The conference kicks off on Friday evening with a keynote address by Nick Maxwell of Wordwell Ltd, followed by the expected IPMAG wine reception, kindly sponsored by Aegis Archaeology, Ltd. Registration begins sharp at 9am on Saturday, with papers kicking off at 9:30. A conference dinner will be held in a private suite at the Sligo City Hotel on Saturday evening. Papers continue on Sunday morning, and the conference concludes at 1pm.

Books, books, books!
The Post-Medieval Archaeology of Ireland, 1550-1850

Late in 2007, the long awaited first IPMAG book was published! Entitled The Post-Medieval Archaeology of Ireland, 1550-1850, this landmark volume brought together thirty-two papers based upon conference presentations at the first ever IPMAG conference held in Belfast in 2001. Edited by Audrey Horning, Ruairí Ó...
Baoill, Colm Donnelly, and Paul Logue, the book was published by Wordwell with financial support from the Heritage Council and the Northern Ireland Environment and Heritage Service, and by IPMAG funds derived from our generous sponsors and membership fees. Two launches were held for the book, one in Belfast and one at the 2008 IPMAG conference held in Kenmare.

A recent review of the volume by Toby Barnard, published in *History Ireland*, described it as a ‘welcome collection’ and an ‘invaluable’ introduction to Irish post-medieval archaeology. Professor Barnard then set a worthy challenge that clearly reflects the aims of IPMAG: ‘having provided this manual,[IPMAG] can start interdisciplinary evangelism to unite the sadly separated archaeologists, historians, art and architectural historians, geographers and anthropologists.’

In April 2008, IPMAG joined the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology and the Association for Industrial Archaeology in Leicester for a three-day conference designed to debate future directions in the archaeology of post-1550 Britain and Ireland. Sparks flew during some of the presentations by Irish speakers, revealing disagreements about the role of theory and the importance of material culture. You can read all about it in the proceedings of the conference, edited by Audrey Horning and Marilyn Palmer, published by Boydell and Brewer, and due in bookshops in mid-March 2009. Look for a flier with a special IPMAG member rate at our Sligo conference.

**Books, books, books!**

*Plantation Ireland: settlement and material culture, c.1550 - c.1700*

In February 2006, IPMAG co-hosted a conference with the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement. This conference drew attention to the built environment and material culture of early modern...
Ireland. Transcending the disciplinary divide, papers were presented by historians, geographers, literary scholars as well as archaeologists. Drawing upon various documentary sources such as policy treatises, literary tracts and maps, as well as non-textual sources including architecture, artefacts, and landscape, the concept of plantation as a means for explaining social, cultural and economic change was explored. These papers have been brought together in a book that is being published this year by Four Courts Press. This will be the third conference proceedings to be released by IPMAG since its inception!

Books, books, books!
Ireland and Britain in the Atlantic World

This volume brings together, for the first time, substantive contributions by a range of scholars working in Britain, Ireland, and North America. Each brings their own individual background, expertise, and approach to archaeology of the modern world, situating the newly-developing field of Irish post-medieval archaeology in relation to the more established field of European post-medieval archaeology and the aims of a global historical archaeology. The chapters in this collection constitute significantly revised versions of papers presented at the 2004 Irish Post-Medieval Archaeology Group (IPMAG) conference held in conjunction with the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology (SPMA) in Derry City.

By focusing first upon Ireland and its relationship with Britain, then broadening out to the Atlantic, the contributors provide a welcome new perspective on the archaeology and material culture of the last five hundred years, enabling broader consideration of the commonalities and divergences between Ireland, Britain, and the New World.

Edited by Audrey Horning and Nick Brannon, the volume is divided into sections which address four themes: landscapes and seascapes of conflict; change and continuity in the rural and urban landscape; material culture, trade, and manufacturing; and archaeologies of the Irish Diaspora. Ireland and Britain in the Atlantic World will be published by Wordwell as part of the IPMAG series, and is expected late in 2009.

Books, books, books!
Carrickfergus- The Story of the Castle & Walled Town, by Ruairí Ó Baoill. Published in October 2008 by TSO for the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

The book charts the development of Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim, over 800 years using archaeological, documentary and cartographic evidence, and is arranged in 12 short chapters, starting with the geographical and geological background to the settlement and then describing in a chronological sequence the development of the town and Castle.

Three of the chapters focus specifically on the main monuments in the town - the Castle, the 17th-century town walls and St. Nicholas’ Church. The book is also meant to be used as a tourist aid and to this end specially-commissioned new maps of the Castle, town and other important buildings were produced for the publication. Nearly 200, mostly colour, illustrations are used in the book to accompany the text, which also includes an up-to-date bibliography of archaeological and historical sources for the town.

The author, Ruairí Ó Baoill, is an IPMAG Committee member and former IPMAG Chair. He now works for the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen’s University Belfast. From 1991-1995 he directed 12 excavations within Carrickfergus and he has written extensively on the archaeology of the town.

He has just completed another excavation that uncovered sections of the late 16th-century town ditch at a site on the northern side of West Street, close to the Irish Gate. In the base of one section of the town ditch were the very badly disturbed remains of a probable mill. These took the form of two parallel lines of large stones,
below which were the remains of a wooden framework structure. Although documentary and cartographic sources for the town list and portray the sites of mills, this is the first time that one has been discovered on an excavation. A number of copper-alloy pins and needles along with leather off-cuts and a base-copper late Elizabethan coin were also recovered from the basal fills of the ditch.

And MORE Books!

In 2008, Belfast City Council published new editions of TWO rare 19th-century volumes: George Benn’s History of the Town of Belfast and Young’s Town Book of the Corporation of Belfast 1613 – 1816.

Spearheaded by Robert Heslip, Heritage Officer for Belfast City Council, the City Council teamed up with Blackstaff Press for Benn and Colourpoint Books for Young to reproduce these two volumes, now available at the exceptionally reasonable price of £15 (soft-bound) £25 (hard-bound) for Young and £25 for the two-volume Benn!

Belfast archaeology and the significance of George Benn
By Nick Brannon

‘They look almost with amazement on the accommodations and innovations which modern times have produced, and wonder how men lived in the days of their grandfathers...such will be the case too with a future generation...’ (Benn 1823, 285).

