



Medieval Monasteries.

Parish of Bagenalstown

CARA DÉ

Volume 1, Issue 8

Augha

Δεχατο βιοντζλαρ no δεχατο αρποζλαρ,
The field of the green tillage (Joyce)

Siting;

On high ground overlooking valley of River barrow on east side, opposite Old Leighlin.

Period of occupation;

5 th to 13 th cent (est)

Public access;

On farm of Nolan family. Access with permission through farmyard.

History

Founded by St Aed / Maedog
(mo Δοοη ος) in 6th c

St Fintan of Clonenagh (Co Laois) was abbot here.

Pillaged by Vikings in 864 AD.

In AD 1016 Abbot Conmbach was slain by the Ui-Bairrche a local clan.

Orientation;

Church is E-W

Current condition;

In ruins. East and west gables and south wall extant, north wall collapsed completely.

Internal dimensions; 45'-6 x 15'-6".

This church was built in two stages. Earliest stage at West side has stonework of exceptional quality (hammer dressed.), with L/W ratio of 2:1. The later extension making L/W ratio 3:1 stonework is much inferior.

Early stone buildings make limited use of chiselled stonework. It is confined mainly to cills, quoins, window & door surrounds, because of the high cost of the skilled labour required. The inner / outer main walls are usually of selected field stones with random rubble in the centre. This was the dominant style of construction until the 19th c when ashler cut stonework appears.

Interesting objects on site

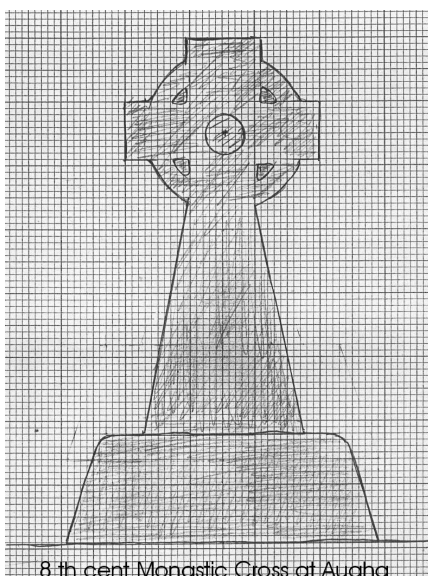
Base of monastic cross on site. Remains of water mill in farmyard. Large slab with rectangular opening may be a second cross base.

Survey result

Present ruin was built in 10th cent. A later extension to NW located, but now no visible trace. The Celtic cross (which once rested on existing base) was located below ground a few paces to E. Also to SE and within a few paces of the church ruin is another small 10th c building, presumably the priests residence.



10th c Church East Gable



8 th cent Monastic Cross at Augha

Artists reconstruction of 8th c granite cross in graveyard, extrapolated from base dimensions and by divining. The cross is similar to others of same period locally eg Killeogan & Old Leighlin.

475 AGHA

OS 12:14:6 (456,12) 'Agha Church (in ruins), Graveyard' OD 300-400 27305,16536

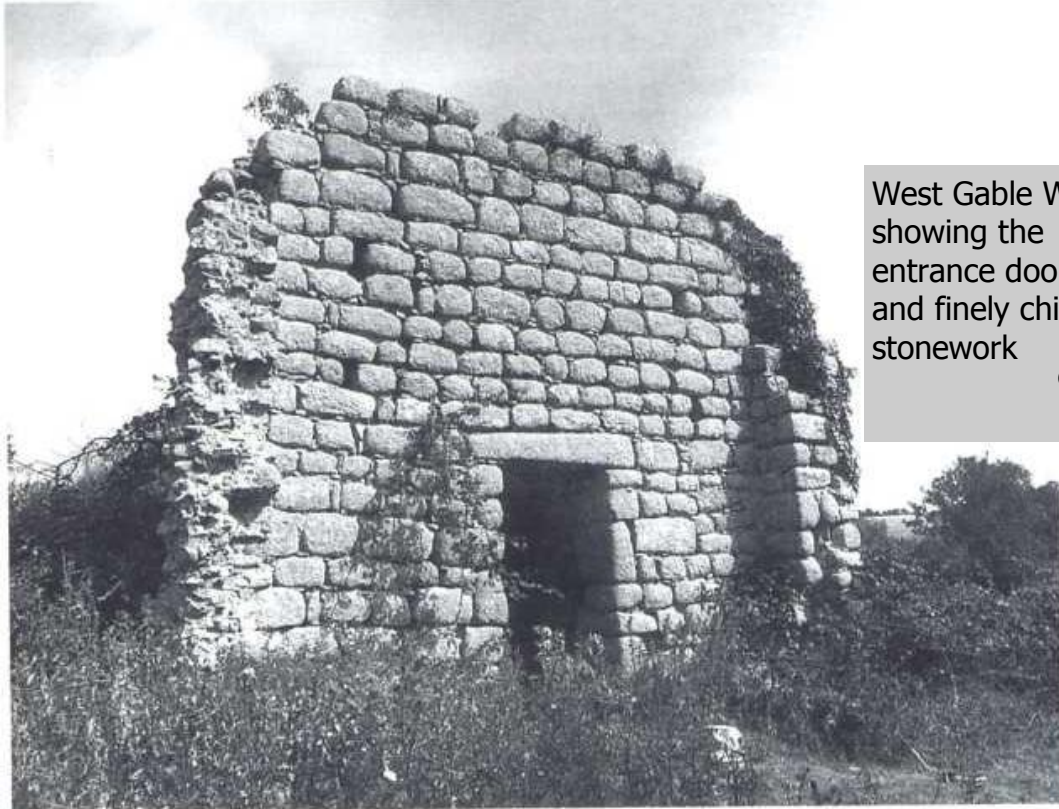
Unenclosed church and cross bases Pre-Norman rectangular structure (13.9m x 4.7m) of granite with W gable entrance and antae, built on platform against side of valley; two cross bases in immediate vicinity of church. E gable has narrow ope with single stone round head and wide end splay. S wall has two opes.

