

# Galloon Church and Graveyard Fact Sheet



## Background

The site at Galloon was home to an early monastery and graveyard. Today, at Galloon the church ruins remain alongside the graveyard, cross shafts, carved stones and a holy well.

St. Tierney (Tighearneach) established the monastery at Galloon, before moving to the monastery at Clones, leaving St. Colman (Comgall), in charge at Galloon. St. Tierney chose the island of Galloon as a remote “desert” to seek contact with God.

There is a number of legends associated with saint, he raised people from the dead, and his prayers brought children to a childless chieftain and his wife, while his prayers saved men from drowning. In 1247 Maguire had a guesthouse at Galloon.



## Church Site

It is designated as a graveyard on the 1835 and 1860 editions of the OS map, and ‘Church (site of) Cross’ on the 1909 edition. The location of the holy well is unknown. McKenna noted that the well was said to be linked by an underground stream to a well at Drummully, a letter dropped in one well would soon appear in the other. The well is said to turn hair grey. “There is a well at Galloon, into which, if one should dip his hand, he would become instantly grey.”

In 1966 when Hamlin visited the site the ‘church was still traceable but very overgrown.’ There is now no trace except for a faint hollow lying east-west in the western area of the graveyard.



## Remains

Galloon is home to two hugely significant, if damaged, cross-shafts, dating to the 9th or 10th century. The high crosses depict scripture and traditions of the church. One cross head is in the care of NIEA (thought to be the head of the East Cross), while the other, recorded in 1966, has disappeared.

The 1609-10 Bodley map shows a roofed church and a round tower. This, however, may have been the standard representation for parish churches.

“The only remains of any buildings are the foundation of 3 parallel walls, north, centre and south. It was as the people describe it, a double roofed building. It is not unlikely that a great part of these old walls have been used in building the dwelling house, which is on the west end of the graveyard as I saw a carved stone in the gable wall of it.” OS Memoir, 1835

It has been suggested that the larger cross-shaft with its fine Adam and Eve, now located in Lisnaskea, was once at Galloon.







# LOUGH ERNE — PILGRIM WAY —



Lough Erne is home to many religious sites, places of gathering, learning, worship, and burial. Today, we can trace these places along the lough as they quietly sit as timely reminders of a once thriving early Christian community.

