

# The Building Stones of Ireland



**1**  
**Ben Bulbin, Co. Sligo:**  
Limestone



**2**  
**Giant's Causeway, Co. Antrim:** Basalt



**3**  
**Holy Trinity Church, Portrush, Co. Antrim:**  
Basalt walls and limestone around windows



**4**  
**Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin:**  
Limestone from Dublin & Meath with pale limestone and green slate from England



**8**  
**Lynch's Castle, Galway:**  
Limestone



- Basalt (youngest)**
- Upper Carboniferous shales and coal**
- Lower Carboniferous limestone**
- Granite**
- Cambrian to Devonian sandstones and shales**
- Precambrian metamorphic rocks (oldest)**



**7**  
**Field boundary, Burren, Co. Clare:**  
Limestone

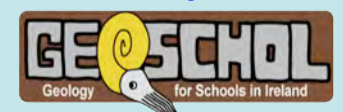


**6**  
**Staigue Fort, Co. Kerry:**  
Old Red Sandstone (Devonian)

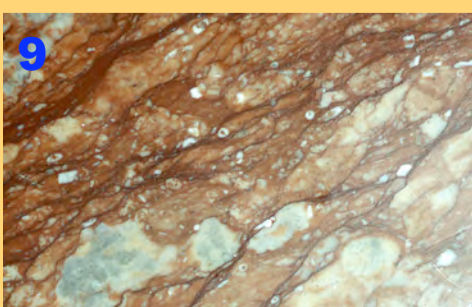


**5**  
**Cashel Palace, Co. Tipperary:**  
Red brick

Stone has been used in Ireland for building for over 4,000 years - the early builders used local stone, while nowadays, stone from all around the world is imported. Stone is usually hard wearing and is quarried in large blocks. These are then cut by huge saws into smaller pieces and may be carved into various shapes. Limestone is a common building material as it is found in many parts of Ireland. Today it is made into cement or shaped into blocks, or polished for use on buildings. Granite was also used in many places. Slates are flattened metamorphic rocks that are easily split for use on roofs. They were once quarried at Killaloe and Valentia Island. Bricks are made from clay that was formed as granite weathered and broke down. In the past different types of stone such as Connemara Marble were polished and used for decoration. Most buildings today are made of concrete on to which a thin layer of polished stone such as granite or limestone is attached to make them look more attractive.



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Text & images: Patrick Wyse Jackson



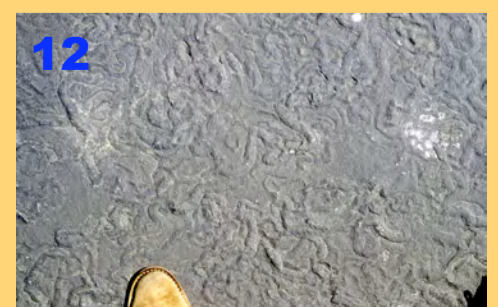
**9**  
**Cork Red Limestone, Little Island**



**10**  
**Connemara Marble, Co. Galway**



**11**  
**Leinster Granite, Co. Wicklow**



**12**  
**Liscannor Flagstone, Co. Clare**