Lewis Prytherch’s Manuscript.

By R. Wyse Jackson, M.A., D.Litt.

Earlier this year a small unbound manuscript book of considerable local interest was acquired by the Limerick City Library. It comprises ten leaves of parchment, sized 5½ inches by 9½ inches, and it contains an autograph account, written between the years 1698 and 1700, of the ecclesiastical benefices held in County Limerick by the Reverend Lewis Prytherch.
Prytherch was an English-born clergyman of Caermarthenshire stock, and he was educated in Trinity College, Dublin, where he entered as a sizar on July 18th, 1668. Having proceeded via Scholarship in 1672, B.A. in 1673 and M.A. in 1676, on October 8th, 1688, he was appointed to the vicarage and prebend of Eisin in St. Mary's Cathedral, together with the rectory and vicarage of Dromin, rendered vacant by the resignation of John Tom. In 1689 he acquired the curacy of Athlacka. In 1694 he was appointed rector and vicar of Kilfinane, vicar of Dermacow (or Daragh), and vicar of Kilfin. In 1697 came the final addition of the rectory and vicarage of Athlacka, the rectory of Tankardstown, and the vicarage of Bruree.

All these benefices were fairly close together, lying to the west and south of Kilmallock, and it seems likely that the conditions of the Williamite wars had made it necessary to group them under the care of one man in order to give an adequate living to a resident country clergyman. The document which we transcribe gives a list of parochial properties and throws a good deal of light on local conditions, finances and place names at the end of the seventeenth century. The matters dealt with touch many aspects of Irish history. Place names and topography are given with close attention to detail, though one apparent inaccuracy is visible in the placing of the Abbey of Ballinagaul to the west, instead of to the east, of Ballydonagh (p. 6). Some of the results of the Williamite wars are obvious, as in the stripped state of Kilfinane church (p. 1), or the uncertainty still existing about the forfeiture of the Browns of Hospital (p. 5). There is a mass of information about the working out of the tithe system with all its accumulated anomalies and complications, its great and its small tithes, its tithes of agistment; about lesser ecclesiastical dues like bookmoney and smoke money or Easter offerings; about glebe land and churchyard boundaries; about patrons and impro priators, Trinity College lands, Orrery claims, Kildare gifts. Social history necessarily crops up in passing: parsons' fishing rights; a residential tall castle for a clergyman at Bruree; eel weirs for the vicar; the use of spoken Irish (Prytherch seems to have had a working knowledge of it); the Down Survey; appeals to the Black Book of Limerick; methods of farming and varieties of crops.

There are items here which might be commented upon almost for ever. This article will content itself with presenting a transcript of the text, as the raw material of history, together with a sketch map of the area. Westropp's "Churches and Castles of County Limerick" gives a good commentary on most of the topographical matters.

This little manuscript links itself on page 8 with the visitation of that excellent and historically important bishop, Thomas Smyth. The original of that visitation, one of a series covering the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, is still in the possession of the diocese.

The remainder of Lewis Prytherch's story is vague. One daughter married the Very Reverend Jonathan Bruce, Dean of Kilfenora. He himself was succeeded in 1708 in all his benefices, which suggests an early death.*

TRANSCRIPT.

(PAGE 1).

A Terrier of ye value of Kilfinan, Darach, als. Deriemakoe, & Kilfin, in ye Baronie of Coshlea, in the County and Diocesse of Limerick in the year 1698.

*Note also the reference to the case of Prytherch v. Chidley Coote (Lenihan, p. 321).
I can find noe other name of title or dedication in these churches but that of Kilfinan Church Daragh or Deriemakoe Church, and Kilfin, nor are there any patron days observed here yet I can find.

The three parishes are an old union whereof Kilfinan is ye mother church where they doe constantly come to prayers and sacraments.

The Church of Kilfinan is in good repairs at present. But the late warr yt began in 1688 destroyed the bell, cushions & the cloathes of the pulpit & the font with what other vessels in the Communion Service that they had before.

