

## ANTIQUITIES

Abbeys, Castles, Fortresses, Round Towers, Early Churches, Sculptured Crosses, Stone Circles, Ogham Stones, Cairns, Souterrains, Pillar Stones, Cromlechs, Forts, Rathes, Moats, Tumuli or ancient monuments of any kind. Exact location of each with short description, noting condition, etc. Relate local legend or tradition associated with building or object. State if in charge of Office of Public Works. Right of way to public? Admission charge (if any). Name and address of caretaker, or where key is kept.

Strade Abbey Situated in Strade village and beside the main road. It is in charge of Office of Public Works. There is a right-of-way and the gate is unlocked.

The ruins consist of nave, choir with vaulted chamber off south wall, and a south transept. The nave appears to have lost most of its northern wall as arching.

The nave is 67' by 22'. Its west gable has the remnants of a wide-splayed window. There are to each side of window four square post-holes running through the wall and at intervals in the wall's height. The post-holes are small, about 8" square.

The window sill is 7' from ground level inside and the window was perhaps 12' wide. Attached to west gable is a portion of nave wall (north). It is 6½' long and 40" thick and has chamfered sandstone edges ending in a roll-cornice about 11' up. Above this the wall is broken. Possibly an arch surmounted this. The gable is about 25' high behind this wall portion and about 20' high at south-west angle, the remainder being broken around window.

Nave south wall has, near west gable, a plain round-headed doorway through the thickness of the wall which is 4½'. The doorway is now about 7½' high. At about 14' up, and almost directly over the doorway, is a single-light pointed window, of brown and chamfered sandstone and of wide internal splay. The light would be about 6½' high by 20" wide. Further east along the nave south wall is a window of two lights, pointed leads and of chamfered sandstone. Each light is about 6½' high by 2' wide.

Nearly midway in south wall is a recess 8' wide, 3' high and 2' deep, pointed arch, chamfered. Behind the chancel arch are the remnants of a built-up and broken window. In the angle formed by the chancel arch south column and the south nave wall, is a pointed arch doorway, 38" wide and 35" high and of cut sandstone, chamfered. The inner jamb gives doorway a

(Plain sheets of foolscap paper to be used, if necessary, for recording additional information)

width of 55", the head being a half-round vaulted arch ending at chancel column.

The south nave wall is perhaps 25/30 ft. high.

To the north of the nave the gable (west) continues to meet a north wall which is 12' 9" from nave. The gable (west) has had a window which is built-up and broken. Of the north wall little survives to an appreciable height. It has, near west gable, a doorway whose upper part is missing. The doorway is plain, without cut stone and is 4' wide with internal splay to 5' 4". This wall is 40" thick.

The north transept has little left of interest except an east window near chancel arch north column. This window is of two lights, moulded and chamfered. The lights are round-headed with cusps and appears to be reconstructed as a piece of original mullion is inserted which is 7½" x 4½" by 35" high with picked chamfers. Each light is about 65" high and in width is 19¼" from old mullion and 20½" from the new. Overhead is intricate tracery of seven lights, the whole window being painted lead. The painted moulding is rebated and simple with plain terminals.

A piece of the north transept wall near north-west angle has a round headed plain recess.

The chancel arch is pointed - perhaps 20 ft high. The columns are 44" wide, faced with lower stone blocks. The north corbel (supporting arch springing) terminates in the figure of a bird apparently in a dying condition? This corbel also has a face and two other ornamentations of similar pattern. The south corbel terminates in the figure of the bird in the act of devouring something (looks like a large worm or small snake).

The choir is 48½' by 22'. Its large east window which is almost 10' from ground inside, was about 19' wide and perhaps almost 20' high. Its mullions are missing and its lead and wall above it - all also gone. It has a wide internal splay. Just a few feet beneath it and at intervals along the east gable are rounded corbels with a small hole in each.

Attached to the wall, its base at ground level, and directly under the east window, is a row of panels 36" high; ornamented. These have figures carved in relief, a central one 2' wide representing the Blessed Virgin holding her son in her arms, apparently a scene from the Nativity. This is flanked by a carved panel 14" wide, to each side. The adjacent four panels are blank of carving but have some ornamentation.

