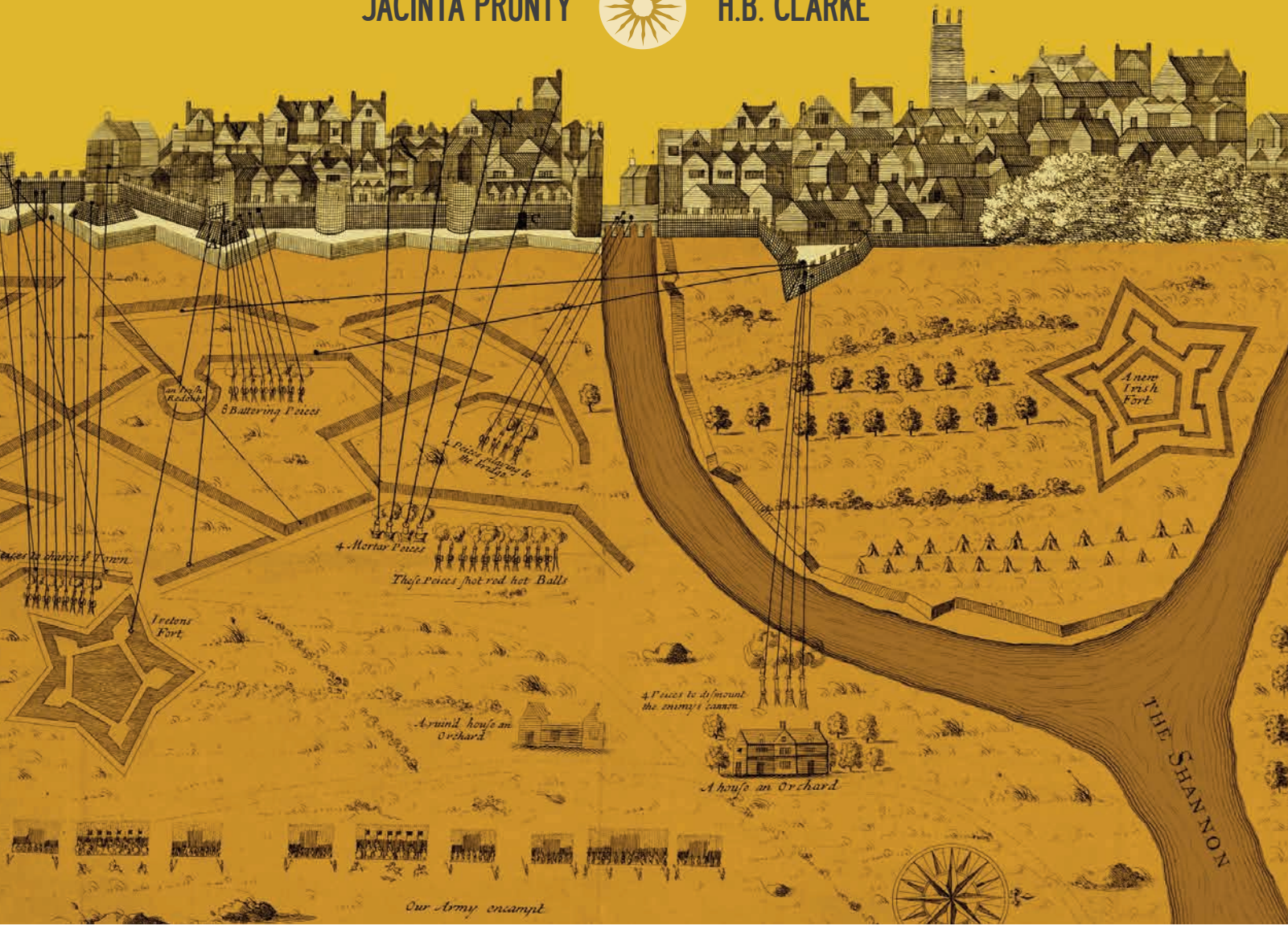
MAPS

READING THE MAPS: A GUIDE TO THE IRISH HISTORIC TOWNS ATLAS

JACINTA PRUNTY H.B. CLARKE



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A guide to the Irish Historic Towns Atlas

JACINTA PRUNTY H.B. CLARKE

Blackrock Education Centre
Ionad Oideachais na Carraige Duibhe

RIA

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FOREWORD

The main title of this guidebook is an intentional echo of the phrase 'reading the runes'. Runes have a dictionary definition of characters or marks that have mysterious or magical properties attributed to them. Maps have some of the same characteristics. To many people they have an air of mystery about them; they make extensive use of symbols and of conventions that need to be explained. They convey messages about spatial arrangments in a three-dimensional present and early maps do this in a four-dimensional past. Such maps may themselves date from the past or they may be reconstructions of that past. The word 'reading' should be understood in its widest sense: not only to take meaning from textual matter on a map, wherever that applies, but also to interpret the conventions, signs and symbols that map-makers employ.

Now that a critical mass of Irish Historic Towns Atlas (IHTA) fascicles has been published, together with ancillary works, the richness of the resource can be exploited. It can be done in a number of ways, using this guidebook to assist the process. To start with, the four main sections can be read as a series of conventional book chapters, divided by headings and generously illustrated. Then a stop-go approach can be adopted by re-reading individual units and answering the questions in the 'test yourself' boxes. This method would suit teaching environments on all levels. Finally research programmes could be devised on specific topics, using the material in this book as a starting point. To that end, the book includes suggestions for further reading in addition to the IHTA publications themselves.

