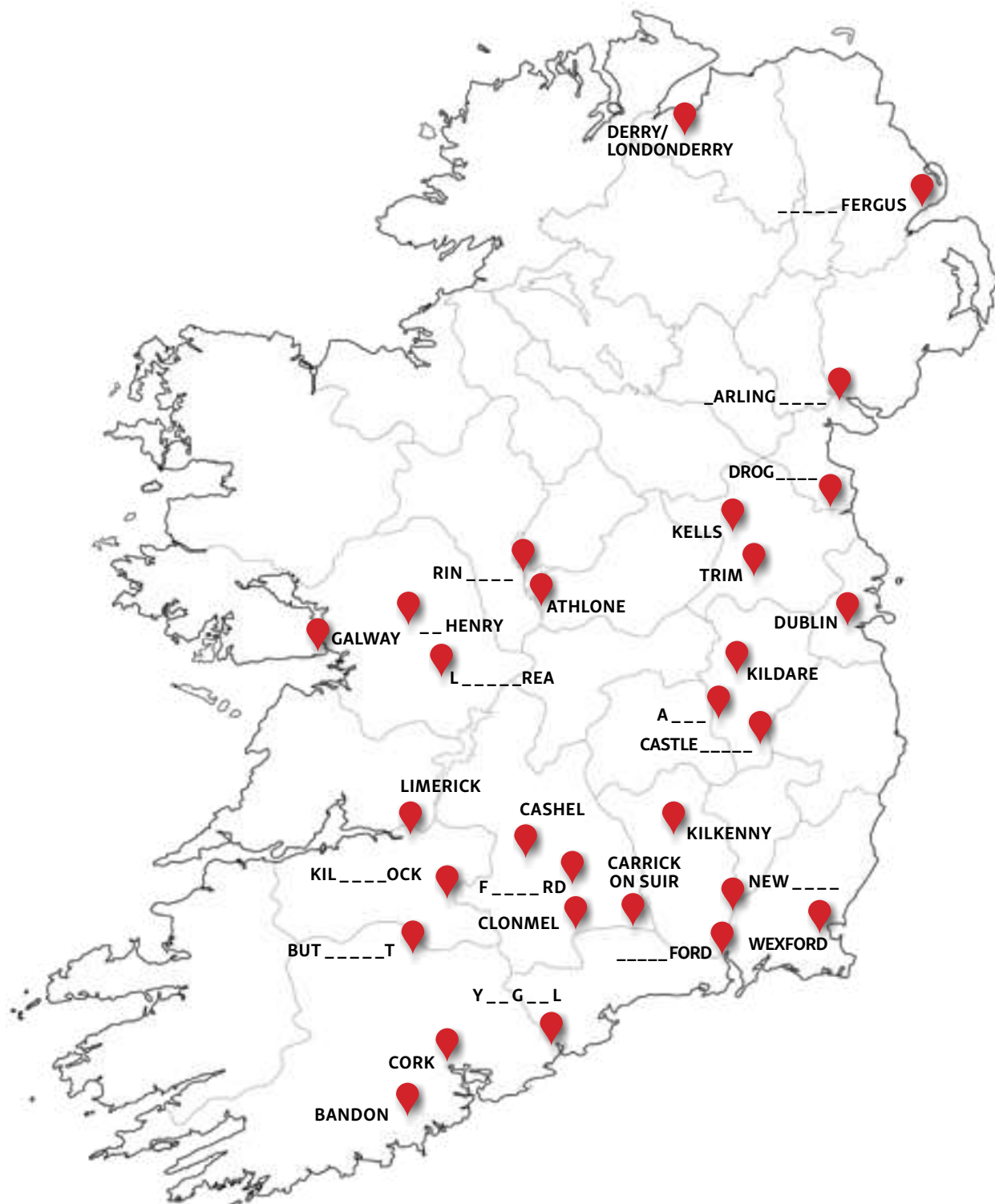


# DISCOVER THE WALLED-TOWNS OF IRELAND!

A Workbook for Primary School Children

April 2020





## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Irish Walled Towns Network (IWTN) was formed by the **Heritage Council** in 2005 to help the walled towns of Ireland become better places in which to live, work and visit. The island of Ireland has **56 known walled towns, 29 of which have joined the IWTN.**

## 2. CAN YOU COMPLETE THE TOWN NAMES?

Using an **atlas** or **Google Maps**, can you complete the names of the 29 towns that are part of the Irish Walled Towns Network?

