



Medieval Monasteries

Parish of Graignamanagh

CARA DÉ

Volume 2, Issue 1

Tinnahinch

Historical sources have little to say of any monastic foundation at this site. The only ancient remains visible are the ruin of a stone church and a holy well between graveyard and the River Barrow. Opposite the entrance gate is a tomb with the following inscription;

“Great King of Glory, Justic, Mercy, Peace,
I, vilest sinner of the Human Race.
Thou hast prevented, my request thou hast given,
It's of thy mercy Infinite that I am among the liven.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

John Patsull. Aged 78 years. 1766

- Extract from; Archaeological Inventory of County Carlow. Duchas

Our survey conducted during the Autumn of 2002 located a total of 27 buildings dating from the 5th to the 13th century. A small community of not greater than 15 monks inhabited this site for six hundred years. The monastery was then closed and use as a parish church continued for many centuries.

The earliest buildings found dated to the 5th and 6th century were clustered around the ruined church gable, and consisted of a church, sleeping huts, workshops and a building for cooking/eating. During the succeeding centuries these timber framed structures were replaced with larger buildings indicating growth of the community. Within the present ruin of St Michael's Church were two earlier timber framed churches dated to the 8th and 10th century respectively.

611 TINNAHINCH

OS 24:5:6 (222,324) 'St. Michael's Church (in ruins),
Graveyard' OD 50-100 27096,14302

Church and graveyard Wall foundations and W gable of featureless rectangular structure (26.5m x 6.4m) of split stone and rubble masonry. W gable and adjacent portion of N wall show pronounced exterior base batter (90-100m E-W x 60m N-S). Circular graveyard shown on 1839 OS 6" map has been quarried away. Holy well (no. 654) 200m to SSE.

24:27

3-7-1987

This site is beautifully situated overlooking a valley formed by the river Barrow and Mount Brandon. At the present time one enters the site from the public road through a narrow gateway, leading to a lane which leads to the graveyard. All of the land on three sides of the graveyard has been quarried away. The well maintained graveyard contains modern burials surrounding the church ruin. There is evidence to suggest that the burials of earlier times were indicated only by marker stones which were removed a generation ago.

In the ruin of St Michael's Church is an altar constructed in 1980 of brick topped with a stone slab. Mass is celebrated here in September every year.

Not until the 10th c do stone buildings appear. Of quite modest size to begin with, as if the builders were unsure of the new technology.

The ruined church described in the extract above is believed to have been a parish church built in the late 12th or early 13th century. A conjectural plan of the structure is given in a drawing on page 5. An arch divided the chancel from the nave. A wooden screen at the west end formed a room for vesting. A porch and new entrance door was added at the south west end in later times. No trace now remains of this porch.

In the 18th century a low wall enclosing several family burials was constructed at the east gable of the church, a common custom at that time.

