



CASTLE SALEM About one mile from Rosscarbery on the main road to Skibbereen, a road signposted to the right leads to a secluded valley surrounded by steep hills in which Castle Salem is situated. In its early years Castle Salem was known as Benduff Castle and The Four Masters mention it was built by Catherine Fitzgerald, wife of Florence McCarthy Reagh, in 1470. Catherine, daughter of Thomas, 8th Earl of Desmond, was known as "the black lady" and various legends are told about her in connection with Benduff. Castle Salem was never plundered; the walls of the central tower were eleven feet thick, with passages and recesses and the usual stone stairway. The tower was originally about seventy feet high. During the latter half of the 17th Century the McCarthys were dispossessed and the castle was granted to Major Apollo Morris, an officer in Cromwell's army. He changed the name from Benduff Castle to Castle Salem, *salem* meaning peace. His successor, William Morris, took the top off the castle and put on a slated roof. He also built a new house against the old walls in 1682. William Morris was an intimate friend of William Penn, whose father was governor of Kinsale. William Penn emigrated to the New World and founded the colony of Pennsylvania.