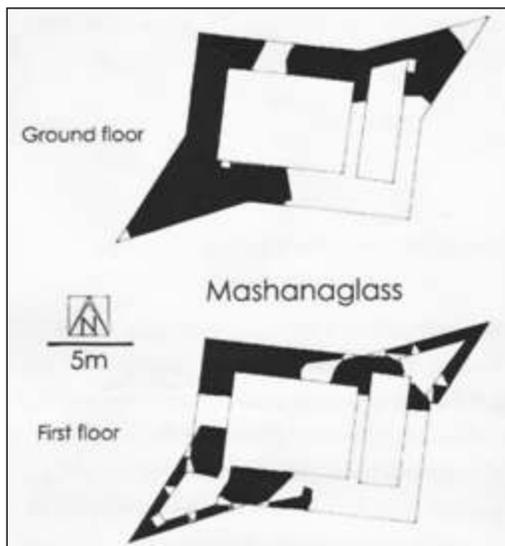




Mashanaglass, a four-storey tower house that suffered severe damage in 1864. South facade.



Mashanaglass - late 16th century four-storey tower house with redans to the NE and SW.

Location: Townland of Mashanaglass, Ir. Maigh Seanghlaise or Ma Seanghlaise (the plain of the old/mature stream), Co. Cork.

Description: A rectangular tower house, measuring 14.65m by 9.7m, with acute-angled, triangular projections or spurs (or redans) at the SW and NE corners stands in level pasture. The tower now stands to four storeys but was possibly at least one floor higher. In about 1864 the SE corner was blown up by ‘vandals’ so that most of the east wall and the east half of the south wall no longer stand. At ground-floor level, the north end of a guard chamber survives in the thickness of the east wall, close to the NE corner, indicating that the tower was entered by a door in the centre of the east wall, with a spiral stair rising in the SE corner (no trace of either feature surviving). There appear to have been mural chambers in the east wall at first, second and third-floor levels, of which only the walls at the north end survive.

The main ground-floor chamber, measuring 7.4m by 5.4m, is lit by splayed window embrasures covered by segmental vaults in the south and north walls, the latter having a single ogee-headed light. The main first-floor chamber is covered by a rounded vault, the SE corner of which has col-

lapsed. There is currently no access to the floor over the vault. A window in the south wall at second-floor level has a double ogee-headed light (mullion and jambs gone) and a hood moulding.



Condition in the 1970s

There are fireplaces in the north wall on the second and third floors, the higher one having a vertically grooved jamb, the surrounds otherwise having disappeared. Four corbels in the north wall above third-floor level indicate the former presence of at least one further floor. At first-floor level, doors in the SW and NE corners of the tower give access to the corner projections. In plan the projections are brought forward 0.2m at right angles from the side walls of the tower, then taper for 6.4m towards a blunted point. The projections stand to first-floor level and have inclined stone roofs. Each appears to be solid at ground-floor level, with a triangular chamber covered by a segmental plank-centred vault, at first-floor level. They have four gun loops each: one in each corner covering the side walls of the tower and one mid-way along each side, looking outwards. At the same level there are gun loops set into the east end of the north wall and the west end of the south wall of tower. These penetrate the wall at an angle from the corners of square-set, lintelled embrasures such that the asymmetrical external splays allow coverage of the spurs.

Similar projecting spurs exist at Carrignacurra Castle (Inchigeela, Co. Cork, about 14km WSW of here and currently for sale), built post-1570, and at Castle Hyde (just west of Fermoy, Co. Cork, (and just put back on the market by Riverdance star Michael Flatley), described as ‘scarcely finished in 1587’. Mashanaglass has been dated to about 1584, when ownership transferred to the Mac Sweeneys.