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**Ordnance Survey Collection**

**Ordnance Survey Letters:  
Westmeath, Volume 2**

**O'Donovan, John, MRJA (1806-1861), et al.**

**1837-1838**

**Volume 2 of 2**



**14 G 14/1**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Title page and index to letters containing information relative to the antiquities of County Westmeath, collected during the progress of the Ordnance Survey in 1837.**

**Also contains index to maps.**

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Antiquities  
of the  
County of Westmeath  
collected during the  
progress of the  
Ordnance Survey  
in  
1837  
Vol II

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*Westmeath Letters, Vol. II.*

*Index.*

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**END**



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**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to John O'Donovan, from George Petrie, head of the Topographical Section of the Ordnance Survey, in which he writes of the architectural features found in St. Fechin's church, St. Feighin's, Co. Westmeath.**

**Petrie, George, MRIA, 1790-1866**

**17 October 1837**

**2 p.**

**18.2 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 1-2.**

RIA

1  
My dear John,

respecting the  
window in the Fickins church  
I have only to say that I  
would not hastily pronounce  
it more modern than the  
doorway. Though like yourself  
I thought so when I saw  
it. But I have since seen  
many windows in early  
churches of that or a similar  
character, which I had no  
doubt even of the original  
construction - a great deal

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however would depend on the  
character of the masonry around  
it. which should exhibit no  
dissimilarity from that in  
the parts unquestionably ancient.

Ever yours faithfully

George Pitten

17<sup>th</sup> Octr 1837.

L. J. Donnan Esq

—



**END**

**14 G 14/3**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, concerning the history and antiquities associated with the high crosses, holy wells, churches and monastery at Fore, St. Feighin's, Co. Westmeath.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)**

**13 October 1837**

**26 p.**

**Contains illustrations**

**Pages vary between 18.2 and 23.3 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 3-28;**

**Includes pencil sketches of a doorway and east window of St. Fechin's Church, St. Feighin's, Co. Westmeath.**

To Fore next let me go  
That Valley lying ~~so~~ low  
And view the mill  
Which thro' the hill  
Unto the mill.

Saint Fechin caused to flow.

O ppat Echne na neanach  
Tnuallam go pobair dub-beanach  
Sleat p'or-aosb'inn map a b'puil  
Lu n-jonsnao a' meurbuil

ingcorpe u gclor  
thrice gan b'p'at  
Mojnreir aip p'at  
muillan gan p'at !

pipu gan p'at, beice gan ep'at. D. O'D.

October 13<sup>th</sup> 1837

Edinburgh

Dear Sir, As Sir Henry Piers has written a good deal upon this place, I think it is the best plan for me to transcribe his words, and make such remarks upon them as I think necessary, and also to add what he has omitted. He writes as follows, Collectanea, vol. 1 p. 63.

"Fore, an ancient Corporation, sending two Burgesses to Parliament, seated on the north side of the hill or rising ground which interposeth between it and Lough Lene before mentioned. This town is said to have been anciently a town or University of literature and that its name signifying in the Irish language, the town of Books, and the mentioned lake the lake of learning, may seem to give countenance to this

(a) Usher also states that Fore is called by the Irish baile na leabair, the town of Books, and he finds a similar name in the old testament (Primordia, p. 966) But this is one of those gross errors which Usher would never have committed if he had

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(2) <sup>4</sup> also an island in the said lake bearing the like name <sup>(3)</sup> which is said to have been the retiring place of the learned who taught here. But if this town were not a mart of learning, surely it was of devotion there being in it no less than the ruins of three parish churches <sup>(2)</sup> more by two than the greatest and best town of our county hath; one monastery, one church or cell of an anchorite, the sole of the religious of this kind in Ireland. This religious person at his entry maketh a vow never to go out of his doors: all his life after, and accordingly here he remains pent

any acquaintance with the Irish language. The natives do not call it Baile na leabap, but baile fóbap, which means the town of Fore. It is my opinion that the name fóbap was originally applied to the spring which gushes from the hill, and turns the little mill of St. Trechin. The word fóbap is explained in the rhytmical Glaspar called Deiríob'pup Do'n Eagaid An Eigre, as signifying a spring, well or fountain, and this meaning is sufficiently borne out by the locality of Fore, where, besides this water gushing from the foot of the hill called Garragh Bhaileon, there are two other fine wells, the one called Tobap na Cozaine and the other Dubac Pershm; but the locality of Uad fóbap, campulus fontis (the fire of fires of Vallancey <sup>at the foot of Agagh Balaigh</sup>) must be carefully examined before any very certain conclusion can be drawn. Colgan explains fóbap, the name of this monastery of St. Trechin, as signifying Favour, tho' it would appear from the lives of that saint published by him that fóbap was the name of the valley before <sup>he</sup> was born. 14/G/14/3(2)

"pent up all his days; every day he saith mass  
"in his chapel, which also is part of, nay almost  
"all his dwelling house, for there is no more house  
"but a very small castle<sup>(c)</sup> wherein a tall man

can

(b) The name of this lough does not mean the lake  
of learning; it is called by Mac Poisi, the Laureate  
of the King Moylesaghlin loc léin - a name exactly  
similar to that of the celebrated Lake of Killarney  
but in the Martyrology of Donegal, and the  
lives of St. Fechin loc léibestn. If it meant the  
lake of learning it would be spelled loc léigin. The  
present tradition is that it was named after Léan, the  
daughter of the Necromancer Mac-an-an Mac Lir.

(c) Colgan calls it Inis-locha leibhiom, which is no name  
at all as there are three islands in the lake, but  
of these presently

churches

St. Mary's

(d). I have been able to find only the ruins of two, viz  
the old church of St. Mary's, in the east of the town,  
and St. Fechin's to the west. There was a third on  
the slope of the hill about 5 perches from the  
gate and to the left as you go to Castle Pollard.  
It was called Teampull Fionáin, but I do  
not see what parish it could have been the  
original church of. This church was levelled  
about 8 years ago by Mr. Drum, who holds the  
land on which it stood from the Marquis of W. Meath.

(4)<sup>6</sup> " can hardly stretch himself at length, if he  
" laid down on the floor, nor is there any  
" passage into the castle but thro' the chapel.  
" He hath servants that attend him at his  
" call in an outer house, but none lyeth  
" within the church but himself. He is said  
" by the natives who hold him in great veneration  
" for his sanctity, every day to dig or  
" rather scrape for he useth no other table but  
" his nails, a portion of his grave; being esteemed  
" of so great holiness, as if purity &  
" sanctity were entailed on his cell, he is constantly  
" visited by these of the Romish  
" religion, who aim at being esteemed more

(c) This house of the anchorite ~~lies~~ stands on the  
slope of the hill a short distance to the S. W.  
of St. Fiechins church. It was rebuilt in 1680, as  
appears from the following inscription on a stone  
in the north wall of the chapel.

" The Right Honorable Richards Nugent  
" Earl of Westmeath, at his own expences  
" rebuilt this Chapel and Castle for the  
" burying place of himself and his successors  
" Anno Domini 1680."

It is now shut up and used as a Mausoleum or tomb  
by Lord Westmeath, who, not many years since buried his  
only son and heirs within it. H/G/14/3(4)



my (5)

“devout than the ordinary amongst them; every vi-  
“sitant at his departure leaveth his offering or (as  
“they phrase it) devotion on his altar; but he  
“relieth not on this only for a maintenance,  
“but hath those to bring him in their devo-  
“tion whose devotions are not so fervent as  
“to invite them to do the office in person;  
“these are called his Proctors, who range  
“all the countries in Ireland to beg for  
“him whom they call “the holy man in<sup>angcoipe a gcloré</sup>  
“the stone; corn, eggs, geese, turkeys, hens, sheep,  
“money and what not; nothing comes amiss,  
“and no where do they fail altogether, but some-  
“thing is had, inasmuch that if his proctors  
“deal honestly, nay if they return him but  
“the tenth part of what is given him, he may  
“doubtless fare as well as any priest of them  
“all; the only recreation this poor prisoner<sup>\*</sup> is ca-  
“pable of is to walk on his terrace built over  
“the cell wherein he lies, if he may be said to  
“walk, who cannot in one line stretch forth  
“his legs four times.

14/6/14/3(5)

\* The name of this Anchorite was Patrick Biglin as  
appears from a Latin inscription inside the Chapel,  
But there was another before him.

(6) 8  
" One of these Churches before mentioned is called  
" Saint Fechin's, one of our Irish Saints. The  
" chief entrance into this church is at the  
" west end by a door about three feet broad  
" and six feet high. This wall is hard  
" & strong, if not altogether three feet thick;  
" the lintel that traverseth the head of  
" the door is of one entire stone\* of the  
" full thickness or near it of the wall,  
" and to the best of my remembrance, about  
" six foot long or perhaps more, and in height  
" about two foot or more; having taken notice

---

\* This is the heaviest stone I ever saw over the doorway of any church or fort. It is about 6 feet long, 3 feet thick and <sup>from</sup> 2 to 2½ feet high. It exhibits a rude representation of a cross within a circle immediately over the middle of the doorway. It does not appear to have been touched by the chisel, but it is well smoothed with a hammer, and bryance. The same story is told of its being lifted by St. Fechin, as written by Piers, but it is added that the circle, divided into four parts by the cross is intended to represent

14/6/14/3(6)

of it as the largest entire stone, I had<sup>9</sup> (7)  
at any time observed especially so high  
in any building, and discoursing of it  
with an ancient dweller in the town,  
I observed to him that of old time they  
wanted not their old engines even in  
this country for their structures; the gen-  
tlemen smiling up at my mistake, told  
me that the Saint himself alone without  
either engine or any help placed the  
stone there, and thereon he proceeds in  
this formal story of the manner and  
occasion of it; he said the workmen  
having heven and fitted the stone in  
its dimensions, and made a shift with  
much ado to tumble it to the foot  
of the wall, they assayed with their  
joint forces to raise it, but after much  
the griddle of bread which the workmen ate <sup>toil</sup>  
while Saint Fechin, <sup>was lifting it</sup> but this <sup>is</sup> probably a modern  
addition to the story.

14/9/14/3(7)



(8)<sup>10</sup>  
"tail and loss of time, they could not get  
"it done, at last they resolved to go and  
"refresh themselves and after breakfast  
"to make another attempt at it; the saint  
"also, for as the story goes he was then  
"living and present, advised them so to do.  
"and tells them he would tarry till their  
"return; when they returned, behold they  
"find the stone exactly as to this day  
"it remains over the door; this was done  
"as tradition goes by the saint alone; a  
"work for my part I believe impossible  
"to be done by the strength of so many  
"hands only as can immediately apply  
"their force unto it; however I assure  
"you this story in that formality related,  
"is infinitely believed by a generation credu-  
"lous enough, and who boast of miracles  
"and adhere to tradition how unlikely

Severn

" never it be if it seem to set but the least  
 " glass or varnish on that Religion or the  
 " relatives thereof, that they so tenaciously  
 " adhere to."

" Besides the churches and the cell  
 " this corporation hath adjoining to its  
 " one monastery not large but neat, and  
 " of firm composure, of Canons regular,  
 " built by the same St. Fechin<sup>†</sup> about the  
 " year 630\*. This monastery is said to be  
 " built in a bog, and so it is, but founded on  
 " a firm spot of grounds which it wholly  
 " possesses. This town of Foure, after all  
 " that is said of it, is at this day but very mean  
 " the inhabitants and live in small cottages<sup>‡</sup>."

14/9/14/3(9)

\* According to the Four Masters St. Fechin  
 abbot of Trochar, died in 664. but they do  
 not record the year in which he placed his  
 Monastery at Foure or how long he was  
 abbot of it. His lives as published by Colgan  
 are also very unsatisfactory on this head.

‡ It is now worse than ever: it contains only two wretched  
 public houses, a little mill and some wretched cottages.

This is the same large monastery and not  
 St. Fechin's

12  
(10)

of the Rills which flow from the foot of the  
hill at Fore.

which now flows from the foot of the hill in several distinct springs  
This water <sup>which falls at once into the mill-pool</sup> is said to have been miraculously  
carried through the hill by St. Fechin.

Tradition says that the Saint employed a mill-  
wright to erect a mill in the hollow immedi-  
ately to the north of his church, where there  
was no stream or water at the time, and  
that the millwright laughed at him for  
so foolish a business. The mill being finished  
the wright asked the Saint, "where now is the  
water to turn it"? Leave that to me, replied  
the Saint, I will bring a stream through the  
hill, and the Saor scornfully laughing at  
him, said, I shall go into the hopper until  
I am ground into meal, the foolish man not  
believing that the Saint could bring water thro-  
the bowels of a lofty limestone hill. Do as you  
like said Fechin, and taking his crozier, he directed  
his steps to Lough Lene distant about one  
Irish mile to the S.W. of where the mill stood  
and observing a large rock, on the northern  
shore of it against which the waters then  
agitated by the winds, rushed furiously, he



cast his crozier against <sup>it</sup> and lo! it <sup>passed thro'</sup> ~~pierced~~ <sup>19</sup> the hill in the direction of the mill, and brought after it a copious stream of the waters of Lough Lene, which filling the pond <sup>soon</sup> fell upon the water wheel, and im-  
-filled <sup>it</sup> round; <sup>and</sup> ~~gave~~ the incredulous miller <sup>wright</sup> who <sup>had</sup> fallen asleep in the hopper, <sup>was grained</sup> to bloody dust!

This story is however told in various ways, but it is not worth the labor to give the various lectures. It is thus told by Augustine Magrath Canon of Saints Isle in Rough Ree:

"At another time when the man of God saw  
"that his brethren laboured so much in preparing  
"food, compassionating their laborious sweat, he  
"bethought himself of erecting a mill according  
"to the will of God for the men of God (i.e.  
"the monks) who were three hundred in number  
"were accustomed to grind with their own  
"hands. He sought therefore a certain wright  
"for constructing a mill and having found him  
"he brought the work to a completion. And  
"when the place where the mill was built was  
"situated on a high hill, the Carpenter despair

14/6/14/3(11) ing

(12) 14

"ing of the conducting of water thither, said: I  
"would wish to live no longer than till the  
"time this mill will have abundance of  
"water". Which when the man of God had  
"heard, confiding in the Lord, he replied: God  
"is able to furnish his servants with water  
"when he pleases", and presently <sup>supply</sup> ~~going~~ <sup>rising</sup> he went  
"neighbouring lake which lies at the other side  
"of the mountain at the distance of nearly a mile,  
"and confiding in the <sup>virtue</sup> power of him, who through  
"the hand of Moses granted water in abundance  
"from the rock to a thirsting people, cast his two  
"croziers into the lake. What more? the croziers  
"cast into the lake, like quicksilver perforating  
"the interposed mountain, and drawing <sup>with them</sup> the waters  
"in abundance, which drowned the incredulous  
"mechanic, who, from the fatigue of his labour,  
"had fallen asleep in the hopper of the mill.

On this passage the good believer Colgan writes the  
following note, rejoicing that in his own time, the  
locality of Fovar, bore irrefragable evidence of the

14/G/14/3(12)

truth of the miracle.

15 (13)

"This is a living, true, and perpetual mira-  
cle, by which the scoffers <sup>at</sup> of miracles can be easily  
convinced, if not converted. For this purpose take  
this short description of the place. Through the mid-  
dle of this valley flows a small little river, be-  
tween which and the monastery, <sup>which is situated at the foot of an overhanging mon-  
tains</sup> the holy man  
had his mill erected, thinking that from this little  
river or from some other source waters could be easily  
conveyed unto it; but they could not. Wherefore, by  
prayer, he commanded that waters should be con-  
ducted unto it from a lake a mile distant, under  
the <sup>interjacent high</sup> mountain contrary to the order and powers of  
nature; and these waters <sup>make their first appearance</sup> first flow from the earth  
a few paces only from the mill, and between it and  
the adjacent monastery, which stands at the foot  
of the overhanging mountain, and to this day  
turn <sup>a</sup> the mill with rapidity; so that the <sup>water</sup> sides of  
of the monastery and the mountain under both  
which this stream from the lake makes its  
first appearance shew the continual prodigy.

This description of the stream, ancient monastery  
and mill of Fore is perfectly correct, and we will  
not quarrell with the faithful Colgan about the  
miracle. It appears from this description of Fore  
14/6/14/3 (13)



(14) 16 which must have been sent him by the then pa-  
-rish priest <sup>It appears</sup> that the ancient monastery of Fore  
was situated at St. Fechin's old church <sup>to the</sup>  
south of the mill, and <sup>on the strath North of the mill</sup> not where the large  
monastery, which is of anglo-Norman erection,  
is now to be seen.

One question connected with ~~with~~ this stream of  
Saint Fechin remains to be answered by the natu-  
-ralist and geologist, viz Is it certain that it  
is derived from Lough Lene, and not a spring  
from the <sup>hill</sup> mountain itself? Sir Henry Pierp, who, it  
is curious to observe, seems never to have heard  
of St. Fechin's miracle, writes as if it were certain  
that this stream <sup>is derived</sup> is from Lough Lene, but as  
his knowledge of natural science smells so much  
of the romance of the old school, he cannot be  
much depended upon. He says:

" Lough Lene in Irish sounds the <sup>quasi Latin</sup> lake of learning,  
" seated within half a mile of Fore town in the  
" Barony of Benifore from which it is parted  
" by a fine rising arable ground (on the <sup>not north</sup> south  
" side of the lake) unto which by a narrow &  
" short channell not above six or eight feet  
" broad and scarce two furlongs long, this lake  
" sends a proulet, which at the end of this short  
course

14/6/14/3(14)

(15)

" course falleth into the bowels of the hill, and  
" traversing the same issueth out on the other  
" side thereof in the town itself, and in a far  
" shorter course than it made before its entry  
" turneth an overshaft Mill; that office  
" being done, it watereth the town and  
" adjoining plains. This our said little  
" brook before it entereth the higher ground  
" aforesaid is on every storm the receptacle  
" or retiring place of the small fish in  
" the lake. I myself on such an occasion  
" was once there. (Nathan telleth a story  
about himself and some persons who accompanied  
him about attempting to catch these small  
fishes) "The natives report that oftentimes  
" some of these fish force themselves thro'  
" the straits of the hill, but they that got  
" thro' (unless of the smallest size) are mi-  
" serably shattered and torn, their scales  
" being forced off in the narrowness of the  
" passage, and their sides scratched & furrowed  
" by the sharp stones between which they  
" strained themselves in their passage."

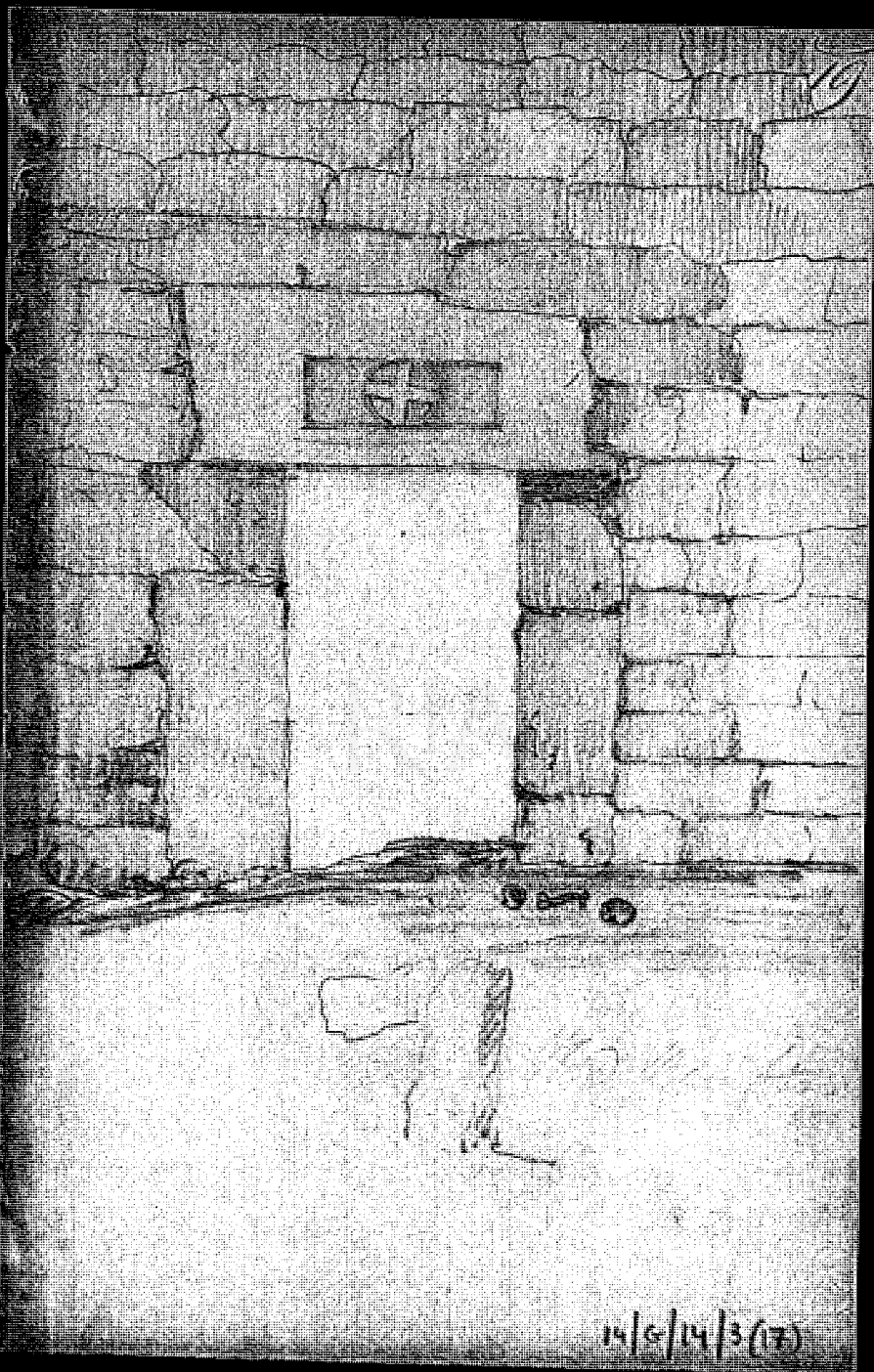
\* The present tradition<sup>is</sup> that since the stream  
was carried through the hill by St. Fechin  
only two trout came from Lough Lene & these were  
miserably lacerated in their pilgrimage 14/9/14/3 (15)

(16)<sup>18</sup> If the following story which the country people tell about this stream can be depended upon, the water is certainly derived from Lough Lene.

Sterne Tighe Esq. of — not many years ago wishing to render the miracle of Saint Fechin null and void, and perhaps to withdraw the water from Merriman's little Mill, built a stout wall of large stones and good lime cement at the place where the stream enters into the bowels of the hill on the northern shore of Lough Lene, and thus succeeded in stopping the current of a subterranean <sup>runnell</sup> stream, which St. Fechin intended to flow perpetually as a memorial of his own favour with his God. The stream ceased to flow for nine days till the arrival of Saint Fechin's night (20th of January) when a storm arose on the lake, which shattered Tighe's wall to fragments, opened the sacred <sup>passage</sup> track, and the waters flowed from the hill at Fore in greater abundance than they were ever before observed to flow. This happened on St. Fechin's night, and a venerable old shepherd assured me that Tighe has not since

14/6/14/3(16)





14/6/14/3(17)

thought it prudent to meddle with Saint  
Fechin or his stream; so that the prodigy  
is still vivum, verum, et perpetuum!

Of Saint Fechin's Church & Monastery.

This church presents all the appearance of one of  
the early ages of Christianity, and is the largest of  
the churches of this description I have yet seen.  
The doorway is nearly Cyclopean, being formed  
of many stones of the full thickness of the wall.  
The East window alone presents the appearance of  
having been remodelled in the middle ages: it  
is certainly in the pointed style, and evidently more  
modern than the doorway, and still I  
have seen such windows in many little churches  
of the primitive age, as in the Teampull Mor  
on Inis Clothrann in Lough Ree, in the old  
church of Lickblay near Castlepollard, and  
in several others, but I am of opinion that  
all those nicely chiselled windows were inser-  
ted several centuries after the original  
erection of the churches in which they are  
found. I hope Mr. Petree will be so kind

14/6/14/3(19) as



(18)<sup>22</sup> as to let me have his opinion on this subject.  
This church stands <sup>near</sup> ~~at~~ the foot of the hill about  
eight perches to the <sup>south</sup> ~~north~~ of St. Fechin's mill!  
I made every search and enquiry for the site  
of a round tower near this church, but found  
no site, name or tradition to suggest that  
there ever was one. The natives say that  
they never heard of any clargied <sup>existing</sup> nearer to  
Fore than the one at Kelly. And there  
is no reference to one in the annals of  
Fore as extracted from the Four Masters  
nor in the lives of St. Fechin published  
by Colgan. The Four Masters at the year  
812 mention the destruction of the Bear-  
theach or Penitentiary of Fore by fire,  
but they mention no other building, but  
the church and monastery. It is pro-  
bably that the monastery or houses  
previously to the erection of the large Anglo-Norman one  
of the monks, consisted of wooden struc-  
tures placed around the church at the  
foot of the hill.  
I could find no ancient inscription or



hear of any having existed in or near this old Church. And still I cannot remove the impressions from my mind, but that there was a round tower at this celebrated monastic town, and <sup>also</sup> several ancient inscriptions, which have been either totally destroyed or <sup>still</sup> deep buried in the grave yard.

of the Croppes of Fore 14/9/14/3(21)

Tradition says that <sup>originally</sup> there were <sup>four</sup> ~~thirteen~~ Croppes at Fore and in its vicinity and some assert that thirteen of them can still be found, but I have not been able to identify so many. One of them <sup>which is much mutilated</sup> stands in the town in the middle of the street, a second will be found in the churchyard of St Mary's, and five <sup>others</sup> on both sides of the road leading from Fore to Mount Nugent, one of which standing in a field in the townland of Knockadoon <sup>hill of the doon</sup> is inscribed with Gothic letters which are now so time worn that I could make nothing of them, and another on the side of the road near the old church of Templelawn in the townland of Templelawn distant about 1 1/4 mile from Fore, which is also mutilated in its

\* There is a remarkable room or raised part in this townland a short distance to the west of this cross.

arm. It exhibits a small fragment of an inscription in modern raised letters, and the name Mulligan, but this cross if ancient, must have inscribed in modern times.

I suppose these crosses have not been marked on the plan of Tore and its vicinity. (If you think it worth sending a surveyor to mark them) ~~you~~ an old man of the name Honor Corrigan <sup>living at Tore</sup> (well) would point out the pedestals of several others.

### of the wells of Tore

Besides the <sup>springs</sup> Tofars which flow into the Mill pond, there are three other sacred <sup>at Tore</sup> springs, which are said to have been blessed by St. Fechin, viz

1. Tobar na Cogaine lying about 3 chains to the North east of St. Fechin's church. over it grows a large ash tree, and the decayed trunk of another which is evidently the parent stock from which the present living one shot off. Tradition says that the present tree was planted by the hand of St. Fechin himself, but though this is not true in the direct sense, it is not unlikely that he planted, or caused to be planted, <sup>over this well</sup> an ash tree <sup>from which the present one</sup> ~~over this well~~ and many of its parents have shot off as suckers. Stations are performed at this well on Saint Fechin's day, - 20<sup>th</sup> of January as well as on St. John's - 24<sup>th</sup> June, and Saint Peter's - 29<sup>th</sup> of June. This well forms

25 (21)

one of the four wonders of Foure enumerated in the  
following quatrain which is repeated in the neigh-  
bourhood.

Ungcoipe d gclōjō  
Uirce san bpuic  
Mornypen arn ppac  
Mullean san ppwē.

An anchorite in a stone  
Water without boiling (i.e. which cannot be boiled)  
A monastery on a strath  
A mill without a stream!

It is still firmly believed at Foure that the water of  
this well could not be heated to the boiling point  
by any fire not even the fire of a glowing furnace;  
but Mr. Drum, who keeps a little grocer's shop in the  
village, and who has got so far rid of his superstitious  
fears, as to have the audacity to pull down the  
old Church of St. Fionan, already referred to, assured  
me, that one of the Police stationed at Fore, did  
actually boil this water and used it for making  
tea which he drank with impunity! I hope the  
Saint has not neglected his old glen: in the 11<sup>th</sup>  
century he inflicted severe punishments on the  
profaners of his church, as the Four Masters  
have recorded:

"A.D. 1069 Morogh, the son of Dermot, led  
an army into Meath and set territories and  
churches on fire, viz Granard, Fovar. Trechin

14/9/14/3(23)

and



(22) & 26

"Ardraccan. But Fechin met him (propria persona)  
"face to face" and killed him, and he also brought  
"total destruction on the Danes and Lagenians  
"by inflicting them with supernatural diseases."

948  
2. Dabhach Fechin which means Fechin's  
vat or keeve. I have already met two wells called  
Dabhachs, viz Dabhach Phadruig a celebrated  
and copious spring near Lough Macneane in  
Fermanagh and Dabhach Chomain at  
the town of Roxcommon. Dabhach Fechin  
<sup>appears</sup> ~~has~~ about two chains to the east of Tobar  
na Coghaine. Children in decline are taken to  
this well and immersed in it a stated  
number of times, after which they are sure,  
if they are destined to live at all, to recover  
immediately.

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3. Tobar Inalach. This is rather a pool than  
a well, and I could not learn that it is  
used for the cure of diseases or resorted to  
for any superstitious or religious purposes.  
Some say that it was blessed by St. Fechin  
but others deny that it ever was. It lies east  
of the other two.

It appears from the lives of St. Fechin, published by  
Colgan that the original name of Tobar was Gleanh  
Fobhar. It is not therefore unreasonable to suppose  
that this original name means 'the valley of springs'.

The Pond of this Mill lies at the foot of Cappagh Barleop and about eight perches to the north of St. Fechin's old Church. This pond is at once filled supplied by the water which flows <sup>directly into it</sup> in several distinct springs from the base of the hill. <sup>The fact of</sup> This pond being thus <sup>super</sup> ~~formed~~ <sup>fed</sup> by springs in the same that a well is produced has given rise to the saying

Mullen's sun pput

Because the pond is not filled by a ~~long~~ <sup>flowing from a distant source</sup> stream like the generality of millponds in Ireland. The present mill and house are of very modern erection, but little doubt can be entertained of their occupy<sup>ing</sup> the site of St. Fechin's original mill. The only tradition connected with this mill, not already mentioned, is that the saint ordered in his will that no ~~the~~ woman should be ever allowed to enter it. But they have in this century violated this his dying order.

Please to let me have what Cambrensis says of the Mills of St. Fechin and St. Lucherin. In the extracts from the lives of St. Fechin, they have not sent me the derivation of the name Loobhar, the account of his birth, parentage nor of other <sup>his</sup> establishments in Ireland, nor even of where he was interred. Tradition says that he erected a monastery in the Co. of Louth, and another at Castlereagh in the County of Galway, and that

Please to let me have all the references to Desert-Holla as soon as possible. Does Archdall or Colgan place it? I have had the good fortune to discover it. I have not a single reference to it.

(24) 28

he was interred, according to his own request, at St Hieranis Church on the Blackwater near Kelly.

There are but few other remains at Fore: at Sallymount in the parish are to be seen four holes in the ground, <sup>which cannot, it is said, be removed</sup> said to be formed by the knees and elbows of St. Trechun while he was prostrate at humble prayer.

The large Monastery on the Strath is evidently of Anglo-Norman erection, but I take parts of it to be of considerable antiquity. The windows of the part of it called the Chapel are all circular not pointed, which would seem to show that they were erected previously to the introduction of the Gothic or pointed style. Opposite this monastery to the east stands a beautiful green moat, on which it is said <sup>in the reign of Queen Elizabeth</sup> the ~~Cannon~~ <sup>Canon</sup> were planted, the Cannon which dismantled the edifice.

It is said that this town was anciently fortified: the road which passed through it was defended by two gates at either extremity which are yet in existence in tolerably good preservation. <sup>The town of Fore</sup> It was fortified on the north side by a canal and on the south by a mound and ditch extending <sup>under the rock</sup> a full so-called from the one gate to the other. This rampart is still traceable and should be shown on the plan.

Your obedient servant

John O'Donovan

14/6/14/3(26)



**END**

14 G 14/4

Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)

Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from T[homas] O'Connor, written from Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, concerning the history, topography and antiquities of the parishes of Newtown and Castleost (sic), Co. Westmeath, with particular reference to their castles.

O'Connor, Thomas

12 October 1837

8 p.

23.4 cm.

Pagination in original binding was 29-36.

Mullingar Oct<sup>br</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> 1837

Sir, I made my way from Tyrrrellspass, to this town, today. I expected to meet Mr. O'Donovan here, but did not; I wish it be made known to me, where he is, in order, that I may write to him. I have as much business to do about this town, as will occupy me for at least three days. Afterwards I can wait on Mr. O'Donovan here, or meet him where so ever he may be. I received in Tyrrrellspass, this morning, the paper, for which I called, and by this letter, I return the receipt signed for it.

I found it very difficult to make out any person about Tyrrrellspass, who is accustomed to speak Irish.

14/9/14/4(1)



St. James's

Newtown Parish has received  
 this name from an old Church  
 which lies now in ruins in Newtown  
 Low. I have been informed, there  
 are portions of the walls remaining.  
 I could learn nothing concerning  
 the erector, or the date of the  
 erection of this Church. The  
 Patron day of the Parish is  
 Saint James's day - <sup>24<sup>th</sup>?</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> of  
 July. In Newtown low there is an  
 old Castle in ruins, which is said  
 to have been built by a man of  
 the name of Madden, and to have  
 received the denomination of  
Low, from a family of that name,  
 whose ancestor attended Cromwell  
 on his expedition to Ireland, and  
 obtained possession of this Castle  
 and the appurtenances thereto  
 belonging, by a grant from Oliver Cromwell.

The last of the male issue of this family, died in an asylum in Dublin. It is said that Geoghagan of Castle town Castle, went a Coshering, as was a Common Custom at the time, to Madden, who erected and occupied this Castle, and that he remained longer than Madden wished. Madden made an attempt to get rid of him, by appealing to his feelings as a gentleman, alleging on the occasion that he wanted to see a few friends in his house in the course of a few days, and that he, therefore, stood in need of the apartment occupied by Geoghagan, who refused to give it up, and entering into a Contest with Madden, finally expelled him from his residence and property.

+ This is  
the way -  
the story  
runs -  
Let the  
consistency  
be sure  
judice

The Geaghigans thenceforward Con-  
tinued as possessors of the Castle  
and its appurtenances until  
the time of Cromwell, at which  
period Low, from whom Keo-  
town Low is called, obtained  
possession of them, as is said above.

In Cumminstown townland,  
there is an old Castle in ruins,  
of which, I could obtain no  
information as to its erector, or  
period of its erection.

I exercised every means possible  
to discover the locality, <sup>& nature</sup> of the  
pass, from which the Village  
of Tyrrells pass, took its denomi-  
-ation, and could collect only  
this much - that a man named  
Tyrrell, who erected and oc-  
-cupied a castle, the walls of which,



Stand in perfect condition in the village, and have now a dwelling house attached to them; was in the habit of giving passes to persons who paid him some Contribution towards the erection of his Castle, permitting them to pass and re-pass from Dublin to Galway.

The road from ~~Dublin~~ to Galway ran at that time, between the bog of Allen and the bog of Tyrrelspass, and the village of Tyrrelspass stands <sup>or on</sup> close to where the old road is said to have run.

I could obtain no more information respecting the origin of the name of Tyrrelspass.

14/9/14/4(5)

St. James

Castleost Parish has taken its name, from an old Church now lying in ruins, in the townland of Castleost, which (J.L.) has taken its denomination from the old Castle, called Castleost-Capleam lort, the ruins of which are observable, close to a moat in the said townland.

This Castle is traditionally said to have been erected and occupied by the Tyrrell family.

In the Inquisitions in the time of Charles the 1<sup>st</sup> we find noticed 'Jaci Tyrrell late of Castleost'.

And  
'Maur<sup>r</sup> Tyrrell of Castleost'.

And in the Inquisitions  
in the time of Charles the 2<sup>d</sup>,  
we find 'Jac' Tirrell late  
'of Castlelost'. In the reign  
of James 1<sup>st</sup>, there is notice  
made of 'Gerrald' Tirrell  
now of Castlelost.

The Patron day of this  
Parish, is, as well as I  
could learn, St John's  
day. But I think  
it has no Patron day  
independently, as it is  
united with some other  
principal Parish. There  
is nothing else, worthy of  
notice in it.

14/6/14/4 (7)



I attempted today to get the local names of the townlands in the Parish of Passkillbride, and could meet with ~~no~~ one person, who spoke Irish, or could with Confidence give me the names Commonly made use of among the people.

It is very difficult to pick out any person in this part of the Country who Can speak Irish, and more difficult to meet with any one, who retains any traditional accounts. Please, inform me where Mr. O'Donovan is located at present.

J. A. Larcom Esqr  
H.C.H.

Yours Obedient  
Humble Servant  
J. O'Connor

14/6/14/4(8)

**END**

**14 G 14/5**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from T[homas] O'Connor, written from Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, concerning his findings regarding the history, antiquities and topography of the parish of Lynn and the island of Inishcrone, Co. Westmeath.**

**O'Connor, Thomas**

**13 October 1837**

**12 p.**

**23.4 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 37-48;**

**Included are related extracts from the 'Annals of the Four Masters' and Colgan's 'Trias Thaumaturga'.**



34  
Mullingar October 13<sup>th</sup> 1873

Sir,  
I got into Inishcroan Island <sup>in L. Ennel</sup> today, on which I met with a very small portion of a wall covered with ivy, about the Centre of the island. It is certain there was some edifice on it; but what it was, I cannot decide by tradition alone, which treats the description of it in various ways. The account given by those, who state on the authority of tradition, that there was a monastery on this island, where Mavilseachlin in retirement, ended his days, I have given in a former letter. I got another traditional account today respecting King Mavilseachlin and the island, which is by no means the least creditworthy.

14/G/14/5(1)

A very old man, who was breaking  
 stones at a lime kiln in a field  
 within the Rochfort Demesne,  
 which <sup>(field)</sup> is called Castle Kume, be-  
 -cause in it there formerly stood  
 a Castle belonging to Gustavus Kume  
 Rochfort, of which there is not a vestige  
 now remaining, states to me that  
 he himself was brought up in  
 the Parish of Lymn, in which, he  
 still resides, and that he was  
 when young always in the habit  
 of hearing from his own father,  
 and from others, that King Maoil-  
 -seachlin was residing in Castle-  
 -Cool in the Parish of Dysart,  
 which Castle, according to this  
 tradition, stands in ruins in the  
 townland of Castlecool. That  
 the King was killed at the

Castle, and was conveyed to  
 the island on Loughinmel, which  
 is in Irish Called Cro. insh and  
 in English, Insecroan. <sup>and interred therein</sup> He  
 goes on with a further account  
 respecting the building that  
 was on the island, and says that  
 he saw the remains of a  
 Castle on it, a greater height  
 of the walls of which, remained  
 at the time, than there remains  
 now of those of Castlereach. The  
 stones of the Castle, were all  
 used in building a Cottage  
 for one of the Rochforts, about  
 50 years ago on an island, which lying  
 adjacent to Cro-insh, <sup>is</sup>  
 connected with the main land  
 by a little Kesh-or-bridge, ~~and~~  
 is called Olean nangabun i.e.  
insula Caprarum — the island of the goats.

14/9/14/5(3)



he saw  
the walls  
of this Monastery  
in ruins, being  
at the time as  
high as the  
lime kiln at  
which he  
was working.

Part of the walls of this Cottage, remains still. He says, there was never a monastery on Cro-insh, but that a monastery stood in the field called Castle-hume hill, where there is now a large bush, to which he pointed in shewing the site of it.

Dúnna Shiath is entirely forgotten. The Dún thought by Mr. O'Donovan to be Dún, na Shiath, is not far from Castlecool old ruins. It is a general tradition in this Country, that the King of the Danes (meaning Turgesius) was drowned in Loughennel near Cro-insh, by Maolseachlin.

This, it appears, is a throughout traditional account, which in <sup>essence</sup> reality relates to the ~~the death~~ <sup>the killing</sup> of Maolseachlin on the island. And in addition to

the retention of the Ancient name of the island, by traditional use, its having the death of a King, <sup>connected with it</sup> though the tradition change ~~both~~ the name ~~and form~~, ~~form~~ and represent him as other than the historical person, contributes no small share of proof towards its being the historical island, spoken of as the place, where the King of Meath met a violent end. The island is now under plantation and contains apparently no less <sup>ground</sup> than 1 acre, which was the quantity of land contained by the Cro. evish, that is surely a mis-copy for Cro. evish, in the Inquisitions.