### 3. MEET THE PURCELLS! ( & COLOUR THEM IN!)

The Purcells are a  
merchant family living  
in Medieval Ireland  
(1100-1600 approximately)

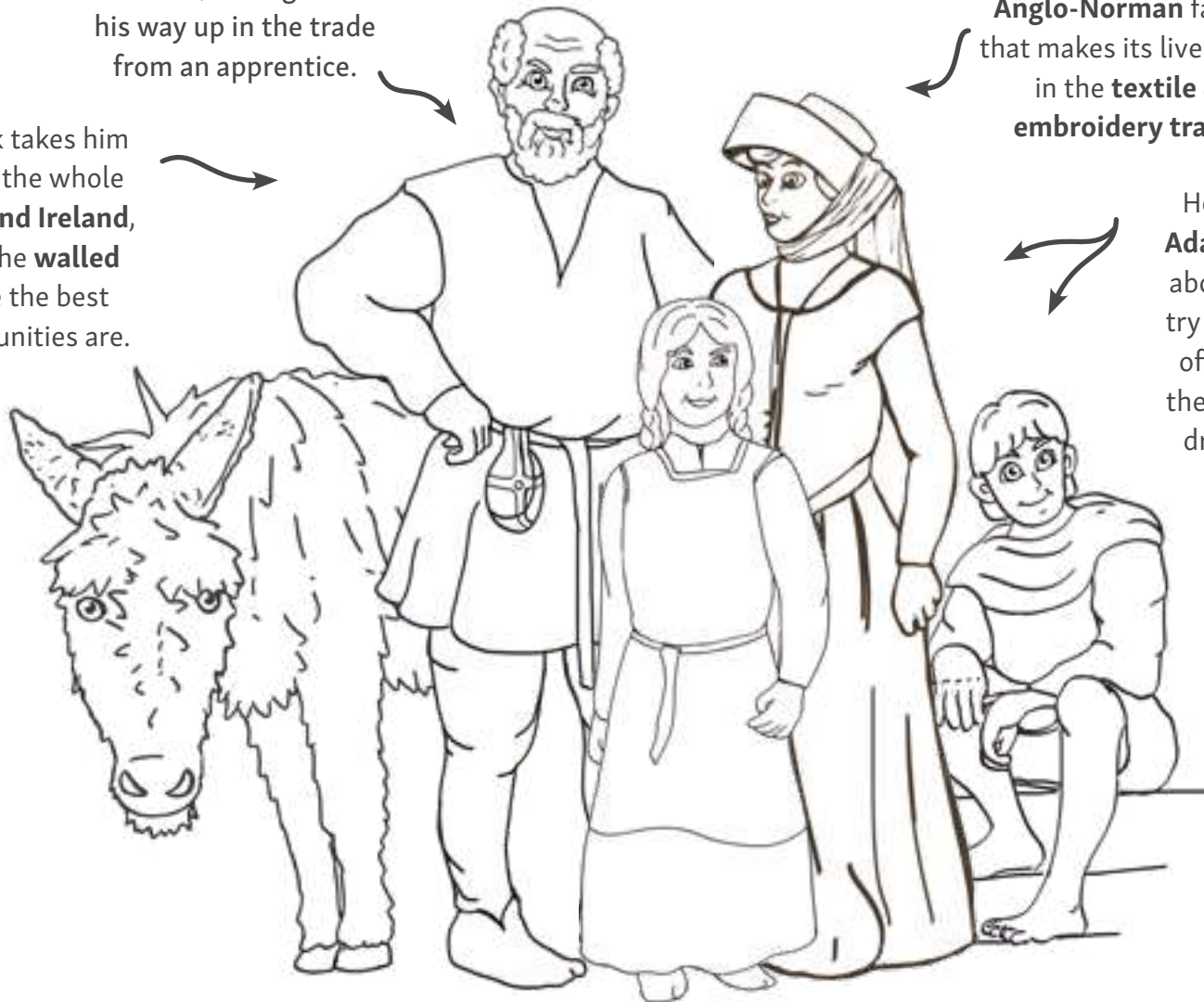
Maurice Purcell is a  
successful **trader in skins  
& textiles**, having worked  
his way up in the trade  
from an apprentice.

