

Housing

LESSON 2

The Big House



ARCHAEOLOGY
time in transition

IT'S ABOUT TIME 2

**Aim(s)**

To give the students an appreciation of the architectural styles introduced into Ireland in the 18th and 19th centuries.

**Objective(s)**

To give the students an understanding of the major changes in building tradition that occurred in the 18th and early 19th centuries by examining the country houses of the period, in terms of their architecture, the influences that shaped them and the fashions they followed.

**Time Period**

18th and early 19th centuries (1700s and 1800s).

**KEY INFORMATION****Lesson**

- Post 1690 witnessed the emergence of a new land owning elite.
- The new landowning elite built elegant Country Houses which were architect designed in the most up-to-date style.
- The fashionable styles were neo-Classical, and later neo-Gothic.
- The Country House was surrounded by a private park called a *demesne*.

Context

- Major changes took place in Ireland after 1690 (Williamite Wars) which had profound political, social and religious effects on the country.
- These changes are expressed in the upsurge of building that occurred in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Many of these buildings remain today in our towns and cities and in our rural countryside. The Country House is a visible example of these changes.

**METHODOLOGY & MEDIUM**

- Instruction
- Visual—PowerPoint
- **Worksheet** Building Record Sheet
- **Student Handout 1** Irish Country Houses
- **Student Handout 2** The Features of a Building

**SECTIONS**

- Section 1** The Irish Country House
- Section 2** Irish Country Houses
- Section 3** Neo-Classical Architecture
- Section 4** Taking a closer look
- Section 5** Neo-Gothic Architecture
- Section 6** The Demesne
- Section 7** Finding out about Country Houses



Key Question(s) What changes in architecture took place between the 17th and 18th centuries?

Slide 1 The Big House

We will now look at the major changes in building tradition that occurred in Ireland in the 18th and early 19th centuries.

Slide 2 Same or Different?

- On the left is Kanturk Castle, Co. Cork. This was built by a branch of the Mac Carthy's around 1630.
- On the Right is Emo Court, Co. Laois. This was built in 1790 by John Dawson, the 1st Earl of Portarlington. It was designed by the architect James Gandon.



Teacher Instruction

Ask the students to compare the 17th century fortified house with the 18th century country house under the following headings

Similarity: large imposing residential stone buildings belonging to important landowners.

Difference: Kanturk Castle resembles a medieval castle although it was built in the 17th century. Emo Court is designed in a neo-Classical style and was a very fashionable building for its time.

Fortified Houses: These were built by native landowners in the late-16th/early-17th century, who wished to replace the dark and cold tower house of the preceding era with a larger, more comfortable and warmer house. However, these fortified houses are still rooted in the castle tradition, with defensive features such as machicolations, bartizans, battlements and gun loops. However, there is some appreciation of newer ideas; windows are larger and often arranged in vertical and horizontal lines, especially above ground-floor level. Kanturk Castle is therefore looking in two directions—backwards to the castle tradition and forward to the modern country house (see *Irish Castles Throughout the Ages*, T2,U2,L2).



Machicolation: openings in a projecting parapet or fighting platform supported on corbels through which stones, etc. could be dropped on assailants.

Bartizan: a roofed, floorless turret projecting from the corner of a castle, especially tower houses, either at roof height or below, to defend the angles and provide flanking fire.

Battlement: the defences of a castle's wall tops, normally an indented parapet.

Loop: a narrow vertical slit, of various forms, in a wall or at the angle of two walls, facilitating the release of trajectories such as arrows or gunshot.

Eighteenth century country houses, like Emo Court, were designed by architects familiar with the latest English and continental styles. The house has a strict symmetrical appearance—the windows and doors are organised in a very deliberate fashion according to strict rules of design.

The central porch is classical in design with ionic columns and is topped by a triangular pediment.

The tops of the walls are projected outwards. This feature is called a cornice and gives the house a pleasant proportioned appearance.



Teacher Instruction

Discuss how these features give Emo Court an elegance which Kanturk Castle lacks.



Emo Court is a neo-Classical country house designed in 1790 by James Gandon, who also designed the Custom House and the Four Courts in Dublin.

Slide 3 Looking at the Different Window Types

The difference between the two styles of building is demonstrated by their windows.

