

# Ballyshannon :

— *its* —

*History and Antiquities*

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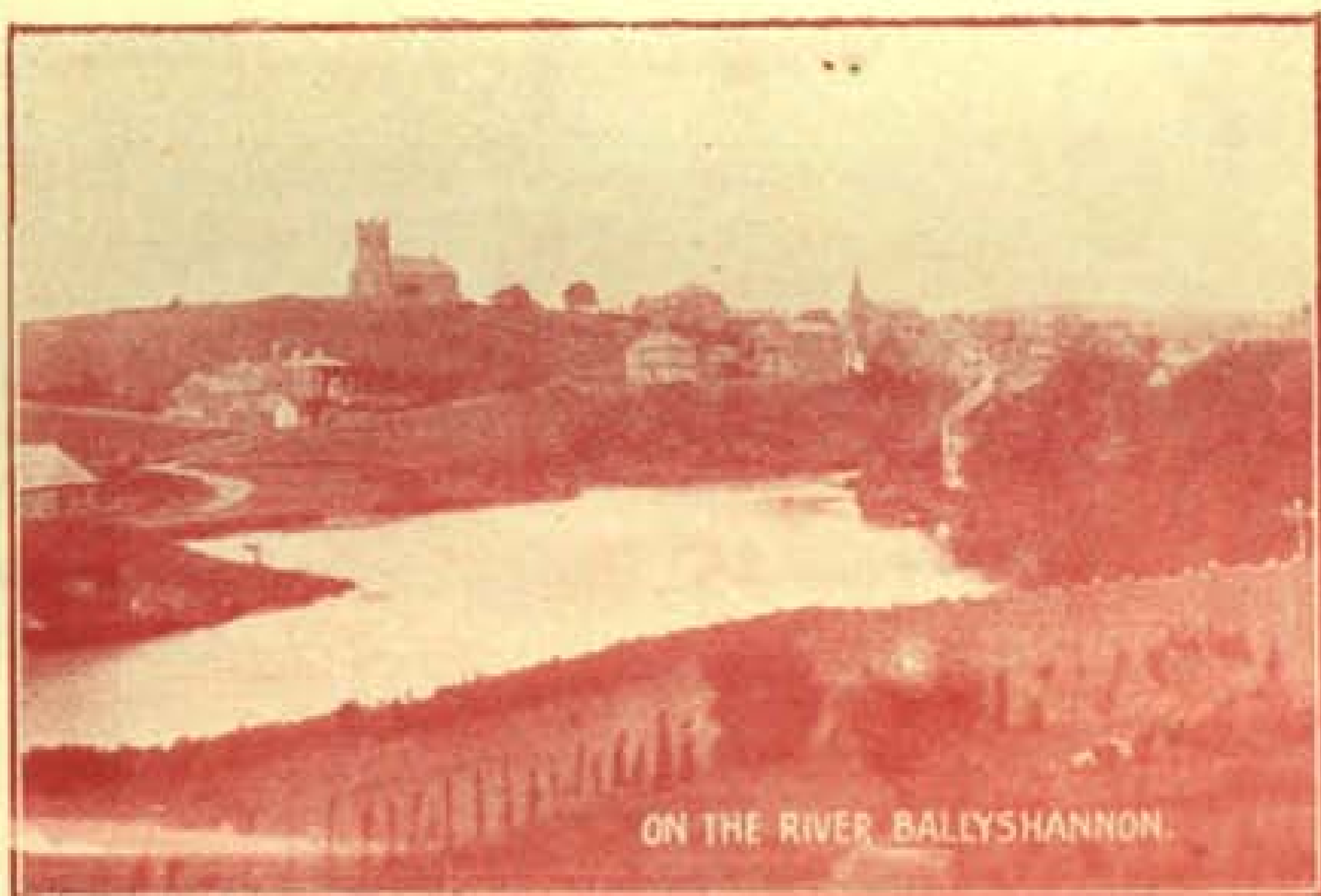
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FALLS OF ASSAROE,  
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ON THE RIVER BALLYSHANNON.



# BALLYSHANNON :

—its—

## HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES ;

—with—

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE SURROUNDING NEIGHBOURHOOD.

—by—

HUGH ALLINGHAM.



BALLYSHANNON :

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1937

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TO

*The People of Ballyshannon,*

AT HOME AND ABROAD,

THESE CHRONICLES OF THEIR NATIVE PLACE

ARE DEDICATED

BY THEIR

WELL-WISHER AND FELLOW-TOWNSMAN,

H.A.

LEABHARLANN

Dhún na nGall

LÉANN DHÚN na nGALL  
DONEGAL STUDIES



## PREFACE.

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There are few towns so modern or so devoid of historic interest as not to afford sufficient subject-matter to fill a moderate sized volume; but in the compilation of a local history, many difficulties arise in collecting reliable information which has to be gathered from sources very widely scattered and often not easily attainable.

The town of Ballyshannon, though now suffering from the chilling effects of a diminished trade and a decreased population, can at least boast of its superior antiquity, and its many historical associations.

To collect these scattered memorials of bygone times, and present in a connected and readable form, an epitome of all that relates to our town, past and present, is the aim and object of the following pages. In their preparations no pains have been spared to obtain the best and most accurate information, and I have carefully consulted many manuscripts hitherto unpublished.

My best acknowledgements are due to the Very Rev. William Reeves, D.D., M.B., M.R.I.A., Dean of Armagh, our greatest living authority on Irish ecclesiastical antiquities, for his valuable aid and kind encouragement. Through the assistance of P. W. Joyce, Esq., LL.D., M.R.I.A., I have been enabled to give much interesting information respecting the origin of our local names, a branch of literary research with which his name has become famous. To Richard G. Symes, Esq., F.G.S., Royal Geological Survey, I am indebted for the particulars respecting the geology of the district. My thanks are also due to W. F. Wakeman, Esq., whose pen and pencil have so often gracefully depicted the antiquities of Ireland.

For permission to insert the copyright poems, "The Goblin Child" and "The Winding Banks of Erne," I am indebted to their author, William Allingham, whose poems, especially those relating to the Town, have taken a firm root in the memories of Ballyshannon people, both at home and abroad.

To all those friends who have assisted me by placing at my disposal various books and papers, not otherwise obtainable, I tender my best thanks.

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NOTE—The views of Ballyshannon which forms the frontispiece though only comprising a portion of the town, have been selected as being picturesque and appropriate.



## PREFACE.

The zoological notes are the result of careful observation and inquiry, and the particulars respecting the Flora have been derived in most instances from personal investigation; all the doubtful species having been submitted for identification to an experienced botanist—S. A. Stewart, Esq., Fellow of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh.

Though conscious of many defects and shortcomings in the execution of my task, I yet indulge the hope that this little book may be the means of rescuing from an undeserved oblivion, the memory of many persons and circumstances associated with the history of our town in former times; and that throughout its pages, the stranger as well as the resident, may find varied items of useful information.

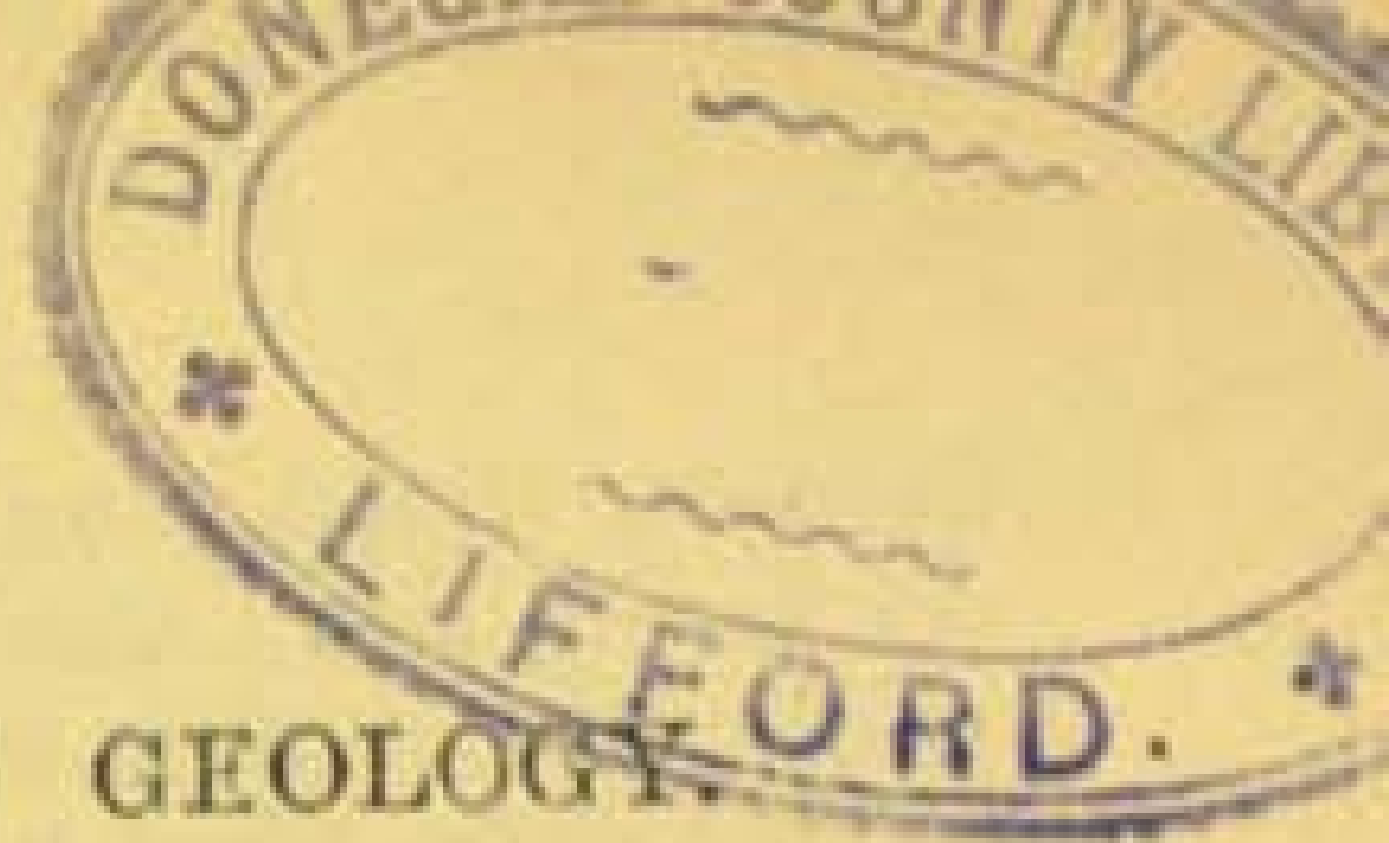
H.A

BALLYSHANNON, DECEMBER, 1879.

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## CHAPTER I.

### PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GEOLOGY.

Ballyshannon, an ancient town in Ulster, the largest in the County Donegal, is in the barony of Tirhugh (\*); it forms a portion of two parishes—that of Kilbarron and Innismacsaint—and lies close to the frontier line dividing Tirconail (now Ulster) from the “ Kingdom of Connaught.”

The most prominent physical feature of the town is the river Erne, which, dividing it into two portions, flows rapidly to the celebrated waterfall of Assaroe, where it discharges, it has been estimated, four hundred thousand tons of water per hour (†) into the estuary below.

That the site of Ballyshannon was chosen by its founders by reason of its possessing this joint natural attraction—river and waterfalls—there can be little doubt. Waterfalls we know were sources of especial interest to the early inhabitants of Ireland; almost every fall of any consequence possesses a legend of its own, and the early settlers and inhabitants of our country have left behind them abundant proof that they were not wanting in a just appreciation of what was beautiful in nature, and best suited to their personal comfort and safety.

Ballyshannon was generally called by the old annalists Ath-Seanaigh. Bel-atha signifies ford entrance, or mouth of a ford; Seanaigh, from Seanna, who was grandson of Conal Gulban, the progenitor of St Columbkille, and also of the race of the O'Donnells, princes of Tirconnell, hence the name means the mouth of Seanach's ford. The termination ‘on’ in the present name is a modern corruption, and is discarded by many of the old-fashioned inhabitants, who still call it Ballyshanny. In the charter granted by James I. the name is spelt Balleshannon, while Spenser in his “ View of the State of Ireland,” calls it Bally-shannon.

The natural features of the country neighbouring the town are varied and interesting; that on the north side of the river being pleasingly diversified by numerous hills and valleys, frequently interspersed with small lakes and streams. On the south side lies the extensive but broken plain (about 15 miles by 7) known as the Moy, while the fine mountain range of Dartry, extending from Rossinver to Ben Gulban, forms the southern boundary of our

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(\*) Tirhugh is called in Irish authorities Tir-Aedha, i.e., the territory of Aedh or Hugh, king of Ireland, who summoned the celebrated Convention of Drumceat in 573.

(†) Messrs. Stevenson's Report on Ballyshannon Harbour, 1832.



district. Truskmore, the highest of this range is 2,115 feet above sea level ; Ben Gulban or Ben Bulben, 1,722 feet. Looking seawards, three miles distant, is Donegal Bay, into which the waters of the Erne, after many bends and curves, make their final exit at the Bar, and mingle with the Atlantic waves. At Coolnargit (cuil-an-airgit)—i.e., the recess or winding of the silver—are extensive sandbanks ; owing to the composition of this sand—minute particles of shells and rocks—it possesses little or no cohesive properties, hence it is the sport of every passing storm ; and though the sea-reed (*Psamsa arenaria*) with its wide-spreading roots helps to keep the sand together, the hills have within the last quarter of a century rapidly decreased in size, and their shape has been greatly altered.

There is one other feature of our neighbourhood which will particularly strike the stranger, and that is the vast quantity of stones and rocks scattered about the fields, and the almost complete absence of trees and shrubs, excepting a sprinkling here and there round country houses. Bereft of trees as our district now is, at one time extensive forests clothed the surface of the country ; indeed, the locality was noted for the extent of its oak forests, under whose umbrageous shelter, the wild boar (*sus scrofa*) and the red deer (*cervus elaphus*) found a suitable refuge from the huntsman and his wolf-dog. In many of our local names of places is preserved a remembrance of the “king of trees,” the prefix Derry (Doire or Daire), meaning oak wood, is in very frequent occurrence in the composition of names in our district, as Derryhirk—i.e., the oak wood of the boar ; Derry-naseer—i.e., the oak wood of the carpenter, etc.

The Moy at one time was an extensive forest, and trees grew even to the water's edge, on that now treeless wind-swept region of Ballymacward and Kildoney. Near to the Bar those rugged rocks known as the “forest rocks” once marked the limit of trees whose roots must have been washed by the tidal waves. The climatic changes brought about by the removal of such extensive planting must have been considerable ; among these an increased temperature and a diminished rainfall were probably the most important. Ballyshannon now enjoys a comparatively warm temperature, which is owing in a great measure to the heating influence of the Gulf Stream (\*). The isothermal line (or line of mean annual temperature) which passes Vienna, London, etc., reaches its highest latitude about 80 miles north-west of Bundoran.

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(\*) So great is the heat communicated by this ocean river, it has been calculated that the warmth thrown into the Atlantic by the Gulf Stream on a winter's day, would be sufficient to raise the temperature of that part of the atmosphere which rests upon France and Great Britain, from freezing point to summer heat.—“Norway and its Glaciers” by Professor Forbes.



The average yearly rainfall at Ballyshannon, of which a daily register has been kept since 1st January, 1874, is 41.64 inches (†) Our district, though wetter than some places on the east coast, is much dryer than the southern and more western portions of Ireland. Moreover, it is in a great measure free from the cold easterly winds. Westerly and south westerly currents prevailing during the greater part of the year.

The harbour or tidal portion of the river covers a superficies of 606 imperial acres. The tides at springs rise about 10 or 11 feet (varying with the force of winds and other causes) and at low water there is about two feet on the Bar. The channel is considerably deeper, in many places being 20, and in some 30 feet deep at springs. The harbour being situated east of the five o'clock tidal line, the time of high water at springs may be approximately stated at 5 40.

The strength of the in-coming tidal wave is sufficient for some hours to check the outward progress of the great volume of fresh water coming down from Lough Erne, but generally about half an hour before high water at the Bar, the pent up "fresh" becomes too strong for the rising tide, and consequently begins to flow down, thus sometimes presenting a serious difficulty to the navigation of vessels crossing the Bar.

The town of Ballyshannon stands on the north-west margin of the carboniferous limestone which forms the extensive plain known as the "Great Central Plain of Ireland"; but that the lowest rocks of the lower carboniferous period are to be found in Ballyshannon is not to be inferred from this statement, as a large fault, or series of faults (the technical term for a fracture in a rock), separate the limestone from the metamorphic rocks which are to be found immediately north of the town. The observer has only to go down to the Pool, where he will see these "faults" well marked for a considerable distance to the west. Along the road leading from Ballyshannon to Pettigo is the boundary line which divides the two great series—the limestone and the metamorphic (\*).

The rocks of our district may be divided into two classes, I.—The Carboniferous Limestones and their Associated Sandstones. II.—The Metamorphic Series.

(†) An inch of rain represents about 100 tons per acre.

(\*) The physical features north and south of this road, especially in the vicinity of Cliff, are very remarkable. On the one side we have the cold barren outline with its stunted vegetation (such is observable wherever the metamorphic rocks prevail), on the other, a rich and luxuriant growth clothed with trees, which add an additional charm to the river scenery of the Erne.

The rocks south of the town, consist chiefly of thin bedded dark cavernous limestone, with shales, resting on which are dolomite or magnesian limestone. Over these are irregularly bedded light gray limestones, which weather rapidly, and are well seen south of Waterloo. Over these again are bluish limestones and shales, which are probably the representatives of the "Calp" of the east of Ireland. Above these is a tolerable thickness of sandstones (\*) which extend from Lennox Bridge and Mullinaleck Bridge to Belleek, and thence to Boa Island on Lough Erne. Over the sandstones are the upper limestones, well exemplified in the Dartry Mountains, and at Maghoo on the south shore of Lough Erne. Surmounting all are the representatives of the Toredale series, which are composed of sandstones and shales.

The palaeontological character of the limestones about Ballyshannon is much the same as that of the lower limestone of the West of Ireland. At the salmon weirs, whole beds of limestone are composed of crinoids or "stone lilies," and a few specimens of producta (a fossil of the cockle species) and some corals are occasionally met with. As to the thickness of the carboniferous beds south of the town, at present it is enough to say that the "Geological Survey" have the district in hand, and until it is completed, the position of the great east and west fault cannot be pointed out. That such faults exist, may be assumed with tolerable certainty, as from examination already made, it has been found that the beds of the limestones, sandstones, etc., all dip in one direction, viz., towards the south. Some of the beds dip at an angle of 35 degrees, and if this were constant we should have between Ballyshannon and Mount Prospect, on the south shore of Lough Melvin, such a thickness of the carboniferous series as would lead us to expect coal in the Dartry Mountains. But as no such trace is found there (in them the upper limestone appears), it must be assumed that a fault, or more likely two faults, exist, and the external features of this neighbourhood suggest two—one from Ballyshannon up Lough Erne, the other running almost parallel with it from Lough Melvin to Cliffoney.

The metamorphic series of rocks is well exemplified in the historic island of Inis-Sainer; also at the quay and along the road leading to the Gas Works. These rocks run in an eastward direction under the Church on Mullaghnahee, towards that mountainous district north-east of Ballyshannon, of which Dhubally and Bressie are prominent points. These rocks are for the most part mica schist and quartzites. Although their form has been altered as their name implies, yet as in the case of the rocks on the island, the foliation corresponds with the bedding. They were sandstones prior to their change, and the difference in

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\*These sandstones are supposed to be the representatives of Sir R. Griffith's "Calp Sandstone."



time between their deposition and that of the superincumbent limestones marks a geological period. The only other rocks which we will here notice are the fault rocks near the Pool ; these are composed of an aggregation of pieces of quartzites and schist (from the metamorphic series) generally bound together by a calcareous cement, and their origin is due either to the depression of the limestone, or the elevation of the quartzite.

The river Erne which flows through Ballyshannon receives only the drainage of a very small area around the town. It rises in Lough Gowna (the Lake of the Calf) about thirteen miles south-west of the town of Cavan, and at a point about 214 feet above the level of the sea. The meaning of the name Gowna is explained by a legend which describes the origin of Lough Erne. There is a well in the townland of Rathbrackan, one mile from Granard, in the County of Longford. In this well once lived a magical calf who was kept enclosed in it by means of a door which all persons using the well were strictly enjoined to close after them ; but one day a woman going to draw water, forgot to shut the door, and the wonderful calf jumped out, the water following him, expanding its course as it went so that neither calf nor water stopped their race till both leaped into the sea at Ballyshannon ! !

The Erne, after passing from Lough Gowna, flows as a narrow river into Lough Oughter, which is 160 feet above sea level, from thence into Upper Lough Erne (151 feet above sea level) and then into Lower Lough Erne (149 feet 9 inches above sea level), (\*) and in the short distance of four miles from its exit, from the lake proper at Belleek, it passes over numerous falls and rapids, descending in many places the cavernous limestones through which it flows, till it takes its final plunge over the rocks at Assaroe (about 16 feet high). In its course, the river Erne (for such it may be regarded from its source to its exit) receives the following tributaries—The Annalee from the neighbourhood of Cootehill ; the Woodford near Ballyconnell ; the Colebrooke at Maguire's Bridge ; the Claddagh at Swanlinbar ; the Arney from Lough Macnean ; and the Silees from Derrygonnelly.

North of Ballyshannon, the drainage passes into the Tullymore (or Abbey) river which flows into the estuary at the Abbey Bay. A mile and a half south of the town, the drainage about Stormhill, etc., passes into the river Bradogue (the little gorge), which flows into Donegal Bay at Bundoran.

The geological period known as the "glacial period," or ice age of this country, is remarkably well exemplified in the neighbourhood of Ballyshannon. Not only have we erratics, or blocks,

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\*Summer water in the lake is 138 feet above high water at 10 feet spring tides at Ballyshannon.

carried from a distance, but where the rocks are newly exposed from their capping of boulder clay (the term used for the drift as transported), we find the polished and striated surface produced by the passage of glaciers over them. From this testimony of the rocks we have ample and satisfactory proof that glaciers did pass over our district, and we have further evidence of the exact direction in which they travelled, until they finally passed into the sea where they assumed the form of bergs, or floating ice. For good examples of transported blocks and boulder clay, we may point to Shegus on the north side of the town, and the Doon Hill on the south side (in the townland of Dunmuckrum) both of which are typical examples of the hundreds of similar saddleback hills of Ireland which owe their existence to the agency of ice, and are nothing more than an accumulated mass of boulders (chiefly in our locality limestone) and drift, transported thither by that great motive power—ice, in its passage from east to west. It is further noticeable that the direction of the axis of these hills indicates the direction of the flow of ice. A fine example of boulder clay or ice action, i.e., striation, may be seen along the line of railway from Ballyshannon to Belleek. The best illustration will be found at the point about 200 yards west of the wooden bridge at Forthwilliam. There, the railway cutting shows the boulder clay resting on the polished and striated rocks. The polishing and striation are peculiar, *inasmuch as the rock presents a wave-like polished surface, the wavy appearance having been produced by the ice in its progress passing along the lie of the limestone beds, and not across them.* These striations or scratches, which a casual observer from their distinctness might suppose to be quite recent, when examined by a clinometer (an instrument used to ascertain the angle or dip of strata), have been found to consist of two sets of stria, showing that, although the general direction of ice-action from east to west was constant, yet other and smaller currents from different quarters also contributed to the carving and scratching of the surface.

In Ballyshannon traces of minerals are frequent, but like many other parts of Ireland the mineral deposits are but superficial, and in our immediate neighbourhood we have had many proofs of the necessity which exists for thorough scientific knowledge before embarking in projects which only end in disappointment and pecuniary loss. Traces of lead, copper, and barytes, have been found at Ballyshannon, and trials have been made at the Abbey, at Finner, and at Belleek, but none of these mines are now in operation. At Belleek, however, there are numerous traces of iron, and quantities of red hematite, and iron pyrites are to be found at Castle Caldwell. In Boate's "Natural History of Ireland," a book written more than 200 years ago, mention is made of extensive iron works having been in operation on the banks of Lough Erne, where the ore was dug up, and the smelting carried on by Sir Leonard Blenerhasset.



This industry was, however, entirely upset by the Rebellion of 1641. Brick clay is very plentiful in the district, especially on the hills about Ashbrook, Newbrook, etc., and the presence of this stiff clay, in that long vein of country extending from the shores of Lough Melvin towards Pettigo, is a serious obstacle to successful agriculture.

In the country surrounding Ballyshannon, on both sides of the river, are extensive peat bogs, which offer an inexhaustible store of fuel, and have proved a beneficent compensation for the absence of coal in our district. These peat bogs are most recent of our accumulations, and are still in process of development. A large portion of the extensive plain of the Moy, which now abounds in peat, was at some former period under water, and probably formed a portion of what is now Lough Melvin. Through the gradual accumulation of such plants as reeds, mosses, (\*) etc., the water was dried up, and the bogs formed. Remains of the forest vegetation of former periods are abundant—birch and hazel, fir and oak, are found submerged at various depths in the peat deposits. The bark of many of the plants which compose our bogs is furnished with an abundance of tannin, which, when mixed with water, has the property of preserving from decay most kinds of animal and vegetable substances; hence it is that “bog butter,” (†) timber, etc., which are frequently dug up from a depth of many feet, are sound and undecayed.

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## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY TRADITIONARY ACCOUNTS.

Some of the earliest traditionary events of which there is any record in the chronicles of Ireland, are associated with Ballyshannon and its neighbourhood.

The Island of Inis-Samer, now known as “Fish Island” is mentioned as having been for a time the residence of Partholan, a Scythian chief, who was, it is said, a co-temporary of the patriarch Abraham, and consequently lived about three centuries after the

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\* The mosses known as sphagnum are those which have most largely contributed to this formation.

† A vessel of “bog butter” has recently being dug up in a neighbouring bog. It is of cheese-like substance, and free from any rancid smell. In former times it was customary to sink vessels of butter deep down in bogs, to improve their flavour. Among the food of the Irish, Dinley (A.D. 1675) mentions “butter mixed with a kind of garlick, and buried for some time in a bog, to make a provision of a high taste for Lent.”—See “Irish Names of Places” (2nd Series), page 203.

deluge. According to the old chronologists, these adventurous explorers set sail from a country called Migdonia (a part of ancient Macedon, or Thrace), and having braved the seas, they at length dropped anchor at the Bay of Kenmare, on which coast they planted a colony; then sailing northward, they came into Donegal Bay, and having crossed the Bar at Ballyshannon, landed on this little rocky island. Here Partholan built a house, and lived with his wife and three sons for an unrecorded period. The island, it is said, got its name Samer, from a favourite greyhound of Partholan's which was buried in it, and a romantic tale, in which the dog appears, has been handed down, but as it is doubtless familiar to most readers it is needless to introduce it here. According to Keating's "General History of Ireland" the island was also called the Dog's Isle. It seems however more probable that its name was derived from the River which was called Samhair or Samer—i.e., the Morning Star. The Partholans, it is recorded, at a subsequent period left the neighbourhood of Ballyshannon, and settled at Howth, near Dublin, where the entire colony, numbering several thousands, were cut off by a plague. The modern village of Tallaght in that locality, has in its name a reference to this plague. It may be added that there is still to be seen, on a hill near the village, a remarkable collection of sepulchral tumuli, evidently of great antiquity.

After the destruction of this colony, the country is said to have remained uninhabited for a period of thirty years when another colony of Scythians, called Nemedians, arrived and occupied it, until they in their turn had to succumb to a stronger and more warlike race named Formorians, natives of Africa, who, under the command of Conaing, their chief, established their headquarters on Tory Island. This island lies some nine miles from the mainland, and is a part of the barony of Kilmacrenan, in the County Donegal. On a cliff, at its eastern extremity, was the tower celebrated in the old annals as

"The tower of the island, the island of the tower,  
The citadel of Codnaing, the son of Toelar."

The exploits of "Balor of the mighty blows" are still preserved in the local traditions of the islanders. This Balor is represented as having one eye in the middle of his forehead, and another directly opposite, in the back of his head. This hinder eye was kept constantly closed, as it had a mortiferous power, and he only used it when he wished to destroy an enemy. The accounts which tradition has handed down of this mighty chief bear a strong resemblance to some of the strange beings which Baron Munchausen met with in his voyages to the Dog Star; possibly the writer of this satire on travellers' tales, who was said to have lived for some time in Ireland, may have had this description of "Balor of the blows" in his mind's eye when he wrote his book.



According to the old chronicles, Magh Goeidne\* (the Moy), situate between Drobhaois (the ancient name for the Drowas river) and Eirne (Lough Erne) was the scene of great oppression and cruel exactions, for it was here that the Fomorians of Tory compelled the Nemedians to pay over their annual tribute on the 1st November. This tribute consisted of 'two parts of their children, cattle, milk, butter, and wheat.' A woman, it is said, was employed as "cess collector," and this amazon, no doubt supported by an armed force, compelled each family to contribute their portion.

Respecting these notices of the primitive history of Ireland which have been handed down, chiefly through the bardic historians, it is difficult, if not impossible, to discriminate between what may be accepted as a fact, and what must be relegated to the domain of romance; one thing, however is certain—that Ireland was known to the inhabitants of other countries at a very early date. It was known to Aristotle as Ierne (the western extremity), and Tacitus says "the ports and landing places of Hibernia are better known than those of Britain, through the frequency of commerce and merchants." Ptolemy in his geographical writings places Ireland amongst the celebrated islands of the world. In his Map of Eirin he styles the river Erne, the Ravins, and in a very ancient manuscript, our river is mentioned amongst the nine rivers of Ireland. "The ancient streams that made the country fruitful were Laoi, Buas, Banne, Bearbh, Samer, Sligo, Mudhorn, Muadh, and Liffec."

The poet Spenser in his "View of the State of Ireland," written more than two and a half centuries ago, describes the country as so antique "that no monument of her beginning and first inhabiting remains;" he also adds: "it is certain that Ireland hath had the use of letters very anciently, and long before England." The opinion of Spenser on this subject just carries more weight with it when we remember that he was an Englishman, and not favourably disposed towards Ireland.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE WATERFALL OF RED HUGH, AND THE EARLY CHRISTIAN PERIOD.