Eleanor is from an  
**Anglo-Norman** family  
that makes its livelihood  
in the **textile &  
embroidery trade**.

Maurice's work takes him  
( & sometimes the whole  
family) **all around Ireland**,  
especially to the **walled  
towns** where the best  
trading opportunities are.

Here are two of their children,  
**Adam & Agnes**. Both are curious  
about how things work & like to  
try out new things. This curiosity  
often gets them into trouble &  
their hair-brained schemes often  
drive their parents to despair!

As children of a middle-  
class family, the children  
are expected to care for the  
family's animals and younger  
siblings, **cook, clean & help  
out in the family business**.



## 4. HOW DID THE WALLED TOWNS EVOLVE?

### 4.1 EARLY SETTLEMENT

Medieval Irish people lived all over Ireland in big circular settlements called ringforts. Mums, Dads, brothers, sisters, grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles and cousins all lived in the ringfort's round houses, built with thatched roofs and mud walls. The houses were protected by a palisade (big wooden fence) and their animals were brought inside this fence at night.

Later, when monasteries were built, people wanted to be closer to the churches and monks who provided mass, food, hospitals, trade and wealth. So they lived in wooden houses on the outskirts of monasteries.

Reconstruction drawing of early medieval Clones, Co. Monaghan by Philip Armstrong.



### 4.2 VIKING TOWNS

The Vikings were from Norway, Sweden and Denmark. They sailed all over the world looking for places to trade with or attack. When the Vikings were raiding Irish monasteries for their wealth, they realised they liked Ireland and decided to stay.

The Vikings built longphorts, or defended bases close to rivers. Some of these later became the first towns in Ireland. Inside the Viking towns were rectangular houses built along straight streets. The Vikings protected their towns with ditches, earthen banks, palisades and of course their swords!

Reconstruction drawing of a Viking settlement by Sara Nylund.



### 4.3 ANGLO-NORMAN TOWNS

The Anglo-Normans came from Normandy in France, they invaded England and Wales before coming to Ireland in 1169. They took over some of the Viking towns and some of the Irish monastic settlements and turned them into Anglo-Norman towns.

At first they built wooden castles and small towns known as motte and baileys. However, the local Irish kept attacking the wooden towns and burning them to the ground. In Athy, County Kildare the town was burned four time by the O'Moores of Laois before the town walls were built of stone to protect the residents. All Anglo-Norman castles and walls were rebuilt in stone to protect the people from attack. As well as keeping out enemies, walls allowed the towns to charge taxes on food and craft items brought into the marketplace for sale.

Reconstruction drawing of New Ross, Co. Wexford - an Anglo-Norman town by Uto Hogerzeil.



