

## History of Kilmacar Church

The present church appears to date to the 13<sup>th</sup> century and it was most likely built by the Anglo Normans after their first bishop of Ossory, Hugh de Rous, confirmed a grant of Kilmocar and Kilcoleman (Conahy) churches to the Abbey of St Thomas in Dublin. The patron saints of Kilmocar are the Apostles Peter and Paul. Their feast day is June 29<sup>th</sup> and a Pattern Day was held until 1838. According to Canon Carrigan the Irish name for the church is Cill Mocheara, or the church of Ceara or Moceara referring to saints mentioned in Irish Martyrologies. He says feast days were the 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of February. William Nolan says *machair* means "a level or flat place". The only level place here is the road.

To the East, near the Cloghnagh / Glosa river, was a holy well, Tubber-Murrha (Mary's Well) until 1800.

To the West was Kilmocar Castle, once a manor house, inhabited until a storm on St Martin's night 1780. Beyond the Castle was a moat and burial cist. It is believed that next to the Toor Road there was a monastery.

Areas adjacent to churches, monasteries and manor houses, were often populated, so the name Barrack Village, referring to this area, likely confirms some settlement here. No record of a Barracks here, sometimes a barracks got built and possibly circumstances changed and then never garrisoned, but retained the title.

Conahy Heritage Society Ltd. In 2017 had mortar, from the still standing West gable, carbon dated giving an early 13<sup>th</sup> Century reading. Thus adding credence to an Anglo Norman building a similar period to when St Canice's Cathedral in Kilkenny was built.

The graveyard must have been much larger than the present walled structure as bones were found in the field opposite (when ploughed) on the Kilkenny side.

Canon Carrigan, History and Antiquities of the Diocese of Ossory,

Vol 11 P. 200ff.

William Nolan, Fassadinan Land Settlement.