On the whole, all the circumstances attendant on it, all the phases attached to it, as collected from history and tradition, produce the incontrovertible conclusion that Inshe Croan (i.e. Insh. Cro. ins) lying on Loughennel is the Cro. evish of the Annals &c.

14/9/14/5(5)

\* No. the very contrary: there are two islands one called case insula, <sup>near the Banter Crong</sup> Cro-mry dis the other 1 my crone, and the one cannot be confounded with the other. See my letter from Newport into 24<sup>th</sup> October. Cro

42

## Lynn Parish.

The Irish pronunciation of the name Lynn, <sup>which I got</sup> does not present any relation to Lann Leie of the Annals, or to Linn Leie of Colgan.

But the Anglicised form Lynn and the Linn in Linn Leie of Colgan, <sup>seemingly</sup> bear some relation in their orthography. The Irish pronunciation of the name, I could not get from any person consulted by me, excepting from one, upon whom I cannot depend, Paddy Brogan, who lives very near Lynn Old Church, and who says, Irish was the first language he spoke, and that he forgot it through the constant habit of speaking English, pronounces the <sup>name</sup> Lynn. Lynn in Irish, which I am very certain is quite corrupt, and not at all its true Irish sound.



The tradition about it, states that it is a place, which was <sup>formerly</sup> of great note.

Very little aid can be had from any other source than from historical evidence, if there be any such evidence attainable, to prove this Lym to be the Linn Lere of the Annals &c.

The ruins of a Church are in the townland of Lym, and the Patron day of the Parish is St Nicholas's day, which falls on ? day of ? near Easter.

In Triad: Shan: p. 188. Col: I.

Note 172. Linn Lere occurs. —

Monachus Pyschyter Focarius.  
c. 98.

Monachi Confessoris in Hibernia,  
inquit Mart. Barthus. ad 17. Septe.

But he was abbot of Linn Lere

14/9/14/5(7)

in Meath, as Marian Gorman,  
and the Martyrology of Donegal  
relate at the same (day?) and  
died in the year 776 according  
to the Four Masters in the Annals.

And in Triad: Shaw. p. 633. col. 2.  
Lann Leire is committed to  
flames in the years. 968. 1002.  
1050, 1148. 2. M.

The Four Masters take notice  
of Lann Leire under the following  
years.

A.D.  
740 'Cummene the grandson  
of Maonach, Abbot of Lann  
Leire, died'.

776 'Maonach, the grandson of  
Maonach, abbot of Lann Leire  
died?'

843 'Gormghal the son of Muir-  
eadhach, Bishop and Anchorite  
of Lann Leire, died'.

A.D.  
848 ' Ferchar, the son of Muir,  
- eadhach, Abbot of Lann Leire  
' died?

867. Plann the son of Ferchar,  
' Abbot of Lann Leire, and  
' Fertighis (Economist) of Armagh,  
' died?

893 ' Garbry the son of Suibhne,  
' Abbot of Lann Leire, died?

900 ' Maelcianan, son of Fortchern,  
' Bishop of Lann Leire, died?

919 ' bearnach the son of Plann,  
' Abbot of Lann Leire, died?

921 ' bucongatta, Priest of Lann  
' Leire, Iethra of Ireland &c  
' bhaite and orator, in Voice, in  
' harp, and useful wisdom, died?

930 ' Suibhne Abbot of Lann Leire  
' died.



A.D.

965 ' Flann the son of Angus  
' Abbot of Lann Lere, died?'

968 ' Monasterboice and Lann  
' Lere were plundered by Donnell,  
King of Ireland; on the Danes,  
and he burned fifty three of  
them in the one house'.

" ' The refectory of Lann Lere  
' was burned by Donnell the  
' son of Moragh, and four hundred  
' both of men and women perished  
' by the fire and sword'.

1148 ' Lann Lere was burned'.

In Catherinestown townland  
in this Parish, there are small  
remains of the walls of an  
old Church in ruins.

And in Lynn townland  
are small remains of an  
old Castle, the occupier of  
which, tradition says, was  
attacked by enemies, who  
expelled him from his Castle  
and pursuing him to Lough-  
ennel, killed him, at it,  
or on an island thereon.

This is, I suppose, <sup>another</sup> ~~a~~ version  
of the story of Turgesius and  
Maelseachlain, connected  
with this proprietor, whose  
name is now forgotten.

As Mr. O'Donovan is at Rath-  
-can, I shall write to him im-  
-mediately, letting him know, how  
soon I can get done. I am  
convinced he is as curious as he  
successful in his researches.

I always leave notice in the  
Post office in every town, I move  
from, to have any letters &c. for  
me, forwarded to the town I  
go to. It was by this means, I got  
the paper sent to Killbeggan, for-  
-warded to me to Tyrrellspass.

Was there any other thing sent  
either to Killbeggan or Tyrrell-  
pass? This method of leaving notice  
in this manner, is very useful, and even  
necessary: as letters <sup>can</sup> do not always give  
immediate communication <sup>by removing</sup>.

J. A. Larcom Esq  
&c. &c.

Your Obedient  
humble Servt  
J. O'Connor

14/G/14/5 (12)



**END**

14 G 14/6

Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)

Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Newpass, Co. Westmeath, in which he writes of Thomas O'Connor's progress on the survey of the county and his plans to commence working in Co. Kildare.

O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)

13 October 1837

2 p.

23.3 cm.

Pagination in original binding was 49-50.

Newpass October 13<sup>th</sup> 1837.

Dear Sir.

I wrote to Honor stating that you wish him to go on to Kildare after having finished the parishes about Mullingar. I told him to go first to Maynooth and wait there till the books of Kildare are sent him, and then do the south of the County first, and to work on letting you know his daily movements. He will return all the books and papers he has about him, and I wish them to be sent back to me hither, that I may see how far he has succeeded in identifying old places, and attempt to divide the county into the old territories of which it consisted previously to the formation of Baronies.

I hope that every exertion will be made to procure some old map of Lough Ennell that I may be enabled with certainty to identify Cro-inis and Dun-na-sgiath. I wish Speeffer could assist us for a few weeks in the County of Kildare, where he has several friends: the weather promises <sup>now</sup> to remain good for some time, and I think it would <sup>do</sup> him much good to take an excursion into the country for a few weeks. The County of Kildare is early Anglicised, and it does not require any natives knowledge of the language of Ireland to obtain from the people what

14/9/14/6(1) knowledge



knowledge can <sup>now</sup> be obtained about its names and localities. By getting O'Keefe's assistance <sup>they</sup> for a few weeks we will be enabled to get done with Kildare and the King's County before the black winter sets in. May I therefore expect that he will join O'Conor at Maynooth? And when I shall <sup>have</sup> finished my letters about a few parishes in this County, and taken a general view of the ancient Trilochá Theads, I shall join them there or wherever <sup>else</sup> they shall be located when I have done.

I would not be so anxious about having O'Keefe in particular - as I think he has no very particular wish for country excursions - had I not known that he has friends in that country, who will assist and direct him. But as soon as he feels the weather disagree with his health, he can return to Dublin. Even one fortnight would forward our progress considerably.

your obedient servant  
John O'Donovan

**END**

**14 G 14/7**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from T[homas] O'Connor, written from Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, concerning the history, antiquities and topography of the parishes of Pass of Killbride (sic), Moyliscar (sic) and Killbride (sic), Co. Westmeath, with particular reference to their holy wells, castles and the origins of their placenames.**

**O'Connor, Thomas**

**15 October 1837**

**9 p.**

**23.3 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 51-59.**



# Contents

Pass Killbride Parish, name of accounted for.  
Pass, the antecedent part of the name, tradition concerning.  
St. Brigid, well of near the ruins of the old church.  
Shanhill, - her day formerly celebrated in this Parish.  
Shanhill, name of explained.  
Corcloon, Castle of.  
Milltown, Castle of.  
Beallach Chille Brigide mention of  
in the Annals.

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Killbride Parish, name of explained  
old church of, in  
ruins in Whitewell townland.  
St. Brigid, well of  
Her day - Patron day of the Parish.  
Whitewell; Townland of - a  
sub-denomination of Killbride T.L.  
Name of - from a  
well.  
Killbride old Castle of  
Simonstown old Castle of -

14/9/14/70)

Moylisca Ph. - Church of -  
 — Patron day of -  
 — Irish name of — for-  
 gotten  
 — Tradition of the name.

Query - does it ~~exist~~ appear in  
 any written document &c?

Syrrellstown Old Castle of.

Mullingar Oct 15<sup>th</sup> 1871

Sir, "Passkillbride Parish" is in Irish Called  
 Beallach Cille bryde, which signifies  
 Via cille S. Brigide - the pass of the Church  
 of S. Brigid, and takes its name from  
 a Church, dedicated to S. Brigid, the  
 ruins of which lie in the townland of Passkill-  
 -bride, Close to the North of the Road leading  
 from Syrrellspass to Kennygord.

It is said that the Pass from which Syrrell's-  
 -pass was named, running from Dublin to  
 Galway, gave name also to Pass Killbride

14/G/14/7(2)

A.D. 1598 Bealash an Tiriallaigh. Annales L.M.

Tyrrell's pass is now the name of a townland in the Parish of Clonsfad in the Barony of Partullagh. The village of Tyrrell's pass lies partly in this townland; a small part of it runs into the Parish of Newtown in same Barony.

It was written 'Tyrrell's pace' -  
Inquisition in time of Charles 1<sup>st</sup>.

'Jac' Tyrrell de le Pace' - Inquis: Temp: Jac: I

Beallagh-Chille-Brighde

in  
The territory of Partullach

A.D. 1598. L.M.

Pass of Killbride is now the name of a Parish in the Barony of Partullagh, and of a townland in the same Parish.

In the Inquisitions of the time of James 1<sup>st</sup> we read 'Gerald' Tyrrell  
'de le Pisce de Killbride'

14/6/14/7(3)



' & de so aci' ter' in vil' de le Pace  
' de Kilbride in Co: Westm'id' -

Inquis: Temp: Car: I

Bel-an-atha.

L. M. A. 1553.

Ballina - pronounced commonly now  
Ballinay, is <sup>the name of</sup> a townland in the  
Barony of Moyashel and Maghera-  
derron  $1\frac{3}{4}$  mile West of Mul-  
lingar Town.

In the Inquisitions of the time of  
Charles I. it is called Ballyna.

as it was leading close by this Church. Within 12 perches of the old ruins, to the North side, lies a well, which was formerly frequented with devotion; and was dedicated to Saint Brigid, and called Tobair Bríde. Saint Brigid's well, whose day was formerly celebrated as the Patron day of this Parish, but has been discontinued for some time back.

Adjoining the village of Milltown in this Parish, there is a place called in the Name-book, Shanhill, which is called in Irish, Sean cill, signifying old church. Vetera cella. This name was given it from an old burial place, that was in it, and that has fallen into disuse.

There was an old Castle in Corcloon townland, of which, I am informed, a part remains. There was another Castle in Milltown.

Beallach Chille Brighde is mentioned in the Annals at the Year 1595.

In the first month of Autumn O'Rourke mustered an army and marched forthwith to Beallach Chille Brighde.

56  
in the territory of Pertullach. He seized upon booty and slew some persons at Joyrells pass, after which, he returned to his Country, without receiving the slightest injury or opposition?

*Whiterwell*  
Killbride Parish is Called Cell  
bride. Cella S. Brigide, from an old Church, <sup>which is</sup> now lying in ruins in the townland of Whiterwell, close by the road leading to Mullingar, and which was dedicated to Saint Brigid. Within 40 perches of this Church to the North, there was a well called Saint Brigid's well. It does not now appear. St Brigid's day is the Patron day of the Parish.

Whiterwell townland is a sub-division of Killbride townland and obtained its denomination from a well lying in that portion.

There is an old Castle in ruins at Killbride House, in the townland of Killbride; and another in ruins in Simonstown townland.

14/6/14/7(6)



## Moyliscair O<sup>ph</sup>

The parochial Protestant Church stands on the site of Moyliscair Old Church. This Parish is united in the Roman Catholic parish, which is called Gairstown, as the Parish Chapel stands in the townland of Gairstown. The Patron day of Gairstown Parish is Saint Nicholas's day, <sup>qu</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> of July, which is the Patron day of all the Parishes forming the union.

The Irish name of Moyliscair Parish is entirely forgotten; but there is a tradition concerning the name Moyliscair, which in the opinion of the people, goes on to explain the signification of it.

It runs thus: The Parish of Moyliscair was named from Moliscair Lough, lying in the townland of Tyrrellstown in this O<sup>ph</sup>, which lough obtained its name from the circumstance of twelve Mool cows (cows without horns) and a bull, being often seen coming out

14/9/14/7(7)

of the lake and feeding on the  
land adjacent to it, and then  
returning and plunging into  
it again. For, Sir, Maol means  
a cow without horns, and isker  
is a lough and that is the <sup>iscar</sup>  
reason of the name Moylisker  
for you? All the veriest of  
stuff!

Does the name Moylisker  
appear in any written document,  
where it may be explained,  
or from which it can be learned  
what it signifies? <sup>maol-isker</sup> See  
<sup>3 apt-isker</sup> in the annals

There is a very small part  
of an old Castle, remaining  
in Tyrrellstown townland.

It was this morning, I received the letter giving directions for preparing the contents of the letter <sup>by way of</sup> to them. It is dated the 11<sup>th</sup> inst. and was redirected from Killybeggan to Tyrrellspass and from thence, to Mullingar.

I traversed on yesterday the three Parishes described here and did not return till half past seven o'clock in the evening. During the time, I was out, Mr. O'Donovan called to Mrs. Clarke's Hotel, where I stop, and went off again before I returned. There is a parcel to day for him in the Post office of this town, which I thought well to forward to him to Rathoan. I go tomorrow to Rathconrath Parish, which is 6 miles from this town, and with which I finish the number of Parishes, on my hands. I must then of course hear from, or see Mr. O'Donovan.

J. A. Larcom Esq.  
J. A. Larcom

Your Obedient, humble

Servt.  
J. O'Connell  
14/9/14/7(9)



**END**

**14 G 14/8**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from T[homas] O'Connor, written from Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, concerning the history, antiquities and topography of the parish of Rathconrath, Co. Westmeath, with particular reference to its castles and the origins of its placename.**

**O'Connor, Thomas**

**16 October 1837**

**4 p.**

**23.4 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 60-63.**

Rathconrath Parish - name explained.  
<sup>Rath of.</sup> Old church of  
 Patron Saint of - not known  
 Killpatrick T.L. S. Patrick's well in.  
 Old town - Castle of -  
 Ballymounstown - castle of -  
 Milltown - Castle of -

Mullingar - October 16<sup>th</sup> / 34.

Sir, I went to Rathconrath Parish today, from which, I returned about 1/2 past 8 o'clock in the evening. I first proceeded to Rathconrath Village, where I got every name

14/9/14/8 (1)



61  
in the Parish, very satisfactorily with  
the exception of one, which <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ the  
name of a well lying in Castle-  
gadeny T. L. on the boundary of  
the Parish. The distance from  
Rathconrath village to this well  
is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles, I went and got the  
name, and proceeded from where the well  
lies to Ballinacraig village, and  
came in to Mullingar by the  
Mail Car.

Rathconrath is in Irish, pronounced  
rah conrad which signifies the Rath  
of the Compact - Arx Compacti.

The Rath lies immediately at  
the village of Rathconrath.  
And at the Protestant Church of  
Rathconrath, are the ruins of  
an old Church, both which  
are close to the village.

14/6/14/8(2)

W. J. F. J. J.

The Patron Saint of the Parish,  
I could not learn from any  
person; there is a well in Kill-  
patrick townland - Gillpatrick -  
Cella S. Patricii, called Saint  
Patrick's well, Fons S. Patricii.

In old town townland  
Sean Gable - Vetera villa there  
is part of an old Castle remaining  
and in Lower Poddinstown - Baste  
páidín - there is a Castle in ruins.

In Milltown townland. Baste  
an nínín, there is a Castle in  
ruins.

These are all the particulars  
this Parish is remarkable  
for. I have now finished  
in this district.

14/9/14/8 (3)

Mr. O'Donovan has stated to me in a Letter arrived today, that you wish me to attack the Co: Kildare, and tells me that I had better go on, as soon as I had finished, to Maynooth, and wait there till the books of Kildare are sent me. He tells me to return all the Westmeath namebooks, that I have, to the Ordnance Survey office, from whence they will be forwarded to him. I send the namebooks tomorrow, as I had not time after my return at 1/2 past 8. to have them in the Post Office, along with writing this letter, before 9 o'clock, after which hour there is nothing received. I leave this town for Maynooth tomorrow, let the namebooks and extracts of the Co: Kildare be sent there. Mr. O'Donovan wishes, that I should attack the South part till he joins me, which, he says, will be in few days; let ~~there~~ the namebooks of that part be sent.

J. A. Larcom Esqr.  
 &c. &c.

Your Obedient &c.  
 Servt. J. O'Donovan

14/G/14/8(4)



**END**

**14 G 14/9**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from T[homas] O'Connor, written from Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, in which he writes of the progress of his survey work of the county and plans to travel to Maynooth, Co. Kildare.**

**O'Connor, Thomas**

**17 October 1837**

**2 p.**

**23.3 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 64-65.**

all forwarded to Mr. O'Donnell -  
18 Oct 97

64

Mullingar October 17<sup>th</sup> 1897

Sir,

I return the name books of  
all the Parishes I have done, and  
along with them three parcels, of  
which the first Contains 'Extracts  
from Various authorities, relating to  
Westmeath'. The second 'Letter from  
Mr. O'Donnell to me, Concerning plaques  
in Westmeath'. The third, 'Extracts  
from the Four Masters, Colgan, and  
the Calendar -

Map of the Co. Westmeath -

Trace from the Co. Map, made  
of Lough ennel, and its islands -

Letter from the Ordnance Office.

and  
a List of the Name books herewith  
returned.

14/9/14/90)



I am now ready to set out for  
Maynooth, and wait for the Coach,  
which is to arrive here from Gligo  
at 20 minutes before 4 o'clock.

I wish to have every thing sent  
there as soon as possible, and I  
want some quills, sealing wax  
and blotting paper. I had to  
ascertain some names of townlands  
&c. in this Parish of Mullingar, to day.

Your obedient,  
humble

Servt.

J. O'Connor

J. A. Larcum Esq<sup>r</sup>  
&c. &c.

**END**

14 G 14/10

Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)

Notes made by Thomas O'Connor, for the Ordnance Survey, concerning the history, antiquities and topography of the parish of Noughavall (sic), Co. Westmeath, with particular reference to its burial grounds, holy wells, castles and religious foundations.

O'Connor, Thomas

[1837]

2 p.

23.4 cm.

Pagination in original binding was 66-67.

## Noughavall Parish.

is generally pronounced Nohill by the people, which sounds in Irish - Nócorill.

In the townland of Nohill is a burying place.

Tradition does not remember the name of the Patron Saint of this Parish, but states that the Patron day is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July.

In the townland of Creggan there is a well called Tóberpatrick tobap patapac. Fons S. Patricii.

In Ardacranny. ayid na <sup>cránach</sup> cranna. there is an old Monastery in ruins, at which there is a burial place.

In the townland of Bawn baobuín there was a Castle. of which a vestige does not now remain.

There ~~was~~ is a castle in ruins in Con-  
-nerstown. or. Cannonstown. baile cáonórach.

14/6/14/10(1)



64  
which was used as a garrison. It is mentioned  
as one in Sir Henry Pier's Description of  
Westmeath, <sup>page 83</sup> and Called Connorstown.

In Lissory townland are the ruins  
of the house in which Oliver Goldsmith's  
father resided some time, and op-  
posite it is Loughma Keegan 'Where  
the hollow sounding bittern built its  
nest'. Goldsmith.

Inch bofin and Inch Turk on Loughree  
belong to this parish. the former is  
called iní bó fín - insula vacca albae,  
and has the ruins of a monastery  
on it. the latter is called iní turc  
i. e. insula aprum. vel. porcorum.

**END**

**14 G 14/11**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Newpass, Co. Westmeath, concerning the local traditions and lore associated with the Danish leader 'Torgesius'.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)**

**18 October 1837**

**9 p.**

**23.3 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 68-76.**

**RIA**

Epitaphical references to Longinus  
collected. Some remarks on Keeling  
Hallaney and Gardiman.

Heering lines,

Turled vera up Ennō ojs

He mast jencard nat jenoip

Objected too in his own strain and metre.



tuillep pepa an Eirí mór  
 ní maí reárd mór reárd  
 óir mór peógar an blaí tóir  
 peógar an inleáir ar an gáir  
 ní uil grian in lárna gáir  
 na grian mórna rampard ar meórn lae  
 ched a in uróir mo gáir  
 Sna mol tuisir na reáir;

féo fionn fionn, féo na féo  
 féo fionn fionn na nárda in le  
 a meórn a nárda; féo céilur  
 céo fionn, na tóir, céo fionn  
 céo ní fionn a dárda féo  
 a nárda féo féo féo féo  
 féo cá ham den blárda in le  
 féo cá ham den blárda in le  
 ar tuis cop mór in dárda féo  
 a nárda, féo fionn, féo fionn  
 Newpass, October 1837

amult dárda lae a búrda  
 ar dárda in ar fionn na hárda  
 mór in dárda in reáir  
 Eirí, búrda ar nárda a gáir

O. O. D. against  
 the Bard Macdon

Dear Sir, Having written so much upon the traditions connected with Torgesius, the Danish tyrant, I shall now collect all the historical passages which are extant about his reign, but I have not a single word about him from the annals of Tighernagh which must be considered the best authority as the writer flourished about 197 years after his times and had before him the records of a monastery which became a principal theatre of the tyrant's profane and cruel actions.

Dudley Mac Firdis transcribed from some ancient MS. the following short account of Torgesius from which it appears that he took possession of the monastery of Clonmacnoise:

"Torgesius came with a large fleet, and assumed  
 " the chief leadership (or became king) of the Danes  
 " of Ireland. They first plundered the north of  
 " Ireland, and afterwards spread themselves  
 " all over the country, and placed their fleets

upon  
 14/6/14/11(2)

(4) 70  
" upon its lakes. Turges took up his station,  
" upon Loch Riu, and plundered all the  
" Churches of the distinguished saints of Ire-  
" land; and it was on the altar of Clonmac-  
" noise that Oda, the wife of Turges was ac-  
" customed to give <sup>up</sup> <sup>her</sup> <sup>all</sup> to all!  
" Turges was in the abbacy of Armagh for seven  
" years!  
" Turges was captured by Maolpeachlainn, who  
" drowned him in Loch Uair.

MacFulise, p. 768.

Connell Macgeoghagan translates the account of  
his capture and death from the Annals of Clon-  
macnoise, thus:

" A.D. 842. Turgesius was taken by Moyleseaghlyn  
" the son of <sup>Mac</sup> Moyleronie, and afterwards drowned  
" by him in the pools of Lough Ware adjoining  
" to Molyngare."

The Four Masters record the event thus:

" A.D. 843, Turges was captured by Maolpeachlainn,  
" the son of Maolruana, and afterwards drowned  
" in Loch Uair, through the miracles of God and  
" Hierán and of the other saints."

The Chronicle Scotorum and the Annals of Ulster give the  
very same account.

Giraldus Cambrensis has enlarged the story, and makes use of it to shew the treacherous character of the Irish people for he never, as Ware confesses, loses an opportunity to traduce the poor Gael. He tells the story as follows:

"How after Gurmundus was slain in Gaul  
"Turgepin deceived by the stratagem of girls  
"fell in Ireland."

"After Gormundius, therefore, was slain in Gaul, and  
 "the yoke of the barbarians was, on that occasion,  
 "removed from the necks of the Britons, the Irish  
 "nation immediately recurred, with no ineffectual  
 "designs, to their usual snares of deceitful craft.  
 "When, therefore, at that time, Turgesius loved  
 "ardently, the daughter of the King of Meath,  
 "Omachlachelin, that King having poison within his  
 "breast, consented to give him his daughter and pro-  
 "mised to send her with fifteen beautiful girls to  
 "him <sup>in</sup> to a certain island on the lake <sup>of the</sup> Lochynen in  
 "Meath. To meet whom Turgesius exulting with joy  
 "came accompanied with the same number of the  
 "nobles of his tribe on the stated day, and to  
 "the place appointed, and finding on the island  
 "fifteen heedless young men, who were courageous



\* Toghéir do Séail le Mádheárlán mac Maoilmuinnis agur a baidís  
a loe Ándán yán m'ise Keating, c. 1649.

(6) <sup>72</sup> and selected for the purpose, cloaking the strata-  
gem under the dress of girls, he with his com-  
panions fell instantly during their embraces  
by the knives which the youths had privately  
brought with them."

Topograp: (Dist 3. c. xi. Camden. p 749.

Keating agrees with this account\*, and it is al-  
most certain that he had no Irish authority  
for the story about the young men, as he  
disagrees with all the Irish annalists, who  
have all recorded nearly in the same words  
that Torgeis was drowned in Loch Uair, not  
in Loch Enyn as Cambrensis and Keating have  
it. The tradition which O'Flonor picked up  
from the apothecary and some old men that  
Torgeis was drowned in Lough Ennell has  
been drawn from Keating's history of Ireland  
and is of no value in ~~contra~~ juxtaposition  
to the testimony of the Chronicon Scotorum and  
other annals of unquestionable authenticity.



\* It is very likely that Targessing erected a long-plat on Ringloun or St. John's on the site of which the single Norman afterwards erected the present castle.

Keating drew a great part of his history of Ireland from Geoffry of Monmouth, Cambrensis and Camden, and also from modern historical novels or tales <sup>from</sup> which he copied many anecdotes as if they were genuine history.

The universal tradition in this part of the county of Westmeath is that Targessing was drowned in Loch Bán an canaigh, but neither this nor any other oral tradition is of any value when it disagrees with chronicles drawn from contemporary documents. Nor <sup>does it appear</sup> is it probable that Targessing made <sup>Inis</sup> Loch Lein or the fort in Ballania his head residence as we have the testimony of all our authentic documents that he placed his fortified residence in Lough Ree\* in the Shannon. But it is highly probable that the fort in Ballania was one of his <sup>many</sup> military stations throughout Meath, and that he visited it so often and committed so many

(8) <sup>74</sup> acts of cruelty in its neighbourhood as to leave  
a ~~memory~~ <sup>recollection</sup> of him indelibly fixed on the  
minds of tradition.

I am very anxious to know if Moore has swal-  
-lowed the story of Cambrenig, <sup>or</sup> enlarged by  
Keating. The monster writers have made every  
exertion to lessen the character of the  
northern and southern Hy-Niall families  
in order to magnify the Dalcassians; and  
from their works Keating has extracted a  
considerable quantity of false history. Among  
these works are to be reckoned the interpo-  
-lated copy of the annals of Inisfallen,  
the story of Callaghan Cashel, and all  
the production styled Cogadh Gall le  
Gaothalaibh which is a kind of his-  
-torical novel written for the purpose  
of extolling the bravery of the O'Briens  
and their ancestors.

Is it not curious to see that Vallancey took up this  
subject with all the warmth of a Milepian Bard

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75 (9)

as if he were a Mac Brody, who looked up to the  
O'Brien for protection, and for a Laureate's fee!

He dedicates the tract to the Earl of Inchiquin  
who was perhaps a friend of his, and there was no  
Earl of the southern Hy-Niall family whose pride  
could be offended. *Vae victis!*

---

I have now done with *Torgéir*. The territory in  
which his *Dún* is situated <sup>came</sup> ~~fell~~, after the Anglo-  
Norman conquest or Invasion, into the possession  
of the family of Nugent, and there is extant ~~and~~  
a nice little poem written in very pure Irish  
by a Gerald Nugent on his leaving Ireland  
and in which he bids farewell to his relations  
of *Dún Doimhíre*. It appears from two monuments  
<sup>dated 1680 & 1682</sup>  
within the church of St. Mary's at Fore, that  
Robert, and Oliver Nugent (Barons of Delvin (i.e.  
the eldest sons of the Earl of Westmeath) ~~that~~ lived  
<sup>in</sup> at *Ballana*, the townland in which this fort is  
situated, and it would appear from the little  
poem above alluded to that Gerald or Garrett,  
the author of it was either the Baron of Delvin  
or at least a brother of his. He writes:

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(10) 76

Slán do'n buidín d'págram dár ndéir  
Maenaidé dúna Dorrbóigir.

Farewell to those we have left behind  
The youths of Dun-Dorrbóigir.

He must have been at least a near relative of  
the family of Ballantrae.

This poem has been published by Hardiman in  
his Minstrelsy, but in that edition the original  
text is much corrupted, <sup>and</sup> the metre destroyed by  
the addition of unnecessary words and syllables,  
and the English translation conveys  
ideas which the author never intended.

In thus censuring the works of others, though it  
is a disagreeable task, I shall make future  
investigations cautious in receiving published  
documents without examining the originals  
from which they have been taken. I may  
fall into error myself from want of sufficient  
data to reason upon, and from want of  
judgment to reason correctly. But no one  
shall ever say that I <sup>perverted</sup> falsified original  
documents to support any favorite theory.

Your obedient servant

John O'Donovan

14/6/14/11(9)



**END**

**14 G 14/12**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, concerning the early history of Co. Westmeath, with particular reference to 'Mullach Cletty', the 'second seat of the Irish monarchy', the fort of Dun na Sgiath, and the locality's association with the Danish leader Torgest.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRJA, (1806-1861)**

**[1837]**

**21 p.**

**Contains illustrations**

**Pagination in original binding was 77-97;**

**Includes pencil and ink sketch of Lough Lene, Co. Westmeath, indicating sites of topographical and antiquarian interest.**

Addressed to the ghost of O'Keerin <sup>young</sup> (11)  
author of the topographical poem on  
Leb-ellagh - a material argument.

Now from Ternie's ancient store  
We give ye more historic lore.  
O'Keerin says that the aged sage  
Alone is fit to trace the page  
on which the Shanachie's of old  
The tales of kings to us have told  
But with regard and due respect  
We <sup>much</sup> ~~most~~ suspect  
To do 'tis true that blooming flowers  
Decay and wither in those hours  
When winter pours his snowy shroud  
Thus also wither, fade the powers  
Of intellect in feeble age  
And thus no dotard can be sage.  
O! O' Keerin with us accord  
~~Said thus no dotard can be sage~~  
And never praise the doating bard <sup>and</sup>  
There is no sun of stranger ray  
Than that which shines in summer's day  
When <sup>at</sup> he gains meridian height  
He pours a glorious flood of light.

14/9/14/12(1)

(12) 78

Behold the brightness of the moon  
When at its full in midnight noon  
And now to gain another rhyme

Behold fair woman in her prime.

Behold the tree, the fruit it brings  
In youth and age! all living things  
And <sup>all</sup> the ~~plants~~ <sup>thing</sup> upon the earth

Which to decline have got their birth

How well they flourish in their prime

How much they fade in hoary times!

What season of the year is bright?

What season shows the clearest light?

What season shows the darkest cloud?

What season is wrapped up in shrouds

Of dismal gloom? (The Bard and sage

<sup>lying like my lord</sup> say season withers <sup>in</sup> the old age

Doctor Syntox



Second seat of the Irish monarchy after the removal from Tara, pointed out story of St. Patrick and his epist. purged of its fable.

Dun Dourghheis. description of.

Torgesius - his reign of Tyranny

Loughinipy - some timid remarks upon, not conclusive, nor intended as urged as such

Torgesius - his end -

'nosp Tuallam - gur ab tuall réin,  
 Ó póbair go pionn loc léin  
 Loc na n-íorán, rna ngeal-geir,  
 'S ar roin riap go dún Dorribgeir.  
 Ór as tuall ó áit go háit  
 Gan dóm comnuigte, gan reáit  
 Do éin an Seóin dúin ár peal  
 Do éaréoin go hupiréal  
 Mar deoráide do íor ar pán  
 'Mair na máis na ngleán, rna bpan;  
 Ni bías n-éirín loc ná ráit  
 Máearpe doibín, dúin, na polá  
 Dúin glap, prod-énoc ná Cairíol  
 Ná mbair éuca ar d-earíol.

Ó naé bpuil hi ngleán na ndeor  
 As neac aet tuar éruad go leor.  
 Gurdeam gur buán ar d-tuair  
 Ó inbeur moir go h-íorruar  
 'Só abú Samuoir ná n-ear mbín  
 a ndear tap léim Chonóullarín.

S. O. D.

Recd at 05/01/18 Dec 97

Dear Sir, I now come to the <sup>second</sup> ~~third~~ seat of the Irish monarchy -  
 (after its removal from Tara) - a place unknown to the modern  
 writers of Irish history as the seat of royalty. When Tara  
 was cursed by St. Rodanus, abbot of Lorrain, the palace was  
 removed to Mullach Cletty over the Boyne, and remained  
 not long there when Moriartagh More Mac E.K. by his bad  
 conduct, incurred the wrath of St. Cairneach of Tuilen, who,  
 at the request of Moriartagh's queen, cursed the house of  
 Cletty in solemn, <sup>in that age</sup> and terror-striking form. Hitherto it remained  
 dark to me where the Kings of the southern Hy-Niall next re-  
 moved their residence. But I have now before me sufficient  
 evidence to show that it was to Lough Lene within one  
 mile of Ford. This appears sufficiently clear from the  
 lives of Saints Aidan and Fachin, which, when purged

14/9/14/12(4) of

(4) <sup>81</sup> of their fables must be received as topographical, and historical documents. Thus although no one in this age can believe that St. <sup>Stephen</sup> ~~Lechin~~ walked on the waters <sup>of Lough Lene</sup> and conveyed a mill stream through the mountain to turn his mill at Fore; it is but scepticism, according to the rules of historical evidence, to doubt that <sup>the former</sup> ~~St. Stephen~~ passed over the waters of Lough Lene and <sup>that the latter</sup> created a mill at Fore, which was turned by water which <sup>had</sup> flowed from the mountain according to the order and law <sup>of hydraulics</sup> of nature long before the saint was born.

In the life of St. Aidan we read: "The parents of an only son came to St. Aidan requesting him that he would release <sup>him</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>their</sup> only son whom the king of Meath held in chains for the purpose of destroying him, and the holy senior went along with them <sup>inward</sup> to the island of the Lake Lechin where the king was: but the holy bishop was not permitted to go to the island because the king had ordered that that man of God should not be <sup>turned over</sup> introduced to the island. St. Aidan knowing this trod the waters as he would the dry land; and walked on foot into the island to the king. The king seeing this great miracle performed before his eyes, gave up the captive to the holy Bishop, and the servant of God blessing the king, handed <sup>their</sup> son over to his parents, who <sup>returned</sup> gave thanks to God and Saint Aidan."

In a note upon this passage Colgan says that 'Stegnum Lechin' is a celebrated lake in Westmeath. 14/G/14/12(S)

And in the life of St. Fechin: "When the man of God was  
 " shining with miracles and virtues, it happened that  
 " a certain leper covered with ulcers came to him as he  
 " was delaying at the door of the monastery <sup>gate</sup> and asked  
 " from him food with which to satisfy the cravings of  
 " a hunger, and ordered him to send for a certain noble and  
 " beautiful lady who was bound to administer unto  
 " him. The Saint raising the leper on his own shoul-  
 " der brought him ad hospitium, and when he had  
 " no doubt that he was Christ in the shape of a  
 " pauper, wishing to comply with his request, went  
 " him to the castle of the King Dermotius, which  
 " was near at hand, &c,

And in another life of Fechin: "When St. Fechin returned to  
 " Fore, and dwelt there, a certain ~~leper~~ man struck  
 " with the leprosy from head to foot came to him  
 " before the door of the church where the Cross stands,  
 " and asked for the sake of the divine retribution that  
 " the holy man would assist him with meat and  
 " drink, and moreover that he would be <sup>night</sup> honoured  
 " with the <sup>faithful and charitable</sup> attendance of a certain devout <sup>not</sup> handmaid  
 " or matron. The man of God carried him on his own  
 " shoulder to the hospital, and leaving him there, he  
 " then went to the <sup>aula</sup> hall of King Dermot, the son



(6) 83

viduus, Slaine, who then dwelt on an island which  
is called Enis Loch a Leibhionn, where the man  
of God asked the Queen how far in the duties of  
Christian charity she wished to assist a leper.  
She consented on condition that the holy man would  
promise her a <sup>pignus</sup> pledge of eternal glory\* as the reward  
of her labor. Thus the holy man did promise. The  
Queen undertook to perform an office plainly arduous  
and difficult but the great desire of so great a  
reward softened the difficulties. She therefore approached  
the leper, and attended him sedulously and piously.  
*Inter alia dura ministeria, leprosus divinum allegando munus*  
*ab ea petit ut purulenta flegmata è naribus suis pro-*  
*prio ore expungat; quod et devota virago raro pietatis*  
*exemplo fecit; et quæ sic extraxit in mundum depo-*  
*suit linteum ut viro Dei ostenderet.* The leper <sup>then</sup> gave  
his staff to the queen to be kept for Saint Trechin  
and he himself presently disappeared. St. Trechin  
returning that night <sup>re</sup> saw how affairs went on be-  
tween the queen and the leper, saw a globe of  
fire extending from the roof of the house in  
which they were even to the heavens, and entering  
he found the Queen alone, who relating what was  
done opening the linen to shew the purulent

14/G/14/12(7)

phlegm

St 7

phlegm, found it converted into a mass of the purest gold, which, with the staff she had received from the leper, or from Christ, who had appeared in the form of a leper, she presented to the holy man. St. Fechin was carried beyond himself in the praises and love of Christ, who condescended, with so great a proof to test the charity of his servant, and to prove and reward the piety of the Queen. That staff is the one which is at this day called Bachall Fechin, and held in great veneration. The gold he divided into three <sup>equal</sup> parts, of which he placed one in <sup>the staff</sup> his crozier as a perpetual memorial of so great a miracle. With the remainder he purchased lands for his church."

This is one of those foolish stories which shew into what a deep vale of darkness the ecclesiastics of the middle ages had fallen. Divesting it however of its fable, we have the following facts with as much certainty as if it had been written by Tacitus: that St. Fechin was kind to a certain leper, and that <sup>Temper</sup> the queen of King Dermot, was so far wrought upon as to humble her pride so far as on one occasion to attend a leper in

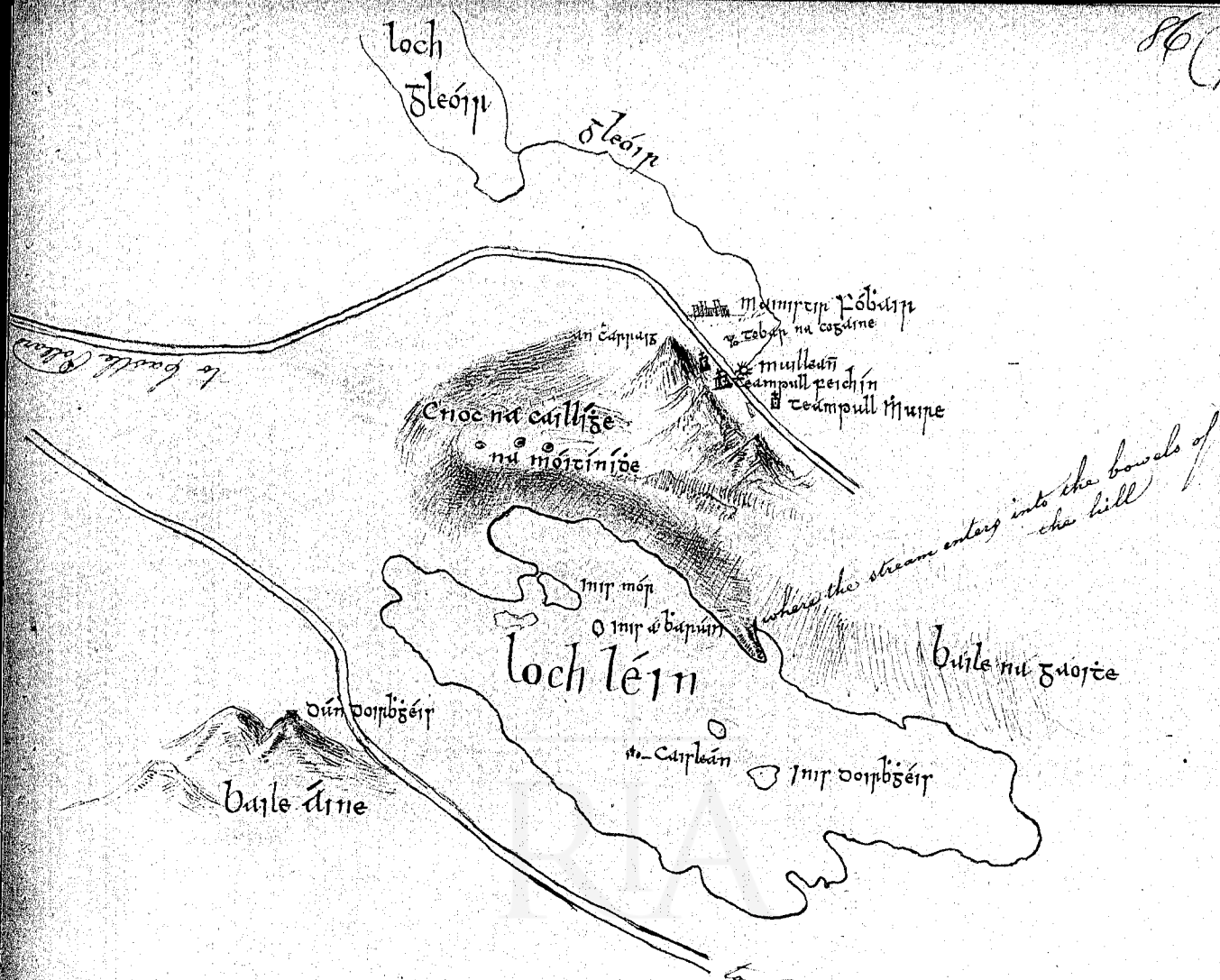
14/9/14/12(8)

(8) <sup>85</sup> St. Fechin's hospital, and that <sup>by</sup> this, and other kind offices to the poor she procured a great fame for sanctity. That St. Fechin's Crozier was preserved at Ffore with superstitious veneration in the time of the writer, and that it exhibited some gold ornaments upon which the fable was founded. But the principal <sup>undeniable</sup> inference to be drawn from it, is that King Dermot, the son of Aidus Slaine had a house on an island in Lough Lene. for the writer could have had no inducement in fabricating this part of the story; on the other hand the vivid traditional <sup>existing</sup> recollection in his time that the island referred <sup>to</sup> was a residence of the Kings of the southern Hy-Niall or Clan Colman race, & contributed in no small degree, towards gaining credence for a story which he founded upon a distant, dim and varying tradition.

