



Navan Points of Pride

Walking Tour of Navan,
Ireland's Floral Town



Navan Points of Pride

Welcome to 'Points of Pride' a walking tour of Navan designed to showcase the best of Navan's heritage, with reference to the town's rich historical past and more recent developments. It is a celebration of the people, the architecture and the culture of Navan.

A Concise History of Navan

Navan, Ireland's floral town, located in the heart of the Boyne Valley, is a vibrant business, shopping and tourist destination with plenty to interest the modern visitor. The name Navan comes from the Irish translation of 'An Uaimh' which means cave. The cave in question is located on the east bank of the Boyne at Athlumney and was discovered in 1849 during excavations for the extension of the railway line from Drogheda to Navan.

Navan developed first as a market town and because it is a natural meeting point for North-South traffic. The town was utilised by the landed families of rural Meath although it did not benefit from any great patronage, as did the towns of Kells and Slane. The four principal estates in and around the town were owned by absentee landlords: the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Essex, Lord Howth and Lord de Ros.

Navan was originally the point where travellers came to cross the Boyne and Blackwater rivers, at the ford of the Poolboy (from the Irish 'Póll buí' or 'Yellow Hole'). Soon after the Norman conquest in 1170, Henry II granted the Kingdom of Meath to the Norman Hugh de Lacey, who in turn passed the Barony of Navan to Jocelyn de Angelo (later Nangle). De Angelo founded Navan town to encourage settlement and to create a centre for the exchange of goods, grain, linen, hides and wool for iron, salt and luxury goods such as wines and silk. He also founded an Augustinian Abbey dedicated to the Virgin in 1189, which was in ruins in 1641 and of which no trace remains today. The statue of the Blessed Virgin, which was housed in the monastery attracted large numbers of pilgrims during the Middle Ages.

By the late Middle Ages Navan was a partially walled town but the area enclosed by the wall was relatively small. In 1539, it is recorded that the town's defenses were damaged by the native Irish, and Navan was described as being 'not walled nor defensible'. The first settlers ran the town until they were displaced by the Cromwellian wars. In these turbulent times, the Catholic Nangle family was replaced by the Protestant Preston family and from 1661, only Protestants were permitted to serve in the Town Corporation.

Through marriage the Prestons became Ludlows and in 1830, they left their estate to the Russells, Dukes of Bedford. The land was eventually bought out under the Wyndham Land (Purchase) Act of 1903, but some Navan Street names still reflect the Russell family's connection with the town.

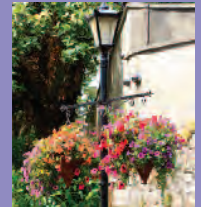
During the 18th century, the Catholic population gradually prospered and when representative town government was established in Navan in 1840, Catholics came to dominate town life. The 19th century was a time of radical change and shifts of fortune in Navan. The town witnessed the tragedy of the Famine and the building of a Navan Workhouse, the rise and fall of industry, the coming of the railway, and investment in water supply, sewage disposal and architecture.



