



NUI MAYNOOTH

Oifacol: na hÉireann NA Nua

**A monastic landscape:
The Cistercians in medieval Leinster**

by

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Chapter 8

The status of the monasteries and the Cistercian Order in Ireland post-dissolution

The main aim of this chapter is twofold. Firstly it is proposed to examine records from across the country to ascertain the impact of the dissolution on the lands held by the Order and to try to identify the fate of that land. Secondly the status of the Order in post dissolution Ireland will be examined. It will be determined whether the Cistercian Order maintained any presence in Ireland in the century after the closure of the religious houses. The relevant monasteries will be dealt with in turn below.

Jerpoint

The offer made to the Earl by the King must have been accepted because by Aug. 1542 James the 9th Earl, Pier's successor, was granted 4 ex-monastic sites in the shire.¹ These were the Cistercian abbeys of Duiske and Jerpoint, the Augustinian Friary of Callan and the Augustinian Priory of Kells together these grants added another 14,000 acres of land to the Earl's holdings.² This transfer of ownership of land obviously led to a huge change in landholding pattern in the area with the Butlers now controlling by far the most land in the County.³

¹ David Edwards *The Ormond lordship in county Kilkenny 1515-1642* (Dublin, 2003), p. 14.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.* p. 14.

The land of the monastic orders was to remain in Butler hands for more than a century although the initial lease of these lands was only to be for 21 years and should therefore have expired in the 1560s. Black Tom the 10th Earl, who died in 1614, never had to renew the leasehold his association with the court probably helped much in this regard and he would have been seen as remaining loyal to the crown.⁴ Due to financial reasons Earl James entered into a number of mortgage agreements and some of the land which he allowed others to gain temporary possession of included part of the lands of Jerpoint Abbey.⁵

However, the earls did not receive all of the lands owned by the monastery, and some of what they did lease, was again let by them in turn. An indenture dated 08 Feb. 1556 between Thomas, Earl of Ormond and Oliver Grace of Legan states that Thomas granted the

... water mill of Gerypounde called the Earl's mill, with the watercourse, mill pond, weir, fishing, etc., to have and to hold unto said Oliver and his heirs for a term of 21 years at an annual rent of 6*l.*, Oliver to build up said mill, now in decay, with lime, stone, slate and timber, at his own cost.⁶

Another indenture between the same two men this time dated 29 March 1561 sees the Earl granting the towns of *Kyeltrowly* alias *Ballydolle* and *Kylgrellan* with all their lands and also 5 messuages and 38 acres of arable land in Thomastown to Oliver Grace. The indenture goes on to state that all of these lands are parcels of the late dissolved monastery of Jerpoint. The annual rent is fixed at 12*l* and a

⁴ *Triumphalia chronologica monasterii Sanctae Crucis in Hibernia*, ed. and trans. Denis Murphy, (Dublin, MDCCCXCI), p. lii.

⁵ Edwards *The Ormond lordship*, p. 136.

⁶ *Ormond deeds* vol. 5 deed 59(3) p. 59.

red rose at midsummer.⁷

On 4 May 1571 Thomas Earl of Ormond granted all the sites, ambits and precincts, campaniles, halls buildings, lands and ecclesiastical benefices which the Earl owns in the monasteries of, among others, Holy Cross, Geripont, Kilcowle and Kenles to William Johnson, dean of St. Canice's, Kilkenny, John Archdeacon, treasurer of St Patrick's, Cashel, Richard Shethe of Kilkenny and Edmund Butler fitz Theobald of Callan.⁸ On 6 Nov. 1598 this land was returned to the Earl.⁹

Kilcooley

It is recorded that the lands of the Butlers, established from Pierce Butler who was ancestor of the Earls of Carrick and descended from John of Lismolin, had lands which stretched across fifteen miles of country, from Lismolin to Kilcooley. In the late fifteenth century Pierce established his chief residence at Kilcooley and so he built the large castle of Clonamiclan. Pierce was buried in the Abbey and after his death the chief residence of the family was at Lismolin.

Following the dissolution of the monastery Thomas Shortall and John Colton were both granted a pension of £5 per year. Colton remained as the first curate of the parish and as such he was allowed the altarages.¹⁰ The tithes became the property of the Earl of Ormond, who on the 28 Sept. 1563 leased

⁷ Ibid. deed 101 p. 122.

⁸ Ibid. deed 181 (2) pp 197-8.

⁹ Ibid. deed 181 (3) pp 198 -9.

¹⁰ Neeley, *Kilcooley*, p. 14.

them to Edward Butler and John Walshe.¹¹ In 1562 the Earl of Ormond left his farm at Kilcooley to his son Edward.¹² When Mary succeeded to the throne of England, the Cistercian order tried to have the Abbey restored to them but the Queen granted the possessions of the Abbey to the Earls of Ormond.¹³ However the monarch disputed the rights of the Earl to the tithes, and subsequently Queen Elizabeth granted both these tithes and those of almost all the other parishes in the Slieveardagh barony, to the Viscount Netterville. The Viscount was an old English Roman Catholic peer and the main result of this practice on the monastery was the neglect of the abbey building.¹⁴ The extent of this neglect may be discovered from the surviving visitations of the Archdiocese of Cashel. The record of the visitation for the years 1588, 1607, 1615 and 1633 show that in the barony of Slieveardagh all the churches were in ruins. There were no rectories, services or clergy, with the exception of Nicholas Fleming who was named as curate of Kilcooley in 1633.¹⁵ This is significant as it indicates again that the order was keeping a presence within the vicinity of the monastery. In 1585 the Bishop of Ossory was murdered in his own palace at Kilkenny, it is stated that his murderer sought refuge in the woods surrounding Kilcooley.¹⁶ The outlaws there provided him justice of a kind by hanging him on one of the

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., pp 14-15.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 15

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁶ Ibid.

trees.¹⁷ In 1600 Hugh O'Neill must have marched through Kilcooley on his way from Durrow to the great camp at Holy Cross. The Butlers held Holy Cross against the combined armies of Hugh O'Neill and Red Hugh O'Donnell.¹⁸ John Stapleton 'received the habit of religion' on 19 July 1645 and he is said to have served his novitiate in Kilcooley.¹⁹ In Nov. 1671 Bernard Lahy took his full vows when Thomas Cogan was Abbot of Kilcooley.²⁰

Grey Abbey

Grey Abbey and its possessions were granted by the Crown to several persons at different times. Eventually, they were granted to Sir Hugh Montgomery after tripartite arrangement between himself, Con O'Neill and Sir James Hamilton.²¹ Hugh arranged that the nave of the abbey church be used for a parish church for the Protestant congregation and the roof was timbered with oak which grew in the woods of Lisdalgan, near Saintfield.²² In 1629 his second son Sir James Montgomery took possession of the holding but the land was forfeited by the Cromwellians.²³ In 1652 the Cromwellians granted it to the commander of their Northern Ulster forces, Colonel Robert Barrow.²⁴ The Montgomeries recovered possession after the Restoration, but in 1717 James

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ *Triumphalia Sanctae Crucis*, p. 115.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ O'Laverty, *Down and Connor*, i, p. 435.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

Montgomery, the last descendant of Sir Hugh who possessed the estate, sold it to William Montgomery, who was a descendant of John Montgomery of Gransheough, a cousin to Sir Hugh.²⁵ By the 1870s the proprietor was a descendant of John of Gransheough.²⁶

Bective

On 22 Feb. 1553 a license was granted to Andrew Wyse to separate all of the possessions of the abbey which he had earlier purchased.²⁷ The land was to be divided between Richard Dillon of Preteston, John Wycombe of Dublin, and Richard Cox.²⁸ On the death of Andrew Wyse the possessions passed into the hands of Sir Alexander Fitton, who had married his daughter and heiress, Mary.²⁹ A daughter, Catherine, was born to Alexander and Mary and in turn she married Sir Bartholomew Dillon, son to Sir Robert Dillon of Riverston.³⁰ About the year 1639 the former abbey and lands of Bective passed from the Dillon family to Sir Richard Bolton, Lord High Chancellor of Ireland.³¹ When writing in the 1850s Cogan states that the land was still among the holdings of that family.³² During the intervening period the various owners of the monastery appear to have maintained the building to some extent. It is known that when Bishop

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Cogan, *Meath*, i, p. 119.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid. pp 119-20.

³² Ibid., p. 120.

Montgomery visited the location in the early 17th century the church was said to have been repaired.³³

After Bective Abbey was dissolved the community are said to have retired to some obscure location within the neighbourhood.³⁴ Members of the order continued to dwell in the area until the seventeenth century. It is known that Stephen Shortal, a native of Kilkenny city became a Cistercian monk at Nucale Abbey in Galicia, Spain and in due course was appointed titular Abbot of Bective prior to his death which occurred on 3 Dec. 1639.³⁵

Knockmoy

Hugh O'Kelly was named as abbot of this monastery when it was dissolved and he was granted the lands at dissolution after he surrendered the monastery to the king at the Council of Dublin in 1542.³⁶ At that council he renounced the Pope and acknowledged Henry as his lord.³⁷ Part of the agreement was that, in return for the abbey's lands O'Kelly would pay an annual rent of £5 and would provide eighty horsemen, a band of Scots and sixty kern if the king's deputy wished to enter Connaught.³⁸ Interestingly the king's deputy was to take O'Kelly's son as hostage.³⁹ It is needless to point out the fact that the

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ D'Alton, *Tuam*, p. 208.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 166.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 166.

abbot had a son would indicate that the community were not adhering to the rule of St Benedict up to the dissolution.

It is probable that Hugh was the son of the ruling Hy-Many chief who had long and close associations with the monastery. O'Kelly remained in this position of abbot in *commendam* throughout the reigns of Henry, Edward VI and Queen Mary.⁴⁰ It is known that in 1557 he assigned the collection of the abbey tithes in Galway to a Nicholas Blake, so obviously the abbey was still in possession of its lands and holdings in the mid sixteenth century.⁴¹

In 1566 the Abbey and the lands were granted by Queen Elizabeth to Andrew Brereton.⁴² Later they were in the possession of Nicholas Fitzsimons of Galway and later still the Mayor and Corporation of Galway held them before the land was leased to Sir Patrick Barnwell.⁴³ Unfortunately D'Alton did not include dates for these and subsequent changes in ownership.

Finally the possessions were split with one part given in fee simple to Sir John King and Sir Adam Loftus, with much the larger portion granted to Sir Valentine Blake, of Galway.⁴⁴ These lands were created 'The Manor of Knockmoy' and Blake was authorised to hold courts, leet and baron, and to hold

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp 208-9.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 209.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

a weekly market and a yearly fair.⁴⁵ D'Alton states that since that date the lands have remained in the Blake family.⁴⁶

Newry

When the abbey of Newry was dissolved by King Henry VIII it was converted into a Collegiate Church for secular priests and was placed under the wardenship of the last Abbot, John Prowle.⁴⁷ This situation did not last long and during the reign of Edward VI the abbey and its possessions were granted to Sir Nicholas Bagnal, Marshal of Ireland.⁴⁸ In 1611 under James I the grant was re-confirmed and the lands passed in due course to Henry, son of Nicholas Bagnal and then to his grandson Arthur.⁴⁹ The text of the 1611 grant is extant and from it, it is known that the family paid the sum of £40 by which they received all of the lands and possessions of Newry Abbey including the town, castle and listed townlands.⁵⁰ It is stated in the charter that these made up the associated lands which were termed 'demesne lands' of the monastery. It would appear from the wording of the charter that the possessions of Newry were kept together, the family received the entire monastic estate along with tithes and spiritual and temporal possessions.⁵¹ Another fragment of this charter is worthy of mention.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Atkinson, *Dromore*, p. 11.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

The Bagnals were also given land styled the 'Manor of Carlingford' and the 'Lordship of Cooley and of Omeath in County Louth'.⁵² This land would appear to be situated in very close proximity to some of the possessions of Mellifont Abbey. The manor, lordship and castle of Greencastle and the territory of Morne were all granted to Bagnal also along with all rights and appurtenances associated with these holdings.⁵³ In the more recent centuries this portion of land was traditionally thought of as originally being part of the possessions of Newry Abbey but that may not be the case.⁵⁴

Inishlounaght

Inishlounaght appears to have been another house where the Cistercians did not simply leave their monastery. Nicholas Fagan is known to have been abbot of the house prior to his death in 1617.⁵⁵ Nicholas, the son of a Waterford man studied philosophy in Ireland before continuing his theological studies in Salamanca and Rome.⁵⁶ It appears that it was through Lombard, a noted Waterford cleric that the Pope named Fagan as Abbot of Inishlounaght. Laurence FitzHarris was a native of New Ross and he was consecrated abbot of the monastery at a service in Waterford on Trinity Sunday 1625.⁵⁷ The presiding celebrant was the Archbishop of Dublin. It would appear that on the death on

⁵² Ibid., pp 11-12.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 12.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 13.

⁵⁵ Burke, *Clonmel*, p. 413

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

the Continent of FitzHarris in 1646 the activity of the abbey of Inishlounaght ended.⁵⁸

Moycosquin

The abbey of Moycosquin appears not to have been suppressed during the general dissolution of the monasteries but little is known of the later history of this house. About 1600 the monastery was granted to the authorities of the London Companies for the plantation of Derry.⁵⁹

Holy Cross

The fate of this house has been well documented in the many publications of Colmcille O'Conduibhe, particularly *The Cistercian houses of Tipperary*. It is from this publication that the lands outlined are drawn from. Particular reference is made to this monastery in the *Triumphalia chronologica monasterii Sanctae Crucis in Hibernia*, edited and translated by Denis Murphy.

Fate of the monks

Having discussed the fate of the monasteries at the Dissolution and examining the physical remains of the buildings it is appropriate to discuss briefly the fate of the men who dwelt within the monasteries. A number of questions are immediately forthcoming. One of which is what happened to the

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Gwynn and Handcock, *Medieval religious houses, Ireland*, p. 139.

monks after the houses were closed? Did the Order die out in Ireland at this time? What became of the possessions of the houses and the fabric of the buildings?

It is probably true to say that for many people the belief is that when the monasteries were dissolved and the abbey lands confiscated the monks either went into exile in other parts of the continent, particularly France, or possibly just renounced their vows and took up other occupations and or trades. While it is probable that many men did just that, some evidence would suggest otherwise.

In relation to the lands, the destiny of much of the holdings has been touched on in other parts of this work but it is safe to summarise this by saying that a large portion of the land was leased by the King to, in most cases, leading members of the aristocracy who showed their support to the monarch. In many cases the new leaseholders did not farm the land directly but allowed those who had previously been tenants of the monks to continue in this way. Others leased lands to third parties and in this way the large tracts of monastic lands were broken up. The buildings themselves, while forming part of the leasehold were more often than not ignored by the new lord. From the dissolution extents it is clear that in many cases the farmer used some of the buildings for dwelling for himself or for housing for his animals. The outer precincts were generally plundered of any stone, timber and other materials of which use could be made. It is obvious, from the scant remains of some houses that the monastery itself

was also used as a quarry for building materials and in some cases nothing of the actual fabric of the building has survived.

In other locations the monastery has survived almost intact and this may well be due to either the usefulness of the walls or the superstition of the local people. The walls in some cases were used to support other structures such as the row of cottages which were constructed at Jerpoint Abbey which used the west wall of the cloister ambulatory as a supporting wall for the houses. It is very likely that any intact claustral buildings would have been used for dwelling or storage purposes.

In many cases the abbey church was referred in the list of extents as being from 'time immemorial used as the parish church' but this only means that the church was used within living memory. Whatever the truth of this statement it is very likely, and has been suggested, albeit without documentary foundation, that many of the churches were used by the faithful for worship into the seventeenth century. Two points are relevant here. Firstly due to the religious and political circumstances of the time, particularly the seventeenth century, it would not be expected to find much written evidence of the blatant disregard for the laws of the time. This period was, of course, at the height of the Penal Laws and the suppression of Catholicism in Ireland. Secondly, the preponderance of burials within many of the abbey churches would suggest the prolonged use of these buildings for the purpose of burial probably from shortly after the dissolution of the religious houses. The fact that the practice of burial continues

at some of the medieval Cistercian houses to the present day is testament to the importance that the laity attached to these monasteries. It can be argued that the use of the locations for internment would, to a certain extent, limit the damage to the buildings because it would be a logical assumption to make that the people who were burying their dead within the monasteries would be less likely to desecrate the buildings.

The other possibility to be considered here is that some of the monasteries survived because the monks retained some jurisdiction over the houses. Holy Cross Abbey was not dissolved until the seventeenth century and subsequently fell into ruin only to be restored by the parish and today is used as the parish church. This series of events meant that the monastery church was not in ruins for very long and so, in addition to the fabric of the building, characteristics such as the wall painting, the owl and other delicate features on the piers of the crossing survived relatively intact. A similar situation occurred at Duiske Abbey although the monastery had been dissolved in the sixteenth century, unlike Holy Cross.

Three important and virtually indisputable sources may be introduced here to support the theory that the Cistercian Order remained active in Ireland throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These are the *Wadding Papers*, the 1933-41 edition of the *Statuta Capitulorum Generalium Ordinis Cisterciensis*, edited by Joseph Canivez and the *Triumphalia chronologica monasterii Sanctae Crucis in Hibernia*, edited and translated by Denis Murphy.

The *Wadding Papers* which span the period 1614 to 1638 make a number of references to members of the order in Ireland. Eighteen abbots are mentioned but two may be included twice. These men were Luke Archer, abbot of Holy Cross, Patrick Barnwell abbot of Mellifont, James Baron abbot of Baltinglass, John Cantwell of Wonthing, or Woney, James FitzGerald of Baltinglass and Lawrence FitzHarris of Suir, but Lawrence Harries of Suir is also mentioned, presumably this is the same person. Thomas Gaffney is listed as the abbot of Lethra abbey in the diocese of Ardagh, this may be the monastery of Abbeylara as this was the only Cistercian monastery listed for that diocese. John Gainnor is listed as being abbot of Leuthra, again in the Ardagh so it is very likely that either these references both relate to the same person, or, John replaced Thomas as abbot at a later date. Malachy Harty is listed as Prior of Mothell, this is a monastery which was situated in county Waterford but was not a house of the Cistercian order in the medieval period. It is possible that this monastery was taken over by the Cistercian Order in the post dissolution period. Reference is also made to Mothell being Cistercian in the *Triumphalia Sancta Crucis*.⁶⁰ One John Madan is named as being a monk of the order and Thomas Maden is named as abbot of Mothell, John died in 1645.⁶¹ Maurice Manbairy is recorded in the papers as

⁶⁰ *Triumphalia Sancta Crucis*, p. 203.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

being the abbot of Assaroe while Florence Myles is referred to as the president of St Mary's abbey, Dublin. A Fr. Nagle is listed as a member of the order as is Bartholomew O'Hogan who is named as president of Ownea, or Owney abbey. Thomas Bernard O'Lamy and Thomas Olarng are both named as abbots of Kilcooley abbey and it is likely that these are the same person; he was buried at Kilcooley on 26 July 1636.⁶² However, a Bernard Lamy received the habit in Holy Cross in 1671 so whether these are two men of the same name or the dates are incorrect is unclear.⁶³

Gerard Purcel was the abbot of De Legi Dei, or Abbeyleix and Paul Ragget was named as abbot of St Mary's Dublin and vicar general of the Cistercians in Ireland. Thomas Roch or Roche was the abbot of Tracton and Stephen Shortall was abbot of either Boyle or Bective, Stephen died in Dec. 1639 and is possibly buried in the Dominican Abbey in Kilkenny.⁶⁴ Gelasius O'Cullenan is referred to in the *Triumphalia Sancta Crucis* as being Abbot of Boyle.⁶⁵ No date is given for his abbacy however he is recorded as being the oldest of seven brothers and the fifth brother, Bernard, was also Abbot of Boyle.⁶⁶ Bernard died in 1639.⁶⁷ No abbot of Jerpoint Abbey is recorded in this source but letters dated at the abbey are listed. In addition references are to be found in the *Decisions of the General Chapter* to abbots of Jerpoint attending chapters throughout the seventeenth

⁶² Carrigan, *Ossory*, iii, p. 123.

⁶³ *Triumphalia Sancta Crucis*, p. 115.

⁶⁴ Carrigan, *Ossory*, iii, p. 124.

⁶⁵ *Triumphalia Sancta Crucis*, p. 253.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

century. In 1641 reference is made to the 'second suppression' of St Marys in Dublin when the community of six were forced to flee.⁶⁸ The abbot was Patrick Plunkett and the oratory is described as being 'within the enclosure of the famous abbey of St Mary of Dublin'.⁶⁹

Two of these men deserve special mention, along with one other not listed above. A Cistercian monk named Nicholas Fitzgerald was martyred about the year 1575.⁷⁰ He was captured while wearing his habit, taken to Dublin in chains and was condemned to be 'hanged, and while half-alive to be quartered'.⁷¹ His remains were taken by his parents to the family tomb in the church of the nuns of the Order of St Brigid in Kildare where he was interred.⁷²

Fr Paul Ragget was a native of Kilkenny and in 1611 was referred to as a Doctor of Divinity and Abbot of St Marys Dublin, Duiske, Dunbrody and Jerpoint as well as being 'Vicar General of the Sacred Order of the Cistercians, in the Kingdom of Ireland, England and Scotland'.⁷³ The *Triumphalia Sancta Crucis*, lists eleven men who were professed under Ragget between the years of 1621 and 1636.⁷⁴ The monks were named for monasteries including Mellifont, Assaroe, Dunbrody, Hore, Owey, Boyle, St Mary's Dublin and Abbeyshrule,

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Carrigan, *Ossory*, iii, p. 122.

⁷⁴ *Triumphalia Sancta Crucis*, pp 105-13.

reference is also made to Gerald Purcell, the abbot of the monastery at Abbeyleix about 1620.⁷⁵

Paul Ragget died in Oct. 1633 and after his death Fr Luke Archer replaced him as Vicar General. Around this time too Archer established an oratory and novitiate in Kilkenny.⁷⁶ The exact location of this is unknown but it was possibly situated in St Mary's parish, the novitiate was opened c. 1618 and closed in 1637.⁷⁷

Thomas Cogan was titled Abbot of Holy Cross when he died in 1700.⁷⁸ It would appear that he was replaced as abbot by Bernard Lahy who died in 1724.⁷⁹ An F. Lahy would seem to have been the last Abbot of Holy Cross and his passing, sometime prior to 1752, marks the end of the Cistercian life of that monastery.⁸⁰

In all, this indicates that the Cistercian Order retained a presence in Ireland throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. References can be found to men being trained at Salamanca and other notable locations.⁸¹ It has also been noted that men who were styled as abbots of particular Irish Cistercian monasteries were elevated to the position of Bishop on more than one occasion, this and the attendance of abbots at the General

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Carrigan, *Ossory*, iii, p. 124; Bradley, *Kilkenny*, p. 13; *Triumphalia Sancta Crucis*, p. 105.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ *Triumphalia Sancta Crucis*, p. li.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid., pp 105-13.

Chapters indicate that these were full members of the order and were not just abbots in name only.⁸²

It can thus be stated that the Cistercian Order existed in Ireland from the introduction of the first monks by Malachy of Armagh in the twelfth century right up to the early eighteenth century.

In 1832 the Order established itself again with the foundation of Mt. Melleary but it is clear that, in the intervening period, while a monastery of the order may not have existed in this country, Irish men were still joining.

⁸² Ibid.

Conclusion

This thesis began by briefly discussing the origins of, reasons for and development of Christian monasticism, chronicling its beginnings in the deserts of the east and its journey through Europe. The huge impact of Benedict of Nursia on the development of monasticism on that continent received particular discussion as it was the impact of that man, primarily in the form of the rule for monastic life, which he created, that allowed monastic life to grow and flourish across Europe. The Benedictine Order followed from Benedict and his rule and this and the four main reforms of that order received particular attention with the main focus being on the inception of the order of Cîteaux. Both the foundation and geographical movement of the Cistercian Order across eleventh and twelfth century Europe was outlined.

Chapter two mainly examined the arrival of the Cistercian Order in Ireland in the fourth decade of the twelfth century. The number of monasteries founded, their locations and founders were tabulated and discussed. From the information presented it can be stated that forty two Cistercian monasteries were founded in medieval Ireland in a period spanning one hundred and thirty years. The time of least expansion in the twelfth century was the sixth decade, with only two monasteries founded. However, these two did mark the beginning of a new dimension within the expansion of the order in Ireland. Of the overall total, twenty eight monasteries were founded from Irish houses with Mellifont itself founded from Clairvaux. Two other monasteries were founded from a French

house, these being Beaubec and Moycosquin. Four of the forty two had Welsh mother houses and initially seven were subject to English houses.

The speed of the distribution of the Order across Ireland was examined, and it served to illustrate a number of points. Firstly, it is obvious there was no shortage of patrons willing to endow the foundations. Whether the reputation of the Cistercians had gone before them or not is unknown but the speed of the spread of the Order in Ireland is remarkable. Men flocked to the monasteries in order to support such a widespread distribution. Obviously plenty of unattended and uncultivated land was available for the monks to inhabit. Many of the grants of land were large enough to enable the monks to try a number of different locations within the land holding before they finally settled on the location for the monastery. In particular situations the speed of expansion was outstanding perhaps the most noticeable example found was in relation to Jerpoint abbey and the foundation of its first daughter-house, separated by a maximum of four years.

In addition to this particular example it was found that the organisation of the Cistercian Order in Ireland must have been well handled during the foundation phase. Excepting the debacle in the mid thirteenth century the expansion of the Order in Ireland, particularly in relation to the Mellifont houses presumably had some forward thinking monks at the head. Even though Ireland had, for years previous to the foundation of Mellifont, been perceived in some areas as being backward and barbaric the Order managed to establish

monasteries in very diverse physical and geographical locations within less than 150 years. How much scope each monastery had is not really clear nor is the extent of the role which Mellifont played directly in the organisation of the early houses. What is evident is that the monks had an acute awareness of what their mission was, men were trained at a startling pace and monasteries were established without any waste of time. It would be difficult to think that so many houses working independently would have achieved such a cohesive and successful organisation without a strong leadership emanating from a central point, and this must have been the monastery of Mellifont.

