

Preliminary research and investigation of potential Registration of Buildings and/or designation of a Conservation Area at the Nunnery Estate



PAT/17.4.2010

April 2015

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1 OBJECTIVES OF THIS REPORT

Objectives were set out in a memorandum from the Director of Planning and Building Control, dated 11.02.2015.

1. Desktop study reviewing existing research undertaken previously by DoLGE, Manx National Heritage and others based on material (including photographs) held by Department of Infrastructure, Planning & Building Control; also considering material submitted as part of previous planning applications for properties on the Nunnery Estate.
2. initial draft assessment based on above material. For each building or group of buildings this should comprise a concise description (which is sufficient to meet the requirements of Section 14(2) of Town & Country Planning Act 1999) of:
 - History
 - Architecture
 - Reasons for Registration
 - Architectural Interest and Aesthetic Quality
 - Historic Interest
 - Close Historic Association
 - Landmark Qualities
 - Group Value
 - Age and Rarity
 - Extent of any future Registration ie individual building and its curtilage, group of buildings and their curtilage, exterior only, exterior and specified interior features
 - Sources and references
 - *Books*
 - *Newspapers*
 - *Articles*
 - *Maps and Plans*
 - *Photographs*
 - *Internet Sites*
3. Identify what further work is required (if any) in order to provide sufficient material to:
 - inform a decision to be made on Registration in accordance with Section 14 of Town & Country Planning Act 1999 and Town & Country Planning (Registered Buildings) Regulations 2013
 - support process to Register Buildings (if required)

Identify that if Registration of Buildings is not appropriate, whether a Conservation Area should be designated and what further work is required to implement this.

2 DESKTOP STUDY – EXISTING RESEARCH ON NUNNERY AND NUNNERY ESTATE

2a. Overview:

This review of the existing documentation on the Nunnery and the Nunnery Estate has proved disappointing. Most of the reports, letters and other documentation discuss work that ought to have been done to assess the history, archaeology, ecology, architecture and landscape merits of the buildings and their contexts, but much of this proposed work has not been undertaken, leaving an accumulation of flimsy historical speculation but little of real substance. No part of the Nunnery is registered or with conservation area status. Nor is any part listed as an ancient monument.

At the time of the Nunnery's acquisition by the International Business School, the following resolution was agreed in Tynwald (July 2002, Minute Paper 303/7):

Tynwald directs the Council of Ministers to formulate an overall long-term plan for the Nunnery estate, having particular regard to retaining the parkland setting of the Estate for the future educational and recreational use of the Manx public and report.

This resolution was met in part by the use of the building as the International Business School, by the conversion of the Stable Building and Chapel Cottage to their present use for the Centre of Manx Studies and Culture Vannin, but the use of the parkland setting for the Manx public has not been realistically pursued. No data was available on file or in the Planning Applications online regarding the current 2014/2015 plans to convert the Mansion House¹ to a private educational establishment and to add a modern extension to the east end of the building.

The bibliography (section 7) lists the available documentation. Further information may be held in family papers contained in the MNH archive, in the Government archive, or by other Government Departments, but the brief for this current research did not provide for further investigation. There is little documentation on the phased development or conversion of the Nunnery Mansion House or the conversion of the Stable Building to educational use in the material provided to the author of this report. Access was not gained to any of the buildings, although the author has previously been inside the Stable Building and the Mansion House.

The significant details of each building or feature as gleaned from these documents are summarised in the Preliminary Assessment.

The more significant documents are listed in table I and the Bibliography. Lengthier quotations are given in full in Appendix 1. Recent Planning Applications are listed in Appendix 2. Further potential sources for ongoing desktop studies are given on page 49.

Andy Johnson provided copies of correspondence from MNH relating to recent planning application, and copies of the reports on the Chapel by Glyn Coppack and Peter Ryder. Kate Chapman (MNH, formerly CMS) provided the archaeology reports.

¹ NB: the term 'Mansion House' has been in this report used to distinguish 'the Nunnery' main building from the Chapel. It is not a term intended for continuing usage.

2b: Significant Documents and Reports

Table 1: SIGNIFICANT DOCUMENTATION OF THE NUNNERY ESTATE

date	Title (NB. documentation not seen by the author of this report is in grey type)	author	Ref/source
2002	<i>Memorandum on the Nunnery Estate, dated 27.2.2002</i> Excellent summary of planning matters pertaining to the estate	Brian Sindon, Office of Planning	Planning file and pdf
2002	<i>Memorandum on the Nunnery Estate, dated 11.4.2002</i>	Marlene Hendy, Office of Planning	Planning file and pdf
2003	<i>The Nunnery Estate (Preliminary Study)</i> Unsubstantial and superseded by later documentation	Marlene Hendy, Office of Planning	Planning file and pdf
2004	Appraisal report, <i>The Nunnery, Old Castletown Road, Braddan</i> Archaeological and Documentary Assessment of the Nunnery Estate carried out for the Friends of St. Bridget's Chapel	Ashley Pettit Architects	APA
2007	Archaeological and Documentary Assessment of the Nunnery Estate, CMS, University of Liverpool <i>Archaeological Assessment of the proposed temporary and permanent car parks north of the Nunnery Chapel complex, Test pitting May 2007</i> Little of substance found	Corkill, C; D Radcliffe and P Davey	CMS MNH/CMS
2008	<i>Excavations at the Nunnery 2008 at the site of the proposed car park (phases 2 and 3) and within the Stables Block at the Nunnery.</i> Eleven partial skeletons found under the Chapel Cottage, but little of substance elsewhere other than evidence of garden drainage	Mytum, Harold and Richard McGregor Edwards, CMS	CMS
2009	(There should be a report for the 2009 fieldwork season) Initial report on the excavations of the skeletons found within the cottage attached to the chapel. (There was some medieval pottery found with the skeletons)		Comment from Kate Chapman, MNH
No date	<i>Report on the watching brief for the Nunnery cottage porch.</i>	Crellin, Rachel	MNH/CMS
2009	<i>The stable yard and Chapel of St Bridgit, the Nunnery Estate, Old Castletown Road, Douglas</i>	Coppack, Glyn	MNH
2010	<i>Report on the condition of the stonework of the three existing sandstone pillars at the IBS south entrance after their demolition in a road traffic accident, dated 27.1.2010</i>	John Parsons, Department of Education	Planning file
2011	<i>Detailed Osteological Assessment of the Human Remains from the cottage.</i> This information has not been dated	Curtis, Shirley	MNH/CMS
2014	<i>The Nunnery Chapel - A Reassessment</i> Contains drawings including elevations of the Chapel. Assessment viewed with some scepticism by Andrew Johnson.	Ryder, Peter F	MNH

CMS – Centre for Manx Studies, University of Liverpool

2c: Planning Particulars

Brian Sinden (2002) summarised the Planning particulars of the Nunnery estate:

- 1 **The Estate** lies within the Douglas Town boundary and thus falls within the Scheme Area of the Douglas Local Plan. On the Local Plan, all of the Estate land is designated Private Woodland, with the River and Railway separately identified. The Castletown Old Road is identified as a Principal Traffic Route.
- 2 **Trees** within the Estate were deemed Registered by the 1982 Development Plan Order, as were those on the railway embankment and the south side of the road. Subsequent Orders have not invalidated this Registration. Most of the trees, attractive in themselves, form a continuous canopy, essential for maintaining viable wildlife diversity, and so form part of the ecology of the area, which includes the feeding, breeding and roosting of birds and bats. The trees form part of the greater landscape viewed from Pulrose Golf Course and the elevated viewpoints around the town.
- 3 **Ecologically**, there are two areas of particular interest – the broad leafed woodland, and the River, mill-race and adjoining wetland. Both areas provide habitats for a diverse flora, birds, bats and other wildlife. Bats are specifically protected under the Wildlife Act 1990 and under the Eurobat Agreement, the IoM Government has an obligation to protect their major feeding and roosting areas. In Manx terms, the Estate provides a rare opportunity for environmental education within close proximity to the major town and teaching establishments.
- 4 **The River** is designated as a principal river, managed by the Department of Transport. The Department's usual requirement is that a nine metre corridor should be kept free of built obstruction to be available for river maintenance. Salmon are found in this river, along which there are several weirs.
- 5 **The flood plain** of this river extends to the land between the river and mill-race when the river is in spate. The meadow between the mill-race and the public footpath has also been known to flood.
- 6 **The Steam Railway** follows the northern boundary of the estate. The train provides good views of the river, an indication of the woodland and the open fields to the west of the Estate.
- 7 **Access to the Estate** is from the Old Castletown Road on the southern boundary of the Estate, via the vehicle entry-points at the two lodges. The road has a 7.3 carriageway and continuous footpath on the northern side. A public footpath runs through the Estate from the former Nunnery Mills to Pulrose Park. There is no other public access to the estate, and signage discourages this.
- 8 **Drainage** is not part of the Town's sewerage system, although this would be possible if the capacity were available. Connection to the IRIS sewer which runs under the road would only be possible with an engineered and pumped arrangement. Uncontaminated surface water could be discharged into the river, possibly necessitating some form of holding area to manage surges.

HISTORY

Table II: TIMELINE OF EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE NUNNERY ESTATE

date	event	Source of data
6 th C	Legendary date for founding of Nunnery, allegedly by St Bridget of Kildare 453 – 525 CE, who became the first Abbess	
1187 – 1190	More commonly accepted date for founding of the Nunnery, supposedly by Aufrica, daughter of Godred Crovan, King of Man.	
1313, May	The Manx Chronicles record a visit to the Nunnery by Robert the Bruce, en route to Castle Rushen	
1408	First mention of a Prioress at Douglas	Dempsey (1958) p69, ref 14
1515	Summary of 1414 Inquisition describes the Nunnery as Cistercian, in which case it was probably dedicated to the Virgin Mary.	
1536 – 1540	Dissolution of the Monasteries.	
1540	Dissolution of the Nunnery and Rushen Abbey; there were three nuns and the Prioress, Margaret Goodman, in occupation; Nunnery acquired by the Lord's Comptroller, Robert Calcott of Castletown, who married Margaret Goodman	
1540 – 1685	The Nunnery remained in the hands of the Calcott descendants	
C1553	Priory at Douglas sold for £48	Dempsey (1958), p123
1648	Blundell ² writes: <i>There is a house wherein a gentleman of an ancient family of the Calcots lives, which corruptly is called the Nunnery, but was indeed y^t place which divers writers mention and call it the Priory of Douglas...</i>	
1685 – 1776	The Nunnery passed to the Heywood family, heirs of the Calcotts. Peter Heywood (1661-1699) m Leonora Cannell (d1732). She was daughter and heiress of Hugh Cannell, Water-Bailiff and Margaret Calcott of the Nunnery.	
1720	Waldron ³ – in ruins, very large, some cloisters remaining with 'curious carvings' on the ceilings. Thick columns supported the arches. He assumes much of the damage was caused by soldiers (at the dissolution) and notes the empty niches in the Chapel. Monuments included one to Matilda, daughter of the King of Mercia, and Cartesmunda, the nun of Winchester, dated 1230.	1720
18 th C	Lawn used as drill and parade ground by Manx Fencibles	
1776	Nunnery sold by Deemster Peter John Heywood to John Taubman of the Bowling Green, Castletown. Sub sequent to the sale, the Deemster resigned and relocated with his family to Whitehaven.	
1803	Taubman/Goldie marriage; the surname of Goldie-Taubman adopted in 1824.	
1811	In the year 1811, about three thousand acres in the parish of Braddan were titheable to the estate of the Nunnery, and such part of these tithes as were not payable out of the estate itself, were then let to the occupants respectively, by private agreement.	Train (1850), Ch 3.
1823	John Pinch the Younger, of Bath ⁴ (1796 – 1849), commissioned to extend the house, but he condemned the original house; work commenced on the first phase of the current house.	

² Blundell, William (1648 – 1656) *A History of The Isle of Man* Printed from a Manuscript In The Possession Of The Manx Society Ed. William Harrison, Vol. I, Chapter IX.

³ Waldron (1731, reprinted 1863) *A description of the Isle of Man*. Manx Society. Vol II.

⁴ Colvin, HM (1997, 3rd ed) H.M. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840*. Yale University Press, p 756.