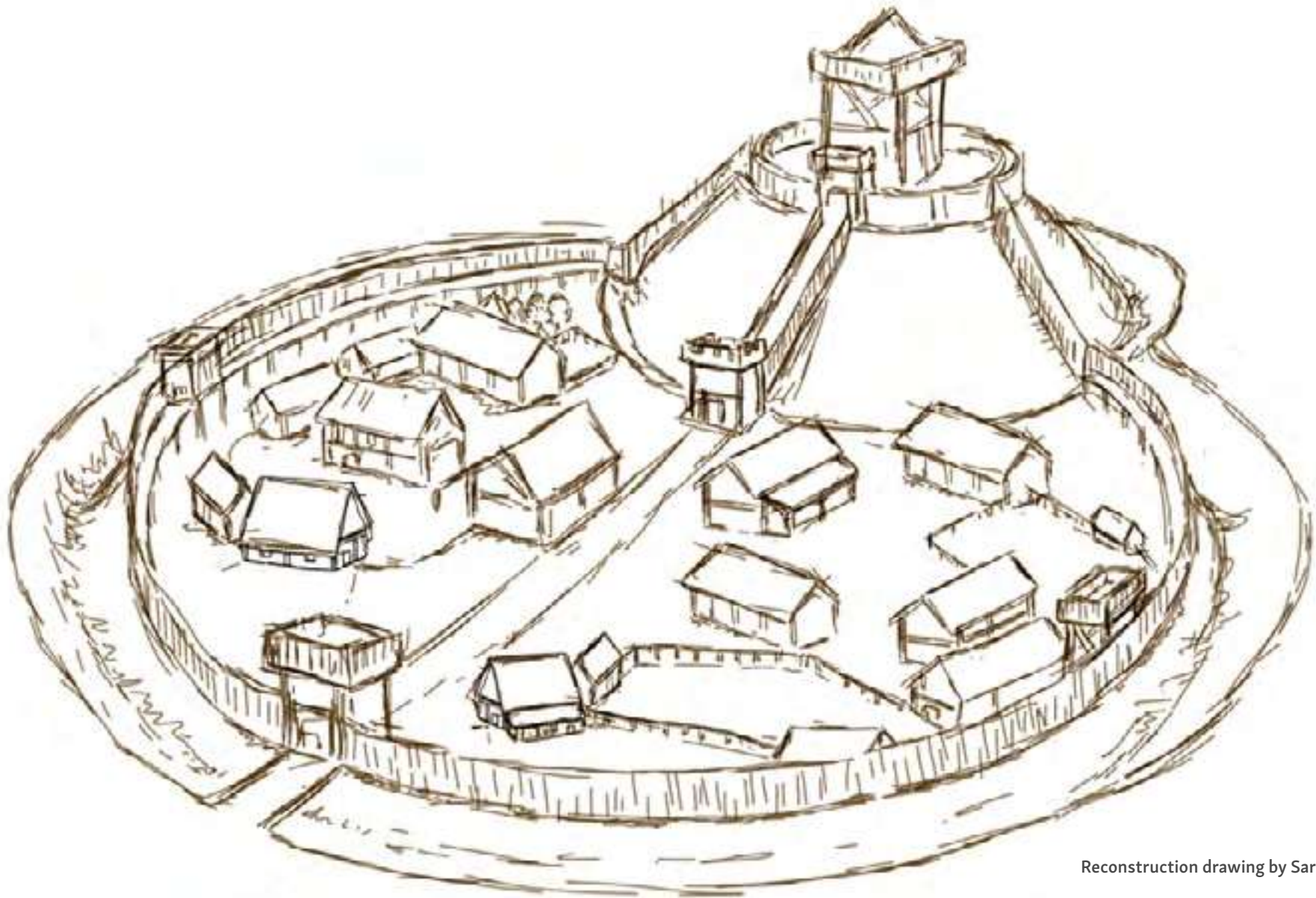
## 5. WALLED-TOWN WORD-SEARCH

P	F	C	A	R	R	I	C	K	O	N	S	U	I	R	G	Z	W
H	A	I	K	I	L	K	E	N	N	Y	J	R	O	I	H	B	A
D	B	R	Q	O	J	Q	F	E	T	H	A	R	D	S	P	I	T
U	Q	H	R	N	C	A	R	L	I	N	G	F	O	R	D	D	E
B	H	Y	H	G	K	X	K	W	E	X	F	O	R	D	Y	R	R
L	K	K	U	Q	T	S	K	K	E	L	L	S	W	M	C	O	F
I	C	A	S	T	L	E	D	E	R	M	O	T	J	J	A	G	O
N	O	Q	Q	Y	M	N	I	Z	N	Y	E	Y	R	R	S	H	R
G	R	T	Y	D	L	I	M	E	R	I	C	K	V	W	H	E	D
O	K	Z	B	U	T	T	E	V	A	N	T	C	I	K	E	D	S
N	J	E	Q	R	H	X	P	E	N	P	H	T	N	Q	L	A	H
C	Z	O	F	C	C	E	K	I	L	M	A	L	L	O	C	K	J

Find the following words in the puzzle.  
Words are hidden ➡ ⬇ and ↘ .

- |               |            |           |
|---------------|------------|-----------|
| BUTTEVANT     | DROGHEDA   | LIMERICK  |
| CARLINGFORD   | DUBLIN     | WATERFORD |
| CARRICKONSUIR | FETHARD    | WEXFORD   |
| CASHEL        | KELLS      |           |
| CASTLEDERMOT  | KILKENNY   |           |
| CORK          | KILMALLOCK |           |