As a government archaeologist tasked, in the late 1970s and 1980s, to emulate the British ‘rescue excavation’ response to urban development in an Ulster context, my attempts to characterise and map Belfast’s archaeological heritage often met the reaction that Belfast had no history beyond that of its visible Victorian and Edwardian past. The impact of George Benn’s work, expressed by William Hennessy of the Dublin Public Record Office, who commented on his 1877 book.
- ‘I think you have managed to do an almost impossible thing, namely to create a history for an unhistoric town’ – seemed scarcely to have been learned.

The scant archaeological record, if such it could be called, of coins, tokens and human remains recovered from dredgings and building works, formed a sparse background for the accurate targeting of sites worthy of exploration and understanding. Benn’s writings provided reassurance that Belfast, as an urban centre, did have a past, one that could yield material remains capable of placing Belfast on a par with other Ulster towns such as Armagh, Londonderry or Coleraine.

As it has proved, particularly over the last few years, historical research and archaeological investigations have added a wealth of data and understanding. Belfast has its own Irish Historical Atlas (Gillespie and Royle 2003), while its ‘pott-houses’ have emerged from obscurity (Francis 2000). The 2006 volume of the Ulster Journal of Archaeology devoted most of its pages to the historical archaeology of the city, embracing overviews of discoveries, further potential, and even reviving 19th-century debate on the location of the Belfast ford and the nascent town’s urban nucleus.

George Benn was born in Tandragee, Co. Armagh on 1 January 1801. His family (with five siblings, including his elder brother Edward (1798–1874)), moved to Belfast in 1809, where George studied at Belfast Academy and later at the Belfast Academical Institution. His 1819 gold medal-winning essay – ‘A History of the Parish of Belfast’ - was expanded and published in 1823 as The History of the Town of Belfast with an Accurate Account of its Former and Present State. Albeit published anonymously, its authorship (Benn was only 22) soon became known.

George and Edward established a distilling business at Downpatrick before moving to Glenravel, County Antrim, to an estate purchased by their father, John Benn, in 1835. In 1842 John built Glenravel House, where George lived until moving to Fortwilliam Park in Belfast in 1875.

While at Glenravel, George Benn’s historical interests centred on County Antrim. He exchanged correspondence with local historians and antiquarians, notably William Reeves, later bishop of Down and Connor. 1853 saw the founding of the Ulster Journal of Archaeology, and in the later 1850s Benn contributed several articles, mostly on merchants’ trading tokens and the history of whiskey and distilling. He would also have read, in those same journals, the (occasionally vituperative) debates over the ‘true position of the ford of Belfast’, and the authenticity of the ‘1660’ map of Belfast, both subjects covered in his 1823 history.

In the late 1850s and 1860s Benn entered into correspondence with William Pinkerton, a London-based historian. In 1862, Pinkerton had been asked by the publisher Marcus Ward to write a history of Belfast, but he became ill six years later and the work foundered. Benn gained access to Pinkerton’s drafts but could not shape them suitably for publication.

In 1871, after Pinkerton’s death, Benn began writing his new history of Belfast, the successor to his 1823 publication. He drew information from others, such as Reeves, George Hill (historian of the Ulster Plantation) and staff of the Public Record Offices in London and Dublin. Following the death of his brother Edward in 1874, he presented ‘a collection of Irish antiquities, together with a number of books on antiquarian subjects’, left by his brother, to the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society. The ‘Benn Collection’ formally opened, in purpose-built premises, in July 1880. Both Edward and George were philanthropists – Edward helped to found Belfast’s Samaritan Hospital, its Skin Hospital, and its Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital, which were also endowed by George.

George Benn’s History of the Town of Belfast from the Earliest Times to the Close of the Eighteenth Century was published by Marcus Ward in 1877. Albeit
greeted enthusiastically, it made little profit, as Belfast at the time was in an economic slump. A year later, Benn began to assemble information to extend his historical survey to 1870, but his eyesight was failing and his research and writings, mostly into the lives and times of prominent Belfast families, reached only to the year 1810. His supplementary volume was published in 1880. George Benn’s last years were spent in illness and near blindness, and he died in Belfast of bronchial illness on Sunday 8 January, 1882. He was buried three days later at the city cemetery.

Much, no doubt, remains to be discovered about the history and archaeology of Belfast. But Benn’s work is one of those landmark publications – framing and colouring the picture, embedding the consciousness, characterising the sense of both time and place – that should always find a home on the bookshelves of those interested by, and invested in, the past. We continue to ‘wonder how men lived in the days of their grandfathers’, and the historical archaeology of Bennett’s 19th-century city has itself become a legitimate study. So, no ‘little volume(s)’, these. Belfast City Council and The Blackstaff Press deserve all credit for bringing these rare volumes to the ‘future inquirer’.

Benn, G. 1823 The History of the Town of Belfast.

Conference report: Kenmare 2008
The 8th annual IPMAG conference was held in the brand new Carnegie Arts centre in Kenmare, 22-24 February, on the theme Toil and Trouble: Archaeological perspectives on economy. IPMAG secretary and Kenmare promoter extraordinaire Frank Coyne got the conference off to an excellent start with a walking tour of the town (with requisite pub visit) which was followed by a fascinating evening lecture by historian Gerard Lyne on the notorious Trench family. On Saturday morning, papers were delivered by Bernard O Mahony (on Board of First Fruit churches), Ruairí Ó Baoill (on Carrickfergus), Brian Shanahan on the Discovery Programme’s work on post-medieval rural sites in north Roscommon, John Sheehan on Ballinskelligs tower house, and Frank Coyne on a remarkable clapper bridge at Ballyvourney in Co. Cork.

Afternoon proceedings included a fascinating discussion of piracy in West Cork by Connie Kelleher, a consideration of battlefield archaeology by Damian Shiels and Paul O’Keeffe, and Wes Forsythe on landscapes of Improvement on Ulter’s islands. Saturday’s proceedings continued with the aforementioned launch of The Post-Medieval Archaeology of Ireland 1550-1850, and an absolutely stunning four-course meal provided by P.F. McCarthy’s Bar and Restaurant, whose proprietors also kindly donated the wine for the Friday evening reception.

