

# Boyne Valley CAMINO

Starting at the impressive St Peter's Church, West Street in the medieval town of Drogheda, the Boyne Valley Camino takes us on a journey through history. The route is a mixture of riverside, greenway, wood paths, quiet country roads, canal path and green fields on its route from Drogheda to Old Mellifont Abbey and back.

The 25km walk forms a figure of eight looped walk via Townley Hall Woods on the way out to Mellifont Abbey through Tullyallen village, down King William's Glen via Belnumber Wood, across the beautiful Boyne at the Obelisk and back into Drogheda via Oldbridge along the Boyneside Trail and Ramparts. The Boyne Valley Camino (25km), added to the Camino from A Coruña to Santiago (75km) in Spain, entitles walkers to a Compostela certificate in Santiago.

WAY OUT/ SLÍ AMACH	c. 12KM	DROGHEDA (ST PETER'S RC CHURCH)	TOWNLEY HALL (CAR PARK)	MELLIFONT ABBEY
		c. 5KM	c. 7KM	
WAY BACK/ SLÍ ABHAILE	c. 13KM	MELLIFONT ABBEY	BELNUMBER WOOD (TULLYALLEN)	DROGHEDA (ST PETER'S RC CHURCH)
		c. 6KM	c. 7KM	

## WAY BACK / SLÍ ABHAILE c. 13KM

**MELLIFONT ABBEY** → **ST. PETER'S RC CHURCH**  
GPS: 53.742861, -6.465604

- Leaving **Mellifont Abbey**, return to the crossroad. Go right and retrace your steps for 1.2km to **Lynch's Cross**. Continue straight ahead on this road for a further 1.6km to a T-Junction opposite Tullyallen School and football field.
- Go right and walk 100m to a crossroad. Go left here to **Tullyallen Village**. Continue through the village as far as the supermarket where you can get a stamp on your passport.
- Return from the supermarket in the direction of the school. You can get a stamp at the **Morning Star Pub**. Take the turn to the left, opposite the Morning Star Pub, signposted for the church and follow this road past the church. (Our Lady of the Assumption).
- Go around the back of the church (site of Williamite Camp before **Battle of the Boyne**) and follow this road back to the village opposite the pub. (There is a well on your right at this T-Junction.)
- Go left here opposite the Morning Star Pub and walk back to the crossroad after the school.
- Go left at the crossroad and approx. 200m downhill you can access **Belnumber Wood (King William's Glen)** via a timber gate on your right. Follow this meandering path through the wood for 1.3km and when you reach the end of it, go left and walk for 100m to reach the small carpark at the crossroads on the **N51**.

**BATTLE OF THE BOYNE**  
The Battle of the Boyne was fought in 1690 between Protestant King William III (William of Orange) and his father-in-law, Catholic King James II to control England, Scotland and Ireland. William of Orange, with his 36,000 troops was victorious. One of his major camps was behind Tullyallen Church, where they had the benefit of the elevated ground. Our walk follows his route down King William's Glen.

**OBELISK BRIDGE**  
Built in 1868, this single span iron girder road bridge is a fine example of 19th century engineering. A 54m high Obelisk to mark the Williamite victory at the Battle of the Boyne stood from 1763 until it was destroyed in 1923. The mound it stood on is visible to the Northern side of the bridge.

## WAY OUT / SLÍ AMACH c. 12KM

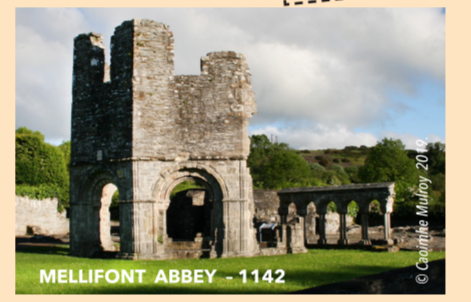
**ST. PETER'S RC CHURCH** → **MELLIFONT ABBEY**  
GPS: 53.715017, -6.352781