We now reach the epoch which is assigned by the annalist Tighernach as the limit to authentic Irish history; he asserts that all events anterior to this are uncertain.

More than five centuries before the Christian era the sovereignty of Ireland was committed to Aedh Ruadh (Red

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\*Magh Goeidne, i.e., the Plain of Treaty the name originated in the above circumstances.

Hugh), the son of Badurn, and to Dithorba, son of Deman, and to Kimbath, son of Fintan, sons of three brothers, and each took his turn to reign for seven years. Red Hugh's turn was first, and came round twice again, and towards the end of his third period he was drowned while attempting to cross the river Erne at one of the fords. The old king's body having been swept down the cataract, was recovered and buried on the summit of the hill overlooking the scene of the disaster, and over the grave was heaped up a mound sufficiently large to indicate the resting place of a king of Ireland. To the death and burial of Aedh Ruadh, the waterfall and hill above, owe their name. The former being henceforth called Eas Ruadh (now Assaroe), the latter Sidh Aedha Ruadh (now Mullaghnashee).

From the untimely end of the old king arose a series of events which culminated in the foundation of the celebrated palace of Emania, which was the resort of the Red Branch Knights, and kings of Ulster, for more than eight hundred years. King Aedh Ruadh left no son to succeed him on the throne of Ireland, but he had a daughter—Macha of the golden-hair; a young lady who was as great a stickler for "women's rights" as any of the strong-minded sisterhood of the nineteenth century; Macha claimed her father's right to the seven years' reign, when her father's turn came round, but the other sovereigns refused to recognise a woman's claim to the crown. The strong-hearted Macha was not to be put down; she raised an army, and, after a fierce contest, made good her right by force of arms. Dithora was slain, and his five sons banished to the wilds of Connaught; but the new queen, fearing danger might be brought about by the outlaws, followed them herself to their retreat and made them all prisoners. She spared their lives, on condition that they should become her vassals, and by her command they constructed the palace of Emania. The site of this celebrated resort is still to be seen in a field about two miles west of Armagh. Thus did our Waterfall become associated with some of the most important events in early Irish history.

St. Patrick in his missionary travels also visited the Cataract (Eas), and it is recorded that he blessed the south side of the river, leaving the north side to be blessed by his successor, Collum Cille, whose advent he foretold. At a later period, King Brian Boru, in one of his annual progresses through Ireland, visited the Cataract. It has therefore not been inappropriately styled a Royal Cataract, in an old tale entitled "The Banquet of Dunagay and the Battle of Moira." "The clear-watered, snowy-foamed, ever-roaring, in salmon-abounding, beautiful old torrent, whose celebrated well known name is the lofty, great, clear-landed, contentious, precipitate, loud-roaring, headstrong, rapid, salmon-fall, sea-monster-full, varying, in large-fish-abounding, royal and prosperous Cataract of Eas Ruadh." ! !



Nations and kingdoms have arisen, flourished, and been overthrown, centuries upon centuries have passed by since Red Hugh met his death in the rapid stream, and yet "the music of the waterfall" sounds in our ears as of old, and still rolls down, its ceaseless murmur mingling with the rougher but more distant rumble of the Atlantic breakers. But of the regal grave, nought now remains to mark the spot where the old king sleeps, the last vestige of the mound on Mullaghnashee having been, it is said, obliterated in 1798, when a star fort was constructed on the hill top, hence the spot is now called Fort-hill. It should be borne in mind that in early times, there was no dividing walls between the present churchyard, the paupers' burial ground and the field adjoining, but that these collectively constituted Sidh Aedh Ruadh. The termination shee (sidh or sith) in the modern name, is of mythological, not historical, origin. The popular belief in fairies assigned to them as dwelling places the interior of "pleasant hills," and from time immemorial, Mullaghnashee was regarded as a "gentle spot." Another celebrated fairy resort was Shegus or Sheegy's hill (fairy hills), and close to the shore beneath is Mullaghnashee frog (the hill of the fairy dwellings). Besides these local habitations of the "gentle folk," tradition has handed down many marvellous accounts of their exploits, more especially among the sandhills, and in the Wardtown district; but the present is a dull matter-of-fact age, and the folk-lore of the good old times is fast fading away, and in a generation or two will be entirely obliterated. Reference has been already made to St. Patrick's visit to the Fall of Assaroe; there are besides other circumstances which point to the fact of the Saint having been in our neighbourhood.

In the name Kildoney, Cill-domhnaigh—i.e., Sunday Church, we have evidence that there was at one time or other a church in that district, which was founded by St. Patrick himself. According to the "Tripartite Life," Jocelin, Ussher, etc., all the churches that bear the name of Domhnach - or in the Anglicised form, Donagh or Doney—were originally founded by St. Patrick, and were so called because he marked out their foundations on Sunday (Dominica, the Lord's day). Nothing now remains to mark the site of this early foundation, but this is not to be wondered at, when we remember the many centuries which have elapsed since time of St. Patrick, and the primitive and not always substantial character of the structures erected in the early years of Christianity in Ireland. The existence of a burial ground in Kildoney, is however, interesting, as it is a satisfactory proof of a Christian Church having been at some time standing there. Wherever old burial grounds are situated it may be assumed with almost absolute certainty, that churches were originally attached to them, though no ruined walls appear, and though their very name is lost. The graveyard of which we are speaking is in the townland of Kildoney, upon the summit of a hill

about mid-way between the Glebe-house and the Castle of Kilbarron. It is not now used for interments, but has about it evidence of great antiquity. Near the Black Rock, at the Bar, is Pollpatrick (Patrick's hole), a deep pool of water ; and close to the " Pound Bridge," leading to the Abbey, is Toberpatrick, a well bearing the saint's name.

In due time St. Columb Cille (the dove of the churches), was raised up to spread the blessings of Christianity throughout the land. The ancient Church of Kilbarron, which gave its name to our parish, was, according to the oldest records, founded by Column Colle. St. Barrain, or Bairrfionn, was appointed bishop of this church, and his name is commemorated in the " Martyrology of Donegal" at the 21st May. The ruins which now remain are not, however, those of the original church, but probably belong to the thirteenth or fourteenth century.

St. Collum Cille, whose family name was Camthain, was great-grandson of Conall Gulban, who was the ancestor of the O'Donnells, hence their territory came to be called Tirconnell (Conal's land). Conall got the cognomen Gulban from having been fostered near Benbulbin (Gulban's peak) mountain. Its majestic outline may well have inspired the old poet who has thus apostrophized it :—

"Thou art sad to-day, oh, Bin Bolbin ! gentle height of the beauteous aspect ! It was pleasant, Oh, Son of Calpuin ! in other days to be on its summit ; many were the dogs and the youths ; oft arose the sound of the chase. There a tower arose ; there dwelt a mighty hero. Oh, lofty hills of contest ! many were the herons in the season of night, and the birds of the heath on the mountains, mingling their sounds with the music of the little bird. 'Twas sweet to listen to the cry of the hounds in the valleys, and the wonderful son of the rock.\* Each of the heroes would be present with his beautiful dog in the slip, many were the lovely maids of our race who collected in the wood. There grew the berries of fragrant blossom ; the strawberries ; there grew the soft blushing flower of the mountain and the tender cresses. There wandered the slender fair-haired daughters of our race ; sweet was the sound of their song. It was a source of delight to behold the eagle, and listen to her lonely scream—to hear the growl of the otters, and the snarling of the foxes ; and the blackbird singing sweet on the top of the thorn !"†

Associated with the name of St. Columba is also the ancient church of Drumholm, now the name of the parish in which Ballintra is situated. The west gable still remains in the graveyard of Mullinacross. The church was called Druimtuama—i.e.,

\*The Irish poetical name for an echo.

†This fragment is ascribed to Ossian.



the ridge or hill of Tomna (a pagan woman's name), it was dedicated to St. Admann, the biographer of St. Columba. Here was also the celebrated monastery of which St. Ernan was abbot. This monk was a disciple of St. Columba, to whom also he was related; and we are told that when Columba had finished his great work of spreading Christianity in Scotland, and was peacefully breathing his latest breath in Iona, that St. Ernan, otherwise called Ferreolus, in his secluded monastery at Drumholm, had a vision in which he saw angels gliding down from heaven, filling the air with heavenly music, and bearing off the pure soul of the saint, after it had left its earthly tenement, into the clouds of heaven. The monastery of Drumholm was one of great mark in its day, and within its precincts were deposited the remains of many of the most noted chiefs and abbots of Tirconnell. Nothing, however, now remains to mark the site of this once illustrious foundation, and even the name of its abbot would be forgotten, were it not perpetuated in the name of Mr. Hamilton's picturesque residence near the town of Donegal, which he has called St. Ernan's.

We have already spoken of Tory Island as having been the head-quarters of the warlike tribe of Fomorians, but there are other and more pleasing associations connected with the island, for even to this wild secluded spot St. Columba found his way, and there founded a church and monastery. The monastery, according to the "*Monasticon Hibernicum*," was founded in the year 650, and St. Ernan, son of Colman, was first abbot. This monastery continued to flourish through many ages down to the time of Queen Elizabeth, when Bingham, governor of Connaught, made a raid upon the island, destroying and pillaging all before him. It seems, however, that the Tory islanders did not even then submit to English rule, for in the "treasury papers" (time of James I.) we find the following entry: "To Sir Henry Follyot, Knt. for money by him disbursed for the hire of one boat, two mariners, and ten sailors, that were employed by the space of five weeks at the surprising of Torrey—£29 6s 8d.

A fine round tower, known as Clogteach (i.e., Bell House) is still standing on the island. It was contemporaneous with the monastery founded there by St. Columb Cille. Its doorway presents a fine example of the semi-circular arch formed of a number of small stones, and is regarded as one of the earliest instances of the use of the arch in Ireland\*.

Besides the round tower, are pointed out by the inhabitants the foundations of seven little churches or cells, and a curious round

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\*See "the Origin and Uses of the Round Towers of Ireland," page 406, by Petrie.



stone is preserved, which, when struck emits a sharp metallic sound. This is said to have been used before the introduction of bells, to summon the islanders to worship. The name of St. Columb Cille is also preserved in our neighbourhood by a well and a lake. The well is near the one-mile-stone on the road to Donegal, and "stations" were formerly held there; the lake which bears the saint's name, lies about two miles north of Belleek, and is a good example of the numerous class of mountain tarns which are dotted here and there over our district.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE ABBEY OF ASSAROE.

Before the foundation of the monastery of Assaroe, there was on the island of Inis-Samer a building; whether this was a "religious house," or a residence for the princes of Tirconnell, chosen by them for its quiet and seclusion in a bloodthirsty and turbulent age, it is difficult now to conjecture. Archdale, in his "*Monasticon Hibernicum*," says that "there seems to have been a religious house on this island," and this supposition is supported by a record which exists, to the effect that Flaherty O'Muldory, king of Tirconnell, having renounced the cares of the world and dedicated himself to heaven, died on this island in the year 1197.

The narrow limits of Inis-Samer could not, however, afford sufficient space for the erection of a monastery, but it should be borne in mind that long before the foundation of the abbey of Assaroe, there was the Cistercian Abbey, "*De Samario*," which was so called from Inis-Samer. Of this foundation we have no records, and it is impossible to say where it may have stood. But from its name it has been supposed by some to have been built somewhere near the river and island from which it was called.

The abbey of Ashroe, Easroe, Easruaidh, or Assaroe, was, according to some chronicles, founded by Roderick O'Cananan, prince of Tirconnell, in A.D. 1178. Following, however, "*The Annals of Boyle*," which account has been adopted by "*The Four Masters*," its foundation is attributed to Flaherty O'Muldorry, Lord of Kinel Connell, in A.D. 1184. It was this prince who died on Inis-Samer thirteen years later. The monastery of Assaroe was dedicated to God and St. Bernard,\* and was, as well as the

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\*St. Bernard of Clairvaux born 1091, the founder and first abbot of the celebrated Cistercian Abbey of Clairvaux in 1115. The abbey of Assaroe, as well as the other Irish foundations of the same order, kept up friendly and intimate relations with that of Clairvaux.

older abbey. "De Samario," for monks of the Cistercian order. O'Muldorrey, the benefactor of Assaroe, who was in his day a great warrior, and had reigned over Tirconnell for thirty years, was not buried there, but in the older monastery of Drumholm, of which mention has been already made.

The abbey of Assaroe was richly endowed by the successive princes of Tirconnell. By an "inquisition" taken in the 31st year of Queen Elizabeth, the abbot of Assaroe was found to be in possession of the ground on which the abbey was built; also the village known as "Abbey Island," in which was a cemetery, a church and steeple, partly roofed with shingles (thin boards), and partly with thatch, the ruins of a dormitory, three other stone buildings, and four small cottages. There were also attached to the monastery, fifty-three quarters of land \* and the fourth of half a quarter (it being near the abbey demesne). These quarters were Laghye, Behy, Ardgyllow, Tullaghcorke, Brownkylly, Leghdaghtan, Geoghan, Musseboy, Cashill, alias Lack, Crevagh-tartan, Downesbiragh, Ballynageragh, Crevemonagh, Tawnagh, Irren, Killecroghan. Ardpatin Cashill Tully, Dacoolallows, Tullaghmore, Drumskilly, Altyn Towre, Cavan Egarre, the Castle of Bellyke, Ballynamannagh, Carrowcashill, Carrow-colea, Garvannagh, Carrowclough, Carrowtobber, Cloughter, Knader, Grange of Tawnyshyntallen (in O Boyle's country), Grange of Daryragh, Grange near the mountain of Kyseure, Grange of Kilternan in Fermanagh, etc., etc. In this long list the reader will be able to identify some with our modern names. The prefix Carrow, which occurs in several of the names, is from the Irish word ceathair (four or quarter), thus Carrowelough, the stoney quarter, Carrowtobber, the quarter of the well. It is also noticeable that these landed possessions appertaining to the abbey, were not confined to the surrounding neighbourhood, but some of them were at a distance, and others even in the county of Fermanagh.

Besides these landed possessions, the abbot of Assaroe was possessed of ten weirs on the river Erne (at the time of the inquisition), valued at £10 per annum. He had also the privilege of having two fishermen on the river Erne, and he was entitled to the second draught of every person fishing on the river "when they began to fish." Moreover he had the right of keeping a boat to carry salmon and other fish from the island to the sea. This mode of transit was doubtless often used for the purpose of conveying fish to Kilbarron castle, the residence of the historians of Tirconnell, who were always on friendly terms with the abbot of Assaroe. Tithes from various Ballyboes (cow or grazing lands) and townlands were attached to the monastery. It will be seen that the princes of Tirconnell endowed the religious houses in

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\* The old townlands were divided into four parts or quarters.



their territory with no sparing hand. The Franciscan monastery of Donegal likewise enjoyed the right of fishing on the river Esk, which at that period seems to have abounded in salmon, as we find the monks asserting that their river "was ever as fishfull as the river Erne." Local tradition says that the monks of Assaroe had a weir constructed on the abbey river at Catsby, for entrapping any stray fish which might chance to pass up the little stream, and that the "box" was so contrived that when a fish got in, a wire connected with a small bell in the refectory made known the fact to the monks within.

Associated with the abbey was an interesting funeral custom, the remembrance of which is still preserved in the names of Portamorrow, and Lughanore. Before bridges were built in our neighbourhood, and when fords were in use, the dead who were to be buried in the cemetery of Assaroe were usually brought by boat, and the place of embarkation on the south side of the river was called Port-na-marbh, pronounced Portnamorrow, or Portnamorra, i.e., the port of the dead or dead person. During the passage across the harbour, it is said, the friends of the deceased were forbidden to speak, or utter any sign of their inward grief, and no other sounds than the plash of oars, and the echoing tolls of the monastery bell were allowed to break the silence of the "green-hilled harbour." But when the boat touched the abbey shore, and was met by the monks who accompanied the funeral as it slowly moved up the little gorge by which the river flows, the people were allowed to give expression to their hitherto restrained grief; hence the passage got the name of Lug-na-ndeor or Lughanore,—the hollow of the tears. In Catsby (the steep settlement) just below the monastery, are two of those circular hollows in the rock, called "bullawns" (little pools) which tradition says were used by the monks as baptismal fonts. These bullawns are found in the vicinity of churches of great antiquity, and are supposed to be coeval with the earliest age of Christianity in Ireland.

The monastery was doubtless in its day an extensive and imposing structure; the carved stones which seem to have been so freely used in the construction of the cornices, mullions, and arches, many fragments of which still exist, bear testimony to the care and skill which were expended on its erection. According to an account written a little more than a century ago, it seems that the ruin retained considerably more of its architectural features than it now does; it is thus referred to: "Near Ballyshannon are the remains of the abbey of Ashrow; some of the gilding in the vault of the cloister is still visible."\*

In the ecclesiastical edifices of this period, the gothic style of architecture was adopted in Ireland, and our abbey, as well as other monasteries of the Cistercian order, was doubtless adorned

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\* Guthrie's Gazetteer published about 1776.



with the richly decorated door-ways, arches and windows, which were characteristic of this style. The little rustic bridge of two arches which crosses the abbey river was doubtless built by the monks, and may therefore be regarded as one of the oldest bridges still existing in the country. It appears that no bridges of any importance were built in Ireland before the twelfth century and many of them were wooden. The little bridge at the abbey seems to have been partially rebuilt, as an examination of one of its arches will show, and at a later period it was across its narrow-limits than an invading army passed to invest the abbey buildings.

The following are a few of the events connected with the history of the monastery, as recorded in the "Annals" A.D. 1241:

Donnell More O'Donnell, Lord of Tirconnell, died in the monastic habit, victorious over the world and the devil, and was interred with honour and respect in the monastery of Assaroe in the harvest time.

Thomas O'Heraghty, abbot of Assaroe died, A.D. 1319.

Thomas, son of Cormick O'Donnell, abbot of Assaroe, was then elected to the bishopric of Raphoe, A.D. 1333.

Hugh, son of Donnell Oge O'Donnell, Lord of Tirconnell, the most eminent man of his time for jurisdiction, laws, and regulations, and the chief patron of the hospitality and munificence of the west of Europe, died victorious over the world and the devil in the habit of a monk, and was interred with great honour and solemnity in the monastery of Assaroe.

A.D. 1377—The monastery of Assaroe (near Ballyshannon) was burned.

A.D. 1398—A great army was led by Niall Oge O'Neill, king of Kinel-Owen, and the sons of Henry O'Neill, against O'Donnell; they arrived at Assaroe, and there plundered the monastery of all its riches.

A.D. 1422—Turlough, the son of Niall Garv O'Donnell, Lord of Tirconnell, took the habit of a monk in the monastery of Assaroe, after gaining victory over the present world.

A.D. 1450—Edmund, abbot of Assaroe, died.

A.D. 1502—Art O'Gallagher and John O'Loiste, two abbots, who contended for the abbacy of Assaroe, died in one day.

A.D. 1519—Edmund Duv O'Dwyer, abbot of Assaroe, died.

A.D. 1550—The Abbot of Assaroe, (John, son of Donnell Roe O'Gallagher), died on the 29th of April.

A.D.—Cosnamach O'Clery was buried under the asylum of God and St. Bernard, in the monastery of Assaroe.

From the foregoing extracts from the "Four Masters" it will be seen that the monastery did not, during its existence, enjoy uninterrupted prosperity, but like everything else in Ireland at that period, suffered from the ravages of an unsettled and war-like age. In the earlier period of its existence it was stormed and plundered by O'Neill's soldiers, and in later times, when the



English had directed their energies to the conquest of Tirconnell, the monastery of Assaroe was the first place in our neighbourhood which the invading army surrounded and attacked. When and how these later attacks were made shall be related in their proper place. Its fortunes were so closely interwoven with those of its patrons and supporters, the O'Donnells, that when they fell the monastery met with the same fate—ruin and confiscation.

Of all the massive building which was the pride of Tirconnell—the treasure-house of letters, in an unlettered age, and the quiet retreat of men of peace, from the turbulence and bloodshed of the outside world—nothing now remains but a few shapeless walls, fast crumbling away, and some carved stones of the arches and cornices, scattered along the walls of the graveyard adjoining :—

“ Gray, gray is Abbey Asaroe, near Ballyshanny town,  
It has neither door nor window, the walls are broken down ;  
The carven stones lie scatter'd in briar and nettle bed ;  
The only feet are those that come at burial of the dead.  
A little rocky rivulet runs murmuring to the tide,  
Singing a song of ancient days, in sorrow, not in pride ;  
The elder tree and lightsome ash across the portal grow,  
And heaven itself is now the roof of Abbey Asaroe.” \*

It may be observed that the abbeys of Tirconnell, Tyrone, and Fermanagh, preserved their independence, and therefore their existence, to a much later date than the other Irish foundations ; for although all the monasteries were formally dissolved by Henry VIII., yet these monasteries “ were never surveyed or reduced into charge” but “ were continually possessed by the religious persons” till the time of James I.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE O'DONNELLS IN BALLYSHANNON.

In A.D. 1200, the O'Donnell family succeeded to the chieftainship of Tirconnell, but it was not until 1423 that their illustrious name became intimately connected with Ballyshannon.

It was at the latter date that the castle of Ballyshannon was built by Neal Garv O'Donnell. From its close proximity to the rival kingdom of Connaught, and from the fact of its being a seaport, the place was regarded as an important military post—in short, as the chief gateway of Tirconnell.

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\* From the poem “ Abbey Assaroe” by William Allingham.



The site of the castle was chosen that it might command the principal ford of the river—the ford of Athseanaigh. Bridges, it should be remembered, are of comparatively modern introduction into this country; even two and a half centuries ago they were far from general in Ireland; for we find a writer of that period saying concerning the fords: “It is to be observed that not everywhere, where the highways meet with great brooks, or small rivers, bridges are found for to pass them, but in very many places one is constrained to ride through the water itself.”\* The ford of Athseanaigh lay a little above the present bridge, it was one of the class of artificially constructed fords, as its remains still testify, though it is only when the river is low of a dry summer that the stones now remaining, can be seen. It has been suggested to the writer by a gentleman of great antiquarian knowledge, that the large “standing stone” in the “big meadow,” in College Lane, may have been used in former times in conjunction with another large stone now prostrate, near “Tom Pye’s Bridge,” as a landmark of this ford; and it is worthy of notice, that a line drawn across the river from one stone to the other would exactly indicate the course of the ford. Although, however, the “standing stone” in the Big Meadow might have been used as a landmark, it is not to be supposed that it was erected for that purpose. From its name, Cloughnanone (Cloch-nanogham), i.e., the stone of the ogums, or ogham-inscription, the stone doubtless belongs to the class of “standing,” or pillar stones, which were erected in ancient times to mark the spot on which some important event occurred. Upon these stones are frequently found ogham characters (a species of rock inscriptions used in times of remote antiquity). In the example of which we are speaking, no traces of rock writing are now observable perhaps they have been obliterated by time, or by the vandalism; of some past generation; or it may be that the inscription was cut on the end and placed in the ground. That such was sometimes done the following extract shows. In an account of the battle of Ollarba, fought in A.D. 285, it is stated, “there is a pillar stone at the cairn of Footadh, and an ogum is on the end of the pillar stone which is in the earth.† While speaking of these curious pillar-stones, mention should be made of another in our district. On the summit of a hill overlooking the river, in the townland of Cloughore, is a tall pillar-stone. The word Cloughore means the stone of gold, and it seems probable that from this stone originated the name of the surrounding district, and that it received its name from the fact of gold having been buried or discovered somewhere in proximity to it. The precious

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\* Boate’s Natural History of Ireland.

† Treatise on the Round Towers of Ireland, by Dr. Petrie.

metals were, it should be remembered, frequently buried in this country in ancient times, and to this practice many Irish local names owe their origin. Coolnargit (cuil-an-airgit), i.e., the recess or winding of the silver or money, is another of our names which owes its origin to some traditional treasure which was doubtless deposited in the adjacent sand-bank. While speaking of the frequency of treasure trove, we may mention a curious and interesting discovery of gold in the neighbourhood of Ballyshannon, at the beginning of the eighteenth century. It is thus recorded in "Camden's Brittania," published in 1722:—"Near Bellishannon, were, not many years ago, dug up two pieces of gold, discovered by a method very remarkable. The bishop of Derry happening to be at dinner, there came in an Irish harper, and sung an old song to his harp. His lordship, not understanding Irish, was at a loss to know the meaning of the song; but upon enquiry he found the subject of it to be this, that in such a place, naming the very spot, a man of gigantic stature was buried, and that over his breast and back were plates of gold, and on his fingers rings of gold, that an ordinary man might creep through them. The place was so exactly described that two persons there present were tempted to go in quest of the golden prize, which the harper's song had pointed out to them. After they had dug for some time, they found two pieces of gold (one of these gold pieces is figured in "Ware's Antiquities" it is of circular form, and curiously engraved).\*

Of the castle of Ballyshannon nothing now remains but a portion of one of the walls (about 10 feet high and 5 feet thick), part of which is incorporated with a grain store, and part with a butter shed on the north side of the market yard. The castle buildings doubtless occupied the whole or greater part of the ground now used for market purposes, and probably extended some way further up the river bank, and from its "well battle-mented" towers were poured many a volley of bullets and other missiles on the luckless enemies without. The castle park (a name still preserved in some old leases of adjacent premises) extended almost, if not entirely to the summit of the hill northward of the castle: and long after the building was demolished, a quantity of human bones was discovered in a garden close to the castle walls; and within the past few years a further discovery of bones was made upon the south bank of the river, while the road was being opened for the laying down of gas pipes. These remains doubtless belong to the period of the O'Donnells, when many a warrior fell in the battles of the ford. Besides the ford of Aathseanaigh, there were other fords on the river which were

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\* See Wilde's catalogue of the Antiquities of Gold, page 83.



occasionally used. One of these was about half a mile west of Belleek, the ford of Ath-cul-uain. There was another further down, under Laputa ; this ford was commanded by a small fortress, the walls of which are still standing on the south bank of the river, at Cherrymount. This "keep" was built on the summit of the artificially constructed mound, so that the soldiers in charge might have better command of the river below.\* Yet another ford, but only seldom used, owing to the difficulties and dangers attached to it, was Casan-na-g-curaidh (the path of the champions), immediately above the waterfall, where the old king was drowned.

The regular military force of Tirconnell, under the command of O'Donnell, consisted of 1,500 foot, and 300 horse ; of these, 200 foot soldiers and 40 horsemen were usually kept in the castle of Ballyshannon, but their number was further augmented in times of need by additional detachments. The western limit of Tirconnell was Drobhaois, the ancient name of the river Drowas—a name often mentioned in Irish history as a scene of many a desperate conflict. It was here the "Kingdom of Connaught" began, and on some spot near the river bank (not now recognizable) stood the castle of Bundroos, which was built by the O'Conors about the same time as O'Donnell's castle was erected at Ballyshannon. O'Donnell, hearing of the building of the former, and thinking it might be dangerous to his territory, at once marched his forces to the spot for the purpose of putting a stop to his rival's project. He was, however, unable to turn them from their design, and had to return to Ballyshannon without success. The Carburians (people of Carbury, in Sligo) being enraged by O'Donnell's interference at Bundroos, collected their forces, and marched to Ballyshannon, where the rival armies confronted each other. A battle was fought, which resulted in the defeat and rout of the men of Carbury, many of their officers being killed, and the soldiers only escaping by a hurried flight. Five days after this engagement, the irrepressible Connaught men made another raid on Ballyshannon ; this time by stealth. A body of cavalry came through the Moy, and having crossed the river unobserved (not by the ford of Athseanaigh, but at the waterfall) late on a summer evening, and finding O'Donnell's sons, Donal and Nial, with their horsemen enjoying themselves "after their wine" on Port-na-

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\* This fortress seems to have fallen into disuse before the time of Queen Elizabeth, as in an old map of that period, preserved in the Public Record Office, London, this building is marked as "an old castell" and is represented as a ruin, while Ballyshannon Castle (the name is spelled on the map Bellashange) and Belicke Castle, as well as Assaroe Abbey, are given in their perfect proportions.

long (the bank of the ships), they rushed on the unsuspecting Tirconnellians ; Donal was slain, and Nial only escaped by leaping from the bank and swimming out to a merchant vessel then at anchor in the harbour. This act of revenge (for legitimate warfare it could not be called) took place at what is known as the Fall Park, or Pool bank ; and it should here be remarked that in former times Ballyshannon did not rejoice in the possession of that fashionable place of resort—the Mall. Our forefathers were satisfied after the rebellion of 1641, but name of Fish Lane, and where it ended (at the passage up to the Back Mall) the Fall Park began.\* At its entrance was a style, and as there was no road other than a footpath, and no houses or other enclosures, from the water to the summit of Mullaghnashee spread one unbroken reach of green sward, dotted here and there with trees.

The castle of Bundroos† which proved such a thorn in the flesh to the O'Donnells, must not be confounded with the ruin which still exists in that neighbourhood. The tottering walls which we see standing on an elevated mound near the roadside at Tullaghan, are the remains of the castle of Dun-cairbry (the fort or dun of Cairbre). It was erected in the 16th century by the MacClanchys a clan who possessed the ancient district of Dartree or Dartry. The chief residence of these chiefs was the castle of Rossclogher, the picturesque remains of which are still standing on an island in Lough Melvin. The "Four Masters" thus refer to this island in the year 1421 :—"Cathal O'Rourke and his sons made a nocturnal attack on MacClanchy on Iniskeen, an island of Lough Melvin, and the guards of the lake delivered up the boats of the lake to them. They took young MacClanchy prisoner, and possessed themselves of Lough Melvin and its castle." The property of the MacClanchys was confiscated after the rebellion of 1641, but their name is still very common in the district.

The princes of Tirconnell, like other great Irish chiefs, maintained a large retinue of followers—historians, bards, and household officials, upon all of whom certain duties devolved, and to whom certain grants and privileges were accorded. Foremost among these were the Ollaves, or chief historians, whose residence was the castle of Kilbarron. Here, for many years lived the O'Sgingin family. One of them, Matthew O'Sgingin, was ollave, when Niall Garbh O'Donnell was Lord of Tirconnell. This

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\* In the beginning of the present century, the name "Fish Lane" was changed to "Park Lane." It is thus designated in Pigot's Hibernian Directory, published in 1824.

† This Castle seems to have fallen into O'Donnell's hands during the viceroyship of Sir Henry Sidney. See memoir of Sir H. Sidney's Government of Ireland, year 1556.



