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## ***Irish Post-Medieval Archaeology Group***

### **IPMAG VII Rathmullan *The Archaeology of Ireland in the era of the Flight of the Earls* 27-29 April 2007**

IPMAG is pleased to announce the forthcoming conference to be held at the Ozanam Social Activity Centre, Rathmullan, County Donegal, 27- 29 April 2007. The conference will open with a field trip on Friday afternoon, April 27. Please see the separate article detailing the sights to be seen! Proceedings formally open on Friday evening at 8.00PM with a keynote lecture by Dr. Hiram Morgan of University College Cork on the topic 'Renaissance Images of the Irish: from Albrecht Dürer to John Michael Wright 1680.' Dr. Morgan's lecture will be followed by one of IPMAG's famed wine receptions, and plenty of opportunity for informal discussion.

Paper presentations begin the next morning at 9:30 sharp following registration (9:00-9:30). Presentations include Áine Ní Dhuibhne speaking on *When Fanad was 'Mac Swynes country,'* to be followed by Siobhán McDermott on *The native plantation of Truagh, north Co. Monaghan, at the turn of the seventeenth century* and Thomas McErlean on *The End of the Old Order: the demise of the Gaelic Estate*. Morning proceedings will wrap up with a talk by William Roulston on *The archaeology of Scottish settlement in early 17th-century Ulster* and a presentation by Elizabeth FitzPatrick on *Landscape and settlement on the estate of a Gaelic hereditary legal family*.

Saturday afternoon events kick off with a discussion of *The military maps of plantation Ireland c.1580-1640* by Annaleigh Margey, followed by an examination of *The conflict archaeology*

*of the Nine Years War* by Paul Logue and James O'Neill. Next, Cormac McSparron will consider *The coarse potting tradition of medieval and early post-medieval Ulster*. After a discussion period and time for tea and biscuits, the IPMAG committee would like to invite all attendees to participate in an Annual General Meeting. The AGM is scheduled for 4:30-6:00PM. Please plan to attend, as IPMAG needs your input! The highlight of Saturday evening will be our conference dinner.

Sunday morning sees an early start, with Stephen Trick and Ronan McHugh speaking on *Geophysical survey of Gaelic inauguration sites in Ulster—results of recent work* at 9:30AM, followed by Audrey Horning on '*The Scot's Warning fyre*' *Goodland, Co. Antrim 1607*, and John O'Keeffe on *Colonies in transition – recent study of the private plantations in the Ards, Co. Down*.

Two more papers will follow in the afternoon, including a presentation by Michelle O' Riordan on *Beannacht ar anmain Éireann: Ireland's soul died with the departure of the Earls?* The conference will close with a general discussion from 12:30-1:00.

**For further information on booking and accommodation, please visit the IPMAG website:**

[www.science.ulster.ac/crg/ipmag.html](http://www.science.ulster.ac/crg/ipmag.html)

## **IPMAG Fieldtrip 27 April 2007**

**By Franc Myles**

As an opener to **IPMAG VII**, to be held this year in Rathmullan as part of the 400th anniversary of the Flight of the Earls, a fieldtrip has been organised to allow those attending the conference to visit some of the more significant post-medieval structures which survive in this part of Donegal.

Leaving Rathmullan at 15.00 sharp, we will drive across the bottom of the Fanad peninsula, through the town of Milford (*Báile na nGallóglach*) and onwards

across the hills via Creeslough to a well-preserved fortified house within a bawn at **Faugher**, arriving there at 15.45. Faugher (also known as Wray's Castle) appears to have been started by Tirlagh Roe O'Boyle, who was granted 2000 acres in the barony of Kilmacrennan in 1611. He had 'built a good bawn and a house of lime and stone in which he and his family dweleth' by 1619; he soon after mortgaged his lands to John Stanton, whose wife lived there in 1622. The house was described that year as being 'of clay and stone rough cast with lime, 48ft long, 25ft broad and 13ft high'. Within the bawn were a further three stone houses and a thatched timber house. The lands were forfeited after 1641 and were granted to Sir John Stephens whose assignee sold the property to William Wray in 1700. The Wrays had been living there for the previous 30 years and it is likely that they built what is now the roofless shell that stands within the bawn.

Moving back east from Faugher we'll stop at **St. John's Church of Ireland** at Ballymore (probably by Michael Priestly, 1752) that is, according to Alistair Rowan, 'the finest early Georgian church in north west Ulster.'

