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Plantation Ireland

*Settlement and material culture,
c.1550–c.1700*

James Lyttleton and Colin Rynne

EDITORS



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Contents

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	7
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS	11
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	13
PREFACE	15
1 Introduction: new approaches to plantation-period Ireland <i>James Lyttleton and Colin Rynne</i>	17
2 'Certejn notes': biblical and foreign signposts to the Ulster Plantation <i>Rolf Loeber</i>	23
3 The problems of plantations: material culture and social change in early modern Ireland <i>Raymond Gillespie</i>	43
4 How popular were fortified houses in Irish castle building history? A look at their numbers in the archaeological record and distribution patterns <i>Sharon Weadick</i>	61
5 A house at the birth of modernity: Ightermurragh Castle in context <i>Tadhg O'Keeffe and Sinéad Quirke</i>	86
6 'The root of all vice and bestiality': exploring the cultural role of the alehouse in the Ulster plantation <i>Audrey Horning</i>	113
7 Famine and displacement in plantation-period Munster <i>Colin Breen</i>	132
8 Representing plantation landscapes: the mapping of Ulster, c.1560-1640 <i>Annaleigh Margey</i>	140
9 Archaeological perspectives on external mortuary monuments of plantation Ireland <i>Harold Mytum</i>	165

10	raint of our fathers: the Gaelic aristocracy in Co. Offaly and the Counter-Reformation <i>James Lyttleton</i>	182
11	Relics and the past: the material culture of Catholic martyrdom in Ireland <i>Clodagh Tait</i>	207
12	Irish archaeology and the poetry of Edmund Spenser: content and context <i>Thomas Herron</i>	229
13	The social archaeology of plantation-period ironworks in Ireland: immigrant industrial communities and technology transfer, c.1560-1640 <i>Colin Rynne</i>	248
14	Last stages of plantation <i>Toby Barnard</i>	265
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	286
	INDEX	307

Illustrations

How popular were fortified houses in Irish castle building history? A look at their numbers in the archaeological record and distribution patterns

SHARON WEADICK

4.1	Distribution of tower houses (Aalen/Stout)	62
4.2	Distribution of tower houses (O'Danachair)	63
4.3	Leamanagh Castle, Co. Clare	67
4.4	Schematic depictions on Down Survey barony maps	71
4.5	Distribution map of fortified and possible fortified houses	73
4.6	Distribution map of early masonry, motte and bailey, and ringwork castles	81
4.7	Tinnahinch Castle, a fortified house in Co. Carlow	83

A house at the birth of modernity: Ightermurragh Castle, Co. Cork

TADHG O'KEEFFE & SINÉAD QUIRKE

5.1	Ightermurragh from the east	87
5.2	The interior of Ightermurragh today	88
5.3	First-floor fireplace with inscription	90
5.4	Plans of Ightermurragh's floor levels	92
5.5	Sketch of Ightermurragh's exterior	93
5.6	Isometric reconstructions of Ightermurragh	94
5.7	Windows, west end of south wall	95
5.8	Sketch of interior	96
5.9	Ightermurragh Castle c.1840	97
5.10	Ballyduff Castle, Co. Waterford	99
5.11	Kilmaclenine Castle, Co. Cork	102
5.12	Ballyduff Castle, Co. Waterford	103
5.13	Sleady Castle, Co. Waterford	104
5.14	Kanturk Castle, Co. Cork: two doorways	106

'The root of all vice and bestiality': exploring the cultural role of the alehouse in the Ulster plantation

AUDREY HORNING

6.1	Detail of Thomas Raven's map of Newtown Limavady, showing inn	124
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changed its name in 2000 to Templemichael College on the occasion of a visit from President Mary McAleese, 'and to herald in the new millennium'.⁵⁵ Other sites connected with Plunkett have had mixed fortunes. The shrine at the saint's church at Ardpatrick that was so enthusiastically cleared in the 1920s and 30s has fallen into disuse again and is overgrown and difficult to access, though his other shrine at Ballybarrack is well-kept. There are further signs too that religious figures in general do not capture the public imagination over the long term in quite the same way as the martyrs and heroes of physical force nationalism. Recently a forty-seven-year-old statue of Luke Wadding, a Franciscan historian and Guardian of St Isidore's in Rome, who was a contemporary of some of the martyrs, was displaced from its prominent perch in the Mall in Waterford to make way for a rather more dynamic image of Thomas Francis Meagher on horseback, though not without opposition.⁵⁶

In the case of the early modern Irish martyrs, we cannot but remark on the longevity of the memory of individuals who lived and died in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This has partly to do with the mutability of memory, and the plasticity of memorialization. The various elements of the material culture of martyrdom, whether relics, statues, windows, streetnames, or commemorative paraphernalia, have assisted the periodic reshaping, even the total overhauling, of ideas about the martyrs, while at the same time giving a sense of continuity between past and present. These relics of the past are in fact relics of the multiple pasts in which the martyrs have been treasured, neglected, and reimagined.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ D. Power, 'Sun shines for president', *Longford News*, May 2000. ⁵⁶ 'Council votes for moving statue', *Waterford News and Star*, 9 Apr. 2004; 'Campaign to honour Luke Wadding moves up a gear', *Waterford News and Star*, 11 June 2004; M. Clancy, 'Luke Wadding on his way to Greyfriars', *Munster Express*, 14 Jan. 2005. ⁵⁷ Some initial research for this article was undertaken during the course of an Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences Fellowship held at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, September 2000–September 2002. I am indebted to Bill Frazer for his comments on earlier drafts. Thanks also to Lady Dunsany, Philip Ayres and Pauline Garland for responding to queries on the items in Dunsany and the Sydney vestments, and to Brendan Scott and Colin Barr for bibliographical information.

Irish archaeology and the poetry of Edmund Spenser: content and context¹

THOMAS HERRON

This chapter, more overview than case study, will stress how insights into the material and cultural significance of the Munster plantation, and its colonial *mentalité*, are gained by emphasising the Irish content and context of Edmund Spenser's later poetry, in particular *The Faerie Queene* (1590, 1596 and 1609) and 'Epithalamion' (1595). Insights into Spenser's vast poetical oeuvre continue to come to light through study of the general and minute particulars of Ireland's post-medieval archaeology and settlement history. In particular, recently published work on Spenser's Kilcolman Castle, Co. Cork and the Munster plantation offers an exciting opportunity to study Spenser's poetry from the point of view of material culture. Spenser's poetry has much to offer the archaeologist and archaeology the Spenserian.

Whether or not one agrees that Edmund Spenser 'set the agenda' in the later sixteenth century for widespread colonial reform by plantation in seventeenth-century Ireland, as Nicholas Canny argues, one can legitimately say that Spenser himself desired such radical, humanist-inspired reform to take place in Munster and farther afield.² His colonial ideas he plotted out prosaically, in his *View of the present state of Ireland* (c. 1596; pub. 1633) and in verse, most notably in his romance-epic *The Faerie Queene* and shorter poems, such as his self-celebratory wedding poem 'Epithalamion'. Here the poet beds his planter bride at his estate at Kilcolman amid many fluttering cupids and orphic harmonies.

Now al is done; bring home the bride againe,
Bring home the triumph of our victory,
Bring home with you the glory of her gaine,
With joyance bring her and with jollity.
Never had man more joyfull day then this,
Whom heaven would heape with blis.

¹ A version of this paper, 'Spenser's medieval landscape: an archaeology of conflict', was presented as part of the panel *Anthropology, archaeology and medieval texts*, 30 Dec. 2005 in Washington, DC, at the annual conference of the Modern Language Association. ² Canny, *Making Ireland British*, ch. 1.