There is likewise a large churchyard; onely on the west part ye Bounds are claimed to be the wall of the old Castleyard, but lately since ye war is there a ditch drawn within yt wall with a house to serve a Tanyard, which ye owner, ye Ld. of the Mannor Capt. Charles Oliver claims to be right bounds, yet they say the bones of ye dead are dug out of it, which shows it was ye churchyard.

Likewise tis claimed that ye churchyard is wronged on the East Side, & ye Honbl. Capt. Charles Oliver did in ye presence of ye Rt. Revd. Father in God Thomas Ld. Bishop of ye Diocesse of Limerick promise & allow soe much ground there as would serve to build a house on, beinge about fourteen foot from ye churchyard Wall eastward to ye street, with a Convenient back side to it, & now there stands a little cabbin there and the clark lives in it Rent free, except what he pays to the Minister.

2ly, There are three Gleab gardens. The two largest of these three gardens belonginge to ye Vicar, eastward near ye churchyard, ye little space of land between them being claimed by ye Church, & bounded on the East by ye highway yt leads to Boswoods & Bosnetstown, bounded on the south by some little gardens between them and the street, & those gardens containe by survey two acres of plantation measure. The little garden is ye impropiators.

There is likewise eastward beyond the highway above mentioned, which leads by Boswoodstown to Dublin a feild by survey containing five Acres, two roods and two perches plantation measure part of it dos belonge to the Vicar & part to the Impropiator, and it is divided by a ridge unplowed, ye greater part being the vicars and yt because a large peice of land between yt feild and ye River eastward is claim'd to be gleab, but not enjoyed now, the Irish preist here sayinge, yt the vicar of this place could formerly goe from the churchyard to yt river upon Gleab Land to fish.

3ly. The said parish of Kilfinane is bounded on ye North with Fants-town & Tirmoore by a plaine Ditch beinge the bounds of those lands.

On ye East with ye bounds of Kilmurray by a Ditch beinge the bounds of yt Land.

On ye South with Ropelagh & Ballina Courty beinge Mountaine bounds. On ye West with ye particles, bounded with Ballygeegoge Brook; The whole parish containinge by the Barrony booke at this present one thousand nine hundred and fifty nine acres of land.
DARAGH OR DERIE MAKOE.

This town or village of Daragh is said to have been one of the Ancien-
test Towns of Ireland, & sd. to be one of the Seaven Cities thereof; There
appears now only the ruins of a large church & a churchyard; and noe
manner of Gleab to be found.

The parish is Bounded on ye North with the Parish of Kilfinan by the
bounds above mentioned.

On the south 'tis Bounded with th great Mountaines between the Countyes
of Limerick & Cork.

On ye East with ye River Ownegeragh, beinge the bounds betwixt the sd.
Countyes.

On the West with ye parish of Kilfin, bounded with a ditch between Balline
Courty, & Keale.

The whole parish containinge by ye Barony book at this time one thou-
sand eight hundred and thirty one Acres.

These two parishes are Impropriate.

Kilfinane is improper to two severall persons;

Moorstown & Boswoodstown bounded on ye lands of Kilmurrey are
Impropriate to the family of the Browns of Hospital in ye same county, & as
is now enjoyed by them, tho' tis sd. they are forfeited by this late Rebellion,
& tis not yet known, how it may be settled by ye Kinge.

The vicar of Kilfinane has a third part of the tythes, & all the book-
money.

The Rest of Kilfinane, and all the parish of Daragh is Impropriate to the
Rt. Honbl. the Earl of Orrery, and the vicar has half the tythes & half the
bookmoney, besides ye Gleab above mentioned. The Earles part here is worth
eighteen pounds sterl. p. Annum and Browns part worth about eight.

Kilfin, 1698.

There appear the ruins of a little church, & a very little churchyard, but
noe gleab, nor soe much as any way to goe to it it stands west of the highway
by Bally Donagh.