The reason for such a rapid expansion was questioned. It could be argued that the monks were setting such a pace so that they would be in some way viewed as crusaders in their country. However, the back-breaking work of construction and agricultural labour which these men endured along with the rigorous training and harsh realities of life as a Cistercian monk could not just have had their origins in the hope of praise from an outside force. Indeed the decisions of the General Chapter make virtually no mention of the foundation of Mellifont, or of any other house in Ireland. The first detailed record of the Irish houses comes with the mention of the Riot of Jerpoint and its subsequent trouble. It is true also that, within the Mellifont houses, most of the men who joined the monasteries were Irish men, how many had any knowledge of the order prior to its establishment either in Ireland as a whole or at a particular location is not known. Those who joined the order in the early days in Ireland may have been

in some ways idealists, they might have been able to see past the drudgery and harshness of the foundation into the glory days yet in the future, but above all these must have been men of faith, patience, talent and vision. Without those elements no order could have expanded in Ireland in the medieval period, certainly not with the speed and success with which the Cistercians did.

In relation to the patronage it is clear from the information presented that the main patrons of the Irish Cistercians prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans were members of the Gaelic nobility. Minor kings and their overlords appear to have welcomed and facilitated the expansion of the White Monks into Ireland and it is evident that, without their patronage the expansion could not have been so rapid. The influence of these kings on their subjects was great, and by seeing the ruling families welcoming the monks the secular world was sure to follow suit.

With regard to the founders of the twenty nine Irish houses, including Mellifont, all were either Gaelic kings princes or chieftains. Donal Mór O'Brien, king of Thomond was the most prolific founder, being associated with the establishment of five monasteries with his son and successor founder of one. Family names included among the founders were O'Carroll, Mc Murrough, Mc Dermott, O'Farrell, O'More, O'Neill and O'Connor representing territories such as Uriel, Thomond, Moylurg, Annaly, Ossory, Idrone and Tirconnel. It was noted that these names offer a final glimpse of Ireland on the cusp of change just prior to the time when the Anglo-Norman adventurers would arrive and the

country would change forever. It was observed that this change is perhaps nowhere more tangible than in the foundation charters of the Irish Cistercian houses where so many of the placenames associated with the specific foundation bear no resemblance to the names offered in the sixteenth century.

The founders of the Anglo-Norman houses were equally all high status individuals with lords, earls, and the wife of a lord and daughter of a king among the patrons. The most high profile of these founders was William the Earl Marshal who founded two monasteries within his lordship of Leinster.

The second part of this chapter dealt with foundation charters. This portion of the study determined that foundation or re-confirmation charters are extant for Mellifont, Maigue, Newry, Inishlounaght, Jerpoint, Killenny, Holy Cross, Dunbrody, Kilcooley, Tintern, Duiske and Abington. Of the twelve, seven were situated within the modern province of Leinster, five in Munster and one in Ulster. It was decided that, as the main area of study in this paper is Leinster in addition to the seven situated there, only Kilcooley and Maigue would also be discussed. The reason for the inclusion of Kilcooley lies in its proximity to Leinster and as the charter for Maigue contains many placenames of various roots and forms a discussion of these was also included.

The content of the charters allowed a glimpse of the organization of the monastic lands to appear, where possible the locations were identified and any points of interest discussed. The most notable information to emerge was that

both natural boundaries and roadways were used to demarcate the monastic lands; this is a point that received more attention in chapter three.

In addition to the above information the various liberties and customs that were granted to particular monasteries were also discussed and it was found that the privileges were extensive and gave great power to the monasteries.

Chapter three dealt with Leinster. Leinster was the principal area of study and as such the first step was to demarcate this area. This in itself raised a number of interesting points that helped to underline the huge social and economic changes which the Cistercians had to deal with and adapt to throughout the period. The Leinster, which was discussed at the outset of the chapter, was very different to the province that later emerged. It was established that the territory as it stood when the Cistercians first settled in Ireland initially comprised a number of kingdoms ruled by particular clans. The kingdom of Ossory provided a focus for the early part of the chapter as its boundaries were clear and it could be argued that, in the early period, it was home to four Cistercian monasteries. The impact of the twelfth century church reform in relation to the Synods allowed for a re-enforcement of the boundaries of the kingdom of Ossory, and as such provides a dual template for study.

The internal political dissent within the wider area of Leinster prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans was also discussed, however, it is the period encompassed by the arrival and subsequent settlement of these men that provide the best sources. The progress of the men through Leinster was chronicled and

from these records information pertaining to the landscape and physical boundaries of the kingdoms was gleaned. With settlement came political change and as a result the territory was divided among the leaders of the Anglo-Normans. These changes were discussed as was the fact that the Gaelic clans were, in many cases removed from positions of power within their communities. This is a point to which reference was made a number of times throughout the study.

The death of Anselm Marshal in 1247 caused Leinster to be divided into five portions and from the division the thirteenth-century boundaries of the lordship are clear. A major point in relation to the division of Leinster in this period is that each of the divisions appears to incorporate a portion of Cistercian lands as part of these boundaries. The re-establishment of resident Ormond power in 1515 and its subsequent impact was also examined as was the creation of the Pale. The boundaries of Leinster in the period after the arrival of the Anglo-Normans but before the creation of the Pale were outlined and mapped. The situation of the Cistercian monasteries within this territory was discussed.

The second part of this chapter sought to discuss the physical landscape into which the Cistercians settled and the changes which were wrought within this landscape in the period under study. The main rivers and mountain ranges were discussed and the associated social impact of these natural barriers was commented on. It was found that the wood cover was still extensive in various parts of the country which were identified and mapped with particular attention

paid to Leinster. The next features to be discussed were road and route ways. The proximity of the Cistercian monasteries to such features was a central question in this thesis. It was found, that in Leinster, overwhelming evidence was presented, which indicates that Cistercian monasteries were constructed in very close proximity to roadways, in some cases roads passed virtually beside the monastery. In other cases, such as at Baltinglass a roadway was seen to have made a definite diversion in order to pass closer to the location of a monastery. In situations such as at Duiske where the nearest road may have been situated a few miles away the monastery was positioned very close to a major river, which was navigable to a port. In addition a huge number of passes were identified through various natural barriers, particularly mountains. All of the findings indicate that medieval Ireland and particularly Leinster was very well serviced with road and route ways prior to and during the period of Cistercian occupation.

The second main finding in this chapter was also in relation to the physical location of the monasteries. It was found that in all cases within Leinster the Cistercian houses were situated in areas of strategic importance either in locations that corresponded with the internal or external boundaries of Leinster and within the earlier kingdoms and territories, which were present prior to the changes of the late twelfth century and subsequent years.

When all of the above information is assessed it must point to the willing involvement of the Cistercian Order in the political situation of the later

province. The extensive patronage of the Order by the Gaelic nobility indicates a high level of interdependence on the two groups where the Cistercians could not have expanded at the rate with which they obviously did without the help of the patrons. Conversely the power of the church was such that having a Cistercian monastery associated with a particular family would have had huge social connotations. It is not possible to suggest that the strategic location of these monasteries and their proximity to major communication routes and social and political boundaries was an accident. In all, the situation of the monasteries would appear to indicate a high level of organisation and communication between the monks and their patrons possibly prior to foundation. That is not to say that the only reason that a monastery was located in a particular place was due to political intrigue and a planned long term outlook. Leinster was a relatively small territory in which to fit so many Cistercian monasteries and it would only be expected that some of them would have been placed in important and significant areas. The fact that all of the houses were in important physical locations cannot be overlooked and must point to a deeper reason.

The main aim of chapter 4 was to try to ascertain firstly if a standard plan existed for the layout of the monastic complex and if so, is it a plan to which the Irish houses adhered. In addition it was hoped that through a discussion of the various elements of the complex a clear picture of life within the Cistercian monasteries in medieval Ireland would emerge. It was anticipated that a

discussion of the various buildings and associated features would give an insight into both the land requirements and skills of the monks.

The role of the founder and the reasons for patronage were briefly discussed before moving on to highlight the natural resources that were required. Obviously water was an essential element, but so too was the proximity of stone and timber. It was noted that access to the latter two elements was often assured within the foundation charter, such as happened at Duiske and Dunbrody. While the layout of the monastery was of a standard form it does not appear that the ancillary buildings were required to follow suit. From various sources it was established that the complex was walled, indeed two outer walls appear to have been the norm, both with gate-houses and these were often two storey structures.

In relation to the expected features within these walls it was found that gardens were a standard feature and these were divided into a number of categories, which included physic gardens, herb gardens, kitchen and ornamental gardens in addition to orchards. Bees, hazel and various types of vegetables and herbs would have been found in the gardens and the associated materials and tools must have been stored in close proximity. The water requirements within the monastery were next discussed and this was obviously used for sanitation and washing but also for the activation of bellows in the forge, the turning of mill wheels and the filling of fishponds. Other additional buildings would have included workshops for the smith, cobbler, tanner, glazier,

the infirmaries, brew house, bake house, laundry, granary, stables and storerooms and these, and other discussed, would all have been a common sight within the complex. It is known that a tannery was located at St Mary's abbey and brick and lime kilns along with a system of bell-founding and salt pans would all have been required.

A large number of mills were associated with the Irish Cistercian houses and these were also detailed. These Irish mills took various forms with a list of thirty nine mills drawn up from various sources. While most of these were vertical water mills other types including horse mills, tide mills and salt mills were also recorded. It was seen that no mention was made of any fulling mills, iron mills, bark mills or windmills but the possibility of their presence in Irish medieval Cistercian monasteries cannot be discounted. It is worthy to note that most of the monasteries appear to record the presence of a mill either within the complex itself or very close to the outer wall.

Hay-barns, woolhouses, granaries, dovecotes and fishponds were all discussed as part of the system that existed outside the complex. The possible types of fish consumed were outlined and the methods of preservation discussed. Many weirs were recorded among the possessions of the Irish monasteries and the type, location and valuation of these was examined.

The study next moved to the requirement for land. While the acreages and breakdown of land type will be discussed in detail in chapter seven some general observations were made here. In a broad sense the land appears to have

consisted of a large tract of arable and pasture land with small acreages of wood, meadow and mountain mentioned in some cases. Not all houses included pasture land within the demesne, neither did all houses have what was termed 'demesne land' rather the area that was nearest the monastery at a number of houses was what was termed a vill. These vills usually contained a number of cottages, houses or tenements and in some cases the rent was payment in kind. From the extents, vills were recorded at seven houses: Abbeyleix, Chore, Jerpoint, Duiske, Bective, Hore and Tintern Abbey with cottages recorded at two monasteries, Jerpoint having eight and Duiske, twenty-two. In this case the demesne land appears to refer to an area of land that was situated close to the monastery as opposed to the entire lands associated with the manor, which would be the usual definition. It is probable that the demesne land was set aside in order to allow the monks to engage in manual labour but still be close enough to the monastery to be able to return at the designated times for the divine offices.

Obviously the main requirement was in relation to arable and pasture production and so the main cereal types and animal species were detailed. A discussion of the types and varieties of crops grown found that wheat, oats, barley, rye, flax, hemp, peas and beans would all have been common crops on the Cistercian lands, and the uses of each crop was examined.

A late thirteenth-century valuation of animals from Dunbrody abbey allowed a table to be drawn up which produced interesting results. The least

value was given to the hoggets, and while two-year-old sheep were not at all valuable in their own right, their value lay in their wool. The ewe could be used for milk and cheese but was principally used for breeding. The cow and heifer were valued at almost the same and it was seen that these animals were used for meat for the guests and used as a source of milk, leather and tallow. A bull and ox were useful for breeding but used primarily for work, and as such were very valuable. The highest valuation was retained for horses and while this is not unusual, what may be surprising here is the number of horses mentioned in the plea roll for this monastery. Thirteen horses were removed from a grange of the monastery and as all of the monasteries, horses would be expected to be found at a central location, particularly a grange, it may be assumed that the monastery owned many more than thirteen horses.

Overall the numbers of sheep retained on the lands of the Irish Cistercians far outweighed the numbers of cattle but this was solely because of the wool trade. It is clear that the larger houses in Ireland must have had thousands of sheep each year. When wool production was at its peak the management of the flocks took on an even more important dimension. In many cases the flocks were moved during the summer into upland pastures where the healthier wethers were left to over winter while the ewes and younger sheep were brought down to the lower ground. The placenames evidence supporting this idea of the movement of sheep and other associated dimensions of sheep rearing was examined.

Other requirements and uses of the land were also discussed and it was suggested that hunting, the keeping of deer parks, and various types of mining all had a role to play within the lives of the monks and brothers.

In order to set all of the information in relation to food production and economics into context chapter six sought to determine the kind of economy and society in which the Cistercians shared. The chapter began with a comparison of the agricultural situation between Ireland and England and analysed the owners of the land during the period. Distinct periods were identified in relation to the agricultural situation in Ireland. The first period examined lies in the phase of Gaelic dominance prior to the arrival of the reform orders and the Anglo-Normans. In this earlier time the country was identified as being sparsely populated, the economy was predominately pastoral and the settlements were scattered and tended to be temporary. The land utilisation was of low intensity and the most common form was either grazing or long-fallow cultivation. During this time oats and flax were the most widespread cereals produced with barley and wheat grown to a lesser extent. Cattle were the most common animal type to be found. This changed during the second phase which witnessed a large increase in the amount of grain cultivated with Leinster and east Munster being the greatest producers.

However, it was seen that this trend changed again because it was found that in the early fourteenth century cereal production declined and the land productivity either remained static or fell. The fluctuation in cereal prices was

noted and discussed and it was observed that some major influence or influences were causing these changes. The annals and other contemporary sources were examined for any references which might indicate the reasons for these changes. Through this study it was found that references to war, famine and disease were plentiful for the early years of the fourteenth century and the impact of each of these was discussed in turn.

It was ascertained that the king also imposed a number of taxations on his subjects during the late thirteenth century and these, in addition to the huge sums of money which were passing from the Irish treasury into the war effort caused a huge drain on resources in Ireland. It was seen that the system of purveyance was imposed in 1244 and in addition to this, huge amounts of crops and other foodstuffs were exported to aid the troops in Wales, Scotland and Gascony. It was seen that this demand for food continued right through the thirteenth century and into the early years of the next when a temporary hiatus was experienced, until that is Robert Bruce continued the attack right up to his defeat of Edward at Bannockburn in 1314. Another reason for this pause in the food supply was found to have had a root in the fact that by 1306 the Irish treasury was empty. The years 1322 and 1323, when purveyance ended, again saw Edward demanding supplies from Ireland but it was determined that the amounts never matched those of the earlier period. By that time another reason was identified in that by 1322 Ireland had suffered greatly both from the arrival of the Bruces and the famine of 1315-18 which affected much of western Europe.

It was seen that the 1315-18 famine was only one in a series of famines, plagues, bad harvests, murrains within animals and appalling weather conditions recorded. Taking the huge drain which had occurred on the Irish resources during the period detailed above into consideration, the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries posed huge challenges to the people in order to stay alive not to mention to thrive. Worse was to come with mention in the annals of the great plague reaching Irish shores in 1349. This along with the climatic changes of the preceding century encouraged the spread of the pneumonic plague and as such the mortality rates were even higher. It was determined the population of Ireland was reduced by at least 40% as a result of the Black Death, and it was presumed that this figure was exacerbated by the previous famines and adverse conditions.

The impacts of the difficulties outlined above were discussed. In relation to Leinster it was found that the areas of Anglo-Norman dominance were worst affected and this led to a change in the status quo, a situation which allowed the Gaelic clans to regroup and impinge on the Norman strongholds such as Dunamase and Lea and on territories such as the present counties of Laois and Offaly. By the fifteenth century the Anglo-Norman colony had been reduced in size to a z-shaped piece of land which stretched from Greencastle, county Down to Waterford city.

Another point which came to light was the impact of the mortality rates. Such high mortality rates were a huge issue in themselves because apart from the

social issues and problems that so many deaths raised another major factor was in relation to the available workforce. In order to stabilise wages in the fifteenth century, the parliament of 1409-10 decreed that labourers were only to be paid at the rates which existed before the great plague. The statute of labourers contains information relating to wages paid to virtually all members of the workforce and these were examined in detail. The monasteries were particularly affected by both the mortality rates and the increased cost of labour because in the later fourteenth century they had less men available within the monasteries to carry out maintenance and agricultural work.

The role of the wool trade was next examined and it was observed that one of the major factors in turning Ireland from pasture to arable producers was the utilisation of sheep and the reasons for this were outlined. In all the changes introduced by both the Cistercians and the Anglo-Normans revolutionised farming in medieval Ireland. With the exception of shearing, the keeping of sheep was not labour intensive and by selling the wool the monks were maintaining a steady income. However, it was seen that problems arose by the second part of the thirteenth century when the monks began to fore sell their wool. Evidence of the sales of wool from Welsh, English and Irish houses was presented and discussed. It was noted that the last two decades of the thirteenth century was the time of the most virulent outbreak of sheep scab in England which devastated the flock and so the Italian merchant bankers turned to Ireland in order to make up the losses. Even in the earlier part of the thirteenth century

much wool was exported from Ireland by Flemish and Florentine merchants in addition to those in London and Gascony and this was discussed. It was noted that in 1217 Henry III had borrowed money from the Florentine merchants to pay his debts to the king of France. The identification of loans by the bankers to the kings of England was a recurring theme in this chapter.

The Italian merchant bankers were the main agents of wool sales throughout the thirteenth century and particular attention was paid to the firms of Lucca of whom huge amounts of references were found in contemporary documents. In 1275 the great new custom was granted to the king by the magnates of Ireland and so it was seen that the wool export trade came under the total control of the Italian merchant bankers. Many examples of the value of the custom was presented in this chapter but perhaps the most significant statistic presented showed that between May 1275 and Michaelmas of 1280 £5171 18s 60 was paid into the exchequer by the merchants of Lucca as part of this collection. It was seen that in 1284 the king ordered that the entire amount of the great custom was to be deposited with the Receiver of Wales and this money was used primarily to wall castles and towns in Wales. These points and the others presented in the chapter serve to reinforce those made above in relation to the export of food at this time.

It was seen that when Edward resumed control of Wales one quarter of the cost for the eight castles that he fortified came from Ireland. However Edward was not the only English king to have borrowed money from the

bankers and the fact that King John, King Richard, Henry III all borrowed from the bankers was examined. At the death of Edward I, it was seen that the king owed in excess of £118,000 to the Italian merchant bankers and this debt was passed to his son who by the time of his own death had increased the debt to over £400,000 and in 1340, King Edward III owed Florentine bankers £1,000,000 and as such the only option he had was to declare the monarchy bankrupt.

The final part of this chapter aimed to discuss the impact of all these changes on the monasteries, it was decided to take one monastery and conduct a case study. The monastery chosen was Jerpoint Abbey for a number of reasons which were outlined. From the study it became clear that prior to the fourteenth century little decoration would have been evident within the abbey although the monastery must have been on a secure financial footing. While no detailed information remains in relation to the impact of mortality rates, loss of harvests, changes in benefactors and the natural disasters outlined above is available, it is clear that the fourteenth century was a period when very little maintenance or building work took place in Jerpoint. Indeed two letters, one dating to 1374 and the other between 1390 and 1440 both indicate that the fabric of the building was in severe distress. It was seen that by the fifteenth century, this situation was reversed with the construction of the tower and cloister and the rebuilding of various parts of the monastery. A new type of funerary monument emerged in this period, and these included the cadaver and weeper tombs. The *mater dolorosa* and the *danse macabre* also emerged in this period. The weeper tombs

of Jerpoint were discussed and it was noted that the increased decoration of the fifteenth century culminated in Jerpoint with the spectacular carvings of the cloister arcade. It was also noted that this development in decoration was brought about by an increase in patronage. It was suggested that this renewed patronage had its origins in the effects of the previous century.

The direction in which the Cistercian monasteries moved by the early fifteenth century has been taken by many as a sign that the order was again in need of reform however an opposing view was presented in this paper. It is argued here that it is entirely possible that the reasons for the changes of the fifteenth century were brought about by communities who were only too well aware of the disastrous impact of the previous centuries. It was stated that an order that was dependent on self sufficiency must have realised that they could not have survived without adapting to the new circumstances in which they found themselves. It was only through embracing the challenges, adapting to the changes and accepting an increased patronage that the order could hope to survive into the next century. This change in attitude has no better example than the cloister arcade of Jerpoint abbey.

The main aim of chapter six was to identify any additional lands which had been granted to particular monasteries after the initial foundation phase had passed. Entries were included for Mellifont, Baltinglass, Jerpoint, Killenny, Duiske, Kilcooley, Dunbrody, and Tintern. The grants were outlined and discussed.

Few entries were identified for Mellifont but, with the exception of Baltinglass numerous substantial additional portions of land were granted to the other houses. It was also seen that some monasteries appear to have begun to lease out portions of their possessions between 1500 and c. 1540.

Chapter seven aimed to deal with a number of specific topics relating to the closure of the Cistercian monasteries in the mid sixteenth century. The main element here was a discussion of the land type which the monasteries were in possession of at dissolution.

The first point which must be made is that not all of the monasteries were closed at this time. Of the thirty seven Cistercian houses which lasted throughout the medieval period only twenty were recorded within the *Extents of Irish monastic possessions* as being dissolved in the period 1536-41. Fourteen of the twenty monasteries were situated in the modern province of Leinster which constitutes the principle area of study. In addition the possessions of two more houses, namely Glanwdyn and Killenny, are incorporated within the returns for the larger houses to which they were made subject in the thirteenth century. From the above figures it is clear that all of the Cistercian monasteries which were positioned within Leinster were dissolved during the period of the general dissolution of the religious houses in the mid sixteenth century.

What is evident from the Extents is that only the eastern and southern portion of the country was examined in any detail. In many respects the houses in the west and north-west appear to have been left to their own devices.

Presumably the reason for this is that these particular monasteries were not situated in the strategically important areas which were situated outside the Pale but were still close enough to impact greatly on the economic wellbeing of Dublin and the major ports of the east coast. When one considers the dire fiscal situation of the monarch as compared to the lands held by the monasteries and the potential income from the leasing of these lands the thinking behind the dissolution of the religious houses becomes clear. However, when one also considers the privileges which had been granted to these houses as discussed in chapter two it is equally clear that the monasteries held huge power in particular areas and potentially these rights, in the hands of the king, could be used for substantial monetary gain.

From the extents the physical state of the remaining buildings was examined. It is clear that on the whole the monastery buildings were, for the greater part, in a reasonable to good state of repair. Baltinglass Abbey would not belong to this category but the entry for this monastery is important because of the fact that the precinct wall is referred to. The remains of particular monasteries such as the complex of Duiske Abbey or Abbeyleix was said to have been worth nothing, however a church, cemetery, cloister, orchard and garden were all listed as still being present. While these structures may not have been in a perfect state of repair it is significant that no monastery in Leinster was recorded as being totally derelict. In other words, all of the Cistercian monasteries were functioning and were in reasonable repair right up to the

inventories being taken. In some cases these records were not compiled until four years after the monasteries were dissolved. By stating that the outer buildings were in need of repair by that time would not have been surprising, perhaps the most notable point is that the outer buildings were standing at all so long after the demise of the monasteries.

Another point which arises from an examination of the remains of the monasteries and outer buildings is that there is a certain uniformity in relation to the make up of the complex. In many cases a complex is recorded in the first instance, gardens, water mills, a cemetery and outer buildings were present at many houses at their closure which supports the points made in chapter four and also indicate that the monks still required use of these structures right up to the point of the closure of the house. In other words a certain level of self sufficiency was still adhered to until the mid sixteenth century.

This point also seems to be true for the houses which were situated outside of Leinster, for example the lands of the three Cork houses of Tracton, Fermoy and Chore Abbeys are almost all recorded as waste but yet the monasteries and the associated buildings appear to have been in reasonable repair. The abbey churches of all three are recorded as being used as parish churches and obviously this indicates a local secular community. The precinct is referred to at Chore.

The second area of study and the main focus of the chapter are in relation to the lands held by the various monasteries within Leinster at dissolution. It

was decided to include information from the extents pertaining to houses outside of this province for comparison purposes. Three main points were examined: firstly the amount of land which each monastery held and the location of that land was established. Secondly the type of land found was discussed and an overall breakdown of arable, pasture, moor, meadow, mountain or woodland was established. Thirdly the amount of waste land was determined, the reasons for this wastage was discussed. The various graphs were included to supply an image of this quantitative data.

A difference in trend is evident between the monasteries in the kingdom of Meath and the medieval province of Leinster in relation to the cultivation practices with a major emphasis on arable production in Meath. The abbeys of Bective and Granard in particular appear to have predominately given over to arable farming.

Regional differences are also apparent within the kingdom of Meath in relation to the measurement of land with 'quarters' used at the monastery of Granard. With the exception of one portion all of the land at this monastery was divided into fractions of thirty acres. Granard also, like Mellifont, had a relatively large number of churches distributed across its holding.

From the overall findings it is clear that by 1536-41 the land was predominately under arable cultivation. Of the overall land value of 28,468.41 acres 23,175 acres were returned as arable land. This equates to 81.4% of the total. In relation to pasture the percentage figure is 11.7% or 3,344.5 acres. The

figure for the area under wood was 2.4%, with figures of 0.9%, 0.4%, 0.7% and 2.5% for moor, meadow, mountain and miscellaneous respectively. The figure in the miscellaneous category is high because of the fact that 580 acres from Maure and one hundred acres from St Mary's were not broken down into any land type. In relation to Leinster 84% was returned as arable, 10.7% pasture, 2.5% wood, 1% moor, 0.5% meadow, 0.9% mountain and 0.5% miscellaneous. When compared with the overall figures it can be stated that more arable, wood, moor and meadow land was found in Leinster. The most interesting fact from this information is the absolute preponderance of arable farming right across the monasteries recorded. It was also suggested that at its peak the Cistercian order in medieval Ireland was in possession of at least 500,000 statute acres of land.

During the examination of the land question it was possible to discuss the location of the granges of many of the monasteries. Surprisingly a number of grange buildings were identified and, as far as possible, a sample number of these were located in the present landscape. A number of points came to light from this study.

In areas of Leinster where much of the land was recorded as waste a high proportion of castles were recorded on the granges. In areas where the amount of waste was relatively low a mixture of castles and houses were recorded. Presumably this indicates that an element of defence was incorporated in the construction of the grange buildings in particular areas. Areas which had no waste land had very few of either.

