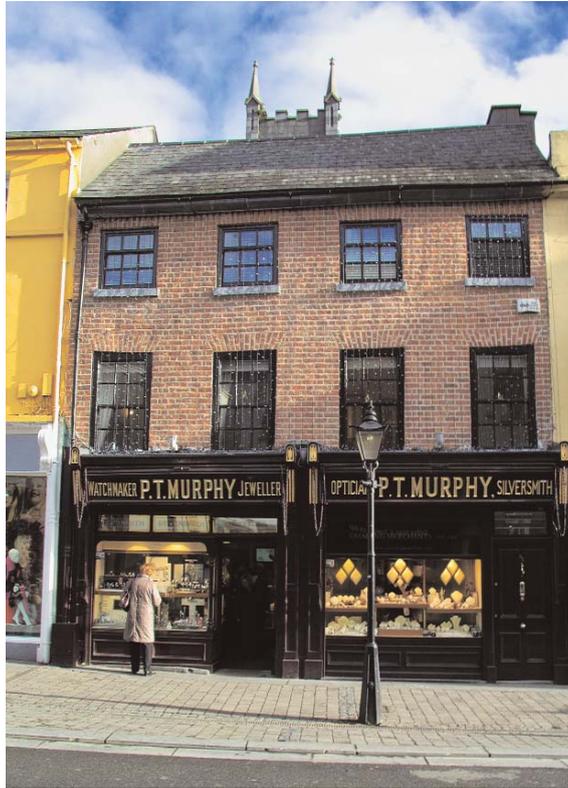
Reputedly having origins in an omnibus depot, a small-scale garage exhibits a sparse aesthetic redolent of the 1950s, the slight profiling above the doors and the raised lettering the only apparent concessions to architectural expression.

Commercial premises, pubs and shops, continued to follow by now traditional lines, and changes occurred only incrementally. Some premises assumed a markedly urban feel in terms of composition and materials. The red brick J.R. Anthony (c.1900), Main Street, Piltown, has a quality more akin to a Dublin suburb like Rathmines than a small rural community. At the date of its erection it must have been 'the talk of the place!' (fig. 151).



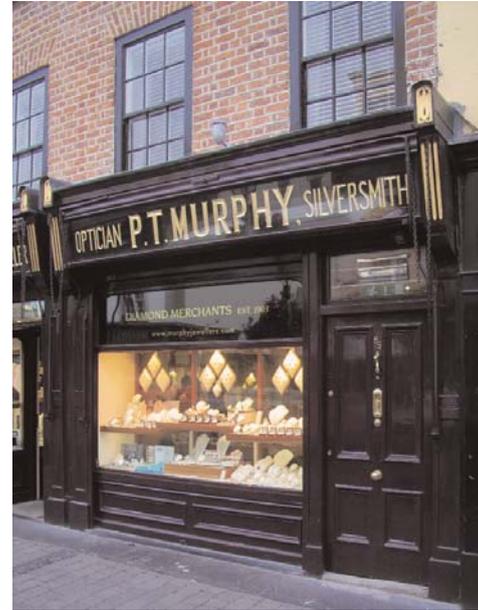
(fig. 151)
J.R. ANTHONY
Main Street,
Piltown
(c.1900)

A striking composition, befitting a larger urban centre than Piltown, is identified by its construction in red brick with cut-limestone dressings and produces a visual effect characteristic of the late Victorian or Edwardian periods. A Classical shopfront, once again featuring carved limestone, retains the inscribed nameplate of a now-lost enterprise.



(fig. 152)
P.T. MURPHY
84-85 High Street,
Kilkenny
(house c.1725;
shopfronts 1903 and
post 1903)

P.T. Murphy has recently (2004-5) undergone a successful restoration programme including the repair of the original brick work, damaged at one time by a hard cement render, together with the reinstatement of traditional sash windows where the original predecessors were long lost.



(fig. 153)
P.T. MURPHY
84-85 High Street,
Kilkenny

The last surviving frontage in Kilkenny City that can be attributed with certainty to the Kilkenny Woodworkers' Company, the shopfront's distinctive design features include the clever incorporation of the awning box into the cornice over the fascia. A slightly later frontage by a now-unknown craftsman replicated many of the design elements to produce an appealing ensemble at street level.

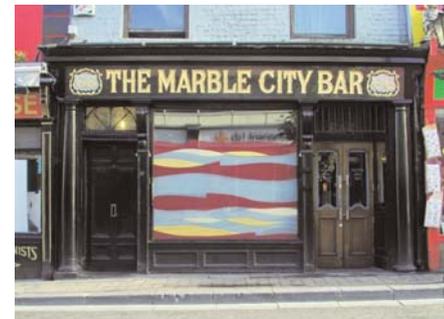
(fig. 154)
P.T. MURPHY
84-85 High Street,
Kilkenny

A very discrete inscription records the place of manufacture of the shopfront as 'The Kilkenny Woodworkers, Kilkenny'.



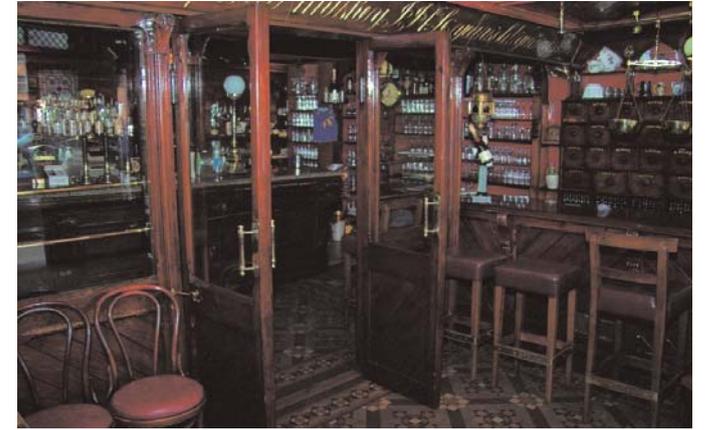
(fig. 155)
TYNAN'S BRIDGE
HOUSE
2 John's Bridge
(The Horseleap Slip),
Kilkenny
(house c.1800;
pubfront 1908)

A reasonably plain modest-scale Classically-detailed house is enlivened by a traditional Irish pubfront featuring a glazed fascia over gilded lettering, together with delicate iron cresting.



(fig. 157)
THE MARBLE CITY BAR
64 High Street,
Kilkenny
(house c.1775;
pubfront 1908)

The famous public house features in innumerable postcards sent throughout the world, thereby potentially rivaling Kilkenny Castle or Saint Canice's Cathedral in terms of international recognition status. Although the equally-renowned early commercial interior has been replaced, the pubfront continues to make an important contribution to an historic streetscape.