O'Sgingin had no son to succeed him as hereditary historian, but he had an only and beautiful daughter, and at this time there arrived at the monastery of Assaroe a young man comely in appearance, and a proficient in both canon and civil laws; his name was Cormac O'Clery. He did not belong to the race of Tirconnell, his family being of the county Galway, nevertheless the monks perceiving that the young stranger was of good morals, wisdom, and intellect, invited him to stay for a time at the monastery. It was during O'Clery's stay there that he became acquainted with the old ollave of Kilbarron, and became the fortunate possessor of O'Sgingin's handsome daughter. It was customary in Ireland, as well as in some other countries, that the husband should make a present to his wife's father. In this case the only dower the ollave demanded, was that in the event of a son being born to them, he should be trained up in the knowledge of literature and history, so as to become a worthy successor to the now almost extinct race of the O'Sgingins. In due time a son was born to Cormac and O'Sgingin's daughter, and the parents did not forget to carry out the wishes of the ollave. Thus, the family of the O'Clerys became regularly installed in the office of historians of Tirconnell, and in the quiet and seclusion of their rock-bound dwelling at Kilbarron, they laid the foundation of a literary fame, destined to survive the wreck of their castle and their worldly fortunes. The castle of Kilbarron has been wrongly supposed by some to have belonged to a tribe of lawless freebooters, who choose its isolated position as being best suited to their plundering designs; and popular tradition still points out the "murdering hole," through which the bodies of hapless victims used to be hurled into the sea. Such a supposition is, however, entirely without foundation. As to the precise date of its erection, historical records do not inform us, but it is probable that it was originally built by some of the O'Sgingin family in the thirteenth or fourteenth century. The "Annals" state that the castle of Kilbarron was rased to the ground by Donnell, son of Murtoigh O'Connor,\* in 1390. It was probably afterwards re-edified by Cormac O'Clery, but the "stone houses," the remains of which are now standing, were built at a subsequent period by the three sons of Teige Cam (or, the stooped) O'Clery, whose names were Tuthal, Gillareagh, and Dermot. In addition to the lands attached to Kilbarron, O'Donnell bestowed upon them several additional quarters of land, including "Kildoney, Coolremur, and Drumnacrin in Moy Enne." So richly were these learned men endowed, that it has been calculated that the lands held by them would produce at the present time a rental of more than £2,000 per annum! Instead, therefore, of associating with Kilbarron castle ideas of a lawless and uncivil-

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\*It was this family of O'Connor who subsequently built Bundroos Castle already referred to.

ized age, let the visitor, as he looks upon its weather-beaten and lichen-covered ruins, now the haunt of chough and rock-pigeon, remember that it was once the home of men of learning and piety, who honestly and patiently laboured for their country's good, and who have left behind them in their literary works, a memorial more enduring than stone and lime.

The Macwards, the hereditary bards of the O'Donnells, dwelt in the neighbouring townland of Ballymacward (the town of Macward), now called Wardtown. In those literary compositions of these laureates of Tirconnell which are still preserved, there is abundant evidence that they were not wanting in poetical spirit and skill in versification. Even Spenser, the English poet, and no friend to the Irish, had to acknowledge that the verses of the Irish bards "savour of sweet wit and good invention." Further on we shall have an opportunity of quoting one of Macward's poems.

Attached to the household of the O'Donnells was another important functionary—the keeper of the Cathach, or "battle book." This ancient relic was handed down from the time of St. Columb Cille, through the line of the O'Domhnaill, or O'Donnell family, for a period of 1,300 years. The Cathach, which is still preserved, consists of a highly ornamented silver shrine or box, enclosing a portion of the psalms of David, consisting of fifty-eight leaves, written on vellum, by St. Columb Cille's own hand, and is regarded as one of the oldest and most interesting relics of the early Christian period in Ireland. The custodians of this reliquary for many centuries were the family of Mag Robhartaigh (Magroarty), and the townland of Ballymagroarty, near Ballyshannon, was held by them in virtue of their office. The Cathach was carried on the breast of the custodian, before the army of Tirconnell, and three times before a battle did the keeper carry it round the soldiers of O'Donnell as a talisman to victory. It did not however always ensure success, for in 1497 Con O'Donnell was defeated in a battle with MacDermott, in the Curlew mountains, and the Cathach was taken by the enemy, and MacRoarty, its keeper, slain. Subsequently it was recovered, and remained in the charge of the MacRoarty family till the close of the 17th century. In 1724 it was in the possession of Col. David O'Donnell, from whom it passed to Sir Neal O'Donnell, thence to Sir O'Donnell, Bart., by whom it was deposited in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy, and can now be seen by any one who will visit that depository of Irish antiquities.

In times of peace, within the walls of the castle of Ballyshannon, the O'Donnells exercised that lavish hospitality which was characteristic of Irish chiefs, and became them as the princes of Tirconnell. A glimpse of their way of living is afforded by an account contained in the "Four Masters," of a visit paid by a neighbouring chief of Fermanagh, Giollaise Maguire, having a



grievance, determined to go and consult O'Donnell. Accompanied by a troop of cavalry, whom he commanded to carry with them a supply of the choicest liquors for the journey, he at length arrived at the castle of Ballyshannon. When O'Donnell heard that his friend Maguire, attended by his horsemen, was in the castle lawn, he went out to meet him, and having affectionately kissed Giollaise, and given orders for the proper entertainment of his men, he brought the Fermanagh chief into the banqueting hall, where the sweetest meats and best flavoured liquors were served up, and there they spent their time till the usual hour of dinner. They enjoyed their evening together, and their ears were delighted with the sweet sound of harp and voice. When sleeping time came, O'Donnell escorted his friend to the "guest chamber," followed by attendants carrying "sweet and delicious mead" (a beverage then much used in Ireland). Here it may be remarked that in O'Donnell's castle was always a plentiful supply of the choicest wines. Irish chieftains living on the sea coast carried on a considerable traffic with French and Spanish traders, who brought them wine and other products of their countries, and took fish and farm produce in return. This exchange of commodities was carried on extensively by the O'Donnells at Ballyshannon, and in a manuscript pedigree of the family, which was written by Sir George Carew, he observes — "O'Donnell is the best lorde of fishe in Ireland, and exchangeth fishe alwayes with foreign merchants for wyne, by which his call in other cuntryes the kinge of fishe."\*

Amongst the officials attached to an Irish chieftain's household, not the least curious was the "keeper of the bees," or purveyor of honey, an article much in request for making midoil and medaib (mead and metheglin): also the astronomer, who was none other than the family doctor, who generally combined the science of the stars with a knowledge of the healing art. These last-named officials, with many others, were doubtless attached to O'Donnell's establishment, but being of intetior importance to the ollaves and bards, no particulars have been handed down concerning them.

Besides the historical associations which have rendered the castle of Ballyshannon famous, the halo of romance has also been thrown around its walls. Within them once lived Helen O'Donnell, the most beautiful and accomplished young girl of her time; a graceful mien, a lovely face, and a benignity of disposition like hers, did not fail to attract the nobles of Ireland. There was one fortunate suitor—the young chieftain of Fermanagh, who was favoured with her regard. He had spent his early years in Spain, and added to a gentlemanly deportment a good education, and

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\*Pinkerton's History of Irish Commerce.

those habits of gallantry for which the Spanish court was famous. Helen's father encouraged his suit, but the course of true love was unfortunately destined to be rudely and cruelly cut short. The celebrated Shane O'Neill, came on a visit to O'Donnell, for the purpose of arranging an attack on the English border. All the chieftains of Donegal belonging to the sept of O'Donnell, as well as Maguire of Fermanagh, assembled at Ballyshannon. The entertainments given on this occasion were in keeping with that profuse hospitality which was characteristic of the times. The outdoor amusements were divided between hunting the red deer, then common in the country, and shooting excursions on Lough Erne, and the nights were passed within the castle walls, amid songs and merriment; but all these diversions were lost upon O'Neill, he had seen Helen O'Donnell, and had fallen madly in love with her. He spoke to her father, who informed him that Helen was betrothed to the chieftain of Fermanagh. O'Neill appeared satisfied, but in his inmost heart was kindled a deadly jealousy of his rival. One evening after the banquet, Maguire left the hall, and went to seek his intended bride in the castle garden. Helen came forward to meet her lover, attired in a little Spanish hat and feather, and a crimson scarf. "Reginald," she said with maidenly playfulness, "why did you delay so long? come let us walk near the lake—'twill be long ere the evening closes—let us enjoy the scene. 'Let me bear your harp, Helen," said Reginald, as he bowed acquiescence. They walked a considerable distance from the castle along the river banks, and between music and conversation the hours stole away. At length they came to a verdant slope near to Belleek. The view was enchanting—'twas sweet summer time, nature was decked in her gayest apparel, the sun had just set behind the distant hills, and his last rays still resting on the valley beneath them, threw a splendid radiance on the scene around. "Reginald," said Helen, "shall I sing you a wild scrap I composed lately?" He gladly assented, and as she softly touched the strings of her harp, she sang:—

"Hail to my birthplace on high  
Hail to the noble and free;  
Hail to my home near the sky,  
Where the wild deer away,  
Dash thro' heather so gay;  
Oh, this is liberty!

Hail to my own land above,  
Towering so gallantly;  
Hail to the land that I love,  
Where the eaglets roam,  
Where all find a home;  
Oh this, this is liberty!



Then hail to my birthplace once more,  
 I shall never again quit thee ;  
 But list to the waterfall's roar,  
 'Tis my music so wild,  
 I'm liberty's child,  
 And I love, I love liberty."

The young maiden ceased to sing, but her fingers were still wandering along the strings of her harp, when Reginald started, saying, "Helen did you not hear a noise among the brushwood yonder?" Hardly had he uttered these words than Shane O'Neill, mad with jealousy, and attended by four of his clansmen, rushed from his concealment. Maguire instantly drew his sword, and clasping the now unconscious form of his sweetheart in his left arm, defended himself gallantly, but Helen was torn from his embrace, and the young chief, no match for his powerful opponent, soon lay dead at O'Neill's feet. Having horses at hand, the inanimate form of Helen O'Donnell was placed on that ridden by O'Neill, and the party at once, and with all speed, hastened to their own border. The unfortunate Helen was subsequently restored to her father, but the shock she had received, had so effectually blighted her happiness, that the rest of her days were spent in the strictest seclusion.

About the middle of the 16th century, Callogh O'Donnell, then Lord of Tirconnell, seems, from prudential motives, to have sought and obtained English succour, to aid him in repelling the inroads that O'Neill was then making on his territory. At this time the attention of the English was directed to the subjection of the "Arch rebel, Shane O'Neill," and in 1565 a treaty was made between Sir Henry Sidney, the Lord Deputy, and Callogh O'Donnell. By this, O'Donnell resigned certain rights and claims to the Queen, and in return received assistance from the Lord Deputy, in regaining several castles which had been seized by O'Neill.

The following account of this transaction is contained in "Sir Henry Sidney's memoir of his government in Ireland," written in 1583. "By the way, I left not one castell in the possession of the rebel (O'Neill), nor unrestored to the right owner (O'Donnell), so marchinge on still, and passing the great water Assurroo, and having the castell there called Balieshannon (Ballyshannon) delivered me, I came to the strong castell of Dunyngall . . . where I re-possessed the old exiled Callogh O'Donnell lorde of it, and the Country." From this time down to 1587, a comparatively friendly feeling seems to have existed between the O'Donnells and the English government. But all this was shattered by Sir John Perrott's plot in kidnapping Hugh Roe O'Donnell. This young man was from his childhood filled with a desire to secure the complete independence of his native Tirconnell, and making

no secret of his intentions, became a source of no small alarm at Dublin Castle. Here he was confined for years, and the treatment he received, served to fan the flame of his hatred to English rule.

Though for a time apparently favourable to O'Donnell's rule in Tirconnell, the English government had cast their eyes upon the territory, and their attention was specially directed to Ballyshannon as an important and desirable acquisition. Besides its value as a seaport, possessed of a strong fortress, its relative position as a convenient gateway to Tirconnell and Connaught, rendered its conquest of great moment, and no expense or pains were considered too great to accomplish so desirable an object. It was then little more than thirty years after the signing of the treaty between Callogh O'Donnell and the Lord Deputy, that the first determined effort was made by the English to get possession of Ballyshannon. In A.D. 1597 Sir Conyers Clifford was sent over from England as governor of Connaught. He had at his command a plentiful supply of arms, and a large military force, which was supplemented by Donough, the son of Connor, and Murragh, baron of Inchiquin, together with several other of the Irish nobles who had joined the English ranks. Having mustered all their forces, which consisted of twenty-two standards of foot, and ten of cavalry, they marched to the banks of the " Samaoir of blue streams" (the ancient name of our river), where they pitched their camp. On the south bank they passed the night, and early on the following morning prepared to cross the river, thinking their overwhelming numbers would strike terror into the hearts of O'Donnell's garrison, and that they would carry the place by storm. O'Donnell, however, had all the fords well guarded by his soldiers, so that the invading host tried in vain to effect a crossing near the town. They at length made their way to an intricate ford called Ath-cuil-uain, about half a mile west of Belleek, and near Teetunny burial ground, where they succeeded in crossing the river, the time being July and the river at its summer level. Here also they were opposed by O'Donnell's soldiers, one of whom taking aim at the Baron of Inchiquin (who was crossing on horseback, and encouraging his men to advance), shot him off his horse; the ball penetrating his mail armour, he fell into the river and was drowned. The soldiers did not take time to recover the body of their fallen captain, but having made good their passage to the north bank of the river, they pressed forward, not halting till they reached the monastery of Assaroe, where they encamped from Saturday till Monday. On Sunday, whilst the besieging army was encamped at the Abbey, a number of vessels from Galway, laden with ordnance and military stores, crossed the Bar and came up to the island of Inissamer, where they landed their supplies for the use of the invaders. On the following day—Monday—the canon were brought off to the mainland, and placed in position before O'Donnell's castle; the



troops then marched from the Abbey, and took up their quarters on the summit of Sith Aodha (Mullaghnashee). Having then marched to the neighbourhood of the castle, they commenced their cannonade, which they kept up without intermission till Wednesday. The good old fortress was proof, however, against all their battering, and after a three day's siege it held out as impregnable as ever. The attack is thus graphically described by the "Four Masters"—"They continued firing at the Castle with thick flashes of fire and red shot, from loud-roaring guns, and immensely large and heavy ordnance, which they planted before the fortress, so that their resounding and echoing reports were heard in the vaults of the air, far and distant from them; having their bodies clad with thick, strong iron armour, fine polished helmets on their heads, and completely guarded with bright round broad-bucklers and shields of hard iron to protect them against the shots of their enemies. O'Donnell's soldiers, on their part, gallantly defended the castle, pouring down thick showers of shot upon the enemy, while from the battlements of the castle they threw down heavy stones, beams, and other missiles upon any of their foes who came under the castle walls.' At length the besiegers, notwithstanding their great numerical strength and extensive stores, perceiving that all their efforts to take the castle were in vain, turned their backs upon its walls and retired to their camping-ground, on Mullaghnashea, receiving, as they went, a parting salute of shot from the castle garrison. During the engagement the besiegers lost great numbers, and many more were badly wounded. Upon Mullaghnashee a council of war was held by the commander and officers, their deliberations lasting all through the night, till break of day on Thursday, when they came to the decision of making a precipitate retreat. Their plan was to descend the hill in companies, if possible unperceived by O'Donnell's soldiers, and to cross that little used and dangerous ford called Casan-na-g-Curaidh, immediately above the waterfall. In endeavouring to carry out this project, many of their numbers were swept down the fall and drowned; but the commander, officers, and all who were able, crossed over to the south bank of the river, from thence retreating by the Moy. Whenever O'Donnell's soldiers became aware of their movements, they opened fire upon them, and O'Donnell (though not himself within the castle during the siege), who had come to the rescue with additional soldiers from other parts of Tirconnell, at once put his men in fighting trim, and crossing the river\* after the enemy, followed them for a considerable distance, as they retreated to Sligo. The English losses were not less than 600 killed, besides the loss of the greater part of their baggage and

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\* From this memorable engagement the ford gets its name Casan-na-Curaidh, i.e., the path of the champions.



stores, which, in their hurried flight, they had left behind them. O'Donnell, as we have already remarked, was on friendly terms with the Court of Spain, and had received a couple of months before the siege, a cargo of stores from thence, which were called into requisition in this emergency. This memorable siege shows what can be accomplished by bravery and determination, for the odds against O'Donnell were tremendous. The invading army consisted of not less than four thousand men, well armed and provisioned ; whereas the garrison within the castle numbered only eighty men, who were commanded by Scotch captain, named Owen Crawford ; six of his men were Spaniards, the rest Irish.

After things had settled down in Ballyshannon to their accustomed quiet, Cormac O'Clery, one of the monks of Assaroe, recovered, after careful search, the body of the Baron of Inchiquin ; his remains were interred with all due solemnity in the Monastery burial-ground. However, the friars of Donegal Abbey hearing of this, contended that the body should be buried in their abbey, because it was in a monastery of their order (Franciscans) that the ancestors of the Baron were interred. The dispute between the two orders of monks was referred to O'Donnell and the Bishops of Raphoe and Derry, who decided in favour of the claims of the Donegal monks. The remains were therefore exhumed, and being taken to Donegal were finally deposited in the Abbey there.

O'Donnell, not long after the siege that we have described, received intelligence from the Earl of Tyrone, that the Lord Justice was on the march with a powerful army to attack him. He immediately mustered his forces, and being joined by O'Neill, marched against the English. A battle was fought at a ford on the Avonmore, where the English were defeated. O'Donnell then returned to Tirconnell in triumph. After a succession of victories and defeats, this Red Hugh O'Donnell, the most illustrious man of his name, and one of the most extraordinary men that Ireland ever produced, went to the Spanish court in the beginning of the year 1602, for the purpose of inducing that King to send an army into Ireland. There he was seized with sudden illness and died on the 10th September, in the same year. His body was removed to Valladolid, and interred in the monastery of St. Francis, with all the state and honour the Spanish court could confer. The friendly intercourse between the Spaniards and the O'Donnell family was destined to survive the wreck of their supremacy in Tirconnell ; for even to the present day there are direct descendants of that illustrious family, who occupy a distinguished position in the Spanish court.



## CHAPTER VI.

CAPTURE OF BALLYSHANNON AND CLOSE  
OF THE O'DONNELL PERIOD.

The absence of Red Hugh O'Donnell from his castle at Ballyshannon presented an opportunity to the English government to make an attack on "that long desired place." Ever watchful of O'Donnell's movements, and being aided and abetted by Nial Garv O'Donnell, a cousin of Hugh Roe, they decided on surprising Ballyshannon. In the spring of 1602, a body of soldiers under the command of a Captain Digges, one of Sir Henry Dowcra's officers, marched thither, and being provided with heavy ordnance, attacked the castle. Owing to the absence of their chief, the defences of Tirconnell had been allowed to fall into a weak and inefficient condition, consequently, when this unexpected attack was made, the few men within the castle walls, being without succour or reinforcements, had at once to surrender, and escape for their lives. Thus, in the short space of five years after the memorable battle related in the last chapter, were the fortunes of war reversed, and the English soldiers who had then to fly before O'Donnell, now found themselves masters of their enemy's fortress.

The circumstances connected with the taking of the castle are best told in Dowcra's own words: "And now being earnestlie called upon for a supply of victuells for them at Dunnagall, I took up garrons\* in O'Doghertie's country loaded them with salt and biskitt, and with one hundred beeves (cattle), went over the mountains, most part on foote, the wayes were so rotten, and on the 12th day of December, brought them reliefe; and because I sawe that little pile reserved from the rage of fire, to small a greate to contain a large and important garrison; I removed part of them, and added two companies more to lye at Ashrowe, an abbey ten miles further, and not above quarter of a mile distant from Ballyshannon; left Captain Edward Digges the Sergiant Maior, to command there; took a viewe of the castle; promised as soon as I came home to send him the Derry cannon, which before I had taken Ainogh withal, gave my opinion howe he should proceede in the use of it; tooke oath and pledges of the chief of the inhabitants thereabouts, and so returned. . . . I sent away the cannon as soon as I came home, and on the 20th March, it arrived there, and on the 25th, (being the first day of the year 1603,)† was that long desired place taken by

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\* Garrons or Erse word meaning strong horses.

† The "old style" of calendar in which the year began on March 24th, continued to be used by the English till 1752, when the Gregorian calendar was adopted.

the said Captain Digges, with lesse than a tenth parte of that charge which would have willinglie (been) bestowed upon it, and the consequence thereof brought many furtherances to the general service."

With the unexpected death of Red Hugh O'Donnell in Spain, and the capture of Ballyshannon castle, both happening in the same year, the independence of Tirconnell came practically to an end. For though Rory O'Donnell, on his submission to James I., got the title of Earl of Tirconnell, it proved but an empty honour and faint reflection of the former greatness of this remarkable family. Though not yet deprived of all his principality, Rory O'Donnell had henceforth no control over the castle of Ballyshannon, which was occupied by an English garrison. In 1607, the Earl of Tirconnell and the Earl of Tyrone were suspected by the English government of being in conspiracy to overthrow their rule in the North, and hearing of the feeling which existed in Dublin Castle towards them, O'Donnell and O'Neill, with many of their friends and followers, having regard to their personal freedom and safety, resolved to quit their native shores and seek an asylum in a foreign land. They embarked from Lough Swilly. The circumstance is thus referred to in the "Annals":—"They embarked on the festival of the Holy Cross in Autumn. This was a distinguished company; and it is certain that the sea has not borne, and the wind has not wafted in modern times, a number of persons in one ship more eminent, illustrious, or noble, in point of genealogy, heroic deeds, valour, feats of arms, and brave achievements than they." Amongst those who accompanied the earls in their flight was Owen Roe Mac Ward, the last of the family who filled the office of bard to the O'Donnells. Upon the death of his chief, which followed quickly on the wreck of his fortunes, MacWard composed an Elegy, from which the following is an extract :—

"O woman of the piercing wail,  
Who mournest o'er yon mound of clay  
With sigh and groan;  
Would God thou wert among the Gael!  
Thou wouldst not then from day to day  
Weep thus alone.  
"Twere long before, around a grave  
In green Tirconnell, one could find  
This loneliness;  
Near where Beann-Boirche's banners wave  
Such grief as thine could ne'er have pined  
Companionless.

Beside the wave in Donegal,  
In Antrim's glens, or fair Dromore,  
Or Killiloe,



Or where the sunny waters fall,  
 At Assaroe, near Erna's shore,  
 This could not be.  
 On Derry's plains—in rich Drumelieff—  
 Throughout Armagh the great, renowned  
 In olden years,  
 No day could pass but woman's grief  
 Would rain upon the burial-ground  
 Fresh floods of tears !

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If on the day the Saxon host  
 Were enforced to fly—a day so great  
 For Ashanee\*  
 The chief had been untimely lost,  
 Our conquering troops should moderate  
 Their mirthful glee.  
 There would not lack on Lifford's day,  
 From Galway, from the glens of Boyle,  
 From Limerick's Towers,  
 A marshalled file, a long array,  
 Of mourners to bedew the soil  
 With tears in showers !

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What do I say ? Ah, woe is me !  
 Already we bewail in vain  
 Their fatal fall !  
 And Erin, once the great and free,  
 Now vainly mourns her breakless chain,  
 And iron thrall !  
 Then, daughter of O'Donnell ! † dry  
 Thine overflowing eyes, and turn  
 Thy heart aside !  
 For Adam's race is born to die,  
 And sternly the sepulchral urn  
 Mocks human pride !

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\* Ballyshannon.

† The elegy is addressed to Nuala, O'Donnell's sister.

## CHAPTER VII.

## CONFISCATION AND RE-DISTRIBUTION OF LANDS.

The flight of the Earl of Tyrconnell was followed in due course by the entire confiscation of his territory. The abbey lands met with a like fate; and the O'Clerys, O'Donnell's hereditary historians at Kilbarron castle, from this date were no longer possessors of their rich estates. O'Donnell's lands were distributed to the various settlers and "undertakers," who came into this country at the "plantation of Ulster." The castle of Ballyshannon was garrisoned by a strong body of English soldiers, under the command of Sir Henry Folliott, "Captain of foot at Ballishanan," who was destined from henceforth to occupy a prominent position in this town and neighbourhood, and to become the principal landowner of the district. He was styled "governor of Ballishanan," and received the order of Knighthood from Robert, earl of Sussex, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, on 6th September, 1599; he was subsequently raised to the peerage of Ireland, under the title of Baron Folliott of Ballishanan, on 22nd January, 1619. The first lands which he seems to have been possessed of were the abbey lands at Assaroe and lands at Belleek, both of which he obtained, not by grant from the crown, but by purchase from the original patentees, about the year 1610.\* In this year also an agreement was made between the English government and Sir Henry, that on condition of his keeping the castle of Ballyshannon and that of Bundrowes in repair, and without charge to the king; holding them always in a fit and defensible state; if trouble and rebellion should arise, he should obtain a fee farm grant, as "undertaker" of the lands lying between the two castles. In addition to the lands thus acquired, the salmon and eel fisheries fell into his hands.

The defences of the harbour and Lough Erne were also provided for, and for this purpose a special corps was organised, as the following extract from the calender of state papers, 1606-8 shows:—"1607, May 15th. The king to Sir Arthur Chichester: Captain William Cole to be continued by patent, in the place he has for many years held, of Captain of the king's long boats and barges at Ballishannon, and Lough Erne, with an allowance of 3s. 4d. for himself by the day, and 8d. a piece for ten men, etc." On the summit of a hill overlooking the Bar, are the remains of a circular fort, evidently intended for the purpose of defending the entrance to the harbour, this fort probably belongs to the English period, and many have been constructed in the time of James the First.

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\* Calendar of Treasury Papers.



The last of the O'Clery family who held the lands bestowed on his ancestors, was Lughaidh or Lewis O'Clery, the most distinguished literary man then living in the north of Ireland. He held his lands till the close of the year 1609. He was selected as one of the "good and lawful men" of the county, appointed to hold an "inquisition" into the confiscated lands of Tirconnell. This inquiry was held at Lifford, on September 12th, 1609, when the following statement respecting the parish of Kilbarron was made:—"The parish of Kilbarron contains five quarters in all, whereof one quarter is herenach land, possessed by the sept of the O'Cleries as herenachs,\* paying thereout yearlie to the lord busshopp of Raphoe, thirteen shillings and four pence Irish per annum, six meathers of butter, and thirty four meathers of meal; and that there is one quarter named Kildoned, in the tenure of the said sept of the O'Cleries, free from any tithes to the busshopp, also that ther is in the said parish, three quarters of Columbkille's land, everie quarter conteyninge six balliboes, in the tenure of Lewis O'Clerie, to whom the said lands were sithence mortgaged for fortie pounds by the said late earl of Tirconnell, unto the said Lewey, who hath paid thereout yearly unto his Majestie since the late earl's departure, four poundes, two muttons, and a pair of gloves, but nothing to the said busshopp." The O'Clery's lands being forfeited to the king, became the property of Sir Henry Folliott and the bishop of Raphoe. Peregrine O'Clery, son of Lewy, was allowed to hold a small portion of land in the barony of Boylagh and Banagh, for which he paid a yearly rent; but it appears from an inquisition taken at Lifford on 25th May, 1632, that he "being a mere Irishman and not of English descent or surname," was dispossessed, and his lands forfeited to the king. The O'Clerys were thus reduced to poverty, but they could not be deprived of that noble heritage of learning, which they had always used for their country's good; and now that they had lost their temporal possessions, they devoted themselves with renewed vigour to the service of literature. It was in the same year that they were deprived of the last of their lands, that the great work known as the "Annals of the Four Masters," and sometimes styled the "Donegal Annals" were begun. The compilers were - Teige of the Mountain, O'Clery (who afterwards adopted the name of Michael), Maurice O'Mulconary, Fergus O'Mulconary, Cucogry O'Duigen, Cucogry O'Clery (also called Peregrine mentioned above), and Conary O'Clery. It thus appears that there were actually six persons engaged in the compilation of the annals, though the work is popularly known as the "Annals" of the Four Masters—three of the Masters being of the O'Clery family. The work was not

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\* The Herenachs were men partly ecclesiastical and partly lay; in them were vested the termon (or church) lands. See Davies' "Historical Tracts," page 217 et seq.

strictly speaking, written in the monastery of Donegal, as it had been burned to the ground by the English in 1601. An attempt was made to rebuild the abbey, but it was never carried out. The friars of the abbey having fled after the destruction of their edifice, when affairs settled down came out of their hiding places, and, with the materials at their hand, built a few cottages amongst the ruins of their former abode. In these cottages the O'Clerys and their fellow labourers found a temporary home, and it was in them the annals were compiled. The work was begun on 22nd January, 1632, and finished 10th August, 1636. They commence with the year 1242, and end with the year of our Lord 1616. To an Irish chief unconnected with Tirconnell, one Fearghal O'Gadhra, belongs the honour of having originated the idea of thus collecting the Records of Irish History, and defraying the expenses of the O'Clerys during the progress of the work. A striking proof of attachement to learning in the midst of adversity, is given by Peregrine O'Clery in his will. He thus bequeaths his most valued possessions : " I bequeath the property most dear to me that I ever possessed in this world, namely my books, to my two sons, Dermot and John. Let them extract from them without injuring them whatever may be necessary to their purpose, and let them be equally seen and used by the children of my brother Cairbre as by themselves ; and let them instruct according to the—(obliterated). And I request the children of Cairbre to teach and instruct their children. And I command my sons to be loving, friendly, and kind to the children of Cairbre, and to their own children if they wish that God should befriend them in the other world, or prosper them in this and give them the inheritance of heaven." It is satisfactory to find that these solemn injunctions of the good men were faithfully filled by his posterity. His books were carefully studied and preserved by his descendants, from generation to generation, and at the commencement of the present century were deposited in the Royal Irish Academy. Within the past few years a handsome monument in the form of a richly decorated Irish cross, with an appropriate inscription, has been erected in Dublin to the memory of the " Four Masters" ; but independently of this tribute of respect to their memory, their name and fame will continue as household words, as long as the History of Ireland's fortunes and reverses is preserved by her people.





## CHAPTER VIII.

## BALLYSHANNON AS A CORPORATE TOWN.

In 1613 a parliament was summoned to meet in Dublin, one of the objects of which was to place the "plantation" on a firmer footing, and to render absolute the distribution of the escheated lands of Ulster. Having this object in view, James conferred grants on certain towns, which made them corporate; appointed fairs and markets, with other liberties, and with the power of sending members to parliament.