1833	East gate and Lodge built, architect John Welch. Welch also designed the Hermitage for Captain Goldie (now occupied by Quayle's Garage/Athol Car Hire).	
1861 – 1864	Asylum plan, appearing to show Phase One of House	MNH – Asylum Plan no. 110, fiche no 68; sketch attached to APA letter dated 29.1.2003
1867 – 1868	The first Ordnance Survey of the Isle of Man shows Phase two of main house completed by this date, plus elements of the courtyard and the gardener's cottage	Sketch, attached to APA letter dated 29.1.2003
Late 19 th C	Third and final phase of main house added	
1887	Remains of Chapel restored in the High Catholic Revival manner by Leigh Goldie-Taubman, and dedicated to St Bridget. See Appendix A2 – article by Mr Goldie-Taubman in the Manx Note Book. ⁵ Paddock used for the Royal Manx Agricultural Show and Highland Gatherings during the 1930s; also for the World Manx Association and Scout and Guide meetings.	
1930	Kermode, ⁶ Lists it under Kirk Braddan, Keills or Chapels, no. 8: <i>Ruins of Priory, the Nunnery. S. Bridget's Chapel is now the only existing remains of the 12th or 13th c. buildings. Gothic doorway in the S. wall and two side-windows. Piscina of grey sandstone. Two pilasters from the cloister. B.G adjoining.</i>	
1936	Reports on the condition of the Nunnery Estate properties at December 1936 with some later additions or updates	MMA – WT, MS 11040
1973	Nunnery Estate acquired by IoM Government	
1975	Approval granted for use as a Country Club, Golf Course and Leisure complex.	
1976	Estate (minus the front paddock) sold to Mr Robert E Sangster, subject to covenants restricting the use of the Estate to that of private residence, with no further building of any kind allowed unless ancillary to the established residential use.	
1984	Robert Sangster purchased the field now known as 'Sangster's Field'	
1990	Robert Sangster constructed a swimming pool in the walled garden	
c1996	Chapel arbitrarily closed down by new owner Mr Graham Ferguson-Lacey. It has been serviced from St Matthews.	
1997 August	Purchased by Graham Ferguson Lacey, who undertook a review of potential alternative uses of the Nunnery and the 55 acre estate, determining that the best usage would be as a country club, for which an outline application was submitted by Ellis Brown in July 1998.	
1998	PA 98/0765 approved a master plan for a country club with aparthotel.	
1999	PA 99/1066 permitted change of use to International Business School. Permission granted for three years only.	
2001	Estate, including Sangster's Field, purchased by the Isle of Man International Business School. Restrictive covenants do not apply to the field. Front paddock acquired on 99 year lease, restricted rights limited to grazing or recreational use.	
?	Report on Chapel by Dalrymple Associates for IoM International Business School	Not in file
2003	Establishment of the Friends of the Chapel of St Bridget at the Nunnery.	

⁵ <http://www.isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook/manxsoc/msvol11/index.htm>

⁶ Kermode, PMC (1930) *List of Manx Antiquities*

2003	Ashley Pettit Architects instructed by Conservation Officer Marlene Hendy to research the site and 'make suggestions as to the restriction of the Site.'	Planning file - Letter dated 29.1.2003: Ashley Pettit to Peter Davey, Centre for Manx Studies
2004, 11 Nov	Report by Guy Thompson, Diocesan Surveyor	
2005, 4 March	Report on Proposed Research and Archaeological Projects on the Chapel of St Bridget and environs at the Nunnery, Douglas, Isle of Man, by The Friends of the Chapel of St Bridget at the Nunnery	Planning file -
2005	Ownership of Nunnery passes from IoM International Business School to the Department of Education.	
2005, April	NADFAS survey of Chapel and contents commences	
2005, 18 July	Letter of Understanding from Friends of Nunnery Chapel	
2009 - 2010	South gateposts damaged in traffic accident; report dated 27.1.2010 details proposed remediation and repair	

ABBREVIATIONS

AJ – Andrew Johnson, MNH
 APA – Ashley Pettit Architects
 MNH – Manx National Heritage
 WT – Wendy Thirkettle, MNH

Table III: POST-DISSOLUTION OWNERSHIP OF THE NUNNERY ESTATE

dates	Family/owners	people
1540 - 1681	Calcott	Robert Calcott,
1681 - 1685	Cannell?	
1685 -	Heywood	Peter Heywood (1661 – 1699) + Leonora Cannell (? – 1732) ↓ Robert Heywood (1686 – 1742)
?	Bridson	William Bridson assigned the Estate to Leonora's youngest son Thomas Heywood
? - 1776	Heywood	Thomas Heywood, SHK, Captain of Douglas Fort (1698 – 1759) + Hester Reeves ↓ Peter John Heywood (1739 – 1790), Deemster, left IoM for Whitehaven 1776
1776 – 1824	Taubman	Major John Taubman, SHK (1746 - 1822) purchased the Nunnery from Deemster Heywood General Alexander John Goldie, SHK + ? Taubman ↓
1824 - ?	Goldie- Taubman	Lt-Colonel John Taubman Goldie-Taubman, ⁷ SHK (1804 – 1852) + Ellen Senhouse ↓ John Senhouse Goldie-Taubman, SHK (1838 – 1898) + Amelia Donald Ross (1840 – 1922) John Leigh Goldie-Taubman (1861 – 1928)
1973 - 1976	IoM Govt	
1976 - 1996	Sangster	Robert E Sangster (1936 - 2004)
1996 – 1999?	The Nunnery Ltd	Graham Ferguson-Lacey
1999	IBS	Isle of Man International Business School
2005	DoE	Isle of Man Department of Education

Old Quirk ... remembered:

... five generations in the Nunnery--Major Taubman, who made a gift of land on the Castletown-road to build a Catholic Chapel; the " warrior " General Goldie, who dismantled the old Nunnery Chapel; Major Goldie-Taubman ; John Senhouse Goldie-Taubman, and his son.⁸

⁷ John Taubman Goldie changed his name by Royal License to John Taubman Goidie-Taubman in 1824.

⁸ Old Douglas, Part 1, Mona's Herald 15 July 15 1896.

4 PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

4a: *The Nunnery Mansion House*

The earlier house – no longer standing



Described as the oldest known print of the 'Abbey Church and Friary,' this 1791 print shows the three storey, three bay, house, with the Chapel to the right. The view is from the Douglas River, to the east. This view, from the river, does not conform to later interpretations of the relationship between the House, Chapel and the Stable Building, and suggests that the present Stable Building which has red sandstone to door and window openings, may have been the location of the original Chapel. Private Collection. The house is shown as three bay and three-storied, with the gable facing east.

It is debatable as to whether any part of the earlier house, condemned by John Pinch the Younger c1823, survives. Peter Kelly and other have suggested⁹ that the wall separating the yard from the chapel passageway was the gable of this original house, incorporated into the present yard wall during the Victorian period, but the print above suggests otherwise.

The house has been variously described in historical documents and prints and shown as three storey with between three and seven bays.

Robertson (1794):

The modern building has an air of elegance superior to any other in the Island. The gardens are spacious and luxuriant; and the surrounding fields, being highly cultivated, and finely interspersed with woods and waters, present and exquisite landscape. In this charming retirement, once consecrated to piety, but now sacred to hospitality, Captain Taubman, the

⁹ Letter dated 30.12.2004, Peter Kelly on behalf of Save Mann's Heritage. Planning file.

worthy proprietor, enjoys "Optium cum dignitate;" not more esteemed by strangers, for his politeness and generosity, than respected by the natives, for his worth and benevolence.

Bullock (1816):

The gardens and grounds have some beautiful features, for many years the whole has been without a rival, and travellers finding nothing else to admire, have lavished more praise than it deserves on this spot, which certainly has many advantages in point of situation, but the scenery is disfigured by the erection of small houses, a mill, a warehouse, and even by two bleachfields, evermore spread with linens of different shades, all which are directly in front of the mansion. The house is not more than a decent country seat, whose whitened walls are curiously finished by a cornice and bordering of deep red stone.



The present house: Initial draft assessment

History

The first phase of the Nunnery (Mansion House) as it now stands was designed by John Pinch the Younger in 1823 as a summer residence for the General Alexander Goldie, who resided in Bath. It was Pinch's first independent commission and, as far as is known, his only work in the Isle of Man. He had initially been commissioned to improve the existing large house on the Estate, but condemned this and proposed a smaller new building on an elevated site. This first phase comprises the present entrance hall and the rooms to the west, clearly distinguishable as the symmetrical taller part of the present building, with the distinctive external octagonal chimneys. The staircase that was within this building was removed and relocated in the next phase of building. Pinch's adopted style was based on Strawberry Hill Gothick, perhaps at the insistence of his client, who was familiar with other large houses in this style, such as Lowther Castle in Cumbria. When the family decided to make the Isle of Man their permanent home, they started to expand the house to the east in a series of phased developments. The final phase is believed to have been designed by George Kay.

*Dorothy Wordsworth: June 28th, Saturday.*¹⁰

... Lovely morning; walked with Henry to the Nunnery; cool groves of young trees and many fine old ones. General Goulding [sic *Goldie*] has built a handsome house near the site of the old Nunnery, on which stands a modern house (to be pulled down). The old convent bell, hung outside, is used as a house-bell; the valley very pretty, with a mill stream, and might be beautiful, if properly drained. The view of the Nunnery charming from some points.

Architecture

The distinctive architectural features of the exterior are the use of random Manx stone, the distinctive buttressing false chimneys, rectangular and octagonal, and the castellation above a narrow string course. There is a more substantial flat rendered string course at first floor 'floor level' right around the building except to the Pinch north elevation, the tower and section 4 (the last phase, as described below). The windows have characteristic Manx label mouldings, which may be a later embellishment.

The house is built up against a levelled platform on the north side, which is now largely under the car park, but also forming a narrow lawn alongside the later phases of the house. This raised lawn truncates close to the north-side basement windows, but on the south this lower floor forms a full storey facing onto a terrace overlooking the main sweep of lawn to the south.

Strawberry Hill, Horace Walpole, 1749-76



¹⁰ Wordsworth, Dorothy (1828) *Journal of a Tour In the Isle Of Man, 1828.*

The use of brick to trim the jambs and form the relieving arches suggests that Pinch may have intended the house to be rendered.



Below: Lowther Castle, built by Robert Smirke between 1806 and 1814 (his first job) was visited by John Taubman, and may have been the stimulus for the Nunnery. built by Robert Smirke between 1806 and 1814 (his first job) was visited by John Taubman, and may have been the stimulus for the Nunnery.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Lowthercastlemorris_edited.jpg



Passes one and two, from a 'collection of twelve views' published in three sets of 4 between 1833 and 1839. They were sketched by AE Watts, drawing master at King William's College. Lithographed by L Hague.MNH

Right: This undated collection of five views was probably published c.1845. Sketched and drawn on stone by G. Wilkinson and published by Day and Haghe, London. MNH



Print showing the first and second phases. Text reads: The Nunnery, Isle of Man, seat of Lieut^t Gener^l Goldie. On stone by W. Crane. MNH



Elevations

Looking at the south elevation, the house has five distinct elements:

- 1 The first and tallest, by Pinch, is the three bay entrance section, with the single bay entrance on the north side and the three storey bay window on the south side both placed symmetrically on the elevation. Both bays are splayed with a castellated parapet. The windows, apart from those on the entrance bay, the arch-headed window above it, and those in the top storey of the south bay, all have red engineering brick defining the window jambs and brick relieving arches over the openings. Behind the central splay bay, the raised parapet has a further raised central merlon is raised further and faced with the same Taubman coat of arms as on the north entrance bay.
- 2 The adjoining lower second section has four bays but was initially built with three. Three are shown in the Watts/Hague lithograph (previous page), which confirms that this second phase was completed by the 1930s; and in the Crane lithograph (above), and examination of the façade also confirms this. There is an abutment along the inner jambs of the fourth bay windows, the stone of the fourth bay is a different colour and shows different workmanship, and, apart from a shallowly-arched soldier brick lintol to the bottom window, the fourth bay windows have no brick jambs or relieving arches. There has been more of an attempt to lay the stone in random courses in the fourth bay. The colour differential carries through the parapet. There is a metal spiral staircase alongside the second bay window, rising to French windows at the first floor. The brickwork around the first three of the four ground floor windows is more substantial than on

the upper storeys and is used to form shallowly arched brick lintols two or more bricks deep, rather than the relieving arches used on the upper storeys. There are no label mouldings to the four ground floor openings. All the windows in this section are paired four-on-four sashes.