## 6. COLOUR IN THE ANGLO NORMAN MOTTE & BAILEY!

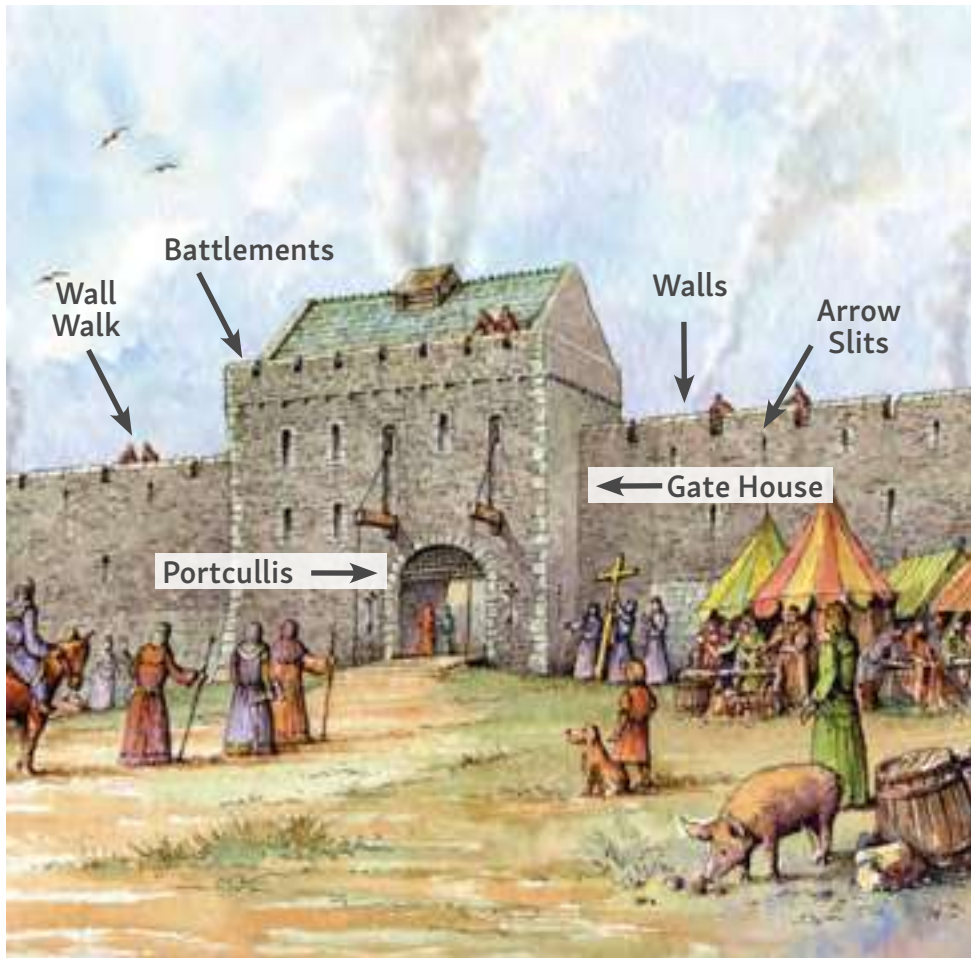


Reconstruction drawing by Sara Nylund.

## 7. TYPICAL ARCHITECTURE OF A WALLED-TOWN

The 29 walled towns across the island of Ireland that are part of the *Irish Walled Towns Network* all feature examples of architecture that is hundreds of years old. Watch out for **stone walls, arrow slits, bastions, battlements, wall-walks and towers** on the walls of the towns.

Reconstruction drawing of St James' Gate, Kilkenny City in the 1400s by Philip Armstrong.



### Arrow-Slits

Narrow windows for firing arrows at your enemies, their size makes it difficult for your enemies to hit you with their arrows! Arrow slits can be found in **Waterford City's** town wall towers.

### Bastions

Structure sticking out of the corners of the town walls, used to fire arrows in all directions! You can see bastions on the town walls of **Bandon**, County Cork.

### Battlements

Found on the tops of walls and castles. They look like stone teeth. The gaps let soldiers fire arrows and stones down at their enemies, while the 'tooth' part protects the soldier from any arrows or stones being thrown back. **Fethard** in County Tipperary has fine battlements.

### Burgage

Plots of land inside a town for a house and vegetable garden. The burgage plot was owned by a King or a Lord but could be rented to citizens of the town. You had special privileges if you owned a burgage plot, like the right to vote.

### Castles

Some towns had big stone castles where the Lord lived with his family and his soldiers. In times of war the castle protected the people. **Carrickfergus**, County Down has a safe castle inside its town walls. **Rindoon** in Co. Roscommon also had a large castle inside the town walls.