Make feast therefore now all this live long day;
 This day for ever to me holy is.
 Poure out the wine without restraint or stay,
 Poure not by cups, but by the belly full,
 Poure out to all that wull,
 And sprinkle all the postes and wals with wine,
 That they may sweat, and drunken be withall.
 Crowne ye God Bacchus with a coronal,
 And Hymen also crowne with wreathes of vine,
 And let the Graces daunce unto the rest;
 For they can doo it best:
 The whiles the maydens doe theyr carroll sing,
 To which the woods shal answer and theyr eccho ring.³

These are not the words of an unhappy husband. These are not the words of someone who, in despair over the political efficacy of his poetry, turned solely to prose in the mid 1590s: quitting *The Faerie Queene* mid-way and concentrating instead on the more forthright *View* as O'Neill's storm-clouds gathered in the north.⁴ Nor are they the words of an overly anxious and pessimistic, post-colonial poet wracked by murderous guilt, republican sympathies and keen envy of the old bardic order he was replacing.⁵ Rather, they are triumphant.⁶ They are imperial and pro-Elizabethan. They echo the spirit of the sixty-ninth sonnet of the 'Amoretti' (the companion poems to 'Epithalamion'), which document Spenser's fraught courtship of Elizabeth Boyle before the wedding day itself. In sonnet sixty-nine, having won over his bride, Spenser celebrates 'The happy purchase of my glorious spoile, / gotten at last with labour and long toyle.'⁷ Gaining Elizabeth Boyle's hand in marriage helps to consolidate his territorial hopes and dreams in Munster.⁸

3 Spenser, 'Epithalamion' in W.A. Oram et al. (eds), *The Yale edition of the shorter poems of Edmund Spenser* (New Haven, CT, 1989), pp 659–79 at 672 (lines 242–60). All references here to 'Epithalamion' and 'Amoretti' are taken from this edition. 4 As suggested in Canny, *Making Ireland British*, p. 56. For a rebuttal, see Thomas Herron, *Spenser's Irish work: poetry, plantation and colonial reformation* (Aldershot, 2007), p. 20. 5 For discussion of such critical trends, see Herron, *Spenser's Irish work*, ch. 1. 6 For discussion of Book V of *The Faerie Queene*, in particular the Souldan episode, as echoing contemporary courtly rhetoric of classical 'triumphs,' see Anthony Miller, 'Bellona Britannica: the discourse of triumph in early modern England' in Philippa Kelly (ed.), *The touch of the real: essays in early modern culture in honour of Stephen Greenblatt* (Crawley, Australia, 2002), pp 159–76 at 164–7. 7 Spenser, 'Amoretti' in Oram (ed.), *The Yale edition*, pp 583–658, at 642 (Sonnet 69, lines 13–14). 8 The question remains as to whether or not Spenser received favour on behalf of Richard Boyle thanks to marrying his cousin Elizabeth. By 1598 Richard Boyle was 'gentleman' of Kilbehenny, not far from Kilcolman, and so Spenser's marriage at least strengthened his family ties with his New English neighbour. For discussions of the Irish political contexts of 'Amoretti', see Christopher Warley, "'So plenty makes me poore": Ireland, capitalism, and class in Spenser's *Amoretti and Epithalamion*', *ELH*, 69:3 (2002), 567–98; James Fleming, 'A *View* from the bridge: Ireland and violence in Spenser's

The speaker of 'Epithalamion', inspired by celestial 'Graces' (and the singing maidens at the party) can himself still 'doo it best'; he believes in the eternal relevance of poetry to make the specific universal and specific places universally productive for the imperial English crown. Although we learn in a later stanza that the 'Pouke' and other 'evill sprights' of the Irish night (line 341) threaten the happy couple in their homestead – as if, symbolically, they represent disgruntled natives beating their drums in the distance⁹ – even this threat is not enough to put the bridegroom off his stroke and render moot his plans for the future inheritance of Kilcolman. In the penultimate stanza to the poem, the speaker prays to the 'high heavens ... That we may raise our large posterity, / Which from the earth, which they may long possesse, With lasting happinesse' (lines 409–23) will flourish. Like the ancient Israelites, so the New English in Spenser's mind: the more difficult the circumstances, the more courageous the settler and the greater the blessing of God's providential grace in allowing His earthly saints to conquer, wed and prosper in Co. Cork.¹⁰

Questions nonetheless remain about 'Epithalamion' that only history and archaeology can answer: assuming that Spenser literally did throw a party to celebrate his marriage, where did it occur, and what kind of 'feast' might he and his bride have had, and where did that 'wine' come from? How did it get there? From the rival Spanish economy? If so, then the wine would literally connect the revelers to Mediterranean cultures, appropriately so in a poem built on classical conceits. To drink it might not be the most patriotic thing to do, however.

Or, Spenser may not be thinking of politics and the Munster economy at all amid the music: blood-red wine sprinkled on walls and pillars echoes ancient Roman marriage rites,¹¹ and the skin of the blushing bride is like 'pure snow with goodly vermill stayne, / Like crimson dyde in graine' (227–8). In all three images (blood on pillar, blood on walls, blood on pure skin) Spenser anticipates the penetration of the virgin bride that night. Blood and wine are mixed internally and, symbolically, externally.

Simultaneously, the poem could be emphasizing how the New English

Amoretti', *Spenser Studies*, 15 (2001), 135–64. 9 On Spenser's 'Pouke' as the Irish *púca*, see Pauline Henley, *Spenser in Ireland* (Dublin, 1928), p. 84. For the possible allusion to Castlepook Cave near Kilcolman, see David Newman Johnson, 'Kilcolman Castle' in A.C. Hamilton (ed.), *The Spenser encyclopedia* (Toronto, 1990), pp 417–22 at 418. For the possible allusion to the MacCarthy stronghold Carrigaphouca Castle, see Thomas Herron, 'Irish den of thieves: souterrains (and a crannog?) in Books V and VI of *The Faerie Queene*', *Spenser Studies*, 14 (2000), 303–17 at 309n. 10 On Spenser's militant use of the doctrine of grace towards imperial ends, see Paul Stevens, 'Spenser and the end of the British empire', *Spenser Studies*, 22 (2007), 5–26. On the theme of providential exile as it relates to Ireland and *The Faerie Queene*, see John Breen, 'The *Faerie Queene*: Book I and the Theme of Protestant Exile', *IUR*, 26:2 (1996), 226–36. 11 W.L. Renwick (ed.), *Daphnaida and other poems*. By Edmund Spenser (London, 1929), p. 206. See also *The Faerie Queene* I.xii.38, wherein wine is sprinkled on pillars during the marriage of Red Crosse Knight and Una, an event that allegorically signifies the triumph of the Protestant Anglican church under Queen Elizabeth I.

planter economy (patterning itself on the Old English and native Irish economy) created that feast. A wedding is traditionally a time of communal healing and harmony as well as demonstrations of material prosperity. Spenser's celebration is attended by 'merchants daughters' (line 167) and presumably their parents as well – Irish, Old and/or New English – who rejoice at the 'gaine'-ful event.¹² Moreover, because the speaker is emphasizing the quantity of wine ('not by cups, but by the belly full'), he obliquely calls attention to the containers it arrived in. Before it entered a cup, a mether or a skin, wine would have arrived in Co. Cork in barrels, such as those manufactured at a high rate from Munster forests by Spenser's New English neighbours, including Raleigh.¹³ Raleigh's industry carved many barrel staves out of those same woods whose 'echo rings,' like wedding bells ['Ring ye the bells, ye yong men of the towne' (261)], at the close of each of the first sixteen stanzas of the poem (after night falls in the seventeenth stanza, the ringing is silenced but referred to in all but the last stanza of the poem). Whatever treasonous or Spanish import the wine might have held, its availability in the 1590s was partly contained, literally, within the strictures of the New English economy. By analogy, Spenser's classical, foreign source-material is squeezed into his heady, wine-inspired New English verse, whose loose narrative form here is modeled on the Italian *canzone* but carefully structured according to calendrical and 'heavenly' numerical patterns. Archaeology and settlement history cannot settle the question of the 'true' intention of Spenser in his verse but these subjects richly inform its meaning and suggest new possibilities for interpretation.