- Start at **St Peter's RC Church**, West St, Drogheda, Co Louth. With church facing you, go left, walk past the **Westcourt Hotel**. Walk 200m to a crossroad with the **R132**.
- Go through the crossroad at Bridge of Peace and walk 150m on the **R168** Trinity St. towards Slane. Go left down **Horse Lane** to the river.
- At the end of the lane, go right and follow the riverside path for 800m until it brings you back to the **R168** at Mell.
- Go left onto the **R168** and walk 400m to a 3-way junction near Aldi.
- Take the **R168 for Collon/Slane** (stay on the main road) and walk 700m. Just beyond the recycle centre, go left onto a lane after a stone house (bullaun stone outside the house).
- Walk 700m to the end of the lane and go right.
- Walk 200m and go under the **M1** motorway via the underpass. Continue for 1km to the busy **N51 Slane Road**. Cross the **N51** carefully and walk to the old road parallel to it.
- Go left onto the old road, passing a well on your right, walk downhill 400m to the end of the road and cross safely to the carpark.
- Cross the carpark and enter the wood via the entrance between two piers. Follow this wood path for approx. 1km to tarmac road at small stream, bridge and carpark at the main entrance to **Townley Hall**.

**ST. OLIVER PLUNKETT**  
Oliver Plunkett was born in 1625 in Loughcrew, Co Meath. He was ordained a Priest in 1651 and founded Ireland's first integrated Jesuit College in Drogheda. He was condemned to death for 'promoting the Roman faith' and was hung, drawn and quartered in Tyburn, London. His head has been in St Peter's RC Church in Drogheda since 1921. Oliver Plunkett was canonized in 1975 and became the first Irish saint in almost 700 years.

**SALMON OF KNOWLEDGE**  
Legend has it that Fionn Mac Cumhail, great leader of the Fianna and brave warrior got his wisdom by being the first to taste the salmon of knowledge caught on the River Boyne.

- Go right and follow the tarmac road into the wood. Follow this road for 800m until you reach a metal gate.
- Go right here into the wood and follow the wood path around, close to the perimeter fence. After 500m you will emerge onto a hard roadway.
- Go right and then after 10m go left and then go right again immediately on the hard road. After 300m, at a right-angle bend, leave the road and take the grass path straight ahead of you (go around metal barrier on grass path).
- Walk 100m and then go left and follow this path to the end after 500m.
- Go right at the end of the path and then walk 100m to a main road (Townley Hall Road).
- Go left onto the main road and walk 300m and then take the first right onto a minor road (house with paddock-style fence, stand alone red brick garage on right).
- Follow this road for 600m uphill and then at a sharp right-hand bend follow the road for another 800m to a T-Junction (**Lynch's Cross**). This is the highest point on the route with great views of the Boyne Valley.
- Go left at the T-Junction and stay on this road for 1.2km to a crossroad.
- Go left and walk 300m along a cul-de-sac to **Old Mellifont Abbey**.



**TOWNLEY HALL WOODS**  
The Townley Hall Woods were planted up to 200 years ago. Species are mainly oak, beech, ash, sycamore, silver fir, and scots pine. Holly, blackthorn, hazel, ivy and elder pop up in the gaps, as well as beautiful woodland flowers such as anemone, primrose, bluebells and the fern provide fabulous ground cover under the trees and shady gorges. This cover provides an ideal habitat for badger, fox, squirrel, pine martin and deer.

**MELLIFONT ABBEY**  
Mellifont Abbey was the first Cistercian monastery in Ireland, founded in 1142 by St Malachy of Armagh. The ruins are great for exploring and the excellent information boards around the site tell stories of the Abbey through the ages, including the Lavabo (wash house) which was built c 1200. This site is managed by the OPW. Ireland's first youth hostel was on this site. The name comes from Latin Mellifons, meaning Font of Honey.

- Carefully cross the **N51** in the direction of Oldbridge House, crossing the **Obelisk** metal bridge. Follow road over bridge veering left along the Boyne Canal, then right across humpback bridge.
- After crossing the humpback canal bridge, you can access the start of the **Boyneside Trail** to Drogheda on your left.
- The entrance to **Oldbridge House** (1750) is on your right. You can detour off our walk to enjoy Oldbridge House which houses the Battle of the Boyne Interpretive Centre, café, gardens and magnificent grounds. Managed by OPW.
- Follow the **Boyneside Trail** for 1.6km and this leads onto the ramparts path along the Boyne. This riverside path leads to Drogheda after 2.3km. In Drogheda, follow the path under the roadway bridge (Bridge of Peace) and continue until you reach a pedestrian bridge. (Sculpture – 'The Wanderer').
- Cross the St. Dominic's Bridge (Dominican church on other side) and continue straight ahead uphill. At the top of Dominic Street, go right and this will bring you back to **St Peter's Church**.

