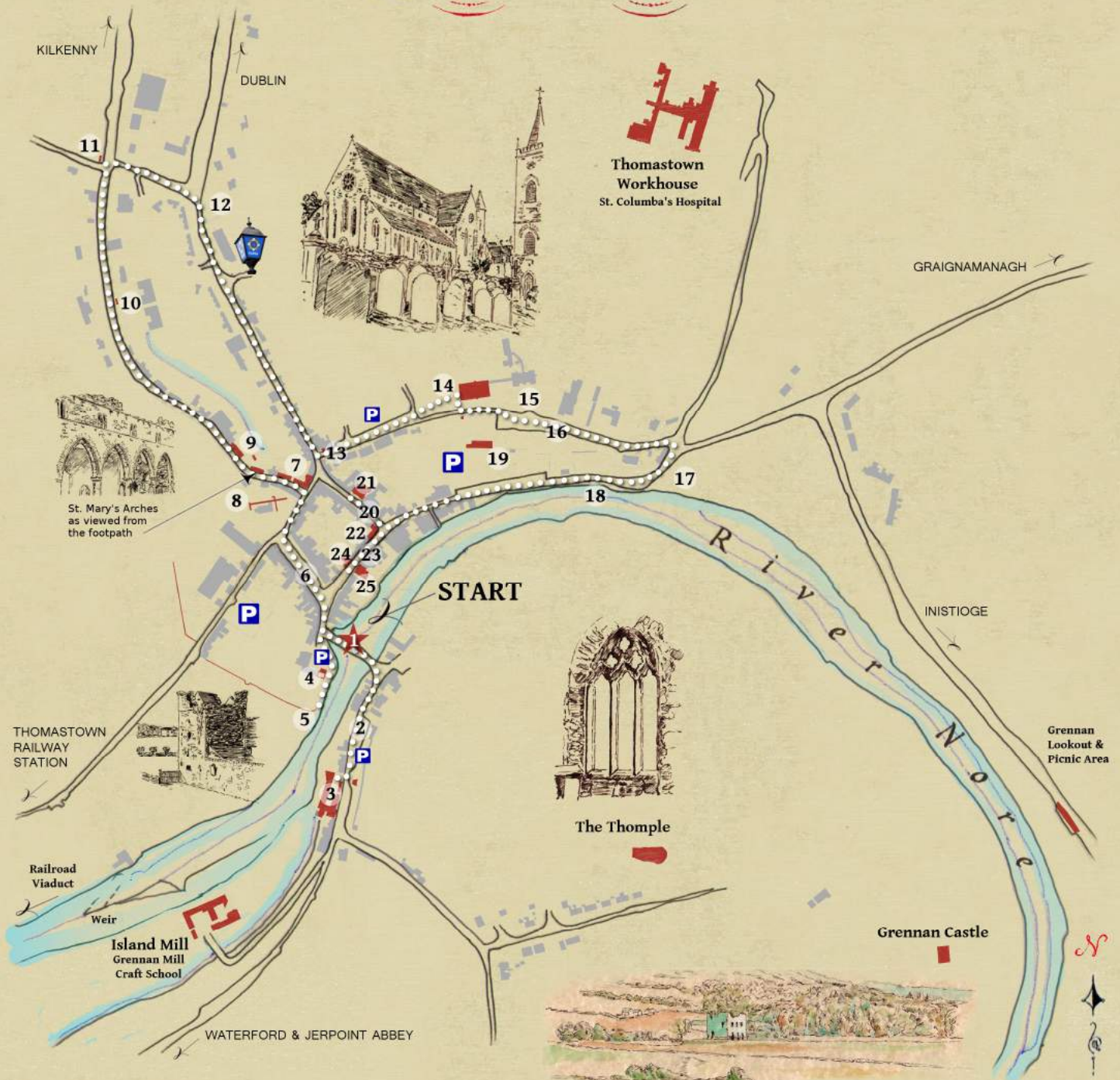


A Walking Tour Of THOMASTOWN



1. Thomastown Bridge (refer to back)	10. Ladywell (well dedicated to Our Lady)	18. The Quay & Boat Trade (refer to back)
2. Mill Street	11. The Fountain (once the local source of drinking water)	19. National School (later CYMSI)
3. Grennan Mill (now private property)	12. Maudlin Street Graveyard	20. Logan Street
4. Mullin's / Sweetman's Castle (refer to back)	13. The Geata Bui (heel stone of one the gates in medieval wall)	21. Sessions House (once seat of District Court)
5. Town Wall (refer to back)	14. Church of the Assumption & Belfry (refer to back)	22. The Commercial Hotel (now O'Hara's Pub)
6. Market Street	15. St. Joseph's Convent (now private residence)	23. Low Street
7. Ryan's Tannery (refer to back)	16. Viewing Platform	24. The Hibernian Hotel (now Murphy's Pub)
8. St. Mary's Church (now private residence)	17. Moonteen Mill (in ruins)	25. Brady's Castle (now B&B, refer to back)
9. The Watergarden (site of earlier flour mill)		

CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION (no.14)

Work began on the Catholic Church in 1859 and completed in 1867 at a cost of £5,300 "freely given by clergy and people," no mean feat considering the traumatic after effects of the Great Famine. The church replaced an earlier one built in 1770 with a belfry added in 1823.



The holy water font at the entrance, and the baptismal font at the side altar are both said to have come from Jerpoint Abbey. The latter is decorated with the Butler and Fitz Gerald coat of arms and a pelican plucking her breast.



THE BRIDGE (no.1)

The bridge dates from the 1780s and replaced an earlier structure which was swept away along with an entire street known as Weaver's (or Guter) Lane in the catastrophic 1763 flood during which 21 townspeople were drowned.



RYAN'S TANNERY (no.7)

Located between Lady's Well St and Maudlin St, the tannery dates from 1785. In 1870 John T. Ryan, grandson of the founder, expanded the business and by 1896 16 men were in full-time employment. The tannery supplied leather to all parts of the country although working conditions were generally poor. Its eventual inability to compete with cheaper foreign imports hastened its closure in 1931.



A Walking Tour Of THOMASTOWN



Map Detail. Grennan Castle as seen from the Viewing Area

A Thomastown Tidy Towns Publication



INTRODUCTION

It is fitting that this publication should coincide with the 800th anniversary of the foundation of Thomastown by the Welsh-Norman Thomas Fitz Anthony. From its feudal origins the town has, for better or worse, been the subject of considerable urban development yet its essential core remains the same. To walk the grid-like pattern of its streets is to get a pervasive sense of its Norman inheritance; the facades remind you of the Norman planning trait of always turning its back to the river. Viewing the Nore from The Quay one can imagine a heyday of milling and boat freight; in the immediate hinterland lies the jewel of Irish Cistercian monasteries, Jerpoint Abbey. Indices to the past are everywhere and the town's enduring appeal is that past and present are forever dovetailing. Long may the delicate equilibrium remain.

Tom Dack, May, 2010

OLD TOWN WALL (no.5)

In 1374 a charter of Edward III permitted the burgesses of Thomastown to charge tolls on all goods sold in the town or passing through it for a term of 20 years. The proceeds were to go towards the building of the town wall. Another charter granted in 1450 allowed the town a 10 year tax immunity thus enabling proper wall maintenance.

Although the northern and eastern walls have been lost, segments of the western range still exist. Roughly semi-circular in configuration, the Nore provided a natural defence to the south.

SWEETMAN'S CASTLE (no.4)

This fortified 15th century town house has 3 storeys and a wall walk with a parapet which encloses a modern gabled roof. There are turrets at the north and south corners rising above the wall walk. The building appears to have been erected by a merchant family primarily as a warehouse. In the 16th century the building was modified to make it more habitable. The outwork is an oblong structure which appears to be part of the original building phase of the fortified town house.



TOWER HOUSE (no.25)

Like Sweetman's Castle the Tower House or Brady's Castle formed part of the town's medieval defences. It is a 3-storey fortified town house dating from the late medieval period and was probably built by a local merchant. In 1983 it was renovated and adapted as a dwelling.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH (no.8)

St. Mary's Church dates to c.1270 on analogy with Gowran and St. Canice's Cathedral and was attached to the Priory of Inistioge. The church originally consisted of an aisled nave with a tower in the south-western corner and a chancel with a sacristy and detached chapel. In 1809 the south wall and south aisle of the church were removed along with the chancel to make way for the Protestant church, now a private residence.

THE THOMPLE



Thomple Thaeaghawin was the church of Grennan. All that remain today are a few tombs and a beautiful three-light traceried window in the east gable. It is named after St. Techan who belonged to the Ui Daimhin, an ancient Ossory tribe whose territory lay around Thomastown.

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