



Medieval Monasteries

Parish of Bagenalstown

CARA DÉ

Volume 1, Issue 7

Lorum

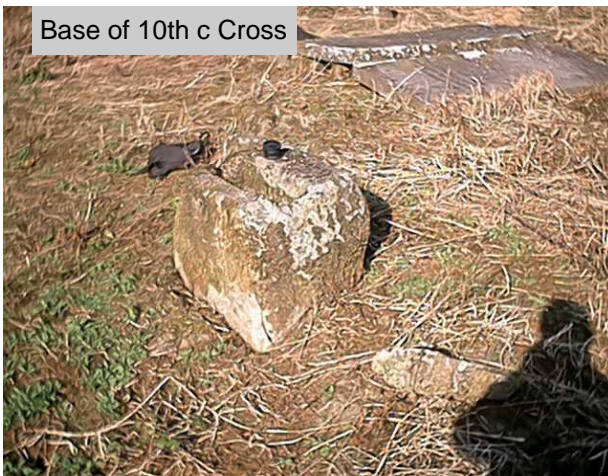
Lorum or *Leamh Dhum* meaning the 'ridge of the elms' is one of two monasteries founded by St Laserian in the 7th century. According to local folklore the saint arrived in Lorum seeking a place to build a monastery. He decided that wherever the sun should set on the skyline would be his chosen spot. The sun set over the half glen or Old Leighlin as presently known.

The Lorum site is on high ground about 3.5 Km from the River Barrow. Ownership of this site was transferred from Morgan Kavanagh to the crown in the year 1625.

Because of its historic and religious significance this ancient site is still in use and occupied by a fine parish church (C of I), constructed in the 19th c. At the rear of the present church is an earlier 18th c church now in ruins and a graveyard. The cross base referred to in the OPW extract 492 was located in this graveyard (see photo below)

The 'ancient church' referred to at S and SE is building number 12.1 on our site map and illustrated in a later page.

Our survey conducted in two stages between 2001 and 2003 located a total of 18 monastic buildings here dating from the 6th c to the 12th c. Fifteen of these were constructed of timber with clay/wattle walls. The earliest stone walled building was a church (building 10.1). Actually the ruined walls of this 10th c building were extended westwards to form the present ruined church in the 18th c. Other remains from that time include stables immediately north of the church ruin and a dry stone wall which separates the churchyard from the 'church field'. Judging by the number and type of buildings it would appear that there was a small monastic community on site from the 6th to the 11th or early 12th c. Then followed a period of use as a parish church (church 12.1) The Church of Ireland have had a parish church from the 17th or certainly the 18th c to date.



Base of 10th c Cross



Ruin of 18 c Parish church. Church of Ireland

492 LORUM

OS 19:2:6 (392,474) 'Lorum Church, Graveyard'
OD 400-500 27250,15743

Church site and graveyard Pace information in *OS Letters* (1839, 92-3) 'ancient church' may have been located to S and SE of eighteenth-century church in old graveyard. Now appears to be represented by rise in ground level. Small cairn with cross c. 250m to W in field (no. 512). *JAPMD* (1889) records cross base in graveyard; not located. *OS Letters* (1839, 92-3) record former presence of 'steeple' interpreted as round tower and association with St Molaise (holy well no. 643), and with St Laserian (holy well no. 644).

19:11

12-9-1989

Extract from Archaeological Inventory of Co Carlow- OPW

Timber Framed Buildings

	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Dimensions</u>	<u>Location</u>
6.1	Church	22'-0" x 17'-0" Wall 12', 5 windows	field
6.2	Unknown	20'-5" x 11'-6", Wall 8',	field
7.2	Unknown	17' x 13', Wall 9', Apex 15', Windows; 1E	field
7.3	Unknown	20' x 12'. Wall 9', Apex 17' , Windows 3	field
7.4	Sleeping	12' x 7'-6"	
8.1	Church	17' x 9'.	under road
8.2	Unknown	13' x 10'	field
8.3	Workshop	11' x 8'	field
8.4	Sleeping	12' x 7'	under road
9.2	Workshop	10' x 10'. Windows; 2E, 1N	graveyard
9.3	School	17' x 7'	graveyard
9.4	Sleeping	10' x 8'-6"	field
9.5	Sleeping	10' x 7'	field
11.1	Church	25' x 11', Wall 8', Apex 16', Windows; 3N,3S, 1E with Ope 4' wide x 6' high, 3 sections	carpark
11.2	School	10'-6" x 8'. (orientation NS)	carpark
11.3	Sleeping	11' x 8', Apex (orientation EW)	carpark

Stoney Buildings

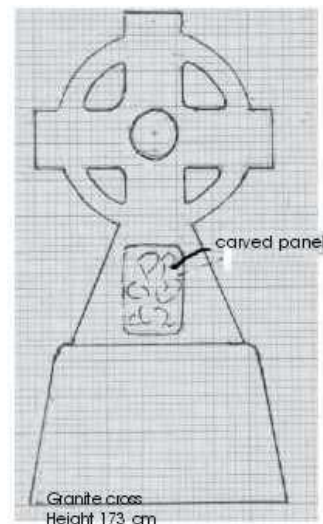
10.1	Church	23' x 18'. Wall 12'. Windows; 2n, 2S, 1 E Opes 14" wide x 40" high at exterior wall. Vestry between altar and E gable. Wooden partition.	graveyard
10.2	Tower	Circumference; 56'. Height 76'.	graveyard
12.1	Church	T-Shaped. 36' x 14' -6". Wall 24', Ridge 30'	field

Celtic cross: The base of this cross lies at a few paces S of the 18th c church ruin in the graveyard. The accompanying figure on the right is reconstructed to the same scale (by a combination of extrapolation from the base dimensions and dowsing).