View from the south lawn. PAT/19.3.2015

- 3 The next section is only two storey high on the south side, but three on the north. The south parapet is deeper than those to the west (sections 1 and 2), terminating just above the height of the string course defining the bottom of the earlier parapet to the west. From the south lawn, the higher inner castellated parapet can be seen beyond this lower one. For some extraordinary and unjustifiable reason, the grey stone copings and cappings to this section have been replaced with red ceramic ones. These are completely 'wrong' and look like a sudden unexpected rash of pimples on a previously smooth-faced person. This work has not been covered by a Planning Application. PA 12/00110/B_— works to the main roof, only encompassed the first (Pinch) phase of the building, and did not provide for any replacement coping and cappings. The first floor windows are paired one-on-one sashes with Gothic heads in the joinery-work. The ground floor windows are paired four-on-four sashes, as in the earlier section adjoining, with bars across the lower sashes, presumably to prevent accidents once the swimming pool was built. The lintols below the label mouldings are deeper than in other parts of the building. Reveals are rendered.
- 4 The final narrow three storey single bay section with corbelled false chimneys set at parapet height is accessed separately from the garden via steps that rise over a small room (see photo with covered swimming pool in foreground). There is a clear construction joint signalling that this is a separate phase. The first floor window is three-bay with one-on-one sashes and joinery-work Gothic heads. It does not align with the adjoining window in the earlier phase. The second floor window is the smallest on this elevation, with paired Gothic-headed sashes. The grey copings and capping have also been replaced with red ones.
- 5 The tower, although at the rear of the house, is clearly seen from the south lawn.



The site of the former swimming pool, which is covered over. Adjoining windows are barred, to prevent accidents.
PAT/6.4.2015

Immediately in front of the house there is a rather unkempt terrace, with crude areas of paving, planting that seems to consist mainly of montbretia, and the rather heavy dual steps up to the door in the bay window. The whole terrace needs refreshing.

There is a small room under the far external staircase at the end of the house, which links with the former winter garden or grotto.

On the north elevation, there are three apparent phases:

1. The original three bay, Pinch the Younger, house, is set taller than the remaining bays of the house, with the parapet raised in the central bay. This bay also has a pair of rectangular buttresses and the upper window is Gothic-headed. As opposed to the full height bay on the southern elevation, here the offset splayed bay is single storey, forming the porch. It has a battlemented parapet, with inset crest, Gothic-headed side windows and paired narrow doors with arch-headed fanlights. It is probably a later addition, which may be contemporaneous with the bay to the left, on phase two. Stylistically, the Georgian period of this phase would have been more likely to have had a door set unpretentiously in the naked of the wall, perhaps with a simple portico or door-case. Apart from the porch, all the five windows have engineering brick reveals and the four windows with flat lintols have brick relieving arches.



The entrance front, with the original three bay summer house forming the tallest part of the present house (apart from the tower, off to the left). The buttressing hexagonal projections at the corners of this first house suggest chimneys, but in fact the true chimneys are concealed behind the castellated parapet. Note the change to the window to the left of phase one. This marks the revised position of the main staircase. PAT/ 6.4.15



The image from the late nineteenth century, below, shows the house covered in ivy (or parthenocissus) – a problem Garrad (2003) noted as being avoided by other owners of large Manx houses. Apart from the treatment of the window-heads, there appears to have been little change. MM PG/11346, Hudson series, late 19th C.

Detail of entrance front. There appears to have been some remedial stonework around the door, and the work around the label moulding suggests that that is new, too. PAT/13.6.2010



The Taubman shield above the door has the same head on the scallop crest as on the south gateposts. On close inspection, the wolf's fangs and ears can be seen. See the citation from the granting of the arms on 1824, below. PAT.13.6.2010

*TAUBMAN (College of Arms, 1824).
Per fesse argent and sable, on a bend cottised between six lozenges counter-changed, a sword, the point upwards proper, pommel and hilt or, between four escallops also counter-changed. Mantling sable and argent. Crest — On a wreath of the colours, an escallop inverted argent, charged with a wolf's head erased sable. Livery — Light drab, black facings.*



2. The second phase has the same number of storeys, but less height. It is three-bay, with the projecting single height bay extension = phase three. Like the entrance bay, this has buttressing at the corners and a battlemented parapet. Unlike the entrance bay, this has paired four-on-four sash windows under a heavy label moulding. As on the south elevation, there is a clear demarcation between the three bays of this phase and the fourth bay at this height. The bay covers bays two and three of phase two, and there is a taller window either side of the single storey bay.
3. The third phase is the single fourth bay to the lowest section of parapet, distinguishable by changes in colour and construction.
4. The fourth bay is composed of the five bays of paired sash windows to the left in the photograph below. These windows are characterised by the heavy label mouldings. The disastrous red replacement copings and cappings can be seen in this image. This bay faces the flattened raised lawn, with the basement level facing into it behind a narrow drop.



North elevation: phases two, three and four, up to and including the first projecting bay. Windows have hood mouldings above rendered bands to the jambs and heads, and rendered cills. A string course separated the first floor from the parapet. The red ceramic (?) copings to phase four (nearest) are discordant. The basement window-frames are in poor condition. The stonework has been repointed. PAT/6.4.2015

5. The octagonal tower is most probably contemporaneous with phase four, but this remains to be determined. Its main purpose seems to be to fly the flag.



Above left: the Tower – a larger version of the false chimneys, with windows. The hood mouldings do not have a return stop. Note the slate damp proof course below the first floor windows. PAT/6.4.2015

The features of the east elevation are:

1. Full height of the basement, which forms the service area. It is fronted by a service yard, approached by a gravelled track from the carriage drive.
2. The tower.
3. The pair of small corbelled buttresses set about the top corner window.

Right: East elevation from service lane. Note the small corbelled octagonal false chimneys to the south-east corner of the second floor. PAT/6.4.2015

Below: East elevation with service yard. The sandstone capping to the pier appears to be the only original sandstone capping at the building. Pat/6.4.2015



Right: east elevation – note the little stepped pinnacle to the left – another one-off on the building. PAT/6.4.2015

The **west elevation** is the only one clearly seen in full from the driveway. This is the work of John Pinch the Younger. Its features are:

1. The three buttressing piers, one and two window bays apart
2. The use of the slope, descending from two storeys on the north, to three on the south, with the basement ceiling line marked by the simple banded string course
3. The battlemented parapet above the string course, with the colour of the stone indicating that the parapet stone came from another source, as was possibly constructed at a slightly later date.



The east elevation, clearly showing how the building has been set into the slope of the ground. PAT/12.4.2015



View of the west elevation from the carriage drive. Pat/



Window details showing the use of engineering brick. Note also the different colour of the stone in the parapet. Pat/12.4.2015

The recent replacement of parapet copings and buttress cappings on phases three and four with red clay copings is particularly unfortunate and should not proceed on the other phases, if that is being contemplated. The remediated stonework to the parapet on phase three will eventually darken down. PAT/6.4.2015



A typical aedicule on an internal door. The broken-topped scrolled pediment, sitting on scrolled brackets, is particularly elegant. Similar joinery-work can be seen in Peel Courthouse. PAT/13.6.2010



The interior contains some fine joinery-work, plasterwork and stone and metal fireplace surrounds. The phased nature of the building has historically been evident in the varying types of fenestration¹¹ as seen in historical artworks and photographs. These transitioned from small-paned Georgian to large Victorian sashes, with more Victorian one-over-one sashes being retro-fitted in some of the older windows, especially on the ground floor. Judging by the present pseudo Gothic treatment to all the windows, it appears that the applicant (and the planning approval PA 11/01296) ignored the informed suggestion by Mr Johnson to respect this history when carrying out the re-fenestration. A print (ref 49) shows the house with the first and second phases only. There is a formal parterre in the foreground, possibly under construction (the image of too poor a quality to be sure).

¹¹ Letter dated 19.10.2011, ACC Johnson to Secretary to the Planning Committee, re PA 11/01296.

Reasons for Registration

a. Architectural Interest and Aesthetic Quality:

- This is believed to be the only work in the Isle of Man by John Pinch the Younger (1796 – 1849), and his first independent commission, therefore it has significance in both a Manx and English context. Pinch is not as important as his father, Pinch the Elder, but has a number of notable buildings in Bath and elsewhere to his name. He worked with his father and, later, his younger brother Charles. He mainly worked on housing, but also did quite a lot of ecclesiastical work and succeeded his father John Pinch the Elder as Surveyor to the Pulteney and Darlington Estate.
- The house seems to have been the spur for a whole series of works in a similar vein, with the Welch brothers and John Robinson being the main proponents of this stripped-down Strawberry Hill Gothic Revival style.
- The interior contains some exceptional joinery-work, plasterwork and fire surrounds – all comparatively rare in the Manx context.

Historic Interest

- The association of the site with the Nunnery and Priory religious houses and the link to Rushen Abbey, despite the loss of the earlier mansion house, makes the site historically significant.
- The ownership of the house and site by a number of the Island's leading families (Calcott, Heywood, Taubman, Goldie, Goldie-Taubman), is historically important. None of these families' histories have been written up in any great detail – and ought to be, following full research.
- The aesthetic qualities of the house reside in its setting, the symmetry and elegance of the original Pinch summer house, augmented by careful further additions, and in the evocation of a period character in the stylistic treatment, which recalls the appetite of nineteenth century gentry for abandoning austerity and indulging in fantasy. This mood of fancy is readily evoked in the engravings of the house.
- The House remains functionally viable.

b. Close Historic Association

- The close association with the Nunnery, and the pre-Dissolution ownership of the Estate by the Nunnery Barony, are the reasons for the existence and continuance of the Estate and for the presence of the mansion house.

c. Landmark Qualities

- The integrity of the surviving elements of the Estate, both as mixed landscape and Estate properties, gives the Nunnery high landmark values. Some valuable vistas remain, and could be further enhanced by judicious tree management.

d. Group Value

- The landscape (gardens and agricultural), Mansion House, Chapel, Stable Building, Gatehouse, gates and Lodges, plus the Inkermann Memorial, St Bridget's Well and the Doll's House and the survival of the Mill, although converted and no longer part of the Estate, constitute an effectively complete surviving group – with historical importance in the Manx context.
- The presence of the Mansion House is essential to the viability of the estate as a whole.

e. Age and Rarity

- The first phase of the Mansion House dates from 1823 (some sources have this as 1828).
- It is the architect's only work in the Isle of Man.
- It set the precedent for the widespread Manx use of this Gothic Revival style, resulting in a number of follies, toy castles, and castellated churches.

4b: The Nunnery Chapel

History

The origins and history of the Nunnery Chapel are uncertain. All historical descriptions seem rich with speculation, and it is impossible to discern the extent to which subsequent writers have relied on earlier reports rather than ascertained a true picture from their own observations.

The dedication to St Bridget (aka St Brigid, 453 – 523 CE) has led historians and writers (Cumming, 1848; Goldie-Taubman, 1887) to assume that the religious house was founded by the saint in the sixth century. Other historians (notably Dempsey, 1958, p142) consider this unlikely, as the Nunnery is believed to have been Cistercian and the female dedications of the Cistercian Order were almost always to St Mary. They suggest that the dedication to St Bridget came later. By the time the estate was acquired by Major Taubman in 1776, it is probable that the Chapel's history was forgotten. Dempsey (1958, p142 and fn12) describes a temporary Roman Catholic chapel dedicated to St Bridgid (sic) being opened in 1814 in a disused quarry on the Old Castletown Road. It was on land given by Major Taubman to Father McPharlan, an old friend. A schoolhouse was built alongside in 1824. The dedication to St Brigid appears to have arisen with Father McPharlan, whose home parish at Blanchardstown was also dedicated to the Saint. This temporary chapel and schoolhouse had been demolished by the time Leigh Goldie-Taubman restored the Nunnery Chapel in 1887, and it seems plausible that he transferred the dedication to it.