Not every literary critic would see it this way nor wish to stress Ireland's presence in Spenser's poetic oeuvre. Critics have other fish to fry, and methods to try, and there are many ways to approach the study of Spenser. Spenser's profundity is a direct result of his expert and wide-ranging methods and encyclopedic subject matter (note the invaluable *Spenser encyclopedia*).¹⁴ Some critics nonetheless exhibit a willful resistance towards highlighting his Irish

¹² The poem has a problematic tendency to gloss over the political tensions inherent in such a celebration. Judging from loud complaints by Protestant bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, William Lyon, the Old English burghers of Cork in the mid-1590s were less than likely to celebrate New English hegemony in their town and province. On this point, see Judith Owens, 'The poetics of accommodation in Spenser's "Epithalamion"', *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*, 40:1 (2000), 41–62. ¹³ On Raleigh's stave and other forest industry, see D.B. Quinn, *Raleigh and the British empire*. 2nd ed. (London, 1962), pp 149–55; Nicholas Canny, 'Raleigh's Ireland' in H.G. Jones (ed.), *Raleigh and Quinn: the explorer and his Boswell* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1987), pp 87–101; in connection with Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, see Herron, *Spenser's Irish work*, pp 122–7; Thomas Herron, "'Goodly woods': Irish forests, georgic trees in Books 1 and 4 of Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*", *Quidditas: Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Society*, 19 (1998), 97–122; Judith Owens, 'Professing Ireland in the woods of Spenser's Mutabilitie', *Explorations in Renaissance Culture*, 29:1 (2003), 1–22; Christopher Burlinson, *Allegory, space and the material world in the writings of Edmund Spenser* (Cambridge, 2006), ch. 8. ¹⁴ Hamilton (ed.), *The Spenser encyclopedia*, passim.

subject matter. Richard Helgerson, long at the forefront of historically, cartographically and politically based readings of renaissance literature, in a review of Richard McCabe's 'magisterial'¹⁵ monograph, denies McCabe's heavy emphasis on Spenser's Irish content and context in his later (post-1579) poetry.¹⁶ Helgerson argues instead that Ireland directly influences the allegories of *The Faerie Queene* only in a few episodes in Book V.¹⁷

By the same token, there is palpable relief among some Spenserians that the flood of 'New Historicist' and Ireland-centered, heavily politicized readings of Spenser's poetry – on the level of both colonial theory and material culture – appears to have crested and subsided since the 1990s. According to prominent critic Gordon Teskey, 'the danger' of an 'ideological *Gleichschaltung*' or group-think among graduate students more interested in studying Spenser's *View* than his poetry (as many Miltonists currently study Milton's prose at the expense of his verse), no longer threatens to take place.¹⁸

Such alarm was hardly warranted in the first place. It has never been the case beyond, perhaps, one Spenserian conference at Yale, in 1996,¹⁹ fingered by Teskey, that Irish issues – and interest in the *View* specifically – have dominated Spenser studies; even so, witness two very different essay collections to come out of that conference: one has a strong Irish and material culture focus (among other topics) and one distinctly, avowedly does not.²⁰ One of the highlights of that Yale conference was the argument made by Andrew Hadfield and Willy Maley that Ireland has largely and 'blithe[ly]' been ignored in Spenser studies; simultaneously, they argue that Spenser studies should not be restricted to Irish matter by any means.²¹ Witness the regular line-up of contributions to the annual publication *Spenser Studies* for the last twenty years: how many focus significantly on Irish issues? Volume twelve (1998), with seven Ireland-focused articles out of twelve total, is the exception that proves the rule that Ireland has

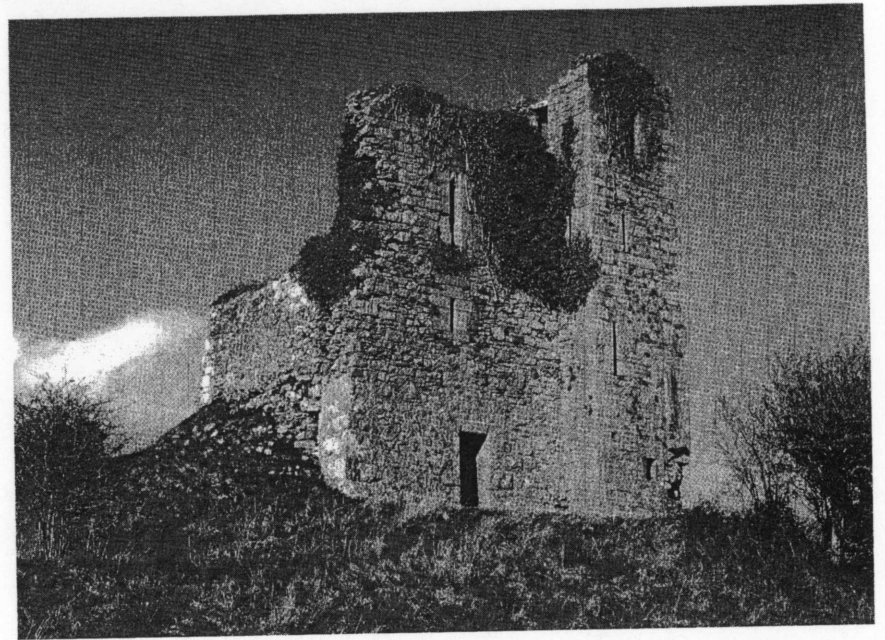
¹⁵ Stevens, 'Spenser', p. 12. ¹⁶ Richard McCabe, *Spenser's monstrous regiment: Elizabethan Ireland and the poetics of difference* (Oxford, 2002). ¹⁷ Richard Helgerson, 'Review', *Spenser Review*, 34:3 (2003), 2–5. For other seminal monographs on Spenser and Ireland, see Henley, *Spenser in Ireland*; Andrew Hadfield, *Edmund Spenser's Irish experience: wilde fruit and salvage soyl* (Oxford, 1997); Willy Maley, *Salvaging Spenser: colonialism, culture and identity* (London, 1997). ¹⁸ Gordon Teskey, 'Let's get Spenser on the undergraduate syllabus everywhere', *Spenser Review*, 39:1 (2008), 9–31 at 14–15. ¹⁹ 'The Faerie Queene in the world, 1596–1996: Edmund Spenser among the disciplines'. Conference of the International Spenser Society, Yale University, 26–8 September 1996. Judging from titles on the program (I did not attend the conference), approximately fifteen papers (out of 68) focused significantly on Irish issues, and 11 of these occupied the same round-table seminar. The superb but small 'Millennium Spenser' conference at Springfort Hall, Doneraile, Co. Cork, 24–7 Aug. 1999, had more Ireland-related papers than otherwise on its program. Some of these have appeared in its published fruit: Julian Lethbridge (ed.), *Edmund Spenser: new and renewed directions* (Madison, NJ, 2005). ²⁰ The former is Jennifer Klein Morrison and Matthew Greenfield (eds), *Edmund Spenser: essays on culture and allegory* (Aldershot, 2000); the latter, Patrick Cheney and Lauren Silberman (eds), *Worldmaking Spenser: explorations in the early modern age* (Lexington, KY, 2000). ²¹ Andrew Hadfield and Willy Maley, 'A view of the present state of Spenser studies: dialogue-wise' in Morrison and Greenfield (eds), *Edmund Spenser* (2000), pp 183–96 at 184–5.

always been a sidecar to the main engines of Spenser scholarship. Professor Teskey's anxieties could use an *Ungültigkeitserklärung*.

