

Cartographic and Historical Sources for Native Woodlands

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Forest Service



Native Woodland Scheme Information Note No.1



Developing a picture of how a particular site has changed down through the centuries is a key component of any native woodland project, and will yield a wealth of useful information. For example, a study of successive historical maps may indicate that all or part of the site may have been under continuous woodland cover since records first began. A study of the original townland name may give hints about the type of trees or woodland present during these earlier times. A review of estate records will indicate the past history of management within existing woodland. All of this information will have a direct bearing on decisions regarding how best to

proceed on a particular site, be it to establish new native woodland cover, to enhance existing native woodland, or to convert non-native woodland to native woodland. An historical assessment, coupled with the ecological assessment, also creates a 'package' of information regarding the unique historical, cultural and natural heritage associated with the site. For these reasons, a review of historical records is a requirement under the Forest Service Native Woodland Scheme as part of the Ecological Survey and Management Plan. This Native Woodland Information Note details the wealth of cartographic and historical sources in Ireland relevant to native woodlands.

INTRODUCTION

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 6 inch to 1 mile (1:10,560) scale maps are perhaps the most frequently used source when it comes to assessing the historical woodland cover on a particular Native Woodland Scheme site. However, a significant number of other useful cartographic and written sources are also available. These include town, city and county maps, estate maps and records, valuations and descriptions, as well as journal articles and county histories. Most of this material can be found in the following archives and libraries:

- The National Library of Ireland
- Trinity College Library Map Library
- The National Archives
- The Royal Irish Academy
- The County/Local Libraries

Although probably less relevant, further sources of material are held in the Royal Society Antiquaries of Ireland and the Irish Architectural Archives.

A large number of the maps, particularly those contained in estate papers, are also listed in Hayes Catalogue, a copy of which can be consulted in each of the above institutions.

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF IRELAND

The National Library of Ireland (NLI) Department of Manuscripts has a spacious Manuscripts Reading Room with an extensive collection of maps and plans. Among the notable items in the

collection are: a map of Europe in a 12th century copy of the *Topographia Hiberniae* by Giraldus Cambrensis; maps by Francis Jobson and Richard Bartlett documenting the English conquest during the reign of Queen Elizabeth; and plans of fortifications in the period 1685-92 by Captain Thomas Phillips and the Huguenot engineer John Goubet.

However, the most relevant series of maps are the Down Survey. This survey was directed by William Petty between 1655-57, and included the detailed mapping of baronies and parishes confiscated after the Cromwellian conquest. The maps depict selected items of settlement and topography, such as barony, parish and townland boundaries,



Landed Estate papers constitute the other main component of the NLI collection and comprise records generated in the course of the administration of certain landed estates over a period of several centuries. Among the more notable estates represented are:

Balfour	Co. Meath and Co. Louth
Bellew	Co. Galway
Castletown	Co. Laois
Clements	Co. Leitrim and Co. Donegal
Clonbrock	Co. Galway
Conyngham	Co. Meath, Co. Donegal, Co. Clare and Co. Limerick
Coolatin	Co. Wicklow
De Freyne	Co. Roscommon
De Vesci	Co. Laois
Doneraile	Co. Cork
Farnham	Co. Cavan
Fingall	Co. Dublin
Ffrench	Co. Galway
Headford	Co. Meath
Inchiquin	Co. Clare
Lismore	Co. Waterford
Louth	Co. Meath, Co. Louth, Co. Monaghan and Co. Kildare
Mahon	Co. Galway
Mansfield	Co. Kildare
Monteagle	Co. Limerick
O'Hara	Co. Sligo
Ormond	Co. Kilkenny and Co. Tipperary
Powerscourt	Co. Wicklow
Prior-Wandesforde	Co. Kilkenny
Sarsfield	Co. Cork
Wicklow	Co. Wicklow
Wynne	Co. Wicklow

The estate collections usually include correspondence and other personal papers documenting the personal lives and careers of the various members of the landlords' families. Most of the collections date from the 17th to the 20th century.



TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY MAP LIBRARY

The Map Library established in 1987 and contained in the Trinity College Library is the centre for cartographic materials in the University of Dublin. It holds both rare, older material as well as modern maps, and contains over half a million maps, making it the largest collection of printed maps in Ireland. The collection is particularly strong on maps of Ireland and Britain.

The library is open to all. Readers who wish to consult maps should apply for a reader's ticket at the Enquiries Counter in the Berkeley Library, or write directly to the Librarian.

THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY

The Royal Irish Academy (RIA), founded in 1785, is the principal learned society in Ireland. One of the major research

projects funded by the academy is the Irish Historic Towns Atlas (perhaps not, unless they illustrate surrounding woodland cover. If this is the case (e.g. illustrate the likes of FitzSimon Wood), then keep in the info. note, but add a sentence explaining their relevance and application.), a series of publications on individual towns representing different periods of urban development in Ireland. Each individual town atlas contains a large-scale (1:2,500) colour map depicting the town circa 1840, copies of other historical plans, views and illustrations, and a detailed text section with explanatory maps. The towns published to date are as follows:

- No. 1 Kildare (1986)
- No. 2 Carrickfergus (1986)
- No. 3 Bandon (1988)
- No. 4 Kells (1990)
- No. 5 Mullingar (1992)
- No. 6 Athlone (1994)
- No. 7 Maynooth (1995)
- No. 8 Downpatrick (1997)
- No. 9 Bray (1998)
- No. 10 Kilkenny (2000)
- No. 11 Dublin, Part 1, to 1610 (2002)
- No. 12 Belfast, Part 1, to 1840 (2003)

The RIA also holds the original manuscripts of the OS Memoirs. These contain descriptions of parishes visited during the mapping of Ireland at the time of the first OS. Colonel Thomas Colby initiated the written reports, with instructions to compile statistical remarks for every parish dating from his first



However, these reports embrace a whole range of subjects other than purely map-related information.

Since 1989, as a joint venture between the RIA and the Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University of Belfast, volumes of the extant memoirs for different counties have been published, together with excerpts from the maps and some of the drawings that illustrated the original descriptions.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

The first OS of Ireland was authorised by the Duke of Wellington in 1824. During the period between 1824 and the present day, it has created very large quantities of archives, some of which have been transferred to the National Archives of Ireland. The archives transferred comprise part of the administrative archives, most of the archives generated by the mapping of the country at the scale of 6 inches to 1 mile (1:10,560), and town plans at various scales. Included are items such as registered correspondence 1824-1952, parish observation books, descriptions of trigonometrical stations, boundary remark books, plots of rivers and lakes, etc., as well as the name books, which record evidence on the orthography of the place names.

Probably the most relevant of these archives are the Fair Plans, the original partly coloured drawings prepared on a parish basis, from which the 6 inch maps were traced for printing. Although they themselves were never published, the plans were finished with great care and attention to detail. They are most interesting in bog, garden, woodland and mountains as well as demesnes were depicted by appropriate symbols.

General information about the history of Ordnance Survey mapping can also be very useful (Andrews, 1974 & 1975). A very detailed paper on the history and significance of the Ordnance Survey Memoirs, entitled *Portraying Donegal: The Ordnance Survey Memoirs*, was written by Angélique Day and published in the Donegal Historical Society Year Book. (Should this be included in the reference list? Will consult Emmet)



LOCAL LIBRARIES

Most County Libraries have a Local Studies section containing a collection of books and other material dedicated to many aspects of their county. They are usually open to the public free-of-charge. The quality and size of these sections very much depend on the resources of the particular library service and the interest of the local librarian, but some are exceptionally well stocked. Most of the titles primarily deal with the history, archaeology and topography of the county, and will usually include historical and archaeological journals of specific relevance to the county. There may also be other directories, almanacs, topographical dictionaries and

Facsimile copies of early maps or estate papers are less frequent, but do occur. Some libraries hold copies of the Down Petty Survey (1685) and Grand Jury Maps (1787), as well as first edition OS 6 inch maps and their accompanying Letters and Name books. Some OS 25 inch, 5 inch and 10 inch town plans may also be held, as well as maps relating to the Commissioner of Public Works navigations and reclamation scheme of the late 19th Century. There may also be other estate records and land surveys, for example, Griffith's Valuation of 1855) which gives information on land holding in the 19th Century.

