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CHAPTER 3

'Irishtowns' and 'Welsh Streets': ethnic enclaves within the towns of colonial Ireland and Wales in a northern-European colonial context.

[Figures *at end* for reference: Figure 2, Figure 3, Figure 5].

Introduction.

Ethnic enclaves were a common feature of cities and towns in medieval Europe. Some were named after an ethnic group, with which they were associated, while others were not. This chapter focuses on the named examples. Ethnic enclaves existed in at least two basic forms. The first and more familiar form emerged when a foreign group, often a merchant elite, settled and created their own neighbourhood in a city whose ethnic composition reflected the local ethnic community at large. In some places, especially in the post-Roman west, they were probably almost as ancient as the cities themselves, emerging and retreating in scope and importance as trade with ethnically and linguistically different people waxed and waned. Established ethnic enclaves may have grown, and new ones were created, as part of the general renewal and

expansion of urban life that was under way by the 11th century.[1] Indeed, Frisian merchants had quarters outside the centres or walls of the Rhine river towns of Mainz, Worms, Duisberg and Cologne as early as the 8th and 9th centuries.[2] At London, a merchant enclave existed on the Thames near the confluence of the Walbrook ('walha' meaning 'foreign' in Anglo-Saxon) by 1100, merchants of Rouen had special rights there by the mid-11th century and later merchants of Cologne built a guildhall that would form the nucleus of the Steelyard, or German quarter.[3]

The suburb of Flemingstown outside Kilkenny in south-eastern Ireland was an ethnic enclave of this type that had, by the 14th century, taken its name from an immigrant population of Flemish merchants and craftsmen (many specialising in textile production).[4] They probably came from Flemish colonies that had been established in Wales in the first decade of the 12th century; Flemings also had a named enclave – Flemingate – in England at Beverley by the 12th century.[5] In Wales, Flemish communities were centred around Haverfordwest, but there is no evidence of any named 'Flemingstowns' in Wales; rather the Flemings, invited to colonise south Pembrokeshire by Henry I, constructed new towns at Haverfordwest and Wiston in which they

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[1] Pirenne's 1925 thesis of an 11th-century urban Renaissance remains broadly accepted. H. Pirenne, *Medieval Cities: their Origins and the Revival of their Trade*, repr. (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2014). See also R. Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950-1350* (London, Penguin Books, 1993), especially chapter 7.

[2] F. Schmieder, 'Various ethnic and religious groups in medieval German Towns? Some evidence and reflections', in D. Keene, B. Nagy and K. Szende (eds), *Segregation – Integration – Assimilation: Religious and Ethnic Groups in the Medieval Towns of Central and Eastern Europe* (Farnham, Ashgate, 2009), p. 17.

[3] D. Keene, 'Introduction', in Keene et al. (eds), '*Segregation – Integration – Assimilation*', p. 6.

[4] There were also townlands called Flemingstown in Tipperary, Kilkenny, Kildare and Meath, but these probably took their name from families or persons called Fleming (a common surname in the colony) so although they may have been held by persons who were ultimately of Flemish descent, they cannot be taken to signal the presence of enclaves of Flemish people: J. Mills (ed.), *Calendar of the Gormanston Register* (Dublin, University Press, 1916), p. 1.

[5] J. G. A. Prim, 'Ancient Flemish Colony in Kilkenny', *Transactions of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society* 1:1 (1849), 37–40; E. Oksanen, *Flanders and the Anglo-Norman World 1066–1216* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 184, 214–16.

were long the dominant group.[6] In fact, perhaps as a result of Wales's weak maritime and foreign-trade connections, no evidence survives of a named urban enclave of foreign merchants or tradesmen in Wales. There were in some English towns, especially near to Wales and in areas with high levels of trade with Irish ports, named Irish and Welsh areas attested in the Middle Ages, as at Bristol and perhaps Chester.[7]

Named ethnic enclaves of non-local or minority groups were also common in towns on the eastern 'peripheries' of the Baltic region, and beyond, where urbanisation was similarly used as a tool of economic and political expansion. For example, in 14th-century Riga there was a 'Russian village' or 'Russian Street', and in 15th-century Tartu a 'Russian End'.[8] Looking still further afield, late medieval Lviv, as controlled by the kings of Poland, had a 'Russian Street' and a 'Scottish Market', among other ethnically named areas.[9] Jewish areas like the 'Jewish Streets' or 'Jewish quarters' found within towns in much of continental Western Europe are perhaps the best known of this type of enclave named for a distinct minority community within the urban environment, but none are attested in medieval Wales or Ireland.[10]

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[6] T. A. James, 'Haverfordwest', in R. F. Walker (ed.), *Pembrokeshire County History, Vol. II: Medieval Pembrokeshire* (Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire Historical Society, 2002), pp. 131–3.

[7] P. Fleming, 'Identity and belonging: Irish and Welsh in 15th-century Bristol', in L. Clarke (ed.), *The Fifteenth Century VII: Conflicts, Consequences and the Crown in the Late Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2007), p. 176; J. Laughton, *Life in a Late Medieval City*: *Chester, 1275–1520* (Oxford, Oxbow Books, 2008), pp. 104–60. Laughton emphasises, however, that Welsh and Irish did not live in homogenous ethnic enclaves in Chester: J. Laughton, 'Mapping the migrants: Welsh, Manx and Irish settlers in fifteenth-century Chester', pp. 169–83 at 171, 178–9.

[8] S. Selart, 'Russians in Livonian towns in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries', in Keene et al. (eds), *Segregation – Integration – Assimilation*', pp. 39–40, 44.

[9] A. Janeczek, 'Ulice etniczne w miastach Rusi Czerwonej w XIV–XVI wieku', *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej*,1–2 (1999), 131–47 at 135–6.

[10] B. Ravid, 'All ghettos were Jewish quarters but not all Jewish quarters were ghettos', *Jewish Culture and History,* 10:2-3 (2008), 5–24; A. Haverkamp, 'The Jewish quarters in German towns during the late middle ages' in R. Po-Chia Hsia and Hartmut Lehmann (eds), *In and Out of the Ghetto: Jewish-Gentile Relations in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 13–28.

The second form of named ethnic enclave, and the one which is our focus here, was that in which the local population was spatially marginalised in urban settlements that were dominated by an economically and/or socially and/or legally dominant foreign group. Such enclaves were common in Ireland but also appear in Wales. They emerged where towns, typically defined by a charter of urban liberties (see chapters 2, this volume), were founded by or taken under the control of incoming settler groups as part of the process of colonisation. Externally driven urbanisation of this kind characterised the settlement of Ireland, Wales, Prussia and Livonia, as well as other European peripheries, such as Ruthenia. In these towns, the ethnically different colonists dominated the urban space politically and legally, if not always numerically. As Keith Lilley has argued of Wales and Ireland, 'in the creation of chartered "new" towns Anglo-Normal lords used exclusionary devices to structure the internal spaces of new towns, separating English townspeople from Welsh and Irish and in the process marking them as "outsiders" in a "colonial" society'.[11]

This 'outsider' status in Wales and Ireland was manifested in the existence of numerous places called 'Welsh Street', 'Irish Street (in the earlier, Latin documents *vicus Hibernicorum*)', 'Irishtown (*villa Hibernicorum*)' or similar.[12] In Ireland, efforts to assert English control of

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[11] K. Lilley, '"*Non urbe, non vico, non castris*": Territorial control and the colonization and urbanization of Wales and Ireland under Anglo-Norman lordship', *Journal of Historical Geography* 26 (2000), 517–31 at 517.

[12] Many of the documents that survive record these placenames in English as 'Ireshton', 'Irysheton' or similar, especially from the mid-14th century onwards. The latin *hibernicus/ca* was used in different contexts in the English colony to mean just 'Irish man/woman' of any status but also sometimes 'unfree Irish person' i.e. an unfree labourer with a position something like a villein in England. These people were also sometimes called betaghs, though not all betaghs were Irish by ancestry. In the urban environment, this is not relevant since the '*hibernici*' living on the *vicus hibernicorum* in Drogheda, for example, were not unfree rural labourers; in some of the rural Irishtowns, however, it is possible that the *hibernicus* element in their names originally signified both Irish and also unfree. Some 'Betaghstown's, also found in south and eastern Ireland primarily, may have had a similar meaning originally. See S. Booker, *Cultural Exchange and Identity in Late Medieval Ireland: The English and Irish of the Four Obedient Shires* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2018)*, 46, 90-1.

newly captured Hiberno-Norse towns in the 1170s may also have resulted in the marginalisation of the Hiberno-Norse population and the creation of 'Ostmentowns' in Dublin and Waterford.[13] There are only two of these Ostmentowns known, so they were much less numerous than 'Irishtowns', but they – particularly the well-documented suburb that came to be called Oxmantown north of the River Liffey in Dublin – can provide insight into how quickly the demographic composition of these ethnically associated enclaves could change. In Prussia too, a small number of these ethnically named streets reflecting pre-colonial ethnic groups existed in the 15th century, such as Wendish Streets (*ul. Wendyjska*) in The New Town of Thorn and in Kolberg, and Polish Streets (*ul. Polska*) in Elbing and in the suburbs of Thorn.[14]

This chapter interrogates when and where these ethnically named enclaves in Wales and Ireland first arose, under what conditions, and how long these areas retained an ethnically distinct character. Ethnic enclaves in Wales and Ireland have received little sustained attention from historians; John Bradley provided very brief but important commentary on the phenomenon of Irishtowns in his 1985 essay on Anglo-Norman towns in Ireland while, as already noted, Keith Lilley used the examples of the Irishtown of New Ross and Ostmantown of Waterford to illuminate the processes by which the incoming settlers made 'outsiders' of the local population

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[13] This has been the dominant theory of how and when 'Ostmentowns' came into existence but work by Emer Purcell and Seán Duffy have complicated this picture. Purcell argues against this 'expulsion' model and Duffy has argued that the Dublin's Oxmantown had its name by 1171-2 and it is possible that it predated the arrival of the English: S. Duffy, 'Town and Crown: Kings of England and their city of Dublin', in Michael Prestwich et al. (eds), *Thirteenth-century England X* (Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 96-7; E. Purcell, 'The expulsion of the Ostmen: the documentary evidence, 1169–1171', *Peritia* 17–18 (2003–4), 273–94; E. Purcell, 'The city and the suburb: medieval Dublin and Oxmantown', in Seán Duffy (ed.) *Medieval Dublin VI* (Dublin, Four Courts Press, 2005), pp. 188–223; Lilley, '"*Non urbe*', 526–7; E. Curtis, 'The English and Ostmen in Ireland', *The English Historical Review,* 90 (1908), 209–19. The 'Cantred of the Ostmen' near Limerick is too large and ill-defined an area to include in the analysis here: H. S. Sweetman (ed.), *Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland,* 5 vols (London, Stationary Office, 1875–86) [hereafter, *CDI*], vol i, p. 24.

