

North Munster Antiquarian Journal

IRISLEABHAR SEANDÁLUÍOCHTA TUADH-MHUMHAN

VOLUME XXXII

1990



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THE FRANCISCAN FRIARY, ENNIS

750 Years (1240-1990)

- 1240 Founded at the behest of Donnadh Cairbreach Ó Briain, King of Thomond.
- c.1300 Enlarged and repaired by King Turlough O'Brien, the fine east window dating from this phase. A few years later Mathcath McNamara built the Sacristy and the Refectory.
- c.1400 Benefactions from the McNamaras or the O'Briens allowed the cloisters to be built and the south transept added.
- c.1460 Central tower/belfry erected.
- 1507 Irish Provincial Chapter held in Ennis.
- 1543 Monastery suppressed, though monks linger on there.
- 1570s-84 Used as a courthouse.
- 1599 Served as a place of refuge when Red Hugh O'Donnell attacked the town.
- 1617 Last monk of the old community, Dermot Broudin, died.
- 1617-22 Converted into a chapel for Church of Ireland services.
- 1751 Tower struck by lightning, and again later in the century.
- 1792 Restoration undertaken, including addition of pinnacles to the tower.
- 1871 Abandoned as not up to Victorian standards and Church of Ireland moves to Bindon Street.
- 1887-82 Roof collapses leaving friary open to the skies.
- 1893 Taken over by Board of Works as National Monument no. 170. Major repairs and conservation undertaken.
- 1969 Church of Ireland handed over their remaining rights to the Ennis Franciscans who, since 1830, had been in a new friary nearby.

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FORMERLY
THE NORTH MUNSTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Founded in 1892 as The Limerick Field Club

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