That Lough Lene was a seat of Royalty appears also from Mac Cope's lamentation for the downfall of Dun-na-Sgiath after the death of King Moyler-seachlin. He calls <sup>him</sup> King of Lough Lene, in the same way as he would call him King of Tara, and this he would not have styled <sup>him</sup> had not Lough Lene

14/6/14/12 (9)





Slán do'n bairín o' págram dár ndéir  
 mácaríde dúna Doribóir  
 Gerald Nugent.

Fuair ní bu mó ná roim  
 Ceathur Éireán toir is trián  
 fearó blaíona, ó pláir locha léin  
 Dúrran mair tuar a dún na ríuath.  
 Gerard Mac Coisic.



(10)<sup>87</sup> been at some period the seat of the Irish mo-  
-narchy

## of Dun Doirbhghéis

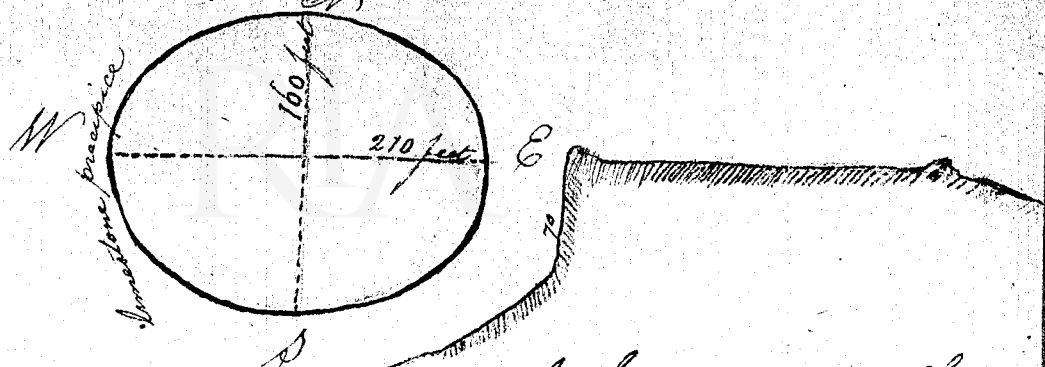
Lough Lene.

Not far to the west of this island Lake on the apex of a lofty hill stands a fort, which tradition calls Dun Doirbhghéis, i.e. the fort of Torgest, from its having been either erected by, or dwelt in, by a Danish tyrant of that name, who was cotemporary with Moylesceaglin I. It is now popularly called Rát an Dúin, which is also the popular name of Dun na sgiath near Lough Ennell. "It is my opinion that this <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ the site of the fortress of the Irish Kings previously to its occupation by Torgest or Torgesing; for, reasoning by analogy, as King Moylesceaglin or Malachy II, had his palace or Royal fort at Dun-na-sgiath and a house opposite it on Cro-inis in Lough Ennell, we may naturally <sup>draw the inference</sup> come to the conclusion that King Dermot (and, perhaps his successors down to the time of Torgesing) had his royal fort on this conspicuous hill, and a house on Inis-Lochar-Leibhionn. <sup>is</sup> This opinion must stand highly probable until actual evidence

88 (11)  
he found to shew that Torgesius himself erected  
this fort, and that there was no other on  
the hill before his time. It will however, be  
asked why the name of Torgesius alone is  
remembered by tradition in connexion with  
it; but this is easily answered, as Torgesius was  
the most conspicuous character ~~who~~ <sup>that</sup> ever lived  
in Ireland - a conqueror who impressed upon the  
minds of the native Irish <sup>a deep rooted hatred</sup> ~~such~~ <sup>and</sup> of him, and  
made such changes in their condition, as would  
be handed down <sup>by tradition</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>remotest</sup> posterity; and what is still  
stronger argument, it appears that he was the  
person who caused the Irish monarch to  
remove his seat to Lough Ennell, and the  
very last who lived in the Fort which now  
bears his name.

This fort of Torgesius (ridiculously called <sup>verations?</sup> Tergations fort  
in the County map) stands on a very conspicuous  
hill in the townland of Ballania about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile  
from Castlepollard and to the right of the  
road as one goes thence to Collinstown. The  
hill itself is nearly fortified by nature, its south  
and west sides being formed of lime stonewall  
presenting all the appearance of regular masonry.  
(more lasting walls than Rignin for Gorman ever  
built) and rendering the fort which crowns the  
14/G/14/12(12) apex.

(12) <sup>89</sup> apex of the hill <sup>is</sup> inaccessible on these sides. On the north and east sides the wall disappears and the hill assumes a gentler slope; but ~~it was~~ the fort was defended on these sides by a fosse and ditch which are now much effaced especially on the east where the hand of cultivation has extended its efforts to <sup>efface</sup> ~~destroy~~ a fine specimen of barbaric bulwark. The fort itself consists of one ring of earth which, enclosing the whole <sup>the</sup> apex of hill and being adapted to its <sup>contour</sup> ~~form~~ <sup>outline</sup> is nearly of an oval shape being about 160 feet in breadth and 210 in length. It extends east and west.



It commands a varied prospect of the country: The view to the north and west is extensive. It looks in the south-east direction far into the County of East Meath, but the hills of Fore <sup>stop</sup> block up the view to the North east. The view to the North South west extends no farther than Knockryan, and its neighbouring heights, which stand between it and Mullingar, but through a chasm between the hills the hill of Croghan <sup>is</sup> ~~is~~ seen in the distance.

14/6/14/12 (13)



To the west at no great distance it commands a <sup>good</sup> view of Lough Derravaragh, and immediately beneath to the east Lough Lene and its islands form by far the most beautiful part of the landscape.

The lofty situation of this fort, the natural fortification afforded by the hill, its contiguity to the beautiful Lough Lene, and many others its relative advantages, seem to me to argue that it was erected not only long before the period of Torgessius but even so long before the removal of the seat of the monarchy from Tara, and I should not at all be surprised if it were to be found among the list of forts erected by the Milesian colony after their arrival.

843 Its bearing at present the name of Torgessius is no argument to disprove its antiquity. Nothing is more probable than that when that conqueror had obtained monarchical sway (coppenburg), in Ireland, he drove the native monarch from his Royal Dun and placed his own residence in it with additional fortification if he had skill to do so.



(14) 91

The present tradition in the country is that Torgesius had his palace in this fort, and that he had also within sight of it a house on that island in Lough Lene belonging to Windtown, on which, however, no vestige of a house can now be traced. On this island, if oral tradition be true, the tyrant Dornbógeir slept every night, and hither were brought him every bride in Ireland (as far as his jurisdiction extended) by her husband and parents that he might debauch her before her husband knew her! No marriage was lawful in Ireland but that which was consummated by Torgesius; and he had so regulated affairs that no marriage could be celebrated in the country without his knowledge. He himself seized upon the Coarbships of St. Patrick at Armagh, and appointed others, his chiefs and leaders to the <sup>most</sup> ~~and situations in the church~~ <sup>lucrative</sup> ~~abbacies~~ <sup>in the country</sup>, so that he had complete ecclesiastical as well as lay <sup>jurisdiction</sup> ~~command~~. ~~Thus he was enabled to have~~ <sup>But this manner he ordered all</sup> the young brides noble and plebeian ~~to be~~ brought to him to this island in Lough Lene, and whenever he objected to the personal attractions of ~~any one of them~~ <sup>any one of them</sup>, her husband was obliged to pay him a certain <sup>fixed</sup> sum; and, in some instances, <sup>even tho' the bride was deplorable</sup> ~~as the~~ <sup>he</sup> had at all times a sufficient number of distinguished

14/6/14/12 (15)

92 (15)

beauty to serve his purpose) the husband was allowed to com-  
-promise by paying an equivalent for the privation. In this  
manner the tyrant made marriage a source of pleasure  
and emolument to himself.

This is the state of affairs which the holy Berchan is  
represented as predicting and not the change caused by  
the English clergy since the reformation, as my good  
friend Mr. Hardiman will have it.

Trepaíd geinte tair muir meann  
múepaid sonár na hEireann  
brao abb uata pop gac cill, &c.

And the learned and honest Keating understands it  
to allude to the Danes and not to the English.

In connexion with this tradition of the custom of  
Torgesing, I would wish to introduce the subject of  
Loughinipoy.

In touching upon a question delicate in itself, in a na-  
-tional point of view, and dangerous to be meddled  
with in the present undeveloped state of Irish  
literature, I do not pretend to have sufficient data  
to clear up all <sup>the</sup> difficulties that present themselves,  
but I wish in proposing the argument to have  
all our Irish documents examined either to con-  
-firm or refute the grounds upon which I ven-  
-ture to form an opinion.

The same story which is here told of Torgesing and  
the brides is repeated in Ulster of O'Neill who is  
remembered by tradition as a tyrant equally

(16) 93<sup>B</sup> exorbitant in his demands, cruel and de<sup>te</sup>stable. And a similar traditional account is given of the custom of Balor, the pirate of Tory, but as this last character flourished at a period of our history *qui se perd dans la nuit du temps*, nothing bordering on certainty can be inferred from any traditional reminiscences of him.

I incline to think that this custom was in existence during the reigns of our pagan monarchs and that it even descended to Christian times until the exertions and examples of our early saint-men of austere habits and pure morality put <sup>at least</sup> in most parts of the country an end to it as subversive of the ordinances of Christianity, and that when it was wholly or partially abolished the king or chief claimed in lieu a fine for every marriage celebrated within his kingdom or territory and this fine is what I conceive was originally called *luné impsde*. Many objections can, however be raised to this my view of *Loughinippy*, and which I shall urge hereafter, but some there are some facts on record which, unfortunately for the national character, seem to bear me out. In a Statistical account of the county of Kildare drawn up for Sir William Petty's intended Atlas, and evidently by one of the resident gentry, who seemed to have had no great dislike to the natives, it is stated that the poorer classes in that county thought themselves in



in no small degree honoured whenever one of their <sup>94</sup> (17)  
daughters had borne bastard children <sup>to</sup> a lord or  
~~great gentleman~~ <sup>Chief man of distinguished family,</sup> and the writer adds "not that I say  
it that Loughinipy is practised." If any reliance can be  
placed on this writer who seems to have known what  
Loughinipy really meant, having lived in an age  
when the <sup>ancestral</sup> Irish customs were in full bloom, my  
view of Loughinipy is not very erroneous; for what  
else could he have meant? I will not urge in addition  
the customs of the barbarous landlords of the counties  
of Mayo and Galway, <sup>in the last century</sup> nor the conduct of the infa-  
mous Major Kirwan, of whom I have heard so  
much, but I have to add with some selfish regret  
for the national character of my ancestors that  
the Irish writers themselves in their novels and  
historical tales but too plainly give us to under-  
stand that in the <sup>early and</sup> middle ages and <sup>even</sup> down to a late  
period, the plebeians thought their daughters high-  
ly honoured in being the courtesans of kings and  
great men. Of this fact the Romance about King  
Art the Solitary, and the Smith's ~~wife~~ daughter  
afford a striking instances. The girl was de-  
bauched by a youth of August mien and car-  
riage, and when the father questioned her upon the  
subject, she described the personal appearance

14/9/14/12 (18) of



18. His admirer \*  
of the youth, and assured him that he took a drink ~~and~~  
from a ~~new~~ vessel which she presented to him. The  
father, who was a most keen philosopher (for Smiths  
were great men in those ages) put the vessel to his  
mouth, and congratulating his daughter upon  
her good fortunes, exclaimed Ta blar béil plaen ar an subpass,  
a saying truly disgusting to any person of ~~democratic~~  
~~kind~~ feelings, with which I am so blessed that I never  
read this tale without cursing <sup>the writer as well as</sup> the Blacksmith  
and his daughter. That such a feeling <sup>the</sup> ~~such~~ exist  
in the minds of a Plebeian Irish is not to be wondered  
at, as here is the predominant passion, not only  
of the "common folk" but also of the "better sort"  
and as it is a well known fact in the history  
of this unfortunate <sup>country</sup> island that these great lords  
had, from some <sup>unaccountable</sup> ~~important~~ feeling  
in their na-  
ture, a fonder affection for the children they  
illegitimately <sup>bore</sup> begotten by them, than for those  
begotten in the hallowed bonds of matrimony,  
and that they often contrived <sup>either</sup> to appoint them  
as their heirs, or to intrude much upon the patri-  
mony of the rightful heirs to have them well  
provided for. In instance <sup>among many others</sup> Con Bacach O'Neill  
first Earl of Tyrone and his Bastard son  
Fardoragh Baron of Dungannon 14/6/14/12 (19)

X Note the fruits of this intercourse X

96 (19)

To return to Torgesing, who drew me into this disagree-  
-able subject, he made <sup>according to tradition</sup> Lough Lene and this fort  
in Ballania his <sup>principal</sup> residence, and <sup>he</sup> continued his reign of tyranny  
~~843~~ 843, when Moylescaghlin or Malachy I. of pious  
memory, <sup>first</sup> captured and <sup>afterwards</sup> drowned him, according to the  
best authorities, in Loch Hair now Lough Mail  
near Mullingar. After this the good King issued  
a proclamation calling upon all his subjects  
"who had been expelled from their native  
"territories and <sup>living in</sup> ~~under~~ slavery to return home  
"to enjoy peace and happiness." <sup>who died in 1088</sup> Tigernach, and  
who had genuine records of the cruelties of Torgesing, in  
recording the cruelties of that tyrant, and his death  
adds "Thus ended that reign of tyranny, which  
was secondary only to the tyranny of Hell!"  
The <sup>truth of the</sup> account given of the capture of Torgesing by  
young men dressed in girls clothes, is very  
much to be suspected. It is given by Cam-  
brensis and Keating only, and it is much to be  
suspected that the latter copied it from the  
former, as it does not appear in any of  
the authentic annals or other genuine do-  
cuments; and as Cambrensis gives <sup>it</sup> as an  
instance of Irish treachery I <sup>suppose</sup> suspect it to  
be of the same character with his account

14/9/14/12 (20) of

(20) 97

of the inauguration of O'Donnell.

14/6/14/12 (21)

All the historical <sup>accounts of</sup> ~~reference to~~ the reign of Torgesius, which I have before me, state that he placed his Dun or Longphort in Lough Ree in the Shannon, and I do not find a single reference <sup>in history</sup> to his Residence near, or on Lough Lene. It is also to be remarked that the <sup>written</sup> authorities differ <sup>about one</sup> ~~in giving~~ the name of the lake in which he was drowned.

Tomorrow I shall compare all these authorities and then hasten to a close.

Not far from the island in Lough Lene on which Torgesius is said to have had a house, there are to be seen over water a very large stone and a <sup>short</sup> ridge of small ones, which form a remarkable object in the lake. The natives call this object the Castle, and state that a large quantity of oak timber was taken up from the side of it and also a brass pot which is still preserved in the neighbourhood.

Let me know if this object has been shewn on the plan, and also if Moore believes the story about Torgesius having been captured by young men disguised in girls clothes? Your obedient servant. J. O'Donnell.

**END**



**14 G 14/13**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Newpass, Co. Westmeath, concerning the history, antiquities and topography of the parishes of Saint Mary's, Kilpatrick, Kill Uailleach, Killagh and Kilcumney, Co. Westmeath, with particular reference to their early churches, holy wells and castles.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)**

**18 October 1837**

**20 p.**

**Pages vary between 23.3 and 23.6 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 98-117.**

98 (1)

Tmullam arís pad ná fódla:  
 Do dírept náosín éilíon Tola.  
 Do náosín lonán éille h-uallleach  
 Sa ndearr arprude do cilleach. J. P. D.

Newpass October 18<sup>th</sup> 1837

Dear Sir,

I feel that I am stopping too long in this  
 county, and still I cannot do more than I am doing  
 without passing over curious subjects that force  
 themselves upon me when I sit down to put the  
 traditions connected with some localities into  
 form. If by throwing out conjectures on those sub-  
 jects, even though I may be wrong in general of my  
 views, I open the road to a full and fair inves-  
 tigation, I trust that my time will not be  
 looked upon as wasted in wrestling with giants  
<sup>destroying</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>building</sup> castles in the air.

of the parish of Saint Mary's

This parish which may be described as lying  
 between the parish of Fore and the County of  
 East Meath seems to have been originally a part  
 of the parish of Fore and to have been formed  
 into a distinct <sup>one</sup> parish by the <sup>Rev</sup> Vicar, who  
 dedicated it to the virgin Mary to whom

14/6/14/13(1)

(2) 99 the Anglo Norman families were much de-  
voted. I do not find any evidence that the  
Irish themselves, previously to the arrival of  
the English ~~settlers~~ <sup>and Welsh people</sup> amongst them ever dedi-  
cated any church or parish to any saint  
but their own - a fact which it never occurred  
to me to notice before, and which I am  
most anxious to have fairly put to the  
crucible. I wish you would ask Mr.  
Petrie if he ever met any evidence to  
disprove it.

The old Church of this parish is within  
the town or village of Fore immediately  
adjoining the modern <sup>Rt</sup> Catholic Chapel,  
but compared to the old Church of St.  
Fechin it must be pronounced an erection  
of modern times, though little doubt can  
be entertained of its being five or six  
centuries old. Inserted into its east  
gable <sup>on the inside</sup> are to be seen <sup>two</sup> free stone flags

100 (3)

exhibiting two epitaphs (now much effaced)  
the one for Robert and the other for Oliver  
Nugent two Barons of Delvin <sup>who had lived at Ballana</sup>. The one is  
dated 1680 and the other 1682.

In the p.e. corner is a small stone shewing in  
rude raised letters the name Fissimur and  
the date 1612. (16xii)

Charles O'Connor in Orchard Improved places the Tub  
Simon between Killeghony <sup>and Ballyhogan</sup> which was, I believe their locality  
Country but it would appear that a branch of  
was also located in this neighbourhood. At the  
year 1505 the Four Masters record the death  
of Edmund (Doragh Fitz Simon) (1173 Simon) abbot  
of Fore, who was descended from the Ritter or  
Knight Fitz-Simon.

Lough Ban in Ennagh, in which tradition erroneously states  
~~that~~ Forgesius was drowned, merges on this parish.  
Sir Henry Pers calls this lake Lough-Banean. Ennagh  
and incorrectly translates it the White Lake  
of the passage for the white lake of the  
Ennagh <sup>man</sup> which is the name of a townland  
verging on its <sup>s.</sup> east shore in the County of East  
Meath. He philosophizes most learnedly upon  
the strange rising and sinking of ~~the~~ its wa-  
ters. with which I have nothing to do here.



(4) 101

In this parish, to the south of Lough Bane-an-Amy, lies the townland of Glen-Sean, which is mentioned by Dudley Mac Firdis as the seat of a branch of the family of Traye a name now of no distinction.

"The family of Gleann Shiodan"

Simon, the son of  
Thomas, who was the son of

George

Robert

James

John

Roger

Walter

George

Sir Mayn Killer (Knight)

It is ~~also~~ said that a family of the Nugents <sup>also</sup> lived here, the last of whom died about eleven years since.

14/G/14/13(4)

This parish lying due South of St. Mary's, is called in the Irish Cill Cuimhne, a name which the natives account for in this manner: When St. Patrick, had finished the erection of the adjoining church of Kilpatrick, he set out for in the direction of Lough Lene to select a spot for the erection of another church, and having found a spot whose amenity attracted his eye, he commenced to mark the foundations, and as in the progress of drawing the lines it was necessary to read some prayers, he told his servant to hand him his Breviary, but he found that it had been forgotten at Kilpatrick. The servant returned to Kilpatrick and brought him the book, and the Saint in memory of the event styled the church and the place Cill Cuimhne, from Cill, meaning back, retro, and Cuimhne, remembrance, because when he remembered that the book had been left behind, he sent the servant Back for it! A similar story is told at Tempo Dexil in Fermanagh to account for <sup>that name</sup> that this story was got up in modern times

103  
(6) to account for the name of a place, of which the real etymology had been forgotten, admits of no doubt, but it is not easy, ~~to~~ in the absence of historical evidence, to venture upon any explanation of it. It is highly probable, however, that Kerry, the latter part of the compound is a man's name, and if the former part were C. K., it would follow that <sup>the latter</sup> it is the name of a saint.

The church in the townland of KilKerry was erected since the Reformation, <sup>as the parish church</sup> and <sup>used</sup> till the <sup>new</sup> modern church of Drumree was erected not many years since. There is no holy well nor other traces of ancient sanctity near it, but in the glebe of the parish there was a sacred spring, which emigrated from its original locality on having been profaned by a country woman who washed dirty clothes in it.

In this parish lies the beautiful hill of Drum <sup>Drumree</sup> <sup>C. K.</sup> for which I have been on the look out this long time back. (It is now pronounced by the <sup>people</sup> <sup>as the name of the hill</sup>)

Fgaye/Moy. Greek. Flagellum. Lat. 1044 (7)

natives *Drum* *Dras* (by changing the liquid *p* to *l*)  
but in the anglicised form of *Drumcree*, the *p* is  
preserved. I have already observed that several  
such changes have taken place in other names.

This hill is celebrated in the *Dimneanchus* as the  
site of a battle between Eochy Feileach, the father of  
Queen Meave and his three sons, the three *Fineamhuys*  
or three fair headed boys of *Emania*. It is also  
celebrated in a historical tale of considerable anti-  
quity founded on the same battle, and which details  
the circumstances <sup>that</sup> ~~which~~ gave rise to the dispute  
between these three young rapscals and their  
Royal father. This tale would appear to have  
been written in this part of Meath, and it is  
probable that the writer has mentioned, in  
the course of his narrative, the names of several  
localities in the neighbourhood of *Drumcree*.  
I would therefore wish that Mr. Curry would  
read it over and extract from it those pas-  
sages, which relate to places in Meath  
and especially to the neighbourhood of  
*Drum Briagh*, the site of the battle.

It is stated in the *Dimneanchus* that these  
three rascals lay with their own sister  
<sup>a young Irish Colling</sup> *Clathra*, before the battle, and begot Loac

14/6/14/13 (7)

Riadearg



(8) Riabard, afterwards monarch of Ireland, but <sup>even</sup> tho' their period is now acknowledged <sup>to be</sup> as within the grasp of Irish history, this account of their incestuous intercourse, <sup>with cloths</sup> can hardly be credited in this age, as I believe there is no instance of such conduct now to be found amongst the lowest savages on this globe, - not even among the worshippers of Buda! The only parallel to it to be found in history, is the account given of the daughters of Lot in the old testament, and that given by Cobbett in his history of the Reformation of Henry VIII; having married his own daughters. Indeed many facts are on record to show that men of high rank when <sup>sufficed</sup> ~~gloried~~ with ~~com-~~ mon, & easily indulged <sup>pleasures</sup> ~~in~~ vices, have had recourse to others, which lowered them beneath the <sup>deignity</sup> ~~rank~~ of the brute creation. (See Tacitus on the reign of Nero)

Drum Briadh is mentioned by Mac Firbisce as a seat of a branch of the Nugent family, of whom there is not one now in existence.

"There are gone, like night-dreams passed away!"

\* It is not probable that the Irish had imbricating figures in the time of Early Ireland unless methodin.

106 (9)

"The family of Druim Griadh"

"Thomas, Edward, Oliver, three brothers. Oliver married  
" Anna Barnwell and had issue, Christopher, Robert  
" Lamailin and Richard.

Oliver, the son of  
Christopher, who was the son of  
Richard  
James  
William, &c. as before.

of the parish of Kilpatrick

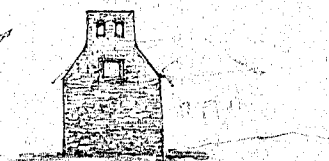
In this very small parish adjoining <sup>to the N.W.</sup> Kilcumney  
there is nothing to attract the notice of the an-  
tiquarian but the old church, which is an  
-cient and said to have been erected by St.  
Patrick. A crozier is said to have been pre-  
served at the church, but there is no account  
of where it is at present nor of what happened  
it as I have already observed in speaking  
of the one now in the possession of Bryan Fagan  
of Carpenterstown in the parish of Forc.  
There is no holy well near this old church, nor as  
far as I could ascertain any vestigia of a  
place of pilgrimage.

14/4/14/13(9)

(10) 107 of the parish of Kill Uilleach. (Killiclagh)

Directly south of the parish of Kilcumney lies the parish of Kill Uilleach, which is one of the oldest <sup>in the parish</sup> but unfortunately the old church is an erection of comparatively modern times. Its west gable, the one in which the bell was placed, is in good preservation and of this form.

of about 300 years  
old?



The patron saint is Lonan as still vividly remembered but there is no well in the parish now bearing his name. The amount of what tradition remembers of him is that he was a most zealous preacher of the gospel, and that a tyrant who lived in the neighbourhood cut out his tongue. That on one occasion he thrust his walking stick in the ground, and that it grew immediately, and became a large ash tree which gave name to a neighbouring townlands now anglicised Ballytown but also called in Irish bailé báta or bailé an báta, which means the town of the sticks.

This church and St. Lonan its patron is mentioned by St. Egan in the Tripartite life of St. Patrick:

<sup>When</sup> "The holy bishop ret departing thence (Lunin) had mounted  
" his chariot, a certain woman of name Richella brought  
" her tender little son unto him requesting that he would  
" give him who was wishing to learn his blessing. The saint  
" consenting made the sign of the cross on the child's  
" brow

14/6/14/13(10)



" boy's mouth, and delivered him over to Cassanus  
 "(of Donoughmore) <sup>near Slivan</sup> to be instructed in piety and  
 literature. With whom he is said to have made in  
 a short time so great a proficiency that in the  
 space of twelve days he learned the whole psalter.  
 He is Lanin, (the son of Denamy) who is in  
 the church of Kill Muilleach."

An interpolator or Scholiast adds. "This Church of  
Kill Muilleach in process of time was granted by  
 the monks of Cluain mic nois to the monks of  
Cluain Craind for two other churches of which the  
 one is called Kill Ochair lying in the country of  
 the Bregia, and the other lying in its vicinity to  
 the west called Cluain Alada deirg."

Colgan says in a note that this church of Kill Muilleach  
 lies in <sup>ie Granillogh's Country</sup> Feara Ceall, a territory in the south of  
 ancient Meath, but I doubt very much that he is right.  
 It is probable that there are two churches of the  
 name, but I think that this Kill Muilleach in  
 Delain is the one mentioned by Evin, but I can-  
 not finally settle this till I go to the King's  
 County. [There is no such church in Feara Ceall. O.D. March 22, 1838]  
 of the Crozier said to have been preserved at this  
 Church I have already written as much as is known.



In this parish lies also Dispart Tola, (pronounced at present according to the Meathman accent Deesart Taula) in which there was a very ancient church and grave yard, but <sup>which are</sup> now almost effaced. This was a peled ated church but our topographers have been very much in the dark about its situation, because they have not consulted the proper documents. Lanigan made every effort to point out its locality, but as it did not occur to him that there might be two places of the name his conclusions have drawn a ~~deep~~ <sup>dense</sup> cloud over the subject. He finds that one authority places Dispart Tola in Meath and another in the upper part of Gal. Co. (or County of Clare) and the doctor, knowing the truth of the old saying "in medio tutissimū idē", takes a medium & places it on the confines of both territories! This is a <sup>the</sup> sure way of reconciling various authorities. But he ~~had~~ had opportunities enough to learn that the early distinguished Saints of Ireland had more than one establishment.

I shall here give all Lanigan's reasoning on the subject, and then proceed to show how he is wrong about the situation.

# Lanigan's Ecclesiastical History of Ireland.

(vol. III. p. 171)

St. Tola, bishop of Clonard, died in 734 on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March, the day on which his anniversary was commemorated. (105) This saint was of the illustrious family of the Galengis, (106) and son of one Dunchad. He led for many years the life of a hermit at a place called from him Desert-Tola, and situated either in the southern part of the ancient Meath, or northern part of ancient Munster, and consequently in the now King's county, (107) Afterwards he was raised to the see of Clonard, but in what year is not recorded. It has been said that he was bishop <sup>also</sup> of Kildare. That this is a mistake may be safely concluded from as much as is known of his transactions. (108)

(105) Colgan treating of St. Tola (at 30 March p. 793.) quotes the 4 Masters, who assign his death to 733 (734). As to the day of it, which was omitted by them he does not (<sup>16</sup>) expressly mark it, only observing, that his memory was revered on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March; but elsewhere (Act. S. L. p. 407.) we read, according to his printed text, that Tola died on the 3<sup>d</sup> of March. This must be a typographical error for 30; whereas Colgan states that he had taken from the calendars of all the obitual days, the Natalis of the several saints, whom he names in this part of the Act. Now all the calendars, referred to by him at p. 793, have Tola's name only at

the 30th of March, and it is plain that Colgan considered it as his Natalis. This mistake of the printer (one of the thousands, which have greatly injured Colgan's works,) led astray Ware, (Bishops at Meath) who accordingly assigned Tola's death to the 3<sup>d</sup> of March. Besides this mistake Ware fell into another, for which Colgan is not to blame, although he professed to follow him; for, instead of 733, which Colgan has every where for the death of Tola, he, or his printer, has given us 732.

(106) The family of the Galenigi inhabited, I suppose, some of the districts called Galenga or Gallen. There was a Gallen or Galian, which comprized a very great part of the Queen's county, and of the counties of Carlow and Kildare. considering the situation of the place, in which, as will be just seen, St. Tola commenced his career, it is not improbable that he was a native of that territory.

(107) Colgan observed, that the Calendar of Cashel placed Disert-Tola in Meath, while, according to every authority, it was in upper Dalcassia, that is, the northern part of Munster. He justly remarks that it lay, perhaps at the boundary of both provinces. In former times Meath and Munster met each other in what is now called the King's county, which has been made up of districts that belonged to these provinces.

That Disert-Tola was in the now barony of Garrycastle in said county may, I think be deduced from the circumstance, related by the 4 Masters at A.D. 1034, of Carten Lord of Dealbhna having been killed by some of his subjects when entering



entering the church of Disert-Tola. This Dealbha was, in all probability, the one sur-named Cathra, the Mc-Coghlan's country, or barony of Garrycastle. (See Harris, Antiq. ch. 7. and Seward at Dealbha.)

(108) In St. Tola's Acts at 30 March, in which Colgan collected every thing that he could find concerning him, Kildare is not even mentioned. In the passage of the 11 Masters relative to him, there quoted at full length, he is called bishop only of Clonard. The Calendar of Cashel has "St. Tola of Disert Tola;" the martyrology of Donegall, "St. Tola bishop and anchorite of Disert-Tola." But in no calendar whatsoever is he said to have belonged to Kildare. Yet at p. 40<sup>th</sup> we find and of Kildare, et de Kill-dara, added to the words, bishop of Clonard. It is plain that Kill-dara has slipped in, instead of Disert-Tola. Hence proceeded the mistake of Ware and Harris, who (Bishops at Meath and Kildare) make him bishop not only of Clonard, but likewise of Kildare. To shew still further that they were mistaken, I may add that in the very minute catalogue, which Colgan has, (Tr. H. p. 629.) of the bishops, abbots, &c. of Kildare, from the beginning down to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, no St. Tola is reckoned among them.



(16) 113.

It will appear from the following extracts from the Annals of the Four Masters that there were two places in Ireland called Disert-Tola.

"A.D. 970. Glonard, Fore, Lann-Balas and Disert-Tola were burned and plundered by Donnell, the son of Mórugh (Molaghtin).

This Disert-Tola is beyond doubt the one in the Barony of Belvin in this County.

"A.D. 1010. Salach of Disert-Tola, Coarb of Fechin and of Tola, a distinguished scribe died."

This is also the one in Meath.

"1034. Muireadhach O'Flaherty, lord of Hy-Briuin Deola, and Cárten O'Mulhoney, Lord of Belvin, were killed on the thresholds of Disert-Tola by their own people; But

"Tola revenged the deed by killing the perpetrators at the same time, through the miracle of God." And thus also. But the next pas-

sage is direct proof that there was another Tola's Desert in the County of Clare, viz.

"A.D. 1589. Dermot age, the son of Dermot, who was the son of Denis, who was the son Dermot who was the son of Coner (Bishop of Limerick)

144 (17)  
" who was the son of Morogh and aine I'Day, died  
" and was interred in his own <sup>burial</sup> ~~town~~ of  
" Disert Tola in the centre of Kinel.  
" Learmaic in the upper part of Dal-Cais."

The Four Masters copied this <sup>passage</sup> from the  
Annals of the Mac Brodys the heredi-  
-tary Chroniclers of Dal-Cais which  
shews the value of their compilation as  
the Annals of the Mac Brodys are  
lost.

Surely the seat of I'Day in Kinel Learmaic  
was not in Mac Coghlan's country in the  
Barony of Garrycastle!

I then draw the conclusion that there were two  
Disert Tolas in Ireland, one in the Barony  
of Delvin in West Meath, which retains its  
name to this day, and the other in the  
<sup>upper? south?</sup> ~~middle~~ of the County of Clare, which is  
also in existence.

It is very probably that <sup>originally</sup> they were both <sup>same</sup> ~~original~~  
hermitages of the Saint Tola, who, like St  
Aidus, was so desirous of solitude that

14/9/14/13 (17) <sup>when</sup>

(18) 115

when had attracted notice in one desert,  
he retired to another at a far distance  
to apply himself more sedulously to  
the consideration of eternity.

What Lanigan says about the Galanigi  
having been located in the counties  
of Carlow and Kildare is too <sup>incorrect</sup> ~~wrong~~  
to be treated seriously. He knew very  
little about their locality, but it is  
veraciously to think that he will be  
regarded as standard authority by those  
who know still less.

\* If you send a surveyor to mark the site  
of Disert-Tola in this parish, <sup>a man named</sup> ~~old~~ Phelim  
Hett of Ballinacree will direct him.

The family of Dardis, whose ancestor is  
called in the Irish Annals Dáirdsprech gan  
olige i.e. Dardis the lawless lived at Gigans-  
town in this parish. A tombstone in the  
churchyard of Kill-uailleach exhibits the  
following inscription

"Underneath this stone are interred the re-  
mains of William Dardis formerly of Carling-  
stown in the County of Westmeath Esq

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" as also those of Catherine Dease of Tur-  
" betstown; alias Dardis, his wife, who died  
" on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 1797, and at whose  
" desire this monument has been erected.

" Several of the Dardis family late of  
" Ligonstown Co. of Westmeath are like-  
" wise buried here. R. I. P.

In this parish lies also the townland of  
Bracklin which is called Breachlach by  
Mac Firlisse, who mentions it as the  
seat of a branch of the Stugents.

" Pedigree of Stugent of Brackly "  
" Edward Stugent of Brackly has issue  
" Walter, Richard, William, James & Thomas  
" He is the son of Thomas

Christopher

Lamfahill &c

In the townland of Mulchanstown on a  
small hill <sup>is</sup> to be seen a small part  
of the walls of a Castle, about which  
I could get no tradition in the Country.

14/6/14/13 (19)



(20) 117 On the merging of Dardistown and the parish  
of <sup>Kill-~~Uilleach~~</sup> ~~Uilleach~~ there is a well called Toban  
Luibe, but it is not a holy well.

of the Parish of Killagh.

This is a very small parish adjoining Kill-  
Uilleach on the south. It has no pa-  
tron saint, but it has like all others its  
old church and grave<sup>yard</sup>, and near them a  
fine green meadow.

Cllere is mentioned by Mac Firbise as a seat  
of a branch of the Mugents. The ruins of  
their castle are yet to be seen.

The family of Uilleach

Henry the son of

Thomas

James

Richard

John

Richard

William

Nicholas

Thomas

Gilbert the Bastard

Sir Gilbert Agent.

your obedt servant  
John O'Sullivan

There is a remarkable well  
called Toban a Deardain  
near the boundary of this parish  
but it is not within it.

**END**

**14 G 14/14**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Newpass, Co. Westmeath, concerning the history, antiquities and topography of the parishes of Castletowndevlin and Clonarney, Co. Westmeath, with particular reference to their castles and early churches.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)**

**19 October 1837**

**7 p.**

**23.3 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 118-124.**

Druideam ppi ren-éire d'ell-na  
 d'f' sup solám, r' sup delb' ná  
 Seng-ppapáin p'f' ná p'f' ne  
 r' p'écám p'or d'ne, r' p'or delb' ná  
 tíu p'ín h'uí p'íon'alláin  
 'Na ul aindre p'íh-áláin'  
 'r' p'íu p'íu p'íu p'íu p'íu  
 'S p'empad ngort a'p' p'epuín-éuláin  
 'h'í tuisge h'í gceán h'áin p'eualláin  
 'Noir h'í gceir h'í p'íh'alláin  
 'f'íu na d'f'íu d'f'íu d'f'íu d'f'íu  
 'Doib' na d'f'íu d'f'íu d'f'íu d'f'íu

Aengz na n-áep.  
 as leim d'g an áep.



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2.  
Deaðoná mór do bparit bandáil  
ar é a plait O' Fionnalláin.

Shane O' Dugan

Newpass, October 19<sup>th</sup> 1837.

Dear Sir,

The next parish I have to notice is that of Captletown Delvin. It does not seem to be an ancient Irish parish, nor have I any document to prove what the parochial name was before the removal of the church to Captletown Delvin. Tradition says that the old church of Clonamey is the mother church of the parish, but, <sup>as</sup> I have often observed, tradition cannot be relied upon in the absence of written documents, or at least of local monumental remains. No patron saint is remembered either for this or the adjoining parish of Clonamey

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but it probable that a St. Aithairne gave name to the latter. Of this however I have no record.

The Castle which gave name to Castletown Delvin, was according to the universal tradition in the country, erected by Sir Hugh de Lacy, by Marriage with whose <sup>Rosy, Sir</sup> daughter, Gilbert de Nugent obtained it and the Barony of Delvin, the ancient country of the i'Finnellans.

A considerable part of ~~this castle~~ (the natives say about one half) of this castle <sup>at Delvin</sup> is still standing in good preservation, but as Mr. Petrie has published an accurate drawing of it, I need not attempt to describe it. It is certainly ancient.

We learn from the topographical <sup>poem</sup> written by Shane O'Dugan some time previous to

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the year 1372, that O'Finnellan was  
in Irish times the chief of Dealbha  
mor, and it is curious now to remark  
that that name is not to be found  
in Delvin, but it is <sup>more curious</sup> stranger that  
their successors, the Nugents should  
not exist in it as a numerous clan  
like the Fitzgeralds and Burkes in  
other parts of Ireland. The Nugents  
too are just extinct with the ex-  
-ception of the Marquis of West-  
meath, and one or two other fa-  
-milies. But it is still more strange  
and curious that the only De Lacys  
<sup>who claim direct descent from the Earl</sup>  
in the barony, are pharmakers in  
the village of Castletown Delvin!