Architecturally, the Gothic details given in historical descriptions of the buildings of the Nunnery Chapel, cloister and associated structures and their ruins have led to the assumption that these dated from the 12th or 13th century, but this has never been proven. Waldron, 1731, giving the earliest description, describes it a very large, with fine details, empty niches in the chapel, and part of the cloister remaining. He describes wall monuments where the Latin texts suggest an illustrious history (Appendix A1); Cumming, 1848 describes the ruins as suggesting 'an impressive building' and Train, 1850, describes something recognisable from the present structure – 'Gothic windows, and arched gateway, half dilapidated, over which hangs a convent bell.' He then relies on Waldron's description to evoke its previous appearance before being robbed of stone.

With regard to the Dissolution, Sir James Gell (Dempsey, 1958 – see Appendix A6) makes it clear that the dissolution of the Manx religious houses was not authorised by Acts of Parliament, or by the Act of Surrender, which authorised the dissolution of Furness Abbey (the parent house for the Manx religious houses), but merely a seizing of unauthorised power by Cromwell's agents.

The widely repeated suggestion that the Lord's Comptroller, Robert Calcott, married the Prioress, Margaret Goodman, following the Dissolution of the Nunnery is refuted by Dempsey and Cumming (see Appendix A6/2). Documents list the Abbess/Prioress as Elena Calcote (sic). Dempsey suggests that she was the sister or daughter of Calcott, and that he was sufficiently wealthy and privileged to be able to purchase the estate from the Royal Commissioners.

Following some years of use as a store and coach house, Leigh Goldie-Taubman had the chapel restored and refurbished to meet its original purpose in 1887. He describes the works and the finds made. In particular, he mentions the large number of skulls and bones found in the Chapel sub-floor, outside and under the stable yard, but these 'either fell away on exposure to the air or were destroyed by the pickaxes of the workmen.' There are several references to the 'Burial Ground' containing numerous skulls and other bones (Kermode et al, 1935).

It has been suggested that the eastern end had been part of the pre-Reformation Convent.

The fragment of an oak beam now in the Manx Museum is believed to have been a rood-screen in the Chapel. It bears an inscription: SOLI DEO HONOR ET GLORIA, As thow art god create h(ys) . . . (Kermode et al, 1935, Fig. 22, Plate XVI).

Train (1850, ch III) describes a cross surmounting a pyramid of reddish stone standing in a small square court behind the chapel. The nuns would weep in front of it, so he assumed it to be a 'weeping cross.' He notes that the Manx would parade a corpse round such a cross three times before entering the church. In a later chapter (ch XIV) he appears to describe the same cross as a battle monument.

Train further remarks (1850, ch XIV) that although the structure had clearly been very large (is he confusing the remains of the demolished mansion house with the remains of the chapel?) only some Gothic windows, and the arched gateway remain. The latter, over which hangs the convent bell, is half dilapidated. This main gate was only opened by a nun, or at the death of the Lady Abbess.

" Few monasteries ever exceeded it either in largeness or fine building. There are still some of the cloisters remaining, the ceilings of which discover they were the workmanship of the most masterly hands ; nothing, in the whole creation, but what is imitated in curious carvings on it. The pillars supporting the arches are so thick as if that edifice was erected with a design to baffle the efforts of time, nor could it in more years than have elapsed since the coming of Christ have been so greatly defaced, had it received no injury but from time; but ill some of the dreadful revolutions this Island has sustained, it doubtless has suffered much from the outrage of the soldiers, as may be gathered by the niches yet standing in the chapel, which has been one of the finest in the world, and the images of saints repositied in them being torn out. Some pieces of broken columns are still to be seen, but the greatest part have been removed. The confessional chair also lies in ruins.⁶⁶

It is evident from the literature (Blundell, 1648; Gell –Appendix A6), that a Priory was based in Douglas for four years, and this subsequently reverted to or amalgamated with Rushen Abbey, taking the rights to the Braddan 'Abbey Lands' with it. The Nunnery appears to have been a completely separate establishment, but other writers appear to confuse 'priory' with 'nunnery' and imply that they are one and the same.

Architecture – present structure

The archaeology and early history of the present building remain uncertain. The preceding structure was widely reported as being ruined with only fragments remaining and it is unclear as to whether these fragments were reworked into the present structure in-situ, or were robbed, relocated and re-used in a new structure.

The present building and environs consists of a simple cellular church in Manx stone divided by a timber rood screen. The sanctuary is to the east and there is a cottage adjoining in a continuation to the west. The cottage is currently the offices of Culture Vannin. The Chapel contains a number of piecemeal fragments, some conventional Victorian stained glass in good condition, some nineteenth century floor tiles (Minton or similar), some set into the step to the chancel (now under glass in the levelled floor) and some wall tablets. There is a west gallery. The south door is framed in quoins and has a timber porch.

The Chapel is set alongside a charming landscaped narrow walkway/allée and the facing and enclosing tall wall (allegedly part of the earlier, now lost, mansion house) which is inset or faced with religious iconography (a cross and saint). This lane is accessed under the archway facing the carriage drive. The arch is topped with a bell. At the other end of the walkway is a small archway into the Nunnery gardens.

The architectural elements in the chapel are:

- Bundled columns as pilasters framing the rood screen – almost certainly those referred to as the surviving 'cloister' columns. They are Romanesque in style and have an oak leaf carved below the abstract clusters of foliage forming the capital. (They will be the source of the 12th/13th century attribution; Coppack dates the capitals to the fourteenth century)
- Coffin (cist)-niche in north wall of chancel at floor level, with shallow pointed head to the niche
- East window with Y-tracery and stained glass, set into stone surround with pointed arch
- South chancel window with stained glass and sandstone surround and floral label stops
- North nave window with Victorian stained glass depicting a knight in armour (dedication obscured)
- Stoup in pale stone with four-banded base (inset beside south door) is a nineteenth century copy of the medieval one in the north wall of the chancel
- Piscina in south wall of chancel, similar in style to the stoups, but wider and with three-banded base (for rinsing holy vessels)
- Brass tablet to Charles Francis Goldie Taubman, Captain, the King's Own Regiment, who died whilst in active service at Guloo, West Africa on June 23rd 1898, aged thirty-four. Set in north wall of chancel.
- Stone tablet in memory of Joseph John Grove Ross, Harriet Goldie Grove Ross and Margaret Ankerville Grove Ross
- Other windows with stained glass – a small pair set high in the north chancel wall; another pair set high in the north wall of the nave and a similar pair in the south nave wall; and another larger window in the south wall of the nave with stained glass depicting a saint or king holding a staff.

The Chapel was restored by Leigh Goldie Taubman (Appendix A4) and refurbished recently by Ashley Pettit Architects. It is currently used for meeting and teaching purposes. The right to use it as a Chapel was removed by Mr Ferguson-Lacey when he owned the Nunnery.

Reasons for Registration

▪ *Architectural Interest and Aesthetic Quality*

As described above, the architectural interest is in the historic usage and the surviving historic elements, especially the columns described as surviving from the Nunnery cloister. These do appear to date from the 12th/13th century. The other stone elements, including to stoups and piscine, may be much later. The capitals are particularly charming and

▪ *Historic Interest*

The Chapel has great Manx historic interest, as being a survivor, along with Rushen Abbey, of the pre-Dissolution presence of a Cistercian religious house on the Isle of Man.

Close Historic Association

There is close historic association with Rushen Abbey and with the later developments of the current mansion house on the site

Landmark Qualities

- Landmark qualities are limited to its location on the Nunnery estate

Group Value

- The Chapel forms part of a charming cluster of structures in association with the Stable Building.

Age and Rarity

- The undoubted age of some of the elements within the chapel; the archaeological remains, and the historic associations, give this extreme rarity in the Manx context. There remain historical, architectural and archaeological details to uncover regarding this building and it need the full protection of registration.



Archway to chapel close, with bell above. The Chapel porch can be seen through the arch. PAT/19.3.2015



Chapel porch PAT/19.3.2015



Bundled column with Romanesque capitals are built into the chapel rood screen. They may be the remains of the chapel cloister as described by several writers. Note the oak leaf above the lower annular ring. PAT/9.4.2015



Sandstone label stop to Chapel chancel side window. Similar stops are on the window in the east elevation of the Stable Building. PAT/7.4.2015



MNH PG/11361, 1960, IoM Daily Times



Interior from Gallery. PAT/4.9.2015

4c: The Stable Building



East elevation of the Stable Building. PAT/9.4.2015



The Stable Building before conversion to the Centre of Manx Studies. MNH PG/8141/13, undated, uncredited



One of the four false arrow-loops symmetrically disposed about the entrance door and the window above it, in the east elevation of the Stable Building. PAT/9.4.2015

History - The stable building appears to have had several incarnations and the date of the various elements is difficult to determine. Coppack (2009) suggests no part is earlier than the late eighteenth century and that the roof structure dates the west, north and east ranges to the early nineteenth century. The presence of red sandstone elements in the façade may be in their original

contexts, or re-sited having been robbed from elsewhere. However, the print on p 10 infers that the east elevation may be retaining some original features, so not all the sandstone details can be attributed to the conversion of this wing to Sunday School c1886.

The two storey building is arranged around a yard entered under an arch topped by a bell (German, dated 1797, a 'found object' not related to the structure) sitting on a rather unsatisfactory pile of bricks. The present Stable Building incorporates the rooms to the north and west, as well as the Nunnery Cottage to the south, where it is linked to the Chapel.



Stable Building PAT/19.3.2015

Architecture – this is not important architecture, but use (or re-use) of the red Peel sandstone details is noteworthy – the Y-tracery window, the window with label-stops, the door with in-and-out work to the jambs, the four arrow-loops; also the decorative hoisting mechanism above the loop-holes (originally openings for delivering hay and other goods, now a door and window).

Potential reasons for Registration

- *Architectural interest and aesthetic quality* remains in the details described above and in the overall charm of the treatment and grouping of elements around the courtyard.
- *Historic interest* resides in the association with the Nunnery as a religious house and in the historical elements built into the east elevation.
- *Close historic association* is as above – with the religious house and later, with the mansion house.
- *Landmark qualities* can be derived from the relatively picturesque qualities of the east elevation and the clustering of the elements.
- *Group value* is inherent in the relationship with the Chapel and the association with the house.
- *Age and rarity* – age is indeterminate, as the presence of the sandstone details may indicate an original structure, or the presence of elements robbed from the former buildings of the religious house.

4d: The East Gatehouse and Lodge



The East gatehouse and Lodge was designed by George Kay and built for the Goldie-Taubman family in random Manx stone with fussier detailing to the crenellations and false machicolations than on the main house. Flat lintols and cills are in imported red sandstone, whilst the three depressed pointed segmental arches (main entrance, footpath entrance and lodge ground floor window) are in narrow worked stone. The false arrow-loops appear in other works of similar date (eg the gateway at Lorne House). Kay has been attributed with designing the final phase of the mansion house and this may be contemporaneous with it, but it does stylistically differ, especially in window and battlement treatments. A similar, but more substantial gateway (without the arrow-loops) is the one on the Marine Drive. This gateway provides a fitting indication of the grand house to come.

The shield combines the elements of both the Goldie and the Taubman coats of arms. The two carving above the tablet borne on neck-armor are both damaged: only the jaw remains of the wolf on the left; the wheat-sheaf to the right is more complete.

Regrettably, recent repair to the masonry have been inappropriate, with the hard cement pointing standing proud and acting as a shelf to collect salts. As a result, there has been a recent build-up of calcium carbonate, especially in the vicinity of the main arch. Above this arch, the crenellations appear to be in need of further remedial work.



Detail of the gatehouse tower



The Goldie-Taubman coat of arms above the main arch of the gateway

Potential reasons for Registration

- ***Architectural interest and aesthetic quality*** – the Gothic Revival treatment gives drama to the gateway and lodge and adds an appropriate sense of anticipation to the drive towards the mansion house. Whilst not being of exceptional quality, it is part of a group of buildings, gateways and lesser structures in this style that can be found in the Isle of Man. It more successfully conveys a purpose than the larger gateway to the Marine Drive. The exact date remains to be determined.
- ***Historic interest*** is comparatively recent, and lies in the association with the mansion house.
- ***Close historic association*** is with the mansion house.
- ***Landmark qualities*** can be derived from the situation of the gateway adjoining a curve on the Old Castletown Road, and to this structure's role in the staged approach to the mansion house.
- ***Group value*** is in the implied relationship with the mansion house.
- ***Age and rarity*** – this is one of a significant number of buildings and structures built in this Gothic Revival style, but it is the largest built as a gateway and lodge to a 'grand' house.