[14] Janeczek, 'Ulice etniczne', 134; K. Mikulski, 'Struktura etniczna mieszkańców i status społeczny ludności pochodzenia polskiego w Toruniu od końca XIV do połowy XVII wieku', *Roczniki Historyczne*, 63 (1998), 111-129.

and excluded them from urban centres.[15] Individual Irishtowns like those in Dublin, Limerick and Kilkenny, as well as Flemingstown, have also been the subject of (usually brief) articles, while Oxmantown has been explored in much more detail; the general phenomenon of named ethnic enclaves in Ireland still remains to be addressed.[16] No published research exists on named ethnic enclaves in Wales. The only directly comparable sustained study of named ethnic enclaves in new towns on either the western or eastern peripheries of Europe was undertaken by Andrzej Janeczek, who investigated the roughly 200 new towns of late-medieval western Ruthenia. These towns, like most of those of Wales and Ireland, were colonial foundations created by urban charters that often initiated a settlement de novo, and tended to be small, with around 150–300 houses.[17] However, in stark contrast to the typically bi-ethnic Anglo-Welsh and Anglo-Irish towns, the defining characteristic of Ruthenian towns was their heterogeneity, at the political, economic and ethnic intersection of Polish, Ruthenian, Russian, Armenian, Tartar, Greek and other flows of goods and peoples. Often no one group comprised an outright majority and, in Janeczek's words, 'homogeneous towns, with a simple population structure were practically non-existent' (*Miasta jednorodne… o prostej strukturze ludnościowej, praktycznie biorąc nie istniały*).[18]

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[15] J. Bradley, 'Planned Anglo-Norman towns in Ireland', in H. B. Clarke and A. Simms (eds), *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in non-Roman Europe* (Oxford, B. A. R. Publications, 1985), pp. 446; Lilley, '*Non urbe*', 525–7.

[16] Prim, 'Ancient Flemish Colony'; J. P. Mahaffy, 'Irishtown, near Dublin', *Hermanthena* 14:32 (1906), 165–7; B. Hodkinson, 'The Origin and dating of the name of Limerick's Irishtown', *NMAJ*, 49 (2009), p. 1–5; J. Bradley, 'Kilkenny', in A. Simms, H. B. Clarke and R. Gillespie (eds), *Irish Historic Towns Atlas* (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, 2000), pp. 1–6 [< www.ihta.ie >, accessed 1 January 2021, hereafter *IHTA*]; Purcell, 'The city and the suburb'; Purcell, 'The expulsion of the Ostmen'; Curtis, 'The English and Ostmen'.

[17] Janeczek, 'Ulice etniczne', 133.

[18] Janeczek, 'Ulice etniczne', 137–7.

In this way, the presence of ethnic enclaves – so named, or unnamed – in Ruthenian towns fits into a pattern posited by Felicitas Schmieder, who explained the existence of ethnic enclaves in medieval German towns as arising from Germany's position as 'a region of passage' within a broad European context.[19] Later medieval Wales and Ireland, however, were not regions of passage straddling inter-regional flows of goods and peoples; they were, in effect, the beginning or the end of the road. Like Lilley, Janeczek stressed that named ethnic enclaves indicated the presence of legally and/or socially less advantaged groups. Further, he argued that their reflection in place names was potentially triggered by such communities' relative 'alienness (distinctiveness)' (*obcości (odrędności)*) in relation to the most legally and/or socially advantaged groups, even when present in small numbers.[20] In the context of the colonisation of Wales and Ireland by their near neighbour, England, it is doubtful whether the 'alienness' of small numbers of Welsh and Irish peoples was the principal trigger for the naming of an ethnic enclave. It is much more likely that the initial impetus for naming these enclaves was the relative abundance of Irish or Welsh people in one place, even if they did not constitute an outright majority there. This assumption – that most of these enclaves did have a significantly higher Irish or Welsh population than neighbouring areas when they were first named, and that this was the reason that they were named as they were – underlies the discussion below and is borne out most clearly in the detailed evidence from Ruthin. Only in a minority of cases are there other plausible reasons for their names, such as the 'Welsh Walls' in Oswestry (Shropshire) that may be so

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[19] Schmieder, 'Various ethnic and religious groups', p. 16.
[20] Janeczek, 'Ulice etniczne', 140, 144.

named because they faced Wales, and perhaps some of the townlands named Irishtown that
could have been named for a family with the surname 'Irish'.[21]

Survey and Distribution.

In Wales and the March – that is, the Anglo-Welsh borderlands, some of which would later be
incorporated into England – in the early 16th century, there were at least three borough streets
called 'Welsh Street', plus 'Welsh Walls' at Oswestry. Welsh Street in Chepstow (Gwent), in
extreme southeast Wales, and Welsh Street in Bishop's Castle (Herefordshire), in the middle
March, still exist; the street name Welsh Walls, just adjacent to remnants of the walls
themselves, is in use at Oswestry. Welsh Street, Ruthin (Denbighshire), has since been changed
to 'Well Street'. 'Irishtowns' are much more common in the Irish toponymic record. The
Placenames Database of Ireland identifies some 31 places called Irishtown/Irish street/Grange
Irish/Irishtown Upper or similar and there is evidence for at least 14 of these dating from the
period *c*.1170–1541.[22] Roscommon and Robertstown's Irishtowns, which do not appear on the
Placenames Database but are attested in the medieval period, can be added to this total.[23]

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[21] This is possible since townlands were often named after families that lived on them, but 'Irish' though not
unknown, was a relatively uncommon surname and we have no examples that show any of these Irishtowns were
ever associated with families called 'Irish'.

[22] The Placenames Database of Ireland, < www.logainm.ie >, accessed 1 May 2021. The remaining Irishtowns listed
on logainm.ie are spread across modern cos. Meath (4), Dublin (1), Offaly (2), Wicklow (3), Wexford (2), Antrim
(1), Mayo (1), Tipperary (1), Laois (1) and Limerick (1); some of these are likely to have been medieval, especially
those in the South and East, particularly in Wicklow and Meath, which were so intensively settled in the late 12th
and 13th centuries. Given that there is evidence that a number of Irishtowns received their names in the early
modern period, however, we cannot include Irishtowns in the analysis that are not attested before 1550. The
Northern Ireland Placenames Project (< http://www.placenamesni.org/ >, accessed 30 April 2021) identifies 3
Irishtowns in Northern Ireland, but none of these are attested in the medieval period.

[23] See table 3.1 below for these Irishtowns and their first attestation.

In both Wales and Ireland, these named ethnic enclaves were concentrated in areas where there was a high level of English immigration and settlement; none are attested in the west of Wales, where even urban populations often were predominantly Welsh, and they are rare in the west and north of Ireland where there were much lower levels of English immigration.[24] Towns in interior and western Wales were mostly too small to have any distinct Welsh quarter, usually having less than 100 burgages; the populations of most of them were proportionally too Welsh, virtually from their inception, to have a distinct Welsh quarter; and most were integrated too thoroughly in the 15th century, if not before, to retain a Welsh quarter if there had ever been one.[25] The walled royal towns of north Wales excluded Welsh burgesses, lowering the likelihood of a distinct 'Welsh Street', despite the fact that Welsh persons no doubt lived in all of these towns as servants and sub-tenants of burgesses.[26] Counties Dublin, Meath, Louth and Kildare, the so-called 'four obedient shires' at the heart of the English colony, were home to most of the Irishtowns/streets with only two of sixteen Irishtowns attested in the medieval period lying outside the medieval boundaries of those four counties.[27] The well-known suburban Irishtown of Kilkenny lay further south, although still within densely settled areas of the colony, while Roscommon's Irishtown lay to the west, outside the area of the colony settled in the first decades of colonisation. The latter is thus an outlier geographically and may not have borne the name Irishtown long, since, unlike most of the other Irishtowns discussed here, it does not survive into the modern toponymic landscape. This may be because Roscommon had reverted to Irish control

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[24] See M. F. Stevens, 'Anglo-Welsh towns of the early 14th century: a survey of urban origins, property-holding and ethnicity', in H. Fulton (ed.), *Urban Culture in Medieval Wales* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2012), esp. p. 141 (Table 6.1); M. Stevens, *The Economy of Medieval Wales, 1067–1536* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2019), pp. 61–5.

[25] Stevens, 'Anglo-Welsh towns', pp. 155–58.

[26] 13 of 22 servants named in the Caernarfan court rolls from 1361 to 1402 had Welsh names: G. Jones and H. Owen (eds), *Caernarvon Court Rolls, 1361–1402* (Caernarvon: Gwentlyn Evans Ltd., 1952), pp. 15–177.

[27] For the four shires region see Booker, *Cultural Exchange,* pp. 24–44. Mullingar now lies in Westmeath, but Meath was not partitioned into Meath and Westmeath until 1542.

by the mid-14th century. The emergence of named ethnic enclaves required a sufficiently large

and self-conscious English burgess community to make the name meaningful, but the survival of

these names depended on a combination of factors that maintained the relevance of the name for

a sufficiently long time so as to embed itself into the collective consciousness of the community.

These factors included the level of Irish or Welsh migration into these towns and any shifts in

political control that meant that the towns fell temporarily or permanently under Welsh or Irish

control.

Location: relationship to the town.

The location of named ethnic enclaves in relation to their associated town varied greatly. The

Irishstreet of Drogheda lay within the town walls while Welsh Street of Bishop's Castle began

where the town market was bounded by the borough bank and ditch, and extended beyond the

borough. Ruthin's Welsh Street was bisected by town defences built in the early 15th century

and lay half within and half without those defences.[28] The Irishtown at Kilkenny and Welsh

Street at Chepstow were suburban settlements, lying just outside the town walls or just across a

small river (as at Kilkenny), while the Irishtowns of Roscommon and Mullingar lay a little bit

further away from the town core but were associated with their respective towns in contemporary

sources.[29] Oxmantown in Dublin was also a suburban and transpontine ethnic enclave, lying just

across the River Liffey from the walled core of the city; the location of the vill of the Ostmen

near Waterford is not known, but the slight evidence of the phrasing 'near Waterford' may

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[28] D. G. Evans, 'The medieval defences of Rhuthun', *Clwyd Historian/Hanes Bro Clwyd*, 64 (2011), 34–41 at 36.
[29] See below, this section, for discussion of Roscommon. The Irishtown of Mullingar was in 1427 called 'le Irishton near Mullingar' and there was a field containing at least 20 acres that lay between Mullingar and Irishtown, described during the survey of monastic lands in 1540–1. Not knowing how this field was configured, we cannot know precisely how close Irishtown was to the centre of Mullingar, though the modern townland lies a little over a kilometre outside the town to the northwest: TCD Chancery, Close Roll, 6 Henry VI', no. 51; *CPCRCI*, p. 4; N. B. White (ed.), *Extents of Monastic Possessions, 1540–1* (Dublin, Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1943), p. 29.

suggest that it was a nearby suburb.[30] The suburban location of many of these enclaves is telling and at Chepstow there is evidence that the burgesses made an effort to ensure the exclusion of Welsh Street from the walled circuit of the town. In the 1270s, when Anglo-Welsh tensions between Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, Prince of Wales, and Edward I, King of England, peaked, Chepstow was enclosed by the construction of a town wall called the 'Port Wall' to isolate the town within the bend of the River Wye in which it is situated.[31] This wall extended from the castle on the north side of the bend and cut southwards across the High Street just a few feet on the downhill, riverward side of Welsh Street, rendering it an extramural community. Archaeological remains confirm that the wall was constructed over earlier traces of occupation, eliminating the possibility that Welsh Street originated later.[32] While strategic and financial concerns might constrain the area enclosed within medieval town walls, the enclosure of a large tract of undeveloped land to the south of the town while excluding Welsh Street immediately to the west, together with the timing of the enclosure, is conspicuously anti-Welsh.

