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**Cultural Heritage Study  
Irelands Eye  
North County Dublin**



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On behalf of Fingal County Council**

**January 2017**

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**COURTNEYDEERY**   
Heritage Consultancy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This cultural heritage study of Ireland's Eye has been carried out by Courtney Deery Heritage Consultancy Ltd for Fingal County Council. It involves the identification, analysis and description of key archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage elements of the surviving historic landscape on the Island. It also aims to establish the significance of these elements and to identify previously unrecorded and unregistered sites that exist within this landscape.

There has, to date, been remarkably little written about the history and heritage of Ireland's Eye and no one document that compiles the fragmentary records and stories together. It has been necessary, therefore, to bring together the disparate references and to create a historical context within which the cultural heritage assets of the island can be situated. This will facilitate a greater understanding of – and definition for – the historic character of the island landscape and the historic forces that have helped to shape it. By promoting a better understanding and management of the historic landscape resource, it will then be possible to inform the decision-making process, which will in turn ensure the protection of the Island and allow for the enhancement of its amenities.

## 2. STUDY AREA

Ireland's Eye is a small, uninhabited island located just over a kilometre north of Howth Harbour, in Dublin Bay (Figure 1).



Figure 1 Location of Study Area

It comprises the main island, a range of rocks (including The Steer and Stags to the north and northeast), and an islet called Thulla off its southern point. The island itself measures only c. 600m by 700m (21.5 hectares in area),

though the surrounding rocks and islet provide additional habitation for the native colonies of birds and seals. The island has no built harbour and is generally accessed via one of the two small boats companies that offer trips to the island during the summer months. The topography of the island is dominated by the steep cliffs on the northern side, which rise to over 90 metres, with lower, more sheltered ground to the south. A beach of fine sand runs along the south and west side of the island, having formed in the protection of the small curving Carrigeen Bay.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

A three-phased approach was undertaken, comprising baseline research, field-recording and photographic survey, and report compilation. This combined approach allowed an analysis of the cultural heritage landscape in terms of its coastal framework and the cultural heritage elements within that framework, the physical and historic relationship of the island with the mainland, the seascape to and from the Island, and its relationship with the sea itself. It also looked at how much – and where – different historical periods are represented, as well as considering the island in terms of different areas of distinct character. The elements recorded – whether of archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage importance – were not just seen in isolation; consideration was given to the interrelationship between archaeology, architecture, cultural heritage features, sensitive cultural landscapes and other environmental factors.

#### 3.1. Baseline Research

The desktop study / data-gathering stage of the study was primarily involved in assessing historical information, digital and paper map sources (current and historic), drawings / paintings, aerial photographs and documentary sources. The sources listed below in Table 1 were used to establish the aspects of the archaeological, historic and built environment that have been shaped by human activity in the past.

Table 1 Research Sources

Research Elements	Sources
<i>Architectural Heritage</i>	The Irish Architectural Archive, Merrion Square, The National Archives, Griffith's Valuation Books of 1865, Protected Structures (RPS) and Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA), National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)
<i>Archaeological Heritage</i>	Site & Monuments Records (SMR) and Records of Monuments & Places (RMP); Survey files of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland; National Monuments, Permanent and Temporary Preservation Orders and Register of Historic Monuments; Shipwreck Inventory and Maritime Records. (Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs). National Archives, Kew (UK)
<i>Stray Finds</i>	Topographical Files, National Museum of Ireland; Shipwreck Survey
<i>Place names data</i>	Field names and place names (placenames database of Ireland) supported by consultation by local historians- Its place name has Viking influence.
<i>Historical Mapping</i>	Early coastal map surveys, Down Survey maps, Board of Ordnance & War Office maps, John Rocque's map of County Dublin c. 1760, historic Ordnance Survey mapping, 1838-43 onwards (6-inch and 25-inch maps; 1st, 2nd and 3rd editions).
<i>Previous archaeological excavations</i>	Online excavations database ( <a href="http://www.excavations.ie">www.excavations.ie</a> ) and published bulletins, containing summary accounts of all excavations carried out annually in Ireland.
<i>Literature Review</i>	All publicly available documentary and literary sources from the National Library of Ireland, Royal Irish Academy, Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Local Library, Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI), 19 <sup>th</sup> century sources (The Irish Builder, Dublin Penny Journal, JRSAI excursions to

	the Island, the Irish Naturalist, Dublin Historic Record etc), and CELT; The Corpus of Electronic Texts, UCC.
<i>Aerial Survey</i>	Analysis of aerial photography was undertaken using the Ordnance Survey of Ireland map viewer (Geohive), Google Earth, Bing Maps, Heritage Maps and GSI maps.
<i>Consultation</i>	Consultation took place with Dr Jason Bolton (author of the Martello Towers survey and specialist in coastal historic stone monuments), Christine Baker (Field Monuments Advisor, Fingal County Council), Rachel Barrett (Archaeological Survey of Ireland Archive's Section), Dr Gerry Clabby (Heritage Officer, Fingal County Council). Additional information about the island and the history of the area was sought through interaction with ferry-man Ken Doyle, whose family has long served the island. Consultation with local historical societies was also attempted, but was unsuccessful.

### 3.2. Field Recording and Photographic Survey

A field survey was undertaken in order to verify the historic areas or elements identified in the desk study and to consider additional influences or features that may not be apparent from the research. The inspection sought to identify and record known features and to assess the condition and the significance of each element. It provides a photographic record of the form, materials and treatments of the architectural heritage, of the upstanding archaeological sites and of areas of distinct character. The field inspection also sought to identify any unrecorded low-visibility or destroyed monuments that may be present on the island and assess the archaeological potential (if any) of the site. Any cultural heritage features (agricultural/ industrial/ maritime) present on the island were identified and recorded. A GPS device was used to record the location of each feature encountered during the field survey, all of which are illustrated on Figure 32.

### 3.3. Report Compilation

The results of the desk study and field survey are presented in this report and supported by historic and current maps and images. An inventory of all the features examined is provided in Appendix 1, which contains the field-survey descriptions (including visual condition of monuments), locational data, relevant illustrations and photographs, and statements of significance. This is accompanied by an annotated map showing all the features identified. In addition, a management plan has been devised in order to:

- Identify any potential threats/vulnerabilities or issues to each feature and to the island;
- Advise on management proposals for the effective maintenance of monuments (and potential increase in visitors and activities associated with this);
- Advise on protection strategies for monuments;
- Identify opportunities to enhance and present monuments.

## 4. STATUTORY PROTECTION

There are four recorded archaeological sites or monuments (RMP / SMR sites) located on the island, one of which – the Martello Tower – is also a protected structure (Table 2) and is listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage with a national rating (NIAH Ref. 11359042). Extracts from the relevant legislation are provided in Appendix 2.

Table 2 RMP, SMR and RPS sites recorded on Ireland's Eye

Statutory Designation	Site Type	Townland	ITM
RMP DU015-016 / RPS No. 589	Martello Tower	Ireland's Eye	728345,741526
SMR DU015-133	Promontory fort – coastal	Ireland's Eye	728345,741524
RMP DU016-001001	Church	Ireland's Eye	728698,741190
RMP DU016-001002	Burial	Ireland's Eye	728685,741187

## 5. CULTURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPE

The archaeological and historical evidence for settlement – and even for human activity – on Ireland's Eye is relatively scarce. What does exist presents us with tantalising glimpses of the island through time, hinting at links with Romano-Britain and the Vikings and at a rich monastic past. In more recent centuries, it played a role in defence and trade concerns at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was the scene of a notorious murder in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Today it is a haven for birdlife and – during the summertime – is visited by day-trippers, though its heritage attractions are more or less unheralded and its many stories relatively unknown.

### 5.1. What's in a name?

The island has two names, each reflecting different parts of its history. The present placename, Ireland's Eye, is a corruption and conflation of two separate toponymic traditions: the earliest known name for the island, *Inis Eireann* meaning 'Eri's Island', is Irish in origin; according to O'Donovan the name appears in the *Dinseanchas* (OS Name Book, [www.logainm.ie](http://www.logainm.ie)). This was then partly altered in the Viking period to Erin's Ey, with 'øy' being an Old Norse word meaning 'island', and this, over time, became Ireland's Eye. The Irish placename more commonly associated with the island is *Inis-mac-nessain*, meaning 'the island of the three sons of Nessain / Nesson'; it is documented in the early medieval annals and is a reference to the monastery founded there in the early 7<sup>th</sup> century (Gwynn & Hadcock 1970). The church on the island (now in ruins) is known as St Nesson's Church, though tradition holds that it was the sons of Nesson – Dichuill, Munissa and Neslug – who founded the original monastery (Wakeman 1892).

### 5.2. The Island Setting

An island is not necessarily an isolated place, somewhere separate from the mainland – remote, secluded, inaccessible and 'other' – though this perception is one that springs readily to the modern mind. What we often forget, however, is that our ancestors used waterways – along rivers, across lakes and the sea – to facilitate travel, trade and communication and as a resource for food. This means that many islands were perfectly placed to function within a network of routeways, acting as trading-posts, staging-posts or resting places, and as settlements. In the case of the many lakes around the country, where natural islands did not already exist artificial ones (crannógs) were constructed, a fact that demonstrates the perceived value or significance of islands. Crannógs were built primarily (but not exclusively) during the early medieval period by both the lower and higher social classes. They varied in size and in addition to a principal settlement function, they could provide a means of controlling territory,

boundaries and routes, defence, proximity to good agricultural land, and displays of social and political power (O'Sullivan 2004).

While the sea offers far greater challenges to the navigator than rivers and lakes – as the many shipwrecks off our coast can testify – it provides a means of connection with the wider world that has been exploited since the prehistoric period. There have long been direct seaborne links to Britain across the Irish Sea from the east coast and archaeological evidence also suggests the use of a post-Roman trade route on the western seaways, from Ireland to France (Wooding 1996 & Campbell 2007). The small islands off the coast of Dublin would have played a vital role in this network and they should be seen as an integral part of the archaeological and cultural landscape, rather than isolated, discrete elements that are separate in terms of their geography and their place in our history. Thus, while the idea of remoteness and the use of islands as places of retreat is not a purely modern concept – witness the hermit monks of Skellig Michael who founded a monastery on an inhospitable and previously uninhabited rocky outcrop in the Atlantic – it is fair to say that in the past, islands often functioned as places that were part of, and even central to, daily life rather than places on its edge.

### 5.3. Prehistoric Activity

There is direct evidence for prehistoric maritime activity in the seas around Ireland's Eye, albeit not on the island itself. Ireland's Eye is just one of a network of small islands off the coast of Dublin (Figure 2), within easy reach of the mainland and of each other, with Dalkey Island and a nearby islet (the Muglins) on the south side of Dublin Bay, Lambay Island c. 9km north of Ireland's Eye, and the Skerries islands further north again (Colt, St Patrick's, Shenick, Rockabill and Red Island; the latter now a headland). This grouping of Dublin islands included the nearby Howth peninsula, which was an island during the prehistoric period (it is now joined to the mainland by a sandy isthmus at Sutton Cross), as well as Clontarf Island (a small island of sand and gravel now under the East Wall area). There is an abundance of evidence to suggest that Dublin's coastline – both mainland and islands – was used by Mesolithic people, hunter-gatherers who were exploiting maritime resources; this includes significant Late Mesolithic activity in the form of middens at both Dalkey and at Sutton / Howth Head (RMP DU015-024) and Late Mesolithic fish traps identified in estuarine mud from the River Liffey (Mitchell 1956; Liversage 1968; Woodman *et al.* 1999; McQuade & O'Donnell 2007). Analysis of lithics collected from Lambay Island also revealed definite evidence for the use of the island in the Late Mesolithic period, with strong indications that it was used from the Early Mesolithic (c. 7000 BC) onwards (Dolan & Cooney 2010). At a time when Ireland was densely wooded, boats provided the most efficient means of transport into the interior, via rivers and lakes, while coastal and island hopping would have been the easiest way to communicate in coastal areas.

The evidence for the Neolithic period (c. 4000-2500 BC) paints a similar picture, with both recorded and excavated sites demonstrating that Neolithic activity was widespread in the Dublin coastal zone. The more sedentary, farming-based economy of the Neolithic period has left greater visible traces in the archaeological record; there were permanent and fixed settlements, new funerary monuments and a more organised approach to the exploitation of natural resources and tool production. In the areas closest to Ireland's Eye, along the Fingal coastline, there is a megalithic portal tomb on Howth Head (RMP DU015-032), as well as a coastal group of passage tombs that extend



northwards from Knocklea, near Rush, to Bremore and Gormanston. Evidence from surface finds and the results of archaeological excavations in the vicinity of Malahide, Skerries, Balbriggan, Lusk, Beaverstown and Donabate also indicate an intensity of Neolithic activity – and settlement – along this coastline (Dolan & Cooney 2010).

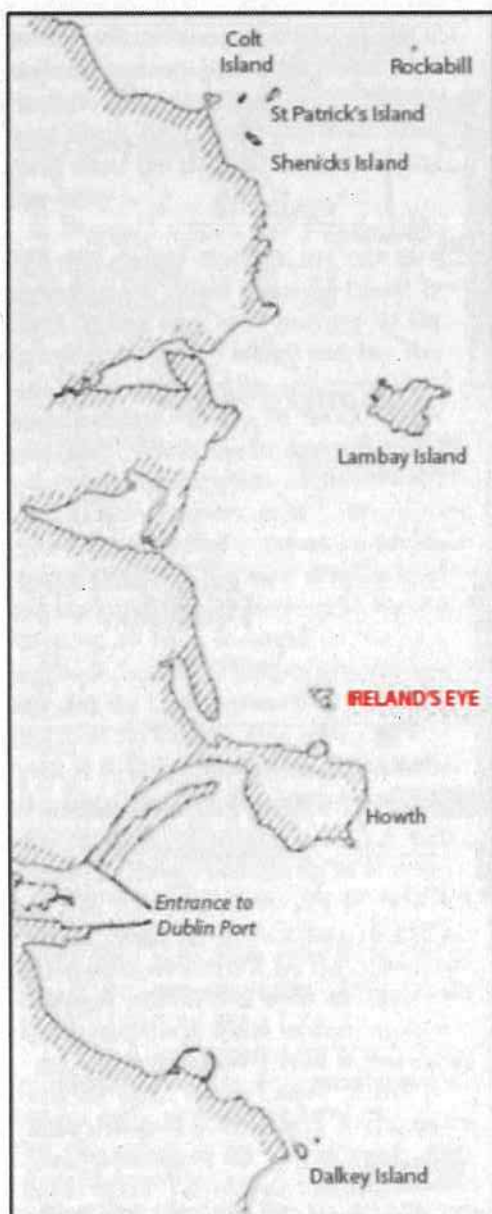


Figure 2 Dublin's Islands (after Cooney 1990)

The role that Ireland's Eye played in this network is unclear, but given its position, close to Howth and the coastline at Baldoyle and Portmarnock and in relative proximity to Lambay, it is likely to have played some part. It may have been used on a seasonal basis for its natural resources or simply as a stopping-off point when required, from the Mesolithic period onwards.

Widespread maritime contacts during the Bronze Age are evidenced by similarities in cultural assemblages – of metal-work and ceramics – and in the trading of mineral resources, such as Irish copper, Cornish tin and amber from

This is borne out by the findings of the ongoing and extensive research led by Professor Gabriel Cooney on Lambay Island, the closest of the Dublin islands to Ireland's Eye. Lambay is significantly larger, with evidence for a long period of human activity and settlement. During the Neolithic period, this activity appears to have been focused on a neolithic quarry where porphyritic andesite (or Lambay porphyry) was worked to produce stone axeheads from the early fourth millennium BC (Cooney 2005). Strong trade and cultural exchanges during the Neolithic period between Ireland, Britain and mainland Europe are evident in similarities in tombs, artefacts, houses and economies (Brady 2008b). For example, key links have been established between Lambay and Dublin's coastal zone, as well as farther afield to Wales and to the Isle of Arran in Scotland: a small number of Lambay porphyry axeheads occur in assemblages on the mainland (e.g. at Feltrim Hill); and, a pitchstone artefact from Arran and axes made from preselite (a stone found only in southwest Wales) were recovered on Lambay (Dolan & Cooney 2010; Cooney & Mandal 1998). In general, there appears to have been substantial activity on the mainland with continued use of offshore islands and the research on Lambay indicates that the use of the sea and islands was increasingly to do with communication and contact. In this context, Cooney observes that the islands function as nodes in a pattern of exchange involving stone objects and other items, in a new network of social relations that extended over land and sea (cited in Dolan & Cooney 2010).

the Baltic region (Brady 2008b). Within the Dublin coastal region, there is definitive evidence for the continued use and development of the trade links established during the Neolithic period, with Beaker pottery recovered during excavations at Dalkey Island (*ibid.*). That prehistoric activity and use of the islands and coastline in the area around Ireland's Eye continued beyond the Neolithic period is readily apparent in the number of recorded archaeological sites on Howth Head and Sutton Cross. In addition to the Neolithic portal tomb noted above, there are a number of sites that are suggestive of activity during the Bronze Age and Iron Age; these include an embanked barrow on Dun Hill (RMP DU019-004003), four unclassified cairns (RMP DU016-007 & DU019-003; -006; -007) four mounds, three of which are known to have contained burials (RMP DU015-019, -020, 023, -028), and a promontory fort (RMP DU016-003001). Lambay Island also shows some evidence for use at this time, with two hilltop cairns, two promontory forts and a number of late Iron Age burials recorded there (Cooney 1993).

A promontory fort may also have occupied the headland at the north-western tip of Ireland's Eye (SMR DU015-133). The possible site was identified during a promontory fort survey in the late 1990s, in which it is described as follows:

'The headland, irregular in plan, slopes steeply down to the point [on which the Martello Tower sits] and at a point some 30m inland is a curving natural escarpment of rock outcrop with level berm and gentle rise visible immediately to the west, suggesting the presence of a fosse and wall or bank. This was visible from the air and the site has not yet been visited on the ground. Several vague lines running across the headland closer to the tower may indicate further defences. Not enough remains visible above ground to ascertain the nature of these features.' (Casey 1999)

The presence of promontory forts in fairly close proximity on Howth, Lambay, at Drumanagh near Loughshinny and (possibly) on Ireland's Eye may be indicative of the uncertain and hazardous nature of maritime trade during the Iron Age (Cooney 1993).

The significance of the Dublin Islands in the trade and communication network of the later Iron Age is best illustrated by the presence of two of them in a brief geographic description of Ireland written by the Graeco-Roman geographer Ptolemy. This was produced as part of a larger geography of Europe c. 150 AD and included a series of reasonably accurate co-ordinates for the country; the oft-depicted map based on the textual description was not drawn until the late 15<sup>th</sup> century (Figure 3). The two islands located about halfway along the east coast – thus roughly in the location of the Dublin Islands – are named *Adrou* and *Lemnu* by Ptolemy. It is difficult to positively identify the islands – both of which are described as desolate and deserted – though it has been argued that *Adrou* may refer to the peninsula of Howth (Irish: *Etar*), which was once an island, and *Lemnu* may be Lambay Island; a clear problem with this is that Ptolemy locates *Adrou* to the north of *Lemnu*, rather than the other way around (Daffy 2013). Whatever their actual identification, at least two of Dublin's islands were important enough in terms of navigation – and perhaps also trade and communication – to have been included in Ptolemy's description. At the very least, the knowledge of the islands' names must reflect increased maritime traffic between Ireland and the Roman world from the first century AD.

#### 5.4. Links with the Roman World

Ptolemy's *Geographia* is not the earliest reference to Ireland – though it is the most detailed – and there is sufficient documentary evidence to indicate that the Romans had a fairly good knowledge of the country. There is an earlier reference to Ireland in Julius Caesar's own account of his Gallic Wars, written in the middle of the first century BC; it describes the size and the distance of the sea-crossing between Britain and Ireland and notes that the island of *Mona* (Anglesey) lay in between the two (Brady 2008b). Tacitus, the Roman senator and historian, recounts the possible invasion of Ireland by his father-in-law, the Roman general Agricola, in AD 81. According to Tacitus, the invasion plans were informed by an exiled Irish chieftain and there is also evidence that the Roman military collected information by questioning traders and by dispatching scout ships to explore crossings near the Scottish coast (McLaughlin 2012). Although the invasion never happened, all of the available documentary and archaeological evidence points to contact of some sort and to some degree between Ireland and the Roman world.



Figure 3 Ptolemy's map showing islands off the coast of Dublin

Many of the littoral and offshore islands of County Dublin have produced single Roman finds, artefacts without provenance or context, which can do no more than hint at possible connections to the Roman world. Ireland's Eye is no exception, with a number of 4<sup>th</sup> century AD Roman coins recorded from the island, including one copper coin, which dates to the emperor Constantine I (308-337 AD) and was minted in London (Daffy, 2013; the exact find-spot on the island is unknown and the coin was found in the late 1920s). In addition, a small hoard of eight mid-4<sup>th</sup> century AD coins were ploughed up in the south-eastern corner of the island in the 1860s; these date to the short reign of the usurper Magnentius, who led a rebellion in Gaul from 350-353 AD (Daffy 2013). In contrast to these slightly tenuous links, there are two sites within the north Dublin coastal zone that appear to have more concrete connections with the Roman world: Drumanagh fort at Loughshinny, on the mainland between the villages of Rush and Skerries, c. 5.5km north of Lambay, and Lambay Island itself.

In 1927, burials were uncovered during reconstruction works at the harbour on Lambay Island, containing at least two 'crouched inhumations' (so-labelled at the time) and a large number of late Iron Age and Roman artefacts (Cooney 1993). One of the burials appeared to be that of a male warrior, with sword and shield, while the other may have been a female 'mirror burial' (based on the iron mirror present and parallels known from Britain; Cahill

Wilson *et al.* 2014). Previous analysis of the finds suggested parallels with Romano-British artefacts – specifically of northern Britain – which has led to suggestions that the burials represented refugees of the Brigantes tribe fleeing the Roman conquest in the first century AD (Rynne 1976; O'Brien 1990; Cunliffe 2012; McLaughlin 2012). An alternative view was postulated by Cooney in the early 1990s, proposing instead a community with strong links with Roman Britain, engaged in the trading of metal and other artefacts in exchange for commodities from Ireland (e.g. foodstuffs or slaves; Cooney 1993). A reassessment of the human remains and finds was carried out as part of the ongoing Late Iron Age and 'Roman Ireland' (LIARI) project, the findings of which offer a very different perspective on the burials and associated material. The remains of up to eight individuals (including at least one juvenile and an infant) were identified in an examination of the skeletal remains, which suggests that this was a late Iron Age community burial ground (Fibiger, in Cahill Wilson *et al.* 2014). The range of objects seems to include items made in Britain or traded from Gaul, with both Roman and local Iron Age influences noted in the technologies and designs. In addition, the material assemblage appears to offer clear parallels in both dating and find-type with the likely trading activity taking place at Drumanagh during the pre-Roman Iron Age and first and second centuries AD (Cahill Wilson *et al.* 2014).

Prior to the discoveries in the 1920s, a single second-century AD coin recovered around 1840 was the first of the Roman finds on Lambay; its issue corresponds with finds of bronze coins of Trajan and Hadrian from Drumanagh, suggesting contacts between the two communities (Cahill Wilson *et al.* 2014). The multivallate promontory fort at Drumanagh lies some 14km north of Ireland's Eye and is one of the largest and most impressive monuments of its type in Ireland, encompassing an area of c. 13 hectares. The promontory would have been a clear marker to seafarers travelling from Britain or along the coast, it was close to a sheltered harbour, providing a prime landing spot and a strategic maritime position (Raftery 1994). Its connections with the Roman world are provided by the substantial numbers of native Roman and Romano-British artefacts recovered there through illegal metal-detecting. The sheer quantity of Roman material from within the fort, as well as disparate finds from the wider area, has prompted the suggestion that Drumanagh was an important trading port connecting the north Leinster region with Roman Britain (Dowling 2014). Geophysical survey undertaken as part of the LIARI Project at Drumanagh and in its environs has demonstrated the importance of this location in later prehistory, revealing a complex of ring-ditch funerary monuments on the high ground overlooking the fort (Cf. Dowling 2014). Despite these recent investigations, the possibility that there was a 'Roman settlement' on Drumanagh, founded and inhabited by Romans, remains unproven.