The choir north wall has seven, long separate lights each 2' wide and ending about 10/12 ft. up in painted leads except for two where leads are missing. Jambos are of chamfered sandstone and inner jamb has a wide splay.

West of the window which is second from the east gable, is built-up. Inside it is a recess, which is almost 7½' wide and is perhaps 12' high. It is almost 2½' deep. Closing the recess from ground level to a height of 3' are two flags, rough-picked to inside but carved on the outside into eight ornamented panels, each having the figure of a friar, and all in different attitudes, one with cross and book, one with hands uplifted in supplication, etc. etc. The head of the recess is closed by a painted arch of intricate tracery and flanked by ornamented uprights. (Perhaps this is altar of later construction).

Near the latter is a recess, painted arch with chamfered outer edge - 40" high and 7' wide.

A plain recess, round headed and partially broken, is situated under the window nearest east gable. This window is partially built up at the inner bottom.

The south choir wall has, towards east gable, two recesses, one which has half-arched arch, 11' high (approx), 7' wide and 15" deep.

The other recess has a cusped round-headed arch almost 5 ft. wide and 6 ft. high. This recess has two shallow piscinas with a small hole in each for releasing the water. Being, apparently, the recess where the sacred vessels were cleansed and stored (there is a shelf trace half-way up), this is further ornamented by two thin half-pillars at the sides, with simply moulded capitals and bases. The joint stones are left out to form the half-pillars.

Also in south choir wall is a doorway leading into a vaulted chamber. The doorway is slightly ogee headed with chamfered edges next to choir. It is of heavy sandstone - dimensions being 6' high and 28" wide.

The south choir wall is 25/30 ft. high and 44" thick except where the vaulted chamber abuts it - where it is 58" thick.

The vaulted apartment off the choir is 19'4" by 10'. It has in its west wall and near south-west angle, a plain rectangular doorway which is 27" wide and 5' 11" high. The doorway widens inwardly to 39".

The east wall has a rectangular loop, plain featured, 27" high and 5'5" wide with inward splay to 22" wide. The height of the vault is about 10', the vault springing starting at a height of 54".

On the chamber's floor are four slender carved slabs, two of them debris-covered.

To the exterior of south choir wall is the remnant of a wall which was apparently part of a range of lean-to buildings running the length of the nave as well. The corbels still project from the exterior abbey wall level.

NOTE: Above descriptive particulars not taken from any publication. I also communicated with office Public Works and Mrs. Heath informs me that no pamphlet has been issued on Strand Abbey.

## Strada Abbey (contd).

The abbey, which in the Annals of the Four Masters is properly called "mansurus aia levisan" was built in 1250/1252 by the lordans of Ballylahan castle. It was originally intended for the Franciscan order but Jordan's wife is traditionally said to have persuaded her spouse to grant it to the Dominicans. At a banquet in Ballylahan castle she refused to sit at the table until her husband promised the monastery in favour of the Dominicans.

The Cromwellian and penal times are said to have caused the decay of the abbey. A friar named Clarke, however, is said to have been the last monk of the abbey and his tombstone was uncovered some time ago, dated 1437.

Templemore old church. No right-of-way. Not in charge of office of P.W. Land of Mr. Michael Gallagher and situated near Strada Catholic Church.

A slight portion of wall is all that remains of this building together with two walls, each 10 1/2 feet high, of a building or apartment 20' wide which has in each wall a plain rectangular doorway whose lintel is half fallen. Over the lintel is a stone with wrought outer face which has a plain cross and the words - Requiescat in Pace, Amen, 1729 - engraved on it. This was perhaps a grave stone and may give an approximate time to the church which is said to be the one in use after the ruination of the abbey. This church was followed by a cruciform building which, with the exception of one transept, is now the Parochial Hall at Strada village.

A slab in the square apartment, inserted in the wall, says - "Here lie the remains of Capt. George Moore and his descendants."

Ruins of Ballylahan Castle. Land of Thomas Higgins. Is in charge of office of Public Works. No right-of-way. Situated near main Inveread/Castletown road junction with Solah main road.