(fig. 156)
TYNAN'S BRIDGE
HOUSE
2 John's Bridge
(The Horseleap Slip),
Kilkenny

An early twentieth-century commercial interior survives remarkably intact with decorative tiled floors, glazed timber screens incorporating pretty colonettes, and timber panelled counters all contributing to the historic character of the site. Of additional interest, the grain or spice drawers refer back to a period when many public houses also operated as a grocery outlet.

The Kilkenny Woodworkers were responsible for a number of distinguished fronts, among them P.T. Murphy (house c.1725; shopfront 1903) on the High Street, Kilkenny (figs. 152-154). Other fronts from this period include Tynan's Bridge House (house c.1800; pubfront 1908) (figs. 155-156) and the now altered Marble City Bar (house c.1775; pubfront 1908) (fig. 157), both in Kilkenny. The painted tiles

LENEHAN
10 Castlecomer New Road/
Barrack Street,
Kilkenny
(c.1900)

A well-preserved house accommodates a commercial space with an enriched pubfront making a pretty impression in the street. An original interior scheme survives similarly intact; display shelving incorporates panelled pilasters supporting a frieze and moulded cornice.



(fig. 158)
KEOGH'S MODEL BAKERY
Lower Bridge Street,
Callan
(c.1900)

Maximising on the position adjacent to a flour or corn mill indicated on early editions of the Ordnance Survey, an appealing composition accommodates commercial and residential spaces in an integrated scheme. The building is identified at street level by a particularly fine tile and timber shopfront supplied by the Brilliant Sign Company of England.

(fig. 159)
KEOGH'S MODEL BAKERY
Lower Bridge Street,
Callan

A detail of the shopfront displays the decorative glazed tile work featuring panels with sheaves of wheat which express, in pictorial form, the nature of the business carried out within.



D. MURPHY
Low Street,
Thomastown
(house c.1825;
shopfront post 1904)

In Thomastown, decorative panels, including faience tiles featuring a floral theme, embellish a shopfront dating from the Edwardian period.

of Keogh's Model Bakery (c.1900), Lower Bridge Street, Callan, add a splash of colour to the streetscape (figs. 158-159). Meanwhile, the well-established tradition of banks that employed a demonstrative architectural street frontage continued. The Hibernian Bank (originally 1865), Patrick Street Lower, Kilkenny, was enlarged and re-fronted (1904) to designs by William Henry Byrne: the bank now operates as The Hibernian Hotel. The Ulster Bank (1914) on nearby High Street dates from the outbreak of World War I and retains an element of the ebullience characteristic of that age; the old counters in the bank are a welcome retention of some of its original interior (fig. 160). As the decades move on, one can trace how the 'Classical' elements become more vestigial, linking with the past perhaps but also, if not quite engaging with Modernism, acknowledging the more slim-line architectural styles of international trends. The AIB Bank (1921-2) on High Street, Kilkenny, exemplifies this tradition: it echoes the limestone fronts of nearby banks, yet is assuredly of its age, with Classical detailing applied sparingly and suggestive of flair rather than detailed architectural correctness. This trend became more widespread and at the later AIB Bank (c.1925), Main Street, Urlingford, brick and decorative stonework are combined in a composition that retains elements of Classicism but verges on a more utilitarian approach to architecture.

New modes of entertainment that opened up social opportunities in communities large and small included the emergence of dance halls and cinemas. Historically, Kilkenny had a small-scale public theatre tradition but this had waned in the nineteenth century. The tradition of patronage fostered by Lady Ellen Odette Desart (1857-1933) and her brother-in-law, Captain Cuffe (1853-1912), encouraged the opening of the Kilkenny Theatre (1902), on Patrick Street Lower, which continued in operation until the early 1960s. The surviving façade reveals an understated quality common to theatres across the United Kingdom until the 1900s: giant Corinthian stucco pilasters frame the façade and support a playful entablature surmounted by a balustrade. The Watergate Cinema (pre 1945), on Parliament Street, now a theatre, retains some of the characteristics of a mid-century cinema. Its plan was functional: in common with most cinemas worldwide, and unlike earlier theatres, it allowed for a wonderland on the screen rather than in the auditorium and placed the emphasis on the single direction focus of the screen. Nonetheless there were touches of Art-Deco inspired décor both on the interior and the exterior which, coupled with the now obliterated original lighting, suggested a hint of old Hollywood glamour in the midst of the city.

Ó'RIADA
25 Parliament Street,
Kilkenny
(house c.1825;
pubfront c.1900)

A traditional Irish pubfront exhibiting Classical references in the disposition of the pilasters, the fascia or frieze, and the simple cornice. Ó' Riada represents one of a small number of public houses in Kilkenny City retaining early commercial interior schemes.



OXFAM/JOHN GUNN
48 High Street,
Kilkenny
(house c.1825;
shopfront 1908)

A narrow early nineteenth-century house features a subtle Classical theme identified by moulded architraves to the window openings and piers incorporating vermiculated panels. A pretty shopfront, making a pleasing visual impression in the streetscape, incorporates a decorative mosaic recording the original enterprise as 'The Grocery Hall'.



OXFAM/JOHN GUNN
48 High Street,
Kilkenny

A distinctive bipartite or two-part window arrangement was commonly referred to as the 'Kilkenny Window', due to its once ubiquitous presence in the city. The attractive visual effect is often easily lost when inappropriate replacement fittings are introduced.

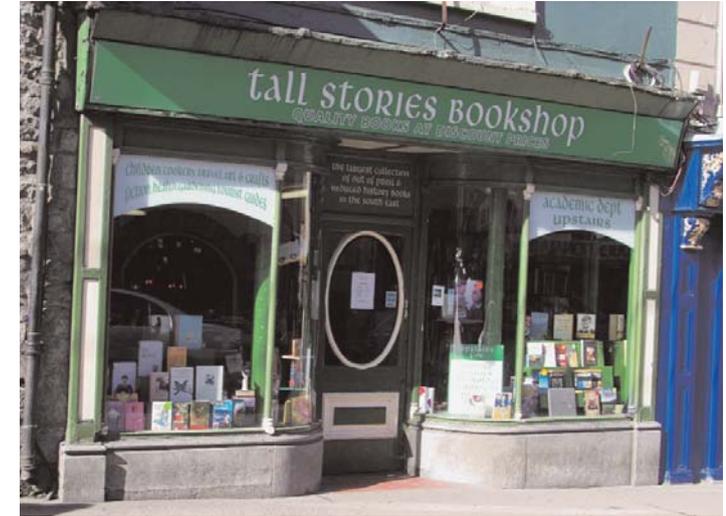


TALL STORIES
27 Rose Inn Street,
Kilkenny
(house c.1825;
shopfront c.1900)

A Classically-composed early nineteenth-century house incorporates a distinctive Wyatt-style tripartite window producing an elegant architectural design aesthetic. The comparatively primitive Shee Almshouse built by Richard Shee (c.1550-1608) in 1582 was restored as a tourist office in 1981, and contributes to the diverse streetscape quality in Rose Inn Street.