Sunday saw five more excellent paper presentations. Donal Fallon opened with a consideration of the importance of using wills, deed, and valuations in concert with archaeological study, while Lynda Lynch discussed the ways in which osteoarchaeologists discern dietary evidence. Tom Janes followed with a consideration of economic changes as seen through excavations at Deerpark, Moyode and Brusk (see his articles in this newsletter), while Franc Myles introduced delegates to his politically- and literally-charged examination of an Emergency-era explosives works in the middle of Phoenix Park! The final presentation of the conference, by Richard Clutterbuck, examined the archaeology and social history of the Slieveardagh anthracite mines in Co. Tipperary, demonstrating the value of examinations of the recent past, as will be highlighted in Sligo this year.

Historical archaeology, the World Archaeological Conference, and lessons for Irish archaeology?
June 2008 saw thousands of archaeologists from around the globe descend upon
University College Dublin for the 8th World Archaeological Congress. IPMAG chair Tracy Collins was kept exceptionally busy organising and managing the many volunteers who dealt with everything from audiovisual equipment to lunches to First Aid, and deserves many thanks and much recognition for stepping into the post, especially considering that she isn’t even Dublin-based!

Much has been written already about the vitriol and police presence occasioned by heated discussions over the relationship between archaeologists and the Iraq war as well as protests and disagreement linked to the Tara M3 debate. These well-publicised controversies were not the only ones unmasked at the meeting, however. Your humble editor wishes to point out the disjuncture between the sizes of the lecture space allocated by the UCD conference organisers for subjects pertaining to prehistory (generally spacious lecture theatres) versus the single small seminar-size space allocated to the daily historical archaeology sessions. There was a clear presumption that only a handful of individuals would possibly be interested in historical archaeology….

But au contraire! The seminar room (cupboard) for historical archaeology was consistently packed to the gunwhales. The session on Irish historical archaeology, organised by Tadhg O’Keeffe and Charles Orser, was so oversubscribed that the corridors outside the room were lined with people from all over the world straining to hear about what archaeologists had to say about post-medieval Ireland. By contrast, your editor noted a few echoing lecture theatres hosting only a handful of speakers and delegates…. Clearly, the rest of the world believes in the significance and viability of Irish historical archaeology - hopefully it won’t be too much longer before our own Irish archaeological colleagues take notice!

IPMAG goes international (again!)
With a background in the archaeology of plantation-era settlement in the Irish midlands, Dr. James Lyttleton (member of the IPMAG committee) has begun to look further afield, examining some of the earliest connections between Ireland and North America. James is currently based in the Dept. of Anthropology and Archaeology at Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada, where he holds a post-doctoral research fellowship from Memorial’s Institute of Social and Economic Research. He is working on a comparative study of one planter family, the Calverts, who as Lords Baltimore, acquired estates contemporaneously in Ireland and North America. While much attention has been paid to the efforts of this family in establishing some of the earliest English colonies in Maryland and Newfoundland, little research has taken place on their initial colonial experience in Ireland, a country which was undergoing cultural, economic and religious transformation with the arrival of English and Scottish planters. In the next article, James explains why Newfoundland and Maryland matter to Ireland…

Exploring the seventeenth-century colonisation of Newfoundland and Maryland – the Irish connection
By James Lyttleton

The 1st Lord Baltimore, George Calvert, after having resigned his position as Secretary of State in the royal court at London, declared his Catholicism, and moved with his family to newly-acquired lands in Ireland in 1625. His peerage was named after one of his Irish manors, Baltimore in County Longford, though it was to another manor that he established his main residence, at Clohamon, County Wexford. There was a pre-existing castle on this estate, either constructed by the Anglo-Normans in the 13th century or the Gaelic-Irish in the 15th century. Either way, it appears that the Calverts did not renovate this castle and instead built a manor house on the grounds.

Sir William Brereton, an English traveller, described the Clohamon residence in 1635 as ‘a brave house, but of no great strength, nor built castle-wise’. It was during their sojourn in Ireland that the Calverts came into contact with a number of Catholic gentry families, including the Carrolls and
the Talbots, families who were to follow the Lords Baltimore across the Atlantic and become a prominent part of Maryland’s subsequent history.

Sir George made the first transatlantic voyage to North America from his Irish ‘brave house’ in 1627, spending a summer and autumn in his Newfoundland colony at Ferryland on the Avalon Peninsula. He obviously liked what he saw, going back to Clohamon and bringing his family to Ferryland in the following year. Contrary to earnest hopes, the Newfoundland winter proved too harsh for Calvert, observing that from mid-October to mid-May ‘there is a sad face of wynter upon all this land’.

With the onset of summer again, Sir George sailed south to Virginia. Because of their religion, the Calvert party was not allowed to settle in Virginia; instead they sailed back to England, where Sir George worked to have the northern half of the Chesapeake granted to him. A charter was issued to the family in 1632, but not before Sir George passed away, bequeathing his title and lands to his eldest son, Cecil.

While the 2nd Lord Baltimore was busy establishing the Maryland colony, he was also settling his Irish estate with English Catholic tenants from Lincolnshire and Bedfordshire. A village, with a market and a mill had arisen in the vicinity of the Calvert manor house. Despite the outbreak of troubles in the middle of the seventeenth century and the family’s Catholicism, the family continued to maintain their holdings in Co. Wexford right through the seventeenth century and into the next.

This coming year, a field school is being held at Clohamon involving archaeology students from Memorial University of Newfoundland and University College Cork. A field surface collection of artefacts and geophysical survey has already being carried out this winter in the vicinity of Clohamon Castle to identify potential areas associated with the Calvert occupation of the site. This will be followed up with trial excavation to ascertain the nature of the remains of the manor house there and other associated structures such as the bawn, which may have contained a renaissance-style garden and other buildings necessary for the running of a large estate. This will form the basis of a comparative study of English colonisation in the North Atlantic world and how Ireland was used as a stepping stone in the opening of the New World as was clearly the case with the proprietary colonies of the Lords Baltimore in Newfoundland and Maryland.

**A cobbled courtyard in Deerpark, Co. Galway (E2057)**

*By Tom Janes*

In early 2006, a post-medieval site at Deerpark, Co. Galway was excavated by Headland Archaeology Ltd under the direction of Tom Janes in advance of construction of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road Scheme, supported by the NRA and Galway County Council. Deerpark (E2057) was located approximately 3.8 km southeast of Athenry, on lands formerly owned by Mary Jo O’Dea. The land comprised undulating farmland which was under pasture at the time of excavation. A wall along the eastern edge of the area represents the remnants of a demesne wall associated with Tallyho Lodge - a small country house depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1841 (Sheet 96).

