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## Roscommon

**R**OSCOMMON, the principal town of Co. Roscommon, has a population of over 2,000, its name is from the Patron Saint, Saint Coman, whose first monastery was in the sixth century. The site was adjacent to the junction of Lanesboro' Street and the Circular Road. A field connected with the Monastery is still called the Humain Field (Páirc Chomain), a well, now dried up was a place of local pilgrimage upto 80 years ago.

During the Saint's lifetime the monks moved their monastery to the place now occupied by the Protestant Church in Church Street and the cemetery behind it. A famous monastic school was here and flourished with varying fortunes up

to the 16th century when Saint Comans suffered the usual fate of such institutions in Ireland. The famous "Cross of Cong" as it is called was made in AD 1123 by a monk in Cloonsellan Abbey on the order of King Turlogh More O'Connor. In the centre of this work of art was a portion of the True Cross sent to Turlogh by Pope Callistus II. The cross was enshrined in Saint Coman's Abbey, later it disappeared and was found in Cong early in the 18th century and is now in the Dublin Museum since 1839.

A royal Charter gave to the Prior of Saint Coman's in 1282 the right to hold a weekly market on Saturday. This market continues to the present day.