An Elizabethan Map of Kilmallock

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Item number 62 of the 'Hardiman Atlas' (MS 1209) at Trinity College, Dublin, is a map of the town of Kilmallock, county Limerick, drawn on paper and measuring 21\(\frac{1}{2}\) inches by 15\(\frac{1}{2}\) inches inside the border. The face of the map is varnished and it was formerly backed with canvas, a small rectangle of which has been preserved so as to show through a window cut in the modern paper mounting that covers the rest of the verso. There is a title ('Kilmallo towne') but no date or signature. The style is that of the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century and an Elizabethan date is indicated by the words 'The Q. Castle' which are applied in the reference panel to the building now generally known as the King's Castle. The map is drawn in full colour. The land surface appears in various shades of green and brownish-yellow with a few patches of deeper brown and orange. (An exceptionally dark red used for one plot of land to the south-west of the Queen's Castle may have been deliberately chosen to mask the penned outline of one or more large buildings which had previously been inserted, no doubt by mistake, in the same space.) Water is blue; the walls of buildings are red, orange or yellow; some roofs are yellow, others blue; the doors of the gate towers are brown or dark yellow. A distinctively coloured greyish-brown strip, presumably representing a ditch, encloses the town wall for most of its length.

The map contains three inscriptions which, though evidently early in date, do not belong to the original design: (a) the number 12 written sideways in the lower right-hand corner and now only faintly legible; (b) 'The Towne of Killmallock,' also written sideways, under the scale line; and (c) on the canvas backing, 'Killmalock, in C|O: Lim: p[er] Joanes.'

Although it has never been described in detail this map has long been known to scholars. In 1788 it was borrowed from the college by the antiquary and military surveyor Charles Vallancy.\(^1\) In 1824 it was catalogued, along with other early Irish maps in the college library, and dated to the Elizabethan period by the historian James Hardiman, after which these maps were bound together to form the atlas that traditionally bears his name.\(^2\) In 1840 a copy in the form of a generalised line drawing was published in T. Crofton Croker's rare Historical Illustrations of Kilmallock, with a caption assigning the original to the reign of James I. In 1858 a neat but not scrupulously accurate manuscript copy, entitled 'Ancient map of the town of Kilmallock, about 1600,' was made at the request of James Charles O'Connell; the artist is unidentified, but since an inscription attributes this copy to the kindness of Sir Richard Griffith we may presume him to have been a member of Griffith's staff at the valuation office in Dublin.\(^3\) In 1905 the map was listed, but not dated or otherwise explained, in

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1 TCD MS V.i.20, f. 1.
2 James Hardiman, 'A catalogue of maps, charts, and plans, relating to Ireland, preserved among the MSS in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, with preliminary observations,' *TRIA*, 14(1824), Antiquities, p. 73.
3 This copy is now in the possession of Mr. William A. Lee, solicitor, Kilmallock.
Robert Dunlop's valuable survey of sixteenth-century maps of Ireland. Finally, in 1927, a small photographic reproduction appeared in the second volume of J. Begley's book, *The Diocese of Limerick*, which gives the date as c. 1600 without providing further commentary. Because of the thickness of the varnish and, in some places, the colour, the map is a difficult subject for photography (Plate IV) and in bringing it to the notice of readers of this *Journal* the editor has decided also to print a corrected tracing of the O'Connell copy (Plate V) which gives a reasonably good impression of its topographical content.

The maps, plans and views in the Hardiman atlas vary considerably in style, subject-matter and probable origin, but most of them date from between the 1560s and the 1620s and most of them seem to have passed through the hands of Sir George Carew (d. 1629), whose Irish career lasted with some interruptions from 1574 to 1611 and reached its zenith when he served as President of Munster in the years 1600-2. Annotations in Carew's handwriting occur at many places in the Hardiman atlas and among his own papers at Lambeth Palace is a list of his maps (including one of Kilmallock) which fits the main body of the atlas so well as to leave little doubt as to its identity.

Within this group the present map has two sets of special associations. In the first place, the note referring to 'Joane's' is in a hand (not Carew's) that occurs in the endorsements to a number of the other maps, none of them demonstrably post-Elizabethan. In most cases the writer of these descriptions has added nothing to what can be learned from the maps themselves, and apart from Jones the only cartographers named by him are (John) Browne and (Francis) Jobson; but although two out of the three maps that carry these names are themselves unauthenticated, enough is known about Browne and Jobson to place their authorship of the maps in question beyond reasonable doubt—a fact that gives some solidity to the figure of Jones, even though such evidence is scanty in his case.