Kanturk Castle's windows have stone frames with mullion and transom divisions and hood mouldings. There was no glass in the windows which were closed by a wooden shutter.

Emo Court has sash windows. These are very elegant windows with sliding frames, each frame divided by glazing bars. Each of these held an individual pane of glass. In the 18th century large plate glass was not available. Instead glass was hand-blown so the panes could not be made too large. Sash windows are very elegant and were an important part of the design of a country house. Usually, the windows decrease in height higher up the building. This gives the house a proportioned appearance.



Mullion: vertical post or upright of wood or stone, separating the lights (openings) of a window.

Transom: a horizontal bar of wood or stone dividing the lights of a mullioned window.

Hood moulding: shallow stone projection over a window.

Slide 4 Political and Social Change

What political and social change was responsible for the change from fortified house to country house?

- Kanturk Castle represents the old Gaelic order. This world was finally swept away by the mid-17th century.
- Emo Court represents the new land-owning elite, the Protestant Ascendancy, who took power after the Cromwellian settlement.
- The 18th century was a period of relative peace in Ireland and this enabled the new elite to become wealthy and start to build grand country houses for themselves.
- The building of these houses showed the wealth and power of this new elite.
- This was part of a major rebuilding programme throughout Ireland from the mid-18th century through to the early-19th century. Most of the older buildings in our towns and countryside belong to this period.

Slide 5 Buildings of the 18th and Early-19th Centuries

The 18th and early-19th century is a period of great rebuilding in Ireland. This slide shows the variety of structures that were built in this period: country houses; bridges; courthouses; market houses; churches; schools; military and police barracks, jails; alms houses; mills etc.

Many of these buildings are familiar to us because they are still in use today. They form the bulk of our architectural heritage and give character to both town and countryside.



Victory by William of Orange at the Battle of The Boyne in 1690, and the Treaty of Limerick in 1691, marks the final end of the Gaelic and Old English (Norman) order and the emergence of a new landowning elite—the Protestant Ascendancy. This change is represented by the appearance of country houses.

Slide 6 From the Spectacular to the Vernacular

Country houses were built by landlords to reflect their status in society. They showed that they were up-to-date with the latest fashion by employing an architect to design the house in a modern style.

Landlords were a privileged minority, mainly Protestants, who owned large tracts of land, most of which they rented out to tenant farmers. In 1804 there were approximately 10,000 landlords in Ireland, with a total population of approximately 5,500,000 people.

Traditional (vernacular) Architecture

At the other end of the scale, during the same period, vernacular houses were being built to accommodate the growing general population. These were built by local craftsmen using local materials, like thatch, according to local tradition and responding to local needs. A typical vernacular house was one storey. There was a limited arrangement of rooms, a typical house having a kitchen, parlour, and two bedrooms. These are also a very important part of our architectural heritage.

Between these two ends were the many houses of the minor gentry and strong farmer classes. These have some of the grandeur of the larger country houses but are much more modest in size and scale.



Country houses look outwards for their design—vernacular houses look to tradition for their design.

SECTION 2 Irish Country Houses



Key Question(s): What factors influenced the appearance of country houses?

Slide 7 The Inspiration Behind the Houses

- **These** large houses were built mainly in the countryside surrounded by their estates—hence the name country house. Some of these estates were vast, up to thousands of **acres**.
- Most of the land was rented to tenant **farmers**.
- These rents provide the revenue to drive the building boom that lasted up to the time of The Great Famine.

- **Where did the inspiration for these houses come from?**

The inspiration for these houses came from France, Italy and especially England.

- They were designed by architects trained in the latest architectural fashion of the day. Some of these architects were Irish, others came from England and the Continent. Italian craftsmen were employed to decorate the interior of these houses.



The architect Richard Cassels (1691-1751) was born in Germany. In Ireland he designed many important buildings such as Powerscourt House, Co. Wicklow, Carton House, Co. Kildare, Leinster House (now The Dáil) in Dublin, and Russborough House, Co. Wicklow. While working in Ireland he changed his name to Castle.

Slide 8 Typical Examples of Country Houses

Here are some typical examples of country houses from across Ireland.



Teacher Instruction

Get students to feedback what they feel about the style of these buildings.

Are they all the same? What are the differences?