### Drawbridge

A big wooden door to a castle or a gate in the town wall. It could be lowered in the morning by the gate keeper to act as a bridge over the moat and at night it was pulled up so no one could get in or out of the town.

### Gates

All town walls have gates to control entry into and out of the towns. Guards often lived in gate houses and would go on patrol all day and night. During

the day they charged people taxes coming in to sell their goods, at night they would close the gates so no one could get in or out. A good example of a walled town gate is the Tholsel in **Carlingford**, County Louth and Blossom gate, **Kilmallock**, County Limerick.

## Machicolation

These were holes in the walls, castles or gatehouses where you could drop boiling oil and poo over your enemies. One can be found on the walls of **Galway City**.

## Market Square

A market square is a large open area in the centre of the town, where the market was held. People from all over the countryside would come into the walled towns and sell their goods in the market square, so long as they paid their taxes at the gate. The walled town of **Athenry**, County Galway has a great market square.

## Moat

Either a natural river/ stream was used or a ditch was dug around the town and filled with water. No one wanted to walk through the rubbish-filled moat and get wet when they were attacking the walls so they were a good way to protect your town. You can see a medieval moat around **Loughrea**, County Galway.

## Portcullis

Are a heavy wood or metal gate in the gatehouse which can be dropped down from above to stop anyone entering the town. Watergate in **Cork City** used to have a strong portcullis.

## Ramparts

Steep banks of earth or rubble used to slow down attackers before they reached the moat. Sometimes ramparts were used inside the walls to support the stone from cannon attack. Some ramparts were used in **Kilkenny's** walled city. Inside the walled town you might be able to see the remains of burgage plots, castles, a parish church and a market square.

## Towers

Town walls often had tall towers which were used to store weapons inside, to keep look out out from and to see trouble coming and to get soldiers quickly up to the top of the walls. Round towers were better than square towers, as they had no corners and were less likely to collapse. The walled town of **Clonmel**, County Tipperary had lots of fine towers. Some can still be seen in Old St Mary's Graveyard in the town.

## Walls

Usually built with stone, the walls come in all shapes and sizes. They can be up to 8m tall and even 7m wide in some towns!

## Wall-Walks

Footpaths at the very top of the town walls. They let soldiers patrol and watch out for anything going on inside or outside of the town. You can walk on **Derry/ Londonderry's** wall walk.

## Just outside the town & sometimes connected to the town walls were:

### Monasteries

All walled towns had monasteries, usually built outside of the town. The monasteries would often build their own walls for protection and connect them to the town walls. The monks in the monasteries would offer mass every day for the people in the town to attend. A number of monasteries were found outside the walls of **Kildare town**.

### Hospitals

Lots of walled towns had hospitals, they were usually located just outside the walls to stop sickness spreading in the town. The hospitals weren't always good at medicine. Sometimes patients would have hot stones or leaches put on them to cure them! **Limerick City** is one of the walled towns with a medieval hospital.





Reconstruction drawing of Castledermot, Co. Kildare by Marc Guernon.

## 7.1. FIND THE FEATURES!

Circle the features of the Medieval Town that you can see in the image above!

1. Castle
2. Moat
3. River
4. Stone Walls
5. Gates
6. Drawbridge
7. Orchard
8. Monastery
9. Parish Church
10. Hospital
11. Burgage Plots

## **7.2. DRAW YOUR OWN WALLED TOWN!**

## 8. BUILD YOUR OWN WALLED TOWN!

(you might need help from a grown-up!)

### Task 1: Gather Materials

- Cereal boxes, kitchen & toilet paper tubes, milk cartons, shoe boxes.
- Adhesives - masking tape, sellotape, craft glue & spray adhesive.
- Other household materials such as tin cans & scrap paper.
- Scissors, craft knife, straws, string & pipe cleaners.
- Crayons, colouring pencils & paint.

### Task 2: Plan Your Walled Town

- Based on your drawing of a walled town above, draw a ground plan of your walled town on a large piece of flat cardboard, include any towers, gates and doorways.
- Mark in where you will place the different features of the town - the houses, burgage plots, castle, church, market place and any other features you'd like to include.
- Think about how the townspeople would escape from the walled town if under attack. What would help them escape? Slides, ladders, catapults? Anything else you can think of?