**PILL BOXES**  
Built in 1940 by the Ministerial Committee on National Defence during the Emergency, Pill Boxes were constructed to defend Ireland's neutral status in the Second World War. Constructed with reinforced concrete, these squat, flat roofed buildings, with horizontal lookout and firing slits, housed one or two men. Keep and eye out for four of these defence pill boxes between the Obelisk and Drogheda.

**MARY McALEESSE BOYNE CABLE BRIDGE**  
Named after former President Mary McAleese for her work on the Peace Process. The bridge spans the river 3km west of Drogheda. This is a four lane, 352m, cable-stayed bridge that carries the M1 motorway between Dublin and Belfast and was completed in 2003 at a cost of €35 million. This attractive inverted Y structure, with 56 individual span cables is illuminated with strong blue light at night and can be seen for miles in many directions.

## DROGHEDA/DROICHEAD ÁTHA

Steeped in history on the banks of the Boyne, **Drogheda / Droichead Átha**, meaning the bridge of the ford, is Ireland's largest town. A medieval walled town full of arts, culture, lively bars, restaurants and many historical sites. Drogheda's proximity to the history-rich Boyne Valley to the west and fantastic beaches to the east make it a perfect base for exploring the town itself and hinterland. Boyne Valley Walking Group often lead walks and detail many local routes.



If you'd like to explore more on foot, please search online for **'Drogheda Walks'** or pick up a copy of the FREE Drogheda Walks map. Four walks through the town take different routes which highlight places of interest in our built, cultural, religious and natural history.

**BRIDGES** c. 1.5KM WALK  
**SPIRES** c. 4KM WALK  
**WALLS** c. 4KM LOOP  
**STEPS** c. 6.5KM LOOP

**www.drogheda.ie**  
For more to see and do in and around Drogheda, visit [www.drogheda.ie](http://www.drogheda.ie)

## DROGHEDA TO A CORUÑA

The Camino de Santiago (The Way of Saint James), is a network of pilgrims' ways leading to the shrine of the apostle St. James the Great in the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, northwestern Spain. Pilgrimages were at their peak from the 13th to 16th centuries before the Reformation of the Church and various European wars that hindered travel. The Camino routes are once again becoming popular for distance walks, spiritual journeys, endurance challenges or just the opportunity to do something different for holiday.

**Pilgrim Routes**  
Traditionally, Camino pilgrims started their journey from their own homes and various Camino de Santiago routes developed over time crossing most of Europe. The Camino Ingles, was the route preferred by Irish and British pilgrims on their way to Santiago. Pilgrims would take a boat from the main ports in their countries and land in the north of Spain to continue their journey. The main starting point on this Camino route is A Coruña, in Galicia, Spain.

**Celtic Camino**  
While A Coruña is a traditional starting point, it is only 75km away from Santiago, meaning pilgrims wouldn't be able to obtain their Compostela certificate in Santiago. It is now possible to walk 25km on the Boyne Valley Camino around Drogheda and then do a further 75km from A Coruña to Santiago; a combination of the two walks will give pilgrims the required 100km for a Compostela. The Boyne Valley Camino reconnects ancient routes between Drogheda and A Coruña.