Ballyshannon was one of the towns thus favoured; it was created a borough by Royal Charter, dated 23rd March, 1613. The charter, which is a very lengthy document, too much so for repetition here, begins thus:—"James, by the grace of God, of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, king, defender of the faith, to all to whom these our present letters shall come, greeting. Know ye that we, as well as the humble petition of the town of Balleshannan in our county of Donegall, in our province of Ulster, in our kingdom of Ireland, as for the inhabiting and planting, according to the form of constitution nobly established in our kingdom of England, of those northern parts of the same our kingdom of Ireland, which have been depopulated and devastated, and for the better progress and advancement of that new plantation lately happily begun there. . . . We determine, ordain, and declare by these presents, that the aforesaid town or village of Balleshannan, and all and singular the castles, messauges, tofts, mills, houses, edifices, structures, etc., etc. . . . from henceforth are, and for all future times shall be, one whole and free borough by itself, under the name of the borough of Balleshannan. . . . And further, we will, ordain and constitute by these presents, that within the aforesaid borough, there shall be one corporate and politic body, consisting of one Provost (in English, portrieve), twelve free burgesses, and a county, and that all the inhabitants within the said town and lands henceforth for ever are, and shall be by virtue of these presents, one coporate and politic body, in deed, fact, and name, by the name of the Provost, Free Burgesses and County of the Borough of Balleshannan." The grant goes on to recite the powers conferred on the borrough in parliamentary representation, and proceeded to appoint the first provost and burgesses thus—"To the intent that in future times it may appear that this new incorporation is now composed of good and honest men, we make, constitute, and ordain Bennett Payne to be the first and modern provost of the said borough. . . . and similarly we make, constitute, and name, Henry Folliott Miles.\*

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\* Sir Henry Folliott, soldier. The character is written in Latin. Some authorities say that Miles here means knight.

William Rastell, Richard Bennett, Stephen Michael Richard Orme, William Atkinson, John Connor, John Glasson, Hugh Allingham, John Forster, John Stephenson, and Francis Edmunds, to be the first and modern free burgesses of the aforesaid borough." The charter appointed a court to be held in Balle-shannan on every Wednesday, under the presidency of the provost. The court was empowered to hear cases concerning "actions, dues, agreements, transgressions, detentions, contracts, and personal demands whatsoever, not exceeding the sum of five marks\* sterling." The provost and burgesses were likewise empowered to make laws "for the good guidance and safe government of the inhabitants." The charter also constituted a "Guild of Merchants," who should have a common seal, "graven with such form and device as shall appear better fitted for the business of the borough." There were also appointed two Sergeants at Mace, and other inferior officers, to whom certain duties belonged; and finally a Clerk of the Markets, who regulated the tolls, and saw that the marked rules were not infringed.

In what building the Corporation of Ballyshannon first met for the transaction of public business, we cannot now tell, as it appears from an old minute book that the market house, which stood on the site of the present one, was not built till the year 1760. In an entry bearing date 5th November, 1760, it was said: "The Portrieve Burgesss and Commonalty of said Borough have resolved, that as the Market House erecting within said Borough, is now so far finished as to be capable for the reception of the Corporation, that the court be held in the great room of the said market house, on Wednesday next, for the tryal of pleas, pursuant to Charter." The Parliamentary privileges conferred on Ballyshannon appeared to have possessed but little real value for the inhabitants in general, who had no voice in the election of members to represent them in the Irish parliament. It was what was termed a close borough, and the provost and burgesses (with whom the nomination of the members rested) returned whoever their patrons directed them. A parliamentary election in those days seems to have been a tamer affair than even in the present age of ballot boxes. Here is an example taken from the borough minute book, April, 1761:—"We, the provost and burgesses of the Borough of Balleshannan, pursuant to a precept directed to Henry Major, Esquire, provost of said borough, by Richard Bateson, Esquire, high sheriff of the county of Donegal, bearing date the 10th day of April, instant, requiring the said Henry Major to cause to be elected according to the form of the statute in that case made and provided, two burgesses to attend and serve in parliament in the city of Dublin, on the 19th day of May next ensuing, do, with mutual assent and consent of each of us, make choice and elect Thomas Conolly, of Castletown, in the

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\* A Mark was equal to 13s 4d.



County of Kildare, Esquire, and Michael Clarke, of the city of Dublin, Esquire, to be burgesses of our said borough, and to represent us in the said parliament." (here follows the signatures.

The following is a complete list of the gentlemen who represented Ballyshannon, from the time it was created a borough till its disfranchisement in 1800 :—

- |       |           |  |
|-------|-----------|--|
| 1613. | April 29. | Powle Goare (Bart.), Magherybegg.  |
|       | "         | Edward Cherrye, Esq.   |
| 1613. | "         | Sir Arthur Savage, Knt., Kildare (vice Cherrye, deceased).                           |
| 1634. | June 27.  | Thomas Leake, Esq.   |
|       | "         | Michael Stanhope, Esq.   |
| 1634. | Dec. 27.  | James Dillon, Esq. (vice Leake, retired).  |
| 1639. | Feb. 28.  | Sir Robert Meredith, Knt., Greenhills, Kildare,                                      |
|       | "         | James Cusacke, Esq. (Cusacke was expelled for connexion with the rebellion of 1641). |
| 1661. | April 19. | John Bridges, Esq.   |
|       | "         | Sir Anthony Morgan, Knt.   |
| 1661. | May 2.    | Robert Kinge, Knt., Boyle (vice Bridges, resigned).                                  |
|       | "         | William Hill, Esq. (vice Morgan, resigned).  |
| 1692. | Sep 22.   | John Folliott, Esq., Ballyshannon.   |
|       | "         | Francis Folliott, Esq., "  |
| 1695. | Aug. 6    | Henry Folliott, Esq., "  |
|       | "         | Francis Folliott, Esq., "  |
| 1697. | May 21.   | Richard Warburton, Esq. (vice H. Folliott, created Lord Folliott).                   |
| 1703. | Aug. 30.  | Richard Geering, Esq., Dublin.   |
|       | "         | Richard Warburton, Esq.  |
| 1713. | Nov. 13.  | Major-General Owen Wynne, Sligo.   |
|       | "         | John Rochford, Esq., Carlow.   |
| 1715. | Oct. 26.  | Major-General Owen Wynne.  |
|       | "         | John Rochford, Esq.  |
| 1727. | Oct. 4.   | William Conolly, Esq., Dublin.   |
|       | "         | Thomas Pearson, Esq., Co. Meath.   |
| 1727. | Dec. 7.   | William Conolly, Junr. (vice Conolly, retired).                                      |
| 1737. | Oct. 28.  | Edward Walpool, Esq. (K.B. Dublin, vice Pearson, deceased).                          |
| 1754. | June 28.  | Michael Clarke Esq. (vice Conolly, deceased).  |
| 1761. | April 20. | Thomas Conolly, Esq., Castletown.  |
|       | "         | Michael Clarke, Esq.   |
| 1761. | Nov. 10.  | John G. Handcock, Esq., Dublin (vice Conolly, resigned).                             |
| 1766. | March 31. | Hugh Henry Mitchell, Esq., Dublin (vice Handcock, deceased).                         |
| 1768. | July 2.   | Francis Andrews, LL.D., Dublin   |
|       | "         | Michael Clarke.  |

1769. Nov. 21,	William Gamble, Esq. (vice Andrews, resigned).
1774. Sep. 13.	Thomas Smyth, Esq., Limerick.
1776. May 11.	John Staples, Esq.
	Sir Michael Cromie, Knt.
1783." Aug. 7.	William Ogilvie, Esq.
	Sir Michael Cromie, Bart.
1790." April 26.	Thomas Dickson, Esq.
	Sir Michael Cromie, Bart.
1797." July 27.	Hon. Somerset Lowry Corry.
"	David Babington, Esq.

The two last named, represented the borough till its disfranchisement at the Union of 1800, when the Earl of Belmore received the sum of £15,000 as a compensation for disfranchisement. The following extract from "Memoirs and Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh" will throw some light on the position of a close borough, such as Ballyshannon was: "With respect to what are called 'close boroughs' it is conceived this compensation (for loss of parliamentary franchise) may be given to the individuals possessed of the commanding interests, without regard to any claim from actual electors." The Earl of Belmore, having in this case, the "commanding interest," received this large sum, but it does not appear how he came to exercise such an influence over Ballyshannon.

At the time of the "Union" there were in Ballyshannon 198 houses paying that oppressive tax—the Hearth and Window Duty.\* The total amount received per annum was £307. In addition to the charter granted to Ballyshannon in 1613, there was a subsequent one granted to Lord Folliott, dated 9th April, 1622. Under this charter a Seneschal's court was established in this town, which was presided over by Lord Folliott as Lord of the manor, who now became owner of the town as well as the surrounding lands on both sides of the river. Thomas, second Baron Folliott of Ballyshannon, was born in 1613, and his son and heir, Henry, third baron died in 1716, when the title became extinct. The Folliotts of Holybrock house, of whom Col. John Folliott is the present representative, are descended from a common ancestor with Lord Folliott of Ballyshannon.

About the middle of the 17th century there lived in Ballyshannon a man named Patrick Conolly. He kept a small inn, which stood on or near to the ground now occupied by the new bank building. He had a son named William who lived with him, and it happened that there came to Ballyshannon two gentlemen

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\* The Window Tax was first imposed by William III. in 1659, for the purpose of making good the deficiency in the coinage, caused by the practice of clipping money.—Harris's "History of the Life and Reign of William III."



who were sent to secure the return of members to the Irish parliament. They lodged at Connolly's inn, and perceiving that William was an unusually smart, intelligent boy, they induced him to follow them up to Dublin, where they promised to have him educated and started in life. Having availed himself of their generous offer, the young man in due time became an attorney; from this point he rose step by step, at length becoming speaker of the Irish House of Commons. He purchased extensive estates, amongst others, the town of Ballyshannon, with some adjacent property, from the Folliotts. "Speaker" Conolly, who died in 1729, had no son, and he left his estates to "Tom Conolly of Castletown," his grand-nephew; he was also childless, and after Lady Louisa Conolly, his widow, enjoying the property during her life, it descended to her nephew, Col. Edward Michael Pakenham, who then took the name of Conolly, and whose son and heir, the late Thomas Conolly, M.P., was so well known to the people of Ballyshannon. In an interesting manuscript entitled, "A Description of Lough Erne," written in the year 1739, which is preserved in the British Museum, and from which we have gathered some particulars respecting this town and neighbourhood, the following reference is made to the founder of the fortunes of the Conolly family: "The greatest honour of this town (Ballyshannon) is its having given birth to the late Right Honourable William Conolly, Esquire, whose zealous attachment to the protestant interest and liberties of his country, after having exposed himself to imminent dangers in evil times, at length raised him to the highest honours of the state, to be the Commissioner of the Revenue, Speaker of the House of Commons, and one of the Lords Justices for Ireland, in which eminent stations, he acquitted himself with wisdom, integrity, and zeal for many years, till his death, and left after him the amiable character of an affectionate father of his country, and a faithful minister to his Prince."

Eight years after the granting of the charter, an "Inquisition" was held in Ballyshannon by order of King James, for the purpose of inquiring into the disposal of the lands and privileges escheated from O'Donnell and the monasteries.

This inquisition was held on Tuesday, the 2nd January, 1621, when the following "good and lawful men" were examined on oath before the commissioners, touching the objects of the inquiry: "William Rastell,\* gent., Donell O'Sleven, gent., Gillonie McGurnell, gent., Teige McGilwell, gent., Cormack O'Callenan, gent., Patrick O'Daly, gent. Dounogh . . . gent., David McGroertie, gent., Hugh Allegan,† gent., Hugh McAffertie, gent., Knogher McArt, gent., Bryan McTurlagh McAlum, Patrick Ranys, gent., Owen Oge McBrogan McTirlagh,

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\* One of the Burgesses of Ballyshannon.

† One of the Burgesses of Ballyshannon.

Lowry McEwarf, gent." This inquisition, which is preserved in the Rolls Office, Dublin, contains a long and most minute description of the lands and rights of fishing appertaining to the monastery of Assaroe and some neighbouring foundations, and of the mode in which they were disposed of at the "plantation." Unfortunately, some of the writing in the original is obliterated. Some of the names above mentioned are familiar, though strangely spelt; others have long died out.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### THE JACOBITE TROUBLES.

From the time of James I, till the period of the Jacobite struggle, history furnishes few details of local interest. In the wars between Cromwell and the Royalists, Ballyshannon for a time was held against the republicans, and the way was kept open for the passage of the royalist troops between it and Connaught. Oliver Cromwell, however, never himself visited this part of Ireland, his military operations having been carried out by Sir Charles Coote, who eventually reduced the whole of Ulster into subjection.

From the year 1641 to 1661 a gap occurs in the parliamentary representation of our borough (see list of members) during which time the Irish parliament never met.

On 24th March, 1689, King James II. made his entry into Dublin, and on the following day issued a proclamation for parliament to sit on the 7th May. The parliament was accordingly held in the King's Inns, Henrietta Street, and there was passed the Act entitled, "An Act for the Attainder of Divers Rebels, and for Preserving the interests of Loyal Subjects." By this Act the following persons connected with Ballyshannon were, amongst many others, deprived of their lands and possessions for favouring the cause of King William:—Sir James Caldwell of Belleek, bart., Patrick Conolly of Belashannon, gent.,\* Thomas Folliott of Belashannon, gent., Francis Earles, Belashannon, gent., Francis Jennings of Belashannon, gent., John Folliott, Esquire, Belashannon, Charles Caldwell of Belleek (son and heir of Sir James Caldwell), John Montgomery of Carrickboy, gent., Thomas Atkinson, senr., Belashannon, gent., Thomas Atkinson, junr., Belashannon, gent., Michael Hueson of Coolebegge, gent., John Hueson of Coolebegge, gent., Robert Delapp of Belashannon, gent., Lord Folliott of Belashannon." In the same month in which this Act of Attainder was passed, Ballyshannon was be-

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\* Father of Speaker Conolly.



sieged by a Jacobite army. The Connaught contingent, under the command of General Sarsfield, pitched their camp at Bundrowse, waiting their opportunity to seize Ballyshannon. The town was, however, strongly garrisoned, and the troops were under the command of Henry (afterwards third Baron Folliott). The Jacobite army, on the other hand, though numerically strong, were ill-disciplined and but poorly equipped.\* The Castle of Ballyshannon was still used as a military head-quarters, and contained a large number of soldiers. Folliott, however, finding himself beset by such a formidable army, sent to Enniskillen for reinforcements, and on 6th May, Col. Lloyd, in command of the afterwards celebrated regiment, the 27th Inniskilliners, started for Ballyshannon. The Jacobites, having heard of their approach, marched to Belleek for the purpose of preventing them from reaching Ballyshannon, and having placed themselves in the most advantageous position they could select, awaited the advent of the enemy.

At that disturbed period there were no high roads in the district, and the Jacobites held the only "pass" which existed. This was bounded on the one side by the lake, and on the other by a bog. Notwithstanding all this, Lloyd, being better acquainted with the country, succeeded in flanking the enemy, who turned and fled without firing a shot. The Jacobite losses were 190 horse, slain in pursuit. Most of the foot soldiers escaped through a bog in the Moy, and made good their retreat to Sligo. Some, however, of Sarsfield's men fled to Ballyshannon, where they took refuge on the island of Inis-samer. These refugees, to the number of sixty, were soon made prisoners, and thus ended the engagement, the Inniskilliners having only one man wounded. The siege was then raised, but in July, Sarsfield and his men once more took up their position at Tullaghan, with the view of gaining possession of Ballyshannon. The town was, however, too well prepared to afford them an opportunity for attack, and the sharp repulse they had received a couple of months before, taught them that "discretion was the better part of valour." On the evening of the day (28th July, 1689), on which Derry was relieved, a message was sent to Ballyshannon, asking for help at Crom, which was besieged by Lord Mountcashel. The gallant officers in command of Ballyshannon, remembering how recently they had received valuable aid from the Inniskilliners, at once complied with the request, and notwithstanding the presence of the enemy a few miles off, between 400 and 500 men were despatched. Having arrived at Enniskillen, after their long march from Ballyshannon, they declared themselves ready to go on

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\*At the siege of Crom, their only ordnance were two tin cannon covered with buckram,

without resting that same night.\* The battle of Newtownbutler on the 31st July, which resulted in the total rout of the Jacobites, having reached the ears of Sarsfield as he lay at Tullaghan, induced him to give up his design of attacking Ballyshannon, and he consequently withdrew his men to Sligo.

In the "Calendar of Treasury Papers," under date 1692, we find the following reference to Henry Caldwell, merchant of Ballyshannon:—"Sir Joseph Horn, Knight, petitioned Government, which was certified by several of the officers who held out at Ballyshannon, and other adjacent garrisons in the county, for the King against King James, and that there were used by the garrison several goods which belonged to Henry Caldwell, Esq., and that he was never compensated for them." From a record preserved in the church books, in the year 1691, it appears that the 27th regiment of Inniskilliners, under the command of their first† colonel, Zechariah Tiffin, was stationed at Ballyshannon in the beginning of that year. The following is a copy of the minute:—"A vestry held within ye church of Mullaghnashee upon Easter Monday, 13th April (1691), hath chosen John Jones and Arch. Harvy, church-wardens, Mr. Robert Delap and Mr. Lewis first overseers of high ways. Enacted that a petition be drawn and presented to Colonel Tiffin for a contribution of his regiment and reparation of ye church." After King William had established his authority in Ireland on a firm basis, the parliament passed an Act "declaring all Attainders, and all other Acts made in a late pretended parliament" held under King James at Dublin, about 7th May, 1689, to be void. All the rolls, etc., of that parliament were cancelled and publicly burned, and the persons whom we enumerated at the beginning of this chapter, as having had their property confiscated, were reinstated in their titles and possessions.

The prolonged wars which England and Holland waged with France, from 1689 to 1697, after the termination of the Jacobite struggle in this country, engrossed the attention of King William's government. In the Calendar of Treasury Papers, at the year 1691, we find the following strange entry in which our town is mentioned: "the government bought 8,000 bushels of oats at Whitehaven, at a cost of £726 16s 8d to be sent to Ballyshannon, for the purpose of the army being brought into Holland." From this it seems probable that the troops, with their stores, embarked at Ballyshannon for the seat of war on the continent. It should be remembered that in those days the transport of troops and

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\* A few days before a vessel had arrived at Ballyshannon from Derry with arms and ammunition for Enniskillen, which were landed here, and at once transmitted by Lough Erne to their destination. The frigate "Bonaventura" also called at Ballyshannon to ascertain the state of the garrison here and at Enniskillen.

† After the regiment was commissioned; at first it was a volunteer corps.



stores across the country was a serious matter, both as to time and cost, and as there was a large garrison here and at Enniskillen, advantage was taken of the port, by shipping them at Ballyshaunon.

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## CHAPTER X.

### PAROCHIAL HISTORY.

The preservation of the parochial records in the Established Church of Ireland, was not in former times a matter of much consideration, and as a consequence, the earliest and probably most interesting chronicles of the parish of Kilbarron, in common with others, are irretrievably lost. The oldest documents which would throw light on our parish were deposited in the episcopal library at Raphoe, but these were destroyed by the Jacobite soldiers, when passing through the that town to the siege of Derry.

It has been asserted that the old church of Kilbarron which gave its name to the parish, was one of the first in Ireland in which the English service was used after the reformation; we cannot however discover any record or evidence to support this statement, and having submitted the matter to a high authority\* on all points of ecclesiastical antiquities, his opinion will doubtless be allowed to settle the question. He thus refers to the subject—"I am not aware, nor do I think it likely, that Kilbarron old church had any priority over the principal churches throughout Ireland in the use of our reformed prayer book. Indeed I would a priori say that so wild and primitive a district as Tirconnell would be long behind the churches of the "pale" in the employment of our English service book." The old church of Kilbarron may possibly have been used for protestant worship during the first part of the 17th century, and the English settlers may have occasionally attended service there, which was perhaps conducted by the clergyman of the neighbouring parish of Drumholm. There does not, however, appear to have been any settled minister in Kilbarron even as late as 1622. In the "Ulster Visitation Book" of that period, the nearest parish in which a clergyman resided was Drumholm. The inconvenient distance of the old church of Kilbarron from Ballyshannon would in any case have prevented its having been long used for worship, and the necessity for a church in the town must have made itself apparent as the English inhabitants increased. As to the exact date of the erection of the first church at Mullaghnashee, we are left in ignorance; the first parochial vestry book being lost, and

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\* Dr. Reeves.

other documents which might throw light on it, not being forthcoming.

The oldest existing book goes back to Easter, 1691. At that date the church seems to have been a good while built, and in want of considerable sepair, as the following extract from the vestry book of 1692 shows—"it was ordered that the sum of twenty-one pounds, should be apploded and levied off ye parish of Kilbarron, for the reparation of ye church and other pious uses." It should however be remembered that the first church on Mullaginnashee was not built in the substantial manner of more modern buildings: it was roofed with shingles. These were thin boards, generally of oak, and a fresh roof composed of them was put on the church in 1692, the shingles having been brought from Enniskillen by Lough Erne. This method of roofing churches existed in Ireland from the earliest Christian period.\*

At the time of which we are speaking, slates as well as shingles seem to have been simultaneously used, as the following item at the year 1692-3 shows—"To 15 hundred of slates drawn from ye church to ye castle." The old church did not stand upon the same ground as the present one, but further down and nearer to the iron gate. The west wall of the churchyard stood near to the east window of the present structure; this wall was built round the churchyard in 1697, and in the same year trees were planted in it, and the bell which was hung in a small open belfry, surmounted by a weather-cock, was taken down and a new bell obtained from Dublin. The particulars connected with its cost and erection are sufficiently curious to justify reproduction here:—

"To Captain Ffolliott for ye Bell	...	...	£6 02 07
„ Bringing it from Belturbet	...	...	01
„ Drawing it from Balleeke	...	...	0 04
„ 14 barrels of lime	...	...	04 08
„ Digging sand and riddling it	...	...	05
„ Horses drawing stones, and men from abbey	...	...	09 02
„ Gads and hurdles for scaffolding	...	...	01 06
„ Drawing water	...	...	0 04
„ 39 lbs. Iron and to ye smith for working it	...	...	11 01½
„ 3 lbs. led. hanging it	...	...	02 00
„ Carrying home ye scaffolds	...	...	00 04
„ Ye mason	...	...	2 0 0
„ Michael Conolly's subn. and Thomas Lee's not paid	...	...	05 0
„ Carriage of Bell from Dublin	...	...	08 0
			-----
			£10 06 05½
			-----

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\* See Petrie's Ecclesiastical Architecture, pages 186-7.



At the time of the Jacobite siege, the church appears to have been used for military purposes, as was frequently the case in troublous times. From its commanding situation, the churchyard was well suited for heavy ordnance, and that they were placed there, the following extract from the vestry book in 1692-3 shows :—" To carrying Bombs out of ye church, one shilling, To John Horcoy drawing these to ye castle two shillings." This last item is of historical interest, as it shows the castle at Ballyshannon existed at that date as a military fortress. At the year 1694 there is a curious entry of four shillings and sixpence, being the hire of three horses to convey the parish representatives to the visitation of Derry. Hotel expenses must have been very moderate in those days as the charge for the parochial deputation for board and lodging, was only six and eightpence ! Besides the extracts already given, the early vestry books contain many morsels of antiquarian and historical interest, a few of which may here be noted :—In the latter part of the 17th century a labourer's hire was fivepence per day ; wine 22d per bottle ; a lather\* for church use, cost three and sixpence. In 1698, intramural interments seem to have been usual. "The said vestry have ordered that all persons buried within ye church, below ye pulpit, shall pay ten shillings for ye use of ye poore or repairing of ye church ; and all persons buried above ye pulpit in ye chancery,† it shall be left to ye discretion of their friends to pay according to their quality."

In the year 1700, the sum of one pound fifteen shillings, was paid for a baptismal font of "hewen stone" which was set in the west end of the first church. It now lies in the church porch, having been rescued by the present incumbent from a yard in the town, where the top portion was used as a trough for feeding ducks ! In 1718, a school house "for the instruction of poor children" was built by Archdeacon Michael Hewetson. This primitive structure stood upon the site of the present sexton's house, and was, like the church, roofed with shingles. In 1735, the church had fallen into such a ruinous condition that it was deemed unsafe to use it any longer for public worship, and it was resolved by the parishioners that a new church should be built 'with all convenient speed' on the level ground lying between the west wall of the church and the sod fort.‡ The new church which was cruciform, was of the following dimensions—length of

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\* Many words were at this time spelt as pronounced : the word ladder is still commonly sounded leather. Many more examples could be given of this phonetic method of spelling words in old MSS. and of their survival in local pronunciation.

† An old term for Chancel, from the same root, cancelli, railings.

‡ This was the Sidh Aodha Ruaidh, the regal mound having been then in existence.

nave and choir, 85 feet, width 23 feet—length of transept, 58 feet width, 23 feet. During the erection of this church, public worship was conducted in the old school house. The tower now standing on Mullaghnashee belongs to the second church, which was dedicated to St. Ann, and is so styled in the vestry minutes of that period. The present church, which is considerably larger than either of the earlier ones, was built by the ecclesiastical commissioners in 1841. It is solid and roomy, but devoid of architectural beauty. The sum expended on its erection would have more than sufficient to have added a picturesque feature to the general appearance of the town.

At the beginning of the present century, the old church bell, which was put up in 1698, was stolen from the belfry by some young men and thrown into the pool out of which it was subsequently fished up, and was, after the purchase of the new bell, put up in the old school house, where it remained for many years and was used to summon the reluctant scholars to their task : eventually this ill-fated bell once more disappeared and no trace of its whereabouts has since been found. The present bell was a sweet and sufficiently powerful one till it was broken by a careless ringer.\*

Owing to the imperfect state of the church records, it is impossible to give a complete and accurate list of the beneficed clergy of this parish. The following we have compiled from the existing vestry books, and the dates attached show the period at which they held office—1691, Rev. John Forbes—1718, Rev. James Forbes—1734, Rev. George Knox—1745, Rev. James O'Neil—1809, Rev. Henry Major—1820, Rev. Robert Ball—1823, Rev. Robert Pakenham—1827, Rev. George Griffith†—1830, Rev. George N. Tredennick (the last vicar previous to the disestablishment). The gift of the living was vested in the Conolly family from the time of their obtaining the property, till the disestablishment.

In the autumn of 1831 a curious discovery was made in the churchyard. As the sexton and grave-digger were opening a grave in the centre of the churchyard, they were arrested in their work by coming on some large flat stones, which on examination proved to be the roofing flags of a subterranean chamber running in a north-westerly direction ; this unexpected "find" was thus described by an eye-witness : "By the time the corpse (for the reception of which the grave was being made) was brought into

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\* It is surprising that the parishioners of Kilbarron should have so long allowed themselves to be summoned to worship by a cracked bell, when for a moderate outlay the bell could be re cast, and made as tuneful as at first. The charge for re-casting is only Two guineas a cwt.

† Rev. Geo. Griffith discharged the duties of Vicar for three years, but did not hold the living.



the burial ground, attended by its sorrowing friends, and while the procession was slowly proceeding to the grave, it was interrupted by a voice saying "don't go there, the place is not safe"; the procession immediately stopped, and the affrighted sexton drew near to explain the cause. He said that when he had removed the clay, to the depth of about three feet, the crowbar he was using to loosen the earth, suddenly disappeared all but about four inches, and that in endeavouring to pull up his bar he perceived a hole, on looking into which he saw a vault of considerable size. Here there was a general ejaculation "Heaven preserve us." The corpse was then interred in another part of the yard, and a few of the bystanders cautiously approached the dreaded spot, and one who ventured to look in said he thought he smelt sulphur! The chamber which is said to be heart-shaped—9 feet long by 6 feet wide—was subsequently closed, and it is to be regretted that it was not examined by some one of antiquarian knowledge, as it probably formed part of that system of souterrains or artificial caves and passages, whose ramifications began in the Booley Bawn and extended up the hill of Dungraven, to the summit of Mullagnashee. This kind of cave-construction is believed by antiquarians to be the oldest existing example of the builders' art in Ireland.

In the churchyard of Mullagnashee are some tombstones which from their age or quaintness of inscription, possess considerable interest for the curious. At the period of the removal of the old church in 1841, several tombstones had to be removed for the purpose of clearing the ground for the foundation of the present church; it is to be regretted that some other plan was not devised, so as to have avoided interfering in any way with the graves, which at all hazards should be held sacred. Some of the old tombstones are sadly weather-worn and battered, and the inscriptions almost obliterated, while others of equal age, are in tolerably good preservation; those in raised letters seem to have withstood the ravages of time better than the sunk inscriptions, which through the wearing down of the surface of the stone and the growth of lichens, often become very difficult to decipher.

It will be gratifying to all who have friends buried in Mullagnashee, to know that the present incumbent, the Rev. S. G. Cochrane, is taking an interest in the preservation of the tombstones and monuments, and has at his own expense had many of them cleaned and repaired.

The following inscriptions are among the most noteworthy:—

"Here lyes Jean Banerman, alias Forbes, who dyed September the seventh, 1681, aged 65."

"Here lyes the body of Elizabeth Caldwell, wife to Francis Irvine, who departed this life, the 30th day of June, Anno Domini 1711."

"Here lyes the body of John Favset, who departed this life the forty-fourth year of his age, in July 9, 1712."

"Here lies the body of John De'ap, who departed this life the 28th day of November, Anno Domini 1713."

"Here lyes the body of Robert Delap, who departed this life the 64 year of his age, in May the first." (Year omitted but appears to be one of the oldest stones in the churchyard).

"Here lies the body of John Henderson, who departed this life on the 10th August, 1776, aged 56 years."

"Beneath are deposited the remains of Thomas Atkinson, of Cavangarden, Esq.; he departed this life the 11th May, 1783, aged 70 years. Also the remains of his daughter Rebecca, who died 17th January, 1768, aged 12 years."

"Here lies the body of Hugh Finch, who died September 1, 1782, aged 84 years. Also to the memory of his son William, who departed this life the 24th June, 1790, aged 46 years."

"Here lies the body of Francis Forster, who died February 14th, 1782, aged 82 years."