As editors of the IHTA it is our belief that the geography and the history of towns and of town life in Ireland need to be better understood. It is also our belief that, made accessible to the widest possible readership, maps are a fundamental tool in that endeavour. In addition, many early maps are beautifully executed works of art. They deserve to be 'read' correctly for what they reveal about the past, as well as to be enjoyed as remarkable products of human creativity. Readers will discover that every Irish town in the sample has an interesting story to tell; the IHTA tells those stories through a balanced combination of maps and texts. Hitherto the stories were told individually; now they can be told collectively as well. In this guidebook every town, no matter how small in size or short its history, is the subject of at least one case study featuring part of, or an aspect of, its particular geographical and/or historical story. Reading the maps is a universal exercise.

Anngret Simms, H.B. Clarke, Raymond Gillespie, Jacinta Prunty
April 2011

UNIT D.6

The nineteenth-century town

In broad terms the eighteenth century was the last in the long pre-industrial age, when manual labour was predominant. Machines did exist, of course, notably those dependent on water power and on wind power, but the balance would shift towards greater reliance on machines, many of them newly invented, as the nineteenth century progressed. This process would leave its characteristic marks on towns as industrialisation proceeded. For geographical, geophysical and historical reasons, Irish towns were not subject to as many pressures as were English ones; even so, a number of common themes emerge from IHTA fascicles. The nineteenth century witnessed an extraordinary range of changes to the island's towns and cities – administrative, economic, political, religious, social and technological. A selection of these will here be examined very briefly and in roughly chronological order. The emphasis throughout will be on those factors that affected the layout and nature of the built environment and that therefore show up on contemporary maps. Prominent among the latter, of course, are the most proficient maps hitherto produced in Ireland – those of the Ordnance Survey starting in the 1820s.

The first theme is one left over from the second half of the eighteenth century – the completion of the canal network – even though only a minority of towns were affected. In a previous unit (C.6) we came across the Shannon navigation at Limerick and the great loop round Mullingar, as well as other examples. By *c.* 1806 the latter had two special graving docks in the harbour area, for carrying out repairs to barges. By 1837 there were corn stores at different locations near the waterway, along with cattle and pig markets on the western side. There, too, lay Canal Street (now Grove Street) serving as a back lane to Linen Street (now Dominick Street): here we can see how the presence of a major canal facilitated economic activity. Maynooth's Royal Canal harbour was built *c.* 1796 at the southern end of Leinster Street, an arm of the new north–south axial road. In this case, however, it did not lead to significant economic offshoots.

A second theme that has been touched on in a previous unit (C.2) is the construction of military barracks on the outskirts of some towns. Barracks of the larger sort needed a squarish site on fairly level ground, for practising formation marching (in army language 'square bashing') and for moving heavy equipment around. Such requirements would have played an important part

in determining the precise location of large facilities. The timing of their construction was influenced by the circumstances of the 1790s and the first fifteen years of the following century, when Britain was urgently engaged in measures connected with the French revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. This was, after all, the age of the martello towers built at intervals round Ireland's coastline. The regime was further unnerved by the 1798 rebellion, which was followed five years later by the revolt led by Robert Emmet. There is a striking, though not surprising, concentration of new facilities either side of the year 1800. Thus Belfast's Victoria Barracks (a later name) opened in 1796; a barracks was built on the site of Parliament Square and a cambric factory at Dundalk in 1797; Bandon's existing barracks on the north side was refurbished and enlarged in 1798, while there was an artillery barracks on the south side by 1804; the New Barracks (now Sarsfield Barracks) at Limerick was completed in 1798, the same year that Tuam's Tierboy Barracks was garrisoned; Derry~Londonderry had both a horse barracks by 1799 and an infantry barracks built *c.* 1802; Kilkenny's barracks was opened in 1803 and finally Fethard's smaller-scale barracks in 1805. All but the last of these were located on the edge of town.

Military barracks had been built in earlier times, if not on this scale. There was a barracks on the site of the former Dominican friary on the eastern side of Barrack Street in Limerick by 1679, whilst in 1751 the medieval castle had been provided with three ranges of barracks-style buildings inside the curtilage. A barracks was built at Armagh, on Barrack Hill, in 1773 and in the following year a large site at Longford incorporating the castle, the market house and a space already known as The Square was built up as a major barracks. Longford's Map 2 shows the layout, components and relationship to the town almost directly across the River Camlin (Fig. 165), and a later photograph shows the frontage of the new buildings constructed in 1808–43 (Fig. 166). The barracks at Longford was intended for cavalry troops, as was the case at the installation on Foyle Road at Derry~Londonderry and those at Dundalk, Fethard and Tuam. Dundalk's Map 2, which shows the results of rebuilding in 1825–32, labels a large block of stables, the forage yard, the riding school and the riding yard. Elsewhere barracks were designed for infantry troops: Armagh, Belfast, the Foyle Street base at Derry~Londonderry, Kilkenny and Limerick are cases in point. The latter also had a large artillery barracks, completed in 1807, and about three years later another was opened just north of the infantry barracks at Belfast.