Sic transit gloria mundi //

14/9/14/14(4)

In this parish of Capltetown Delvin are situated  
the townlands of Bealatha an-inbhair, and  
Baile na mBile mentioned by Mac Firbisce as  
seats of two branches of the family of  
Gaul?  
Stigent, whose pedigrees he gives as follows:

"Pedigree of ~~Stigent~~ surnamed  
" the Gaul Finn of Baile  
" na mBile in Delvin.

" Edmund the son of  
William

James

Walter

John

William

Thomas

Redmond

Thomas

Nicholas

William the first of  
this family who came  
to Ireland."

" The family of <sup>belies angling</sup>

Jeffry son of  
chevler

Jeffrey

James.

Enter  
N.B. Mr Barry has ~~so~~  
curtailed these pedigrees  
in spec of way ~~that~~  
that I cannot see what  
families they are, or  
Mac Firbis has left  
them imperfect. They  
certainly are not Stigents.  
I wish he would <sup>consult the work</sup> again  
and ascertain whether  
Mac Firbisce has said  
any more about them. All  
those pedigrees and observa-  
-tions should be given in full.



123

In the parish of <sup>Clonamey</sup> Killua lies the townland of  
Bastle a Scoptlocag (Scurlockstown) which Mac Lillis  
mentions as the seat of some family of the  
name of which I cannot make certain in  
consequence of the manner in which the pedigree  
is shortened, and in the parish of Killua  
Bastle an loia (<sup>with</sup> ~~and~~ its castle) which is mentioned  
by the same Genealogist <sup>in</sup> as the country  
of Mac an Bharrain, <sup>of family?</sup> the son of the Baron.

I shall have to compare all those documents  
hereafter, as it is impossible to do all  
here.

I should be curious to discover upon what  
authority Sir Thomas Chapman states  
that the Castle of Killua "was <sup>once</sup> called"  
St. Lucy's, perhaps the officer who surveyed  
the district could write to him on the  
subject. I am told he is a good natured  
worthy gentleman. I think the real  
name is St. Lea's. It is highly probable

14/a/14/14(6)

that the Saint Luanus or Lua from whom  
 this parish was named is the Luanus de  
 Craebhach mentioned in the Tripartite  
 life of St. Patrick. The pattern of the  
 parish was held at Clonmellon, now  
 generally called Raiskeen, on the  
 Sunday before Michaelmas day, but  
 I could meet no one to tell what  
 it was held in honor of.

RIA *Lao*

**END**

**14 G 14/15**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letters to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Newpass, Co. Westmeath, concerning the history and antiquities associated with Tristernagh Priory and the parish of Kilbixy, Co. Westmeath.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRJA, (1806-1861)**

**20-24 October 1837**

**36 p.**

**Contains an illustration.**

**23.3 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 125-155 and 160-165;**

**Illustration is an ink sketch of Lough Ainin, Co. Westmeath, indicating sites of topographical and antiquarian interest.**



Charter of Tristernagh translated,  
O'Doherty's Camp and Bush

Newpass. October 20<sup>th</sup> 1837.

Dear Sir, Mr. Broughton and I visited Tristernagh to-day and viewed the localities of that neighbourhood, but there being too many places to be looked at, we have not been able to get finished, and will visit the neighbourhood again tomorrow.

I shall here give a translation of the charter of foundation of the Priory of Tristernagh, and attempt to identify the localities as well as I can. Be it known to  
 "The present and future (generations), that I, Halfridus  
 "de Constantine have given and granted, and by  
 "this my present Charter have confirmed to God  
 "and the house, which I under the authority of  
 "God, have founded in the territory of Killispy,  
 "in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to the Canons  
 "there administering to God in the <sup>usual forms</sup> regular habit  
 "for the health of my own soul and the souls of  
 "my father, mother, and wife Letitia, and for the  
 14/G/14/15(1) soul

& soul of all my ancesters and heirs, the lands,  
 & churches and liberties here under written, viz:  
 & the place in which <sup>the</sup> house is situated, <sup>which is</sup> and called  
 & Tripternagh, with four carucates of land <sup>lying</sup> adjacent  
 & according to their acknowledged divisions and boundaries.  
 & and the islands of the lake which is called Loghern, <sup>(a)</sup>  
 & which lies near the house, and whatsoever part of the  
 & same lake is known to belong to me at Kilbiky, <sup>(b)</sup> the  
 & whole of the land from <sup>(c)</sup> the passage <sup>(d)</sup> which leads from  
 & the church to the castle, and from the head of the same  
 & passage by the ~~same~~ <sup>way</sup> road in the valley as far as the  
 & site of the mill, <sup>(e)</sup> and the site and ponds of the same  
 & mill, and so by the pond ~~and~~ of the Mill and  
 & <sup>and also a quae</sup> Mill race, as far as the divisions of land which  
 & I have given to Agnes, the wife of Thurstan, and  
 & so by the divisions of the same land as far as the  
 & Cross of Saint Columba <sup>(f)</sup> on the high road, and so by  
 & that <sup>high</sup> great road <sup>(g)</sup> as far as the house which belonged to  
 & the old Irish chaplain. I have also granted and  
 & confirmed to ~~the aforesaid~~ <sup>my</sup> ~~for~~ aforesaid Canons,  
 & that they, whenever they please, may clean, improve  
 & and enlarge the aforesaid mill and millpond, and  
 & that no one can turn away the water from thence,  
 I shall have a right <sup>to</sup>

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" In bunemuck<sup>(h)</sup> two carucates of land lying nearer  
" to the lake Loghyern and between the water which <sup>ring</sup>  
" is called Etheio<sup>(i)</sup> (Inny) and the water which is called  
" Deloghmuergen<sup>(j)</sup>, and on the same water the site of  
" one mill and two fishing weirs, which are called  
" <sup>Dub-capad<sup>(k)</sup></sup> and <sup>capad and gille<sup>(l)</sup></sup> Carangilly. I have also granted  
" to my aforepaid canons, that they, whenever  
" they please, may conduct the water which  
" is called Moylle<sup>(m)</sup> through my land to their  
" house through a large and sufficient <sup>by</sup> canal<sup>(n)</sup>  
" without the opposition or interruption of any  
" one.

" In Balrothery<sup>(o)</sup> one toft, and in the green<sup>x</sup> of the same  
" village, the whole of the land which belonged to Ra-  
" dulp<sup>h</sup> Carpenter.

" At Dublin without the walls of the city near <sup>i.e. College Green</sup> Hogges<sup>(p)</sup>  
" one messuage, as to them it has been divided and  
" assigned.

" In Cannought ten <sup>ploughlands</sup> carucates of <sup>x</sup>land of my land<sup>(q)</sup>  
" with all <sup>the</sup> appurtenances <sup>at</sup> a place <sup>to</sup> suitable and  
" <sup>better</sup> more adapted <sup>to</sup> for them. <sup>which may be altogether</sup>  
" I have also given and confirmed to my aforepaid



" Canons regular, as far as ~~it belongs to~~ (as patron)  
 " the churches of Kilbysky ~~and~~ Balgrothry, <sup>(or)</sup> Tyr-  
 " cloghir, Rathrow, <sup>(t)</sup> Glyn, <sup>(du)</sup> Croakeyn, and Killoe with  
 " their appurtenances.

" I have also given and confirmed unto them, the half  
 " carrucate of land, which belonged to Awardup, and  
 " the half carrucate of land which belonged to  
 " Henry, ~~the~~ (Prior), and the half carrucate of land  
 " which belonged to Robert Mayson, and the half  
 " carrucate of land which belonged to the wife  
 " of Thurstan, and the whole of the land which  
 " belonged to Aluredi Vigilis and others, viz that  
 " lying between the bridge <sup>(or)</sup> which is in the valley  
 " near the Cross of Saint Columba and the house  
 " <sup>we Tripternagh</sup> of the same Canon, for all which (lands) I have  
 " given to the aforepaid Awardup, Henry <sup>the</sup> Prior, &  
 " to the heirs of Robert Mayson and Agnes, the  
 " wife of Thurstan, and Aluredi Vigilis and  
 " the others an exchange <sup>ie such an exchange as they were willing to accept of</sup> according to their  
 " own wish.

" I have also granted and confirmed five carru-  
 " cates of my ~~land~~ Mow of Kil Kareth, together



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" with five carrucates of <sup>measur</sup> the adjacent <sup>one</sup> wood. I have  
" also given granted and confirmed unto them the  
" <sup>(the rights of)</sup> commonage throughout all <sup>the</sup> my woods in my lord-  
" ships to <sup>for</sup> all the fowl and all their swine, with  
" <sup>2 app to</sup> (the liberty of paunage) and to all their other  
" buildings and to all things necessary for  
" their use. I have also granted and confirmed  
" to my aforesaid Canons, one carrucate of  
" land which belonged to Robert de Stock-  
" <sup>lands</sup> ford-bord in the "territory" of Kilkisky  
" for which the said Robert, ~~according to~~  
" <sup>by</sup> his own wish, received an exchange, accord-  
" ing to the tenor of the charters and  
" writings between <sup>us</sup> them perfected.  
" I have also granted and confirmed unto  
" them the whole of the lands of Taurinus  
" ~~the~~ Carpenter in the <sup>lands</sup> territory of Kilkisky.  
" which the same Taurinus granted and by his  
" charter confirmed unto them (3)  
" I have also granted and confirmed unto

14/G/14/15 (5) them

& them <sup>one</sup> the half carrucate of land, the gift  
 of Radulphus de Trivers in the territory <sup>larger</sup>  
 of Kilbisky, <sup>a mill</sup> and the gift of Fulco Flan-  
 densis (Fulk Fleming) one mill, which  
 he granted <sup>to</sup> them with its pond, and with all  
 other appurtenances; <sup>the gift</sup> and of the gift of  
 Stephen Sagittarius (now Archer) one toft at  
 Balgrothy, which Robert of Bahdonegan holds  
 of them at the yearly rent of twelve denarii.  
 which his heir William of Curtelagh pays them.

I have also granted and confirmed unto them the  
 toft which belonged to Cadric Tector in the  
 village of ~~Kilbisky~~ <sup>Kilbisky</sup>; and in the plains of the  
 same village the whole of the land which belonged  
 to the same and which Felicia, the sister of Arnus  
 (a tenant), sold them and finally proclaimed  
 peaceable to them.

I have also granted and confirmed to my afore-  
 said canons that they may hold a free court of  
 all their <sup>tenants remaining</sup> men on their land remaining, and that  
 they, and all their <sup>people</sup> men throughout my land

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" may have free <sup>bartering</sup> buying and selling without  
" the exaction of any custom.

" I have also granted and confirmed to my afore-  
" said Canons and their successors that they may  
" have, receive, and for ever possess, freely and  
" quietly, and without the opposition of any  
" person, the toll <sup>custom</sup> of every thing purchased  
" and sold upon their lands wherever they may  
" have lands in Market towns throughout all  
" my lordship, <sup>(all which I give)</sup> as a proper, free and perpetual  
" donation. (a)

" I have also granted and confirmed to my foresaid  
" Canons, all donations of lands and alms of my <sup>(b)</sup>  
" feudal tenures, which have been reasonably granted  
" unto them or shall hereafter be granted.

" I have also granted and confirmed that  
" they, at the decease of their prior Henry  
" and of all <sup>others</sup> his successors, they may have a  
" free election of their Prior without having  
" or requiring the consent of any other person.  
" I have also determined, as far as it appertains

14/9/14/15(7) to.

"to a patron so to do, that should any <sup>or discord</sup> dissension  
 "arise among the canons (which God forbid) in  
 "electing the Prior, they may convoke, as it may  
 "be <sup>seem proper</sup> pleasing to them an assembly of religious <sup>or Ecclesiastical</sup>  
 "and other discreet men, by whose counsel and  
 "advice the election and appointments may  
 "proceed according to the will of God; and  
 "during the vacancy of the Priorship that  
 "the Canon may have a free and general  
 "management and administration of their  
 "house until the prior be appointed, no  
 "one on any occasion <sup>meddling</sup> interfering with them  
 "or their house.

"Wherefore

"Wherefore I wish and firmly <sup>give over to</sup> order all my heirs and  
 "people, <sup>in order</sup> that the often mentioned canons may the  
 "more freely attend to the salvation of my soul; and  
 "of <sup>to</sup> their own, and the souls of others by whose property they  
 "are supported, ~~they~~ <sup>(or be allotted)</sup> they may have, hold, and possess as  
 "a proper and perpetual donation well and in peace  
 "freely and quietly, innocently and honourably, all the

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" aforesaid churches with all their benefices, viz the  
" tythes of crops, hay, milles, gardens, fisheries, pigeon  
" houses and of all other things which are renewed  
" yearly, <sup>(c)</sup> and of which the holy church is accus-  
" tomed to demand <sup>and receive</sup> tythes; also all the aforesaid  
" lands with all their appurtenances and with all  
" the <sup>(d)</sup> men belonging to them, viz ~~than~~ meadows, pastures,  
" ~~lakes~~ <sup>morgages</sup> marshes, waters, currents, lakes, milles, <sup>in roads</sup> ways  
" paths, woods, plains, and with all the other liber-  
" ties aforesaid, and with all liberties and free  
" exemptions which <sup>to them</sup> I can give and confirm exempt,  
" free and quiet from tolls, carriage taxes, demands,  
" exactions, and from every peculiar <sup>(e)</sup> duty and exaction.  
" And that my heirs, who will perhaps inspect and  
" examine this my Charter of donation may consider  
" with what intention and disposition I have re-  
" ceived from my entire <sup>property</sup> acquisition gained by toil hunger  
" and want this little grant not only for myself but  
" for them who are to come, I leave to all the benefactors,  
" conceppors, maintainers and assiglers of this my grant  
" my perpetual blessing; but let the presumptuous  
" plunderers, violators and disturbers see and beware of the  
" of the danger impending over them lest they should  
" be deprived of this blessing.

A caution to his heirs

14/6/14/15(9)

These are the witnesses:

- Symon by the grace of God, Bishop of Meath,
- Radulfus Parvus (Petit), Archdeacon of same (see)
- Patricius Rossell, Clergyman,
- Thomas de Rossell,
- Willielmus de Rossell,
- Henricus de Rupe, Clergyman,
- Willielmus de Arcy
- Thurstanus de Sandall
- Manus Gardinerus
- Richard Rossell
- Lambert de Londeby
- Robert de Burnell
- Hugo the Chaplain (who wrote this charter)
- and many others (witnesses.)

These names with the exception of Londeby still exist in Meath.

Notes by Lord

- (a) Loghern, now Lough Cron lying close to Tigternagh
- (b) Killispy; so pronounced at this day, but generally written Killispy.
- (c) The church of Killispy occupied the site of the modern protestant church which was built by Lord Dunderrin at his own expence.
- (d) The Castle stood <sup>in Collingtown Currininstown</sup> about 2 roads to the <sup>s.</sup> west of the church. <sup>It is very correctly laid down on the Down Survey map\*</sup> The field on which it stood is called The Castle field, but no remains of it can be traced except ~~the~~ the site of one square tower. The calciata or causeway extended from the castle across a bog, but it could not be now traced with any certainty so as to warrant its being shown in the plan. A small piece of it setting off from the castle field in the direction of the church is still in existence but every vestige disappears in the middle of the <sup>boggy</sup> marshy tract lying between it and the church. The probability is that this tract was originally a <sup>large</sup> bog and that in the cutting of it down this causeway was removed.
- (e) There is still a mill <sup>and ancient pond and still race</sup> a short distance to the south of the head of this causeway, (which are all marked on the plan) and a trace of a road from the castle field towards this mill, of which not known.

\* The Down Survey shows a castle and church at Killispy, a castle at Collingtown and a castle at Grange.

14/9/14/15(11)

- (g) Not traceable.
- (h) Cunemuck, in the haugh of the swine. This name does not exist. It is probably the land now called Baronstown. Tradition says that wild hogs existed in the woods near Tristernagh about 100 years since.
- (i) This is certainly the Imy called in Irish Eithne.
- (j) Deloghmeegen - Dubloic moggan - the name does not exist. There is no lough in this direction nearer than Lough Glinn which lies to the north of the Eithne.
- (k; l) Two fishing weirs on the Eithne called Black weir and white weir. These names are forgotten.
- (m) (n) The <sup>deep</sup> <sup>called bócup na coppaid, i.e. via fructus</sup> channell of a stream which took its rise in the Commons of Lour and extended in the direction of Tristernagh is <sup>partly</sup> ~~yet~~ traceable. It presents all the appearance of its having been ~~not~~ artificially <sup>conveyed</sup> conducted in that direction. Tradition says that a mill stood on it at a locality called bogán and that the stream was <sup>in latter times artificially</sup> diverted from this channel into the Imy, but it is more probable that when this artificial channel became choked up with the deposits of the stream, the water returned to its original natural course into the Imy. The natives state that they have taken up considerable quantities of manure from this old millstream of the monastery, but they have no recollection of the period at which



the water ceased to flow through it.

(c) Balrothery, now Balrathery in the Co. of Dublin.  
An Inquisition taken in the 4<sup>th</sup> Eliz. found that  
the Prior of Tusternagh (Richard Tuile) was  
seized of the Rectory of Balrothery.

(p) often called also Hoggins Green. See Harris's history  
of Dublin.

(q) Sir Henry Piercy, the lord of the soil in 1082 remarks  
on this passage "This generous landlord, among  
other his large donations to this abbey, gives his  
" lands in Connaught without naming any partic-  
" ulars; whereas in all he had before given, he  
" is so curious as not content with barely naming  
" them, he describes their very meers and bounds;  
" advising with an ancient and judicious person  
" person what he could imagine might be the  
" reason hereof, he told me that this was usual  
" with great warriors and conquerors of old,  
" who confiding in their prowess and good fortune  
" oftentimes designed lands to such and such uses  
" even before they had conquered them; hence we  
" may conclude that Connaught was not yet conquered  
" when this abbey was founded, and whether our Con-  
" querors did or did not after this time make any  
" impression on Connaught I cannot learn; Sure

14/9/14/15 (13)

S

"I am that there appears nothing that our monks  
 " that were here ever had any possessions in  
 " Connaught, and of those that they had here,  
 " of which there remaineth record many were  
 " sold and aliened in their own time, and many  
 " were lost at the time of the suppression  
 " for want of due care or faithful dealings  
 " in those that were at that time by the  
 " crown employed so as neither the crown,  
 " nor any by or under the title thereof, ever  
 " held them to this day."

Collectanea vol. I. p. 72.

(r.) (s.) (t.) (u.) (v.) (w). Inquisition of Eliz. finds that the  
 Rectories of Chisternagh, Kilbixy, Killuckneward  
 Imper, Donagh, <sup>Rathcormick</sup> ~~Rathcormick~~, <sup>Stafarnan</sup> ~~Stafarnan~~, <sup>Leon</sup> ~~Leon~~ and  
 Le Kyn were appropriated to the prior of Tristernagh.  
 The difference between this and the list in the  
 Charter must have arisen from additional grants  
 and barter<sup>from made by the prior</sup>. Killoe is in the Co. of Longford.

(x) This must have been near the commons of Tour.

(y) q. Is KilKareth the present townland of  
 Kille in the parish of Kilbixy?

(7) That is Laurinus Carpenter <sup>one of the sub-chiefs of Constantine</sup> made a grant of 140  
land to the monastery, and Constantine as the  
chief lord and founder of the monastery  
consents to, and confirms this grant.

(a) That is, the customs of all the markets or  
fairs held on the lands which I grant them  
now or which my heirs or others may here-  
after grant; or should towns spring up, or  
fairs be established, on their lands they  
shall be entitled to all the toll and  
customs usually paid at such places.

(b) i.e. Those lands which his followers granted  
out of their shares of his territory.

(c) Things which are renewed yearly i.e. the produce of the  
earth, cattle, &c.

(d) This is curious! The inhabitants of the lands granted  
as well as the lands themselves!

(e) Secular g? whether secular can mean <sup>no!</sup> temporal? or  
does he intend to <sup>render</sup> make them exempt from all  
demands of the Bishops of Meath, and the parish  
or secular priests. The latter is the more probable  
and it will militate against <sup>the claim of</sup> Mr Beer ~~pioneer~~ who  
14/6/14/15 (15)

141 who is a secular not a regular priest, if he wishes to rest any of his claims on the evidence of this charter. Ab omni seculari officio <sup>et exactione</sup> means that these Canons regular were not obliged to perform any <sup>themselves (a privilege which they enjoy at this day)</sup> secular duty to perform nor to pay the secular priest for the performance of such duty in the district.

It appears however that the prior <sup>of Tristernagh</sup> paid four marks yearly proxies to the Bishop of Meath in 1530.

I am not aware that this Galfridus de Constantine is mentioned in the Irish annals by his Contemporary Cambrensis or by any of our other writers; and as far as I can remember we know nothing about <sup>him</sup> except what is derived from this charter. It would appear that this country afterwards fell into the possession of the Tuities who became great benefactors to the abbey of Tristernagh, and it strikes me that it may not be improbable that this Galfridus of Constantine was their ancestor;



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but this should not for a moment be assumed  
without the support of some historical docu-  
ment.

---

Other remarkable features in the parish of  
Kilbixy to be continued in the next letter.

---

The next curious feature to be noticed is O'Doherty's Bush  
and Camp, of which Sir Henry Piercy writes as follows:  
"In the demesnes belonging to this abbey (Thisternagh)  
"the great O'Dogharty with his followers & forces  
"out of Connaught to the number of six hundred  
"men, is said to have encamped at an hillock  
"where grew a thorn bush called by the natives  
"from his defeat O'Dogharty's Bush although  
"since that on another occasion it hath  
"another name, he having sat here for many  
"days was at last set upon by one of the  
"Queen's captains, <sup>whose</sup> name nor the peculiar  
"time I could not learn; after a brisk en-  
"gagement on both sides, some of O'Dogharty's  
"chief men falling, he gave ground & retired

14/6/14/15 (17) hoping

hoping to be received and protected by Nugent  
 as then tenant within the abbey walls; but Nugent  
 tho' it is said he had been kind unto him be-  
 fore seeing him fly and the Queen's forces  
 as at his heels denied him entrance; thus  
 as he and his men missing of this hope, made  
 as but very weak resistance, in so much that  
 as they were all miserably slain under the walls  
 as of the abbey few or none escaping; whether any  
 as found quarter I cannot find; the slain to a  
 as great but uncertain number were buried on the  
 as spot as daily experience shews us, when occasion is  
 as given of digging in our gardens any thing more  
 as than ordinary deep. This account tho' lame, is all  
 as that Order could learn of this action; and the  
 as great negligence of our forefathers, in trusting  
 as their actions not to writing but uncertain tra-  
 as dition is much to be lamented not only in  
 as this but in instances of greater concern, some  
 as whereof we may have occasion to mention here-  
 as after."

The bush here referred to is still in existence, but very nearly decayed being hollow in the centre up to the very top, and little of it remaining but the outer shell which however conveys vital sap to the branches. It is now shown on the plan.

This great O'Dogherty must have been <sup>Sir</sup> Shane the father of Sir Caher, but if so he must have come from the north not out of Connaught; but perhaps he had first gone to Connaught in the army of O'Donnell and ~~that~~ he was sent to search to look for prey.

There is still preserved in the College Library a poem enumerating all the plundering excursions performed by this Shane O'Dogherty but I fear that his Bard omitted this one into Trilernagh, where his people were so miserably slaughtered. Mr Petrie has had this poem copied, and I wish it would be perused to see if this attack upon  
14/9/14/15 (19)

Killex, or Tristernagh be mentioned in it.

There are some very obscure passages in the Charter of Tristernagh, of which I have attempted a translation without a Law Dictionary. I do not understand the meaning of cum libertate p annagii. He gives them access to the <sup>wild?</sup> hurd, & hoggs of all his woods, with the liberty of p annagium, and to all the other edificia. These passages are very obscure. I think I understand all the rest, though my translation, being too liberal, reads rough and un-Englishlike.

Thos. A. Larcum Esq.

Your obedient servant

Newpass

Chapman, October 24<sup>th</sup> / 37

John O'Donovan



Newpass, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1837.

Dear Sir, We examined the localities of Kibixy and Tripternagh on last Friday and Saturday as well as we could with the documents in our own and M<sup>r</sup>. Beer's possession, but I think much more could be done if we had traces from the Down Survey maps of these town-lands. <sup>It</sup> <sup>thinks</sup> would be very desirable that the descriptive remarks given of the respective parishes in that Survey should be transcribed (which could be very easily done) into the Field name Books, before they are sent to me, as the most remarkable remains in the parish are always enumerated.

Other features in the parish of Kibixy not mentioned in the last letter

1. St. Bridget's hospital. I find the following notice

14/9/14/15 (21)

(2) 47

of the town of Kilbixy and this hospital on a loose sheet of paper in the possession of the Rev. Mr. Beer, but he could not tell me what he copied it from.

Kilbixy } " This ancient town in the barony  
          } " of Moygaigh, and about a mile  
" west of Trilerna was adorned with a castle  
" erected by Hugh de Lacy in 1192, and a  
" monastic edifice or rather an hospital  
" built for the support of lepers, and hence  
" it acquired the appellation of the  
" Leper house of St. Bridget.

" A.D. 1413, on the 24<sup>th</sup> May divers indulgences  
" were granted to this Hospital for its better  
" support as appears by the Registry of  
" Milo Sweetman, Archbishop of Armagh.  
This sheet is endorsed " Lodges Rep<sup>ty</sup> Charles I.  
" Vol 2, No 6 in the Record Tower."

A considerable part of the walls of this Leper house is still standing and should be called St. Bridget's Leper House on the ord. map. It lies close to the Church to the west.

14/6/14/15 (22)

1448 (3)

2. St. Bixy's well, now called by the natives  
Bixkeagh's well. It lies in a <sup>marshy field</sup> well close to  
the Rector's house, and is still frequented  
by pilgrims as appears from the various rags  
of various colours hanging on the thorns over  
it. This is an eternal monument of the sanc-  
tity of the virgin Bixpeach, whose memory was  
formerly celebrated there as patron on the 28<sup>th</sup>  
of June. It is now shewn in the plan as  
St. Bixy's well to agree with the spelling of  
the parish named.

### 3. The Monastery of Tristernagh.

Mr Henry Pier describes this edifice as it  
stood in his time (1682) as follows.

" This monastery is built as many ancient  
" Collegiate churches have been, in the form of  
" a cross, having in the centre thereof a tower  
" or steeple raised on the four innermost  
" corners of the cross, from each of which  
" corners the wall as it riseth slopeth  
" off until the whole is brought into an  
" octagon; whence forward the tower riseth  
" about thirty foot in eight sides, in each

14/G/14/15(23) of

(4) <sup>149</sup> "of which there is a window. The wall of this  
a church and steeple, though without roof  
a time out of mind, remaining to this day very  
a firm and substantial."

Collectanea, vol. I, p. 71.

This monastery was torn down about forty  
years ago by Sir Pigot Pierp to obtain  
materials for enlarging the house of Tris-  
ternagh; and the peasantry of the neigh-  
bourhood state that the family have had  
no luck since, which appears so true, that  
in the absence of other causes, one would  
be inclined to think that the curse of  
Sir Galfridus de Constantine had descended  
upon them. The house of Tristernagh  
is in a most deplorable state of dilapida-  
tion, and is said to have suggested to  
Miss Edgeworth the first idea of her  
story of Castle Rackrent. "Rackrent"

A considerable part of the house was built  
on the arches of the monastery <sup>of which</sup> ~~and~~ some

14/G/14/15(24)



150 (5)  
of ~~the~~ stone steps are still to be seen, but no correct idea could be formed of the architecture of the part remaining as it is so mixed <sup>up</sup> with the modern houses, which is itself a ruin and if not an antiquity, is certainly a curiosity and perhaps a moral lesson. Three of the arches of the old building are however in good preservation, and shew that the edifice was in the Gothic style and of excellent masonry.

"Presumptuosi vero aufertores, violatores  
et contradictores ne benedictione priventur, periculum his imminens videant et caveant." !!

Charter

#### 4. The old Church of Templecross.

This beautiful Gothic church or chapel is thus described by Sir Henry Pierp.

"West hereof not a quarter of a mile is seated  
a small and well built Chapel now in  
good repair wherein hangeth one small bell  
which had the good fortune to escape the  
fury and rapine of the East men. In this  
chappel in our late bishop of Leath's days  
were ordained at one time eleven or more

14/9/14/15 (25) priests

(6) <sup>157</sup> priests and deacons and at another time six  
or seven; this place <sup>house</sup> supplieth the defect  
of our mother church Killybeg now out of repair.  
He then goes on to describe a sacred relic which  
belonged to this chapel, and called Corpnau  
which had been lost in Lough Cron and after-  
wards found <sup>on a hillock in the chapel, and</sup> poisig indigitantibus "in a large  
square stone having in the centre thereof a  
large square hole engraven about five inches  
deep". This stone is still in existence and  
was the pedestal of the cross from which  
the chapel was called Leampull na Croise  
ie the church of the cross. It is now <sup>shown</sup> on the plan.

The relic itself was nothing more than a  
box in which the priests were used to carry  
the sacrament or consecrated host, and  
hence the name Corpnau naom - Corpus Sanctum. It  
is said to be <sup>at present</sup> in the possession of the Piers  
family. It was thus described by Sir Henry  
in 1682. "The thing itself is no more than a  
small piece of wood shaped somewhat like a  
bible of the smaller volume laced about with

a lace of brass, and on some parts studded  
 a over on the one side with pieces of crystal  
 a all set in silver and here and there carved  
 a set or chased into the wood and fastened  
 a with nails, some brass and some silver; on  
 a the other side appears a crucifix of brass  
 a and whether it have any thing hidden within  
 a it is known I believe to no man living  
 a but it hath been <sup>held</sup> and is <sup>to this day</sup> in  
 a great veneration by all of the Romish persua-  
 a sion that live hereabouts."

Collectanea, vol. 1. p. 74.

A monument of the Pierp family within this Church exhibits the following inscription

Misericordias Dei  
 in eternum cantabo

1620.  
 Aetatis suae 51.

He was  
 probably  
 the father  
 of Sir  
 Henry  
 Pierp  
 the writer  
 of the note  
 in the  
 Collectanea  
 200

Hoc tegitur saxo dominus pietate refulgens Henricus Persus progener  
 stemmate claro adis Tristernach reparator incolae et hospes qui  
 instincto sacro tumultum sibi struxerat istum, postquam sacratas  
 ades renovaverit hanc adjunctamque viam stravisset, cetera  
 Christo commendans. Anima precibus succurrit lector.

Gulielmus Pierp pater Henrici <sup>per?</sup> Dux fortissimus ac liberalissimus  
 Mater vero Anna Haubt nobili genere ortae. Ejus uxor Jana  
 filia Tho: Johanne Cancellarii filij Regni, viri sapientissimi  
 et purissimi et Margaritae Pardon Splendidol loco natae.

(8) 153

or Gallows town

In Baile na croiche lying between Tristernagh and the Commons of Lour is to be seen a small square earthen fort, said to have been the site of the gallows belonging to the town of Killybeg, and between it and the church of Templecross there is a road called Boithrin na marbh, the little road of the dead said to have been the one along which the malefactors who were executed at Baile na Croiche were carried to be interred in the churchyard.

I believe that there is historical evidence to prove that Gallowses were originally erected at some distance from towns and not in them as is the custom at present.

It would be a curious historical inquiry to trace the origin of hanging) "funer strangulare" to its source that is, to discover in what nation that mode of execution had its origin. The Jews stoned to death, the ancient Romans crucified, the Irish <sup>spoiled</sup> prized (changed with gods) and the greater number of the continental nations in modern times execute

14/6/14/15(28)



154 (9)

by cutting off the head, differing only in  
the modus operandi. I think that the bar-  
baric custom of hanging originated with  
the Celts & the Welsh, Irish, Caledonians  
and the other Barbaric hordes of the same  
family, but I am not learned enough to prove  
that "choaking by the <sup>gad</sup> rope" was not used  
among the ancient Germans and other northern  
nations. } Close to the Gallones is the trace of a small  
building about 4 feet square called the  
"Sweating House" from which very one entering came out cured. (John O'Han)  
of the situation of CRÓ-ÍNN in Lough Ennell.

We have sufficient evidence to prove that these  
two islands in Lough Ennell now Lough Ennell  
called CRÓ-ÍNN and ÍNN CRÓINE, the former celebrated  
as the island on which Maelpeachlainn II:  
the last Irish monarch (conspicuous) of the  
southern Hy-Niall family died, and the latter  
as containing a church erected by the virgin Saint  
Crón surnamed of Muine Tablain, she having in  
all probability been born at a place of that  
name. O'Honor in his letters about CRÓ-ÍNN hesitates  
14/9/114/15 (29)

(10) 155  
in deciding about which is which, and is at one  
time inclined to believe that cró-inis and Inis  
Cróine are one and the same island. But I have  
not such hesitation, I insist that Inis Cróine never  
was nor could be made cró-inis, nor vice versa,  
but that there is every evidence that they are  
two distinct islands retaining their ancient  
names pure and uncorrupted to this day - a fact  
which could be proved on oath before the Royal  
Society.

We have the testimony of all the Irish annals  
that King Maelseaghlain died on Cró-inis  
in Loch Linninn, and Maelseaghlain adds  
that this island was near his palace of Dun-  
na-sgiath, and we learn from Mac Firbis's  
pedigrees of the Irish Saints <sup>(p. 752)</sup> that a virgin  
Crón had her establishment on Inis Cróine in  
Loch Linninn. Now it is a fact that there are two  
islands in Loch Ennell retaining these names  
the one at the west and the other at the east  
side of the lake; the former is called cró-inis in Irish  
and 'Cormorant island' in English and lies directly op-  
posite Rath-an-deirín, which was beyond any doubt

14/6/14/15 (30).

loc aīnīn rān  
rān mīde.



Dūrran mār eāī ā Dún na rīač!  
Mac Cosie

(12) <sup>1461</sup> the Dun-na-sgiath of King Maelseachlainn, and the latter <sup>incha</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>1117</sup> Cpóine, insula Crona, and lies at the east of the lake opposite Belvidere Park. To say a word more on this subject would be burlesque upon reasoning.

The parish of Dysart lying to the west of this lake is not Disert Mocholmoe as Archdall makes it but Disert Maeltuile as can be proved from the tradition in the country and the Annals of the Four Masters.

It surprises me very much that the poet and historian of Ireland Thomas Moore calls not only Maelseachlainn II, but even Maelseachlainn I, who flourished in 843 by the surname O'Melaghlín; he should have known that the family was named after him, and that he could not be named after himself. The O'Melaghlíns took their name after Maelseachlainn II and it is silly of course to call Maelseachlainn I by a surname which his descendants assumed.



162 (13)

some centuries after him. Cambrensis committed  
the same error by calling the King who  
crushed Toigtesing O'machlachlain, but  
Cambrensis thought he bore the same name  
which his great descendant <sup>did</sup> had in his  
own time.

It was  
Lanigan's opinion ~~that~~ that the King Maelseachlainn  
II. died in the monastery of Inis Angin in  
Lough Ree, but there is no evidence that he  
died in a monastery at all, and it is much  
more probable that he died in his own  
cottage - for there is no account of a monas-  
tery ever having existed on Cro-inis.

Another glaring error committed by our writers  
is that Maelseachlainn II. lived at Tara and  
was attacked there by Brian Boru. Val-  
lancey has attempted to prove this and  
Moore has not seen the error! All which  
shows that Irish literature and topography  
are not yet sufficiently developed for any  
person to undertake writing a correct his-  
tory of Ireland.

14/6/14/15 (33)

(14) <sup>163</sup>  
In the parish of Portloman in the Barony of  
Mayaghel there is a townland called Bail  
rath at present but in an Inquisition temp.  
Jac I. Balrathnaplee which means Rath town  
of the way or pass. It is my opinion that  
the ancient Slighe Asail, a via Regia  
which anciently existed in Mayaghel ran  
in this direction and gave name to this  
townlands.

The seat of the <sup>in Portloman</sup> Nugents, mentioned in O'Flaherty's  
letter about that parish, is mentioned by  
Usher: "From <sup>St.</sup> Lomanus Port Lomain the <sup>appellatum</sup> town  
of the Nugents in Westmeath, received its  
appellation ~~and~~ in which the memory of  
that Saint is still venerated. Besides the  
Loman who was <sup>they</sup> first bishop of Lym in  
East Meath and the nephew of our great  
Patrick there were two others of the name  
more celebrated among us, of whom the one  
was <sup>(styled)</sup> Loman of Loch Gile and the other  
Loman of Loch Uair."

Usher: Primordia pag. 966

citante Colgano in Actis  
Sanctorum p. 363.

14/G/14/15 (34)

The very conspicuous hill or mountain of Fpeshindyn  
 (lying in the same parish) which I now view from  
 this window is celebrated by the Irish annalists  
 and Bardic writers as the site of many battles  
 as far back as the year of the world 5084  
 it is stated that the monarch Eochy chru  
 was burned on it by Sheemall. In the year  
 of Christ 501, Triacha, the ancestor of the  
 Uageoghengans was defeated at it by  
 Failge Barry the ancestor of the Honors  
 Faly. In 630 the two sons of Aidus Slaine  
 (the monarch) were killed at Loch & Rethin  
 near Freamhainn by Connell Guithblinn.

This loc speirn is now called Lough Drin and  
 lies about a mile to the east of Loch Hair.  
~~The~~ Other notices of Freamhainn are <sup>to be found</sup> at the  
 years <sup>704</sup> and 792, but they are of little importance.  
 In 1430 the celebrated Owen O'Neill chief  
 of the northern Hy-Niall family, marched  
 into Meath and pitched his camp on Freamhainn,  
 and the chief of the South of Ireland repaired  
 to meet him to be employed by him in the

(16) 165  
year in which he was then engaged with  
his English and Irish enemies. on this  
occasion he burned Kilbixy and overran  
Westmeath with fire and sword until  
at length the Baron of Delvin,  
the Plunketts, the Herberts, and all  
the other English families of West-  
meath offered him his own demands  
for sparing their country.

This hill is now cultivated and studded  
with <sup>corn</sup> stacks to the very top; so that every  
trace of its monuments (if any existed) are  
in all probability destroyed. There appears  
to be a small tumulus on its top.

This delay is ominous!

your obedient servant

John Donovan



**END**

**14 G 14/16**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from  
Lieut. W. E. Deloss Broughton of the Royal Engineers, with notes by John Lyons of  
Ludistown, concerning Cormorant Island in Co. Westmeath.**

**Lyons, John**

**Broughton, W. E. Deloss, Lieut.**

**November 1837**

**4 p.**

**18.2 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 156-159.**

New York,

New York 2nd

Nov. 27.

Nov. 27. 1837.

Dear Sir

I hope you will excuse the liberty I am taking in writing to you but being anxious to obtain some from them

Information relating to a locality in your neighborhood connected with the Pednace Survey. I trust will please my excuse.

There are <sup>not any</sup> very few persons near me who understand the Irish language further than to speak it - I do not know one who writes or reads it in the Gaelic character - as far as I can find out from those with whom I have conversed respecting the subject of your communications it is called Croinch

There is an Island Cróine.  
in L. Inverness lying Cró - Cro has various significations in  
opposite the old Castle and Fort  
14/6/14/16(1)

15<sup>th</sup> of Kilcooley in the Irish language as  
 the Puck of Dyrast Death, a flock, chic  
 now called "Cormorant" Dren - valour, a hint  
 Island, and a cottage - a fortrefs  
 containing the and as an adjective  
 Ruins of some close, or narrow -  
 building now Inc or Inca is an  
 crumbled into a Island -  
 fragments maps, there is some old story  
 Could you ascertain from the of a King having been  
 old Inhabitants drowned there "long ago"  
 in your neighbourhood hence it might be  
 what this Island the Island of Death  
 is called in Irish? a from the old building  
 Old Doyle who if it was a matter of  
 lives at Lilliput defence - the island  
 has stated that it of the Castle, or Castle  
 is always called Island -  
 Cro-incha in the (Old Doyle is dead)  
 Irish language & I am told you will  
 that Cormorant find the entire  
 Island is a history of the Kings  
 modern name.  
 So all the old

14/G/14/16(2)

158  
 Men who speak Death in the second  
 Irish about you volumes of Keating  
 agree that that History of Ireland  
 Cro-incha or but there it not -  
 Croinska is the  
 ancient name of  
 this Island?  
 Did you ever hear  
<sup>description of</sup> shape, building it no.  
 was? whether Castle  
 or Monastery?  
 Croinska being a Ironed pine it as  
 name of historical Cro inch - only  
 Interest. I am anxious Cormorant Island  
 if it can be proved cannot even be  
 to be the Irish name called the modern  
 of Cormorant Island name -  
 to give it on the From  
 Ordnance Map as John Lyons  
 an alias name; in order that <sup>the</sup> ancient Ludistown  
 as well as modern  
 name may be  
 preserved by our work  
 which we endeavor

14/G/14/16(3)



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to render as complete  
as possible. —

If you could obtain  
this Information for  
me in the course of  
a few days I should  
feel particularly obliged  
as it is required for  
publication. — Again  
apologizing for the  
trouble I may give  
you, believe me  
Yr. much obliged

H. S. Oliver, Major Genl  
27th Regt Engs  
Nov 7. 1857.

14/6/14/16 (4)

**END**

**14 G 14/17**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Newpass, Co. Westmeath, in which he outlines his most recent findings regarding the history of sites of topographical and antiquarian interest in Castlelost, Portnaghangan and Rathconnell, Co. Westmeath.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)**

**25 October 1837**

**16 p.**

**Pages vary between 23.3 and 23.6 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 166-181.**

Newpass October 25<sup>th</sup> 1837

Dear Sir,

I have now settled the names of  
the part of this County which O'Conor has  
traversed. <sup>25 books.</sup> I shall take notice of some places  
which he has omitted. as not having the  
extracts before him

In the parish of Castlefort there is an ancient  
fort called Rath-kinin, which probably  
received its name from the Firbolgan chief  
who according to the Dimpunching placed  
his residence at Lach-kinin now Lough Connell.

