

[Photo by

TINNAKILLA CROMLEAC.

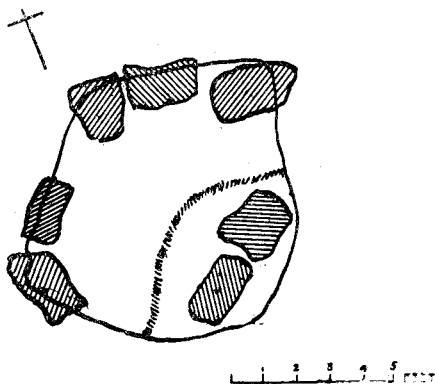
G. Fegerty, R.N.]

# CROMLEACS IN COUNTY LIMERICK, NO. II.

BY P. J. LYNCH, M.R.I.A.I.

## TINNAKILLA.

This cromleac is the second on the list given in the last number of the Journal, in the barony of Shanid and townland of Tinnakilla. This would appear to have been an important place in ancient times. It is quite close to the boundary of the townland of Tir-a-righ, (1) doubtless the site of a royal residence at one time. There are numerous



PLAN OF TINNAKILLA CROMLEAC.

raths in the locality, and about twenty yards south-west of the cromleac may be traced the remains of a vallum and fosse, which enclosed a large area, and may possibly have been the king's dun. This Cromleac is marked on the revised 6-inch Ordnance Sheet, No. 18, as "Leagan," a name given to pillar stones. Several fields to the north-east a "Crom.

(1) The Ordnance Map has it *Tooravee*, another instance of the way in which these maps are prepared from the antiquaries point of view.

Leac." is marked, this is a mistake, as there is no cromleac there; the descriptions should have been reversed. A short distance to the west are two pillar stones. The situation is a commanding one, as is that of most cromleacs; in many districts they are found crowning the top of the highest hill. From this one the view is very fine; to the north and east the majestic Shannon flows onward to the sea; while to the south and west an extensive view is obtained of the counties of Limerick and Kerry.

Cromleacs—as before explained—differ very much in construction. To this one the generic term used by Borlase of Dolmen, which means table stone, applies very well. This type is uncommon, as the covering stone cannot have been more than about 2 feet over the original surface, and the supports are small field stones (see plan.) There are seven of these *in situ*, and average 2 feet 3 inches long, by 12 inches to 18 inches wide, and 15 inches to 20 inches high over the present surface. One of the supports, on north-east, is made up of two stones in the height. There are two or three outlying small stones, which at one time were probably supporters of the slab, but have been displaced by thoughtless individuals. The covering stone is about 9 feet 6 inches on the main axis, north-east and south-west, and about 8 feet greatest width, by 2 feet thick. It is of limestone, each stratification being 12 inches thick, as seen in the photograph. (2)

Some of the small stones seen in the photograph are portions of the covering stone, which have fallen away, as it has suffered much from the custom of lighting bonfires on it, the heat having damaged a large portion of the top and cracked the stone for the full thickness on the southern angle. This portion must in time fall away, when the Tinna-killa cromleac will become a ruin.

Local effort should be directed towards replacing the stones removed under the covering stone, and possibly preventing it from falling away. The County Council too, should exercise the powers now vested in it, and have all such interesting monuments scheduled and cared for.

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(2) In Borlase, vol. i, p. 46, it is described as green mountain stone, but this is a mistake. He also mentions ten supporting stones, which was probably the number when the Ordnance Survey letters were written about 1845. . . The covering slab is described as nearly touching the ground.