Even though most of these military bases were situated geographically on the outskirts, it is well to remember that they offered employment opportunities to townspeople and that such concentrations of men (for the most part) had

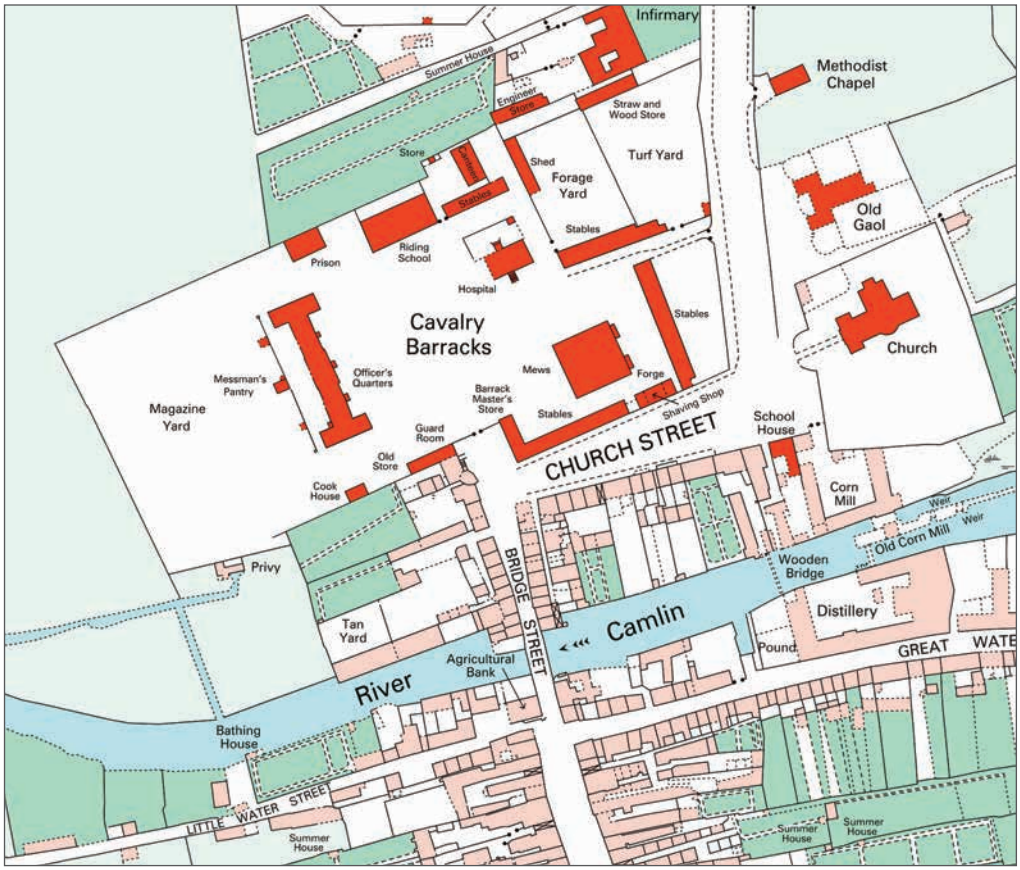


Fig. 165: *Longford*, map 2, 1836, extract.

important social implications, especially for women. As we saw in an earlier unit (C.3), the same was true of the new generation of gaols built in the second half of the 1820s. The construction of large-scale military barracks and gaols raises the question of whether we are witnessing the start of the appearance of institutional quarters of a secular nature in at least some of Ireland's towns, to which other components might be added in the form of fever hospitals, medical dispensaries, lunatic asylums, police barracks and union workhouses. Map 2 is a suitable starting point in most cases, centring on the 1830s. At that stage most of Ireland's towns did not possess a concentration of secular institutions: Armagh's, for example, were scattered in all directions round the ancient core. But there are exceptions, one of the most impressive being Limerick's Mulgrave Street in 1840, lined on its southern frontage by the artillery barracks, the county gaol and the lunatic asylum and having the county infirmary on its northern side. At Kilkenny the barracks, union workhouse, county infirmary, a fever hospital and a national school were all situated in the St John's district where the railway would join them later. Longford's new gaol, barracks, infirmary and a school were focused on Battery Road, whilst another town of

modest size with a new-style gaol, Trim, had this as the initial focus of an institutional quarter on the south side of town. This aspect of nineteenth-century urban growth can be explored further by setting one or more later dates and by using the gazetteer to fill in the details onto a photocopy of Map 3.

Another feature of Map 2 is the recording of Roman Catholic chapels, often on the periphery. A series of Catholic relief acts between 1774 and 1793 had dismantled parts of the penal law system, though adherents faced severe disadvantages until 'emancipation' was achieved in 1829. This was followed by a massive church-building programme that impacted on towns everywhere. The Catholic building boom was further fuelled by the repeal of laws forbidding the endowment of Catholic charities in 1861. For evidence of this Catholic resurgence we can start with cathedral towns. Perhaps the most imposing site was that selected for St Patrick's Cathedral at Armagh – the summit of the next drumlin to the north of the ancient core then occupied by the Church of Ireland building. Begun in 1840 a building intended to dominate its landscape was not finished until 1904 (Fig. 167). The other archbishopric in our IHTA sample is Tuam, where the Cathedral of the Assumption was built to replace an existing chapel on Bishop Street in 1827–36. Two Roman Catholic cathedrals came to be located just outside the medieval town walls: St Mary's at Kilkenny west of the Hightown (1857) and St John's at Limerick outside St John's Gate in Irishtown (1859). The building of St Mel's at Longford, begun in 1840, was suspended during the famine years 1846–53 and it was opened in 1856 as 'the largest and most elegant structure of the kind in Ireland', according to a contemporary directory (Fig. 168). Finally at Derry~Londonderry St Eugene's Cathedral was erected in the Bogside district well outside the western wall of the plantation era (1873). A house for the (arch)bishop was a standard facility nearby.

Fig. 166: *Longford*, cavalry barracks, Church Street, *c.* 1900. Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland, Lawrence Collection.