A difference was noted between the granges situated on the lands of the houses which were originally part of the kingdom of Meath and those which were always part of Leinster with the former lands having a different grange system whereby the land was almost exclusively divided among the lay tenants with the monastery providing a church and priest. This system was not as extensive within the province of Leinster. What must be concluded here is that the Cistercian houses of Meath did not suffer the same level of interference from Irish rebels as did houses in particular parts of Leinster.

The location of the grange castles in Leinster appears to follow the internal boundaries between the Uí Chennselaig territory and the rest of Leinster. This follows the path at the base of the Blackstairs Mountains and on southwards by the river Barrow into Wexford. Much unrest is recorded with the clans of the Kavanaghs, the Mc Murroughs, the O Neills, O'Tuailles and other mentioned as being the main perpetrators. It is interesting, and presumably significant that much of this activity occurred on the lands of Baltinglass abbey which were situated in an upland area. From the period of the arrival of the Anglo-Normans the Gaelic Irish were forced into these upland areas. Indeed, as discussed in chapter five some suggest that the reasons why the Gaelic were not affected as badly as the Normans in the period encompassing the Black Death was because there were dwelling in these higher altitude areas. It would appear that this still held true in the sixteenth century.

Probably the most significant point to emerge from this portion of study is the fact that physical remains of some Cistercian monastic granges still stand in Leinster today.

The reasons for the dissolution are not central to this thesis but the distribution of the lands held by the Cistercian order at this time is, particularly in relation to Leinster. The extent and organisation of that land has been clearly detailed in the preceding chapter and a number of observations can be made. While Leinster is the main area of study it is useful to include houses from outside this remit in order to gain a balanced view of the situation in the sixteenth century. It can be said firstly that Leinster differs from the other provinces in that all of the monasteries of Leinster are included in Whites edition of the extents of monastic possessions and this can not be said for any of the other three provinces. Indeed no reference at all exists in this source in relation to monasteries in Connacht or Ulster. No receipts are recorded for a small number of the Leinster houses and this presumably indicates that the land from these monasteries was of no value otherwise it would surely have been included.

On the whole it can be said that the holdings of the order in the province of Leinster in the mid sixteenth century were substantial. It is acceptable to state that this was not the period when the land-holding of the order was at its peak but the monasteries do appear to have been, in general, in quite a good state. Exceptions to this appear on both sides. Much of the land of Baltinglass, Tintern and Dunbrody is returned as waste; in all cases the reasons are given as rebellion

amongst the Irish tribes. The same can be said to a lesser extent for Duiske Abbey. Taking the counties into consideration it would seem that Wexford and Wicklow had been subjected to serious warfare and subsequent destruction by the tribes discussed above. This would equate well with the discussion in an earlier chapter with reference to the physical barriers of Leinster. The areas of greatest destruction may be identified as being situated near to the internal boundaries of the province. On the other hand Kilkenny would seem to be in an exceptional condition with almost no land recorded as waste, and the possessions of Jerpoint were in a good state of production. However, Mellifont must be held as the ideal organisation of Cistercian lands in the country at dissolution. Many crops were in production and, although the monastery was not in a great state of repair churches and priests were spread right across the lands ensuring religious instruction for its many lay tenants.

What is clear is that the monks had adapted well to the situation in which they found themselves by the sixteenth century. Although the purists of the order probably did not agree with the direction taken the realists saw that without the integration of the secular world the monasteries simply could not have continued after the fifteenth century. Instead of allowing the monasteries and holdings to fall into disrepair or into secular hands the monks diversified once again and by using tenants they ensured the continuation of the monasteries in relation to production and the essentials required to survive. They bound the community to them by providing a sound economic platform,

they continued to be their moral and religious bastion and ensured that, by binding the livelihoods of the populace to the monasteries, it would be more difficult for any magnate to wrest their lands away. The only one who would have the power to remove the lands from the monasteries was the head of the church or the King.

An exact figure of acreage is simply not possible to determine for a number of reasons one of which is that the Extents, when compared to the later Fiants, may not have recorded all possessions of the monasteries held at dissolution. Another major factor is that when recording lands the actual acreage was not included, where the placenames is still identifiable an estimation of the amount may be ascertained from the placename index but it is not always possible to identify the names in the modern landscape. Indeed this is a recurring theme across this work where many places named in various centuries are just not identifiable in the present time. In the case of particular monasteries some of the possessions can only be identified on the *Delinatio Hibernica* and others only on the Ordnance Survey's Discovery Series. Interestingly for the majority of placenames included most were recorded as waste at dissolution.

In relation to the lands of Baltinglass Abbey it is clear that the native Irish clans were an important element in the fabric of the society in this area of Leinster. Presumably this would indicate that they were dwelling in the upland and mountainous areas as had been suggested by earlier historians. Three native Irish families are specifically mentioned as causing much destruction to the lands

of the abbey in the year before it was dissolved. It is not altogether whether their problems were in any way related to the presence of the monks or whether the clans objected to the dissolution, and in a strange way were trying to protect the lands of the monastery which was presumably providing their people with work and shelter. The fact that three clans were involved could also indicate that they were each vying for dominance and were trying to wrest control of the lands from the ailing monastery. In all the list of possessions would, on the surface point to a monastery which was beginning to fall into disrepair and whose lands were in a serious state of un-cultivation with no chance of rents coming from barren land. On taking a close look it is evident that this widespread destruction only began in the year before the monastery was dissolved and in actual fact, until that summer of 1536 Baltinglass Abbey must have been in a sound state with the land still producing and the complex virtually intact. The level of involvement of the native clans points to a barely suppressed rage which, when the monks were removed from the equation, must have been ready to explode.

Differences are apparent between the provinces, for example the demesne lands of Tracton Abbey appears not to have been broken up or distributed among the secular community which is a marked difference with the houses in Leinster which have been examined above. In addition the lands owned by Tracton seem not to have been divided into smaller parcels, as happened with many other monasteries, instead the monastery maintained a distribution pattern

of large areas of arable and pasture land in each area that they are recorded as holding.

Although much of the land recorded in certain parts of Leinster such as Carlow, Wicklow and Wexford were recorded as waste practically nothing in that province compares with the huge amounts of waste land which is recorded for the three Cork monasteries where virtually all of the land is returned as waste.

The organization of the lands at Duiske Abbey appears to be slightly different to many of the other monasteries in the way in which the secular world was accommodated. In addition to the cottages situated in the vill of Duiske four other clusters of cottages are evident with fourteen cottages at the abbey's land Rayhendonor, four at Kyllen, twelve at the Grange of Tollaghanny and eleven cottages situated at the Grange of William Carraghe. While many other monasteries, Mellifont in particular, had large numbers of cottages associated with it none seem to have followed the same pattern and certainly no other monastery listed in the extents had so much lay involvement recorded at the granges.

Interestingly the returns for Mellifont abbey record very few granges or possible grange buildings. This is in direct contrast with, say Baltinglass who were in possession of a number of named granges and associated castellated structures. It is also true however that Baltinglass recorded much unrest and had large amounts of land laid waste by the Irish clans where Mellifont did not. It is

perhaps possible that the construction of these castles on the lands of Baltinglass had more to do with the monks trying to maintain a strong presence in the area than simply being granges. It is also possible that the occupiers of the granges needed more than simple houses to protect them in these obviously dangerous areas. Conversely very little unrest is recorded at Mellifont and this may have allowed the lay-brothers to stay in more acceptable monastic type grange buildings which were of simple construction and not castles. It is also possible that the distribution of these castles may indicate regional differences. Most of the castles listed are located in the earlier territory of Leinster whereas Mellifont only became part of Leinster much later, originally being a part of the kingdom of Meath.

Two points are worth noting in relation to the fact that Mellifont abbey had a large number of chapels across its lands and in 1541 these were serviced by former monks of the monastery. Firstly the monastery had a highly organized system of providing worship across its property for the lay tenants. This practice marks a change from the early days of the Cistercians in Ireland, but perhaps this activity is what enabled the Order to survive for so long, and this ensured that the people were still receiving some sort of religious education. A similar situation appears to have existed at Granard. Secondly, in relation to Mellifont the former monks were allowed, under a patent issued by King Henry VIII, to officiate in these chapels, presumably this means that the monks were allowed to continue with the Mass and other Roman Catholic practices. This would oppose

the idea that the monasteries were closed because of the religious aspect and would support the notion of the King wanting the lands and underline the financial aspect of the dissolution rather than the religious.

The monastic holding at Bective was almost exclusively partitioned between lay tenants with each portion of the monastery's lands divided between named people. Most of the parcels of land comprised of in excess of one hundred acres of land. This division of land reflects the organization of the lands at Mellifont where the tenants were farming the area in which they lived, what could be termed a secular grange where the tenants replaced the lay-brothers and the cottages replaced the grange building.

The presence of Richard O'Ferrall as abbot of Bective at the dissolution of that house marks a new dimension in the life of the Irish Cistercians in the sixteenth century. Presumably this Richard was a member of the O'Ferrall Kings of Annally who, it has long been thought held control over the monastery and were involved in the appointment of abbots for many years. This is perhaps the first real glimpse of political and dynastic interference by a patron on the foundation as late as the sixteenth century.

In relation to the land breakdown the total lack of scrub land, wood land, bog or marsh reflects well on the agricultural skills of the monks, who over the previous centuries must have farmed well, and turned most of their holding into arable land, thereby fulfilling the Rule and maximizing their yields.

Two incontrovertible points are immediately evident from the returns listed at dissolution. The monasteries can be placed in three categories, some were almost totally barren, some hold large amounts of waste land but are still in a position to produce from the remaining land and then other monasteries appear to be almost untouched. These latter houses are producing much from the land, have a large secular population for whom the monks are providing religious education and in all appear to have been maintaining their monasteries and lands right up to the dissolution. This is not to say that the houses were not under pressure, and did not feel the burdens but the monks at these locations do seem to have been willing to work until the end, to have taken care of their secular tenants, and they seem to have been doing a good job of protecting their lands and producing their crops right up until the time when the King decreed otherwise.

One other essential point must be made about the closure of the monasteries. It is clear from the records of the lands held that the dissolution caused a major shift in land-holding pattern to take place. In this period immediately post dissolution, the land which had been owned for, in some cases four centuries, by one establishment, was totally and irrevocably changed.

It is clear from the findings of chapter seven that in Leinster at least the monasteries, contrary to the opinion of many, appear to have been in quite a good state of repair and were still cultivating and producing from the land. While this thesis is not about the religious actions of the monks up to the period

of the reformation it must be seen that, through their continued maintenance of their monasteries, their lands and their tenants the monks of the Cistercian Order in Ireland were ready and willing to continue the toil into the late sixteenth century. Whether they still maintained the same religious fervor as those men of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries had is perhaps not up to this generation to say. What can be said is that the Cistercians of the sixteenth century would most likely have found a way to adapt to the changes which society and the King brought in the same way as those men of the late fourteenth century adapted to the huge changes which they witnessed. Chapter eight, the final chapter, sought to discuss this question.

Chapter eight mainly dealt with two elements, firstly the fate of the lands of certain monasteries was detailed these included Jerpoint, Kilcooley, Grey, Bective, Knockmoy, Newry, Fermoy and Inishlounaght. Much of the information presented came from the Fiant Rolls and Diocesan histories and more could have been included but it was decided just to take a sample.

The main finding shows that the break-up of the lands of the monasteries began very soon after the extents were drawn up and the fragmentation of the lands continued throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Obviously the confiscation of land in Cromwellian times had a huge impact of the destiny of that land. In many cases the possessions of a particular monastery was divided between a number of persons shortly after dissolution and as such the land became fragmented almost immediately. In other cases, particularly

evident within the Earldom of Ormond, a certain stability was afforded to the lands during the early post dissolution years as the Earl received most of the grants.

As stated in chapter seven not all of the monasteries were dissolved in the mid sixteenth century, Holy Cross being the best example. In some cases although monasteries were dissolved during the Reformation references to monks still using the name of particular houses was found throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is known that an abbot of Jerpoint attended the General Chapter in the mid sixteenth century. Monks were present in Kilcooley up to at least 1633. Members of the community of Bective were said to have remained in the area until the mid seventh century, and Stephen Shortal was appointed titular abbot of this monastery prior to his death in 1639. The abbot of Knockmoy at dissolution remained abbot *in commendam* until the mid sixteenth century. The year 1646 appears to have been the last date when a member of the community of Inishlounaght can be identified.

It can clearly be stated that the Cistercian monasteries of Leinster in the mid sixteenth century were in a reasonable to good state of repair and production and, contrary to the belief of many, would probably have continued to function well into the seventeenth century had Henry VIII not intervened. Indeed it was seen that even with his intrusion members of the Cistercian Order in Ireland were to be found well into that century and even into the next.

Appendix 1

List of placenames associated with Maigne Abbey taken from the re-confirmation charter which was issued in 1200 by King John

The monastery was situated at Kenelmegan, the other placenames granted are as follows - Athecrokain, Cealcon' ata', Cealcongí, Athen, Ceallmor, Cluaincollam, Cluain Mesradin, Baliidubdi, Baliiduban, Briddain, the grange of, Cluain Melrach, Ceall Mecceril, Balitarsim, Cathirnachongearr, Baliiedain, Baliiriagan, Nahava, the grange of, Enachchuli in Corbali, Culocdir, Bali Idubguirim, Leasswaribin, Baliisoder, Cluain Crectain, Cluain Ichadin in Taballgort, Iglassain, Coracoimgillain, the grange of, Bali Icarrig', Bali Ieda, Bali Ichunin, Bali Ibrenain, Bali Iastchill, Denndirg, Onruadmon Icarrig, Gortnaren Ifedomair, Naglochmile, the grange of, Bali Idub, Leasconmaig, Leasciarmocan, Bali Idelgussa, Magnahengi, Scivil, the ford of, Kilkillin, Kealkillin, Cathircormi, the grange of, Salcuarain, Bali Ichudin, Bali Inacalligi, Crether, the ford of, Crangulligin, Makelkellan, Seagainlag, the grange of, Locgeir, the grange of, Dungeir, a moirty of, Almarain, the vill of, Addarigan, Greal Laochilonbegan, Catercurrith, Rathean, Liamin, Cathirflenn', Magdorach, Camuis, the grange in, Ceallseanig', Bali Ichearbain, Bali Ilemi, Bali Icunin, Conacad, Ceallconill, Tulachbracci, Brug, Cathircuain, Chillconill, Intlevi, the grange of, Ceallcrumtirlapan, Cuilleán in Corbali, Bali Imelinnan, Cuthicathil, Cealcodigi,

Cealladleach in Rapalach, Cellpian, Lathrachlami, Bali Igerridir, Gleannoneolain river, Inisbechtig, Imeachdregingi, Cillnarath, Samir (river Suir), Tulachmin, Daachmuchua river, Bearninnalith.

Appendix 2

Road and route ways

1. *An tSlighe Mhór*

The name translates as 'the great road' but it was also known as the *Eiscir Riada* or the 'ridge of riding'. This great road marks the division of Ireland into two portions, Leath Chuinn and Leath Mhogha and follows the natural route of the eskers which were deposited by the retreating ice of the midlandian ice age.

The road is said to have followed a route from Dublin through Lucan, Celbridge, Taghadoo, Timahoe, Monasteroris, Road, Croghan, Kiltober, Durrow Abbey, Ballycumber, Togher, Ballaghurt, Clonmacnois, Ballinasloe, Aughrim, Kilconnel, Bellafa, Kiltullagh, Clarinbridge.

Manuscript BL 107 states that the Slighe Mór passes through Clonard. Ó Lochlainn states that there are many indications that a road led westward to the ford of Athlone through Enfield, Moyvalley, Clonard, Kinnegad, Kilbride Pass, Milltown Pass, Tyrell's Pass, Killavally, Kilbeggan and Moate.

2. *Slighe Dhála Meic Umhóir*

This may also be called *Belach Muighe Dála* the road of Dála, son of Umhóir. This road is thought to have formed part of the boundary of north Munster.¹ This

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 471.

was the road which connected west Munster with the royal seat of Tara.² The road appears to have passed through Dublin, Drimnagh, Clondalkin, Newcastle, Oughterard, Naas, Newbridge, Kildare, Monasterevan, Togher, Rathleague, Ballyroan, Abbeyleix, Shanahoe, Aghaboe, Borris, Ballaghmore, Roscrea, Dunkerrin, Moneygall, Toomevara, Shanbally, Nenagh, Kilcolman, Carraigatogher, Ballina (Killaloe), Castleconnell, Annacotty, Limerick, Mungret, Kildimo, Kilcornan, Aeskeaton, Foynes and Tarbert.³

3. *Slighe Assail*

This road connects Meath with the province of Connacht, and in so doing appears to cut the province of Meath in two. This road deviated from the *Slighe Mhidluachra* just north of Drogheda and continued along the high ground which is situated to the north of the Boyne, passing through Slane, Navan, Donaghpatrick, Teltown, Kells, Crossakiel, Fore, Kinturk (Castlepollard), Floatbridge, Edgeworthstown, Longford, Cloondara, Termonbarry, Tulsk and on to Rathcroghan.⁴ The junction road with Tara would be from Navan.

4. *Slighe Mhidhluachra*

This road was said to lead from Tara to the other major royal site of *Emain Macha*. The way connected Cell na Sagart, Druim Cáin, Sliabh Fuait, Raith Tréna and Findabair Cuailgne. The road turned north to Crích Conaille (Muirthemne),

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., p. 472.

Cuailgne, Magh Cobha and joined with the *Slighe Chualann* heading into the southern portion of the country.⁵

Ó Lochlainn states that the modern main Dublin to Newry road appears to follow this ancient route with the turn west to the north of Drogheda indicating the junction of the older way with Tara.⁶ The line would then be Dublin, Swords, Balrothery, Clonard, Gormanstown, Drogheda, Drumshallon, Anagasson, Lurgangreen, Dundalk, Moiry Pass, Newry, Banbridge, Moira, Crumlin, Antrim, Kells and Connor, Ballymena, Donaghly (Clough), Armoy and on to Dunseverick.⁷ A number of branch roads led from this main route. From Clough one route led northwest to Dunloy, Ballymoney and the ford of Camus, situated south of Coleraine terminating at Aileach.⁸ A branch led eastwards from Newry to Dundrum and Downpatrick. Another road led west from Antrim to Toombridge, Derry and Tir Conaill.⁹ From Derry, a road went south passing through Strabane, Camus, Ardstraw, Omagh, Agher and Clogher. The last three townlands appear to have many associated features, mostly early Christian ecclesiastical sites.

5. *Slighe Chualann*

This road connected the south eastern portion of the country with one of the main routes to Tara. Ó Lochlainn suggests that this route radiated from

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

Dublin to Tallaght, Saggart, Rathcoole, Killeel, Ballymore Eustace, Dunlavin, Baltinglass, Rathvilly, Tullow, Leighlinbridge, Goresbridge, Ullard, Graig, St Mullins, Ross, Rossbercon and Waterford. This road connects with the main Munster road system at Goresbridge.¹⁰

6. *The Tripartite Life of St Patrick*

(A) From the mouth of the river Delvin a road led to Slane, Tara, Trim, Athboy, Delvin, Moyashel, Mullingar, Dysart and Uisneach before turning north to Ardagh and Longford.

(B) Another road led from Tara to Navan, Teltown, Kells, Crossakiel, Fore, Kinturk, Float Bridge, Abbeylara, Granard, Cloonbroney, Longford, Cloondara, Tremonbarry and Rathcroghan. This road then continued to Elphin, Belangare, Frenchpark, Killarought, Dromod, Ballaghadreen, Tullinarock, Kilmovee, Kilkelly, Kilmaine, Ballinrobe, the bridge of Keel, Partry, Ballintober, the Triangle, Aghagower and Croagh Patrick.

From Drumsna the road crossed the river Boyle at Essmakirk and crossed the river Moy at Bartragh island and then continued on to Enniscrone and Easky by following the coast and on through Skreen, Ballysodare, Sligo, Drumcliff and Ballyshannon. This road continued north to Donegall through Barnasmore, Stranorlar and on to Donaghmore via the Finn valley. From Donaghmore it went through Aileach, Dromin, Carndonagh and Merville, across the Foyle to Magilligan, and across the Bann to Colraine, Dunseverick and Ballycastle before

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 473; Henry Morris, 'The Slighe Cualann', *J.R.S.A.I.* 68 (1938), pp 113-123.

turning south through Armoy and Slemish, then following the Braid valley to the Glere which is situated near to Glenarm, St Conaing's near Carncastle, Glynn, Magheramore and Island Magee, to Rashee which is near Ballyclare and Doagh and from here across the Lagan either at or near Belfast to Knockbreda and Comber. At Comber it travelled west to Finnabrogue which is situated between Sliabh Gullion and Lough Neagh, then through Tullahogue, Disertcreat, Donaghery situated west of Stewartstown, south west to Donaghmore, Clonchar, Killeevan and Donaghmoyn. The roadway joined the Slighe Mhidhluacra here at Donaghmoyn and continued into Leinster.¹¹

The same route joined with the Slighe Mhór at Dunmurraghil approximately three and a half miles north west of Clane. From this point the road went through Clane, Sallins, Naas, Killashee, Kilcullen, Narraghmore, Timolin, Moone, Castledermot, Maganey and Selaty. From Selaty it travelled south along the west bank of the river Barrow to Dind Righ and via Belach Gabhráin to Kilkenny. From here it passed through Kilmanagh, Ballinunty, Ballinure, Dualla, Cashel, Athassel, Kilfeakle, Tipperary, Cullen, Kiltely, Pallas Green, Carnarry, Limerick, Mungret and Patrickswell before turning south east to Singland, then Donaghmore, Ballineety, Loch Gur, Holy Cross, Bruff, Kilmallock, Ardpatrick and Ballyhowra.

A road, which is recorded in the epic the *Táin Bó Cuailgne* is stated to have passed through Mellifont which is also a location on the road mentioned in the

¹¹ Ó Lochlainn, 'Roadways in Ancient Ireland', p. 467.

Fled Bricrend. Macosquin and Monasternenagh are both listed as locations for the road recorded in the *Mesca Uladh* while *Acaldamh na Senórach* recorded Monasterevan, Monasternenagh, Boyle and Baltinglass as placenames on this route.

Evidence also exists for a road beginning in Dublin and passing through Castleknock, Maynooth, Cloncurry, Johnstown, Carbury, Edenderry, Ballylackan, Philipstown, Ballinagar, Geashill, Balliboy, Birr, Shinrone, CloghJordan, Nenagh, Ballina and Killaloe.¹²

Other roads were also present as testified in other sources such as *Talland Étair*, *Congal Clairingeach*, *Lismore Lives*, *Aislinge Meic Conglinne* and *Muirchertach Mac Néill's circuit*.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 472.

Appendix 3

Placenames associated with St Mary's Abbey, Dublin, listed in the Fiants of King Edward VI, 1552, fiant 1083.