List of Timber Framed Buildings

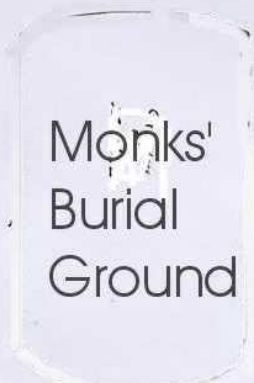
- 5.1 Church. (Θουητεαδch) Internal dimensions; 16' x 9'. Wall 12' Apex 18'. Door; 1W. Vestry inside entrance. Windows 1E,2N,2S
- 5.2 Workshop. Internal dimensions; 14'-6" x 7'-0". Door; 1W. Windows; 3S,2N,1E. Lofted for sleeping quarters for 2 persons at E end. Partition in middle. Use; Making of light wooden objects.
- 5.3 Workshop. Internal dimensions; 9' x 7' . Door; 1 W, Windows; 1E. Use; Metalworking
- 5.4 Dwelling. Internal dimensions; 20' x 10'. Wall; 9'. Apex;19'. Door;1W. Windows; 1E,3S,2N. Use; Cooking, dining.
- 6.1 Dormitory. Internal dimensions; 11' x 8'. Wall; 11'. Apex;15'. Door,1W. Windows;1E,1N @W end.
- 7.1 Church. Internal Dimensions; 12' x 6' Wall;9'. Apex; 15'. Windows; 1 E.Doors;1 W.
- 7.2 Undesignated. Internal dimensions; 14' x 8'. Wall 8'. Apex;17'. Hipped roof.Door 1W. Windows; 1E,2S
- 8.1 Church. Internal dimensions; 15' x5'. Wall;9'. Apex;15'.Door; NE corner @ altar.Windows; 1E.
- 8.2 Workshop. Internal dimensions; 7'-6" x 7'-0"
- 8.3 Oratory. Internal dimensions; 11'-6" x 7'-6". Wall; 9'. Apex; 23'. Door; 1W. Windows; 1E,1N
- 8.4 Refectory. Internal dimensions; 16' x8'. Wall; 8'. Apex;14'. Door;1W. indows; 2E,2S,2N. *NB;This building within present ruin.*
- 8.5 Dormitory. Internal dimensions; 19' x 6'. Wall; 7'. Apex; 13'
- 9.1 Church. Internal dimensions; 11' x 7'. Apex; 15'. Windows; 1E, 1N. Doors; 1W.
- 9.2 Workshop. Internal dimensions; 10' x6'. Wall; 9'. Apex; 16'. Hipped roof. Windows; 2N, 2S, 1E. Doors; 1W
- 9.3 Dormitory. Internal dimensions; 14' x 13'. Windows; 2E,2N,2S. Doors; 1W. Accomodation; 10 cubicles.
- 9.4 Workshop. Dimensions unknown. Located in field immediately to right of cemetery entrance.