In other towns (and leaving aside the much more complicated cities of Belfast and Dublin), Roman Catholic chapels were built in backstreet or generally peripheral locations, many to be replaced, in due course, by larger and grander churches on the same site, or perhaps taking in adjacent sites. Serving a community that represented only 11% of the population at the time, St Nicholas's at Carrickfergus occupied a very peripheral position in the Irish Quarter. On the other hand the chapel of the Holy Trinity at Fethard was built on Main Street inside the medieval walls. Clearly circumstances varied from place to place.

Fig. 167: *Armagh*, St Patrick's Cathedral (R.C.), 1880. From John Gallogly, *The history of St Patrick's Cathedral*.
Bottom right: Fig. 168: *Longford*, St Mel's Cathedral, as proposed, 1842. From *The complete Catholic directory*.

Roman Catholic cathedrals, churches and chapels came to be accompanied by the convents of religious orders. From the end of the eighteenth century when Nano Nagle's Presentation sisters pioneered the education of poor girls, followed closely by the schools of the Christian Brothers for poor boys, religious-run institutions were opened in the poorest parts of town, often beginning in private houses or converted premises until funding by a generous benefactor made a new building possible. Frequently this new building was on a site adjoining the cathedral or parish chapel, which is not surprising since religious orders were commonly brought to a town at the express invitation of the local bishop to fill a particular need, on a site that he had already pinpointed.

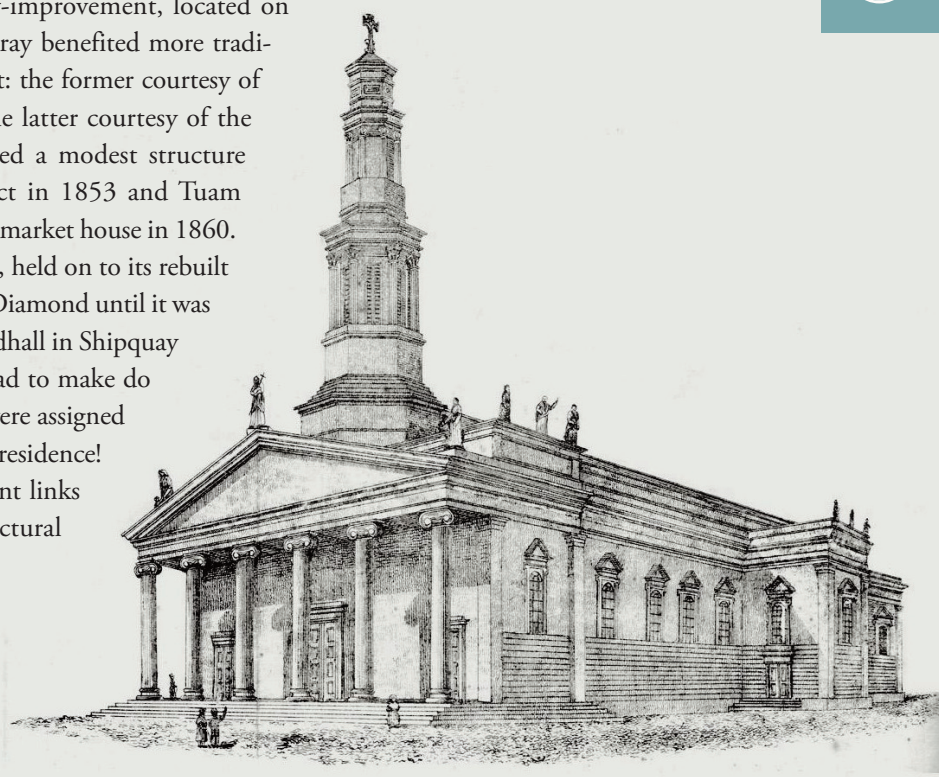
By the middle of the nineteenth century the Presentation and Mercy nuns made up over half of all the convents in Ireland and this fact is reflected in our IHTA sample of towns. The Presentation establishments tended to be earlier, as one would expect from their earlier foundation date, and were always attached to or in close proximity to their schools since the sisters were confined by enclosure. The Mercy sisters were less bound by enclosure and ran a greater variety of institutions, with the result that the one convent could serve schools and other works spread across town.

While the founding stories and religious geography vary, nevertheless evidence will be found on maps and in the building fabric of each town of this Catholic resurgence. As in the case of secular institutions and indeed of the dissenting congregations among Protestants, Sections **11** and **20** of the gazetteer can be used to plot these individual geographical and historical patterns – the

sites, relocations, amalgamations and closures. The most dramatic impact in terms of topography is where a recognisably 'Catholic quarter' evolved in the course of time. Examples are the James's Street area at Kilkenny, the cathedral precincts of Tuam, and the present-day cathedral area north of Bishop's Gate Street at Mullingar, formerly known as The Back of the Town.

In an age of reforming ideas and ideals, the whole question of town government or municipal administration came under review in the 1830s. The most contentious issues were the bases upon which taxes were raised – outrageously inequitable at the time – and control over the spending of these monies, in which few if any townspeople had a voice. Over the centuries, various systems of government had emerged, but they were generally characterised by elite groups or families being in charge and by elements of corruption and inefficiency being normal. Exclusion from municipal life solely on religious grounds could no longer be justified after 1829. In the summer of 1835 the British government introduced the first of six Irish municipal reform bills. One of these was concerned with town boundaries (1837), which had long been an issue of dispute and doubt. Without this information, there was no possibility of revising the lists of ratepayers or the electoral roll, or indeed of moving on any of the areas urgently requiring attention. The parliamentary outcome was the Irish Municipal Reform Act of 1840, whereby the old town corporations were dissolved and replaced by town commissioners.