The presence of Roman finds on both Lambay and Drumanagh should not necessarily be taken to mean that the people living there were Roman, as has been argued in the past, though clearly, they had strong links with the Roman world. It has recently been mooted that these were 'internationalised' communities, possibly including Romano-British settlers, most likely from south-western England, who had links with continental Europe (Cahill Wilson 2014). The communities acted as a commercial hub or frontier market, facilitating trade into Ireland through negotiations with the Romano-British military, administrators and entrepreneurs, supplying prestige items to the social élites of Ireland. Taken as a whole, the Romano-British material from the Dublin Islands and coastal area

suggests that this region was a focus of trade during the late Iron Age and into Late Antiquity – there is both early and later Roman material from Dalkey Island and a small, possibly Roman-type lamp, from the foreshore at Skerries – with the possibility that the Dublin Island group was used to provide stopping-off points, safe harbour and some (probably temporary) settlement before the development of Drumanagh as an agreed port of trade (*ibid.*).

### 5.5. Early Christian Settlement on Ireland's Eye

Little is known about the early medieval ecclesiastical site on Ireland's Eye. It was reputedly founded in the early 7<sup>th</sup> century by three sons of Nesson – Dichuill, Munissa and Neslug – and is traditionally associated with an early medieval illuminated gospel-book known as the Garland of Howth. The ruins of St Nesson's Church represent the only surviving physical remains of the ecclesiastical site on the island. Historically, it is known that St Nesson's became a parish church during the Anglo-Norman period, having formed the original prebendal lands and church of Archbishop Comyn's Collegiate Chapter of St Patrick since 1190. This status was short-lived, however, as the prebend was transferred to St Mary's of Howth in 1235, which then became the parish church.

#### 5.5.1. St Nesson's Church

St Nesson's Church is a recorded archaeological monument (RMP DU016-001001). It comprises the ruined remains of a pre-Norman structure, though more precise dating is difficult owing to the scant remains and to a rather heavy-handed restoration attempt in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although known as St Nesson's Church – and referred to as such here – it is more correctly called Kilmacnessan; i.e. the Church of Nesson's Sons (Cooney 1990).

The site was visited by a number of antiquarians and artists during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, resulting in a number of sketches and even two early photographs (taken c. 1889-1893; Plates 2 & 3). At the time of Petrie's visit in 1828, the church ruins had yet to be 'restored' and were also a good deal more substantial; Petrie noted some years later that 'of the ancient stone-roofed church on Ireland's Eye [...] the doorway was unfortunately destroyed some years since, that the stones might be used in the erection of a roman catholic chapel in Howth' (Petrie 1845). Robert Cochrane, who takes care to distinguish himself as an archaeologist (rather than an antiquarian), described the site in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, commenting rather scathingly on the subsequent restoration works: 'The too ardently enthusiastic antiquary has been at work; and a structure which at the beginning of the present century was regarded by such a man as Petrie as interesting, is now, to the archaeologist who visits it for the first time, disappointing in the extreme' (Cochrane 1893).

The church, which survives currently in its reconstructed form to gable height, is a nave and a chancel construction, aligned ENE-WSW. The chancel is tied into the nave and has a vaulted roof from which rises the partial remains of a round turret (this has been interpreted by some as the remains of a round tower); the sketches by Petrie (1828), Du Noyer (1841) and Wakeman (1843) all show a large portion of the turret still in situ (Figures 4-6). The sketches produced by the antiquarians also demonstrate the degree to which the ruins degraded in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and also the extent of the subsequent reconstruction. By the time Wakeman visited in 1843, the whole of the west gable had disappeared, as had the east window and parts of the east wall, along with much of the south walls of the chancel and nave (Figure 5).



Figure 4 'Base of Round Tower of St Nesson', George Victor Du Noyer, June 1843 (RSAI Library)

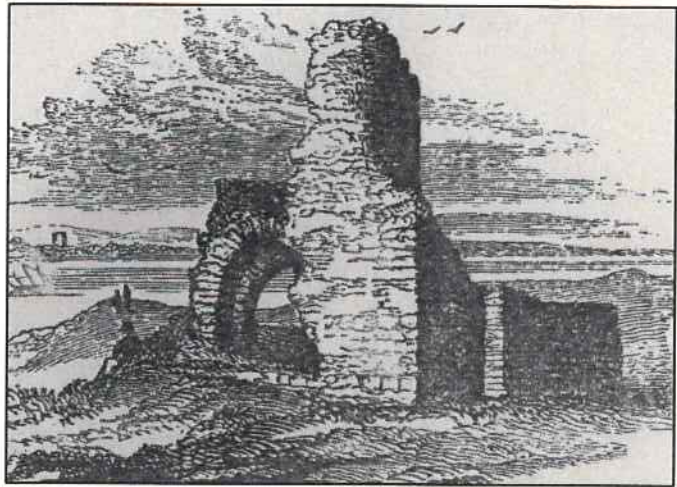


Figure 5 'Kilmacnessan, east view', by W. F. Wakeman 1843 (Cochrane, 1893)

The ensuing restoration works can be seen – still crisp and obviously quite recently completed – in the two photographs taken towards the end of the century (Plates 2 & 3). The turret is, by this time, gone and its base partly or wholly reconstructed along with the east gable wall and window. In addition, the north wall, which is shown on Wakeman's and Du Noyer's sketches with no openings, is now pierced with two small windows (one each in the nave and chancel). More subtle differences include the impostes on the doorway (the projecting blocks embedded in the wall which serve as the base for the lowest voussoir of the arch); as Cochrane (1893) observed, these are now formed of rough hammered flagstones, whereas Petrie's earlier sketch had shown them as chamfered along their bottom edges (Plate 1, Figure 8).

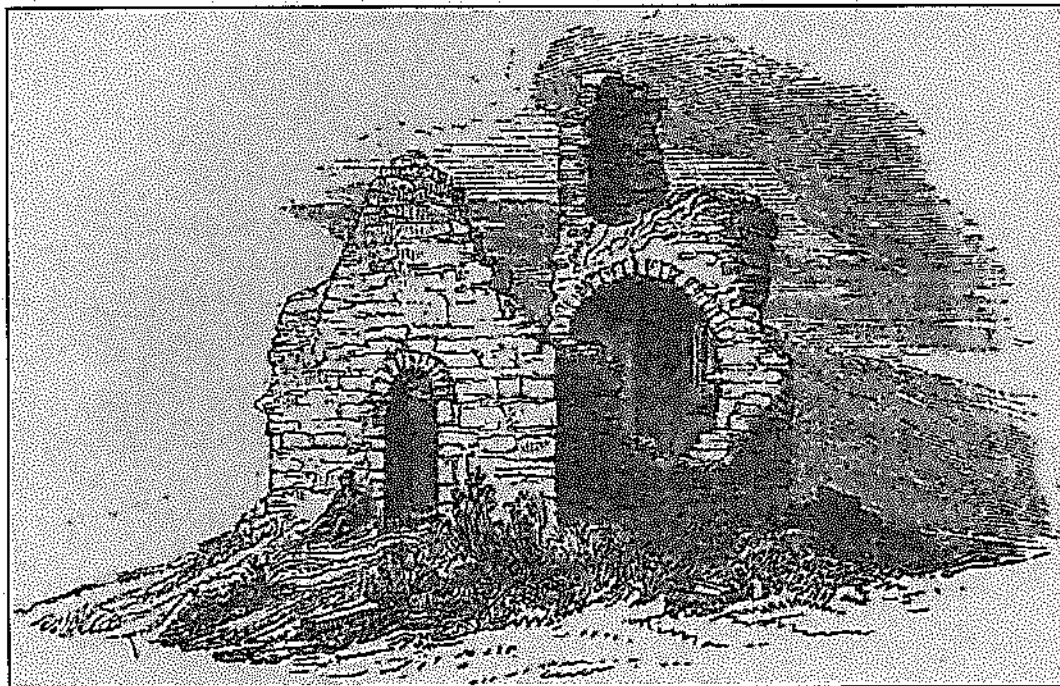


Figure 6 'Kilmacnessan', a sketch by Petrie, 1828 (Cochrane, 1893)

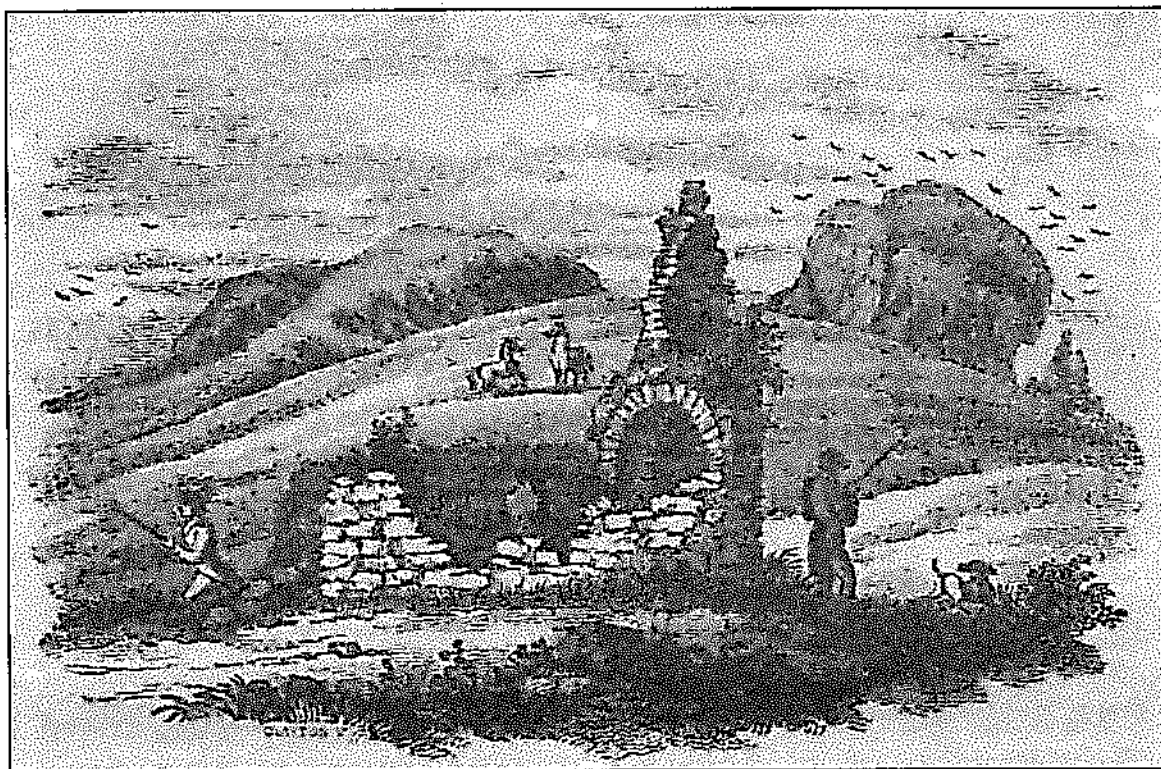


Figure 7 'Ruins of St Nesson's Church', sketch by R. A. in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, August 1833

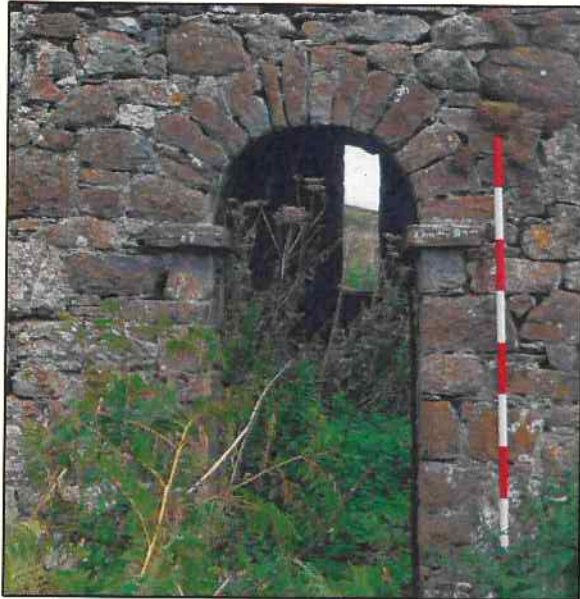


Plate 1 St Nesson's Church,  
doorway in east wall

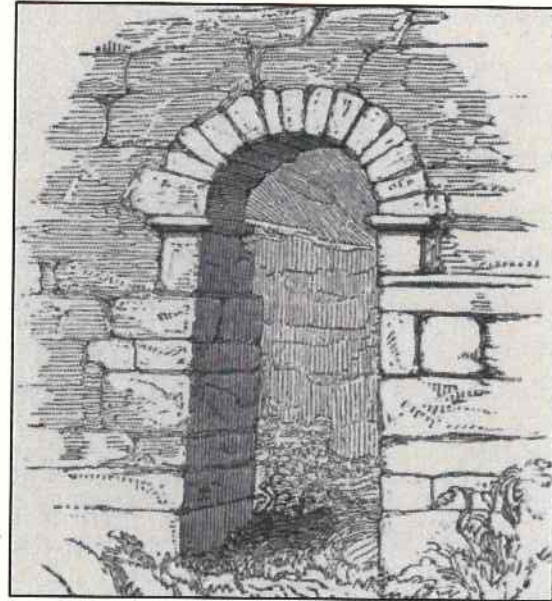


Figure 8 Petrie's sketch of  
east doorway, 1828  
(Cochrane 1893)

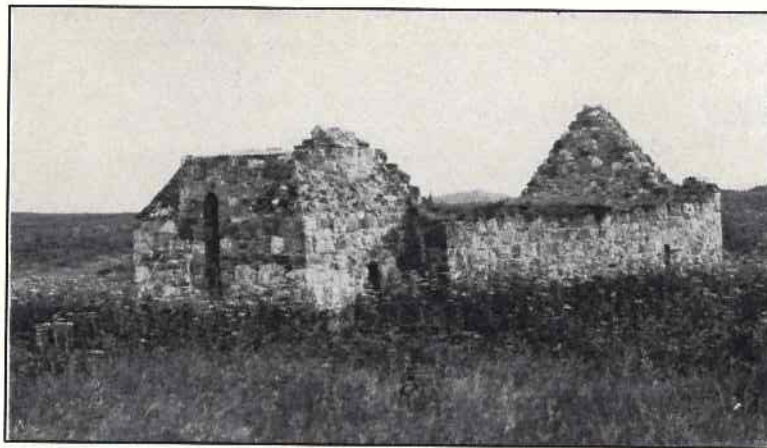


Plate 2 Ruins of St Nesson's Church, taken c. 1889 by E. Mc Dowell Cosgrove (RSAI Library)

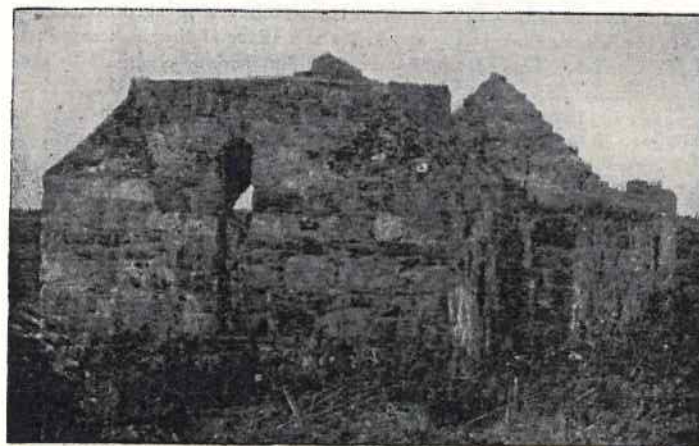


Plate 3 Ruins of St Nesson's Church, taken c. 1893 by Mr Taunton Clarke (Cochrane, 1893)



At least one burial is known from the vicinity of the church. The grave was revealed during ploughing in May 1868 (which also turned up the Roman coin discussed above), c. 30m northwest of the church ruins, and consisted of a long cist covered by lintel slabs (Cooney 1990). An account of the find was produced by Rev. J. F. Shearman (1868), who inspected the burial shortly after it was uncovered. According to Shearman, the 'covering flags' were found c. 30cm below the surface, the sides and ends of the grave were 'built in rubble without any cement', and 'at its head or western end, a small square nook [...] was formed to receive the head [...] so that in shape the grave was not unlike some medieval stone coffins, found at the Black Abbey in Kilkenny' (Shearman 1868; Figure 9). Although the orientation of the grave and the location of the head at the western end suggest a Christian burial sometime during the early medieval or medieval periods, it is not possible to date it more precisely.

There is some evidence for additional burials in this area; Shearman notes that other 'human remains [...] turned up near the church'. He also comments that ploughing in 'the hollows between the hill and the sand dunes on the western shore' turned up 'bones, oyster shells, &c' (Shearman 1868). Unfortunately, this brief and passing mention by Shearman represents the only evidence for additional burials located in the vicinity of the church. Whether or not the bones found with the oyster shells were human is unknown; at the very least, the presence of animal bone and oyster shells is indicative of human activity or settlement at some point in the environs of the ecclesiastical site (possibly a midden disturbed by ploughing).

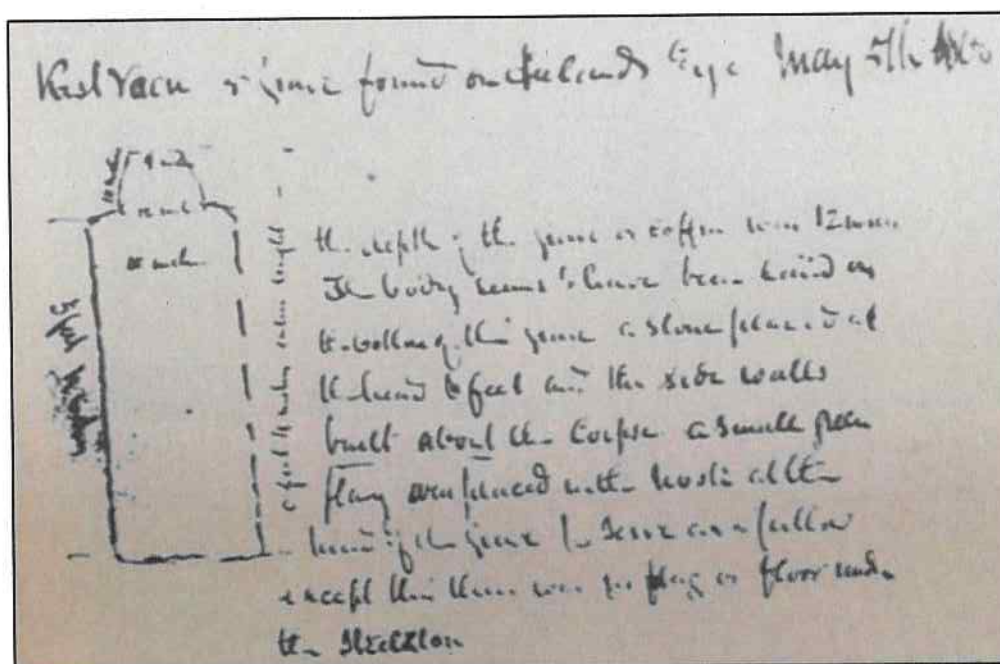


Figure 9 Shearman's notes on the burial found near the church (1868)

With the exception of the church ruins, there are no other visible remains of the early medieval ecclesiastical site surviving above-ground. Clearly parts of the island were put to tillage in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (if not before), which might explain the absence of any other evidence for ecclesiastical remains on the island. Historical accounts point to the removal of at least some of the stones from the church to Howth and any earthworks or other above-ground remains (e.g. of enclosures or burial markers) may have been destroyed by ploughing. Ploughing is documented

during the 1860s, when the cist burial was discovered (though it is not known how extensive it was). In 1833, a visitor to the island (known simply as R. A.) recounted that 'near the church are the marks of mounds and trenches, but although the soil appears rich, yet it is now uncultivated and over-grown with ferns and briars' (*The Dublin Penny Journal* 1833). The 'mounds and trenches' may be a reference to traces of ridge-and-furrow and thus to past agricultural practices (given the remainder of the sentence, this is the most likely inference). Alternatively, the 'mounds and trenches' observed by R. A. might have been vestigial remains associated with the early medieval ecclesiastical settlement, such as earthworks, ditches, buried stone foundations or burials.

Given the dearth of historical and archaeological evidence for the ecclesiastical settlement on Ireland's Eye, it is not possible to determine its exact nature or size. The traditional association with the illuminated gospel-book, the *Garland of Howth*, would indicate that the settlement was at least substantial enough – and wealthy enough – to support a scriptorium (assuming that the book was, in fact, produced there; see below). The relatively small size of the island would obviously constrain the scale of the settlement, both physically and in terms of its ability to provide the resources necessary to sustain the monks. Food could, of course, be brought over from the mainland, and it is possible – given its proximity to Howth Head – that the lands there were farmed to support the ecclesiastical settlement (though such speculation cannot be proven). A certain amount of self-sufficiency would be required, in any case, particularly during the winter months when inclement weather and turbulent seas would cut off access to the island.

Without further information it is not possible to determine if the settlement on Ireland's Eye was a minor monastery tethered to a larger ecclesiastical centre, a separate foundation serving as an interface with local secular groups or simply a small hermitage. Given that ecclesiastical foundations are also recorded on Lambay Island (reputedly founded by St Colmcille), St Patrick's Island (at Skerries) and on Dalkey Island, however, it is likely that all of these island monasteries would have exploited their potential as staging-posts; their position offered an easy connection to the large ecclesiastical sites established on the east coast at Swords and Lusk (both sites are located at or close to an estuary).

### 5.5.2. *The Garland of Howth*

While the *Garland of Howth* is traditionally associated with St Nesson and Ireland's Eye, its provenance is not entirely secure. Unlike like other illuminated gospel books, it is not named after the saint with whom it is associated or the place where it is thought to have been made (such are the cases, for example, with the *Book of Mulling*, named for St Mulling, and the *Books of Durrow* and *Kells*). It has neither a dedicatory inscription that might assist in tracing where it was produced or by whom, nor any additional material inserted at a later date – such as the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century legal transcriptions in the *Book of Kells* – that might help to establish where a book was made or even where it was at a certain point in the distant past (Moss, 2016). In contrast, the *Garland of Howth* has a name of obscure origin and there is only a hagiographical story to connect it to the early medieval church of St Nesson on Ireland's Eye.

The *Garland of Howth* is first documented in the early 1530s when it is called the 'Kerlower' by Archbishop of Dublin, John Alen, a name that is a phonetic derivation of the Irish *Ceathair Leabhair*, or 'four books [of the gospels]

(McNeill 1950). Almost a century later, the book was apparently in Howth Castle and Archbishop Ussher noted there, with some disdain, that the Kerlower had become vulgarly known as 'The Garland of Howth' (Elrington, 1848, cited in Moss, 2016). It is possible that 'garland' is a more extreme Anglicization of *Ceathair Leabhair*, or that the term garland implies a talismanic function, common to a number of relics of the time; in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the word 'garland' was also used to denote 'the principal ornament, the thing most prized', and it may be that this lies at the root of the name (Moss 2016). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Trinity Librarian T.K. Abbott changed the name of the manuscript to the Codex Usserianus Secundus, to reflect his belief that Archbishop Ussher had been responsible for its accession to the Library (*ibid.*). As there is no proof that Ussher owned the book, nor that he brought it to the Library, it has since reverted to being called the Garland of Howth.