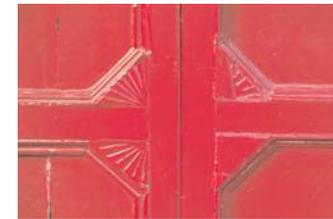
TALL STORIES
27 Rose Inn Street,
Kilkenny

An elegant shopfront of the late Victorian or early Edwardian period is built to a symmetrical plan; bowed windows centre on a door continuing the curved theme through the use of an oval centrepiece. Meanwhile, the decorative quality of the delicate colonette mullions contrasts with the functionally structural nature of the cast-iron pillars behind.



J. O'REILLY
Market Street/
Marsh's Street,
Thomastown
(house c.1775;
shopfront pre 1904)

An early shopfront belonging to a design group particular to Thomastown features a fascia with scroll ends and a moulded cornice on decorative diminutive dentils. Although a small number of the type survives to the present day, J. O'Reilly remains as the best preserved, retaining the small-pane glazing pattern together with increasingly rare protective shutters.



J. O'REILLY
Market Street/
Marsh's Street,
Thomastown

A detail of the protective timber shutters reveals a thorough approach to design, the inscribed fan-like detailing to the spandrels softening a geometric pattern.



BUTLER
The Rower
(post 1925)

A range redeveloped following destruction by the Black-and-Tans during 'The Troubles' (1921-5) incorporates commercial and residential accommodation. The scheme features a projecting porch merging with a Classical-style shopfront, oculi, and attractive glazing patterns in an aesthetically-pleasing composition.

E. POWER
Kilmacoliver,
Tullahought
(house c.1825;
shopfront c.1900)

A well-preserved house gives evidence of the alteration works carried out to accommodate a part-commercial use, including an additional block surviving from the period when a post office operated on site.

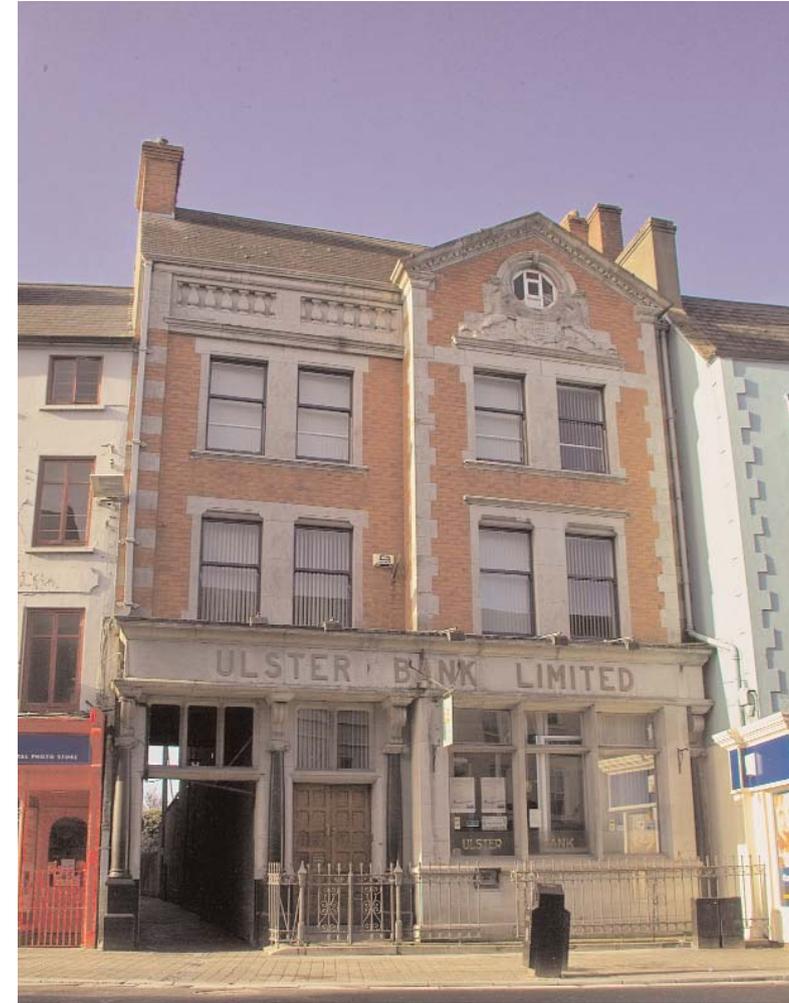


JOHN DELANEY
Baunreagh
(c.1900)

A modest range in an isolated rural outpost has a somewhat formal composition, accommodating commercial and residential spaces in an integrated design. A Classical shopfront features a glazed fascia and identifies the premises as a combined public house and grocery in the traditional Irish manner.

E. POWER
Kilmacoliver,
Tullahought

An illustration of the shopfront (c.1900) retaining increasingly rare attributes including timber boarded protective panels or shutters, raised lettering, and vermiculated panels on the projecting segmental consoles.



(fig. 160)
ULSTER BANK
27 High Street,
Kilkenny
(1914)

An early twentieth-century bank makes a strong statement in High Street on account of the lively visual effect produced by the construction in red brick with County Kilkenny limestone dressings: an intricately carved cartouche exhibits the high standard of stone masonry associated with the county. Meanwhile, the surviving remnants of the original interior scheme include timber panelled counters.

(fig. 161)
8-10 TALBOT'S INCH
VILLAGE
(1896-9)

A terrace of three individual houses represents an early stage in the development of Talbot's Inch Village. The terrace is characterised by a construction in roughcast with brick, leaded windows, high-pitched sproketed roofs featuring a covering of small clay tiles, and chimney stacks incorporating dentils.



(fig. 162)
8-10 TALBOT'S INCH
VILLAGE

An appealing, small-scale house is enlivened by panels of decorative brick work arranged in a variety of individual patterns.