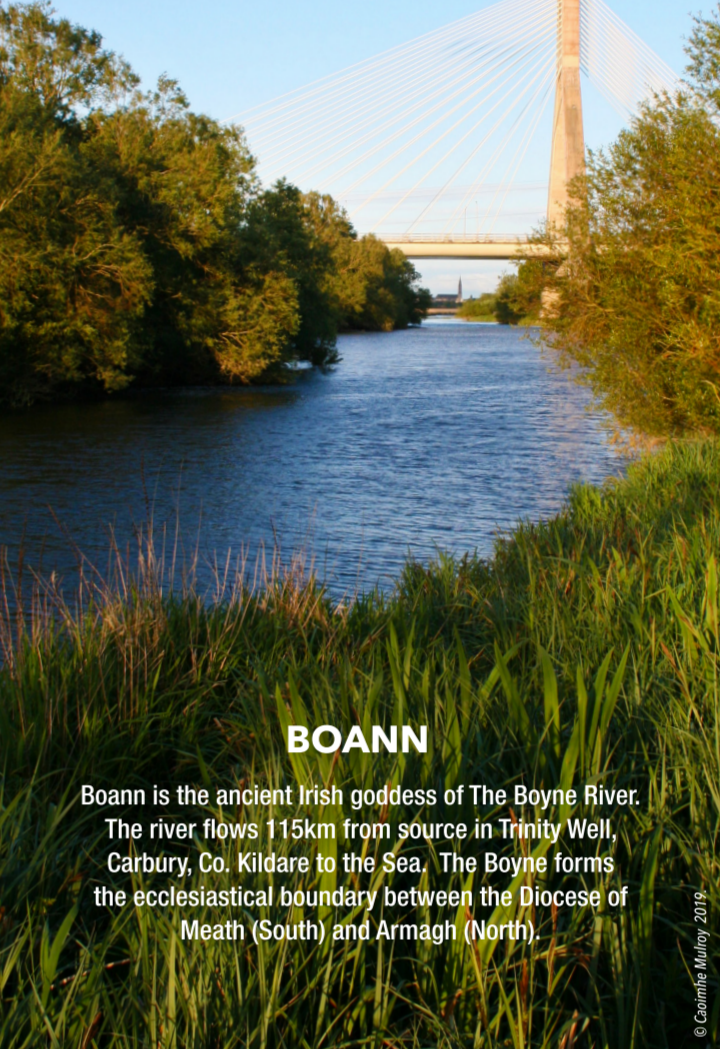
**Link from Drogheda to A Coruña**  
In medieval times pilgrims travelled long distances to Drogheda from all over the North East and Midlands before embarking for A Coruña in Spain. In Drogheda, it is understood that there was a hostel/hospital catering for the pilgrims by providing shelter and rest while they waited for the ships. It was located near the town walls in what is now the Scotch Hall area. Several references are made to Drogheda as a departure point in Dr Bernadette Cunningham's book, 'Medieval Irish pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela'.



## THE RIVER BOYNE

*"The Boyne, its source sanctified by religious veneration, and commemorated in legend and in song; serene and peaceful, like a true philosopher, it glides noiselessly on, in deep but calm repose, bestowing the blessings of fertility on the counties through which it flows bearing on its bosom the intercourse which socialises man; enriching, beautifying and civilizing, it receives in return the homage of its tributaries, and finally mingles with that eternity of waters, the sea."*

William Wilde  
*The Beauties of the Boyne and Blackwater, 1849*



## HOW TO GET YOUR CAMINO PASSPORT

The Camino Passport can be purchased from **The Camino Society Ireland** at their office or from their website. The passport comes in book and the newer foldout format and both are official.

Passport cost: €10

**Buy online or at The Camino Society Ireland office**  
Address: St. James's Church, James's St, Dublin 8, D08 X799. (Office beside St James's church)  
Hours: Thursday to Saturday 10.30 to 15.30 – April to October  
Email: [info@caminosociety.ie](mailto:info@caminosociety.ie)  
Tel: 087 224 3618  
[www.caminosociety.com](http://www.caminosociety.com)

## STAMPING YOUR PASSPORT

**WAY OUT / SLÍ AMACH**  
**St. Peter's Church** - West Street, Drogheda  
**Westcourt Hotel** - West Street, Drogheda  
**Hurley's Delicatessen** - Narrow West Street, Drogheda  
**Mellifont Abbey** - OPW office during season (May-Sept)

**WAY BACK / SLÍ ABHAILE**  
**Lynch's Supermarket** - Main Street, Tullyallen  
**Morning Star Pub** - Main Street, Tullyallen  
**Oldbridge House** - Oldbridge, Co. Meath  
**Droichead Arts Centre** - Stockwell Street, Drogheda  
**Tourist Office** - Tholsel, Drogheda  
**Clarke's Bar** - Peter Street, Drogheda

**TO COMPLETE YOUR COMPOSTELA:**  
Bring your Camino Passport to A Coruña in Northern Spain and walk the 75km to Santiago, collecting stamps en route.

**Boyne Valley Camino**  
FREE MAP & GUIDE  
A Big Thanks To:  
Monsignor Jim Carroll and St Peter's Church on West Street  
Colleen and the OPW – custodians of our built and natural heritage.  
The Boyneside Trail and Tullyallen Community volunteers for their work into securing safe walking routes along the Boyne and through Belnumber Wood.  
Our kind sponsors, the Westcourt Hotel, Clarke's Bar, Coca-Cola, ProHealth Chartered Physiotherapy, The Morning Star Pub, Drogheda Tidy Towns and Louth and Brian Conolly for many of the amazing photographic images in this document.  
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Santiago via A Coruña.