The association with St Nessian and Ireland's Eye stems from Archbishop Alen's recounting of the tale in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. According to the legend, St Nessian had been reading his gospel book on the island, when he was accosted by an evil spirit. He repelled it with holy water, ejecting it with such force that it struck the adjacent coastline imprinting its face on Devil's Rock (it is also called 'Split Rock' or 'Puck's Rocks' and is located at the east end of Balscaddan Bay on Howth Head). In the process the book was lost in the sea. It was later miraculously recovered by sailors, and came to be held in such veneration, according to Alen, that the locals feared to swear on it lest they perjure themselves and meet some terrible fate (McNeill 1950). Alen's account clearly associates the book with the island, but, in common with much hagiography, a tale that incorporated an ancient church in the area and puzzling feature of the landscape, may simply have been a means of adding authenticity to the ancient fragmentary gospel book (Moss 2016).



Figure 10 Pages from the Garland of Howth, showing text (folio 2v) and illustrated page (folio 22r) (TCD)

The date of the book is also uncertain, though a 9<sup>th</sup> century date is now generally accepted (Moss, 2016; Alexander and Colker, cited in McBrierty 1981). It is of relatively small size, particularly when compared with the contemporary Book of Kells, and this difference most likely reflects their original functions; the early medieval gospel books were either designed to be small enough to be held for reading or carried about by missionaries (e.g. the compact Book of Mulling and Book of Dimma) or large enough to be displayed (e.g. the Book of Kells). The Garland of Howth measures only 24.1 cm x 19.2 cm, thus about half the size of the Book of Kells, and where the latter would have been far too large to look at without the aid of a table or lectern, the Garland of Howth could have been held comfortably in the hands (<https://www.tcd.ie/library/early-irish-mss/launch-of-the-digital-garland-of-howth>).

Books of any kind were a rarity in early medieval Ireland, partly because only a tiny elite, such as monks, scribes and other professionals, knew how to read and write, but also because books were expensive to produce, both in materials and in labour. An illuminated gospel book would have been a prized possession for a church or monastery, valued not only for its sacred content but also for its real value; the production of illuminated manuscripts was both a skilled and expensive undertaking. It required the production of vellum (pages made from calf-skin), the expertise of trained scribes and significant amounts of time to pen the text and illustrations. As an example of the expense involved, the 370 folios contained in the Book of Kells would have necessitated the slaughter of around 150 calves and the subsequent preparation of the skins to make the vellum (Hughes & Hamlin 1977).

Most of the manuscripts show evidence of later veneration, by having been kept in shrines, and the Garland of Howth originally had a small clasp or tongue of silver attached to the book, inscribed with the name 'St Talman'; the clasp is no longer present and may have been removed when the book was re-bound 'in a most unskilled manner' in 1841 (McBrierty 1981).

Estimates about how long it would take to produce an illuminated manuscript like the Garland of Howth vary, though it is likely to have taken several months to complete, if not longer (Meehan, 2012). The Garland of Howth is fragmentary and contains 86 folios inscribed with the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. It was produced in the insular tradition, using a majuscule script, and although the decoration in the Garland of Howth is less elaborate than in the Book of Kells, there are comparable elements (Moss, 2016). As with other insular Gospel books, a set of illuminated pages was made to preface each gospel. Only two of these (the introductory images for the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, folios 1r and 22r) are preserved in the Garland of Howth (Figures 10 & 11). On these folios, the large initials of Insular display script mix with interlace and beasts, while the central decoration incorporates images of the evangelists and their symbols.

Copies of the illuminated pages were produced in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century by Margaret Stokes, and were subsequently published by the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1868 (Figure 11). The Garland of Howth is now held in Trinity College Dublin (TCD) Library and the manuscript has recently been made available in digital version, as part of the TCD Early Irish Manuscripts Project (<http://digitalcollections.tcd.ie>).



Figure 11 The Garland of Howth, folio 1r, original page (left) and chromolithograph by Stokes (right) (TCD)

### 5.6. Raids, incursions and Viking settlement

From the 5<sup>th</sup> century onwards – and throughout the early medieval period – there is significant evidence for trade and travel to Britain and the Continent. Not all of this maritime activity was friendly or cooperative, however, and there are numerous accounts of raids during this period. In the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, Irish tribes had raided and settled in large numbers on the west coast of Britain and the Irish Sea appears to have been very much under Irish control (Brady 2008b). This picture changes rather dramatically in the late 8<sup>th</sup> century with the onslaught of the Viking raids, but there is an even earlier account relating to Ireland's Eye that suggests that these were not the first incursions by 'foreigners'; the Annals of Ulster record that in 701, Irghalach, king of Bregia, was slain on '*Inis-macnesain*, east of *Binn Edair* [Howth]' by Britons who invaded his territory and followed him to the island where he died at their hands (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988). That Irghalach went to Ireland's Eye in the first place suggests that he was seeking asylum in the church there; the right of asylum in ecclesiastical centres was a well-established practice at this time and was enshrined in canon law, though it did not, ultimately, save the Bregian king.

The first of the Viking raids in Ireland is also recorded in the Annals of Ulster, which tells of the 'burning of *Rechru* by the heathens' in 795 (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988). Although this entry was long thought to refer to the monastic community on Rathlin Island (*ibid.*), it is now considered more likely that it describes an event on Lambay Island (Rathlin and Lambay have similar Irish names; Cooney 1993, Ó Corráin 1972, Brady 2008b). Viking raids in the area continued, with an attack on *Inis Patraic* (St Patrick's Island, Skerries) recorded only three years later, and Viking fleets in the Boyne estuary and the River Liffey by the 830s, wreaking havoc on the east coast (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988, Ó Corráin 2001). There was also activity close to Ireland's Eye: The Annals of the Four Masters record that in 819 '*Étar* [Howth] was plundered by the heathens, and they carried off a great number of women into captivity' ([www.ucc.ie/celt/online/T100001A](http://www.ucc.ie/celt/online/T100001A)). Viking camps were established to provide temporary bases (*longphorts*) at

which to over-winter, but gradually some of these settlements became permanent, developing as trading hubs and – eventually – proto-urban centres.

There are numerous examples of place-names with a Scandinavian origin along the east coast, including a significant number along the Dublin coast, such as Skerries, Howth, Lambay and Dalkey. This is unsurprising given the close proximity to the Viking settlement at Dublin. The significant Norse influence on the Fingal region can also be seen from Gaelic place-names such as *Fine Gall* ('territory of the strangers') and *Baile Dubh Gaill* (Baldoyle: 'town of the dark stranger'). According to Hurley (1983), there is reputed to have been a Viking harbour in the vicinity of Baldoyle, almost directly opposite Ireland's Eye on the mainland. There is also evidence to suggest that a Norse community lived on Lambay, at least on a temporary basis, using it as a base from which to attack the mainland (Cooney 1993).

There is no direct evidence to indicate a Viking settlement on Ireland's Eye – permanent or otherwise – though as noted previously, the place-name itself is distinctly Scandinavian. There is, however, a suggestion in the documentary sources that there may have been a temporary base on the island. In 902, Cerball mac Muirecáin, King of Leinster, and Máel Findia mac Flannacáin, King of Brega, launched a two-pronged attack on Dublin from the north and the south, driving out the Norse ruler, Ivar II. The Norsemen's defeat was comprehensive; the Annals of Ulster describe that they fled, leaving 'great numbers of their ships behind them, and escaped half-dead across the sea' (Year U902.2; CELT). According to the Annals of the Four Masters, some survivors of the initial onslaught took refuge on Ireland's Eye, where they were besieged (Annal M897.7; CELT). More turbulence followed later in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, when the Annals of the Four Masters record that the island was plundered (in 960), when 'a prey was carried off by the son of Amhlaeibh from *Inis-mac-Neasain* to Britain, and to Mon-Conain' (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988; [www.ucc.ie/celt/online/T100005B](http://www.ucc.ie/celt/online/T100005B)).

The references in the documentary sources to raids on the island by Vikings, and by others, point to it playing an active role in the trade and communications network at this time. The permanent, known settlement focus on Ireland's Eye during this period was clearly ecclesiastical, one of a network of such settlements on the Dublin islands. Its history is, however, inextricably linked with the secular events going on around it and it is likely that – at the very least – it was used as a staging-post by the Vikings and other raiding parties. That the fleeing Norsemen sought refuge on Ireland's Eye in 902 may imply the presence there of a camp or temporary settlement base. A similar scenario has been suggested for Dalkey Island, a slightly smaller island of the Dublin group. (Other similarities include the presence of an early ecclesiastical settlement, a promontory fort and a Martello Tower.) In the case of Dalkey Island, the references appear to indicate that it functioned as a holding centre for hostages during the 10<sup>th</sup> century, presumably while the Vikings of Dublin sought ransom or a market for slaves (Doyle 1998). In both cases, the annalistic references are sporadic but it remains a possibility that they belie a wider use for the islands by the Vikings.

### 5.7. Connections with Howth

Given the proximity of Ireland's Eye to Howth Head, it is not surprising that there are connections between the two, though for much of prehistory and the early historic period these links are implicit rather than explicit, with both places being part of a shared cultural and social landscape. It is not until after the Anglo-Norman invasion

that the two places become more closely connected historically. The lands of Howth, which included Ireland's Eye, were granted to Sir Almeric, first Lord of Howth, in 1177 after the Battle of Howth. Sir Almeric took the family name of St Lawrence and the Howth estate has remained in the ownership of the (extended) St Lawrence family for over 800 years.

### 5.7.1. *Howth Demesne and Ireland's Eye*

Howth Castle is located within a large landscaped demesne, situated on the western part of the Howth peninsula, which extends out from the north-eastern shore of Dublin Bay towards Ireland's Eye. Although the island forms part of the estate lands, it is separated from them geographically. For much of its history, it is likely that it represented a strategic land-holding, a small land mass located directly opposite Howth Castle across a short stretch of water, though it may also have been used for shooting parties (the large bird colonies on the island would provide easy pickings).

Until the Restoration in 1660, the landed gentry still tended to live in houses that were defensive, fortified and insular looking, the pleasure gardens were comparatively small and the surrounding lands were utilitarian (e.g. woodland for timber and hunting, deer parks, crop fields worked by the Lord's tenants and areas for grazing). After 1660, the political situation was more settled and less dangerous, and so the fortified nature of many of the houses was rendered obsolete. Over the following century, new houses were built in the grand estates or existing ones renovated and extended; the medieval keep, tower and hall at Howth, for example, although altered somewhat over the years, were not properly enlarged and modernised in 1738. The post-Restoration period also saw landowners begin to expand and develop their gardens and estate lands. Garden design during this period was quite formal, modelled on the fashionable Continental gardens, with their geometric patterns, flat lawns and an axial relation to the main house (Rocque's map of c. 1756 shows such a design at Howth; Costello 2015).

In direct contrast to this was the naturalistic style popularised in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the famed English landscape architect, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. His designed landscapes encompassed smooth undulating grass, which would run straight to the house, clumps, belts and scattering of trees, and serpentine lakes formed by invisibly damming small rivers (Clifford 1962). This 'gardenless' form of landscape design swept away almost all the remnants of previous formally patterned styles and had, at its core, a desire to improve the existing landscapes to create new vistas. Where pleasant views did not already exist, Brown would create them, through the removal or addition of trees, artificial slopes, rivers and lakes, and architectural features such as follies. Although Brown never designed a garden in Ireland (he refused any requests, on the basis that he had not yet finished England) his influence was immense and landowners sought to replicate his designs on their own estates.



Figure 12 An engraving by William Henry Bartlett, showing a romanticised view of Ireland's Eye from the Hill of Howth, with Howth Castle and demesne in the foreground (RSAI Library)

How much the design of Howth demesne owes to the Brownian style is uncertain, but it is clear that the views framed by dense copses of trees and intersecting pathways was an important element. Strictly speaking, the demesne is that part of the estate which was attached to the great house itself, comprising ornamental and vegetable gardens, parkland, woodland and farm buildings connected to the house. As such the landscaped demesne lands did not, by definition, include Ireland's Eye. That being said, the presence of Ireland's Eye on the near horizon would undoubtedly be a view worth capturing for the Howth estate, which includes, at its southern extent land rising to the Hill of Howth. The number of paintings and sketches that survive of Ireland's Eye from Howth in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries demonstrates the attraction of this vista for artists (Figure 12; see also Section 5.12).

#### 5.7.2. *The Great Harbour Debate c. 1800*

The proximity of the island to Howth was also significant during the discussions about the development of a new safe harbour for the mail packets (postal service ships) between Dublin and London at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Trade and commerce between Britain and Ireland was increasing and the need for a safe harbour for the mail packets was a matter of some urgency, as the Port of Dublin where ships anchored at the Pigeon House was notoriously dangerous and difficult to access. The loss of life and cargo when ships were wrecked was considerable; during the six-year period, from January 1797 to 1803 no less than 124 vessels were wrecked or damaged in the approaches to Dublin (Ruddy, 2012). As a result, various alternatives to the harbour at Pigeon House were considered, including Howth, Dalkey and Dunleary (then a small village and cove; the present Dun-Laoghaire or Kingstown, with its harbours and piers was not begun until 1816).



Howth had been an official trading port since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, with both health and duty collection officials supervising from Dublin. In addition to an existing harbour, it offered a speedy and reliable mail link between Dublin and London, commonly taking only six hours for ships to reach Holyhead. Its proponents published pamphlets in support of the project, one of which pointed out that the shelter provided by Ireland's Eye from the east and northeast winds, rendered the harbour secure in stormy conditions (Dawson, 1805). Radical new designs to improve the harbour were also proposed, as for example in Thomas Rogers' two pamphlets at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the 'road and safe anchorage between Ireland's Eye and Howth' (Rogers, 1800a&b). Rogers had, for several years, been the superintendent for Howth lighthouse and his proposal was based on his observations of shipping in stormy conditions (Ruddy, 2012). His solution was to develop a new, safe harbour between Howth and Ireland's Eye, with a canal running from Howth to the Liffey, thus avoiding the danger to ships passing the Bar and the North and South Bulls. The map accompanying his pamphlet shows the proposed canal extending from the harbour, with the area between Howth and Ireland's Eye annotated as 'Road or Anchorage' and a line designating a ridge of sand between the northern point of the island to the sand bank of 'Baldoil Gut' (Figure 13).

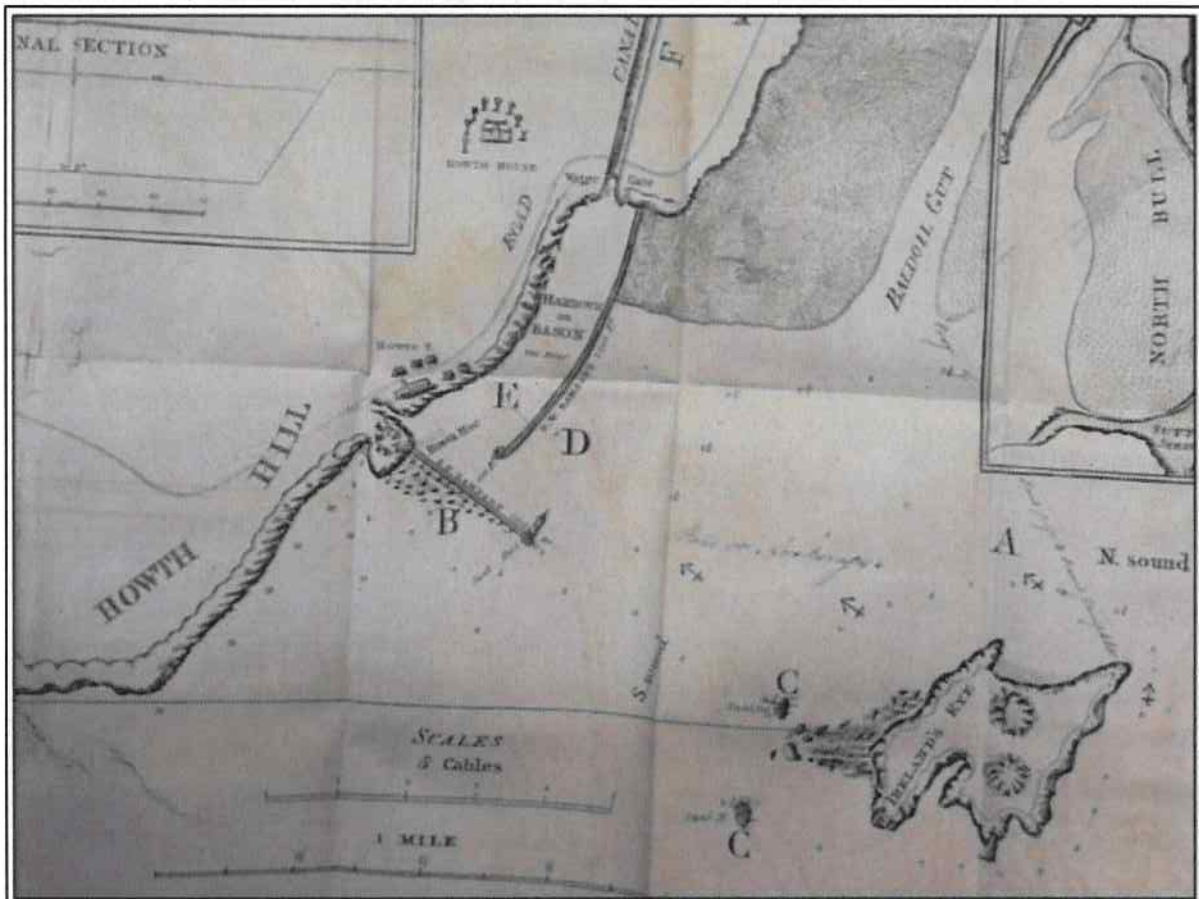


Figure 13 Map from Roger's pamphlet, c. 1800, showing the proposed new canal and 'road or anchorage'

Despite concerns about silting, Howth was duly chosen as the location for the mail packet service and work commenced on the building of a new harbour in 1807 (though not to Roger's design and without his suggested canal). Captain George Taylor was the engineer in charge of the Howth works but the actual plans were developed

by Captain Bligh of '*Bounty*' fame. The completed harbour consisted of two piers built of rubble stone taken from Kilcock Quarries, dressed granite was sourced from Dalkey and stone for underwater revetments came from Runcorn near Liverpool (JCA 2010). From 1818, however, the harbour needed to be frequently dredged due to silting in order to accommodate the mail packets and eventually the service was relocated to Dún Laoghaire in 1834 (<http://www.howthboat.ie/thearea.html>).

### 5.8. The Martello Towers of Dublin

Martello towers were constructed around the coastline of Ireland as part of a strategic response to an unstable international situation (rebellion within the British Empire and its military conflicts with others) in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and to the particular threat posed by Napoleon's threatened invasion of Ireland. Twenty-eight of these towers formed part of a comprehensive defence network for Dublin City, carefully positioned in coastal locations to protect approaches to the city, with overlapping fields of fire. The Dublin group of towers – which includes the tower on Ireland's Eye – is the only group constructed to defend a capital city, and is the most complete group of towers still existing in the world (Bolton 2008).

Examples of Martello towers are found throughout the former British Empire, defending key positions of military value along the trade routes to Africa, India and the Americas. They are easily recognisable, being typically squat, cylindrical, two-storey masonry towers positioned to defend a strategic section of coastline from an invading force, with a landward entrance at first-floor level defended by a machicolation, and mounting one or more cannons to the rooftop gun platform. The towers had a number of complementary functions: to hinder the passage and approach of enemy shipping, to resist a landing by an invader, and to provide a strong fort which could effectively withstand both bombardment and siege by a superior force to allow reinforcements to arrive. The name of the Martello tower derives from a coastal tower built at Mortella Point in Corsica in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, which was the site of a significant engagement between the British and French forces in 1794. The tower at Mortella Point would inspire the later Martello towers – which mirrored its tactical role and application – but it did not, as is commonly thought, directly influence their architectural design (Bolton 2008).

Ireland's Martello Towers were designed and built by the Board of Ordnance, an independent section of the military, who trained its own specialist troops: Royal Engineers to build the towers and Royal Artillery to man them (Bolton *et al.* 2012). All of the Dublin towers follow a similar design, based on a well-defended circular fortified gun platform overlooking a strategic coastal point, and were built using locally sourced stone. The design was a refinement of that of the earliest Martello towers, which were built at Cape Colony in South Africa in 1796, and they went up with remarkable speed between 1804 and 1805 (Bolton 2008). Construction costs varied, with an estimate of £1800 per tower and £1200 per battery given in 1804, while the lands for them were seized by the Board of Ordnance, apparently without proper recourse to the law. Compensation to the landowners was made some time after the fact and a return of 1830 details the 'acquisition' of the sites for the Martello towers on Ireland's Eye and at Howth Head, both of which belonged to Lord Howth: 'For ever from the Earl of Howth in consideration of £600 with a Right of passage by a Road through his Lordships grounds from the high road to No.2 Tower [i.e. Howth] and a right of Passage 3 yards wide to a well 106 yards distant from No.3 Tower [i.e. Ireland's Eye]. No Rent' (Bolton 2008).

The plots of land that were taken over by the Board of Ordnance were frequently circular, with an access route, a privy (small shed containing a toilet), an ash pit and sometimes a piggery. There were exceptions to the usual circular plan, generally as a result of local topographical restrictions. This was the case on Ireland's Eye and Shenick's Island, for example, where a peninsula of land with access paths and freshwater wells were taken over. The tower sites normally included the foreshore and many of the sites show evidence of clearance of rocks to provide small supply boats with a safe landing area. The boundaries of the Board of Ordnance lands were marked with boundary stones of cut-granite, all of which are square in plan, with a flat or pyramidal top and an arrow cut into one face. Some of the stones also bear inscribed lettering: 'B.O.' for Board of Ordnance and 'W.O.' for War Office (The Board of Ordnance was dissolved after the Crimean War, in 1855/6, and all its land functions, fortifications, ordnance etc were transferred to the War Office). In most cases, the stones in Fingal have pyramidal tops, and no lettering other than the arrow (Bolton *et al.* 2012).

The towers and batteries of Dublin were manned by the Royal Artillery, drawn from the companies assigned to the Islandbridge Barracks and answerable directly to the Board of Ordnance. Each detachment held between twelve to fifteen men; a large gun such as a 24-pounder (of which the Ireland's Eye tower had two) required at least nine men to fire the piece, with extra men needed in case there were casualties. The 18- or 24-pounder 'guns' on top of the Martello Towers (or in the batteries) were iron canons, painted grey and mounted on a timber carriage. These could be rotated around the top of the tower to fire in any direction. Amongst the variety of ammunition that could be fired was 'hot shot' and all of the towers had a furnace in a compartment off the rooftop for heating iron shot (a particularly devastating weapon against timber sailing ships, as it could set them alight as well as causing impact damage). Most of the original canons were mounted for 30 or sometimes 50 years before being taken down (Bolton *et al.* 2012).

The construction of the Martello towers contributed to opening up the coastal landscape to change and development; new roads were constructed providing access to the coast, and as their military importance declined, these roads became the focus of development and public access to the seaside. Over time the towers fell in and out of use as they were periodically re-armed, transferred to the Coast Guard, and there was a gradual attrition of military values as many plots were divided into lettings and encroachments, and eventually many passed into private hands (Bolton 2008).