Excavation revealed a cobbled yard surface measuring c. 570 sq m defined by the course of a limestone wall. Artefacts recovered from site included fragments of clay pipes, glazed pottery and metal objects; some animal bone was also recovered. The remains of a stone wall survived on three sides of the courtyard.

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1 Please contact the author (tom@headlandarchaeology.ie) if you are interested in copies of the data analysis.
The wall was of similar construction and dimensions on all three sides, comprising roughly-hewn medium limestone blocks, bonded with a lime mortar, 0.5 m wide and surviving to two courses.

The south-eastern wall section was notable for a gap midway along its length, through which a cobbled causeway flanked by two drainage ditches extended. The causeway was discernible as two parallel banks on the surface of the field immediately beyond the south-eastern limits of the site. These banks are the only trace of the site depicted on the first edition map (Sheet 96).

Both ditches terminated approximately 2m south-east of the walls. The fill of the western ditch yielded a quantity of animal bone. Species represented by this assemblage included sheep, goats, horses, cattle and unidentified large and medium mammals. There was no evidence of butchery on any of the bones from these ditches.

In the south-east corner of the site, outside the projected line of the boundary wall, was a rectangular stone-lined feature, interpreted as a probable well or cistern. Pottery recovered from the basal fill has been dated to the 17th – 18th century. A sample of pine pitch was also recovered from this layer. This is a material with a number of uses, including the waterproofing and sealing of containers, an accelerant for fires, and a means of repairing damaged hooves. The latter is probably the use to which the material was put in Deerpark, as it is likely that the site functioned as a stables and/or kennels associated with the nearby Tallyho Lodge.

The cobbled yard surface measured approximately 26m north/south by 22m east/west. Distinct areas within this yard were defined by different sizes and patterns of cobbles. The largest of these areas comprised a cobbled surface covering the south-west corner of the site within the area delimited by the boundary wall. Although heavily truncated on its north-west edges this surface was likely to have originally extended across the north-west corner of the site within the projected limits of the boundary wall.
A second distinct cobbled area was identified immediately north-west of this spread, and beyond the projected extent of the boundary walls. The width and orientation of this surface, as well as its location, suggest that it may represent a north-western continuation of the causeway identified on the south-eastern edge of the site.

On the western edge of the cobbled surface were the remains of a sub-rectangular structure defined by a tiled surface and the lower course of a mortared wall. These deposits were sealed by a layer of probable collapse. The tiled surface measured 4.5m east/west by 6m north/south. It had an L-shaped extension from its north-east corner. The fired clay tiles which comprised the surface were 0.2m² and 0.1m thick, and were laid on a plaster bedding. The wall defining the limit of the structure was of similar form to the boundary walls discussed above. It only survived to a height of one course. The best preserved section was at the south-west corner of the structure. A plaster rendering was noted on sections of the internal face in this area.

No trace of the wall was identified on the eastern side of the structure. However, the cobbled surface appeared to have a defined limit east of the tiled surface. This may indicate that any possible eastern wall had been demolished. A combination of the lack of identified structures with analysis of both the faunal remains and the pottery indicates that the site at Deerpark was unlikely to have had a domestic function. Only twenty sherds of domestic pottery were recovered from stratified contexts (Doyle 2007), and around 17% of the bone assemblage displayed evidence of toothmarks (Tourunen 2007).

The relatively high proportion of gnawed bones, along with the presence of pine pitch, suggests that horses and hounds may indeed once have been stabled and kennelled here. None of the structures identified during the excavations appear to have functioned as either stables or kennels. However, such buildings may exist beyond the limits of excavation, or they may have been built of timber, and have left no trace in the archaeological record.

Local tradition maintains that Deerpark was the location for the kennels of the Galway Blazers, a well-known local hunt. However, the dates retrieved from
excavation, and study of Ordnance Survey mapping, indicate that the site had fallen out of use by the time the hunt was formed in 1839. It is likely that the complex at Deerpark represents a courtyard and ancillary structures associated with the nearby Tallyho Lodge; one of the earlier seats of the Persse family.

The Persses had become one of the wealthiest and most influential families in east Galway by the late 18th century when ‘Old’ Burton Persse settled at Tallyho Lodge (Lane 1996, 403). This house was situated approximately 200m northwest of the site at Deerpark and is the first house settled by Burton, the youngest brother of Col. William Persse of Roxborough. He later moved approximately one mile south west, and built Persse Lodge.

The remains of a walled garden are incorporated into the modern farm buildings which currently occupy the site of Tallyho Lodge. At the entrance to this garden is a date stone of 1712, which does not appear to be in situ, but it is likely to be a remnant of the original lodge. Burton Persse’s son, Burton de Burgh Persse, inherited Persse Lodge in the 1820s and replaced it with a neo-Gothic house in baronial style, which he named Moyode Castle (Roy 1997, 194). The house, which became the nucleus of a 3000 acre estate, stands in ruins today and a number of ancillary and associated structures remain (Roy 2001, 197-198). The footprint of Moyode Estate is also still clearly visible on OS mapping, and in topographical features. It also merited a mention by Samuel Lewis, although the lands at Tallyho Cross and Deerpark did not (Lewis 1837, 449). The site at Deerpark appears to have been abandoned around the time that Burton Persse built Persse Lodge, probably to be replaced by a complex of similar function closer to this new estate house.

Lewis, S. 1837 A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland. London

Jarama: remembering a battlefield.
By Franc Myles

Introduction
For many English-speaking visitors, the main focus of a visit to the battlefield of Jarama, Spain is undoubtedly Suicide Hill. This is a ridge some 680m above sea level, perched on the eastern side of a steep slope with the Jarama River running along its foot. The ridge fronts a slightly higher area of plateau to the east, which falls back to the Tajuña valley to the rear. As was the case when the battle commenced on 12 February 1937, the landscape is dominated by olive trees and unimproved areas of scrubland and is crisscrossed by barrancas, rocky gorges which provided cover both for those attacking and those attempting to defend the ridge.

