

## CROMLECHS IN CO. LIMERICK.

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The Photographic Section of the Limerick Field Club proposes to illustrate the *Cromlechs* of the Co. Limerick, of which some very good specimens remain.

For the benefit of our members outside the Archæological section, I may explain that *Cromlech* is the name given in Ireland to a form of sepulchral monument of prehistoric times, which consists of a covering stone, generally of enormous size, resting on smaller stones. Within these have been found cinerary urns in some cases, and in others the remains of carnal interment. Various names have been given to these ancient monuments. One very common one—resting on a popular fallacy—is Druids' altars; another name is "giants' graves," but the most common is Dermod and Graine's bed, associating them with an episode in the romantic story of the elopement of Graine, which is one of the best known tales of the Fenian cycle. These names and others serve but to show how little was known of these structures in the past, for even at the dawn of Christianity in Ireland the history of the Cromlech had been forgotten. All we can tell is that they were built in Ireland in the neolithic or bronze age, and that they mark the passage of a race across Europe.

In other countries these are called Dolmens, or "table stones," while *Cromlech* is applied to circles of stones. In Ireland circles of stones are still found around the *Cromlech*. In some cases the single covering stone is supported on but a few smaller stones, in others the covering stones continue on, supported on side stones, forming an elongated chamber. In France the chamber is often high enough to stand under, these are called *allées couvertes*, and formed tribal ossuaries in which the tribe were buried, often with their weapons, which have been found on examining the tombs. The covering stone has in some



*From a Photograph*

CROMLECH AT KILMALLOCK.

*By G. Fogarty, R.N.*

cases fallen from its position and is found lying on the ground, such may be called ruined Cromlechs.

Much has been written about this type of monument. The subject may be said to have been exhausted by Mr. Borlase in his work on the dolmens of Ireland, and any member who wishes to pursue the subject should study it. His list and description of the existing dolmens of Ireland, however, are not at all complete. I have discovered some in Kerry that he makes no reference to, and we illustrate one at Kilmallock, the first of the series, which has not been before noticed. The following is a list of the Co. Limerick Cromlechs copied from Borlase; possibly some members may know of others or see something in the list requiring correction.

### COUNTY OF LIMERICK.

IN THE BARONY OF OWNEYBEG—In the Townland of Cappannahagh, and the Parish of Abington, “near Lissguaire,” and on the N.W. of the Slieve Felim mountains, is a dolmen marked Tuamanirvore in Ord. Survey Map No. 6.

IN THE BARONY OF SHANID—In the Townland of Tinnakilla, and Parish of Kilmoylan, marked Crom Leac in Ord. Survey Map No. 18.

IN THE BARONY OF SMALL COUNTY—In the Townland of Friarstown North, and the Parish of Fedamore, about a mile N.W. of the dolmen at Kilpeacon, was a dolmen, not marked in Ord. Survey Maps Nos. 13 and 22, which contain the townland.

In the Townland of Kilpeacon, and Parish of Kilpeacon, about six miles and a half N.W. of Lough Gur, was a dolmen marked Cromlech in Ord. Survey Map No. 22.

In the Townland of Ballynagallach, and the Parish of Knockainy, two giants' graves as marked in this townland in Ord. Survey Map No. 32. The one is on the N. side of the townland close to the S. margin of Lough Gur. The other lies about three-quarters of a mile to the S. of it.

In the Townland of Lough Gur, and Parish of Knockainy, a giant's grave is marked in Ord. Survey Map No. 32, close to the lake at a distance of about half a mile N.E. of the northernmost giant's grave, in the Townland of Ballynagallach.

In the townland of Cromwell, and Parish of Ballinlough, there is a

dolmen marked Dermot and Grania's bed in Ord. Survey Map No. 33. It is indicated by two parallel lines of four stones each.

In the Townland of Grange, and Parish of Monasteranenagh, on the W. side of Lough Gur, a hundred feet due S. of the principal circle of the western or Ardaghougher group of circles, Mr. Lynch places the site of a destroyed dolmen, not marked in Ord. Survey Map No. 32.

IN THE BARONY OF COSHLEA—In the Townland of Deerpark, E. of that of Duntryleague, on the hill lying to the E. of the Church of Duntryleague, in the Parish of Galbally, is a dolmen marked Dermot and Grania's bed in Ord. Survey Map No. 49.

Only three stones remain of the Kilmallock Cromlech. The centre stone (see photograph) would appear to have fallen in and the covering stone slipped off to the left, as it now appears in photograph. This stone is 12 feet 6 inches long, 2 feet 9 inches thick, and 7 feet 6 inches wide. The centre stone is 7 feet long, 3 feet wide, and 2 feet thick. The upright stone to the right is 7 feet 6 inches long, 4 feet 6 inches wide or high, and about 1 foot 3 inches thick, all of limestone. There may have been others which have been removed.

The Cromlech lies outside the walls of Kilmallock, behind the R. C. church. 6 in Ord. Map, Sheet No. 47, on which it is not marked.

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