The Martello tower on Ireland's Eye is both a recorded archaeological monument and a protected structure (RMP DU015-016; RPS No. 589). It is situated on a rock outcrop at the northwest end of the island. It was constructed c. 1804 as a 'Two Gun Tower' (i.e. armed with two 24-pounder guns) to command the anchorage and the approaches to Howth and was the largest example in north county Dublin (Bolton *et al.* 2012). The 'double-tower' has a basal plinth and is defended by a machicolation. There are small opees on the east and west sides and a raised doorway on the south side with dressed limestone jambs. As with all of the other north Dublin towers, its construction is of rendered rubble masonry. In contrast, the corbels at the box machicolation and around the top of the tower, as well as the stonework around the doorway is of finely cut limestone (probably from the quarries beside Corr Castle in Howth; Bolton *et al.* 2012). A plan drawn in 1848 shows the extent of Board of Ordnance land (Figure 29; Section

6.3), with six boundary stones marking rights of way and the position of a freshwater spring (Bolton 2008; other mid-19<sup>th</sup> century plans show, variably, five or eleven boundary stones). The tower itself is a well-preserved example. It appears to have been unoccupied for most of its existence, though it was in use – probably seasonally – by the Preventative Water Guard (the Revenue Coast Guard) to prevent smuggling (Bolton 2008; discussed further below). The tower was reported in poor condition throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century – with numerous references to the damaging effects of persistent damp from the sea air and lack of a permanent occupant – and was unsuccessfully offered to let on a number of occasions before its purchase by the Earl of Howth in 1909 (Bolton 2008). The tower is currently unoccupied, derelict and in private ownership.

### 5.9. Smuggling and shipwrecks

Smuggling was a major industry in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, an activity that had been fuelled for centuries by taxes imposed in the medieval period on imports and exports, with prohibitively high taxes on goods such as alcohol and tea. Customs officers searched cargoes and collected dues in ports, and Customs Revenue cruisers patrolled the coasts for vessels illegally offloading cargo. From 1698, the first Riding Officers were established, who were responsible for preventing the movement inland of smuggled goods that had evaded the Revenue cruisers (the various districts overseen by the customs service were subdivided into 'ridings').

Smuggling, or 'free trade', was highly profitable and widespread in the Irish Sea region, and along the north county Dublin coastline in particular. During the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the area was essentially rural with no large towns, and, significantly, two estuaries (the Rogerstown Estuary, between Rush and Portrane, and the Broadmeadow Estuary, between Donabate and Malahide). These estuaries provided access for small boats almost as far as the main turnpike road to Dublin. In addition, the small off-shore islands that dot the coastline provided a haven for smugglers (whilst also being a hazard for ships). The long expanse of coastline, with its small creeks and harbours, therefore presented some difficulty for the customs service. The fishing port at Rush village became a home-base for a large fleet of wherries or fishing boats, with fishing providing a suitable cover for the more lucrative smuggling activities. Rush had the advantage of proximity to the Isle of Man (a well-established entrepôt base for the smuggling trade), as well as relatively easy access to the Dublin market (Cullen 1968). Proximity to the estuaries and islands, such as Shenick, Lambay and Ireland's Eye, undoubtedly helped the flourishing trade.

In an effort to deal with the smuggling problem, customs stations were established, one of which was located at Howth, overseeing the harbour and directly opposite Ireland's Eye (Ní Mhurchadha, 1999). In addition to the Revenue Cruisers and the Riding Officers, a Preventative Water Guard was established in 1809 under the control of the Board of Customs; their job was to monitor inshore waters and deal with any smugglers who had evaded the Revenue Cruisers. The locations of the Martello Towers that stretched along the coastline adjacent to the prosperous city of Dublin led to a number being utilised by the Preventative Water Guard, as was the case at the Ireland's Eye tower (albeit probably on a seasonal basis; Bolton 2008). In 1822, the Preventative Water Guard, the Riding Officers and the Revenue Cruisers were amalgamated to form the Coast Guard. While this newly formed body would later be praised for its success in stamping out smuggling, it was changes in legislation and

taxation in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century that brought the 'trade' to an end by rendering it no longer profitable (Bolton 2008).

Though initially focused on ending smuggling, the Guard gradually adopted extra duties, including taking responsibility for shipwrecks by safeguarding cargoes and vessels from looters. Shipwrecks were a significant problem on Ireland's east coast due to the high levels of marine traffic moving through the Irish Sea. This was especially true along the Dublin coastline, with the majority of known wreck locations located in Dublin Bay, Portmarnock and on the Arklow Bank (Brady 2008a). There are approximately 110 wrecks recorded around Ireland's Eye and Howth Head, with many of the vessels lost while attempting to enter Dublin Bay or while navigating the narrow channel between the harbour at Howth and Ireland's Eye (Brady 2008b). Navigation through Howth Sound can be difficult at low tide, while Ireland's Eye has a number of reefs and rocks located around its perimeter; namely Thulla, Rowan Rocks, The Stack and The Steer.

The majority of the known shipwrecks off Ireland's Eye (and Howth) date from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which is no doubt a reflection of the increased maritime traffic and more efficient record keeping. Despite the vagaries of the sea, many of the records report the crew being saved, though sadly not on all occasions; the *Dusty Miller* was stranded and wrecked off the northeast corner of Ireland's Eye in April of 1859 and all six crew were reported as perished (Brady 2008b). It was not only the seas that were perilous. A ship became stranded at Howth in December 1787 and fearing that the cargo would be plundered, the Captain spoke to the Lord Mayor, who directed that it be protected. When a sloop was driven ashore at Howth during heavy gales two months later, it was plundered of its cargo (malt in this case) and although the Master and crew all survived, contemporary newspaper accounts note that they were robbed of their goods and clothes by a local crowd (*Dublin Chronicle & Freeman's Journal*, January 1788; cited in Brady 2008b).

Most of the shipwrecks are known only from documentary sources – and so their exact locations are uncertain – but others have been identified through seabed survey or by divers. For example, a possible wreck was identified c. 800m northeast of the entrance to Howth Harbour by the Irish National Seabed Survey, at a depth of 10m (Ref. W00966, Brady 2008b). Even closer to Ireland's Eye, a stone anchor and wreckage were discovered c. 10-15m from the southeast shore of the island by divers from Marlin SAC; they were found in 4-5m of water on a rocky seabed, with 'modern wreckage' also observed in the vicinity (Ref. W00965, Brady 2008b).

#### 5.10. Murder on the island

At the end of the summer of 1852, a young woman was found dead on Ireland's Eye, with her husband arrested for the murder shortly afterwards. The subsequent trial and verdict were the subject of heated public debate throughout the country and the murder became a cause célèbre (to such a degree that Isaac Butt, MP, was leading counsel for the defence). The contemporary records and newspaper articles that describe the murder on Ireland's Eye in 1852 provide not only an account of the murder and trial, but also a present an interesting picture of the times in which they took place.

William Kirwan and his wife Maria were spending the summer at Howth, having taken rooms in a lodging house, though Kirwan returned periodically to the city for work. A letter published in the *New York Times* a few months after the murder described Kirwan as a handsome man around 40 years of age, being 'tall and well looking: strongly built ... [with] strong limbs, broad chest and duly-proportioned body', while his 29-year old wife was 'handsome, elegant and accomplished' (*NYT*, Jan. 15, 1852). Kirwan was an artist whose principal – and not inconsiderable – income derived from his work as an anatomical draughtsman for the Royal College of Surgeons, with additional monies from picture cleaning and restoring, as well as map-making for the Ordnance Survey (Strickland, 1913). He and Maria had been married for twelve years and were childless. They resided in Dublin, at No. 11 Upper Merrion Street, and were to all intents and purposes a respectable couple, living in an equally respectable and fashionable part of the city.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 1852, the couple took a boat from Howth to Ireland's Eye and arranged for the boatmen to collect them at 8 p.m. that evening (a relatively late hour, by which time it would be dark, but Kirwan professed an intention to paint the sunset). They had taken previous trips to the island that summer (and even that week), during which Kirwan would sketch, while his wife walked, read or bathed in the sea. Another family visiting the island that day had spoken to Maria on the beach at about 4 p.m., just before they departed the island, and this would be the last reported sighting of her alive. When the two boatmen returned to collect the Kirwans, they found only William, who said he had not seen his wife for an hour and a half (and was apparently unconcerned it was past dark and that she was not yet at the arranged collection spot). The three men set out to look for Maria, eventually finding her body, bruised, scratched and bloodied, lying face-up on a low rock, on the shore at the Long Hole. She was wearing her bathing shift, which was gathered up exposing her body, with a wet sheet beneath her.

The general assumption initially was that Maria had accidentally drowned. The police sergeant's report to the county coroner the following day had noted that 'this case appears strange, as there was a sheet about the woman' and requested an investigation. Unfortunately, no doctor was available to carry out an examination that day and instead this fell to a 'medical man', Mr Hamilton, who was lodging in Howth and – unbeknownst to the coroner – was actually an unqualified medical student. A cursory external examination by Hamilton and the coroner was considered sufficient to pronounce accidental drowning, without taking into account the fact that the body had been washed and without pursuing any other real avenues of inquiry. The coroner's inquest was brief and essentially a formality, a box-ticking exercise simply to get the whole thing over with as quickly as possible (the proceedings would later be described by one commentator as slovenly and a gross neglecting of duty). The result was that no post-mortem was ordered, a verdict of accidental drowning was reached on September 7<sup>th</sup> and the body was released to the husband and subsequently interred in Glasnevin cemetery.



Figure 14. 19<sup>th</sup> century visitors to the Long Hole, 'scene of the Kirwan tragedy' (Roney, 1861)

It appears that some disquiet remained about the suspicious circumstances surrounding the death and a police investigation commenced. It did not take long for eyes to fall on William Kirwan. He had been the only other person on the island when Maria met her death and if she had not died by her own hand or by natural causes then he was the obvious suspect. Some of his behaviour was questionable, including his insistence that the body be washed immediately on return to the mainland, rather than allowing it to be first inspected by the police. There was considerable circumstantial evidence too. Several locals reported hearing loud screams from the island at around 7 p.m., including one fisherman whose boat had been passing close by and reckoned they came from the direction of the Long Hole. The lodging house landlady recounted hearing a number of arguments between the married couple, at least one of which led to William threatening Maria and subjecting her to a beating. In addition, Maria was known to have been a strong swimmer and therefore unlikely to accidentally drown, particularly in such shallow waters (though the defense would argue that she had drowned as a result of an epileptic fit). The final nail in the coffin – as it was seen to provide motive – was that William had a mistress, kept in a house in Sandymount and by whom he had eight children.

In December 1852, he was tried in Dublin for the murder of his wife. He was found guilty and condemned to death, but as the evidence against him was not seen as wholly conclusive, the sentence was commuted to transportation.

for life. His trial was a sensation in both Ireland and Britain, with huge crowds gathering outside the courtroom on each of the three days of the trial. After his conviction newspapers on both sides of the Irish Sea printed pages of rumour, gossip and opinion, with one article even appearing in the *New York Times*. William served 27 years in Spike Island prison off the coast of Cork. He made frequent petitions to be released and was finally released on Licence in January 1879 and went to Queenstown (or Cobh in Cork) and boarded a ship to America to join his mistress and children.

The Kirwan trial generated much discussion at the time and continues to divide opinion, with some believing that he was convicted on flimsy, circumstantial evidence and that the guilty verdict was at least partly the result of moral outrage at his long-term extra-marital affair. There is no doubt that Victorian conservatism and puritanism balked at the notion of a married man capable of keeping a mistress and fathering eight illegitimate children; to the Victorian mind, it would logically follow that if he was capable of this repugnant behaviour, then the murder of his wife was not unthinkable. The Victorians were especially exercised by all things illicit and immoral and held the family as sacrosanct. This is well illustrated in a contemporary description of the murder, which appeared in a letter to the *New York Times*:

'The crime ... is not of the ordinary Irish type. We have, unhappily, too much bloodshedding in Ireland, but it is usually the effect of passion heated by intoxication, or the murder is that of those whom Ribbonism teaches the ignorant and oppressed that it is meritorious to slay, [i.e.] landlords, agents, or bailiffs. Such murders as this one occur more frequently in England, and the habits in which they originate are more frequent – sporting with female chastity, the unrestrained gratification of lust, and reckless regard of the domestic obligations.' (*NYT*, Jan. 15, 1853)

It did not help that Kirwan made something of a habit of antagonising people and at least one aggrieved neighbour made unsubstantiated accusations against him (including that he tried to poison his wife on two occasions and that he had killed his brother-in-law). Another unconfirmed allegation was made by Thomas Larcom, former Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He claimed that the suspicious death of one of his surveyors had been at the hands of 'that murderer Kirwan' (Rieley, 2014).

Rumour and public outrage aside, it does seem wholly likely that William Kirwan did murder his wife. A recently published book by Michael Sheridan (2012) describes medical evidence not presented at court, as well as a detailed account of the circumstances leading up to the murder and the trial that followed. The medical evidence showing murder constitutes a paper published in the *Dublin Medical Press* in January of 1853 by Dr Thomas Geoghegan, a professor and fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, who had both visited the scene of the crime numerous times and had sat through the whole trial. Unlike the doctors who gave evidence at the trial, Dr Geoghegan was both qualified and experienced in medical jurisprudence and forensic science (such as it was at the time). He demonstrated that the haemorrhaging from ears, nose and 'other parts' down below – as the Victorians put it – could only have resulted from manual strangulation and certainly not from asphyxiation from drowning (accidental or otherwise). It is not known why his findings were not admitted into evidence during the trial, but the medical facts presented certainly offer incontrovertible proof that Maria Kirwan suffered a brutal and violent death at the



hands of her husband (and indeed this opinion was shared by Dr Devon, a medico-legal examiner for the Crown in Britain, who peer-reviewed Geoghegan's article prior to its publication; Sheridan 2012).

An interesting footnote to the murder is that some of William Kirwan's paintings survived and were subsequently deposited in the archives of the National Library of Ireland, where they have generally languished unseen (Kirwan Collection; NLI Ref. 2085 TX 89). There are one or two finished watercolour paintings, but most of the collection is made-up of odd scraps, unfinished sketches, doodles and fragments of accounts (Rieley 2012). The collection includes a partly coloured-in sketch of Maria, showing a pretty woman in a rather elaborate hat and fashionable attire, annotated on the reverse with "Mrs Kirwan, sketched by her husband" (Figure 15). Several scenes of sunsets at sea - including one of Ireland's Eye - echo one of Kirwan's own arguments in his defence; at his trial he offered his sketchbook to the jury as a form of alibi, so that they could see that he was painting of the sunset at the time of his wife's death.

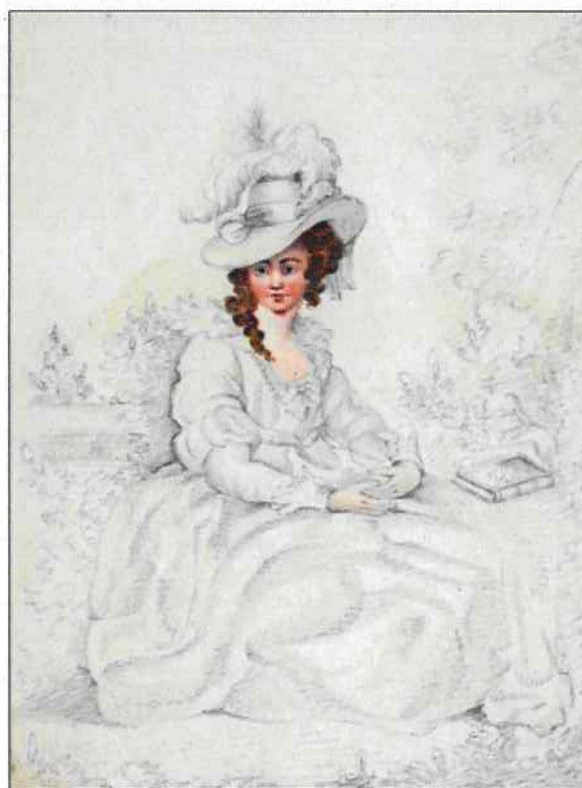


Figure 15 A drawing of Maria Kirwan by her husband William (National Library of Ireland)

### 5.11. Evidence for Farming Practices on the Island

There is evidence that at least some parts of the island were used for tillage during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as evidenced by the Roman coins and later burial that were uncovered during ploughing in the 1860s; it is equally possible, however, that the practice pre-dates the recorded instances. It is not only possible, but likely, that the island was farmed during the early medieval period. It may have been of a relatively small-scale – essentially subsistence farming – with crops grown and animals grazed to support the monastic community. Depending on the size of the ecclesiastical settlement – which was presumably substantial enough to house a scriptorium, as well as the church, burial ground and dwellings of the monks – it may also have held lands on the nearby mainland of Howth peninsula, with these being settled and farmed by *manaigh*. The connection of an island settlement to associated activities and land possessions on the nearest mainland during the early medieval period can be seen in the contemporary crannógs. Such sites in County Westmeath, for example, tend to be associated with good agricultural land for both arable farming and grazing (O'Sullivan, 2004); O'Sullivan also notes the possibility that some crannógs were even positioned at particular parts of lakes in order to control prime pastures along the lakeshore (with some of the

ringforts found along lakeshores possibly representing byres and corrals for the protection of cattle, rather than enclosures for human settlement).

It also appears that the island was used for grazing animals and for hunting, with evidence once more coming from 19<sup>th</sup> century observations. An account of a visit to the island in 1833 by 'R. A.' in the *Dublin Penny Journal* describes seeing 'a few horses, who bound in uncontrolled liberty over the yielding turf' (these being 'the only visible signs of proprietorship' on the island), as well as a 'party of gentlemen' who were hunting the gulls that nested on the island (these are illustrated in a sketch contained in the article and reproduced in Figure 7, Section 5.5). The same author also comments on the 'marks of mounds and trenches' near the church and that 'although the soil appears rich, yet it is now uncultivated and over-grown with fern and briars'. It is possible that the author was describing ridge-and-furrow marks, an archaeological pattern of ridges and troughs created by a system of ploughing that was used during the medieval period. Raised ridges in this manner had the advantage of better draining the fields for crops, before the advent of underground field drainage systems.

#### 5.12. Cartographic and Pictorial Representations of the Island

Early detailed cartographic sources for Ireland's Eye are scarce. The island does appear on 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> century maritime maps of Ireland, Britain and their coastlines, but these are fairly large in scale with a consequent lack of detail. By their very nature, such historic maps are more concerned with showing the location of the island, for navigation purposes, rather than providing a depiction of any particular features on it (not that the scale would allow this in any case). John Goghe's map of Ireland drawn in 1567 (Figure 16), for example, shows Ireland's Eye (not named) situated between Howth Head and Lambay (both named); the map is primarily concerned with giving significant placenames and showing churches and major topographical features across the country (not to mention such important obstacles as the sea monster that lurks in the Irish Sea).

A more detailed map was drawn of the coast of Ireland from Dublin to Carrickfergus c. 1580 (Figure 17); it depicts all of the Dublin islands, including Ireland's Eye, which is located just north of 'Hothe heade' (the island is named and shown in roughly the right shape).

The earliest maps of any detail that show and name the island are Down Survey maps that were produced c. 1656 for the parish of Howth, the barony of Coolock and the county of Dublin. Although they all depict Ireland's Eye, only the parish map indicates the presence of St Nessian's church on the island, and crude though the representation is, the protruding gables and lack of a joining roof-line suggest that it was already in ruin by the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century (Figure 18 B). The baronial map gives an indication of the topography, showing large rock outcrops or hills. It also illustrates the importance of nearby Howth, where a large house complex and trees representing Howth Demesne dominate the peninsula (Figure 18 A).



Figure 16 John Goghe's Map of Ireland, c. 1567



Figure 17 Map of the coast of Ireland from Dublin to Carrickfergus c. 1580

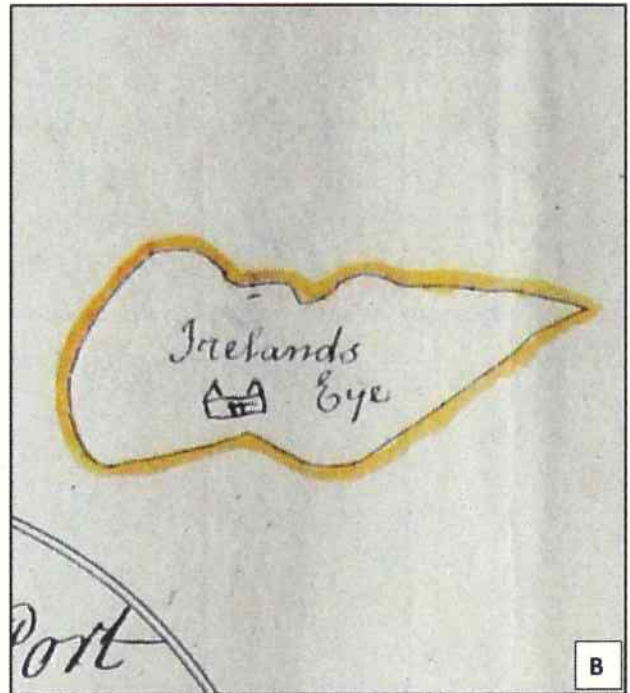


Figure 18 Down Survey maps c. 1656: (A) Barony map (B) Parish map

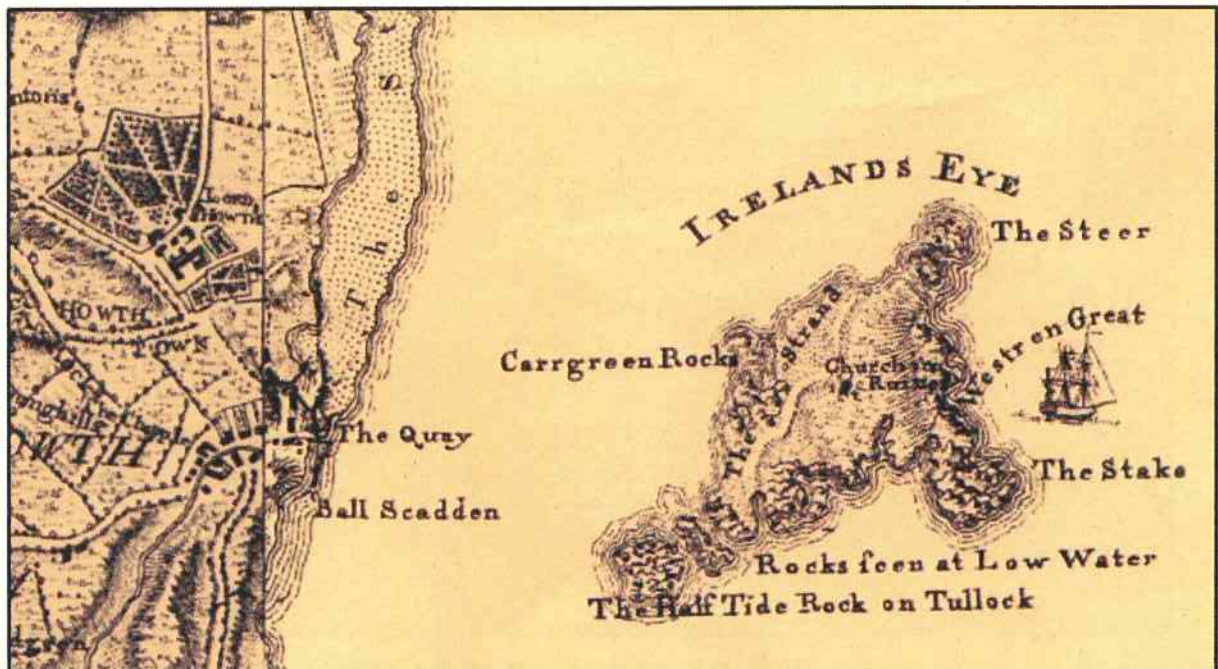


Figure 19 Rocque's map of County Dublin, c. 1760

John Rocque's map of the county of Dublin (Figure 19) was issued in 1760 and provides substantially more detail than the Down Survey maps of the previous century. It depicts the island off the coast of Howth, showing the then small quay and village of Howth, as well as Howth Castle and demesne. Of the island itself, Rocque depicts not only the main landmass but also the many rocks that litter its coastline, naming 'The Steer', 'Carrgreen Rocks', 'Westren Great' and 'The Stake'. He also notes 'The Half Tide Rock on Tullock' (islet) and indicates that the depicted rocks around the coastline are representative of low tide. The map shows the long beach on the sheltered western side of the island ('The Strand') – Carrigeen Bay – and shows St Nessans's Church (annotated 'Church in Ruins'). The tall ship depicted on the eastern side of the island is no doubt indicative of the busy maritime traffic within these waters.