The remaining Irishtowns lay further from any urban settlement, though Irishgrange of Carlingford and Irishtown of Skreen were associated with those respective settlements in contemporary documents – called 'le Iryssheton of Skreen' or 'le Grange near Carlingford' – despite lying some 4 kilometres or so outside them.[33] Other Irishtowns, like those to the west of Kells (Meath), northeast of Ardee (Louth), west of Navan (Meath), east of Athy (Kildare) and between Lucan and Palmerstown (Dublin), lay a similar distance – 4–6 kilometres – from their respective towns. These Irishtowns were, therefore, not in themselves urban and might lie quite a

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[30] *CDI*, ii, p. 426.
[31] ; R. Shoesmith, 'Chepstow town, priory and port wall', in R. Turner and A. Johnson (eds), *Chepstow Castle: Its History and Buildings* (Logaston, Logaston Press, 2006), pp. 207–12.
[32] I. Soulsby, *The Towns of Medieval Wales* (Chichester, Phillimore, 1983), pp. 108–9, esp. n. 9.
[33] For the identification of Grange with Irishgrange, see the sources for Irishgrange in the Table 3.1.

distance away from the town centre. It is reasonable to suppose that in some of these cases the '-town' element in their names 'bears the older sense of a mere "enclosure", still found in certain provincial usages', though there is evidence for settlement of varying sizes at several of these sites.[34] Kilkenny's Irishtown and Drogheda's Irishstreet were likely the most densely settled, but it is clear that Roscommon's Irishtown had a pre-existing market associated with a lay village, that Irishgrange near Carlingford had its own church and tower house by the later-16th century and that Irishtown near Athy had at least 12 households (but possibly more) in the 'town' by 1418.[35] These latter places were very different, then, from densely settled suburban Irishtowns such as that at Kilkenny, but they are included in the analysis here because they are an unexplored avenue for understanding what the name 'Irishtown' signified and what conditions gave rise to the creation of settlements with that name. The location of most of these Irishtowns near boroughs newly founded in the 12th and 13th centuries, and the explicit association of some of them with those new boroughs, suggest that even the rural examples were closely linked with the process of colonisation through urbanisation, and reveal one of the ways in which urbanisation shaped the rural hinterlands of towns throughout the south and east of Ireland.

Table 3.1 Irishtowns: location and attestation.

Name	Closest/associated town	Earliest date attested	County
Irishtown [s1]	Kilkenny	1332	Kilkenny

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[34] Mahaffy, 'Irishtown, near Dublin', 167.

[35] Pynnar's map, British library Add. MS 24200; H. O'Sullivan and R. Gillespie, 'Carlingford, no. 23', in *IHTA,* p. 13; Gillespie, 'Carlingford churches', p. 594. Rev. M. Devitt, 'Dame Anastasia Wogan's dower', *Journal of the Kildare Archaeological and Historical Society,* 3:1 (1899), 88–97; TCD Chancery, Close Roll, 1 Henry VI, no. 3.

Irishtown [s2]	Roscommon	1279	Roscommon
Irishtown [s3]	Lusk	1540	Dublin
Irishtown [s4]	Lucan and Palmerstown	1540	Dublin
Irishtown [s5]	Castleknock	1408	Dublin
Irishtown [s6]	Dunboyne	1540	Meath
Irishtown [s7]	Navan	1383–1404	Meath
Irishtown [s8]	Skreen	1384	Meath
Irishtown [s9]	Kells	1344	Meath
Irishtown [s10]	Mullingar	1427	Westmeath (medieval Meath)
Irishstreet [s11]	Drogheda	1312	Louth
Irishtown [s12]	Ardee	1301	Louth
Irishgrange [s13]	Carlingford	1301	Louth
Irishtown [s14]	Athy	1297	Kildare
Irishtown [s15]	Straffan	1490	Kildare
Irishtown [s16]	Robertstown	1318	Kildare

Note: John Bradley listed nine Irishtowns in his article of 1985 (Dublin, Limerick, Drogheda, Ardee, Athlone, Kilkenny, Clonmel, Enniscorthy and New Ross) and noted that two further Irishtowns were early modern in date. The only secure medieval attributions for his none are at Kilkenny and Drogheda, and it is likely that Dublin and Limerick's Irishtowns and Ardee's suburban Irishstreet received their names in the early modern period: Mahaffy, 'Irishtown, near

Dublin', 165–7; Hodkinson, 'Limerick's Irishtown', 1–5; N. Ross, 'The Walled town of Ardee: selected extracts', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society [JCLAHS]*, 27:3 (2011), 339–65; J. Bradley, 'Ardee Archaeology', *JCLAHS*, 20:4 (1984), 288. This may also have been the case for the Irishtowns of Athlone, New Ross, Clonmel and Enniscorthy where the first recorded mentions of the name seem to be early modern: H. Murtagh, 'Athlone', *IHTA* (1994), p. 2; C. Ó Drisceoil, 'The Archaeology, topography and layout of medieval New Ross, County Wexford', MA thesis (University College Dublin, 1996); W. Burke, *History of Clonmel* (Clonmel, N. Harvey & Company, 1907), pp. 90, 105.

Sources:

S1. E. Curtis, *Calendar of Ormond Deeds*, vol. I (Dublin, Irish Manuscripts Commission,1932), nos. 643, 742, 757, 800; J. Ainsworth (ed), 'The corporation book of Irishtown of Kilkenny, 1537–1628', *Analecta Hibernica*, 28 (1978), 1, 3–78.

S2. *CDI*, ii, no. 2008, pp. 458–9;

S3. *CPCRCI*, p. 83; White, *Extents*, pp. 73–4.

S4. White, *Extents*, p. 59.

S5. TCD Chancery, Patent roll, 9 Henry IV', no. 37; *Alen's reg*., pp 178, 180.

S6. White, *Extents,* p. 258.

S7. *Gormanston Register*, pp. 4, 141. This Irishtown is in the parish of Ardbraccan, barony of Navan lower. Athboy is 9 or 10 kilometres west from this Irishtown and Navan 6 kilometres east.

S8. TCD Chancery, Patent Roll, 10 Richard II, no. 42; Patent Roll, 8 Richard II, no. 49.

S9. This is about 5 kilometres south of Kells (parish of Burry, barony of Kells Upper). It lies just north east of the townlands of Ethelstown and Chamberlainstown, mentioned in the 1344 and

1385 grants. Given the lands that were described alongside it in 1389, this may be the same Irishtown that had been held by Richard Drake at that stage: TCD Chancery, Close Rolls, Edward III 18, no. 127; Patent Roll, 8 Richard II, no. 63, no. 47; Patent Roll, 13 Richard II, no. 47.

S10. TCD Chancery, Close Roll, 6 Henry VI, no. 51; *CPCRCI*, p. 4 (1533–4); White, *Extents,* p. 29. J.H. Andrews with K.M. Davies, 'Mullingar', *IHTA* (1992), p. 3.

S11. J. Bradley, 'The topography and layout of Medieval Drogheda', *JCLAHS,* 19:2 (1978), pp. 113.

S12. D. Mac Íomhair, 'Townlands of county Louth in A.D. 1301', *JCLAHS,* 16:1 (1965), p. 45; White, *Extents*, p. 225.

S13. Mac Iomhair, 'Townlands', p. 43; R. Gillespie, 'More on Carlingford churches in 1485', *JCLAHS,* 27:4 (2012), p. 594; TCD Chancery, Patent Roll, 4 Henry IV, no. 303; Patent Roll, 4 Henry IV, no. 113, Patent Roll, 7 Henry IV, no. 51; Patent Roll, 7 Henry IV, no. 40*; Register Swayne*, pp. 134, 137–8. That Grange refers to Irishgrange rather than one of the other areas with Grange elements of their name in the Cooley peninsula is confirmed by the location of the settlement on Bartlett's map of 1602 but also the fact that he calls it 'Grange, Seagraves town'. Other documents connect Irishgrange with the Seagrave family: National Library of Ireland, MS 2656; TCD Chancery, Patent Roll, 4 Henry IV, no. 113.

S14. *Calendar of the Justiciary Rolls of Ireland*, vol. 1, pp. 191, 208, vol ii, p. 29. This Irishtown was mentioned in several early 16th-century documents: 'Kildare Rental' (1518), pp. 285, 288, and 'Crown Surveys' (1540–1), 151, 167, in G. Mac Niocaill (ed.), *Crown Surveys of Lands 1540–1 with the Kildare Rental Begun in 1518* (Dublin, Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1992).

S15. *CPCRCI*, p. 40; N. B. White, 'The Reportorium Viride of John Alen, Archbishop of Dublin, 1533', *Analecta Hibernica,* 10 (1941), 173–222 at 216; White, *Extents*, pp. 61–2.

S16. It is conceivable that the Irishtown associated with Robertstown in 1318 is the same as that near Straffan (also in northern Kildare) but the distance between the two settlements makes this unlikely: G. Mac Niocaill (ed.), *Red Book of the Earls of Kildare* (Dublin, Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1964), no. 166; J. A. Watt, 'Gaelic polity and cultural identity', in A. Cosgrove (ed.), *New History of Ireland* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 326.

Ecclesiastical connections.

Beyond this general distribution in areas of dense colonial settlement, which created the necessary demographic conditions for Welsh or Irish enclaves to arise, there are other patterns evident in the location of named Irish and Welsh areas. The first is that some marked the site of settlements that pre-dated the founding of English boroughs. A high proportion of Welsh or Irish inhabitants was likely in pre-existing settlements that subsequently lay adjacent to the new towns. Lilley identified this way of 'suburbanising' the native population, by 'recentering commercial activity around a new Norman borough', as occurred at Hereford after the Norman invasion.[36] In Wales, Ruthin's 'Welsh Street' was one of the three streets leading from open country into the town's market square, at the corner of which was the Church of St Peter (made a colligate church after 1282). It was probably the focus of a pre-conquest Welsh settlement with its own parish church that predated the foundation of the borough. [37] At Chepstow, skeletal remains suggesting a cemetery have been unearthed at the junction of Welsh Street and High Street, and it is likely that this was the focus of a Welsh settlement before and after the 1067 Norman occupation of the area.[38] This pre-existing settlement in the area of Chepstow's later Welsh Street may also have been associated with the early medieval foundation of St Kynemark's, which was a house of Augustinian canons by the 1270s. The later Welsh Street led northwest in the direction of the monastic foundation.[39]

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[36] Lilley, '*Non urbe',* 526–7.
[37] M. F. Stevens, *Urban Assimilation in Post-Conquest Wales: Ethnicity, Gender and Economy in Ruthin, 1282–1348* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2010), p. 11.
[38] Soulsby, *The Towns*, p. 108.
[39] L. A. S. Butler, 'Saint Kinemark's Priory Chepstow, an interim report on the excavations from 1962–65', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* 2 (1965), 33–41.