(The key words to look for should include: *big/ formal/ grand/ elegant/ architect-designed*)

Slide 9 The Factors Influencing the Shape of the Houses

What are the influences shaping these houses?

- **Climate** Always an issue, especially in Ireland. Most of these houses had a fireplace in every room—hence large chimney stacks. Slate roofs were important as was lead flashing to keep out the damp.
- **Technology** The technical knowledge of architects and builders who were formally trained is reflected in the sophisticated design and construction of country houses. The range of materials available included imported stone and slate.
- **Economics** Growing wealth in 18th century.
- **Social Status** Important social symbol reflecting the owner's status.
- **Fashion** This was largely the architect's responsibility. Some owners were conservative but most sought the latest style.



Teacher Instruction

Discuss with the students the influence of fashion and style on their lives.

What is a style or a fashion? Name 10 brands of clothing that are in fashion at the moment. Do they influence what young people wear? Is it important to be 'in-style'? What does it mean to be 'old fashioned'?

Most of the people who built country houses wanted their houses to be 'in fashion' and not seen as 'old fashioned'. They wanted their houses to be up-to-date, and thereby reflect their status in society (i.e. that they were 'modern' people).

What was in fashion?

The dominant architectural fashion for most of the 18th and early-19th centuries was a very elegant and well-proportioned style based on the architecture of Ancient Greece and Rome. This style is known as neo-Classical and influenced the design of most public and private buildings in this period.



Key Question(s) What are the main features of neo-Classical Architecture?



The greatest period in the history of western architecture is the Classical period 800BC to 200 AD. The Greeks and then the Romans built beautiful buildings of aesthetic quality which have never been surpassed. The decline of the Roman Empire saw the end of this tradition. However, it was revived again in the Renaissance when artists like Leonardo da Vinci, Michaelangelo and Palladio copied Roman art and architecture as a source of inspiration.

Slide 10 How Did the neo-Classical Style Become Fashionable?

The Grand Tour became a feature of aristocratic life in the 18th century. This was seen as an essential part of a young person's education. The visit to Rome and Athens brought these people in direct contact with the remains of classical antiquity.

The picture on the left shows two such young gentlemen on their Grand Tour digging Roman ruins. The renewed interest in the study of Latin and Ancient Greek enhanced this interest in the Classical world.

Pompeii—the Roman village covered by volcanic ash was discovered in 1748. Its excavation caused great general public interest. The picture shows tourists in the 19th century visiting the site to view the excavations.

Slide 11 Columns

Columns are an essential feature of Greek and Roman architecture. The Column is divided up into three **sections**

- **Base.**
- Shaft—can be plain or fluted (channels grooved vertical up the **shaft**).
- Capital—the top is a key element in the column.

Slide 12 Capitals

The treatment of the **capitals** gives the *order* of the building. There are three main orders

- Doric—plain.
- Ionic—scroll.
- Corinthian—leaves/foilage.

Slide 13 Irish Examples of Capitals

This slide shows examples of Doric, Ionic and Corinthian capitals from 18th and 19th century Irish buildings.

Classical columns are used to give buildings an architectural elegance. They were very popular in public buildings such as court houses and churches. They were used also by carpenters in the wooden surround of shop fronts.

Slide 14 Classical Features

Other Classical features

- *Entablature*: horizontal element held up by columns.
- *Cornice*: upper projecting part of entablature.
- *Frieze*: middle part of entablature.
- *Pediment*: triangular feature on top of entablature.

Slide 15 Spot the Neo-Classical Features

Spot the neo-Classical features of this country house (Crosshaven House, Co. Cork)

Well balanced and proportioned. Classical detail.

- Pediment.
- Cornice.
- Column: capital; column; base.
- Ionic capitals.
- Base.

Slide 16 Leinster House

The use of classical details is well illustrated by Leinster House—now Dáil Éireann.

This house was built by The Duke of Leinster in 1745 and designed by Richard Cassels. Though built in an urban setting it has been described as ‘a country house in town’. The classical features include the four Corinthian columns which support an entablature on which sits a triangular pediment. The windows have an architrave (surround) and pediments.

SECTION 4 Taking a Closer Look

**Key Question(s)** How do we describe these buildings?**Slide 17 Describing the Building****Teacher Instruction**

Ask the students to describe the building.