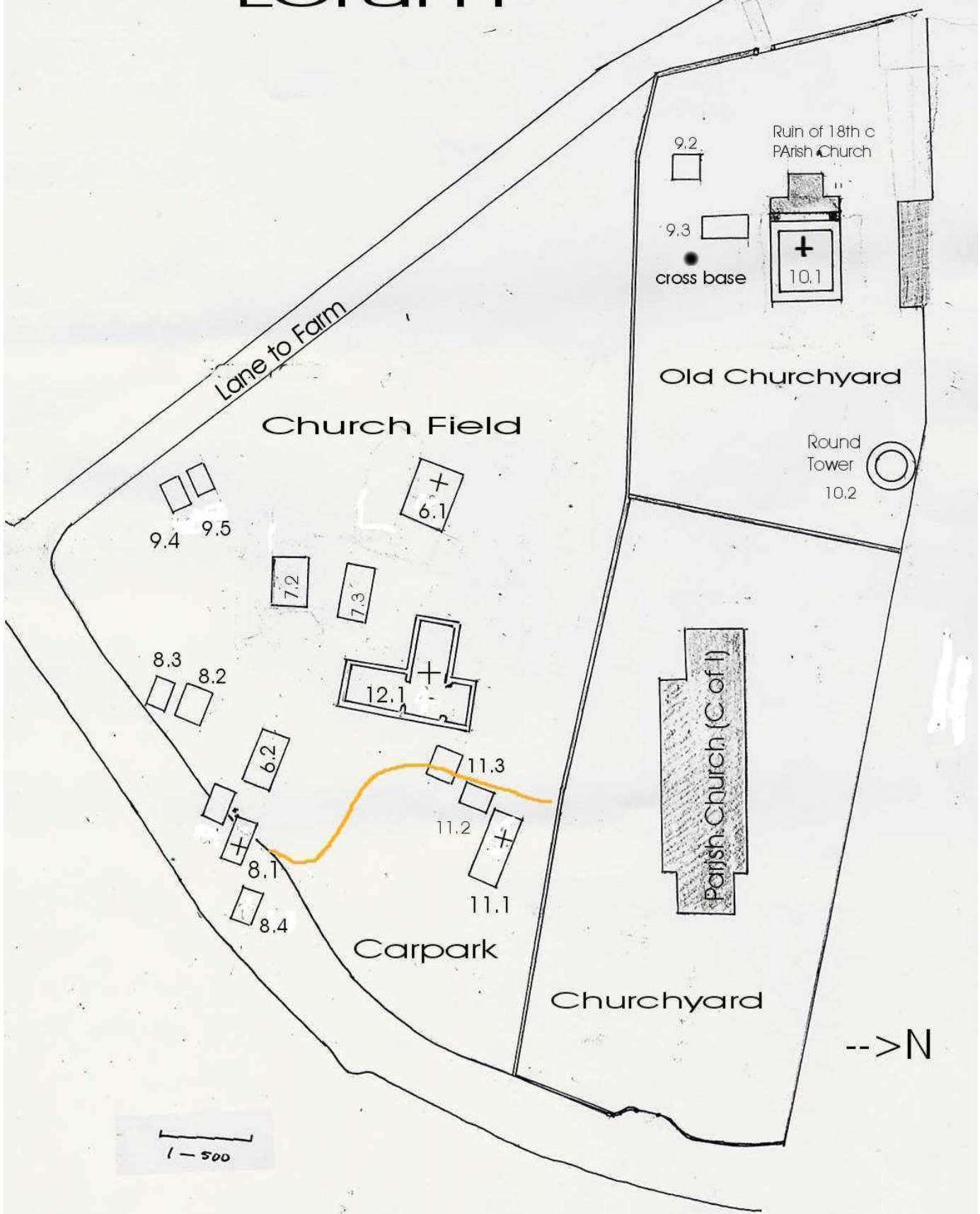
Two other crosses may be buried in a field nearby. These crosses were of a later Latin design. One has an inscription across the cross arms;

Ite in Nomine Christii, (Go in the name of Christ)