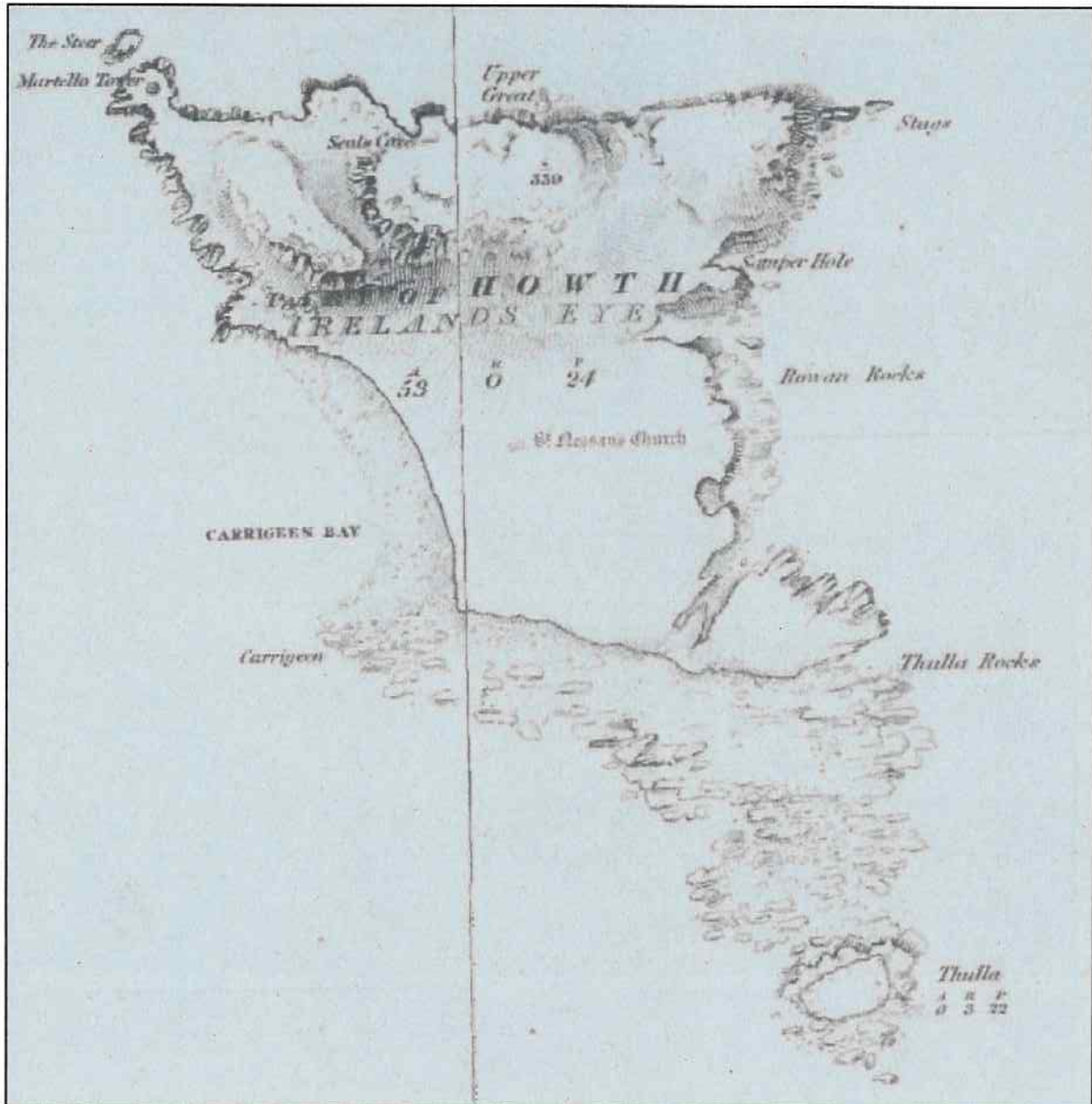


Figure 20 Ordnance Survey six-inch map, 1843

The plans drawn up by the Board of Ordnance (and later War Office) from c. 1805 onwards show varying levels of detail in the northern section of the island, around the site of the Martello Tower. Although they are primarily

concerned with marking out rights of way and the boundaries of the Board of Ordnance land, they are the first cartographic source to map the location of the natural spring on the island (Figures 29 & 31; Section 6.3).

The first edition six-inch Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1843 provides the earliest accurate and complete picture of Ireland's Eye (Figure 20). It provides good topographical information, such as the shingled beaches along Carrigeen Bay and the south end of the island, as well as the heavily indented coastline along the west side, where it shows cliffs and names Stags, Semper Hole, Rowan Rocks and Thulla Rocks. The map also illustrates the lower cliffs and rocky coastline around the northwestern corner of the island, showing the Martello Tower on its small peninsula and the large rock of The Steer beyond it. In the interior of the island the distinction between the lowlying southern half of the island (in which lies St Nessian's Church) and the steep rock outcrops in the north is evident. It is easy to see from this map that the right-of-way designated for the Martello Tower at the beginning of the century was simply following the lie of the land, tracing a path leading from the beach at Carrigeen Bay, skirting along the edge of a large rock outcrop. Other rocks marked along the coastline include Carrigeen, Upper Great and the islet of Thulla to the south. 'Seals Cave' is annotated at the northern end of the island.

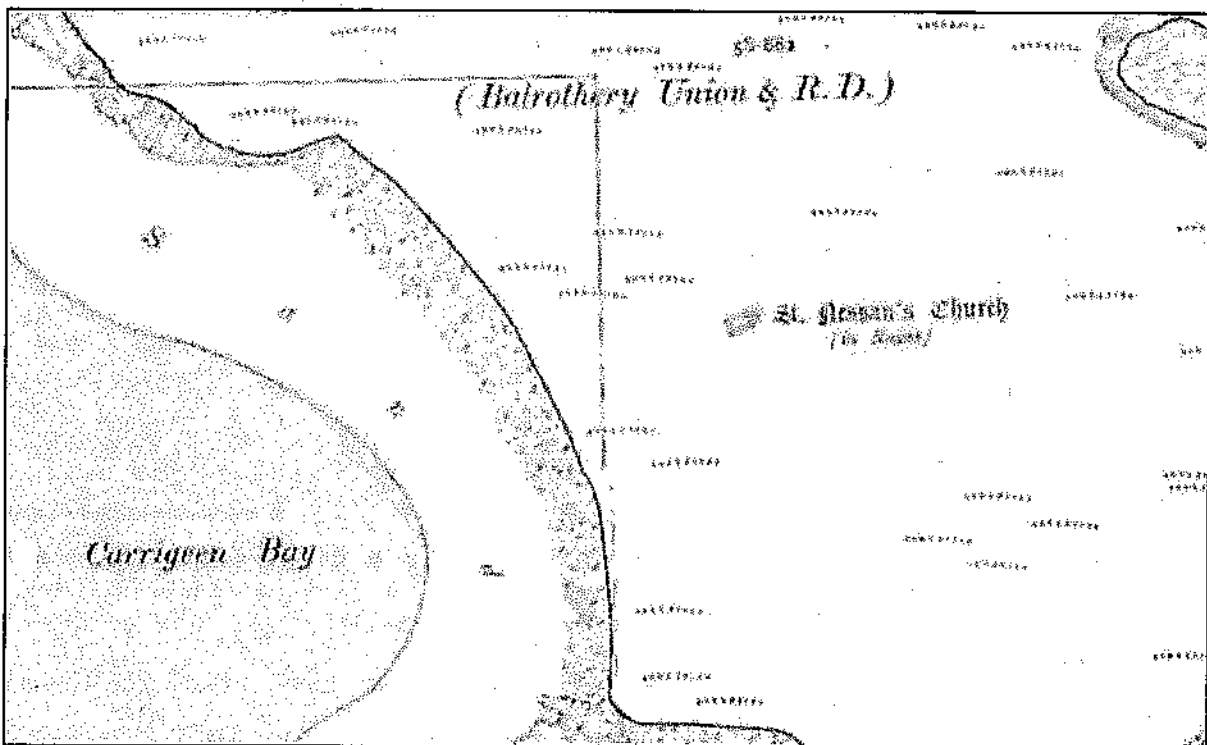


Figure 21 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map detail, 1906-9, showing St Nessian's Church

This topography is more clear on the 25-inch OS map (Figure 22), with the smaller scale allowing for additional details, such as the scrub grass across the island, the sand on Carrigeen Bay giving way to small cobbled coves further north towards the Martello Tower, and the sand and shingle marked to the south at Thulla. There are some other features noted on this edition mapping, including the plan outline of the nave and chancel structure of St Nessian's Church (which is annotated 'in ruins'; Figure 21), the War Office boundary stones associated with the Martello Tower (Figure 30; Section 6.3), and the location of the natural spring.

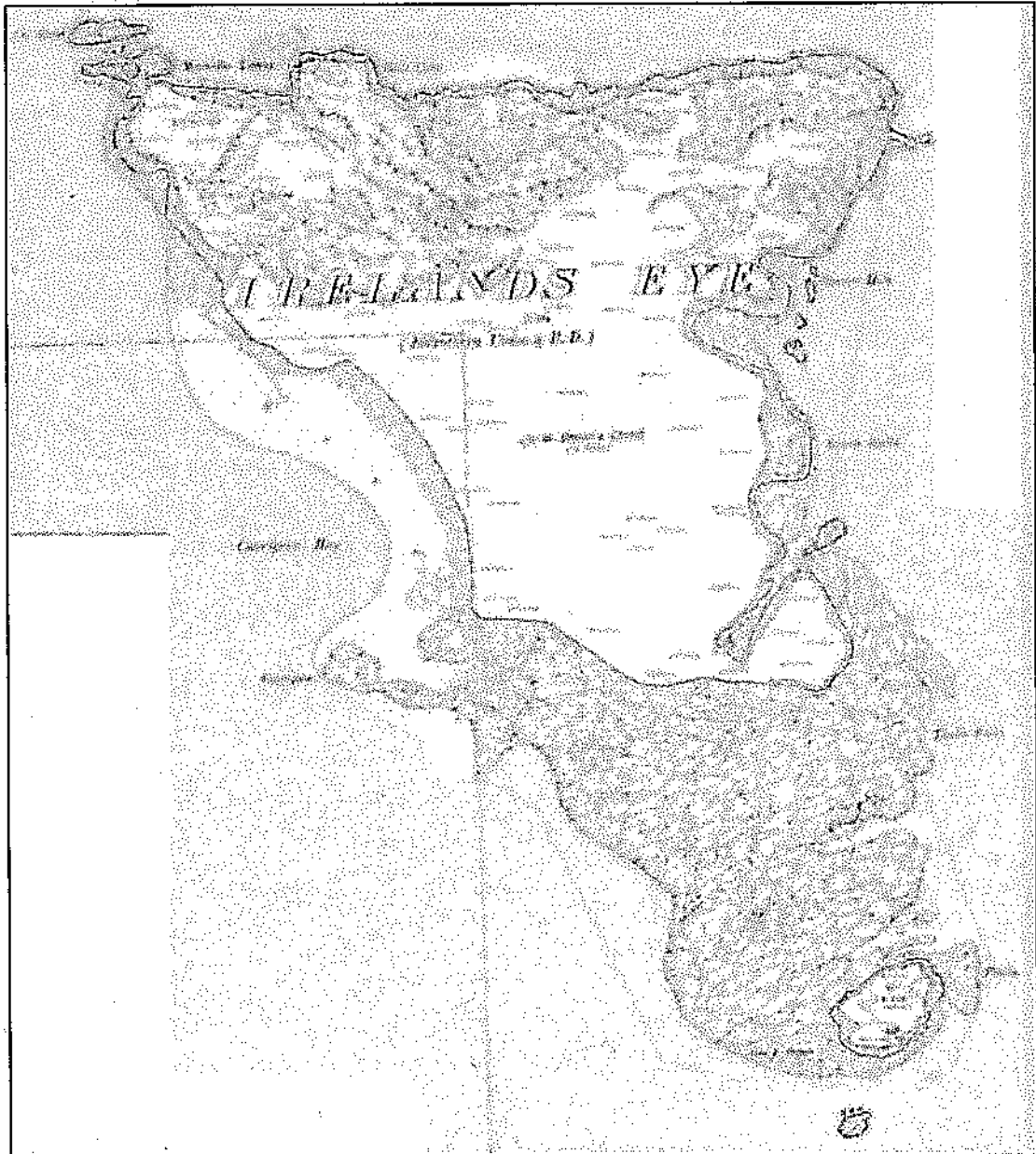


Figure 22 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map, 1906-9.

In addition to the cartographic sources, there are a number of artists' renderings – sketches, paintings and engravings – as well as some 19<sup>th</sup> century lantern slides and a later postcard, that capture views of the island in the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and earlier 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The majority of the views are taken from Howth, often from the height afforded by Howth Hill, which gives an attractive prospect of the village in the foreground, with the harbour and seascape of Ireland's Eye in the background (Figure 12, Section 5.7.1; Figures 23-26 below). Most of the images provide a good likeness, portraying the island's topography, with its prominent stacks of rock outcrop, and the Martello Tower (post-1805), though never showing the church ruins, a fact that serves to illustrate how much they blend into the landscape. Beranger's 18<sup>th</sup> century painting is a variation on this, showing a view from Howth, with a glimpse of the old harbour and a somewhat skewed perspective that focuses on the abbey and motte-and-bailey (his 'karne'). It

includes a distant view of Ireland's Eye and as it pre-dates the construction of the Martello Tower, it gives us an opportunity to view the island without its now prominent landmark.

One image, unusually, is the complete reverse; it gives a view of the new 'new pier and lighthouse' at Howth, the engraving being published in September 1817, just after construction was completed. It is an interesting aspect, with the south-western corner of the island in the foreground, small boats pulled up onto the sands along Carrigeen Bay, and a group of visitors enjoying a picnic just east of the Long Hole inlet (Figure 27). Another less common view is the early 19<sup>th</sup> century engraving published in the *Dublin Penny Journal* that shows not only the ruins of St Neessan, but also horses grazing the hill above the church and a shooting party of men hunting birds (Figure 7; Section 5.5).

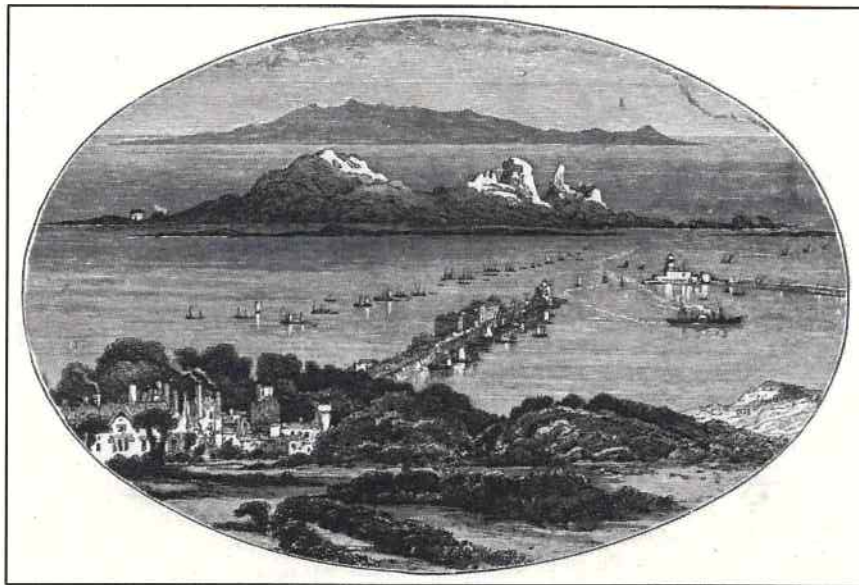


Figure 23 *Howth Harbour and Ireland's Eye* (Lovett, 1888)

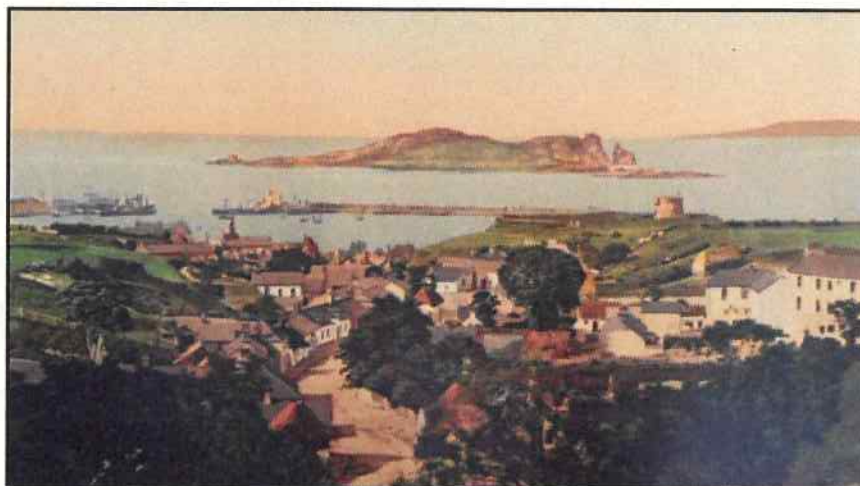


Figure 24 19<sup>th</sup> century postcard showing Howth and Ireland's Eye (ex. Bolton *et al.* 2012)





Figure 25 Howth and Ireland's Eye by Edward Mc Farland (National Library of Ireland)



Figure 26 Howth Castle & Ireland's Eye, photo by Robert French c. 1880-1910 (National Library of Ireland)

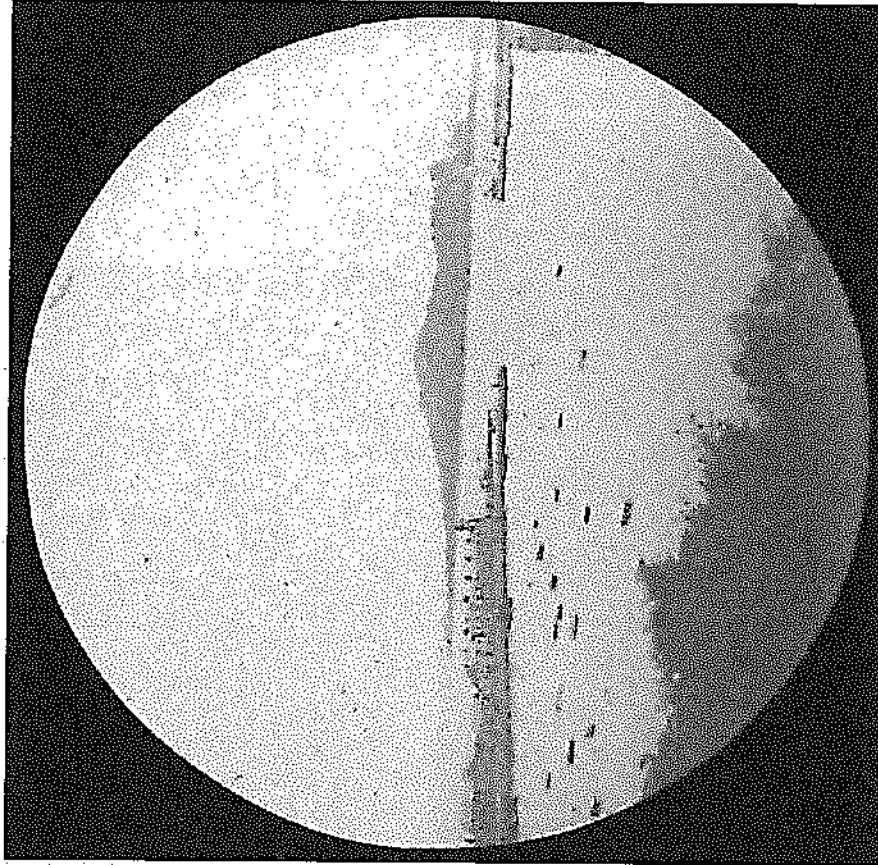


Figure 27 19<sup>th</sup> century lantern slides showing views of Ireland's Eye from Howth (RSA Library)

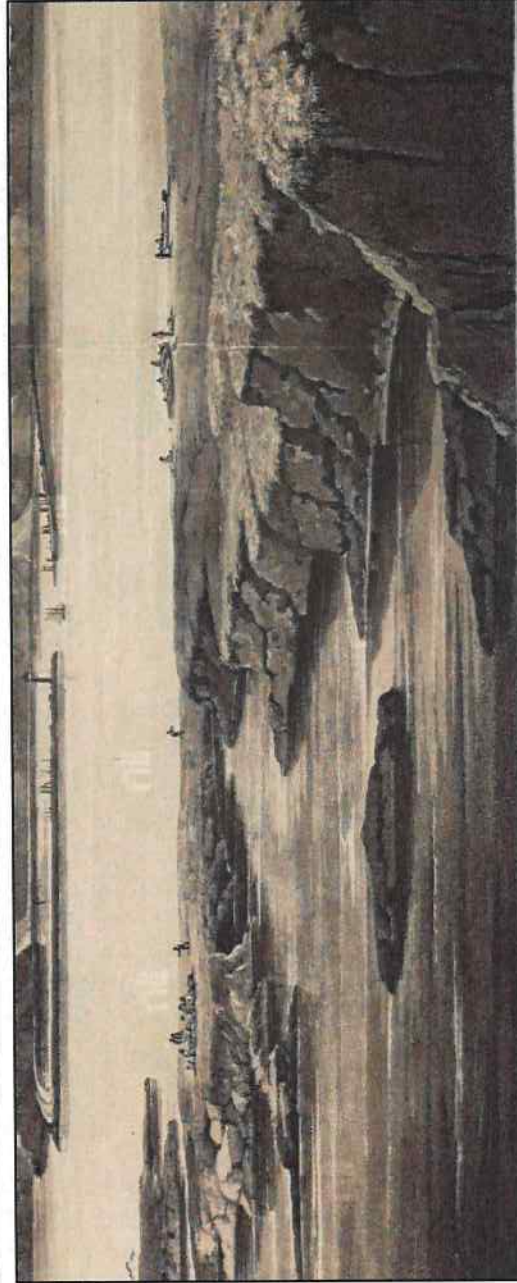
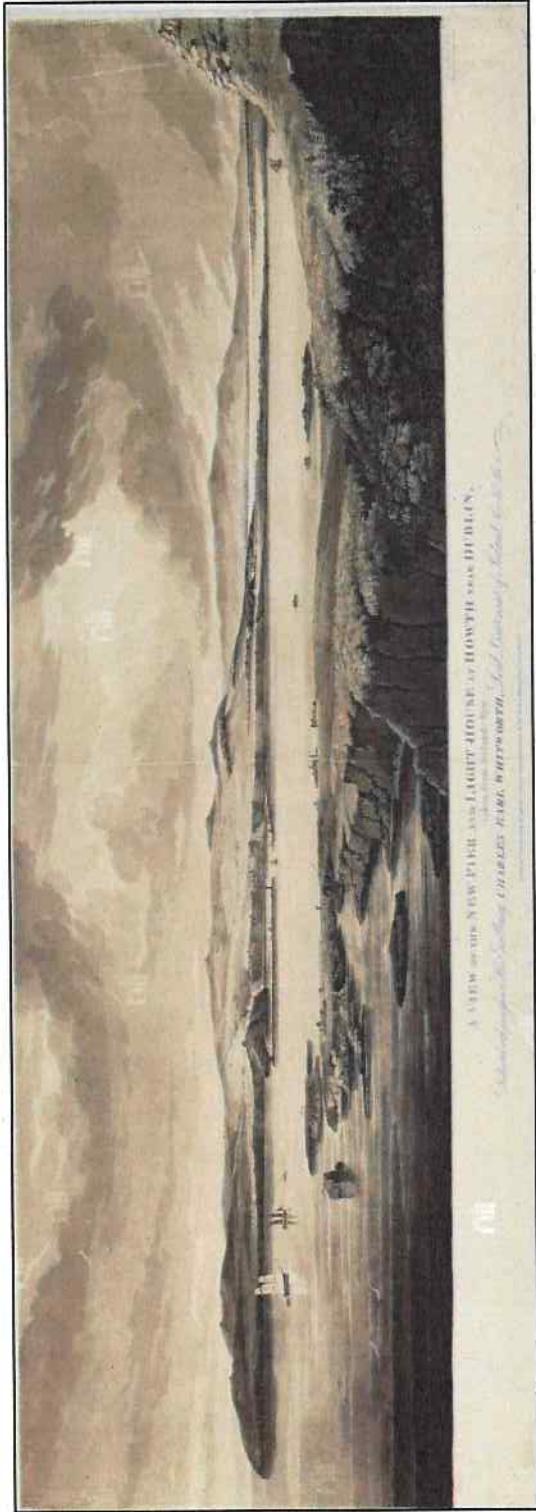


Figure 28 A view from the new pier and lighthouse at Howth near Dublin, taken from Ireland's Eye, by Charles Earl Whitworth, 1817 (National Library of Ireland)

## 6. RESULTS OF FIELD SURVEY

The approach to Ireland's Eye by boat emphasises its proximity to the mainland, taking only twenty minutes from Howth Harbour to the north-western tip of the island (Plate 4). Views towards Howth, Lambay Island and the coastline at Baldoyle and Portmarnock from the island are spectacular on a clear day; they look remarkably close and the strong physical and spatial relationship between the islands and coast is readily apparent (Plates 5 & 6). Photographs taken during the course of the field survey in August 2016 are presented throughout the text below, with additional images of all cultural heritage features contained in the inventory in Appendix 1. The locations of these features are illustrated on Figure 32.



