

# THE STONE CIRCLES OF LOUGH GUR.

## ITS PILLAR STONES AND TRADITIONS.

By OWEN BRESNAN.

Lough Gur is within three miles of Limerick, eight of Kilmallock, and eleven of Limerick City; it is only a few hundred yards east of the public road leading from Cork to Limerick, and is surrounded on all sides by romantic hills and glens and ivy-mantled precipices extremely picturesque and attractive. Very old seanachies of the locality believed that the lake had its origin in the neglectful treatment of a sacred well which existed thousands of years ago a little south of Garodhe Island and midway between the western extremity of Knocadon and Paddock Hill, or Ardaghlooda. The covering flagstone of the well was forgotten on a certain night by the neglectful Thuckee Brean of the Beanathee, with the disastrous result that on the following morning the entire valley was deeply submerged, including Cir-gors Castles, cattle, and inhabitants. The following quotation from General Vallancey in Lenihan's History of Limerick refers to the subject:—"We have many cir-gors in Ireland and round Lough Gor or Gur, in the country of Limerick, on the borders of the lake, and thence to Bruff are many. And if the inquirer will venture in a currach or leaky punt to the centre of the lake he will be shown by the boatman the great city and cir-gor that sunk in one night when the water rose above them and formed the lake." A striking similarity exists between this tale and the one narrated regarding the origin of Lough Neagh or lake of Eochaidh.

On Lough Neagh's banks as the fisherman strays  
When the clear cold eve's declining,  
He sees the round towers of other days  
In the waves beneath him shining.

In O'Donovan's Irish Grammar, p. 253, it is stated that the following lines are all repeated in the south of the county of Derry by those who speak the Irish language and have preserved the traditional account of the eruption of Lough Neagh:—

"Tigidh dhun na coille,  
As bainigidh currach;  
Oir ticeadh an tonn ruadh  
Tar bhaile righ n-Eathach."

"Come ye to the wood  
And cut ye a currach  
For the red flood will come over  
King Eochaidh's town."

Lough Gur is supposed to be one of the entrances to Tir na n-og. Professor O'Looney, in his introduction to the lay of Oisín, says:—"There are several such passages to Tir na n-og in this country, to describe which would be both needless and endless; suffice it to mention a few of the greatest celebrity—Ibh Breasail (O'Breasail's country), Ibh Leithin (O'Leithin's country), Inchiquin, and Lough Gur. The great Earl of Desmond is supposed to have been submerged in Lough Gur, where he is seen every seven years anxiously awaiting the destined hour of return to his country. On reference to the ancient records and pagan history of different nations, it will be seen that they have their traditions of pagan elysium as well as Ireland."

Garodhe Iarla, the great but ill-fated Earl of Desmond, who waged the fifteen years' war against the united forces of Elizabeth and Ormond, witnessed the battle of Manister in 1579, from the summit of Droum an Assal, now called Tory Hill, about six miles west of

newed by Sir John Fitzgerald, brother of the Earl, aided by the famous Jesuit, Dr. Allen, and the Abbot of the monastery. The enemy, under Sir Wm. Malby, consisted of 150 cavalry and 600 infantry. Though the Irish were ably commanded by Spanish officers, and fought with such fury that the result of the battle was for a long time doubtful; they were finally defeated with great slaughter, leaving the famous Dr. Allen and 260 of their army dead on the field. The grand old monastery suffered severely from the fire of the English cannon, the refectory and cloisters being destroyed, and the surrounding walls razed to the ground, so that though the monastery survived until the dissolution, it never recovered its original importance. A horrible slaughter was made by the Cistercian monks by the murderous soldiers of Malby, who cut the throats of three defenceless recluses, and perpetrated the most revolting atrocities. It is said, also, that after the horrible carnage, an old monk, the only survivor, entered the choir weeping copiously, and found all his murdered brethren with a bloody mark round their throats and with crowns on their heads and palms in their hands, singing the usual vespers, Deus in adiutorium, etc.