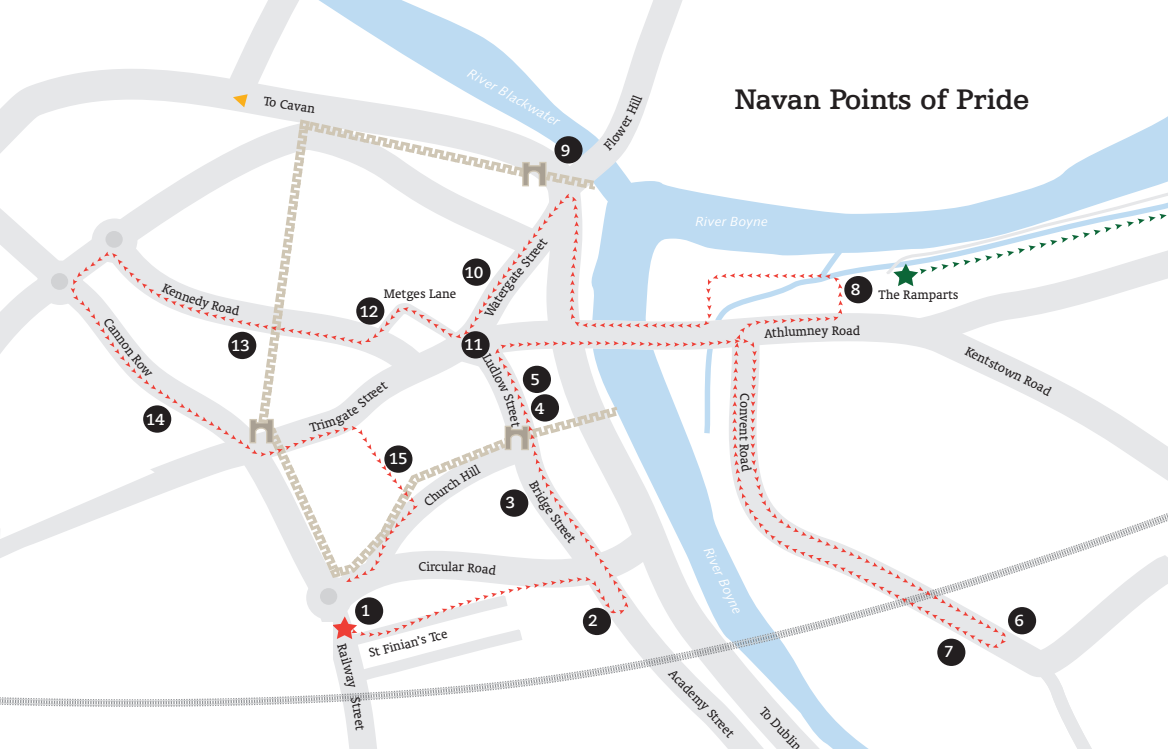
By the turn of the century Navan was a modest town, and home to around four thousand people. County buildings were located here in the early 20th century, and Navan became, in effect, the county town of Meath. The area prospered as a centre of manufacturing particularly of furniture and carpets throughout the 1930s and 40s. Since the 1960s the town has been steadily expanding and by 2011 the population stood at nearly 30,000.

Recent times have brought further changes to the townscape. The development of Tara Mines (the largest lead and zinc mine in Europe, and the 5th largest in the world) has attracted wealth to the town, while the many excellent shops in the town provide plenty of opportunity to spend it! Navan's first shopping centre also moved Navan's urban focus from the historic Market Square for the first time since the twelfth century. Though the world-famous Navan Carpets factory is long since gone, the famous Navan Carpet name lives on, and the town maintains its reputation for quality furniture.

On this walk, you are invited to trace the town's past and to experience life in Navan as it is lived today.



Navan Points of Pride



The Navan Points of Pride town walk starts at the Solstice Arts Centre and is 4km long. At a leisurely pace it can be completed in approximately 2 hours.



The old walls and gates of Navan which defined the boundaries of the town, have long since disappeared. They are indicated on this map to show how the medieval town has grown over the centuries.

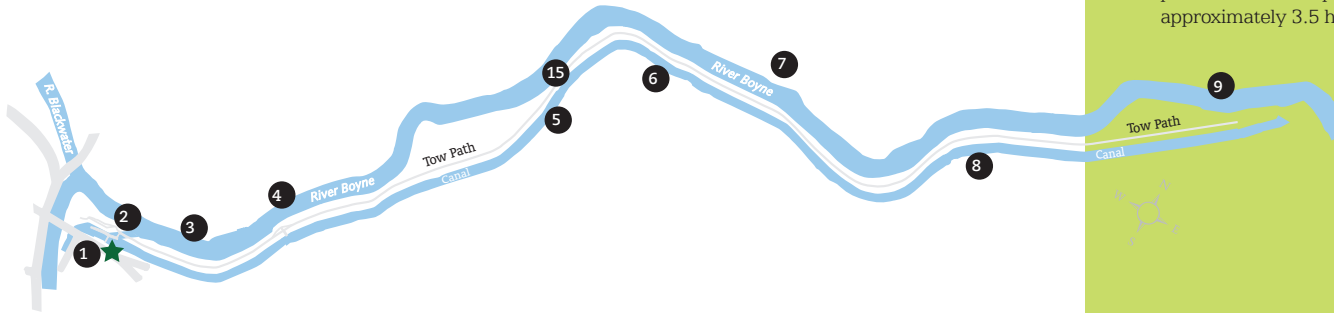
Navan Points of Pride

- 1 The Solstice Arts Centre
- 2 Academy Street/John Boyle O'Reilly
- 3 Meath County Infirmary/St. Mary's Church of Ireland/Newgrange Hotel
- 4 Tobberorum
- 5 Old Court House
- 6 Athlumney Castle
- 7 Athlumney Church & Graveyard
- 8 The Ramparts & Ruxton's Bridge
- 9 Flower Hill
- 10 Watergate Street
- 11 Market Square
- 12 Metge's Lane
- 13 Kennedy Place
- 14 Canon Row
- 15 St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church/St. Anne's School/Fairgreen



