NOTES ON PLACE NAMES
IN NORTH-EAST OF
COUNTY LIMERICK.
PART II.

By Rev. J. F. Lynch, B.A.

(Continued from Page 190.)

GRENANE.—The townland of Grenane in Cahirconlish parish evidently represents “both the Grenans” of the Down Survey Map, termed mor, or “great,” and heg, or “little,” since a portion of Mr. O’Neill’s farm in this townland is called Grenane beg. In the townland of Grenane, and close to the Cross of Grenane, is one of the Caherconlish glebes, the property of Mr. Joseph Cahill, Caherconlish. Very likely this glebe belonged to the church of St. Michael, as those various glebes of the Caherconlish union of parishes are all situated near the sites of old churches, to which, I presume, they originally pertained.

A ridge runs north and south through the townland, and from this beautiful, sunny, ridge the townland was named Grianan, which is from grian, the sun. On this ridge are the sites of two castles, close together. The site of one castle is a few yards south of Mr. O’Neill’s garden, and the site of the second castle adjoins Mr. O’Neill’s byre. These castles are marked on the Down Survey Map, and being so close to the Bothar Mor, or great road, from Limerick through Grenane, were of considerable importance from the point of view of their Burke builders, to whom in the good old times, the Limerick and Waterford merchants had to pay toll.

Dean Storey, whose name is mentioned in Lenihan’s History in connection with Cullen and Bilboa, where he acquired property by his marriage with Catherine Warter, served as chaplain with the troops of General de Ginckle, who were encamped three weeks in Caherconlish, in the field near St. Michael’s Church, called the Camp Field, and during this period Storey was told a tale about two castles of Caher-
conlish which he has recorded in his history of the war. Storey does not state the names of these two castles, but the tale still survives in the district, and is told in connection with these two castles in Grenane; but the ladies, according to the present version, were two sisters, old maids, named Burke, who quarrelled, and one of them is stated to have dressed a broomstick in her own clothes and so managed to deceive her sister, who fell dead when she discovered her mistake, having "barged" the broomstick for a long time. The same, or a similar, tale is related in Sir William Wilde's "Lough Corrib" concerning two Galway castles, built close together, one of which is still called Caislean na Caillighe, or the castle of the witch, hag, or old woman.

BOHER.—I have noted that the old road passing through the townland of Benwilsh is named Bothar na Caillighe, and that this road passed through the townland of Knockanegh or Boher (Bothar) to the castle in this townland, marked on the Down Survey Map. In this castle lived Ralph Wilson of Bohir, who was High Sheriff of Limerick in 1708 and 1733. Thus it appears that the present railway station, hamlet, and townland of Boher are named from Bothar na Caillighe, the road of the witch, most likely one of those two sisters of Grenane.

GRENANE BÉG.—In Inch St. Lawrence parish there is also a townland named Grenane Beg, so called from the beautifully situated sunny rock on which the Burkes built a castle, of which only a small block of stones and mortar is now left on the top of the rock; but this was also an important castle, since Inch St. Lawrence and the present townland of Ballyhoodane formed one of the Burke Manors in Munster.

CLANCY'S FORT.—I have been told by Mr. Patrick Hickey that a gentleman named Smith resided in this castle, and that he attended Mass in the penal times at a place called Poulanaffrin and Clashanaffrin (hole and trench of the mass), a disused and filled-in quarry on Clancy's hill, a portion of the hill of Inch St. Lawrence. On this hill, a short distance west of the quarry, is a hole called Poulnasheevra, the hole of the siabhra (fairy), for which word see Joyce's Irish Names of Places, p. 189, 1st series.

Clancy, of Clancy's hill, was uncle to Mr. Patrick Hickey, and as the Clancys are a very old family in this district, it is likely that Clancy of Ballyvourneen Castle was a member of this family, with which, by
intermarriage, was also connected FitzGerald of Ballinard Castle, near Herbertstown, concerning whose cruelty and braon sinniord, or ancestral drop, the old people have much to say.