Though the Earl of Desmond's estates in Limerick, Cork, Kerry, and Waterford extended 150 miles, and contained 574,628 acres, after his defeat at Monasternenagh he had not one square foot of land he could really call his own, and 100,000 acres of his in Limerick county alone were divided amongst twelve English families. With a large reward offered for his head, thenceforward during four years the Great Earl became a hunted refugee. He was almost captured with his countess and a few faithful followers at the wood of Kilquagh, near Kilmallock, on the information of one John Walsh, but after being deserted by the countess, and having only one female and two male attendants, he was finally entrapped by the Moriarty gang in a little hut under cover of a rock in Glangeenty, five miles east of Tralee, county Kerry, dragged out into the public road, where the brave old veteran chieftain was mercilessly beheaded by one of the those infamous hirelings, a soldier named John Kelly. The road where the barbarous murder of the hoary-haired chieftain of 80 years was perpetrated is yet known as Boher an Earla, road of the Earl, and is said to be still red with his blood. The headless remains were secretly interred in the old churchyard of Ceall an Amanach. Edward Walsh in his poem on Aileen the Huntress says:—

"And now Ceall an Amanach's portals are passed,  
Where, headless, the Desmond found refuge at last."

For the purpose of securing their own safety as well as Elizabeth's foul reward, the head of the Earl was conveyed privately in a bag to Cork, and finally spiked on London Bridge, and the epithet, "Ceann na Mala" (head in the bag) was ever afterwards anything but agreeable to the ears of the lineal descendants of those merciless savages.

Garodhe Iarla is supposed to have spent many of his youthful days at Lough Gur, and to have repeatedly heard Mass in the old church of Kilalough, where a mound of stones still marks its site. Midway between the road and the old shore of the lake, and a little south-east of Cashan Dubh (the Mack castle),

Iarla as the guardian spirits of Lough Gur. Still some of the old local tales credited Aine with being his wife, and others that she was his mother. Garodhe is supposed to ride over the surface of the lake every seventh year on his snow-white charger, the Coppal Bawn, and as he joyfully traverses the enchanted avenue it seems to spring up immediately before him, and disappears as suddenly behind him, from the shore north of Leaba na Muca, to that island fortress which he loved. There are people still living around the lough who imagine that they saw the renowned Garret ride out from the Leaba na Muca shore on some of his nocturnal expeditions, and the following extract from an old poem on the subject illustrates the tradition:—

"O'er Carrigal's white summit the pale moon  
Gently rose,  
And shed a halo round that vale, where Lough  
Gur's water flows.

The air was sweet and balmy from the fragrance  
Of the flower,  
The earth, it seemed a heaven, in the grandeur  
Of that hour.  
Enraptured with its beauty I strayed along that  
shore,  
Where the mighty sword of Desmond brightly  
flashed in days of yore.

Lo! gentle Luna's pallid face blushed to a  
golden hue,  
The turbid waters of the lough assumed an  
azure blue;  
And giant oaks that long had slept beneath the  
turf unseen,  
Reared up their arms to the sky, enrobed in  
richest green.

With meteor flashes, luminous, the sky seemed  
all aglow,  
A gorgeous highway spanned the lake, from the  
ruin of Teampul Noe;  
Its sands in glittering grandeur far excelled the  
stars on high,  
As Garodhe Earla galloped on his snow-white  
charger by.

The sparkling golden armour which that princely  
rider wore,  
Surpassed in dazzling splendour aught by mortal  
seen before,  
And as he checked his charger's rein by the lovely  
Innismore\*,  
A host of stalwart clansmen stood to greet him  
on its shore.

Then the ruined ramparts of that wild, chaotic  
isle,  
Restored to ancient splendour, on their lord  
appeared to smile  
As he rode along its centre; every turret, every  
dome,  
Seemed to welcome back its master to his  
ancient island home."

I here omit his lengthened address to his beloved Dalcassians, but insert the concluding verses:—

"As he spoke his glaring eyes like two fiery comets  
blazed;  
Every head was upturned, every arm was up-  
raised;  
Every sword to its scabbard gave a clashing, ring-  
ing leap.  
Then they vanished in a moment and were veiled  
beneath the deep.

In astonishment I gazed where I saw them dis-  
appear.  
I could see or hear no more, save the blue waves  
rolling near;  
The pattering of the ivy which encrowned the  
dismal cave,  
And the weird-like crooning owl soaring o'er the  
silent grave."