From Ballymore we'll drive back through Creeslough to visit **Doe Castle** on the shores of Sheep Haven, arriving at 17.15. The principal seat of MacSweeney Doe, the castle is first mentioned in 1544 and provided refuge for survivors of the Armada over 40 years later. It was central to the local disturbances which occurred after the Flight of the Earls and was indeed the focus of much of the action in the area in the wars of the 1640s. During the Williamite Wars it was taken by Donal Óg MacSweeney and appears to have fallen into ruin by the early 1700s. By 1800 the castle had come into the possession of George Vaughan Harte, who began its restoration (and some new building) which was completed by his son. The *ravelin* to the east of the bawn facing the sea appears to date from this period. The castle was let to various tenants and was abandoned again by the 1890s.

The towerhouse within the bawn has undergone recent conservation work, which may or may not warrant further discussion. Otherwise, most of the fun can be found in trying to distinguish Harte's work from the late medieval fabric, although the G.V.H. on one of the buildings somewhat gives the game away.

Leaving Doe, we'll go back the way we came to the **Priory at Rathmullan** (if time is against us, the Priory is a five minute walk from the conference venue). The remains consist of a fairly typical Carmelite structure of c. 1516, which was converted into a fortified house by Bishop Knox in 1618. It's a stunning building. Knox's additions have a heavy Scottish influence: the rounded corner bartizans and the brick chimney stacks (seemingly decorative, as there are no flues beneath) are unique to the county. The stacks may well have been erected specifically to distract the visitor's eye from the medieval tower behind; unfortunately, this may well be a last chance to see the stacks before their collapse.

Ivy growth over the structure has obscured most of the features visible even five years ago and has introduced serious structural instability into several areas of the fabric. The Priory is not listed on the Donegal County Council *Register of Protected Structures*, which effectively absolves that body of any legal responsibility towards its upkeep and preservation as a cultural artefact. The local authority effectively owns the graveyard to the southwest of the Priory, the chancel and the tower; the remainder of the structure (the nave, transept, cloister and friars' accommodation) belongs to the Church Representative Body. To commemorate the anniversary of the Flight of the Earls, a decision has been made to floodlight this, the only building in Rathmullan still (just about) standing 400 years later.

### ***Practicalities***

Those wishing to go on the fieldtrip are asked to contact Franc Myles on 00353 86 8537281 so that an idea of the numbers involved can be arrived at. If significant

interest is shown, a bus will be hired for the afternoon's excursion. Otherwise, people are asked to operate a car pool, remembering that the conference will begin at 20.00 that evening in Rathmullan.

If you want to plan ahead for the route, we'll leave Rathmullan towards Ramelton at 15.00, taking a right turn just after the bridge at Ray. After 4km the main road to Milford will be met where we'll turn right, driving through Milford and then taking the main road around the western side of Mulroy Bay.

At approximately 3.5km beyond Milford, we take a left turn (marked *Glen*) and drive over the mountain on a well surfaced road for 10km, passing straight through Glen and meeting the main road a further 2.5km beyond at Lackagh Bridge.

Turning left we drive on through Creeslough (those with the OS Discovery Map No. 2 may wish to avail of the shortcut at Duntally) and out the main road towards Dunfanaghy. St. John's Church is on the left 4km after the village while the right-hand turn off for Faugher is 1km further north to the right (do not take the turn for Marble Hill at the National School, it's the next one). Faugher is just up the hill on the left-hand side, with parking available at the crest of the hill on the right. Doe Castle is signposted to the left when returning through Creeslough. If time permits, a stop for refreshments will be made at the **Glen Bar** on the way home while the 19th-century warehouses at Ramelton are always worth a look. The eagle-eyed among us may notice several items of industrial heritage along the way, while the bridges at Ray and Lackagh are significant monuments in the landscape in their own right.

### ***Further reading***

Bowden, M., Carton, M., Ní Dhuibhne, M. (eds.). 2001. *Along Rathmullan's Shore. A Maritime Memoir*. Rathmullan  
Lacy, B. 1983. *Archaeological Survey of Donegal*. Lifford (see in particular 343-6 for Rathmullan Priory, 356-9 for Doe Castle and 367-9 for Faugher)

Ní Loingsigh, M. 1994. 'An assessment of castles and landownership in Late Medieval Donegal' in *UJA* 57, 145-58  
Rowan, A. 1979. *The Buildings of Ireland. North West Ulster*. Harmondsworth.