- What kind of roof? (see next page)—hipped slate roof—this is the most popular type used in country houses.
- How many storeys?—three.
- How wide is it?—usually described in bays (vertical divisions of a building often marked by windows and doors)—this building is five bays wide.
- Walls—stone and mortar. (In this slide the walls are made of cut-stone blocks (ashlar) of limestone).
- Breakfront—the central three bays are brought slightly forward. This is a design feature known as a ‘breakfront’. On top of the breakfront is a triangular pediment.
- Door—the door itself is made of panelled wood. On each side are ionic columns of limestone. On top is a semi-circular fanlight (this allows light into the hallway inside the door).



Teacher Instruction

Ask the students to describe the windows

There are lots of windows, at least two for each room

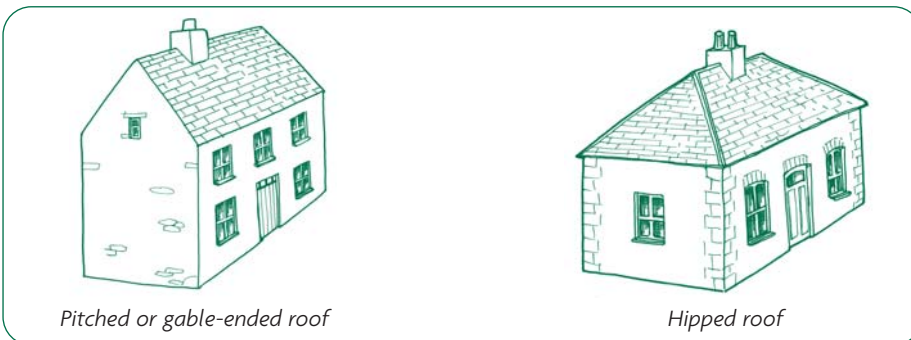
They have individual panes of glass (these are termed 'lights')—count the number of panes in each window. Are they different on the ground floor to the first floor? first floor to 2nd floor?

Other features of the house

Fireplaces—in nearly every room, resulting in two large chimney stacks on the roof.

Rooms—lots of rooms—dining room, drawing rooms, kitchens, hall, bedrooms, etc.

Utilities—pump for water, chamber pots, candle light.



A pitched roof is where the gable end rises to the height of the roof ridge. It often has a chimney on top of the gable (though not in example above).

Slide 18 Other Features

- **Quoins** (pronounced 'coins')—are the corner stones of the buildings. They are often highlighted as a feature of the **building**.
- *Sash window*—very important feature in neo-Classical **architecture**.
- *Rusticated ashlar*—recessed joints to give emphasis to the **ashlar**.
- *String Course*—a prominent horizontal band of **masonry**.
- *Band Course*—a prominent horizontal band of masonry, wider and flatter than a string **course**.
- *Fanlight*—semicircular window over door—elegant and functional (providing light for the hall).



Ashlar—Walls formed of cut-stone blocks.

Slide 19 Sash Windows

Sliding up and down sash windows become very popular because the vertical rectangle suited the balance and proportion of neo-Classical buildings (as opposed to the horizontally rectangular casement windows of the 16th and early 17th century fortified houses).

Glass at this time was hand-made—this kept panes small and uneven and very expensive.

Timber glazing bars held the small panes and give added texture to the window's appearance.



The front of this house is built of coursed ashlar (cut stone blocks). Other houses, particularly the smaller ones, are built of rubble stone that is rendered over with lime plaster.

Slide 20 Crosshaven House

Look at Crosshaven House, Co. **Cork**. The description should make sense now!

Slide 21 Doneraile Court

Here is another country house—Doneraile Court, Co. Cork.



Teacher Instruction

Distribute the **Building Record Sheet** and ask the students to record the building.



In the 18th and the early 19th centuries window glass was hand made by spinning discs or blowing glass. The uneven nature of the glass can still be seen in some of these old windows. Window panes are referred to as 'lights'.

In the mid/late 19th century technology allowed for large and cheaper sheet glass to be available. Thus fewer glazing bars were needed and the appearance of windows changed with fewer glazing bars.

Slide 22 Minor Landed Gentry

Many country houses were modest in scale and size but still had a sense of elegance and style. Minor landed gentry built these houses, as well as professionals like doctors and magistrates, and the more prosperous tenant farmers.