Do studies of Shakespeare's rhyme scheme demand that we ignore his physical situation in England? One understands the opposite: that being in London among so many brilliant patrons, rivals and collaborators had a powerful influence on his work, as did the London book trade, which among other things ensured Shakespeare's use of Spenser.²² Who would deny it? Shakespeare probably moved to London sometime in his later twenties, in the late 1580s. Spenser entered Irish service in 1580, aged between twenty-six and twenty-eight.²³ The two began writing their best work at the same developmental period in their lives. Should we pretend that Spenser's artistic maturation, which occurred in Ireland around the likes of Lord Deputy Arthur, Lord Grey (who had earlier patronized the poet George Gascoigne), Geoffrey Fenton, Edward Dyer, Barnabe Riche, Lodowick Bryskett, the Norris brothers, the Carew family, and Sir Walter Raleigh, not to mention the earls of Kildare and Ormond and their wives (some of them English), poets of the Pale such as the Nugent brothers and famous bards like Tadhg Dall ó hUiginn, et al., happened in a cocoon? The larger point needs to be made that the inclusion of Irish history, poetry, material culture and even (gasp!) colonial and post-colonial theorizing in our study of Spenser is not always necessary, nor desirable, yet it can be highly useful and lead to fresh discoveries in his poetry as well as his prose. Conversely, the *View* needs more formal, rhetorical studies made of it, so that it is not only mined as a source of historical-anthropological insights and/or *aperçus* into the politics of Spenser's poetry. Of course, these approaches should be intertwined. Spenser was a colonial administrator and avowedly political in his poetry, wishing to be ranked among 'Poets historical' such as Homer.²⁴ Remove Ireland from his life and work and you remove much of the meaning, including the material background, from his life's work. Nor need Irish material, if included in our analysis of Spenser, spin the bias completely against more formalist or other 'non-politicizing' studies to any great degree. If Spenser's epic style became more international in the later Books of *The Faerie Queene*, for example, as David Scott Wilson-Okamura argues that it did, then perhaps his highly fraught situation in Cork – in epic, international circumstances of war, wine, trade and colonization, and not only book-reading – had something to do with it.²⁵ The various approaches to

22 See Julian Lethbridge (ed.), *Spenser and Shakespeare: attractive opposites* (Manchester, 2008).

23 Spenser's birthday is normally placed with uncertainty in 1552: Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (2nd ed. London, 2001), p. xii. If calculated back from a comment in 'Amoretti' 60 that forty years have passed in the poet's life, however, then he was born in 1554. Critical consensus is that Spenser was actively working on *The Faerie Queene* in the very late 1570s and early 1580s, the same time that his pastoral *tour de force*, *The Shepheardes calendar* (1579), was published. 24 'Letter to Raleigh' in Spenser, *The Faerie Queen*, pp 713–18 at 715. All citations to *The Faerie Queene* in this article are taken from this edition. 25 As noted by Wilson-Okamura, Spenser wrote most, if not all, of the *The Faerie Queene's* second installment in Ireland, where he



12.1 Kilcolman Castle, Co. Cork

studying Spenser, whether strictly 'textual' or overtly 'material', complement and inform each other.

Among historians, Brendan Bradshaw and Nicholas Canny have taken the greatest steps towards analyzing Spenser's poetry (not only his prose) relative to the intellectual currents behind New English colonization.²⁶ Spenser's poetry is a primary source for early modern Irish history and should be treated as such. Among archaeologists the cast is far slimmer: John Bradley has given a conference paper touching on Spenser's poetry; Eric Klingelhofer occasionally mentions it.²⁷ New opportunities abound, however, both in terms of the positive reception of archaeology among literary critics and as regards a

was removed from the fashions of London and court. This had several effects, but one, to my knowledge, has not been talked about: living in Ireland forced Spenser to rely on books. They were not just books from England, either. Spenser seems to have absorbed even more from his foreign reading than his English. When we think about Spenser in Ireland, we should envision a poet whose mind is on rebels and lawsuits, but whose ears are full with voices – not just the voices of the past, and not just of London, either, but Europe's voices, rich and strange, Wilson-Okamura, 'The French aesthetic of Spenser's feminine rhyme', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 68 (2007), 345–62 at 351–2. 26 Canny, *Making Ireland British*, pp 9–31; Brendan Bradshaw, 'Edmund Spenser on justice and mercy' in Tom Dunne (ed.), *The writer as witness: literature as historical evidence. Historical Studies 14* (Cork, 1987), pp 76–89. 27 John Bradley, 'Irish frontier town or Renaissance city? Kilkenny in the sixteenth century', paper delivered at the International Spenser Society conference, 'The place of Spenser: words, worlds, works', Cambridge University, 6–8 July 2001; Eric Klingelhofer, 'Castle of the *Faerie Queene*', *Archaeology*, 55:2 (1999), 48–52 at 49.

growing wave of post-medieval archaeology focused on early modern Munster (and elsewhere). Among the latter, Colin Breen's path-breaking work enriches our understanding of Spenser's material world (at least making use of the *View*) and Eric Klingelhofer has partly excavated some of Raleigh's Munster settlements as well as the material remains of Kilcolman Castle: some particulars from these works relating to Spenser's poetry will be exploited below.²⁸

Among the literary critics, Spenser's Irish world has been well examined by Andrew Hadfield, Willy Maley, Patricia Coughlan, Richard McCabe, Andrew Murphy, Patricia Palmer, Andrew Zurcher, Christopher Burlinson and others. These critics, except for Burlinson, have not generally focused on material goods and archaeology, however. Given the slippery and sophisticated nature of Spenser's allegorical technique, one might be discouraged to try: Maley, a guiding light in other ways, has expressed sharp skepticism over the usefulness of excavating Kilcolman, and even Burlinson remains wary of overly stressing Irish material content for fear of error and/or reductionism.²⁹

Bart Van Es provides a valuable overview of Spenser's use of historical methodologies and Spenser's place in antiquarian discourse on Ireland, with some focus on Irish material and landscape, including rivers.³⁰ Matthew Woodcock fills in some details concerning the Scythians, the Irish and the pioneering ethnography of Olaus Magnus as it influenced Spenser's *View* in particular.³¹ Philip Schwyzer's very recent monograph seeks common ground between the professions of literary criticism and archaeology (including antiquarianism): 'archaeology and literary studies are united by their shared intimacy with the traces of past life, and by a common if covert desire for contact with the departed makers of these traces.'³² Schwyzer focuses on literary and antiquarian representations of death and bodily exhumation and their real-world traces, and one chapter ('Exhumation and ethnic conflict: colonial archaeology from *St Erkenwald* to Spenser in Ireland') focuses partly on Spenser's poetry and prose, so as to explain how preoccupied Spenser was with Irish ghosts and corpses, including his own.

28 Colin Breen, *An archaeology of southwest Ireland, 1570–1670* (Dublin, 2007). Eric Klingelhofer, 'Edmund Spenser at Kilcolman Castle: the archaeological evidence', *Post-Med Arch*, 39:1 (2005), 133–54; idem, 'Castles built with air: Spenserian architecture in Ireland' in *Military studies in medieval Europe: papers of the 'Medieval Europe Brugge 1997' Conference*, vol. 11 (Brugge, 1997), pp 149–54; see also the definitive historical work, Michael MacCarthy-Morrogh, *The Munster plantation: English migration to southern Ireland, 1583–1641* (Oxford, 1986), and the highly speculative 'Afterword, 2000: Spenser at Kilcolman' in Richard Berleth, *The twilight lords: Elizabeth I and the plunder of Ireland* (2nd edn. Lanham, MD, 2002), pp 295–318. 29 Maley, *Salvaging Spenser*, pp 1–2; Burlinson, *Allegory*, p. 163: 'Insofar as Kilcolman represents the touch of the real in contemporary Spenser studies, it may have come to represent the touch of death'. 30 Bart Van Es, *Spenser's forms of history* (Oxford, 2002), chapters 2 and 3. 31 Matthew Woodcock, 'Spenser and Olaus Magnus: a reassessment', *Spenser Studies*, 21 (2006), 181–204. 32 Schwyzer, *Archaeologies of English renaissance literature* (Oxford, 2007), p. 15.

As this chapter will endeavor to show, Spenser's interest in Irish land and its artifacts was not only inspired by ghoulish epistemologies and anxieties concerning his future demise at the hands of rebels, but rather deeply invested in a positive, life-giving colonial transformation of his immediate land and polity.