## **The Kinsale Battlefield Project**

### **By Damian Shiels**

#### ***Introduction***

The siege and battle of Kinsale, Co. Cork was the decisive engagement of the Nine Years War (1594-1603). It occurred following the landing in Kinsale of some 3,500 Spanish troops under the command of Don Juan del Aguila, in support of the Irish Confederacy led by Hugh O'Neill and Red Hugh O'Donnell. The Spaniards were besieged by English Crown forces, and a significant number of fortifications and trenches were dug around the town. Following some three months of intensive siege warfare with sallies and harsh weather conditions taking its toll, the Gaelic Irish relief army was routed by an English force less than half its size. The Spaniards surrendered the town soon after, but the war, again essentially confined to Ulster, was to drag on until 1603.

The Kinsale Battlefield Project was set up in 2001 with the aim of attempting to archaeologically locate sites relating to the siege and battle of 1601. The core team consists of professional archaeologists who carry out the work on a volunteer basis. Throughout this period it has received valuable assistance from Dr. Hiram Morgan of the University College Cork History Department. The initial phase of work involved a detailed desk based analysis in order to glean as much information as possible regarding the location and scale of the sites.

#### ***Written & Cartographic Sources***

A conscious decision was made to systematically review the primary historical and cartographic sources available that related to the siege and battle, in order to cast a fresh eye on possible locations for the events. Every detail in the written sources that suggested location, sub-surface work or fortifications

was recorded. Of particular value were the Calendar of State Papers, the writings of Fynes Moryson (secretary to the English commander Lord Deputy Mountjoy in 1601) and Thomas Stafford's *Pacata Hibernia* (published 1633). In addition the numerous contemporary maps of the siege and battle were consulted, with particular attention being paid to the large painting of the events now held in Trinity College, Dublin. Dr. Hiram Morgan has identified that this painting was almost certainly set to canvas between 1601 and 1633, as the illustrations of events in *Pacata Hibernia* appear to have used it as a source.

The written sources were found to provide highly detailed information as to the location of many sites. This includes references to encampments being placed on hills such as Knockrobin and 'Spital' which survive today as modern townland names. In addition frequent reference is made to the construction of fortified positions and to the movement of troops around them- all of which proved an invaluable resource. The close study of the maps often revealed a high degree of accuracy, particularly regarding the Trinity painting. Following detailed study it was possible to identify ridge lines and roads which correlate with the situation on the ground today. To further this analysis, the main features on the Trinity painting were overlain on a modern map in order to test its accuracy, with positive results.

#### ***Aerial Photography***

A study of available aerial photographs was also undertaken in an attempt to identify sites, particularly those relating to the siege. This led to the identification of two possible sites, Ballynacubby Sconce and the Earl of Thomond's Second Camp.

#### ***Ballynacubby Sconce***

Analysis of a photograph taken in the 1960s revealed a roughly polygonal shaped field boundary outside the town in Ballynacubby townland. The primary sources review confirmed that the besieging English forces had constructed a minor fortification in this area which

underwent a violent attack by Spanish forces during the siege. The field has since been developed, although it is possible to trace the line of the original field boundary in the current housing estate access road. Of particular note is that Dr. John Barber undertook an excavation in this area in 1978 which revealed a number of inhumations, one of which was buried with a possible 16th- or 17th-century ring. Although the burials may not relate to the siege, the primary documents do attest to burial of both Spanish and English dead in this location.



**Fig. 1** Aerial photograph with outline of the field boundary indicating a possible scence in Ballynacubby townland

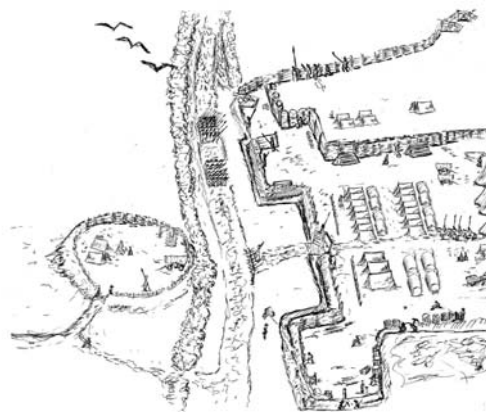
#### *The Earl of Thomond's Second Camp*

Dr. Póitín Mould identified a large circular enclosure in the townland of Rathbeg through aerial photography, now listed as an RMP. When this was examined in conjunction with the primary written and cartographic sources, the possibility that it may have played a role in the English siege positions was revealed. The documentary sources place the fortification in this location, and in addition the Trinity Painting portrays the Earl of Thomond's Second Camp with a ringfort incorporated into its defences. Contemporary English chroniclers also make a number of references to using extant raths as 'places of advantage'.