"Here lies the body of Thomas Faulkin, who departed this life 20th November, 1786, aged 38 years, and who for friendship, hospitality, and benevolence, some might equal, but few could excel."

"Here lyeth the body of Edward Scanlan, Esq., who departed this life October 10th, 1789, aged 62 years."

"Sacred to the memory of the Rev Robert Caldwell, for many years dissenting minister of this place, who departed this life the 28th day of November, 1790, aged 53 years."

"Here lyeth the body of Margaret Lockhart, who departed this life 22nd November, 1790, aged 52 years"

"Here lyeth the body of Jane Curry, who departed this life the 13th of March, 1791, aged 86 years."

"Sacred to the memory of Francis McDonagh, who departed this life the 26th day of February, 1796, aged 75 years."

"Beneath this stone are deposited the remains of Mr. Archd. Murray, who departed this life 22nd April, 1798, aged 67 years; also the remains of Mrs. Florinda Murray, relict of the above Archd. Murray, who departed this life the 17th day of April, 1799, aged 66 years."

"Sacred to the memory of John Campbell, who departed this life the 19th May, 1796, aged 74 years; also to that of Jane Campbell, his wife, who changed this life for immortality, on the 16th March, 1800, aged 75 years.

The heartfelt and general affliction occasioned by their deaths is the best record of their virtues, which were truly Christian."

[The above were the parents of Sir Robert Campbell, Bart.]



"In memory of Henry Thompson, who departed this life March 25th, 1799, aged 46 years."

"Sacred to the memory of Jane Brandon, wife of Mr. Edward Brandon, of Ballyshannon, Merchant, who died the 1st January, 1801, aged 35 years.

Admired when living for many domestic virtues, and sincerely lamented at her death by all her acquaintances."

[The above were the parents of Rev. Wm. Brandon, who died in the pulpit of Finner Church; and the Rev Dr. Barclay, now Bishop of Jerusalem, is their great-grandson.]

"Here lieth the body of Ralph Babington, of Greenfort, in the Co. of Donegal, Esq. He died in February, 1806, aged 40 years."

"Beneath this stone are deposited the remains of Patrick Haly, Esq., who departed this life the 26th day of April, 1813, aged 65 years."

[The Gentleman Piper of Ballyshannon].

"Returned to his native earth, lieth all that was mortal of Lieut. Taaffe M'Govern, late of Northumberland Regiment of Fencible Infantry. He fell in a duel on the 2nd March, 1802, in the 23rd year of his age.

If the esteem and regard of his brother officers who have erected this stone to his memory could assist his soul in its flight to heaven, its ascent must have been rapid and its reception good."

"William Urquhart, Esq., late Captain in the Loyal Essex Regiment of Infantry, son to the late William Urquhart of Meldrum, Esq., Aberdeenshire, Scotland, died September 29, 1798, aged 42 years. This memorial was erected by his disconsolate widow:—

How loved, how honoured once, avails thee not,  
To whom related or by whom begot,  
A heap of dust alone remains of thee,  
'Tis all thou art and all the great shall be."

"Sacred to the memory of John Studdart, late Major, 45 Regiment, who departed this life the 1st January, 1814, aged 50 years. And also to the memory of his grandson, Thomas Studdart Robinson, who departed this life on the 10th of April, 1827, aged 10 months."

"This tomb was erected by the officers, non-commissioned officers and privates of the light company of the 91 Argyleshire Regiment, as a mark of their esteem and respect, in memory of Private David McIntosh, who was drowned near Ballyshannon, 28 June, 1832, aged 38 years, after having served in the regiment at home and abroad, during a period of 21 years."

"Here lies the body of William Bean, late private in the 79th,

1st Company, who departed this life January 7th, 1804, aged 22 years. As a token of regard for their deceased comrade, this stone was erected by the non-commissioned officers and privates of the company."

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We have already spoken of Mullaghnashee Church, as having been used as a place of military defence at the period of the Jacobite disturbances. In less than a century from that time was originated within its walls a local corps, which was called "The Loyal Ballyshannon Volunteers." In the year 1779 the coast defences of England were in such a weak and unsatisfactory state that a combined fleet of French and Spanish ships entered the English Channel in overwhelming force, and the "Serapis" man-of-war, a frigate, and several smaller vessels belonging to England, were captured.

This occurrence, coupled with various political agitations, created a great feeling of insecurity in Ireland, and was the cause of the enrolment of volunteer corps throughout the country. On the 1st August, 1779, the following resolutions were passed in Mullaghnashee Church :—"We, the underneath inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of Ballyshannon, having at this critical time, when our country is threatened with an invasion of the natural enemies of the present constitution (the French and Spaniards), formed ourselves into an independent company, by the style and title of the 'Loyal Ballyshannon Volunteers,' in which we are further encouraged by the countenance and protection of the Right Honorable Thomas Conolly, who has done us the honour of accepting the command, have come to the following resolutions :—Regimentals—each man to furnish himself with a scarlet cloak faced with green, white waistcoat and breeches. A good firelock and bayonet ; cartridge box and belt. Resolved, that whenever the company are called upon, they shall pay strict obedience to their officers. Resolved, that the company shall attend every day at parade, until such time as they are expert and perfect. Any one absent from parade without leave, to pay a fine of sixpence. Resolved, that the drum and fife be paid by the treasurer the sum of three shillings and three pence each per week, and that they do regularly perform their duty of beating the drum, and playing the fife, at the proper hours each day. Resolved, the commanding officer present each parade day, be desired and empowered if any volunteer appear on parade, not being cleanly and properly dressed (his hair well powdered, himself completely accoutered with his arms in proper order), instantly to fine such volunteer any sum he shall think proper under one shilling, or in default of payment, to be instantly turned out of the ranks for that day with disgrace." The corps used to march to church on Sundays, and afterwards to go on parade in



an adjoining field. Henry Major, who was agent on the Conolly estate, and at that time provost of Ballyshannon, was appointed captain of the volunteers. A similar corps was organized in Killybegs, and an interesting memento of the local spirit and patriotism of Ballyshannon and Killybegs were exhibited at the Royal Irish Academy, where the banners of both corps formed part of the decoration of the building of that learned body at the conversazione given in honour of the British Association, which met in the Autumn of 1878 in Dublin.

Before the era of the "plantation," there seems to have been no ecclesiastical edifice in the town, though there were both churches and "chapples of ease" in the surrounding neighbourhood. The one most generally resorted to by the inhabitants was doubtless the "church with a steeple" which adjoined the abbey of Assaroe. The old church of Kilbarron, though also attached to the abbey, was, owing to its isolated position, probably allowed to fall into disuse and decay, long before the English settlement was effected. The Donegal portion of the parish of Inismacsaint was provided with two chapels of ease, as the following extract, from an inquisition taken at Enniskillen, 18th September, 1609 shows: "they alsoe saie that in the said parish (of Ennismis-saugh) is a chapple of ease, called Ffennoare in Macginey, unto which said chapple the viccar of the said parish is to send a curate to saie divine service; and that in the said parish also is another chapple called Ballihanny." The first of these is Finner church,\* one mile distant from Bundoran, the other is probably identical with the ruined church at Sminver, near to the railway station at Ballyshannon. Though Sminver is not in the townland of Ballyhanna, it is contiguous to it, and some confusion in the boundary lines may have been made when the inquisition was taken. There was also in former times, a chapel in the townland of Rathmore, not far distant from Ballyshannon. The Roman Catholic Church now standing in a part of the old park of O'Donnell's castle, was erected in 1842. It stands on the site of the old chapel, which was built in the year 1795. The old building was cruciform, and not of such large proportions as the present edifice. The abbey burial ground, which has been used without interruption for seven centuries, was enlarged by the Most Rev. Dr. McGettigan, Archbishop of Armagh, during his residence in Ballyshannon. The Rock Chapel, situate in the adjoining parish of Inismacsaint, was, with the burial ground attached, consecrated in September, 1835.

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\* Since the above was written, the district has been examined by Dean Reeves, who is of opinion that the "Chapple of ease," called Ffennoare, is not identical with the ruined Church at Finner, which he believes to be of comparatively modern date, and that the Chapel of the inquisition, stood in the neighbouring townland of Caldragh (a derivative from Cill a Church), where is an old burial ground.

The first Presbyterian Church was in College Lane. It was built in the last century, and remained in use till 1832, when it fell into such a ruinous condition that it was decided to build a new one. This was erected on the Mall in 1833, and rebuilt with extensive additions in 1878-9.

Of the two Methodist chapels, that in the Main Street is much the oldest, having been, according to the tablet inserted in the wall, built in 1791. The Rev. John Welsey, the founder of Methodism, visited Ballyshannon on more than one occasion; and in 1771 preached here. At that time, he seemed to have but few supporters in the town, as the following entry in his journal shows:—"I rode to Ballyshannon, and preached in the Assembly-room. I was acquainted with some of the chief persons in the town; but they were ashamed to own me. Only some of them sent their compliments to me, properly so called." In subsequent years, the cause of Methodism grew and flourished in Ballyshannon, and at one time there was a large number of members, which, however, have dwindled away with the decreased population. The Methodist Chapel on the Mall is a more modern structure, and, being roomy and commodiously situated, will soon supersede the Main Street Chapel.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### BALLYSHANNON IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Often as it has been said of our town that it is at a stand still, "the same old place as ever," yet, were some Rip Van Winkle, who had lived in Ballyshannon a century ago, to awaken from his slumbers, and once more revisit his old haunts, he would miss many of the old landmarks; would see many of the buildings which in his early days were the scene of bustle and animation now in ruins, and inquire in vain for the decendants of his former friends and acquaintances. The names as well as the faces of the new inhabitants would appear strange to him, and he at least would be slow to admit that it was 'the same old place as ever.' The following notice of Ballyshannon is from a manuscript written in 1739, from which we have already quoted

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\* There are 44 townlands comprised within Kilbarron, which, but for a nominal tithe in the case of 7 townlands, have always been tithe-free. The cause of this freedom is accounted for by a curious legend in which a lame monk relieved the parish by walking through its bounds in one day; all the ground that his crutch touched was to be free. When he came to the sea shore and could go no further, he flung his crutch across to the Island of Ratlin O'Beirne, which from henceforth became a part of the parish of Kilbarron!



—“The most southerly town in the County (Donegal) is Ballyshannon, a borough and seaport, lying on the northern shore of the River Erne. The situation is beautiful, being washed by so great a river, from which the town, rising in a pretty steep ascent, appears to advantage; over the river is a large stone bridge, in the midst of which rises a tower with a gate, and a guard-room at the end of the bridge; along the shore of the river stands beautifully two very fine barracks, that on the west side of the street for two companies of foot the other on the east for two troops of horse; on the top of the hill over the town stands a neat church; and a quarter of a mile on the north side of the harbour an old abbey. Except about Ballyshannon there is no large flock of sheep (in Donegal) nor are there many herds of black cattle but what graze there, and at Horn Head.” From Guthrie’s *New General Gazetteer* (published about 1750), we take the following:—“Ballyshannon, a borough, market and post town in the County Donegal, province of Ulster, 101 miles from Dublin, having a good harbour, east of Donegal Bay. It has a bridge of fourteen arches over a river, which runs out of Lough Erne, which river falls down a ridge of rocks about twelve feet, and at low water forms a most beautiful and picturesque cascade; it is rendered singular by being the principal Salmon Leap in Ireland. It has a barrack for one (?) company of foot; it sends two members to Parliament.”

In a book entitled “A Tour in Ireland in 1775, with a map, and a view of the Salmon Leap at Ballyshannon,” the following description of the town is given:—“The next day I arrived at Ballyshannon, and was so pleased with its beautiful situation that I remained there four days. It is a small town, situated near the sea, with a bridge of fourteen arches over a river, which a little lower falls down a ridge of rocks, about twelve feet, and at low water forms one of the most picturesque cascades I ever saw. It is rendered still more singular and interesting by being the principal Salmon Leap in Ireland.” The writer of this “Tour” seems to have paid special attention to the salmon fishery during his stay in Ballyshannon. After describing at length the various habits of salmon, he goes on to say that “every morning during the fishery, they are taken out by means of a staff, with a strong barbed iron hook, which is stuck into them. . . . They have often been shot while leaping at the fall. . . . At the bottom of the fall porpoises and seals disport themselves among the waves.” The author, as the title of the book sets forth, has honoured our town by selecting as the subject of his frontispiece, “A view of the Salmon Leap at Ballyshannon.” In this curious plate, in which the Leitrim mountains and the sandhills are made to stand out as prominent features in the immediate background, a number of seals are represented as airing themselves on the rock below the “pool,”

and the old manor mill, with its rustic wheel, occupies the site of the present ruined distillery.

There is in existence an oil painting of Ballyshannon in the last century. It is taken from the south side of the river, and shows the steeply ascending hill, with the old church on Mullagh-nashee, with its transept facing the river. Also another painting, in the possession of a gentleman in the neighbourhood, which shows the aspect of the town a century or so back. This picture takes in the bridge with its tower in the centre and the gateway which stood on the south end; also the "Port" and Rock showing the houses then standing. It must have been painted some time subsequent to 1700, as the barrack, which was built in that year appears in it. Both these pictures, which represent the town from different points of view, are very interesting and valuable.

In the last century, Ballyshannon must have been a cheap and desirable place of residence, as the following prices given in the above-mentioned book show:—Salmon, 1d. per lb. or 6s. per cwt. Rabbits, 3d. per pair. Turkeys and geese, 1s. each. Ducks or Fowl, 2d. or 3d. each. Potatoes, 1s. per barrel (of 48 stones). But these must have been unusually low prices, as 8s. and 10s. per barrel was the general price, and after the long frost of 1739-40, potatoes were sold at 32s. per barrel. Whiskey was 1s. per quart; and of port wine, the author remarks—"I found the port wine better in Ireland, than any I had tasted in other countries;" he also observes that one of the customs peculiar to Ireland, is that of having constantly boiled eggs for breakfast, with tea! After "doing" Ballyshannon, the author of the Tour went on to Castle Caldwell, where he was hospitably received, and lodged for a week, by Sir James Caldwell, then the owner of that estate. After enjoying a round of fishing and musical parties on the lake, he was conveyed from Castle Caldwell to Enniskillen in Sir James's six oared barge.\*

While speaking of Castle Caldwell it may not be out of place to mention some particulars respecting that picturesque and beautifully-situated residence. The Castle was, it is said, formerly a monastic building, but all particulars respecting its original foundation, are now unfortunately lost. Archdale, in his "*Monasticon Hibernicum*," makes no mention of it. Though that work was written nearly a century ago, even then all trace of many of the most ancient foundations had disappeared, and often the only thing left was their name. There are, however, in the Castle Caldwell building, several architectural features, which lead to the supposition of its having been at some former period

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\* A curious monument in the shape of a stone fiddle was erected by Sir James to the memory of Denis M'Cabe, Fiddler, who was drowned out of the "St. Patrick" Barge, 13th August, 1770. It will be found at the south wing of the castle.



an ecclesiastical structure. It was after the dissolution of the Irish monasteries, and when their lands became forfeited to the crown, that the Castle Caldwell property came into the possession of the Blennerhassett family. In 1611, King James made a grant of these lands to Sir E. Blennerhassett, and for many years afterwards the old monastery seems to have been used as a family residence, and received the name of Castlehasset. One of the family—Sir Leonard Blennerhasset—owned and worked extensive iron mines on the shores of Lough Erne, where the ore was smelted, and sent away in a manufactured state.\* This industry, together with others of a similar kind, was entirely upset by the rebellion of 1641 †. In 1671, Sir Augustus Blennerhassett sold the property to James Caldwell, who was subsequently created a baronet. His son, Sir Henry, during his early life carried on business as a merchant in Ballyshannon, where he built the Custom House; and upon the death of his father, went to reside on the property, which was from hence called Castle Caldwell. The house, which was in a rather dilapidated condition when it came into the hands of the Caldwells, was by them renewed and partially rebuilt, though its original features seem to have been in the main, carefully preserved. The title of baronet in the Caldwell family descended in the following order, the two last named holding title only :—Sir James Caldwell, Bart. ; Sir Henry Caldwell, Bart. ; Sir John Caldwell, Bart. ; Sir James Caldwell, Bart. ; Sir John Caldwell, Bart. (grandfather to the present owner, John Caldwell Bloomfield, Esq.,) Sir John Caldwell, Bart. ; Sir Henry Caldwell, Bart., at whose death the title became extinct.

At the close of 1739 this country was visited with a frost of extraordinary length and severity. It extended into the year 1740, lasting in all 108 days. A period of great scarcity and distress succeeded, and it was at that time that General Folliott, the owner of Wardtown, decided to build Wardtown Castle, thereby giving employment to the distressed classes of the neighbourhood. The remuneration they received during the progress of the work was sixpence per day, and their food. Considering the value of money in those days, this was a liberal allowance, and fully equivalent to 2s. per day at the present time. Before the erection of Wardtown Castle, the Folliott family had a residence on their property there. In a "Collection of Payers communicated to the Royal Society" by Thomas Molyneux, M.D., F.R.S.E., the following passage occurs :—"In the year 1691, Major Folliott told me, that digging for marl near the

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\* Boates' National History of Ireland.

† There were also iron works at Garrison, in which more than 100 men (mostly English), were employed. These were burned down in the Autumn of 1643 by some of the neighbouring clans. A portion of one of the iron hammers is still preserved.

town Ballymacward, where he lives, not far from Ballyshannon he found buried ten feet under plain solid ground, a pair of these sort of horns (*Megaceros*), which he keeps still in his possession." General Folliott, the builder of Wardtown Castle, was an ancestor of the present Colonel John Folliott, of Hollybrook House, Co. Sligo who still holds a portion of the lands of the old barons of Ballyshannon, and is descended from the same stock.

Ballyshannon was in the last century an important military depot. Besides the infantry barracks on the left hand side of the bridge, and the cavalry barracks on the opposite side of the road, the Rock barracks seem to have been built prior to the year 1800, when all three were in occupation together. A detachment of soldiers was also stationed for a time at Portnason. The cavalry barracks (which stood within the present Market Yard enclosure), was probably built with stones from O'Donnell's Castle, but no vestige of it now remains, the ruins having been removed previous to the building of the railed wall which now separates the Market Yard from the street.

The introduction of the military element into the town upon such an extensive scale, though not an unmixed good, nevertheless afforded a great impetus to local trade and enterprise, and caused large sums of money to circulate in the neighbourhood. The wine trade especially, became, under the patronage of the officers, an important and lucrative business, and large quantities of wine—port, sherry, claret, etc., etc.—were annually imported direct by the local merchants, who, having established their reputation, carried on a considerable trade, sending their wines to the inland counties and even to the southern part of Ireland. Amongst those who were wine importers in the last century, was Archibald Murray, an extensive merchant, whose perseverance and enterprise, owing to reverses in trade, did not result in an accumulated fortune. From one of his letter books, we glean some curious particulars of the way in which trade was carried on before the introduction of banking facilities. Money remittances were made by the purchase and transfer of bills of exchange, which were obtained by the remitter from some outside party, and seldom represented the exact sum required to settle the transaction. Consignments of wine from Bordeaux and elsewhere, were occasionally paid for in kind by a return cargo of butter and grain.

Notwithstanding the extent of the trade by sea to Ballyshannon in the last century, the Bar was in those days, as it still is, a subject of anxiety to the merchant. There is, we believe, still in existence a map and survey, bearing the following title:—  
 "The survey and soundings of the Ship Channel from the Bar of Ballyshannon to Murray's Quay—taken at low water September 23rd, 1778, by order of Archibald Murray, merchant of Bally-



shannon." The following note is added as explanatory of this survey :—"The present course of the river at the bar spreads over a crooked stony bottom, by which the current there loses its force, and runs on the stony shore to the north side. It is, therefore, humbly proposed that a wall or battery of stones (which are very convenient) should be made on the dotted line, A. C., viz.—from the Black Rock to the South Rock, being only 60 perches, by which the current would leave all the stones to the north side, run in a direct confined course through a channel where there is nothing but sand for eight feet deep (proved), so that the water would then be as deep at the entrance of the harbour as in any other part of the channel above the black rocks, as was the case a few years since, when the current ran in the course now proposed by uncommon great floods that winter, and must ever continue so, if confined or assisted in this manner, from the great current of fresh water always running outwards. By this improvement, which could be made at a small cost of £2,000, large ships might trade here at all tides and seasons, as the tides rise about 10 to 16 feet, so that Ballyshannon would very soon become a place of great trade, as well as from its natural advantage of inland navigation of 50 miles, as from its situation contiguous to the fisheries, and for the export of beef, fish, butter, leather, and other produce. By the increase in trade, a small tax on shipping would very soon reimburse this considerable expense of £2,000.—(Signed) Archibald Murray."

In the latter part of the last century, Ballyshannon possessed a large and well-assorted nursery—the only one in the County Donegal. The grounds were in the Knather, or as it was then styled "Nadir," and an extensive trade was done in supplying plants and shrubs to this neighbourhood, as well as the Counties of Fermanagh, Leitrim, and Sligo. Unfortunately, the enterprise did not exist long into the present century, and the town is now deprived of the benefit of a local nursery.\*

In the year 1800, "The Tyrhugh Farming Society" was founded. The first meeting was held in the house of Mrs. Pye, in Ballyshannon, on the first Monday in November. A committee of gentlemen was appointed to promote the following laudable objects:—A linen market in Ballyshannon; to encourage good enclosures, and quick-set hedges; draining land and growing wheat; the improvement and watering of meadow land; reclamation of bog lands; the cleanest and neatest farm houses, and best enclosed kitchen gardens; best sallow gardens, etc. How long this society continued to exert its beneficial influence upon

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\* In 1835 there was a nursery in Cashel, which was furnished with a good collection of trees and flowering shrubs; it seems, however, that the demand for these were not sufficient to encourage the continuance of the enterprise.

the farming operations of this neighbourhood we cannot say, but it is certain that a society having such useful and necessary objects in view is much wanted in our midst at the present day, and the benefits which would arise from such a local institution, were it intelligently conducted, cannot be over estimated.

Ballyshannon did not suffer much by the disturbed state of the country in 1798. It was about that period that the Rock Barracks were built, and a strong military force, both cavalry and infantry, were stationed here. The accommodation afforded by the barracks at the Bridge, and those on the Rock, was not sufficient, and soldiers were posted at Portnason and at Belleek. It was at this time that the Star Fort was constructed on Mullaghnashee, and cannon placed there. The town was regarded as a safe refuge from more disturbed localities, and numbers of people from Sligo and other parts flocked thither, where they remained till more peaceful times arrived.

In October, 1798, a French frigate of 30 guns sailed into Donegal, where they intended to land, but, the militia having been called out, and determined preparation for resistance being made by the inhabitants, the vessel beat a retreat. In their haste the chain of the anchor snapped, and the anchor still remains stuck in the mud, as a memento of this futile attempt at invasion.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### BIOGRAPHICAL AND LITERARY NOTICES.

A local historical sketch would be incomplete were no particulars to be given of its former inhabitants.

In the preceding chapters, mention has been incidentally made of several names, formerly well known in Ballyshannon. Therefore it is only necessary to give a short sketch of persons once residents of the town, who seem to call for special notice.

Early in the last century, there lived in Ballyshannon a lady named Elizabeth Dixon, some of whose relatives are supposed to have been engaged in the wine trade, and to have resided in the Main Street. There was also another Dickson family living in the town at the same time, the descendants of whom are still in this neighbourhood, but the two families were in no way related to each other, though it appears from some existing documents that the first named Dixon family, sometimes, at least, spelled their name Dickson, which was the usual mode of spelling it in this district. It should, however, be remembered that there have been in past time, frequent instances of persons altering the mode of spelling their surnames, sometimes writing them one way and sometimes another.



Elizabeth Dixon seems to have left Ballyshannon about the middle of the last century, and to have gone over to England, where she married a farmer named Wollstonecraft, and they appear to have resided for a time in the vicinity of London, where on 27th April, 1759, was born to them Mary Wollstonecraft, who was destined to become celebrated by the brilliancy and versatility of her literary talents; the many romantic circumstances connected with her career, and, finally, by her marriage with William Godwin, the Philosopher, Novelist, and Historian, and by her being the mother of Mary Godwin, who became the second wife of the poet Shelley. Amongst the many works of Mary Wollstonecraft may be mentioned "Thoughts on the Education of Daughters" (her first work), one on the French Revolution, which brought her into notoriety. "A Vindication of the Rights of Women." A version of Lavater's Physiognomy; an interesting series of "Letters from Norway, etc." Mary Wollstonecraft's daughter also inherited much of her mother's literary power, and proved a congenial companion and suitable wife to the poet Shelley. From anything that is known of Wollstonecraft, the husband of Elizabeth Dixon, it seems probable that it was from the mother's side that the daughter inherited her genius.

Amongst the names associated with the trade of Ballyshannon in former times was that of the Jennings family. The English branch of which spelt the name Jenyns. Francis Jennings, who was brother of Sir John Jennings or (Jenyns), the grandfather of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, came from Somersetshire, and settled in Ballyshannon in the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth. His family became connected by marriage with the Forbes, Major, Scanlan, and Babington families. His son, who bore the same christian name was extensively engaged in the iron export trade, which in the reign of James I., was an important branch of business in Ballyshannon. In a former chapter reference was made to the Iron Works of Lough Erne, which were, at the period of which we are speaking, in full operation. The supply of iron in England did not at that time equal the demand, and consequently all the ore which could be supplied by this country found a ready and profitable sale in the English market. Most of the iron produced by Donegal, Tyrone, and Fermanagh, found its way to Ballyshannon, where it was bought at about £11 per ton; from thence it was shipped to London, where it realised £17 per ton. Francis Jennings, junr., (son of this iron merchant), left Ballyshannon and settled in Stockholm, where he became an affluent man, and a naturalized Swedish nobleman. His son John received in that country the title of "Knight of the Polar Star," and in company with his wife visited Ballyshannon, his father's birthplace.

Up to this very day the name continues in Sweden, the present

representative of the family being John Gus. Ad MacJennings, who is connected with one of the most extensive iron mines of Sweden, and is great-grandson of the Francis Jennings who left this town for Stockholm.

The enormous wealth which accumulated in the family, owed its origin, it is generally admitted, to the profits derived from their connection with the iron trade in Ballyshannon and England, but owing to the wilful destruction of family papers by some interested persons, since the death of Win. Jennings, of Acton Hall, Suffolk, who died intestate in 1798, all traces of legal identification between the English and Irish branches\* are lost and a rightful owner has not been found for the stored-up wealth.

Thomas Crawford, the American sculptor, though claimed by our trans-atlantic friends as a native of New York,† was born in Ballyshannon. His father's name was Aaron Crawford, and his mother's Mary Gibson. At an early age he accompanied his parents to America, but he ever cherished a fond remembrance of his birthplace, and looked forward to the pleasure of revisiting it.

He showed an early turn for art, and learned to draw and carve in wood. In his nineteenth year he was placed with a firm of monumental sculptors in New York. At the age of twenty, he went to Rome, and became a pupil of the famous Danish sculptor, Thorwaldsen. The first work that brought him into general notice was his "Orpheus" (1832); after which he produced "The Babes in the Wood," "Flora," "Sappho," "Vesta," "The Dancers," "The Hunter," etc. His bust of Josiah Quincy is in the Boston Athenaeum; his equestrian statue of George Washington at Richmond, Virginia; his statue of Beethoven in the Boston concert room; and he also did busts of Channing and Henry Clay, and a large number of bas-reliefs of scriptural subjects. For the capitol at Washington, Crawford executed the colossal figure of "Armed Liberty," also figures for the pediments, and the bronze doors. He went to reside in Rome for a time, where his studio was a place of great attraction, and revisited America in 1844, in which year he married Miss Ward, an American banker's daughter. In 1849 and in 1856 he was attacked by a tumour on his brain, which caused at last the loss of his sight; he sought relief in Paris, but in vain; and, coming to London for the same purpose, he died there on the 10th

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\* Several of the descendants of the Irish branch who began their career in Ballyshannon, are still living, and occupy respectable and influential positions both in this country and America.

† According to the American accounts he was born in New York, March 22nd, 1814. The above account of his birth has been confirmed by his relatives here, as well as by the published statement of the Sculptor's mother.



October, 1857. His works are especially noticeable for invention and freshness.

Another Ballyshannon man worthy of notice is Sir Robert Campbell, Bart., who was born on the Rock, towards the close of the last century. His father, Mr. John Campbell, occupied a respectable position in this town, where he acquired some property which still remains in the family. His son Robert left Ballyshannon when young, and went out to India, where he became connected with the East India Company, of which he was subsequently appointed a director. In 1831 he was created a baronet, in recognition of his services in the promotion of Indian commerce. He spent the latter part of his life in London, and re-visited his native town, which, amid all his prosperity he was never ashamed to own ; and during his public career in London, he always showed a disposition to lend a friendly hand to all his fellow-townsmen, whom he had the opportunity of advancing. He died in England at a ripe age, respected and beloved by all who knew him.

A well-known personage in Ballyshannon was Tom Patten, a pensioner of the 28th Regiment, who died not very many years ago. The recollection of his tall gaunt figure and shambling gait, is still fresh in the memory of many, but the exploit by which he distinguished himself while in active service, in the Peninsular War, is worthy of being recorded.

When the regiment was on duty in Spain, and during the cessation of hostilities, at the barrier between the English and French forces, was a rivulet, and our soldiers had established an underhand traffic in tobacco and brandy with the French, in the following manner :—a large stone was placed in that part of the rivulet screened by the wood, opposite to a French sentry, on which our soldiers used to put a canteen with a quarter dollar, for which it was very soon filled with brandy. One afternoon about dusk, Tom Patten had put down his canteen with the usual money in it, and retired ; but though he returned several times no canteen was there. He waited till the moon rose, but still found nothing on the stone. When it was near morning, Tom thought he saw the same sentry there, who was on duty when he put his canteen down ; so he sprang across the stream, seized the unfortunate Frenchman, wrested his firelock from him, and actually shaking him out of his accoutrements, recrossed, vowing he would keep them till he got his brandy. Two or three hours afterwards, a flag of truce was displayed on the French side of the barrier, and an officer of the regiment having gone down, found the officer of the French picquet in a state of great alarm, saying that a most extraordinary circumstance had occurred (relating the adventure), and stating that if the sentry's arms were not immediately returned, his own commission would be forfeited, as well as the life of the poor sentry. A sergeant was

at once sent to the picquet-house to search for the articles, when Tom Patten came up, scratching his head and saying "he had them in pawn, for a canteen of brandy, and a quarter dollar!" The arms were at once given up to the French officer, who was delighted to get them back so easily. The Frenchman, stepping behind, put two five-franc pieces into Patten's hand. Tom however was not to be bribed by an enemy, and returned the money. He was then put into confinement, and tried by court martial, which sentenced him to receive three hundred lashes. When the time came for the carrying out of the punishment, Tom was brought out, and his sentence read in presence of the assembled regiments; the General remarked upon the nature of the offence, and the possible consequence of Patten's imprudence, but he said that, having taken into consideration the gallantry of the offender on former occasions, at the passage of the Douro, and Talavera, he was resolved to remit his sentence. On Tom's release he got three hearty cheers from his company for his good fortune.