(fig. 163)
8-10 TALBOT'S INCH
VILLAGE

A detail of a decorative panel displays the colourful quality inherent in the combination of burnt umber-, orange-, pink- and yellow-tinged handmade brick. Also visible, two shallow courses of stone produce an aesthetically-pleasing sill course.

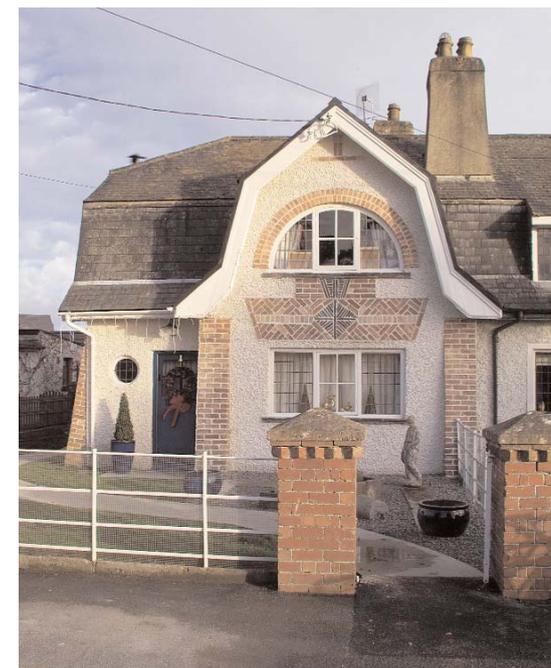


(fig. 164)
8-10 TALBOT'S INCH
VILLAGE

Simple iron railings enclosing small front gardens enhance the domestic quality of the workers' houses and maintain an understated character lacking in the suburban schemes of the greater Kilkenny City area, which have gradually encroached on Talbot's Inch Village since the late twentieth century.

(fig. 166)
11 TALBOT'S INCH
VILLAGE
(1904)

A slightly later phase in the development of the Talbot's Inch enclave included a terrace of six houses featuring Diocletian or lunette windows, decorative brick work, and distinctive mansard roof profiles.



(fig. 165)
8-10 TALBOT'S INCH
VILLAGE

The soft quality inherent in handmade brick, as opposed to hard mass-produced factory brick, allows for the shaping about a curved timber beam without any degradation of, or flaw in, the decorative pattern.

In *Bowen's Court* (1942) Elizabeth Bowen (1899-1973) bemoaned the failure of the ascendancy class to embrace aspects of native or indigenous culture. Conversely, others engaged with native culture on a level that moved beyond the realities of that culture, and prefigured the cinema in seeking a sense of Ireland that was more imaginary than real. Such might be ascribed to the valiant efforts that produced the architectural programme at Talbot's Inch, developed (1896-1904) by Lady Desart and Captain Cuffe (figs. 161-166). On the one hand it was part of the county's long established tradition of planned formal towns and villages, but it also echoed planned industrial communities elsewhere in Ireland, as at Portlaw, County Waterford, or Sion Mills, County Tyrone. Talbot's Inch Village was designed by William Alphonsus Scott (1871-1921) and was linked by a bridge (between 1896-1904; destroyed 1947) to the workplace of the



(fig. 167)
1a-2b SUNLIGHT VILLAS
Kilkenny Street,
Castlecomer
(1913)

A picturesque group of four Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) officers' houses, arranged about an enclosed forecourt, make an agreeable visual impact in Kilkenny Street.

(fig. 168)
1a-2b SUNLIGHT VILLAS
Kilkenny Street,
Castlecomer

A detail of one house clearly demonstrates the various characteristics of an Arts-and-Crafts-style theme, including the combination of fieldstone, limestone, yellow brick, painted roughcast, and timber in the construction.

Kilkenny Woodworkers. In its attention to scale, detail, and varied materials — it was originally thatched and whitewashed — it reveals the widespread influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Originating in late nineteenth-century England the movement was associated particularly with John Ruskin, and designer and theorist William Morris (1834-96). It emphasised the importance of craft and materials in the hope that workers would take joy and pride in their handcrafted work. However, for some critics this aspiration represented an urban elite vision of the country and of what crafts should be. The influence of Talbot's Inch Village in Kilkenny was limited, although it is possible to discern Scott's influence in other projects, like the cluster of Arts and Crafts style Sunlight Villas (1913) on Kilkenny Street, Castlecomer (figs. 167-168), and in some of the farm buildings (c.1900) at Sheestown House, Sheastown, outside Kilkenny City. Scott also designed a home (1896-9) for the manager of the Kilkenny Woodworkers (fig. 169) and Lady Desart's own Kilkenny house, Aut Even (completed 1907), a

name derived from the Irish *Ait Aoibhinn*, translating as 'Beautiful Place' (fig. 170). For all its acknowledgment of Arts and Crafts tastes, the house was ultimately a residence of the haute bourgeoisie and hints at the affluent suburbs of contemporary Berlin (Lady Desart was originally Ellen Bischoffsheim from Berlin). Such fluid styles, admittedly inspired by English prototypes, had been encouraged in the writings of Herman Muthesius (1861-1927), notably his *Das English Haus* (1904-5). The purpose-built hospital (1915) also called Aut Even and built to designs prepared by Edward Albert Murray (1849-1924), is adjacent to, but quite separate from, Aut Even House. The building retains particularly striking entrance doors, attributed to William Emery and carved by the Kilkenny Woodworkers.

Large individual detached houses, if on a smaller scale, became increasingly common for the 'well-to-do' sections of society: the more affluent farmers and the professional and management classes. Riverside House (c.1900), a gabled red brick house close by the bridge in



(fig. 169)
OAK LODGE HOUSE
Talbot's Inch Village
(1896-9)

Built as Tigh na Cairde House for William Faulds, general manager of the Kilkenny Woodworkers Company, the house exhibits an impressive scale in contrast to the

houses intended for workers. Details, including square-leaded glazing patterns and decorative brickwork to the chimney stacks, identify a common design aesthetic shared throughout the village.



(fig. 170)
AUT EVEN HOUSE
Talbot's Inch Village
(completed 1907)

Not too be confused with the later hospital (1915) established by Countess Desart in memory of her brother-in-law Captain Otway Frederick Seymour Cuffe (1853-1912), the Desart home at Talbot's

Inch is identified by a pronounced Arts-and-Crafts theme. The construction in fieldstone with unpainted roughcast recalls a contemporary (1908) scheme in Castlecomer, thereby suggesting William Alphonsus Scott (1871-1921) as the architect common to both projects.