Secondly, the Kilmallock map shows certain resemblances of style and format to five of the other Hardiman maps. They are: number 45 (Cork city, including the fort which was built by Carew in 1601-2 and destroyed or at least badly damaged in 1603); number 47 (a more detailed plan of the same fort); number 51 (Haulbowline fort, constructed in 1602, together with part of Cork harbour); number 61 (a map or view—both terms seem applicable—of the siege of Glin Castle, county Limerick, in July 1600, closely similar to the one printed in the first volume of Stafford's *Pacata Hibernia*); and number 67 (the town, ferry and part of the harbour of Youghal). Only one of these maps is dated (number 45, by the author in his reference panel, to 1602) and none of them is signed, though number 47 is endorsed 'p[er] Joanes' in the same hand as the Kilmallock map. But they are all on varnished paper and at least four of the five were formerly mounted on canvas. All have continuous colour washes in which light browns and greens are predominant. They include writing of various styles

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6 The next two paragraphs are in disagreement with Dunlop, who ascribed numbers 45, 57, 61 and 67 of the Hardiman collection to Paul Ivy while suggesting Jones as the author of numbers 46, 53, 60 (for which see below) and perhaps 71.
which in spite of their differences it is not impossible to conceive as products of the same hand. The Kilmallock and Cork city maps both show walls and buildings in a rather naive-looking mixture of elevation and perspective, and in both towns there are parallel rows of houses, packed unconvincingly tight, lining the principal streets on either side. In so far as it is now possible to check them, all the maps can be said to reach a fairly high standard of planimetric accuracy, not only as regards relative positions but also in orientation (their north is evidently contemporary magnetic north, a point about eight degrees east of true north?) and in scale. The three town maps have no known prototypes and, until modern times, no known derivatives. In the case of Kilmallock no other large-scale sixteenth or seventeenth-century maps have been recorded.

The following items should also be included in any consideration of the Kilmallock group. Hardiman 57 is a plan of Limerick city, undated but including references to the Queen’s Castle and the Queen’s Mill, which although drawn on vellum and unvarnished resembles the above-mentioned maps in style, in accuracy and in lack of known cartographic ancestry or progeny. Hardiman 60 is a view of the siege of Glin on vellum, similar in content to 61 but drawn and coloured in a freer and more spirited style. There is also a third version of the same subject in volume 635 of the Carew Collection at Lambeth. Though closely similar in most respects to Hardiman 61, the Lambeth copy is remarkable for the signature ‘W. Jones’ in the bottom right-hand corner of its reference panel. It seems reasonable to suggest that both Hardiman 61 and the Lambeth map are derived from the rougher-looking Hardiman 60: if so, they differ from their original in ways which detract from the copyist’s reliability as a source of architectural and other non-planimetric information.

Some of these maps have been mentioned or reproduced by writers on local history, but none of them has been intensively studied in its own right. Taken together they provide at least a partial conspectus of the military geography of Munster during Carew’s term of office (the most obvious omission, that of Kinsale, can be easily, if variously, explained) and since there seems to be no reference to them in the records of the central government they may plausibly be regarded as a personal venture of the President’s and not, like some of his maps, acquired ready-made from the Irish state papers. The varnish and canvas backing suggest that at some time the maps were hung or intended to be hung in Carew’s study, but the archival history of his maps is too large a subject to be further considered here except to note that endorsements (a) and (b) of the Kilmallock map, described above, will have a part to play in any detailed reconstruction of that history.

9 C. Hansteen, Untersuchungen über den Magnetismus der Erde, atlas volume, 1819, map 1, showing magnetic declination in the year 1600.

8 For Limerick, see T. J. Westropp, R. S. A. I. Antiquarian Handbook, No. VII (1910), 9; H. G. Laski, ‘The ancient walls of Limerick,’ NMAJ, 2 (1940-41), 85 and 107; Canice Mooney, ‘Franciscan architecture in pre-Reformation Ireland,’ JRSAI, 80 (1956), plate XXVII; all of whom date the map to c. 1600.