#### *Landscape Analysis*

A major component of the Kinsale Battlefield's Project research thus far has been landscape analysis. Many miles have been covered walking the ground, analysing the terrain and studying the

contemporary setting in order to assist with the identification of sites. During the course of this many prospective locations for features such as siege camps were found to lie on extremely commanding ground around the town, as one would expect. It was at this stage that the final decisions were made as to where initial exploratory detection should take place, and it also played a role in considering where the battlefield itself lies.



**Fig. 2** Reconstruction of the Earl of Thomond's Second Camp, Rathbeg, showing interaction with ringfort, by Sara Nylund.

#### *Kinsale Battlefield*

The battlefield of Kinsale is currently thought to lie in the vicinity of the Millwater Ford, and this is where the commemorative stone chair erected in 2001 has been placed. Numerous writers on the battle, including the eminent military historian G.A. Hayes-McCoy, have located the engagement here. This site lies at the base of the dominant landscape feature surrounding Kinsale, Ardmartin Ridge. However, during the course of the assessment of the available evidence, including the primary documents and the Trinity map, it is now possible to suggest a possible alternative to this position. There is compelling written and cartographic evidence to suggest that the Earl of Thomond's First Camp is located atop Ardmartin Ridge at Liscahane More. If this is indeed the case, then the site of the battle cannot be at the Millwater Ford.

Contemporary English accounts of the battle noted that the Irish advanced to

where the 'Earl of Thomond first lay' and that subsequently the English advanced for a mile across a plain before engaging the Irish. If the location of the Earl of Thomond's First Camp is indeed on Liscahane More, and the Irish retreated down the principal routeway away from it as the Trinity painting and the eyewitness accounts suggest, then the battle would have been fought near the village of Dunderrow. Naturally this hypothesis can only be tested by metal-detection of the different potential locations for the engagement, but it is an intriguing possibility that merits further analysis.

### ***The Metal Detection Survey***

Having carried out the initial research it was decided to examine three possible English siege sites between 5-7 August 2006. This was carried out under excavation licence 06E0722 and detection licence 06R0134. The methodology involved a systematic detection survey with all hits being marked and registered using an EDM, and descriptions of all finds recorded in the field. A decision was taken not to follow any hits below topsoil level in order to preserve any potential archaeological levels underneath. The work was made possible thanks to funding provided by Cork-based businessman Mr. Joe Carey, to whom the project owes a debt of gratitude. Initially three sites were selected for metal detection, namely:

- Camphill- Probable site of the Lord Deputy's main fortified siege camp
- Liscahane More- Possible site of the Earl of Thomond's first siege camp
- Rathbeg- Possible site of the Earl of Thomond's second fortified siege camp

Unforeseen difficulties close to the fieldwork date meant that it was not possible to investigate the Camphill site, and the study area at Rathbeg was drastically reduced. The total area investigated was some 4000m<sup>2</sup> at the Liscahane More site and 1000m<sup>2</sup> at the Rathbeg site.

### ***The Earl of Thomond's First Camp: Liscahane More***

The site selected in this location was the highest point on the hill, chosen following both the desk based assessment and landscape analysis. Work was carried out on the 5th August. The site was occupied by something over 1000 troops, but was only in use for a short period of time. However, its role in assisting the location of the battle site necessitated investigation. Extreme difficulties were encountered with the detector at this location, and it was subsequently revealed by the landowner that a metal-based material had been spread across the entire site in the 1960s. No finds that can be conclusively tied to the siege camp were recovered, although post-excavation work is ongoing. One find of note is a fragment of glazed pottery which initial analysis has dated to the 16th or 17th century.

### ***The Earl of Thomond's Second Camp: Rathbeg***

As with the previous site, the study area was selected based on the previous analysis undertaken. Work was carried out on the 6th and 7th of August. The detected area was restricted to a small strip of greenfield land behind the current Annmount farmhouse, which originally dates to the 18th century. Due to its proximity to the farmyard the ground contained large quantities of metal associated with domestic and farming activities. This is currently undergoing comparative analysis in the post-excavation phase. However, the first solid evidence for archaeological material relating to the siege was also uncovered.