In Ireland, foundation of new colonial towns adjacent to, but not on the exact site of, pre-existing Irish ecclesiastical settlements seems to have occurred at Kilkenny, Roscommon, Lusk and New Ross.[40] In Kilkenny, Roscommon and probably Lusk this resulted in a named Irishtown emerging soon after the new borough was founded, but, in New Ross, an Irish suburb (likely associated with St Evin's monastery to the north of the English borough) may have existed for centuries before it became known as 'Irishtown' in the early modern period.[41] Some extramural or transpontine ethnic enclaves were never given the name 'Irishtown' or 'Welsh Street' and it is likely that suburban areas generally were particularly likely to have Irish or Welsh inhabitants.[42] Other English towns in Wales like Newcastle Emlyn, across the River Teifi from the mostly Welsh episcopal foundation of Adpar, especially further west and in more interior positions, had transpontine or extramural Welsh communities;[43] in Ruthin there was both a 'Welsh Street' and an additional transpontine suburban Welsh community named Llanfwrog, after the parish church there. This concentration of Irish or Welsh people in suburban areas was due to the lower status and property values of suburbs as well as to laws which specifically sought to exclude them from walled towns.[44] The burgesses of Rhuddlan complained sometime before 1295 that 'so many

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[40] Lusk was much smaller than either Roscommon or Kilkenny and was classified by Bradley as one of the smallest of the 'rural boroughs' in county Dublin: J. Bradley, 'Rural Boroughs in Medieval Ireland: Nucleated or Dispersed Settlements?', *Ruralia,* 3 (2000), 288-293. At Kells and Kildare new boroughs were founded on the site of early Christian monasteries and the layout of the monastic enclosures influenced the topography of the walled towns but there is no evidence of Irishtowns at these locations.

[41] Ó Drisceoil, 'The Archaeology, topography and layout of medieval New Ross'. Doran suggests the Early Christian monastery associated with St Abban, and later St. Evin, was sited either just inside the borough walls in the north-eastern corner or outside to the north-east of the later walled borough. The suburb that later became called Irishtown lay to the north-east: L. Doran, 'New Ross c. 1200 to c. 1900: seven hundred years in the making', *IHTA* (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, 2008), pp. 6-7.

[42] Purcell, 'The city and the suburb', pp. 204–5.

[43] Soulsby, *The Towns*, pp. 73–4, 196–8; Stevens, 'Anglo-Welsh towns', p. 141.

[44] See T. Phipps and M. F. Stevens, 'Towards a history of "race law" in medieval Wales', *Journal of Legal History* 41 (2020), 290–331 at 300–01, 321–2; Booker, *Cultural Exchange,* pp. 61–5.

Welsh are lodged near the town on the outside that they disturb the profit of the market of the English'.[45]

Roscommon's Irishtown provides an example of the way in which pre-existing settlements, often associated with ecclesiastical sites, were 'suburbanised'. It was located between two monastic houses, both of which predated the takeover of the area by the English: the convent of St Commán (founded in the 8th century) and St Mary's Dominican Priory (founded in 1253 by Fedlimid Ó Conchobhair, king of Connacht). The description of the Irishtown in 1279 as 'the Irish town of the prior and convent of St Coman' associates it with that foundation and, like the Irishtown of Kilkenny, it was probably in existence before the English borough as an Irish lay village associated with the convent. There may also have been an Ó Conchobhair residence or fortress at Roscommon.[46] The Irishtown was the site of a weekly market that, from the wording of the grant in 1279, also seems to have preceded the founding of the English town sometime in the 1270s.[47] Both St Commán's and St Mary's were located just south of where the walls of the English borough were probably erected sometime before 1299; they lay about half a kilometre apart with Irishtown in between.[48] The English chartered town of Roscommon therefore shifted the core of settlement at Roscommon, which had long been a site of Irish royal and ecclesiastical

[45] *Petitions*, p. 461.
[46] *CDI*, ii, no. 2008, pp. 458–9; M. Murphy, 'Roscommon Castle: Underestimated in Terms of Location?', *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society,* 55 (2003), 38–49 at 40–1.
[47] The town and castle were completed a few years after the death in 1274 of Aedh Ó Conchobhair whose unrelenting attacks delayed their completion: Murphy, 'Roscommon Castle', 40–1; B. J. Graham, 'Medieval Settlement in County Roscommon', *PRIA*, 88c (1988), 19–38 at 35.
[48] The exact circuit of Roscommon's walls is not known, but they were built at some stage before 1299 and a gatehouse on the southern side of their extent, just north of St Commán's church, survived until the 19th century: Roscommon town, ref. RO039-043004, Historic Environment Viewer, Archaeological Survey of Ireland < https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/ >, accessed 1 May 2021; Graham, 'Medieval Settlement', 35.

significance, slightly to the north towards Roscommon castle, and left the pre-existing 'Irishtown' as a suburb.[49]

Apart from this association of some Irishtowns and Welsh Streets with significant pre-existing ecclesiastical sites, many of these ethnic enclaves had other notable ecclesiastical links. In addition to Roscommon, Kilkenny and Lusk, Irishtowns at Lucan/Palmerston, Skreen, Mullingar, Carlingford, Dunboyne, Navan/Athboy, Straffan and Ardee were either wholly or partly in episcopal or monastic hands during the medieval period. At least 11 of the 16 Irishtowns had ecclesiastical connections and it is possible that such links help to explain how they came to be called 'Irishtown'. In cases such as Kilkenny and the lay community around St Canice's cathedral, Roscommon and the lay community around St Commán's, and St Kynemark's at Chepstow the pre-existing lay community seems to have remained in place as a new English town was founded nearby, and the existing settlement was then called Irishtown or Welsh Street by the newcomers.

In other cases, however, the process leading to the name Irishtown or Welsh Street may relate not to the existence of a pre-existing Irish monastic site and lay village but rather to the preservation or even growth of the Irish tenant population on church lands. To take the example of a named Irish area that we know a good deal about: 180 acres of land in Irishgrange near Carlingford were held by the Cistercian house at Newry before they were confiscated in 1373 on the grounds that the Newry Cistercians were Irish enemies of the crown. The house at Newry had

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[49] Murphy, 'Roscommon Castle', 40–4.

been founded by Muirchertach Mac Lochlainn, King of Cenél nEogain, in 1157 and remained

under the control of Irish abbots in this period.[50] It is possible that it was merely this association

with an Irish-controlled monastic house that gave Irishgrange its name – as could also have been

the case for Irishtown near Skreen where the nuns of Odder held lands.[51] Though possible, this is

not the most likely explanation for the name, as the existence of an area named Englishgrange

just to the east of Irishgrange and also attested in 1303 indicates. This pairing of Irishgrange and

Englishgrange in the toponymic landscape suggests that at the moment when these areas

obtained their names there were many Irish tenants living in Irishgrange, while mostly English

tenants lived at nearby Englishgrange, which was also likely in Cistercian hands.[52] Moreover

lands at other Irishtowns were in the hands of monastic houses founded by patrons and

dominated by abbots, abbesses, priors and prioresses of English descent, so they could not have

received their name because of an association with an Irish-controlled monastic institution.[53]

A high proportion of Irish tenants was therefore the most likely reason why many of these

Irishtowns obtained their name and it has been shown elsewhere that the church – even those

parts of it headed by English clerics – served as a mechanism for the immigration of Irish tenants

into the colony by virtue of the ecclesiastical links that spanned the political divisions on the

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[50] Gillespie, 'Carlingford churches' p. 594; G. Dawkes, 'Before Bagenal's Castle: evidence of the medieval Cistercian abbey at Newry, County Down', *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, 68 (2009), 124–40 at 124–5.

[51] D. Hall, 'Towards a prosopography of nuns in medieval Ireland', *Archivium Hibernicum,* 53 (1999), 3–15 at 4–5.

[52] The placename Grange was often used for monastic lands, particularly Cistercian ones. There are also; townlands called Millgrange and Grange Old adjacent to Englishgrange and Irishgrange; if these names are medieval in origin, which they almost certainly are, these may have also been in the hands of the Newry Cistercians at some stage.

[53] Lucan/Palmerstown Irishtown was in the hands of the hospital of St John the Baptist outside the New Gate, Dublin, Mullingar in the hands of Augustinian Priory of St Mary, Mullingar, which had been founded by Ralph le Petit, bishop of Meath in 1227 and perhaps endowed with the lands from the Petit family in Irishtown at that stage. Irishtown Dunboyne was held by the nunnery of Lismullen and Ardee's Irishtown by the Hospital of the Crutched Friars of Ardee. All were houses founded post-invasion and dominated by English religious: See Hall, 'A prosopography', pp. 6–7, 11–12. A. Gwynn and N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland* (London, 1970); R. Mackay, 'William Petit', *Dictionary of Irish Biography,* online, accessed 1 November 2021.

island of Ireland.[54] This was the case even when new Irish tenants were prohibited by the colonial administration, as they were several times in later medieval period.[55] In Wales too, church lands had a relatively high proportion of Welsh tenants, as illustrated by the bishop of St Davids' boroughs when compared to royal boroughs in south Wales: based on the fuzzy ethnic indicator of burgesses' names *c.*1300, compare episcopal St Davids (38 per cent Welsh) or Adpar (80 per cent Welsh) to royal New Carmarthen (11 per cent) or Cardigan (20 per cent).[56] This immigration of the Irish onto church lands in the colony raises the possibility that some Irishtowns were created and named during later waves of migration from Irish areas in the midlands and north of the island (most notable in the 15th century), rather than at the time of each town's foundation in the 12th or 13th century.

This migration model for the evolution of at least some Irishtowns contrasts with discussions that have assumed that they were founded at a single moment of expulsion early in the colony's history – as has also been posited for the Ostmentowns of Waterford and Dublin, albeit with more evidence – rather than arising through more gradual suburban growth.[57] The case of Straffan's Irishtown supports the migration model. This area was known as Ballespadagh in the 13th and the late-14th centuries but was called Irishtown by 1490 and thereafter in documents of

[54] S. Booker, 'Irish clergy and the diocesan church in the 'four obedient shires' of Ireland, c. 1400–c.1540', *Irish Historical Studies,* 39:154 (2014), 179–209 at 190–2.

[55] Booker, *Cultural Exchange,* pp. 60-1. We do have evidence that these prohibitions may have made some clerics seek to regulate Irish tenants on their land, as in 1495 the archbishop of Armagh granted custody of lands in Irishtown near Skreen to Richard Wellesly but stipulated that he not bring in extra farmers, *especially Irish ones*, without the archbishop's permission. These efforts at enforcement, however, were sporadic and never very effective: M. U. Sughi (ed.), *Registrum Octavian alias Liber Niger: The Register of Octavian de Palatio, Archbishop of Armagh, 1478–1513, Vol. I* (Dublin, Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1999), p. 51. This Irishtown in Kilmoon was called Piercetown in 1566, but then seems to have reverted back to the name Irishtown: logaimn, 'Irishtown, Kilmoon, Skreen, Kilbrew'.