The lands of Reynoldstown, Ballybogh, Dubbere, Galrootheston, Clondalkin, Balleroan, Dalkey, Ballybaghill, Ellistown, Gerrardstown and the grange of Portmarnock.¹³ Little Cloneshiaghe, Great Cloneshiaghe, and Cloneshillagh are all listed and these may all be incorporated in Clonsilla. Murragh, Kilcragh, Tobergregan, Howth, Corrstown, Kylmanaghe, Lucan, Huntstown, Blanchardstown, Termonfeken, Donane, Drogheda, Monketown, Sraneduffe, Skreen, Ellistown Reade, Browneston, Ballyluge, Grenoke, Bulleston, Caleston, Great Braneston, Dunboyne, Gibbonstown, Knightstown in Morgallion, Ballynure and Deffytallaghe, Galway, Leixlip, Tibburgan alias Roseraile, and ten shillings rent in Coldreny were all part of the possessions of St Mary's Abbey at dissolution.¹⁴

The rectories of Bloyk, the grange of Balgoighe and Stomenyston which is possibly Stormanstown along with Mayston which may also be known as Manetown are all listed under the possessions.¹⁵ Shilloke, Huntstown, Ballysherwan, Dardistown, Collinstown, Ballymon, the Graunge alias

¹³ *Irish Fiants of the Tudor Sovereigns, 1521-1558, fiant 1083.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Ballychelmer, Kilmcodryke, Clonmyne are also included. Cloneshillaghe, Little Cloneshiaghe, Great Cloneshiaghe are all listed again as is the grange of Portmarnock.¹⁶ Rachenne may be Raheen, Kilcraghe, Brownstown and Little Rathescall are recorded. It is possible that Little Rathescall may be identified as Rathescar in county Louth. Dromecarre may be Drumcondra with Ballycorre possibly either Ballycoolen or Ballycorus. Deffytallaghe, Fertullaghe and Fasaghreban all escape identification presently. Carlow, Daneston, Staffordstown, Kyllene, the Great Kilcarne, Athlumney, Dowestown, Skreen, Gibbenstown, Saint Glanokes, Killanee, Monkstown, Templekieran, Follestown and Staholmog are all recorded.¹⁷ Unfortunately Castellostie, Portsangan, Rossaghe, Maystromme evade identification, however a townland of Portloman still exists in Westmeath and a Knockrath is listed for county Wicklow, it is probable that this is the Knockerathe of St Mary's. All of these locations, principally situated in the counties of Dublin, Louth, Meath and Wicklow constituted a large portion of the abbey holdings.¹⁸ The rent of these lands which were leased to Walter Peppard on 24 June 1552 was set at £310 13s. 7d.¹⁹

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

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Figure 1: Montecassino Abbey (www.google.com)



Figure 2: Cluny Abbey (www.google.com)



Figure 3b: Mellifont Abbey, lands in County Louth

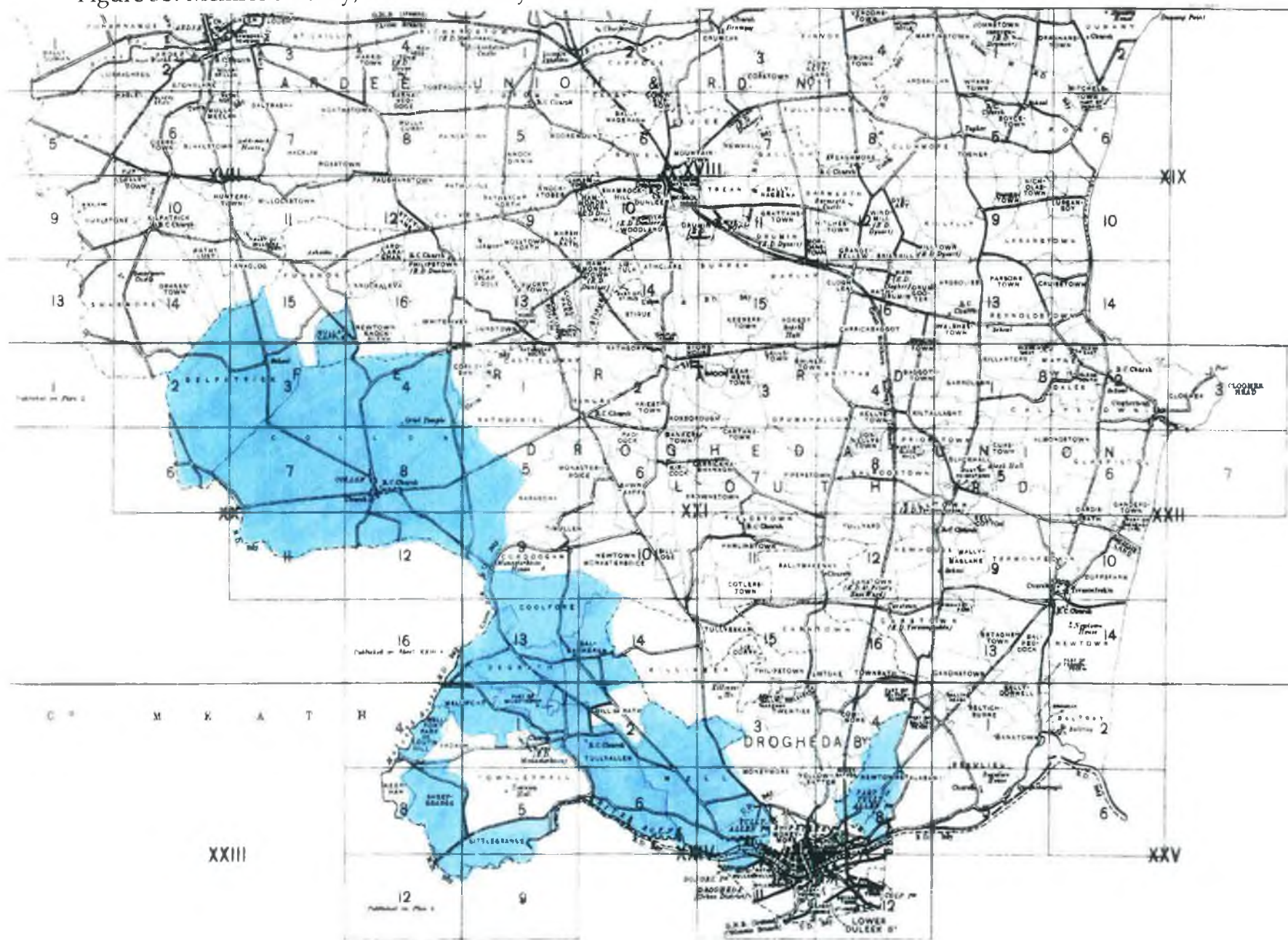


Figure 4: Jerpoint abbey showing proximity of the abbey with Newtown Jerpoint on left. The confluence of the Little Arrigle and the river Nore is also visible. (by the author)



Figure 5: Main portions of lands associated with Jerpoint abbey (blue) and Duiske abbey (red)

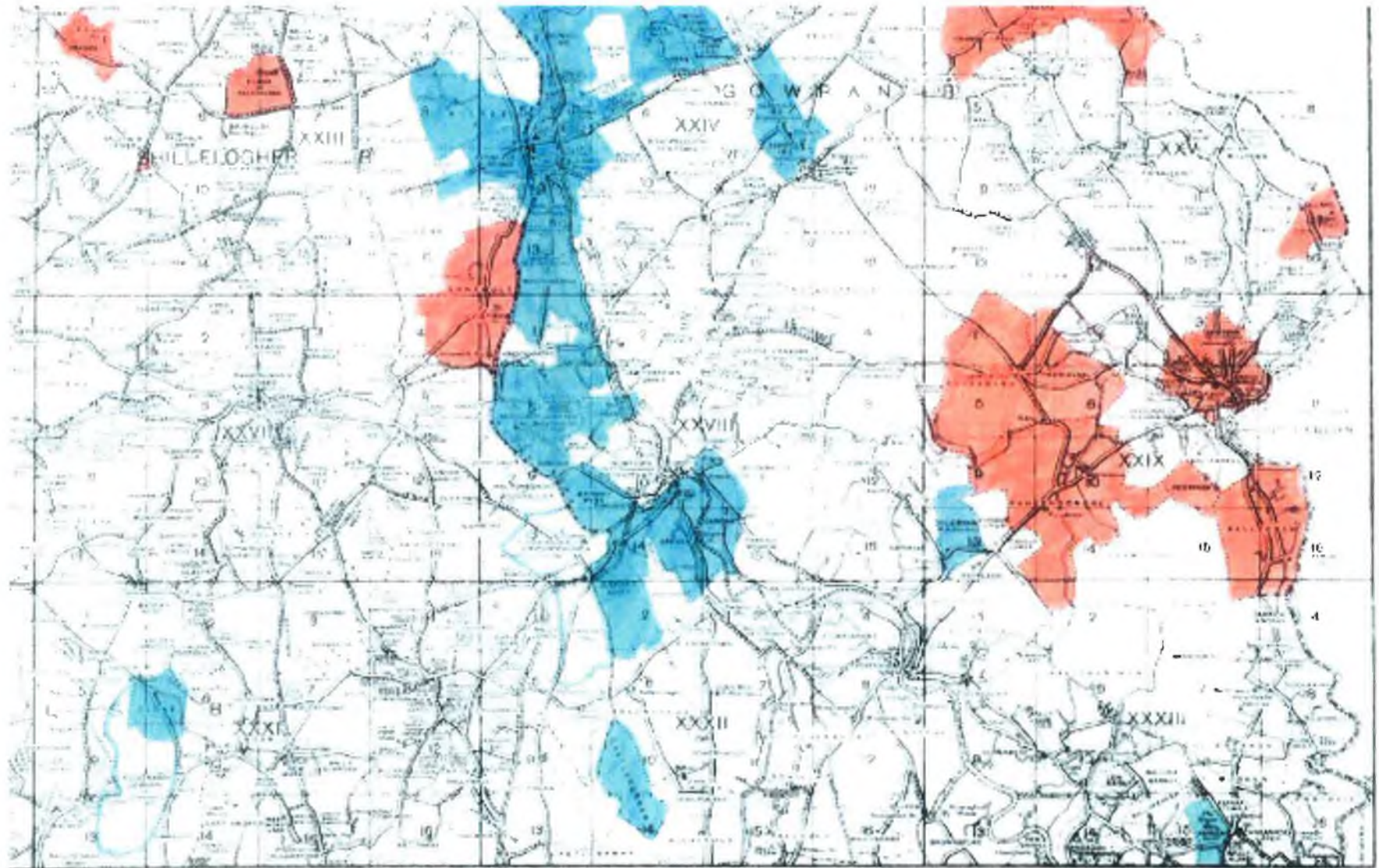


Figure 6: Map showing lands of Killenny, Duiske at dissolution (red bloc on right) and portion of Jerpoint land (blue)

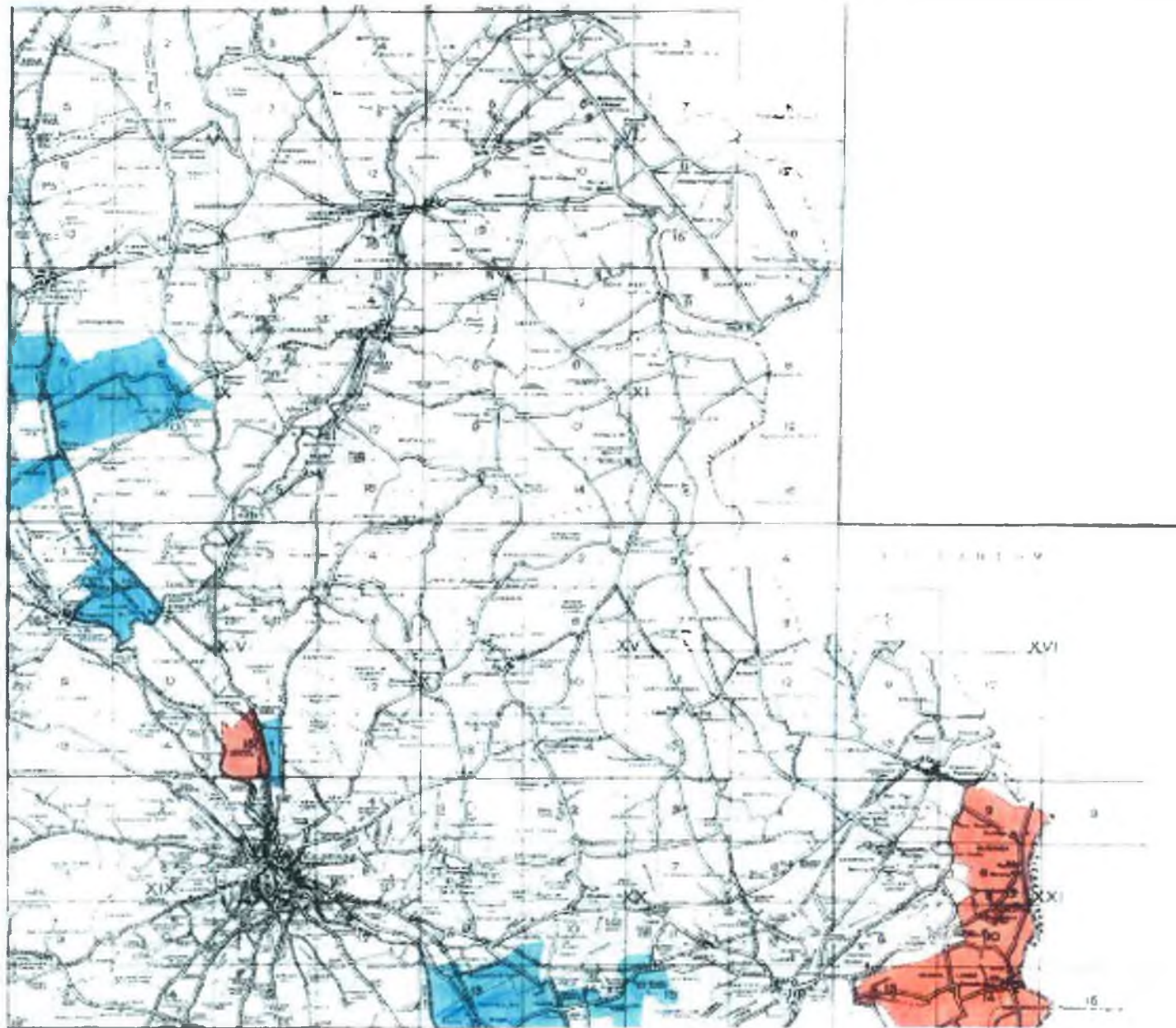


Figure 7: Lands of Dunbrody Abbey (blue) and Tintern Abbey (red)

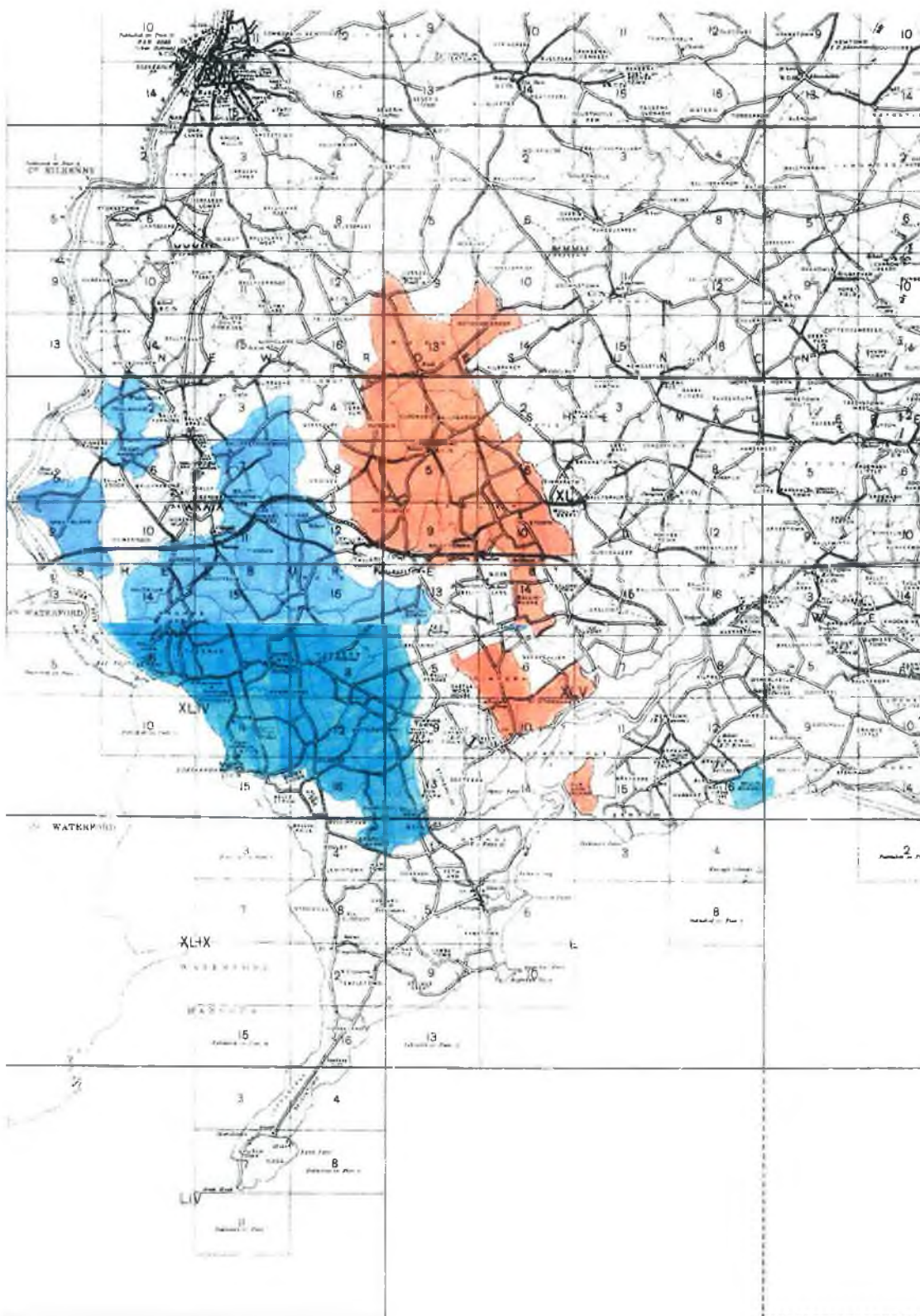


Figure 8: Portion of Kilcooley (dark blue on top right) along with portion of Holy Cross (yellow) and Hore (lighter blue)

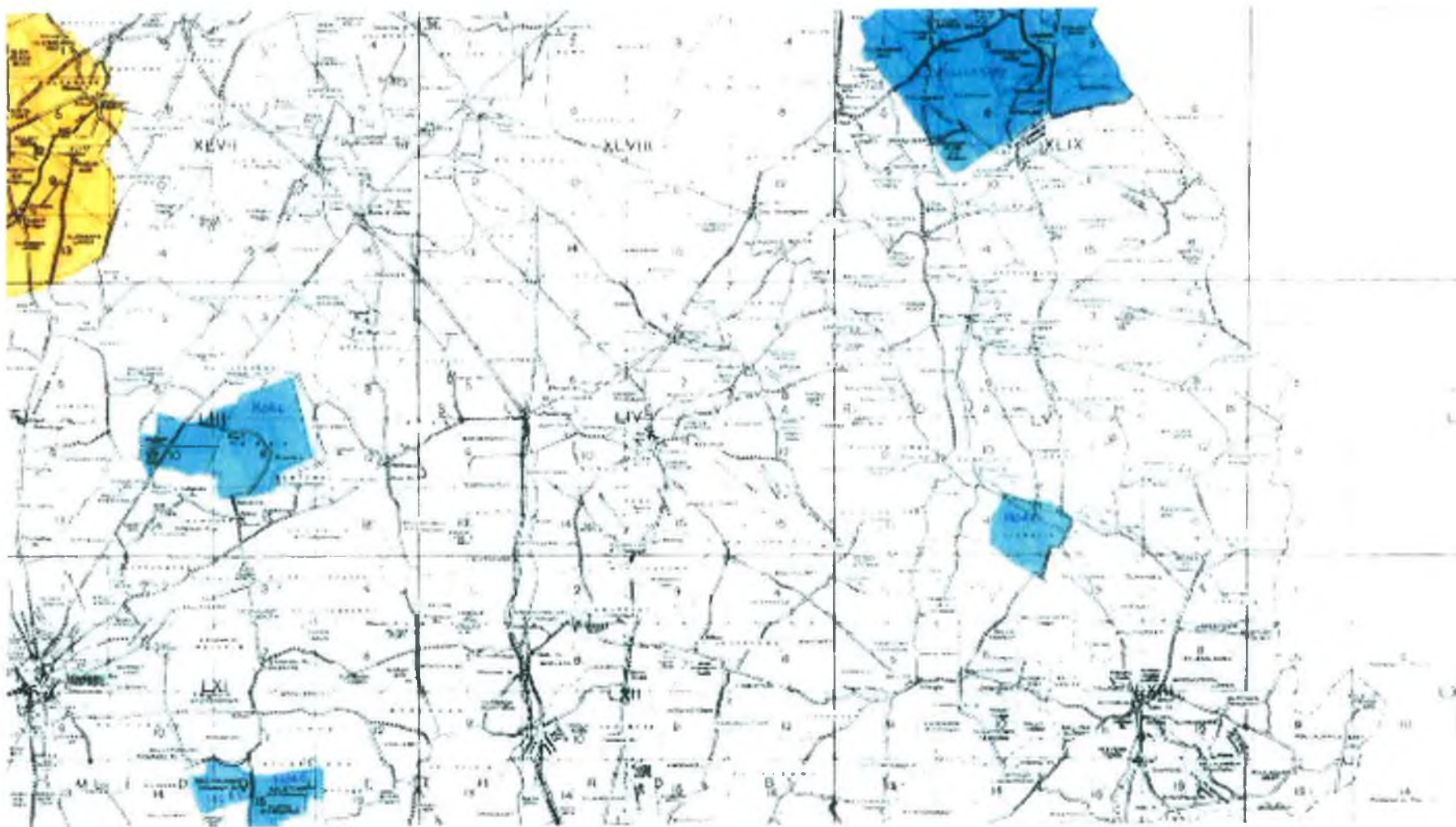


Figure 8b: Lands of Holy Cross (yellow) and Hore abbey with surrounding lands (blue)



Figure 9: Map showing Kilcooley abbey and surrounding lands (blue) along with portions of Holy Cross lands (yellow)

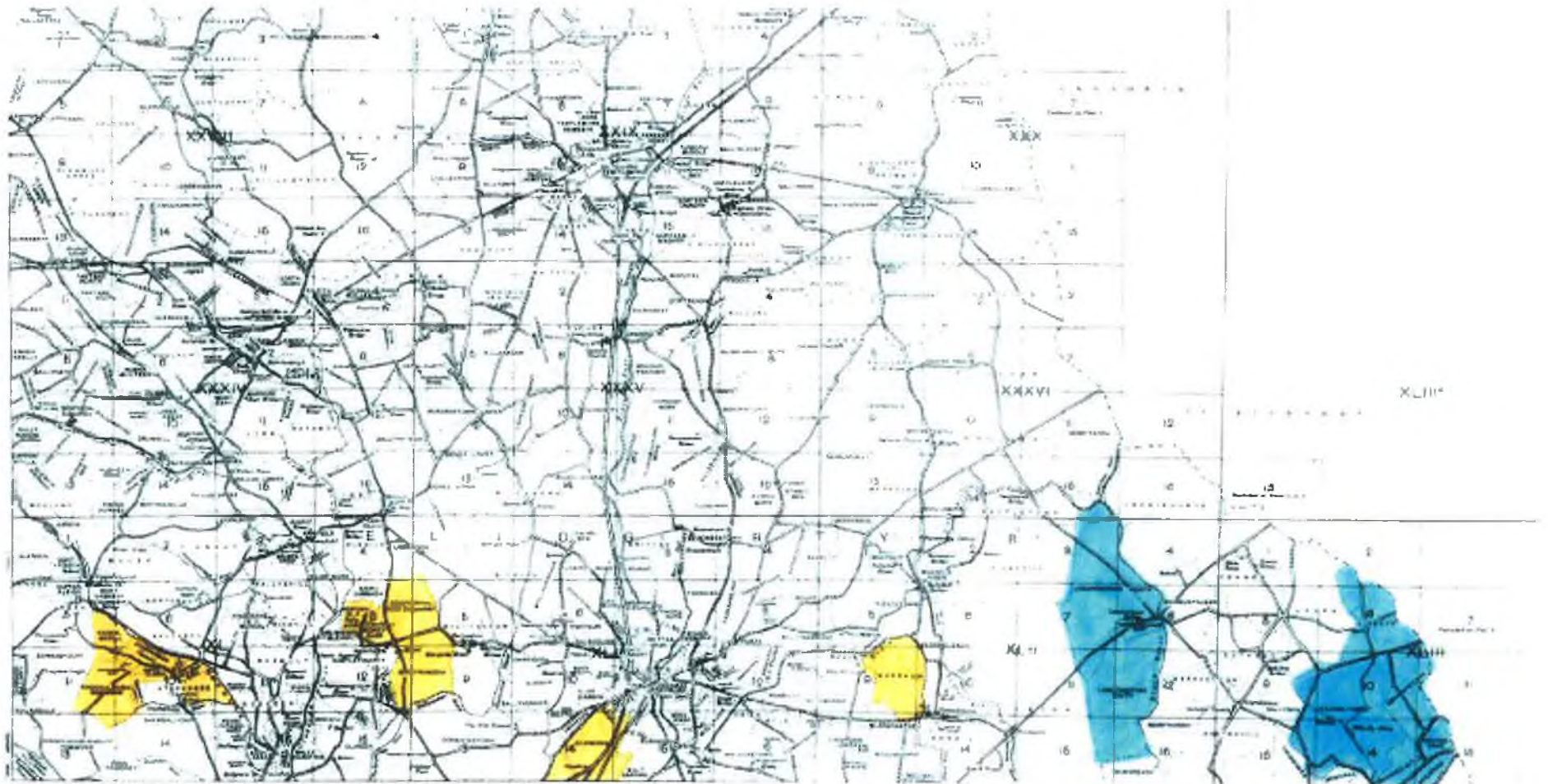


Figure 10: Aerial view of Dunbrody abbey (by the author)



Figure 11: Aerial view of remains of Abbeyshrule. Note the river between the abbey and later farm buildings. The second waterway is the Royal canal. (By the author)



Figure 12: Aerial view of situation of Baltinglass abbey. The abbey remains are near the river at foreground right. Note the steep rise in the background. (By the author)



Figure 13: Aerial view of Holy Cross (by the author)



Figure 14: Aerial view of situation of Tintern abbey (by the author)



Figure 19: Plan of St. Gall (Lorna Price, *Plan of St Gall in brief*)