4e: The West Gates and Lodge

The West Lodge dates from 1833. The architect was John Welch.¹² The Lodge is architecturally undistinguished and, whilst remaining modest, has been subject to a number of alterations and extensions retaining a character vaguely reminiscent of railway architecture. From the roadside, little more can be seen than the slate roof in diminishing courses. It remains inhabited. The merits of the Lodge remain in its ongoing function rather than history or architectural quality.

The more architecturally significant red sandstone gateposts are surmounted by features from the Taubman coat of arms and therefore date from the Taubman or Goldie-Taubman period (1776 – 1973). They are not compatible with the architecture of the house, being in a neo-Classical style with a Greek frieze below the projecting capping. They rather overwhelm the modest lodge.

Despite being demolished in a traffic accident, they were carefully documented and restored in 2009/2010, and merit registration, as being one of the finest sets of gatepost in the Isle of Man, and in a style not used elsewhere on the Island.



Wheatsheaf from Taubman arms



Wolf from Taubman arms. It is missing ears, but the fangs are present.

¹² Letter dated 30.12.2004 from Peter Kelly on behalf of Save Mann's Heritage.



The gateposts were badly damaged in a road traffic accident in 2010 and carefully restored. In red sandstone with a Greek frieze under the capping and rustication to some of the stone work. The two larger gateposts are surmounted by carvings representing elements of the Taubman crest. PAT/

4f: The Estate Yard



The yard is an irregular shape, possibly reflecting some older parcel of land such as a paddock.

The walls enclosing the yard appear to be contemporaneous with the East Gatehouse, having the same rectangular chimneys and arched heads to the windows. These arches are semi-circular rather than Moorish. They are constructed in random stone with a castellated coping. The rather random collection of buildings in the yard is all single storey and those abutting the roadside wall are all in stone. There are four sectional open-fronted garages.

If there is anything of interest here it will be in unseen archaeology.





Limestone blocks in the yard.



4g: The Inkerman Memorial

This war memorial was erected in memory of Brigadier-General Thomas Leigh Goldie (1807 – 1854), who fell in the Battle of Inkermann in 1854. He was the second son of General John Goldie. Today, it is a simple monument of a small cannon set on and held by a limestone plinth. The inscription on the rear face, away from the road, is becoming difficult to read:

Erected by public subscription in memory of Brigadier-General Thomas Leigh Goldie of the Nunnery, Lieutenant Colonel of HM 57th Regiment. Commanded a Brigade of the British Army in the Crimea and fell in the Battle of Inkermann 5th 1854 In the 47th year of his age.

Originally, this monument was surmounted by a tall obelisk in banded pale and darker stone, with a cannon standing to the side (see photos overleaf). The obelisk toppled in a storm some time after the second photograph was taken in 1971. The cannon, captured from the Russians, was surmounted on the surviving plinth. Following the realignment of the access drive and the reduction in height, the memorial has been subsumed by the woodland and is now undistinguished and easy to miss. It is, however, easily accessible to visitors wishing to see it. It is No. 130 in the Isle of Man list of war memorials.¹³

On the 1867 OS map, which shows the earlier alignment of the road to the north of the memorial, it is referred to as 'Goldie's Monument.'



Inkermann Memorial, side view



Inkermann Memorial, view from road

The following was published in the Manx Sun, 25 Nov 1854, p. 20:

Thomas Leigh Goldie

"The fall of this gallant and distinguished officer on the sanguinary battle-field of Inkerman, has thrown a feeling of gloom over our entire Island. The father and grandfather of the deceased brave officer had both risen in succession, and after a long career of service, to the highest rank, save one, in the military service of Great Britain; all his brothers, and several uncles, also, held, or now hold, advanced rank in the army or navy of England. Brigadier-General Goldie was the second son of the late General Alexander John Goldie, who after a long service under the Duke of Wellington, retired to this Island wherein he had married the daughter of the late

¹³ As first appeared in the IoM Family History Soc Journal vol 24 no 1 Feb 2002

Major Taubman of the Nunnery near Douglas. Major Taubman, General Goldie and Col. Goldie Taubman were successively elected, and held during their respective lives, the office of Speaker in the House of Keys. Brigadier-General Goldie served in Canada during the stormy period of the insurrectionary movement in that colony, as Lieutenant Colonel of H.M.'s 66th Regiment, and subsequently, in Ireland, in command of the same distinguished corps. On landing in the Crimea, Colonel Goldie was, by General, now Field Marshal, Lord Raglan, Commander in chief of the British army, raised to the rank of Brigadier General, and attached to the Fourth Division under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir George Cathcart, K.C.B. On the fatal 5th of November, at the bloody battle of Inkermann, the brave Brigadier-General Goldie, and his world-renowned commander of the unconquerable Fourth Division, Lieutenant General Cathcart, fell in the arms of victory. Brigadier-General Goldie had been upwards of thirty years in constant service, having entered the army when only seventeen, and died at the comparatively early age of forty-seven, as a gallant soldier ought to do, in the arms of victory, and with his face to the foe." (source: i-Museum)



The i-Museum shows this undated photograph (PG/11355) as being of the Goldie Monument at the Nunnery.



MM PG/7990, 1971

4h: The Doll's House

The Doll's House stands adjacent to and to the north of the East Gatehouse. It is Georgian (square footprint, hipped roof) and recently had replacement windows fitted under the guidance of the Conservation Officer. It is within the curtilage of the estate but effectively hidden from it by being below and screened from the east access by the wall adjoining the gatehouse. There is no documentation available (other than photographs) but it does not appear to merit independent registration, and protection under Conservation Area status should suffice.

The Dolls House



4j: the former Mill

Bullock (1816) mentioned the mill:

... the scenery is disfigured by the erection of small houses, a mill, a warehouse, and even by two bleachfields [*for flax*], evermore spread with linens of different shades, all which are directly in front of the mansion.

This is a more substantial and attractive building, but has been converted to apartments. It should similarly be protected by Conservation Area status.

4j: The Grounds and vistas

Vistas

The twin carriage drives (now re-routed on the east), created for the new mansion house, were, in part, designed to provide vistas towards the house. Garrad (2003) compares these to those at Kentraugh, Rushen and Ballamoar, Jurby. There are few good vistas of the house surviving today, due to the density of tree cover:

1. The sweep of the driveway from the East Gate gives a glimpse across the lawn and also over the yard wall, but this is now obscured by the mature trees. It would not be too onerous or damaging to prune these to afford a clearer view, as was the case in 1972 (see p13).
2. An old photograph shows a head-on view of the house from the Old Castletown Road, but this is no longer possible, being obscured by trees. Considering the speed of road traffic on this road, it would not be advisable to open up this potentially distracting vista.
3. There is a potential for a long vista towards the west end of the house from the west Gate, but this would necessitate the removal of part of the shelter belt which adjoins the driveway on the vicinity of the former summer house.
4. The principal surviving vista is that from the meadow below the south lawn (photo below).
5. The remaining view of the house is that of the west elevation seen from the straight line of the drive from the west, now usually unfortunately cluttered with parked cars.



The principal vista is that gained from the meadow below the house. PAT/9.4.2015



Obscured vista from the east drive. This view would not be possible with summer foliage on the trees. PAT/19.3.2015

A teasing glimpse of the mansion house can be seen over the yard wall. PAT/19.3.2015



Landscape

The Grounds

Today, the grounds are maintained but not nourished with new or seasonal planting. The surviving treescape is a mix of planting from each of the phases of development – Nunnery, first mansion house, second mansion house – and bears the influence of the different occupiers, but without dating the trees, it is difficult to determine what period each tree is from. It is known that the Heywoods (first mansion house) sourced plants through their connection to the international corresponding network of botanists (Garrad, 3003, p115). Larch Garrad (ibid) has interpreted some of her research and identified many specimen, but her survey needs updating to record the present status of the specimen listing. It is clear that Leigh Goldie-Taubman was enthusiastic about the garden and the winter garden he created at the south-east end of the house, but apart from the Sangster period, there has been little serious interest shown in the gardens.

The whole estate is designated private woodland on the Douglas Local Plan.

Sangster's Field was acquired for the Government's strategic land bank, with possible future use for a primary school. This field, currently grazed, adds considerably to the landscape value of the approach from the west, completing the visual panorama, and should be considered an integral part of the Estate.

The water meadows adjoining the River Douglas are not considered to have any development potential, but have nature conservation significance, provide a wildlife habitat, and provide landscape impact. The mature trees shield the estate, visually and acoustically, from the urban character of Douglas.

The previously landscaped area to the north-west of the house is now mostly open woodland, with the former paths and allées only being recognisable (at Easter) by their dense carpet of wild garlic, which is thinner spread elsewhere.

The front lawn is now largely unadorned, with just a few specimen trees and shrubs standing, but earlier photographs show a more profuse landscaping. Later photographs, apparently from the Sangster period, show substantial herbaceous borders. The significant survivors are the large *cupressus macrocarpa* and the pinky-red *rhododendron arboretum*.

The quartz-clad walls and grotto-like zone which were under roof glazing appear to have dated from the Sangster period. Without the lush planting, this area now looks inappropriate and crude.

The former large glasshouses have been demolished with just the back walls left standing and the three-bay equipment shed has been boarded up. The glasshouse area has been levelled and laid with gravel to serve as a car park to the Stable Building.

MM PG/6953,
undated, described
as 'early 20th C.



A photograph from
1865 (MM PG 0980)
shows the formal
garden in winter,
being prepared to
take bedding plants..



Leigh Goldie-Taubman created a winter garden around steps from the garden up to the entrance on the east end of the facade, c1900 and this survived under a glazed roof until about 1970, when it was stripped out by the Government.¹⁴ It had been lushly planted with a wide range of exotics. The first two photographs overleaf show it as it is now; the third image shows it when planted, possibly c1960. It looks particularly unfortunate without the effect of the planting, resembling some very dated nineteenth century grotto.

¹⁴ Garrad, 2003



Above: two views of the abandoned grotto. PAT/6.4.2015

Below: as a landscaped winter garden, under a glazed roof. MM PG/8141/6, undated, uncredited





Gates to the glasshouses. MM PG/8141/10, undated, uncredited



PAT/19.3.2015

The garden gates, bearing the date 1762, are now in very poor condition. They are blocked off with boarding, and covered in clematis montana. Garrad (2003) cites a note in the MNH Archive that they were bought by Leigh Goldie-Taubman from a Mr Kermode of Ballaquinney, Marown, and speculates that they originated in France.



PAT/19.5.2008



Above: The Mansion House from the former glasshouses terrace. The garden gates are to the left. PAT/6.4.2015

Below left: the gates. PAT/7.4.2015



Bottom right: Steps to upper garden. PAT/19.3.2005



5 Further work required

Desk study

The Planning files do not contain any record of the work undertaken since the Estate was acquired by either the International Business School or the Government. This should be summarised to include:

1. The conversion of the Mansion House to educational establishment
2. The conversion of the Stable Building
3. The works to the Yard.

Further research is needed to establish the following (where possible):

1. Dates, extent and architects of the phased development of the Mansion House
2. History of the Inkermann Memorial
3. The history of the gardens
4. The history of the Chapel and Stable Buildings
5. A more complete summary of the history of occupation of the site, in particular in the present and prior Mansion House
6. A more complete history of the earlier Mansion House
7. Date and architect of the east gatehouse and lodge.

Documentary evidence appears incomplete. Further work is needed on reviewing the following:

1. Archived periodicals and newspapers (Manx Life, Victorian Society Newsletter, etc)
2. Archived family papers (of all families who resided at the Nunnery, where available)
3. Manorial and Lords' papers
4. Deeds
5. Government archive
6. Department of Education records
7. Historical prints and lithographs (none available on the i-Museum site, which has been the source of historical photographs shown in this report).

Archaeological investigation

There has been modest archaeological investigation of the site in the vicinity of the Chapel, revealing little more than the eleven partial skeletons found under the Chapel Cottage floor, and the evidence of drains and related works under the yard car park. Despite the many recommendations regarding the archaeology, much remains to be done. Funding should be provided for further investigation.