In the parish of Portnashangan there is a  
Bridge called Muilleann Odhrain Br. from  
a mill which was celebrated in a song and  
of which there are still some remains. This  
is most probably, if not certainly the mill  
mentioned by Tigernach so early as the  
yearly 652, as the place where the two

14/9/14/170) sons



167 of the monarch Hugh <sup>Sidus</sup> Blaine were killed  
in a fray which took place between them  
and the miller MacLoran.

Díe bleice an dóimín indre  
for do rinneadh a maraíodóir.

Ligh Farannain now Liffordham is men-  
tioned by Mac Firbis as the seat of a  
branch of the Nugent family whose pedigree  
he gives as follows:

"The family of Ligh Farannain."

Laurence, the son of

Pierce, who was the son

Nicholas

William oge,

William choise

Thomas

Gilbert, the Bastard

Sir Gilbert Nugent,

In the parish of Rathconnell lies the townland  
 of Baile Riabhach mentioned by the same  
 genealogist as a seat of the Nugents  
 "The family of Baile Riabhach."

James, the son of  
 |  
 Edward, who was the son of  
 |  
 Thomas  
 |  
 Edward  
 |  
 Richard  
 |  
 William  
 |  
 Nicholas  
 |  
 Thomas  
 |  
 Gilbert, the Bastard  
 |  
 Sir Gilbert Nugent.

The legend found by Honor at Rathconnell  
 is thus told verbatim by Sir Henry  
 Percy who wrote in 1682.

14/9/14/17(3)

" This place hath its name from an ancient  
 a leader of the Irish nation called O'Connell  
 a Carnagh, <sup>rem.</sup> who here in some age of the world  
 a by I know not whom, was defeated, the memo-  
 ry of which action lives only in the name  
 a of the place, for Rochonell, being interpreted  
 a imports O'Connell's rout or defeat."

Collectanea. I. 98

He gives a long account of a battle which  
 took place here during the war of 1641.

Connell <sup>victorious</sup> Carnagh (who was never called O'Connell)  
 was one of the heroes of the Red branch.  
 There is an Irish historical tale entitled  
 Deapz pudap Chonall ceapudg. I wish Mr. Curry  
 would read it to see if this place in Westmeath  
 is mentioned. According to the (Dinnseanchus)  
 he was defeated on another occasion at  
 Cuachain in Roscommon; ~~which~~ whence he  
 fled through and on the occasion gave  
 name to Moyburg, but was overtaken at



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Bellacommel in Breifny where he was killed.  
Mapard a dinn for an de oz anfu.

Killyman in the parish of Rathcommel is mentioned by Mac Turbise as the seat of William Boy Tuiter whose pedigree he traces up follows:

William Boy of Cill fhiandain, son of  
Prickeen ne Becker, who was the son of

Edmond

Andrew

Jeffrey

Thomas

James

John

Richard

Richard surnamed "of the battles"

Thomas

Maurice

Richard More

John Tuiter son of the

King of Denmark.

14/9/14/17(5)



In the parish of Church lies the townland of Dundonnell containing the ruins of a castle which is mentioned by Mac Firbis as a seat of a branch of the Daltons, and also the townland of <sup>Balrath</sup> Baile an Rath, another seat of the same family. He gives their pedigrees as follows:

"The Daltons of Dundonnell"

Henry, Richard & Robert

Edmond

Henry

John

Pierce

Maurice

Pierce Duff

Philbuck

Nicholas

Philip "an duin"

Sir Walter Dalton

the first of the name that came to Ireland.

"The family of Baile an Rath"

Henry, Edmond, Garrett Duff & James

Richard

Maurice

Pierce Duff

Philbin

Thomas

William

Maurice

Maurice

Pierce Duff

Theobald

Maurice oge

Maurice

Styler

Pierce Duff, &c. ut supra.

14/6/14/17(6)

1470

Twites. from Mageoghegan's translation of  
the Annals of Clonmacnoise.

AD. 1210 The English Bishop that was Depite, <sup>and from the 4. g. steps</sup> and Richard Twite  
founded a stone castle in Athlone, wherein there was a tower  
of stone built, which soon after fell and killed the said  
Richard Twite with eight Englishmen more.

1240 There arose great dissensions in Ulster against the  
Earl of Ulster this year. Richard Twite with a  
company of 3000 soldiers went to assist him.

1261 O'Reignie killed his own Landlord mac Coghlan for  
which cause Richard Twite caused O'Reignie to be  
hanged drawn and quartered for the fact.

1268. Meloghlyn mac Coghlyn was killed at Hillideaghlan  
by Richard Twite.

1273 Richard Twite the worthiest baron in all  
Ireland died.

1280 John Twite was killed by his own son David, and by  
the son of Gilletkwegyn the excommunicate O'Kennedy. The son  
was taken.

1288 Richard Twite, a noble and honourable Baron,  
was slain in an engagement with the O'Melaghlin's & Foxes &c.

1408. The King's son with his forces marched to the Province  
of Leinster, Hodgins Twite, a man of great worth was lost  
of that hostings.

From Mageoghegan's Annals of Clonmacnoise  
14/6/14/17(?)



1414. John Hanly, the King of England's Deputy, assisted  
by James Tuite and the King's party, plundered —  
Niall, the son of Hugh O'Higgins in Umeach,  
Henry Dalton however plundered Tuite and the  
King's party, and by way of reprisal gave O'Higgins  
people a Cow.

Annals 4. Masters.

<sup>present</sup> The representative of the Tuile lives at  
~~Sannagh and is a Baronet.~~ near Athlone  
and is ~~the~~ a Baronet. The Tuile of Sannagh  
is a younger brother.



D. Daltons.

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AD

1379 Philip Mac Kivale Dalton, Lord of the Baronie of Rathconrath in Westmeath, died.

1386. Neale Mc Brochogrie age Mageoghegan was killed by the Daltons.

1398. Morish Mc Ogers Dalton was killed by Montagh age Mageoghegan and by Bryan O'Connor of Affailis son.

1403. John Boy, the grandchild of Johnnyn Burke was killed by the O'Kellys of Blann-vick-neoyne and by the Sons of Robert Dalton.

1408 Mils Dalton was killed by his own brother, and the Race of Cahall Offerall killed his son, and took his Cartto too.  
From Mageoghegan's Annals.

1328. The English sustained a signal defeat from Mageoghegan 3500 of them being slain in the contest together with some of the Daltons and the son of the proud knight.

Ann. 4 Masters.

14/9/14/17(9)



1373. William D'Alton and the Sheriff of Meath were slain by the tribe of Hy-Fiacha (i.e.) the Malgeoghigans and by O'Melaghlin.

1379. Philip, the son of Nicholas, head of the D'Altons and Lord of Westmeath, died.

1386. Niall, the son Buncogy oge Malgeoghigan, heir to the chieftainship of his own tribe was slain by William D'Alton and his son.

1408. Myles D'Alton was slain by his own near relatives, and his son was afterwards slain and his Castle demolished by the descendants of Cathal O'Serrale.

1414. Henry D'Alton plundered James Thite and the King's party.

1429. O'Boffey (Melaghlin Mac an Chlopaigh) was slain by Edmond the son of Robert D'Alton.

Ann. 4. Masters.

The head of the Daltons is now very poor he lives with his family in the old castle

\* The Four Masters record that Murethach was attacked by O'Kelly in 1472 and that he was opposed and defeated on the occasion by the English of Wickinacath viz the Tintes, Pettis, Synnells, Dargys and Pulling.

Loughagar in the parish of Rathconnell is more probably the seat of the branch of the Nugents mentioned by Mr. ac. Firbis than the Loughgar in the parish of Street as I stated in a former letter.

It appears from a pedigree of a branch of the Nugents given by Mr. ac. Firbis that the old castle<sup>\*</sup> of Shanylea belonged to the Tintes.

" Laurence (Nugent) had by the daughter of  
" Maurice Robert William Thomas Roe,  
" Edmund, Oliver, Walter and Richard; and  
" William and Thomas Roe by the daughter  
" of Edmund Tinte of Murethach."

In the parish of Killucan lies the <sup>quondam</sup> celebrated town of Rathghnair now Rathwire, but of which according to Honor's letter, scarce a vestige is now traceable. It was described, by Sir Henry Piers in 1682, as follows:

" Rathwire is the first place of note that presents  
" itself to our view, and that at a distance if

14/6/14/17(11) you

paying  
" you come from the east, situate in the Barony  
" of Farbell on an high rising grounds, built  
" as of design not to overlook but to use  
" the whole country founded (as tradition  
" goes) by Sir Hugh (De Lacy, who was  
" one of the first English Conquerors,  
" and fixed in this country in or very  
" near the reign of King Henry the  
" Second. It seems by what to this day  
" remains of the ruins to have been a  
" strong well built fort for the manner  
" of building at that time, capacious  
" and of good receipt, now remain only  
" some portions of the outwardly and  
" heaps of rubbish.

" Fruit Plum et ingens

" Gloria Dardanida

" Virg

" Very near this but in a valley behind it  
" is seated Killuckin, the largest of all  
" the

14/6/14/17 (12)



1478

a parish churches I have seen in this county.  
a It beareth some proportion with the  
a mind not the body of the founder  
a (for Sir Hugh was a small timbered man)  
a and not only so but with the parish itself  
a which is commensurate with the barony.  
a For the Barony of Farbill and the  
a and the parish of Killuckin are terms  
a synonymous\*. The Church hath a  
a large and well built steeple or tower  
a in the west end thereof, wherein  
a hang to this day two or three fair bells.  
a which have had the good fortune to es-  
a-cape the rapine and fury of the late  
a wars. On the east end is a fair large  
a chancel raised almost to the height  
a of the body of the church; the whole  
a well roofed and shingled, on the  
a north wall of the Chancel at the  
a east end stands a fair handsome  
14/6/14/17 (13) Castle



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a Castle, now without roof; the mansion  
 a house, I suppose, of the vicar or  
 a Curate; adjoining to this church are  
 a two or three Chappels, whereof, one  
 a called Saint Mary's is a large one  
 a but without roof, all built in af-  
 a ter ages for burial places for  
 a divers of the best families of the  
 a Country; not far from the Church yard  
 a ~~from~~ on the south of it, stands  
 a what is left of the ancient par-  
 a sonage house, a fair large building,  
 a according to the ancient mode of  
 a building, it is to this day proh pudor!  
 a waste without stick or stone after a  
 a thus long settled and well-established  
 a peace. This seems indeed an universal

14/6/14/17(14)

malady

"malady, and I take it to be one of  
"the many inconveniencies that follow  
"non-residence (an evil too frequent  
"among our clergy) which certainly here  
"in a parish so large, and of very good  
"revenue is hardly excusable."

Collectanea I. 61.

It is highly probable that this castle  
or town of Rath Ghnaire, was erected  
by Sir <sup>Hugh</sup> De Lacy as Pierp collected  
from oral tradition in 1682. It  
appears from the Annals of the  
Four Masters that it was an  
English Irish station so early  
as the year 1209<sup>th</sup> when "the King  
"of England arrived in Ireland

14/9/14/17(45) with

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2700 ships and landed in Dublin  
" He thence set out with his nobles  
" to Carrickfergus and laid siege to it  
" until it was surrendered to him. He  
" then went to Rath-Guare whither  
" O'Conor came to meet him and de-  
" livered him hostages." He,  
Mageshegan plundered and burned this  
town in 1450.

What ruins have been shewn on the  
plan at this place?

I am working like a mauler for 14 hours  
a day, and will soon be done. I am very  
cautious to connect history with the  
localities while the documents are  
before me

Your obedient  
servant  
John O'Donovan  
14/G/14/17(16)

**END**



**14 G 14/18**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Newpass, Co. Westmeath, in which he refers to sites of topographical and historical interest, located within the parishes of Killucan and Kilbride, Co. Westmeath.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)**

**25 October 1837**

**8 p.**

**23.4 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 182-189.**

Newspass October 25<sup>th</sup> 1837.

Dear Sir, I find that Millerstown in the parish of Kellucan is called in the Down Survey Mylerstown, and I incline to think it the Baile Maoluis<sup>†</sup> of the Irish Documents. Can Mr. Petrie inform me where Meyler, the son of Henry II fixed his residence in Ireland? or whether he left a family? I remember that he is mentioned and his person described by his cotemporary Cambrensis, but I do not recollect whether or not that <sup>historian</sup> mentions what part of Ireland he took up his residence in, or <sup>that, whether</sup> left a family after him. The Irish Annals make frequent mention of the Mac Maoliers, whom I always took to be the descendants of the Meyleries

14/9/14/18 (1)

† no: it is Mylerstown in the County of Kildare.

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of Cambrensis. Perhaps I am wrong. Are the  
 Mac Maolers, the present chieftains of Ireland?  
 In that part of the parish of Durrow which  
 lies in this county is situated the townland  
 of Ros Deald, which is mentioned in the  
 Book of Ballymore and in the Annals of  
 the Four Masters, as a place at which  
 a most wonderful phenomenon appeared  
 in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. A Clai-theach of fire  
 appeared at night, and round it flew, and  
 on the top of it perched a number of birds,  
 and among them appeared a bird of extra-  
 ordinary size, under whose wings the smaller  
 ones, scared with at the sight of the  
 glowing pillar of fire, hid <sup>their heads</sup> themselves.

These birds, after having amused themselves  
 with this fiery pillar (as butterflies flutter  
 around a lighted candle) were observed

14/6/14/18(2)

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by the astonished inhabitants to fly from  
it suddenly and to perch on the branches  
of the oaks of a neighbouring <sup>Roburum</sup> Dairbhre  
of which the large bird tore the largest  
tree from the roots; after which he ~~lifted~~  
seized upon a greyhound and flying with  
him to a sublime height, let him suddenly  
drop down and killed him! Soon after,  
these birds (devils to be sure) and the  
fiery pillar disappeared!

(quoted from memory)

This phenomenon is set down in the Book  
of Ballymote as one of the thirteen wonders  
of Ireland and referred to by John Dalton Esq  
the ablest antiquary in Ireland, as a proof  
that the round towers of Ireland were fire  
pillars!

It was a storm of lightning? It was not Aurora  
Borealis. Perhaps it was nothing more than  
arick of fuzge hay or corn which took fire  
14/6/14/18(3) and



185 and around which the birds of the wood fluttered?  
Birds generally flock around a fire, but the  
oak torn from the roots would seem to  
indicate a storm. The greyhound was knocked  
dead by lightning? The words clocteadic terme however  
are very impressing to those who wish to be-  
lieve in fiery pillars!

Some fiery phenomenon made its appearance  
which, to a people unacquainted with the  
laws of nature and the nature of optical  
delusions, seemed worthy of being recorded among  
the wonders of Ireland. <sup>is all which</sup> What can be said  
about it.

The conspicuous hill of Craghan lying in the  
parish of the Pass of Kilbride and now called  
Crachain Laighean, or the Lagenian Craghan  
to distinguish it from the Connacian and  
other Craghans ~~is said by the B.~~ was an-  
ciently called Crachain Bri Ele, and

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is stated by the ancient Irish writers to  
have taken its name of Bri Eile from  
Eile, the daughter of Eochy Feileach.

"This King had a daughter Eile, who  
became the wife of Fergal, the son of  
Machach. From her Bri Eile  
in Leinster is named. After the  
death of Fergal she became the  
wife of Eragin, the son of Niall  
one of the Ernaing (of Munster) and  
brought forth to him Mata, the fa-  
ther of (the celebrated) Dilill."

Book of Lecan fol. 175, b. a. col. 6

This mountain is mentioned in the annals of  
the Four Masters at the year 1385.

"Morogh O'Honor Lord of Offaly and the  
Rinel O'Frachach (i.e. the Mageoghegan)  
defeated the English of Meath at the  
causeway of <sup>Doon</sup> Cruachan Bri Eile; Nugent  
of Meath, Scornach and his son, and a countless

14/9/14/18(5) number

18<sup>th</sup>

10 of the other nobles and plebeians of the English  
 were slain: Masters.

It is stated in the Irish Calendar that  
 an Irish saint had his church in this  
<sup>viz by connecting by Ely with a cell</sup>  
 mountain. & wish it to be inserted into  
 the extracts for the Kings County that  
 we may identify it when examining the  
 same and antiquities of that County.

In the parish of Mullingar is situated the  
 townland of Baile na mBreathnach or  
 Walsington mentioned by Mac Firbess  
<sup>of a branch</sup>  
 as a seat of the family of Nugent  
 whose pedigree he traces as follows:

- "The family of Baile na 7 Nicholas  
mBreathnach 8 Thomas  
 1. Edward son of 9 Gilbert, the Bastard  
 2. Garrett, who was son of 10 Sir Gilbert Nugent.  
 3. Lamailin  
 4. James  
 5. Richard  
 6. William

14/G/14/18(6)

In the same parish lies Ballina which is 188  
mentioned 1553.

"Niall, the son of Felim O'Melaghlin (son  
of Clan-Colman, a successful and warlike  
man, and of his years the best among his  
tribe) was treacherously slain by Imelagh-  
lin (Teige Roe) at Bel-an-atha as  
he was returning from the Court of  
Mullingar. In revenge of this murder  
of Niall, the Baron of Delvin and  
the English of Athlone plundered  
Magh Corrain (O'Melaghlin's territory) and  
took his castle of Cluain Corrain and  
Newcastle and expelled O'Melaghlin himself."

Connell MacCarthygan referring to this place  
states that it is the Ballina near Mullin-  
gar.

In the same parish lies Belaglass, mentioned by  
the same Annalists at the year 1450-  
14/G/14/18(7)



"Mageoghagan waged war with the English of Meath, <sup>spurned their towns</sup> and laid their country waste with fire and sword. The English of Meath and the Duke of York came with the standard of the King of England to Mullingar, and the son of Mageoghagan came the next day with a large body of Cavalry to Bel-atha-glas to oppose them; but the English having held a Council, thought it advisable to make peace with him."

4 Masters

The first mention of Mullingar in the Annals is at the year 1306 when it is mentioned as an abbey. It took its name from a mill which stood on the River Brosnagh and the site of which is still said to be known. It signifies Carr's Mill, but who that Carr was, whether an English or an Irish man we can only now conjecture in the absence of historic evidence. It is said that the head town of the County <sup>was</sup> first ~~stood at~~ <sup>at</sup> Kilsney. Your obedient servant  
Edmondson

**END**

**14 G 14/19**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Newpass, Co. Westmeath, concerning the use of 'indigenous trees and plants' in Irish placenames.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)**

**30 October 1837**

**8 p.**

**22.7 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 190-197.**

RIA

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Newspass October 30<sup>th</sup> 1837,

Dear Sir,

I have been working at the ancient territories since I wrote last, and have succeeded tolerably well in pointing out their limits but I have not evidences enough. I sat up last night till 2½ of clock studying the extracts to see if I could find any evidence of what ancient Irish territory or territories was or were formed into the Barony of Rathconath, but I failed. Is there no Irish or English document which shews what Irish family or families were dispossessed by the Daltons? Until this be ascertained, it <sup>will be</sup> impossible to to shew what the triocha chead name of the Barony of Rathconath was.

from memory  
It would be very difficult to give any list thing like a perfect <sup>list</sup> of the names of trees and shrubs which enter into the names of places in Ireland. The best plan would be to look over  
14/6/14/19(1)



191 If the Indexes of the Counties that are finished and to take out the names of townlands that are evidently derived from trees. In doing this however considerable skill is required, as the name of a bird might be easily mistaken for that of a tree, as Tullyneagh which might be the hill of the raven, or the hill of the birches.

I shall here give an imperfect list from memory of names of townlands and localities, which certainly derived their names from indigenous <sup>trees</sup> plants.

Elm:

1. Greggannalivan <sup>near Athlone</sup> greagan na leimín, the rocky hillock of the elm. Many other places will be found into which <sup>grow</sup> the leimín or pleimín, elm, enters.

Oak

2. Ard na darragh, ard na dupac, hill of the oak. you will also find in the Indexes various other townlands into which na dupac enters. In the County of Fermanagh, which I found to abound in names called from trees you will find a village called after a dapóg or ancient Oak tree which stood at it.

Birch

3. Beagh in Irish beiteac is the name of countless townlands, and means Birchy, or Land

14/6/19(2)

abounding in birch. You will also find  
na beice of the birch forming the latter part  
of Countess townlands, and especially in Fermanagh

Hazle 5. Collmore, Coll mór or Call mór signifying large hazle  
is the name of a townland lying near Magherfelt  
in the County of Derry. You will also meet  
various townlands called <sup>and</sup> Dym <sup>&</sup> Coill, hill or  
ridge of the hazle, and <sup>&</sup> Coill of the hazle is  
a very common termination.

Alder 6. Farnagh, fearnach is the name of a townland  
in Westmeath, <sup>near Moate</sup> on which stands the ruin of  
O'Melaghlin's Castle. It signifies Alder-  
producing. na fearna or na fearnóige, of the alder  
and na bfeárnóg of the alders is a termination  
of constant recurrence.

Yew 7. Rossinure. Rop an tubáir. point of the yew occurs  
in Fermanagh, and an tubáir <sup>taxus</sup> and na n-tubáir <sup>taxum</sup> are  
common terminations. See the extracts for Long  
<sup>or Roscommon</sup>ford for a list of the celebrated ages trees  
of Ireland which were prostrated in the reign  
14/6/14/190 of

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as aidus Slaine in the seventh century, as  
 bile topdan, cnaobí dárín, Eó Ropa, &c. There are several  
 places in Ireland called iubair from <sup>large</sup> solitary  
 yew trees as iubair spnaib, iubair cín tñágh, &c.  
 See Loughmure in Dougal which is so called from an island  
 on which some yew trees are still growing.

8. The Ash. Funshinagh and Uphinagh occur  
 frequently as the names of townlands. You  
 will also find na puinnceoirge and na bpuinnceoirge as  
 common terminations.

9. The White Thorn

Bally-Ard-Drum-na-skeagh - town-  
 hill, ridge of the white thorn, are very common.  
 There is an aged thorn in the townland of  
Loughanstown, <sup>near Rathowen</sup> called pcericeob, which the natives  
 believe to be the waul of Ireland.

10. Black Thorn. Tullindreen, Dreenan, Dreenoge  
 occur frequently - <sup>as full names</sup> aspo na spuinnceoirge, <sup>spuinnceoirge</sup> of the Black  
thorn as terminations.

11. Holly. Ardachullion is common; and Cmthonnac  
 - a place of hollies, is found at Derry Sheridan near  
Lough Dreen. See Corquillen or Corcullion in Dawn.

14/6/14/19(4)



12, Gallow. Drumnafillagh is very common - and na parleagh is a very common termination. na parleog often occurs. I think that parleach is the Willow and its diminutive parleog the Sallow. See the story in Keating about Laura Loingsreach and the widows son. in which braithne the harper is said to have cut down the Saileach tree to make a new harp of it. 1944

13. The Elder or Rose trees.

Truim, Trom, and Troman, <sup>names for this tree</sup> will be also found in names of places.

14. The Apple tree, in Irish apán abail

Lipardavla occurs in Longford and Cuach abhla in Westmeath. na habla of the orchard occurs in Fermanagh.

15. The Quickenbeam or Rowan or wild mountain ash.

This is called by the Irish Cuopán, and there are thousands of places named after <sup>it</sup> as Truim a Chaorthagun, now Dumkeeran near Lough Allen.

16. <sup>The Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr</sup> (Ed) Dubourdieu, the author of the stat<sup>t</sup> accounts of Down and Antrim, attempted to persuade me that this is the ancient Irish ash: and that the tall stately ash was unknown 14/9/14/19(5) to



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ancient Irish. (If you look at one of my  
letters from Rathfriland you will see how  
I argued against him though I was then  
quite a young mountain ranger)

16. The Fir or Deal tree in Irish  $\text{ḡiúr}$  or  $\text{ḡiúr}$   
I found several bogs called  $\text{loc a ḡiúr}$  the  
Fir Lake from fossil fir, but I do not re-  
collect that I ever met a glen, hill or  
plain named from the Fir in its living  
state. (If you look at one of my letters  
from Dromore in the Co. Down, you will find  
a curious query proposed by Mr. Waring of  
Waringstown. He states that there was  
not a single Fir tree in Ireland in  
the reign of Charles II, and still that  
the Fir is found fossil in vast quan-  
tities in almost all the Irish Bogs.)

The names of Shrubs are too numerous to attempt  
a list of them from memory, but if you send  
me a list of them and also of the names  
of all the indigenous Irish trees from Keogh's

little Book on trees, I shall be able to <sup>196</sup>  
tell you whether or not I met with  
them in the names of places.

Please to let me know how O'Keefe is  
getting on in Kildare, and to ascertain  
for me what town in that County I  
can meet him <sup>or O'Conor</sup> before this and Saturday.

I expected to see Lord Westmeath here today  
but he passed through Rathven in a hurry,  
I sent him however a list of queries about  
Westmeath, which I hope he will answer.  
I hope you will be pleased with my disser-  
tation on the territories, which has cost  
me much labour and close application.

I acknowledge that I failed on one  
or two points, but I have laid a  
sure basis for future investigation; and  
if I can succeed in clearing up the  
history of the numerous family of O'By  
I shall think myself very fortunate  
14/G/14/19(17)

19<sup>th</sup> as rescuing from ~~all~~ the darkness into which  
Dr. O'Brien and others have thrown a very  
interesting portion of Irish family history.  
I shall be able to send you the accounts of  
the territories to-morrow or Wednesday.

your obedient humble  
servant

John O'Donovan

The weather is dreadful here.

14/6/14/19(8)

**END**



**14 G 14/20**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Newpass, Co. Westmeath, concerning the history and topography associated with the ancient lordships of Brawney, Muchaire Chuirne, Calree an Chala, Moycoran, Kinel Fiacha, Ui MacUais, Teffia, Feara Tulach, Feara Bile, Dealbhna Mor, Corca Raoigh and Feara Asuil.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)**

**31 October 1837**

**70 p.**

**Contains an illustration.**

**Pages vary between 22.8 and 23.3 cm. (letter)**

**22.5 cm. (drawing)**

**Pagination in original binding was 198-265;**

**Illustrations include ink sketch map of Co. Westmeath, indicating the boundaries of the ancient lordships and the lands held by the leading Gaelic families of the county and a trace map of lands in Co. Westmeath, indicating the location of lands held by the leading Gaelic families in the county.**

Newpass October 31<sup>st</sup> 1837.

Dear Sir, The next enquiry is to ascertain into what territories the County of Wiltshire was divided before the formation of baronies. To do this with certainty would require a long, patient, and laborious research, and the assistance of more ancient English law documents than I have at present before me. I shall, however, make the attempt and <sup>though may</sup> fail in some instances from want of sufficient evidence. I shall lay a sure ground work for others to work upon hereafter. I am at the same time satisfied that no one can ever bring the work to perfection except a person intimately acquainted with <sup>all</sup> the original Chish as well as with <sup>the</sup> English documents\*, and that there can be but little hopes of perfecting it till the Record Commissioners have completed their work. And I am so deeply impressed with these convictions that I shall make every effort to leave <sup>some account of the documents</sup> on record that are <sup>now</sup> and may be

\* That is able to connect the one with the other and the link is often so broken that it requires great skill now to fill up the chasm!

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hereafter

299 hereafter accessible for throwing light upon the history of the ancient Irish tribes and territories. The traditions formerly connected with our localities are fast fading away more and more every year, and the Irish language will be entirely lost in less than fifty years. <sup>hence</sup> If therefore we do not now record the glimmerings of tradition that <sup>remain</sup> exist, and connect them with genuine history, none will have the power to do so hereafter, and the topography and history of this noble but unfortunate island will for ever remain in a state of confusion and darkness from which future <sup>tho' ever so industrious</sup> investigators can never clear them. Proceed we then to our work.

## I. Brawney.

Beginning at the Shannon the next territory we meet is Upreáimaine now anglicised Brawney and called a Barony but in the Down Survey it is styled the territory of Brawney. It appears from the Annals of the Four Masters that O'Inganig <sup>and many other authorities</sup> tookographical name that O'Brien was the ancient Irish chief of this territory and his dependants retain who now anglicise the name O'Bryan retain a small portion of it to this day. Whether this territory was or was <sup>not</sup> anciently more extensive than the present barony which retains its name I have no evidence to prove. It appears from the geoghegan

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translation of the annals of Clonmacnoise that it contained the castles of Cuagan and Barraha which still exist, and <sup>with the exceptions of the names</sup> are almost the only <sup>direct</sup> evidences now remaining to prove its position and extent.

Other <sup>collateral</sup> evidences can however be derived from the situation and extent of the adjoining territories, and by them I am led to believe that, at least in modern times, the territory of Breaghmhaine otherwise called Magh Breaghmhaine was not more extensive than the present Barony. The first evidence is from the situation of

## II. Machaire Chuirene.

This territory which still retains its name was formed into the barony of Kilkenny west as we learn from Connell Mageoghegan in his translation of the annals of Clonmacnoise (ad ann: 949) and from O'Flaherty in ogygia (translation, II. 304) but it appears from the life of St. Munig, that the church of Forney was in Cuirene from which it may be safely inferred that it extended northwards as far as the Enny. On viewing the localities we shall find that this territory was bounded by natural merey. It was bounded on the west by the Shannon on where it expands itself into Lough Ree; on the north by the Enny, which separated it from Carbury <sup>Gathra</sup> ~~Cherry~~; on the N. E. and East by the river

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Innesin, now called (Dungolman river) and on the south by a stream (now generally called Ath-Bheen) which takes its rise in the bog of Shurock and flows through the townlands of Dunlora, Ballycloghadoe, Ballypallagh, Killeenstown under the hill of Breen-da-Choga, Ballyboran, Coolvack, Twyford, Annaghgortagh and so, on to Lough Ree into which it falls a short distance to the south east of Friary Island. This stream, <sup>according to tradition</sup> divided Cuirne from Calree Magawley and Brawney. From this it appears that <sup>the territory of</sup> Brawney did not extend ~~far~~ farther to the north than does the present Barony. Another evidence of its extent in the Eastern direction can be derived from the situation of Calree of which presently.

This territory of Cuirne was first the inheritance of the O'Shainghs but they becoming extinct or feeble, it fell into the hands of the MacCarroons, who were in their turn dispossessed by the Dillons, who were likewise dispossessed by Cromwell! Of the seats of the Dillons in this territory and especially of the celebrated Breen-da-Choga I have spoken in a former letter.

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### III. Cabree an chala. (See annals 1264.)

We learn from the annals of the Four Masters from O'Flaherty's *Ogygia* (transl. II, 330) that Magawley who descended from <sup>the</sup> fourth son of Niall of the nine hostages, was the chief of this territory, and it appears from the English documents that he held a considerable portion of it till the troubles of 1641.

This territory\* still retains its ancient name of Cabree and tradition makes it coextensive with the parish of Ballyloughloe, which is always called the parish of Cabree by the natives. From the castles existing in Cabree and <sup>traditionally</sup> remembered, as having belonged to Magawley, it appears that his territory extended westwards to the very verge of the present Barony of Brawney, and hence if this evidence can be relied upon (and I do not see how it can be fairly rejected) the conclusion is unavoidable that the territory of Brawney extended no farther to the east than the present Barony does.

It is said in the country that the present head of the Magawleys of Cabree is a Count, and that he resides at present somewhere in the King's

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\* On stating I improved this territory is called Cúry of Moycashel in a name which it never bore, and placed in the history of Rathconga entirely out of position.

(6) <sup>203</sup> County. The next to him in point of seniority is a farmer living in the parish of Drumrany.

That part of the barony of Clonloman lying to the south of Calree or the parish of Ballyloughloe was called:

#### IV. Moycoran the last remnant of Clan Colman

And was in latter ages the only territory retained by the Royal family of O'Melaghlin, who went by the tribe name of Clan Colman. The position of their territory is ascertained by the castles which are traditionally remembered as having belonged to them, and from the Annals of the Four Masters corroborating the traditional account. Their little <sup>the remnant of a kingdom!</sup> territory was bounded on the north by Calree; on the west by Brawney and the Shannon; on the East by Kinel-Tiacha, Mageoghegan's country; and on the south by Delvin Macoghlin. The O'Malones and O'Dalys had a portion of this territory, but whether they were subject to the O'Melaghlin, or not, I have no evidence to prove. There are several families of the name throughout the county but none of them know their pedigree.

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204,  
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From O'Connell's Improved  
From Ch. O'Connell's Improved



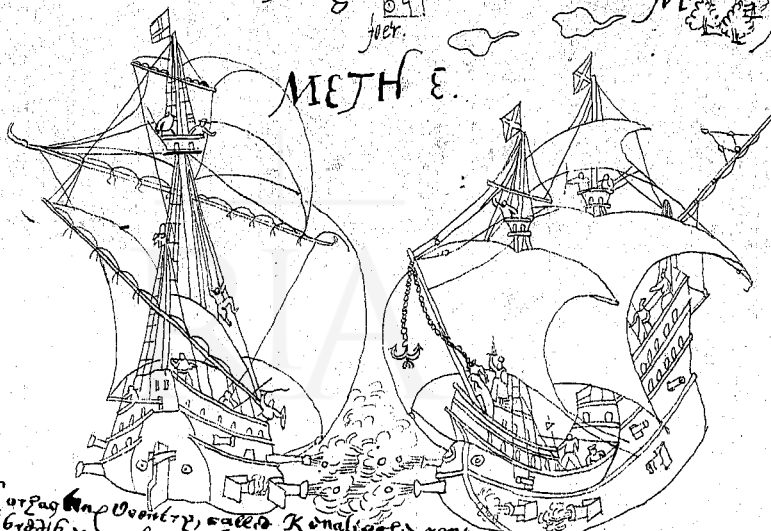
\* O' Malaghlin  
is placed here in  
the wrong place.  
he should be  
placed between  
Mageoghagan  
and the Shannon  
L.O.

14/6/14/20(7)

The map is a copy of the original map of the Longford, CLANN COLMAN, WEST MEATH, and KINGS COUNTY regions. It is a hand-drawn map and is not a reproduction of the original map. The map is a copy of the original map and is not a reproduction of the original map.



ΜΕΤΗ Ε



*m* Corragan Country, called Konalagga containeth in length vij myles,  
 & m breadth iij myles. It lyeth midway between the  
 Faly, & Athlone first myles distant from either of them & also  
 five myles distant from Mollingar. To the south westward of it  
 The said m Corragan country is oftty Someria of w<sup>ch</sup> northw<sup>th</sup> situated in  
 upper end thereof bounding to y<sup>e</sup> South of the said County, & on y<sup>e</sup> other  
 side southward of it is Omologys Country. And on y<sup>e</sup>  
 southeast of it by both offaley & on y<sup>e</sup> east side ragyneth  
 Terrells Country also Herbellagh. On y<sup>e</sup> north  
 side lyeth Daltons Country. And Omologys  
 lous country on y<sup>e</sup> west side betwixen  
 H Athlone whise a cornd of it  
 ragyneth w<sup>th</sup> Dilsons Country

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Ny-Gahagan and is still living.

Connell Mageoghagan the translator of the annals of Clonmacnoise, and who is styled by the Four Masters in the ~~the~~ preface to their Sanctilogium, "the industrious Bee in collecting every fragment of the history of the Gaels" was probably the head of the family in the year 1627. He lived at Lip-Maighne now Lismoyry in the parish of Horseleapp as we learn from his approbation prefixed to the Sanctilogium of the Four Masters:

"I, Connell, the son of Niall Mageoghagan  
of Lip-Maighne in Kinel-Triacla in  
the County of Westmeath, Esq; do <sup>certify</sup> acknowledge  
that I have the book from which this  
was extracted, in witness whereof I have  
here ~~at~~ signed my hand, on the 4<sup>th</sup>  
day of the month of November 1630."

Conall Mag Eoigáin.

His real name was Conla



## VI. Muintir Tadhgain 208 (9)

West of Mageoghegan's Country and <sup>bordering on</sup> ~~summit~~ the  
County of Westmeath lies Muintir Tadhgain or Foxe's  
Country. After the division of ancient Meath into  
<sup>upon</sup> Counties  
Baronies and Baronies this Country of the Foxes  
(though bounded on the north East and West by the  
County of Westmeath,) was placed in the King's  
County and called the Barony of Kilcourie.

This appears from Patent Roll Chancery 42 Eliz. of  
which the following is a copy (or at least an abstract?)

"Hubert Fox of Leinch, Baronic of Kilcourie  
" alias "the Foxe, his Country Gentleman, commonly  
" called the Foxe, chief of his name by deed be-  
" ted 1<sup>st</sup> May 1599 to express his zeal and loyalty,  
" surrendered to the Queen all his estate spiritual  
" and temporal within the whole Barony and  
" territory of Kilcourie called Mounteshagan  
" or the Foxe his Country which was divided  
" into three parts viz Shantwoy, Roagh an  
" and Moy and Monterdowlan and containing  
" 30 Coreines or Plowlands, part free and part



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" chargeable, with intent that her Majesty should  
 " regrant the same in tail male to him & others  
 " of his kinsmen, in accomplishment whereof &  
 " pursuant to Privy Seal dated at Richmond  
 " 29<sup>th</sup> January 1599, her Majesty hereby granted  
 " the same to him, and the heires male of his  
 " body, remainder to his nephew Briessel Foxe  
 " son of his brother Arte and his heires male,  
 " remainder to his uncle Owen Foxe of Lissin  
 " uskie in the said Barony and County, and  
 " his issue male; remainder to Phelim Foxe  
 " of Tolghan-ne-Brennye, said Barony Gent.  
 " and his issue male; remainder to Bissel  
 " Foxe of Kilmaledie said Barony Gent;  
 " son of Neile Foxe, who died lately in the  
 " Queens service, and his issue male to be  
 " holden by Knights service in Capite by  
 " the twentieth part of a Knights fee, and  
 " the ancient service of <sup>40</sup> 4 footmen at every  
 " general hosting yearly as he and his

210 (14)

"ancestors were accustomed to bear, with power  
"during his life to keep once a month a Court  
"Baron, and twice a year a Court Leet  
"within any part of the said Barony, before  
"himself or his sub-Seneschal, hereby appoint-  
"ing him Seneschal thereof, and to appoint  
"Deputies under him, and a power of alien-  
"ation to him and his successors accord-  
"ing to the said limitations."

The Abbe Mageoghagan, whose information concerning this part of the Country was more than usually correct agrees with this deed. Foxe's Country was therefore entirely included in the present King's County and was coextensive with the Barony of Kilcourcey in that County.

The Foxes were originally the arch chiefs of all Teffia, and subject only to the O'Melaghlin, <sup>who were</sup> Kings of Clan Colman &

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(12) <sup>211</sup> in their turn, before the destruction of the monarchy, of all Ireland.

Here it is to be observed that besides the tributes which the arch-chief of any principality received from his sub-chiefs, he had a distinct tract of land for the support of himself and his clan, which tract most generally bore the tribe name of himself and his followers or correlatives. Thus the Siomnach O'pharry whose name was in latter ages anglicised to Foxe was prince of the large territory of South Teffia from all the chiefs of which he received tribute and had also the tract called from his tribe name Munster Tadgain for the support of his household & tribe, and whenever a rival family wrested the chief government of South Teffia from his hands, he still had this family tract to support him, till fortune raised him again to the chief command. He is styled by the Annalists Chief of Teffia and Lord of Munster Tadgain.