As I have argued at length elsewhere, Ireland is where Spenser's genius flourished and Irish culture – blood and soil – is a constant preoccupation in his later poetry, not only in his *View*. From its very beginning, and not only in Book V, the Book of Justice and the book traditionally seen as most overt in its allegorization of Irish subject matter, *The Faerie Queene*, is underwritten with epic and specifically *georgic* strains that highlight in militaristic and often optimistic terms the heroic struggle of the poet-plowman-figure, including the author himself, to overcome Irish, Catholic and foreign, specifically Papal and Spanish, menace, and to create a new pastoral and civic Protestant civilization in its stead.³³ The poem catalogues the woes and hoped-for onward progress of Protestant New English gentlemen in Ireland, such as Raleigh, one of the poem's principle dedicatees.³⁴ These so-called 'adventurers' discovered lucrative and dangerous opportunity in fertile soil in the 1580s and 90s at the behest of their queen, Elizabeth I, either killing and displacing the old (predominantly Catholic) order or fighting them in the courts. Many of these natives reacted in turn against London and Dublin governance, including the large-scale but piecemeal colonial directives such as the Munster plantation. Spenser was a vital part of this project with a royal grant of over 3,000 acres, and Raleigh the largest landowner, with over 40,000 acres centered on the lucrative Blackwater valley.

Spenser laboured in profound hope and fear. On the optimistic side, as in 'Epithalamion,' Spenser's *Faerie Queene* makes his position in Ireland resonate with a universal and central significance: it is a land to be cultivated, protected and made fertile with the blessing and military help of the great sun-goddess Queen Elizabeth, another Augustus.³⁵ Frequent puns on Irish etymologies in character and place names, such as the damsel-in-distress Irena in Book V, or both Una and Duessa in Book I, play a significant part in the politico-linguistic archaeology of Spenser's text, as it were (Irena's name, for example, signifies *eire* and *Ire*-land as well as *irenic*, from the Greek word *eirene*, meaning 'peace': to protect her is to fight for a peaceful Ireland).³⁶ The nominal ruler of this land Spenser allegorizes as 'Gloriana,' or the Fairy Queen, a dreamy ideal who holds court and encourages knightly derring-do, as Queen Elizabeth encouraged

33 Herron, *Spenser's Irish work*, passim. 34 On the political, editorial and imaginative significance of the poem's 'paratexts', including the 'Letter to Raleigh' and dedicatory sonnets, see Wayne Erickson (ed.), *The 1590 Faerie Queene: paratexts and publishing, studies in the literary imagination*, 38:2 (2005). For a reading of their imperial, Irish significance in particular, see Thomas Herron, 'Raleigh's gold: placing Spenser's dedicatory sonnets', *ibid.*, pp 133–47. 35 Herron, *Spenser's Irish work*, pp 103–15. 36 Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, pp 510–11n.

vassals such as Spenser or Raleigh, who rose to fame and prominence at court by means of military action in Ireland in the early 1580s. Raleigh is allegorized as Prince Arthur's squire Timias in the epic, for example.³⁷

Simultaneously, in what appears as a dynamic tension in his artistic vision, Spenser complains regularly about the world and Ireland in particular, comparing it often to an obscure and lawless wilderness ruled by tyrants. Spenser stresses the difficulties of life, including the horrors of war, in chilling passages like the Despair episode (I.ix), wherein the hero Red Crosse Knight (the future St George of England) almost takes his own life after confronting a starving, spectral figure with the gift of the gab: Despair argues at length that God is not at all merciful to sinners, including those who strive hard for their livelihoods, but instead all-punishing. Spenser's larger purpose is to meditate on the state of the errant Christian soul in a hostile or de-centred world of confusing signs, and to 'fashion a gentleman or noble person' out of the reader.³⁸ The hero does find grace and reward when Protestant faith is wed to valor. Spenser's fascination with lapsed souls and corrupt civilization, including Catholicism, has as much, if not more, to do with his fixation on inner states of savagery and Christian salvation as on actual savage, and Catholic, conditions in the world, and we can appreciate how the stereotypical colonial images in his poetry, such as those describing a woodsy, lustful and suspiciously Irish 'Other' 'outside the Pale,' as it were, not only castigate the Catholic, native Irish and/or degenerate Old English but also satirize the effects of sloth and moral degeneration everywhere, including inside the Pale, in Wales or in Scotland or England or France and so forth. On one level, Spenser writes for everyman.

In 'Epithalamion,' Spenser's loving ideals – for wife, for monarch, both named Elizabeth – coincide with his colonial ones: as we see above, he will consolidate the 'gaine' of his foothold in Co. Cork along with his politically advantageous marriage to Elizabeth Boyle, who was cousin to Richard Boyle, future earl of Cork. But where exactly was he married? Documentation is missing and the city is unspecified in the poem (we know it is someplace other than Kilcolman and has a church important enough to house an organ: this could indicate Cork cathedral but also St Mary's in Youghal).³⁹ This is surely intentional on Spenser's part: ambiguity helps the specific become universal, and timeless. Spenser encourages the reader to imagine him/herself in the same spiritually uplifting mood of fertile celebration, to join in his eternal celebration no matter what the time or place, be it at his wedding or our own.

37 For discussion of Sir Walter Raleigh's early military exploits in Ireland, as related by the historian John Hooker, which are in turn allegorized in *The Faerie Queene*, see J.P. Bednarz, 'Raleigh in Spenser's historical allegory', *Spenser Studies*, 4 (1984), 49–70. For further discussion of Raleigh's problematic relationship with Queen Elizabeth as it impacted Spenser and his poetry, see Judith Owens, *Enabling engagements: Edmund Spenser and the poetics of patronage* (Montreal, 2002), passim. 38 Spenser, 'Letter to Raleigh', p. 714. 39 Breen, *An archaeology of southwest Ireland*, p. 82.

Beneath this celestial canopy, however, familiar aspects of Irish history and material culture are writ large by the expansive and disturbingly aggressive imagination of 'England's Arch-Poet.'⁴⁰

LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND INHABITANTS

What then are some of the material traces in *The Faerie Queene* especially that point it towards an Irish colonial purpose? The following analysis is suggestive rather than exhaustive. Many critics have emphasized Spenser's 'cartographic' imagination in his poetry as emblematic of a domineering colonial mindset.⁴¹ Spenser also follows literary convention when he places his knights and ladies in a typical romance-genre landscape of forests, caves, rivers and fords, 'rich stronds' (i.e., seacoasts), plains and castles, with the occasional town thrown in: a landscape uncannily like Ireland's at the time. Indeed some medieval romances feature Irish adventures and landscapes in them.⁴² Spenser famously celebrates Irish rivers as rich in fish and running in 'duefull seruice' to the English Thames (*Faerie Queene* IV.xi.40–44): by analogy Irish citizens should pay tribute to their monarch. Elizabeth's troops, in turn, marched *en masse* across Irish river, fen and field, as seen in John Derricke's propagandistic celebration of Lord Deputy Henry Sidney, *The image of Irelande* (1581). Rather than large-scale combat, far more typical at the time were other scenes found in Derricke: skirmishes between small groups of men whose captains, like Sir Raleigh or Sir John of Desmond, stood out more starkly in one-on-one, hence chivalric, combat.

Ireland and certainly the Munster of Spenser and Raleigh had many forests that served as refuges for rebels and that were open for exploitation. The 'frontier' location of many of these 'along the borders of the autonomous lordships'⁴³ encourages awareness of their symbolic importance as sites of