Trabeate lintelled door in centre of W gable. Anta with base batter preserved at SW corner. NW angle has collapsed. Two cross bases: (1) very regular slightly pyramidal rectangular granite block with rectangular socket and tapering mortice; (2) large thin rectangular granite flag, with rectangular socket; comparable shape to late medieval wayside crosses in Co. Kildare. (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988, 372)

12:79

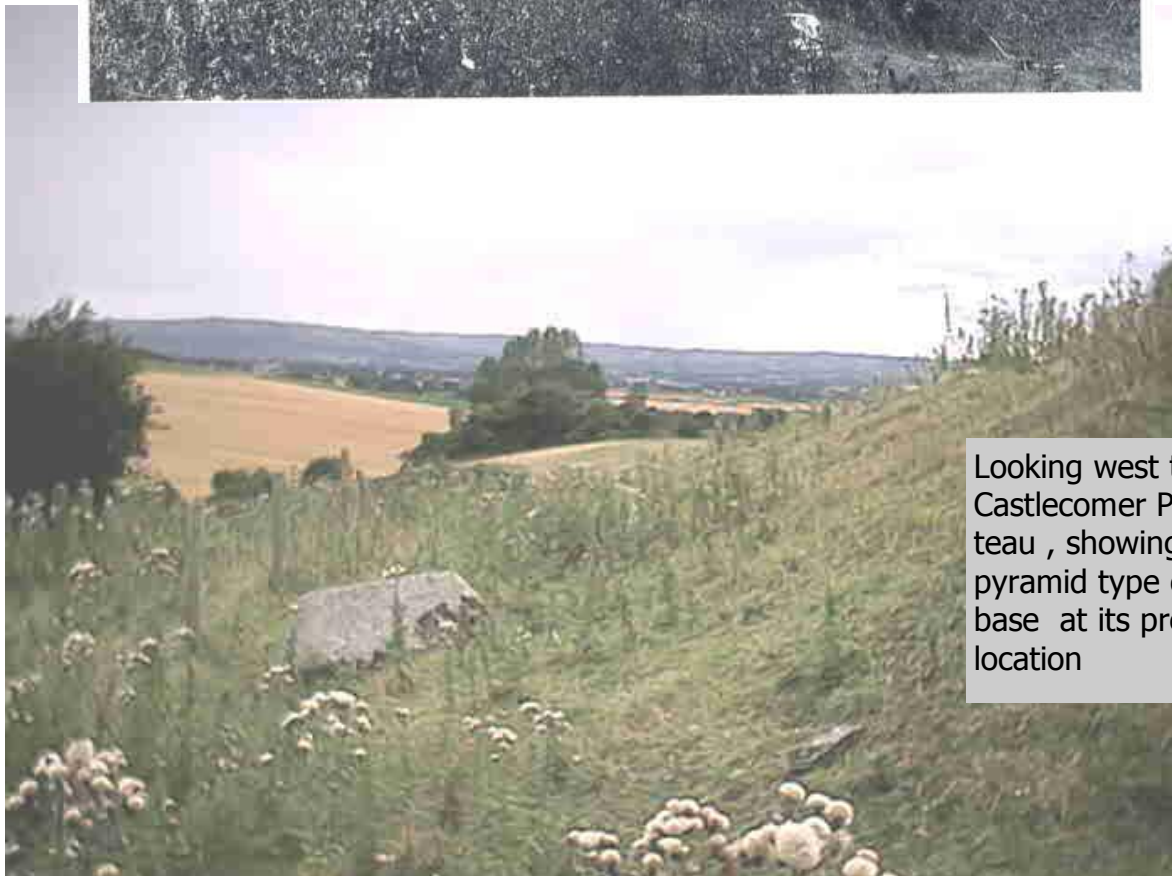
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West Gable Wall showing the main entrance doorway and finely chiselled stonework