Ramparts Canal Walk

Generations of Navan townspeople promenaded along the Ramparts on Sundays and holidays. The beautiful riverwalk can still be enjoyed today.



The Ramparts walk starts at the Ramparts car park. From here to Stackallen Lock covers a distance of 8km. At a leisurely pace it can be completed in approximately 3.5 hours.



Ramparts Canal Walk

- 1 The Ramparts
- 2 Ruxton's Bridge
- 3 Blackcastle Point
- 4 Athlumney Bridge and Weir
- 5 Rowley's Lock
- 6 Old Weir
- 7 Dunmoe Castle
- 8 Taafe's Lock
- 9 Stackallen lock





1

start here

The Solstice

The Solstice, Meath's state-of-the-art centre for the arts, stands on the site of the original Irish National Foresters Hall which was built in 1927. The Navan 'Dean Cogan' branch of the Irish National Foresters was established in March 1899 as a benefit society for working men and was dissolved in December 2003. The Solstice Arts Centre was launched in 2006 as a platform for the arts in Meath. The centre provides a 320-seat theatre, foyer, meeting and showcase space, a café, three galleries and a studio. The building design echoes the natural slope of the site, and at night the tall glass walls exude an atmospheric light.

Across the street is a double row of houses called **St. Finian's Terrace** built in 1911. As a child, Navan's own James Bond, Pierce Brosnan lived in number 2, St. Finian's Terrace.



Follow the winding path through the green area, passing the library on your left. This path will bring you onto Circular Road. Turn right and walk to the first junction, which is the junction with Academy Street.

2



St. Finian's Seminary was the first Catholic seminary to be founded in the northern half of Ireland after the Penal days. The first president of the school was Rev. Eugene O'Reilly who directed the school until 1827 when he became Parish Priest of Navan. In 1835 it is described as a boarding and day school. In 1908 the land was sold, the seminary was moved to Mullingar in county Westmeath, and the County Hall was built on seminary land. Now all that survives of St. Finian's Seminary is the study hall, the roof and walls of which you can see if you look back and up, at the junction between Circular Road and Academy Street. Built in the 1840s in an unusual oval shape, generations of Navan schoolboys have known it as '**Power's Duck Egg**', after Headmaster Power, who built it. **Charles Stewart Parnell's** political career began here, with his selection as the Home Rule candidate for Meath at the great County Rally held on April 12th, 1875. To celebrate his election, the townspeople decorated their house fronts with sprigs of laurel and ivy.

Academy St. / John Boyle O'Reilly

In the fanlight of one of the early 19th century houses on Academy Street, you can make out the word **Moondyne**. John Boyle O'Reilly, patriot, rebel, newspaper editor, poet and laureate of Boston, lived here for a few years and was inspired to use it for the title of his novel '*Moondyne Joe: A Story From The Underworld*', which was published in New York in 1879.

The Railway Viaduct, which crosses the river Boyne here is 122m long and was built in 1850 for the Dublin & Belfast Railway Company by Moore Brothers to the design of Sir John MacNeill. It carries the 27km branch line from Drogheda to Navan and consists of seven semicircular masonry arches, which cross the river and two roadways.

The cottages further down on the left side of the road were originally thatched with wheat and oaten straw and are traditionally known as Butterstream (in Irish 'Bóthar an tSirriam', or 'The Sheriff's Road').

Now cross the junction at Academy Street and Circular Road at the pedestrian crossing. Walk up the street in front of you called Bridge Street.



3

Meath County Infirmary

The building on a height behind railings on the left-hand side of the street as you walk up Bridge Street is the Meath County Infirmary, the first of its kind in rural Ireland, founded in 1754 by the Meath Grand Jury, (forerunner of Meath County Council). It was one of the Medical Charities or Voluntary Hospitals which were beginning to be developed throughout Ireland in the 18th century. An inscription over the door from the Gospel of St. Mark reads "*I was sick and you visited me*", which reflected the ethos of mid-18th century charitable institutions.