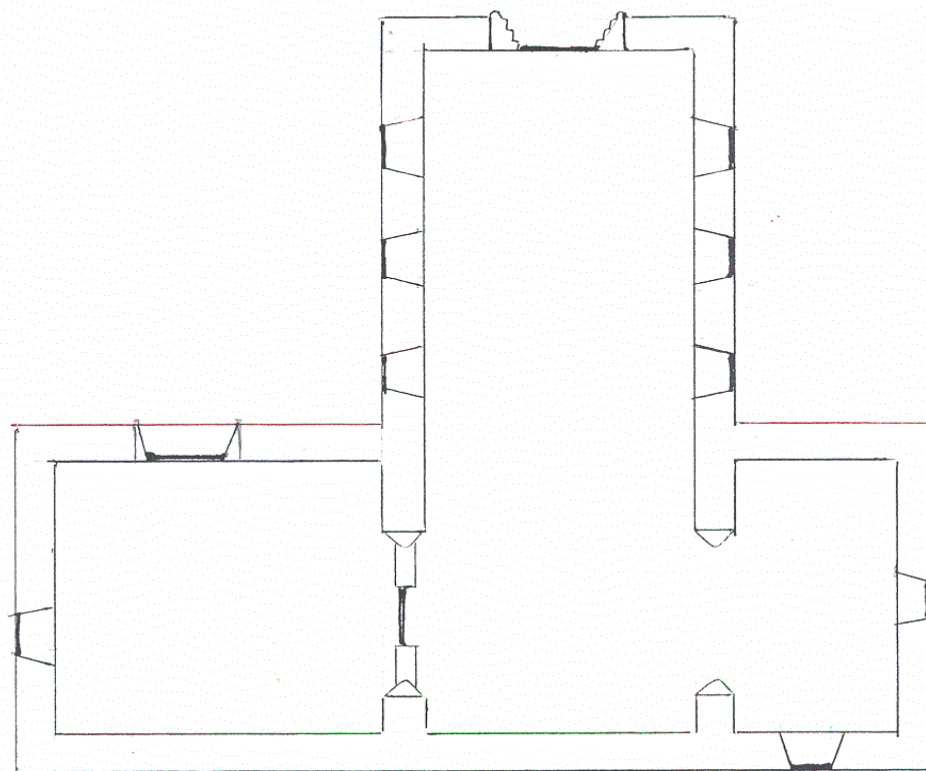
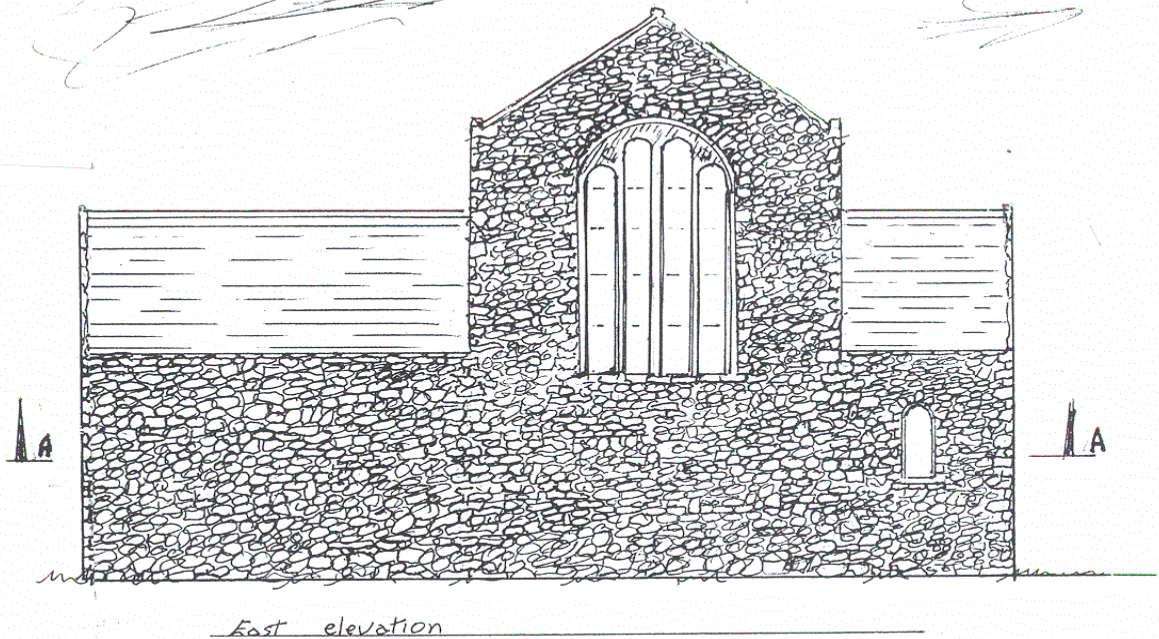
The "high cross" (512) marked on the Discovery map & with an OPW plaque alongside is in a field to SW. This is in our view a boundary marker and dates to the 14/15th c. Access is via the farmyard and an ancient lane which continues on to join the main road from Bagenalstown to Borris at Kilcruit



Lorum



Romanesque Church 12th c.
Artists Reconstruction.



Romanesque 12th c church:

Internal dimensions were; 36' L x 14'-6" W x 24' wall x 30' to ridge.

Transepts; North 9 x 14 Wall 12'-6". Apex 20' South; 17' x 14'. Wall 12'-6". Apex 20'. Arches 6'-6" wide x 14' high.

South transept arch was blocked off and a door fitted for entrance to vestry.

Ten burials within body of church, which include a bishop and three crusader knights.