[56] Stevens, 'Anglo-Welsh towns', p. 141.

[57] Mahaffey, 'Irishtown near Dublin'; Curtis, 'Ostmen', p. 210.

1536 and 1540 (and retains the name to this day).[58] Irishtowns in Lucan/Palmerstown and Dunboyne are not attested until 1540, suggesting they may also have acquired their names in the later Middle Ages. It appears, therefore, that Irishtowns did not originate only during the first wave of English settlement in the late-12th and 13th centuries and could be linked not just to an influx of English population into Ireland but also to later waves of Irish migration into the colony.

Demographic shifts in the early modern period in Ireland again led to the creation of named Irishtowns. Recent re-examination of Limerick's Irishtown suggests it was named in the 17th century, and this was probably the case for Dublin's Irishtown and the Irishtowns at New Ross, Athlone and Clonmel, as well as Ardee's Irishstreet.[59] This wave of early modern Irishtown naming relates, as many of the medieval examples from the late 12th and 13th centuries probably do, to a new influx of English population and assertion of English control of urban spaces in the colony. In Wales, there was no second wave of Welsh-place naming because there was not a second wave of English settlement and the Welsh were much more successfully integrated into the English political and legal system. This also probably accounts for the survival of far fewer Welsh-named enclaves. Thus, although similar experiences of colonisation and urbanisation led to the creation of named Welsh and Irish areas in the high medieval period, the existence of second and third waves of such naming in Ireland and their absence in Wales reflects the increasingly divergent history of the two regions in the early modern period and even in the later

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[58] M. Devitt, 'Old proprietors in Straffan and Irishtown', *Journal of the Kildare Archaeological Society,* 10 (1910), 272–300 at 280–3.
[59] See note below Table 3.1.

Middle Ages when a rising Welsh 'squirearchy', loyal to the crown and favoured by it, was not matched in Ireland (see below, section, 'Counter-colonisation and decolonisation').

Who lived there?

So far, our analysis has assumed that, at the moment at which they received their ethnically linked names, Welsh Streets and Irishtowns were home to a higher proportion of Welsh or Irish inhabitants than other parts of their associated towns. The discussion above of toponymic evidence and the fact that some Welsh Streets and Irishtowns were associated with pre-existing settlements reinforces the likelihood that this was indeed the case. Nevertheless, we cannot assume that the populations of such enclaves were ever ethnically homogenous and we certainly cannot assume that they remained that way throughout the medieval period. As Bradley warned, 'despite the intuitive pronouncements of some writers' the 'status and social composition of these Irishtowns remains unclear', particularly as one moves further chronologically from the time of their naming.[60] Oxmantown in Dublin provides one example of shifts in the composition of the population in these ethnic enclaves with Norse names predominating among Oxmantown landholders in the early 13th century but becoming rare by the 14th century when English names predominated.[61] The ethnic names of these enclaves could thus persist long after they had ceased to signify genuine differences in ethnic composition. The surviving evidence suggests that these findings for Oxmantown may also have held true for many Welsh Streets and Irishtowns, and that those Irishtowns and Welsh Streets which had been named in the early period of borough settlement in the 12th and 13th centuries had become ethnically mixed by the later-14th century. The well-documented enclaves of Ruthin's Welsh Street and Kilkenny's Irishtown will be

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[60] Bradley, 'Anglo-Norman towns', 446.
[61] Curtis, 'English and Ostmen', 218–19; Purcell, 'The city and the suburb', pp. 204–5.

examined in detail below, but the more scattered evidence for the inhabitants of other Welsh streets and Irishtowns will also be considered.

These analyses of population within urban enclaves use characteristically ethnic names in order to identify property owners of Irish, Welsh and English (patrilineal) descent.[62] Welsh names usually take a patronymic form comprising a series of two or more Christian names separated by '*ap*' or '*ferch*', that is 'son of' or 'daughter of', occasionally accompanied by an occupational or descriptive byname, such as 'Robert ap Howell ap Bleddyn, *saer* (E. carpenter)' who held one burgage in Mwrog Street in Ruthin in 1483–4.[63] English names typically comprise a Christian name followed by a locational or occupational byname, for example 'Ibull Thelwall' who held burgages on Welsh Street, Mill Street, Mwrog Street and New Street in 1483–4, whose ancestors had presumably moved to Ruthin from Thelwall, Cheshire before the composition of the first surviving borough rental in 1324.[64] Irish surnames could appear with or without their *Ó* (grandson of), *Mac* (son of) or *Iníon* (daughter of) patronymic suffixes; those Irish families of long residence in the colony often omitted the suffixes while more recent arrivals tended not to do so. More recent arrivals were also more likely to have typically Irish first names like *Donnchadh, Lochlainn* or *Domhnall* and Irish descriptive nicknames like *óg* (young), *buidhe* (yellow), or *ballach* (pockmarked). An English name usually signalled some English descent –

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[62] Matronymic surnames were not unheard of but they were rare and the surnames discussed below indicated descent on the father's side and in the patrilineal line only. They are thus very limited in terms of revealing information about descent overall or indeed about the many aspects of identity that had nothing to do with parentage. However, in assigning people the designation 'Welsh' or 'Irish' or "English' by their surnames we are using the methods of classification closest to those used in the colonial societies of later middle ages in Wales and Ireland: Booker, *Cultural Identity,* pp. 249-58; Stevens and Phipps, 'Towards a history of 'race' law', 316-17.

[63] The National Archives (hereafter TNA), SC 12/24/1, p. 26.

[64] TNA, SC 12/ 24/1 pp. 7, 11–12, 18–19, 23–26, 28; M. Richards, 'Records of Denbighshire Lordships I. – The Lordship of Dyffryn-Clwyd in 1465', *Denbighshire Historical Society Transactions*, 15 (1966), 15–54 at 21; R. I. Jack, 'Records of Denbighshire Lordships II. – The Lordship of Dyffryn Clwyd in 1324', *Denbighshire Historical Society Transactions*, 17 (1968), 7–53 at 14.

and we must keep in mind that many people were the products of many years of interaction and marriage between English and Irish – but could also be a product of significant anglicisation as some Irish people seem to have taken English surnames in an effort to assimilate within the colony. Indeed, in 1465 Irish residents of the colony were ordered to adopt English surnames by the Irish parliament.[65] Thus, increasing proportions of English names in the records can be the product both of increasing numbers of tenants of English descent and the anglicisation of those of Irish descent. Despite high levels of cultural and legal anglicisation, most people of Irish descent remained 'Irish' in the estimation of colonial society, which increasingly defined Englishness and Irishness by descent in the later Middle Ages.[66] Names are thus an inexact way of determining ethnic identity – and particularly in determining how people perceived their own ethnicity rather than how they were categorised by colonial legislators – but, in the absence of other evidence, they can provide insight into general demographic and cultural trends.

A series of rentals from medieval Ruthin name property owners – who were not necessarily the actual occupiers – and the rents of assize they paid on a street-by-street basis in 1324, 1465 and 1483–4. Further, the local practice of linking rents to the relative value of each plot, rather than using the fixed burgage rents found in many English and Welsh towns, makes visible the relative wealth-in-property of burgesses. Welsh Street encompassed about 25 ¼ burgages in 1324 and 52 ¼ burgages in 1483–4, as shown in Table 3.2, making it the most developed street – in terms of total burgage plots – in the town's core. In 1324, the overwhelming majority of people holding land on Welsh Street bore Welsh names (22 of 24 in total) whereas by 1465, the people holding lands there were evenly split between those with Welsh and English names and in 1483–4 the

[65] For this onomastic anglicisation see Booker, *Cultural Exchange,* pp. 45–96, especially 46–8.
[66] Booker, *Cultural Exchange,* pp. 253–8.

Welsh were just in the majority (22 of 39 total). Over the course of the 14th and 15th centuries the focus of the Welsh community in Ruthin shifted from the central location of Welsh Street to a more peripheral neighbourhood called Llanfwrog at the western edge of the borough, situated outside the borough's newly erected, post-1400 defences, as shown in Figure 5. This transpontine area and its main streets, Mwrog Street and New Street, lay within the jurisdiction of the borough and grew from just 14 ½ burgages in 1324 to 67 ⅔ burgages in 1483–4. Other areas of the town had a distinctly, though not exclusively, English tenancy. Mill Street was the focus of the English settler community in 1324, retaining a strong, though by no means exclusive, English character in 1483–4.[67]

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[67] Jack, 'Records', 13–16; Richards, 'Records', 20, 23; TNA, SC 12/24/1 pp. 18–21.

Table 3.2 Welsh Street and the transpontine neighbourhood at Ruthin.

		1324			1465			1483–4		
		Tenants	Sum total of rents	Mean rent	Tenants	Sum total of rents	Mean rent	Tenants	Sum total of rents	Mean rent
Pre-conquest locus of Welsh settlement.										
Welsh Street	Welsh	21	£1 3*s*. 3*d*.	1*s*. 2*d*.	22	£3 17*s*. 2*d*. *ob*.	3*s*. 6*d*.	22	£2 6*s*. 4*d*.	2*s*. 1*d*.
	English	2	4*s*. 1*d*.	2*s*. *ob*.	22	£6 8*s*. 9*d*.‡	5*s*. 10*d*.	16	£2 9*s*. 4*d*.	3*s*. 1*d*.
	inscrutable*	-	-	-	0	-	-	1	6*d*.	6*d*.
	Total property	25 ¼ burgages +			not recorded			52 ¾ burgages +		
Post-conquest transpontine neighbourhood of Llanfwrog.										
Mwrog Street	Welsh	4	7*s*.	1*s*. 9*d*.	18	£2 2*s*.	2*s*. 4*d*.	25	£2 5*s*. 6*d*.	1*s*. 10*d*.
	English	6	15*s*. 1*d*. *ob*.	2*s*. 6*d*.	7	12*s*. 7*d*.	1*s*. 9*d*. *ob*.	4	10*s*. 8*d*.	2*s*. 8*d*.
	inscrutable*	0	-	-	1	25*d*.	25*d*.	4	7*s*. 1*d*.	1*s*. 9*d*.

New Street	Welsh	0	-	-	13	12s. 1d.	11d.	9	9s. 7d.	1s. 1d.
	English	2	8s. 11d. ob.	4s. 6d.	5†	6s. 4d.	1s. 3d.	6	5s. 3d.	10d. ob.
	inscrutable*	0	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
	Total property	14 ½ burgages +			not recorded			67 ⅔ burgages +		

Notes: * For example, the 'parson of Mwrog', Mwrog Street 1465. † This excludes 6s. paid by Richard Longford for 'lands in New Street called "Teresamon" [Salmon Land]', which probably comprised a fishery. ‡ Welsh Street rents for 1465 include 'two parcels' for 10s. and 'half a parcel' for 12s. 11d. ob., that perhaps ought to be discounted, giving a reduced sum of £5 5s. 9d. ob. + In addition to full and fractional 'burgages', these sums include lands called 'garden', *hortus*, 'place', 'particle', etc., but exclude acreage.