Ecological assessment

An ecological statement should be prepared by specialist consultants, to update the plant species list prepared by Larch Garrad (native and exotic), plus a record of fauna present and habitat specifics. In particular, any flora or fauna deemed to be at risk or rare should be identified. The Estate combines woodland, a riparian zone, water meadow, meadow and open field in a viable grouping offering species preservation potential, as well as ongoing educational and research potential.

6 Recommendations regarding Registration or Conservation status of Nunnery and Estate

The most important aspects of the buildings and estate to consider are:

- The Mansion House
- The Chapel
- The gates and gatehouses
- The historic and amenity landscape
- The integrity of the Estate as a whole.

The merits of each element of the estate are summarised below. Please refer to the individual appraisals for more details than given here in this summary.

a: the Mansion House

In considering the house, the following points should be considered:

- Architectural importance of the building as a whole
 - the particular quality of the first phase by John Pinch the Younger, and the merits of some of the interior features
 - Manx social and political History, as represented by the more illustrious inhabitants, representing some of the Island's leading families over a period spanning from the Dissolution to the early twentieth century
- Visual quality of the house in its setting and landscape
- Potential long-term amenity value of the buildings and grounds.

It is recommended that the house be Registered, with particular protection being given to the first phase of the building. Further study should be undertaken to identify the architects of the later phases, where possible.

The house particularly needs protection considering the atrocious replacement of the harmonious grey cappings and coping on the east end of the house with red ones. This work does not appear to have been sanctioned by planning approval and should be condemned.

b: the Nunnery Chapel

The Chapel's history remains sketchy, but it is irrefutable that it contains fragments of historic fabric and until research or expert authority determine otherwise, the probability remains that some elements date from the 12th or 13th century. Whilst some excavation has been undertaken in the vicinity and under the cottage floor, further archaeological investigation is called for and so the building needs full protection through registration.

c: the Stable Building

Whilst this building contains significant sandstone details, it is not considered important enough to be registered, but should be protected by being within a Conservation Area.

d: East Gatehouse and Lodge

Whilst not being the best or most noteworthy example of Gothic Revival architecture in the Isle of Man, it is the best example of a substantial gatehouse which enhances the approach to a large and significant house, and for this, it should be Registered in conjunction with the house.

e: the West Gatehouse and Lodge

Whilst the east Lodge is by a named architect, it is not considered significantly important to merit independent registration, but the Lodge should be protected as part of the Estate through being in a Conservation Area.

The gateposts, however, are distinctive, exceptional in a Manx context, and, despite their recent demolition and reinstatement, are worthy of independent registration. Further work is needed to identify the architect/designer.

f: the Estate Yard

The yard and its enclosing wall and cluster of small building along the east side of that wall are shown on the 1867 OS map. The small outbuildings are dependent on the wall, and therefore probably all date from the timespan of the phased construction of the house. It is probable that they date from the Goldie-Taubman period. The high section of buttressed wall facing the Chapel is believed to be a survivor from the earlier, demolished, probably seventeenth or eighteenth century house, and may still produce useful archaeological or historic data. The yard's value persists in its potential to support and screen maintenance and managements services from the south front of the house. It should be protected under the Conservation Area designation.

g. Inkermann Memorial

In its original form, with the tall obelisk, this memorial would have been comparable to the Douglas Was Memorial on the promenade. In its reduced state, it is far less visually impactful, but it remains an important Manx War Memorial. Most of the Manx memorials, apart from those within churches or graveyards, are dedicated to events or groups of men, but this memorial is dedicated to a significant individual. It is included in the UK National Inventory of War Memorials, held by the Imperial War Museum, London. Memorials on the listing are on the watching brief of the (UK) War Memorials Trust. Measures are in hand outwith planning legislation to provide formal protection of the Island's war memorials¹⁵ under the War Memorials Bill 2014, which has not yet been enacted.¹⁶ The Inkermann Memorial would benefit from careful re-working of the inscription, possibly with the support of the war memorials Trust. It should have sufficient protection under other legislation to not need registration, but should have named protection in the Nunnery Estate Conservation Area.

h. The Doll's House

There is insufficient data in the file to establish the history of this house, and therefore to determine its importance. It is clearly Georgian in date and style. It has been refurbished¹⁷ but is not a visually

¹⁵ <http://www.tynwald.org.im/business/opqp/sittings/20112014/2014-GD-0041.pdf>

¹⁶ Subject to confirmation, 20 April 2015

¹⁷ Several planning applications – see Appendix b.

significant feature in respect of the Nunnery Estate and does not appear to merit registration in its own right. It is not within the present curtilage of the Nunnery Estate nor would it be within the proposed Conservation Area. Its Georgian character and any significant original features should be preserved but it does not appear to merit registration.

i. The former Nunnery Mill

This attractive and large former mill is visible in the approach to the Nunnery from Douglas, but it is no longer part of the Nunnery Estate. Its conversion to other uses is well established. There is insufficient data available to determine any historical or architectural importance, but it appears to have been successfully converted without benefit of registration, and there is no apparent need for registration now.

j. *Grounds and vistas*

▪ *the historic and amenity landscape*

The formal landscape as evident on the first Ordnance Survey map and from early photographs remains substantially intact, despite the loss of mature specimen trees, shrubs and plants. It is recommended that a species study be undertaken by a specialist, as well as an investigation into the potential restoration or ongoing development of the landscape to enhance visual, ecological, environmental and amenity value. The amenity potential of the landscape has been diminished in recent years and should be brought to the fore. It is recommended that the estate be kept intact, to include Sangster's field which greatly enhances and extends the vistas afforded by the Estate. On the basis of its historic importance as the scene of a former Manx religious house, and its being the former seat of a number of important Manx families and individuals, with the mansion house remaining largely intact, It is recommended that the entire Estate be designated a Conservation Area.

▪ *the integrity of the estate as a whole*

To maintain the integrity of the Estate, the whole site should be designated a Conservation Area. The Mansion House, Chapel, East Gatehouse and Lodge and the West Gates are worthy of individual Registration. The remaining elements of the estate should be protected under the Conservation Area umbrella. Whilst the other buildings and structures are not of registerable quality, their further development should be afforded the protection this Conservation Area status to ensure wise future stewardship.



PAT/9.4.2015



PAT/11.4.2012

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MAPS

1861-1864 Asylum Plan, Parish of Braddan (Plan no. 110, fiche no. 68), Manx National Heritage.

1867 Wood's Atlas, Parish of Braddan, Manx National Heritage.

1870 Ordnance Survey Map, Scale 1:2500 (25" = 1 mile), Manx National Heritage.

Current Ordnance Survey

Douglas Local Plan, Maps 1 and 2

Marked up Plan of the Nunnery Estate with attached Key dated 29 January 2002, signed KH Barber.

Maps and Plans attached to Preliminary Study, 2003, by Marlene Hendy.

Nunnery Estate Study Area, 2015.



The north elevation from the car park. PAT/6.4.2015

8 Appendices

Appendix A: historical documentary references to the Nunnery

A1: Waldron, 1731

A2: Cumming, 1848

A3: Train, 1850

A4: Goldie-Taubman, 1887

A5: Cubbon et al, 1935

A6: Gell, cited in Dempsey, 1958

A7: obituary of Thomas Leigh Goldie, 1854

A1: Waldron (1731, reprinted 1863) *A description of the Isle of Man*. Manx Society. Vol II.

Waldron describes the Nunnery: That which is called the Nunnery, is situate in a good pleasant part of the country, about half a mile from Duglas; and the' now entirely out of repair, except one small part of it, where the present Major has his residence, shows in its ruins, -that few monasteries once exceeded it either in largeness or fine building. There are still some of the cloysters remaining, the ceilings of which discover they were the work of the most masterly hands, nothing in the whole creation but what is imitated in curious carvings on it. The pillars supporting the arches are so thick, as if that edifice was erected with a design to baffle the efforts of time; nor could it, in more years than have elapsed since the coming of Christ, have been so greatly defaced, had it received no injury but from time: but in some of the dreadful revolutions this Island has sustained, it doubtless has suffered much from the outrage of the soldiers, as may be gather'd by the niches yet standing in the chapel (which has been one of the finest in the world) and the images of the saints repositied in them being torn out, which could not have happened but by force.

Here has also been many curious monuments, the inscriptions of which, tho' almost worn out, yet still retain enough to make the reader know the bodies~of very great persons have been deposited here. There is plainly to be read on one of them,

Illustrissima Matilda filia ...

and a little lower, on the same stone,

... Rex Merciae ...

I think there is great probability that this was Matilda, the daughter of Ethelbert, one of the kings of England, of the Saxon race, since both Stow and Hollingshed agree that princess died a recluse: but as there is no certainty, the date being .; entirely erased, I shall leave it to my reader to think of it, according to his pleasure.

But I am entirely of opinion that Cartesmunda, the fair nun of Winchester, who fled from the violence threatened her by king John, took refuge in this monastery,*(i. e. Nunnery) and was here buried; because there is very plainly to be read, -. .

Cartesmunda Virgo immacu1ata.

These words remain so legible, that I doubt not but the whole inscription would have been so too, had not some barbarous and sacrilegious hands broke the stone, leaving only one corner of it, which is supported by a column, and on the base the date is yet perfectly fresh.

Anno Domini 1230.

Several fine figures, which seem designed by way of hieroglyphics, have also been both the ornaments and explanation of these tombs; but now so demolished, that one can only know by the fragments they have been too excellent not to have merited a better fate.

In the midst of a small square court behind this chapel is a sort of a pyramid of reddish stones cemented with clay, on which formerly stood a cross; and near it have been many fine monuments, tho' not so magnificent as those within the chapel.

A2: Cumming (1848), chapter 2

Let us take the road which leads through the richly-wooded grounds of Kirby and Ballaughton, and coming out upon Spring Valley, we may saunter leisurely down the streamlet which falls into the Douglas river below the [Nunnery](#). Let us look upwards now to those embattled walls which perch on the summit of the rock, or peep forth from the denser foliage which mantles round its base. These are not the very identical walls in which the venerable Prioress of Douglas used in the olden time to hold her baronial courts, exercising a temporal as well as a spiritual discipline over her own vassals. They, for the most part, have long since passed away; and it would be difficult to trace a vestige of monumental stone (even in the eastern wing, which has a pretension to greater antiquity) which we might venture to pronounce as fashioned and wrought to take its place as part of that ancient house which St. Bridget is said to have founded here in the sixth century¹⁷. But still there is an impressiveness about the building, and we can hardly help feeling a desire to know more of its earlier history, and to trace its influence, if possible, upon a rude people in a troublous age, and observe how it stood forth as a home of civilization and of true religion, a real Port-e-Chee, a refuge to the weak and peaceful in times when every man's hand was against his fellow.

Fn17: ¹⁷ [St. Bridget](#) was born in the year 453, and at the age of fourteen years received the veil at the hands of St. Patrick. In 484 she founded the nunnery of Kildare; about the same time a monastery was founded under the same roof; and this illustrious and immaculate lady presided both over the nuns and the monks till the time of her death in the year 523.- Wood's History of the Isle of Man, p. 113.

A3: Train, Joseph (1850) *An Historical and Statistical Account of the Isle of Man from the Earliest Times to the Present date with a view of its ancient Laws, peculiar customs, and popular superstitions in two volumes.*

A3/1: Train, Chapter III

In the year 1811, about three thousand acres in the parish of Braddan were titheable to the estate of the Nunnery, and such part of these tithes as were not payable out of the estate itself, were then let to the occupants respectively, by private agreement.

A3/2: Train, Chapter XIV

In the midst of a small square court, behind the chapel of the Nunnery, in the neighbourhood of Douglas, on a pyramid of reddish stone, formerly stood a cross, which, I suppose from the great flow of tears shed there by the nuns, when at their devotions, was called the weeping cross.¹⁸

A cross was always placed near the entrance of a parish church, round which the Manks usually carried the corpse thrice before entering the church.¹⁹ These crosses were for the purpose of inspiring holy recollections,²⁰ and for the purpose of devotion, particularly on Good Friday.²¹

Under the direction of the late Duke of Atholl, many runic stones were shipped for Scotland, which may, perhaps, account for many of the crosses mentioned by Waldron, being now nowhere to be found.