The Rev. Patrick Fitzgerald, the Limerick historian, says:—"When the silver shoes of the Coppal Bawn are worn off the enchantment will cease and the Great Earl will return to life. Much the same tales are told by the Germans concerning the return of their great Emperor, Frederick Barbarossa. Lenihan's History mentions that among the Smith MSS. in the Royal Irish Academy is a letter dated the 13th of ..."



'Knockiney faire' in the year 1640, which states that a country fellow going off to Knockiney faire to sell his horse, met a gentleman on the way who demanded his price. The fellow answered £5; the gentleman would give him but £4 10s, so the fellow went to the faire, but, failing to sell the horse there, met the other on his return journey, and as the gentleman expressed his willingness to "stand word with him," the fellow gladly accepted his offer. The gentleman took him into a fine, spacious castle, "payed" him his money, and showed him the "fairiest" black horse the fellow had ever seen. He said that horse was the Earl of Desmond; that he had three shoes already, but that when he had the fourth one, which would be soon, the Earl would be as he was before, guarded by many armed men. The gentleman then conveyed him out of the gates, the fellow came home, but never was any castle in that place before or since." The Lough Gur version of the story is that the owner of the horse was a Clareman, and that he went home after being paid in gold the full amount of a very satisfactory bargain, but on the following morning, to his mortification, instead of the gold he found only a pocketfull of ivy leaves, and of course he knew to his sorrow that it was useless for him to seek either satisfaction or restitution from the wily horse-dealer of that enchanted palace fathoms deep beneath the blue waters of Desmond's haunted lake.

Lough Gur, Holycross, Kilmallock,  
June 5, 1903.

(To be Continued.)

## CANALS OF THE WORLD.

"Great Canals of the World" is the title of a study prepared by the United States Treasury Bureau of Statistics. It shows the commerce, cost, and dimensions of the great canals of the world, especially those connecting great bodies of water, and which may be properly termed ship canals.

Ship canals connecting great bodies of water and of sufficient dimensions to accommodate the great modern vessels plying upon such waters are of comparatively recent production and few in number. The one great example of works of this character which has been a sufficient length of time in existence and operation to supply satisfactory data as to cost of maintenance and operation and practical value to the commerce of the world is the Suez Canal, and for this the available statistics begin with the year 1870, while its new and enlarged dimensions only date from the year 1896. For the Sault Ste. Marie Canal, connecting Lake Superior with Lake Huron, statistics date from 1855, though for the canal in its present enlarged form cover only two years of operation. The other great ship canals of the world are of much more recent construction, and data regarding their operation therefore cover a comparatively brief term, and in some cases are scarcely at present available in detail.

The artificial waterways, which may properly be termed ship canals are nine in number, viz.:-

1. The Suez Canal, begun in 1859 and completed in 1869.
2. The Cronstadt and St. Petersburg Canal, begun in 1857 and completed in 1890.
3. The Corinth Canal, begun in 1884 and completed in 1893.
4. The Manchester Ship Canal completed in 1894.
5. The Kaiser Wilhelm Canal, connecting the Baltic and North Seas, completed in 1895.
6. The Elbe and Trave Canal, connecting the North Sea and Baltic, opened in 1900.
7. The Welland Canal, connecting Lake Erie with Lake Ontario.
- 8 and 9. The two canals, United States and Canadian, respectively, connecting Lake Superior with Lake Huron.

## SIR WILLIAM ROWAN HAMILTON.

### A GREAT IRISH LAST CENTURY MATHEMATICIAN.

Sir William Rowan Hamilton, mathematician and astronomer, was born in Dublin, 9th August, 1805. His father was an attorney; his mother was related to Hutton, the mathematician. Intended for an Indian appointment, he was, when a mere child, sent to study with an uncle at Trim. At four he had made some progress in Hebrew, and in the two succeeding years he acquired the elements of Greek and Latin. At the age of fourteen he was familiar with the rudiments of Hebrew, Latin, Greek, French, Italian, Spanish, German, Syriac, Arabic, Sanscrit, Hindu-

Europe were somewhat astonished when, in 1827, a young man who had not attained the age of twenty-two stepped at once from the position of an undergraduate to that of Andrews Professor of Astronomy and superintendent of the Observatory at Dunsink, near Dublin, especially as he was not known to have displayed any talent for practical astronomy or observing. Until his marriage, in 1833, his sisters, women of uncommon abilities, resided with him at the Observatory, Dunsink. He early produced his great work on "The Theory of Systems of Rays,"



SIR WILLIAM ROWAN HAMILTON.