Sources: R. I. Jack, 'Records of Denbighshire Lordships II. – The Lordship of Dyffryn Clwyd in 1324', *Denbighshire Historical Society Transactions*, 17 (1968), 7–53; M. Richards, 'Records of Denbighshire Lordships I. – The Lordship of Dyffryn-Clwyd in 1465', *Denbighshire Historical Society Transactions*, 15 (1966), 15–54 at 21; The National Archives, SC 12/24/1.

Parity or dominance of overall numbers of property owners on Welsh Street in Ruthin did not translate into parity of wealth or influence. As has been argued elsewhere, analysis of the extensive surviving borough court rolls of Ruthin 1282–1348 indicates that while English and Welsh burgesses shared in some aspects of urban governance, for example the borough council of presentment jurors being always comprised of an equal number of English and Welsh men, most borough/lordship offices and lucrative trades were dominated by Englishmen.[68] Already, by the 1320s, this had led to a markedly wealthier English community within the town.[69] The long-term consequence of this is shown in Table 3.2: while from 1324 to 1483–4 the number of burgages on Welsh Street more than doubled and the sum total of the rents of assize paid on them more than tripled – despite strong deflationary pressures on the 15th-century economy – the number of Welsh burgesses remained more-or-less constant.[70] In the same period, the English property owners increased from two to 16, and the value of their property grew to exceed that of Welsh owners.[71] Of particular note, when the borough's fortunes were at their medieval height, as it became a regional centre of cloth production around the time of the founding of a gild of fullers and weavers in 1447, the sum total of rents paid by English owners of Welsh Street property had risen by 1465 to around 150 per cent of the sum total of those paid by Welsh owners.[72] Indeed, the real gap in wealth may have been even greater, as in both 1465 and 1483–4 at least five Welsh Street burgages formerly in the hands of English burgesses, worth around £2 in total, were held by Henry Grey, by charter of Reginald, fourth lord Grey de Ruthin (d.

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[68] Stevens, *Urban Assimilation*, pp. 71–3, 109–114, 246–8.
[69] M. F. Stevens, 'Wealth, status and "race" in the Ruthin of Edward II', *Urban History* 32 (2005), 17–32
[70] P. Nightingale, 'Credit and mortality: distinguishing deflationary pressures on the late medieval economy', *EcHR*, 63 (2010), 1081–1104.
[71] Inflation.
[72] R. I. Jack, 'The cloth industry in medieval Ruthin', *Denbighshire Historical Society Transactions* 12 (1963), 22; see also, R. I. Jack, 'The cloth industry in medieval Wales', *Welsh History Review*, 10 (1980–81), 443–60.

1440).[73] Total English rents, by 1483–4, had fallen back to roughly similar levels to the total paid by the Welsh, probably as the town's fortunes were now in decline. But the mean rent paid by English owners remained about 150 per cent of that of Welsh owners. Sources do not allow for a direct comparison between the anglicisation of property holding on Ruthin's Welsh Street with that on Welsh Streets in other towns, or with Irish property holding in Irishtowns. However, just as in Ruthin, there was a pronounced tendency for men bearing English names to dominate the highest office of urban governance in Kilkenny's Irishtown and in towns and cities across the English colony in Ireland and in Wales.

Despite the long-term stagnation of the Welsh share of property holding on Welsh Street, the proportion of Welsh property holders overall in the borough did increase markedly across this period, as it did in most Welsh towns where this was not prohibited by law, as it was at Denbigh and in the royal 'walled boroughs' of north Wales.[74] But this increase in Welsh property holders was most evident in the transpontine neighbourhood of Mwrog Street and New Street, which from 1324 to 1483–4 had more than quadrupled in size to 67 ⅔ burgages and now comprised a Welsh area in which at least 34 of 48 property owners had ethnically Welsh names. Furthermore, property holders here, in the 15th century, paid relatively low mean rents, usually less than half the mean rent paid by English property holders of Welsh Street burgages. While personal names are an increasingly unreliable indicator of ethnic identity in the late-15th century, the abundance of clearly Welsh persons here with lengthy patronymic names, such as Madog ap John ap

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[73] Richards, 'Records', 20; TNA, SC 12/24/1 p. 6.; Henry Grey, possibly a bastard, was ward of Edmund de Grey, educated at Cambridge, and subject of an unsuccessful marriage arrangement with the Paston family of Norfolk, of lawyering fame. R. I. Jack, 'The lords Grey of Ruthin, 1325 to 1490: a study in the lesser baronage', Ph.D. thesis (London, 1961), pp. 117, 295, 298.

[74] On the walled boroughs, see Stevens and Phipps, 'Towards a history of "race" law', 300–02.

Gruffydd, Dafydd ap Bleddyn ap Philip and Gruffydd ap Dafydd ap Robyn, plus the low rents, suggest the formation of a less affluent transpontine Welsh neighbourhood that succeeded 'Welsh Street' as the focus of the Welsh community.[75] The evolution of Ruthin's Welsh neighbourhoods, that can be tracked in such detail, shows once again that the names of ethnic enclaves often survived even when the areas became increasingly demographically mixed, and also that ethnic enclaves sometimes existed without being named explicitly as Welsh or Irish areas.

At Ruthin, as at Chepstow, the creation of defensive works was used as an opportunity to exclude much of the Welsh community from the town centre, even as the overall number of Welsh burgesses increased. Ruthin was attacked and at least partially burned by Owain Glyndŵr in September 1400 following a property dispute with Reginald, third lord Grey de Ruthin, in what would prove the opening salvo of a general Welsh revolt against English rule. At this time a defensive ditch was dug around the town, on the eastern side of the Clwyd. Much like the Port Wall built at Chepstow in the 1270s, this bisected Welsh Street, cutting off at least part of the old Welsh neighbourhood from the marketplace. As a consequence, Englishman Adam Burges was given a charter, *c.*1400–15, granting substantial rent relief on his valuable burgage plot (from 2*s.* 5*d.* to just 7*d.*) after part of the town's defensive ditch was made upon it – identified as a half burgage, but likely a full burgage beforehand; in 1483–4 this would be held by his granddaughter Tibot and her presumably Welsh husband, David ap Bady.[76] A gate with a tower called 'Burges

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[75] TNA, SC 12/24/1, pp. 22–7.
[76] TNA, SC 12/24/1 p. 5; The rental was compiled by assessing each street one side at a time. While it is impossible to know in which direction they moved along Welsh street, the impression is that they started at the market and moved downhill along one side before returning up the other. If this is so, then the more valuable property tended to be nearest the market and with more English property holders.

Tower' was also constructed before 1484, although we cannot know when, at the east end of the bridge over the Clwyd, again separating the town core from its transpontine periphery.[77] It is in this context that the name 'Welsh Street' began to fade away. Property deeds, which are extremely conservative in their wording given the importance of descriptive continuity in establishing title, begin in the late-16th century to refer to Welsh Street, 'alias Talysarne', meaning in English the 'Tollway' or 'Toll Street', probably denoting the presence of a gate at which goods arriving to market were taxed.[78] We might expect this, at one time, to have been at the point where the town ditch bisected the street. The current name, 'Well Street', is a modern one – dating from at least the 1790s – which obscures the street's original character and which may well have numerous unknown parallels in forgotten 'Welsh Streets' or similarly named parts of other Welsh towns.[79]

Kilkenny's Irishtown is by far the best documented Irishtown although, unlike Ruthin, there is no rental of the area that would allow us a comprehensive view of the property holders in the town. However, the information we do have from the 14th to the early 16th centuries shows that Irishtown was home to men and women with a mix of Irish and of English surnames throughout the later medieval period. It did, in the early 16th century at least, have a higher proportion of Irish citizens and Irish people in the upper echelons of its civic community than the Hightown of Kilkenny, but many of the earliest records for the area record landholders with English names. Four mid-14th century deeds (dating from 1332–48) and one from the 15th century (1483) mention eight different surnames/families who held land in Irishtown; of these, none had a

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[77] Jack, 'Ruthin', p. 248; Evans 'The medieval defences of Rhuthun', 34.
[78] National Library of Wales, Ruthin Lordship Records, 814 (1594); Chirk Castle Estate Records, F 935 (1604); Wynnstay Estate Records, DD7/7 (1632).
[79] TNA, IR 23/116/16, folio 43–4.

surname that signalled they were of Irish descent, although, of course, they may have had Irish

sub-tenants.[80] The much more voluminous records of the 1530s and 1540s allow us to survey a

larger sample of people who lived in Irishtown, as the town's corporation book preserves the

names of 111 officials and burgesses there between 1537 and 1549.[81] Of these, men with

surnames of English origin and those of Irish origin are almost equally represented (and sadly

only men are represented in this sample as women only rarely served as civic officials).[82] There

were 50 men with Irish surnames, 47 with English surnames and 14 with surnames that could be

either English or Irish in origin. Although there was relatively equal English and Irish

representation in civic officials generally, nine of the portreeves, the highest position in the town

administration, had names of English origin while only three had names of Irish origin. This

pattern suggests that in Irishtown, just as in Kilkenny itself and other towns and cities across the

colony, the higher levels of office holding were dominated by those of English descent.[83] In

Kilkenny's Hightown in the same period, the proportion of Irish sovereigns (the highest civic

position), was similarly small (10 with English names and two with Irish), while men with Irish

names often held lower positions in the civic administration.[84]

The picture for new citizens in Irishtown Kilkenny over the same period, 1537–49, is quite

different, as of the 28 admitted, 20 bore Irish names and six English names with two bearing

surnames that cannot be securely identified. A number of these citizens had Irish first names and

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[80] *Ormond deeds,* vol. I, no. 643, 742, 757, 800; *Ormond deeds*, iii, no. 259.
[81] There is break in the records between 1549 and 1562. J. Ainsworth, 'Corporation book of the Irishtown of Kilkenny, 1537–1628', *Analecta Hibernica,* 28 (1978), 1, 3–78.
[82] A widow named Johanna Will served as a porter for Troy's Gate in Irishtown in 1565. Many thanks to Coleman Dennehy for bringing this to my attention: *Corporation Book*, p. 26.
[83] Booker, *Cultural Exchange,* pp. 81–3.
[84] See, for example, the keepers of the gate in 1498, which included seven keepers, three with Irish and four English names: A.J. Otway-Ruthven, *Liber Primus Kilkenniensis* (Kilkenny: The Kilkenny Journal, 1961), p.76.

seven retained the 'O' in their surname, showing that they were relatively unanglicised. A much higher level of onomastic anglicisation is apparent at the level of officeholders. Whether or not this indicates that Irishtown was becoming home to a greater proportion of unanglicised Irish people and a lesser proportion of anglicised Irish people in the early modern period is uncertain. The later-15th and early 16th centuries was a period of significant Irish migration elsewhere in the colony and many new migrants had unanglicised names.[85] However, it is also the case that freemen represented a broader swathe of society in the town than the civic officials, and included more persons of lower status, many of whom were Irish.