Tis bounded on ye north and west by the particles; on the east by the
parish of Daragh as above mentioned, and ye south with ye great mountaines
between the two countyes of Cork & Limerick on ye redshard Contayninge
seven hundred and seaventy six acres by the Barrony book; of which acres
there there are sixty eight yt belonge to Abby Ballingual which stands west of
Ballydonogh; there are the ruins of a church; the lands belonge to ye Colledge
in Dublin, viz Trinity Colledge, And noe tyth is received out of them, tho' the
provost of ye sd colledge owned lately, yt it ought to be paid, but it is
detained by the lessees.
The Parish is a Rectorie Intire tho very small united to Kilfinane & the vicar there injoys it.

The Lord Bishop is ye patron of & presents to Kilfin.

The Earle of Orrerie is the patron of and presents to Kilfinane & Deriemakaoe or Daragh.

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The ffees or Bookmoney is alike in these three parishes, viz for purificacion is claimed in all two shillings & ten pence; sixpence said to be ye clarks, & ye rest the ministers & impropriators.

for marriage usually three shilling & fourpence, and one shill tho two shill be claimed, as customary for publishing Banns.

for buriall in ye chancel thirteen & fourpence; in the body of ye church seaven & sixpence, in ye churchyard three shills & sixpence of which fourpence to ye sexton,

The Easter offerings or smoake money as 'tis called, is eightpence a house; paid in two gales, at Christmass & Easter; from every house. In ye Earles Impropriate part, two pence has been usually paid the Earle, twopence to the vicar, & the rest to the Clark.

This is ye best account yt could be found by ye present vicar of Kilfinan beinge in ye year of our Lord one thousand six hundred ninety and eight.

LEWIS PRYHERCH.

Memorandum. That ye particles were ever since the memory of man injured by the Vicar of Kilfinan & known by noe other name than the particles of Kilfinan, to which the family of

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Clachan do say formerly yt. Edward Fitzharris did present, but now these particles together with the union of Kilmalloch were by patent from Kinge Charles ye second, a little before the late troubles, united to the Cathedrall & Choir of Limerick, but the people are still served by the vicar of Kilfinan, haveing noe other church to goe to, and he has sometimes had some small allowance for servinge them.

Memdum. This patent was had when there was noe Incumbent either in Kilmalloch or Kilfinan.

These particles were usually worth thirty pounds a year to ye Incumbent, when he injoied them, without any deductions, and are still worth about the same summe.

(in a different hand).

Exhibit in Visitation Ordinary.
Secundo Aug 1699.

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A Terrier of ye Gleabes of Eifynge Dromin, Athlackagh & Tankards-town in ye County & Diocesse of Limerick.
Effynge is a prebend, & I can finde noe other name. It was made a prebend by Mauricius de Rupefort 450 years agoe, as by the old Record book in Limerick now. And then by their old record was to pay 6s a year for ye maintenance of two vicars in Limerick, which since ye late wars was never paid, nor could be recovered. but in ye trouble of 1688 the present incumbant beinge imposed upon passed a bill to pay it.

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There is a churchyard with ye ruines of an old church, and on ye east side joyned to it is a Gleab garden containinge about an acre of ground around. There are four peices of gleab more that belonge to this prebend.—The first is in ye land of Ballyshenekin beinge about an Acre bounded easterly on the highway yt leads southwards from Effynge. Ye other limits of it are ye bounds of the field, & an unplowed ridge westward.—The second peice is over against it, beyond the said highway in ye lands of Clehach, bounded west on the same highway, north & south with ye feld, & eastward onely with an unplowed ridge, & this peice likewise contains about an acre.—The third lies beyond the highroad yt leads from Kilmallock to Ardsce & is bounded round between the lands of Clehach & Ballinfiandra or Ballymacshaneboy & contains as it is allowed about two acres or more, but there is an acre or two more which the old people say did belonge to it. The bounds of it northward are ye highway. The fourth peice is Kilbygyl within the lands of Ballinweely bounded North on ye same highroad scarce an acre of land, showes noe other bounds, but yt ye ridges are crosst and the rest about them.—And

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And there appears an old churchyard, and there was a chappell there 'tis supposed, for in the old Record book at Limerick tis ther recorded Capella De Kilbygyl pertinet ad Effynge.—But now Coll. Thomas Holmes of Kilmallock, haveinge bought the land of Ballinweely since the last Warrs, labours to allow none of it.