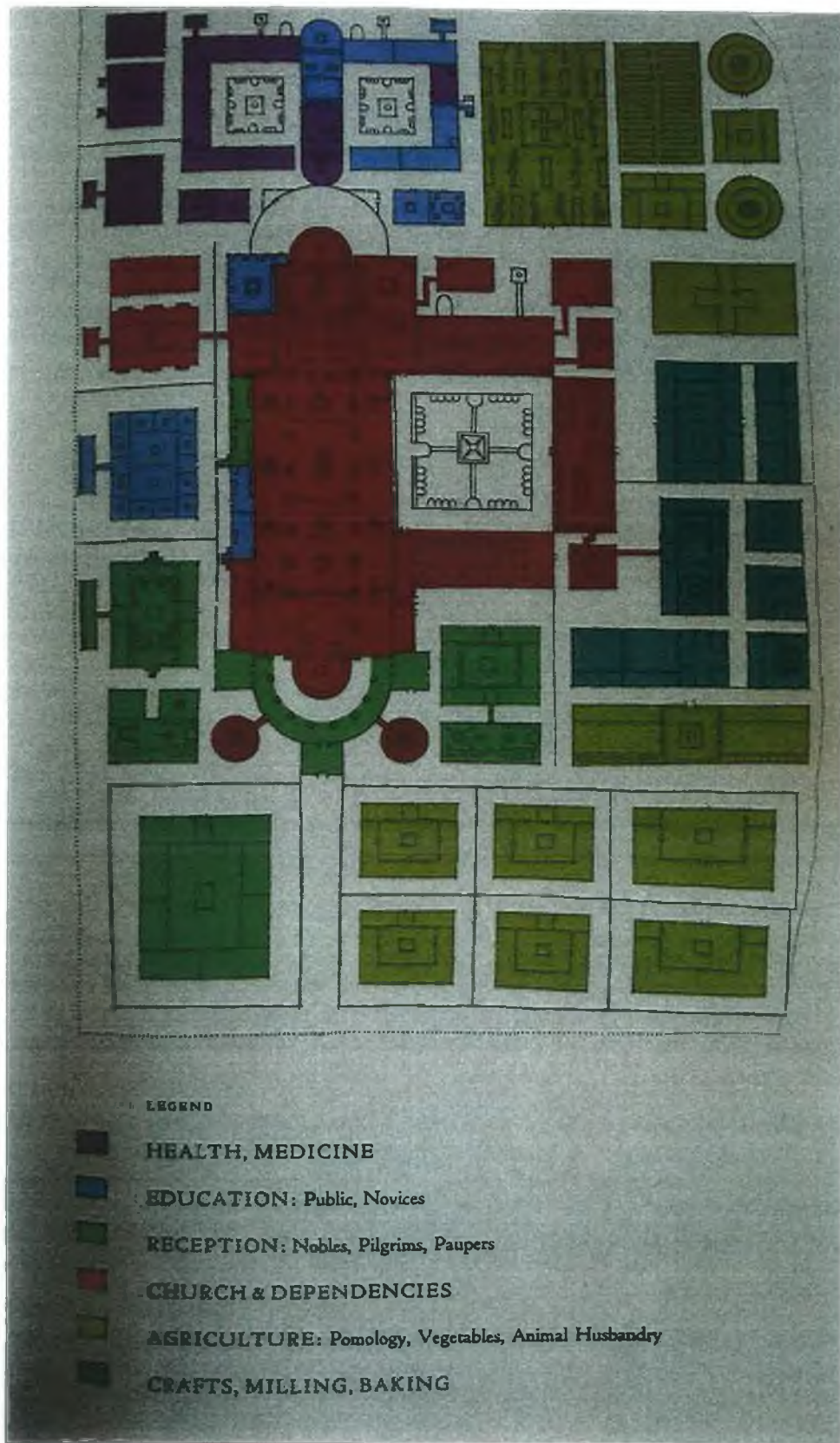


Figure 20: Plan of Cluny II

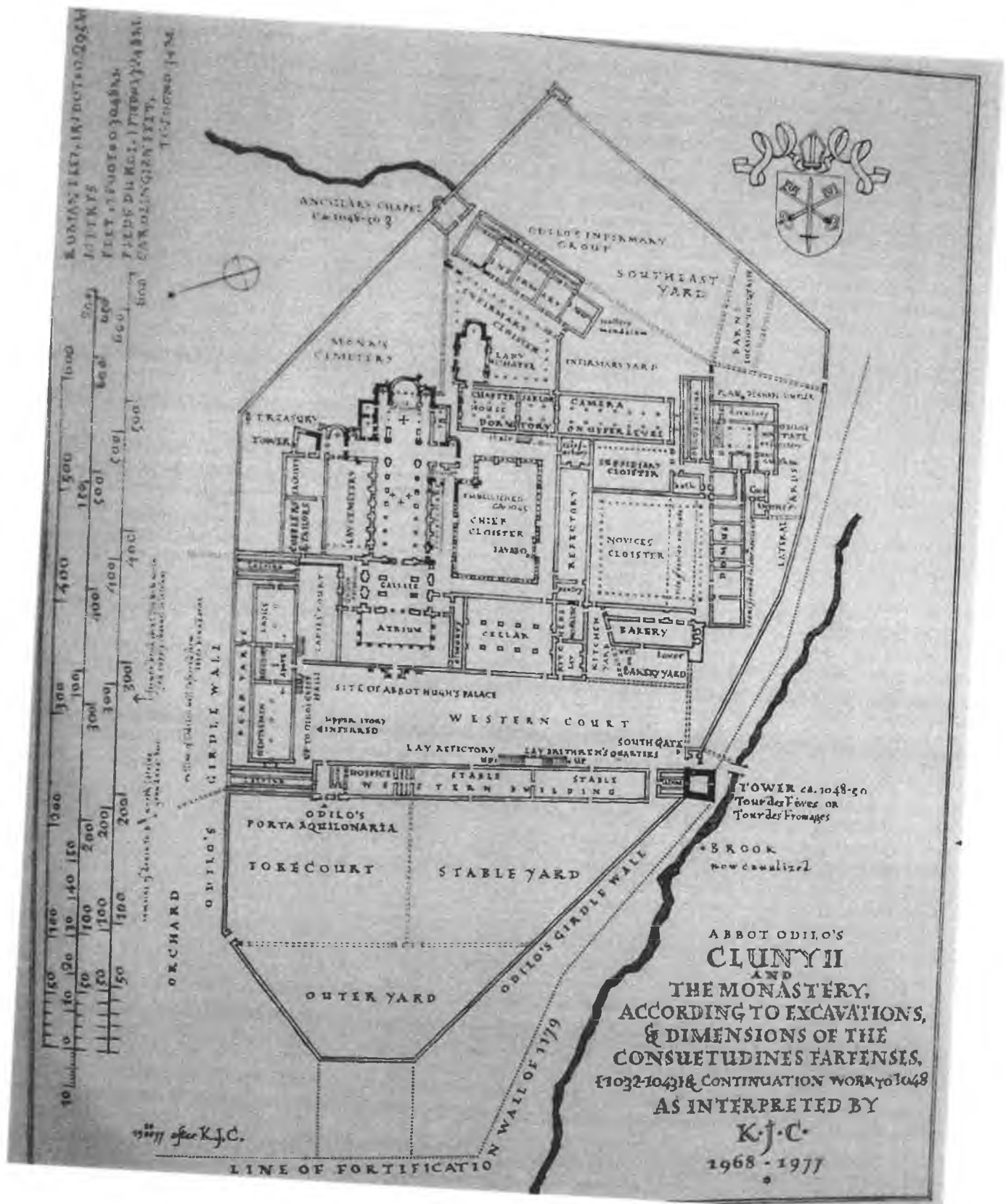


Figure 21: Plan of Clairvaux Abbey (Cistercian)

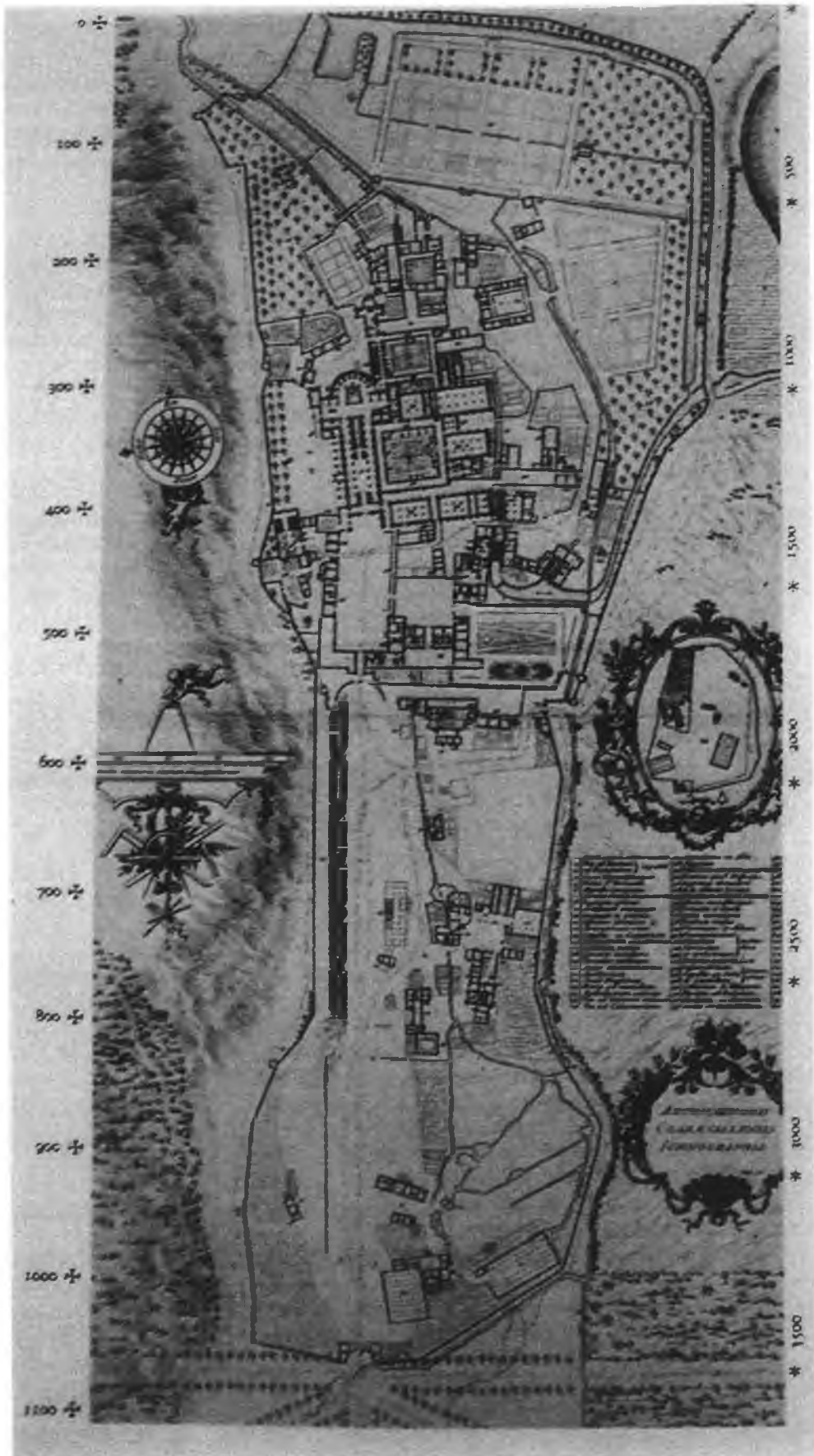


Figure 22: Plan of Fountains Abbey (Cistercian)

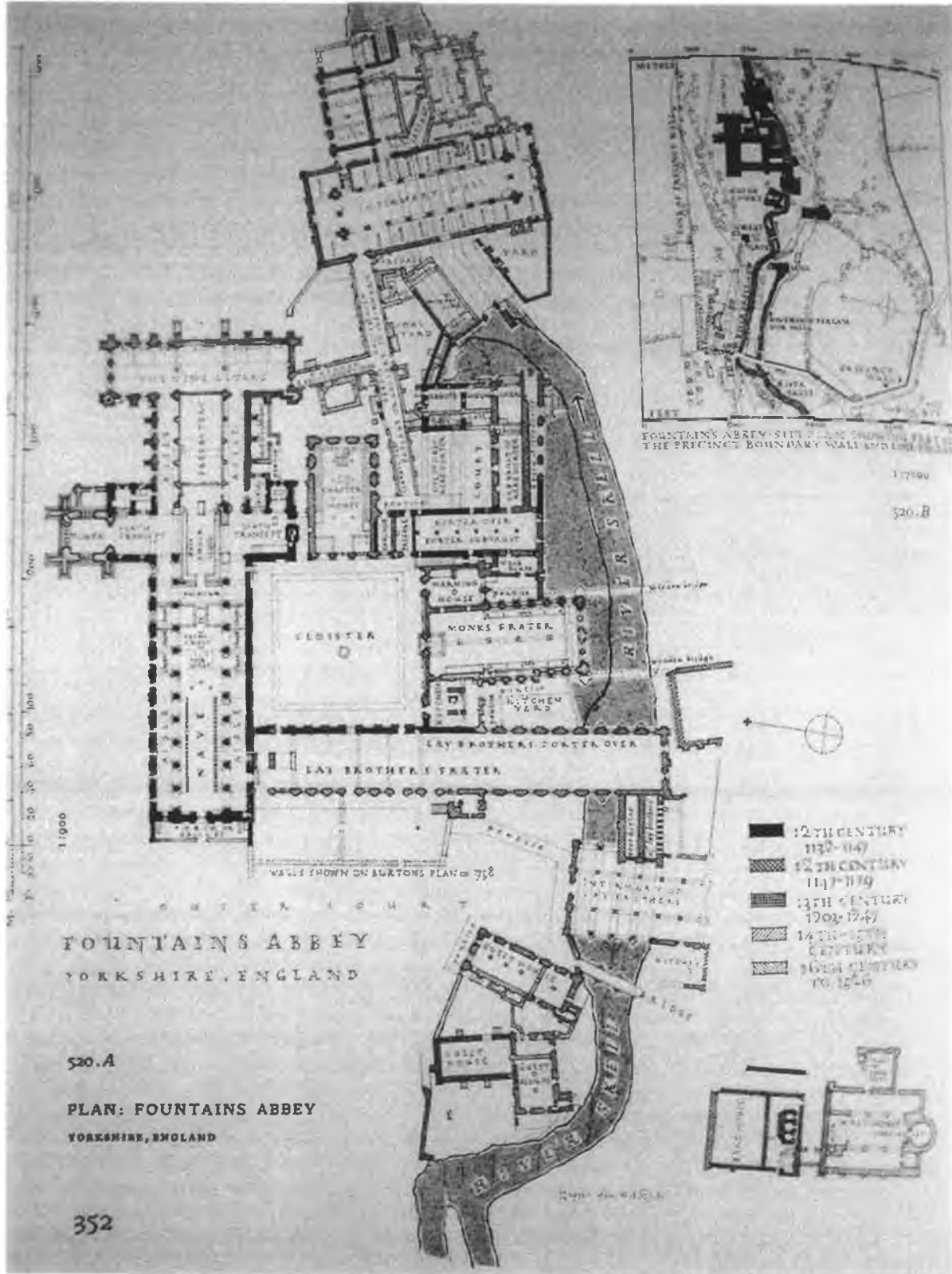


Figure 23: Fountains abbey showing precinct wall

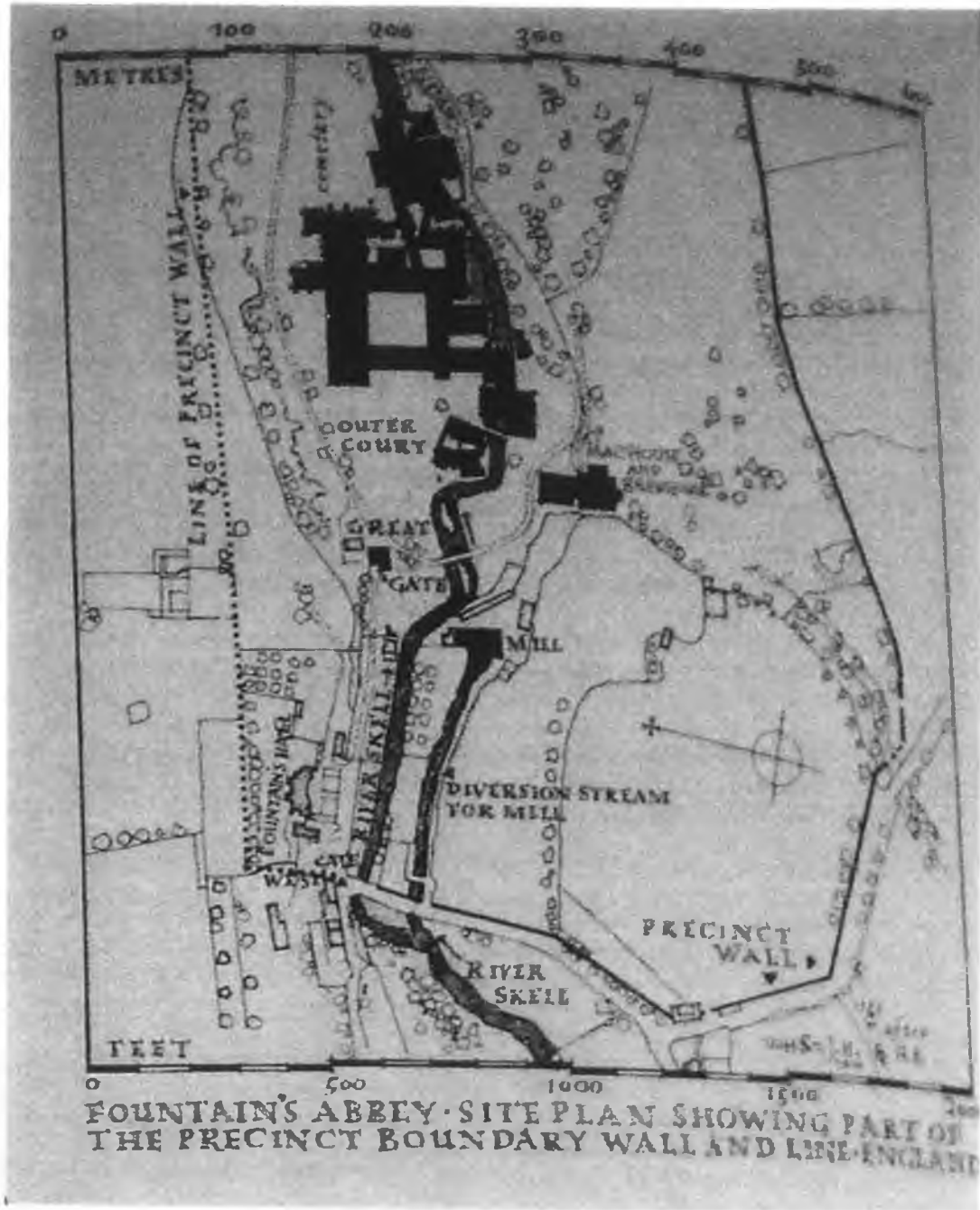


Figure 24: Plan of Kirkstall abbey (*Plan of St Gall*)

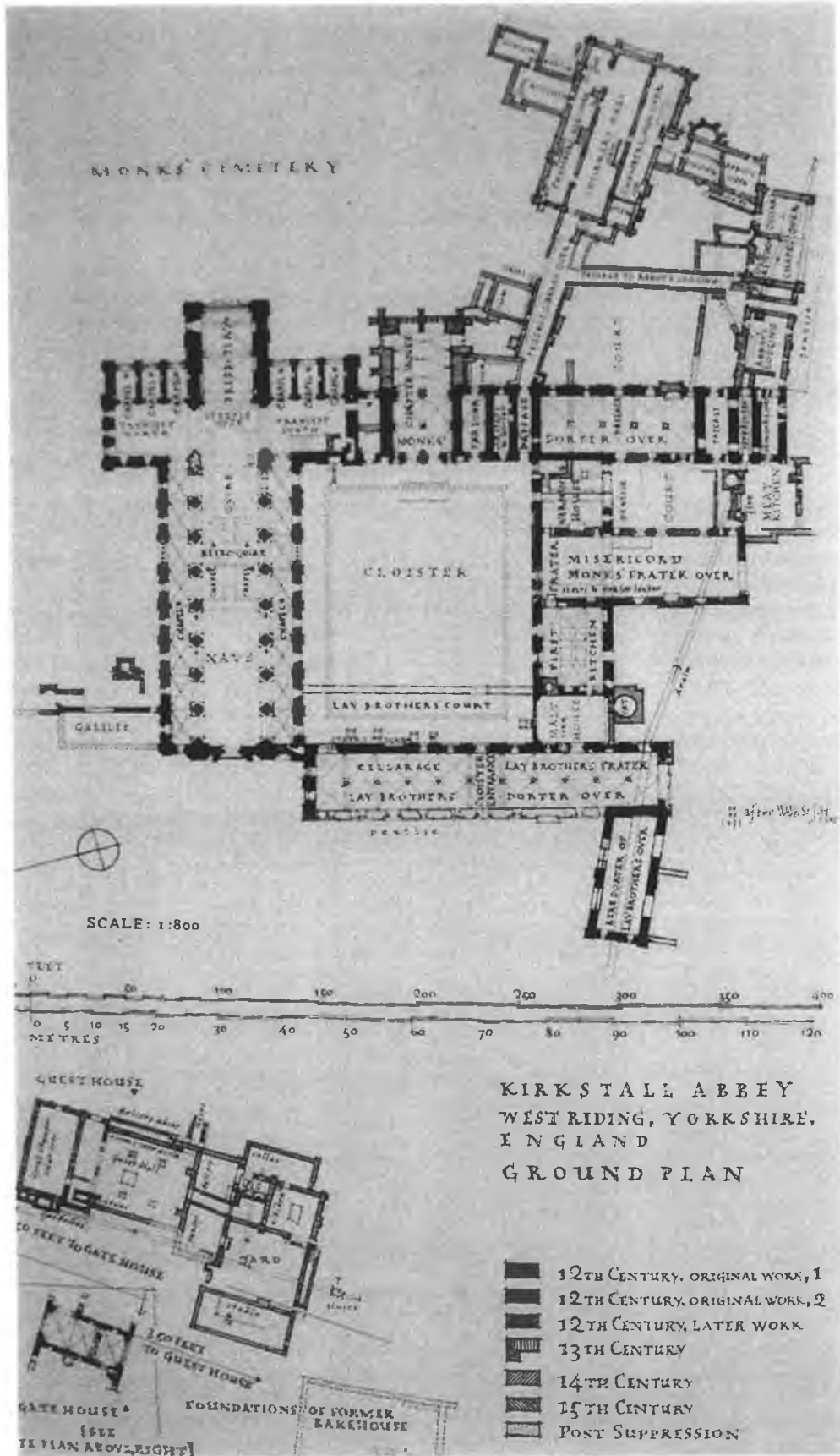


Figure 25: Reconstruction of Monk's cloister and ranges from St Gall. (*Plan of St Gall*)

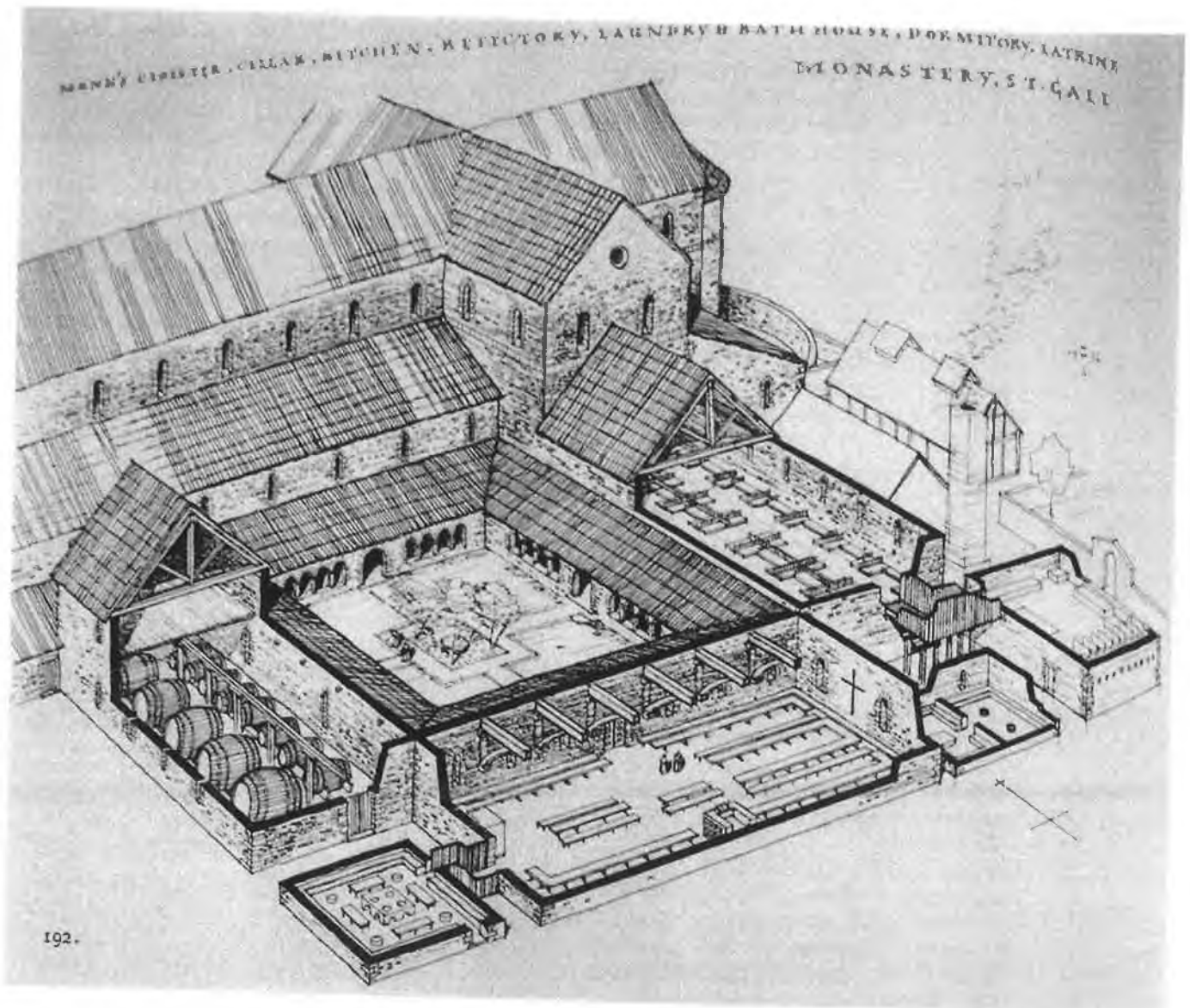


Figure 26: Vegetable beds (*Plan of St Gall*)

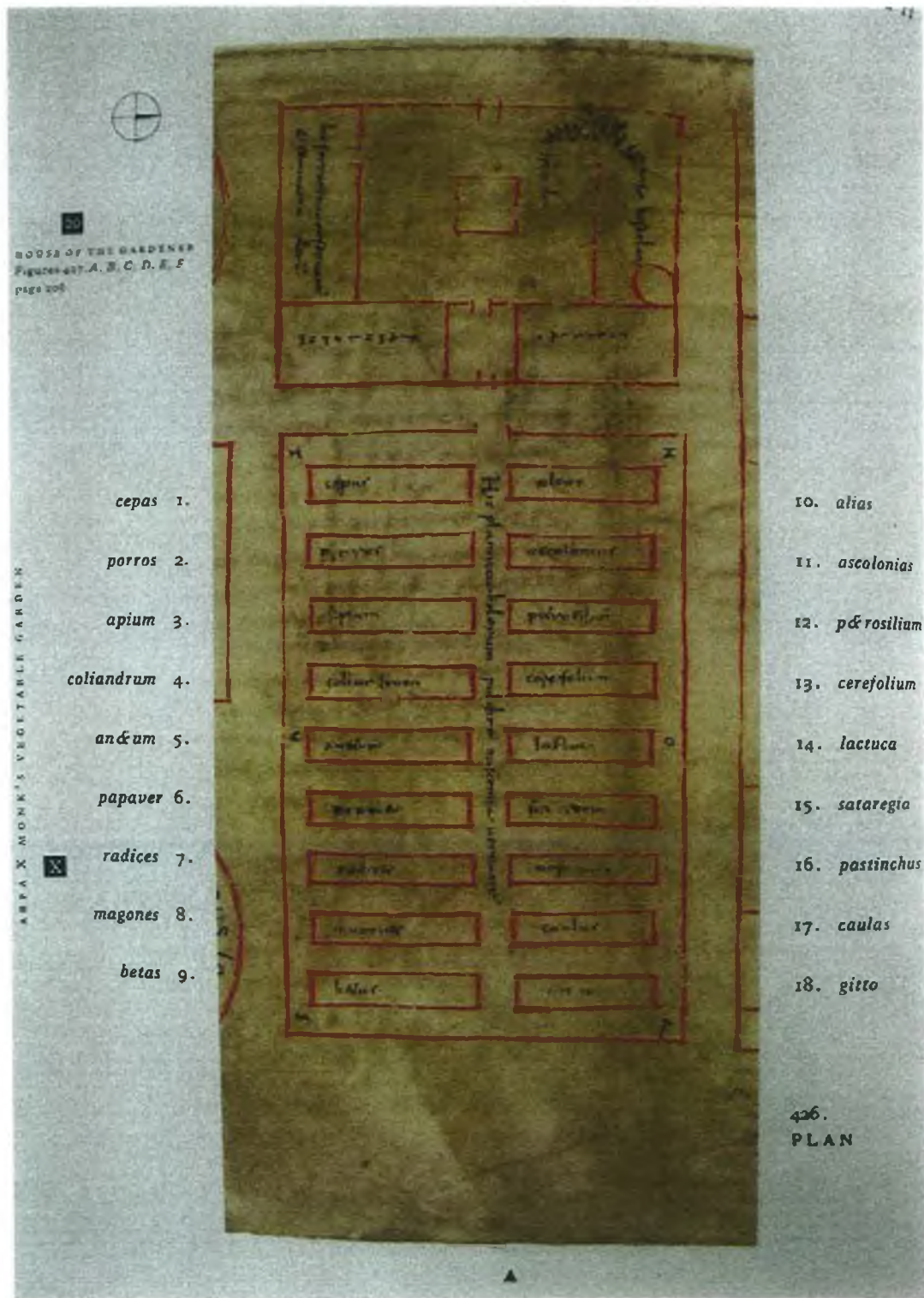


Figure 27: Location of herb garden and detail (*Plan of St Gall*)