Unfortunately a declining tax base and soon a declining population meant that genuine reform was slow and intermittent in many cases. Belfast was one of the few places to acquire a smart new town hall as an expression of self-confidence and a desire for self-improvement, located on Victoria Street in 1868. Bandon and Bray benefited more traditionally from aristocratic enlightenment: the former courtesy of the duke of Devonshire (1862) and the latter courtesy of the Brabazon family (1884). Trim managed a modest structure immediately outside the castle precinct in 1853 and Tuam likewise in Market Square to replace the market house in 1860. Derry~Londonderry, on the other hand, held on to its rebuilt Corporation Hall in the middle of The Diamond until it was closed in 1890 and replaced by the Guildhall in Shipquay Place. Athlone's town commissioners had to make do with a single room until in 1864 they were assigned part of the gasworks general manager's residence! In short, it is difficult to make consistent links between municipal reform and architectural expression on the ground.



In previous units (C.6 and C.8) we touched on two further developments in the second half of the nineteenth century that found geographical expression in Irish towns: these were the coming of the railway and the provision of green spaces for field sports and other outdoor activities. As a dramatic demonstration of the power of the new industrial age, the first of these will bear re-examination below. Collectively all of these features of the nineteenth century caused significant changes even to the smallest of towns, long before that other round of adaptation and reconfiguration which characterised the closing decades of the twentieth century.

TEST YOURSELF

1. What were the physical effects of the construction of military barracks in and near Irish towns?
2. In what ways did the presence of barracks find expression in urban placenames?
3. What push-and-pull factors lay behind the development of institutional quarters of a secular nature in nineteenth-century towns?
4. Why do you think that some towns developed institutional quarters of a religious nature and others show no evidence of this clustering?
5. Had municipal reform made much real progress by the close of the nineteenth century?

Valuation maps

Municipal reform, despite its many imperfections, brought with it another governmental initiative that has left geographers and historians with a primary source of enormous interest. These are the valuation records widely used in IHTA gazetteers under the abbreviations 'Val. 1', 'Val. 2' and 'Val. 3'. These terms signify manuscript town plans, printed tenement valuations, and manuscript revision books and related maps, compiled at intervals during the nineteenth century.

The valuation story is rather complicated since there were in fact two surveys, both conducted under the direction of Sir Richard Griffith (1784–1878), an engineer and public servant who was born in Naas, Co. Kildare. It

was the reliability and uniformity of his first project, the 'General valuation of Ireland' (1847–68), that led to a decision to use his original valuation (intended solely to raise the county cess) for the levying of new poor rates to support the workhouse system and for determining the franchise (the right to vote or to stand for election). A parliamentary act of 1852 started the valuation process afresh. This second valuation, completed in 1864, was published as the *General valuation of rateable property in Ireland* (202 volumes, 1852–65) and is widely available in both microfilm and printed form. It is known variously as the 'General tenement valuation' in order to emphasise that it covers every tenement or holding (unlike the earlier version, which grouped some premises), or as 'Griffith's valuation'. In fairness Richard Griffith was responsible for both valuations, which ran in parallel for several years and likewise produced maps.

It is the printed material of the Griffith valuation that is most widely used in historical research and that forms the basis for valuation relating to towns in the IHTA series. These volumes list the occupants of land and houses, the persons from whom they were leased, and their area and value. The strength of the source is that it applied a very stringent methodology countrywide, the value of each premises being arrived at and published only after a scientific analysis of its dimensions and quality, followed by a judgement on its relative location. Although tenant farmers complained about excessive rents, historians believe that the low agrarian prices of 1849–52 resulted in widespread under-valuation. Nevertheless *relative* property values both within towns and comparatively across towns can be determined accurately.

While the IHTA has made use of this source to advantage in the construction of valuation maps for most towns, comparison across the full series is complicated by the fact that the dividing points by value have changed over the years. Even so, there is a block of fascicles from *Athlone* (1994) to *Trim* (2004) for which the limits were set, for IHTA purposes, at £5, £10, £15 and over £20. For the publication of a much larger and industrialised town with a higher range of valuations, Derry~Londonderry in 2005, the upper limits were set at £20 and over £40. These have been adhered to since then. For a brief comparative study we might choose first a twin-town from the earlier block, Trim, which allows for an examination of the two parts of the town (Fig. 169). In terms of percentages, the only significant difference is that the south side had twice as many properties in the highest category. In terms of their distribution, both sides had in effect a dominant main street with a thin scattering of properties valued at over £5 elsewhere.

The tripartite city of Limerick (whose valuation map is far too big for reproduction here), on the other hand, shows a radically changed pattern. By 1850 the grid-planned Newtown Pery was almost completely dominant in