18 Waldron, p. 150.

19 Waldron, p. 170.

20 Forlocke's Encyclopedia of Antiquities.

21 The old Popish ceremony of "creeping to the crosse" on Good Friday, is given from an ancient book of the ceremonial of the Kings of England, in the Notes to the Northumberland Household Book. The usher was to lay a carpet for the King to "creepe to the crosse upon." The Queen and the ladies were also to creepe to the crosse. In an original proclamation, black letter, dated 26th February, 30th Henry VIII, in the first volume of a collection of proclamations, in the Archives of the Society of Antiquaries of London, p. 138, we read:-" On Good Friday, it shall be declared howe creeping of the trosse signifyeth an humblynge of ourself to Christe before the trosse, and the kyssynge of it a memory of our redemption made upon the crosse." See, also, Bonner's Injunctions, A.D. 1555, 4to, signature A 2, in A short Description of Antichrist, &c. ; see Herbert, p. 1579, the author quotes the Popish custom of " creeping to the crosse with egges and apples." " Dispelling with a white rodde," immediately follows; though I know not whether it was upon the same day. "To holde forth the crosse for egges on Good Friday," occurs among the Roman Catholic customs censured by John Bale.

A3/3: Train, Chapter XIV

Crosses were likewise erected in commemoration of battles.³⁷ In the court behind the chapel of the Nunnery, in the neighbourhood of Douglas, stood a monument which I suppose to be of that description. It was different from all others found in the Island, being built of reddish stone in the form of a pyramid, and surmounted by a cross.³⁸

37 Britton's Architect. Antiq. of England.

38 Waldron, p. 16.

A3/4: Train, Chapter XIV

In the beginning of the ninth century a nunnery was founded by St. Bridget,⁶⁵ in the vale of Douglas; but the only vestige of these fine old edifices that now remains, is part of the chapel of the one alluded to, with its gothic windows, and arched gateway, half dilapidated, over which hangs the convent bell. When the daughters of piety dwelt within its precincts, this principal gate was only opened at the initiation of a nun, or at the death of the Lady Abbess. That this venerable remnant of ancient architecture should have fallen into the hands of such a person as he who took it down, will, I think, be lamented by every one who reads the following description of it :-" Few monasteries ever exceeded it either in largeness or fine building. There are still some of the cloisters remaining, the ceilings of which discover they were the workmanship of the most masterly hands ; nothing, in the whole creation, but what is imitated in curious carvings on it. The pillars supporting the arches are so thick as if that edifice was erected with a design to baffle the efforts of time, nor could it in more years than have elapsed since the coming of Christ have been so greatly defaced, had it received no injury but from time; but ill some of the dreadful revolutions this Island has sustained, it doubtless has suffered much from the outrage of the soldiers, as may be gathered by the niches yet standing in the chapel, which has been one of the finest in the world, and the images of saints repositied in them being torn out. Some pieces of broken columns are still to be seen, but the greatest part have been removed. The confessional chair also lies in ruins."⁶⁶

65 [Appendix, Note viii](#), " Religious Ceremonies."

66 Waldron's Description of the Isle of Man, pp. 148-152.

A3/5: Train, Chapter XIV

There were, likewise, a number of caverns under ground used as places of penance. If the nuns themselves, however, were even suspected of falsifying, they were not confined there, but had to undergo a different kind of punishment. Over the Howe of Douglas, there is a steep rock of considerable height, immediately above the sea; about half-way up this rock, was a hollow resembling an elbow chair, and near the top another cavity somewhat similar. On the slightest accusation, the poor nun was brought to the foot of this rock when the sea had ebbed, and was obliged to climb to the first chair, where she had to remain till the tide again flowed and ebbed twice. Those who had given a greater cause of suspicion, were obliged to ascend to the second chair, and to sit there for the same space of time. Any one who endured this trial, and descended unhurt, was cleared of all aspersion that had been thrown upon her.⁶⁷ Such a lengthened exposure to the elements, so far above the level of the sea, probably occasioned the death of many of these unfortunate creatures. We are elsewhere told that if sentence of death was passed against a female, she was sewed up in a sack, and thrown from the top of the rock into the sea.⁶⁸ This must have been the *Turpeian* Rock of the Isle of Man. Waldron says there were many curious monuments in the chapel of the Nunnery, " some of which, although almost worn out, yet still retain enough to make the reader know that the bodies of very great persons have been repositied here. There is plainly to be read on one of them,

'Illustrissima Matilda filia Rex Merciaë.'

I think there is great probability that this was Matilda, the daughter of Ethelbert, one of the kings of England of the Saxon race, since both Stow and Hollinshead agree that the princess died a recluse. I am, also, of opinion that Cartesmunda, the fair nun of Winchester, who fled from the violence threatened by King John, took refuge in this monastery, and was here buried, because there is upon a monument,

'Cartesmunda Virgo immaculata, A.D. 1230.'

These words remain so legible that I doubt not the whole inscription would have been so, had not some barbarous hand broke the stone, leaving only a corner of it, which is supported by a column; and on the base the date is yet perfectly fresh."⁶⁹

On these monuments there were also several hieroglyphical figures, which, according to the salve author, had been both the " ornaments and explanation of the tombs;" but they were then so much demolished as only to cause a regret that they had not met with a better fate.⁷⁰

The prioress of the Nunnery of Douglas was a baroness of the Isle. She held courts in her own name, and possessed temporal authority equal to a baron. Her vassals were not subject to the jurisdiction of the lord's court, as she claimed the privilege of trying them by a jury of her tenants. Her revenues were large, her authority great, and her person was held sacred.

67 Gibson's Camden, London, folio, vol. ii, p. 1442. The editor adds in a marginal note, " They are now hanged, except witches, who are burnt." This practice reminds us of the punishment for parricide among the Romans. The person convicted of that crime was hooded, as unworthy of the common light, sewed up alive in a sack, with an ape, a dog, and a cock, and in that condition thrown into the sea, or into the nearest river or lake.—Murphy's Notes on the Manners of the Ancient Germans, by Tacitus, London, 1807, p. 226.

68 Waldron, p. 150.

69 Waldron, p. 150.

70 Chronicles of the Kings of Man, ap. Camden.

A4: Some account of St Bridget's Chapel in the Nunnery near Douglas

Manx Note Book, vol 3, 1887, article by Leigh Goldie-Taubman.

ST. BRIDGET OF KILDARE, FIRST OF IRISH FEMALE Saints, is said to have received the Veil from St. Patrick when only 14 years old. She was born at Fochard, County Louth, about A.D. 453, but lived usually at Kildare, where in 484 she founded a Nunnery. Tradition has it that she founded the Manx Nunnery early in the following century, that she was buried there, and that her remains were afterwards transferred to Downpatrick, to rest with St. Patrick and St. Columba. It is at least certain that she was a favourite Saint, as there are Churches dedicated to her, not only in Ireland and Scotland, but in England, France and Germany; and in this Island a Parish Church and four of the so-called Treen Chapels are named after her. The prioress of her [Nunnery at Douglas](#) was a baroness of the Isle, and held her own Courts temporal and spiritual. The last prioress, Margaret Goodman, married Robert Caldicott, or Calcott, who was comptroller of the Island in 1538. Time and the ravages of man have swept away all the Nunnery buildings except the recently-restored Chapel, which probably owes the preservation of its walls to the fact that it was useful as a store-room and coach-house. The entrance is by a Gothic door-way on the south, and looking east we notice on the right-hand side two windows, one not exactly over the other. This peculiarity shows that the building is an old one, as no recently-built edifice would have windows so placed. The lower window has been left as found, the upper one having been disfigured by alteration has now been restored as nearly as possible to its original Gothic form. The next window on the same side lights the Chancel, and is exceedingly interesting; its worn condition and the style of moulding of the red sandstone attesting to its antiquity. The east window has simply had the centre arm, which was of wood, replaced by one of stone, preserving it exactly in its ancient shape. In the wall, under the chancel window, there are two niches which, together with the recess opposite, were not discovered till the old plaster had been scraped off. The recess nearest to the east is to be utilized as a credence table, it probably having served that purpose before; the other niche has a curious hole in the red sandstone forming the base, which has led to the supposition that it was a piscina; such may have been the case, though no outlet appears, and as a rule care was taken to convey the fluid to the earth. In this hole was found an old glass bottle, and, built into the masonry, a piece of polished bone, possibly a relic. The masonry which filled them both up was of good workmanship, but evidently of a much later date. This also was the case with the recess in the north side; something similar to which may be seen at the Cathedral in Peel Castle. A recumbent figure probably lay in this recess, as, when opened, a bit of broken stone, the shape of part of an arm, was found, no doubt the remains of a statue. In some churches, Easter sepulchures are found in the same position, where the consecrated element lay from Maundy Thursday till Easter morning, and such may have been the purpose of this niche. Next to it and nearer to the east is the piscina; it was evidently originally the holy water stoup, and has been much used, as can be seen by its worn edges. In front of the step leading to the sanctuary and in the centre of the choir is a slab, which can be raised by means of rings, and under a glass, hermetically sealed, lie the bones which were disturbed when the excavations in the present floor were made. One skull and some teeth are very perfect, the teeth especially being marvellously preserved in color. Many skulls were found, but either fell away on exposure to the air or were destroyed by the pickaxes of the workmen. The number of bones found, not only in the chapel but outside and under the stones in the stable yard, proves that there must have been a burial ground surrounding it. It is not easy to decide now what length the chapel formerly was, from the fact that the west gable being joined to the dwelling house it may or may not have been the original termination. The stone pillars which support the wood-work carrying the rood belonged to the cloisters of the ancient Nunnery; though it can be seen from their formation that they originally stood against a wall, and not alone as at present, the backs being plain. The other windows in the building are clerestory and were square; they have been made into Gothic externally with two lights, the original form being retained within the building. The whole of this edifice had formerly a loft over it, underneath being the coach-house, and, from these windows being square, it has been suggested that the upper portion in early times, though of course the loft lately removed was a comparatively modern erection, had been used as a room. The shape of the windows, however, proves nothing, for such clerestory windows are no unusual thing in churches, while the

fact that the east window and the large upper window on the south side both run to the roof seems to show that originally the height of the building was that to which it is now restored. The walls of the chapel are undoubtedly the original ones, for the stone work in all cases shows by shape and appearance that it belonged to a sacred edifice, and is of early date. The roof of the building has been left open to the top eaves, the original timber being cased with pitch pine, and arches sprung from corbels add to the effect. When the state of the walls allow of ornamentation, color will be added to give a warmer tone than is obtainable at present.

A5: Extract: Kermode, PMC, William Cubbon and GJH Neely (1935) *The Manx Archaeological Survey Fifth Report 1918*. Douglas: The Mann Museum & Ancient Monuments Trustees.

The Parish of Kirk Braddan.

S. BRIDGET'S. The Nunnery Chapel. O.S. XIII, 11 (2453). The present building, about 100 yards east of the house and about 70 ft. above sea-level, had long been used as a store-room and coach-house; in 1887 it was restored by Mr. Leigh Goldie-Taubman. Evidently it had belonged to the later Priory on this ancient site, and it is described in the '[Manx Note Book](#), iii, pp. 92-93. The Burial Ground, in which were found a great number of skulls and other bones, is probably on the ancient site. Unfortunately, no particulars of the original buildings have been recorded. The fragment of an oak beam now in the Manx Museum is believed to have been a rood-screen in the Chapel. It bears an inscription: SOLI DEO HONOR ET GLORIA, As thow art god create h(ys) . . . [See Fig. 22, Plate XVI.]

The well, Chibbyr Vreeshey, at a distance east of the Chapel of about 72 yards, has had a stone hood built over it by Mr. Leigh Goldie-Taubman. [Note 18.]

Note 18. - 'The Nunnery.' Ord. Surv. particulars: 'The principal mansion in the parish, having extensive offices, ornamental grounds, gardens, etc., situated about 2 mile S. of Douglas on the Castletown road. The property and residence of J. S. G. Taubman, Esq., H.K.' Authorities quoted are: Rev. W. Drury; Mr. Windsor, Pulrose Mill; Mr. W. Caley; Highroad account; Mr. J. S. G. Taubman, prop.