For Cork, see E. Carberry, ‘The development of Cork city (as shown by maps of the city, prior to the Ordnance Survey map of 1841-42),’ JCHAS, 48 (1943), 70-71.
It seems unnecessary to dwell on Robert Dunlop’s avowedly speculative suggestion that the ‘Joanes’ maps were drawn by Inigo Jones the architect. Several Joneses are known to have been present in late Elizabethan Ireland, and while none of them can be identified from documentary sources as a cartographer a good candidate is available in William Jones, who served as Commissary of Musters in Munster in 1598-1601 and perhaps for some time afterwards, having held similar appointments in Ulster and in Connaught in 1597-98. These positions seem to have been obtained through the influence of Sir Robert Cecil, to whom Jones wrote several letters both before and after taking up employment in Ireland. The letters themselves are of small biographical interest, but their elaborately looped signature is unmistakably the same as that of the Lambeth view of Glin, and the rest of their writing, though not identical with any of the styles seen on the maps, seems likely to have come from the same hand as the writing on the maps of Kilmallock, Cork (both city and fort), Haulbowline and Glin (all copies), and on part at least of the map of Youghal.

Whether the two Hardiman views of Glin, with all their differences, were drawn and coloured by the same artist is a problem that must be left unresolved, though it is certainly relevant to the question of whether Jones copied other men’s surveys as well as his own, and whether indeed he made any original surveys at all. For Carew’s collection of Munster town and fort maps could easily have been formed not from a single set of observations but by copying extant surveys of differing date and authorship. The consistency of the Jones maps in non-stylistic matters, as seen for example in the care that has gone into the measuring of the town walls, is insufficient ground for assigning them to the same surveyor or even to the same period, for there was more than one occasion in the later sixteenth century when the fortifications of Kilmallock and other Munster towns may have needed to be surveyed. Nor, except in the case of Cork (which is dated anyway), does internal evidence offer any topographical clue to the origin of the town maps, and the use of magnetic variation to date them, though theoretically appealing, is hardly a practicable proposition.

But ability as a draughtsman need not have prevented Jones, any more than it prevented Browne and Jobson, from showing equal competence in the field. His duties as commissary would have taken him to all parts of the province without standing in the way of surveys that probably required no more than two or three days work apiece. And with a single exception (the misplacing of east and west in the Kilmallock compass indicator) his drawings are free from the kind of obvious copying error that so often betrays the cartographic plagiarist. On balance, at any rate, it

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9 For example Sir Ellis Jones, Lieutenant Hugh Jones, Lieutenant Roger Jones, Ensign William Jones, and Baptiste Jones.
10 Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, 1598-97, p. 471; 1598-99, pp. 62, 409; 1599-1600, pp. 5-6, 383-84; 1600, p. 50; 1601-3, p. 61.
12 The writer is indebted to Mr. William O’Sullivan, Keeper of Manuscripts in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, for his opinion of the writing of the Jones maps and letters and for his comments on an earlier draft of this paper.
13 For a reference to the rapidity with which Elizabethan town surveys could be carried out see R. A. Skelton, Tudor town plans in John Speed’s Theatre, Arch. J., 108 (1951). 111 and 115.
seems improbable that the Kilmallock survey was carried out more than a few years earlier than the date of 1600 proposed by Begley. If the survey was made by Jones, it is unlikely, on biographical grounds, to have been earlier than 1598. And even if it was made by somebody else, we may fall back on the general principle that the number of qualified surveyors in sixteenth-century Ireland probably depended more on the size of the occupying army than on any other factor and, therefore, that an undated and otherwise undatable Elizabethan survey may be more convincingly assigned to the Tyrone war than to any earlier period.

Turning to the topographical content of the map one finds a number of features that are easily identifiable in the modern town plan. These include much of the town wall together with the sites of the Dominican Friary, the parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul, the 'Bla Port' (a name derived from the Irish blath, if we can trust the English version, 'Blossoms Gate,' given in Samuel Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary* and by the Ordnance Survey*) and the King's Castle. The River Looibagh or Lubagh of course is unmistakable. So are the four main streets of the present day, with Sarsfield (formerly High) Street and Sheares (formerly St. John's) Street running north-west from the town's principal intersection and Lord Edward (formerly Ivy) Street running south-east, joined by Wolf Tone (formerly Water) Street from the north and Emmet (formerly Blae) Street from the south. To these landmarks we may conveniently add Ivy Gate and St. John's Gate, the sites of which, though the buildings themselves no longer exist, can be fixed on the modern map beyond any reasonable doubt. With the aid of these identifications the accuracy of the Jones map may be roughly evaluated (Fig. 1)—but no more than roughly, for the scale line is too short and the building and wall symbols too large for distances to be measured with precision. The results of such an evaluation are impressive. Jones's straight-line distance from St. John's Gate to Ivy Gate (about 1,850 feet) is so near the truth that its margin of error cannot meaningfully be defined. To make the same point in a different way, the scale bar is correct in stating the scale of the map as 500 feet ≈ 2.72 inches. Almost the whole outline of the town wall is equally correct; the only exception is the north-easterly projection that bounds the churchyard, which is placed some 140 feet south-west of its true position.