14/G/14/20 (14)

14/G/14/20 (15)

## VI. M

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14/G/14/20 (16)

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Rathconrath

Killare

Templepatrick  
ibid

Piercetown

ibid

~~Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to crossing out.~~

~~Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to crossing out.~~

In the <sup>middle</sup> ~~beginning~~ of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Fox or Diormach Óbalarmy became subject to Mageoghegan, as appears from a curious Covenant made between them, <sup>in 1566</sup> now preserved in <sup>one of</sup> the MSS. <sup>belonging</sup> to the Royal Irish Academy (O'Reilly's no. 106 p. 164.) of which I shall here give a translation.

"In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, (is made) this Covenant between Mageoghegan and the <sup>Fox</sup> Diormach.

"This is the Covenant and contract made between  
 " Mageoghegan (Conla, son of Conor, who was the son  
 " of Loughneach) and Fox of Blinister Tadhgan  
 " (Breasal, son of Owen, who was son of Carbr) viz. Ma-  
 " geoghegan is to be lord over Fox and his country  
 " in manner following. He is to have a free greeve  
 " of land in every sinicion, and a fat hog out of  
 " every other greeve that pays chiefly to Fox, and  
 " this hog to be in the condition of a <sup>hog</sup> muc clagach  
 " and for each greeve in which there is no hog,  
 " a sheep must be given. And wherever the land  
 " of <sup>the</sup> Foxes is mortgaged to people living outside

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or Fox  
 Whenever Mageoghegan is engaged in war or dis-  
 turbance, or whenever <sup>either</sup> one of them shall bring  
 with him his <sup>auxiliary</sup> ~~followers~~ <sup>retainers</sup> outside the territory  
 the other shall send his Bannaghts to protect his  
 country, <sup>(in his absence)</sup> and Mageoghegan is to <sup>punish</sup> ~~correct~~ them for  
 disobedience.  
 Mageoghegan is obliged ~~to~~ in return for all  
 these benefits <sup>Keep</sup> ~~aforepaid~~ to observe the following  
 conditions, viz To <sup>do</sup> ~~make~~ his endeavour to protect  
 and shelter Fox, and every one in his country  
 both large and small. Whenever any <sup>man</sup> English  
 or Irish shall injure Fox or any one in his  
 country, he shall receive <sup>from the aggressor</sup> for such injury,  
 whatever Murtagh Mac Egan or ~~whatsoever~~  
 other Brehon <sup>that</sup> shall be in the territory, shall  
 award, and whenever ~~the~~ such reparation  
 is not obtained, Mageoghegan is obliged  
 to raise from his own and Fox's country  
 the means by which justice can be obtained  
 for Fox and his country.  
 Whenever any portion of <sup>the</sup> Fox's country is unjustly  
<sup>withheld</sup> kept from them or in the possession of disor-  
 dered



(16) 215

obedient people, Mageoghegan is bound to do  
his utmost to <sup>and recover</sup> regain it whenever the Earl  
of Kildare shall neglect doing so. I should  
Mageoghegan, after having recovered the land  
(the unjustly wrested from Fox) consent to keep  
the half thereof himself and leave the other  
in the hands of the person who had possession  
thereof — nay, should he, at any time, neglect  
to shelter, protect and defend Fox, and  
Muintir Tadhgáin, as he would shelter pro-  
tect and defend his own <sup>barle prp</sup> mansion seat,  
he is to have neither rent from them, nor  
command nor lordship over them, but each  
is to be for himself (separate and independant)  
The following are the witnesses of this  
covenant viz Mageoghegan, <sup>and his wife</sup> and God, before him

Marcella, the daughter of Christopher  
O'Brien <sup>Barran</sup> Thomas Boy, (grandson of Owen O'Brien & Brene)  
The parson O'Seanchán (Lucas)  
Owen O'Kinga (the son of Dermot (Duff))  
James Roe (son of Hugh, son of Terrall O'Kinga)  
Murtagh O'Kinga, Ruler of the two countries.  
These are the witnesses of the Kinel Triacha we had.  
The following are those we had of the Foxes  
country. viz

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"The Siomach (Fox) himself and the two sons  
 "of Edmund <sup>the</sup> Murtagh and Estlin, the two sons  
 "of Bryan Fox Bresal and Lucogry and \*\*\*\*\*  
 "a son of Owen son of \*\*\* Onora i.e. two of the  
 "Foxes \*\*\* and Thomas O'Kinga the son of  
 "Carby O'Kinga who was present at the  
 "making of this covenant, and who wrote it.  
 "This covenant was made at Yurde <sup>unimish</sup> Shannan (now  
 "Dyoman <sup>castle</sup>) on Wednesday, and it was written  
 "on Friday, and the age of the Lord at  
 "this time is six years and sixty, five hundred  
 "and one thousand, the twenty second day  
 "of the month of August.

+ I am ellageoghegan + I am <sup>the</sup> Fox

9?? arste llll repre llll lee nglent 3 ncppbhr  
erBrrpbrngnyede all that is in Ireland

+ We are the sons of Edmond Fox + We are the sons of Bryan Fox

On O'Flannery's map called Ortelius Improved Fox is placed  
 between ellageoghegan and the Shannon, but I think  
 he should be located a little more to the South west.  
 I believe however that <sup>in length</sup> Fox was removed to the <sup>in length</sup> Westmeath  
 which was never a part of his ancient Munster Hagan.

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(18) 21<sup>st</sup>

## VII. *Uí Mac Uais.*

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Proceeding to the north of the last mentioned territory we meet a long and narrow tract which retains its ancient name to this day but somewhat corrupted in its anglicised form of Moygeigh (pronounced in Irish .mas uair). This territory hath its name from the posterity of Colla Uais who settled in it after the destruction of Emain in 333, but I have no document here to shew whether the ancient tribe called Hy Mac Uais - nepotes filiorum Uaii became extinct, or remained in power down to the Anglo-Norman Invasion. Shane O'Dugan places the O'Henagys here in 1372, but I doubt very much that they were of the race of Colla Uais. Irish Mr. Barry would look over Oggia and Mac Furbise for Uí Mac Uais and O'Hanagha of Meath. This name O'Hanagha is now anglicised Ennis, and they are still in existence, but not so numerous as to be considered a Clan. This territory is sometimes called Cill Pallamain.

Rí na mac uair bneás, búrth  
O'h-donagha an t-uid. murrp.

Shane O'Dugan

North of Moygeigh Country ~~running~~ lies the Barony of Rathconrath, which since the Anglo-Norman Invasion is known by the name of Dalton's Country, but after the minutest search and examination of ancient documents I could not discover what Irish tribe were previously in possession of it.



# Of Teffia.

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(19)

This extensive and celebrated territory derives its name according to the Dinneenchus from Teffia, (the daughter of Cochy Kireman) with whom Naipi of Loch Lena fell in love. She died at a place called Ard-naipen, and gave name to a very large tract of country; but why posterity consented to transfer her name to the land, we may now conjecture as we like, as the literate of Europe have about Europa and the Bull. These legends are <sup>now</sup> valuable only as shewing how early mankind applied themselves to account for the origin of names of places, and as records of their skill in the science of etymology, and as such they should be preserved by posterity with due veneration. Silly however, as they appear to us of the nineteenth century, they were received three hundred years ago with the same respect which we now pay to the writings of Livy and Tacitus.

In the fourth century the southern half of this country of Teffia was granted by the Monarch Niall of the Nine Hostages to his fourth son Mainé, from whom it is sometimes, but not frequently, called Tir Mainé of Meath, and among whose decen-

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dants, it was afterwards <sup>sub</sup>divided into pretty territories, the lords of which were tributary to the arch chief who was looked upon as the representative of Mainé, though not always the senior of his dependants. It is now difficult, from the meagreness of our documents, to ascertain with certainty the exact limits of this famous principality, but from the families mentioned by our Annalists and Genealogists as located in it, we can form a general idea of its extent although we cannot presume to draw its boundaries.

O'Haherty, who had a most extensive acquaintance with the Latin and Irish documents relating to the early history and topography of Ireland, and who seems also to have examined many of the English Law deeds relating to the transfer of property in modern times, has made great efforts to define the extent of Teffia; but his references to some as he mentions the names of families without pointing out where they were located, he has only laid the ground work for enquiry; and the boundary lines of Teffia can never be drawn, till the exact positions of the families be ascertained. His description of Teffia having been mistranslated by Healy, I shall here give the correct version.

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(he should have added 'and Carbery') (21)

" Teffia which fell to Mainé, the son of King Niall, 220  
" and his posterity, was formerly a very extensive  
" country in Meath comprehending five Baronies  
" in Westmeath, viz the country of the Foxes, Cal-  
" rigia, Bregmania and Cuircnia, besides the  
" lands assigned to the Thites, Petits & Daltons,  
" and the whole of the County of Longford.  
" It was divided into North and South Teffia.  
" North Teffia, <sup>in the County of Longford</sup> otherwise called Carbia <sup>recte Carbia</sup> Gaura,  
" the possession of Carbery son of King Niall and  
" his posterity.  
" South Teffia in the County of Westmeath, being  
" divided from North Teffia by the River  
" Eithne, belonged to Mainé and his posterity"

Ogygia. part III, c. 85.

" The fourth <sup>son</sup> of King Niall was Mainé, the pro-  
" genitor of the people of <sup>(South)</sup> Teffia, that is, of  
" the Foxes of Munter-Tadgan, lords of Teffia;  
" the Magawlies, lords of Calrigia, the O'Brasins  
" of Bregmania, the Mag-Cargannas <sup>Caron</sup> of Cuircnia  
" the O'Dalys of Corcadiuin, and O'Quin of  
" Munter-Gilgain <sup>(which latter lies)</sup> in the County of Longford."

If this account of O'Flaherty's be correct (and I have no  
objection to make to it) <sup>except what I have inserted in parentheses</sup> it will at once appear that

14/9/14/20(25) Teffia

(22). 221  
Teffia comprehended ~~all~~ the seven territories above  
described with the exception of <sup>Sligo and</sup> Mageoghagan's Country  
of Kine-~~Tr~~iacha, which <sup>having been granted to Monaghan (son of Triacha)</sup> is never referred to as in  
Teffia. The probability is that south Teffia  
comprehended that part of the County of Westmeath  
lying to the west of the <sup>chain of</sup> Lakes, Lough Ennell, Lough  
oreel and Lough Cron, and to the north and west  
of Mageoghagan's Country; <sup>besides the Barony of Kilcower in the Kings Co.</sup> and North Teffia the  
entire of the present County of Longford, and  
that part of Westmeath north of the River  
Ethne or Luny. By assuming this to be <sup>the</sup> ancient  
extent of Teffia no reference or fact will, ~~be~~ as  
far as I have been able to ascertain, be found  
to clash with it, and I shall therefore assume  
it as the true extent till some facts - if ever -  
shall turn up to disprove it. "That theory  
in metaphysical or natural science, which  
accounts for all <sup>known</sup> phenomena, must be received,  
till other phenomena make their appearance  
for which it affords no <sup>satisfactory</sup> explanation. This  
Rule must also hold good in historical  
and <sup>topographical</sup> ~~historical~~ investigation. I shall pre-  
sently shew that the remaining territories of  
this



(24)<sup>228</sup> Coinfiacra, who had too much of the blood  
of Miall of the Nine hostages in his veins  
and too much of the courage of the dog  
of slaughter to remain quiet. By his  
acts of atrocity, he so far incurred the censure  
of the congregation of St. Kieran at Clonmacnoise  
as to induce them to curse <sup>him</sup> in an awful and  
solemn form. This curse had its intended effect  
for O'Coinfiacra lost his head a month after  
it had been pronounced.

In 1066 The son of Conaing O'Muregan, heir pre-  
sumptive to the lordship of Teffia was slain  
by Hugh O'honor and Teige O'Muregan. Teige  
O'Muregan then succeeded but was killed the year  
after by a party of his own people. In 1071  
Agradan O'Muregan, lord of Teffia, lost his  
life.

In 1086. Teige O'hahamy, <sup>surnamed</sup> the fair Fox  
the first of that name, who gained the lordship  
of Teffia was killed by Maelpeachlin O'  
Melaghlín.



this county are never referred to as <sup>being</sup> in <sup>222(23)</sup> Teffia

In latter ages, <sup>the</sup> Oshannys who took the name of Sionnachs or Foxes assumed the lordship of <sup>South</sup> Teffia and maintained it for many centuries. Previously however to the thirteenth century many other families of the race of Mainé disputed it with him and wrested the sword of command from his hand.

In the year 1000 Dermot O'Laughnan <sup>O'Lacénán</sup> was lord of Teffia, but was killed by his own people. In 1002 Hugh O'Coinfhiacha was lord of Teffia. In 1028 O'Flagtha was lord, & was put to death by his own people in 1031.

In 1034 Gilpatrick O'Flanigan, lord of Teffia was killed by the Breigians. He was succeeded by another O'Flanigan, who fell a victim to the anger of his own people in 1036. In 1038 O'Muregan a goodly born descendant of Mainé, who succeed O'Flanigan fell by the sword. To him succeeded the next chief of the rival descendants of Mainé was Hugh O'

14/9/14/20(28) Coinfhiacha

In 1087 Malrony O'Hart was lord of Teffia and died quietly on his bed. Requiescat in pace.

He was succeeded by Donnell O'Muregan, who was taken prisoner by the Mononians, and treacherously killed while in bondage & in chains.

In 1099 Mortogh O'Hart lord of Teffia was slain by the men of West Teffia. In 1101 Cathal O'Muregan lord of Teffia was killed

In 1141. Donnell O'Coinfiacra, who seems to have been a prince of peaceable disposition from the length of his reign, died on a pilgrimage at Clonmacnoise.

In 1153, Flann O'Flanigan, lord of Teffia, died

In 1156 Feige O'aharny, lord of Teffia died a clericus. In 1174 Congalach O'Coinfiacra was lord of Teffia.

In 1207. Cathal Fox O'aharny.

1316 Kiall Sinnagh or Fox

1400. Donogh Fox, lord of Munter-Hagan & chief of Teffia

1446 Cuckry or Peregrine Fox

Does Mac Furligh give the pedigrees of these families of ancient Teffia?

Shane O'Drigan enumerates the chiefs of Teffia in the following lines; which give us but a very faint <sup>idea of</sup> their situations or territories:

\* Do b'ne mall ó C'ruaigh  
peasá i c'pich hua m'bhúin  
co loe Ríó m'c m'bhúda do  
m'aine mac Neill a'cup a'p'd  
comairce Eneann uile.

Lib. Lec. fol. 70. a. a.

D'rudem le t'ruaibí Teat'ba  
Na dhígeaí naí a rípp'eac'na  
Luét co'nailbe sp'ideach na n'gleaí  
Comairce\* ip' o'neach Eneann.

Áir'd'ru Teat'ba ón t'im palaid <sup>cujus inimicitia verenda est</sup>

O' Cahainy, Fox O' cáit-ápmach cáit'p'naí  
plata d'p'agaisí puin prada  
O' Quind & O' Bonicle O' cuíí ip' O' Com'p'laclá.  
O' Loughman, O' laet'narn naí luaid beag-áir,  
O' Muregan O' mór-duapach m'p'fáin  
Mair do dhíe prad na r'ona  
as rín rad na h'p'p'p'ogá  
Deag'p'p'ogá ar chom'p' choim'p'  
O' Flanigan, O' plannagáin, plait' p'ogla  
b'íd pe na t'aoib' m'p' thúsle  
O' Green U' b'raon b'ín ór b'p'ag'm'ne. Brawny

Rín Teat'ba ar imeal t'úich  
a'cup C'uib'p'e go n'glán b'uid

Seem quoted by Keating on  
the extent of Limerick's wealth

It is very curious that O'Drigan does not here men-  
tion Magawley, <sup>of Cabree</sup> Mac Carghamhna, or O' Tolairg, <sup>of Cuirene</sup> or  
Muintir Tadhgáin, but I fear that we have no perfect  
copy of Shane's poem. It is also very possible that  
he has not enumerated all the tribes in Le. Con, and



that he passes over several, who were obscure  
or feeble in his time.

Having thus formed a general idea of the extent and  
history of ancient Teffia, I shall next proceed to  
point out the situation and extent of the other  
territories in Westmeath not comprized in  
Teffia, which was <sup>entirely</sup> occupied by <sup>the race of</sup> Maine and Cairbe  
the two sons of King Niall.

### VIII. Feara Tulach

Now taking Mageoghegan's country, (of the situation and  
extent of which we have the clearest evidence) as a  
centre, let us take a retrospective view of the territories  
lying around it, and then proceed to the eastwards  
thro' the County. On the <sup>margin of the</sup> old Map published in the  
third Vol. of the State Papers the following description  
of Kinelaghe or Mageoghegan's <sup>country</sup> is given, which is  
perfectly correct and corroborates the view I have taken  
of it above (No. V.) This map was made and the  
description written in the year 1567. ~~the~~ one year

14/9/14/20 (31) after





228 (29)

Collis  
(viri Montis) which retains its ancient name  
to this day without any corruption in the

Barony of Fertullagh. <sup>It is called campus Teloch by Trechan.</sup> The ancient chiefs of this  
territory were the O'Doolies as we learn from O'

Dugan, the Four Masters and Mac Firbisre

O' Dublaige pa d'ioḡasḡ nath

Rí b-peap d-ḡraḡ-napal d-Tulach. O'Dugan

" A.D. 978. Fiachra and Cu-duilich, the two sons of  
" Dooley, lords of Fer-Tulach were killed at the  
" battle of Tara.

" 1021. Cuccaille, the son of Dooley, lord of Fer-Tulach  
" was killed by his own people.

" 1144. Canor, the son of Turlogh O'Honor, chief Roy  
" of Danu of Ireland and King of Meath during  
" the space of half a year, was killed at Bekalach  
" mhúine na Síride by O'Dooley, lord of Fertutach,  
" who looked upon O'Honor as foreign King over  
" the men of Meath." H Masters

" The O'Doolies are descended from Brian More O'  
" Melaghlin, who went first to Ely after the mo

14/9/14/20 (33) march



(30) 229

a-march of Ireland had been treacherously killed by  
" Archer, the son of Donnell, son of Flahertach, son  
" of Teige, son of Donnell son of Hugh, son of  
" Brian, son of Maolpeachlainn. His descendants  
" are called O'Doolays, from the dubh liughe or false  
" oath which they took to <sup>attempt to</sup> clear themselves of this  
" treachery which was afterwards proved against  
" them. After the discovery <sup>on</sup> of their crime they  
" were expelled, and they betook themselves to  
" Maldoon, the son of Hugh, son of Carroll,  
" King of Ely, from whom they received lands  
" at Bile Cairne, and the title of lord <sup>in</sup> under the  
" King of Ely, and the head of the O'Doolays re-  
" ceived the horse, arms and battle dress of the  
" King of Ely on the day of his <sup>(the King's)</sup> inauguration?"

Dudley Mac Firbispe in  
Pedigree of O'Melaghlin.

<sup>territory</sup>  
This, after the Anglo-Norman Invasion became the property  
of the Tyrrells, and at the year 1366, the Four Masters  
record that Huigni Tyrrell, lord of Fes tullaich, was  
slain by the Birmingham.

14/6/4/20(34)

In 1598, O'Rourke mustered an army and marched to Bealach an Tiriallaigh (now Tyrrell's Pass) and Bealach Ghille Brighde (Pass of Kilbride) in the territory of Feara Tulach. He seized upon booty and ~~slaw~~ <sup>slay</sup> some persons at Tyrrell's Pass after which he returned to his country without receiving the slightest injury or opposition. 4 Masters.

The Tyrrells became so Irish, - Gadelis ipis Gadeliores - that in the latter ages the rhymers in their treason songs, found it convenient to <sup>call old</sup> typify Ireland herself by the name of Caitilin Tiriall or Catty Tyrrell. The most <sup>celebrated</sup> ~~distinguished~~ man <sup>who was chief of this Barony, Capt. Tyrrell</sup> of the name flourished in the reign of Elizabeth and Jac. I. and distinguished himself in many battles against the <sup>Queen's</sup> English forces.

There is no evidence that the Triacla chéad of Feara Tulach was ever more extensive than the present Barony which retains its name: on the contrary many proofs can be drawn from the position of the surrounding territories that it was not.



IX. *Feara Bile*

North east of the territory of *Feara Tulach* lies *Feara-Bile*, which is nearly of the same extent with it, and retaining its ancient name to this day. This territory is called Campus Bile by Tirechan.

The ancient Irish chief of this territory was O'Hannafy as we learn from Shane O'Dugan's topographical poem and the Annals of the Four Masters:

O'h Annbese d'fine na n-ann  
Ry bpean mbile na mbán cūnn.

O'Hannafy of the tribe of ann  
Is king of Ferabile of the white camp.

"A.D. 1021, Hugh the son of <sup>O'Dugan</sup> *Felann*, who was the son of *Maelseachlainn*, *Roydanna* of Ireland was slain by O'Maigteachain, one of the Feara-Bile."

"1095, *Eucogry O'Hanvey*, lord of Feara-Bile, was slain by *Donogh O'Meldaghlin*."

4 Masters.

The name signifies the men of the Bile or aged tree but we have no record of which of the celebrated

232 (33)

trees of Ireland it was. It is highly probable that the present Barony ~~is~~ is as extensive as the ancient territory of Feara Bile ever was. The celebrated principality of Hy-Leary, the inheritance of the O'Quindelwans or Quinlans joined it on the East and South East.

## X. Dealbna mor.

Adjoining Feara Bile on the North side is another famous territory, the name and limits of which are still preserved in the Barony of Delvin.

We learn from all the ancient Irish writers that there were seven territories of the name Dealbna in Ireland, four in Meath and three in Connaught. O'Flaherty speaks of them as follows:

(a Dalcassian)

" The posterity of Lugaid Dealbnaoibh, called  
" Delvians from their father's surname, founded  
" seven Delvins beyond the Dalcassian limits  
" quite contiguous to each other in Meath and  
" Connaught, viz Delvin, the <sup>Mor</sup> great, Delvin, the  
" <sup>Beag</sup> Small, Delvin Cathra and Delvin Teammoy in  
" Meath; Delvin Nuadhat, Delvin of buil-Fabhair

14/9/14/20 (37)



and Delvin Feadha in Tir-da-loch that is  
 is the land of the two lakes, in Connaught.  
 "Sigdy, the great-grandson of Lugaid had Treon  
 from whom Mac Coshlan, Lord of Delvin  
Cathra, now a part of the King's County, is  
 sprung, and Lugaid from whom O'Finnelon  
 Lord of Delvin Mor is descended. But Hugh  
 Lacy, at the English Invasion, the conqueror  
 of Meath, after the expulsion of the O'  
 Finnelon granted Delvin Mor to Nugent,  
 from whom the Nugents, Barons of Delvin  
 now Earls of Westmeath are descended."

Ogygiae part III, transl. II,

In this description of the <sup>p. 311.</sup> Delvins O'Flaherty  
 or more probably his translator is certainly  
 wrong, for he places some of them in Connaught  
 that should be in Westmeath, and some in  
 Westmeath that should be placed in Connaught.  
Mac Firbisse a much better authority, and  
 from whom O'Flaherty principally derived  
 his information enumerates the Delvins as  
 follows:

14/6/14/20(38)

"Delvin Mor, Delvin Beg, Delvin of Civil Fathair  
 " and Delvin Cathra <sup>West</sup> in Meath; Delvin Nuadh  
 " - ad, Delvin Teandmíyhe and Delvin Feadha  
 " of Tis-da-loch in Connaught."

This is unquestionably the true arrange<sup>ments</sup> of the seven Delvins, and hence we have four of them in ancient Westmeath, of which Delvin Cathra or Delvin Mac boghtan lying between Banagher and the Barony of Clonlunan is one, and this Barony of Delvin in Westmeath another. The situation of the other two shall be presently discussed.

That O'Haherty is correct in making O'Finelon, the ancient Irish chief of Westmeath previous to the settlement of the Nugents in it, will appear <sup>from</sup> O'Dugan's topographical poem, and the Annals of the Four Masters.

Deallna mói do bparc bandáil

Ape a place O' Fionnalláin. O'Dugan

The extracts <sup>intended as</sup> relating to the Delvins in Westmeath sent me from the Four Masters relate more of the other Delvins, and as it requires some skill to separate them I shall here do so, while the situation of the territories are fresh on my memory.

14/5/14/20 (39)



(36) 235

"A.D. 842, Kineth, the son of Conrae, lord of the  
"Kinel-Leary was slain by the Delvians."

These Delvians are most probably the inhabitants  
of Delvin in Westmeath, because the Kinel-Leary  
the dependants of the monarch Leary lay contiguous  
to them.

"1034 Muirayagh O'Flaherty, lord of Foy Brinin  
"Seola and Borten O'Macruain, lord of Del-  
"vin, were slain on the threshold of Diserb-  
"Tola by their own people, but <sup>he</sup> Tola through  
"the power of God was revenged of the per-  
"son who <sup>had</sup> thus profaned his church, for he  
"was killed immediately after he had committed  
"the crime.

I have already shewn that this Diserb Tola  
is in the Barony of Delvin in the County of  
Westmeath and not in Delvin Macoghlán  
as Lanigan labors to prove it to be.

"1034, Tarnan O'Flanigan who was called  
"Cú na ndóin agus na bípíon (the <sup>Colgan</sup> Molochus or watchdog  
"of the saints and the righteous) came to Delvin  
"on a plundering excursion, but he was met  
"by a few of the Delvians, who gave him

14/6/14/20(40)

236 (37)

" battle, slaughtered his people and slew himself  
" through the miracle of God and the saints."

This is probably also the Deluin in Westmeath.

The Deluans, who possessed the East of Westmeath <sup>part</sup>  
were generally at war with the Teffians  
who, as we have already seen, occupied the  
western portion of it. They were of distinct  
races - the former being of Dalcaissian  
and the latter of Hy-Niallan <sup>stock</sup> origin.

" 1085, Angus O'Quinlan, lord of Hy-Leary  
" was slain in Clonard after he had en-  
" tered into holy orders there, by the grand  
" son of Corten O'Malromy, lord of Deluin Mor.

" 1096 Giolla-Oisen, the son of Corten (O'Malromy)  
" lord of Deluin More was killed by the  
" Hy-Leary, after he had been <sup>(treacherously)</sup> delivered up  
" into their hands by Morlagh O'Brien  
" to whom he had given (for his ransom) thirty  
" ounces of gold, one hundred cows, and  
" eight hostages."

1159. (Deluin Mor was devastated by O'Loughlin  
(King of Aileach))

14/9/14/20(41)



- (38) 287  
"1160, Donogh, the son of Donnell O'Me-  
"laghlin, King of Meath, was slain by  
"O'Finelon, lord of Delvin Mor, and his  
"sons, for his crimes and tyrannies."  
"1168, Morogh O'Finelon, lord of Delvin Mor,  
"was killed by Dermot, the son of Morogh  
"O'Melaghlin in revenge of his father's  
"death against the intercession of the  
"men of Connaught and Oriel."  
"1201, Cormac, the son of Art O'Melaghlin  
"deprived the English of the ~~the~~ territory of  
"Delvin, and Melaghlin, the son of Art,  
"defeated the English, who were main-  
"taining possession of Delvin and killed  
"their Constable, Robert of Duncomer."  
"1213, The English of Ireland, led a great  
"army against Cormac, the son of Art  
"O'Melaghlin to Drochet Finne, where  
"a battle ensued in which the son of  
"Art was defeated and Rory O'Kiery  
"killed. The son of Art was then expelled  
"and his people were plundered."

14/6/14/20 (42)

After this year the Vikings seem to have obtained permanent footing in Delvin.

" 1429, The Baron of Delvin was slain in the battle of Ghahilmore (in Co. Cavan)

" 1430, Owen O'Neill burned Kildiny and overran Westmeath with fire and sword till the Baron of Delvin, the Plunketts, the Herberts and all the other English families of Westmeath came to him with an offer of whatever he was pleased to demand for sparing their country."

" 1452, Fergal oge Mageoghegan, a leader of great repute and celebrity was slain and beheaded at Cruach-abhall by the son of the Baron of Delvin, and the grandsons of Pierce Dalton. They carried his head to Trim, and thence to Dublin for exhibition, but it was afterwards brought back and buried along with the body at Durrus-Columbkille."

Cruach-abhall is now called Broughal, and

14/6/14/20 (43) lies



(40) <sup>239</sup> lies in the parish of Churchtown to the East of Mount Uineach, and north of the road from Ballymore Lough Seady to Mullingar. The ruins of a castle are still to be seen here. It is called in an Inquisition taken temp. Jac I. Croghowke which identifies it at once with the Cruach Abhall or apple hill of the Annals.

" 1461. Mageoghagan committed great depredations upon the Baron of Delvin; he also committed other great depredations upon the Tuates as plundered the country as far as the River <sup>the</sup> Inny.

" 1473. Edward, the son of the Baron of Delvin, was executed in Dublin for his crimes."

" 1475. O'Donnell (Hugh Roe) marched into Westmeath and set fire to all the towns and castles of Westmeath (Delvin) and to all the surrounding country."

14/6/14/20 (44)

"1478. A great plague raged throughout Ireland  
 & of which the Baron of Delvin died."

"1552. The Baron of Delvin went to England  
 & and returned home after having transacted  
 & business as well as he was able."

"1553. The Baron of Delvin and the Eng-  
 & lish of Athlone plundered Maycoran  
 & O'Melaghlin's country, and took his  
 & Castle of Clonlavan &c."

"Some year, The Baron of Delvin marched  
 & an army into Delvin Cathra and burned  
 & and ravaged that territory."

"1554. The Baron of Delvin attended the  
 & Earl of Kildare on an expedition <sup>into Ulster</sup> against  
 & Tully Roe O'Neill."

"1595. In the month of February this year  
 & marched an army into the country of  
 & the Baron of Delvin, and left neither  
 & corn, cattle or accoutrements in that coun-  
 & try, which they did not carry away."

(42). 241

in 1600, O'Neill, on an expedition into the  
south of Ireland, passed through Delvin  
Mor which he proceeded to lay waste  
until the Baron of Delvin (Christopher,  
the son of Richard, who was the son  
of Christopher) came and submitted to  
him.

H. Masters

All the other passages from <sup>page</sup> 140 to 158  
of the Extracts relate to the other Delvins  
but principally to Maccohlain's Delvin.

## XI Dealbhna Cuile Fabhair

North of the Barony of Delvin lies ~~at present~~  
that <sup>at present called</sup> Demifore or Half Fore, which with  
the other half Barony lying east of it in  
the County of East Meath, was called, when  
the County was divided into Baronies, from  
the town of Fore. This Barony of Demifore  
in Westmeath is most probably the territory  
anciently called Dealbhna Cuile Fabhair  
but as it merged at an early period into

14/G/14/20 (46)



the Country of the Baron of Delvin  
we have no separate record of it.

The Barony of Demifore in East Meath is the  
Dealbhna Beag of the ancient writers.

This <sup>latter</sup> was the ancient country of the O'Mulholl  
lands as we learn from O'Dugan and the  
Annals of the Four Masters.

O' Dealbhna big, calma a'clann  
O' Maol caoin, calma challann.

over Delvin Beag-brave his clan,  
rules O'Mul-fair, brave holland

O'Dugan

"A.D. 1012, Dubhtaichleach O'Maolchallann, lord  
of Delvin Beag, fell in a skirmish with the  
men of Toffa and Galtang." 4 Masters.

He was located in the middle between both.

In thus making the two Baronies of (Demi-  
fore the two Delvins hitherto unknown, I am  
not altogether led by Conjecture. We know  
that there were four Delvins in Westmeath  
two of which are well known, the one Delvin  
Mac Coghlan, and the other called Delvin More  
14/9/14/20 (43)



(44)<sup>248</sup> is unquestionably the present Barony of  
Delvin in Westmeath. Where shall we place  
the other two? Not east of the Barony of  
Delvin because Luignea (now the Barony of  
Lune) occupied that place; not south of  
it, because Feara Bile occupies that part  
of Westmeath, not directly west because  
as we shall presently see, other ancient  
and well established territories occupy  
that part and retain their original  
names. Where then shall we place them  
or ~~could~~ <sup>be</sup> they come but to the North and  
North west of it, where their boundaries  
are retained, though their names are lost,  
in the two Baronies of Demiore\*.

Add to this that the <sup>adjunct</sup> addition of buile  
Fabhair to one of these Delvins is a  
strong corroborative proof of its having  
contained in it the remarkable valley  
or Decensus of Fabhar or Fore.

\* Gerald the great

These three Delving, Delvin Mor, Delvin of  
 Cuil-Fanar and Delvin Beag became the  
 property of the Nugents, and were called  
 in latter times the Country of the Baron  
of Delvin under whom <sup>were</sup> various  
 other branches of the Nugents, who are  
 now all extinct with the exception of two  
 or three families (see my letters from  
 Oldcastle)

I hope that we shall hereafter discover such evidence  
 of the real situation of these<sup>3</sup> Delvings as the  
 Map in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Vol. of the state Papers, which  
 actually proves ~~my~~ <sup>the</sup> account of Kinel-Fiacha, wh<sup>ch</sup>  
 I had drawn up before that map arrived.

## XII. Corca Raioigh.

Proceeding now to the South west of the  
 Delving into the interior of the County, we shall  
 meet a very famous territory whose limits are  
 very well defined by natural boundaries, and  
 which, to our very great satisfaction, still retains  
 its ancient name without the slightest corruption.

(46) 245

This is Corca-Ree. It is bounded on the north and north East by Lough Dairbhreach; on the West by Lough Iron; on the South-west by Lough Hair (Auel); and on the south and South East, and on the East by an irregular line of hills which divide it from the Barony of Moyaphel.

This territory is mentioned by all our Annalists and Genealogists as the patrimonial inheritance of the descendants of Fiacha Raidhe the grandson of the monarch Felim Reach - mharr or the Lawgiver, of whom Dermot O'Donoghue, who eloped with the wife of Fin MacCool ~~was one~~, & Flaherty thus speaks of it:

"Fiach Sugding, the son of King Felim, the  
"Law-giver of the (Desian) origin, had a  
"son called Fiach <sup>Ree</sup>Raide from whom are  
"descended the inhabitants of Corcoraid <sup>ree</sup>and



"Hera Asuil in Westmeath, whose son  
 " Fothad had Diubhne, whose grandson  
 " Diernob o' Diubhne had Ligne Furtrea".

Ogygia, part. III. tr. p. 235.

And Mac Firbisso thus:

" Felimy Reachtmhac had seven sons viz Con  
 " of the hundred battles, &c. &c, and Triacha  
 " Daighe, the progenitor of the <sup>Deece</sup> Desians and  
 " Triacha Raighe from whom the tribe of  
 " Corca Raighe <sup>Ree</sup> are descended, as shall ap-  
 " pear in our book further on."

Pedigree, p. 106.

I have not however got any references to <sup>the</sup> Corca  
Ree in Westmeath after this page. I wish Mr.  
 Curry would examine Mac Firbisso again and  
 ascertain what families were included under  
 the tribe name of Corca Rasidhe. It is of  
 great interest to me as it leads to an inves-  
 tigation of the history and pedigree of a  
 very respectable family <sup>of which one branch is</sup> located in this County,  
 and another in the County of Galway.

14/6/14/20 (51).



(48) <sup>247</sup>  
We learn from O'Dugan's Topographical  
poem that Othionradhan was the ancient  
chief of this territory:

O'hionradhan raorpe rin  
Ri Corca. raoige no glom.

Othionradhan. freeborn he  
King of fairest Corca Ree.

"A.D. 809. There was a slaughter of the men of Corca  
- Roidhe of Meath by the Hy-Mac Mais."

The Hy-Mac Mais, as we have already seen, lived  
north and west of the Corcoradians at the other  
side of the Linn and Lough Cron.

"1185. Maelsopa O'Daly <sup>of</sup> Slane of Ireland and  
Scotland, and Lord of Corca Ree and Corca  
- Adam, a chief illustrious by his poetry, hospi-  
- tality and nobility died while on a pilgrimage  
at Clonard." 4 Masters

Is not Corco-Adam mentioned more than once by the 4 Masters  
This is a very curious passage, and it will throw  
great light upon the history of the O'Dalys who

are here still numerous enough. Captain Daly  
of Castle Daly near Athlone is the supposed  
representative\* of this family, but I have no  
record of when or how his family were re-  
-moved from this territory. (Cave! there is!)

Does Mac Firdis make any branch of the  
O'Dalys the descendants of Miacha Raidhe? No.  
Does he give a pedigree of the tribe of  
Corco-Adam or give any clue to where  
that territory was situated?

### XIII. *Feara Asuil*

South East of Corca-Keo and between<sup>it</sup> and Delvin  
and Feara. Bile, lies another territory which retaining  
its name without much corruption to this day  
in the Barony of Moy-Sheeh. It is mentioned in  
the Tripartite Life of Saint Patrick as the Country  
of the Assaili, whose prince he condemned to eternal  
sterility; and by O'Flaherty as the Country<sup>of</sup> a tribe  
of the descendants of Miacha Raidhe, but <sup>neither</sup> Bugan  
nor the Annalists - as far as I can ascertain  
14/9/14/20 (53) from

(50) <sup>249</sup>  
from the extracts before me, make any reference whatever to it, from which <sup>it is</sup> ~~inferred~~ <sup>inclined to think</sup> that it passed in modern times under another name, though it is not easy to make that appear as the name is retained in the modern Barony. Colgan in a note to Aspalium fabulidæ, which is the Latin of Fera Asuil, states that their country was in Meath, and called in his own time Mag-Asuil, "Asalium populi. C. 14.  
"Sunt populi regionis Medie, quæ hodie Mag-  
"assil vocatur." Note 46, to the second Book of  
the Tripartite. III

Do the Four Masters mention Dealbha Asuil?  
XIV. Corco-Adam.

Hitherto the stream of our enquiry has been clear and uninterrupted, and it will be seen that all the Baronies are referred to their original territorial names with the exception of one <sup>Magherademon</sup> lying in the very centre of the county. I have kept this purposely out of sight in order, that, when all spaces were filled up an inference might be <sup>the more easily</sup> drawn up to which of

14/G/14/20 (54)



the ancient territories of Westmeath it must be. And I must here at last rest solely on conjecture and say that it is Corco-Adam the original Country of the O'Dalys. For as we learn from the Four Masters that O'Daly at the year 1185, had got possession of Corco-Ree in addition to his own original principality of Corco-Adam, the conclusion is not forced, when we infer that the two territories adjoined. Here it is necessary to remark that Corco-Adam was in Tir-Mann or Teffia and that Corco-Ree was not; that O'Daly was descended from Maine, and the original inhabitants of Corco-Ree were not. May it not therefore be lawfully assumed that O'Daly got a grant of Corco-Ree which adjoined his original country of Corco-Adam from the O'Melaghlin, for some great service <sup>which this noble post</sup> rendered them by his sword or pen?

14/6/14/20 (55)

That Corco-Ree was not in Teffia we have the evidence of the Book of Armagh to prove. Thus <sup>describing</sup> ~~speaking~~ of St. Patrick's travels through Meath, it says



(52) 251  
& And he (Patrick) built another <sup>Lackan</sup> church in the  
& country of Raides at Caput Airt in which  
& he erected a stone altar, and another at  
& Quil-Corré, and he came across <sup>over</sup> the River  
& Ethne <sup>Inny</sup> into the two Tethias, &c.

From this it appears that when passing out  
of Corco Ree he crossed the Inny to get into the  
Teffias.

The conclusion therefore which I am driven to  
draw at present is that that portion of the  
County lying between the River Brosnagh (which  
connects Lough Duell and Lough Ennell) and  
the Baronies of Delvin and Terbil was an-  
ciently called Fera-ssul or Magh-ssul  
and that part lying between the same River  
and the Barony of Rath-Conaath was called  
Corco-ssad. But this must be hereafter  
most carefully examined and tested by the  
evidence of all the Irish and English do-  
cuments that can be brought to bear  
upon it. I must at present rest content  
with laying the ground-work by drawing such

inferences ap. the documents before me warrant,  
 but I am satisfied that I have not all.  
 wrote 24 pages today Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup>

## Further remarks on *Teffia*. recapitulation

From the foregoing dissertation on the territories  
 of Westmeath it is clear, <sup>that</sup> none of the following  
 baronies or territories were in *Teffia*, viz.

The three Delwings

Corcon R<sup>ee</sup>

Moy-Asquill or Feranchsuil

Fera-Bile's

Fera-Tulach

Kinel-Fiacha or Moy-Caphel.

Moy-Mac-Uais or Moygoigh.