The presence of troops on the site in 1601 was confirmed by the discovery of three musketballs of caliver type. This weapon was the principal firearm carried by Crown forces in 1601. The first caliver ball had been chewed, and detailed analysis following conservation will be required to ascertain if this was caused by a human or a pig (Dan Sivilich has found similar chewed balls from the American War of Independence battlefield of Monmouth, some of which he has

interpreted as evidence for 'biting the bullet' when soldiers bore down on lead balls during surgery).



**Fig. 3** The first caliver ball discovered at the Rathbeg site

The second and third caliver balls were uncovered in the same findspot and appear not to have been fired. In addition, a possible early coin was recovered, although further conservation work is required before this can be accurately dated. Given the restricted nature of the study area and the proximity to the farmhouse, this material can be regarded as a first step in confirming the site as the location of the Earl of Thomond's Second Camp. What can be said with certainty is that at the very least troops traversed the site in 1601.

#### ***Further Work***

Post excavation analysis of all the material recovered from the initial detection survey is ongoing. In addition to this, it is proposed that in 2007 the Rathbeg site is revisited for a further metal detection survey and the main English camp at Camphill is also investigated. The confirmation of 1601 related material in the topsoil at these sites will also allow for increased funding to be sought which will facilitate the application of techniques such as geophysical survey. This can be used in an attempt to discover features such as ditches and trenches, latrine and rubbish pits and possible grave cuts.

It is hoped that this work can feed into the work of the newly-formed Department of the Environment battlefield steering committee and assist in preserving some

of these sites, which are currently under major threat from development.

#### ***Acknowledgements***

Thanks are due to all those involved in the project who have given of their free time, and particularly to Paul O'Keeffe. The funding provided by Mr. Joe Carey made the fieldwork phase possible.

## **N. Bonaparte and A. Hitler: Annacramph's part in their downfall**

**By James O'Neill and Paul Logue**

It was a wet night in Armagh early in 2005; the occasion was a lecture to the Armagh Historical Society. Paul was illuminating the events and archaeology of the military engagement in the Moyry Pass (1600). Jim had the luxury of only having to answer the odd question at the end. It was during the post-presentation mingling that we were approached by a member of the audience who had a collection of finds that had been recovered metal detecting some time previous. We were informed that she had discovered some musket balls and other unidentified metal objects in a field just north of Armagh. Since we had experience identifying and characterising such artefacts, would we be able to shed any light on her assemblage? She gave us the items in a plastic bag, along with her contact details to enable us to return them once we were finished.

Once back in work the next day, our computer mapping programme was checked to determine the exact location of their discovery, which was in Annacramph, 4km north of Armagh and not on the Yellow Ford site, nor near any other historic monument; sighs of relief all around. First we examined the musket balls, which were spherical lead balls, exhibiting little corrosion but definitely pre-1850, when the conical *Minié* bullets were being introduced to the British army. The average diameters were calculated and their weights recorded. This information was plotted on our imaginatively-titled 'Musket Ball Chart.' This chart compares

the weights and diameters of shot (as musket balls are also known) including historical, scientifically ideal, and samples from other sites such as Derry (1690). The Annacramph collection clustered around a very close parallel, the 14.5 gauge shot.

A quick note on shot terminology: when we say 'gauge', we refer to the amount of balls that could be made from one pound of lead; if 16 one ounce bullets are made from one pound of lead, they are 16 gauge shot; the smaller the gauge, the larger the shot.



**Fig 4** The collection of shot recovered.

The 14.5 gauge shot are slightly smaller than the 14 gauge round of the English Long Land Pattern musket more commonly known as the Brown Bess. Introduced in the 1720s, the Brown Bess flintlock musket was the most common infantry firearm in British service until 1840.

The critical change that helped narrow the date range of our shot was a change in the size of shot made for army issue muskets. By the mid-18th century, complaints had been made to the Board of Ordnance that the standard 14 gauge bullet could not be forced down the barrel of the gun after a few shots (black powder weapons fouled

their barrels with a sticky, corrosive residue that coated the inside of barrels and had to be scraped out after use). In response, in 1752, the Ordnance altered the official size to the smaller 14.5 gauge.