In the last century, and even at the beginning of the present one, duels were of frequent occurrence. A slight dispute was often followed by a challenge, which was always accepted, and in some quiet corner, attended by their seconds, the combatants settled their "affairs of honour," too often with deadly result.

At the beginning of the present century, *theatrical performances*, which were largely patronised by the military, were frequently given in Ballyshannon; and Lady Morgan, then a young girl, accompanied by her father, Owens, performed in the town. After one of these entertainments in the spring of 1802, a dispute arose between Lieut. McGovern, of the Northumberland Regiment of Infantry, then stationed here, and George Henderson, an attorney. The quarrel resulted in a challenge, and early on the morning of the 2nd March, the two combatants, attended by their seconds, met in a field on the riverside at Laputa. The signal was given (the dropping of a handkerchief), and Henderson's shot took deadly effect—Lieut. McGovern was killed. The duel was witnessed by many bystanders, and henceforth the field was known as McGovern's Meadow.

The body of the fallen man was brought to Ballyshannon, and buried with military honours in Mullagnashee. He was a favourite in his regiment and great sorrow was felt amongst his comrades for his untimely end. The anger of the soldiers against Henderson waxed so hot that they attacked his house in Castle Street, and he had to escape from his dwelling to avoid summary vengeance being wreaked upon him.

A tombstone, with a curious epitaph,\* was placed over the grave of McGovern by his brother officers.

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\* See Chapter on Parochial History.



Another duel was fought on the island of Inis-samer, but neither party was wounded ; and a duel with swords was fought in the town, but was brought to an abrupt termination through the intervention of a lady, who appeared on the scene and disarmed the belligerents.

In the last century flourished the " Ballyshannon Union Hunt," and an interesting memento of its existence is still preserved in a large punch jug of elegant shape, upon which are portrayed scenes from the hunting field, and the initials F. G. (Francis Gillespie, who was master of the hounds, and lived at Danby). This jug was specially made in China, and was brought over from that country at a time when the Chinese ports were closed to European commerce. While speaking of hunts, mention should be made of the exploit of a gentleman formerly well-known here—Kit Allingham. One day in the winter time, while hunting a fox in the Knather district, reynard bent his course towards the river, a little below Laputa ; the hounds and riders followed for awhile, but Kit Allingham pressed forward his horse, breasted the stream and crossed over to the opposite bank.

A little below this point of the river was the scene of another curious equestrian exploit. In the Knather, not far from the main road, lived towards the close of the eighteenth century, a tall swarthy woman who was locally known as Kathleen Bwee, i.e., Yellow Kathleen ; she dwelt alone in a small cottage, her only companions being a white mare, and a couple of large dogs, all of whom attended her in her rambles abroad. Kathleen rode (without side saddle) and bareback ; and one day, wanting to get her mare shod, and the smithy being on the other side of the water, she crossed the river a little above the rapids, hence they have since borne the name " Kathleen's Fall."

Another feminine name associated with our river, but of a very different class, is that of " O' More's Fair Daughter," or " The Hawk of Ballyshannon." This is the title of a song written and composed by Carolan, the great Irish musician. It was finely translated into English by Thomas Furlong ; the ode, which contains seventy-one lines, is too long for insertion here, but as a specimen, we may quote the following :—

" Rejoice ! rejoice ! with harp and voice,  
For the Hawk of Erne is near us ;  
She comes with a smile our cares to beguile  
She comes with a glance to cheer us :  
Not loved and lovely alone is she,  
But bounteous as high-born dames should be,  
On she moves, while the eyes of all  
Hail the ground where her footsteps fall ;  
Sweet are her tones as the measur'd store,  
Which the weary weary bee

Culls from the flowers he lingers o'er  
 When he wanders far and free.  
 Sweeter far than the cuckoo's lay  
 That rings on the ear on a summer's day ;  
 But come, let this the rest declare  
 In the bumper flowing o'er,  
 We pledge the fairest of all the fair  
 The daughter of Old O'More."\*

The tune of Carolan's "Hawk of Ballyshannon" is a fine stirring air, with the genuine Irish ring in it. A composition, entitled the "Donegal Polka," which introduces Carolan's original, was published by Mr. Oliver, while bandmaster of the Donegal militia.

The following poem, the original of which is in Spanish, was written by Dr. D. Joaquin Lorenzo Villanueva, chaplain to the King of Spain, and Knight of the Royal and Distinguished Order of Carlos III. Villanueva left Spain owing to the political troubles of the period, and lived for some time in Ireland. He wrote and published while in this country a work on Irish history, also a volume of Spanish poetry, which was printed by subscription in Dublin, in 1833.

During his residence in Ireland he must have visited Ballyshannon, and the view from the summit of Sheegus Hill, its sides shining with golden gorse, the town, and "the river-tide," separating this "mountainous slope" from the great Dartry range beyond, seems to have suggested

### THE SHEPHERD'S FAREWELL.†

"Ballyshannon, flowery village,  
 Flowery village, once my home!  
 Peaceful rest among thy mountains,  
 That afar off see me roam.  
 Left my little flock for ever—  
 Never by the river-tide  
 Shall I tend the merry kidling  
 Leaping by its mother's side;  
 On the upland pasture never  
 Pass the glowing noon away.  
 Shaded 'neath the wavering wild rose  
 Looking o'er the dreary bay.  
 Bear I these alone for dower—  
 Flowery village, once my home!—  
 Sweet old times and songs of childhood  
 In my breast, where'er I roam.

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\* See Hardiman's Irish Minstrelsy, vol. I.

† Translated from the Spanish by Dr. George Sigerson Dublin, to whom we are indebted for the above particulars respecting Villanueva.



On this mountain slope above thee,  
 Where I spent my happy time,  
 'Mid the fruit my hands had planted  
 Gladdened by thy distant chime,  
 Here, ere leaving thee for ever,  
 Here I light a fire—the last,  
 'Mid my cot's down-broken ruins  
 And the ruins of the past.  
 Naught remains of all my labour—  
 Nought but broom and nettles rank,  
 Thistle, gorse, and wild weed cluster  
 Over meadow, field, and bank,  
 Burst in flames dry wood and bramble,  
 Light the ruins of my home,  
 And the sad steps of its master,  
 Who afar off now must roam.

Seeking some fair spot of safety,  
 O'er the hills my path shall lie,  
 Sleeping, mayhaps, in their bosoms,  
 'Neath the vigil of the sky—  
 Sleeping, mayhaps, by the fireside,  
 Of some shepherd, rough and kind,  
 With my heart gone back in slumber  
 To the land I left behind;  
 Or it may be in the valleys,  
 Wander through the gentle spring,  
 Tilling 'mid the lowland gardens,  
 When green leaves are opening;  
 Or upon the moving waters,  
 Seek the good gifts of the sea,  
 'Til another tempest coming,  
 Drive me off, as now from thee.

But amid the cities never,  
 Never shall my pythway lie,  
 Where great walls shut out the mountains,  
 And dark smoke the holy sky.  
 Ballyshannon, flowery village,  
 Flowery village, once my home,  
 Peaceful rest among thy mountains,  
 That afar off see me roam."

In by-gone days there lived a race of musicians in Ireland which have become extinct. For such there was always an open door and a hearty welcome. They were received and treated as honoured guests, and, in return, charmed the ears of the company with their performance on the pipes or harp. Macdonnell, a famous Irish piper, lived in great style, and kept servants,

grooms, and hunters, etc. His pipes were small, and of ivory tipped with silver and gold. One day there was a large dinner party in Cork, and Macdonnell was sent for to play for the company during dinner; a table and chair were placed for him on the landing outside the room, a bottle of claret and a glass on the table, and a servant waiting behind the chair designed for him, the door left wide open. He made his appearance, took a rapid survey of the preparation for him, filled his glass, stepped to the dining-room door, looked into the room and said, "Mr. Grant, your health and company!" drank it off, threw half-a-crown on his table, saying to the servant, "There, my lad, is two shillings for my bottle of wine, and keep the sixpence for yourself." He ran out of the house, mounted his hunter and galloped off, followed by his groom!! Of this race of musicians, was Patrick Haly, the gentleman piper of Ballyshannon, a skilful performer, who was much sought after, in the society of the neighbourhood, in the latter part of the last century. Haly was a burgess of the corporation of Ballyshannon. He was born in 1748, and died in 1813. \*Haly, like others of his class, was a jovial fellow and fond of good living. He was a frequent visitor at Castle-caldwell, and the sound of his pipes often enlivened the musical parties which Sir James Caldwell gave in the "St. Patrick" barge on Lough Erne. Some local rhymster has perpetuated the remembrance of Haly's visits to Castle-caldwell in a "song" which was at one time a great favourite, but is now almost forgotten. The following verse will be sufficient to show the character of the composition:—

" With his pipes and songs  
And chanter longs,  
He sits in high decorum,  
And at his ase† he snuffs and plays,  
And pushes about the jorum.

Amongst the officers quartered in the old barrack at the bridge, in the last century, was the Hon. Robert Stewart, afterwards Lord Castlereagh. An officer's wife, known as the "Green Lady" (from the colour of her dress), was said to have fallen by the hand of her husband, while in this barrack, and many strange stories were whispered about the house being haunted. Whether or not Lord Castlereagh had his imagination excited by these rumours, we know not, but it is certain he related several strange circumstances many years after, at a dinner party in Paris, one of those present being Sir Walter Scott, who afterwards referred to it in his writings.

\* An interesting portrait in oils of Haly is still in existence. In it he is represented as playing the guitar.

† The local way of sounding the word case.



The circumstance is graphically described in a poem entitled the "Goblin Child of Ballyshannon," by William Allingham :—

" A Regiment, filling row by row,  
One evening ninety years ago,  
As wintry dusk was drawing late,  
Through Ballyshannon's old bridge-gate,  
Changed pass-words with the pacing guard,  
Left-wheeled into the barrack-yard,  
And halted willingly—for tired  
The men were, dropping, soaked, and mired ;  
And ev'n the highest in command,  
With trembling knee and fevered hand,  
Felt on his horse almost as jaded  
And glad to end the march as they did.

No wonder then that he withdrew  
Betimes to bed ; and though 'twas true,  
His quarters here proved strange enough ;  
Snatched as they seemed, with trimming rough,  
From long disuse ; yet in a pile  
Heaped on the hearth in good old style,  
Bogwood and turf with jovial roar  
Threw ruddy blaze on wall and floor,  
And the new-comer thought he might,  
On such a fagged November night,  
Ev'n in a rougher place have found  
A door to sleep's Enchanted Ground.

Yet when he tried, he tried in vain,  
A dim, fantastic, endless train  
Of stirring fancies vexed his brain ;  
Till as the weary hours went by  
He ever grew, he knew not why,  
More anxious, and his heart was sick,  
And the pulse in his pillowed ear beat thick.

The wide half-furnished barrack-room  
Was full of heavy midnight gloom,  
Save when the sinking coals gave birth  
To smouldering flashes on the hearth,  
And from the single darkness made  
A thousand ghostly forms of shade,  
On which the waker gazed and gazed  
Until his thoughts grew mazed and mazed,  
And down at length his aching lids were weighed.

When suddenly—Oh Heaven !—the fire  
Leaped up into a dazzling pyre,



And boldly from the brightened hearth  
A Naked Child stepped forth.

With a total, frozen start,  
A bound—a pausing of the heart,  
He saw. It came across the floor,  
Its size increasing more and more  
At every step, until a dread  
Gigantic Form stood by his bed.

Glaring for some seconds' space  
Down into his rigid face —  
Back it drew, with steadfast look,  
Dwindling every step it took,  
Till the Naked Child returned  
To the fire, which brightly burned  
To greet it : then black sudden gloom  
Sunk upon the silent room,  
Silent, save the monotone  
Of the river flowing down  
Through the arches of the bridge,  
And beneath his casement ledge.

This happened when our island still  
Had nests of goblins left, to fill  
Each mouldy nook and corner close,  
Like spiders in an ancient house.  
And this one read within the face  
Intruding on its dwelling-place,  
Lines of woe, despair, and blood,  
By spirits only understood ;  
As mortals now can read the same  
In the letters of his name,  
Who in that haunted chamber lay,  
When we call him—Castlereagh.\*

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### CHAPTER XIII.

#### TRADE—PAST AND PRESENT.

In a former chapter reference has been made to the extensive trade carried on in the importation of wine and the exportation of fish and iron from this port.

Notwithstanding the serious obstacle which the Bar presented to the successful carrying on of the shipping business, the port of Ballyshannon was, from its proximity to Lough Erne, in former times the channel of supply for the large inland districts of

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\* 1850. —The room is still known as Lord Castlereagh's Chamber.



Fermanagh and Cavan. Its material advantages for such have been well expressed by a writer in the "Gazetter of Ireland." "Ballyshannon is favourably situated for trade : it occupies the position of the capital of a considerable extent of rich agricultural country ; it stands at the junction of the sea with a water-line which descends from a great distance inland, and has very large lacustrine expansions and communications by still-water navigation with a great portion of the north of Ireland ; and it overlooks the grand sea-path to America, and seems to court much of the commerce arising from the inter-communication of that great continent with Europe."

For more than a hundred years past various schemes have been proposed for deepening and otherwise improving the Bar. In the spring of 1785, a survey and report of the Bar was made by Richard Evans, an engineer of eminence in his day. His proposal was to direct the course of the river to the south side of the rocks, by which plan he expected to have from eight to ten feet at low water, on the Bar. The entire cost of his specification, including the necessary breakwater, was £2,080. He also proposed the construction of a canal between the harbour and Lough Erne, and this part of his proposal was attempted, for in 1789, a company was formed under the style of the "Lough Erne and Ballyshannon Navigation Company," and a sum of money was granted by government for the purpose, but the rebellion of 1798 put an end to the project, and a solitary lock and some rough cuttings at Belleek are all that remain of the enterprise.

In 1832, Robert Stevenson and Son, the eminent engineers, were employed to make a survey of our Bar and Harbour, with a view to the improvement of the port, and the construction of a tramway to Belleek. Their plan was simply the deepening of the Bar and "Patch," to the extent of three feet, and the removal of a portion of the Black Rock. The estimated cost of this work was £5,561 2s. The cost of extension of the quay was estimated at £397 2s. The tramway by which they proposed to connect the harbour with Lough Erne, was to commence with a deep cutting upon leaving the harbour. It was then, by means of a small bridge or tunnel of 60 feet in length, to pass under the Main Street, immediately above the Barracks, and follow the north side of the river, crossing it at the Mullans by a bridge of four arches, and terminating at the quay of Belleek. The estimated cost of this work was £18,133 4s 9d. Following up Messrs. Stephenson's proposals, an effort was made by those interested in the trade of the town to obtain a grant from government ; this however, was refused, and Colonel Conolly, with that liberality characteristic of his family, expended from his private resources upwards of £5,000 in removing rocks and stones from the Bar mouth. Many thousand tons of stone were blasted and taken off the "Patch," which was therefore considerably deep-

ned, and a permanent improvement did certainly result from his expenditure, but unfortunately the requisite funds were not forthcoming for the completion of the scheme.

At present the following are the soundings on the Bar :—

Low water at springs,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet ; high water at springs,  $13\frac{1}{2}$  to 14 feet.

Low water at neaps, 4 feet ; high water at neaps, 9 feet.

In 1852, by order of the Board of Public Works, a fresh survey of the Bar and Harbour was made by Mr William Forsyth, C.E. This gentleman's proposal was the erection of a circular pier, faced with cut stone, on the South Rock, of 40 feet average diameter, and rising 10 feet in height above the level of ordinary spring tides, and to connect this pier with the Black Rock by a mole of rough blocks of stone. This plan would do away with the north entrance, and render the south entrance deep enough to admit vessels of 14 or 15 feet draught. The estimated cost of this work was £10,000 ; and besides, it was recommended that a small Lighthouse should be put on the round pier head, for the guidance of vessels entering the port at night. The necessity for this will at once appear when it is remembered that the time of high water at spring tides being six o'clock, in winter it is dark at the very time vessels can cross the Bar. The construction of a protecting *breakwater on the south side of the entrance* was also proposed, and there is little doubt that had Mr Forsyth's plans been carried out by the Board of Trade, and supplemented by a small tug steamer, Ballyshannon would now occupy an important position amongst the seaport towns of Ireland, instead of having in a great measure to draw its supplies from Derry, Dundalk, etc.

Amongst the trades and occupations formerly carried on in Ballyshannon, the following have fallen into disuse — fish salters, bacon curers, salt manufacturers, brewers, distillers, soap boilers, gun makers, confectioners, nurserymen, breeches makers, dyers, weavers, linen dealers, iron exporters, direct wine merchants, and tobacco and snuff manufacturers. To a decreased population, and in increased facility of communication with the large manufacturing centres, this decay of trades is mainly owing, but steam and improved machinery have also abolished many of the old industries.

In the last century there was a distillery at the head of the town (at the foot of the "Kiln Well" lane), some of the ruins still remain. Owing to its distance from the water it was ill adapted for its purpose, and fell into disuse.

The Old Manor Mill stood on the south side of the fall, and it was here that tenants were obliged by their leases, according to ancient usage, to bring their corn to be ground. Upon the site of this mill, was erected by the "Ballyshannon Distillery



Company" a large building, now a roofless ruin, and in it was carried on an extensive trade. The distillery began to work in 1827, and ceased in 1852. While in full operation, upwards of 100,000 gallons of whiskey were manufactured annually.

Formerly Ballyshannon possessed a large Custom House staff, whose head quarters were in the house built by Sir H. Caldwell, in the 17th century. In those days of timber and sugar duties the customs tariff was so extensive that the shipping trade of the town gave abundant employment to these officials. A house stood below the gas works in the "Boat House hole," in which sugar and other commodities were bonded, and the approach to this was formerly called the "Dirty Causeway." The "bonding yards" and stores on the Mall all testify to the shipping enterprises of by-gone days. In 1831, 61 coasting, and 12 foreign vessels entered the port, in all 5,600 tons.

The following, amongst other articles, were then imported:—New York, pot ashes; Barilla, oak bark; coals—Liverpool, Kendal, Scotch, and Malting; coffee, dyestuffs, logwood, madder, shumac, corned herrings; Swedish, Russian, and British iron; lead, oils, pitch, rosin, slates, sugar, Memel timber, American timber, oak, mahogany, tallow, tar, tobacco. Besides these, extensive importations of Norway timber were occasionally made.

In the summer of 1832, the terrible plague of cholera broke out in this town and neighbourhood. It first appeared at Bundoran, and it was supposed the disease was carried there by a smack from Liverpool which called to take in salmon. The mortality of Ballyshannon during that dreadful visitation was small, compared with many neighbouring towns, but the panic which prevailed at that time, gave a serious check to the trade of the town. The total number of deaths from cholera in Ballyshannon was 93; recoveries, 152.

In 1835, the exports were 10,764 quarters of oats, value, £11,130, and the imports amounted to £9,524.

The salmon and eel fisheries have been from the time of the O'Donnells down to the present, of great local importance. From the time "Speaker" Conolly purchased the property from the Folliot family, the Erne fisheries remained in the possession of the Conollys as landlords till their recent sale. Amongst those who worked them were Mr Major (Provost of Ballyshannon); Mr. Daniel; The Right Hon. Thomas Conolly; Messrs. Richardson and Little; Lady Louisa Conolly; Mr. Edmonds; Dr. S. Sheil; and lastly S. Sheil, Esq., M.D., who held them till the fisheries were sold in the Landed Estates Court to the present owners Messrs. Moore and Alexander.

Before the days of railways and steamers, most of the salmon were salted and cured before being exported to England and the Mediterranean; in later times when the ice-packing system was

introduced, they were shipped in smacks for England, some of which made the run from Ballyshannon to Liverpool in two days and the eels were transmitted thence in well boats, a kind of lighter containing large tanks or wells, for the preservation of the eels, and when railway communication reached Enniskillen carts laden with boxes used to start every day from the fish house to catch the earliest train for Dundalk—the point of shipment. The following is the weight of salmon caught half a century ago :—

	tons.	cwts.	qrs.	lbs.
1823,	68	9	3	8
1824,	60	16	0	3
1825,	76	2	0	16
1826,	74	2	1	2
1827,	45	5	3	23
1828,	51	17	1	29
1829,	41	17	2	13

This shows the average annual weight of fish taken for the seven years enumerated to be about sixty tons. As many as 2,000 fish have been taken in one day, and 400 in a single haul. *The average weight is about 9 lbs. but many much heavier fish are often caught.* From time immemorial Ballyshannon has been a favourite resort of gentlemen fond of the “gentle art” of Isaac Walton, and no inconsiderable sum is circulated in the town through their annual visits. Sir Humphrey Davy, who more than once enjoyed the pleasure of angling on our river, thus mentions it in his “*Salmonia*” :—I should place the Erne at Ballyshannon as now the first river for salmon fishing from the banks with a rod in the British dominions; and the excellent proprietor of it, Dr Sheil, is liberal and courteous to all gentlemen fly fishers. . . . I have taken in the Erne two or three large salmon in the morning.” In another part of his book Sir Humphrey describes the peculiarities of the Gillaroo trout, and mentions having caught them at Lough Melvin. The trade of fly-tying has always been profitably followed in Ballyshannon, and the town has always possessed persons well skilled in the mysteries of the art; indeed without the assistance of such experts, who know every curve and pool in the river, and who watch the atmospheric changes with as much assiduity as the staff of the Meteorological office, it would be impossible for strangers to obtain good sport.

In former times, the manufacture of salt was carried on here, both at Portnason and Milltown. The salt water used in the process was brought from the Bar in large boats constructed for the purpose, and it was no uncommon thing to see one of these lumbering crafts towed canal-fashion to Portnason by a horse, who walked or waded on the edge of the sands. The importation of English salt long ago put an end to this local industry.



The weaver's loom and the housewife's spinning wheel, once so common in our neighbourhood, have become scarce, and in a few years more the spinning wheel, once regarded as an necessary piece of furniture in the country house, will be regarded as an antiquarian relic. In the early part of the present century a linen market was in existence here, and the weavers brought their webs to the market, which was presided over by an inspector and stamper, both of whom were appointed by the "Board of Trustees of the linen and hempen manufacturers." These officials were for the purpose of preventing frauds, such as "fine laps," "short lengths," "thick selvages," and "uneven cloth," and the market stamp was impressed on perfect pieces only, as the stampers had to allow compensation whenever their seal was found on the defective pieces. In 1828 this Board was dissolved, and the trade appears to have dwindled away afterwards. More than twenty years ago a scheme was set on foot for the establishment of a spinning mill on a large scale at Laputa, and a considerable sum was expended in the erection of a suitable building, which, however, was never completed, and the building has since been tenanted by a body of rooks, who alone disturb the silence of this gloomy-looking structure. It is much to be regretted that someone of capital and enterprise has not taken this building and utilised the vast water power, second to none in the country, which has so long been allowed to run waste. The building would be leased for ever, we understand, for little or nothing to anyone undertaking to establish a factory in it; and considering the small outlay which would be requisite to complete the edifice and water course, and its close proximity to both railway and seaport, the success of such an enterprise, if undertaken by competent hands, would be certain, and the benefit to the surrounding neighbourhood substantial.

The manufacture of kelp, a substance formerly much used in glass-making and soap-boiling, but now chiefly used for the production of iodine, is carried on about our shores, and is exported annually from Ballyshannon. The marine plants, from which the kelp is made, are collected and dried in the open air; they are then thrown into a kelp kiln (a kind of grave-like excavation, lined with large stones), and burned. The melted alkali accumulates in the bottom, and, when cold, forms the hard bluish mass called kelp.

In the first half of the present century Ballyshannon was in direct and frequent communication with America and Norway, as well as other foreign countries, and many of the vessels which plied this trade were owned by Ballyshannon merchants. The brisk demand for building materials which then existed gave a great impetus to local enterprise, and large consignments of timber from Russia, Norway, and Canada were frequently being received. Ballyshannon, it should be remembered, was at

that time the chief emporium for Fermanagh and the neighbouring counties. One important result of this direct communication with America was the facilities it offered for emigration; and many were the persons who left their native place, and sought a home in the new world. In 1831 the brig "Mayflower," belonging to Mr. James M'Gowan, an enterprising merchant of Ballyshannon, made two trips to America, conveying a number of passengers. On one of these occasions she accomplished the run in eighteen days. The "Josephine" also brought away a large number of emigrants in 1834.

In the spring of 1836, the brig "Jane" left our port for Quebec, with 100 passengers, all of whom were industrious farmers and mechanics. She was comfortably berthed and provided. The brigs "Hope" and "Charlotte" (the latter 400 tons), both bound for St. John's, N. B. also left our shores the same year with many passengers. In the following year the "Samuel Freeman" and the "Elizabeth" sailed from this port to St. John's with passengers.

The tide of emigration swept from our midst many of our ablest artisans and labourers, and made a serious reduction in the population. In 1831, the census of the town was close on 4,000. In 1841, 4,307. In 1851, the population of the Kilbarron section was 2,385, and in 1861, the same portion contained, 2,423. It is a curious fact that though the figures are larger in 1841 than in 1831, the town contained fewer houses, when the number of inhabitants was at its highest point. In 1831, there were 597 houses; in 1841, 409 houses.\* Since 1841, the population steadily decreased. In 1861, it was 3,197; while in 1871, the date of the last census, it had fallen to 2,969.

The merchants and those interested in the progress of the town had long felt the want of banking facilities and the difficulty of transacting business without such an establishment; and in 1834, a numerous and influential meeting was held "for the purpose of adopting such measures as might appear essential for the formation of a bank in Ballyshannon." A committee was formed for the purpose of arranging with the Bank of Ireland or Provincial Bank for the establishment of a local branch, and the following resolution, amongst others, was carried:—"That the want of a banking establishment in this extensive and populous district has been productive of much injury and inconvenience to trade, and is daily becoming more so. That Ballyshannon being by much the largest town in the county of Donegal, having a considerable import and export trade, in the midst of an extensive and populous district, where numerous fairs are held, and the principal intercourse between Connaught and the north takes place; having a

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\* Gazetteer of Ireland.



Custom House, an Excise Office, an extensive Distillery, and being an important Military Station, it has decided advantages (even at present), over any other town in the county for the forming of such an establishment."

The result of this meeting was that the Directors of the Provincial Bank of Ireland established a branch in the following year, which has since that time contributed much to the prosperity and well-being of the town and surrounding district. The bank commenced its operations on the Mall, but soon removed to the more central and commodious premises which it still occupies. In 1869, a branch of the Belfast Bank was also opened in Ballyshannon, and its business is now conducted in the handsome structure which that company has recently erected. The clock-tower, facing north and south, is a conspicuous object, and the bell on which the hours are struck, can be heard at a considerable distance outside the town.

The prices obtained for market produce in Ballyshannon forty years ago, offer a great contrast to present rates.

In May, 1833, the following are a few examples of the prices of commodities :—

Potatoes (old), 1d. per stone ; new potatoes, 3d ; beef and mutton, 5d. and 5½. per lb ; lamb, 3s. 6d. per quarter ; firkin butter, 8d. per lb. ; fresh butter, (18 ounces) 6d. per lb. ; Ballyshannon whiskey, 7s. 8d. per imperial gallon.

The prices of coals, both English and Scotch, were about the same as at present. Tea and sugar were considerably dearer, and consequently but little used in comparison with present consumption.

In olden times there were not so many fairs held in the town ; four only in the year, viz., on April 4th ; the Tuesday before June 11th ; September 18th ; and Tuesday before November 11th. The fair held on September 18th was, as it still remains, the great event of the year, and in former times was much larger than it now is. It began on the 18th, and was continued for the following days. The first day was principally devoted to cattle sales, and the following ones to lighter merchandise ; pedlars and hawkers used to bring their goods from all parts of Ireland, and considerable sales were made at this gala time. The great crowds which used to congregate at the harvest fair, often made it difficult to preserve the peace of the town, for it should be remembered that Ballyshannon was not, even half a century ago, the peaceable law-abiding place it now is. On more than one occasion a detachment of soldiers had to be called into requisition to quell the riotous mob at the fair ; and in the 1835 fair, the police were attacked by a " mob of idlers" who took their bayonets from them and beat them desperately.

Education and enlightenment have done much during the past fifty years, to smooth down what was rugged and uncouth, and as they become more widely diffused in our midst, a further improvement will be sure to follow.

Before the era of steam, the Dublin mail did not arrive till late in the afternoon. In 1824, the postal arrangements were as follows :—

Arrival of Dublin mail every day (except Monday), 3 minutes past 5 in the evening. Dispatch every morning (except Friday), at 6,

Office hours, 7 in the morning till 11 at night.

Reference having been made to various branches of industry which have become extinct in our district, it is only proper to mention those still in operation around us, besides the ordinary handicrafts common to every town. These are, flour milling, meal grinding, flax scutching, brick making, lime burning, &c., &c. The only mill at Ballyshannon which is worked by the vast water power of the Erne, is that of Mr. Neely, who supplies the town and surrounding neighbourhood with flour and meal, and has also, on the same premises, improved machinery for sawing all kinds of timber. There are also some small mills at the abbey which are kept busily going ; and though not belonging to the town, the porcelain works of Messrs. D. McBirney and Co of Belleek, deserve special mention, as the first and only establishment of the kind in Ireland.

These works have been erected at an enormous outlay, and have turned out work second to none in the kingdom. The merits of their manufacture have been acknowledged in England, France, and America, to all of which consignments are being sent, and it is to be hoped that the proprietors may reap a rich harvest of profit, in return for their spirit and enterprise. Much of the raw material for the Belleek ware is imported to Ballyshannon, where the proprietors have a quay and depot.