Plate 4 View of Ireland's Eye on the approach from Howth Harbour, facing north



Plate 5 View south from Ireland's Eye of Howth Head and Harbour



Plate 6 View of Lambay Island from Ireland's Eye, facing north

### 6.1. Landing Places on the Island

As there is no built harbour on the island, boats off-load their passengers by pulling in at the natural rocky inlets on either side of the promontory on the northern tip of the island, just below the Martello Tower. The boats used to ferry passengers across from Howth are usually small fishing vessels, with a wheel-house and half-deck. As there is no safe place to tie the boats up, a boat-hook is used to steady the vessel alongside the rocks just long enough to allow passengers to disembark. The point at the west of the tower is accessible only for two hours either side of high tide, while the point at the east side is best accessed between low tide and two hours before high tide. Neither of the landing points can be accessed in certain wind conditions, the east side when the wind is easterly or north-easterly and the west side when the wind is westerly or north-westerly. According to one of the ferry-boat operators, both landing points have suffered a lot over the years due to erosion from the elements and the point at the west side has silted up significantly over the years (Ken Doyle, Ireland's Eye Ferries, *Pers. Comm.*).

On the eastern side there is evidence of rocks being cut or shaped to create steps to allow easier access up the cliff-side from the water's edge (Plates 7 & 8). This is a much more elaborate landing place compared to the western side, and the steps cut into the steep cliff would have necessitated a considerable amount of effort to achieve. It seems unlikely that local fishermen would invest the requisite time and energy, simply to facilitate the occasional and seasonal tourist visitor. More probable is that the steps were cut to create a new landing place that would allow direct and easy access to the Martello Tower at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The construction of the tower would have required the delivery and unloading of substantial amounts of heavy material, but given the somewhat precarious nature of the landing place, it seems unlikely (though not impossible) that it could have been used for this purpose. It may well have been created during this initial stage to serve the tower once built, perhaps for those times when the tides rendered the western landing point unusable. A concrete platform has been added at the base of the steps to allow a more sure footing from the boat to the steps.

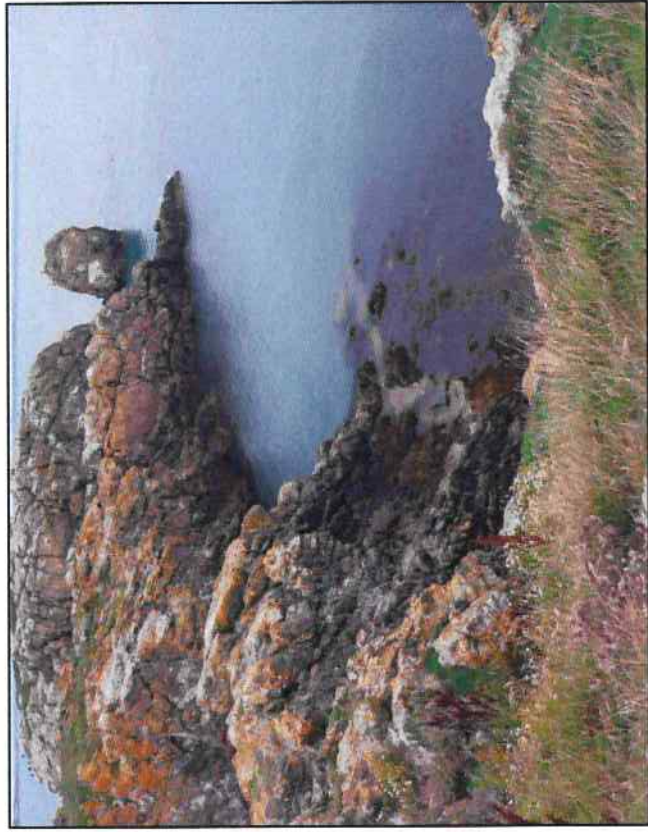


Plate 7 View down to eastern landing place from cliff-top

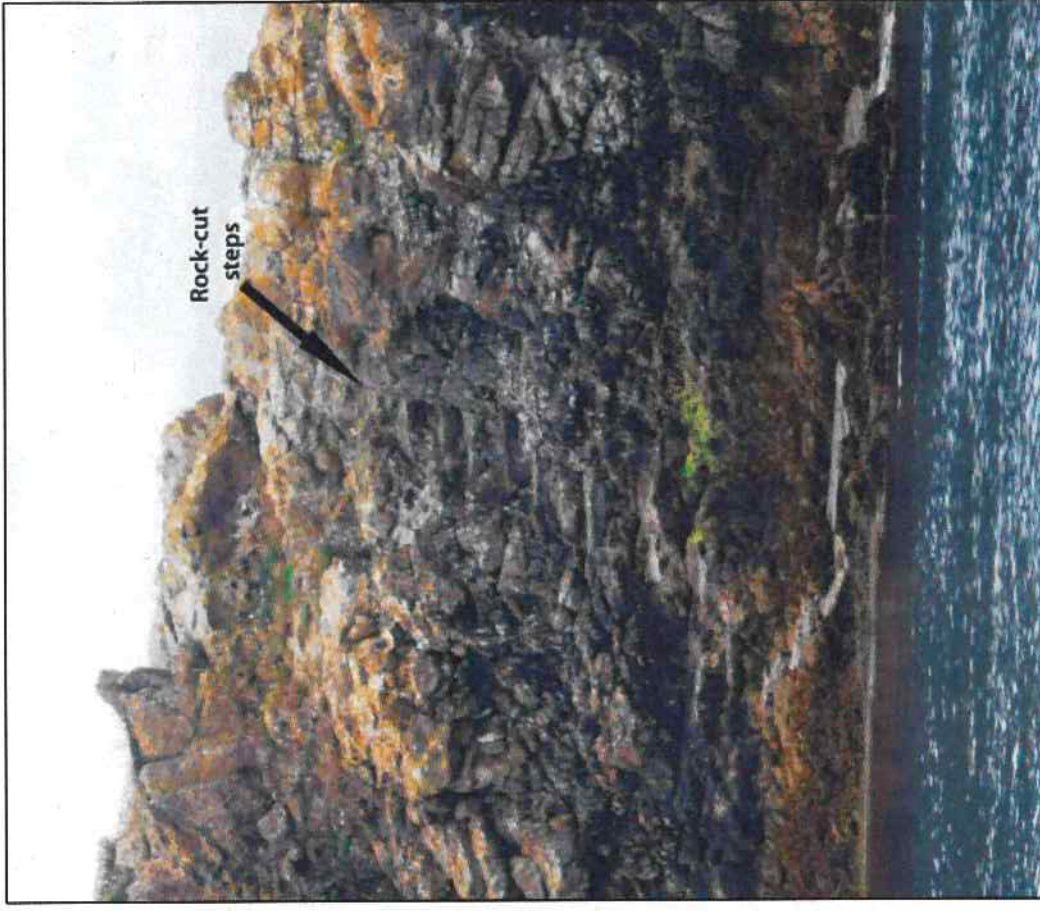


Plate 8 Rock cut steps down to eastern landing



Plate 9 Iron railing at western landing place

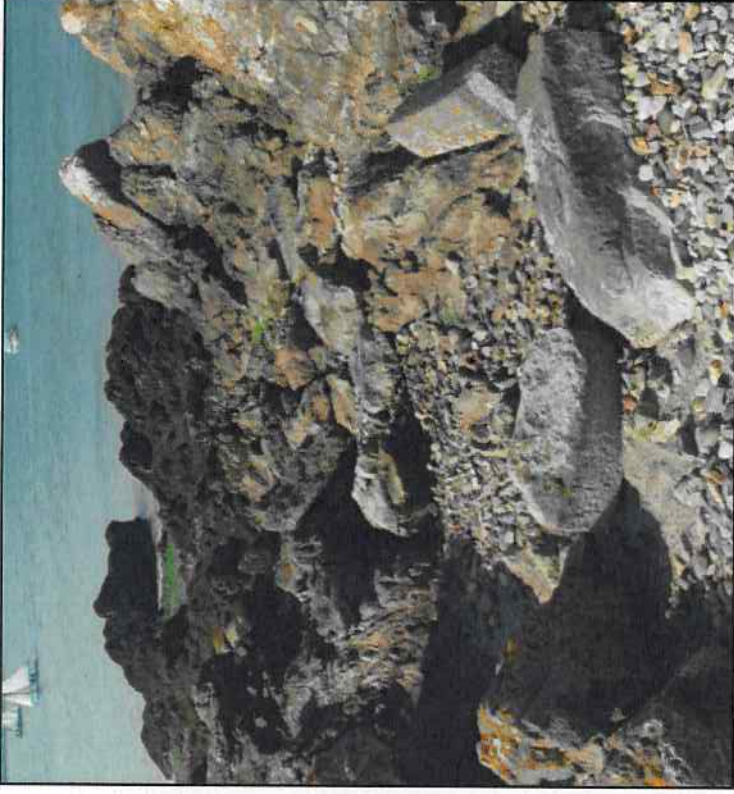


Plate 10 Cut-stones on shoreline, west of Martello Tower (Photo courtesy of Jason Bolton)

In contrast, on the western side of the promontory, an iron railing set into concrete on the rocks at the high water mark is the only indication of a landing place (Plate 9), and even this appears to be a relatively late addition (perhaps early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, given the use of concrete and the iron railing). There is also a natural cove nestled amongst the rocky outcrops on this side of the tower, which is considerably larger when the tide is out, and the cobble and sand beaches here are the most likely landing place for the builders of the Martello Tower and the gunners who took charge of it. Three massive granite stones left over from the tower's construction still lie on the cobbled beach below the tower, strengthening the argument that this was the closest and easiest landing place for unloading at the tower (Bolton, *Pers. Comm*, 11/10/2016, Plate 10).

There was another landing point on the southeast side of the island, at the Long Hole (the inlet that was the scene of the infamous Kirwan murder). Steps had been constructed by local boatmen (it is not known when) but these were washed away during heavy easterly gales some years ago and were never replaced (Ken Doyle, *Ireland's Eye Ferries, Pers. Comm.*).

The sheltered beach along the west side of the island provides a much easier and safer means of landing – for a small, shallow-draft vessel at least; as evidenced by the dinghy that had pulled up there on the day of the field survey – and it has undoubtedly been used by visitors to the island from the prehistoric period onwards (Plate 11). Its proximity to the early medieval church suggests that it was almost certainly used during this period at least.



Plate 11 Sandy beach along Carrigeen Bay, facing north

## 6.2. Natural Spring

An important natural feature of the island – and one that was a prerequisite to human habitation – is that it has a fresh water spring. This is located at the northern end of the island, c. 145m southeast of the Martello Tower. The spring is not marked on the first edition six-inch Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1843, though it does appear on the more detailed 25-inch map of 1906-9; instead of the normal OS marker for a spring (which is a tiny circle), this is shown as a small pond, suggesting that the spring feeds into a natural hollow. It is this feature, rather than the spring itself that allows it to be identified in the field, despite the extensive overgrowth. The wet ground in the hollow supports different plant life, thus distinguishing it from the surrounding vegetation, and the feature is further highlighted by the slight dip in the ground (Plate 12). There was no obvious built structure visible, though it may have been obscured by the overgrowth, which prevented close and thorough inspection. No other springs are marked on the historic Ordnance Survey maps and none were identified during the field survey; it should be noted,



however, that the extent of vegetative overgrowth across the island may obscure any other natural springs that may be present.



Plate 12 Natural spring in the northwest quadrant of the island, facing south (the spring is visible in the image as a large area of light green vegetation ringed with brown).

### 6.3. Martello Tower

The Martello tower (RMP DU015-016; RPS No. 589) is by far the most prominent and the best preserved of the archaeological monuments on the island. It stands proud on a natural rise, on the rocky promontory at the north-western tip of the island (Plates 13 & 19). The views from the tower site are impressive and were undoubtedly even better from the now inaccessible rooftop.

The raised doorway on the south side of the tower was designed to deter attackers (much like the early medieval round towers that still stand on some of the Irish ecclesiastical sites) and access today can only be gained by climbing the rope that hangs from the stone door-jamb (Plate 14). In addition to the doorway, there are small opes on the east and west sides, as well as a small opening with brick insertions beneath the doorway (possibly a later, partial repair). The interior of the tower has been lime-washed and the graffiti on it is evidence of past visitors to the island (such as D. Quinn, who etched his name into the wall in 1940, presumably at a time when the floor was still in place; Plate 16). The original wooden flooring at first-floor level has been removed (the raised doorway provides an entrance to this level), though the remains of the timber supports can still be seen in the wall. This has left the undercroft exposed and revealed a large iron storage chest still in situ, as well as the random-rubble stone partition walls that divided the area into three small spaces (Plate 15). Where the limewash has eroded from the roof of the tower, the brick-construction of the slightly domed top can be seen (this doming is not visible from the outside as it is hidden behind the parapet walls).



Plate 13 Martello Tower, facing northwest



Plate 14 Martello Tower, facing north, showing raised doorway and machiolation

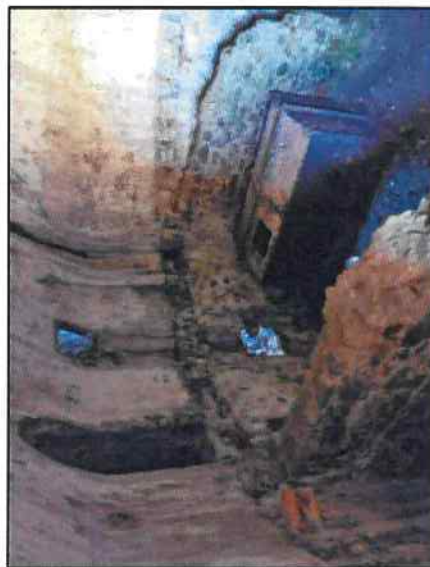


Plate 15 View of interior of tower, showing metal trunk and walls dividing undercroft



Plate 16 Interior of tower, showing graffiti above original floor level



Plate 17 View southeast from raised doorway towards path to Carrageen Bay



Plate 18 View of tower from Drone footage (courtesy of Ken Doyle, Ireland's Eye Ferries)

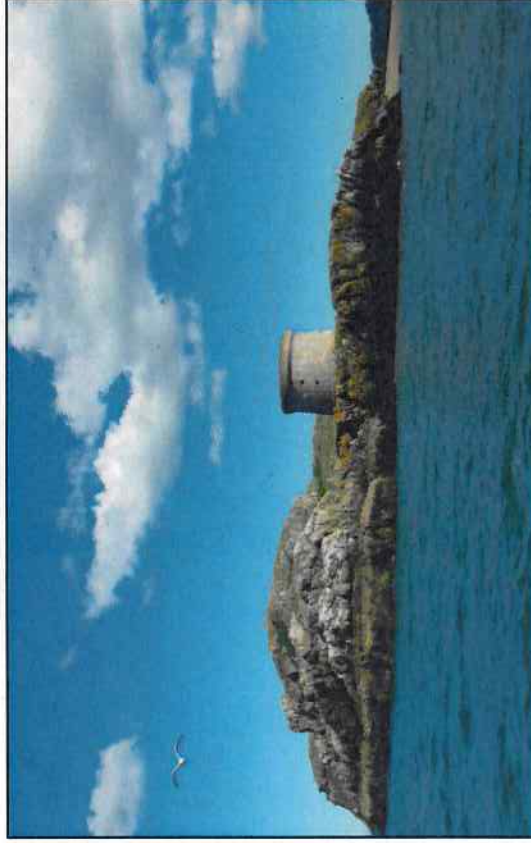


Plate 19 View of Martello Tower, facing south

The site of the tower is one of the least changed in Dublin – no doubt owing to its remoteness – and its original layout can still be discerned by the placement of the Board of Ordnance and later War Office boundary stones that marked its land extents and rights-of-way. The War Office re-surveyed the land extents associated with all of the Martello Towers after they took over in 1855/6, usually removing the original boundary stones and replacing them with granite ones. They also appear to have increased the overall number of stones at the sites so that the boundaries were more clearly marked on the ground. That this is the case at Ireland's Eye is apparent from a comparison of an 1848 plan of the site now held in Kew Archives (Ref. MPH 1-662; Figure 29), which shows six boundary stones (marked 'O. B. Stone'), and the 25-inch OS map of 1906-9, which shows nine (Figure 30).

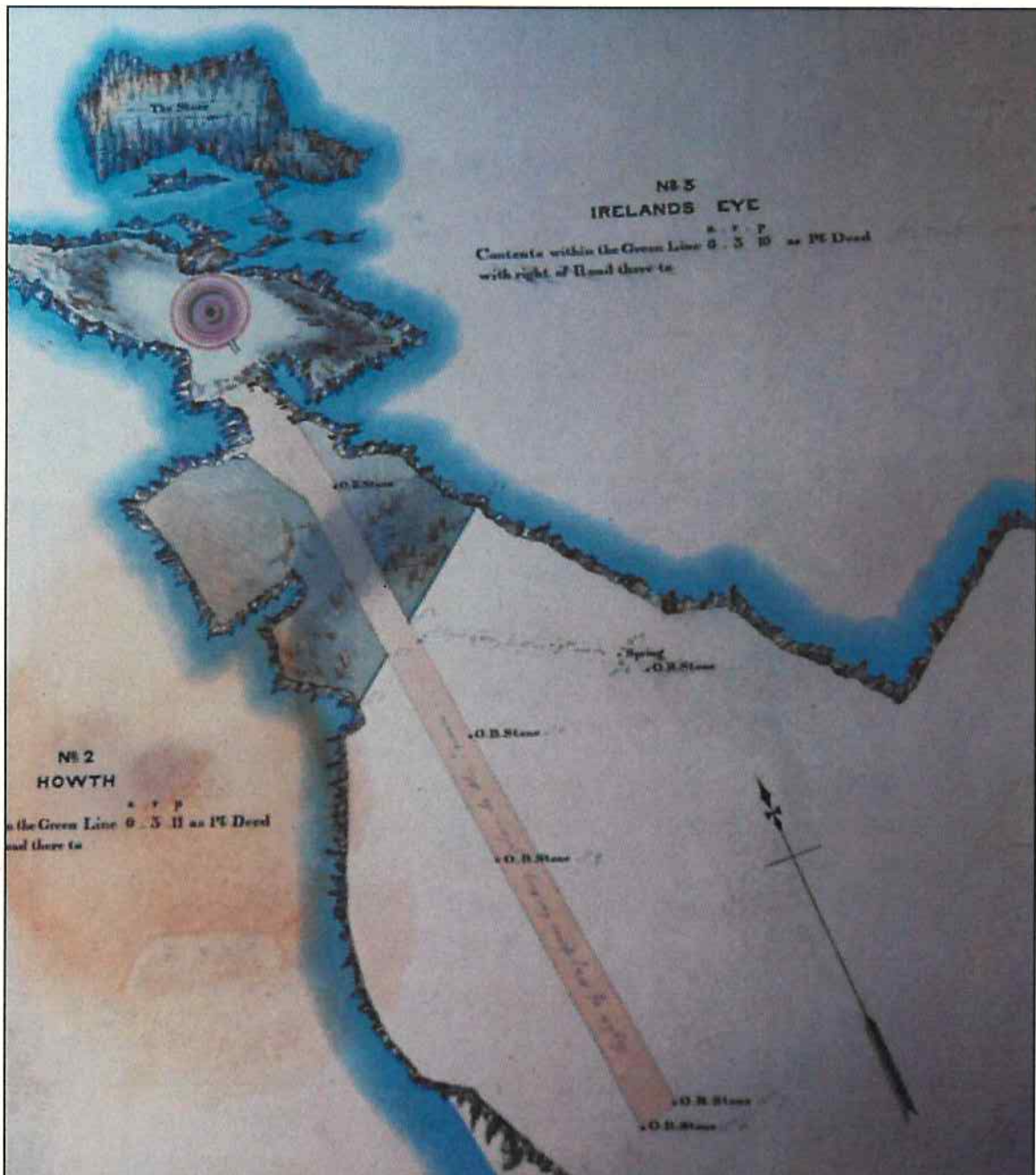


Figure 29 Board of Ordnance Plan, 1848, showing locations of boundary stones (National Archives, Kew)

The earlier plan (Figure 31) depicts an access route running from the beach at Carrigeen Bay to the tower, annotated as the 'right-of-way from landing place to tower', with a pathway way diverging east / northeast to the spring (also annotated as a right-of-way). One of the boundary stones is shown at the spring, on its southern side, with the others demarcating the main access route (a pair of stones mark the beginning of the pathway close to the beach, two stones are staggered along the midway point, one to the east and one to the west, and a third is located close to the tower). Although a line is drawn on the map to indicate the Board of Ordnance lands (this area is coloured in, showing grass and scrub, with the lands outside it left blank), there are no stones marking the boundary. In contrast, the 25-inch OS map edition of 1906-9 depicts nine boundary stones: three parallel pairs aligned along the access route which runs northwest from beach to tower; one each to the north and south close to the cliff-side, marking the extent of the Board of Ordnance lands; and one at the spring.