The only other feature of note from Annacramph was that all the shot had been fired. We know this as there were no traces of any casting seams. Casting seams are created when small amounts of lead fill the gap between two halves of a bullet mould. When unfired this seam is clear on the surface of the shot. When the shot is fired, the hot gases created in the firing process melt the seam, smoothing the surface of the ball. What we could now say was that at some point between 1752 and 1840, British military muskets had been discharged in this field.

Then we had a look at the other pieces of mystery metal. One item was clearly identifiable as a 20th-century rifle bullet. It was fully jacketed, meaning that the lead core was encased in a copper alloy. The bullet was slightly deformed but was most likely a British .303 round. Further to this, the boat-tail, a tapered base, suggested it had been fired by a Vickers machine gun post-1938. Was this World War Two? The collection also included two circular metal objects, made of zinc, that were clearly marked *No 36 M, Mk 1*, positively identifying them as base plugs for the final variant of the Mills bomb, the standard hand grenade for the British army from 1915 to 1970.



**Fig 5** Two grenade base plugs with markings.

The 36M variant was in production from 1917 to 1970, so our date range could still

have been post- World War Two. But other markings gave us tighter dates. One was marked: **E.E. XX**

**1/42**

These indicate that it was made by the English Electric Company in 1942. The other was marked:

**J.H.8 40**

and was manufactured in 1940 by John Harper Co, of Willenhall, Staffordshire. The Harper Company had manufactured mechanical toys from 1790 until 1940, very much in contrast to what it was then obliged to produce for the war effort.



**Fig. 6** The No 36M Mills Bomb, its base plug highlighted.

One of the most interesting items initially seemed to be our least promising piece. The aluminium fragment, 4.2 cm long, could have been part of damaged farm machinery. But as it was associated with other military material we persevered in our attempts identify it. The tan paint on the object was similar to the colour of identification markings on other British ordnance of the period. The only discernable marking read (missing)**A.T. III**. We made a leap of logic that this may either be short for ‘Anti-Tank’ or the rear part of an ‘H.E.A.T.’ marking (short for High Explosive Anti-Tank) designated as having a shaped charge warhead.

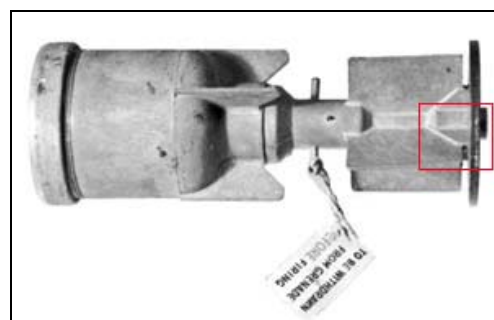
Weapons of this type were (and still are) used to defeat armoured vehicles by generating a jet of super-heated gas and metal that burns through armour plating. By concentrating our search on anti-tank

grenades and projectiles we produced a winner in the form of the No. 68 Anti-Tank Grenade. This was fired from a cup attachment fitted to the end of the Lee-Enfield rifle and could penetrate up to 50mm of steel armour.



**Fig. 7** Our ‘mystery’ fragments.

It was a temperamental weapon as it had to impact at 90 degrees to the target surface to be effective. It was in service between 1940-45 and was produced in variants Mk I-Mk V. The weapon was more commonly seen in the hands of the Home Guard as the regular army had access to more effective anti-tank weapons. Our main fragment would have been part of the tail assembly, and another find of thin piece of aluminium, which was painted the same tan colour, most likely made up part of the casing housing the explosive warhead.



**Fig 5** The fragment located on a complete example

But what was it about the location of the finds that drew soldiers there to prepare for separate conflicts two hundred years apart? The First Edition OS map shows a small quarry adjacent to the field from which the finds came. This area has now been covered by the spoil heap of an even

larger quarry just to the south. Could it be that both quarries were chosen as firing and drill ranges during two periods of threat when continental dictators threatened our shores? Both quarries would have shielded the surrounding countryside from stray shot and shell. Found just outside the quarry, our collection may represent the worst shots the British had to offer over the two centuries. Disconcerting to say the least, when we consider explosives raining down into the normally peaceful farmland of Armagh.

To close, we would wish the reader to note that everything we have discussed came from one small area of metal detection that was not associated with any previously recorded military activity. The possibilities for a micro-history of our countryside that can be discovered through the by co-operation of both archaeologists and conscientious metal detectorists could be indefinably large. So pay heed the next time someone shows you some metal fragments they found in farmland, even what passes for scrap holds an interesting story.