40 The label for Spenser on the title page of the first folio edition of his complete works (1611).

41 See, for example, Bernhard Klein, *Maps and the writing of space in early modern England and Ireland* (New York, 2001) and idem, 'The lie of the land: English surveyors, Irish rebels and *The Faerie Queene*', *IUR*, 26:2 (1996), 207–25; Mercedes Maroto Camino, "'Methinks I see an evil lurk unespied'": visualizing conquest in Spenser's *A view of the present state of Ireland*', *Spenser Studies*, 12 (1998), 169–94; Joanne Woolway Grenfell, 'Do real knights need maps? Charting moral, geographical and representational uncertainty in Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*' in Andrew Gordon and Bernhard Klein (eds), *Literature, mapping and the politics of space in early modern Britain* (Cambridge, 2001), pp 224–38. 42 Evelyn Mullaly, 'The Irish topography of two Arthurian romances: *Durmart le Galois* and *Les Merveilles de Rigomer*' in H.B. Clarke and J.R.S. Phillips (eds), *Ireland, England and the Continent in the Middle Ages and beyond: essays in memory of a turbulent friar, F.X. Martin, O.S.A.* (Dublin, 2006), pp 88–104; Thomas Herron, 'Irish romance: Spenser's Prince Arthur and *The Hystorye of Olyuer of Castylle* (c. 1518)', *Notes and Queries*, 51:3 (2004), 254–6; Elizabeth Rambo, *Colonial Ireland in medieval English literature* (Selinsgrove, PA, 1994), pp 48–72. 43 Kenneth Nicholls, 'Woodland cover in pre-modern Ireland' in Nicholls, 'Woodland cover in pre-modern Ireland', pp 181–206 at 202–3; Breen, *An*

political contention and, conversely, as emblems of the political status quo after the Gaelic resurgence of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. *The Faerie Queene's* opening dark wood of Error and its Tree Catalog, into which our hero Red Crosse Knight and his lady Una first adventure (I.i.7–27), has been read as advertising the dangers and economic opportunities to be found in Irish woods: Raleigh quickly churned up many of these forests to supply lucrative iron mills, naval timber and barrel staves for shipping wine.⁴⁴ The 'Aspine good for staves' in this Tree Catalog (I.i.8.9) could thus allude to barrel staves as well as native weaponry,⁴⁵ such as those 'staves in fier warmd' carried by the

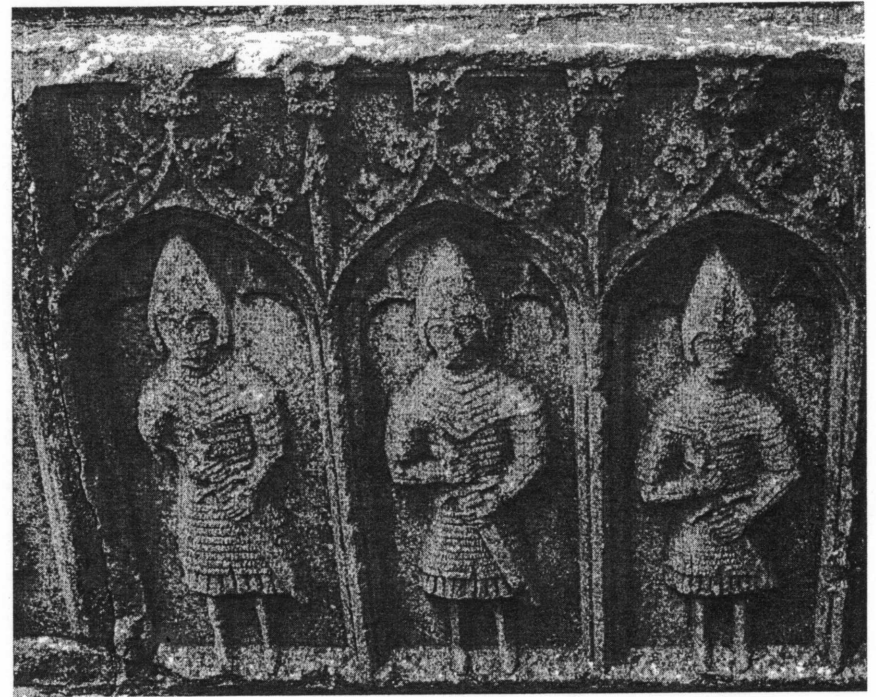
thousand villeins ...

Vile caitiue wretches, ragged, rude, deformd,
 All threatning death, all in straunge manner armd,
 Some with vnweldy clubs, some with long speares,
 Some rusty knifes who creep out of 'rockes and caues' (II.ix.13.2–7).

When they attack the heroes Guyon and Prince Arthur outside of the castle of Temperance they are compared to pestering gnats 'Out of the fennes of Allan' (16.1–2), located in the Irish midlands. What Spenser's knights and ladies venture into is not a forest primeval but medieval, anachronistically so from the point of view of a cultured London merchant audience out to simultaneously exploit the great forests (and native peasantry) of Russia, the New World and Ireland.

Ireland had many devilish man-made caves, or souterrains, also found in *The Faerie Queene* inhabited by Irish-looking villains, like the above 'wretches'.⁴⁶ The country was dotted with petty chieftains or 'warlords',⁴⁷ some in archaic armor: apt models for Spenser's evil 'lords' and 'captains' such as Maleger, the Souldan, Turpine and Grantorto. The last of these is 'all armed in a cote of yron plate ... And on his head a steele cap he did weare/ Of colour rustie browne, but sure and strong;/ And in his hand a huge Polaxe did beare' (V.xii.14.3–7). The famous Irish galloglass found in many sixteenth-century Irish aristocratic retinues and in the field wore mail instead of 'plate,' but Spenser's 'steele cap', or *bascinet* or 'skull'-cap, and 'huge Polaxe' certainly fits contemporary descriptions of them (including his own, fig. 12.2).⁴⁸

archaeology of southwest Ireland, pp 177–82. 44 See footnote 13 above. 45 Herron, *Spenser's Irish work*, p. 123; for further discussion of New English stave, iron mill and smithing industry, including Care, a blacksmith in *The Faerie Queene* Book IV, see also Herron, "Goodly Woods", passim. 46 Herron, 'Irish den of thieves'. 47 Katherine Simms, *From kings to warlords: the changing political structure of Gaelic Ireland in the later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1987), p. 20 passim. 48 John Marsden, *Galloglas: Hebridean and West Highland mercenary warrior kindreds in medieval Ireland* (East Lothian, 2003), pp 81–4; Edmund Spenser, *A view of the present state of Ireland* in Edwin Greenlaw et al. (eds), *Spenser's prose works. The works of Edmund Spenser: a variorum edition*, 11 vols (Baltimore, 1949), ix, pp 39–231, 278–430 at 122–3. All citations from the *View* in this paper are taken from this edition.



12.2 Irish galloglass, tomb in Cistercian Abbey, Roscommon

As Elizabeth FitzPatrick has noted, Spenser's description in his *View* of a native Irish inauguration rite involving a footprint in a stone is probably anachronistic.⁴⁹ Either the poet, or his character Irenius, is misinformed, or he is confused. Inaugural rites involving shoes *were* in practice in Spenser's time or, in the spirit of Giraldus Cambrensis, he wishes to paint native Irish lords as more exotic, superstitious and 'backwards' than they really were. Another correspondence between the *View* and the portrayal of petty lords in *The Faerie Queene*, whose local liberties and rogue operations were anachronistic from the point of view of a centralizing Tudor state with its own princely ceremonies.

In the later middle ages semi-autonomous Irish lords inhabited and/or attacked mostly small castles, particularly 'tower houses,' which were

49 Elizabeth FitzPatrick, *Royal inauguration in Gaelic Ireland c.1100–1600: a cultural landscape study* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp 109, 128–9. Compare with the editors of the *Spenser Variorum* (citing P.W. Joyce) who declare that 'Spenser's account is corroborated by modern archaeology in almost every detail ... and this is probably due to the survival of the rites down to the time the *View* was written', Spenser, *A view*, pp 50–1, 283. One main purpose of tanistry, Irenius tells us, is to keep the English out and the native Irish powers in, so to denigrate their ruling customs would be to emphasize their system as flawed. The *Variorum* editors also note a similarity of the tanistry rite to the 'thrise' turning and superstitious magic of the nurse Glauce in *Faerie Queene* III.ii.50–52.

ubiquitous in Ireland, especially Munster. Spenser's knights can be found riding from isolated castle to castle and occasionally into towns. The Munster tower houses included the early fifteenth-century building appropriated by Spenser at Kilcolman, whose protective bawn he expanded.⁵⁰ Spenser named his estate 'Hap-Hazard,' indicative perhaps of his perilous state surrounded by native Irish and Old English enemies and litigants. Yet, in 'Amoretti' sixty-five, contrary to the picture of a landscape abused by local petty tyrants and aggrieved and envious neighbours, including imagery of warfare and hostage-taking elsewhere in 'Amoretti', Spenser expresses confidence in himself and, by extension, his homestead. The speaker, still wooing his bride-to-be, apparently alludes to his inheritance in the Irish hinterlands when he declares 'fayth doth fearlesse dwell in brazen towre,' where 'spotlesse pleasure builds her sacred bowre.' (13-14).