**Advice to Walkers**  
Please ensure your personal safety while enjoying this Camino. Let someone know where you are going, bring a charged phone, go in company, go in good light, wear hi-viz. Some parts of the trail are shared with vehicles and cyclists so please adhere to the rules of the road. Some areas may be muddy so wear sturdy boots, bring clothes layers, sunscreen and waterproofs for any weather eventually. Bring food and drinks. Recycle or dispose of any waste correctly. If you encounter an emergency situation, call 999 or 112.

**Boyne Valley Camino**  
Boyne Valley Walking  
[www.drogheda.ie](http://www.drogheda.ie)  
Boyne Valley Walking  
Boyne Valley Walking  
Clarke's Bar  
The Morning Star  
Drogheda Tidy Towns  
Band Bano  
Once Upon Design  
ProHealth  
Westcourt Hotel  
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**Boyne Valley Camino**  
FREE MAP & GUIDE  
**Boyne Valley Camino**  
FREE MAP & GUIDE  
25km LOOP WALK  
**www.drogheda.ie**  
Boyne Valley Walking

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MELLIFONT ABBEY - 1142



TOWNLEY HALL WOOD



OBELISK BRIDGE



BOYNESIDE TRAIL/GREENWAY



DROGHEDA



ST. PETER'S RC CHURCH



OLIVER PLUNKETT  
by Edward Luttrell

# Boyne Valley CAMINO

**GPS Coordinates**

- ST. PETER'S RC CHURCH**  
GPS: 53.715017, -6.352781
- MELLIFONT ABBEY**  
GPS: 53.742861, -6.465604
- TOWNLEY HALL**  
(INTERSECTION OF KING WILLIAM'S GLEN & N51 SLANE ROAD)  
GPS: 53.726472, -6.416898
- OLDBRIDGE HOUSE**  
GPS: 53.723307, -6.423357

<b>WAY OUT / SLÍ AMACH</b>	<b>c. 12 KM</b>	<b>DROGHEDA</b> (ST. PETERS RC CHURCH)	<b>c. 5 KM</b>	<b>TOWNLEY HALL</b> (CAR PARK)	<b>c. 7 KM</b>	<b>MELLIFONT ABBEY</b>
<b>WAY BACK / SLÍ ABHAILE</b>	<b>c. 13 KM</b>	<b>MELLIFONT ABBEY</b>	<b>c. 6 KM</b>	<b>BELNUMBER WOOD</b> (TULLYALLEN)	<b>c. 7 KM</b>	<b>DROGHEDA</b> (ST. PETERS RC CHURCH)

**Legend:**

- P Parking
- ⚠ Caution
- 🍷 Picnic Area
- 📄 Stamp Location
- 🚻 Toilets
- ☕ Coffee
- 🍴 Restaurant
- 🍺 Pub
- 📷 Viewpoint
- ✝ Church
- 🛒 Supermarket
- H Hospital
- 🚏 Bus Station
- 🚉 Train Station
- 📍 Tourist Office
- 🚶 Pedestrian Crossing
- ⚔ Passage Grave
- ⚔ Battle of the Boyne Site

**Scale:** 0, 500m, 1km, 1/2 Mile

**Map Labels:** MELLIFONT ABBEY, TOWNLEY HALL, BELNUMBER WOOD, TULLYALLEN, DROGHEDA, RIVER BOYNE, BOYNESIDE TRAIL, OBELISK BRIDGE, HUMBBACK BRIDGE, OLD BRIDGE ESTATE, MARY McALEESE BOYNE CABLE BRIDGE, M1, N51, R168, R132, R130, R131, R133, R134, R135, R136, R137, R138, R139, R140, R141, R142, R143, R144, R145, R146, R147, R148, R149, R150, R151, R152, R153, R154, R155, R156, R157, R158, R159, R160, R161, R162, R163, R164, R165, R166, R167, R168, R169, R170, R171, R172, R173, R174, R175, R176, R177, R178, R179, R180, R181, R182, R183, R184, R185, R186, R187, R188, R189, R190, R191, R192, R193, R194, R195, R196, R197, R198, R199, R200.

**Notes:**

- You can detour off our walk to enjoy Oldbridge House which houses the Battle of the Boyne Interpretive Centre, café, gardens and magnificent grounds. Collect a stamp while you're there. Managed by OPW.



OLDBRIDGE HOUSE - 1750



BOYNESIDE TRAIL/GREENWAY



RAMPARTS

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