### **Digging in the Assay Office...** **By Franc Myles**

Archaeological excavations concern themselves with the scientific exploration of social and cultural phenomena and it is only right that they should be undertaken in an atmosphere where an element of cultural exchange can be encouraged and indeed savoured. As archaeologists, we endeavour to explain what we're doing and why we're doing it to enlighten those with a shared involvement in our projects and in most situations we receive something in return, and not only abuse.

In this case, the archaeologists' cultural horizons were broadened in the linguistic sphere thanks to our working cheek by jowl with the Polish, Ukrainian and Bulgarian workers employed by Hegarty's demolition contractors. One word in particular, *curva*, will always remind me of the Assay Office, but it is probably too

rude to translate here...

Built between 1847 and 1864 and extended to the south with a basement in 1872, the Assay Office originally functioned as a canteen and bar for the NCOs garrisoned in Dublin Castle. Since 1925 it has been occupied by the *Company of Goldsmiths* who were careful not to have left any metallurgical evidence for their presence behind in the building. The brief involved deepening the existing cellar, excavating through the sub-floor deposits of the primary structure and opening up an area outside and to the west of the standing building, located just inside the Ship Street gate of the Castle.

The Assay Office is located on a perceptible slope, with ground levels at 7.6mOD to the south, dropping to 6.4mOD, 16m to the north. The southern culvert of the Poddle extends a further 16m to the north and was recorded by Linzi Simpson in 1995. In addition, that year Simpson undertook work under the southern extension to the Clock Tower Building, prior to its conversion to the *Chester Beatty Library*. She found that extensive late- or post-medieval quarrying had removed the medieval occupation and surface deposits, but there was no indication as to the extent of this activity.

The brief was somewhat complicated by the new design, which involved the underpinning of the exterior walls of the building, along with the complete removal of the spine wall which divided the primary structure and its southern extension. The archaeological crew went into the basement as the building was being stripped out over their heads and did not emerge for several weeks, filthy and blinking in the winter twilight.

It was envisioned that subsoil would be located just over the formation level for the new structure, with the possibility of checking it for those isolated Vikings who have a tendency to find their penultimate resting place throughout the general neighbourhood. This however was not to be and subsoil was never located, even in a

test pit mechanically dug in frustration to 2.7m below formation, which reached 1.8mOD. *Curva!*

The medieval deposits were sealed by the demolition material probably associated with the structures on Buckridge's Court, a small street depicted on John Rocque's 1756 map, which extended into what is now the castle precinct, prior to the construction of the Ship Street barracks in the first decades of the 19th century. Associated with one of these buildings was an 18th-century latrine, similar to those excavated by the writer in Smithfield and constructed as two chambers, with access via stone steps in the north-eastern corner. The walls were supported on timbers and the brickwork was indicative of the period, the bricks being hand-made and held together in a lime mortar with a high sand content. There were no seepage holes present and no characteristic lenses of ash or sand to mask the smell.

Aficionados will know that the collection of waste from Dublin's latrines was privatised in the 18th century, the material being regularly removed by scavengers and brought to lay-stalls, where it was stockpiled and then brought downriver to be used as landfill in the reclamation of the area between Trinity College and Ringsend and across the river at East Wall. It is thus difficult, if not impossible to accurately date such structures from their contents and the earliest sherds recovered are of the North Devon variety, which in this instance would probably not have been produced before c. 1700.

## **IPMAG in Virginia** **By Audrey Horning**

Early January found over one dozen representatives of Irish post-medieval archaeology joining the North American Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) at its annual conference, held this year in Williamsburg, Virginia, in recognition of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of nearby Jamestown in 1607. The conference, held in the lavish conference centre opened by the Colonial

Williamsburg Foundation apparently moments before our arrival, began on Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, and a total of 645 (!) academic papers were presented over the next four days. Distracting from this bounty was exceptionally balmy weather, not to mention complimentary entrance passes for museums in Williamsburg, Yorktown, and Jamestown.

At Jamestown, Irish connections were evident in all three of the exhibits recently opened to commemorate the 2007 anniversary. The most intellectually stimulating display was at the new gallery at the state-run museum, *Jamestown Settlement*, which explored in depth the 16th-century Native American, African, and European cultures that became enmeshed in the Virginia colony. On Jamestown Island, the National Park Service highlighted the new insights into the archaeology of Jamestown as the 17th-century capital of Virginia compiled through research and excavation in the 1990s, while the private Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities wowed the public with displays of artefacts recently unearthed from the site of the 1607 fort.