An idealized vision of pastoral bliss amid hostile circumstances is glimpsed by Spenser's poetic alter-ego Colin Clout atop Mount Acidale in Book VI.x of *The Faerie Queene*. Robert Stillman has likened this meeting place of the dancing Graces and musical shepherds to an Irish folk-mote, also described in the *View*, and Louis Montrose compares it more generally to the ideal political state Spenser wished for around Kilcolman, not only in *The Faerie Queene* but also in his shorter poem Colin Clouts come home againe (1595).⁵¹ Another pastoral vision in Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*, the peaceful farm of Meliboe, is destroyed when it is overrun by Irish-looking 'Brigants,' who store their human captive, Pastorella, in a souterrain-like cave (VI.xi).⁵² Likewise, the vision on Mount Acidale is doomed to vanish when reality intrudes upon it, in the form of the hero Calidore himself. Despite these mortal and moral disruptions, Pastorella (her name connoting the pastoral genre and fertility) is successfully rescued by Calidore with violence and returned to her parents' home, 'the Castle of Belgard' (VI.xii.3.3), a place of beauty, familial harmony and revelatory, beatific vision.⁵³ Since a Belgard Castle, owned by the famous Talbot family on the southern edge of the Pale, actually existed, we might find here an allegorical reference to a real and apt place of refuge and return for any English (or loyal Irish) Pastorellas. Belgard Castle was owned in the early sixteenth century by Robert Talbot, an ally of the Butlers and foe to the Geraldines. His murder in 1523 at the hands of the Geraldines is mentioned by

50 Klingelhofer, 'Edmund Spenser at Kilcolman', pp 143-4; Breen, *An archaeology of southwest Ireland*, 146-7. 51 Robert Stillman, 'Spenserian autonomy and the trial of new historicism: Book 6 of *The Faerie Queene*', *ELR*, 22 (1992), 299-314 at 311-12. Stillman stresses the ongoing 'constructing' role that courtesy plays in Book VI as a means of combating degenerative decay in 'war-torn Munster' in particular. L.A. Montrose, 'Spenser's domestic domain: poetry, property, and the early modern subject' in Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan and Peter Stallybrass (eds), *Subject and object in renaissance culture* (Cambridge, 1996), pp 83-130 at 111-13. 52 For the Irish character of the Brigants, see Herron, 'Irish den of thieves'. 53 Kenneth Borris, 'Sub Rosa: Pastorella's allegorical homecoming, and closure in the 1596 *Faerie Queene*', *Spenser Studies*, 21 (2006), 133-80 at 148-51.

Richard Stanyhurst in Holinshed's *Chronicles*.⁵⁴ Robert's great-grandson Gilbert Talbot in 1580 fought with Sir Henry Harrington against the Baltinglass rebellion, which temporarily shook Tudor rule in the Pale.⁵⁵ In Spenser's time Belgard was allied with crown interests.

Whatever the hap-hazard circumstances, Spenser's idealistic vision of how rural society can conduct itself by courteous and beautiful standards appears to both the reader of and to the characters in the epic. Spenser's pastoral-georgic-epic-romance idealizes heroic activity in a landscape of fortified and fruitful settlement. Spenser's tower-and-bower vision is an ever-fixed mark towards which the ambitious poet-settler and his companions drifted and propelled themselves.

KILCOLMAN

Spenser had further, practical reason to portray shepherds in a positive light since, as Klingelhofer's excavations have demonstrated, wool was an important part of the Kilcolman economy. Wool processed in Kilcolman would be shipped to England, the Netherlands and/or elsewhere via Cork city.⁵⁶ Southern Ireland had an extensive 'rich strond' of trade and towns, and the rivers Spenser praises in his poem are in part economic lifelines bringing tribute to the empire. Colin Breen cites Klingelhofer's excavation and other scattered data (English sheep were kept at the Norris estate at Mallow, for example) to posit that 'with the arrival of the English planters in the later half of the sixteenth century, pastoral activity greatly increased across Munster'.⁵⁷ Spenser's guise as rusticated shepherd far from the London court not only allowed him to criticize that court, according to the traditions of the pastoral genre, but also to reward his monarch and to advertise the wealth of opportunity for other merchant-minded men who might be bold enough to make the sea-crossing and invest in hap-hazard but, as advertised by Spenser, not hopeless circumstances on the Munster plantation.

54 'Robert Talbot of Belgard' is described as counselor to the Lord Deputy when he is murdered. Richard Stanyhurst, 'A continuation of the chronicles of Ireland, comprising the reigns of King Henrie the Eight' in Raphael Holinshed, *Holinshed's chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1586), 6 vols (London, 1808), vi, pp 275-320 at 279-80. 55 F.E. Ball, *A history of the County Dublin*, 6 vols (Dublin, 1902-20), iii, pp 15-18. I am grateful to John Bradley and Michael Potterton for assistance with this reference and information on Belgard. Pastorella, a foundling, is identified as the long-lost daughter of Bellamour and Claribell, the owners of Belgard, by virtue of a 'rose-shaped' birthmark discovered on her breast (VI.xii.15.6; 18.5; 19.4). Intriguingly, Robert Talbot's son, Reginald, in 1536 married Rose, daughter of Richard Luttrell, so 'Rose' was an important family name. Today at Belgard stands a large three-story eighteenth-century house attached to a medieval tower. It is the corporate headquarters of CRH plc. For photograph, see www.oldcastlematerials.com/crh.htm, accessed 25 June 2008. 56 M. McCarthy, 'Faunal remains' in Klingelhofer, 'Edmund Spenser at Kilcolman', 148. 57 Breen, *An archaeology of southwest Ireland*, p. 171.

It not wool, farmers might harvest grain, which Spenser promotes in his political dialogue as a means of bringing security and regular rents to a society still in constant change from native forms of transhumance (*View*, 216–18; Spenser by contrast links wayward Irish behaviour to their traditional pastoralism). Faunal remains from Klingelhofer's excavations demonstrate that grains, including high-quality wheat, were consumed at Kilcolman, which in turn attests to Spenser's status as a gentleman there.⁵⁸ Spenser's colonial-georgic ethos in his work, in turn, promotes tillage as a fundamental underpinning of artistic and social progress in Ireland.⁵⁹ Spenser's idealization of the arduous georgic way of life and tillage-husbandry was not therefore sheer fantasy but had roots in actual practice in Munster.

Whatever Spenser imported, grew, owned and ate at Kilcolman, he did so with a keen awareness of his own bold presumption as a newcomer but administrative insider. As a New English landed gentleman, Spenser possessed the tower and lands of Kilcolman as attainted spoils from Sir John Fitzgerald, rebellious brother of the great Anglo-Norman 'Rebel Earl' of Desmond. Spenser also had long-running bitter legal feuds in the late 1580s and early 90s over property with his neighbour to the east and north, David, Lord Roche, Viscount Fermoy. Klingelhofer's excavation reveals that Spenser rebuilt part of a structure alongside his tower in order to create an Elizabethan house with 'Parlour', 'Great Hall', many windows and clay bond instead of previously existing mortar. While Klingelhofer terms this an insecure, fanciful and status-pretentious 'castle ... built with ayre', something foolish to construct in a former and potential war zone, he also notes that the tower house would have continued to function as an 'imposing and near-impregnable complement to the great hall that served as the centre of [the] mano[r] and gave its occupants social and legal status'.⁶⁰ The tower house would have been 'near-impregnable' to small raiding parties typical of the time, although indefensible in the face of siege and/or massive force, as when the Nine Years War led by the Ulster lord Hugh O'Neill flooded south in 1598 and overthrew nearly the entire Munster plantation, exiling Spenser to his eventual death in London, in 1599.⁶¹

Klingelhofer also discovers that Kilcolman's 'bawn' was enlarged in the poet's time, and he surmises that Spenser did so in order to cultivate both a working vegetable garden to the east and a 'pleasure garden, probably of ... late-Elizabethan type' to the west of the enclosure.⁶² According to the *Atlas of*