From a Drawing made in 1844.

stani, and Malay, and had written a letter in Persian to the Persian ambassador on his visiting Dublin. In mathematics he was almost self-taught. Entering Trinity College in 1822, he carried everything before him, and had mastered Newton's "Principia," the Differential Calculus, and La Place's "Mecanique Celeste" before he was nineteen. A paper containing original researches on curves of double curvature, and a memoir on caustic curves, read before the Royal Irish Academy in 1824, placed him in the front rank of scientific Irishmen. The astronomers of

"which with its supplements is regarded as of the highest importance in relation to the geometry of optics. Charles spoke of it as 'dominant toute cette vaste theorie.' Starting from the fundamental idea that light, whatever be its cause or constitution, must be amenable to the principle of least action (nature's economy in using up force), he arrived at most important deductions relating to reflection and refraction. One of his discoveries, literally made upon paper, was that of conical refraction, a thing neither known or surmised by practical experimenters in



# LOUGH GUR.

## ITS PREHISTORIC MONUMENTS, CASTLES, AND TRADITIONS.

By OWEN BRESNAN.

(Continued.)

Garodhe Iarla, the Guardian Spirit of Lough Gur, is also supposed to favour the Curragh of Kildare, where tales were told by the old folk regarding him. In the pagan period the races of the Curragh of Kildare were held at Oenach Cholmain, and there was also a second Oenach Cholmain in Limerick district, and not far from Lough Gur, as races were held in Croom, and also in Bruree, during the pagan period.

One of Queen Elizabeth's State papers contains a petition of Eleanor Butler, Countess of Desmond, widow of Gerald, the sixteenth Earl, to the Queen, begging to be allowed to retain possession of Lough Gur Castle, which she said was her personal property, having been secured to her in her marriage settlement, but her request was refused, the Lord Deputy saying that Lough Gur Castle was one of the strongest in Munster, and comparing it with Maynooth Castle.

In A.D. 1579, according to Lenihan, the Countess of Desmond presented letters to Lord Justice Pelham at Fanningstown, excusing her husband for disobedience. Desmond was, however, proclaimed a traitor, and the army ordered to enter his territory with fire and sword if he did not within twenty days surrender. During the progress of the army of Pelham, who was presented by the Mayor of Limerick, Nicholas Stritch, with one thousand well-armed citizens, they hanged the Mayor of Youghal at his own door. During the same year, to her eternal dishonour, the Countess of Desmond, during the absence of her husband, and thereby dishonourably endeavouring to modify the resentment of Elizabeth, betrayed into the hands of their enemies Bishop Patrick Hely and his companion, Father O'Rourke. They were conveyed prisoners to Kilmallock, and courtmartialled by the Deputy, Sir Wm. Drury. In order to compel Dr. Hely to reveal certain secrets which they imagined he knew, he was subjected to grievous tortures; they placed small iron bars across his fingers, and struck those bars with a hammer until his fingers were shattered to pieces, but having steadfastly refused to divulge anything, he was led to the gallows. They were both hanged upon a tree at Kilmallock; their bodies were left suspended for fourteen days to be used as targets by the soldiery. The Deputy Drury died a wretched death soon after. He was succeeded by Sir Wm. Pelham, and Pelham was soon afterwards succeeded by Sir George Bouchier. Lenihan states that at this time, after a year and a half fighting, the people of Ireland were reduced to the most wretched condition. It was said that the whistle of the ploughman or the lowing of a cow could scarcely be heard from one extremity of the land to the other.