St. Mary's Church of Ireland

Built with local limestone in the mid 18th century, **St. Mary's Church of Ireland** replaced an earlier medieval church on the same site. The tower, designed by the famous Irish architect, Francis Johnson, was added later. To the left of the church you can see a piece of a medieval cross from about 1500 with what is reputedly an image of St. Catherine of Alexandria, a favourite saint of the Normans in the east of Ireland. Inside, plaster corbels support an unusual star-shaped rib vault in both the nave and the chancel. Richly coloured stained glass windows date from the early 19th century, and the walls are adorned with interesting memorials of prominent Navan figures. The most famous rectors of Navan were the father and son, both called **Daniel Augustus Beaufort**, descendents of the Huguenots. Between them, they were rectors from 1747 to 1818. The younger Dr. Beaufort was also a mapmaker. His son was **Sir Francis Beaufort** who devised the 'Beaufort Scale' for measuring wind speed. A sea in the Arctic Ocean north of Canada bears his name. (Access to the Church and grounds is restricted.)



Continue up this street onto Ludlow Street. The building on your right set behind railings is the old Courthouse.

The Newgrange Hotel

The Newgrange Hotel replaces the Club House or Russell Arms Hotel, which was built in 1837 by the Duke of Bedford, a member of the Russell family who acquired the Ludlow estate, as a meeting place for the gentlemen of the county. The last Russell to own land in Meath was the philosopher Bertrand Russell who sold the Navan estate to the tenants and occupiers in around 1906. (Lord John Russell, who built Ardsallagh House in the 1840s, was Prime Minister of England during the Great Famine.) The Gardens were very fine and Dean Jonathan Swift was said to be a regular visitor. The Newgrange Hotel continues to be a popular meeting place in the town.



Just beside the Old Courthouse is a narrow laneway which leads down to Tobberorum.

4

Tobberorum

Historically the townspeople of Navan depended on the wells and springs of the town for their drinking water, and many springs were reputed to cure certain ailments. ('Tubber' is the Irish word for 'a well' and 'Oran' or 'Odhran' was the name of the charioteer who transported St. Patrick when he was in this part of the Country). **Tobberorum** was the only large well inside the town walls during the Middle Ages, and it was considered important enough to be restored by the Town Commissioners in 1858. It is said that Meath's most famous highwayman Michael Collier (the Robber), who was born in Bellewstown in 1780 and died in Drogheda in 1849, lived in Tobberorum Lane and that, during periods of abstinence from strong drink, he drank only the water of Tobberorum well.



Old Courthouse

The Old Courthouse or Tholsel (now a solicitor's premises) was erected in 1632 by Edward Manning, who was both builder and architect. It is a slim, two-storey stone building noted for its three tall windows. The town stocks stood here in former times. The plaque bearing the date '1798' commemorates the United Irishmen who rebelled against English rule in May of that year. The officers of the Navan Cavalry, John Preston and Philip Barry, requested troops from Kells and met the insurgents, who were advancing towards Navan, on the Hill of Tara. The rebels' pikes proved useless against trained soldiers and cannon, and the rebellion was easily crushed.

In this area of the town the Corn Market was also located. The Town Corporation maintained a weighbridge in order to levy taxes on grain entering the town to be traded and shipped on to the port of Drogheda.

Continue up the hill and take a right turn onto the street named Timmons Hill. ('Timmons' is a family name, a prominent member that served as a town commissioner.) The street slopes down to the river. At the bottom of the hill, at the traffic lights, cross straight through the junction. You will be crossing the river Boyne on a bridge known as the New Bridge.



The New Bridge

Built in 1756, the 'New' Bridge was the first to connect the town of Navan to the east side of the Boyne. Before that, to cross the river without getting wet, you had to travel 3km east to the 15th century bridge, (which still survives at Kilcarn), or 5km north to Babes Bridge, where just two pillars remain.

Cross the bridge, continue on this road and take the next right, just before the Navan Education Centre which is on the right, at the signpost for Athlumney. Continue up this road.