BALLYLINCH STUD FARM
Ballylinch Demesne
(established 1915)

A stud farm established by Major Dermot McCalmont of Mount Juliet House on the opposite side of the River Nore replaced the eighteenth-century Ballylinch House. Although alluding to Arts-and-Crafts principles in appearance, the complex, featuring stable hands' accommodation alongside paddocks, is constructed in rock-faced concrete block with concrete 'ashlar' dressings.



(fig. 169)
OAK LODGE HOUSE
 Talbot's Inch Village
 (1896-9)

Built as Tigh na Cairde House for William Faulds, general manager of the Kilkenny Woodworkers Company, the house exhibits an impressive scale in contrast to the

houses intended for workers. Details, including square-leaded glazing patterns and decorative brick work to the chimney stacks, identify a common design aesthetic shared throughout the village.



(fig. 170)
AUT EVEN HOUSE
 Talbot's Inch Village
 (completed 1907)

Not too be confused with the later hospital (1915) established by Countess Desart in memory of her brother-in-law Captain Otway Frederick Seymour Cuffe (1853-1912), the Desart home at Talbot's

Inch is identified by a pronounced Arts-and-Crafts theme. The construction in fieldstone with unpainted roughcast recalls a contemporary (1908) scheme in Castlecomer, thereby suggesting William Alphonsus Scott (1871-1921) as the architect common to both projects.



BALLYLINCH STUD FARM
 Ballylinch Demesne
 (established 1915)

A stud farm established by Major Dermot McCalmont of Mount Juliet House on the opposite side of the River Nore replaced the eighteenth-century Ballylinch House. Although alluding to Arts-and-Crafts principles in appearance, the complex, featuring stable hands' accommodation alongside paddocks, is constructed in rock-faced concrete block with concrete 'ashlar' dressings.



(fig. 171)
TULLAROAN
(1906)

A house of medium size exhibits a pronounced urban or suburban Edwardian quality at odds with its position in a small rural crossroads village.



(fig. 172)
TULLAROAN

A view of the decorative gateway features Classical-style piers in limestone ashlar along with intricate cast-iron gates.

Castlecomer has the air of a prosperous Dublin suburban house of the period and must have appeared very fashionable in the otherwise late Georgian ambience of the town. A similarly substantial house (1906) in Tullaroan must also have seemed particularly grand at the heart of a rural community. Elements characteristic of the period, sometimes referred to as Edwardian, include the surviving verandas, a feature not uncommon in the 'stockbroker mansions' of the London Home Counties of the period (figs. 171-172).

In an attempt to address the woeful housing conditions of the poorer sections of society, less ambitious schemes encouraged the ongoing development of public housing, especially in larger communities like Kilkenny itself. These developments allowed for the clear recording of a tribute to the incumbent county manager or mayor of Kilkenny as appropriate: 12 Michael Street (1916), Kilkenny, acknowledges the may-

orality of John Magennis (fl. 1914-16) (fig. 173) while 30 Dominic Street (1924), Kilkenny, acknowledges A.R. Deloughry as mayor (fl. 1924) (fig. 174). The recording of the mayoralty continues in public housing schemes to this day.

The opening of the new century did little to radicalise church architecture, just as political upheaval in the wider society did little to challenge the fervour of widespread devotion. Comparatively few twentieth-century churches were erected for any denomination and those, at least in the early decades of the century, continued the Gothic Revival theme. Such had been the extent of nineteenth-century building that few new churches were needed - an indication too, perhaps, of population loss. Shortfalls in funding did not always allow for the original aspirations of church building designs to be realised, as at the Catholic Church of Saint John the Evangelist (1903-6/8), Dublin

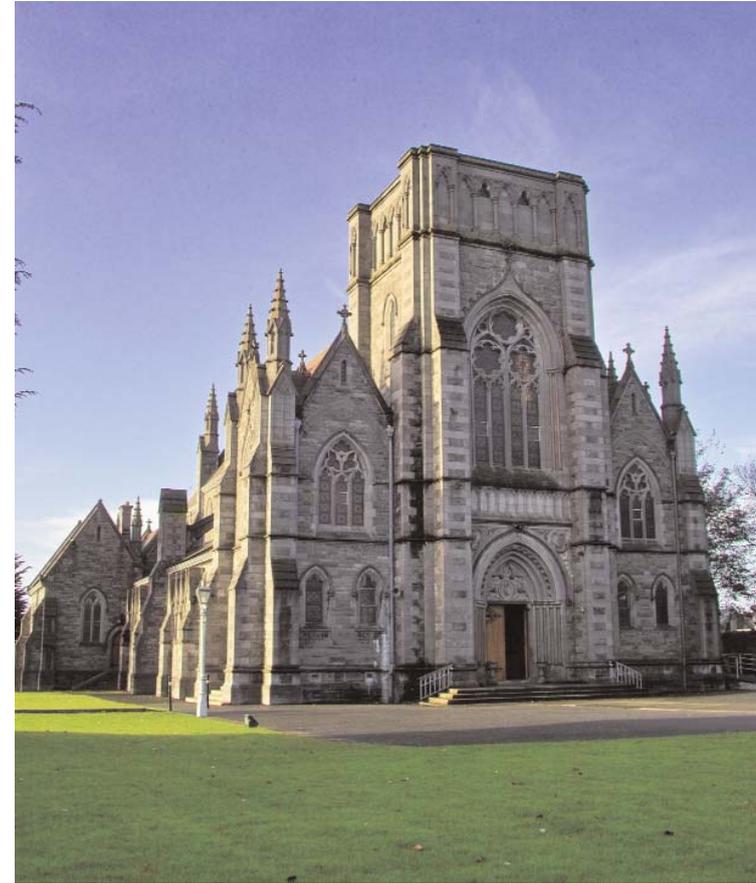
(fig. 173)
12 MICHAEL STREET
Kilkenny
(1916)

A small-scale house, built as one of seven identical units, retains all of the original fabric including sash windows. A cut-limestone plaque records the provenance of the terrace as: 'Erected under Corporation Building Scheme. John Magennis PLC, Mayor of Kilkenny 1914-5 and 1916'.



(fig. 174)
30 DOMINIC STREET
Kilkenny
(1924)

A terrace of houses exhibits an inventive approach to architectural distinction, considering the financial limitations under which the local authority operated. Broken coursed limestone, rough-cast, concrete block block-and-start surrounds, and a decorative plaque are incorporated into a wholly satisfying, aesthetically pleasing scheme.