This particular corner of the battlefield has become a place of commemoration specifically for the International Brigades, which, with great loss of life, kept open the highway from Madrid to Valencia, thus preserving the lifeline of the Republic’s capital for the duration of the war. The Suicide Hill sector is of particular significance to those commemorating Irish, British, and American volunteers, as this is where the XV International Brigade defended and held approximately 1.5km of the line over the first three days of the battle.

Where historical accounts, both primary
and secondary, differ significantly in relation to what actually took place here (any investigation of the Republican conduct of the war and the role of the International Brigades in particular is fraught with political nuance), an archaeological examination of the landscape can and has illuminated aspects of the written accounts of the battle and perhaps more satisfactorily redefined the place for those who visit, both the merely curious and for those who come to commemorate those who fought or died there.

Map of Suicide Hill

**The battle**

The battle began as a breakthrough by Nationalist armies from the west, which quickly advanced across the Jarama and began to climb the slope towards the plateau above, with the primary objective of cutting the Valencia road to the rear. Where the Brigades had the disadvantage of poor weaponry, rudimentary training and no field maps, they at least held a dominant position on the landscape. The British Battalion of the XV Brigade advanced as four companies on the morning of 12 February south of a road connecting a bridge over the Jarama with Morata de Tajuña, a small market town 5km to the rear. After crossing the plateau the volunteers took up positions along Suicide Hill, which was initially referred to as Casa Blanca Hill. This recalls a small farmhouse along the centre of the ridge, which provided some limited cover for one side but an obvious artillery target for the other. The machine gun company stayed slightly to the rear covering the advanced positions.

Suicide Hill from the British machine gunners position

These positions were held until midday when an artillery barrage provided by German units began to sight in on the Casa Blanca and veteran Moorish troops began their assault on the Conical Hill to the right, held by No. 1 Company. The only British unit present with previous combat experience in Spain, it was commanded by Kit Conway, a former IRA volunteer who, along with many of the more experienced NCOs, was not to survive the battle.

Despite the enthusiasm and high morale of the Republican troops, mistakes were made at command level: the machine gun company was unable to benefit from its commanding position held on the first day due to the fact that they’d been supplied with the wrong ammunition for their Russian Maxims. This resulted in the Nationalist forces holding Suicide Hill by nightfall. More significantly, the British held the left flank of the Republican army and the area beyond that to the south was left undefended, an advantage not recognised by the Nationalists.

It is difficult to calculate the losses of the British Battalion after the first day. The remnants of the three rifle companies had withdrawn at nightfall to a position along a sunken road to the rear of the machine guns; of the 600 who had taken to the field on the morning of the 12th, only 225 remained uninjured. By the following evening, only 140 were capable of bearing arms, with the death toll reaching 200.

The following day saw the Nationalists attack the British positions, to be beaten off by the machine gun company, by now supplied with the correct ammunition. Their capture by enfilading Moorish troops that afternoon was followed by a
disorganised withdrawal of the Battalion that evening. The Nationalists held back and stragglers behind the lines were rallied by Frank Ryan and Jock Cunningham and early on the third morning they advanced and retook positions on the edge of the plateau overlooking Suicide Hill.

The difficulty of commemorating Jarama is perhaps best illustrated by comparing the initial experiences of the troops of the British Battalion with those of the American Lincoln Battalion, which had an Irish company partly made up of Irish volunteers who had recently transferred from the British unit.

The Lincolns arrived behind the lines held by the British on 16 February and pitched camp on a hilltop to the rear which was later confusingly dubbed Suicide Hill by veterans. Here are perhaps the best surviving fortifications on the landscape, yet the Americans hardly spent five days on the hill and would not perhaps have had time to construct the system of trenches which survives there today. It is referred to as Suicide Hill (in predominantly pro-Communist accounts) due to the fact that the Americans were unaware that the early morning profile of their occupation would make an excellent target for Nationalist machine gunners, artillery and aircraft.

Although the resulting barrage must have been terrifying, it resulted in only two fatalities. The Lincolns were to suffer more serious casualties when they took over the line from the British and were sent in a series of ill-advised over-the-top attacks from 23 February, all of them repelled by the Nationalists now dug in to the east of the original Suicide Hill. American casualties were to be in the same league as their British comrades, with 125 surviving from a battalion of 400. Despite their efforts, Suicide Hill was to remain in Nationalist hands and here the front line remained until the end of the war, with trench fortifications and strong points constructed along both front lines.

**Commemoration**

The social mechanics of commemoration are perhaps complex issues and the necessity of commemorating those who defended the Spanish Republic does not have to be explained here. The nature of Republican commemoration perhaps differs from that experienced on French and Belgian sites associated with the First World War, where the emphasis is placed firmly on the struggle against fascism but also on peace and reconciliation.

![International Brigades monument](image)

There are three separate loci of commemoration at this sector of the Jarama front. A substantial monument to the International Brigades in concrete and steel was unveiled in 2006 on a hilltop just to the rear of the lines. The hilltop itself was fortified with trenches, machine gun positions and tunnels after the front line had stabilised in March 1937 and this perhaps is the best place to appreciate and explore the physical remains of the battle in the landscape. The location of the monument is not identifiable in the historical literature; however its construction has facilitated a dwindling group of veterans unable to visit Suicide Hill. On another level the huge metal clenched fist replaces a stone memorial to the fallen Internationals built in 1937, fragments of which still survive where it was bulldozed off the landscape in 1939.

A second, more makeshift monument has been erected in the past 20 years, close to the position held by the British machine
gun company prior to their capture. This position directly overlooks Suicide Hill and the valley below and was directly shelled on the second day of the battle, falling into the hands of the Nationalists that evening and remaining behind Nationalist lines for the remainder of the war. The monument comprises a small cairn of stones, with a rusted metal upright holding the 3-pointed red star of the International Brigades. A hand written plaque over the colours of the Spanish republic is dedicated:

| A KIT CONWAY Y OTROS 200 INTERNACIONALES  
| DEL BAT. BRITANICO CAIDOS POR LA LIBERDA 
| 12-14 FEBRERO 1937 |

A small pile of scrap metal has accumulated in front of the cairn, with personal items such as cooking utensils, boot studs and tin cans predominating; rifle cartridges, clips and other debris of a more military provenance have been removed over the years by souvenir hunters. The debris presumably have no connection with the members of the British Battalion which occupied the position for barely 48 hours, yet Soviet Maxim cartridges can still be found in the scrub in advance of the machine gun positions.