For we learn from all the authorities that the  
 descendants of Carbrú and Máine, the two  
 sons of Níall, possessed both the *Teffias*  
 and we have seen that the territories here  
 enumerated were inhabited by tribes of a  
 different race, some being of Balcanisign, some of

Dependence of <sup>the</sup> Clan Colla Race. Deducting then these territories, there remains for Teffia the following: ~~here~~

1. The Barony of Rathconrath
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Magheradernon, or at least that part of it lying west of the River Brognagh.
3. The Barony of Cuircne or Kilkenny West,
4. The Barony of Braunoy.
5. The Barony of Clonlunan, and that part of it added to the King's Co. by Terence Coghlan.
6. The Barony of Kilcoursy in the now King's County.

That Clonmacnoise and the whole of the Barony of Clonlunan was in the Country of the race of Maine or South Teffia we learn from very ancient Irish MSS. which state that it was Cobhthach, the son of Breacan, who was the son of Maine, <sup>& that</sup> who granted Speal-Kieran at Clonmacnoise for ever to God and St. Kieran, as altar land and the same authorities add that



the country of this Cobhach (Coffey) "extended  
"from Bel. Slatha to Glais-Mealla and from  
"Loch Lochy or Lady to Croit." His grandfather <sup>allain</sup>  
had the country extending <sup>from</sup> Co. Antrim to Loch Rib which is south Teffia. <sup>Libby</sup>  
It is also to be remarked that south Teffia alone  
is the Teffia of the Annalists of the middle  
ages, who always <sup>call north Teffia by the name</sup> ~~speak of~~ <sup>Gabriel's</sup> ~~Carbury~~ <sup>now</sup>  
the County of Longford <sup>and speak of it</sup> as a separate and  
independent territory.

It also appears from the Annalists that in the  
struggle between the rivals of race of Mainé  
for superiority they divided this south Teffia  
into East and West Teffias, <sup>the inhabitants of</sup> which were  
constantly <sup>contending</sup> ~~at war~~ with each other for the  
lordship of all Teffia. The River Innesin  
now the Dungelman River was probably  
the boundary between them.

This is all that I can at present say upon  
the extent of ancient Teffia, <sup>but</sup> ~~and~~ I trust  
that I shall be able to collect more evidences  
hereafter to prove more satisfactorily, or by  
direct evidence what I have <sup>now</sup> left doubtful.

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(56.) <sup>255</sup> of the Allicotic or Plebeian tribes of the  
Hirvolgs who established themselves in Meath  
and who were expelled by <sup>the Scottish monarch</sup> Tuathal Teacht-  
mhar.

---

In the Galengas were the tribe of Tuath Ligmairne  
In Bregia Tuath Luighne, and the same  
tribe also got possession of Hy-Leary, Ardaul, the  
two Delving, Hy-mac Raip, <sup>of the country extending</sup> and from Inver  
Colpa to the Confluence at Clonard  
The Tuath Mac Treaga in Teffia and in  
Cuirnia in Weptmeath.

All these Democrats and Plebeians were expelled  
by Tuathal who established men of noble  
<sup>Scottish</sup> Milesian blood in their place. This is  
all we are told about them by <sup>Duald</sup> Mac Furbisso  
and his anceptors, the compilers of the Book  
of Lecan.



(58) 25<sup>th</sup>

Pedigree of O'Melaghlin & Magroghagan

Niall of the Nine hostages

Fiacha a quo. R. Fiacha Connell Carr of Bregia, ancestor of the Sil  
each blame in Bregia and of the Clan  
Colman mor in Meath

Inathal an t-uidhe

Fergus Carrach

Amalgaidh

Dermot, King of Ireland

Copgrach

Colman mor

Eochagan a q. M. G.

Suibhne

Innerege

Connell of the sweet voice, Guithblinn

Rory

Kirmeadhach Caech

Amalgaidh

Dermot

Gilla-Columb

Morogh

Crimthann

Donnell Mor

Eochy

Donogh

Flann

Malromy

Amalgaidh

Melaghlin

Morogh

Flann Sinna, R. E.

Donogh

Melaghlin mor, R. E.

Congalach

Flann

Suluan

Donnell

Copgrach

Morogh

Melaghlin

Donogh

Donnell

Maolseachlainn

R. E. 1022

Murtagh

Donnell

Congalach

Conor

Cucagry

Donnell

Cicalma

Morogh

Murtagh

Melaghlin

Congalach mor

Art

Congalach

Murtagh mor

Cucagry 1350

Cucagry 1374

Fergal 1354

Fergal 1355

Donogh 1337

Dermot 1392

Niall

Isaac 1337

Rory

Fergal R. E. 1382

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Cormac

Art

Cormac

Con

Art.



Of the tributes <sup>rendered</sup> paid by the chiefs of the aforesaid territories to the monarch of all Ireland, according to the Book of Rights

The Deluins sent yearly to Tara 300 oxen, 300 hogs, 300 hundred tinne's (rings) and 300 wethers

The chief of Cuirne 100 beavers, & 100 milch cows

The chief of Fera Tulach, 100 wethers, 100 hogs, 100 milch cows with the calves, and 100 oxen.

It is curious that the chief of Teffia is not mentioned among the men of wealth as paying tribute to Tara. There were many territories free of tribute, especially those from which the monarch was elected.

The following are the presents made by the monarch to the chiefs of Westmeath.

To the chief of Fera Tulach, 6 swords, 6 shields, 6 slaves.

To the chief of Teffia, 8 shields, 8 swords, 8 goblets, 8 steeds

To the chief of Cuirne, 6 shields, 6 horses, 6 <sup>brats</sup> garments, 6 slaves, 6 goblets

To the chief of Cuill Tallamhain (now Moygoish) 5 steeds, 5 goblets, 5 shields.



(60) <sup>259</sup>  
To the chief of Delvin More 8 slaves, 8 women, 8  
steeds, 8 shields and 8 swords."

It is curious to remark here that Guirone is  
mentioned as separate from Teffia, though  
included in it according to all the other  
authorities; and that the chief of Teffia  
receives yearly gifts from the monarch al-  
though he renders him no tribute.

This list of tributes and gifts is taken from a  
poem generally attributed to St. Benignus, the  
disciple of St. Patrick and his successor in  
the See of Armagh, but from the cast of  
the phraseology and other internal evidences  
it can be proved to be ~~many~~ a production  
of much later times. The Revd. Patrick  
Mac Loughlin who translated a considera-  
ble portion of the Book of Lecan for the  
Irish Brigade (while that Book was at  
Paris) says that the poem called Lea-  
char na g-ceart, which is generally fa-  
thered on St. Benen, is the production of  
Cuan O'Lochain, who became chief Law-  
giver of Ireland after the destruction

of the monarchy in 1022. The poem itself  
seems rather to refer to an older work  
composed by Benen than to be itself its  
Benen's composition. Thus <sup>that part of which</sup> describes the  
gifts made by the monarch to the chiefs of  
Meath, & begins

Dljsjd mō Teamra turym  
Ro inr benen burljō.

I enumerate the laws of the King of Temur  
Of which the fair Benen told us  
And again, that part enumerating the rents  
or tributes paid to the monarch by the  
chiefs of Meath:

Cjr tuath mjdj mōr in pcel  
Ro indr filj pirtōrēn  
Mōr fōgnard do theamair  
Ó amrrr Chuind chét chatayō.

The tributes of the territories of Meath great the amount  
A <sup>Benen's</sup> truly mighty poet has told

As they served Temur  
From the time of <sup>Con of the</sup> Hundred-battled Son.

It is evident from these two quotations that the  
writer refers to an older poem by Benen.

+ Any person viewing the original <sup>manuscript</sup> ~~manuscript~~ see also A. B. Chan. 100. 11.  
inside of the preceding vol. 14/9/14/20 (65)

(62) 261

It appears from this poem passim that the monarch made a present of women and fair women, and of women slaves and fair <sup>brought over seas</sup> women slaves, to his chieftains, but I cannot easily conceive how St. Benen could have sanctioned this custom, unless we are to understand that they were to be employed as working at the Quern or some other menial employment, but the epithet fair would seem to warrant a somewhat different conclusion. That these women slaves <sup>in Pagan times</sup> were similar to those against whom Mr. Phillips exclaims, I firmly believe, but I cannot easily conceive how one of <sup>the</sup> early enthusiastic preachers of Christianity could draw up a Code of Regulations in which he included a gift of harlots. And still the author of the present version of the "Code" states that he derived



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his authority from Benen, and that the  
customs had been in existence from the  
time of Con of the Hundred Battles.

Whatever a <sup>written</sup> older production this poem  
is drawn from, it is certain that it  
describes tributes which were certainly  
paid, and gifts which were conferred  
at an early period in Ireland, and pro-  
bably at the very time of its being  
composed; and as such it is well worthy of preservation.  
What the word  $\tau\eta\delta\eta$ , which occurs through-  
out this poem, means, I never met  
any direct evidence to prove. Mac  
Curtin renders it ting of Iron, which  
certainly <sup>is</sup> not the meaning. Keilly explains it chain  
which is much more probable than Mr. Curtin's explana-  
tion. It is <sup>used</sup> ~~given~~ in Cormac's Glossary in  
such a way as that one must conclude that  
it was either a chain, <sup>ring</sup> links of a chain, clasp,  
bracelet, ring or something or another of that

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(64) 263

description but Irish literature is not yet sufficiently developed to bring a sufficient number of passages together for placing its significance beyond dispute.

I do not <sup>clearly</sup> understand why Teara Bile Calce-an-chala or Brauney or Teara Aquila should not be mentioned in this Book of Rights as well as Siurené, either as paying tribute to, or receiving presents from the monarch; but I will not venture an opinion on the subject, till I shall have an opportunity of seeing different copies of this book of Rights and of ascertaining what territories it places in ancient Meath.

I am satisfied that in O'Dugan's poem (or at least in the copy of it sent me) several of the chiefs of Meath are omitted. No copy of that part can be depended upon but the copy in

14/6/14/20 (68)

the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, <sup>264 (65)</sup> which  
is in Cuckery O'Leary's hand-writing, but I  
fear that Mr. Curry has copied the extracts  
sent me from Mac Firbidge's copy of that  
poem, which is in many parts, very defective.

That Caille Fallamhain or Fallon's wood  
became in latter ages an alias name for  
the territory of Hy-Mac Uaig <sup>appears</sup> more  
than probable from the following reasons.  
O'Dugan mentions Hy-Mac Uaig as a  
territory, the Book of Rights makes no  
mention of Hy-Mac Uaig, but has in stead  
Caille Fallamhain. The identity of the one with  
the other is proved by the Irish Calendar  
which places the Church of Ros-each  
now Rosagh in the Barony of Elloygoish  
in the territory of Caille Fallamhain in  
Meath.

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(66) 265

I have now been exactly two months in this  
County of Westmeath, and though I have  
worked very hard, I am not half satis-  
fied with what I have done.

I fear I shall be able to make  
nothing of Kildare

your obedient servant  
John O'Donovan

Newspass.  
October 31<sup>st</sup> 1837.

**END**



**14 G 14/21**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Newpass, Co. Westmeath, concerning the history, antiquities and topography of the parishes of Kilmackneevan and Piercetown, Co. Westmeath, with particular reference to their holy wells, early churches, castles and the locality's association with the Dalton family.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)**

**1 November 1837**

**8 p.**

**22.7 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 266-273.**

Newry, November 1<sup>st</sup> 1837

Dear Sir, November has seen me in the County of Westmeath, having still to visit Mullingarham. Today I visited Kilnacknecuman and the Castle of Imper, where it found tradition very faint. The present patron saint is St. Matthew, but there is a very venerable old well in the townland of Ballynacarrow bearing the name of St. Bridget, from which it would appear that that Thaumaturgus was the patron before the Anglo-Normans established the Evangelist in her place. Two very aged ash trees grow over this well at present, but the present inhabitants are becoming too wise to resort <sup>to</sup> it for miraculous cures. The Parish is called in Irish Cill mho Naoimhín, which means the church of Mac Nevan, but whether Mac Nevan

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26<sup>th</sup> was or was not the original founder of the parish I have no historical reference to prove, nor is there any thing to be derived from tradition to throw even the dimmest light upon it. Is Mac Naomhair mentioned in the Irish Calendar? <sup>Colgan mentions a St. Naomhan</sup>

The parish name is now pronounced as if it were written Kilmanceevin.

In this parish, in a townland to which it gives name, stands the Castle of Imper now Emper, once the seat of a branch of the Daltons. It is nearly a square building being about 40 feet long and 36 feet broad, and so high that I could (with cold hands) scarcely throw a stone over it. A fair is annually held close to it, but I could not learn, whether this

fair was established while the Castle was inhabited, or since it fell to ruin.

That this was one of Dalton's Castle tho-  
not in the Barony of Rathconrath we  
learn from Mac Firdisse who thus  
traces the pedigree of the branch of  
that family to whom it belonged.

"The family of Impier"  
Thomas, the son of  
Clyles who was the son of  
John

1172  
300  
1472 when  
Thomas lived

Garrett  
Nicholas  
Andrew  
Henry  
Nicholas

Philip of Doon, i.e. Dundonnell  
Sir Walter, the first of the Daltons  
who came to Ireland.



There is nothing else of antiquarian curiosity in this parish but an old house which belonged to a branch of the Nugents who passed out of the Country and are the heads of whom is now according to tradition a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, and even this is a modern old house of very little interest.

The Parish of Piercetown adjoining Rib-macneevan on the west seems modern and ~~seems~~ of comparatively modern formation as there is no monument of antiquity to be found in it. It is probable that the Pierce after whom it was named was one of the Daltons as that name is found of frequent

occurrence in their pedigrees.

---

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I now return the name Books of the following parishes with the names settled as well as I could settle them but referring now and again to our Indexes for our established scale of orthography.

1. Kilcumny
2. Killnailteach
3. St. Mary's
4. St. Feighin's
5. Castletown Delvin, 2 books.
6. Killua
7. Kilpatrick
8. Killagh
9. Kilbray

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10. Kilmacneevan
11. Piercetown
12. Russagh
13. Rathasfuek. N.B. There is a holy well  
in this parish on the lands of Cromlin called  
St. Dermots Well,
14. Street
15. Rathgarve,
16. Foyran,
17. Lickblae,
18. Mayne
19. Dysart
20. Clonarney
21. Killucan & Books
22. Rathcomath
23. Castlerost
24. Pass of Kilbride

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- 25. Churchtown
- 26. Newtown
- 27. Portloman
- 28. Lynn
- 29. Tyfarnham
- 30. Tighmure,
- 31. Kilbegann
- 32. Castletown Gahagan, 2 Books
- 33. Mullingar, 3 Books
- 34. Templeoran,
- 35. Rathconnell, 2 books,
- 36. Durrane and Rathhugh
- 37. Moylisher
- 38. Clongus & Kilbride
- 39. Faughallstown,
- 40. Portnashangan

Please to let me know when they arrive, if you have all the name Books

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273  
of the County excepting Lacham, Lemy, Mully-  
farnham and Stonehall. 14/G/14/21(8)

I have received a letter from O'Conor today  
in reply to some queries of mine about  
Laugh Ennell - in which he stoutly maintains  
that Cro-inis and Inis Broine are two  
names for one and the same island.

I cannot contradict him unless I can  
get some old men on the west side of  
the island to take their oaths that they  
told me the truth - His arguments are  
certainly ingenious, but all his evidence  
rests upon the authority of one man whom  
he met breaking stones at a lime kiln.

I still maintain that the Cormorant island  
opposite Rath-an-doon, is still called  
in Irish Cao-inse; but O'Conor destroys  
or attempts to destroy the antiquity of this  
name by saying that it means the island  
of the Crowes! Old Doyle of Lilligat who lived on the  
borders of the lake all his life time sent me O'Conor to it  
in his Lion Boat as Cro-inse! What am I to do? I ask

\* In his last letter he denies that Doyle  
knew the name. Granted this may be, but his  
authority must be as good as any other of the same class of men.  
Go the Divine Survey of this Lake destroyed.

**END**

**14 G 14/22**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letters to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Newpass, Co. Westmeath, in which he refers to sites of historical, religious and topographical interest in Multyfarnham, Ballinalack, Knock-Eyon and Lecan, and the parishes of Leny and Stonehall, Co. Westmeath.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)**

**5-7 November 1837**

**48 p.**

**Pages vary between 18 and 23.5 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 274-321.**

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Newpass November 5<sup>th</sup> 1837.

Dear Sir,

In reading over Sir Henry Pier's account of Westmeath I found a reference to a very ancient chapel and place of pilgrimage on the side of the lofty hill of Knock Egon, which I have not yet visited. There is no reference to it in any of the name books, but I think it is my duty to ascertain whether it is or is not now in existence, and also to find out if possible who <sup>the</sup> St. Keyson or Egon was from whom the famous hill of Knock-Egon took its name. If it does exist (which <sup>it</sup> is more than probable that it does) it should be shown on the plan as a curious <sup>remnant</sup> feature of antiquity; and if it does not it will be satisfactory to ascertain that fact in order that no man may hereafter accuse us of negligence.

The Multyfarnham in the Barony of Corca-Keo is the Multyferman mentioned by Mr. Todd, but it was

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not



(2) 275  
amare that he discovered the annals of that famous  
Monastery. I wish you could ascertain if he has, and  
by what evidences he has been enabled to identify them.  
If they be found they must be of vast importance to  
the history of Westmeath.

Yesterday I walked to Ballinalack, now, <sup>the name of</sup> a small village  
near the Liffey, but anciently the name of the ford  
on that river over which a bridge now stands, &  
which, if tradition can be depended upon, was de-  
fended by a castle which stood on the east bank  
of the river. The name is in Irish Béal na loac  
which means mouth of the ford of the flag-stones, a name  
truly descriptive of the locality, for very large lime-  
stone flags are now to be seen in the ford ~~and~~ on the  
banks of the river and every where in the neighbour-  
hood. The name is nearly synonymous with Belleek  
(of which I have given a full explanation in a letter  
upon Belleek on the Erne near Castle Caldwell.)  
but there is this difference that Belleek is named  
from one large flag nearly as level as a sheet  
of ice, and Ballinalack from several. The true  
Anglicised orthography, <sup>according to our established scale</sup> would be Bellanallack (Beal-  
anallack in the Inquisition) but we cannot in this

14/6/14/22(2)

instances deviate from established usage, as we have not done so in the <sup>Ballinap</sup> nor in the <sup>Ballinamore</sup>, all which should be regulated by similar analogies.

From Ballinalack I directed my course in a north east direction through the Barony of Corca Ree until I was stopped by Lough Derryvarragh. In this neighbourhood I made out a fine old farmer of the name Ledwich (perhaps a descendant of Torgesing) with whose information I was so pleased that I stopped with him till dusk and had to return to Newpass by the dim light of the moon in its first quarter. Passing thro potatoe fields, morasses, flooded Bohareens, and having boots of clay up to my knees, I at last gained the broad high road, which is at this season very heavy, and made my way home among drunken people who were staggering along the road. The country is here very much flooded, and it is with great difficulty a long journey can be performed in consequence of the constant wet and the shortness of the days. I make these remarks to shew that it is <sup>he</sup> necessary for us for the future to start early in the spring and to have our Campaign over before the short, wet days set in. I glory in hardship as long as I can keep off the rheumatism

14/6/14/22/31 but

(4) 27<sup>th</sup>

but I cannot do so much work in winter as during the other three seasons.

I visited the old church of Lecan, and was much pleased with its antiquity. It is much in the style of the old church of St. Fechin at Fore, but not built of such massy stone. The stones of the neighbourhood are lime stone flag, and no massy block can be found in any of the quarries. The lintel "that traverseth the head of the door" is a thin light flag, which it would not require the strength of St. Fechin to lift.

Of this ancient church there now remains but a part of the south side wall which contains the door and a small window of beautifully chiselled lime stone ~~cap~~ (exactly similar to that in the east gable of St. Fechin's church) and a semicircular arch similar in style and position to the one in the old church of Dungiven. It is not easy to form an idea from the present remains <sup>of</sup> what the exact extent of this church was when perfect.

Close to the south wall opposite the door is to be seen a tomb stone shaped like a coffin well cut and ornamented, and exhibiting an inscription

17/6/14/22(4)



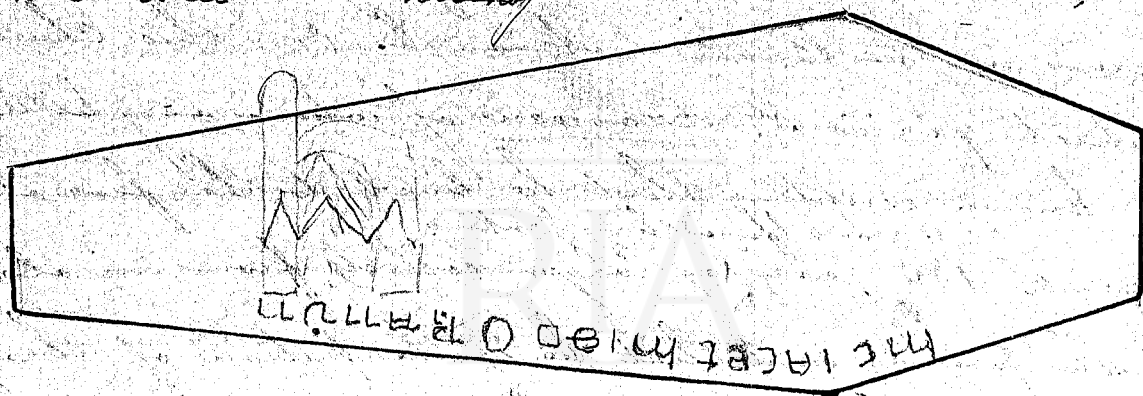
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in raised letters in a style different from any  
I have yet seen. I saw at the first glance that  
it was not an Irish inscription, but it took me  
a long time to understand the plan adopted by the  
artist in shaping the letters. The inscription is this as  
well as I could copy it

mc iacet m i d o o B a n u n

hic iacet

hic iacet

O. B a n u n,



Between the parts of most of the letters there  
are pieces of the stone not cut out, which  
at first sight gives ~~the~~ them a very con-  
-fused appearance. The stone was found at  
the bottom of a grave some years ago, and it is  
probable that many other curious inscriptions are deep-  
-buried in the soil. I take Hiitha O'Bannu to be

14/9/14/22(5)



(6) 282  
for Echod O'Banan, and that it is probably the  
name of one of the modern abbots or parsons  
of Leacain.

*282*  
This church of Leacain was erected by Saint Patrick  
in the country of the Radii, which is the present  
barony of "Corck-ree" (nepotes Radii) as we learn from  
the ~~Tripartite~~ <sup>life of that Saint published by</sup>  
Colgan and from Tirechan's life of him as pre-  
served in the Book of Armagh. Over this church  
Patrick placed St. Cromeen of whom very little  
is known excepting that he lived to the fine old  
age of 180 years <sup>i.e. 11 years longer than Jenkins</sup> (as Colgan collects from an old  
Irish poem) and that he is the patron of the  
celebrated monastery of Leacain in Westmeath.  
He is still vividly remembered; and <sup>till</sup> fifteen years  
ago his well which lies in the S.E. end of the  
townland of Leacain was visited by a great  
concourse of pious people on the festival day  
of the Saint, which, according to tradition, falls  
on the day after St. Peter's; but the present  
Coarb of Cromeen has put a stop to the celebra-

tion of his memory, by telling the people that <sup>283</sup> (7)  
they might as well fill an old pot with  
water and pray around it as around the  
holy well to which the saint gave his blessing.  
The Lapt Coarb however, <sup>one of the good old times</sup> had so great a veneration  
for the patron of Leacain that he used  
to pray at the well himself, and give every en-  
couragement to the people to do the same.

Does the Irish Calendar contain a pedigree of  
this saint? It would be curious if he were  
one of the dependants of Fiachra Raidhe.

I must here correct an error which I committed  
in a former letter, in which I stated that  
there was a well named after this saint  
in the parish of Killybeg. I was led into  
this error by the name book in which the  
name of a well is given as Crummeen well  
instead of Tobar A Choimien, which means  
nothing more than the well of the Commons  
and is so called from its lying in the town-  
land called Cormin d'Unan, or the Commons of  
Toor. This error however has been since corrected.

14/9/14/22 (7)

both

(8) 284  
on the plan and in the name Book.

One request I have to make about those minor names that the person who examines the plan and writes these names (which he does often with cold fingers) from the viva voce pronunciation of the people be got to insert the same into the name books before he forgets the pronunciation, for when a different person copies them, there is a liability to error, and one letter often makes a material difference in the name.

There is another fine spring in this townland of Lecain called Toberloo, which, <sup>according to tradition</sup> was never a holy well, though its name fons Lugadii sounds sacred enough, and I have no doubt but it was considered so in the primitive ages, and called after a Saint Lua, a disciple of Patrick.

The inhabitants of Coora Ree call Lough Derryurragh loc Spiltuech, which is a strange corruption of loc Darbhreac. by transposing the first syllable and changing p into t, a change which I have frequently alluded to before as Lough Enniscuair to Loch Mail, Drumcree to Drumelke, &c.

14/6/14/22(8)



It is curious how the organs of some tribes naturally change the letters n, and p to l. The following is as perfect a list as I could make out of such changes, in Westmeath.

Lough Derrynarragh <sup>Derrynarragh</sup> <del>now</del> always	Lough Derrillagh
Lough <u>Uair</u>	Lough <u>Uail</u>
Drumcree	Drumclee
Lough <u>Stinnian</u>	Lough <u>Ennell</u>

That these changes have taken place is as certain as any other historical fact inferred from historical monuments and they <sup>are</sup> well worth the consideration of the etymologist.

### of the parish of Lenny

This parish lies in the west of the Barony of Corca Ree and verges on Lough Cron and Lough Uail. It was bounded on the south <sup>for about a mile</sup> by the Silver arm <sup>which</sup> of Lough Uail extended to Lough Cron, but in latter times <sup>arm or</sup> this <sup>cut off or</sup> vein has been stopped, and people are employed to prevent Lough Uail from feeding Lough Cron which in my opinion stands not in need of its supply as it drinks up the <sup>whole</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>reason</sup> ~~why~~ <sup>the</sup> Silver arm of Lough Uail was amputated, some say that it was to prevent the fish from passing into Lough Cron, <sup>but</sup> others, that

14/6/14/22(9)



10/286

it was to prevent it from carrying off the water which supplies the Canal. It was a very important stream ~~at~~ in 1682, as we learn from Sir Henry Piercy's description of it.

"This silver stream is of a very short course  
"not full a mile in length and yet it turneth  
"five overshaft mills, whereof the least hath a wheel  
"twelve feet diameter; and one might have a wheel of  
"eighteen, besides which seats might be found with  
"convenience for more mills if our country could find  
"them employment. These mills are perennial, never  
"dry, not in the greatest draughts I have seen.  
"This brook finisheth its short course in the lake  
"called Lough Iron whereinto it falleth at the  
"south end; and at the north end mingles with  
"the Lany, and together with it falls into the  
"Shannon."

Collectanea F. p. 17.

This parish is now called in Irish *Papastree Verne* from the situation of the mother church in a town-land called *Verne recte Verne*, a meadow. There is another townland in the parish called *Kilpatrick*, but I could meet no person that ever saw or heard of an old church or grave yard ~~in~~ in it. There

14/6/14/22(10)

also a well in the townland of Coill a' Rídis <sup>28 Aug 11</sup> or  
Knights' wood, <sup>called Patrick's well</sup> but it is not now considered a  
holy well. There can be however very little doubt  
that all the Patrick's wells in Ireland were  
once accounted holy, as having been blessed  
by St. Patrick.

In this parish on the high road leading from  
Longford to Mullingar stands the little village  
of Bumburgha about <sup>distant</sup> 1½ mile from Ballinacree  
and ¼ mile from Lough Mail. This village takes  
its name from a well which lies close to the east  
side of it in which the River Broghna has its  
source. The stream sent out by this well is now called  
the Bumburgha River; it flows ¼ mile in a south  
east direction and falls into Lough Mail at its  
northern point. Sir Henry Piercy takes no notice of  
this stream, well or village. He looked upon the  
Broghna as having its source in Lough Foyle <sup>note</sup> (Foyle)  
as appears from his description of it published  
in Wallace's Collection I. p. 6,

"The River Broghy riseth in <sup>note</sup> Lough Foyle (Foyle)  
whence passing through the gardens of Cullenmore  
it lyeth to Mullingar, the chief town of our

14/9/14/22(11) County



"County, and thence to Lough Inniel; when freeing  
 it itself from this large water, it is called forward  
 to the Broony, the word signifying a burthen of sticks  
 & but why the River is so called I do not know.  
 & It watereth the large Barony of Moycashell,  
 & running besides the town of Killeegain it sustaineth  
 & a fair bridge; leaving this Barony it falleth  
 & through the King's County, and after a long  
 & course there it payeth tribute to the Shan-  
 & now at or near Banagher."

A different derivation of the name of this River  
 is given in the Tripartite Life of Saint Patrick  
 which I hope will be sent among the Extracts  
 for the King's County.

Two remarks remain to be made on Bumburgha

1. that Bun is used in the name in a directly oppo-  
 site sense to what I have hitherto met it. In  
 the other parts of Ireland the Bun of a River  
 means its mouth as can be at once seen from  
 the localities of Bunduff, Bundoran, Bunclody

Bundroney, Bunratty and from all the Bunowens  
 whose localities I have examined. In this name  
 it signifies the head or source!

2. that Beauford is  
~~wrong in~~ placing this village where Ballinalack  
 is now, and Archdall (Monast. p. 722) is equally inaccurate  
 in describing it as on the shore. your obedient servant  
 14/6/14/22 (12) John O'Donovan

This was in reply to questions of Laph. Parker  
about this in - not written  
to W. W. Wash.

My dear Larcom,

The first of O'D's  
letter to which you allude -  
"his being alive to the danger  
is" has not been sent -  
The letter has come wanting  
the inner sheet, or 4 pages.

What you remark about O'D's  
power to allude to the highest  
subjects for inquiries is quite  
true -

I have glanced over O'D's  
two letters - the perfect and the  
imperfect one - and looked  
with some curiosity for his

14/6/14/22 (13)



notice of the ancient inscription  
in the churchyard of Liscann  
and could not help smiling at  
finding how much less at home  
he is in the black letter than  
in the Irish inscriptions -  
He should have deciphered it  
there - as I believe

HTC IACPT MISE O BRIUN

He gave mise (myself) O'Brien -  
The Irish mise is characteristic enough  
of an Irish chieftain, for such  
O'Brien or Briun was - and  
if I mistake not, of the district  
in which Sean lies - at all  
events it was near to it.

14/6/14/22 (14)

There is a valuable inscription  
in the Abbey church of Mullingar  
nam. which gives the date of  
its erection - 1306. I do not  
perceive that O'D. has noticed  
it, but no matter I have it.

I send back all the letters  
up to this day - also the  
Index for the Baron of  
Carbury, and the name books  
of Kings County - of the union of  
Eglish, and the remaining books  
of Gaery castle -

Corry shall work hard to  
satisfy O'Donovan.

was my O'Lara  
faithfully yours  
George Petre.

14/6/14/22 (15)

Newpass November 7<sup>th</sup> 1837

Dear Sir, This day Mr. Broughton and I visited Knock-Eyow and discovered the little chapel on the side of that hill nearly in the same state as it was described by Sir Henry Piercy in 1682. I shall transcribe his words and become his Scholiast.

"This lake (Lough Bircoreagh) as before said, at  
 "its northern end receiveth the Linn, and for  
 "many miles together washeth the shores of  
 "the Baronies of Derryfora, Corkery and  
 "Moygoyph. It is a large and winding water  
 "branches into several long, large and deep  
 "recesses, inasmuch that no man from any  
 "of the high grounds that surround it

14/6/14/22 (16)

non

(2.) 290

" nor from any station of the water itself  
" can at one view take in all the apartments  
" of it. In one of those which verge to east-  
" ward it injuncteth itself between two  
" rising hills; the one called Knock Ross  
" is well shaded with all sorts of under-  
" wood, and great store of low spreading oaks\*  
" and rises to a vast height above the water  
" but without very steep in the ascent. But  
" the other hill Knock Egan, rises much higher  
" than it, and for more than half its height  
" is almost perpendicular† with the water.

\* Sic hodie. It is certainly very beautiful

† It is very steep, but far from being per-  
pendicular. It forms <sup>an</sup> angle of 35° with the  
water. All the rest of the description is re-  
markably correct.

14/6/14/22 (17)



*hic autem omnium nostrorum in Westmædia Collum altissimum* (3)

"This is <sup>autem</sup> indeed, the tallest of all our hills in Westmeath.  
"To be in the water at a full view and just dis-  
"tance from these hills, were certainly the most  
"agreeable prospect in nature; if hereunto were  
"added the noise of trumpets or loud sound-  
"ing instruments. Major General Reynolds  
"towards the latter end of our late unhappy  
"war, is said (passing this country) to have  
"halted here, and though he descended not  
"into the water, was so taken with the ame-  
"nity of the prospect, and the beauty of  
"the landscape, and the most ravishing  
"echoes that redoubled to him the noise  
"of his trumpets, that he exclaimed he never  
"came to the like place, and is said to have  
"wished he could even then with leisure and  
"safety sit down and take up his rest here.  
"The water, especially under this bill is exceeding

14/6/14/22(18)

\* It is said to be deeper than any part of Lough Deravarra



(4) 293

so deep (as if nature out of this pit had raised so  
a vast a bulk) never yet fathomed by such as  
attempted it. The hill although it rise so steep  
as I have said, is yet in all its ascent clothed  
with trees that naturally and securely grow here  
(for no hatchet can come near them) which ri-  
sing continually and gradually one above another  
add no small grace to the landscape. This  
hill hath on that side which hangeth over  
the water, and about midway from it to the top  
an ancient chapel, dedicated to a saint called  
Eugen or Keyen. This chapel is cut out of the na-  
tural rock, for all one side of it appears to be the  
the natural stone instead of a wall. It is now, and

is so today. But a hatchet could be very easily brought  
to bear on them. They are very small trees or rather  
brushwood. but it is probable that the trees mentioned  
by Piers were cut long since, and that the present ones  
are suckers.

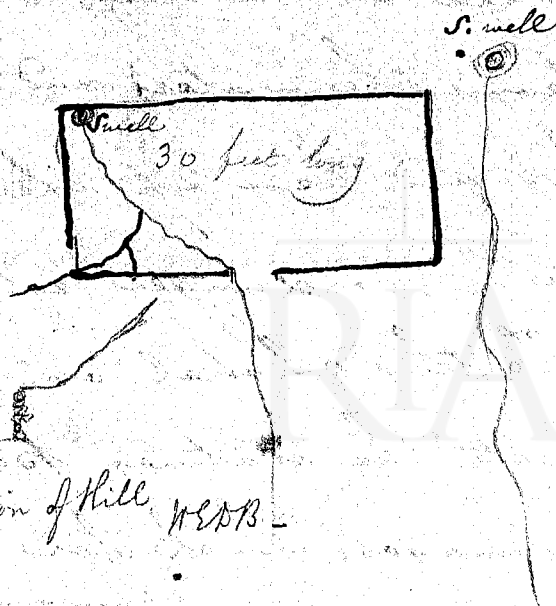
\* This is certainly not true, either in a general or particular sense.

\*\* The south wall is built of regular masonry. The north one

14/G/14/22(19)

293 (5)

"and long hath been without a roof. It hath in  
 "it a curious purling stream brook of crystal  
 "water, which issuing out of the rock side  
 "of the chapel traverseth it, and falling thro  
 "the opposite side wall, hasteneth down  
 "to the waters below."



This water is not  
 very chrystalline now  
 for the well is nearly  
 choaked up with  
 the rotten leaves of  
 trees.

is the natural hill faced with stone and lime mort ar  
 masonry. To form a level for the chapel on the slope of  
 the hill it was necessary to cut down or hollow out a  
 good deal of it. When the area was formed, a spink or  
 bank was also formed to the north of the area, and  
 this spink was faced with stone to form the north  
 wall of the chapel. This is what Piers calls a wall of  
 natural rocks

14/6/14/22 (20)

(6) 294

14/6/14/22 (21)

" To this chapel from the Land side leads a path way  
" on the side of the hill, the nearer you approach  
" to it the narrower doth the way grow; at  
" last and at a good distance from it, the way  
" appeareth hewn out of the rock side, ren-  
" dered easy and safe by the <sup>†</sup> trees, which, as  
" afore said rise from the waters and range  
" over one another and hem up the way so  
" close that there is no danger either to  
" slip or fall. To this chapel on the first  
" Sunday in harvest, the natives pay their  
" devotion<sup>\*</sup> in pilgrimages, which for certain

† Now Bruchwood only.

\* Stations are performed here yet, and a pattern may  
held <sup>on the 1st August</sup> at the foot of Knock Eyon until the present  
P.P. drove it out of the parish of Tanghamtown  
(the one in which Krosekeyn is) It is now held on  
the road in the "Mountain Parish (Tashmun) and  
not far from the boundary of Tanghamtown Parish.  
(at a place called X Roads)



295 (7)

stages, they undertake barefoot; but when they come  
to a certain noted place in the way they hold on the  
remainder of their devotion on their bare knees  
all along to the chapel, on stone and gravel,  
intermixed and overgrown with heath and grass.  
Their devotions performed they return merry and  
shod no longer concerned for those sins that  
were the cause of this so severe a penance;  
but as if having now paid off the old score  
they longed to go on in the new again,  
they return in all haste to a green spot  
of ground on the east side of the hill  
towards the land, and here men and women  
fall a dancing and carousing the rest  
of the day; for ale sellers in great numbe<sup>er</sup>  
on these days have their booths as in a  
fair, and to be sure the merry Bag-pipers  
fail not to pay their attendance. Thus

14/6/14/22 (22)



(8) 296

14/6/14/22(23)

in lewd and obscene dancing, and in excess of  
drinking, the remainder of the day is spent, as  
if they celebrated the Bacchanalia, rather  
than the memory of a pious saint<sup>†</sup> or  
their own penitentials; and oftentimes it  
falls out that more blood is shed on the  
grass from broken pates and drunken  
quarrells, when the pilgrimages are ended  
than was before on the stones from their  
bare feet<sup>\*</sup> and knees during their devotions.

† I like this.

\* Their feet did not bleed at all, ~~less~~ because  
the greater number of them went barefooted  
at all times. It is very curious that Piers  
makes no mention of whiskey here; it is  
probable that whiskey was not generally  
sold at this period.

Many young fellows went to the pattern to enjoy fun  
but <sup>did</sup> the pilgrims fight?

You see Lough Euell and Long's Connell to great advantage; also the hills of Fohes, Loranagh moor, Clullagh, Shieve Carney, &c. &c.

29<sup>th</sup> (9)

\* This chapel so high above water, being exposed, you may yet continue your travel or ascending for a good way within trees low. and the top of the hill, which now in climbing becomes more easy in the ascent; But after a while your way is no longer shaded with verdant trees\* but is cumbered with a more humble plant or heath intermixed with grass. Having at last topped the hill, if in a fair day you have a prospect into both east & west <sup>+</sup> seas, and may perceive many mountains &

\* Now very small underwood,

14/G/14/22-(24)

† It would require a portion of Irish credulity, none of which am I blessed with, to believe <sup>ally</sup> this. To the <sup>(Lond)</sup> East you see the steeple of Kelly, and, in the dim distance, <sup>the Dublin & Wicklow Mountains</sup> but surely not the east sea? and if, you see the west sea at the Bay of Galway, you are well gifted with the <sup>second sight</sup> precious sight. The truth is you see neither the east nor west sea, but you have a fine view of the Shieve Bloom mountains. <sup>Croghan, &c. &c.</sup>

(10) 298

" and countries both south and north, so that  
" ~~from~~ thus our County not only sendeth streams  
" east and west, but affordeth a pleasant  
" prospect of both seas.

Collectanea I. pages 14, 15

November 8<sup>th</sup> 1837.

Today we visited Mullyfarnham and had a  
long <sup>Rev. Mr. Conboy. O. S. F.</sup> Confab: with the abbot, who seemed very  
anxious to give us all the information he could  
but he would not acknowledge that he has  
any MSS, <sup>and</sup> ~~which~~ I firmly believe <sup>he has not</sup> though  
Mr. Broughton does not. He was ex-  
ceedingly obliging; shewed us all the cu-  
riosityes of the place, and declared upon  
the honor of a gentleman, that if he had  
any MSS or records of the Monastery ~~that~~  
he would not only shew them to us, but  
send them to Dublin, that we might have  
full time and liberty to inspect and  
all judge. W.S.B.