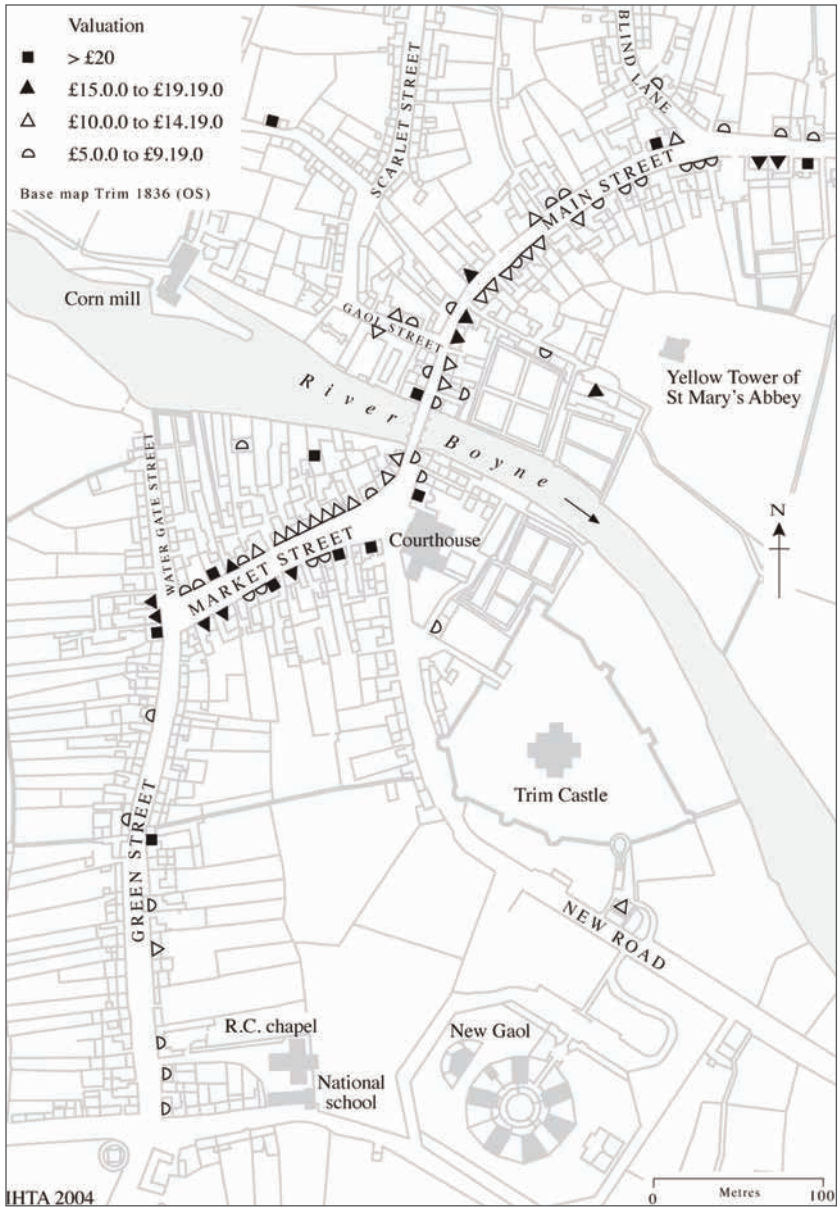


Fig. 169: *Trim*, fig. 5, valuation of residential buildings over £5, 1854.

terms of high-value properties. The principal axis of the city had clearly become (in terms of the street names then current) Richmond Place, George's Street and Patrick Street. The most important cross streets in length were William Street and to a lesser extent Thomas Street. In the Irishtown district Broad Street and less obviously Mungret Street were still commercially viable, but what is really striking is the catastrophic decline of Englishtown as the

heart of the city. There, only two properties exceeded £40 by valuation and only seven others £20. The old medieval axis of Nicholas Street and Mary Street, together with Merchants Quay, was characterised by properties valued at more than £5 but less than £15. The most economically dynamic part of Englishtown appears to have been Georges Quay on the Abbey River. In sharp contrast stood Kilkenny in the same year, where the medieval High Street had clearly retained its commercial dominance. There were extensions northwards into Coal Market, southwards into Lower Patrick Street and north-eastwards into Rose Inn Street and across the bridge into Lower John's Street. Not surprisingly the built side of The Parade leading up towards the castle had a number of high-value properties.

In general the commonest pattern in small to medium-sized towns is a linear concentration of higher valuations along the main street, as at Bray, Carrickfergus, Dundalk, Fethard, Longford, Maynooth and Mullingar. Relatively minor variations are found at some other places. The south side of Bandon, for instance, had a row of modestly valued properties along Cavendish Quay, which had been rebuilt earlier in the century along the course of the Bridewell River. Kildare's Market Place remained important on all three sides in addition to the main east–west alignment, whilst at Athlone there were some valuable properties in the side streets of both towns. Armagh's principal alignment was strikingly sinuous, comprising essentially Upper English Street and Scotch Street; there were also projections eastwards along both College Street and Russell Street in the direction of Beresford Row and Charlemont Place on the eastern side of The Mall. Downpatrick and Tuam were similar in their concentrations along four main streets leading towards their convergence in the middle of town. Derry~Londonderry was remarkably similar to Limerick's Newtown Pery with an extensive grid reflecting both commercial and industrial prosperity.