Slide 23 Georgian Townhouses

The neo-Classical style was also used for townhouses in the 18th and early-19th century. The elegant streets and squares of terraced Georgian townhouses which are a feature of Dublin, Limerick and other towns, follow the same rules of symmetry as country houses. Details like door surrounds use Classical orders. This slide shows part of the terrace at Henrietta Street in Dublin, one of the country's oldest Georgian streets. Unlike country houses, brick was extensively used for townhouses.

SECTION 5 Neo-Gothic Architecture



Key Question(s) What did neo-Gothic architecture look like?

Slide 24 Neo-Gothic Architecture

The neo-Classical style continued to be popular into the 19th century but by then it was just one of a number of styles in which a country house might be built. By the late 18th century a new style was gaining popularity—neo-Gothic.

Castleward, Co. Down shows the change in style incorporated into one building.

The owners of this country house could not make up their minds about which style they wanted. It was built in the 1770s. The owners Lord and Lady Ward had different tastes. He wanted a sombre classical house in the traditional style. She wanted something much more fashionable and up-to-date. In the end they built a house in two different styles. One front is neo-Classical but the other is neo-Gothic. The neo-Gothic elevation has pointed and ogee arches over the windows and battlements on top of the wall.



Teacher Instruction

Ask the students which style they prefer. Imagine the argument between Mr. and Mrs. Ward—what might they have said to each other?

Slide 25 The Romantic Movement

- The new neo-Gothic style was influenced by The Romantic Movement and a newfound interest in the Middle Ages (King Arthur etc.).
- Castles were now seen as part of a mysterious and romantic past. There was also a growing interest in medieval ecclesiastical buildings (e.g. Wordsworth's poem about Tintern Abbey).
- Thus architects became much more diverse in their designs in order to keep up with changing styles, and the older interest in symmetry and classical details was no longer fashionable.

Slide 26 Wilton Castle

Wilton Castle, Co. Wexford (built in 1840). Colonel Harry Alcock inherited the Wilton estate in 1840. He built a new 'castle' in granite stone from Mount Leinster. The house, known as Wilton Castle, was destroyed by fire in 1923 during the Civil War, a fate which many country houses met at this time.



Teacher Instruction

Ask the students to describe this country house (the asymmetrical nature of neo-Gothic architecture makes it more difficult to describe than the uniformity of the neo-Classical). See if they can identify some of the castle features on the building.

Slide 27 Medieval Features of Wilton Castle

- Towers and turrets.
- Battlements along the top of the wall.
- Machicolations—projections on top of wall used to drop objects from on attackers below—here they are solid and fake.
- Oriel window—Tudor-style window projecting from the upper floor.

- **Windows** with stone divides (mullions) and hood mouldings (projecting over top of window).
- **Fake** arrow **loops**.
- Moat.

Is the building symmetrical in its design?

How would you describe it?—fussy, simple, ornate, modest, romantic, gothic, classical?

Slide 28 Country Houses in the neo-Gothic Style

A number of country houses were built in the neo-Gothic style, for example

Glenstal, Co. Limerick—designed by William Bardwell in 1837 for the Barrington family. Now a Benedictine abbey.

Adare Manor, Co. Limerick—designed by local architects the Pain brothers in 1832 for the Earl of Dunraven. Currently functions as a hotel.

Dromoland Castle, Co. Clare—also designed by the Pain brothers in 1826 for Sir Edward O'Brien. Currently functions as a hotel.

Slide 29 Country House Summary

- **In** the 18th and early-19th century many country houses were built in **Ireland**.
- This was a period of relative peace and prosperity after the turbulence of the 17th **century**.
- The new land-owning elite built large country houses to display their wealth and **power**.
- The 18th century saw the introduction of neo-Classical architecture—using features from ancient Greek and Roman architecture, like columns and **pediments**.
- These houses were balanced and symmetrical in **appearance**.
- From the late 18th century a new style emerged, the neo-Gothic. This moved away from the neo-Classical and its insistence on **symmetry**.
- The neo-Gothic draws inspiration from a romantic view of medieval castles and ecclesiastical **architecture**.
- Few country houses were being built in the late 19th century (after the Great Famine) as the land-owning elite began losing their power and wealth (The Land Acts etc).