Numerous valuable tales have been irretrievably lost at Lough Gur, but a few regarding the district were published by Mr. Fitzgerald in vol. ii. of 'Revue Celtique' of Paris, the tale of the enchanted lake, by T. Crofton Croker, and a tale of Trainin Glas and the cave of the Green Knight. The Journal of Cork H. and S. Society, vol. i., second series, p. 555, states—“What the Apostle did in Munster is set out

in the Tripartite Life. The following is the folk-lore history of his work. At the time that St. Patrick came westward from “Cashel of the Kings,” on his great mission of Christianising the Irish nation, a very large serpent infested the district where Bruff now is. The Saint drove the serpent into Lough Gur and ‘commanded’ it to remain there until the Easter Monday before the Judgment Day. Ever since that serpent is confined at the bottom of Lough Gur, but comes to the surface on Easter Monday once in the seven years, and then addresses the query, always in Irish, ‘Bfuil an fada a Phadruig O Dia Luain a tac?’ “How long is it, O Patrick, from that last Monday?” or literally ‘How long is it, O Patrick, from that Monday at the end of time?’

The Limerick historian, Fitzgerald, who was the son of a Bruff tailor, and educated in Bruff, says—“The summer when the wind blows from the south-east the water in the lake becomes thick and green, emitting a very fetid smell,” and a writer in the “Dublin Magazine” for 1764, p. 323, says—“The lake is of a particular nature and is said to answer the end of a barometer, indicating a change of weather. The water is generally very clean, but before a storm or foul weather it appears of a yellowish or greenish colour, and a disagreeable smell proceeds from the wind which blows over it.” It was believed in the old times that when Erin suffered any great loss or any great sorrow came upon the land, that there was a feeling of sympathy exhibited by the lake, and that is the reason why the Munster poet, Egan O'Rahilly, wrote:—

Air chlos taig is baig an Phoenix,  
Thug Donn Cliodna biodhghadh baoghalach,  
Do Chi Loughguir an' shuil seacht laethe.

On hearing the tidings and death of the Phoenix,  
Town Cliodna gave a start of danger,  
Lough Gur was blood for seven days.

An uair do rith an fhuir tar cortas,  
‘S an tan do bhris Loughguir fa mhiontibh.  
Air gheim an Ruis do chrith an chioige.  
Treimhse roimh a dhul air feschadh.

When the sea rush beyond its bounds,  
And what time Lough Gur overflows into the moor-lands,  
At the roar of Ross the province shook,  
A short space ere he went into decay.

Knockadoon (the hill of the fortresses) is now a peninsula, being surrounded by the lake in the form of a horseshoe, on which at present there are two islands. Mr. John Punch, of Lough Gur, says that it was Mr. Henry Baily, who died an old man in 1808, who in his young days, assisted by an engineer named Fuzelle, first attempted to lower the waters of Lough Gur by draining it westward, because the water, after a heavy rainfall, flowed over his kitchen garden. Mr. Punch asserts that it was Henry Baily's brother John, an elder brother, who was accidentally killed by his horse at the little bridge east of Tullybracky Church after visiting some relatives, and that John's death occurred previous to the attempted drainage, though some writers on the subject have stated the contrary. Mr. Punch says that so deservedly great was the popularity of the Baily family at Lough Gur, over which they were middle landlords, paying 8s 6d per acre themselves to the Fanes and Bouchiers, that when the son of the above-mentioned Henry Baily (who was also named Henry) died at Castleconnell on the 29th September,

1803, one hundred and seventy-five Lough Gur men, riding two on every horse, together with sixteen well-armed gentlemen, relatives of the Baily family, rescued the remains at night, forcibly, and had them interred in the old family vault in the south-eastern corner of the old ruin of Teampul Noe. An order was laid on the body at Castleconnell by his widow, and interment prevented, until her future living would be guaranteed.

Previous to the lowering of the water of Lough Gur about the year 1850, it had six islands, viz., Garodhe and Bolin islands, still in existence; Croc (a corruption of Choc) island, still exists in the form of a wooded mound of earth on the moor opposite Grange Hill House, where a diminutive bay formerly flowed almost to Grange R. O. Chapel; Church island, near the southern shore of the lake, and directly north of Leaba na Mucca; and Baily islands, the two of which, as well as Church island, have entirely disappeared. Baily islands were in the Little lake, now dry and due west of the stone fort on Carrig-gal.