### Task 3: Build your Town & try the Escape Routes

- For the walls of the town, you can use large cardboard boxes. Cut open the boxes and cut off the bottom and top flaps so that you are left with long pieces of card that can be used for the perimeter wall.
- Using masking tape, stick as many of these long pieces of card together as you need to ensure your wall will enclose the entire area of the town that you have drawn on your plan.
- Before you assemble the walls, cut out any doors or gateways.
- Align the bottom of your wall to the line of the perimeter wall you have drawn on your ground plan.
- Using a strong glue or masking tape (so that you can paint over it later!), attach your town wall to the ground plan.

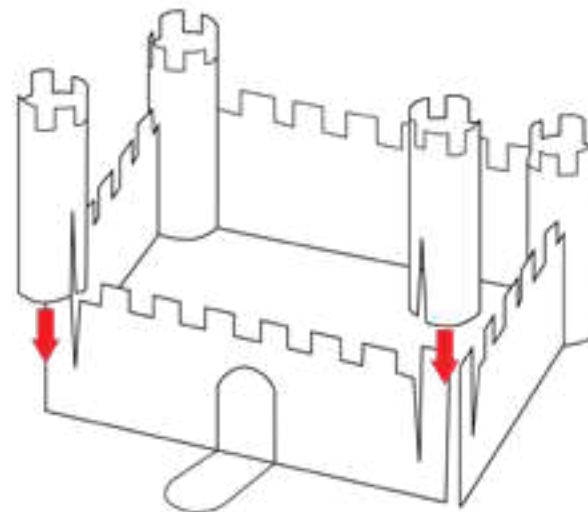
- Cut a slit into kitchen-paper tubes & slide them over the walls to make towers on each corner of the town walls.
- Use smaller cardboard boxes to make the other buildings and features within your walled town (remember to cut in any windows, doors or arrow slits!)
- Try out different escape routes through the town!

### Task 4: Paint your Walled Town!

- Once you have the structural features of the town constructed and put on the ground plan, it's time to decorate!
- Paint the ground of your walled town - paint in the mud paths, green burgage plots, any vegetation or wild flowers.
- Paint the walls of your walled town - walls would have been grey, white or brown.
- Use a variety of colors to paint accents on your building, for example, use a deep burgundy to paint any rooftops. Other details include, window sills, window panes, doors & gates.

*TIP!*

*Make a paper template of a window & use this as a guide to make sure that all your windows look the same!*



If your town has a castle, cut out square shapes along the top of the boxes to make the battlements!

Or build your walled town in Minecraft or with Lego!

## 9. DID YOU KNOW?!

**Derry/ Londonderry's walls have never been breached** (broken into by an invading army!) They are the only walled town to have survived all attacks and are nicknamed the 'Maiden City' because of it.

The walled town of **Carrickfergus**, Co. Down was the **landing place of William of Orange** who fought at the Battle of the Boyne against his father-in-law and became King of England in 1691.

The **sheep gate** in **Trim**, Co. Meath, located beside the River Boyne is known as the '**Echo Gate**' because of the quality of the echo that can be made as you pass under it.

When the walls of **Kells**, Co. Meath were repaired in the 15th century the **townspeople were forced to pay for the work**, causing many residents to leave the town.

In 1221, **Dublin** became the **first town in Ireland to receive a 'murage grant'** (money from the King to build town walls).

**Sir Walter Raleigh** was a famous resident of the walled town of **Youghal**. He was beheaded in England & it is said that afterwards **his wife carried around his severed head in a velvet bag!**

**Drogheda** was originally **two walled towns** on either side of the River Boyne, that became one walled town.

**Sir Ernest Shackleton**, a famous Antarctic explorer was from the walled town of **Athy**, Co. Kildare.

When **Clonmel**, Co. Tipperary was under siege by Oliver Cromwell in 1650, the native Irish ran out of lead & had to **start making bullets out of silver!**

Legend has it that **Napoleon's horse, 'Marengo'** was bought at the Horse Fair held in the walled town of **Buttevant** in Co. Cork.

**Loughrea** has the **only surviving working moat** in Ireland.

**70% of Athenry's town walls** still stand today.

At one stage, **Cork City** was a **monastic settlement, a Viking longphort & an Anglo-Norman town!**



# 10. WALLED TOWNS QUIZ!

Test your Walled Towns knowledge with our Quiz!

