

Why No English (except Cornwall) or Welsh Souterrains?

Why no souterrains of the Irish architectural forms in England (except Cornwall) or Wales, if these were Celtic countries similar to Ireland or Scotland or Gaul? Yes, the *fogous* (*foth guis / huis??...* 'underground houses' or 'under the house' places...) existed in Cornwall and 'earth houses' existed in Scotland. In Scotland's southern Pictland there were drystone built souterrains among the Pictish people. Why no seepage into Lothian, Bernicia, Northumbria... ? But why in the lands between Southern Pictland and Cornwall were there no souterrains of the early medieval period or earlier constructed? Why? What made the cultural practices of the occupants of such lands different?

Were there no souterrains in Ireland prior to the coming in to being of Roman Britain? If there was a movement of Celtic peoples from Britain to Ireland why did they not have a souterrain cultural element to bring with them? Was the building of souterrains of various types something which happened in Ireland when Britain was under Roman rule; and therefore Roman culture dictated what was constructed across its landscape resulting in no souterrains? Therefore it was culturally different as a result?

Are souterrains, their architectural forms, as known in Ireland, of the Early Medieval / Early Christian period? If so do they reflect a particular type of Christian influence (Eastern Mediterranean?) which did not impact on Roman Britannia or subsequently Anglo-Saxon England or Celtic Wales? But if Irish Christianity of the Early Medieval period was influential on Welsh Christianity and vice versa, as is known from the historical record, then why no souterrains in Wales? There are some ogham stones from there. Why did the Cornish *fogous* not spread there?

Souterrains with some degree of similarity to the architectural forms found in Ireland are found in Scotland, Cornwall, France (Gaul), Saxony, Bavaria and Austria. So, why none, as far as I know, in Spain, the Netherlands, England and Wales? What was so different that they did not spread into these places? Were there cultural issues involved, based on tribal and clan geographies and practices in these regions?

At Kinver in Staffordshire, England is a cliff face into which several rock-cut houses were carved in pre-Reformation times...noted as remnants of English troglodyte living...how old are they?
On the land surface directly above these houses is a place known as Holy Austin's hermitage. Nearby there is **an Iron Age hillfort**.

*[Mmmm.....the Carrignagroghera (rock outcrop of the crosses i.e. the place of a gallows or of a calvary or something else such as a grotto?) souterrain in proximity to Fermoy is situated at the tail end of a ridge (by the golf-course!) on which there is the very prominent ridge top hill-fort known as **Carn Hill**. If this B1 (Passage and Beehive Chamber souterrain architectural form) is a very early type of Christian 'oratory', then was the siting of such oratories with their associated 'cells' and 'cluain' hermitages, a feature of the activities of early (primitive / nascent Irish) Christianity and the embedding of itself upon the Irish landscape -and within the heartlands of clan and tribal communities - , by occupying their places of long standing 'pagan' worship, places incorporating the performances and displays of festival/ fair/ law giving [**Aonach**]gatherings, places where the 'new faith' could be syncretised with the 'collective unconscious' of tribal identity / clan identities their collective memory and story heritage expressed through the deeply embedded psychologies of rite and ritual, places where Lugh the sun god could become Christian, where the god Crom Dubh who was Lugh's 'bent back' grain carrier at the Lughnasa harvest festival could become a saint seated at God's table in heaven because once upon a time he fed the people with an enormous heffer which resulted in every hair of the animals hide saving a soul for heaven and therefore now in the new faith he sat by God in heaven and so his traditional followers on earth should now understand that Crom was being rewarded by becoming a saint [Cant' remember if this was a Cloyne diocese story???...if so was it connected to the St. Coleman's leap story i.e. he jumped from the top of the Round tower to land at the pagan Lugh festival site[**Lurrig**,,Lugh Ríagh?] at **Barrykilla** ridge overlooking Cork harbour and Rostellan lake*

*about a mile west of Cloyne monastery?]. Was this same pattern of siting very early monastic or missionary settlements beside prominent and at that time already very ancient traditional tribal / clan gathering places a common practice? See the lands of the locality a short way to the north east of **Carn Hill** [e.g. Manning / Kilcrumper / Clondalane / Coole] where the Funcheon River meets the Blackwater, or **Cush** in east County Limerick [excavated by O Riordáin] with its cluster of little circular enclosures (each with a souterrain patched around a small ‘ yard?’ space fronted by a rectangular enclosure (an early garth or ‘cloister’???)) and situated upon a Bronze Age cemetery... in the vicinity of Knockany (**aonach** site) or Slieve Reagh and the Harps of Cliu, or the Christianised ‘Cahir / Caher’ known as the ‘city’ at **Shrone** by the Paps of Anu in Slieve Luachra (of the Cork/Kerry/ Limerick border) a place of an ancient pre-christian tradition of a ritual annual fire cleansing of the local cattle herds of the clan farmers of the region. How many other examples of these across South Munster?]*

A hermitage and the tradition of a holy man named Austin or Austen. Rock-cut, man-made, ‘caves’ beneath the hermitage site facing out to a landscape view. One thinks of the rock-cut houses still in use overlooking the Loire Valley in France.

What might the rock-cut room dwellers of Sherkin Island in Cork have said? What might Mary Rotha Clay in her book on Anchorites have said? What might the medieval scholar residents of *Cró na hOidhe* (Cronody) by Dripsey, County Cork have said? What might Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould have said?