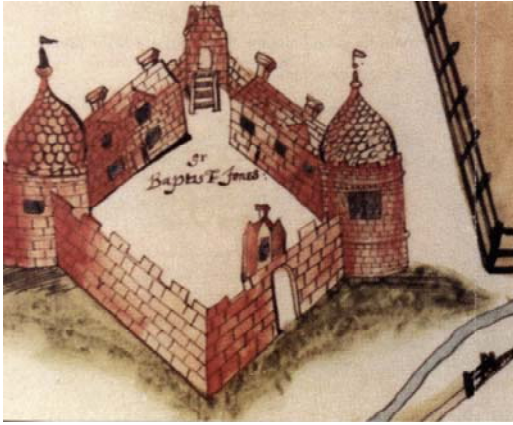


BELLAGHY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



BELLAGHY BAWN

Situated on a height above Castle Street in Bellaghy

The Vintner's Company built Bellaghy Castle (now Bawn) in 1613 for Sir Baptist Jones on a height overlooking the village. It was a fortification to defend the timbered village houses below it and the countryside surrounding the village. It had two round towers of which one is still standing.

The Castle was burnt down in the rebellion of 1641 and rebuilt. In 1829, following another fire it was rebuilt again in its present Georgian style. It was a family home from the eighteenth century onwards until its acquisition by the Department of the Environment, Historic Buildings division, in 1988. Extensive restorations were carried out and the Bawn was formally opened as a Heritage Centre in 1996.

Pride of place at the Bawn are rooms dedicated to the celebrated local poet Seamus Heaney many of whose manuscripts, rare books and papers are housed there.

On 2 April 2009, the poet himself unveiled a fine sculpture located outside the Bawn Gates. It is of a man digging turf, representing his poem on this subject.