

# OFFALY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	<b>Crinkill Mushroom Rocks</b>		
Other names used for site	The Nun's Stone		
<b>IGH THEME</b>	<b>IGH1 Karst</b>		
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	<b>Crinkill</b>		
<b>NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE</b>	<b>Birr</b>		
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	<b>35</b>		
<b>ITM CO-ORDINATES</b>	<b>605810E 703123N</b>		
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>GSi BEDROCK 1:100,000 Sheet No.</b>	<b>15</b>

## **Outline Site Description**

A complex of Mushroom Rocks – isolated upstanding rocks in a grass field.

## **Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type**

The rock is composed of Carboniferous Limestone but the solutional weathering is post glacial – that is, Holocene in age.

## **Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest**

Crinkill is a complex of mushroom rocks near Birr, with a few examples in a small area. Isolated upstanding rocks with undercut lips and shapes sometimes resembling mushrooms are believed to be the result of former temporary lake levels where the undercut section of the rock was submerged below lake water which was acid enough to dissolve the limestone it was in contact with. Such lakes or enlarged river basins were common in the period at the end of the Ice Age when extensive meltwaters could be trapped behind temporary dams of glacial till and remaining ice sheets.

An alternative hypothesis for some mushroom rocks is that they were dissolved below a soil or bog deposit which has subsequently either shrunk or been eroded away to reveal the weathered section of the rock.

At Crinkill, the Nun's Stone (Crinkill 1) is extant, and some metres away is a sloping base or 'stump' of an incomplete, eroded stone. Crinkill 3 is located in a separate field but was not found due to extensive blackthorn growth over the location which prevented access. Two mushroom rocks were located in an adjacent field on the west side of the road, but these have reportedly been moved by a landowner from the original location to the east of the road. The moved rocks are now at totally different heights in the field, even though they have been placed the correct way-up.

## **Site Importance – County Geological Site**

Crinkill 1 alone warrants classification and is recommending as a County Geological Site, given its local name and recognition, and that other stones have been damaged or removed from the vicinity.

## **Management/promotion issues**

The apparent removal of at least two other stones from this site is highly detrimental since their natural position is key to any scientific measurements to determine possible former lake levels or other features. The remaining stone should be protected from any disturbance or damage.

The site is on private farmland and no access to the stone should be made without permission of the landowner.



Crinkill 1, the Nun's Stone is visible from the adjacent road.



A 'stump' of a former mushroom rock close to Crinkill 1.



The Nun's Stone, Crinkill 1.