This monument replaces a similar one constructed immediately after the battle by members of the British Battalion, which was again destroyed by Nationalists on their victory.

The third locus of commemoration is the cemetery at Morata, located to the rear of the front line. A majority of the bodies recovered from no man’s land were buried here during the war, to be disinterred and dumped on waste ground to the rear of the cemetery throughout the 1940s. Work undertaken by French veteran François Mazou in the 1980s resulted in the erection of a small plaque to the 5000 Republican troops killed at Jarama, which has more recently been consolidated by the erection of a larger memorial, thanks to the efforts of a recently-deceased Irish veteran Bob Doyle.

Archaeological investigations
Archaeological work engaging with Franco-era Spain has concentrated mostly on mass grave sites. These hold the remains of the many thousands of socialists, communists, anarchists, schoolteachers and even liberals, executed for their beliefs, their resistance to the victors or simply by hearsay. Excavations have been undertaken under the auspices of the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, a body established on a grassroots basis in 2000, which has calculated the existence of some 30,000 such sites throughout the country.

In Catalunya, the organisation No Jubilem La Memòria perhaps focuses more on commemoration and education; the British field hospital located in a cave near La Bisbal de Falset has however been investigated by Angela Jackson in a manner more familiar perhaps to historical archaeologists than to battlefield historians (Beyond the Battlefield: Testimony, Memory and Remembrance of a Cave Hospital in the Spanish Civil War, Pontypool 2005).

The excavations throughout Spain have now uncovered hundreds of burials, emphasising the oppression supposedly forgotten under the post-Franco pact of amnesia, where old wounds were let lie for the good of the fledging democracy. Politically, this is to the advantage of the Socialist PSOE and where the enacting of the Ley de Memoria Histórica (Law of Historical Memory) in 2007 has undeniably given the excavations a legislative basis, this writer is unaware of investigations targeted at the mass graves of Nationalist victims of Republican repression.

The excavations have not therefore been uncontroversial, even among those on the left. Often undertaken in the media spotlight with relatives of the deceased present standing along the baulks, the excavations provide harrowing testimony of the extent of the Nationalist repression. Other more contentious issues have emerged: the muted enthusiasm of some families for the closure provided by the recovery of physical remains of their loved ones has contrasted with the discomfiture
evident on the faces of the family of Federico García Lorca, who are refusing to have his grave disturbed. In Galicia and León former *huídos*, partisans who remained behind to continue the war from the mountains, have argued that the remains of their comrades should stay in the ground as incontrovertible and enduring evidence against Franco and his regime.

**Fieldwork at Jarama**

Battlefield sites of the civil war have in the main been left to encroaching suburbia and battlefield tourism, with towns such as Belchite and Gandesa preserved as ruins. With the seventieth anniversary of the war, such sites have accommodated an increasing number of visitors, including those there specifically to commemorate fallen comrades and family members.

Conversations held over the years with Irish veterans have underlined the necessity of a more considered investigation of the landscape, with perhaps a secondary concern regarding its physical preservation. In this context, limited investigation of the Suicide Hill sector, partly funded by the Irish Department of Social and Family Affairs, has had as its aim the facilitation of an accurate historical recovery of the battlefield and the clarification of areas contested historically and sometimes obscured in the writings of ideologically-driven historians.

Recent fieldwork undertaken by Spanish and Irish volunteers has located the remains of the Casa Blanca under heavy scrub on the hilltop just to the south of Suicide Hill. It was almost completely destroyed by artillery on the first day of the battle and apparently never after occupied by Nationalist troops, due to its being so obvious a target.

Other work has involved an investigation of the place of death of Charlie Donnelly, a Tyrone poet of some promise who was killed with the Lincolns on 24 February. His best-known poem, written some weeks before his death, is particularly poignant as his body lay in no man’s land for several days, awaiting ‘the tolerance of crows’. Donnelly’s commemoration is an important aspect of local commemoration in Dungannon, where a writers’ school is organised annually in his memory. Attempts to erect a permanent memorial to the poet appear to be reaching fruition and a site has been selected some distance away in the community of Rivas Vaciamadrid on the edge of the battlefield.

A detailed photographic survey of the sector will be completed in September 2009 and a publication in 2011 will detail the results of the research.

**Conclusion**

IPMAG IX coincides with the 2009 memorial walk at Jarama, which with each passing year sees fewer veterans retracing their steps and those of their fallen comrades. The walk is led each year by Seve Monterro and it takes place this February without Bob Doyle, who passed away in January. The walk revisits various locations on the battlefield and is increasingly informed by the research being undertaken. The archaeological recovery of the battlefield is in turn being increasingly seen as a legitimate and timely attempt to honour those who gave their lives attempting to defeat fascism in Spain.

**Further information**

For information on the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, including discussions of recent archaeological investigations (in Spanish) see http://www.memoriahistorica.org/index.php?newlang=english

Information in English on No Jubilem La Memòria can be found at http://www.nojubilemlamemoria.tk/

The writer welcomes applications from volunteers wishing to participate in the project over the coming two years.

**An estate tenant’s cottage in Moyode (E2353)**

By Tom Janes

In early 2006, a post-medieval dwelling at Moyode, Co. Galway was excavated by Headland Archaeology Ltd under the

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2 Please contact the author (tom@headlandarchaeology.ie) if you are interested in copies of the data analysis.
direction of Tom Janes in advance of construction of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road Scheme, supported by the NRA and Galway County Council. Moyode (E2353) was located on the northern edge of Moyode Demesne, approximately 3.5 km south-east of Athenry. Before excavation the site was visible above ground as a series of linear banks and rectilinear mounds. Excavation revealed two stone-walled fields associated with a three-roomed cottage. Pottery recovered from this site suggests a late 18th- or early 19th-century date for the use of the complex.

During excavation the site was divided into two areas: Area A to the west, Area B to the east. Preserved cultivation furrows, contemporary with the occupation of the site, were noted in both areas both before and during excavation. A number of ferrous objects, fragments of clay tobacco pipe and sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from these furrows.

Area A comprised a large drystone-walled field with two associated features likely to have been animal shelters incorporated into the wall. In Area A, a possible byre was identified in the north-west corner. It was defined by three low walls constructed of rough and randomly coursed stones with a rubble core, surviving to three courses with a maximum height of 0.5m.