Stone Buildings

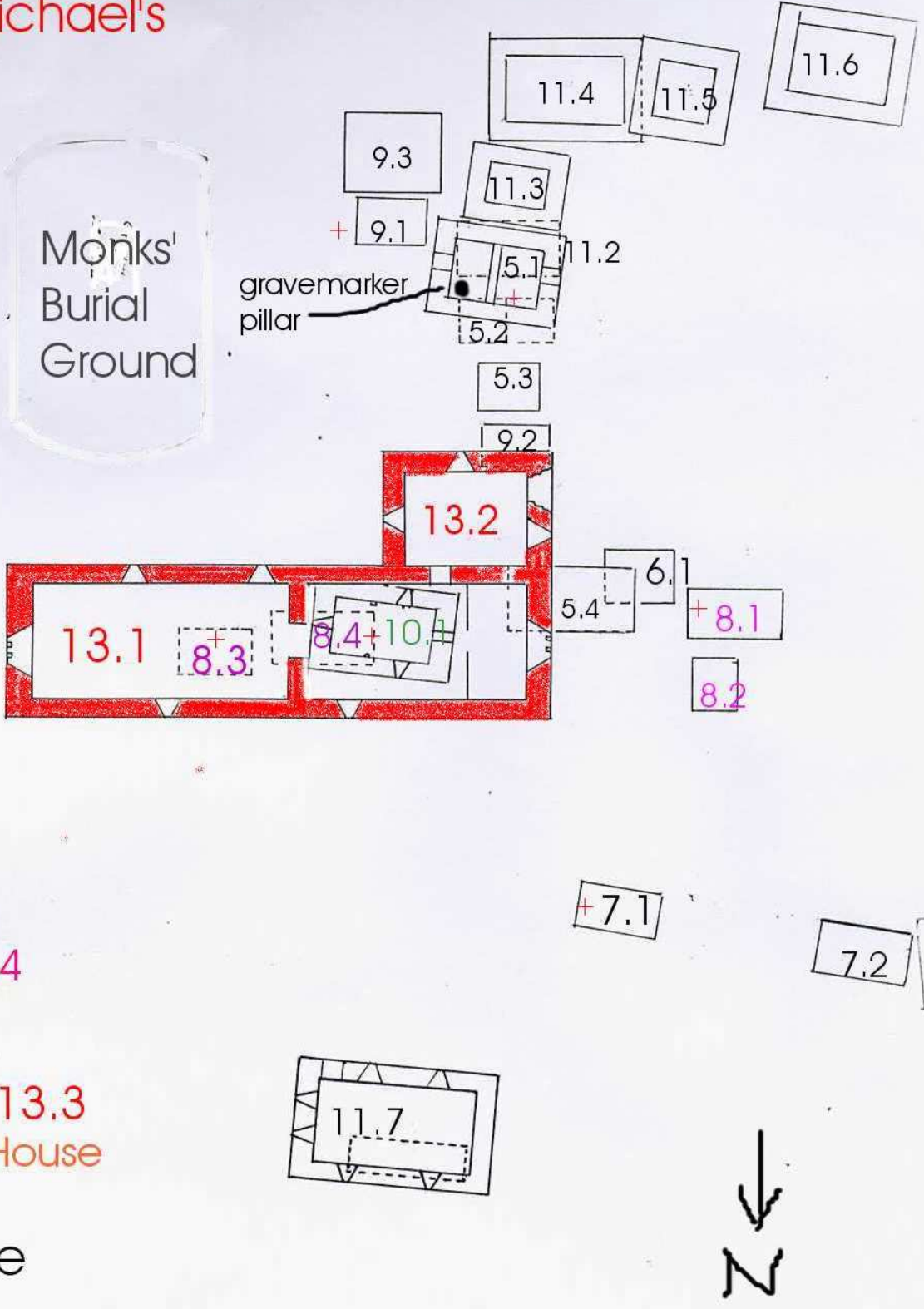
- 10.1 Church. (Θαμηλιαc) Internal dimensions; 10'-6" x 8'-6". Wall; 12'. Apex; 18'. Windows; 2N,2S,1E (12" x 42") . Doors; 1W. Within present church ruin @ W end
- 11.2. Dairy. Internal dimensions; 14' x9'. Wall;10'. Apex 20'. Building divided by a wall at centre, separating dairy from store room. Doors at both gables; Windows; 1N
- 11.3 Cell. (single) Internal dimensions; 9' x 7'. Wall; 9'. Apex;17'. Door;1W. Window; 1E.
- 11.4 Dormitory. Internal dimensions; 19' x 11'. Door;1W. Windows; 1E,2S.
- 11.5 Cell (double). Internal dimensions; 9' x9'. Wall; 9'. Apex 20'. Door;1W. Windows; 1E
- 11.6 Dwelling. Internal dimensions; 16'-0" x 11' -6" .Wall 12'. Apex 18'. Lofted @ W end for sleeping. Windows; 2E, 1N. Door; 1W offset
- 11.7 Dormitory. Internal dimensions; 25' x 14'. Wall; 8'. Apex; 18'. Door; 1@SE corner. Windows; 2E, 2N, 2S. Accomodation; 8 cubicles
- 13.1 Church. St Michael's. Internal dimensions; 78' x 19'. Wall 15'. Apex 23'. Divided internally into nave & chancel by arch. Door; 1S. Windows; 1E x 2, 1W x 2, 3N,2S. Vestry at W end formed by dividing wooden partition
- 13.2 Porch. Internal dimensions; 19' x 16'. Door; 1 W. Windows; 1S,1E
- 13.3 Priest's House. Internal dimensions; 13' x 6'. Wall;8'. Apex 13'. Door; 1NW. Windows; 2NW, 1SW. Single room divided by wooden partition.
- 13.4 Shed. Internal dimensions; 5' x5'. Wall; 6'. Hipped roof. Use; fuel storage.