The Irish form of Clancy is Mac Fhlanachaidh, or Mac Fhlanachaidh, and there was also a family of this name in the County of Leitrim, of Munster origin, but unconnected with the Thomond Clancys.

INCH ST. LAWRENCE.—In the burial ground of Inch St. Lawrence is a small portion of the church, and near it is the well of St. Lawrence, the water of which is regarded as a remedy for sore eyes. The village of Caherconlish is supplied with water from a well in Gragane (little village) named Tobar Caoch, or blind well, and on the hill of Knockaine there is a well similarly named. Other wells in Inch St. Lawrence are Tobar na Greine (the well of the sun, the bright or sunny well) Tobar na Cnaibe (the well of the hemp, probably cnaibe uisge, water neekweed, cannabis), and well of Seaghan Caol, John the Slender, otherwise John Marshall, who died many years ago. This well was a public well, and on the farm of Mr. Marshall, and is marked, but not named on the O. S. Map. I have already referred to the legend of Shanacuart, or the old court on the top of a rock in Knockroe Mason, so called from a farmer named Mason, from whom several families of the district descend. The term Shanacuart, from the Irish Sean-chuaire, is generally used with reference to an old castle. The treasure is supposed to be in a cave of the rock on which the Old Court was built, and this cave is, as I have noted, also connected with the black dog. For German tales of the Schwarzer Hund, or black hound, as a Schatzhueter, or treasure-guardian, see Grimm, Deutsche Mythologie, also Panzer, who gives some Bavarian tales. Goethe, in the second part of "Faust," refers to the same old belief which appears to have had a wide prevalence, as had also the notion that the treasure must be sought by night, thus, according to Goethe:

"To search by day that were a jest;
'Tis darkness that doth harbour mysteries."

Knockroe Mason terminates at the west end in a steep cliff, named Carraig na bh-fiaich and Carraigfiach, the rock of the ravens. Mr. Grene Barry, many years ago, was told by an old man a tale about the king of
the ravens having intervened in a quarrel between the giant of Shanacuirt and a puca (r) or pooka, and of the raven king, having prophesied that Knockroe would be as level as the plain. Old men have told me that it is not very long since the ravens deserted Carraig na bh-fach. The raven is frequently referred to in Irish and Norse tales as a bird of omen, prophesy, and counsel, and, as such, appears also in the Kalevala of the Finns. There are particulars concerning the raven in "Faust," but they come from the Norse tales, in Windisch's Tain Bo Cualnge, 105, 817, will be found some curious references to the raven.

A field near Inch St. Lawrence Burial Ground is called the Pattern (Patron) Field, and in it is a large erratic boulder, called the Pattern Rock, containing a stone vessel to which the term bullan is applied, the water in this vessel is regarded as efficacious for warts and sore eyes. The water in a bullan is always applied externally, and the water is regarded as cleansing and curative, but the water of a holy well may be used externally or internally. The Pattern at Inch St. Lawrence was held on August 10th, and was discontinued about one hundred years ago. St. Laurent is mentioned in the Calendar of Oengus, August 10, and was a deacon of Sixtus II., martyred at Rome in in the persecution under Decius, as noted in the Calendar of Oengus. In Inch St. Lawrence, beside the road leading to Caherconlish, is an iron spa, formerly highly regarded, and neatly walled in and covered, and close at hand, and near the little bridge across a small stream, is the glebe of Inch St. Lawrence for which was exchanged some land in Ballybrood, in 1815, by the grandfather of the late Mr. R. J. Gabbett, of Caherline, to form a glebe at Ballybrood. Inch St. Lawrence, Ballybrood, Kilteely, Rathjordan, and Aglishcormick, formed a union of parishes, and the Incumbent of Ballybrood was Precentor of Emly, and the Prebend of Isert Lawrence was held by the Bishop, which gave him a seat in the Chapter.

The little stream which flows into the Groody is called Scruthan na gCeare, which means streamlet of the grouse. This little stream

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(1) For particulars of the puca, see Joyce's "Irish Names of Places," where Shakespeare's Puck is traced to the pooka. Puck also appears in "Faust," having been borrowed by Goethe from Shakespeare. The Irish puc and the old Norse puki appear to be similar terms.

