

ANTIQUITIES

Abbeys, Castles, Fortresses, Round Towers, Early Churches, Sculptured Crosses, Stone Circles, Ogham Stones, Cairns, Souterrams, Pillar Stones, Cromlechs, Forts, Raths, Moats, Tumuli or ancient monuments of any kind. Exact location of each with short description, noting condition, etc. Relate local legend or tradition associated with building or object. State if in charge of Office of Public Works. Right of way to public? Admission charge (if any). Name and address of caretaker, or where key is kept.

ROSSERK ABBEY.

The Convent of Rosserk was founded in 1460 on the site of an ancient oratory of the Virgin Saint, Searo. Built for the Tertiaries of St. Francis, the convent was founded by a member of the Joyce family. The ruin is in a remarkably good state of preservation and one reason advanced to explain this is that the Friars, who attended the sick and dying as well as devoting themselves to the education of youth, refused to conform to a rule of strict observance which was introduced about 1460 and that they deserted the monastery.

The church and monastery were constructed of a bluish-grey stone and the excellence of construction and beauty of design combine to make of Rosserk a splendid example of the skill of the craftsman of that period. The graceful square tower, which seems to belong particularly to Irish Franciscan establishments, rests on beautifully moulded piers but there is now no means of ascending the tower.

The open square which was once the cloister, is entered by a doorway under the north arch of the tower and from the cloister, four staircases lead to the dormitories and library overhead and other doorways lead to the ground-floor cells. The elaborate carvings of the windows are a notable feature of the Abbey.

The Abbey is in the care of the O.P.W. and the key may be obtained from the caretaker, Mr MacAndrew who lives in the house facing the gate leading to the ruin. There is a public right of way.

CASTLE AT BALLINTAIN.

In Mr John Frazer's lands at Ballintain, near Mullaughfarry, are faint vestiges of an old castle. Little or nothing appears to be known about this foundation and, but for the grass-grown mound which may be noticed, one might pass here without knowing that a castle had once stood on this spot.