(fig. 175)
CATHOLIC CHURCH
OF SAINT JOHN THE
EVANGELIST
Dublin Road,
Kilkenny
(1903-6/8)

Built as the O'Loughlin Memorial Church by the O'Loughlin family of Sandsford Court, a monumental church built under the supervision of William Henry Byrne

(1866-1917) to designs by William Hague (c.1840-99) exhibits a robust Gothic Revival theme with innumerable finials and pinnacles in carved County Kilkenny limestone. The articulation of the skyline comes to an abrupt halt at the point where the proposed tower was abandoned, lending the composition a truncated effect.

Road, Kilkenny (fig. 175). Set back from the road and fronted by a screen it benefits from its location on what was then the main approach to the city; however the spire envisaged by its architects, William Hague and William Henry Byrne, was never to be realised and this accounts for the truncated appearance of the tower. Byrne was also responsible for the Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart (1928), Gazebo, begun years after his death in what was by then a particularly dated style. However, the spacious interior, and what appears to be the unsupported organ gallery, betrays its comparative modernity as the whole structure rests on extensive reinforced concrete foundations. The Carmelite Church (originally 1843) at Knocktopher was a more forceful attempt at breaking away from past restraints but the interior embellishments, such as side altars (1934) and pulpit (1937) reveal the exhausted legacy of the Gothic Revival. However, its triple west windows present a striking Modernist contrast with such conservative taste. It is only in the Catholic Church of Saints Michael and David (1959), Dungarvan, and the Catholic Church of Saint Bennett (1967), Bennettsbridge, that we find a break with the past, although the church in Dungarvan arguably retains Gothic lines. Otherwise, although simple, it shows a wonderful sense of period completeness in its mosaics, side altars, altar railings, pews and even light fittings.

Elsewhere occasional embellishment was the norm. Stained glass was added when funds emerged, as with the series of Evangelist windows (undated) at the Catholic Church of the Assumption (1832), Main Street, Urlingford; its high-altar, now much compromised, was added to the existing church in 1934. Many Catholic

churches were altered, especially following the liturgical changes initiated following the Second Vatican Council (1962-5). The results were not always successful and alterations, initiated in good faith, did not always accommodate the historic character of the building. However, some alterations were not without merit and the truncated plan of the original Black Abbey appeared to enhance its effectiveness for the new liturgy. Its sanctuary was emboldened with the addition of massive blocks of stone for the altar and pulpit executed (1976-9) by C. Harvey with the whole dominated by a dramatically evocative stained-glass window, in stark contrast to the figurative tradition (figs. 63-64).

Church patronage of other building types continued with enthusiasm, complementing State expenditure in this area, and including convents, new schools, and colleges. Saint Kieran's College was expanded in 1955 with a new extensive west wing designed by Simon Leonard (1903-76) of W.H. Byrne and Sons. Being fronted in cut limestone from the nearby Saint John's Catholic Church (originally 1840), the architect not only retained an archly conservative idiom, but also managed to effectively continue the patina of the old building. Such conservatism was not unique to provincial centres like Kilkenny, but also challenged innovative architecture in the old universities of Cambridge and Oxford where the reconciliation between old historic styles and modern architecture remains a challenge to this day.

The downward spiral of landed estates, already underway since the various Land Acts of the nineteenth century, was exacerbated by the upheavals of the War of Independence (1919-21) and the Civil War (1922-3). Some

estates already showed signs of decline by the early part of the century. On the other hand, many properties survived well into the century in what now seems to have been a make-believe world, captured in the plaintive watercolours of Mildred Anne Butler (1858-1941), who lived at Kilmurry House. Although additions were made to Mount Juliet around 1905, including its great terminal chimneystack, photographic evidence suggests that its north wing was already ruinous by 1907. Further additions at Mount Juliet in the 1920s involved the addition of a new entrance porch surmounted by a 'sun-room' supporting a grand Serlian window, and a ballroom, all redolent of weekend parties and hunt balls. Other houses were less fortunate and among those lost to fire were Woodstock (destroyed 1922), one of the great houses of Ireland. Desart Court (1733) was burnt in 1923 and, although rebuilt, was finally demolished in 1957. Castle Morres (c.1750), a house by Francis Bindon, was partially demolished in 1940 while the remainder was demolished post 1973.

Some estates were completely vacated in accordance with changes in the social order. Kilkenny Castle itself, synonymous with the history of the county, was vacated by the Butlers in 1936 and presented to the people of Kilkenny by Arthur Norman Butler (1893-1971), 6th Marquess of Ormonde, in 1967. Other houses and estates found new uses. Bessborough House (1744-55), was substantially rebuilt in 1929 by Harold Stuart Goodhart-Rendel (1887-1959) and for long operated as a convent; it now serves as Kildalton Colege, an agricultural institute. Uppercourt House was purchased by the Mill Hill Missionaries in 1932; its later chapel (1944) and dormitory wing (opened 1950) are worthy of consideration in



(fig. 176)
DUISKE ABBEY
CATHOLIC CHURCH
Lower Main Street/
Chapel Street,
Graigenamanagh
(founded 1204-12)

A pencil drawing (c.1810) by R. Gibbs of the 'Abbey of Graignamanah (sic.)' illustrates the crossing and transepts in ruins prior to reconstruction and rededication by 1813. An engraving of the drawing subsequently appeared in *Antiquities and Scenery of the County Kilkenny* (1851). Attributes including the pointed arches and the elegant window arrangements survive in a recognisable form to the present day.

Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive



(fig. 177)
DUISKE ABBEY
CATHOLIC CHURCH
Lower Main
Street/Chapel Street,
Graigenamanagh

Following a comprehensive renovation programme (1974-80) Duiske Abbey meets with the liturgical requirements outlined by the Second Vatican Council (1963-5) while preserving much of its medieval character. A view of the restored interior outlines the pointed-arch arcade surviving from the side aisles, the round-headed clere-storey windows, and, beyond the crossing, the elegant East window combining pointed- and round-headed lights, all dominated by an open oak roof construction.

their own right. Many houses, however, survived in a reasonably fine condition, or found new owners who could maintain or transform them sometimes, as at Castletown House, or Ballysallagh, with style and flair.

As the century progressed there was an increasing awareness of the intrinsic value of historic architecture, even if this was initially restricted to celebrated or unusual sites. Ongoing maintenance had already been a recurring theme at sites such as the Black Abbey and Saint Canice's Cathedral. Aided by an economic upturn, the 1960s witnessed a burst of energy in restoration which, even if some of the methods would not be acceptable to standards of conservation now in place, has not been emulated to the same extent, or level of enthusiasm, since. Important sites in Kilkenny City underwent extensive restoration. Shee Almshouse was restored in 1981, while the more celebrated Rothe House had undergone restoration in 1963-5. In the same year the attractive stables of Kilkenny Castle were sensitively converted into studios and workshops for the influential, but ill-fated, Kilkenny Design Workshops (KDW). Dr. Henry Robert McAdoo (1916-98), Bishop of Ossory (1962-85) restored the Bishop's Palace (reconstructed 1735-6) in 1962-3, while Duiske Abbey in Graigenamanagh was extensively restored in the same period (1974-80) (figs. 176-177).