A6: Sir James Gell, Abstract of Manx Laws, cited in Dempsey (1958)

A6/1: Sir James Gell, cited in Dempsey (1958), p70, fn15

The Prioress of the Priory or Nunnery at Douglas was a baroness of the Isle and was bound to do fealty to the Lord in like manner as the barons, for her barony. I have not found any satisfactory account of the origin of this priory. It is sometimes mentioned as being in connection with Rushen Abbey: but all accounts respecting it are very meagre; indeed it is not known for a certainty with what temporalities it was endowed, though it is very probable that the lands known as the "Abbey lands of Braddan" belonged to the Nunnery, as sometimes the sergeant of such lands was designated Sergeant of the "Priory lands of Braddan." The manor of the Priory has been supposed to have merged in that of Rushen Abbey, and that what are now designated "Abbey lands" and are treated as one manor, included the former separate manors of the Abbey and Priory."

A6/2: Sir James Gell, cited in Dempsey (1958), p120 - 123.

“The confiscation of these small properties (a parcel of land called Rouatwathe lying between the monastery of Rushen and Castletown... and for the parsonage of St Maughold and St Michael...), which nominally belonged to Furness, was, according to both English and Manx jurists, completely *ultra vires*.

It has been alleged, that the Manx religious houses were dissolved and vested in the crown of England by virtue of an Act of Parliament (27 Henry VIII). This Act, however, did not authorise the suppression of the Manx religious houses, as even were it competent for the Parliament to legislate in respect of property within the Island, the Act has no reference in it to the Isle of Man, and according to English jurists an Act of Parliament does not extend to it unless it be particularly names therein. It is probable that the Act of Surrender dated 9 April 1537 on the part of the Abbot and Convent of Furness may have afforded a pretext for the claim of King Henry VIII to the Abbey of Rushen; but it was a mere pretext, as the King could not take from the Convent of Furness – if they had any right to give at all, which is most questionable – a greater right or power than they possessed; and certainly they had no right or power to suppress Rushen Abbey and appropriate its property. The legality of this and of like transactions being very doubtful, an Act of Parliament (31 Henry VIII) was passed in 1539 (act for Dissolution of all Monasteries). ... This Act has no reference to the Isle of Man, and therefore it could not confirm to the King and right supposed to be given by the surrender of the Abbot and monks of Furness. But, in any case, the Surrender and Act of Parliament afford no explanation of the suppression of the Nunnery and Friary; and, in short, the only conclusion to which we can come is that the Manx religious houses were suppressed or dissolved not by force of any statute or law, but simply by an act of power on the part of the sovereign of England.”

Dempsey continues:

Cromwell’s agents allowed no such fastidious notions of legality to darken their counsels, and in 1539 they proceeded to assess and catalogue the holdings of the Manx religious houses.

... The method usually employed in the suppression of the smaller monasteries ... was as follows: the superior received an annuity, the amount of which depended on his docility; those monks who had taken their vows before the age of twenty-four were secularized, being allowed to take with them only their religious habit; some of the more aged were retained to assist the superior in administering the estates, others were transferred for the time being to the larger monasteries; those who objected to this arrangement were turned out or imprisoned at the discretion of the Vicar General in Spirituals, Thomas Cromwell.

This plan seems to have been put into execution at Rushen; the Abbot and three monks were left in charge to collect the revenues on behalf of the Crown. ... A similar arrangement was made for the Nunnery: Elena Calcote, the Abbess, received £3. 6s. 8d. per annum, Margaret Egliston and Agnes Inlowe, religieuses, £1. 6s. 8d. each. The Franciscan Friary, together with many tithes of the parishes were vested in the Crown in 1540.

...The Priory of Douglas was sold up about the same time, and fetched £48.

Dempsey discusses the usual claim that the Comptroller, Robert Calcott, married the Abbess, one Margaret Goodman, and thereby acquired the Nunnery in fn7, p122. He prefers Cumming’s history,¹⁸ in which the Prioress Elena Calcote is a daughter or sister of Calcott, whose wealth and privilege enabled him to purchase the estate from the Royal Commissioners.

A7: Obituary of Thomas Leigh Goldie

Manx Sun, 25 Nov 1854, p. 20. (source: i-Museum)

¹⁸ Cumming, 1848.

The fall of this gallant and distinguished officer on the sanguinary battle-field of Inkerman, has thrown a feeling of gloom over our entire Island. The father and grandfather of the deceased brave officer had both risen in succession, and after a long career of service, to the highest rank, save one, in the military service of Great Britain; all his brothers, and several uncles, also, held, or now hold, advanced rank in the army or navy of England. Brigadier-General Goldie was the second son of the late General Alexander John Goldie, who after a long service under the Duke of Wellington, retired to this Island wherein he had married the daughter of the late Major Taubman of the Nunnery near Douglas. Major Taubman, General Goldie and Col. Goldie Taubman were successively elected, and held during their respective lives, the office of Speaker in the House of Keys. Brigadier-General Goldie served in Canada during the stormy period of the insurrectionary movement in that colony, as Lieutenant Colonel of H.M.'s 66th Regiment, and subsequently, in Ireland, in command of the same distinguished corps. On landing in the Crimea, Colonel Goldie was, by General, now Field Marshal, Lord Raglan, Commander in chief of the British army, raised to the rank of Brigadier General, and attached to the Fourth Division under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir George Cathcart, K.C.B. On the fatal 5th of November, at the bloody battle of Inkermann, the brave Brigadier-General Goldie, and his world-renowned commander of the unconquerable Fourth Division, Lieutenant General Cathcart, fell in the arms of victory. Brigadier-General Goldie had been upwards of thirty years in constant service, having entered the army when only seventeen, and died at the comparatively early age of forty-seven, as a gallant soldier ought to do, in the arms of victory, and with his face to the foe.

**A8: John Welch (1836) *A six day tour through the Isle of Man*. Douglas: William Dillon.
NB: the book does not identify the author, who is presumed to be Welch.**

We now come to the site of the ancient Nunnery, with a fine modern castellated mansion built upon it, the seat of General Goldie, Speaker of the House of Keys. The turrets, however, are not completed, they want their battlements; at present they have no further finished appearance than a man without his head. Not a vestige of the once celebrated asylum for old maids and discontented virgins now remains. These receptacles, in the march of intellect and (no doubt) true chastity and piety, are becoming exceedingly unfashionable in all countries; the monastic brotherhood, even in bigoted Spain, strewing a disposition and evident determination to resist the denunciations and thunders of the Vatican, and have a turn-out or strike for wives. It is to be hoped the holy sisterhood will not be backward in following so good an example, or what will these honest men do for sweethearts ?

The Nunnery is distant from Douglas about half a mile, and nobly situated in an extensive park, hedged in by fine and extensive woods, to which the public have access, deriving a right to a road through the estate from some prescriptive tenure, which its present proprietor has in vain attempted to supersede, and this constitutes one of the chief public luxuries in the beautiful walks, always open and at hand.

Among these shady groves and lengthened solitudes, an altar might very judiciously be raised, and dedicated to " the laughter-loving Queen;" for most of the marriages of the middle and lower classes of the town are here made up, though latterly the pleasure grounds of Castle Mona have in this respect vied with those of the Nunnery. And if we might not be accused of sacrilege in penetrating further into Love's Sanctuary, the stranger might readily conceive the "billing and cooing" that must therefore necessarily be constantly going on here in the pairing season, out of a population of 8,000; an occupation, indeed, which must very much perplex the spirits of those departed sisters who once otherwise employed their hours within these sacred precincts.

APPENDIX B:

Planning Applications In Respect of Properties on the Nunnery Estate, 1990 to Present

THE NUNNERY MANSION HOUSE (000115011481)

1 May 1990	<u>90/00264/B</u>	Construction of private covered swimming pool, The Nunnery, Douglas. The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB
15 Feb 1991	<u>90/04000/B</u>	Installation of 450 litre LPG tank, South Lodge, The Nunnery, Old Castletown Road, Douglas. The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB
2 Feb 1995	<u>94/01526/A</u>	Approval in principle for conversion & extension of main house to corporate H.Q. with associated parking, The Nunnery, Castletown Road, Douglas. The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB
27 Jul 1998	<u>98/00765/A</u>	Approval in principle master plan for country club, including par 3 golf course, club facilities, residential use, apart hotel and nursing home, The Nunnery, Old Castletown Road, Douglas. The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB
4 Jan 1999	<u>98/01741/A</u>	Approval in principle development master plan for Country Club, including Corporate Headquarters, Residential Use, Golf Course and Club House, The Nunnery, Old Castletown Road, Douglas. The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB
13 Sep 1999	<u>99/01066/C</u>	Change of use to International Business School, The Nunnery, Old Castletown Road, Douglas. The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB
17 Mar 2000	<u>99/02266/D</u>	Erection of signage at gate entrances The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB
4 Nov 2002	<u>02/01605/C</u>	Extension for a further year of temporary approval of use as an International Business School The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB
9 Oct 2003	<u>03/01429/C</u>	Change of use of Nunnery Estate to permanent use as a Business School and uses incidental to, including additional car parking, teaching facilities and associated residential accommodation indicated within master plan The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB
13 Oct 2006	<u>06/01693/B</u>	Creation of a temporary car park and re-surfacing of east driveway and creation of contrasting coloured footway adjacent to existing driveway International Business School The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB
4 Sep 2008	<u>08/01667/B</u>	Erection of a smoking shelter Isle Of Man International Business School The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB
18 Feb 2010	<u>10/00194/B</u>	Creation of a car parking area together with access roadway, footpaths and associated lighting The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB
2 Dec 2011	<u>11/01296/B</u>	Installation of replacement windows and doors International Business School The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB
31 Jan 2012	<u>12/00110/B</u>	Alterations to main roof international Business School The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB
9 Oct 2012	<u>12/00889/B</u>	Installation of street lighting to south driveway The University Centre The

Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB

SOUTH LODGE, OLD CASTLETOWN ROAD, DOUGLAS, IM2 1QB (000115011484)

- 16 Oct 2008 08/01880/B Installation of replacement windows South Lodge Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB
- 22 Jul 2010 10/01053/B Widen vehicular access and reconstruct pillars, wall and gates South Lodge International Business School The Nunnery Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB

STABLE BLOCK, CHAPEL & CHAPEL COTTAGE, THE NUNNERY ESTATE, OLD CASTLETOWN ROAD, DOUGLAS (000115011485)

- 28 May 2008 08/01037/B Conversion of buildings to provide educational teaching, seminar and office space (Amended plans received) Stable Block, Chapel & Chapel Cottage The Nunnery Estate Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man

THE DOLLS HOUSE, OLD CASTLETOWN ROAD, DOUGLAS, IM2 1QB (000115011480)

- 18 Mar 2001 01/02582/B Alterations and extension to dwelling The Dolls House Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB
- 30 Jun 2004 04/01280/B Extension to give wheelchair access to first floor and bathroom for wheelchair user. Nunnery Mill House, also known as The Dolls House Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB
- 4 Mar 2005 05/00350/B Alterations and extensions to dwelling to provide additional living accommodation including a double garage with a flat over and repair to retaining wall The Dolls House Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB
- 29 Sep 2005 05/01865/B Alterations and extensions (Re submission to 05/00350) The Dolls House Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB
- 14 Feb 2008 08/00210/B Alterations and extensions (comprising an amendment to the development approved under 05/01865/B) The Dolls House Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB
- 29 Jul 2009 09/01222/B Creation of a landing stage The Dolls House Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB
- 1 Oct 2009 09/01575/R Alterations to approved extensions (05/01865B & 08/00210B) installation of railings to first floor parapet walls, erection of entrance gates with stone pillars and associated garden walls, driveway re-surfacing, paving of patio areas The Dolls House Old Castletown Road Douglas Isle Of Man IM2 1QB
- 17 May 1985 85/00536/B Alterations and extension to form additional living accommodation, The Dolls House, Old Castletown Road, Douglas The Dolls House Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB
- 19 Nov 1993 93/01102/B Creation of new drive access, The Dolls House, Old Castletown Road, Douglas. The Dolls House Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB
- 12 Feb 1997 96/01654/A Approval in principle for change of use from dwelling to office accommodation, Dolls House, Old Castletown Road, Douglas. The Dolls House Old Castletown Road Douglas IM2 1QB

MAGNOLIA COTTAGE (000115011484) and THE LODGE (000115011483), THE NUNNERY, OLD CASTLETOWN ROAS, DOUGLAS, IM2 1QB

- - NO APPLICATIONS LODGED

Appendix C: Estate Plan