14/6/14/22(25)

digest



digest them. I do not believe that he has  
any MS. records of the monastery. He  
has an old painting which belonged to the  
old abbey, which he says is traditionally  
handed down as a portrait of Johannes  
Scotus Erigena, represented as transcribing.  
But I fear that there is no truth in  
this tradition. It will however appear  
from Pierp's account of Clutiforman that  
there was a large collection of pictures  
in that abbey, from which fact, it  
will be seen that this picture is worth  
attention, but little as is my skill in  
painting, or the history of the art, I would  
venture to give an unlearned opinion  
that this cannot be an original por-  
-trait of that famous Irishman.

<sup>Superior (he is called)</sup> 14/9/14/22 (26)  
The abbot states that he had a visit

This is a dark picture (painted on wood) with a black background. 11.10.22



(12) 300

from Mr. Smyth of College Green and from the celebrated antiquary John Salton. Both of whom ransacked the old Theological library belonging to the monastery, but could find nothing in it but old printed Books on Theology and Church history.

He could shew me no account of the Abbey of St. Dunstons, but a few words in De Burgo, which I shall notice presently. He shewed up all the tomb-stones, and assisted us to "make them out," and ~~seemed very uneasy~~ seemed very uneasy lest I might suppose for a moment that he would be such an enemy to history, as to refuse access to any record that might throw light on the history of the Monastery. He and his brethren hold 46 acres

14/6/14/22 (27)

2

of land from Lord Donaghmore, for  
 which he pays <sup>£</sup>80 a year, and of  
 which he tries to make the best he  
 can.

This land and whatever little gratuities  
 he receives from the neighbours are all  
 he has to support the establishment  
 and, in my opinion, he would have no  
 inducement to suppress any historical  
 documents connected with the establish-  
 -ment, if he had such. I shall there-  
 -fore rest content with his assertion  
 that all the Records of the abbey of  
 Multyfarnham were carried away  
 at the suppression of the Monastery;  
 at which period <sup>in all probability</sup> the Annals of that house  
 found their way into Trinity College.

14/9/14/22 (28)





308 (15)  
which, according to tradition, stood where the <sup>modern</sup> present bridge stands over the Gaine River.

De Burgo in his meagre list of the Franciscan Monasteries mentions this of Multifernan in the following words.

"St. Montis Fernandi, vulgo Multifernan  
" in eodem Agro (Westmeath) Canobium funda-  
" tum a Gulielmo Dekamar sacro Dñi.  
Bib. Dom. p. 744.

How he could render Multee Fernand, Mong Fernand is not easy to be seen, but it is probable that he took multee, to be some modification of mullach a summit. The truth however is that he knew nothing at all about it, for the abbey is in a valley close to the banks of the River Gaine, and the <sup>present</sup> existence of Milly at the locality, and the tradition in the Country that Milly existed there at an early period, and the manifest signification of the name (multee being the plural of mullen)

14/9/14/22 (30)



(16) 304

prove that the true signification of multo  
Fapnam is Harannan's mill. The name  
Harannan, <sup>however</sup> is not now common in the  
neighbourhood, nor will you find any of  
the name nearer to Mully than Clon-  
mellon, where the name is still in  
existence but not <sup>that</sup> of a numerous clan.  
Colgan makes honourable mention of a  
family of this name, but, if I remem-  
ber rightly, he locates them in Ty-  
rone.

Sir Henry <sup>Pier</sup> in describing the River Gaine (An Ghine)  
mentions the mill of Multifarnam as to the north  
of the Bridge, which is its situation at this  
day, and it is probable that the present  
mill is the very one that existed there in  
his time. The Miller stated it to have been in the  
possession of his Father & Grandfather before him  
& Gaine is the last River I shall particularly  
describe, a small but very pleasant water  
of about four or five miles course, traversing

14/G/14/22(31)

305 (17)

the Barony of Corkery. It hath its original  
from several springs that issue from the  
higher grounds which lie to the east  
and south of Mangylea. These springs  
entering short of the town, form in one  
channel a very pretty brook, which thence  
soon falleth over a mill at Kilmaglish  
and about a mile further over another  
at Ballinegall; thence it glideth to Knights  
wood, and there (like a snow ball) en-  
creasing as it goes, sustaineth a late built  
foot bridge; henceforward coasting the  
lands of Knightwood on the west and  
Tifarnan (belonging to the See of Meath),  
on the East, it passeth to Multifernan  
where it falleth under another large bridge;  
and thence <sup>"sic hodie, I. o. d."</sup> to a mill, whence immediately it  
watereth the ground of the late Friary of  
Multifernan; this done after a mile's longer  
course it loseth itself in the large Lake

(18) 304

"Lough Diverreagh.

"This water though small, and of a short  
& course is plentifully stored with the best  
& small trouts in Westmeath, both white  
& and red and some small pikes also."

Collectanea I. 6.7.

I shall next give his account of the monastery  
of Multifernan and then proceed with my own  
remarks.

"Multifernan, a monastery of Franciscan friars  
founded by William Delamere in the reign of  
Henry III, seated on the Gaine in the Barony  
of Corkery. The frame or fabric is rather neat  
and compact than sumptuous or towering, hav-  
ing in the midst between the body of the  
church and the chancel, an handsome, strait  
but very narrow steeple.

"After the dissolution of Monasteries, it became the  
property of Alderman Jans of Dublin, who, or  
his successors permitted the friars to enter  
again, and here settle in as great or greater

14/G/14/22(33)

splendour



30<sup>th</sup> (19)  
" splendor than ever: here at and before 1641 they  
" had their church not only in very good repair  
" but adorned (pardon the expression\*) with  
" images, pictures, reliques &c. here in the choir  
" or chancel, they had their organs and cho-  
" risters; they had not only apartments suf-  
" ficient for their own number, but for the re-  
" ception of many horse and foot at any time;  
" here they had also all houses of offices fit  
" to make preparation for entertainment of  
" such as came at all times to visit or other-  
" wise to consult or debate their concerns;  
" and here it was that the fatal rebellion, which  
" broke out with so much fury and havoc  
" on the English and Protestants in this King-  
" dom in 1641. was hatched and contrived:  
14/9/14/22 (34)

\* The early Protestants were mad about pic-  
-tures. What else could they ornament their  
church withal? See Peter Pindar on this  
subject. It is very probable that the present  
representation of Johannes Scotus is one of these  
pictures, with which the church was adorned (pardon the expression)



for this place being conveniently seated at  
 a most in the centre of the Kingdom, and  
 also of great receipt, that year and some  
 years before great and frequent were the  
 meetings <sup>here</sup> of the Popish Clergy of all kinds  
 from all parts of the Kingdom. &c. &c.

This Abbey is at this time altogether out of  
 repair, yet the friers of this Convent, had,  
 before the discovery of the late Popish plot  
 in England, a friery and Convent on a  
 piece of land near this place, being a  
 parcel of Knights wood, belonging to Sir  
 Thomas Nugent <sup>\*</sup> Baronet, where they had  
 built all manner of conveniences, both  
 for the receipt of strangers, and for their  
 own use, but all ~~blatched~~ <sup>blatched</sup> Cabins <sup>†</sup> which

\* Now represented by Sir. Percy Nugent (Fitzgerald)  
 who succeeded jure matris.

† Not a vestige of these Cabins now remaining.

The present Convent <sup>now</sup> is in the town of Mullifurham  
 opposite the monastery but at the opposite side  
 of the river. <sup>(connected by a Bridge.)</sup> It consists of the Abbot or Superior  
 and three friars, all of the order of S. Francis. <sup>†</sup>

I wish to state that these friars were all educated at Rome, where they have a distinct

309 (21)

“are to this day kept up in good repair, and  
“are ready for their reception whenever they shall  
“please, or find the opportunity of re-entering,  
“and some say that it is not now altogether  
“void of them altho. he who owns to be an  
“inhabitant therein is said to be a protestant.”

The abbey church of Mullyfarnham was  
repaired in 1827 by the present abbot, who  
took great pains to preserve as much of the  
old work as possible. The narrow steeple  
mentioned by Piers <sup>large</sup> is perfect, the south east window is perfect,  
and indeed the whole church may be said to  
be in its pristine state with the exception of  
the roof which is not <sup>carried</sup> so high as the original  
one, and two or three small windows which  
are in the square modern style, and present  
a striking contrast to the magnificence  
of the ancient work.

The kitchen, the refectory, and other parts of  
the monastery are in a state of great dilap-  
-pidation.

- (22) 315  
Moore in his Irish melodies has the following  
note on the reference to the herae of the  
Red branch:
- " Translation of an ancient Irish inscription
  - " upon a tomb stone in the abbey of Mullifernan
  - " County of Westmeath.
  - " A yellow lion upon green satin
  - " The standard of the herae of the Red branch,
  - " Which Connor carried in battle
  - " During his frequent wars for the expulsion of foreigners
- Moore's Melodies (Philadelphia  
Edition 1828) p. 274.

This shews what learned antiquarians we have  
had in this "Gem of the Atlantic", but I hope  
Moore has not been so childish as to introduce  
this inscription as historical evidence into  
his History of Ireland. According to the  
evidence of the tomb of the Delamar family  
the abbey of Mullifernan was not erected  
previously to the year 1316, <sup>(vide copy of Inscription p. 25.)</sup> and therefore  
no Irish inscription found in that monas-  
tery could be considered evidence of the

14/6/14/22 (37)

14/9/14/22 (38) 311

The name Gaynor is not Milesian, that is to say it is not Irish for it is not found in the Histories of any of the Irish Antiquarians. Keating O'Halloran & Flaherty Denis Dooge and Comerford are all silent about the name Gaynor. But it is boldly asserted the name is Norman they came over to England with William the Conqueror and <sup>in</sup> after times came to Ireland with the famous Strongbow and at <sup>that</sup> time their name was Degamoi a Norman name.

A tailor of the name  
Gaynor living at  
Rathmore.



211 223  
312 (23)

Kind of standard carried by King Connor (of Ulster)  
and the heroes of the Red Branch.

I had the good fortune to discover this inscription in the abbey church (notwithstanding the assertion of the abbot that it was stolen out of it) and in order that its true value as a historical monument may be appreciated, I shall give it in full.

"Hoc tegitur Saxo Dominus pietate  
"refulgens Jacobus Gaynorus prognatus  
"stemmae claro.

"Pray for the soul of James Gaynor of Leary  
"who died January 15<sup>th</sup> 1764, aged 66  
"also for his ancestors and posterity.

"leóimán barde ar ipól uáiste  
"Meirge cup na chaoibé Ruáide  
"A ré do bíod ag Concabair sa ceit  
"A ríor tuarógán sa díberc allmírach."

Exactly the Irish of what Moore gives in English  
but it is a mere whim of the stone<sup>cutter</sup> or some  
friend of this Gaynor to have it cut under  
his epitaph. Does Mr. Petrie know <sup>the</sup> his-  
tory of the Gaynors of Leary? There are no  
refs/14/22(39)

(24) 313

211. 257  
Armorial bearings on this tomb stone. Perhaps this Irish Bann was intended to describe the arms of Gaynor? Are they of English origin? If so this Bann has no meaning whatever. They are very numerous here as poor folk, they know nothing about their own history, and I have no record of the noble stemma from which they have pululated.

There is a tomb of the Nugents within this abbey Church, on which their arms are very elaborately sculptured. It exhibits this inscription and many initials, <sup>in raised letters</sup> which are supposed to stand for <sup>the names of</sup> different members of the family who were here interred.

"Sumptibus Jacob: Nugent filii Richi  
"Nugent de Donower qui obiit 18 Feb:  
"Anno Domini 1675."

Outside the abbey church opposite the steeple there is another monument of the same family in raised letters, of which the following is a copy.

14/6/14/22 (40)

" Christopher Nugent late of Corbels town  
 " second son of Christopher Nugent Baron  
 " of Delvin, who deceased the third day of  
 " July Anno Domini 1626, and was married  
 " to the lady Anne North alias Cusack  
 " who caused this monument to be erected  
 " for both for whose souls let all the faith-  
 " full intercess."

On another stone now detached but which originally belonged to the same monument viz,

" Oratio pro Christophoro Nugent et  
" Domina Anna Cusack. 1629."

This was added after the death of his wife.  
 Close to this is the tomb of Delamar, of the  
 inscription on which the following is a  
 faithful copy. (as read for me, <sup>while standing,</sup> by the abbot)

" Wilhelmus Delamar. Armiger exivit hunc tum.  
" hunc pro se et suis Anno Domini 1684. Cujus  
" predecessores Wilhelmus Delamar de Streete  
" Miles, fundavit et edificavit hoc Monasterium  
" Anno Domini 1306."

Vallancey in a note on Piers says that it was erected  
 in 1236. Perhaps he is right.

14/G/14/22(41)

Besides the monastery there is at Mullingarham the ruin of the parish church  
 (one small fragment of a wall) which was dedicated to St. Andrew with its grave yard  
 and a moat by itself with a large old ash tree on its summit.

(26) 315

In the townland of Knightwood there are three wells, of which one has an inscription on a trough through which the water forced itself. The inscription is decidedly not more than a hundred years old as will at once appear from the letters, which are in very modern English large hand, such as boys learn to write in the hedge schools after they get out of "bot hooks and hangers."

It is however an evidence of the name of a Stax well and as such it was worth preserving, but I hope that no one will ever take it for a Druidical inscription in the Ogham or virgular characters.

W<sup>m</sup> F. Tobber Staintek \*\*  
Ego fons salutis

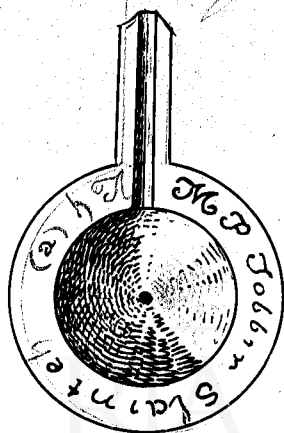
14/6/14/22 (42)



316 26½

Mr. Tobbin planter. It does not  
require any great skill in calligra-  
phy to produce this of modern date.

200



A circular hollow stone with a  
spout. The water formerly  
forced itself through the  
hole in the bottom and was  
conveyed away through  
the trough. The Inscription  
much defaced and quite  
obliterated on one side at  
(2). It was a Spa Well  
14/9/14/22 (43).

but is at present quite  
 filled up with Rubbish.  
 A Person some time ago  
 lifted the Stone from its  
 original Position with  
 the Intention of making  
 a Pig Trough of it, but  
 in doing so he broke the  
 Stone across the bowl  
 and left it close to the  
 Spot where the Bell stands.

To the W. at about a  
 Chain distance is another  
 well called Tobber Michael  
 (a very fine Spring) and  
 again to the W. about a  
 quarter of a Mile is also

14/6/14/22(44)

another remarkably fine  
 well called Tobberachrim  
 so called from an aged  
 Tree which has been  
 blown down & the stem  
 only remaining on the  
 face of the Hill above it.  
 These Wells are all in  
 the Town land of Knight  
 -wood—

H. E. W. B.

14/6/14/22(45)

319

This well is called by the  
old people Tobiqi Propiqlinte, the  
well of true health. The  
inscription is modern and  
the orthography corrupt  
which shews that it was  
not executed by a scholar.  
It is generally called by the  
young people the Shaw  
well.

End.

14/6/14/22 (46)

The parish of Stonehall is called by the Irish Tigh Cloiche, presents nothing of antiquarian interest. It contains a very remarkable cave which, if you believe the natives extends all the way to Máire n' Adáin's house Sheebeen house near Croagh Patrick, in the County of Mayo. It is described by Piercy, who recites a similar tradition as the natives tell us the one had need of a large  
portion of their credulity to believe it, that it ended  
at Croagh Patrick in Connaught. In this case  
 as towards the latter end of our late unhappy  
 as war of 1641, the chief Tory of Westmeath  
 as is said for a time to have lurked, but on better  
 as consideration he soon slighted his garrison  
 as for altho' here one man might keep out a thou-  
 as sand, yet it were easy for one man without  
 as the wind setting convenient, by a smoke to force  
 as a great number within to a surrender or death.  
 I have no record whatever of this parish.



I find that MacTurkiss gives the pedigree of Lute Lord of Moneylea, and that it may not escape my memory I shall transcribe it here.

6. The Lord of Moneylea  
i.e. the Lute,

Andrew Boy son of  
Walter

Andrew

Edmond

Andrew

Jeffrey

Thomas

James

Thomas

John

Richard

Richard of the  
Castles

Thomas

Maurence

Richard More

John White

King of Germany

Robert

Richard

Leineus or Lamar

Archobald

Rolandus

Oliverus

Charles the Great, King  
of France -

M. F. Forbiss, p. 834

MacTurkiss, <sup>in 1666</sup> calls Nangle "Baron of Nangle-  
bail" and Piers calls him in 1682 Baron of  
Navan, which is another proof of the ancient  
name of that town, which I laboured so much  
to clear up before.

There is a Cromlech near the Esker in Bally-  
loughree, which I forgot to mention in my  
letter about that place.

14/G/14/22 (48)

your obed<sup>t</sup> servant  
J. O'Donovan

**END**

**14 G 14/23**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Newpass, Co. Westmeath, concerning the progress of his survey of Co. Westmeath.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)**

**9 November 1837**

**4 p.**

**23.5 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 322-325.**

Thos. St. Larcom Esq. Newpass Moor 9<sup>th</sup> 1837.

Dear Sir,

I have done here at last, and you will say that it is time. I shall go on to-morrow to Dublin, and if I find a car going to Naas I shall move <sup>at once</sup> and join the Messrs. O'Keefe and O'Connor. We must now pull up the line as well as we can, but we cannot possibly get finished before the end of the year. I could do no more at Mullingarham than I have done, and I left it last expecting every day to hear from Mr. Todd. Mr. Petrie may rest satisfied that the present abbot has no MSS. I have done all that could be done to induce him to shew them, if any such there are.

14/G/14/23(1)



I return Oloro's letters about the south of this County, and shall keep the Hildare letters for further examination. I also return <sup>the old maps and</sup> the County Name Book, and the ~~four~~ <sup>five</sup> name books of the parishes of Multyfarnham, Lackan, Lenev and Stonehall. <sup>the 4th vol. of Vallancey's collection and</sup> Also the baronial Index <sup>of the</sup> of the safe arrival of all which I am most anxious to hear. Please to send me word of their arrival safely into your hands. I have not given any full explanations of the names of the baronies or parishes in the County Name Book because it could be only a repetition of what I had already said in my letters.

I conceive that Mr. Lyon's testimony is sufficient for me to call the Cormorant <sup>simply</sup> island Des. incha. He is the resident landlord, and a gentleman upon whose assertion you may rely. In fact I never doubted, nor

14/6/14/23(2)

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could reasonably doubt the word of old  
John<sup>Doyle</sup>, who is now dead, on the name of that  
Island. I would therefore recommend the  
Cormorant island in Lough Binnell to be  
called Cro-incha, and the other island  
lying close to the land on the other side  
of the lake Incha Croan (the last  
syllable to agree with Templecro<sup>ne</sup>an in  
the Rosses in the Co. of Donegal)

I have spent a long time in this County  
but I trust that it has not been al-  
together wasted. If it has I cannot  
now help it otherwise than by working  
hard in the other two Counties

Yours obedient Servant

John P. Donovan

14/6/14/23 (3)

Trallam ó Theabéa ná ngleann  
 'ro Dealtbna<sup>cpé</sup> ná n Dub beann;—  
 Mo plan dá n-iaitibí p'uoróne dpeach  
 Sopard uaim p'p'p' go h-llipneach;  
 Slán le calusarbí cúlparde  
 le Cuipeine, p'le Copca Raíde  
 'S le gach muig bpeáig p'an Mide  
 O bpeáigmarne go bpeáigmuig  
 So cumap báine up Dub-abann  
 Go lé bo-deirg ná Sionann.  
 p' m'réid t'p'iall ó chlár m'ide  
 Do sul go Náir, p'go diñ-p'ig  
 Go h-almann p'go mullach maircean  
 A g'córgead lám-deap' l'ar'gean.

Trallam.

**END**



**14 G 14/24**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from John O'Donovan, written from Tullamore, Co. Offaly, regarding the history, traditions, antiquities and topography of the parishes of Durrow and Kilbeggan, Co.**

**Westmeath, with particular reference to their burial grounds, castles, holy wells and the locality's association with Sir Hugh de Lacy.**

**O'Donovan, John, MRIA, (1806-1861)**

**1 January 1838**

**8 p.**

**23.6 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 326-333.**

Wm. H. St. John

Tullamore January 1<sup>st</sup> 1838

Dear Sir, I visited Durrow and Kilbeggan to-day, and viewed their localities with anxious care - a care bordering upon pain, but was entirely disappointed in finding that the work of destruction has gone on to a lamentable extent! At Kilbeggan no ancient remain presents itself but an extensive burial ground, the walls of the abbey, which lay to the North west of it having been pulled down and entirely levelled about seven years ago. And at Durrow I could find nothing but Saint Columbkille's <sup>well preserved</sup> cross, which is most elaborately sculptured, in the same style, as far as I am able to judge, as his crosses at Kelly and Moone. But this cross of Durrow exhibits a figure which I did not observe upon any of the others, viz a <sup>man</sup> playing on a <sup>six stringed</sup> small harp <sup>which</sup> rests on his left knee; <sup>this</sup> which perfectly agrees with the figure on Mr Petrie's Shroud

14/6/14/24(1)

Maidoc. There is also at Durrow a moat (lying opposite Lord Norbury's Hall-door) with small fragments of lime and stone masonry on the top.

---

Of the place at which Sir Hugh de Lacy was murdered.

---

I shall give the account of this tragic scene now preserved by tradition, as taken this day from the mouth of John Daly of Kilheggan now in the 82<sup>nd</sup> year of his age and on his death bed, but retaining a remarkable vigor of memory and intellect. He is the ultimus Hibernorum in this part of Ireland; and having been once in comfortable circumstances and given to antiquarian research, he procured all the local information on the subject, which could be obtained from the old people.

or 62  
 " About 60 years since, extensive ruins of <sup>the walls of</sup> a castle  
 " were extant at Durrow, immediately to the  
 " north of the moat. These walls were levelled

14/G/14/24(2)

" by the Steiner family, (the then occupiers of  
 " Durrow) to obtain materials for building a  
 " mansion house, which still remains, but  
 " much enlarged and modified by the present  
 " possessor, the Earl of Norbury. It was  
 " said that this Castle was built before Sir Hugh  
 " de Lacy's time, but that he obtained possession  
 " both of it, and of another castle, of which  
 " the site is still traceable near Mr. Dudgeon's  
 " house in the townland of Pop-Deala and  
 " about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  to the east of Durrow. Tradition  
 " says that when De Lacy had obtained pos-  
 " session of these Castles, he commenced to carry  
 " a trench, <sup>road perhaps?</sup> from the ~~the~~ one to the other,  
 " and one day that he was looking over his  
 " men, who were composed of English and Irish  
 " labourers, O'athamy, lord of Toffia and  
 " O'Brien of Braneey got him murdered  
 " as he was stooping down to give directions.  
 " Tradition says that De Lacy was at this time  
 " 14/6/14/24 (3)



"near the Castle of Ros-Deala, and not at  
 "the Castle of Durrow". Daly says that if  
 he could get up (but he never will) he could  
 lay his finger on the spot, which was al-  
 ways pointed out as the scene of this murders.

There is <sup>the ruin of</sup> a small little castle in the  
 townland of Ballybought, called Shan-Court  
 which Mr. Fenwick sets down in the name  
 Book as Durrow Castle, thus:

"Shancourt or Meeanglish, - so called by the  
 country people,

"De Lacy's Castle - Moore's Hist. Ire. v. 2, p. 321.

"Darmagh or Durrow Castle - Lanigan, IV. 277.

"This Castle of which scarce a vestige remains

"was built by the celebrated Hugh de Lacy in 1186.

"upon a spot, hallowed in the eyes of the na-

Ch "tives, as being the site of a monastery, founded

"by St. Columba. Whilst inspecting the pro-

"gress of the works he was killed by a blow of

"an axe by a man named Hugh O'Chary, who

33/  
he thought my view of <sup>it</sup> was wrong. Now I never  
before wrote a word about Dubrows, and what I  
say now is in my own defence, which I deem ne-  
cessary, as I consider Mr. Fennick a gentleman  
of sound judgment and remarkable research.

---

Tradition concerning de Lacy historically  
examined.

---

I do not believe that tradition unsupported by  
historical evidence should be received in deciding  
upon this fact. Sir Henry Pieris wrote in 1682  
that it was then traditionally handed down  
that Sir Hugh de Lacy was murdered at  
the Castle of Horseleap, but I find that  
that castle was not created for some years  
after his death. I do not believe that he  
was murdered at Ros-deala, <sup>either</sup> though tradi-  
tion seems to be decided on that subject,  
as all our authentic Annals agree in mak-  
ing the Castle of Durrow, lying immediately  
at St. Columbkille's Monastery, the scene

14/G/14/24(5)

into the neighbouring woods. Archdall says  
 "the English built a castle here in 1214. See  
 also Lanigan, vol. IV. p. 277 note 73."

Durrow Field Name Book. p. 44.  
 (which is scarcely ancient, and was never famous)  
 But this <sup>very</sup> small castle, stands in an old fort and not  
upon a spot hallowed in the eyes of the natives  
as being the site of a monastery founded by  
St. Columba. The site of St. Columba's Monastery  
 of Durrow is now — according to universal  
 tradition, and as corroborated by the position  
 of St. Columbkille's Cross — occupied by the pre-  
 sent church and grave yard of Durrow  
 which lie within the Durrow Demesne. The  
 celebrated castle of Durrow stood as I said  
 before, to the north of the moat opposite  
 Lord Norbury's Hall door, and considerably  
 ruin of it were to be seen there about 60  
 or 62 years ago, when John Daly of Killeeggan  
 was a young man.

All this I urge to prove that Mr. Fennick's view  
 of this castle cannot be correct. He states that

14/6/14/24 (6)

of the murder. The Four Masters thing record  
(or rather transcribe) the account of it.

A.D. 1184

"Hugo de Latis, the plunderer and destroyer of  
"many churches, - lord of the English of Meath,  
"Breifny and Oriel; to whom the rents of Connaught  
"were paid, - he who won the greater part of  
"Ireland for the English; <sup>and</sup> of whose English  
"Castles all Meath from the Shannon to the  
"sea was full, being offered <sup>\*</sup> the Castle of Durrow  
"came forth, accompanied by three Englishmen  
to view it. But a youth named Gill-gam-inaher  
O'Sheey, one of the men of Tefflia came up  
to him with a battle-axe concealed under his  
cloak.  
garmments. He struck Hugo, and with a blow  
cut off his head, and he fell both head and body  
into the trench <sup>vitch</sup> <sup>dash</sup> of the Castle. This was in  
defence of Columbkille. Gill-gam-inaher, by  
swiftness of foot escaped from the English  
and Irish to Caill-an-Chlair <sup>\*</sup> (the wood of  
Clare) and afterwards proceeded to Fox and  
O'Brien, at whose instigation he had murdered  
the Earl."

\* is pronounced by Daly at this day; but it is Angli-  
-cised Kill-Clare, ~~it~~ is a townland lying  
Hos's country being divided from it by the  
River of Breifny.

14/G/14/24(7)



This differs from Leland's very much to be suspected account of this occurrence <sup>from</sup> ~~for~~ which (if we believe him) we are to understand that the Earl was murdered as he was erecting a castle with materials derived from the old monastery of Columbkille, by one of his own labourers. This account Leland has manufactured from one sentence in Cambrensis; who taking of Durraw says,

A securibus nulla securitas &c. Dermagia, ubi Hugo de Lacy, a securibus malè securus dolo Hibernensium suorum interemptus est.

Perhaps O'Meey had been employed by De Lacy as a labourer, and that Fox, his own lord and relative employed him to murder him.

W. Let me have the account of De Lacy's taking off as given in the Annals of Connacnoise as translated by Mageoghegan, in the Annals of Irishfallen, and in the Book of Kilronan. I think Leland has manufactured this wrongly

**END**

14 G 14/25

Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)

Letter to Lieut. Thomas A. Larcom, Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey, from Thomas O'Connor, written from Maynooth, Co. Kildare, concerning the burial ground and abbey at Killbeggan (sic), Co. Westmeath.

O'Connor, Thomas

29 October 1837

6 p.

23.5 cm.

Pagination in original binding was 334-339.

RIA

It would be interest-  
ing to mark the sites of these  
features on the Plan, have  
you done so? if not pray  
get them laid down.

J. H. L.  
11 Oct 07

St Fennick

Killbeggan P<sup>th</sup>

Killbeggan old burial ground  
is a very extensive one lying about 100 paces  
to the S. or S.E. of the town of Killbeggan.  
The Monastery of Saint Beccan stood  
formerly at this burying place, there  
is not a trace of it now visible  
the ground on which it is said to  
have stood is now a green meadow.

14/6/14/25 (1) There

This burial ground was  
marked on the plan, but we  
could not trace any remains  
of the priory within it. about  
15 chains east of the B. ground,  
are some old walls at the  
end of a garden, which appear  
to be ancient, and are said by  
the inhabitants to be so. Can  
they be part of the old building?  
I have also marked the walls

on the plans -

Rennick

L.R. 120237

Referred to Mr. Conner

Wm Carson M.C.

10 Oct 07

See Letter here -  
- with sent -

J. O'Connor

Shannon



There is no vestige of any edifice  
even within the old burying place.  
The Monastery is said to have been  
very extensive. It was capacious  
enough to contain 850 Monks, or Friars.

\* No one said that any  
part of them existed.

Do's

see also letter dated  
Tullamore 1 Jan'y 1834

I do not understand what  
St. Gerinick means here  
by saying "but we could  
not trace any remains of  
the priory within it." The  
truth is that he has  
misunderstood O'Mahony's  
words, which state, "that  
there is not a trace of  
the monastery visible"  
The <sup>old</sup> walls lying about 15  
chains east of the Burial  
which appear to be an-  
cient, are not said by  
the intelligent inhabi-  
-tants to be so. They  
are no part of the very  
old or even modern  
monastery of Kilbeggen,  
but the walls of a com-  
-paratively modern dwelling  
houses, which fell to ruin

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after the year of the Rebellion (1798) -  
The last who dwelt in this house was  
the Revd. M<sup>r</sup>. Edrington - whose son has  
now a situation in the Tower of London.

L. Daly, aged 82.

A considerable part of the ruins of the  
<sup>not St. Bearn</sup>  
modern monastery at Kilbeccan, (as pointed  
out by a man who was employed at the  
levelling of them) was visible about 7 or 8  
years ago immediately to the North  
West of the Burial ground; but the  
ground which they occupied is now a  
green field. A subterranean passage, <sup>now also destroyed</sup>  
led from this burial ground to the present  
church, which is said to occupy the site  
of the Abbey church.

This is all that remains - the Burial ground  
only, and O'Donovan was very correct in  
his description of it.

14/6/24/25 (3)

L. O'Donovan  
January 1<sup>st</sup> 1838,

35<sup>th</sup>  
Maynooth October 29<sup>th</sup> 1837

Sir,

I do not remember to have Killbeggan Parish before, with these words affixed to it. viz "This burial ground was marked on the plan, but we could not trace any remains of the priory within it."

The words of my letter affirm the non-existence of any remains of the religious edifice to which this burial ground was attached. Accompanied by Mr. Lark of Killbeggan - I examined the ground - and learned as well from him, as from many other well informed men of Killbeggan, who are most intimately acquainted with all the remarkable architectural features in the neighbourhood, that no portion of ~~the~~ Beccan's Monastery, ~~or~~ or of the Chapel thereto belonging, exists now. No part of the monastery extended to within the precincts of the graveyard, according as I have been informed, nor was there probably any other edifice ever within it.

14/6/14/25(4)

I saw Churchy in the very centre of grave yard. The  
grave yard must generally surround the church and  
Monastery but it is not the custom not to inter in the  
monastery but in the church yard.

I look upon that grave yard to be one  
originally attached to Beccan's Monastery, as grave-  
yards are, though they never con-  
tained within them, ~~a~~ religious  
edifice, very often attached to  
Colleges now a days - and that from  
the importance of the Monastery, a  
great number of families had burying  
places allotted to them therein.

As to any old walls that may lie  
near it, there was no remark made  
to me - I think they cannot be  
any remains of this monastery.

The antiquity ascribed by the people  
to old walls, cannot be depended upon;  
for the Annals of their tradition never  
exhibit a yearly date; the erection of  
the most of ruined buildings is referred  
to the year 'very old', or to the wars  
'of Ireland', as also to Cromwell's and  
'Strongbow's time'. No matter which!



I shall be hereafter more careful to make use of the formal words, in which any information is requested to be furnished. In my last letter, I made use of the word 'instructions', whilst the word of the request was 'information', at the same time, making it represent the same idea - with that which 'information'<sup>\*</sup> as if used, would convey.

I received last night the name books of the Barony of Carbury - for which I return the receipt signed - We remove to the Village of Carbury tomorrow. Please forward letters there. If there be a Postoffice in it - if not - It is better have them sent to Colenderry King's County.

J. A. Larcom Esq.  
 &c &c

Your Obedient  
 humble Servt.  
 J. O'Connor

14/9/14/25(6)

\* not exactly according to present usage

**END**

**14 G 14/26**

**Ordnance Survey of Ireland: Letters: Westmeath (Vol.2)**

**Letter from Thomas O'Connor, written from Edenderry, Co. Offaly, in which he responds to the recipient's criticisms of his findings regarding the island of Inishcrone on Lough Ennell, Co. Westmeath. The recipient of the letter, which may be John O'Donovan, is unclear.**

**O'Connor, Thomas**

**30 October 1837**

**8 p.**

**23.5 cm.**

**Pagination in original binding was 340-347.**

Edenderry King's Co: October 30<sup>th</sup> 1871  
14/G/14/26 (1)

Dear Sir,

TUTTW, TUVW, TETUQA. — I am very

much surprised at the Contents of Yours of the 25<sup>th</sup> Inst. Do you want to put me to the pin of my collar, or to take a rise out of me by your remarks as to Inse Croine? You have by way of response said that you liked all my letters with the solitary exception of one, in which I came to the conclusion that the island on which King Maoldeach-lin II. died is the present Incha Croan in Lough Connell. And you lay down as positive that —

We learn from respectable Irish authorities, that there were two islands on that lake, the one called CRo-mys and the other mys Croine. (most certainly)

In adverting to these authorities, we can learn two names, <sup>to have existed</sup> but I question if we can learn two Islands <sup>bearing the names</sup> to have been on the lake: for the words as given do not convey a distinct idea as to their applying to two, rather than to one. The one might be the original, and the other the subsequent name not of two islands, but of one and the same island: the one being preserved by tradition and the other by Common use. Secondly you say 'the one is not the other': which words appear to take for granted that there were two islands, bearing these names, <sup>no, the one bearing the first name, and the second the second name</sup> each one of them. But that there were two is necessary to be proved by some more trustworthy evidence than the mere effect of the difference of sound of names. (The difference of the written names too)

This is a very good copy of the original letter.



14/G/14/26(2)

And you also say that the former took its name from the Casula erected on it by the Kings of the Southern Hy-Nialla family after they were driven &c. there by Eurgessins. The latter from St. Cron, of Moneytaplan, who erected a little Church upon it.

From these words one would most clearly collect there were two islands on the Lake.

But is it not possible that one island might bear both names from being characterised by the very circumstances, which are attributed to two islands, that of a King erecting a Cro, and a Saint a church. The date of the erection of both edifices would go very far to settle this point, for if both were erected at, or near the same period of time, it is not probable they existed on the one island together. And if one was erected before the other, upon my word I would not be astonished at the idea that one, during its existence, imparted a name to the island, from the circumstance of its being thereon, and that as the edifices succeeded each other, so did the denominations. This last hint would suggest according to the present condition of the two denominations ascribed to the one island, — the one being traditionally handed down, and the other being in common use, that the King's habitation, which gave the first denomination, was anterior in point of time, and that the Saint, from whom

34/1  
# This is the only thing in vain - the two islands exist and bear their two distinct names to this day but you think you have betrayed one of them by making it signify the St. Cron's!

it was latterly, and is at present denominated, had erected his edifice on it subsequently. This observation may be very good in its way, but does, not however, prove for certain that the edifice of the King, from which, Cro-inis, existed prior to the edifice of the Saint, from whom Sri. Croine for, if the edifice of the Saint existed even prior in time, the religious veneration of the people would rather continue the denomination of the island, from the Saint, than from the Cro, of an expelled, <sup>his residence</sup> and contemptible King. Historical Chronology can settle all this. Fourthly you state, "It is curious also that at Lough Lene, you will find a fort overlooking the lake, and an island on which the King had his Cottage?"

14/G/14/26(3)

The curiosity in finding a fort at Lough Lene, and an island opposite it on the lake may be curious but cannot go to establish that an island opposite another island in another part of the Country must have <sup>been</sup> an historically handed down name, which no one person in the whole Country ever connected with it, <sup>with the sole exception of one</sup> And indeed Doyle is not the boy of wax to retain traditional records. Nor is any other individual, who is a <sup>real story</sup> solus in any point of tradition to be confuted in; unless a concurrence of narration takes place among a plural number.

\* fully in the extreme: he was not a contemptible king - all this is reasoning in vain - when the two names & the two islands exist? -  
 \* This remains to be proved - you consult only two - a silly woman and one man! - living on the opposite side of the lake!

You remember the way in which the man who walked with us towards Cloch na Chaitin in the Co. of Canan accounts for the erection of forts by the Danes 'because, Sir, any tide you look, you see one, there, and one there, and one there - three always within sight of one another'

In the fifth place, your words are 'I never do not believe that Masil - Seachlain died in Irish Angin in Lough Ree' -

I never stated he died in Iris-Angin or Lough-ree, Nor did the persons whom I consulted on this head, ever extract their knowledge of the affair, from Lanigan or Moore - They certainly collected at least part of what they told me from some writers, but writers, who were more ancient than the two already alluded to.

A continuation of the above words, is 'Nor that there was ever a monastery on Cro-inis in Lough-remell.' There was some religious house on Iris-croine, if Cro-inis, was an alias name for this island.

14/6/14/26 (4)



There was a religious establishment on Cro-inis, not, ~~it might be~~ as to name but as to the very island represented by ~~the~~ other name. viz. & C.

Then a historical reference follows, viz.  
 'Mr. Geaghegan says - that Maolseachlain died on Cro-inis near his house of Dun-na-Sgiath and — he knew well where both lay.

The only remark to be made with regard to this reference is, that Mr. Geaghegan did not say that the island was opposite but near the Doon; and that Inis-Croine could be the near one.

'If the Cormorant island be not Cro-inis - where will you find inis-croine if you allow the one to be different from the other.

'It will put you to the pin of your collar to mark them the one and the same'.

I do not allow the one to be different from the other — See remarks made above relative to two edifices, Royal & Sanctuary, possibly giving two denominations to the island formerly called Cro-inis & now inis-croine.



Again you state 'the story of Turgesius  
'being drowned in Loughmell is worth  
'nothing, nor of Maoilseachlin dying in  
'Irish-Croine? -

'It is much more likely that Maoil-  
'seachlin had his house on the island op-  
'posite his Dun, than on one which could  
'be waded into? -

I perfectly agree with you that  
the story of Turgesius being drowned in  
Loughmell is worth nothing - I never  
placed any worth in it - but I think  
the true account of Maoil-  
seachlin's death, transpires through  
the traditional form of it, which says  
that he died on Irish-Croine. for the cir-  
cumstance of his death being connected  
with a religious establishment on that  
island, proves, as far as proof is attributable  
to tradition, that in the first place there was  
a religious establishment on the island, which  
tradition says - was the scene of the death of this  
Royal personage, and it can be extracted  
from <sup>traditional</sup> these very circumstances, that King  
Maoilseachlin beyond doubt resided on this island.

+ two things  
inferred  
from tradition  
- 1<sup>st</sup>  
a religious  
house on  
Irish-Croine  
- 2<sup>nd</sup>  
that  
Maoil-  
seachlin  
resided  
on Irish-Croine.

on which if he resided he must certainly have had his Cro.

As to the other portion - It is much more likely &c. - It may be likely and not be a fact, - more information must settle this point.

These words are very odd - viz -

'You come to the Conclusion that isse croine, is a corruption of Croinis -'

I cannot positively say whether it be a corruption of it, or not - but, I say that such a Corruption could be formed -

Croinis might have been the original name, and afterwards when the inis of <sup>the name</sup> Croinis was forgotten to signify an island and looked upon as forming but a terminational part of Cro-inis, without a separate meaning - the word island applied commonly to such a feature of land, was prefixed, making the name Isis-croinis, which might, by reflecting the terminational ~~it~~ might become Isis-croini and afterwards Isis-Croine.

How your fail most must abey -