In the Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association, January, 1870, occurs the following note to “Unpublished Geraldine Documents”:—Lough Gur having been mentioned at p. 402, *Supra*, as the place where some of the followers of Desmond lay till cured of the wounds received in the conflict at Affane, we may mention here that it was one of the most remarkable strongholds of the Earls of Desmond. Thomas Dinely, who visited it in the reign of Charles II., describes the lough as a large moat encompassing an island, the castle (now Doon Castle) and bridge (a draw-bridge in Dinely's time defended by a beautiful stone archway which fell about twenty years ago) were built by the Bouchiers after Desmond's fall. But the old Desmond fortress, called the Black Castle (Caslean Dubh), was ruinous even in Dinely's time. The island in the lake is called Knockadoon, and is connected with the land by a causeway solidly built of stone, 432 feet long by 22 feet wide. It is 7½ feet high on the eastern, and about 10 feet on the western side. It was the only approach to the island, was defended by a castle (long since levelled, but shown in a sketch by Dinely) placed 77 feet from the head of the causeway. The foundations of this castellated gateway (in Pat O'Brien's yard) are quite visible, and are 23½ feet square. 162 feet farther on is a very wide and deep fosse; and 177 feet from this, at the insular end of the causeway, still stands the ruins of a fortified doorway (about 12 feet high by 9 broad), from which a strong wall (60 yards long, about 14 feet high, and 6 feet thick, with apertures for cannon), was drawn along the edge of the lake till it met the Black Castle. This castle, observes Dinely, during the time of the Irish Rebellion, was always a garrison for one side or the other; besides, being in an island of above a mile in circumference, encompassed with a large and deep lough or pool, it was a receptacle, not only for man, but beasts, to defend from the enemy. “Some twenty years ago,” states the “Journal,” “the waters of the lake were lowered by drainage works, and the causeway is no longer the only approach to the island. When the waters were drawn off, antiquities ranging from the stone and bronze period down to the historic ages, were found, thus proving that Lough Gur was a stronghold, even in pre-historic times—a fact no less patent from the wonderful megalithic remains which encircle its shores. It is firmly believed by the people that those engaged in the draining of the lake have been all visited by the retributive punishments of death or exile.”

The front or southern wall of Caslean Dubh is still over 50 feet high, the top clothed with beautiful ivy; the remainder is only about 20 feet high. The whole interior is in one compartment; the roof consisting of a strong stone archway; the entrance is at the north-western



corner; an arched door-way, over which was the usual trap-door from which its defenders could hurl boiling oil, water, and stones on their assailants. John Punch says that the castellated gateway, which formerly existed near the head of the causeway, was taken down in 1753, and the stones given by the then Mr. Baily to Mr. Edward Croker as material for the building of the mansion-house (now in ruins) at the west side of the road at Raleighstown. Mr. Punch also states that the old road leading to Caslean Dubh ran south-west from the head of the causeway, and met the existing public road where his own dwelling now stands midway between Leaba Dhiarmada's Grainne and Carrig an eithing (the rock of the lies), and he adds that traces of the fireplace of the lodge, which stood at the junction of the two roads, were discovered there many years ago, also that a neighbour of his told him long ago that in travelling along the road one night by Carrig an Eithig, and having accidentally stumbled over a stone on the highway, a loud laugh of delight or ridicule emanated from the mysterious occupiers of the interior of the romantic Carrig.