The quantity of rubble around the structure suggests the walls may originally have been higher. No roof slates or evidence of roof beams were identified in the rubble. Traces of mortar bonding were noted and plaster rendering was evident on a section of the internal face.

A field around this structure was defined by two similar boundary walls. The first delimited the south-east and south-west edges, and the second defined the north-west edge. The lack of a similar wall on the north-east edge was due to later agricultural improvements.

A smaller field in the north-east corner of Area B was defined by a drystone wall surviving to one course; this field was smaller than that in Area A. A spread of limestone rubble representing the collapsed upper courses was noted on both sides of the wall. Cultivation furrows were also noted in this field, which was likely to be a garden associated with the cottage.
The most notable feature on site was a three-roomed structure in the south-west corner of Area B. This was sealed beneath a layer of rubble and roofing slates representing the collapsed upper courses of the building. Finds from this layer included three padlocks. These were all of a size suitable for a door rather than a chest or similar item and might represent the padlocking of the doors and windows after the abandonment of the cottage.

The external wall was a total of 35m long, 0.7m thick and survived to two courses high. The internal dimensions were 10m by 4.5m. The wall was constructed of rough-hewn, randomly-coursed limestone, with a lime mortar bond, a rubble core and a lime-based plaster on the interior. An entrance with a cobbled threshold was identified in the north-east wall.

Both internal walls were similarly constructed with a lime plaster on both faces. The northernmost of the walls delimited a small room. The doorway was at the north-east end of the wall, immediately to the north-west of the entrance to the building. The second wall defined the north-west wall of a third room. Both internal walls delimited a large central room with internal dimensions of 5.8m by 5.8m.

A large fireplace and hearth comprised of irregular limestone flags was in the centre of the house. A fragment of an iron cauldron and the partial remains of a teapot were among finds recovered from around the fireplace. These items appear to have been left exactly where they were used, perhaps suggesting an unplanned or sudden abandonment of the dwelling. A second fireplace was incorporated into the internal wall of the third room of the structure and shared a chimney flue with the larger central fireplace.

This complex of structures is likely to represent the remains of the farmstead of a tenant of the Moyode estate. The total area enclosed by the two stone-walled fields is equivalent to around ¼ acre. The typical plot of land apportioned to a low-ranking estate tenant was between ¼ and 1 acre (Mitchell & Ryan 2001, 331-338). This would have been intended to provide subsistence for the tenant and his family, while paid employment was provided by the estate.

The animals represented by the faunal assemblage recovered from the site are largely typical of those found on domestic sites. Cutmarks were evident on a number of the bones and were likely to be the result of butchery and consumption (Tourunen 2007).

The dimensions and internal layout of the structure in Area B are typical of an 18th- or early 19th-century estate cottage (Aalen et al. 1997, 146-159). This is consistent with the dates returned from analysis of the pottery assemblage from the site (Doyle 2007). These dates ranged from the 17th to the 20th century, with the majority of the pottery being from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.
The nature of the assemblage is typical of the type of domestic ware owned by a tenant farmer of the socio-economic status of the inhabitants of the Moyode cottage (Zilic 2002). It is a mixture of utilitarian vessels such as storage jars and chamber pots, along with finer items including a teapot and matching cups. The cottage was not without decoration; a fragment of Staffordshire pottery was identified as the base of an ornamental figurine of a cat (Doyle 2007, 5).

Griffith’s Valuation of 1853 records the buildings as being a ‘herd’s house and land’, leased from Burton Persse, the owner of the Moyode estate, and one of the more affluent landowners of east Galway. There is no record of the tenants who inhabited the buildings. The buildings are depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1841 (Sheet 96), but are absent from the second edition of 1895.

There is no record of the tenants who inhabited the buildings, and no record of why the buildings were abandoned. However, Roy notes Burton Persse’s pride that no tenants of his estate were evicted or forced into the workhouse during the Famine (Roy 2001, 219). The impression of a hasty abandonment of the cottage given by the artefactual assemblage could, therefore, be misleading. It might merely have been the case that after the death of the last tenant the property was locked and left to fall into disrepair.

Feehan, J 2003 Farming in Ireland. Faculty of Agriculture, University College Dublin
Mitchell, F. & Ryan, M. 2001 Reading the Irish Landscape. Town House, Dublin

Moyode E2353: Detail of reconstruction drawing of cottage and associated structures

Illustrations by: Eavan O'Dochartaigh
Unearthing post-medieval Sligo: 5, 6, 7-8 Castle St., Sligo; an initial report (07E0096)
By Martin A. Timoney

Running from the ancient Castle St. to the modern Rockwood Parade in Abbeyquarter North, Sligo, is a four-part site, 5, 6 and 7-8, Castle St., the former W.A. and A.F. Woods hardware, tools, shoes, toys and farming stores first established in the mid-19th century. This small site, 28m by 77.5m, was archaeologically examined for the Quinn family over a four-month period from March to July 2008. One stone with lines of pock-marked decoration was discovered in the wall of No. 4 facing into No. 5 during an advance assessment in 2007.

Most of this small site, the only property running from Castle St. to the Garvogue River, was covered with standing buildings which had been successively added on to the four street-front properties, the most recent being in 1992 when a steel structure requiring several large pad holes completed the covering of all but the small open yard at the river end. The four street-front buildings were renovated so only a small number of pad holes were opened within them.

The site, 16925.33590, on the south side of the Garvogue River between the two bridges, lies between Sligo Dominican Abbey of 1252 and the known location of Sligo Castle, that built by Richard de Burgo in 1310. The present St. John’s Cathedral is on the site of an historically-documented medieval hospital. The castles on Castle St. are believed to be later than the high medieval. Sligo possessed two 17th-century military forts, the Green Fort and The Stone Fort, with the latter built on the site of the de Burgo castle. The Market Cross, marked on the first Ordnance Survey maps but not seen since, was less than a hundred metres to the west of the site. Rumours about a former castle in High St. arose in the early 1970s and again earlier this decade, but seem to be totally unfounded. Besides these examples, there are no known or suspected standing late medieval or post-medieval structure in Sligo town, although the discovery of sandstone roofing stones at a number of sites in the town, including the adjacent Nos. 9-10, implies the former presence of 17th-century houses of status.