6

Athlumney

On the left-hand side, 100 meters along this road, is **St. Michael's Loreto Convent** Secondary School for girls. In 1896 Bishop Nulty granted the mansion known as Boyne Cottage and the extensive demesne at Athlumney to the Loreto Nuns for use as a convent. The mansion was extended and a chapel wing added in 1930.

Continuing along this road, you cross over the railway bridge, and further along, on your left, are the ruins of **Athlumney Castle**, which was built in two periods and in which can be seen the change from medieval to modern Ireland.



On the opposite side of the road is the graveyard and the church ruins.

The name 'Athlumney' derives from 'Atha Luman' or 'Loman's Ford'. (St. Loman is reputed to have been a nephew of Saint Patrick and was the first Bishop of Meath.) The corner turrets were common in late medieval castles in Ireland, and the three-storey part of the building is either late Elizabethan or early Jacobean.

The Lords of the manor enjoyed such modern luxuries as glass windows and central heating rising from the kitchens below. According to legend, the castle was burned down by Launcelot Dowdall, the last owner. He fled to exile in France having supported the Catholic King James II in his war against William of Orange in 1689-1691. One of the most important battles of this was the famous Battle of the Boyne, which took place in 1690.





7

Athlumney Church & Graveyard

In the graveyard are the ruins of a church, typical of many church ruins throughout Meath. Athlumney Church, built in the early 13th century and measuring 2m by 8m, is dedicated to St. James, whose Patron Day is 27th July. Bishop Anthony Dopping, during his visitations in the years 1682 to 1685, found the church and chancel unrepaired since the civil war of 1641. Worship, however, continued to take place here up to 1789, the year of Dr. Plunkett's visitation in his capacity as Catholic Bishop of Meath. On that occasion he confirmed twelve parishioners and preached 'on the decency requisite in the divine worship, and repairs of the chapel.' In the nave of the church there is an interesting 15th century tombstone depicting a knight with a coat of arms.

Retrace your steps back to the main road, cross the road, you pass Spicers' Bakery on the left, a long established Navan enterprise. Turn into and cross the small car park you arrive at The Ramparts

The table tomb at the entrance of the graveyard from the road holds the remains of **Peter Metge**, of the Navan Huguenot family, who became Lord Chancellor of Ireland. (Metge's Lane, in the centre of the town, is named after him.) On the site between you and the river Boyne lie the remains of the first Norman settlement in Navan, an earthworks known as a **motte**. Built by an unknown knight, the castle also featured a bailey (a wooden fenced yard) and a wooden watchtower, from which a sentry could look out for approaching enemies. The church extended into the site occupied by the tower when the tower was no longer needed.



7

Old Athlumney Cemetery

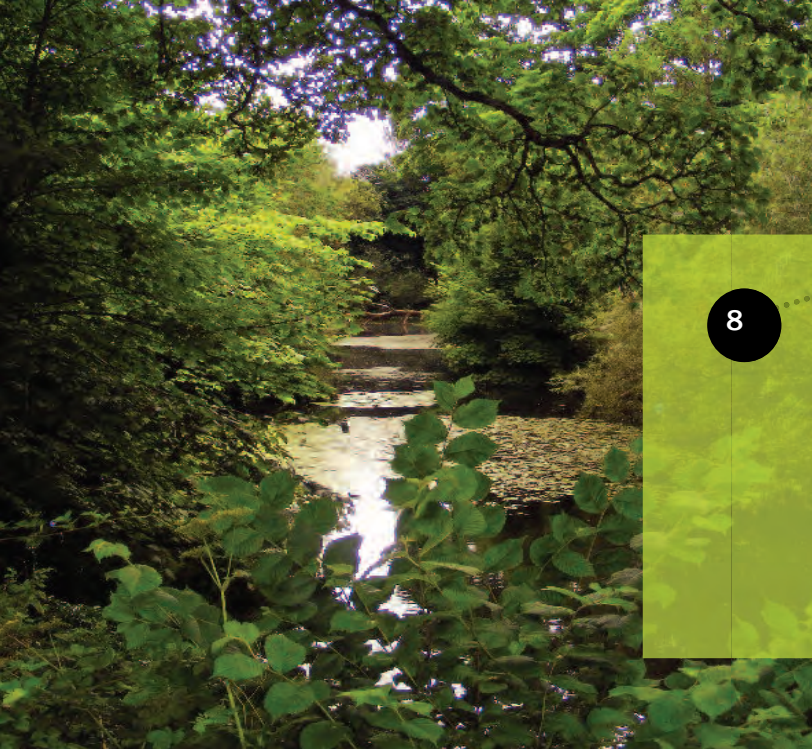


Some interesting graves worth visiting in the old cemetery include:

- No. 20 The oldest recorded age in Old Athlumney is James Mannon who died September, 10th 1778 aged 96 years.
- No. 22 Private P. Kane, Leinster Regiment, died 3rd March 1919.
- No. 57 Joseph Boylan, Killed in France Oct. 1917.
- No. 60 James Flanagan, Killed in Action 1st July 1916.
- No. 116 The Metges were "Huguenots" who left France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) and settled in Athlumney c.1700. Peter Metge was made Bencher of the King's Inns Law Society in 1782 and Baron of the Irish Exchequer 1784-1801. He died 9th Feb 1809 aged 65 years. "By lyeing on top of Box Tomb, cure for bad back or Back-Ake".
- No. 174 John Rice, Athlumney who died 21st December 1899, aged 96 years.

(Old Athlumney Cemetery Committee 2001)





8



The Ramparts

If you fancy a nice river walk there is the old towpath of the Boyne Canal which runs for almost eight kilometers to the bridge over the Boyne at Stackallen.

On the Ramparts Walk, you will see the single remaining eye of Babe's Bridge, the only bridge over the Boyne which survived the great flood of 1330.



When you exit the park gates, cross the road carefully at the designated crossing point and cross back over the river. Turn right at the next junction and proceed to the next bridge you can see.

Ruxton's Bridge

To continue on your current walk of the town, take the humpbacked bridge over the canal, called Ruxton's Bridge. It is named after **Mr. William Ruxton**, a shareholder in the Boyne Navigation which connects Navan and Drogheda. Construction of the canal was begun by the Commissioners of Inland Navigation in 1759 and completed by 1800. Most of the Navigation is on the south bank of the Boyne.

If you continue along this path by the canal you will enter one of the many pocket parks scattered throughout the town. Take a break and enjoy the view and peacefulness of the river Boyne. To the left you will see the railway viaduct which crosses the river, and the road you see on the far side of the viaduct is the main road which leads southwards to Dublin.





From here you cross the main road at the traffic lights and continue up the hill, onto Watergate Street. Take care at this very busy junction.

Poolboy Bridge

Poolboy Bridge gets its name from the Irish 'poll' meaning 'hole' and 'buí' meaning 'yellow', because a yellow clay could be found in the river here. Here at Poolboy Bridge you can see a modern sculpture of a millstone that commemorates Navan's long and profitable milling past. Corn mills, flax mills and saw mills have been powered by the Boyne and Blackwater rivers for centuries.

In the picturesque riverbank garden, you can take a moment to sit and enjoy the view of the meeting of the two rivers. The river Boyne is about 112km long. It rises at Trinity Well, near Carbury, County Kildare, and flows north-eastwards through County Meath and into the Irish Sea at Mornington. The Kells Blackwater is the largest tributary of the river Boyne and is fed by Lough Ramor in County Cavan. It flows in a south-easterly direction, passing just north of the town of Kells, to its meeting here with the river Boyne at Navan.



Watergate Street

On your right, as you progress up Watergate Street, you will see the Town Hall, an 18th century building that once operated as a police barracks and before that as a Bridewell prison. To the left of the main door, set behind railings, are the Town Stocks which were originally located outside the Court House on Ludlow Street. Petty criminals were shackled by their ankles in the stocks and publicly exposed to the townspeople who were encouraged to hurl abuse, as well as rotten fruit and vegetables at them.

The crest of the town, which you can see on an archway in front of the town hall, derives from the seal of the town of Navan from the 17th century silver matrix. It is the crest of the family of Cowan, and shows a forearm issuing from clouds holding a heart; on the right side of the crest is a harp and on the left a rose; above is a royal crown. On the seal from which the crest derives, appears the date 1661 and the legend that refers to the restoration of Charles II reads:



RESTAURATO CAROLO SECUNDO RESPIRAMUS
(We rejoice in the restoration of Charles II)

The population of Navan received a new Charter of Incorporation from James I, which was confirmed by Charles II on his restoration in 1660. The Portreve (Mayor) of Navan at the time the matrix was made was a member of the Cowan family.