Although there were close to 1500 delegates and no shortage of concurrent paper sessions, IPMAG is pleased to report an impressive level of attendance at our sponsored session, *Ireland in the Atlantic World: New directions in Irish historical archaeology*. Papers were presented by Colm Donnelly with Kathy Cluny, James O'Neill, Wes Forsythe, Thomas McErlean, Eileen Murphy, Stephen Brighton, Tadhg O'Keeffe, and Shannon Dunn.

Connie Kelleher, James Lyttleton, Paul Logue, and Nick Brannon each presented papers in another conference session, entitled *Of process and persona: Exploring motivations for colonization and connections between the Old and New World*. Diarmuid ÓSeanachain presented in a session on *Collective Memory and Ethnic Identity*, yours truly spoke in the plenary session on Atlantic world

archaeology, and Colin Breen contributed his good humour as well as intellectual and moral support. I am grateful to all of the above for journeying across the Atlantic and ensuring that Irish historical archaeology continues to be recognised and respected by colleagues around the world. Next year's SHA conference will be in Albuquerque, New Mexico....

## **New PhD Research**

### ***Cultural significance of vernacular settlements in a changing Ireland***

**By Barry O'Reilly, Oxford Brookes**

In recent years, there has been a debate in Ireland (in both political jurisdictions) on rural settlement and housing policy. This debate is couched in the language of sustainability. One side promotes the building of houses in the countryside as a right and the other side, while accepting the general principle, insists that only those actively involved in agriculture should be permitted to so build.

The governments have responded with planning policies which increasingly identify existing towns, villages and small, clustered settlements as places in which to corral future rural housing. The North has explicitly banned new 'one-off' rural houses. The majority of the clustered settlements are vernacular and their potential for absorbing additional population and services remains untested. The cultural significance of these vernacular settlements is little researched to date and there is the possibility that poorly-considered infill and expansion of the settlements could lead to the erosion of their cultural significance.

The proposed research project seeks to examine the cultural significance of these vernacular settlements in the light of such planning policies. A range of locations will be selected, with view to exploring the past, present and future dynamics of such settlements. Anyone interested in discussing these issues, or if you have any relevant case studies please contact the author at [06117989@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:06117989@brookes.ac.uk).

## **Announcements**

### ***The Archaeology of Post-Medieval Ireland c. 1550-1750***

IPMAG is proud to finally announce that the volume incorporating papers from our inaugural 2001 conference is currently in production with Wordwell, Ltd. and **will be** available later in 2007. IPMAG is grateful to the Environment and Heritage Service and the Heritage Council for significant grant aid towards this landmark publication. The editors (A. Horning, R. ÓBaoill, C. Donnelly, and P. Logue) are also grateful to the contributors and the membership of IPMAG for patience during what has seemed an interminable process! We are also on schedule to publish a volume in the Society for Post Medieval Archaeology monograph series based on the joint 2004 IPMAG/ SPMA meeting. Further details to be posted on the IPMAG website:

[www.science.ulster.ac/crg/ipmag.html](http://www.science.ulster.ac/crg/ipmag.html)

### ***Achill Archaeological Field School***

Experience island archaeology in the ruggedly beautiful West of Ireland and participate in the excavation and documentation of sites including a probable megalithic tomb, a round house and the post-medieval Deserted Village. Courses include a one week *Introduction to Archaeology Course* and a two week 'bare bones' course. Longer four, six, or eight week modules are available from April to October. Weekend courses include *Introduction to GIS, Digital Survey & CAD, Ceramics in Archaeology*, and *Environmental Archaeology*.

Further information available from Sinéad Ward, Office and Marketing Manager, Archaeology Centre, Dooagh, Achill Island, Co.Mayo, Ireland. (t) +353 98 43564 [info@achill-fieldschool.com](mailto:info@achill-fieldschool.com)

*The 2006-2007 IPMAG committee includes chairperson Ruairi Ó Baoill, Secretary Audrey Horning, Treasurer Paul Logue, Website Manager Wes Forsythe, Membership Secretary Rosanne Meenan, and members Nick Brannon, Tracy Collins, Frank Coyne, Richard Clutterbuck, Colm Donnelly, James Lyttleton, and Franc Myles.*