TEST YOURSELF

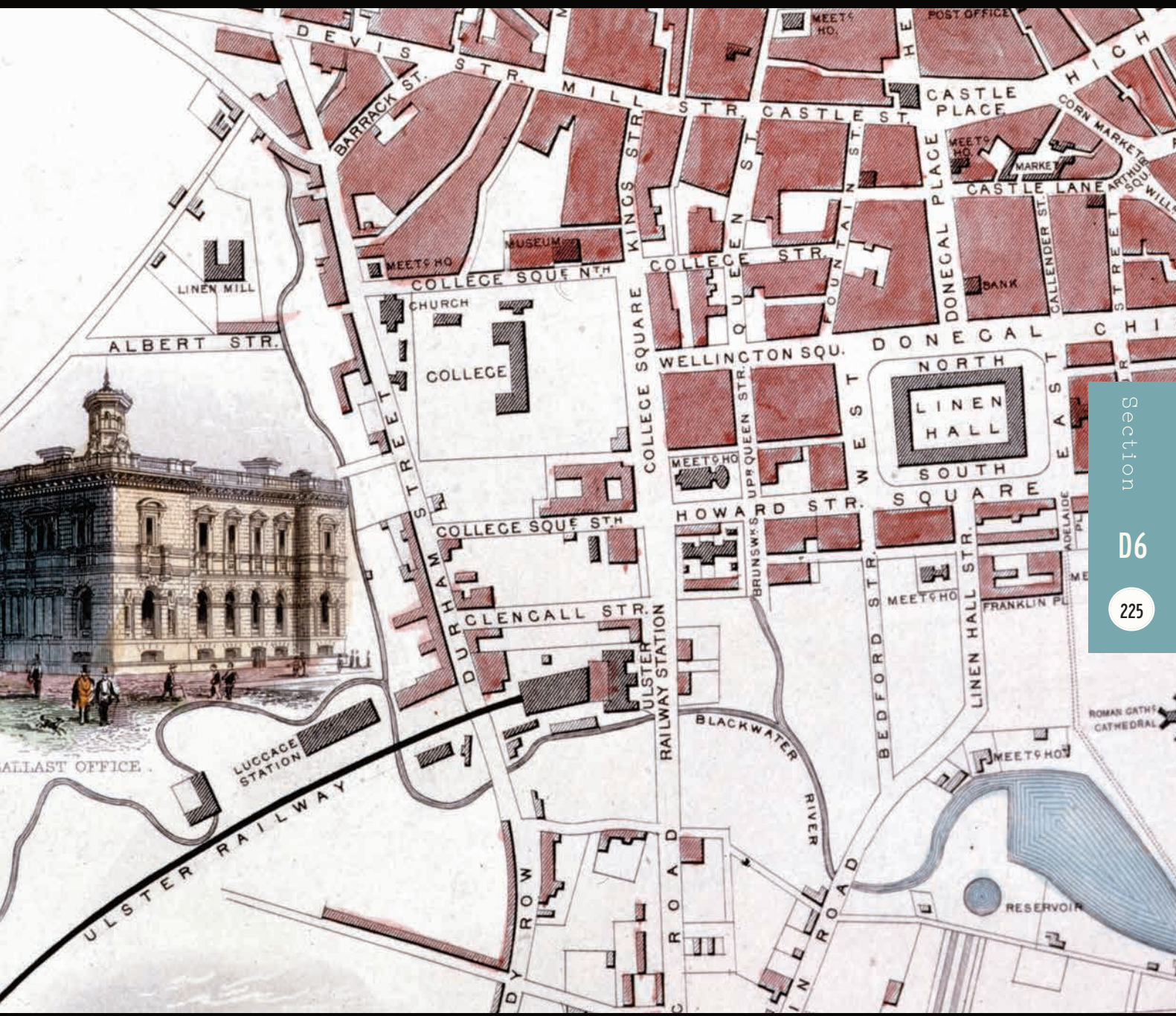
1. Why is the Griffith Valuation important for geographers and historians?
2. What does the range of valuations suggest about the value of money in the middle of the nineteenth century?
3. What significant variations were there in the geographical distribution of properties subject to valuation?
4. Why did Kilkenny retain its medieval pattern of commercial development?
5. Why did Limerick undergo such a radical change in its pattern of commercial development?

The coming of the railway

In an age dominated by the internal combustion engine, the aeroplane and a multitude of electronic marvels, most of whose internal workings are not understood by many people, it is easy to overlook the impact on virtually everyone living in the second half of the nineteenth century – in Ireland as elsewhere – of the coming of the railway. By 1914 the entire island was covered with a network of lines, mostly of Irish standard gauge (wider than that used in the neighbouring island) but several of narrow gauge and one, in western Kerry, running on an improbable monorail. Sadly many of the more remote lines were inherently unprofitable; these and many others have since disappeared, though not without cartographical trace. What has also disappeared almost completely is the steam locomotive. The railway brought with it fire and smoke, novel sights and sounds, and the sheer excitement of speed. Unlike in a modern car, the main working parts of a steam locomotive – the cylinders and connecting rods – were visible for all to see; the power of new technology could be observed as a source of fascination. Some engines were given personal names; they were endowed with personalities. The industrial age was, quite literally, on the move.

The railway came to Ireland and its towns not quite all at once, but certainly in a hurry in mid century. Not surprisingly Belfast and Dublin were first off the mark; their story is too complex to tell here, other than to provide instructive illustrations from the former. The Ulster Railway as far as Lisburn opened to traffic in 1839 and along with it Victoria Street Station. This was intended as the terminus, hence the classical and imposing design of the building (Fig. 170). John Rapkin's map of the city in 1851 shows a typical geographical outcome of that time: the line was brought across the River Blackstaff, stopping short on the edge of the built-up area and tolerably near to the White Linen Hall (Fig. 171). With the exception of the two biggest cities and the small town of Fethard, all the current sample of IHTA towns received their first railway connection in a concentrated period from 1846 (Kildare) to 1860 (Tuam). Fethard got its rail links to the 'outside' world of Clonmel and Thurles in 1879–80. Some favoured towns acquired further connections in rapid order: Mullingar, for instance, had its existing connection with Dublin (1848) extended westwards to Galway in 1851 and was provided with other lines to Cavan in 1856 and to Sligo in 1862. In the following year its station, recently redesigned, was described as 'peculiarly well arranged and commodious'. Life in Mullingar would never be quite the same again.