Continue up Watergate Street you should now be entering a triangular space known as Market Square. You will know you have arrived when you see a stone sculpture of a bull.



11

The Market Square

For many centuries the Market Square was the commercial centre of Navan, and a market cross stood at its centre. Preachers preached at the foot of the cross, deals were made in its shadow, and proclamations and public announcements were read there.

The cross was originally erected by Martin Nangle, eldest son of Patrick Nangle, Baron of Navan, and on it was carved the family crest and a request for prayers for Nangle (de Angelo) and his wife. The only surviving section of the cross was sent to the Royal Irish Academy by the antiquarian W. F. Wakeman who wrote an account of his discovering the stone in the Academy's journal in December, 1849.



Now leave the Market Square and go down a narrow street, which you can easily identify by the glass roof over it (bus stop). This street is named Metge's Lane.

12



Follow Metge's Lane as it curves around to the left. When you arrive at the junction, cross the street and turn right into Kennedy Place.

Two similar stones, sculpted and inscribed, were being used as supports for casks in a public house in Trimgate Street at that time and, although he offered to pay to have the casks moved, Mr. Wakeman's request was refused and the whereabouts of those stones are still unknown. The bronze replicas of the surviving section of the Navan Market Cross, which can be seen in the Market Square now, were created by Meath based sculptor, Orla De Bri. The surviving section of the Market Cross is on permanent loan from the National Museum of Ireland and is now exhibited in its hometown at The Solstice Arts Centre.

The sculpture which now dominates the Market Square, weighs 16 tonnes and was carved in limestone by Galway sculptor **Colin Grehan**. The Bull took up residence on his plinth in March 2011 and is a fitting memorial to the trade in livestock and agricultural produce which has taken place for centuries in Navan.

Metge's Lane

Metge's Lane is named after one of the important Huguenot families who left France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 and who settled in Navan in the early 18th century. Peter Metge was made Bencher of the King's Inns Law Society in 1782 and held the position of Baron of the Irish Exchequer from 1784 to 1801.

Metge's Lane is typical of the narrow streets where, in centuries past, the poor took what shelter they could in squalid, mud-walled cabins.



13

Kennedy Place

The open space in front of you is the new Civic Plaza, completed in 2007. This award-winning urban space provides a venue for town events and a craft market (on certain days). An attractive fountain and pleasant seating area provide a quiet place to relax and watch the world go by. The impressive bronze sculpture you can see was created by Meath Sculptor, **Betty Newman Maguire**, and is intended to signify human aspiration and the uplifting of the spirit. To the right is Navan Shopping Centre, which is the new commercial centre of the town.

Kennedy Road is named, not after an American president as you may think, but after a local landowner. **Tom Kennedy** was a local politician and a dairy farmer who had a milk round in the town.



An interesting fact, as we walk along, is that *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* reported on April 15th, 1784, that a Mr. Rosseau, accompanied by a 10 year-old drummer boy playing 'The Grenadier's March', flew in a hot air balloon from here, in a south-easterly direction and landed in a field near the village of Ratoath. Strangely, however, the honour of the first balloon flight in Ireland is usually accorded to another aeronaut, one Richard Crosbie, who took off from Dublin in January 1785. As a result, Navan's place in aeronautical history remains to be established.



Continue on this street and, at the roundabout, take a left and then pause at the sculpture.

On your left shortly will be the modern landmark building you see at the end of the Civic Plaza is **St. Mary's Credit Union**. This award-winning structure, designed by local architect Paul Leech, has received special recognition for its sustainable and eco-friendly design. The sculpture close to the main entrance is by Derry-born sculptor Eamon O'Doherty and depicts a salmon leaping up a waterfall on its way upstream to spawn.



14

Canon Row/De La Salle National School/O'Growney Terrace

The street named Canon Row, one of the oldest in the town and dating back to 1540, is named after the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine whose monastery has completely disappeared. In the rush to gaelicise the street names in the 1920s it was called in Irish, 'Sraid na Gunnaí Móra', 'the street of the cannons' or 'big guns'!

In 1916 Bishop Gaughran purchased the old Militia Barracks which stood on the site of the 300 year old Augustinian Abbey known as St. Columba's Abbey. Bishop Gaughran had the building refurbished and introduced the De La Salle Brothers to Navan, giving them responsibility for the new national school. This replaced the old National School on the Fair Green, St. Columba's Abbey.