In 1975, Sligo Corporation laid a main sewer along the south side of the river. This involved moving masses of material out from this south bank into the centre of the river. Having experienced an extensive range of medieval pottery in Patrick F. Wallace’s excavations of Wood Quay in Dublin during 1974, where one of my colleagues was Rosanne Meenan, I walked this disturbed material several times in summer 1975. Nothing but modern material was exposed and there was no evidence for a medieval or post-medieval settlement in Sligo. Since then, test excavations within the centre of Sligo produced a very limited range and limited quantity of post-medieval finds.

Until Rockwood Parade was constructed following the line of the sewer in the early 1990s, the only access to these stores was from Castle St. Since 1992, several properties along this stretch of the Garvoge River were archaeologically investigated in advance of development; the reports on these will now be re-examined in the light of the finds from 5, 6 and 7-8 Castle St. This initial note is to make a basic statement on the surprising quantity and range of material found.

Archaeological work on site began with a five-week period of monitoring the demolition and removal of the standing buildings by J.J. Rhatigan & Co. None were found to be incorporating pre-1800 structures nor were there any reused materials from any medieval castle or any late medieval town house (unlike Castledargan House, Ballygawley, of mid-18th-century date, which was found to have a medieval beam incorporated in its structure). This site produced nothing more interesting than a length of MGWR 1896 rail used as a structural beam. Photographic record was made to the extent that someone could, with the advance site record plans, reconstruct the buildings in detail. Some pieces of lifting
equipment and a shoe stitching machine were saved for the proposed Coach Museum in the to-be-restored mill buildings in Ballymote.

Following removal of the rubble, differential deposition of soils was noted, with deposits of black soil thickening towards the river end. Three shallow ditches, parallel to Castle St. and recognizable as black soil cutting into the underlying gray glacial deposits, were identified in the southern part of the site. There were no structures except for a well, probably of the mid-19th century.

Detailed analysis of the 2,400 finds (acknowledging the assistance of Mary B. Timoney in the counting process), has not yet begun but the following information derived from the on-site recording and the initial counting of the finds does tell us something of post-medieval Sligo, something that will come as a surprise to many people interested in the town. Most of the material recovered from this site dates from the 17th to 20th century.

There seems to be a great variety of animals represented among the 780 bones and 29 animal horns; no human bones were noted. The faunal remains have not yet been examined in detail, so we still do not know if there is evidence of bone worked for tools, weapons or ornaments. Three exceptions include two bone scoops or ‘apple corers’, one which is only partly manufactured, and a knife handle.

A total of 252 oyster shells, 28 cockle shells, 11 mussel shells and 9 as yet unidentified shells were collected. All these shellfish could have been gathered along any of the three bays adjacent to Sligo. Oyster shell predominates, as is common in Sligo, and there seems to be two types of oyster. The small number of cockles is surprising.

Eight organic samples, 46 soil samples and 151 pieces of wood, including bottoms of posts, barrel staves, the base of a vessel, the possible base of a basket and fragments of trees and bushes, were retained. None of the wood appears to be architectural.

The 20 sandstone roofing stones suggest that there was a 17th-century building in the vicinity. One fragment of a possible clay ridge tile was recovered. Among the 59 pieces of glass were tops, necks and bottoms of bottles; one piece of spun window glass was recovered intact. The only clearly identifiable pieces of metal were part of a beaten brass bowl, probably of ecclesiastical origin, that may have been in the process of being cut into narrow metal strips, and a front horseshoe of post-medieval date.

Initial examination of the 235 pottery sherds indicates the presence of 17th- and 18th-century wares, both local and from Devon. No medieval pottery was identified. Fragments of clay pipes totalled 600. Both flat-heeled and spurred types were represented and there were no large bowl clay pipes. There was a concentration of 260 stems and 14 bowls in a pit in the lower part of the site. Some of the stems are decorated with a roulette wheel and some bowls had a roulette impression below the rim. One bowl has EB stamped on the foot.3

Among the 133 pieces of leather were several soles and other parts of shoes, a square purse, shaped pieces of leather and scrap leather, possibly representing the waste from a leather workshop, although no leather working tools were found. Woods did make shoes into the mid-20th century, so perhaps we have a continuity of this craft on this site over a period of several centuries.

Detailed examination of these post-medieval finds from Sligo, which has yet to begin in earnest, may provide evidence for trade with Galway, Bristol and beyond. In that regard it is worth recalling the doggerel:

Herring from Sligo,  
and Salmon from The Bann,  
Hath Made in Bristol,  
Many a Rich Man.

3 Editor’s note: Dr. Peter Davey discusses EB pipes and their Bristol and north of England provenances in the forthcoming Ireland and Britain in the Atlantic World volume (IPMAG Proceedings 2).
The Achill Archaeological Field School is a training school for students of archaeology and anthropology based at the Achill Archaeology Centre in Dooagh and at the Deserted Village of Slievemore, Achill Island, Co. Mayo. The Field School is involved in a study of the prehistoric and historic landscape at Slievemore, incorporating a research excavation at a number of sites within the village. Slievemore is rich in archaeological monuments that span a 5000-year period from the Neolithic to the post-medieval.

The Deserted Village Project began in 1991 with the research objective of completing a thorough archaeological survey of all sites and monuments (prehistoric and historic) that make up the diverse and significant archaeological landscape of Slievemore. The excavation of selected dwellings and their associated gardens has been an integral part of the fieldwork since 1991, and represents a pioneering effort at addressing the material lives of a much-neglected segment of Irish society.

In the past 18 years, several thousand students from 21 countries have come to Achill to study archaeology and to learn about the people who lived in the village through their material remains. For 2009, the Field School has received an increase to the academic credits available on its courses that are provided by the National University of Ireland Galway. This is in recognition of the modifications made to its courses that reflect the changes in professional archaeological best practice and recognised international standards.

In conjunction with its field skill tuition courses, the Field School has developed a range of Professional Development courses, providing specialist tuition in specific areas of interest. Such courses include: digital survey and mapping, ceramics identification and environmental archaeology.

Field school students excavating on Slievemore.

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For further details on all our Professional Development and Field School courses, including dates and costs, visit our website at [www.achill-fieldschool.com](http://www.achill-fieldschool.com) or contact Gary Linehan, our Administrator, (gary@achill-fieldschool.com) or at 098 43564.

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