Siteplan of St Michael's at Tinnahinch.
Earliest Buildings ; 5th c
Latest Buildings ; 13th c

St Michael's



gravemarker
pillar



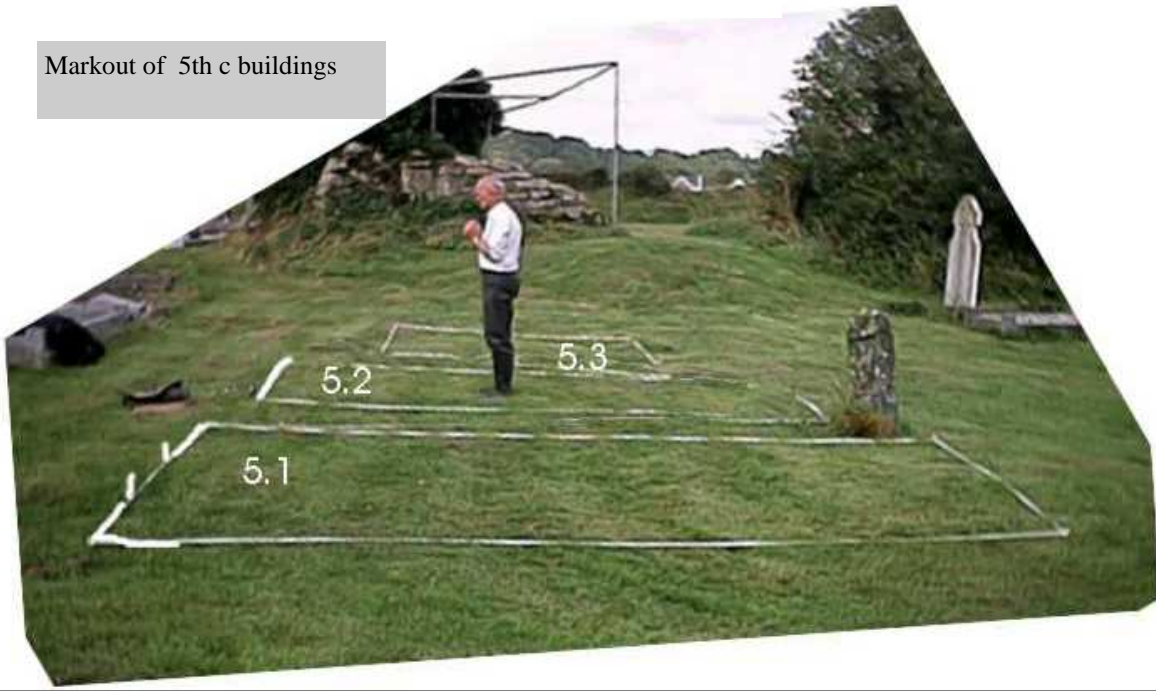
13.3
Priest's House

Entrance