Key Question(s) What are the features of a demesne?

Slide 30 The Demesne



Demesne is pronounced *de-main*

Definition: a demesne is the area around a country house set aside for the private use of the owners.



The origin of demesnes can be traced back to the medieval period when part of the manorial land was reserved 'in demesne' by the lord who farmed it himself.



Teacher Instruction

Ask the students to describe the demesne in this **picture**.

- House in commanding **position**.
- Parkland with deciduous **trees**.
- Ornamental lake and **river**.
- Long winding entrance **avenue**.
- Stable **yard**.
- Walled **garden**.
- Formal **garden**.
- Entrance gates and demesne wall.

Every large country house was surrounded by a demesne. As with the house, the size of the demesne reflected the wealth and status of the owner. The demesne is a designed landscape, with ornamental features. The creation of a demesne often involved planting trees, making lakes, diverting rivers, and creating driveways and avenues.

Most of the trees planted were deciduous (oak, beech, lime) and are only now reaching their full maturity. Many of the most picturesque views in Ireland are the result of demesne design and planting.

Slide 31 Stradbally House

In the early 18th century, demesne design, like this one at **Stradbally House**, Co. Laois, was formal and symmetrical, like the design of the houses themselves.

Here there is a great emphasis on straight lines in the layout. Thus we have rectangular canals and other water features, square enclosed gardens with geometrically arranged lawns, and trees planted in straight lines. This type of demesne design imposes itself on the landscape.

Slide 32 The Naturalistic Approach

This formal approach to demesne design gave way in the mid-18th century to a softer, more naturalistic approach to landscape. This new fashion looked to the natural landscape itself for inspiration. This is also part of a more romantic outlook on art and design and like the neo-Gothic movement was influenced by The Romantic Movement.



Teacher Instruction

Ask the students to describe the scene.

- Lots of mature deciduous trees. These trees were planted over 200 years ago—we are now seeing them in their mature state.
- Winding river.
- Curving avenue.
- Country house in the distance, overlooking this naturalised demesne landscape.

In many instances, in order to recreate a more naturalistic landscape, the old formal demesne was removed and the area returned to something like its original natural appearance.

Slide 33 Ha Ha

One of the problems with a more naturalistic demesne was grassland management. A useful and picturesque way of doing this was to keep a herd of deer. In order to keep the deer away from the flower beds etc. around the house and to avoid having to build an intrusive deer fence, the Ha Ha was invented.

- Ha Ha is a sunken ditch with a sheer stone face on one side. This keeps the deer away but does not interfere with the view from the Country house.

(in this picture the house is to the right—the bushes growing on the top of the wall are recent!)

Slide 34 They Built Pretty Things to See

In order to further enhance the appearance of a demesne many follies, gazebos and eyecatchers were built.

- **Small** neo-Gothic towers were popular. Some were built deliberately to look like ruined medieval castles.
- **Others** functioned as venues for tea parties (tea drinking become popular in the 18th century as trade increased with Africa and Asia).

Slide 35 Water Features

The picture shows an ornamental foot bridge over the river in Doneraile Court demesne. Ornamental water features were an important part of a demesne. Some examples of water features are; artificial lakes, waterfalls, boathouses, artificial islands, and bridges.

Slide 36 Cobbled Yards and Gateways

The care with design and appearance was also extended to the other buildings within the demesne, like stables and coach houses. These were built around cobbled yards with arched gateways.

Slide 37 Walled-in Gardens

Walled-in gardens became a common feature of the demesne. Many gardeners were employed to tend to the demesne and the gardens. The gardens produced a vast array of vegetables and flowers for the household.

Slide 38 Glasshouses

Frequently the south-facing wall of the garden was built of brick because it retains heat better than stone. In some cases glasshouses were built against this wall. Many gardeners became expert at growing fruit like oranges (hence the term 'orangery' for a glasshouse).

Slide 39 Demesne Walls

Around the demesne a high wall was built.

Teacher Instruction

Discuss with the students why they think these walls were built.

The demesne wall created a physical and a visual barrier between the everyday world outside and the private demesne inside. They were useful in keeping deer inside the demesne. They also acted as a barrier to trespassers and other unwanted visitors.