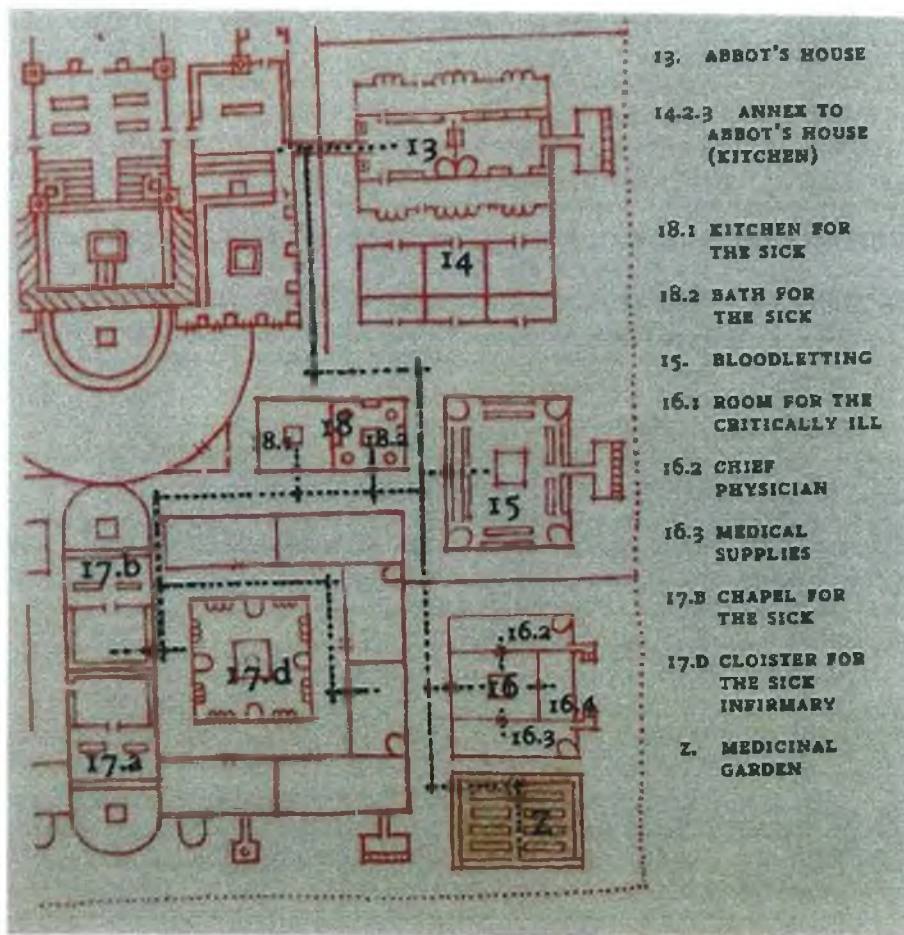


Figure 28: *Colchicum autumnale* (National Botanic Gardens website)



Figure 29: Lavabo at Mellifont (by the author)



Figure 30: Horse mill from tapestry in Bruges (Peter Spufford, *Power and profit*)

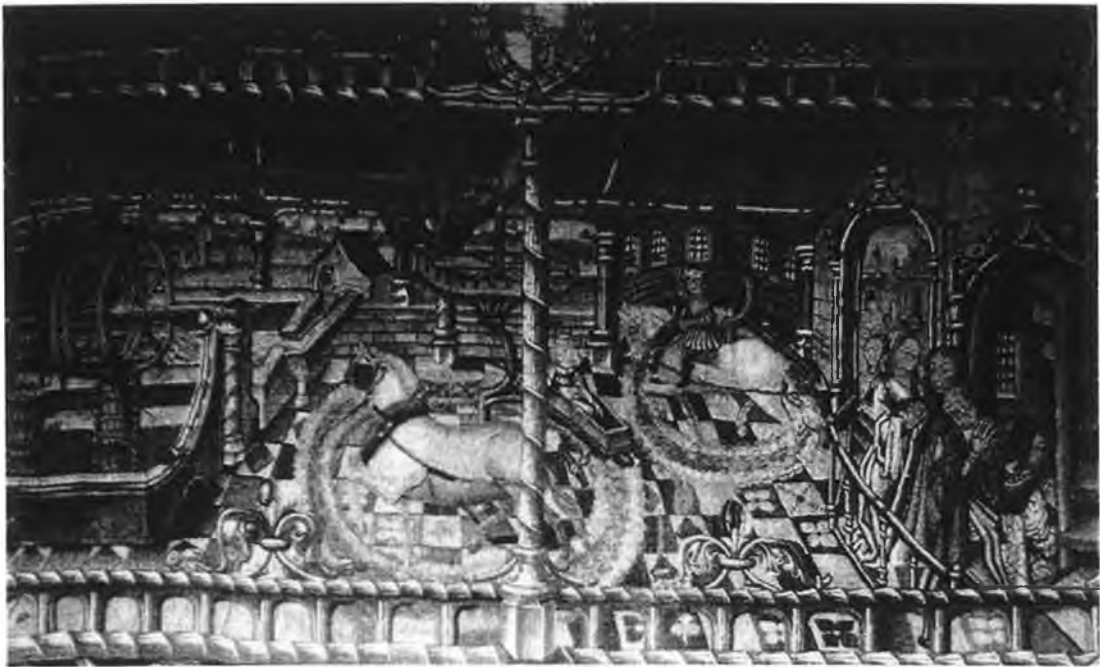


Figure 31: Floating mills in Paris, early 14th century (Peter Spufford, *Power and profit*)



Figure 32: Dovecote at Kilcooley Abbey (by the author)



Figure 33: Situation and plan of dovecote at St Gall



Figure 35: Glanwydan Abbey (by the author with thanks to James Barry)



Figure 36: Glanwydan Abbey, only remaining standing structure (by the author with thanks to James Barry)



Figure 37: Detail from mensa tomb at Jerpoint abbey



Figure 38: Detail from mensa tomb at Jerpoint abbey



Figure 39: Portion of the wall-painting at Jerpoint abbey



Figure 40: Detail of the wall painting showing a boar and scallop shell



Figure 41: The fifteenth century tower at Jerpoint abbey

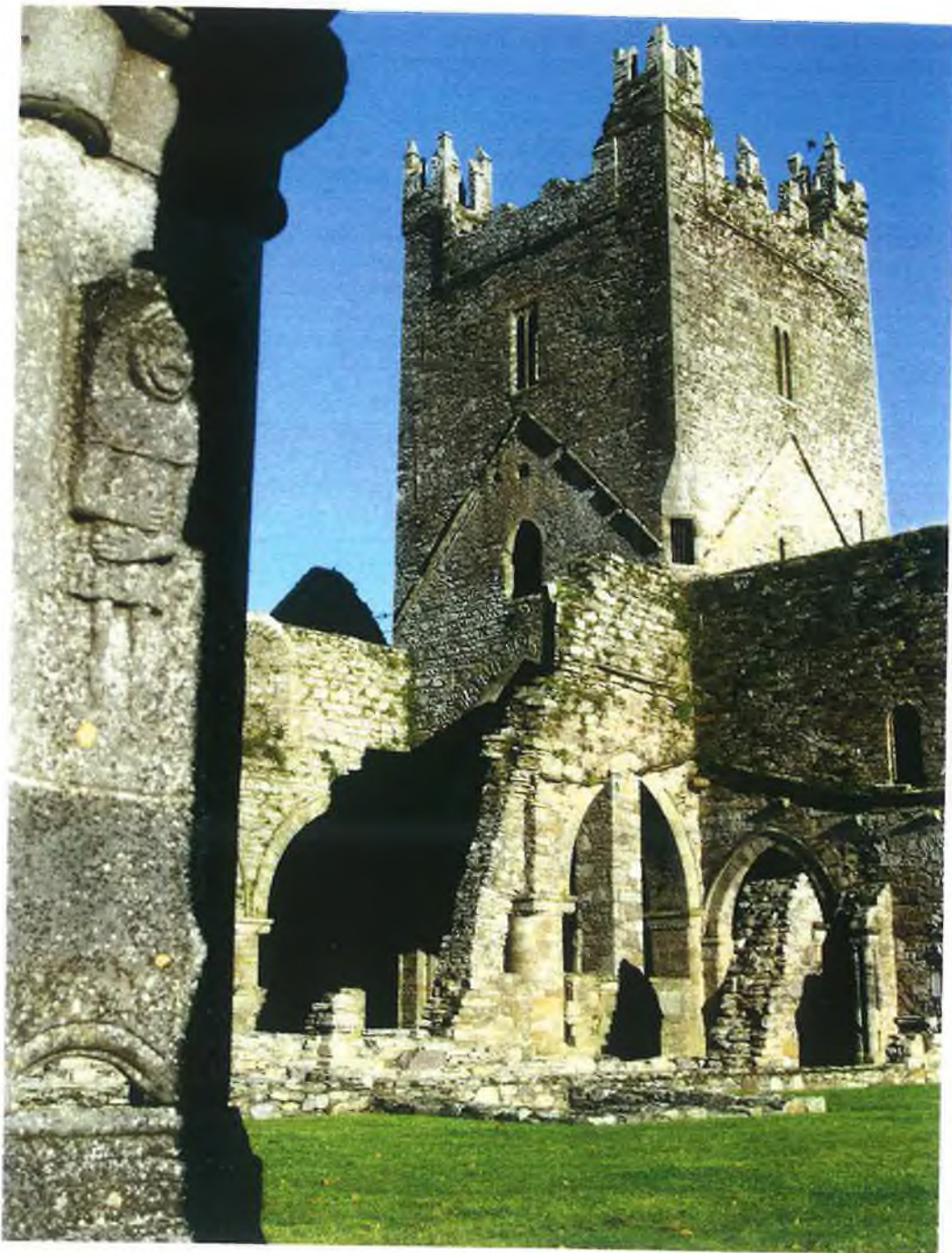


Figure 42: Fourteenth century depiction of St Michael at Jerpoint abbey



Figure 43: Portion of the cloister arcade at Jerpoint abbey, note dumbbell colonette. (By the author)

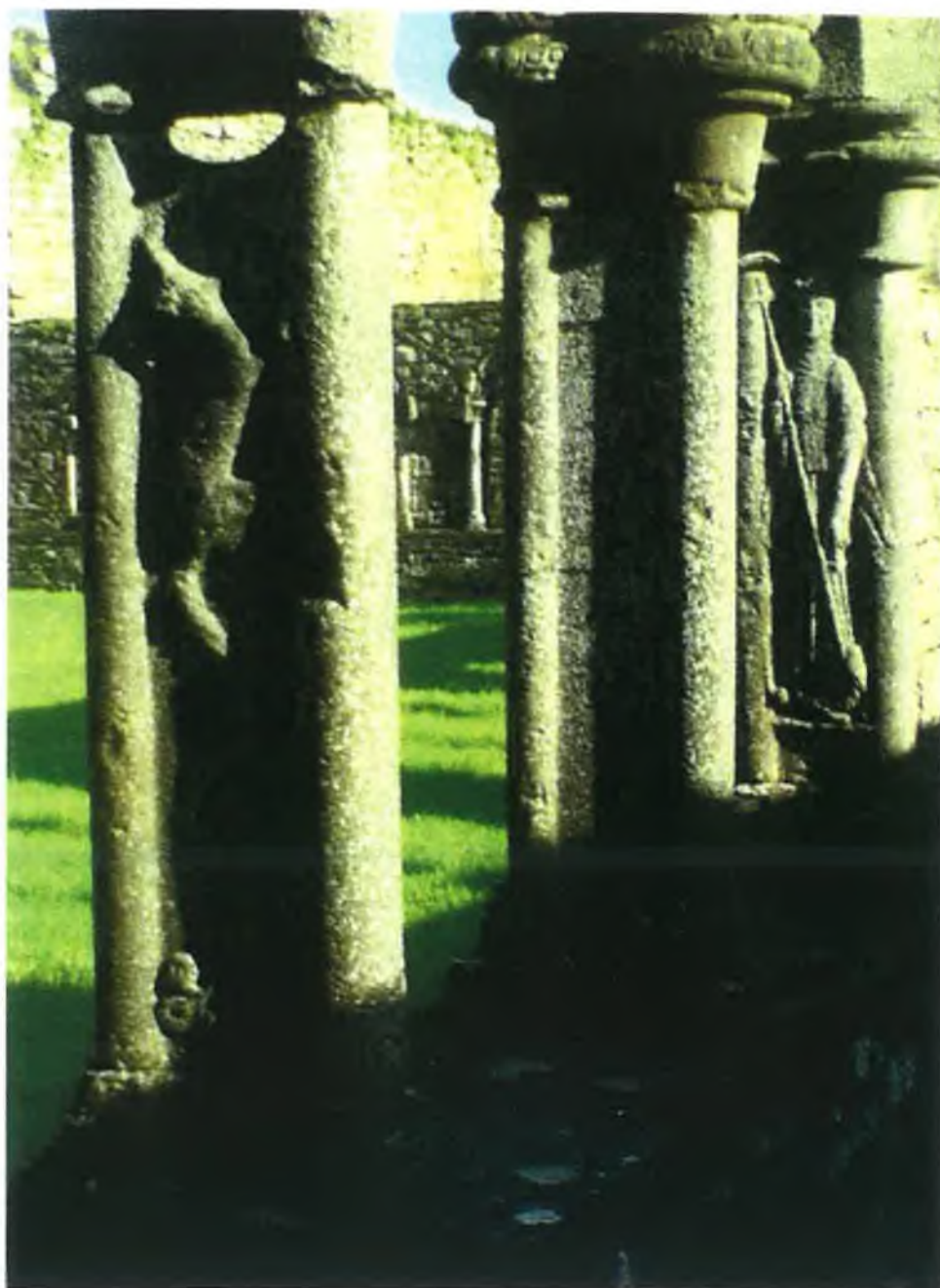


Figure 44: Fragment of a knight from the cloister arcade at Jerpoint abbey



Fig 45: Butler knight from Jerpoint Abbey cloister (Office of Public Works)



Figure 46: Butler land ownership mid seventeenth century (Nolan and Whelan, *Kilkenny history and society*)

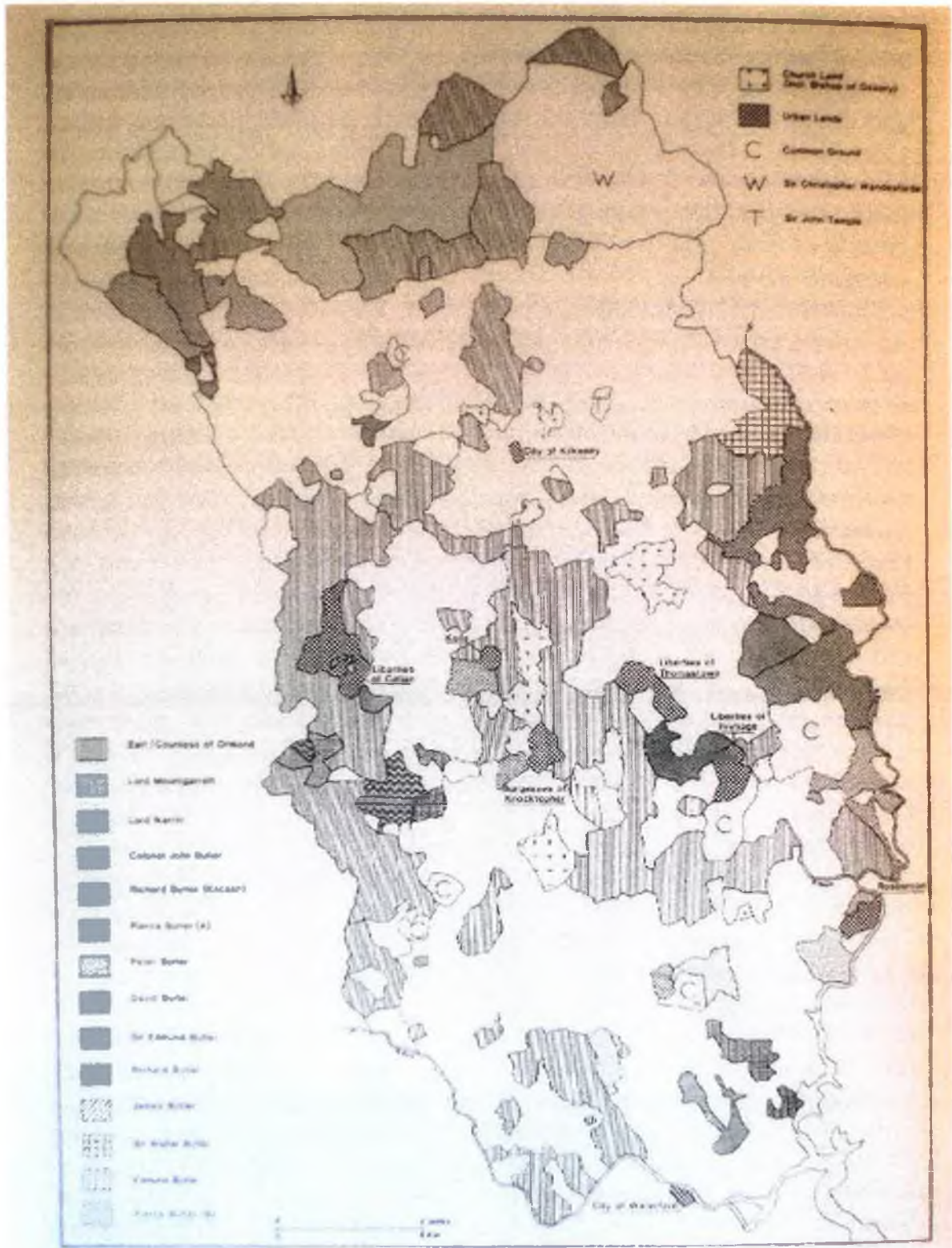


Figure 47: Window head at Jerpoint abbey (by the author)



Figure 48: Detail of chief indented from window head (by the author)



Figure 49: Detail of the Walsh family coat of arms from the sixteenth century Walsh tomb at Jerpoint abbey. (By the author)



Figure 50: Detail of passion shield from fifteenth century Walsh tomb at Jerpoint. (By the author)



Figure 51: Geophysical survey of Kilbeggan abbey (With thanks to Prof. Roger Stalley)

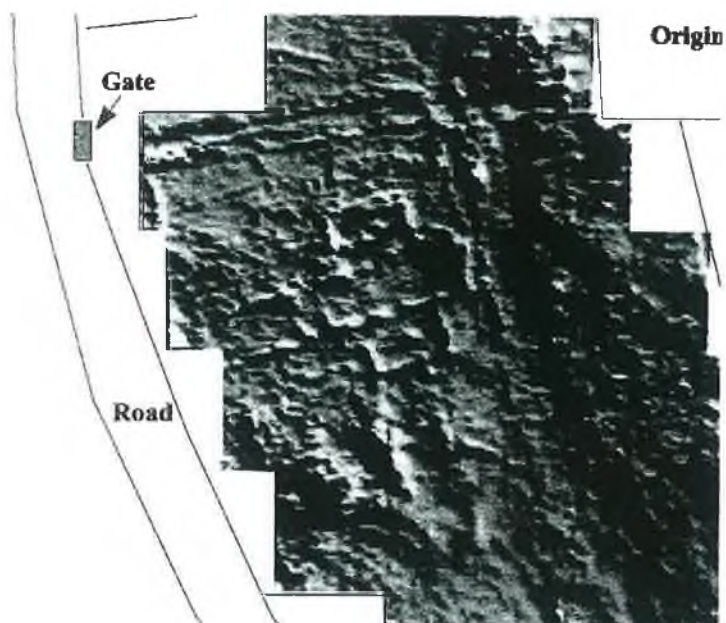


Figure 52: Remains of Monasternenagh Abbey (James Barry)