The remaining detail varies in quality but can nowhere be shown to reach the high standard achieved for the walls. Inside the gates the streets diverge markedly from their correct alignments. Outside, there are difficulties of identification that make it hard to pass judgment. The curve of the Ivy Gate road suggests that the route from Kilmallock to the south-east may have followed the road named 'Bohargorode' on the 1/2500 Ordnance Survey map rather than the modern main route to Kilfinnan, and on the other side of the town the highway to Limerick seems to have taken a more direct course down to the river than at present; but the representation of roads generally is not good enough to give much weight to these suggestions. As for physical geography, the lake (drained in the nineteenth century) is shown in its correct position; so is the stretch of river below the Water Gate Bridge, except in the lower left-hand corner where it has evidently been pulled southwards to bring it into the frame of the map. The latter motive may also have caused the upper section of the river to be

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*In the field name book at the Ordnance Survey office, Dublin (county Limerick, parish of St. Peter and St. Paul, p. 54) the gate is described as 'The Pigeon Castle or Blossoms Gate.'*
Fig. Outline overlay of the Jones map of Kilmallock (Hardiman 62) on that of the Ordnance Survey.
located south of its true position. Comparison with the modern map thus suggests that the surveyor's chief interest was in the defences of the town. He may be pictured as running a traverse survey round the outside of the walls with bearings observed to prominent buildings and along the approach roads. Within this traversed framework the street pattern could be sketched without fear of gross error.

In its treatment of individual buildings the map is less satisfactory. In so far as these are shown realistically at all, they have not been drawn from a south-western viewpoint, as a first glance might suggest, but turned through whatever angle is needed to present their principal face towards the bottom of the map. This is plain from the orientation of the Queen's Castle (whose entrance is made to face in the wrong direction) and, even more, from that of the town gates. Where Jones's details are verifiable they do not inspire much confidence in his accuracy on architectural questions. Both church and friary are too high for their length; the latter shows no trace of the south transept (its most impressive feature when viewed from the town side) and a spire has been added to its tower, while the round tower of the church is shown as square or rectangular for most of its height. The testimony of the map regarding gate towers is a matter for separate consideration in view of the possibility that a cartographer of Jones's background would give more attention to military than to ecclesiastical buildings.15

There remains a group of features, notably dwelling houses and field boundaries, which it is clearly impossible to identify with their modern counterparts in any straightforward manner. No strictly contemporary sources are available for testing this kind of information, but in 1654 a minute account of the houses and tenements of Kilmallock was drawn up in connection with the Civil Survey of county Limerick, and in default of evidence for radical topographical change in the first half of the seventeenth century this document may be tentatively accepted as a basis for comparison.16 Though it contains no maps and no figures of length and breadth, the Civil Survey records abutments in sufficient detail for its contents to be plotted in diagrammatic form and several of its minor street names can be readily applied to the Jones map. 'Friars Lane' is the street joining the Queen's Castle with the Friars Gate; 'Church Lane' leads from the cross to the churchyard; the 'common cart lane' may be seen immediately inside and to the north-west of Blossoms Gate and again south-west of the cross. The Civil Survey's 'Crooked Lane' is evidently the eastern section of the modern Orr Street; in this case the Jones equivalent (connecting the Water Gate with the churchyard) is misplaced, being shown some 150 to 200 feet north-east of its true position.