**Q1. Why were walled towns built?**

- a. For fun
- b. To protect the townspeople from attack
- c. They had a lot of spare stone

**Q2. Who gave the burgage plots to the town residents?**

- a. The local blacksmith
- b. The church
- c. The King or the Lord

**Q3. How many cannon balls were fired at Athlone's castle & town walls in the 1691 siege?**

- a. 2,000 cannon balls
- b. 200 cannon balls
- c. 2 cannon balls

**Q4. How many times was Athy burned down by the O'Moores of Laois before the town walls were built?**

- a. Once
- b. Ten times
- c. Four times

**Q5. Which of these is not a walled town in County Tipperary?**

- a. Cashel
- b. Carrick-on-Suir
- c. Dublin

**Q6. The former President of the USA, John F. Kennedy's ancestors came from which walled town?**

- a. New Ross
- b. Trim
- c. Youghal

**Q7. Which town walls have never been breached?**

- a. Rindoon
- b. Derry/ Londonderry
- c. Kildare

**Q8. What is a battlement?**

- a. A castle
- b. Stone 'teeth' on top of a wall used for protection
- c. A big fight

**Q9. Which city walls can be found inside Eyre Square Shopping Centre?**

- a. Galway City
- b. Kilmallock
- c. Carlingford

**Q10. What is not found on town walls?**

- a. Arrow slits & towers
- b. Wall-walks & soldiers
- c. Waterslides & climbing frames



## 11. SEND US YOUR DRAWINGS!

We would love to see your amazing drawings of the walled towns! Please **post them to either of the social media channels** below and we'll share them all for everyone to enjoy!



**Twitter**

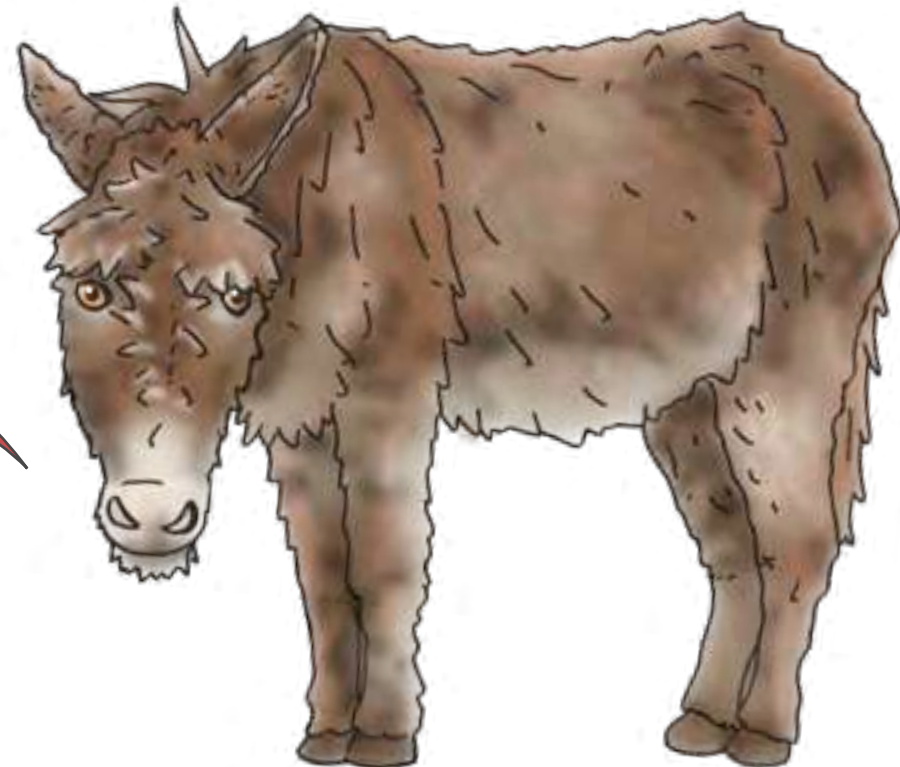
[twitter.com/irishwalledtown](https://twitter.com/irishwalledtown)



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For more information on Ireland's walled towns, visit:  
[www.heritagecouncil/iwtn.ie](http://www.heritagecouncil/iwtn.ie)



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