Figure 53: Breakdown of land type of Baltinglass Abbey

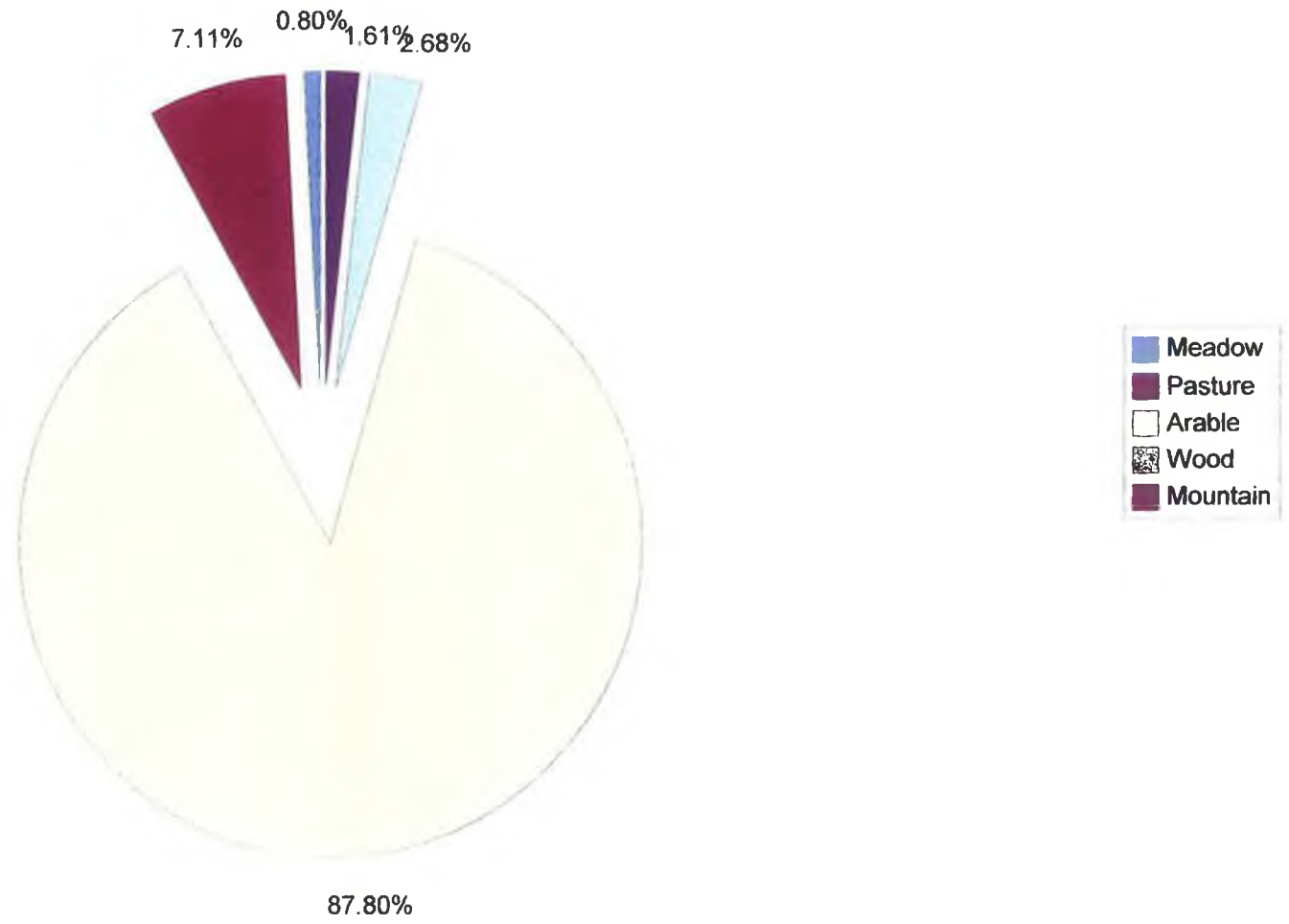


Figure 54: Breakdown of lands of Abeyleix Abbey

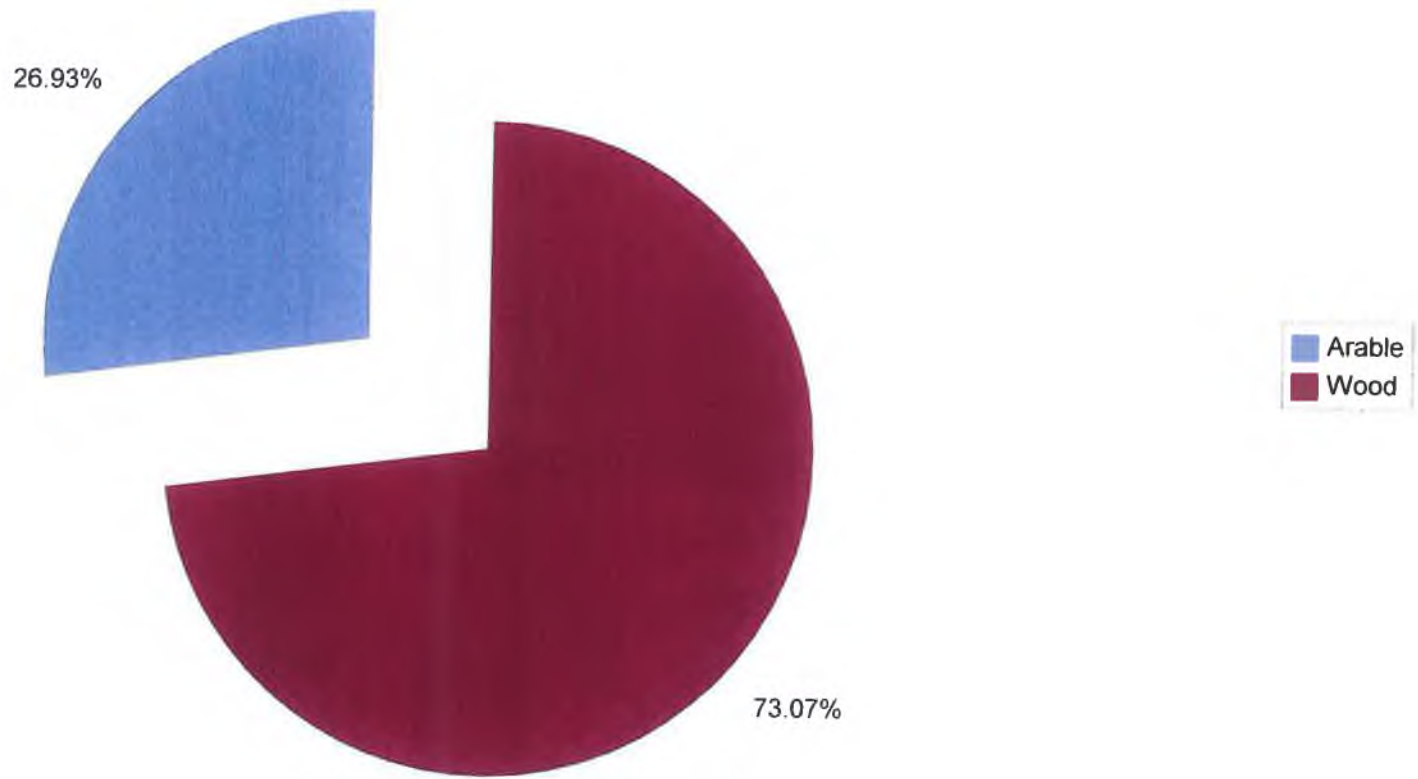


Figure 55: Abbeyleix abbey and identifiable lands

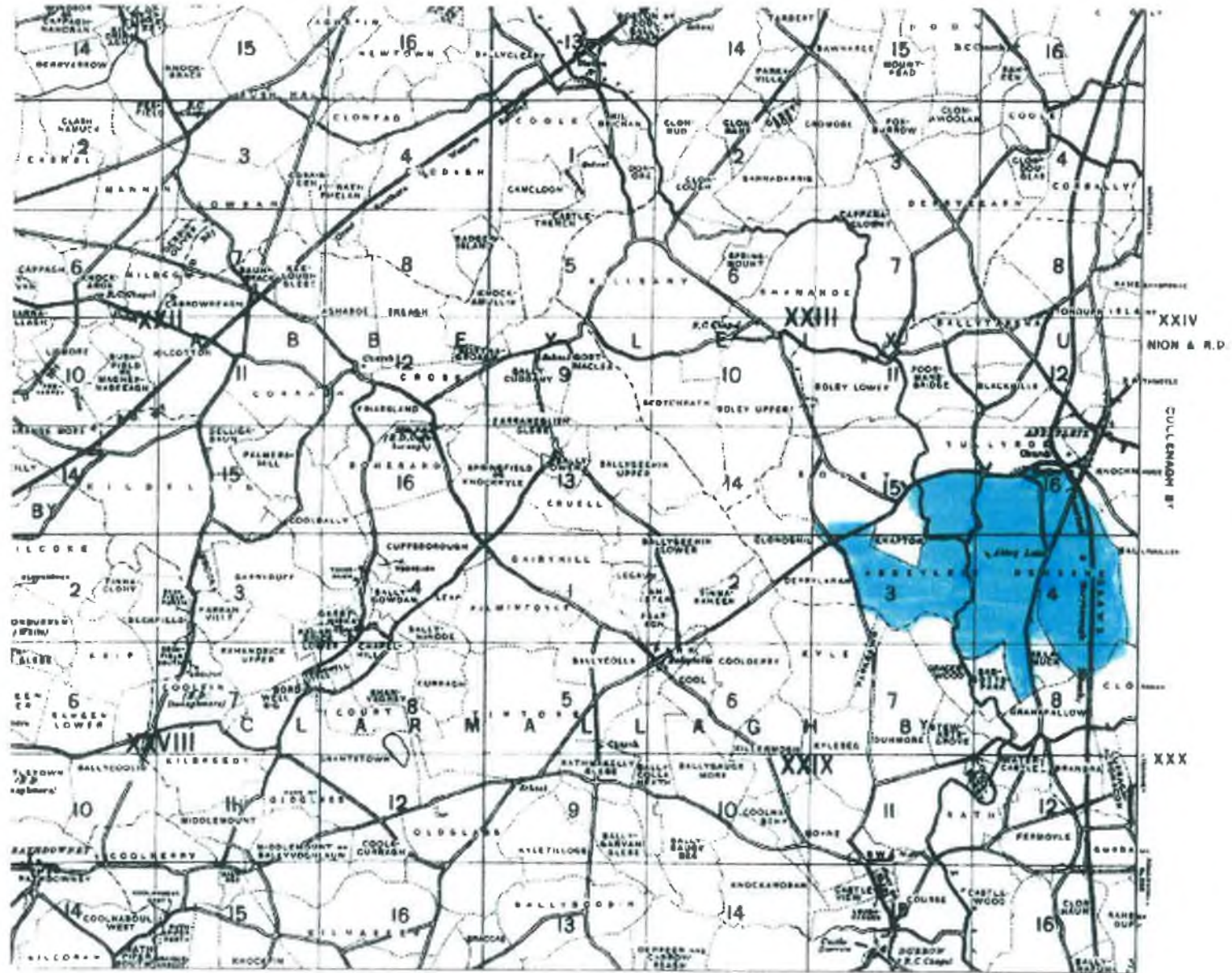


Figure 56: Breakdown of land types of Tracton Abbey

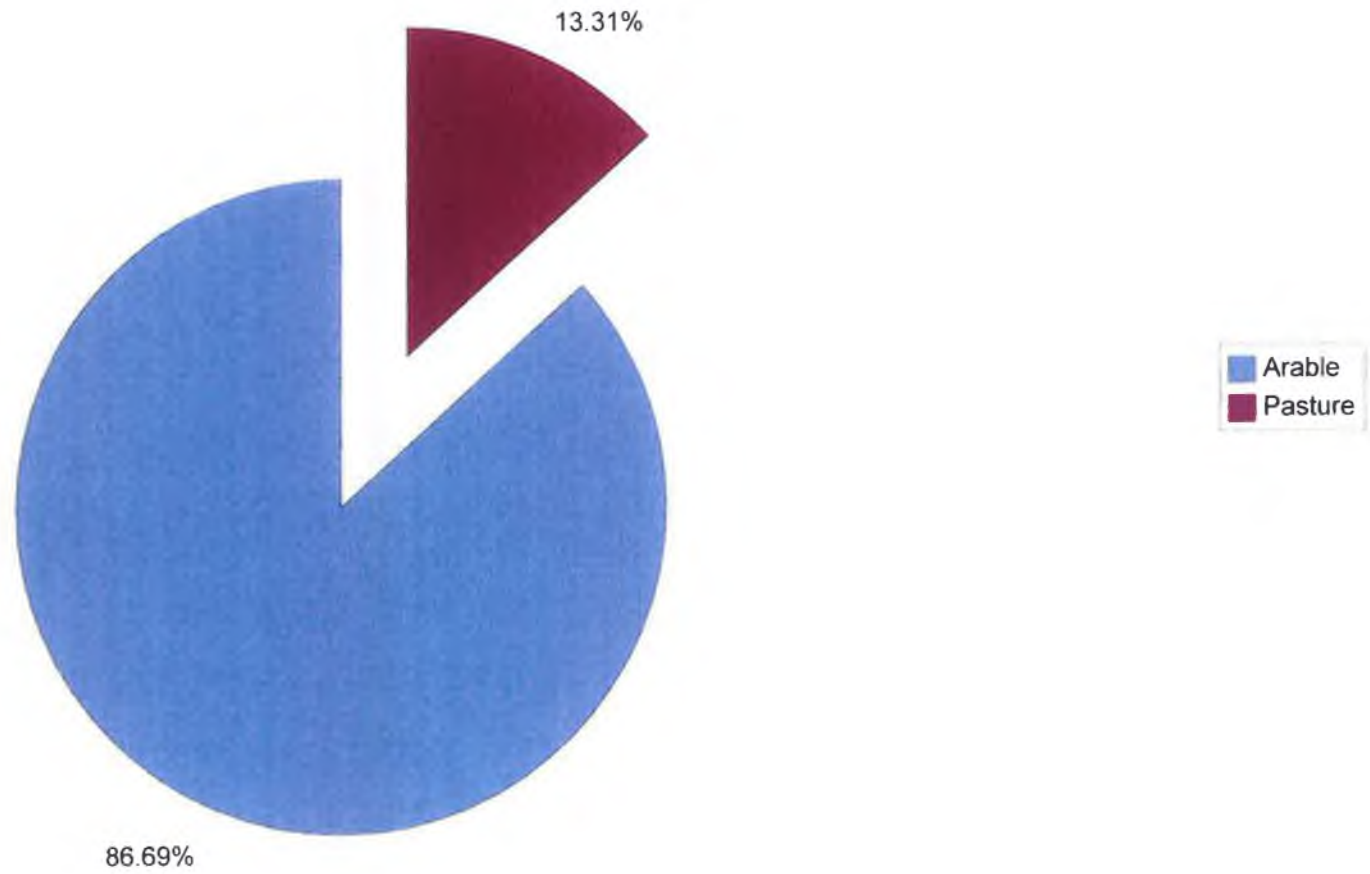


Figure 57: Breakdown of land type of Fermoy Abbey

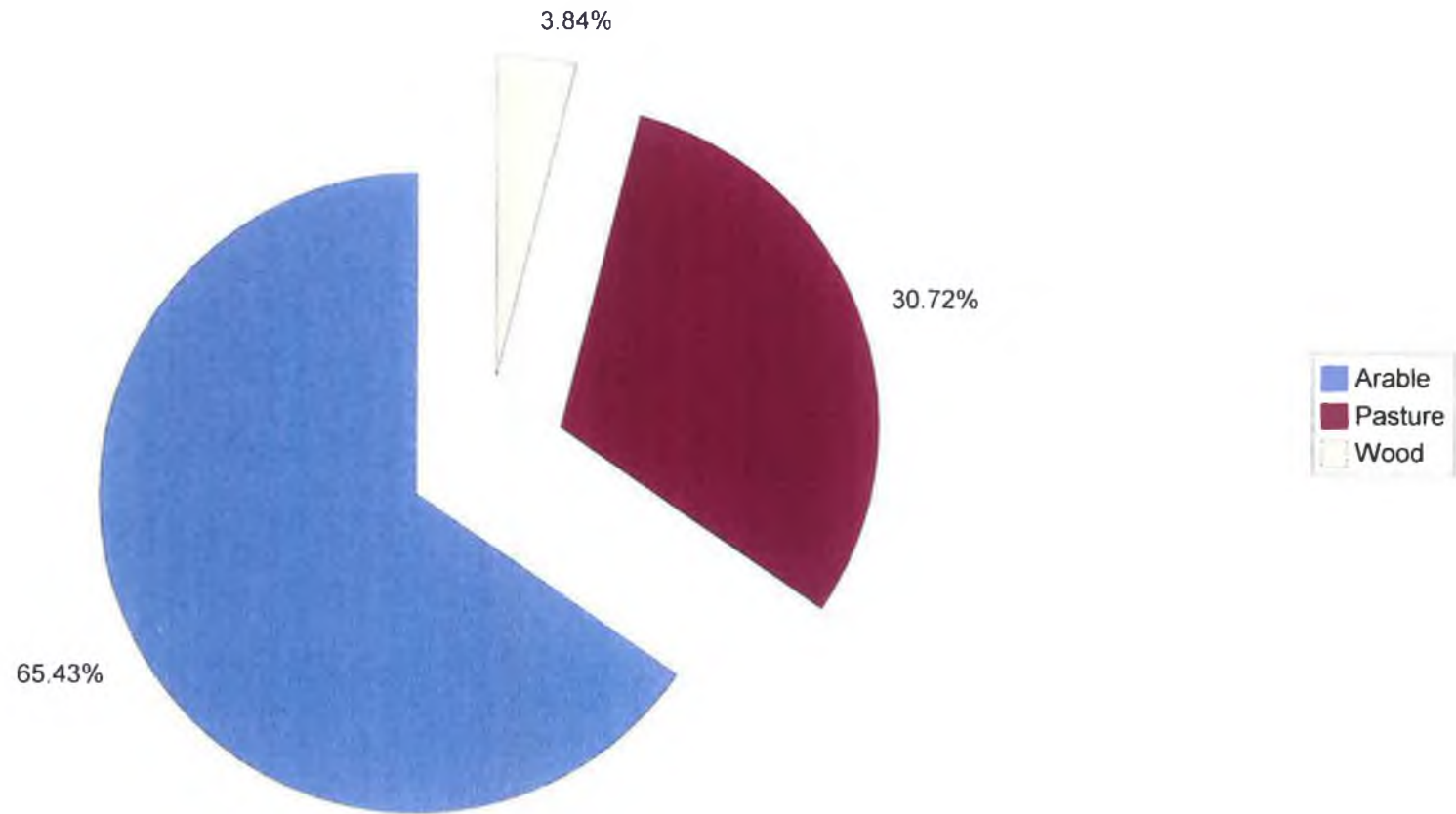


Figure 58: Maure Abbey (by the author)



Figure 59: Maure Abbey showing proximity to Courtmachsharry Bay (by the author)



Figure 60: Breakdown of land type of Maure Abbey

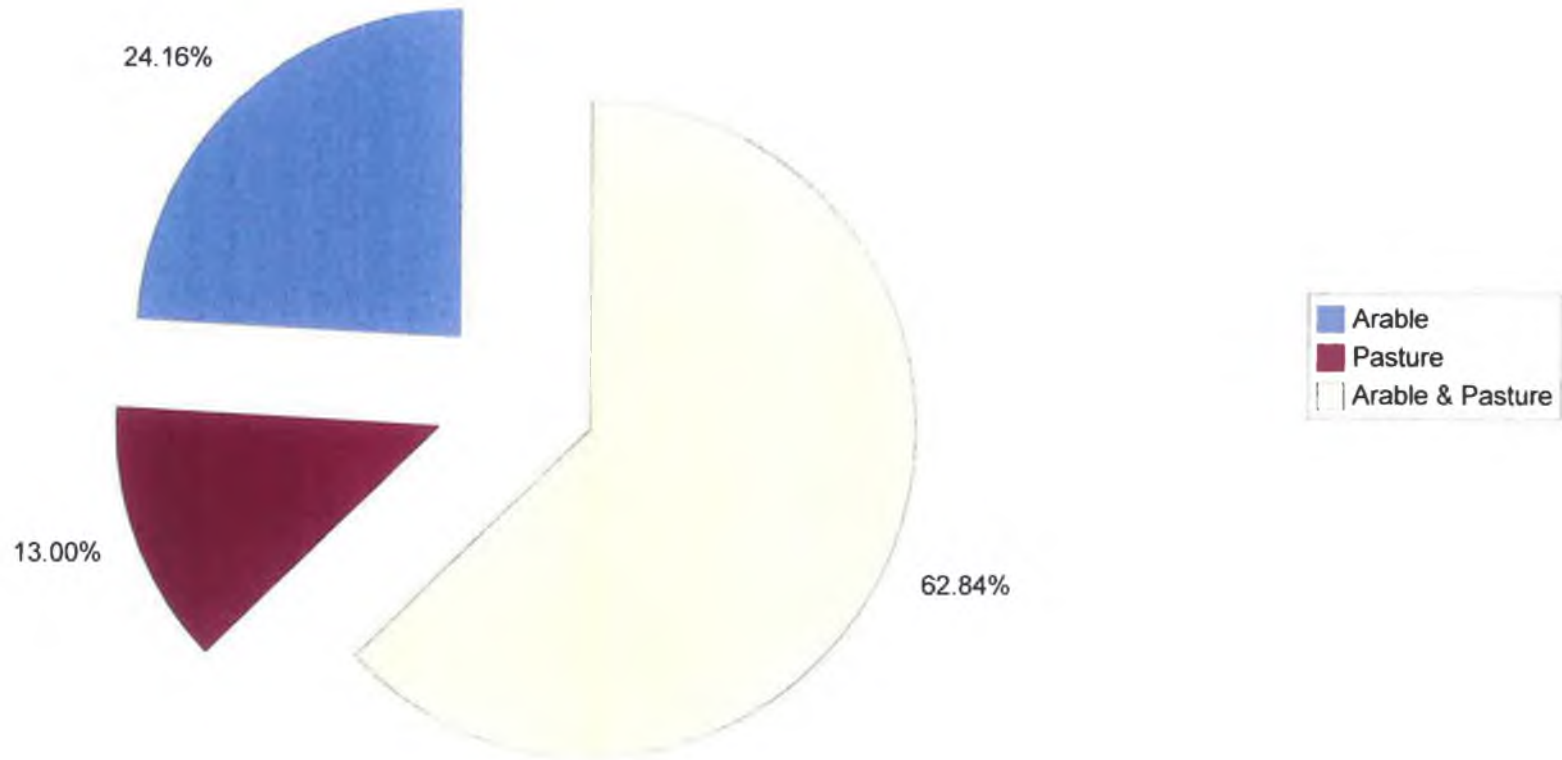


Figure 61: Breakdown of land type of Jerpoint Abbey

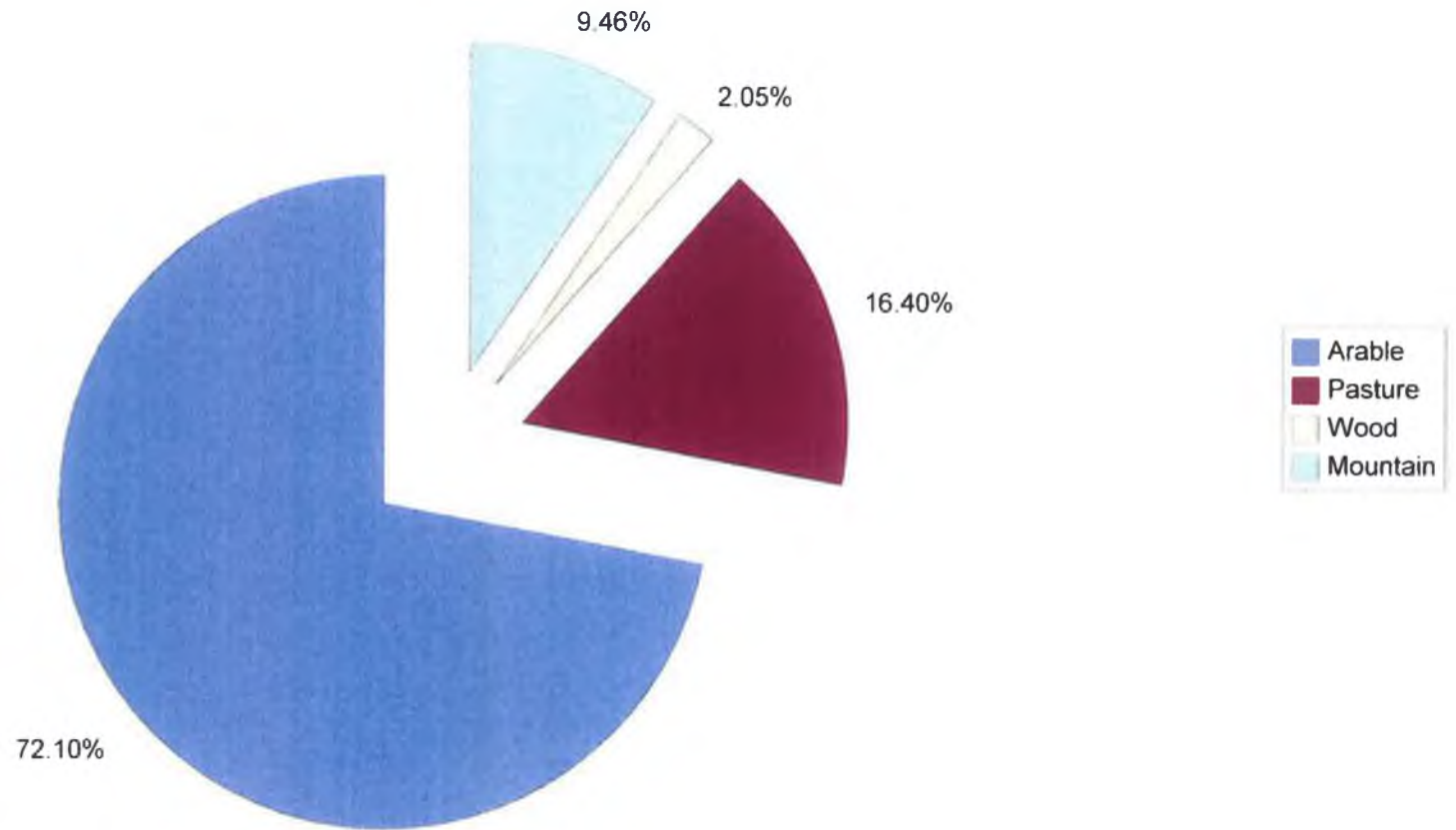


Figure 62: Breakdown of land type of Mellifont Abbey

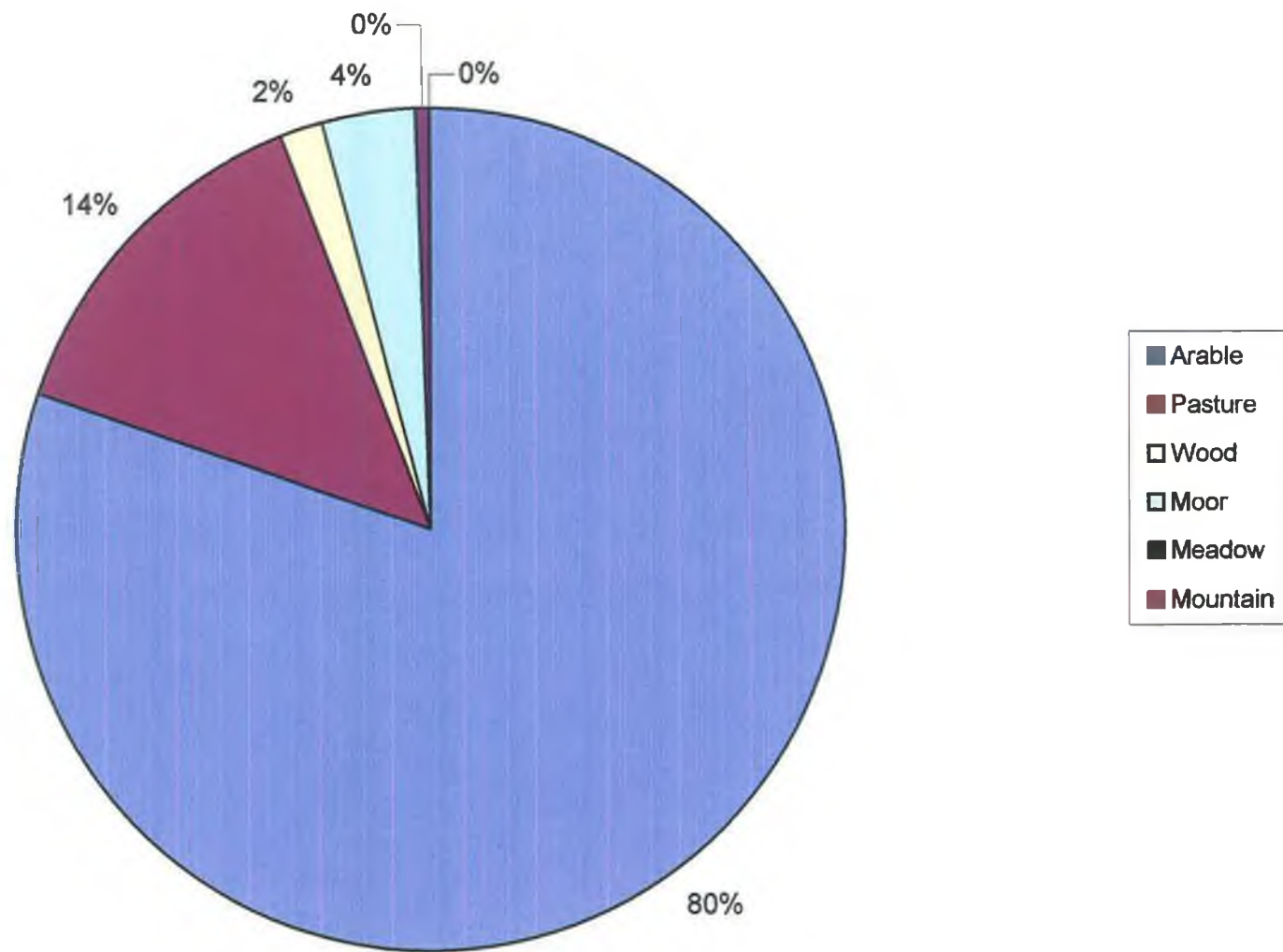


Figure 65: Map showing Abbeylara (red) and Granard abbey and associated granges (blue)