O.P.W Photo



Looking west to the Castlecomer Plateau, showing the pyramid type cross base at its present location

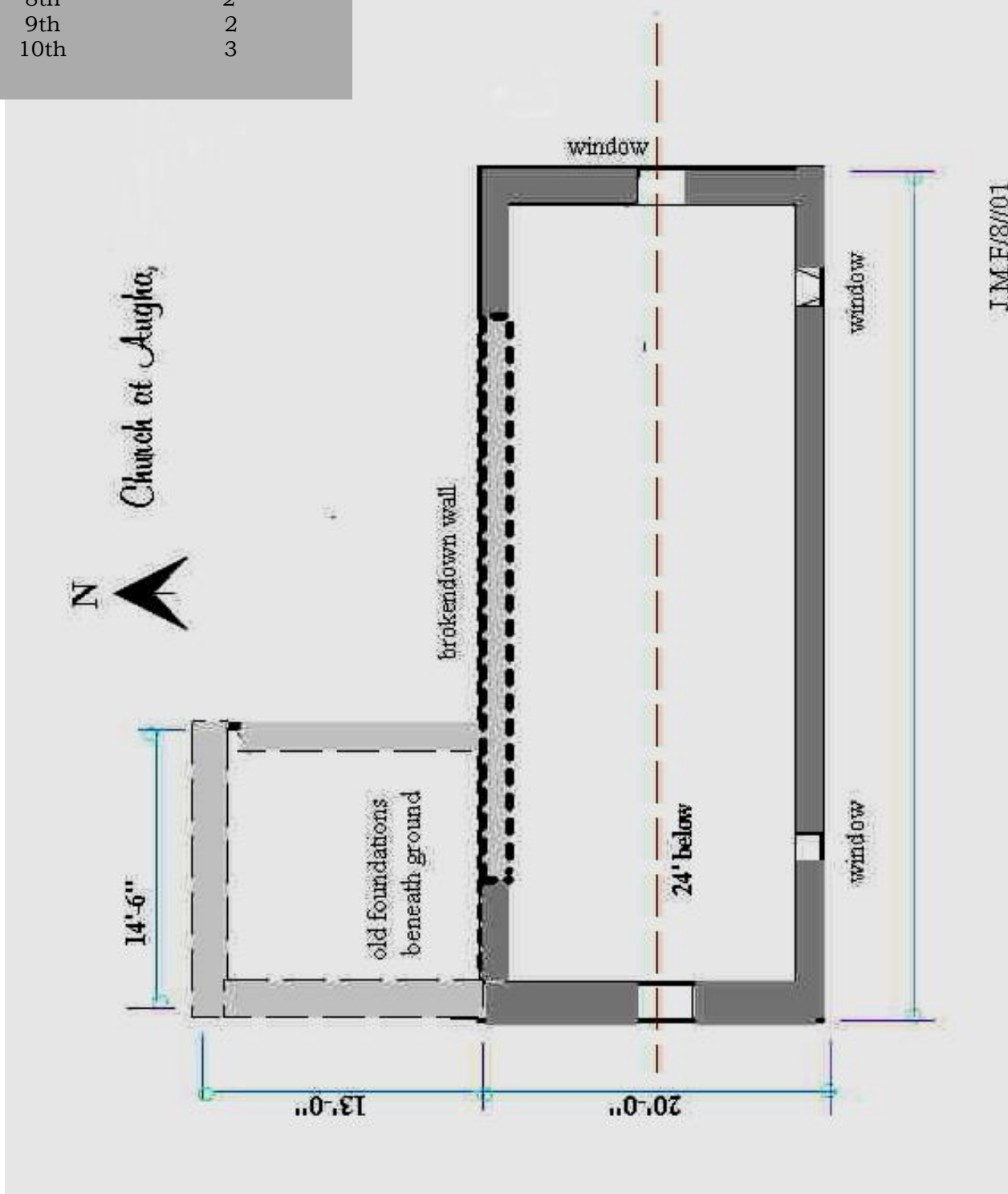
There are imprints of buildings on site prior to the 10th c ruin. These buildings were constructed of clay and wattle with thatched roofs.

Location;

adjacent to present public road and an area midway between road and church ruin.

<u>Century</u>	<u>Number of buildings</u>
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8th	2
9th	2
10th	3



J.M.F./8/01

Augha



1



2



3



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