58 J. Tierney, 'Plant remains' in Klingelhofer, 'Edmund Spenser at Kilcolman', 148–9. 59 Herron, *Spenser's Irish work*, passim. See also Linda Gregerson, 'Spenser's georgic: violence and the gift of place', *Spenser Studies*, 22 (2007), 185–201. 60 Klingelhofer, 'Edmund Spenser at Kilcolman', 136. 61 Alexander Judson, *The life of Edmund Spenser. The works of Edmund Spenser: a variorum edition*, 11 vols (Baltimore, 1949), xi, pp 197–201. 62 Klingelhofer, 'Edmund Spenser at Kilcolman', 143–4, 150. For other examples of mostly seventeenth-century gardens, see James Lyttleton in Thomas Herron and Michael Potterton (eds), *Ireland in the renaissance, 1540–1660* (Dublin, 2007), pp 231–54 at 248–51.

the Irish rural landscape, Italian renaissance gardens were to become 'an integral part of the manor house design' in Jacobean (if not Elizabethan) Ireland, as in England. Witness the walled, gated and turreted terraced gardens at Lismore Castle, Co. Waterford, created in the 1620s by Richard Boyle, earl of Cork and Raleigh's replacement as landowner there.⁶³

Such a defended garden, for pleasure and profit, has intriguing parallels with the ideologically fraught functions of Spenser's famous Garden of Adonis in Book III of *The Faerie Queene*.⁶⁴ This Book features a very loosely allegorized portrait of Queen Elizabeth in Armada mode, as the lady-warrior Britomart, and is an extended paean to the dangers and virtues of 'Chastity': as Spenser conceives it, a heady combination of militant virginity and carefully cultivated marital reproduction. Appropriate for this theme, at the literal centre of this book lies the Garden of Adonis, a 'Paradise' (III.vi.29.1, 43.1), an eternally fruitful plot where people sprout (33.2), flowers bloom, trees harmoniously 'knit' their 'rancke braunches' (44.4) and everything grows to order, 'ranckt in comely rew' (35.4). It is a famously complex and puzzling Neo-Platonic fantasy,⁶⁵ a realm of beauty and classical divinity apparently free of worldly care and mortal labour ['Ne needs there Gardiner to sett, or sow, / To plant or prune' (vi.34.1–2)], tinged with mortality but unquestionably a positive vision of radiant life wherein the chaste and fertile heroine Amoret finds ample nourishment and the poet reveals his cosmic inspiration in biblical, numerical and philosophical terms.⁶⁶

Despite its otherworldliness, the garden has been described by Jane Tylus as a place of 'productivity, reciprocity, and work' and Tylus loosely associates it, Book VI of *The Faerie Queene* and Spenser's political prose tract, *A view of the present state of Ireland*, with Virgil's 'georgic economy'.⁶⁷ According to Michael Leslie, vegetation is arranged 'strongly suggesting the organization of botanic

63 Aalen et al., *Atlas of the Irish rural landscape*, p. 199; J.H. Ohlmeyer, "Civilizing of those Rude Partes": colonization within Britain and Ireland, 1580s–1640s' in Nicholas Canny (ed.), *The origins of empire: British overseas enterprise to the close of the seventeenth century. Oxford history of the British empire*, 5 vols (Oxford, 1998), i, pp 127–47 at 140. 64 Much of the following argument is closely derived from Herron, *Spenser's Irish work*, ch. 3, which finds inspiration in turn from Michael Leslie, 'Spenser, Sidney, and the renaissance garden', *ELR*, 22 (1993), 3–36. Leslie argues (p. 28) that the garden echoes the utilitarian and harmoniously ordered gardens of contemporary Venetian estates, as opposed to the decadent metaphoric fantasies of Roman villas. The Venetian garden – which Leslie associates with quasi-Protestant and republican ideals – is a 'productive farm', a 'haven of fertility, or studious creativity; of pleasure and delight certainly, but dedicated to serious ends, not artificially separated from "utilita.'" The luxurious Roman garden – which Leslie associates with Catholic, papal tyranny – finds its type instead in the figuratively rich and seductive Bower of Bliss, the unchaste anti-type of the Garden of Adonis and fit to be destroyed by the disdainful Guyon (the hero of Temperance) at the close of Book II. 65 R.T. Neuse, 'Adonis, gardens of' in Hamilton (ed.), *The Spenser encyclopedia*, pp 8–9. 66 The Garden has strong verbal parallels with Eden and the Book of Genesis 1.22: 'All things, as they created were, doe grow, / And yet remember well the mighty word, / Which first was spoken by th'Almighty lord, / That bad them to increase and multiply' (34.3–6). Cited in Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, 347n. 67 Jane Tylus, *Writing and vulnerability in the late renaissance* (Stanford, 1993), p. 139.

gardens created for scientific study throughout sixteenth-century Europe', and a post-lapsarian mortality fills the place.⁶⁸ Details normal to colonies, cities and/or enclosed gardens appear: it is 'sited' in 'a fruitfull soyle of old' (31.1) and has a 'planted' populace (33.2), walls, gates, and a centrally located prison, or 'cave' in a 'Mount' (figuratively speaking, the *mons veneris*: like Milton's Eden in *Paradise Lost*, the landscape here is an extended somatic metaphor), wherein Venus 'emprisoned for ay' the malignant 'wilde Bore' (48) that traditionally threatens Adonis. In Spenser's rewriting of the myth, the sexual and wild threat of the boar is contained within the country/body of Venus, and Adonis is spared to enjoy Venus' arms forever. The Garden has a colonial, plantation resonance in that Spenser fantasizes a civic, fruitful garden beneficial to larger society and literally underpinned by penal force against a 'wilde' or savage threat. Young Adonis lies fruitfully in Venus' arms, safe also from 'Stygian Gods' or pagan and/or Catholic idolatry and impregnating her: 'She possesseth him, and of his sweetnesse takes her fill' (III.vi.46.7-9). We are not far here from the 'bowre' of 'spotlesse pleasure' near the 'brazen tower' fantasised by the speaker of 'Amoretti' sixty-five. The Garden of Adonis is an ideal type of plot that Spenser, in the shadow of his tower, is likely to have cultivated for profit and pleasure for a few lucky years at Kilcolman.⁶⁹

CONCLUSION

As Klingelhofer's recent research suggests, based on material remains, Spenser occupied a culturally complex milieu: he could, if he chose to, imagine himself as both a local feudal magnate in traditional Anglo-Irish and native Irish mode, the occupant of another Belgard-on-the-Pale, and also as an enlightened newcomer bringing with him the civilized standards of English court and country literature and architecture to Munster. Certainly this portrait fits the writer we know of, who used Irish myth and vocabulary in his verse but who wrote in English, writing neo-medieval romance in a Chaucerian vein but with renaissance epic ideals of colonial progress and enlightened civility enforced with the point of a sword on behalf of an increasingly absolutist and imperial Tudor monarch.

Spenser's wooded, chivalric landscape reflects the rural Irish political theatre, complete with native or Old English warlords, and Spenser's artistic vision included the fortified garden-plantation at its very centre. The pastoral vision, promulgated frequently in his many poems as allegorically based on a

68 J.D. Hunt and Michael Leslie, 'Gardens' in Hamilton (ed.), *The Spenser encyclopedia*, pp 323-5 at 324. 69 For a related analysis of the intersection of Petrarchan desire, somatic metaphor, and Irish colonization and warfare in Spenser's poetry, see Benjamin P. Myers, 'Pro-War and prothalamion: queen, colony and somatic metaphor among Spenser's "Knights of the Maidenhead"', *ELR*, 37:2 (2007), 215-49.

civilized and artistically enlightened existence, finds real-world parallels in the agricultural industry of Munster and abroad: Spenser not only celebrates his ideal vision of society but advertises in heroic fantasies both its dangers and financial potential. Advertisements for the settlement of Munster and colonial progress in Ireland were not therefore restricted to tracts in prose. Further studies of early modern Irish settlement and archaeology will help us to better understand the poetry of this key canonical figure, and vice-versa.