Conclusion

In recent years County Kilkenny has enjoyed an unprecedented period of economic growth and social change, with the result that many of the older buildings in the county have outlived the function for which they were built. The comparative demise of old industries and large-scale religious orders, or in some cases whole religious congregations, leaves a plethora of industrial and ecclesiastical architecture that is vulnerable to degradation and decay. Much of the county's profile depends on its architectural treasures, and yet this is a rapidly depleting asset, with each passing year of neglect reducing what is a finite resource. The extensive built legacy of past centuries remains as both a challenge and an opportunity to the people of Kilkenny. Among the burdens that this new prosperity brings is that of finding viable solutions for old buildings.

Fortunately, the county shows many working examples of old buildings put to new uses, which can often afford an opportunity to continue the historic associations of any given site. The large mill (c.1825) at Bennettsbridge, on the River Nore, is happily re-used as the home of the internationally successful Nicholas Mosse Pottery. With support from the Heritage Council the Irish Landmark Trust has restored

the tower house of Clomantagh Castle. Interventions at Kilkenny Castle, with the Parade Tower development (1998-9), have added to the vitality of the castle complex. The maltings complex in Tilbury Place or James's Sconce, dilapidated for many years, has found a new use as an office complex. The functional form of Mullhall's Flour and Corn Store (c.1825), Green Street, Kilkenny, assures that it still finds use. Kilkenny County Council is expending a considerable sum on the restoration of the once celebrated gardens (1840-90) at Woodstock House while the Bishop's Palace will soon become the headquarters of the Heritage Council. It would not have been envisaged in the eighteenth century that the small-scale residences along the River Breagh would now form the Priory Gardens to the Black Abbey, a space evocative of calm and an imagined medieval past, yet only developed in the 1950s. We are not in a position to say what new uses will emerge in the generations to come, but it is fair to say that the functional reinterpretation of much of the built heritage of County Kilkenny, both the humble and the proud, will require ongoing attention on the part of both owners and authorities.

BANK OF IRELAND
High Street/
The Parade,
Kilkenny
(1870)

As County Kilkenny rests on a bed of carboniferous limestone, it is only natural that limestone would feature prominently in the built heritage of the region. At the Bank of Ireland vermiculated panels, exhibiting expert stone masonry, provide a decorative textured visual effect in an otherwise sheer composition in limestone ashlar.



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Registration Numbers

The structures mentioned in the text of this Introduction are listed below. It is possible to find more information on each structure by accessing our survey on the Internet at: www.buildingsofireland.ie and searching by the Registration Number. Structures are listed by page number.