See also Dr. Joyce's "English as we speak it in Ireland" (Pooka), page 303. —Ed.
is marked, but not named, on the Down Survey Map. It is from the land lying along this stream that the Inch of Inch St. Lawrence is obtained, but Isert of Isert Lawrence, the alternative name of the parish, is from Dysert, a hermitage, a desert. Passing over the little bridge, we soon reach a hillcock crowned by a very large earth fort, through which the road passes, but a large portion of the fort covered with ancient whitethorn bushes, which give the place a venerable and somewhat uncanny appearance, is left. On the O.S. Map, the hillock is named Knockaunconneely, which means hillock of Kinnealy, a name derived from the Irish O'Cinnfaelhaigh. Up to quite a recent period there were several families named Kinnealy in the district, but here the name has now died out.

The O'Cinnfaelhaigh, however, though not old in Inch St. Laurence in the land of the Dal gCais, are an old and royal family of the land beyond the Maiguc. The O'Cinnfaelhaigh were a tribe of the Ui Fidhgheinte.

The fort of Knockaunconneely seems from its size and construction to have been a great stronghold; but in course of time its ancient purpose as a fortification was forgotten, and its history has vanished, to be succeeded by a number of fairy tales with which the old people of Caherconlish regaled their hearers. Leaving the hillock we soon reach a Caherconlish glebe attached to the farm of Mr. Looney, and close at hand is the site of the church of Garrynakilly, marked by a small quarry, close to the road. Farther on is the College Field, where there is a large quarry.

CAHERCONLISH.—It is locally stated that the church of Caherconlish was served by monks who resided in the college, and on the site, a few years ago, Mr. Aherne found a large and well-made sewer and immense quantities of oyster shells. Near the site Mr. Aherne also found a stone celt, and also close to the site was found, many years ago, a prehistoric grave containing human bones, which were examined by Dr. Seward, at the time of the discovery resident medical doctor at Caherconlish; and the late Mr. Wilson told me that he had been informed by the doctor that the bones must have belonged to a man at least seven feet in height. The Dal gCais were men of giant stature. The human bones which were found in the Cairn of the Buachaill Breige
in Ludden parish, in 1829, and preserved for many years in Caherconlish House, by Major Wilson, were, Mr. Wilson informed me, of great size.

From time to time Mr. Aherne has picked upon his farm pieces of old crockery, and has also discovered numerous hearths which belonged to the houses of the old walled town of Caherconlish, in which, according to O'Donovan, in his "Supplement to O'Reilly's Dict.," were two castles. One castle was on the hill of Caherconlish, where it was built on the site of the old Cathair, or stone fort, from which the place is still called by the old people Cathair Chinnlis, and this castle was occupied by the Wilsons until the close of the eighteenth century, when one day half of the castle fell suddenly, but without injury to anyone, for all were absent at a meet of the hounds in the demesne. The second castle was in the garden of Mr. Mac Inerney, but the exact site is not known. The two castles, like those of Grenane, were close together; the second castle is not marked on the Down Survey Map.

The townland named Carrigoreelly and Dunmona on the map of the Down Survey is now represented by the three townlands of Carrigoreelly, Tubbermolug and Skehard, in the parish of Caherconlish.

CARRIGOREELLY, Mr. Wilson informed me, was, in his young days, called Carrigofarreelly by the old people, which is from the Irish Carrag O'Fairchellaigh, the rock of the O'Farrellys, who were a leading tribe of the Dal gCais, and are mentioned by O'Heerin, and in the genealogy of the Dal gCais, published in this Journal (Vol. I, No. 3, p. 162). A short distance south of the rock, on which is a ruined Burke castle, is the site of a very large earth fort in the townland of Pust, a difficult word to explain, and I can only suggest that it is from the English Post. Pust is a portion of the townland of Knockatana, according to the Down Survey map, and the name does not occur in the map. The fort was destroyed many years ago, when the figure of a knight with a sword at the side, and only one hand, was found in it.

(TO BE CONTINUED).