The general aspect of the town has of late years decidedly improved ; the shipping has increased ;\* the markets are larger than formerly ; more money is being circulated throughout the country. With these indications, we may fairly indulge the hope that the ebb-tide of our prosperity has turned ; that coming years may bring fresh capital and enterprise to our depopulated town ; and that the ruined houses (unfit for human habitation), which now mar the appearance of the streets, may be superseded by respectable and substantial houses, the existence of which would induce new comers to take their permanent abode in our midst.

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\* The imports by sea are now over 3,000 tons annually.



## CHAPTER XIV.

## ANTIQUITIES.

Those who are interested in the relics of the past ages of Ireland, will find in our neighbourhood many existing memorials of pre-historic and early Christian times. Those of greatest antiquity belong to the class of sepulchral monuments. In ancient times the remains of the dead were disposed of by inhumation, or burying the body whole, and by cremation or urn-burial, which existed extensively in the North of Ireland.

Of cromlechs,\* (supposed to be derived from a celtic word *crom*, i.e. crooked—bowed or bending—*lech* a stone), our district presents some very interesting examples. These monuments when perfect, consist of three or more unhewn stones, generally so placed as to form a small enclosure, over which a large flat stone is laid. The position of the covering stone is generally sloping, and to this circumstance the first part of the name probably refers. Owing to the frequency of their being found to contain cinerary urns holding portions of calcined bones, and sometimes human skeletons, it is believed they were constructed for tombs, and monuments of distinguished persons. Indeed, the popular appellation of "Giants' Graves," which country people give them, accords with this theory, and though they may not contain the remains of giants in statue, they were doubtless erected as rude memorials of men of mighty and heroic deeds.

A fine and perfect example of the cromlech was, we regret to say, deprived of its roof a few years ago at Coolmore. The owner of the field in which it was standing became possessed of the idea that treasure was concealed within it, and rested not till he had removed the gigantic roofing-flag, and began his search within. He was, it is said, interrupted in the work by the crowing of a cock on his housetop, which was believed to be a warning not to be slighted; the search was, therefore, relinquished, and the stones replaced in the centre of the enclosure; the roofing-flag, however, being too heavy to restore to its original position, remains prostrate. Another fine example will be found in Corker, not far from Kilbarron Old Church. Here is an unusually large cromlech which retains its roof entire. About half-a-mile north of the O'Clery's Castle is another giant's grave of colossal proportions. The visitor to these memorials of a by-gone age may well be struck with wonder at the labour which must have been expended on these cyclopean works, some of the stones of

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\* The term Cromlech, as applied to this class of Irish Antiquities, is not an old Irish word, and is not found in any of the old writings. Indeed it is not appropriate, as it is believed that these cyclopean tombs were not constructed with sloping roofs, but that the incline which the roofing flags generally show is due to the sinking of the ground beneath them.

which are several tons weight. In the townland of Ballymagroarty Irish is also a series of these grave-stones large enough to contain many human remains. Two cromlechs stood on the high ground near Rowantreehill and Rockfield; that nearest Belleek, was of very large proportions, but of these relics, only just enough remains to mark their position, and prevent their name from being altogether blotted out. The owner of the land on which the largest of these cromlechs stood, is said to have broken up the flags (which were limestone) and filled a limekiln with the fragments, but tradition says that "no power on earth could burn one of them." This giant's grave as well as the Coolmore one, was supposed to contain treasure, and it is related that two men who went to search the enclosure had hardly struck their spades into the sacred ground when they found their feet miraculously fastened to their spade shafts! In the cromlech which stood at the back of Rowantreehill was found, a good many years ago, a cinerary urn containing ashes and several bones of large size. Nearer Ballyshannon, and close to Fortwilliam, are the remains of a cromlech which preserves in its Irish name *Leaba-an-laeich*, (pronounced *Labbinlee*) a remembrance of the object for which it was erected—the word signifying the bed, or grave of the hero.

In Finner Warren are three examples, one of which was unroofed some years ago and found to contain an urn full of burnt human bones. In the same locality is also a stone circle, and a chambered cairn, which was discovered by some labourers while engaged in building a wall in the warren. In this sepulchral cave which is artificially constructed, were found portions of several human skeletons, the teeth in some of the skulls being in good preservation. In this case there was no evidence of cremation having been used. This form of cairn burial is supposed to be of great antiquity.

The earliest form of human habitation, examples of which are to be found in our district, are artificial caves or souterrains. As the inhabitants increased in numbers, the woods could not afford them the necessary shelter; and the construction of artificial caves, partly for hiding treasure in, and partly as dwelling places, naturally suggested itself. The best example we possess of these rude dwellings is at the "Bully Bawn," where the sides of these "coves" as they are generally styled, are formed of rough flags set on edge, over which two or three feet of soil was thrown. The entrance to this cave, in common with all of its class, is much narrower than its internal dimensions, and it is believed that this cave may have been at one time connected with the subterranean chamber discovered in Mullaghnashee (reference to which has been already made), the passage sunning up by Dungravenen, the hill overlooking the "new road." If this was the case, and the evidence we possess seems to point to that conclusion, we have



here the remains of a system of early cave-construction, both extensive and interesting. Sometimes these underground dwellings occur in connection with earthen forts or raths, and of this also we have an example at Raheen, i.e., little fort, on the Belleek road, less than a mile from Ballyshannon. Here is a series of earthen circumvallations, in the centre of which is a chamber formed in the manner already described. Outside Kilbarron old church is another of these artificial caves. It is of small dimensions, and its entrance is now stopped up. The sides are constructed of small stones built in the form of a wall, the roof is covered in the usual manner with flags. It does not appear to have been in any way connected with the church, and although the structure is of great antiquity, this cave probably belongs to a still more remote period.

Our district contains a vast number of Rathes. These are popularly known as "Danish Forts." Formerly it was customary, even for antiquarian writers, to ascribe all such remains to the period of the Danish invasion, and this impression still lingers in our local traditions. It is, however, now well known that these raths existed in Ireland long prior to the arrival of the Danes; moreover these antique dwelling-places are found distributed all over the country, inland as well as seaboard, though it is known that the Danes confined their settlements to places bordering on the coast. That the Danes had a settlement in our neighbourhood, there can be no doubt; the very name of our county—Donegal, Dun-na-nGall, i.e. the fortress of the foreigners—preserves a remembrance of this. There is, however, more direct evidence afforded of the presence of the Danes in this county, by a poem written by Flan Mac Lonan, the Tirconnellian bard. This composition, which was written at the commencement of the tenth century, relates that Egneachan, the father of Donnell, from whom came the O'Donnells, gave his three beautiful daughters in marriage to three Danish princes, for the purpose of securing their friendship, and these marriages were, according to the poem, solemnized at Donegal. Where this "Dun" or "fortress of the stranger" was situated cannot be pointed out, but it was in all probability an earthen fort\* or rath, and it is likely the Danes may have utilized these fortifications which they found already made.

The raths of our district are so numerous, that it is unnecessary here to specify them. Though differing in size, they are all circular in form. O'Donovan mentions that "the Irish kings and chieftains lived in A.D. 637 in the great earthen raths or

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\* The term Rath, Lis, and Dun, are applied to these earthen forts. Rath, it is supposed, refers to the enclosing rampart, Lis to the place enclosed, and Dun to the central mound within the Rath. All three terms occur as prefixes in names of places in our district.

lisses, the ruins of which are still so numerous in Ireland." The fort of Rathmore, i.e. great fort (pronounced Ramore) near Ballyshannon, and in the territory of Magh Cedne, occupies a fine commanding position, and is of very large proportions, being more than 1,000 feet in circumference.

In the townland of Glasbolie (only an hour's drive from Ballyshannon), is a spot of extreme interest and antiquity—the fort Ard Fothadh. Here it was that Domhnall, son of Aedh,\* son of Ainmire, king of all Ireland, had his residence in the seventh century. His death is thus noted in the Four Masters:—A.D. 639—"After Domhnall, son of Aedh, son of Ainmire, had been 16 years in the sovereignty of Ireland, he died at Ard Fothadh, in Tir Aedha (Tir Hugh), after the victory of penance, for he was a year in his mortal sickness; and he used to receive the body of Christ every Sunday." In the Tripartite Life of St. Patrick, it is recorded that the saint while in this neighbourhood visited this very spot, upon which he purposed to build a church; it was however miraculously made known to him that the place was not destined for a sacred house, but for a royal palace, which in due time was to be occupied by king Domhnall.

This kingly fort, which is in tolerably good preservation, has an outside circumference of 870 feet, and its diameter inside the enclosure is 230 feet. Upon the summit (not in the centre, but towards the north side), is a curious beehive-shaped mound (190 feet in circumference), covered with sods, but built of stone, and containing a chamber, the entrance to which is now closed. Such structures it is thought were generally used as storehouses. Ard Fothadh is upon the farm of Mr. James M'Gonigle, and is known in all the surrounding country as "the forth." It at once strikes the observer as something more than, and altogether different from, the usual class of raths, scattered over the country.

The stone forts or caiseals were not so frequent in our neighbourhood. These were also circular in form, and a good example exists a little to the north of the lane leading to Bunatroohan. Within the circumference of this caiseal, are the remains of a small underground chamber. The townlands of Cashel, i.e. stone fort, and Cashelard, i.e. stone fort of the hills or height, derive their names from the existence of this kind of fortress in their bounds.

In Corker, on the summit of a hill close to the "giant's grave" already mentioned, is another fine cashel of great circumference; within it are the remains of a chamber.

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\* Aedh or Hugh was of the race of Conal Gulban, and from him was derived the title Tir Aedha or Tir Hugh.



Crannoges, or lake-dwellings, in Ireland were used from an early period down to the sixteenth century, and perhaps later. They were usually rude habitations, built on artificially constructed islands in deep lakes. During the wars with the English, the Irish chiefs often took refuge in them. At Dernacrannoge, i.e., the oak wood of the crannoge, not far from Belleek, is a small deep lake, in which one of these lake dwellings once existed.

Specimens of implements belonging to both the stone and bronze periods have been found in our district.\* Silver coins, mostly English (from the Edwards to James I), have been found in considerable numbers; several Scotch coins (King David), have been unearthed at Kilbarron Castle.

A remembrance of the industries of our ancestors is preserved in the names Carricknaronta and Lugalustran, both names referring to the preparation and manufacture of corn into meal. On the shore below Wardtown are a series of sandstone rocks, their name, Carrick-na-mbrointe, i.e., the rock of the mill stones, shows that it was here the querns or ancient Irish hand-mills of the district were obtained. Not long ago the upper stone of a quern was found in the vicinity of these rocks, and, as it is only partially shaped, it is evident that it must have been cut where it was quarried, and left by its maker in an unfinished state. In former times it was customary for families to grind their own corn in these primitive mills, which were similar to the Eastern ones, and the practice has only recently died out in some backward parts of the country. The owners of water mills regarded querns with great aversion, and, in their interest, the use of querns was prohibited by law. In 1794, the proprietor of Kesh mills, in the neighbouring county of Fermanagh, gave orders to his miller to break all the querns he could find; and the only pair left untouched used to be secretly lent about and concealed from the miller, with as much care as if it were a "still." Lugalustran, i.e., the hollow of the burnt corn, is a place not from the "Rock." It was here that corn used to be burned in the ear to prepare it for the querns. This process of removing the husks continued in operation in some parts of the country a century ago, and was prohibited by parliament.

In former chapters reference has been made to the castles which belonged to our district, and to the interesting associations connected with their history. It is only necessary here to enumerate those remains of former strongholds which have not been already described.

The castle of Belick, some remains of which still exist, was situated on the north bank of the river Erne. In the time of

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\* A fine stone hatchet of the Neolithic period has been recently found at Wardtown, and some years ago a bronze axe was discovered in the neighbourhood.

James I. the land upon which this castle stood was called Castellane ; the locality is now called Back Lane. The name of the founder of Belleek Castle is unknown, but it seems to have been in the possession of the abbot of Assaroe in Queen Elizabeth's time :—In an inquisition taken in the 31st year of her reign, "The castle of Bellyke" is mentioned as a part of the abbot's property.

The most interesting ruin of its class in our district is that of Kilbarron Castle, whose shattered and weather-worn walls still remain as silent memorials of the old Ollaves of Tirconnell :—

"Broad, blue, and deep the Bay of Donegal  
Spreads north and south and far a-west before  
The beetling cliffs, sublime and shattered wall  
Where the O'Clery's name is heard no more."\*

The cliff on which the castle stood, is circular in shape, and the wall facing the sea was built upon the extreme edge of the precipice ; below, at a distance of nearly a hundred feet, roll Atlantic breakers. Besides its romantic and beautiful situation, the spot was eminently fitted for the erection of a fortified dwelling, as from the sea below, no enemy could effect a landing, and the land side was easily secured from incursions by the outer castle wall, which was of great thickness, and extended from edge to edge of the narrow isthmus which connects the cliff on which the castle stood, with the mainland. In the centre of the building, was a small open space or court-yard.

Within the "keep" or northern wing, are traces of a subterranean passage, which is now stopped up with stones. Nothing is known of its extent or design, but it was open and used for distillery purposes within the past century. The portion of the building which comprises the two chambers next the cliff-edge, seems to be older than the other walls, and is probably co-eval with the first foundation of the castle. The walls of this portion are of immense thickness and solidity, and were probably capped by a stone roof. Through the outside wall facing the sea was an oblong passage of chimney-like shape, whose mouth (a small square opening) may still be seen from the adjacent shore. It is difficult to conjecture how the masons of Kilbarron Castle built the wall on this dizzy height. The tradition of the castle having once been the abode of "pirates and freebooters," who first robbed, and then threw their victims down 'the murdering hole,' has now almost faded away before the clearer light of history, which has been thrown on the castle and its occupants, by the writings of Drs. Petrie, O'Donovan, and others on Irish Topography.

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\* T. Darcy McGee.



Of ecclesiastical antiquities, the old church of Kilbarron, about half a mile distant from the castle, is perhaps one of the most interesting in our neighbourhood, a church having been established there by St. Columcille.\* The present ruin is not, however, of that early period, but belongs to medieval times. The building is massive, but destitute of ornamentation:—the following are the dimensions—length 39 feet, width 21 feet 4 inches, thickness of wall 2 feet 9 inches. The materials are sandstone, procured from the neighbouring shore, cemented together with a grouting of coarse shelly mortar, with which substance the inside of the building seems to have been roughly covered. There are two doorways (one in either sidewall) with “pointed” tops, the arch being formed of two well-cut convergent stones. This pointed style of doorway is much later than the horizontal stone lintel, and semicircular arch, and characterizes the present ruin as not earlier than the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century. In the western gable is a narrow splayed light; in the east gable next the road, was a larger window, but all trace of its shape has disappeared along with the roof, which was doubtless constructed of oak shingles. Around the church was a cemetery of considerable dimensions, and on the north side are a series of small plots of ground, each separated by low dividing walls. These enclosures seem to have been made for the purpose of keeping apart family burial-places from the other portions of the graveyard. There are many headstones still remaining, but hidden from view by long grass and brambles.

At Parkhill, is the site of Kilcarbery church, nothing beyond the name has been preserved of its foundation. Carbery was of the race of Conal Gutban, and from him, doubtless, the church derived its name.

In the townland of Ballymagroarty—Irish, overlooking the road leading from Ballyshannon to Ballintra, is a hill called Racoo. Upon the summit of this hill St. Patrick founded the church of Rathcunga. In the Tripartite Life, it is stated that the saint having passed through that portion of Tirconnell which lay between Las Ruadh (Ballyshannon) and the ocean, came to a place called Rathcunga, and there built a church from the foundation. The church which was doubtless built of wattles, and roofed with shingles, has long since disappeared but the rath-shaped mound with many headstones, still remain to mark the spot. Such circular enclosures, whether composed of earth or stone, are characteristic of, and peculiar to the earliest ecclesiastical establishments in Ireland.”† This ancient cemetery

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\* See chapter III.

† Petrie's Ecclesiastical Architecture, page 445.

has of late years been only used for the interment of unbaptised children.

Another of the ecclesiastical raths or lisses still exists in the Knader townland, though sadly broken down and obliterated. Here was a Church in the sixth century, which has been identified as Cnodain (pronounced Noden) by Dean Reeves, who is of opinion that the modern name of the district Knather is a transformation or corruption of the old one. In the early part of the present century much of the rath existed, but was subsequently levelled for agricultural purposes, and a sufficient quantity of human bones were discovered to show that it was once used as a burial ground.

In chapter III. we have spoken of Kildoney as being one of the favoured districts where St. Patrick founded a Church: it may here be added that the disused graveyard of Kildoney possessed some remains of earth-works of the rath kind, and its name Reilig (from the Latin reliquæ), is an uncommon name for a graveyard, and could only be attached to a place of remote antiquity.

The Church of Domhnagh-Mor, the site of which is now unfortunately unknown, was founded in our district by St. Patrick. It stood somewhere in the Moy, between the townlands of Ballymunterhiggen (Higginstown) and Drumachrin, and St. Nennid-hius was Abbot and Bishop of it. The foundation of this early Church is thus mentioned in the Tripartite Life of St. Patrick:—“Patrick went afterwards past Drium-cliabh (Drumcliff) from Caisel-Ivra, by the Rosses eastwards, along Magh-Eni (the Moy), and founded Domhnagh-mor of Magh-Eni.” Attempts have been made to identify Domhnagh mor with Teetunny, a small burial place in the townland of Cloughore, but there are no grounds for this supposition, and it is certain from some old inquisitions in which Domhnagh-mor is mentioned, that it lay more to the west than Cloughore. The name Teetunny (Tigh-ni Thonaigh) means the house of O’Tony. The O’Tony or O’Tuny family were of the stock of the O’Donnells of Tirconnell, and had a stronghold here, close to the bank of the river; and the circular shape of the graveyard leads to the supposition that it was originally a rath or fort. A little to the north of the graveyard, and nearer to the river’s edge, is the site of Teetunny Church, which belonged to the Abbey of Assaroe, and was probably a “Chapel of Ease,” built for the use of those living on the extreme edge of the Parish of Kilbarron. Half a century ago a portion of the walls of this little Church were standing, but have since been removed to provide materials for building the wall which now surrounds the graveyard. Before this wall was built a circular earthen enclosure existed, which was probably part of the original earthwork of O’Tony’s dwelling.

In Ballymagroarty-Irish is the site of the Monastery or Church



of Bailemegrabhartach,\* which was founded by St. Columba, and in which the celebrated relique of that Saint called the Cathach was deposited by the keepers of the "Battle Book"—the MacRoarty family. Half a century ago there were sufficient remains of the building to indicate its shape and position (the building was east and west); now there is literally nothing but traces of the foundations. A heap of stones lying in a hay field, and a number of massive blocks and quoins, now incorporated with the wall enclosing the field are all that remain of the venerable pile. It is worthy of note that the stones used in its construction were not of the kind found in the locality, but must have been brought from a distance, and that these are of such a size as to show that the building was of an exceedingly massive character; the mortar used (a good deal of which is still attached to the stones) is a coarse shelly kind, as hard as the stones it held together.

Within a mile of the village of Garrison, and close to the shores of Lough Melvin, are the remains of the Abbey Church of Rossinbhir (now Rossinver, i.e., the peninsula of the river's mouth). Its foundation dates from the sixth century, and its patron was St. Moedoc, or St. Mogue, whose memory is still kept in the district. A good deal of the walls still remain, which are gradually being undermined by the thick growth of ivy. The architectural features still remaining show that the pile was rebuilt during the middle ages. A local tradition exists that the Church was built by angels in one night.

"In smiling vale of silver streams (the ruins still respected),  
St. Moeg's holy abbey gleams, by angel hands erected.

All persons were cautioned against looking out of their houses, but a certain woman, overcome by curiosity, peeped out, and the building was, therefore, left unfinished. In the Churchyard are many curious and interesting tombstones. Near the gate is a leac, or headstone, without inscription, but bearing on its face an ancient Irish cross.† The existence of this one stone, cut probably more than 1,000 years ago, is sufficient evidence of the great antiquity of this graveyard.

\* In an inquisition taken at Ballyshannon in 1621, this monastery is thus referred to:—"All those three quarters and a half of lands at Ballirowertie, parcel of the late abbey or religious house of St. Colemkil of Derry, situate lying and being in the barony of Tirahu in the countye of Donnegall."

† See chapter IV.

‡ Another ancient cross of rude workmanship stands at Tullaghan, in a field overlooking the coach-way to Sligo. This relic was found on the neighbouring sea-shore, and erected here in 1778.

About three miles distant from Garrison, in the townland of Killybeg (Caille Bega, little Church), was another Church founded by St. Moedoc. Here, according to Colgan, quoted by Rev. Dr. Reeves, was a "miraculous stone" called Lac-Maodhoc, or Maedoc's stone. No trace of this now remains, but there are a series of "giants' graves," now in a ruined state, and a dallan, or "standing stone," known amongst the country people as "Fion MacCumhal's finger-stone."

On a small island in Lough Melvin, called Inishtemple, are the remains of an old Church, and in a neighbouring one the site of the "Friars' Garden" is still pointed out. Did space permit many additional details might be noted of remarkable places in the immediate neighbourhood of Ballyshannon. What has been said is sufficient to show the richness of our district in historical associations, and objects of antiquarian interest.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### ZOOLOGY AND BOTANY.

Respecting the fauna of our district it would be impossible here to give a detailed or exhaustive description; it will therefore suffice to mention those animals which are regarded with most general interest. Subjoined are a few notes respecting the several classes.

Mammalia.—To this class belongs the hedgehogs (*Erinaceus Europæus*) which are often met with. This harmless quadruped has been wrongfully suspected of sucking cows. The common bat (*Vespertilio pipistrellus*) is plentiful, and it is probable that one or two species occasionally occur, but these have not been recorded. The black rat (*Mus rattus*) has been observed, also the Norway rat; the common brown species is unfortunately too common. Of the hare family, both the red and brown species are plentiful. Foxes, though occasionally met with, are fast disappearing. The stoat (*Mustela erminea*) is common, and is usually mistaken for the weasel, which, according to Thompson's "Natural History of Ireland," is not known in this country. The badger (*Meles taxus*) is occasionally met with. The rabbit (*Lepus cuniculus*) occurs in very large numbers in the warrens on either side of the river; and throughout the country; a black variety is also met with. Large numbers are exported annually to England. Ferrets and wire snares are used in their capture. The otter (*Lutra vulgaris*) is frequently captured in our streams, being regarded as a formidable enemy to salmon. The fallow-deer are still preserved in our neighbourhood. At Castle Caldwell



there may be seen a goodly herd ; there was in former times, a large deer-park attached to Wardtown Castle.

The Aquatic Mammalia are represented by the phocidæ (seal family) which often visit the estuary, coming up close to the Fall in search of fish. The seals frequent the numerous caves along the coast of Donegal Bay, from whence they make excursions to the neighbouring rivers. Porpoises are often seen airing themselves in the vicinity of Kilbarron Castle and Coolmore, and whales are frequently seen in Donegal Bay. In the summer of 1691, a sperm whale (*cetus dentatus*), which measured seventy-one feet in length, was captured close to Ballyshannon Bar. In the last century, whales were so numerous in the bay that a scheme was set on foot in 1736 for establishing a whale fishery. Boats were built upon the Greenland model, and furnished with harpoons, and other instruments, and a grant of £500 was made by the Irish parliament. The enterprise was, however, unsuccessful, as it was found that the general roughness of the sea, compared with the smooth water at Greenland, rendered the capture of the whales (though many were seen) next to impossible. The company who carried on these operations expended £3,000 in the undertaking, when they abandoned it. Subsequently, a novel plan was contrived by Mr. Nesbitt, who discharged the harpoons from a swivel gun, thus giving much greater power to the weapons. By this method he killed three whales in 1762, and in the following year, two of very large dimensions, when the Irish parliament granted him an aid of £1,500. No attempt has been made of late years to capture whales in the bay.

**Extinct Species.**—The red deer (*cervus elaphus*), though once plentiful in this part of Ireland, has long since disappeared. A perfect antler and a portion of another, together with some bones of this noble species, have recently been discovered at the sand-hills. In the sixteenth century the red deer was so plentiful in the north of Ireland that they could be bought for half-a-crown each.\* In prehistoric times, the great Irish elk, or “big horn” (*megaceros hibernicus*), moved his stately form through the dense woods and thickets that clothed the river’s sides. In 1691 a pair of these gigantic antlers was discovered by Major Folliott at Wardtown. They were buried at a depth of ten feet from the surface of the ground.† The wild boar (*sus scrofa*) once roamed through the woods of Magh Cedne. The remembrance of these formidable animals is preserved in our district by the name of Derryhirk, i.e. the oak wood of the boar.

**Aves.**—The birds (especially those of the sea) occupy a con-

\* Payne’s “Brief Description of Ireland, 1589.”

† Boate and Molyneux Natural History of Ireland.

spicuous place in the natural history of our district. Owing to the comparative absence of trees, many birds, generally distributed, are but seldom noticed near the town.

Amongst the *natatores* (swimming birds), the white-fronted goose (*anser erythropus*) is occasionally seen in flocks; they attract attention by their peculiar v-shaped flight and clamorous call, in consequence of which they are sometimes called the laughing goose. The wild swan (*cygnus Bewickii*) is occasionally observed in the winter. The shell-drakes (*tadorna vulpanser*), a showy and elegantly marked species, frequent the sand hills, where they rear their young; hence they are sometimes called the burrow-drake. The wild duck (*anas boschas*) and its young, which are commonly called "flappers," are very plentiful. The widgeon (*anas penelope*), the teal (*anas crecca*) are also frequent. The red-throated diver (*colymbus septentrionalis*) is a regular winter visitant to our shores; and the great northern diver (*colymbus glacialis*) is occasionally observed. The common guillemot (*uria troile*), the razor bill (*alca torda*), and the puffin, or sea parrot (*fratercula arctica*) frequent the rocky shores of Kilbarron. The cormorant (*phalacrocorax carbo*) is plentiful in the estuary, and is easily distinguishable from other swimming birds by its long upright neck and immersed body. The green cormorant, or shag (*p. cristatus*) though much rarer than the common variety, has been observed here. The gannet or solan goose (*sula bassana*), a large species of white plumage, is occasionally seen in Donegal Bay. The common tern (*sterna hirundo*), and the arctic tern, or "sea swallow," and several species of gulls, are plentiful. The lesser black-backed gull (*larus fuscus*) a rare species, has been shot near Lough Melvin. The tippit grebe (*podiceps cristatus*) has been frequently met with, and the little grebe (*p. minor*) are common on Lough Erne and elsewhere, and are popularly but erroneously known as puffins. The great skua (*lestris catarrhactes*) is a frequent winter visitant, and the pomarine skua (*l. pomarinus*), another interesting bird, has been often met with.

Amongst the *grallatores* (wading birds), represented in our locality, is the heron (*ardea cinerea*), commonly but wrongly called the crane. Differing from almost all the birds of its class, the heron selects a tree for its breeding place. Like the rooks, they breed in communities, and a long-established heronry exists at Camlin. They frequent the river banks and shores of the estuary. The curlew is common, and the whimbrel, or "jack curlew," visits us in the spring but does not breed here. The lapwing or green plover (*vanellus cristatus*) occurs in flocks; and

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\* The flesh of the heron, though now despised, was at a former period reserved for the tables of kings. At a banquet given by Henry II. in Dublin, to the Irish kings, heron's flesh was among the chief dishes.



the ring plover, or sand lark, is seen in company with the dunlin, or stint, and other birds, on our strands at low water. The water hen (*gallinula chloropus*) water rail (*rallus aquaticus*), and bald coot (*fulica atra*), also occur. The snipe (*scolopax gallinago*) abounds in suitable localities.

Amongst the insessores (perching birds), are the chough or sea crow (*fregilus graculus*); this graceful bird is occasionally observed at the cliffs of Kilbarron, and the Fairy bridge. The nests are built in the most inaccessible parts of the cliffs. The hooded crow (*corvus cornix*) is common; it is this species that frequent our shores, from a single pair to five or six in search of food left by the receding tide. The rooks (*corvus frugilegus*) are seen all over the country in large flocks. In the evening may be seen "the blackening trains of crows to their repose" hastening to the shelter of their rookeries in the neighbourhood. The jackdaw and magpie are too well known to require any note; and the king-fisher (*alcedo ispida*), the most beautiful of our native birds, is often seen on the banks of the river, and occasionally at the estuary. The brown hawk or marsh harrier (*circus aeruginosus*), peregrine falcon (*falco peregrinus*) occur, and the golden eagle (*aquila chrysoetos*), has been shot at Wardtown and Glenade.

Of the rasores (scrapping birds), the rock pigeon (*columba livia*) is plentiful about the cliffs at Kilbarron and Coolmore, and the woodquest (*columba palumbus*) is a constant resident in the neighbouring woods.

Amongst the similar birds may be noticed the most beautiful of the finches—the goldfinch (*carduelis elegans*), which is plentiful; the bullfinch (*pyrrhula vulgaris*) less common; the snow bunting (*plectrophanes nivalis*) is occasionally seen in winter. The creeper (*certhia familiaris*) in wood plantations. The wren (*troglodytes Europoeus*) is worthy of note, not because of its rarity, for it is everywhere common, but by reason of the cruel persecution to which it is often subjected. Though esteemed a favourite in England and elsewhere, here it is locally known as "the devil's bird," and while the red breast is held sacred from molestation, the wren is hunted down. It is to be hoped that this traditionary dislike to a harmless and interesting bird may be speedily forgotten.

**Pisces.**—The various species of fish which abound in our waters, both tidal and inland, form a prominent feature in the natural history of our district.

Of ganoid fishes, which are allied to the sharks, and are the living representatives of the fish-remains found in the older geological formations, the sturgeon (*acipenser sturio*) is occasionally met with in the estuary.