This discussion of new citizens allows for comparison with the Hightown of Kilkenny, whose proportion of Irish freemen also increased significantly between the late-14th and the late-15th centuries and which between 1499 and 1520 admitted 84 new citizens, 30 of whom bore Irish names, a minority and much smaller proportion than in Irishtown.[86] It is not possible to know whether Irishtown admitted higher proportions of citizens of Irish descent because of an established history or custom of being an Irish area or whether, as a less wealthy and prestigious suburb of the Hightown, it attracted lower status citizens, more of whom were Irish. Ethnicity and social status were so closely linked in Irish towns in this period that it is difficult to pick the two apart. A more direct chronological comparison between Irishtown and Hightown is possible in October of 1537 when juries were assembled in both places to report crimes committed and to convey local grievances and problems to royal commissioners. Of 11 jurors from Irishtown, two and perhaps three, bore anglicised Irish surnames though all had English first names, whilst in

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[85] Booker, *Cultural Exchange,* pp. 48–60, 94–5.
[86] Otway-Ruthen, *Liber Primus Kilkenniensis,* pp. 76-105. A further 9 of these 84 new freemen had names that may well be Irish but could also be English. The *Liber Primus* does not record admission of new freemen after 1520.

Hightown none of the 16 jurors had Irish names.[87] As already noted, the proportion of men bearing Irish names among sovereigns of Hightown and among portreeves of Irishtown (the highest civic positions in each area) was similarly modest.[88] By the 1530s and 1540s, therefore, there is evidence that there was a higher proportion of Irish citizens in Irishtown than Hightown Kilkenny and that the upper echelons of Irishtown society (as represented by the jury lists) may have contained more Irish people, but the modest proportion of Irish names among holders of the highest civic office there confirms that the comparatively high status of Irish people in Irishtown only extended so far.

Material from other named Welsh and Irish areas complicates the impression given by the analysis of Kilkenny's Irishtown and Ruthin's Welsh Street. The only surviving medieval list of Bishop's Castle burgesses, naming each burgess and his or her rents, made in 1285, fails to indicate on which street each tenant's property was situated. At that time there were 45 burgesses holding 44½ burgages, less than six of whose names identify them as Welsh (e.g. Iorwerth Peye and Llywelyn ap Iorwerth).[89] However, in this context, it is perhaps suggestive that the earliest – albeit much later – surviving Welsh Street deed records the 1570 sale of a messuage and tenement from Roger ap Owen to John Edwards, both parties bearing characteristically Welsh names.[90] In contrast, Drogheda's Irishstreet is mentioned in a number of deeds from the 14th century (1312, 1333, 1341), and, according to Bradley, 'of 13 tenants named

[87] H. J. Hore and J. Graves (eds), *The Social State of the Southern and Eastern Counties of Ireland in the Sixteenth Century: Being the Presentments of the Gentlemen, Commonalty and Citizens…Made in the Reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth* (Dublin, The University Press, 1870), pp. 87, 132.

[88] Booker, *Cultural Exchange,* p. 84; Kilkenny Borough Council, 'The Sovereigns and Mayors of Kilkenny 1282–2010 - Kilkenny City' < http://www.kilkennycity.ie/Your_Council/The_Sovereigns_and_Mayors_of_Kilkenny_1282-2003/#List1 >, accessed 20 March 2021.

[89] Shropshire Archives, 5981/A/183.

[90] Shropshire Archives, 1037/8/9.

in Irishstreet in these deeds, not one of them has a diagnostically Irish name'.[91] A man associated

with Irishgrange in 1402 and the three tenants associated with the Irishtowns near Lusk and

Ardee in the 1540s all had English names.[92] Earlier evidence survives for several men who lived

in the Southern Kildare Irishtown near Burtown. The surname of an inhabitant of the Irishtown

in 1298, Doneght (*Donnchadh*) del Irisston, was not recorded but his first name suggests he was

probably of Irish descent.[93] Three men from a family that hailed from this Irishtown and nearby

Moone were accused of robbery in 1297: Henry son of Robert Eynon, Maurice Cam son of

Eynon and Geoffrey son of Eynon. These men were probably of Welsh descent, although they

may have been bilinguial in Irish; Maurice had the nickname 'cam' meaning crooked, which

occurs in both Welsh and Irish.[94] There is some evidence about who the lords of some of these

Irishtowns were, and they were almost uniformly of English descent in the 15th and 16th

centuries, for instance, the Petit family of Irishtown Mullingar and several families associated

with Irishtown Castleknock and Irishgrange near Carlingford.[95] The geographically and

chronologically scattered sources complicate our picture of these ethnic enclaves as they were

clearly home to many English people by the 14th century and many of them were dominated by

English landowners. However, the two named ethnic enclaves about which we have the most

information, in Ruthin and Kilkenny, reveal that though these enclaves were mixed in

[91] J. Bradley, 'The topography and layout of Medieval Drogheda', *JCLAHS,* 19:2 (1978), pp. 113. At least one of the tenants, William Heyroun has a surname that could be an anglicised version of an Irish name, but there are certainly no tenants who have names that are clearly of Irish origin: *Gormanston Register,* pp. 63, 75. For Irishstreet see also M. Corcoran, 'The streets and lanes of Drogheda, part 1', *Journal of the Old Drogheda Society*, 2 (1977), p. 24.
[92] Gillespie, 'Carlingford churches', p. 594; 'Patent Roll 4 Henry IV', no. 303; 'Patent Roll 4 Henry IV', 113, 'Patent Roll 7 Henry IV', no. 51; TCD Chancery, Patent Roll, 7 Henry IV, no. 40; White, *Extents*, pp. 73–4, 225.
[93] Duffy, 'Welsh conquest of Ireland'; *CJR*, ii, 1305, p. 29; *CJR*, I, p. 208, 1298.
[94] *CJR*, vol. I, 1297, p. 191.
[95] Andrews and Davies, 'Mullingar', p. 15; R. Mackay. 'Petit, William', in J. McGuire and J. Quinn (eds) *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009), < http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a7298 > accessed 1 November 2021; TCD Chancery, Patent roll, 9 Henry IV, no. 37*, Patent Roll, 4 Henry IV, no. 303; Patent Roll, 4 Henry IV, no. 113, Patent Roll, 7 Henry IV, no. 51; Patent Roll, 7 Henry IV, no. 40; Gillespie, 'Carlingford churches', p. 594.

population, they do seem to have had higher proportions of Irish and Welsh people than neighbouring areas.

Counter-colonisation and decolonisation.

The smaller number of Welsh Streets than Irishtowns may relate to the process described by Llinos Beverly Smith as 'counter-colonization', or the ingress of ethnically Welsh persons into physical, social and economic spaces that had previously come to be dominated by the English settler community in Wales.[96] Decolonisation – that is, the corresponding diminution of English social and economic dominance in Wales – became widespread from the mid-14th century. Despite the existence of anti-Welsh race laws, which had existed from as early as 1295 and were enhanced and reissued following the of revolt of Owain Glyndŵr (1400–15), decolonisation progressed throughout the 15th century. [97] This led to most towns becoming so substantially Welsh in the composition of their populations that a Welsh Street, as an ethnic neighbourhood, would have been a nonsense. Likewise, Welshmen integrated, albeit fitfully, into borough power structures, as town officials.[98] At Oswestry, for example – where the town's western 'Welsh Walls' may suggest an historic Welsh enclave – two bailiffs served the town each year and while Welshmen are known only twice to have acted as bailiffs in the 14th century, the town was thoroughly integrated by the 16th century; of the 22 known bailiffs before 1400 only two had clearly Welsh names, among the next 22, serving between 1401 and 1464, at least 12 had

[96] Ll. B. Smith, 'Oswestry', in R. A. Griffiths (ed.), *Boroughs of Medieval Wales* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1978), p. 233.

[97] Systematic studies remain few in number. See, for example, A. D. M. Barrell and M. H. Brown, 'A settler community in post-conquest rural Wales: the English of Dyffryn Clwyd, 1294–1399', *Welsh History Review*, 17 (1995), 332–55 at 347–54. M. F. Stevens, 'Credit and colonization in medieval Wales', in S. Köhler (ed.), *Change and Transformation of Premodern Credit Markets* (Heidelberg, heiBOOKS, 2021), forthcoming.

[98] S. H. Rigby and E. Ewan, 'Government, power and authority, 1300–1540', in D. Palliser (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*: *Volume I, 600–1540* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 302–3.

typically Welsh names.[99] A small core of Welshmen resident in the borough in 1301 was steadily supplemented by Welsh immigration and investment by wealthy families. From 1407, at the latest, burgesses could elect fellow burgesses – as opposed to the franchise being tied strictly to owning borough property – leading to many new Welsh franchise holders; further, a residency requirement was eventually dropped.[100] Due to the growth of a Welsh cloth industry in the 14th and 15th centuries, the town became dependent on the export of Welsh textiles. By the 1580s 'over a hundred householders in and around Oswestry and Shrewsbury lived wholly by the weekly carriage of Welsh cloths from Oswestry to Shrewsbury and thence up to London; some kept 12, 16, or even 20 horses or geldings'.[101] At Brecon, the picture is much the same. Although the town was founded as an English colony and was burned by prince of Gwynedd Llywelyn ap Iorwerth in 1231 and 1233, the Welsh made steady inroads and when the town was attacked by Owain Glyndŵr in 1404 its defence was led by Welshman Thomas ap David, who was praised by contemporaries for his 'great labour and devotion' to the borough.[102] Again, such examples could be multiplied many times over.

In both Ireland and Wales, the later Middle Ages was marked by increased migration of Irish and Welsh people into English boroughs and their increased influence in those boroughs; in Wales, however, the increased civic power of the Welsh seems to have been much greater, as Irishmen remained a minority of civic officials in most Irish towns. Despite the fact that cultural exchange and intermarriage were widespread in both regions by the later Middle Ages, people of Irish

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[99] J. Pryce-Jones, 'Oswestry corporation records: the bailiffs from medieval times to 1673', *Shropshire History and Archaeology*, 76 (2001), 32.
[100] Smith, 'Oswestry', pp. 235–8.
[101] D. C. Cox, J. R. Edwards, R. C. Hill, A. J. Kettle, R. Perren, T. Rowley and P. A. Stamper, 'Domesday Book: 1540–1750', in G. C. Baugh and C. R. Elrington (eds), *A History of the County of Shropshire: Volume 4, Agriculture* (London: Victoria County History, 1989), pp. 119–68.
[102] Davies, 'Brecon', p. 51,

descent remained a small minority among the gentry in the heart of the colony where most of our Irishtowns are located, while in Wales there was a rising, modestly affluent Welsh landowning 'squirearchy' that intermarried and engaged in greater *mutual* cultural exchange with English gentry families in Wales.[103] Those Irish people who did manage to join the mercantile urban elite of the colony anglicised to a high level, culturally, and civic ordinances required new Irish citizens to conform to English dress and language.[104] The high levels of influence of the Welsh in English boroughs in Wales is evident in the histories of individual settlements, such as Chepstow, Brecon (despite the adoption of an overtly anti-Welsh charter there as late as 1365)[105] or Ruthin, long before it was formalised with the 1536 'Acte for Laws and Justice to be ministred in Wales in like fourme as it is in this Realme', commonly known as the 'Act of Union', that gave Welsh people equality under the law with their English neighbours. Although something similar occurred for the Irish only a few years later, in 1541, when the title 'King of Ireland' was conferred on Henry VIII and all of the people of Ireland became his subjects, the waves of Irishtown formation in the later Middle Ages and early modern period suggest that anti-Irish feeling, or at least a persistent conviction about Irish difference, was maintained to a much greater extent in Ireland than in Wales.