Fig. 170: *Belfast, part II*, Victoria Street Station, 1848. From James O'Hagan, *Plan of Belfast*. Photograph reproduced courtesy of Trustees of the National Museums Northern Ireland, Ulster Museum. Opposite page: Fig. 171: *Belfast, part II*, map 7, 1851, by John Rapkin. Photograph reproduced courtesy of Trustees of the National Museums Northern Ireland, Ulster Museum, extract.


DEVIS ST.
BARRACK ST.
MILL ST.
KINGS ST.
CASTLE ST.
CASTLE PLACE
POST OFFICE
MEETG HO.
CORN MARKET
MARKET
CASTLE LANE
QUEEN ST.
FOUNTAIN ST.
DONEGAL PLACE
CALLENDER ST.
ARTHUR SQU
WILLS
MUSEUM
MEETG HO.
COLLEGE SQUE NTH
COLLEGE STR.
BANK
LINEN MILL
ALBERT STR.
CHURCH
COLLEGE
COLLEGE SQUARE
DONEGAL
WELLINGTON SQU.
NORTH
LINEN
HALL
SOUTH
WEST
EAST
QUEEN STR.
MEETG HO
HOWARD STR.
SQUARE
COLLEGE SQUE STH
DURHAM ST.
CLENCALL STR.
BRUNSWK
FRANKLIN PL
BEDFORD STR.
LINEN HALL STR.
ADELAIDE
ROMAN CATHS
CATHEDRAL
LUCCAGE STATION
ULSTER RAILWAY STATION
BLACKWATER RIVER
ULSTER RAILWAY
DY ROW
ROAD
RESERVOIR
BALLAST OFFICE

The coming of the railway was a complicated business. The alignment of the trackway had to be determined on engineering grounds and a suitable location for the station (or stations) identified. Land had to be purchased, often after lengthy discussions and negotiations. Decisions had to be made as to whether existing roads should be crossed by over-bridges, under-bridges or level crossings. Investors had to be persuaded and important people lobbied for support. What was effectively a full business plan had to be placed before a parliamentary committee at Westminster before the necessary private act setting up the railway company could be procured. It was only then that work could begin on the ground, though once started this could proceed at a pace that is even now impressive.

The railway navvies would come along from one direction, camping in the vicinity and constituting a temporary township. Cuttings were made, embankments constructed and bridges built; passenger stations followed on, accompanied by pens for cattle and sheep, engine and goods sheds, signal boxes and sidings. When the navvies had moved on, regular services for passengers and for freight could begin. New jobs were created, for stationmasters, porters, signalbox men and keepers of level crossing gates (all manual in those days), the latter with a small house nearby. Stations at a distance from the town centre and from where people actually lived provided work for jarveys. The names of hotels and of streets sometimes came to reflect the presence of the railway. Day trips to the seaside were taken up by town dwellers of every class and journeys by rail began to feature in contemporary novels. The coming of the railway should not be thought of merely in terms of transportation; it made countless differences to the quality of town life.

In terms of its geographical impact, circumstances varied enormously. Dundalk is an example of considerable change. The Great Northern Railway was allowed to pass through the demesne west of the town, though at a suitable distance away from the main house. This meant in turn that the station was at a certain distance from the town centre, on Ardee Road. The addition of lines westwards to Enniskillen and later eastwards to Greenore resulted in a major junction and a small railway quarter south-west of the town. One consequence of the latter was stiff competition for the port of Dundalk itself, for Greenore could accommodate ships at all stages of the tides. Another was that the importation of coal became important, both to the town and to the railway companies. In 1876 four railway companies merged into one and railway engineering services were concentrated in Dundalk. By the end of the nineteenth century twenty-one locomotives had been built there. Other industries were established, adapting themselves to the convenience of bringing raw materials in and finished goods out by rail. A separate goods station was eventually built at Barrack Street, on the eastern side of town.

In effect every town, in this as in every other aspect, deserves to be studied in its own right. Fascicles of the IHTA create endless possibilities for further research. Their authors are encouraged to follow through with a monograph based largely on their previous work, as Raymond Gillespie has done in *Early Belfast: the origins and growth of an Ulster town to 1750* (2007). To finish with an example related to the theme of this sub-unit, Maps 1, 2 and 3 can be used in conjunction with one another to measure the impact of the coming of the railway. With few exceptions, Map 2 predates that event and represents the town at the point in time in which decisions were to be made as to where best to locate the railway and its attendant infrastructure. Thus one can see the logic of siting the terminus at Limerick on the eastern side of Newtown Pery, thereby giving a further boost to its commercial life. The mid nineteenth-century contextual map shows the general result, though on a much smaller scale: in Limerick's case we see the original line towards Waterford and branches curving round to the north-west and to the south-west. Finally the modern map shows in some cases surviving railways, often reduced in terms of ancillary facilities, whereas in other cases signs of former trackways are all that remain. Thus on Kells's Map 3 the course of the former railway streaks across part of the bottom left, the station is shown as a surviving building (unnamed), and the gazetteer tells us that in 1990 the latter was being used as a residence and a store, while the goods shed was also in use as a store. The contents of IHTA fascicles, including their texts, demonstrate how much can be learnt from reading the maps.

TEST YOURSELF

1. How would you have reacted on seeing your very first railway locomotive and train?
2. What kinds of decision had to be made before a railway line was brought to a town?
3. In what ways did the coming of the railway affect economic life?
4. In what ways did the coming of the railway affect social life?
5. Could it be said that the geography of Irish towns was changed irrevocably by the coming of the railway?