Don stic^{as} Period 2

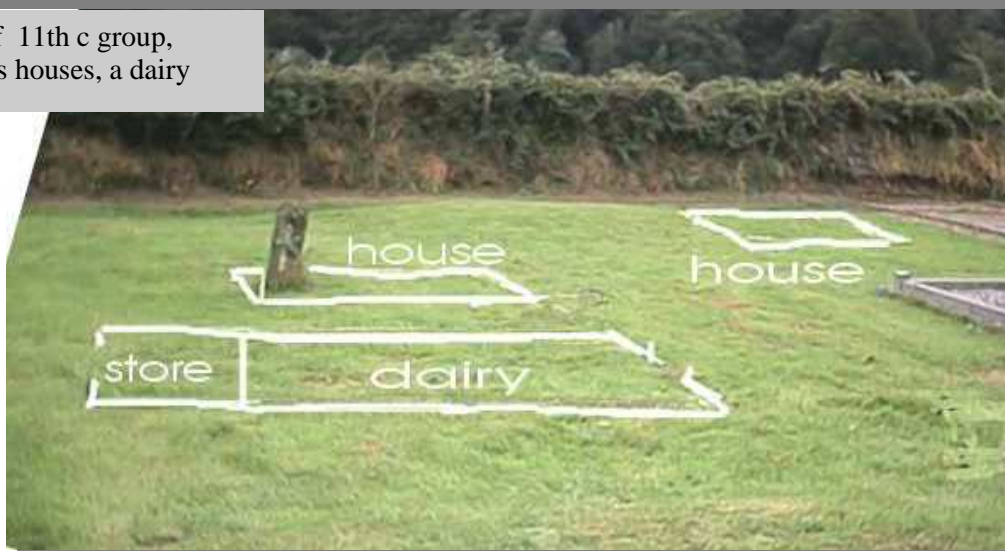
Markout of 5th c buildings



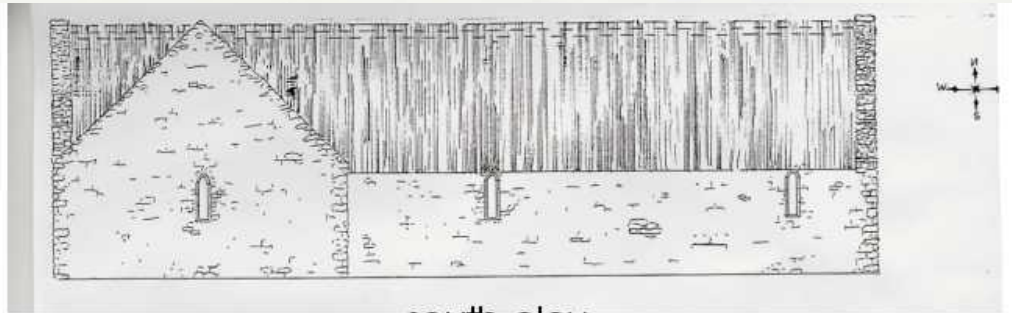
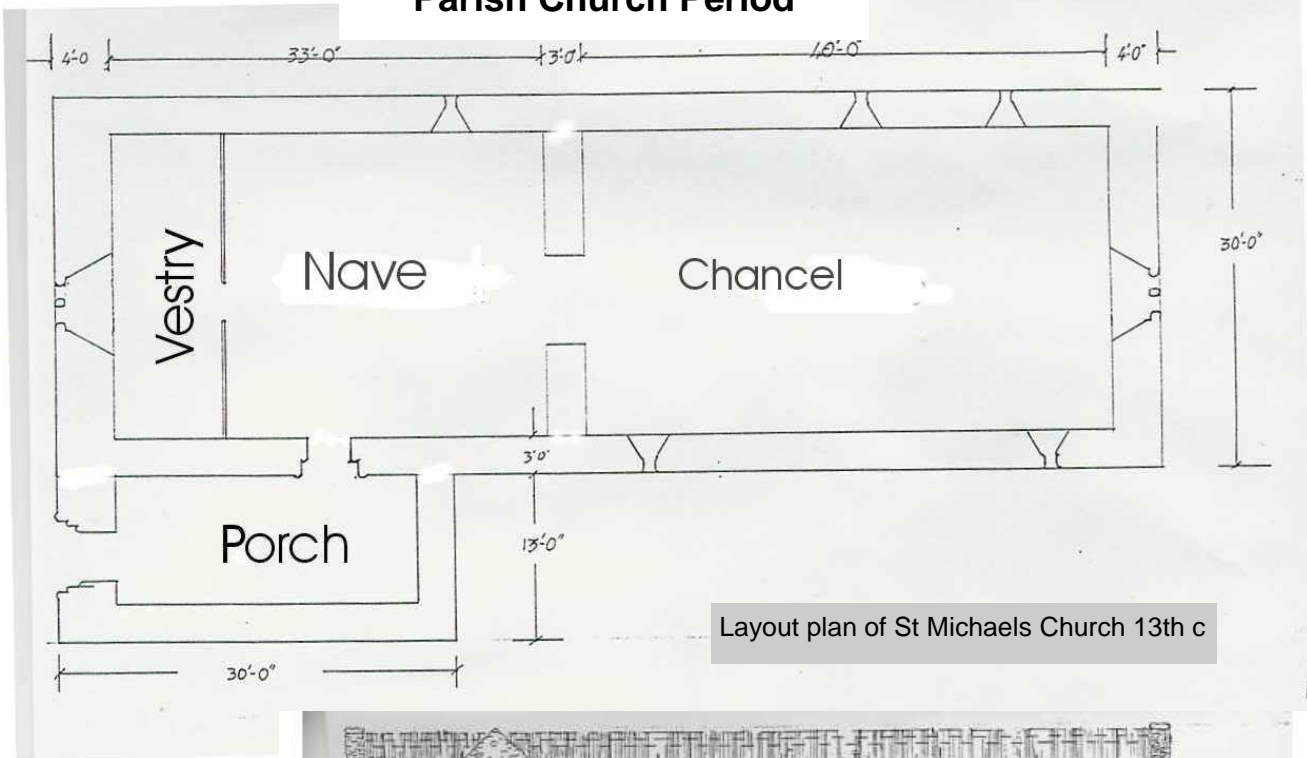
Markout of 9th c buildings.
Church & dormitory