Of the ruins, a portion of the double towered gate building, portions of the enclosing walls with a western gateway, are all that remain.

Check in "Irish Castles" page 72, says ..... "most irregular in its plan is the castle of the Mac Jordans (descendants of Jordan de Exeter) at Ballylahan in Mayo. It had a double-towered gate building but apparently possessed no flanking towers, a fact suggesting an earlier date for the main structure than for the gate-building which can hardly be earlier than about 1260."

Of the gate building there now remains a portion of the north-east tower with traces of adjoining wall, and a much smaller piece of the south-west tower with from it a length of flanking wall.

The north-east tower is approx. 45' high from outside and 25' from interior. It has two embrasured openings on present internal ground level. One is 51" wide and about 7 1/2' high with apex broken but which was a rectangular loop perhaps 4' high by 12" wide. The other embrasured apex was similar - its edges are broken. The wall is seven feet thick here. Over these windows and at a height of about 12' (internal) is a small remaining portion of vaulted roof. Above this the tower wall has a window looking east. The window has been reconstructed by office of Public Works. It is round-headed and would be approx. 6' wide by 9' high. The tower wall above it is at least 8' thick and 9' at sides. There is a small ~~reconstructed~~ rectangular loop near outer base of the tower.

which is also a reconstructed one. (all ones plain, without ornamentation).

The tower has a slight base better.

Cells of the south-east tower remains. Off it is a wall running south and then south-west - the whole being about 45' long and 15' high. It has two small, plain openings.

Portions of wall remain near the west end gate. This is plain featured, rounded lead end is 9 1/2" wide and about 18' high.

The bit of wall to the north-west has the remnants of a plain chimney.

From eastern gate tower to west gate is approx. 120 feet. It may have been at least 100 ft. from N. to S.

The earth-covered foundation line of a rectangular building is visible inside the boundary wall.

The castle is said to have been built by the Jordan de Exeter family who were barons and - who, coming with the Norman invasion, obtained land grants in the area, settled down and became "more Irish than the Irish themselves". Their descendants were the Mac Jordans.

Here it is said, dwelt the Jordans who built Steade abbey in 1250 or 1252. In the banqueting hall the Jordan is said to have been forced by his wife to forego his decision to give the manor to the Franciscans, when she refused to sit at the feast until his promise in favour of the Dominicans had been obtained.

By tradition, the Jordans are said to have had seven castles

Fort and souterrain in Lalkavane. Land of Mrs. Mary Mulroy. Fort is 35 yds. diameter. Fosse is 8' wide. Vallum 8' high. Souterrain is single-passage type. 4' wide at the mouth - excavated completely for a distance of 15'. About 20' of the passage remains and it is 3½' to 4' high. no right-of-way.

Lies in James Lynch's in Knockshabally. It has a north diameter of 30 yds. and its north averages 10/12 ft. above outer ground level. It is much overgrown and if there is a souterrain it is not discernible. no right-of-way.

Fort and Souterrain in Thomas Howley's in Gorteen. This fort is the usual type (35 yds) and the souterrain is temporarily closed. From accounts, it is said to have a single passage opening into a square chamber out of which there is the opening to another passage. no right-of-way.

Fort and souterrain in Dughtore. John Dunleavy's. Souterrain, which is at mouth debris-stone appears to be of the usual single passage type. no right-of-way.

Fort and souterrain in Gormanand. In Mrs. Mary Fitz's. A road has been cut through this fort which is a low one, and the souterrain opening is choked up, so that there is nothing of interest to see here.

Also in Gormanand, in Mrs. M. Mulroy's (different lady to one above) is a fort which is not completely circular being about 50 yds. by 35. It is 15 to 20 ft. high and the fosse is 20' wide where cut lined. no right-of-way.

Site of Shanaganna Castle. Michael Connolly's. Aghavand. Here it is said, once stood another of the Jordan castles which does not now exist.





STRAIDE ABBEY.