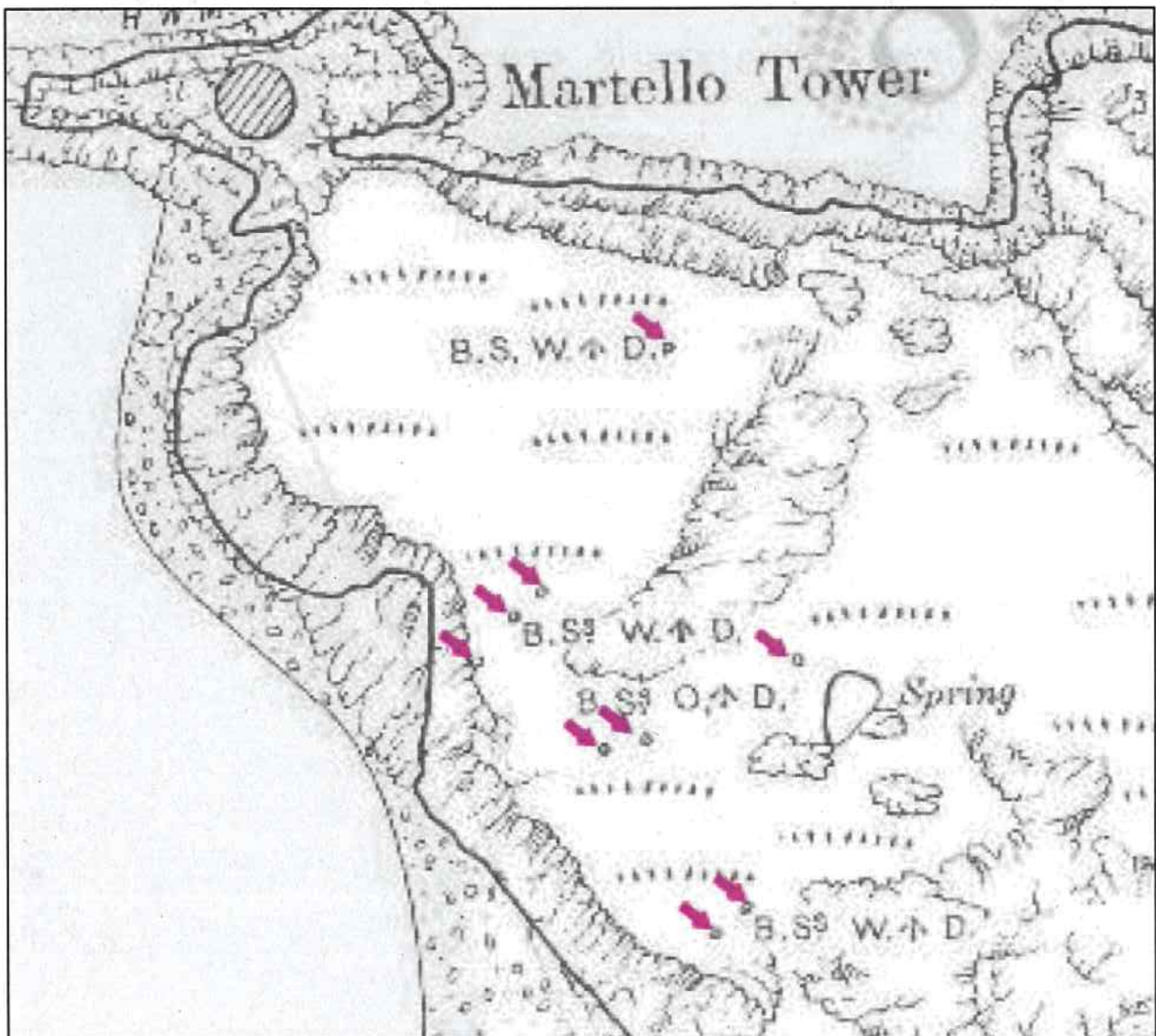


Figure 30 OS 25-inch map, 1906-9, showing locations of boundary stones

Nine boundary stones were identified during the site inspection; their identification was hard-won as almost all were entirely hidden amongst the overgrowth (Boundary Stones 1-9 on Figure 32). Although some of the 19<sup>th</sup>

century plans for the tower indicate a total of eleven stones, the remaining two could not be found. It is possible that they were removed entirely during the War Office works, but given the dense vegetation it is possible that these are extant and as yet unlocated. The locations of the boundary stones were recorded in the field using GPS and plotted onto modern mapping (Figure 32). Their positions were found to be fairly representative of the stones as marked on the 25-inch OS map of 1906-9 (Figure 30). All but one of the stones depicted on the 25-inch OS map were identified in the field; only one of the middle pair was found during the site inspection. One boundary stone that is not marked on the historic map was also identified; it was found at the spring, where it forms a closely-set pair (only c. 2m apart) with the stone shown on the map (Boundary Stones 5 & 6 on Figure 32).



Figure 31 Board of Ordnance Plan, c. 1805, showing rights of way to Martello Tower (Botlon *et al.* 2012)

Six of the boundary stones are cut-granite stones (Boundary Stones 1-4, 7 & 8 on Figure 32): two pairs (each pair comprising two stones set c. 5m apart) marking the beginning and end of the access route from the main beach at Carrigeen Bay to the tower, as well as two stones marking the extent of the Board of Ordnance lands, one each to

the south and southeast of the tower (e.g. Plates 21 & 22). These six stones are c. 1.2m tall pillars (square in profile, each face measuring c. 30cm wide), with pyramidal tops. The granite on these stones is very eroded, with lichen covering some of the faces; no markings were visible. These stones were erected sometime after 1855/6, when the War Office took over the lands and re-surveyed and formalised the boundaries.

Three of the older Board of Ordnance boundary stones are also extant, with at least one in its original position (Boundary Stones 5, 6 & 9 on Figure 32). They are made of cut-limestone and are slightly smaller in scale than the later stones. They exhibit considerably less erosion (a result of the good quality stone used), with the inscribed 'B.O.' and arrow mark still crisp, as are the cut-faces and pyramidal tops (e.g. Plate 20). Two of the stones (c. 80cm and c. 1m high) are placed on the north-western side of the spring. The third (c. 95cm high) is placed at the point where a path is shown on an earlier Board of Ordnance map – dating from c. 1805 when the tower was built – diverging from the main access route towards the spring (Figure 31; Boundary Stone 9 on Figure 32). The latter is one of the middle pair depicted on the 25-inch OS map marking the access route (the second stone of this pair could not be located). The placement of two stones at the spring seems redundant and is not represented on any of the surviving plans. This may suggest that one of the stones was placed there after being removed from its original position by the War Office. The survival of these older boundary stones, with at least one in its original position, is rare as the majority of the boundary stones at the Martello Towers were replaced by the War Office after 1855/6 (Jason Bolton, *Pers. Comm.*, 11/10/16).

Bolton has previously observed three large granite stones that were left over from the construction of the string course and box machiolation on the Martello Tower still lie on the cobbled beach below the structure (Bolton *et al.* 2012; Plate 10). These were not visible at the time of the inspection, as they lie below the high-tide mark.



Plate 20 Original limestone Board of Ordnance boundary stone



Plate 21 Granite War Office replacement boundary stone, with Martello Tower in background



**Plate 22** View from rock outcrop showing level ground to south of Martello Tower containing boundary stones (visible to left) and possible promontory fort site (SMR DU015-133)

#### 6.4. Promontory Fort

There were no visible traces of the features identified by Casey (1999) on aerial photography as a possible promontory fort (SMR DU015-133; Plate 22). The abundant protruding natural rocks and the overgrown nature of the site make it difficult to discern any patterns on the ground. This small headland is fairly level, however, with a large section of rising rock outcrop forming a natural boundary between it and the rest of the island, and the natural spring located just beyond it. The relatively level area between the Martello Tower and the rock outcrop measures approximately 90m by 50m or c. 0.45 hectare (coastal promontory forts can vary considerably in size: e.g. on Lambay Island, the smaller of the two measures c. 75m by c. 25m or c. 0.18ha, with the larger one c. 190m by c. 85m or c. 1.6ha, while Drumanagh Fort is an expansive 13ha). Although the rock outcrop provides a natural boundary, it also allows a vantage point over the level area, which would appear to be a disadvantage from a defensive point of view. On such a small island, however, a defensive boundary may not have been required, but simply one that divided the 'fort' or settlement area from the rest of the land mass.

#### 6.5. The Long Hole

The Long Hole is an inlet located at the south-eastern end of the island, narrow at the entrance and wider towards the head, with steep cliffs on either side (Plate 23). A small, curved cobbled beach sits just beyond the low, grass-covered dunes that line the island's beaches. A large rock protrudes from the water, dividing the channel into two, with other smaller rocks visible in the water close to the beach. This little inlet has a peaceful aspect and provides



no clues to its connection with the violent death of Maria Kirwan in 1852. To the unwitting visitor it simply offers calm waters to paddle or swim in and a quiet picnic spot. It is a secluded place, out of sight from the rest of the island, whilst also being hidden from the mainland by virtue of its location on the seaward side of the island. There is no visible trace of the former landing place described by Mr Doyle, and no evidence for any other built structures or features of archaeological potential.



**Plate 23** The Long Hole viewed from the sand dunes above the beach, facing northeast

#### **6.6. St Nessian's Church**

The recorded church ruins (RMP DU016-001001) occupy the most sheltered location on the island, on the leeward side of the high cliffs that dominate its north and east shores. The church site appears carefully chosen, nestled in a shallow depression in relatively low land above the beach. It has good views back towards Howth Head and the mainland, and it is surrounded by a broad sweep of land that rises gradually up from the beach at Carrigeen Bay to the cliffs (Plate 24). There is no obvious or clear pathway to accessing the ruins, with the significant overgrowth of bracken and briars making approaches from all angles difficult. The combination of the local stone used to construct the church, its location in a slight dip and the overgrowth of vegetation can make the church almost invisible in the landscape (Plate 25 & 26).

At present, the church stands to gable height and is built of coursed limestone blocks with small packing stones and large squared blocks used as quoins (Plates 27-39). It has a nave and a chancel, which is inset and aligned ENE-WSW. It is entered in the west through a semi-circular arched doorway, with the arch springing from roughly-squared

imposts. The nave is oblong in plan (int. dims. L 8.4m, Wth 4.5m, wall T 0.8m) and is lit by two narrow slit opes in the north and south walls that have widely splayed embrasures. The partial remains of the round turret are discernible only from certain angles, as only one or two courses survive at its base, where it meets the chancel roof. There are three windows in the north, south and east walls of the chancel; the former are plain rectangular opes with widely splayed embrasures, the latter is a tall, round-headed window. The reconstruction efforts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century antiquarians are visible in parts of the west gable but are most obvious on the internal face of the south wall. The ruins are surrounded with significant overgrowth, with vegetation internally and on the top of the walls. Some small stones of irregular-shape, but similar size (roughly 35cm by 15cm), were noted in close proximity to the church on its south and east side and may represent burial markers (Plates 40-42).



**Plate 24 View of St Nessian's Church (DU016-001001), facing south towards Howth Head**

Although the ground surface is entirely obscured by the extensive overgrowth, the topography has a generally level aspect and there is an absence of the rock outcrops that are abundant elsewhere on the island. It is known that at least some of this area was under the plough in the post-medieval period and it is likely that the early medieval ecclesiastical settlement would have made full use of all cultivable land on the island (essentially the wider area surrounding the church site). The dense vegetation masks any traces that may survive of enclosing walls or fences, either around the church site or as field boundaries. It also makes it impossible to detect any patterns – subtle or otherwise – that may survive on the ground surface, such as stone foundations, low earthen banks or ridge-and-furrow marks. An examination of aerial photographic coverage of the island yielded no additional information.



Plate 25 View east of St Nesson's Church

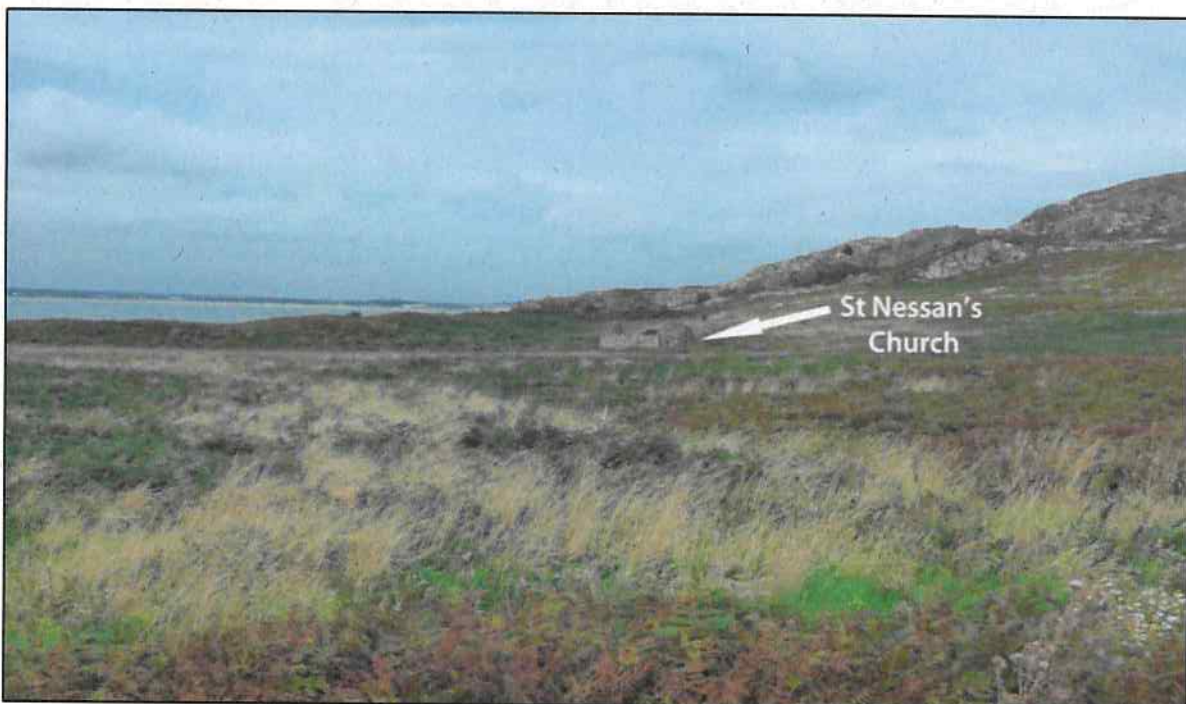


Plate 26 View north / northwest of St Nesson's Church



Plate 27 View east of St Nesson's Church from Drone  
(courtesy of Ken Doyle, Ireland's Eye Ferries)



Plate 28 View southwest of St Nesson's Church from Drone (courtesy of  
Ken Doyle, Ireland's Eye Ferries)



Plate 29 West gable of St Nesson's Church, showing tall  
arched window



Plate 30 North walls of nave and chancel, St Nesson's Church



Plate 31 West gable and south wall of nave, St Nesson's  
Church



Plate 32 East gable of St Nesson's Church



Plate 33 Interior of church: View from east doorway towards chancel



Plate 34 Interior of church: Chancel



Plate 35 Interior of church: Nave



Plate 36 View through both windows of chancel from exterior, facing north

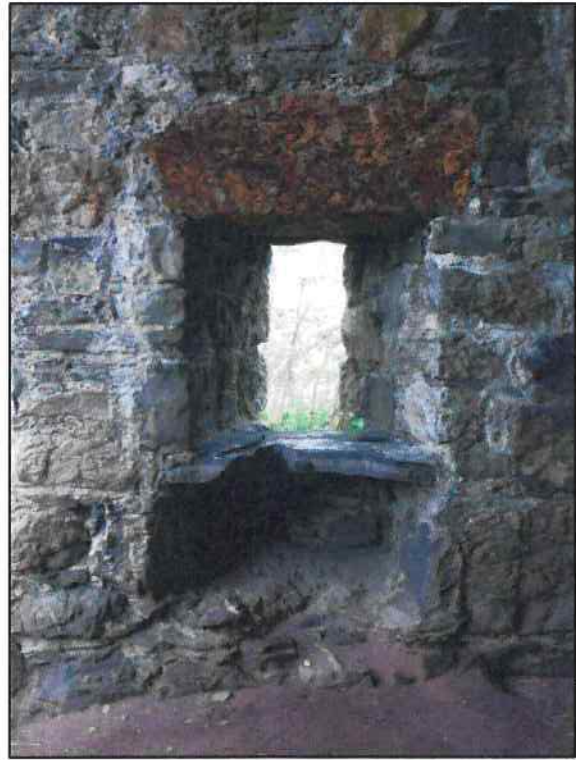


Plate 37 Interior of church: window in north wall of chancel



Plate 38 Interior of church: window in south wall of chancel



Plate 39 Interior of church: window in north wall of nave



Plate 40 Stone set into ground on east side of church



Plate 41 Stones set into ground on south side of church



Plate 42 Stones set into ground on south side of church



Figure 32  
Aerial Photograph showing the location of cultural heritage features on Ireland's Eye



## 7. CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

A rare article devoted entirely to Ireland's Eye – albeit a very brief one – was published in the *Dublin Penny Journal* in 1833. It begins with the question 'Have you ever been at Ireland's Eye?', an enquiry by the author's friend, who urges him to visit the island, telling him that he would be 'highly gratified' by it. At the end of the article, the author 'R. A.' concludes with the following:

'And now, kind reader, allow me to enquire, Have you ever been at Ireland's Eye? if you answer never, I give you the advice my friend gave me, and strongly recommend you to follow it'.

Despite his exhortations, the island – and its attractions – continue to be much ignored. The cultural heritage value of Ireland's Eye as a whole should not be underestimated, however, even if many of its cultural heritage assets are somewhat hidden or elusive, having only a subtle presence in the landscape. Occasionally this status changes, as with the church ruins, which stand out proudly on a clear day in the spring or early summer but become almost invisible on a gloomy day later in the season, when the vegetation has grown. Similarly, the 19<sup>th</sup> century boundary stones that are associated with the Martello Tower are nearly impossible to find at the height of the summer growth; this difficulty is lessened when the vegetation is lower, though the majority of the stones are still mostly obscured.

The Martello Tower and the ruins of St Nessian's Church are probably the most obvious of the cultural heritage assets on the island, both being recorded archaeological monuments (RMP sites). Of the two sites, the tower – which is also a protected structure – is by far the most prominent and visible in the landscape. It appears in most of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century artists' views of Howth and its seascape, being noticeable even at some distance. There are elements associated with both recorded sites, however, that are less tangible. The original pathway associated with the Board of Ordnance right-of-way for the Martello Tower, which is still marked by some of the existing boundary stones, is now completely overgrown, though the existing pathway trod by visitors runs close to it in places. The landing place on the east side of the Martello Tower, with its impressive rock-cut steps, may have been created at the same time as the Martello Tower in order to serve that structure, though the connection is not obvious to visitors landing on the island.

The exact location of the cist burial that was uncovered during ploughing in the 19<sup>th</sup> century – which is an RMP site associated with St Nessian's Church – is unknown. A number of possible burial markers in the form of stones set into the ground on the north and east side of the church were identified during the field survey. Other stones noticed on the north side of the church appeared to form an alignment and may represent the remains of an associated wall. Given the extent of the vegetation and the difficulties it presents to a regular walkover survey, it was not possible to identify these elements with any degree of certainty or to discern any kind of pattern. Nor was it possible to ascertain if any other features were present in the vicinity of the church. Early medieval ecclesiastical settlements did not comprise solely of a church and burial ground; they would have required domestic quarters (such as huts) for sleeping and eating, working areas (e.g. for cooking or for crafts such as wood-working, pottery-making, metal-working; if such crafts were carried out it was likely to have been on a small scale) and animal enclosures etc. There is also the tantalising possibility that there was a scriptorium within the settlement, where the Garland of Howth was produced.

Another less than obvious cultural heritage attraction on the island is The Long Hole, which was the scene of Maria Kirwan's murder in 1852. It is a place that is likely to be visited by day-trippers that come to the island, as it is a small, peaceful cove for a paddle and a picnic and is within rambling distance of Carrigeen Bay. It holds a cultural heritage value as the site of an historical event – albeit it a tragic and macabre one – a story that once gripped the entire nation and which still exerts a fascination to this day. Despite this, it is unmarked (though the ferry-man includes it on his basic plan of the island) and unless you are already aware of the story, you might visit it and think it unremarkable.

## 8. MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 8.1. Consultation with Key Stakeholders

Ireland's Eye forms part of the Howth estate and is in the private ownership of the Gaisford-St Lawrence family of Howth Castle. Any proposed works or future plans for the island will require the permission of, and consultation with, the owner.

There are four recorded archaeological sites or monuments located on the island: Martello Tower, Promontory Fort, Church and Burial site (detailed in Table 2 in Section 4 of the report). These sites are afforded protection under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004; Appendix 2). Any proposed works at or in relation to a recorded archaeological site or monument will require consultation with the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs (DAHRRGA). In addition, the Martello Tower is a protected structure and as such is also afforded protection under the Local Government (Planning and Development Act) 2000 (as amended). Consultation regarding any proposed works at or in relation to the protected structure should also include the Architectural Heritage Advisory Unit of the DAHRRGA.

### 8.2. Immediate Actions

#### 8.2.1. Issues and Vulnerabilities

The two upstanding recorded archaeological monuments on the island – St Nessian's Church and the Martello Tower – are vulnerable to the elements and, if left unchecked, there is the potential that the monuments would be adversely affected.

Uncontrolled vegetation growth can cause considerable damage to a masonry ruin. St Nessian's Church underwent significant reconstruction in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at present the ruins appear stable. Nonetheless, the nave of the church is un-roofed and the structure is open to the elements (a roof is a structure's greatest defence against the elements). A more immediate problem for the church, however, is the encroaching vegetation, which has begun to colonise the interior and was also evident on the chancel roof, the wall tops and the face of the north wall. While this does not appear to be a significant problem yet, the situation will require regular monitoring.

Vegetation growth is not as big a problem on the exposed rock outcrop that houses the Martello Tower. That being said, the drone imagery provided by Mr Doyle shows grasses and lichen growing on the rooftop and in the roof space (only some lichens types can cause damage; expert advice should be sought). The original door into the Martello Tower is no longer present, and this fact, when added to the presence of the small unglazed opes that

pierce the walls, means that the interior of the structure is at least partially open to the elements. There has already been some damage to the internal fabric of the tower, where the flooring at first floor level is gone and graffiti litters the walls. Damp was reported as a particular problem for the tower in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; in the 1820s the window frames were broken and by 1829 it was reported that 'the damp is fast injuring the floor' (Bolton 2008). Continual exposure to the elements now could lead to further damage to the structure. As the monument is still roofed and is currently structurally sound, it is imperative that it is not allowed to advance further into a state of dereliction.

### *8.2.2. Protection and Management of Cultural Heritage Assets*

Regular maintenance and correct repair practices will extend the life of any structure, keep it from falling further into decay. It is also less damaging and less expensive to carry out regular works of small-scale maintenance, than to postpone any action until a major intervention is the only way of securing the structure's conservation. It is therefore recommended that a full condition survey of St Nesson's Church and the Martello Tower be undertaken by a suitably qualified conservation architect. Condition surveys will determine the current state of the structures and identify areas of vulnerability and the nature and significance of any decay processes. This would provide a baseline from which both monuments could be monitored on an ongoing basis, as well as detailed recommendations for the repair, maintenance and conservation of the structures.

In the absence of a full condition survey, and at a minimum, it is recommended that St Nesson's Church be monitored on a regular basis (e.g. once a year at the end of the growing season) to assess the extent of the vegetation growth in and on the structure. Should the vegetation require removal or controlling, this should only be undertaken following consultation with the National Monuments Service (DAHRRGA) and under the supervision of a conservation engineer and / an archaeologist, as deemed appropriate by the National Monuments Service.

It is also recommended, as a minimum requirement, that the Martello Tower be made weather-tight by replacing the door and window glazing, to protect the monument from further deterioration. Despite access to first floor level being only possible by climbing a rope attached to the inside of the stone door-jamb, the graffiti inside the tower is an indication that the structure is vulnerable to vandalism; replacing the door would allow access to the interior to be controlled if that is deemed necessary. Proposals to replace the door and windows or for any other repairs or works to the tower should only be undertaken following consultation with the National Monuments Service and Architectural Heritage Advisory Unit of the DAHRRGA and under the supervision of a conservation architect.

### *8.2.3. Reinstatement of Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Route: Connecting Historic Monuments*

The reinstatement of a historic route that once connected the beach at Carrigeen Bay with the Martello Tower, and continuing it southeastwards to St Nesson's Church, would be a relatively easy way to improve access to the church and to provide a link between the two upstanding monuments. The route from the Martello Tower to Carrigeen Bay was once marked by the upright boundary stones of the Board of Ordnance and War Office; where surviving, these are now largely obscured by dense vegetation. Clearing the vegetation from around the stones and keeping it cut back along their alignment would create a new route for visitors to use, from the tower to the beach. As there is

currently no easy way through the vegetation to the church, this route could be continued by cutting back the vegetation to fashion an informal pathway to the ruins; maintenance would simply require regular cutting during the growing season, while the informal nature of path would not adversely affect the setting of the church or the rugged aspect of the island.