The Earle of Kildare is the Patron & presents to Effynge. The Vicarage is united to the prebend.

They talk of another small piece of gleab somewhere about Tubbermea, but I can finde noething of it—They likewise talk of soe many collops grasieinge as a privilege to ye prebendarie or his clerke upon the whole parish at large all ye year, but is disused now. Tis to be observed likewise yt in ye old record book at Limerick in one place, instead of six pounds there is but five pounds mentioned as payable to ye Vicars.

The fees or Bookmoney are as followeth on ye other side.

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For Banns of Matrimonie two shills. claimed—for purification two shills & tenpence whereof sixpence to ye clerk they say—for Marriage by licence five shills by banns usually three & fourpence for buriall in ye Chancell thirteen shills & fourpence claimed. In the body of ye church seaven & sixpence, in ye churchyard three & sixpence of which fourpence to ye sexton. The Easter offeringes are eight pence payd at Xmas & Easter 4d. a time, 2d. of which to ye
clark, 6d. to ye minister from each house. The church has been near a hundred years out of any repair—

Lewis Prytherch,
Preb of Effyng, 
Ann Dom. 1700.

Dromin church is dedicated to ye Holy Trinity, tis a Rectorie & vicarage in ye Donation of ye same ye Rt. Honbl. the Earle of Kildare and has usually & I think allways gone with Effynge, and soe I have it; there is a good church an old high frierie castle joyned to it, as it seems to be by the cells in it—It

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It has a large churchyard, & by the Down Survey Nineteen Acres and about a half a gleab land, South of ye Churchyard & joyned to it northerly, tis bounded southwards on the lands of Cloyngarre but the present Lord of yt Mannor will allow but fifteen, argueing yt the rest is hog & part of this gleab gives passage from the highway to ye rest of it, on ye East of the churchyard, which he likewise dos not allow. There is likewise near ye church of Uregare an acre of gleab belonginenge to Dromin, and the old people say they saw ye tythes & rent of it paid to Dromin & tis called in Irish Acherine y Drinod I.E. Trinity Acre, but now is out of my possession.

All Manner of sfees & bookmoney here are the same with Effynge.

Lewis Prytherch, 
Rector & Vicar of Dromin 1700.

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Athalackagh Church has nor other name yt I can find, tis a rectorie and vicarage in ye donation of ye same Rt. Honbl the Earl of Kildare from whom likewise I have it.

There is a good church & a large churchyard & fourteen acres of gleab by the Down Survey with a peice of an old castle on it South of the churchyard, but the present Lord of ye Mannor argues against the meares & bounds of it & will not allow it as it formerly has been enjoyed.

All manner of sfees & bookmoney here are the same with Effynge & Dromin as above said.

Lewis Prytherch, 
Rector of Athlackagh.

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Tankardstown has noe other name yt I can find, tis a Rectorie in the Donation of the Rt. Revd. Fr in God ye Lord Bishop of Limerick from whom I have it.

It has twelve acres of Gleab on the south of ye church in little closes contiguous; And about two acres more in ye land of Ballygibbon, yt lie loose without bounds in the feild yt is east of the highway.

All manner of sfees & bookmoney are claymed & payd here & in Dromin, to which it is now ordered to pay church rates.

Lewis Prytherch, 
Rector of Tankardstown 1700.
Bruree is a Rectorie and a vicarage Endowed.

There are ye ruines of a church and I can find noe other name than yt of Bruree; at Howardstown there is the ruines of another church which they call Temple Murrey with the bounds, tho' broken, of an ample churchyard about it, & they say it was a chappell of ease to Bruree or Brury the seat of some kinge, as the name imports. The Rectorie belongs to the Deanerie of Limerick; & is, I thinke, part of the corps of it; the Dean presents to ye vicarage, & the income & tythes of the parish is betwixt them.