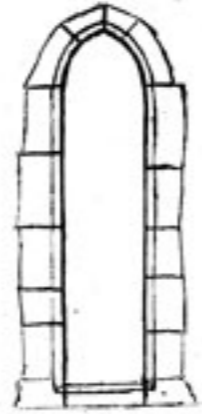
Recess of recess-choir south wall.  
(Chamfered edges)  
Pointed.



Small pointed recess in nave south wall.  
(Chamfered sides)



Pointed doorway in choir south wall.  
(Chamfered edges)  
Ogee headed.



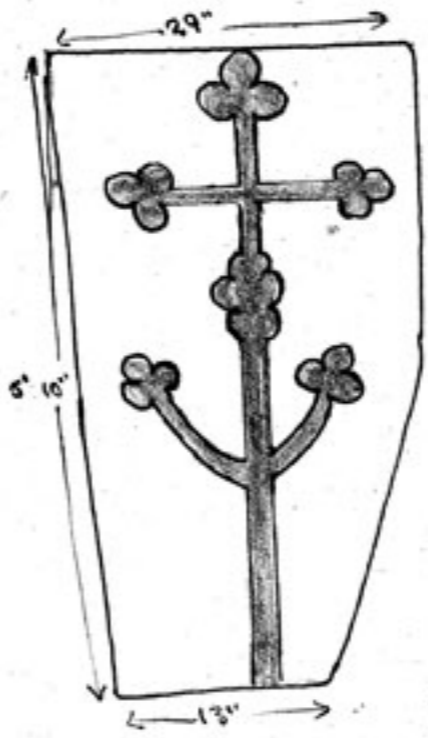
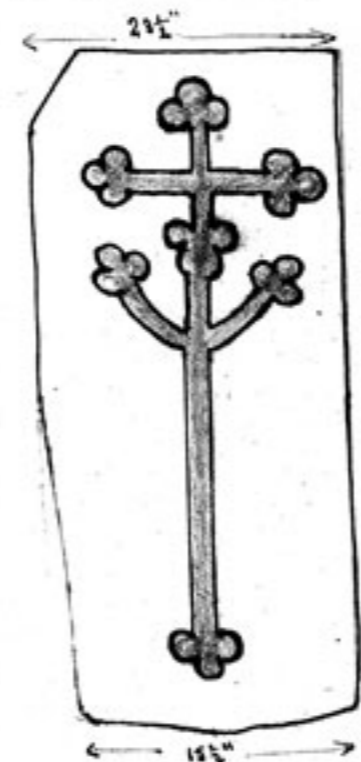
Choir window - north wall.  
(Chamfered & rebated)  
All windows similar.



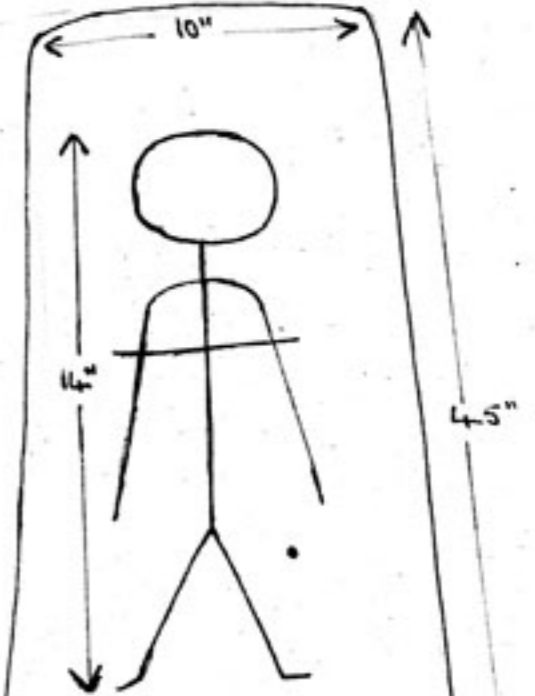
ornamentation - north-chancel arch corbel.



Terminal ornamentation of north corbel.



ORNAMENTED FLAG IN TAILED CHAMBER.



INSEED DRAWING ON FLAG  
in cemetery of abbey.  
[LISTED UNDER CURIOUSITIES]