Where the two sources differ most, however, is in their representation of individual dwellings. In the Civil Survey most of the houses within the walls are stated to be thatched, including all those in the side streets and those at the outer ends of all the main streets; on the map, to judge from the distribution of blue colour, more than two-thirds of the walled town (namely all except the north-west section of Sheares

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15 There are significant differences, however, between St. John's Gate as represented by Jones and the view given at pp. 60-61 of T. Crofton Croker's Researches in the South of Ireland, London 1824.
Street) consist of slated houses. Similarly, fewer houses are mapped fronting the main streets than the corresponding tenements listed in 1654; six frontages appear on the east side of High Street between Church Lane and Water Street, instead of the nine tenements (each with one or more houses) recorded in the Civil Survey. Such discrepancies, which are not unknown in English town plans of the same period, confirm one's impression that Jones's houses are meant to show the built-up area in general rather than the positions of individual buildings. In the same spirit, apparently, he has drawn all his houses with their long axis as nearly as possible parallel with the lower margin of the map, without regard for what one presumes to have been their actual orientation. His practice of arranging them three or four deep may have had some basis in reality, for in certain cases there was more than one house to a Civil Survey tenement and in nineteenth-century views of Kilmallock smaller houses may be glimpsed behind the houses fronting the High Street. But (again to judge from the Civil Survey) this massing of houses is considerably overdone, and it may better be interpreted as an attempt to reconcile the actual shape of the built-up area with a habit of making every house face the same way.

Traces of early stone building survive in the main street of present-day Kilmallock, but without expert study it is impossible to say which of them, if any, derive from the kind of tower-house that dominated Anglo-Irish urban architecture in the late medieval and early modern periods. The six tower-houses shown by Jones are indicated by capital letters in Figure 2 together with the conjectured positions (marked by small letters) of the castles, also six in number, that are mentioned in the Civil Survey. The result is not easily interpreted, for the Civil Survey castles can be located only in a somewhat arbitrary manner by dividing each block of the street plan equally among the tenements. But at least it is clear that b and f are not recorded by Jones and that C and F are absent from the Civil Survey. Nor can we hope to learn much from the positions of the remaining castles in the sequence of houses or tenements, for as we have seen the two surveys differ as to the total number of units in each block. For what it is worth, however, A is the sixth house south of St. John's Gate and a is the third tenement. In the next section of the main street, D can be equated with c, each of them being the sixth unit counting southwards from the castle. The alternative is for c to be paired with B (the second house) and D with e (the sixteenth tenement). Across the street, d can be identified with E: the former is the second tenement north of Church Lane, the latter the third house. There are only two instances, then, where the two surveys place their castles in approximately the same positions. The differences may reflect some uncertainty (in a town known to have contained a number of unusually elaborate houses) as to what constituted a castle, or they may be due to the construction and demolition of buildings between c. 1600 and 1654. But the comparison does little to strengthen one's faith in the map as a record of private dwelling houses. The same applies to gardens and orchards, for these emerge from the Civil Survey not as the squarish shapes seen on the map but as narrow strips running from the main street to the town wall. The boundaries of the larger fields outside the wall are doubtless equally conventional, merely indicating (what is still the case) that the north-eastern area, which is coloured brown, was divided into smaller parcels than the

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17 For an example from Speed, see E. Welch, 'The earliest maps of Southampton,' Cartographic Journal, 2 (1965), 67.
area coloured green on the other side of the main road that crosses the map from left to right.

Many of Jones’s minor features may be seen as the work of a draughtsman elaborating and particularising information that had been left vague and obscure in his (or his informant’s) field notes and sketches. Even so, the residue of seemingly reliable detail, not recorded elsewhere, is far from insignificant. It includes a part, now lost, of the town wall together with the positions of the wall towers; the market cross; no less than six watermills; the castle seen near the upper left-hand corner of the map, which may perhaps be identified with the ‘Courtnerruddery’ of the Civil Survey and earlier documents; the two small bridges connecting the town with the friary; and the road that by-passes the town at its south-east corner. Most remarkable is the suburb, with its own gate tower near the site of the present Gortboy House, occupying land that is now largely unbuilt on outside the Blae Gate. This may be interpreted as post-medieval ribbon development of the kind seen on many of Speed’s English town plans, though its Civil Survey name, ‘Old Blae Street,’ would seem to indicate an earlier origin. Alternatively it may have been an Irish town, with its own gate if not its own wall, similar to the ‘base towns’ that existed at Limerick, Youghal and elsewhere. It is one of a number of points at which this interesting map presents a challenge to the local historian.
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An Elizabethan map of Kilmallock, Co. Limerick

(Photograph: The Green Studio Ltd.—courtesy of Trinity College, Dublin)
Corrected tracing of the O'Connell copy of the Kilmallock map
(By courtesy of Mr. William A. Lee, Kilmallock)