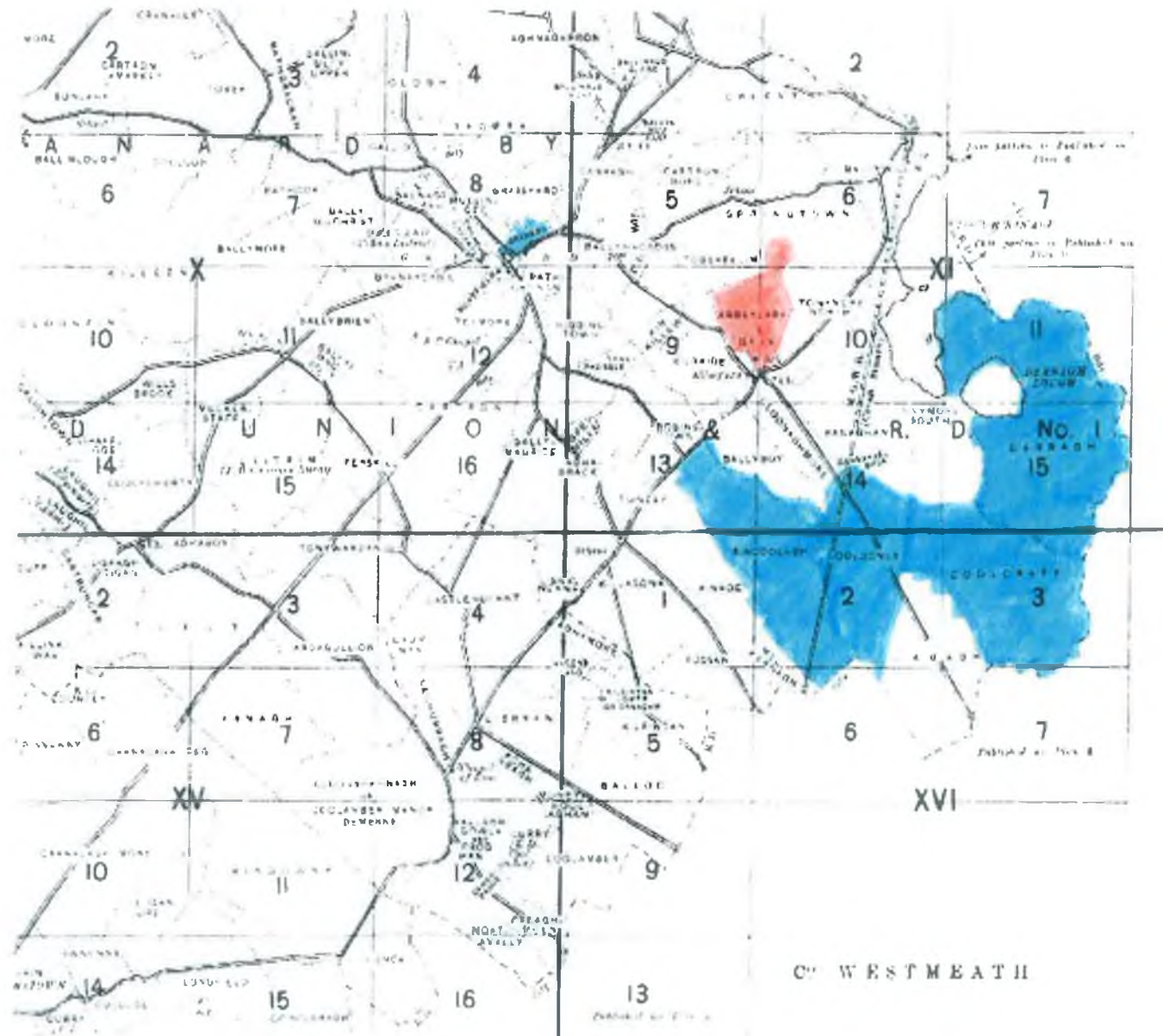


Figure 66: Breakdown of land type of Kilcooley Abbey

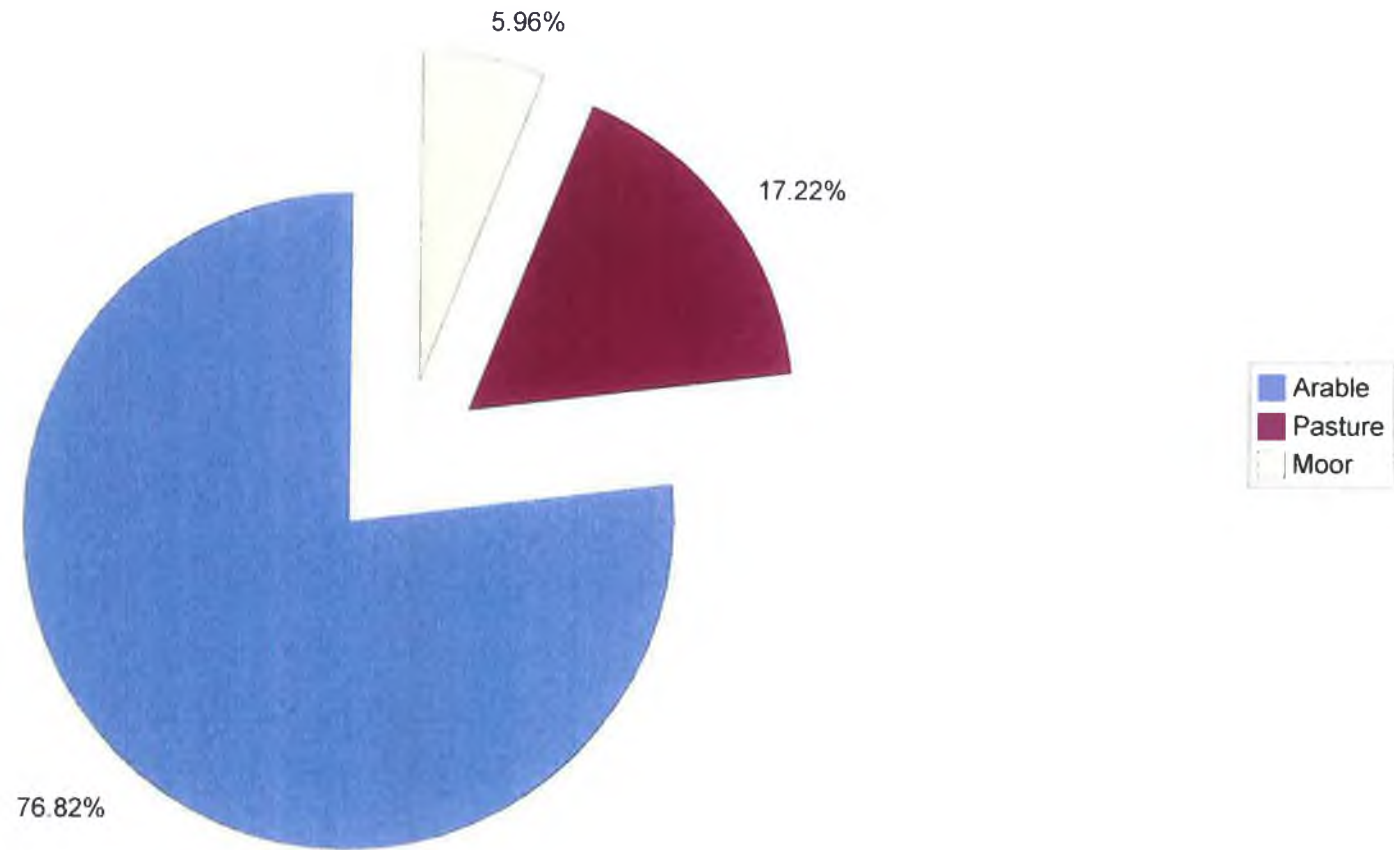


Figure 67: Remains of Hore abbey (by the author)



Figure 68: Breakdown of land type of Inishounaght Abbey

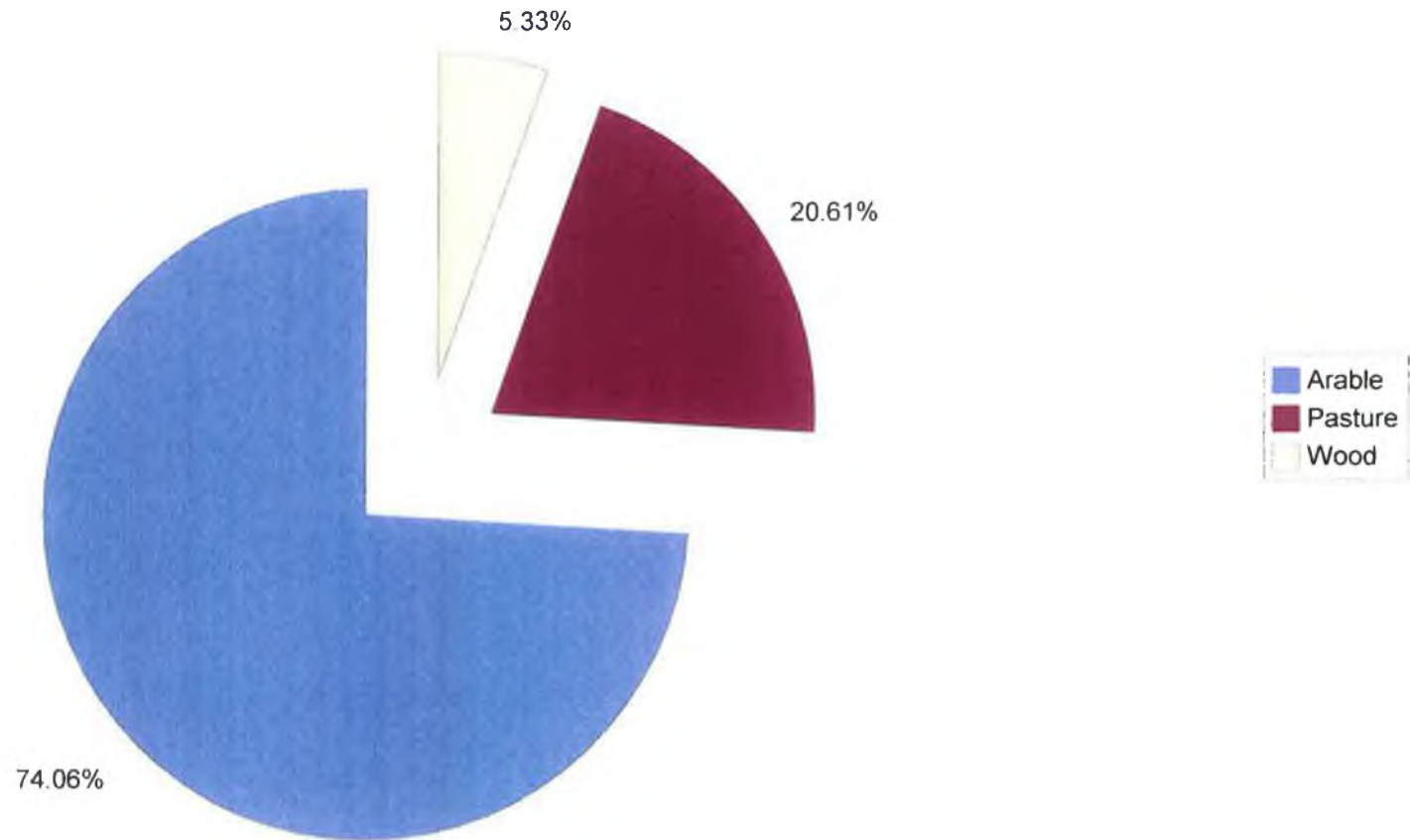


Figure 69: Map of main portion of Inishlounaght land (blue) with a grange of Hore abbey (red)



Figure 70: Waterford portion of Inishlounaght abbey lands, excluding Glandy.

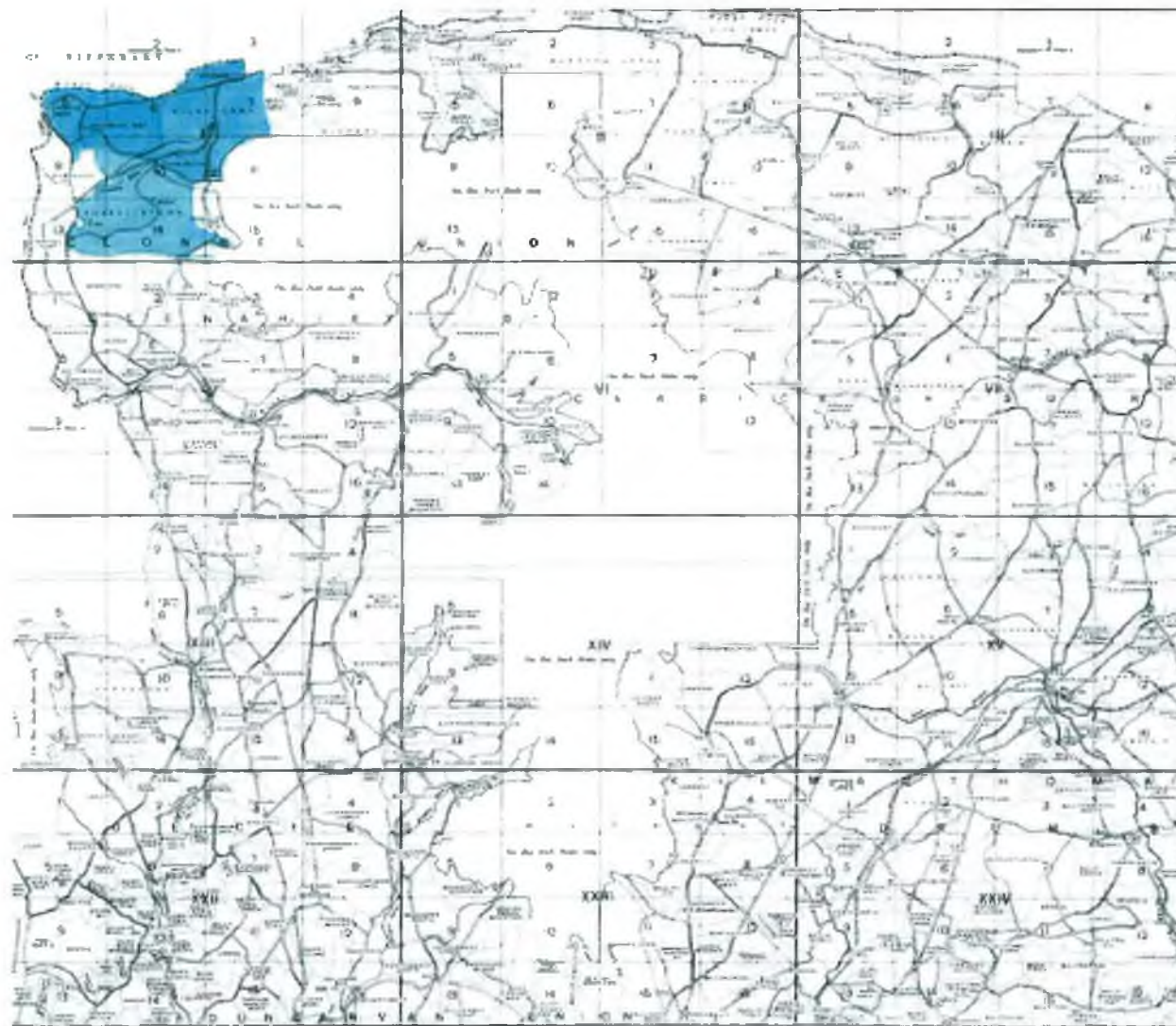


Figure 71: Breakdown of land type of Tintern Abbey

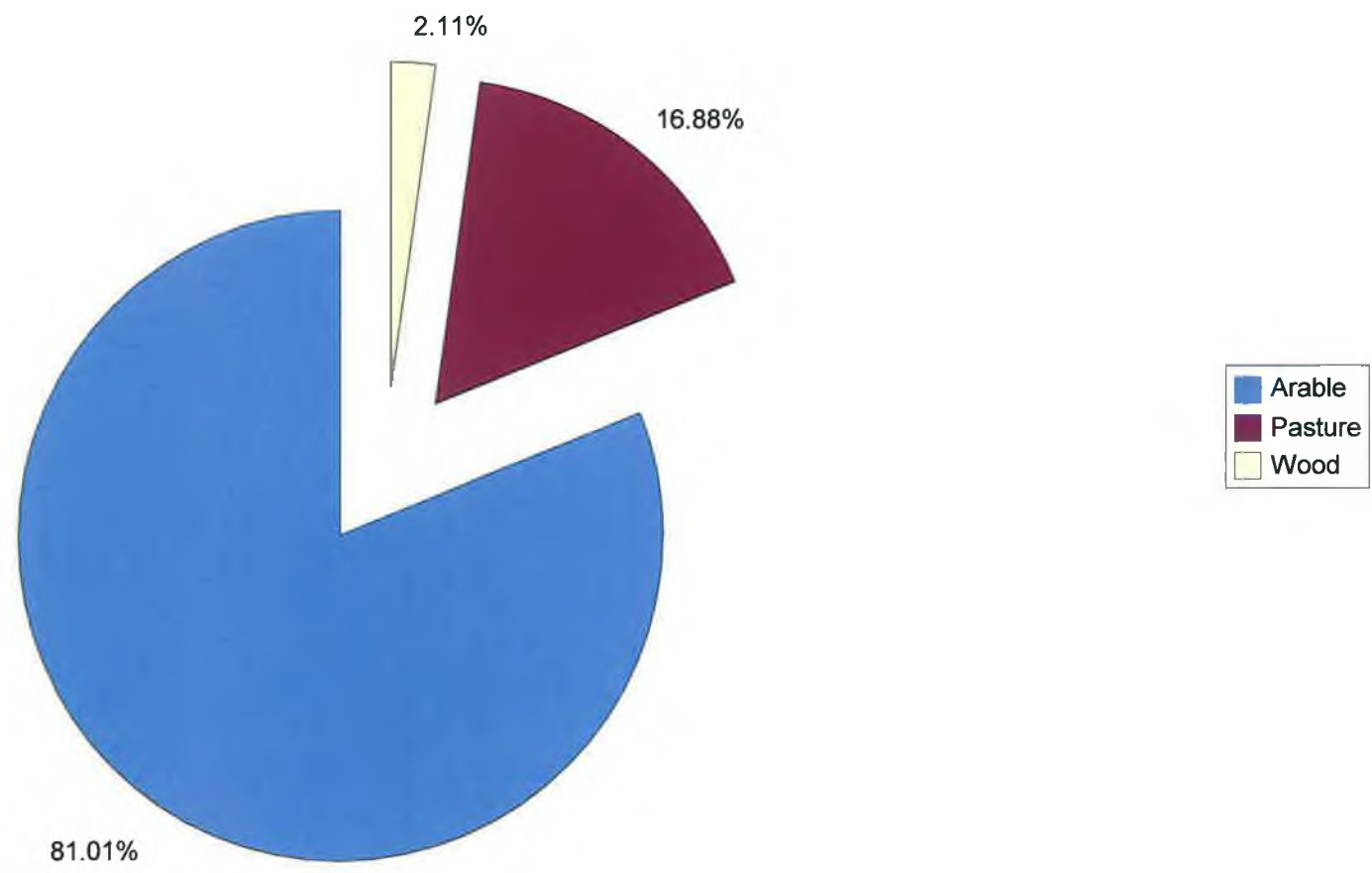
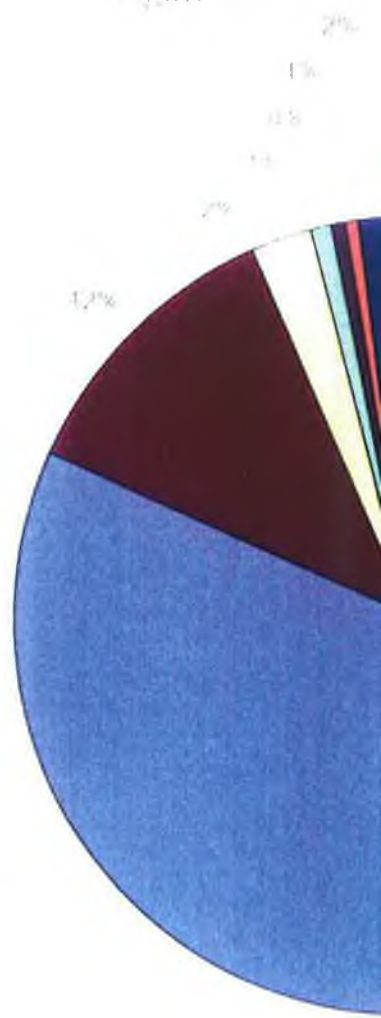
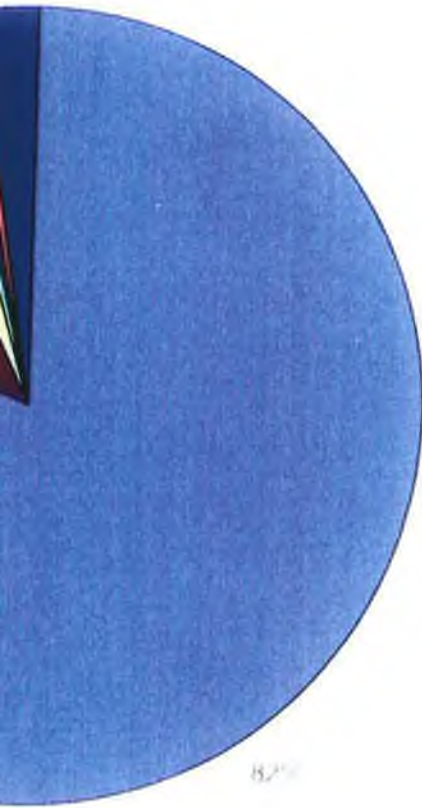


Figure 1

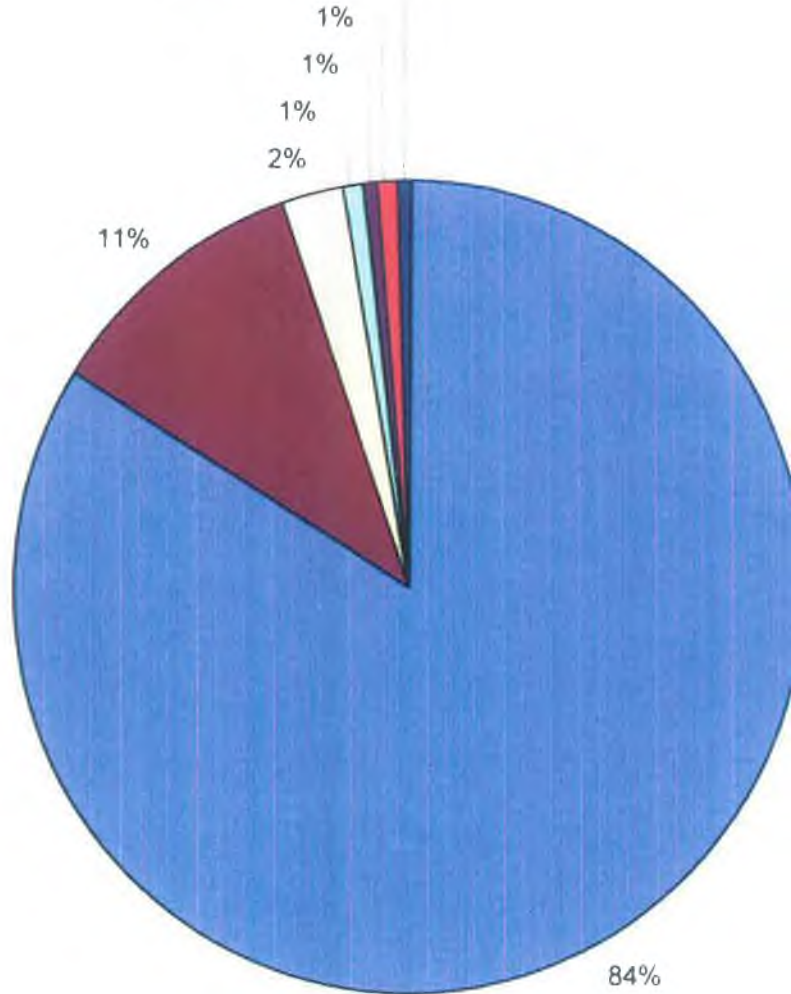


Land type from monasteries listed in extents



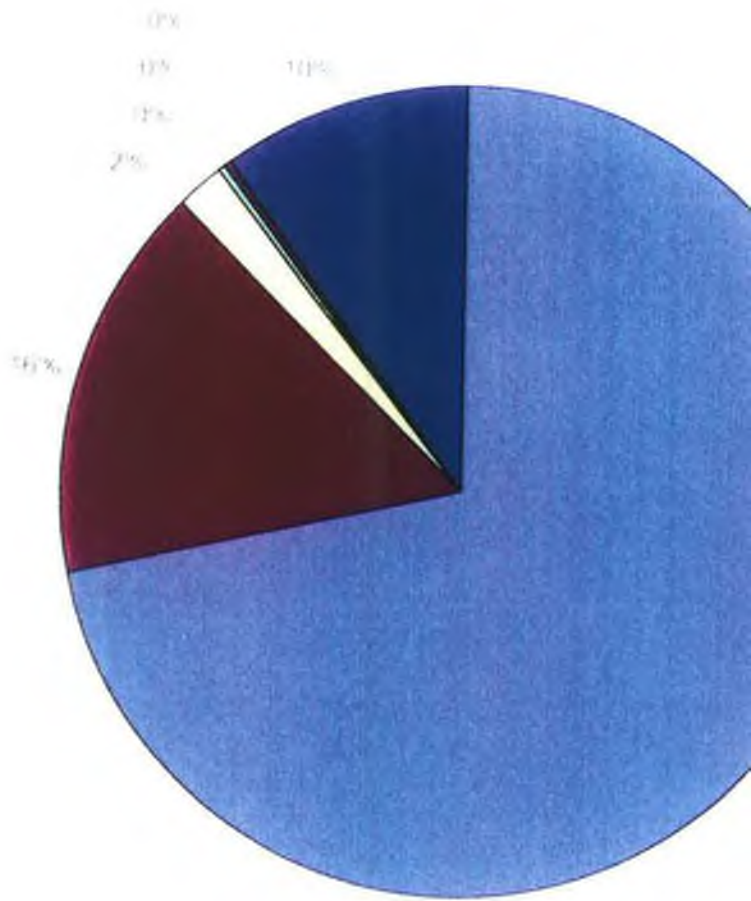
- Arable
- Pasture
- Wood
- Moor
- Meadow
- Mountains
- Misc

Figure 73: Land type in Leinster



- Arable
- Pasture
- Wood
- Moor
- Meadow
- Mountair
- Misc

Figure 4 Non-Leinster lands





12%

- Arable
- Pasture
- Wood
- Moor
- Meadow
- Mountain
- Misc