Slide 40 Entrance Gates

The entrance into a demesne had to be impressive, to enhance the effect of passing from one world into another. Some entrance gateways were designed by architects and reflected the style of the country house itself. Others were more modest—the grandeur of the country house can often be judged by the grandeur of its entrance.

Slide 41 The Gate Lodge

The entrance gates were opened and closed when needed by the gate keeper who lived in the adjacent gate lodge which was generally a small ornate building. The gate was normally kept shut and only opened for family and invited guests.

Slide 42 Gateway/Gate Lodge

Because the gate lodge is at the roadside, care was taken over its appearance. In some cases the gateway and the gate lodge were combined into the same structure. Otherwise the lodge might be inside or outside the gateway, depending on what was deemed most suitable.

Slide 43 Summary

Summary slide.

- Period of relative peace and prosperity.
- Large scale building took place.
- Many country house were built.



Key Question(s) Where would you find information about 18th and early 19th century buildings?

Slide 44 The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

www.buildingsofireland.ie

This is the website of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH). It is an excellent source for buildings in the country. The counties that are available are in red.



The NIAH is a preliminary survey—not all 18th and 19th century buildings have been surveyed. However, it is a very useful source for all the major buildings in the areas it has covered.

Slide 45 & 46 Researching Building Types

You can look up a vast range of buildings on the website, e.g. bridges, court house, gate lodge, and country houses.



Many of these buildings are submitted by NIAH to Local Authorities for inclusion as protected structures in their Development Plans.

Slide 47 & 48 Recording a Building



Teacher Instruction

Ask the students to record these buildings using the Worksheet (**Building Record Sheet**).

See Projects section: Buildings of Ireland—Compare and Contrast.

WEB LINKS

WWW.



National Monuments Service

www.archaeology.ie/

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

www.buildingsofireland.com/

Survey of Historic Gardens and designed Landscapes

www.buildingsofireland.com/Surveys/Gardens/

Archiseek - Online Architectural Resource

www.archiseek.com/category/buildings/ireland-buildings

Vernacular Housing in Donegal

www.geographyinaction.co.uk/Vernacular%20housing/Vern_background.html

Ask About Ireland – Architecture

www.askaboutireland.ie/reading-room/history-heritage/architecture/Architecture/index.xml

Walled Kitchen Gardens Network

www.walledgardens.net

The Garden History Society

www.gardenhistorysociety.org

Address

Street Number

Townland

Description Detached ☐ Semi-detached ☐ Bungalow ☐

No. of bays No. of storeys

Building material

Roof type Material

Are the walls rendered?

Original function

Inscription

Present use

Previous owner(s)

Present owner

Photograph

Front elevation

Door

Side elevation

Window

Date of building

Architectural style

Condition

Date of visit

Recorded by

Protected structure No.

RMP No.

Notes



17th Century



18th Century

The Battle of the Boyne in 1690 marks the final end of Catholic ownership of land and the emergence of a Protestant landowning elite.

The 18th century was a period of relative calm and prosperity.



- Country houses were built by the new Protestant elite.
- Impressive buildings displaying the power and wealth of their owners.
- Inspired by neo-Classicism—well balanced and proportioned.
- Set within a demesne—private parkland.



- Neo-Classicism has its origins in the Italian Renaissance when architects copied the remains of Roman villas.
- Use of symmetry and balance with features of classical architecture.
- Use of sash windows.

The Classical column is divided into three sections:

- Base, Shaft, and Capital.
- Capitals: Doric; Ionic; Corinthian.
- Pediment; Cornice; Entablature.



Neo-Gothic (late 18th/early 19th century)

- The new neo-Gothic style was influenced by The Romantic Movement and a new-found interest in the Middle Ages (King Arthur etc.).
- Thus architects became much more eclectic in their designs, and the older interest in symmetry and classical details was no longer fashionable.
- Examples: Kylemore Abbey, Galway; Glenstal Abbey, Co. Limerick; Adare Manor, Co Limerick.



Features of a demesne:

- Walled garden—glasshouses.
- Elegant farm buildings.
- Ornamental lakes and bridges.
- Fake castles; eye-catchers; follies.
- Demesne wall.
- Lodges and gateways.
- Demesne parkland planted with trees.

Look up buildingsofireland.ie for examples in your area.