Conclusions.

In Wales and Ireland, the emergence of named enclaves was, at least in part, a reflection of the lower social or legal position of the eponymous ethnicity; that these named ethnic enclaves were

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[103] R. R. Davies, *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales, 1282–1400* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1978), pp. 413–24; A. D. Carr, *The Gentry of North Wales in the Later Middle Ages* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2017).
[104] Booker, *Cultural Exchange*, pp. 83–4.
[105] W. Rees, 'The charters of the boroughs and Brecon and Llandovery', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies,* 2 (1924), 245–52; See also, this volume, chapter 2.

a feature of urban life in Wales and Ireland highlights the exclusionary drive of English colonisation and urbanisation. The numerical superiority of the ethnic group after whom an area was named was *not* required, within that space, to perpetuate a name once it had emerged. In these ways, parallels exist between the emergence and perpetuation of named ethnic enclaves in Wales and Ireland, and Ruthenia, as studied by Janeczek, suggesting a broad European pattern.

However, Wales and Ireland differ from Ruthenia in that the emergence of named enclaves in the English colonial sphere seems primarily to have reflected a substantial Welsh or Irish long-term presence in the named places – if not always a clear Welsh/Irish majority population. Further, the alienness of the eponymous groups, noted by Janeczek in a Ruthenian context, was of less importance in Wales and Ireland.[106] That Irishtowns seem to have arisen at different phases in the colony's history, dependent upon the presence of Irish occupants – after long Anglo–Irish cohabitation would have erased scope for alienness – demonstrates the fact that, despite the reality of assimilation, powerful ideas of ethnic difference still motivated colonists and underlay how they envisioned the spatial divisions of their environment. The ethnic background of the people who lived in named Irish and Welsh enclaves, as suggested by their surnames, shows how incomplete such a project was and how soon it could be eroded by the powerful forces of commerce, personal relationships and familiarity that urged cooperation and comingling between the English and the Irish or Welsh. It highlights too the role that the church played in circumventing exclusionary tactics, allowing Irish and Welsh tenants to remain in place and encouraging the arrival of more. The story of Irishtowns and Welsh Streets therefore holds

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[106] Janeczek, 'Ulice etniczne', 140, 144.

within it the great tension pervading colonial history between hostility and subordination, on the one hand, and cooperation and interaction, on the other, in a way not (yet) demonstrated in research focused on the eastern peripheries of Europe.

Fig. 2. The urban network in medieval Wales.
Source: based on M. F. Stevens, *The Economy of Medieval Wales, 1067–1536* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2019), p. 13, 'Map 3. The towns of fourteenth-century Wales'.
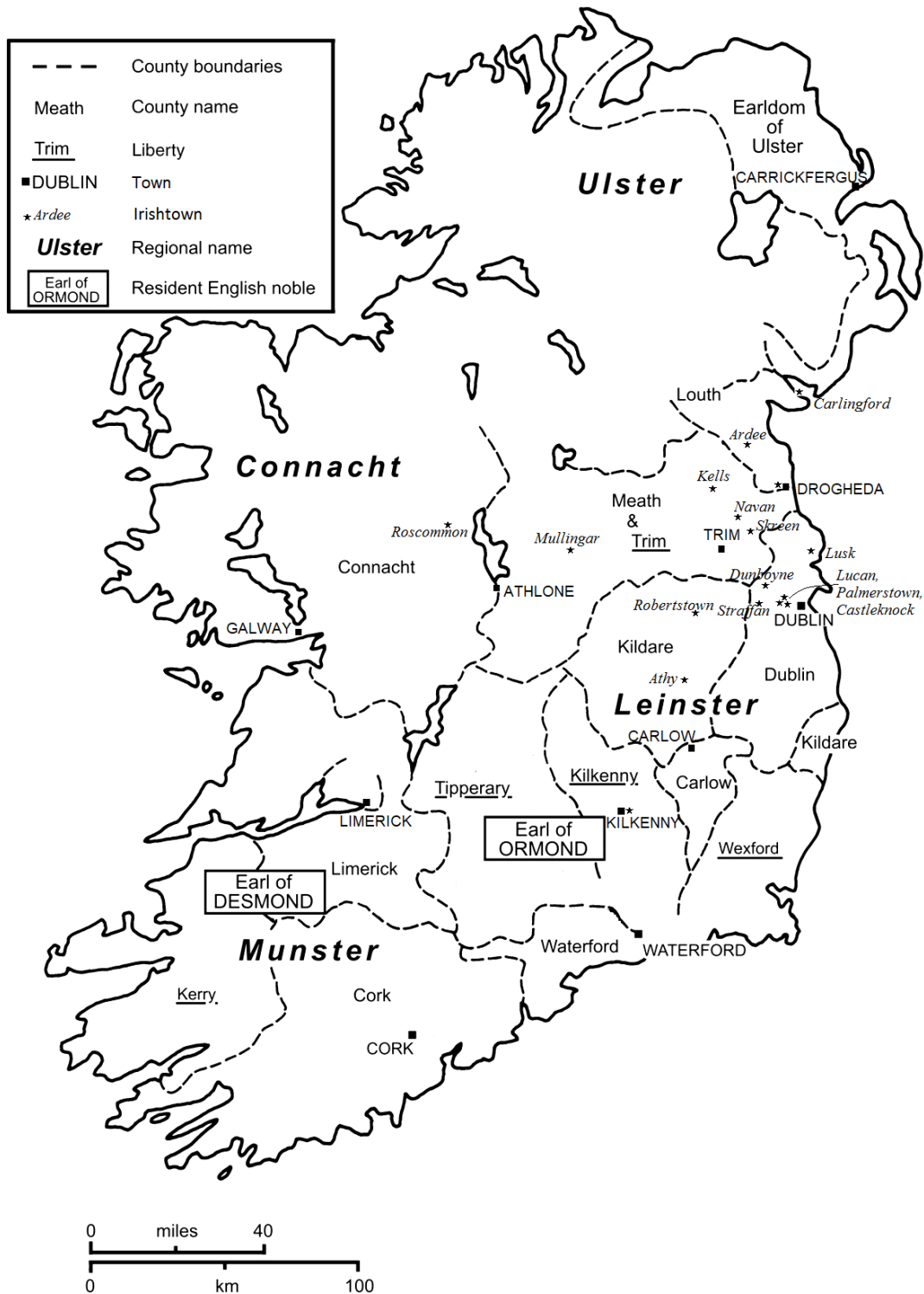
Fig. 3. The urban network in medieval Ireland (partial).
Source: based on P. Crooks, '"Hobbes", "dogs" and politics in the Ireland of Lionel of Antwerp, *c.* 1361–6: the Denis Bethell Prize essay 2005', *The Haskins Society Journal: Studies in Medieval History*, xvi (Boydell & Brewer, 2005), 117–48 at 130, 'fig. 2. Ireland 1361–6'.
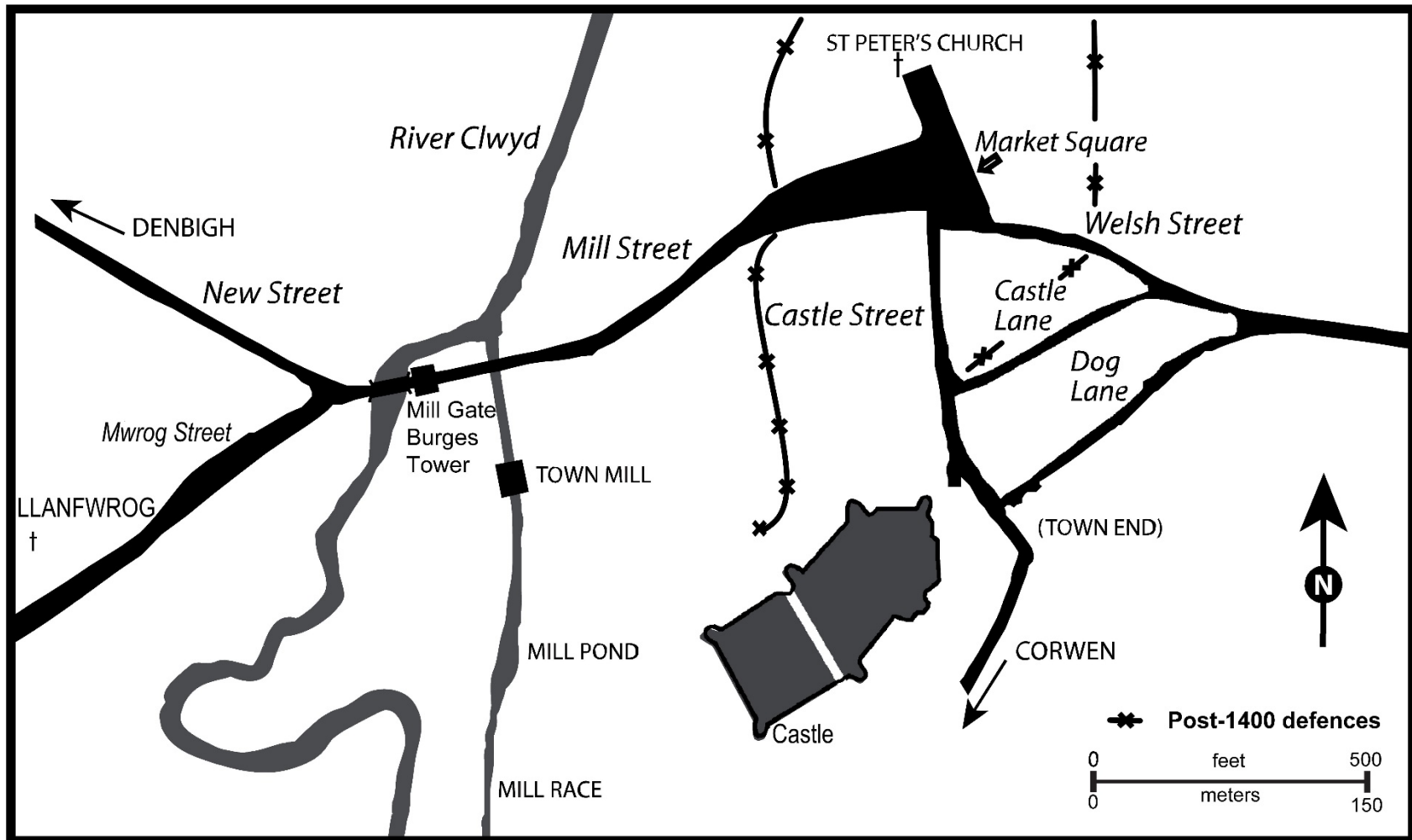
Fig. 5. Medieval Ruthin.
Source: based on M. F. Sevens, *Urban Assimilation in Post-Conquest Wales: Ethnicity, Gender and Economy in Ruthin, 1282–1384* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2010), p. 10, 'Map 2. Medieval Ruthin'; D. G. Evans, 'The medieval defences of Rhuthun', *Clwyd Historian*, 64 (2011), 34–41 at 36.