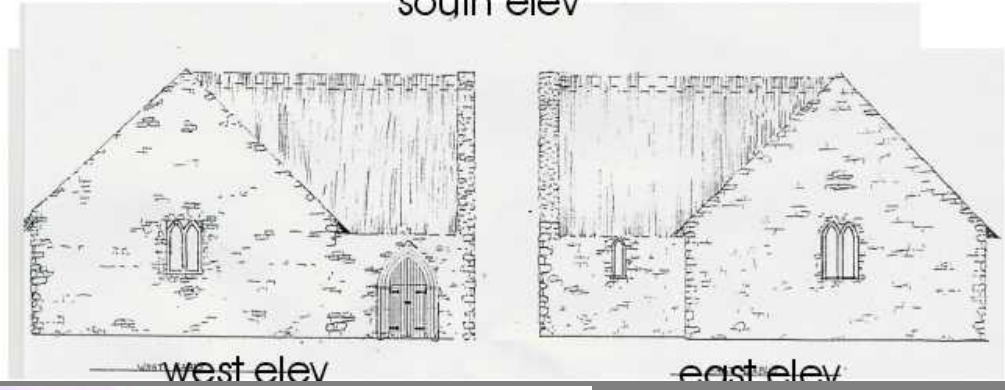
Markout of 11th c group,
two priest's houses, a dairy



Parish Church Period

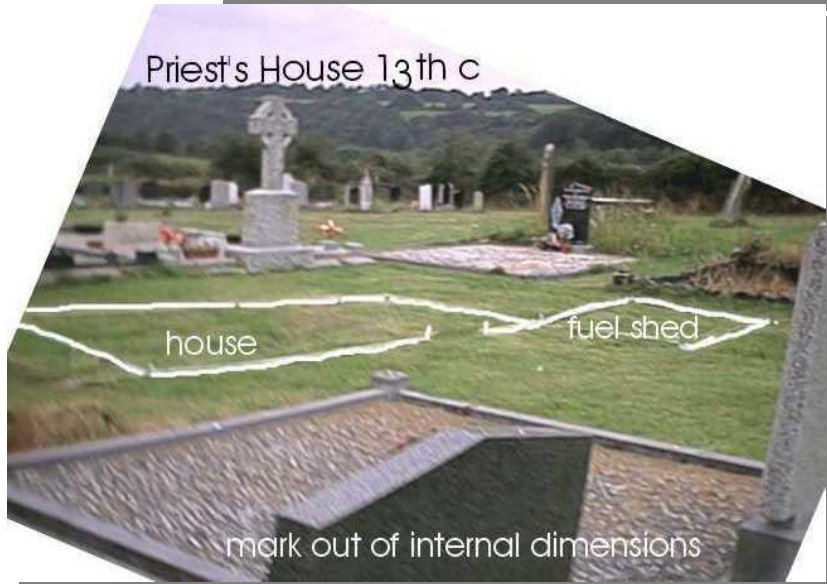


south elev



west elev

east elev



Priest's House 13th c

« Markout of priest's house located between church ruin and present entrance to churchyard