### 8.3. Future Opportunities

#### 8.3.1. *Archaeological Research*

There is considerable archaeological potential on the island that is as yet unrealised, with scope for additional research through programmes of non-invasive and invasive investigation. The broad sweep of land that surrounds St Nessan's Church once held the ecclesiastical settlement that would have been associated with the church, though the precise nature and size of the settlement is unknown. The land was presumably cultivated to some degree during the early medieval period and was certainly used for grazing and tillage in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; it is not possible, however, to gauge the extent of any ploughing in the past as identifying marks like ridge-and-furrow would be obscured by the dense and overgrown vegetation. It is possible that archaeological features and deposits associated with the ecclesiastical settlement survive, either with an above-ground presence that is obscured by the dense vegetation and /or below-ground. It is also possible that there is evidence of prehistoric activity of the island, in the form of the possible promontory fort or perhaps middens in the sand dunes along Carrigeen Bay (one such midden may have been uncovered during the ploughing in the 19<sup>th</sup> century). Artefacts may also be exposed by the elements in the sand and shingle beaches in the small coves or in Carrigeen Bay (none were identified during this field survey, but there is precedent for stray finds on the island, such as the Roman coins discovered in the 1860s and in the 1920s); a programme of systematic field-walking along the beaches and immediately adjacent land over several seasons may identify new finds.

Geophysical survey may be successful in resolving some of these questions, but such surveys would be hampered by the dense, tall vegetation and nesting birds during the months that the island is accessible by boat. One non-invasive investigative tool that might prove valuable is LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging), which could be used to obtain a better understanding and interpretation of the physical, topographical and cultural heritage landscape on the island. LIDAR is a laser-based remote sensing system used to collect elevation data, using a sensor-equipped plane or helicopter. It provides a cost-effective and fast method of recording topographic data over large areas, generating detailed contour models that can be investigated for surface archaeological features. The primary benefit of using LIDAR in this instance is that it has the ability to map features obscured by vegetation and /or which may be indistinguishable on the ground. It is important that a survey specification is agreed that is appropriate for the scale of the island and the type of discrete or subtle features that may exist there. Rather than looking for archaeological sites and complexes, as one might over a larger area, this survey would seek to identify elements that may be associated with the existing sites recorded on the island. Ireland's Eye constitutes a relatively small and contained area for a LIDAR survey, which would allow a detailed approach, with a high point density (e.g. 16 points / m<sup>2</sup>, with a 5cm accuracy) that could record such features. Although LIDAR can only identify features with an upstanding topographical representation, the results of the survey should be able to establish where such features exist and where (and to what extent) ploughing may have been carried out in the past.

Archaeological features and deposits can survive subsurface, even where their surface expression has been removed by agricultural activities, and a more invasive approach – i.e. archaeological excavation – would be required to identify them. The most rewarding sites on the island in terms of archaeological excavation are likely to be in the vicinity of the church or at the site of the possible promontory fort. If funding were to be made available, a programme of research excavation could be devised (subject to the permission of, and in consultation with, the National Monuments Service, DAHRRGA), perhaps in partnership with an academic institution.

### 8.3.2. *Access, Interpretation and Tourism*

Public access to the island is seasonal, with most visitors using the small ferry-boats that operate out of Howth Harbour. Boat trips to the island (and landings) are dictated by the tides and weather and the landing places are suited to only the most sure-footed and nimble of visitors. According to one of the ferry-boat operators, both landing points have suffered a lot over the years due to erosion from the elements and the point at the west side has silted up significantly over the years (Ken Doyle, Ireland's Eye Ferries, *Pers. Comm.*). While repairs to the existing landing places might improve matters to some extent, consideration might be given to the creation of a new, safer landing place (if possible), of a scale and design appropriate to the size of the island and the setting of the historic monuments on it.

For the tourist or casual visitor to Ireland's Eye at present, the cultural heritage significance and value of the island is not readily apparent. The visitor experience would be greatly enhanced by an increased awareness and understanding of the surviving historic landscape on the island, its archaeological sites and its story through time. There are no guided visits to the island, no interpretative signage and no easily obtained reference material. This cultural heritage study could be used to inform interpretational material, such as leaflets or pamphlets that could be made available at the tourist information point in Howth or through the ferry operators. Information panels could also be erected at points around the island, to provide the archaeological and historical context of the various cultural heritage sites, monuments and places. As an alternative or supplementary service, the information could be available digitally, through a mobile app that could provide an interactive experience for the user. The results of any archaeological investigations that may be undertaken could also be incorporated into this material.

### 8.3.3. *Martello Tower*

The views from first floor height in the tower are remarkable; these extensive views were integral to the defensive role played by the Martello Tower at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and form part of the cultural experience of the monument. Future conservation plans for the tower might include safe access (stairs), a replacement floor, door and window glazing, all of which would serve to enhance the visitor experience. Consideration might also be given to its use as a heritage centre, where the story of the island could be laid out for visitors to appreciate.

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**APPENDIX 1 INVENTORY OF CULTURAL HERITAGE FEATURES**

The locations of all of the features described below are illustrated on Figure 32.

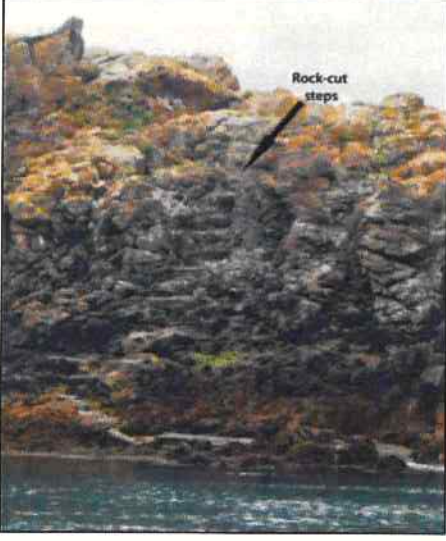
<b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b>	St Nessian's Church
<b>Statutory Protection</b>	RMP DU016-001001
<b>Location</b>	In the southern half of the island, on its western side, overlooking Carrigeen Bay (ITM 728698,741190)
<b>Description</b>	The ruined remains of a pre-Norman structure (nave and chancel) that was heavily reconstructed in the later 19 <sup>th</sup> century (Cf. Section 5.5.1). The stone structure now stands to gable height (in its reconstructed form) and is heavily overgrown with vegetation, in its interior, on its walls and in its surrounds. It appears to have changed little since the reconstruction, as evidenced by comparison with the 19 <sup>th</sup> century antiquarian drawings. Access to the church is made difficult by the dense vegetation that covers the interior of the island. This ground cover also obscures any potential archaeological features associated with the early medieval ecclesiastical settlement that may survive in the area around the church. Possible stone burial markers were noted on the south and east sides of the church. Probable associated cist burial uncovered during ploughing in the 1860s (RMP DU016-001002).
<b>Image</b>	
<b>References</b>	Sections 5.5 & 6.6; Figures 4-9, ; Plates 1-3 & 24-42.


<b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b>	Martello Tower
<b>Statutory Protection</b>	RMP DU015-016 / RPS No. 589
<b>Location</b>	On a small rocky peninsula at the northwest tip of the island (ITM 728345,741526)
<b>Description</b>	A prominent structure, built c. 1805, as one of a group of towers positioned around Dublin Bay. The rendered rubble exterior is in good condition, as are the masonry elements in the machicolation, the rooftop corbels and the door frame. Inside, the original floor is gone and graffiti litters the walls. Impressive views of the structure from high points on the island and from the sea on the approach from Howth. Its relationship with the Board of Ordnance (BO) boundary stones that still stand on the island has been lost. The stones themselves (catalogued individually), which mark the extent of BO lands and the associated rights of way (from the beach and to the spring) have been almost completely obscured by vegetation overgrowth.

<p><b>Image</b></p>	
<p><b>References</b></p>	<p>Sections 5.8 &amp; 6.3; Figures ; Plates 13-19 &amp; 22.</p>


<p><b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b></p>	<p>Promontory Fort</p>
<p><b>Statutory Protection</b></p>	<p>RMP DU015-133</p>
<p><b>Location</b></p>	<p>The site of the Martello Tower and the area south of it (ITM 728345,741524)</p>
<p><b>Description</b></p>	<p>No surface expression. A possible site identified during aerial survey by Casey in the late 1990 (Cf. section 5.3). No features were discernible on the ground.</p>
<p><b>Image</b></p>	
<p><b>References</b></p>	<p>Sections 5.3 &amp; 6.4; Plate 22.</p>


<p><b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b></p>	<p>Landing Place (west)</p>
<p><b>Statutory Protection</b></p>	<p>None</p>
<p><b>Location</b></p>	<p>A natural rocky inlet on the west side of the Martello Tower (ITM 728377, 741522)</p>
<p><b>Description</b></p>	<p>Steps cut into the steep cliff, with a concrete platform has been added at the base of the steps to allow a more sure footing from the boat to the steps. It is likely that the steps were cut to create a new landing place that would allow direct and easy access to the Martello Tower at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.</p>


<p><b>Image</b></p>	
<p><b>References</b></p>	<p>Section 6.1; Plates 7 &amp; 8.</p>


<p><b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b></p>	<p>Landing Place (east)</p>
<p><b>Statutory Protection</b></p>	<p>None</p>
<p><b>Location</b></p>	<p>A small cove on the east side of the Martello Tower (ITM 728328, 741507)</p>
<p><b>Description</b></p>	<p>An iron railing set into concrete on the rocks at the high water mark is the only indication of a landing place. Appears to be a relatively late addition, perhaps early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, given the use of concrete and the iron railing.</p>
<p><b>Image</b></p>	
<p><b>References</b></p>	<p>Section 6.1; Plate 9.</p>


<p><b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b></p>	<p>The Long Hole</p>
<p><b>Statutory Protection</b></p>	<p>None</p>
<p><b>Location</b></p>	<p>At the south-eastern end of the island</p>
<p><b>Description</b></p>	<p>A narrow inlet with a small, curved cobbled beach which was the scene of Maria Kirwan's murder. There is no visible trace of the former landing place described by Mr Doyle, and no evidence for any other built structures or features of archaeological potential. It holds a cultural heritage value as the site of an historical event.</p>


<p><b>Image</b></p>	
<p><b>References</b></p>	<p>Sections 5.10 &amp; ; Figure 14; Plate 23.</p>


<p><b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b></p>	<p>Boundary Stone 1</p>
<p><b>Statutory Protection</b></p>	<p>None</p>
<p><b>Location</b></p>	<p>Northwestern corner of island (ITM ) Cf. Figure 32 for the locations of Boundary Stones 1-9</p>
<p><b>Description</b></p>	<p>War Office replacement of original Board of Ordnance boundary stone, c. 1850s. Cut granite pillar stone with pyramidal top. Dimensions c. 1.2m visible height, with each face measuring c. 20cm in width. Very eroded with no inscriptions evident. Marking the north / northeastern extent of the Board of Ordnance lands, close to the cliff edge; it is roughly aligned with Boundary Stones 2-4. Stands slightly askew. The images below show the stone with a view towards Lambay Island (facing north) and in relation to the Martello Tower (facing northwest).</p>
<p><b>Image</b></p>	

	
References	Sections 5.8 & 6.3; Figures 29 & 30.

Cultural Heritage Feature	Boundary Stone 2
Statutory Protection	None
Location	Northwestern corner of island (ITM ) Cf. Figure 32 for the locations of Boundary Stones 1-9
Description	<p>War Office replacement of original Board of Ordnance boundary stone, c. 1850s. Cut granite pillar stone with pyramidal top. Dimensions c. 1.2m visible height, with each face measuring c. 20cm in width. Very eroded and lichen-covered with no inscriptions evident. One of a pair of stones (c. 5m apart) marking the principal right-of-way from Carrigeen Bay to the Martello Tower, at the northern end of the pathway (see also Boundary Stone 3). Completely obscured by dense vegetation, which had to be beaten down for the photograph. The images below show Boundary Stone 2 (detail) and Boundary Stones 2 &amp; 3 in relation to the Martello Tower (with Boundary Stone 2 on the right).</p>
Image	

	
<b>References</b>	Sections 5.8 & 6.3; Figures 29 & 30.


<b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b>	Boundary Stone 3
<b>Statutory Protection</b>	None
<b>Location</b>	Northwestern corner of island (ITM ) Cf. Figure 32 for the locations of Boundary Stones 1-9
<b>Description</b>	War Office replacement of original Board of Ordnance boundary stone, c. 1850s. Cut granite pillar stone with pyramidal top. Dimensions c. 1.2m visible height, with each face measuring c. 20cm in width. Very eroded and lichen-covered with no inscriptions evident. One of a pair of stones (c. 5m apart) marking the principal right-of-way from Carrigeen Bay to the Martello Tower, at the northern end of the pathway (see also Boundary Stone 2). Stands slightly askew.
<b>Image</b>	
<b>References</b>	Sections 5.8 & 6.3; Figures 29 & 30.


<b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b>	Boundary Stone 4	
<b>Statutory Protection</b>	None	
<b>Location</b>	Northwestern corner of island (ITM ) Cf. Figure 32 for the locations of Boundary Stones 1-9	
<b>Description</b>	<p>War Office replacement of original Board of Ordnance boundary stone, c. 1850s. Cut granite pillar stone with pyramidal top. Dimensions c. 1.2m visible height, with each face measuring c. 20cm in width. Very eroded and lichen-covered with no inscriptions evident. v</p> <p>Marking the south / southwestern extent of the Board of Ordnance lands, close to the cliff edge; it is roughly aligned with Boundary Stones 1-3. The images below show the stone in the foreground with Boundary Stones 2 &amp; 3 in the background (top right in the image; Boundary Stone 1 is not visible as it sits on slightly lower ground on the far side of the small headland), as well as the stone in relation to the Martello Tower.</p>	
<b>Image</b>		
<b>References</b>	Sections 5.8 & 6.3; Figures 29 & 30.	


<b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b>	Boundary Stone 5	
<b>Statutory Protection</b>	None	
<b>Location</b>	Northwestern corner of island (ITM ) Cf. Figure 32 for the locations of Boundary Stones 1-9	
<b>Description</b>	<p>Original Board of Ordnance boundary stone, c. 1805. Cut limestone pillar stone with pyramidal top. Dimensions c. 80cm visible height, with each face measuring c. 28cm in width. The condition of the stone is considerably better than the later granite boundary stones, with crisp edges and clear inscriptions: 'B.O.' and the arrow mark. One of a pair now standing on the northwest side of the spring, positioned c. 2m apart. Only one is depicted at this location on the Board of Ordnance map c. 1848 and the later OS 25-inch map c. 1906-9. The second stone was presumably removed from its original location during the War Office works in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and placed at the spring some time after 1906-9. The image below shows Boundary Stone 5 in the foreground, with Boundary Stone 6 to the rear.</p>	




<p><b>Image</b></p>	
<p><b>References</b></p>	<p>Sections 5.8 &amp; 6.3; Figures 29 &amp; 30.</p>


<p><b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b></p>	<p>Boundary Stone 6</p>
<p><b>Statutory Protection</b></p>	<p>None</p>
<p><b>Location</b></p>	<p>Northwestern corner of island (ITM ) Cf. Figure 32 for the locations of Boundary Stones 1-9</p>
<p><b>Description</b></p>	<p>Original Board of Ordnance boundary stone, c. 1805. Cut limestone pillar stone with pyramidal top. Dimensions c. 1m visible height, with each face measuring c. 28cm in width. The condition of the stone is considerably better than the later granite boundary stones, with crisp edges and clear inscriptions: 'B.O.' and the arrow mark. One of a pair now standing on the northwest side of the spring, positioned c. 2m apart. Only one is depicted at this location on the Board of Ordnance map c. 1848 and the later OS 25-inch map c. 1906-9. The second stone was presumably removed from its original location during the War Office works in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and placed at the spring some time after 1906-9. The images below shows Boundary Stone 6 in the foreground, with Boundary Stone 5 to the rear, as well as both stones in relation to the spring (visible as the circle of lighter green vegetation just beyond the stones).</p>
<p><b>Image</b></p>	

	
References	Sections 5.8 & 6.3; Figures 29 & 30.

Cultural Heritage Feature	Boundary Stone 7
Statutory Protection	None
Location	Northwestern corner of island (ITM ) Cf. Figure 32 for the locations of Boundary Stones 1-9
Description	<p>War Office replacement of original Board of Ordnance boundary stone, c. 1850s. Cut granite pillar stone with pyramidal top. Dimensions c. 1.2m visible height, with each face measuring c. 20cm in width. Very eroded and partly lichen-covered with no inscriptions evident. One of a pair of stones (c. 5m apart) marking the principal right-of-way from Carrigeen Bay to the Martello Tower, at the southern end of the pathway (see also Boundary Stone 8). Completely obscured by dense vegetation, which had to be beaten down for the photograph.</p>
Image	
References	Sections 5.8 & 6.3; Figures 29 & 30.

<b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b>	Boundary Stone 8
<b>Statutory Protection</b>	None
<b>Location</b>	Northwestern corner of island (ITM ) Cf. Figure 32 for the locations of Boundary Stones 1-9
<b>Description</b>	War Office replacement of original Board of Ordnance boundary stone, c. 1850s. Cut granite pillar stone with pyramidal top. Dimensions c. 1.2m visible height, with each face measuring c. 20cm in width. Very eroded and partly lichen-covered with no inscriptions evident. One of a pair of stones (c. 5m apart) marking the principal right-of-way from Carrigeen Bay to the Martello Tower, at the southern end of the pathway (see also Boundary Stone 7). Completely obscured by dense vegetation, which had to be beaten down for the photograph. Image below showing Boundary Stones 7 & 8, with Boundary Stone 8 on far right of photograph.
<b>Image</b>	
<b>References</b>	Sections 5.8 & 6.3; Figures 29 & 30.

<b>Cultural Heritage Feature</b>	Boundary Stone 9
<b>Statutory Protection</b>	None
<b>Location</b>	Northwestern corner of island (ITM ) Cf. Figure 32 for the locations of Boundary Stones 1-9
<b>Description</b>	Original Board of Ordnance boundary stone, c. 1805. Cut limestone pillar stone with pyramidal top. Dimensions c. 95cm visible height, with each face measuring c. 28cm in width. The condition of the stone is considerably better than the later granite boundary stones, with crisp edges and clear inscriptions: 'B.O.' and the arrow mark. One of a pair depicted on the Board of Ordnance map c. 1805 (Figure 31), marking the point where a path lead east / northeast from the principal right-of-way to the spring. The second stone was not in situ.

<p><b>Image</b></p>	
<p><b>References</b></p>	<p>Sections 5.8 &amp; 6.3; Figures 29-31.</p>

## APPENDIX 2 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

### National Monuments Legislation

All archaeological sites have the full protection of the national monuments legislation (Principal Act 1930; Amendments 1954, 1987 and 1994).

In the 1987 Amendment of Section 2 of the Principal Act (1930), the definition of a national monument is specified as:

any artificial or partly artificial building, structure or erection or group of such buildings, structures or erections,

any artificial cave, stone or natural product, whether forming part of the ground, that has been artificially carved, sculptured or worked upon or which (where it does not form part of the place where it is) appears to have been purposely put or arranged in position,

any, or any part of any, prehistoric or ancient

(i) tomb, grave or burial deposit, or

(ii) ritual, industrial or habitation site,

and

any place comprising the remains or traces of any such building, structure or erection, any cave, stone or natural product or any such tomb, grave, burial deposit or ritual, industrial or habitation site...

Under Section 14 of the Principal Act (1930):

'It shall be unlawful... to demolish or remove wholly or in part or to disfigure, deface, alter, or in any manner injure or interfere with any such national monument without or otherwise than in accordance with the consent hereinafter mentioned (a licence issued by the Office of Public Works National Monuments Branch),

or

to excavate, dig, plough or otherwise disturb the ground within, around, or in the proximity to any such national monument without or otherwise than in accordance...

Under Amendment to Section 23 of the Principal Act (1930),

'A person who finds an archaeological object shall, within four days after the finding, make a report of it to a member of the Garda Síochána... or the Director of the National Museum...

The latter is of relevance to any finds made during a watching brief.

In the 1994 Amendment of Section 12 of the Principal Act (1930), all the sites and 'places' recorded by the Sites and Monuments Record of the Office of Public Works are provided with a new status in law. This new status provides a level of protection to the listed sites that is equivalent to that accorded to 'registered' sites (Section 8(1), National Monuments Amendment Act 1954) as follows:

The Commissioners shall establish and maintain a record of monuments and places where they believe there are monuments and the record shall be comprised of a list of monuments and such places and a map or maps showing each monument and such place in respect of each county in the State.

The Commissioners shall cause to be exhibited in a prescribed manner in each county the list and map or maps of the county drawn up and publish in a prescribed manner information about when and where the lists and maps may be consulted.

In addition, when the owner or occupier (not being the Commissioners) of a monument or place which has been recorded, or any person proposes to carry out, or to cause or permit the carrying out of, any work at or in relation to such monument or place, he shall give notice in writing of his proposal to carry out the work to the Commissioners and shall not, except in the case of urgent necessity and with the consent of the Commissioners, commence the work for a period of two months after having given the notice.

#### *The National Monuments Amendment Act 2004*

The National Monuments Amendment Act enacted in 2004 provides clarification in relation to the division of responsibilities between the Minister of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Finance and Arts, Sports and Tourism together with the Commissioners of Public Works. The Minister of Environment, Heritage and Local Government will issue directions relating to archaeological works and will be advised by the National Monuments Section and the National Museum of Ireland. The Act gives discretion to the Minister of Environment, Heritage and Local Government to grant consent or issue directions in relation to road developments (Section 49 and 51) approved by An Bord Pleanála and/or in relation to the discovery of National Monuments

#### Section 14A.

(1) The consent of the Minister under section 14 of this Act and any further consent or licence under any other provision of the National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2004 shall not be required where the works involved are connected with an approved road development.

(2) Any works of an archaeological nature that are carried out in respect of an approved road development shall be carried out in accordance with the directions of the Minister, which directions shall be issued following consultation by the minister with the Director of the National Museum of Ireland.

Subsection 14A (4) Where a national monument has been discovered to which subsection (3) of this section relates, then

- (a) the road authority carrying out the road development shall report the discovery to the Minister
- (b) subject to subsection (7) of this section, and pending any directions by the minister under paragraph (d) of this subsection, no works which would interfere with the monument shall be carried out, except works urgently required to secure its preservation carried out in accordance with such measures as may be specified by the Minister

The Minister will consult with the Director of the National Museum of Ireland for a period not longer than 14 days before issuing further directions in relation to the national monument.

The Minister will not be restricted to archaeological considerations alone, but will also consider the wider public interest.

#### **Planning and Development Act, 2000**

Structures of architectural, cultural, scientific, historical or archaeological interest can also be protected under the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

This act provides for the inclusion of protected structures into the planning authorities' development plans and sets out statutory regulations regarding works affecting such structures. Under the new legislation, no distinction is made between buildings formerly classified under development plans as List 1 and List 2. Such buildings are now all regarded as 'protected structures'.

The act defines a 'protected structure' as follows:

- (a) a structure, or

(b) a specified part of a structure;

which is included in a record of protected structures, and, where that record so indicates, includes any specified feature which is within the attendant grounds of the structure and which would not otherwise be included in this definition.

'Protection', in relation to a structure or part of a structure, includes conservation, preservation, and improvement compatible with maintaining the character and interest of the structure or part;

Part IV of the act deals with architectural heritage, and Section 57 deals specifically with works affecting the character of protected structures or proposed protected structures.

...the carrying out of works to a protected structure, or a proposed protected structure, shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of—

(a) the structure, or

(b) any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Section 58, subsection 4 states that:

Any person who, without lawful authority, causes damage to a protected structure or a proposed protected structure shall be guilty of an offence.