03	Kilkenny Castle, The Parade, Kilkenny Reg. 12001066	09	Saint Canice's Cathedral, Church Lane, Kilkenny Reg. 12005018	10	Kilcreene House, Kilcreen (Crannagh By.) Td., Kilkenny Reg. 12401928	18-19	Castle Blunden, Castleblunden Td. Reg. 12401906	27	Grange House, Grange Td. Reg. 12400901	32-33	Belmore House (Jerpoinchurch House), Jerpoinchurch Td. Reg. 12402809	37	Dinin Bridge, Ardaloo Td./Dunmore West Td. Reg. 12401419	43	1-10 Drover's Row, Main Street, Gowran Reg. 12310020
03	Rothe House, 15-16 Parliament Street, Kilkenny Reg. 12000065	09	Kilkenny City Town Hall (The Tholsel), High Street, Kilkenny Reg. 12000061	10	Butter Slip, Praha (Langton House), 80-81 High Street, Kilkenny Reg. 12000063	19	Ballysallagh House, Ballysallagh Td. Reg. 12401504	27	Uppercourt House, Upperwood Demesne, Freshford Reg. 12305022	33	Graigue Forge, Graigue Crossroads, Graigue (Hartford) Td. Reg. 12402206	37-39	Kells Flour Mill (Mullins Corn Mill), Kells Reg. 12315001	43	Houses, Main Street, Gowran Reg. 12310014 - 16
03	Saint Canice's Cathedral, Church Lane, Kilkenny Reg. 12005018	09	Saint Canice's Steps, Church Lane (off)/Saint Canice's Place (off), Kilkenny Reg. 12005024	11	Abbey View House, Lady's Well Street, Thomastown Reg. 12317026	19	Ballyconra House, Ballyconra Td. Reg. 12400402	27	Gowran Castle, Main Street (off), Gowran Reg. 12310003	32-34	Kilfane Forge, Kilfane Td. Reg. 12402824	37-39	Kells Flour Mill (Hutchinsons Corn Mill), Kells Reg. 12315003	43-44	Saint Mary's Church (Saint Mary's Abbey), Main Street (off), Gowran Reg. 12310009
04	Ormonde Woollen Mill (Castle Mill), Canal Walk, Mill Road, Kilkenny Reg. 12006009	09	1 Church Lane, Kilkenny Reg. 12005023	12-13	8-11 The Parade, Kilkenny Reg. 12001060 - 63	19	Castlefield House, Castlefield Td. Reg. 12402403	28	Belline House, Belline and Rogerstown Td. Reg. 12403906	34	Kilkenny Castle, The Parade, Kilkenny Reg. 12001066	39	Kells Bridge, Kells Reg. 12315002	44	Loughlin, Kilkenny Street/Main Street, Gowran Reg. 12310019
05	Saint Mary's Catholic Cathedral, James's Street/James's Green, Kilkenny Reg. 12005002	10	Rothe House, 15-16 Parliament Street, Kilkenny Reg. 12000025	12-13	Kilkenny County Hall (Saint John's (Kilkenny) College), John Street Lower, Kilkenny Reg. 12000165	19	Bonnetstown Hall, Bonnetstown Td. Reg. 12401909	28	Drawing School, Belline House, Belline and Rogerstown Td. Reg. 12403908	34	Gateway, Belline House, Belline or Rogerstown Td. Reg. 12403910	39	Kilkenny Canal, Purcellsinch Td./Warrington Td., Kilkenny Reg. 12401912	44	Catholic Church of the Assumption, Gowran Td., Gowran Reg. 12310024
06	Saint Lachtain's Church, New Bridge Street/Kilkenny Street, Freshford Reg. 12305001	10	Woodstock/S. Callanan/O'Connor (Archer Mansion), 18-19 High Street, Kilkenny Reg. 12000056 - 57	12-14	Bridge House (Kilkenny River Court Hotel), 88-89 John Street Lower, Kilkenny Reg. 12000151 - 152	20	Castle Blunden, Castleblunden Td. Reg. 12401906	28-31	Gate Lodge, Belline House, Belline and Rogerstown Td. Reg. 12403909	34	Gateway, Castle Blunden, Drakeland Middle Td./Mortgage Fields Td. Reg. 12401905	39-40	Saint Lachtain's Church, New Bridge Street/Kilkenny Street, Freshford Reg. 12305001	44	Gowran Parochial House, Gowran Td., Gowran Reg. 12310026
07	Kells Priory, Kellsborough Td., Kells Not included in survey	10	Shee Almshouse, 26 Rose Inn Street, Kilkenny Reg. 12001073	14	40-41 Parliament Street, Kilkenny Reg. 12000089 - 90	21	Bessborough House (Kildalton College), Kildalton Td., Piltown Reg. 12325001	29	Gate Lodge, Belline House, Belline and Rogerstown Reg. 12403820	34	Stroan Fountain, Kilfane Td. Reg. 12402827	40	Saint Mary's Church, Green Street (Edmund Ignatius Rice Street), Callan Reg. 12314059	44	Catholic Church of the Assumption, Green Street (Edmund Ignatius Rice Street)/Chapel Lane, Callan Reg. 12314010
07	Saint Mary's Hall (Saint Mary's Church), Saint Mary's Lane, Kilkenny Reg. 12000130	10	'Hole in the Wall', 17 High Street (rear), Kilkenny Not included in survey	15	Kilkenny City Town Hall (The Tholsel), High Street, Kilkenny Reg. 12000061	22-23	Woodstock House, Inisitoge Td., Inisitoge Reg. 12403203	29	Gateway, Belline House, Belline and Rogerstown Reg. 12403910	34	Thomastown Bridge, Thomastown Td./Grenan Td., Thomastown Reg. 12317011	40	Saint Canice's Cathedral, Church Lane, Kilkenny Reg. 12005018	44	Callan Courthouse, Green Street (Edmund Ignatius Rice Street), Callan Reg. 12314005
08	Duiske Abbey Catholic Church, Lower Main Street/Chapel Street, Graiguenamanagh Reg. 12318015	10	Berkeley House, 5 Patrick Street Lower, Kilkenny Reg. 12001055	16	Phelan's Hotel (Butler House), The Square/Chapel Avenue, Ballyragget Reg. 12303011	24-25	Castletown House (Castletown Cox House), Castletown Td. Reg. 12403807	29	Stables, Belline House, Belline and Rogerstown Reg. 12403907	35-37	Graiguenamanagh Bridge, Graiguenamanagh Td., Graiguenamanagh Reg. 12318004	40	Robing Room, Kilkenny Bishop's Palace, Church Lane, Kilkenny Reg. 12003011	44	Bank of Ireland, Green Street (Edmund Ignatius Rice Street), Callan Reg. 12314004
08	Jerpoin Abbey, Jerpoinabbey Td. Not included in survey	10	Porter/Paris Texas/Argento (Shee House), 91-93 High Street, Kilkenny Reg. 12001085	17	Whitechurch Church (Castlane Church), Whitechurch Td. Reg. 12403806	25	Whitechurch Church (Castlane Church), Whitechurch Td. Reg. 12403806	29	Ponsonby Memorial Tower (Piltown Tower), Piltown Reg. 12325028	35-37	Inistioige Bridge, Inistioige Td./Kilcross Td., Inistioige Reg. 12323011	40	Fiddown Church, Fiddown Reg. 12327007	45	Aher House, High Street, Castlecómer Reg. 12301002 - 3
08	Saint Mary's Church (Saint Mary's Abbey), Main Street (off), Gowran Reg. 12310009	10	Maibe Carey/J. David Hughes/Uppercuts, 19-21 Parliament Street, Kilkenny Reg. 12000020 - 22	16	Butler House, 16 Patrick Street Lower, Kilkenny Reg. 12001045 - 46	26-27	Mount Juliet (House), Walton's Grove or Mountjuliet Td. Reg. 12402805	31	Kilfane House, Kilfane Demesne Td. Reg. 12402820	36-37	Castlecómer Bridge, Castlecómer Td./Ardra Td./Drumgoole Td., Castlecómer Reg. 12301001	41	Waterpump, The Square, Freshford Reg. 12305011	45	Comerford, Barrack Street, Castlecómer Reg. 12301026
08	Kilkenny Castle, The Parade, Kilkenny Reg. 12001066	10	Dysart Castle, Dysart Td. Not included in survey	17	Ballyduff House, Ballyduff Td. Reg. 12403206	27	Belle Vue House, Borrismore Td. Reg. 12401208	31	Grange House, Grange Td. Reg. 12400901	36-37	Green's Bridge, Gardens (St. Canice's Par.) Td./Newpark Lower Td., Kilkenny Reg. 12004007	42	Inn, Knocktopher Reg. 12321002	45	House, Main Street, Mullinavat Reg. 12326004
		10	Dunmore House, location unknown Demolished	17	Bonnetstown Hall, Bonnetstown Td. Reg. 12401909	27	Dunmore Cottage, Dunmore Td. Reg. 12401413	31	Dovecote, Grange House, Grange Td. Reg. 12400917	36-37	Bennett's Bridge, Bennettsbridge Td., Bennettsbridge Reg. 12312010	43	Gate Lodge, Gowran Castle, Main Street, Gowran Reg. 12310002	46	Dinin Bridge, Ardaloo Td./Dunmore West Td. Reg. 12401419
				17	Bonnetstown Hall, Bonnetstown Td. Reg. 12401909	27	Butler House, 16 Patrick Street Lower, Kilkenny Reg. 12001045 - 46	32-33	Kilkenny Castle, The Parade, Kilkenny Reg. 12001065	37	Ballylinch Bridge, Cotterellsbooly Td./Ballylinch Demesne Td. Reg. 12402802	43	Forester's Lodge, Gowran Castle, Gowran Demesne Td., Gowran Reg. 12402401	46	Fiddown Toll House, Fiddown Reg. 12327008

- 46 Fiddown Bridge, Fiddown
Reg. 12327009
- 47 Thomas McDonagh (Kilkenny City) Railway Station, Dublin Road/Castlecomer New Road, Kilkenny
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