Amongst osseous fishes is the perch (*perca fluviatilis*) which abounds in our lakes. Specimens of 3lbs. weight have been

caught. The red gurnard (*trigla cuculus*), and the grey gurnard (*T. gurnardus*) or "crooner," so called from the croaking noise they make, are plentiful in the bay. The sea-bream (*sparus auratus*) is caught in the summer. The mackerel (*scomber vulgaris*) is taken in the autumn in large quantities. The scad or horse mackerel (*scomber trachurus*), is also frequently caught, but not in the same number as the common kind. This fish is locally known as the "crake-hern." It is generally a larger and coarser fish than its relative, and may be recognized by the row of spines for a considerable distance on each side from the tail. The spines, which are of a horn-like substance, fall back, and are lanced-shaped. The John Dory (*zeus faber*), is sometimes taken, and is much esteemed by epicures. The gray mullet (*mugil capito*) and the thick-lipped grep mullet (*m. chelo*), also occur. The herring (*clupea harengus*), is caught in vast quantities in the bay, and occasionally comes into the estuary. The sprat (*clupea sprattus*) is, in its season, very plentiful. The common cod (*gradus morrhua*), forms the principal item of our winter fish supply, but its more delicate relative the haddock (*g. aegefinus*), occurs in but small numbers, and seems to be getting scarcer. The whiting (*merlangus vulgaris*) is abundant; as also is the coal fish (*m. carbonarius*), which in the autumn months, swarm in the estuary. These fish when young are locally known as "sheans," and when fully grown are called "glassan."\*

The common hake (*gadus merlcus*), and the ling (*lota molva*) are also common. Of the family of flat fish, are the plaice (*platessa vulgaris*), the flounder or fluke (*p. flesus*), both of which occur in our estuary. Large specimens of the holibut (*hippoglossus vulgaris*) are occasionally taken in the bay. The turbot (*rhombus maximus*), and the sole (*solea vulgaris*), are plentiful. Of eels, the conger (*anguilla conger*), are sometimes met with of large size, often measuring over six feet in length. They are said to be used in England in the manufacture of mock turtle soup, but here they are not esteemed. The common eel (*a. acutirostris*), is taken in our river in vast quantities, as much as ten tons having been caught in one night. There are altogether seven weirs on the river, five of which are attached to "the several Erne fisheries," one worked by Mr. D. Johnston, Belleek, and one of late, by the Marquis of Ely.†

The sun-fish (*orthogoriscus mola*) is occasionally met with in the bay. They occur in the summer, and the oil from their livers is

\* These fish, though not attaining in our waters any great size, specimens have been caught in England weighing from 20lb. to 25lbs.

† It appears from an inquisition taken in the 31st year of Queen Elizabeth that there were ten weirs on the River Erne in the possession of the Abbot of Assaroe. So far back as the reign of Elizabeth, eels seem to have been held in esteem, as an Act was then passed for their protection.



of some value. Specimens of dog-fish, skate, and other predatory fish, are also often met with.

The pollan or fresh water-herring (*coregonus pollan*), has been taken in the estuary, where they have doubtless come from Lough Erne. The number of these fish in Lough Melvin has, it appears, greatly increased of late. Their size is from 9 to 13 inches long, and they are most abundant in the months of November and December; these fish belong to the genus *salmo*, by far the most interesting and important fish in our waters, and the name of our town has always been associated far and near with salmon. As a paradise for anglers of high and low degree, Ballyshannon has ever been esteemed. "In the whole of Ireland (says a writer in the 'Field'), there is probably no place so central for a fishing station throughout the entire year as Ballyshannon, situated on the river Erne, in the south-west of the county Donegal. Lake, river, and sea-fishing in abundance, and the variety wonderful." The following species occur in our waters.—The salmon (*salmo salar*). The bull trout (*salmo eriox*), a specimen was lately caught in the estuary which weighed 24lbs. Sea trout (*salmo trutta*), common trout (*salmo fario*), great lake trout (*salmo ferox*), the gillaroo trout (*salmo stomachicus*). In Lough Nelvin, the char and minnow abound; and in Lough Erne and in some of the small lakes in the neighbourhood there are plenty of pike (*esoz lucius*). This fish does not occur in Lough Melvin.

**Crustacea.**—The common lobster (*astacus marinus*) is plentiful, and large numbers are caught at Bunatroohan and Bundoran, and fetch a good price both in this country and England. The cray-fish (*A. fluviatilis*) has been found in a small stream in the townland of Keenaghan, about five miles east of Ballyshannon. The common crab (*cancer pagurus*) is also a source of profit to fishermen who capture them in "lobster pots," and sell them in the local market. The hermit crab (*pagurus bernhardus*), dwelling in the shells of whelks and other molusca, and other species of crabs, also abound.

The cragons or shrimps. The true shrimps (*cragon vulgaris*), occur in small numbers in the sand, but are seldom caught. The prawns, which are very numerous, though not of very large size, are easily distinguishable from the shrimps by their red colour, and saw-like prolongation of the head. *Palaemon serratus* and *P. squilla* are found in our rocky pools, both in the estuary and at Bundoran. Of the echinideae or sea-urchin family, the *echinus lividus* may be found in thousands, making its cup-like nest in the soft limestone rocks at Bundoran. The curious egg-like *amphidotus cordatus*, a species of heart-urchin, is often found on our strands at Tullan and elsewhere.

**Mollusca.**—The lover of conchology will find on the shores of Bundoran and Coolmore many interesting specimens. The

following amongst others occur :—Blunt gaper shell (*mya truncata*) ; otter shell (*lutraria elliptica*), this is plentiful on Tullan Strand ; porcelain shell (*tellina tenuis*) ; convex tellen (*T. solidula*) ; common wedge shell (*donax anatinus*) ; polished wedge shell (*D. politus*) ; radiated trough-shell (*mactra stultorum*) ; elliptical trough-shell (*M. elliptica*) ; blunt do. (*M. truncata*) ; edible crockle (*cardium edule*) ; red-nosed do. (*rusticum*) ; banded do. (*C. fasciatum*). The edible mussel (*mytilus edulis*) is largely used as an article of food. A variety of the horse mussel (*modiola*), is occasionally met with. Allied to these, is the fresh water pearl shell (*unio margaritiferus*), which abounds in the Donegal River. The average size is 5 inches long by 2 broad. So far back as the 17th century, these shells have been sought for the pearls they contain, and at that period, one was sold at £30 ; they are not however now of much value, and can be often purchased for a few shillings a piece. Various species of the pecten or scallops are found. The common limpet (*patella vulgata*) ; the horse limpet (*P. athletica*) ; and the smooth limpet (*P. pellucida*), a small variety of pale horn colour, with a series of blue radiating lines. The elephant's tusk shell [*dentalium entailis*]. Top shells, the largest of which is (*trochus zizyphinus*), and *T. duminyi*, are found at Bundoran ; the only British locality where the latter has been observed. The violet sea snail (*ianthina communis*) whose habitat is the wide Atlantic, is sometimes drifted to our shores, and has been picked up at Bundoran. The wentle-trap (*scalaria communis*), *natica monilifera*, *murex erinaceus*, and the common whelk (*buccinum undatum*), also occur.\*

A group of microscopic organisms, known as Foraminifera (on account of the numerous holes in their beautiful shells), have been found in the sands at Coolmore ; these are well worthy the attention of microscopists.

Botany.—The flora of our district is extensive and interesting. To the botanist, the extensive coast line, as well as the country inland, offers a wide field for investigation ; while the diversified geological features of the neighbourhood (limestone and metamorphic), possess plants characteristic of each. The relation between geological strata and the plants growing upon their superincumbent soils, has long been recognized in the scientific world. For instance, the Blood geranium or cranesbill (*g. sanguineum*), is a plant almost peculiar to limestone and magnesian soils, where it is sometimes observed growing in great luxuriance. Upon the limestone rocks in Carrickboy, this beautiful plant grows in profusion, while on the metamorphic rocks on the north

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\* For figures and details of these shells, see Wood's "Common Shells of the Sea Shore," or any work on British conchology.



side of the river, it never occurs. This is not a solitary instance of the connection which exists between the vegetable and mineral kingdoms, for hundreds of familiar plants might be pointed out with similar peculiarities of habitat.

The Dartry Mountains, extending from Rossinver to Ben-Bulben, may be regarded as the extreme southern limit of our district. Upon these mountains, at various altitudes, are found plants of great variety, while in the woods and lowlands, flourish flowering plants, ferns and mosses of sufficient diversity to rejoice the heart of the collector, or lover of nature.

Within our narrow limits, it is impossible to offer a complete list of our native plants (even were they ascertained). The following particulars may serve as a contribution to a local flora.—Alpine meadow rue (*thalictrum alpinum*); Ben-Bulben (a very rare plant); wood anemone (*a. nemorosa*), frequent. The following species of crowfoot (*ranunculus*), occur :—common water R., small spearwort, great spearwort, pilewort crowfoot, wood crowfoot, celery-leaved do., upright meadow do., creeping do., bulbous do. Marsh marigold (*caltha palustris*); white water lily (*nymphaea alba*) is abundant, and the yellow water lily (*nuphar* (*napaver rhaeas*)) is common in fields, and the welsh poppy (*luteum*) also occurs, but less frequently. The common red poppy (*meconopsis cambrica*), a rare and beautiful yellow flower, grows on Ben Bulben, at an altitude of from 800 to 1,000 feet. The fumitory (*fumaria officinalis*) a humble relative of the favourite garden flower, *dicentra spectabilis*, is very common.

Of cruciferous plants we have many representatives.—Alpine rock cress (*arabis petroea*), a rare plant, and the hairy rock cress (*a. hirsuta*), grows on Ben Bulben. *A. ciliata* occurs near the town. Water cress (*nasturtium officinale*), is widely distributed in ditches and rivulets. The creeping yellow cress (*n. sylvestre*), has been found on the banks of Lough Erne. Scurvy grass (*cochlearia officinalis*), is common on our shores, and occurs on the summit of Ben Bulben. Whitlow grass (*draba verna*), is found on walls near the town, and the twisted podded species (*d. incana*), grows on Ben Bulben at an altitude of 1,200 feet. Sea rocket (*cakile maritima*) grows on Tullan Strand. Sea cabbage (*brassica oleracea*) the progenitor of the garden variety, a rare plant in the north of Ireland, grows on the New Road. Wild mignonette (*reseda luteola*), occurs in a couple of places in the neighbourhood. Dog violet (*v. canina*), is very common, also the wild pansy (*viola tricolor*); the variety *curstisii*, has

been found at Mullaghmore.

Of the family droseraceae, a British representative of the curious class of carnivorous plants, two species occur, the round-leaved sundew (*d. rotundifolia*), and the spatulate leaved do. (*d. longifolia*). The beautiful Grass of Parnassus (*p. palustris*) is abundant in marshy places. Milk wort (*polygala vulgaris*), with blue flowers, is common ; specimens with pink flowers also occur. A sub-species (*grandiflora*) with large dark blue flowers occurs on Ben Bulbin. Moss campion (*silene acaulis*) a rare Alpine plant, grows on Ben Bulbin. Bladder campion (*s. inflata*) is very common. Meadow lychnis (*l. flos-cuculi*) and the red campion are common ; the white campion (*l. vespertina*) grows near the bar. This species is fragrant in the evening. Corn cockle (*agrostemma githago*) occurs in fields. Small pearlwort (*sagina apetala*); sea pearlwort (*s. maritima*) and the knotted pearlwort (*s. nodosa*); also abound. Sea purslane (*honckenia peploides*) grows at the bar. Fringed sand-wort (*arenaria ciliata*), a mountain plant of middle Europe, which does not occur elsewhere in Britain, grows in abundance on Ben Bulbin. This rare plant seems to be peculiar to the Dartry range. Great stitchwort (*sellaria holostea*) and the grass-leaved species (*s. graminea*) are frequent. Common mallow (*malva sylvestris*) is plentiful, and the Tree mallow (*lavatera arborea*) is not truly wild, but is occasionally seen growing in gardens in the neighbourhood ; this is a sea-side shrub. The square-stalked St. John's wort (*hypericum quadrangulum*), as well as some other species, occur. Of the geraniums or cranesbills, we have the beautiful Blood Cranesbill (*g. sanguineum*) a rare plant already referred to. Shining cranesbill (*g. lucidum*), stinking do. (*g. robertianum*), doves foot c. (*g. molle*). Hemlock stork's bill, (*erodium cicutarium*), musky do. (*e. moschatum*). The wood sorrel (*oxalis acetosella*), asserted by some writers to be the true Irish shamrock, is general in shady places. Furze (*ulex Europaeus*) is very plentiful. Broom (*sarothamnus scoparius*) occurs in a few places in the neighbourhood. The kidney vetch (*anthyllis vulneraria*), purple trefoil (*t. pratense*), hares foot do. (*tarvense*), birds foot do. (*lotus corniculatus*), narrow leaved do. (*l. major*), tufted vetch (*vicia cracca*), and the yellow meadow vetch (*lathyrus pratense*), all occur.

The Mountain Avens (*dryas octopetala*) a rare plant, grows on Ben Bulbin, and is said to grow "on rocks at Ballyshannon," but we have never met with it. Marsh-cinque foil (*comarum*



palustre), and the strawberry-leaved cinque-foil (*potentilla fragariastrum*), occur, as also Lady's mantle (*alchemilla vulgaris*), and alpine do. (*a. alpine*) on Ben Bulbin. Common agrimony (*a. eupatoria*), frequent. Burnet-leaved rose (*r. spinosissima*), dog rose (*r. canina*), common crab apple (*pyrus malus*) occasional ; and the white beam tree (*pyrus aria*), on the cliffs of Ben Bulbin. Mountain ash or rowan tree (*p. aucuparia*), rose bay willow herb (*epilobium angustifolium*), small flowered do. (*e. parviflorum*), and others are frequent, alpine night shade (*circæa alpine*), on Ben Bulbin. Purple loosestrife (*l. salicaria*), common sandwortpurry (*s. marina*), grows on rocks at Fairy Bridge. Wall pennywort (*cotyledon umbilicus*). English stonecrop (*sedum anglicum*), biting do. (*s. acre*) occur. Alpine saxifrage (*s. nivalis*), the purple mountain do. (*s. oppositifolia*), and the yellow mountain do. (*s. aizoides*), all rare plants, occur on Ben Bulbin. The white-roset (*hydrocotyle vulgaris*), common in marshes. Bishop's weed (*aegopodium podagraria*), a plant formerly held in repute as a remedy for gout, and introduced by the monks, grows plentifully about the town. Hemlock (*conium maculatum*), occur occasionally, but is often confused with other umbelliferous plants. Shepherds needle (*scandix pecten*) is occasional. Common elder (*sambucus nigra*), and honeysuckle (*lonicera*), common bedstraw (*galium verum*) smooth heath do. (*g. saxatile*), white water do. (*g. palustre*), cross leaved do. (*g. boreale*). Goose grass do. (*g. aparine*) occur ; Blue field madder (*sherardia arvensis*), sweet woodruff (*asperula odorata*), and great wild valerian (*v. officinalis*), frequent. Scabious (*s. succisa*), common (a white variety has also been found). The hairy hawkweed (*hieracium lasiophyllum*), a very rare plant, occurs on Ben Bulbin. Black knapweed (*centaurea nigra*), mugwort (*artemisia vulgaris*). Hemp agrimony (*eupatorium cannabinum*), mountain everlasting (*antennaria dioica*), marsh cudweed (*gnaphalium uliginosum*), Butterbur (*petasites vulgaris*), a plant with large rhubarb-like leaves, sea aster or starwort (*aster tripolium*). Feverfew (*matricaria chamomilla*), sneezewort milfoil, as well as many other common composite plants, occur. The bilberry (*vaccinum myrtillus*) is frequent. Cross-leaved heath (*erica tetralix*) and the common ling (sometimes with white flowers), are plentiful. Common centuary (*menyanthes trifoliata*). Hooded bindweed (*calystegia sepium*). Sea-side bindweed (*soldanella*), gromwell (*lithospermum*

officinale), comfrey (*symphytum officinale*), occur. The ivy-leaved toad flax (*linaria cymbalaria*), this interesting plant which is an alien, has established itself in profusion on old walls round the town. The large flowered hemp nettle (*galeopsis versicolor*) and the calamint (*c. officinalis*), a rare plant, occur at the abbey.

Common butterwort (*pinguicula vulgaris*) is frequent, and the pale species (*p. lusitanica*) also occurs; these as well as the sundews, are insectivorous plants. The cowslip (*primula veris*), a rare plant in Ulster, grows in profusion at Wardtown. Yellow pimpernel (*lysimachia nemorum*), scarlet p. (*anagallis arvensis*) and bog p. (*a. tenella*) are general. Sea pink or thrift (*armeria vulgaris*) sea-side plaintain (*p. maritima*) common. Mercury goosefoot (*chenopodium bonus henricus*), a plant cultivated in some parts of England as a vegetable, occurs at Bundoran. Prickly saltwort (*salsola kali*) grows on Tullan Strand. Common bistort (*polygonum bistorta*). Knot grass (*p. aviculare*), spotted p. (*p. persicaria*) frequent. The Alpine bistort (*p. viviparum*) and mountain sorrel (*o. reniformis*) both rare plants have been found on Ben Bulbin. Portland spurge occurs at the bar, and sun spurge (*euphorbia helioscopia*) locally known as "the seven sisters," and a cure for warts, is common. Sweet gale, or bog myrtle, abounds in the bogs; and the alder (*alnus glutinosa*) is frequent; fearns hill (the hill of alders, at Kildoney) derives its name from this tree. Broad-leaved garlic (*allium ursinum*) and bog asphode (*narthecium ossifragum*). Cuckoo-pint (*arum maculatum*) Cotton Grass (*erriophorum*), frequent. Sea-reed (*psamma arenaria*) clothes the sandhills, and with its wide spreading roots protects the sand from the action of the winds. The American water thyme (*anacharis canadensis*) was introduced into County Down about 1836, from whence it rapidly spread throughout Ireland; it has proved very injurious to salmon fisheries, and to river navigation; it is abundant in the Erne.

Flices.—The family of ferns are well represented in our neighbourhood. The following species, besides many others well known, occur:—Scaly spleenwort (*certerach officinarum*), polypody (*p. vulgare*), Alpine holly fern (*aspidium lonchitis*), prickly shield fern (*a. aculeatum*), angular leaved s. (*a. angulare*) male fern (*a. filix mas*) broad pricklys. (*a. dilatatum*). Brittle bladder fern (*cystopteris fragilis*), wall rue (*asplenium ruta-muraria*), common spleenwort (*a. trichomanes*), green do. (*a. viride*) sea do.



[*a. marinum*].\* Black spleenwort [*adiantum nigrum*, lady fern [*filix faemina*], hart's tongue [*scolopendrium vulgare*], northern hard fern [*blechnum boreale*], royal fern [*osmunda regalis*].†

## CHAPTER XVI.

### LOCAL NAMES.

In preceding chapters, the meaning of names of places which have incidentally occurred, have in most instances been appended. Here it is only necessary to speak of certain names in our district, which seem to deserve especial notice. The researches of Dr. Joyce into the subject of "Irish Names of Places,"‡ have thrown fresh light upon the past habits and customs of the Irish people, and show what a mine of historical and traditional lore lies concealed beneath local names, in constant daily use, but too often conveying no intelligible meaning to those who speak them.

Of names occurring within the limits of the town, a few particulars will suffice.—The port or purt (a bank) from its proximity to the river. Milltown, from the old manor mill which stood on the site of the distillery. Portnason, the bank or landing place of the ramparts; the name seems to be derived from some artificial earth-work defence which has now disappeared. Carrickboy (*carraig buidhe*) The yellow rock: this name may be derived from the proximity of the ford and waterfall, the term "yellow" being often applied to fords, etc. Castle Street, from O'Donnell's castle. College Lane, from a Roman Catholic seminary which formerly existed there. Clochan, the ford of the stepping stones, which led across the little stream which flows there. Carrickadavy, the rock of the vat or caldron, referring to the deep "pool" in its proximity. Bullybawn (*buaile ban*), whitish booly, an enclosed place where cattle used to be fed and milked in. Why the word white was here applied, remains unexplained. Carrickevlin, the rock at the foot of the Mall, derives its name from a woman, meaning Eveleen's rock; the most ancient form of the name is Eblin. Gibby or Gibbagh, meaning a rugged place, is the name of the sharp rock which projects into the water at the Bullybawns.

In the townland of Ballymacoward is a rock at the shore called

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\* This beautiful fern grows in profusion along the rocks in the estuary.

† The botanical names are here given to facilitate reference to any of the numerous works on British Botany.

‡ To these volumes of Dr. Joyce, which contain a vast accumulation of valuable and interesting information, the reader is referred.

Carriknadanty, i.e., the rock of the dans or poems. This name may owe its origin to having been owned by the Macwards, who were the hereditary bards of the O'Donnells, and held the townland in which the rock is situated.

The following names occur in our district—Ardeelan, the height of the sea-gulls. Ballintra, the town of the strand. Ballynacarrick, the town of the rock. Ballynamuddagh, the town of the bodachs, or churls. Behy, birchland. Belleek (Bel-leice), the ford mouth of the flagstone. Bundoran, the mouth of the Doran or Dobhar (little water), supposed to be the ancient name of the Bradoge. Camlin, crooked line (referring to the course of the river). Cloughbolie, stony booley or dairy place. Cashellackan, stoney cashel. Carricknahorna, the rock of the barley. Clontyseer, the meadow of the carpenter. Corlea, gray round mill. Crockacapple, the hill of the horses. Coranamanagh, the monk's weir (this is near Cliff). Durnish, oak island. Derryhillagh, the oak wood abounding in sallows. Derrynahinch, the oak wood of the river-meadow. Derrynaseer, the oak-wood of the carpenter or builder. Doon is the name of a hill and lake in the townland of Dunmuckrum; it is another form of dun, a fort or rath, and owes its origin in some such structure having been erected there.

Doobally, blacktown. Farrancassidy; the O'Cassidys were physicians to the Maguires of Fermanagh, and held these lands in virtue of their office. Finner, a whitish place (from the prevalence of sand). Fartagh, a place of graves (this is a word of pagan origin.) Fasagh (Faussagh), an uncultivated place. Lough Melvin was called in the annals, Loch-Meilghe, from Meileghe, king of Ireland in A.M. 4678. Lough Erne was called Loch Eirne, from the Ernai, a tribe of Firbolgs who dwelt on the plain now covered by the lake. The ancient manuscripts contain traditions of the sudden eruptions of almost all the principal lakes of Ireland. Lough Unshin (the source of the "abbey river," and the name by which that stream was anciently known), means the lake of the ash trees. Loughnamanfin (the small circular lough in Wardtown), the lake of the white or fair-haired woman.

Near the fair-green was the Tyburn, or gallowshill of Ballyshannon; upon the summit of a steep rock which still retains its distinctive name, Carrick-na croghery, i.e. the hangman's rock, once stood the gallows, where doubtless many a culprit was executed in the "good old times." From various passages in Irish antiquities it appears that criminals were executed both by hanging and decapitation, and various names of places in Ireland still preserve the remembrance of such modes of punishment. In our district are several names which owe their origin to the introduction of the English element. For example the well called Tobernassassonagh, i.e. the well of the Saxon, on the north side of the town, derived its name from being dug or used



by the English settlers. The word "Camp," which is the name of a small townland near the town, owes its origin to its having been the site of an English encampment, probably during the period of the O'Donnells. "Park," a name which occurs more than once, is another of these "borrowed" words.\* The village of Garrison on the shores of Lough Melvin, owes its name to its selection as a military station in the disturbances which took place towards the middle of the 17th century, and not only is this circumstance preserved in the name of the village, but by vestiges of the old military barrack, and by the name "barrack street" where the building stood. At "the Garrison" (as it was styled in a letter printed in 1643), were iron works,† carried on by English settlers, and it was regarded, from its close proximity to the "kingdom of Connaught," as a pass worthy of being guarded.

Many of the local names in common used two centuries back have now disappeared. For example, Ballynamanagh, i.e., the town of the monks, a district comprising several townlands on the south bank of the Erne, was so known here in the 17th and 18th centuries, as it is frequently referred to in the church books of that period. Another name now lost is Donnoghmore; this "quarter of land" is mentioned in an inquisition taken in the year 1621. In this townland, which probably lay somewhere between Ballymunterhiggen and Drumachrin, was the Patrician foundation of Domhnagh-Mor.‡ In the neighbourhood of the abbey of Assaroe, was a place called the Desert or Disert, a name now unknown there; the word is from the latin desertum, and means a sequestered place. In the Irish MSS. it is generally used in an ecclesiastical sense to denote a hermitage, or place of retirement, such as the early Irish saints used as dwellings.§ The only place at the abbey which from its situation seems likely to have been selected for such a purpose is Catsby. The name catsby means cat's dwelling which may be a translation of the Irish name of the cave, such as Bonnagat, Coosnagat, Dercnagat or Pollnagat, all of which would mean cat's cave, or Catsby. The name is at all events comparatively modern, and the existence of a circular hole or bullan cut in the rock, is evidence that the place was used for ecclesiastical purposes at a very early period.

There are many other local names occurring in our district whose origin is both curious and interesting, but of these we must not now speak. We cannot, however, bring these pages to a close without expressing the hope that Ballyshannon of the present, as well as future generations, may strive to imitate the

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\* See Joyce's "Irish Names of Places," 2nd series Chapter III.

† See note page, 79.

‡ See Chap XIV. §Joyce's Irish Names of Places, 1st series, page 298.

good example set them by the old inhabitants, of industry, enterprise (notwithstanding many obstacles), and unity of effort in promoting the welfare of the town ; that setting aside sectarian and political differences, all may be ready to work together for the common good, remembering that "unity is strength," and that helping on any well-devised scheme for the prosperity of the community, each individual member will reap advantage.

Since 1831\* many hundreds of persons have left our own for Americ and other foreign countries, some few have returned, but by far the greater number have found new homes across the seas. However great their success, they seldom forget the old town of their early days or

## THE WINDING BANKS OF ERNE.†

### 1.

Adieu to Ballyshanny ! where I was bred and born ;  
Go where I may, I'll think of you, as sure as night and morn.  
The kindly spot, the friendly town, where every one is known,  
And not a face in all the place but partly seems my own ;  
There's not a house or window, there's not a field or hill,  
But, east or west, in foreign lands, I'll recollect them still.  
I leave my warm heart with you, though my back I'm forced to  
turn—

So adieu to Ballyshanny, and the winding banks of Erne !

### 2.

No more on pleasant evenings we'll saunter down the Mall,  
When the trout is rising to the fly, the salmon to the fall.  
The boat comes straining on her net, and heavily she creeps.  
Cast off, cast off, !—she feels the oars, and to her berth she  
sweeps ;

Now fore and aft keep hauling, and gathering up the clue,  
Till a silver wave of salmon rolls in among the crew.  
Then they may sit, with pipes a-lit, and many a joke and 'yarn' ;—  
Adieu to Ballyshanny, and the winding banks of Erne !

### 3.

The music of the waterfall, the mirror of the tide,  
When all the green-hill'd harbour is full from side to side—  
From Portnasun to Bulliebawns, and round the Abbey Bay,  
From rocky Inis Sainer to Coolnargit sandhills grey ;  
While far upon the southern line, to guard it like a wall,  
The Leitrim mountains clothed in blue gaze calmly over all,

\* See Chap. XII., page 10.

† Or, "The Emigrant's Adieu to Ballyshanny." [A local ballad], by William Allingham.



And watch the ship sail up or down, the red flag at her stern ;—  
Adieu to these, adieu to all the winding banks of Erne !

## 4.

Farewell to you, Kildoney lads, and them that pull an oar,  
A lug-sail set, or haul a net, from the Point to Mullaghmore ;  
From Killybegs to bold Slieve-League, that ocean-mountain steep,  
Six hundred yards in air aloft, six hundred in the deep ;  
From Deoran to the Fairy Bridge, and round by Tullan strand,  
Level and long, and white with waves, where gull and curlew  
stand ;—

Head out to sea when on your lee the breakers you discern !—  
Adieu to all the billowy coast, and winding banks of Erne !

## 5.

Farewell Coolmore,—Bundoran ! and your summer crowds that  
run

From inland homes to see with joy th' Atlantic-setting sun ;  
To breathe the buoyant salted air, and sport among the waves ;  
To gather shells on sandy beach, and tempt the gloomy caves ;  
To watch the flowing, ebbing tide, the boats, the crabs, the fish ;  
Young men and maids to meet and smile, and form a tender wish ;  
The sick and old in search of health, for all things have their  
turn—

And I must quit my native shore, and the winding banks of  
Erne !

## 6.

Farewell to every white cascade from the Harbour to Belleek,  
And every pool where fins may rest, and ivy-shaded creek ;  
The sloping fields, the lofty rocks, where ash and holly grow,  
To one split yew tree gazing on the curving flood below ;  
The Lough, that winds through islands under Turaw mountain  
green ;

And Castle Caldwell's stretching woods, with tranquil bays  
between ;

And Breesie Hill, and many a pond among the heath and fern,—  
For I must say adieu—adieu to the winding banks of Erne !

## 7.

The thrush will call through Camlin groves the livelong summer  
day ;

The waters run by mossy cliff, and bank with wild flowers gay ;  
The girls will bring their work and sing beneath a twisted thorn,  
Or stray with sweethearts down the path among the growing  
corn ;

Along the river side they go, where I have often been,—  
O' never shall I see again the days that I have seen !  
A thousand chances are to one I never may return,—  
Adieu to Ballyshanny, and the winding banks of Erne !

## 8.

Adieu to evening dances, when merry neighbours meet,  
And the fiddle says to boys and girls, "Get up and shake your  
feet!"

To "shanachus\*" and wise old talk of Erin's days gone by—  
Who trench'd the rath on such a hill, and where the bones may lie  
Of saint, or king, or warrior chief; with tales of fairy power,  
And tender ditties sweetly sung to pass the twilight hour.  
The mournful song of exile is now for me to learn—  
Adieu, my dear companions on the winding banks of Erne!

## 9.

Now measure from the Commons down to each end of the Purt,  
Round the Abbey, Moy, and Knather,—I wish no one any hurt;  
The Main Street, Back Street, College Lane, the Mall and  
Portnasun,

If any foes of mine are there, I pardon every one.  
I hope that man and womankind will do the same by me;  
For my heart is sore and heavy at voyaging the sea.  
My loving friends I'll bear in mind, and often fondly turn  
To think of Ballyshanny, and the winding banks of Erne.

## 10.

If ever I'm a money'd man, I mean, please God, to cast  
My golden anchor in the place where youthful years were pass'd;  
Though heads that now are black and brown must meanwhile  
gather grey,  
New faces rise by every hearth, and old ones drop away—  
Yet dearer still that Irish hill than all the world beside;  
It's home, sweet home, where'er I roam, through lands and  
waters wide.  
And if the Lord allows me, I surely will return  
To my native Ballyshanny, and the winding banks of Erne.

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\* "Shanachus," old stories,—histories, genealogies.

THE END.

