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# *Clonmel Archaeological Excavations since 1990*

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By Patrick Holland

Over the last five years a succession of archaeological excavations in Clonmel has resulted in the uncovering of the outlines of a picture of Clonmel's medieval past. The location of the town wall has been confirmed in several places and an assemblage of artefacts has been found, as have a number of human burials.

All of these create hard archaeological data to complement the historical picture created by scholars such as Burke in his history of the town. We are only at the start of our journey into the past, however, and there are many questions to be answered. For example, what form did the buildings in the interior and the settlement pattern of the town take?

Most of the excavations undertaken to date were, for developmental reasons, on the edges of the central core area. Can we locate a sufficiently detailed stratigraphical sequence with associated finds to trace and quantify the town's trading links over its history? Was Clonmel established on a virgin site, or was there pre-Norman settlement?

The progress that has been made to date is due primarily to the members and staff of an enlightened local authority, Clonmel Corporation, who funded the first excavation and who have since then required appropriate archaeological investigations in advance of development work. Long may this continue, so that we may open yet more windows on Clonmel's past.



Plate 1 – General view of town wall (F2), looking south; see paper by Hilary Opie, p. 152.