There is in all by the Down surveigh twenty three acres, one Rood & sixteen perches of Gleab Land; There is a large tall old castle standinge by the church, & it belongs to the Rector or Dean of Limerick, and onely five acres of the said Gleabe yt are next about it belonge to it, as ye people say & witness. The other seaventeen acres belong to the vicar; and they lie in three peices—one little field lyes on the south of ye highway yt leads from the River westward towards the Mount called Knockoctro, the other piece on ye north of ye sd. way over against it & reaches down in a very small narrow peake to the River, where they say the vicar has a little fishing weare for eels, the landlord another, and the Rector a third, either there.

there or a little higher up the river. The third peice of gleab belongynge to the vicar is a field reputed to be nine acres & it lyes between Knock Octro & the great Castle.

There is likewise a peice of narrow land between Garryfine & Bally-teige yt contains about two hundred acres & dos belonge to the bishoprick of Kilkenny, which the tenants have of late (since it was discovered to belonge to the Bishoprick) claimed to be tyth free, but the present Lord Bishop has now under his hand disclaimed any such freedom to ye land, forsamuch as it is onely Augmentation Land; and if it were mensall, the Vicariall part ought to be paid .......

The Bookmoney or Ecclesiastical dues are the same here as in the above mentioned parishes, except yt ye parish clerk here claimes one half of the Easter Offerings or that they call Smoak Money, and would have fourpence for him and the other fourpence for the vicar, but 'tis not allowed.

The endowment of the vicarage are the small tythes beside the gleab above mentioned, such as ye lamb & wool, all gardens, all digged, and the half all trenched land, milch money, Turf & faggots, hay; the lands between the overflowings of the winter flood, & ye Brow of the dry upper Lands, which are called by the Irish here Inshiach & Fæaltiach. If ye vicar set his gleab to tenants & they plow it, the great tyth, viz, ye corne belonge to the Rector, but if he keep it in his own hands it dos not, soe if ye Rector set his Gleab the vicar has ye small tythes, otherwise not.

And here because some disputes arise sometimes between them yt rent the great tythes, & them yt. rent the Small, I thought it requisite to lay down what the old inhabitants who have been acquainted with these matters for
thirty or forty years past or more & some of them that have got these tythes for Most of that time, doe testifye & give under their hand & offer to prove to be ye old customes of that place time out of mind, & as they have Reed. them from those yt were before them—

1st. That any house garden yt pays rent whether plowed or digged Belongs to the small tythes, beinge one or two plantation acres.

2ly. That such a garden whether plowed or digged, tho ye house be destroyed continues for three years to be ye small tythes.

3ly. That any quantity of acres plowed & sowed with graine, if it be trenched with spade & shovell, the half of all yt corne doe belonge to the small tythes.

4ly. That ye Rector's Gleab is but five acres as above sd. the rest to twenty three &c is ye Vicars, offer'd to be proved to Mr. Martyn ye former lessee.

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or to me made good by the .... (illegible).

5ly. That ye old Irish gentlemen own the Einshiach agus fealtiach as above mentioned to belonge to the small tythes, & oath offered yt this was undertaken to be proved before the war.

6ly. All land digged with ye spade is small tythes.

7ly. If a peice of ground were plowed, & ye other half of feild digged or trenched, it was seen customarily there, yt the one moyetie of the whole went with the small tythes.

And Lastly, as it is above said All Bookmoney, Milch Money, hay, Turfe, woolle & lamb, &c with all such other ecclesiastical dues yt belonge usually to small tythes in other places, belonge to the small tythes here.

These & severall other little customs are certified by the hands of several of ye parishioners to be the Customes of this place, which for satisfaction to some persons I have taken the paines to write & procure from them.

Lewis Prytherch
Vic of Bruree
Ano. Dom. 1700