Finally, the more developed libraries may also have a photographic collection, with an archive of negatives and prints from important local collections. Some of these collections include interesting views of estates or demesnes in the last two centuries, as well as items of antiquarian interest.

TOWNLAND NAMES AND PLACENAMES

A considerable amount of the topographically descriptive townland names and placenames of the Irish countryside originated during the Early Historic and Hiberno-Norse periods, i.e. from about the 8th Century. Irish placenames indicating woodland are particularly common, especially the ubiquitous *doire* (often anglicised as *derry* or *oak grove*) of which there are over 1600 examples recorded. Also common are placenames including *beith* or *birch*, *iúr* or *yew*, and *saileach* or *willow* (MacCoitir, 2003).

For further details, readers should also consult the publications of the

Chairman's Statement



Preface

Since the establishment of Woodlands of Ireland in 1998, a wealth of practice, expertise and knowledge has been generated in relation to native woodland ecology and management in Ireland. Much of this has arisen through the experiences of the People's Millennium Forests Project and the Forest Service Native Woodland Scheme, launched in 2000 and 2001 respectively. This has resulted in the development of a solid foundation for the rejuvenation and expansion of native woodlands, a long-neglected cornerstone of our heritage, through active management with substantial financial backing.

Technical support for this process has been provided throughout this period by Woodlands of Ireland in partnership and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders involved with native woodlands. These include foresters, ecologists, woodland contractors, nursery managers and other professionals, landowners, environmental NGOs, the Forest Service (Department of Agriculture and Food), the National Parks and Wildlife Service (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government), the Heritage Council, Coillte, the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards, the Marine Institute, Teagasc, COFORD (the National Council for Forest Research and Development), and relevant

departments in universities and institutes of technology.

Woodlands of Ireland provides technical advice and information, stages national events, and publishes supporting literature. The organisation plays an essential role in providing feedback and suggestions to the Forest Service from key stakeholders working with the Native Woodland Scheme on a day-to-day basis. This work has contributed significantly to the ongoing development and refinement of the scheme by the Forest Service, aimed at improving its efficiency and effectiveness.

Woodlands of Ireland also works with the Forest Service in delivering a training programme designed to support the Native Woodland Scheme. This programme includes annual 3-day training courses and regular 1-day training courses aimed at specific target groups. To date, approximately 600 people have participated in these courses, and further courses are being planned.

As a further step in developing the knowledge base, Woodlands of Ireland is developing a series of information notes addressing a variety of key issues relating to native woodland ecology and management, designed to complement the Native Woodland Scheme. A considerable amount of

the material in these notes is derived from training course modules. Each information note, developed with input from relevant experts, contains up-to-date information and best practice on its respective topic, together with further reading and useful contacts. The production of these information notes has only been made possible with the commitment of individual authors and with funding provided by the Forest Service under the National Development Programme (NDP).

As Ireland embarks on a programme of native woodland enhancement and expansion, it is both timely and appropriate that these information notes are published. These notes, to be released periodically, will accumulate to form an invaluable 'decision-support' library for landowners, ecologists and foresters and others involved with the Native Woodland Scheme, and with native woodlands in general. Given that the establishment and management of native woodlands require considerable input and attention to detail, it is clear that, over time, this collection of Native Woodland Information Notes will contribute enormously to the rejuvenation and expansion of Ireland's native woodland heritage.

Michael Starrett
Chairman
December 2006
Woodlands of Ireland
Coillearnacha Dúchasacha