Walk up along Canon Row and, at the traffic lights at the end of the street turn left and walk down Trimgate Street.

The terrace of houses you see in front of you is the first housing development of its kind to be built in the town in the early 1900s. It is named after Fr. Eugene O'Growney, a native of Athboy who developed an early interest in the Irish language and who was appointed Professor of Irish at Maynooth College. As part of his efforts to revive the Irish language he published a series of lessons called *Simple Lessons* in Irish in the newspapers of the time. The lessons were also published in book form by the Gaelic League and O'Growney's *Simple Lessons* in Irish was successful in bringing the language to the attention of many people and inspiring them to learn it.

Fr. O'Growney's name is also strongly associated with Páirc Tailteann, the Gaelic Athletic Association playing fields in Navan where many of the Gaelic League meetings were held.



Trimgate Street has been the town's main street since the Middle Ages. As you walk down Trimgate Street, you will notice a stone plaque on the wall of the pub across the street, next to the Community Centre. The plaque commemorates the widening of one of the town gates, the Trim Gate in 1795, which was financed by John Fay, a wealthy Catholic miller. On Trimgate Street you can see some of the few narrow medieval alleyways to have survived.





15

Chapel Yard

When you turn into the Chapel Yard, the first thing you will see is a stone crucifix chiselled by a local stonemason named **Thomas Curry** which was presented to St. Mary's Church in the mid 19th century. On one side of the cross is a figure of the Crucifixion, and on the other is a *Stabat Mater* which depicts the mother of Jesus at the foot of the cross.



St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church was built between 1830 -1839 under the direction of **Fr. Eugene O'Reilly**. His long association with Navan, beginning as curate in 1797, founder and president of St. Finian's School for Boys in 1802 and parish priest from 1827-1852, makes him one of the founders of the modern town. To ensure good acoustics at mass, the church was modeled on the Cercle Metropolitan of Paris. Inside, some interesting features include a bust of Fr. O'Reilly to the left of the altar, and paintings of the four Evangelists above the altar, commissioned in 1950 from the artist Richard King. The crucifix over the altar was created by **Edward Smith**, the leading sculptor of the day. It was commissioned by the parishioners of the original church which stood on this site, as a public statement that the dark Penal Days were over. This is the only religious piece in wood by Edward Smith to have survived.



Continuing through the churchyard, you will see to your right St. Anne's Primary School, established in 1831 by the Loreto Nuns as the first free school for girls in Navan. Across the street from the churchyard is the Fair Green where the weekly Navan fair was held on Mondays. Now a market takes place on Fridays where you can buy everything from carpets to potatoes.

You have walked through hundreds of years of Navan history and come full circle. Now, take some time to explore the town further, ramble back down Trimgate Street, take the weight off your feet and have a deserving cup of coffee, or take in some shopping in the many delightful shops Navan has to offer.

Whatever you decide to do, enjoy your visit to Navan, Ireland's floral town.



Navan

Solstice Arts Centre
Tourist Information and Arts Centre
Railway Street, Navan, Co. Meath
Tel +353 (0) 46 909 2300
touristinfo@solsticeartscentre.ie
www.solsticeartscentre.com

Trim

Trim Visitor Centre
Tourist Office & Coffee Shop
Town Hall, Castle Street, Trim, Co. Meath
Tel +353 (0) 46 943 7227
trimvisitorcenter@eircom.net

Kells

Kells Tourist Information Point
Kells Civic Offices, Headfort Place, Kells, Co. Meath
(opposite the Church and beside the Headfort Arms Hotel)
Tel +353 (0) 46 9248856
kellstouristoffice@meathcoco.ie

Brú Na Bóinne (Newgrange)

Brú Na Bóinne Visitor Centre
Donore, Co. Meath
Tel +353 (0) 41 988 0305
brunaboinne@failteireland.ie

Oldcastle

Kraft Kaffee and Tourist Point
1 Ardfrail Court, Millbrook Road, Oldcastle, Co. Meath
Tel +353 (0) 49 8542645

Our Tourist Information Centres can also provide customised itineraries of County Meath to suit your interests, provide information on entertainment and leisure activities and reserve accommodation at approved facilities throughout Ireland.