Bourchier's Castle, now called Doon Castle, at the north-eastern side of Knockadoon, is almost 80 feet in height at its eastern side, and is still in a fair state of preservation. Its upper storey, the lower, as well as the roof and parapets are gone, as also are the outworks, of which the foundations have been found on various occasions, as well as numerous human bones and skeletons. At the building of the beautiful three-storeyed residence, now in the occupation of Mr. Thomas Ryan, which was erected about 50 years ago, a stone tablet was discovered in the foundation of one of the outworks and a little south of the castle, on which was inscribed the name of one of the Bourchiers (probably Sir George's) and bearing a date which would corroborate the belief that it had been built by one of them; however, Lenihan imagined that it had been built about the period of the Roses. Unfortunately, the stone tablet was broken up by the workmen and inserted in the new work. The spiral staircase of the castle, which consists of 84 steps, is still perfect, and the old oaken door studded with iron rivets still hangs in the beautifully carved archway, the main entrance to the castle from the east. The usual murder-hole denuded of its trap-door is still intact over the doorway on the inside. The wooden floorings and massive beams on which they rested have long since disappeared, but their number can be easily determined by the handsome projecting stones on which they rested. From the outside the castle appears to have been built in two divisions, the portion which contains the staircase being of superior material and workmanship, and was probably raised in advance for the purpose of conveying material to the remainder. The Earls Hall, a spacious apartment about half way from the top, has its earthen floor resting on a stone archway, which is still perfect, and the grassy flat at the top of the castle is similarly supported. How the principal apartment of the castle obtained the sobriquet of "The Earl's Hall," is a mystery if the castle was built by the Bourchiers. Probably it derives its name from Seamas Ruadh, or the Sugaun Earl, who was, for a short time, in possession of it. Or, perhaps, it may have been visited in Bourchier's time by that degenerate young Geraldine, who, though son to the great Earl, was God-son and cat's-paw of amorous Elizabeth, and was spat upon at Kilmallock when its inhabitants became cognisant of his foul perversion from faith and fatherland.

Lewes says in his article on Knockaney that "On the hill of Knockadoon, just over the lake, are some traces of an ancient fortress." This must be the site of Dun Gair, mentioned in the Book of Rights as one of the Royal Forts of Munster.

Knockadoon, in the grand old days of old,

long before the destructive interference of the Dane or Anglo-Norman convulsed its sunny slopes and peaceful valleys, was in verity a city of stone forts and circles. It has six distinct ones at present, but half-way up its sloping sides, between Seachan Beantighe and the Cave of the Echoes, the dilapidated remains of circular and semi-circular forts can be traced beneath every crag and projecting precipice, and it is probable that the stones of that prehistoric island city were afterwards utilised to build the formidable rampart, now in ruins, which surrounded Garodhe Island. Leac Rury Ri (locally called Rury Ru), a broad natural projection of elevated flagstones on the old shore about 150 yards N.E. of Seachan Beantighe, would afford a convenient landing-stage for rudely-constructed rafts or currachs, on which the transmission of those stones to Garodhe Island would be quite practicable. The above conjectured clearance of the remains of various forts renders identification of them in some cases almost impossible. Strange to say, though a conjoint visit was paid to Lough Gur by the Royal Archaeological Society of Ireland and the Antiquarian Society of Cambridge, accompanied by Professor Rhys, of Oxford University, the account of that meteoric visit published by the Cambridge Archaeologists in their journal is a standing memorial of the utter uselessness of archaeologists attempting to investigate the remains of antiquity at the great prehistoric sites of Ireland, without at the same time taking down from the people the information they could impart regarding those antiquities. We expected great results from the learned antiquaries of Dublin, Oxford, and Cambridge, but they left the records of the greatest prehistoric site of the Irish race exactly as they found them.

Lough Gur, Hollycross, Kilmallock.  
(To be continued.)

### MAY MORNING AT LOUGH GUR.

[Tradition has it that the Earl of Desmond on May mornings, at intervals of seven years, visits Lough Gur, and, attended by fairies, rides thrice round the lake, his horse being shod with silver. Ruins of the Earl's strong castle are on the shore of the lake, and an interesting account of it will be found in the "Pecata Hibernia." This tradition of the Earl's ride is considered similar to that told us in Killarney about O'Donoghue of The Glens.]

Along the shore of that enchanted lake  
The whispering reeds shake off the tears of night;

A hush is over island, hill, and brake,  
As stars and moon fade in the wakening light,  
And gold and crimson lines the heavens' streak.  
The god of day unfolds his coming might;  
Pours beams on Druids' circle and on Fairy fort,  
Where spirits of the elder time resort.

It is May morning, and the rising sun  
Rolls up the shadows of the slumbering hills;  
The beauteous wild flowers open one by one;  
Rich odorous charm the fresh air fills.  
To the blue vault the herald lark has flown,  
And joyous there his quivering carol thrills;  
But why do Fays and Fairies leave the hollow shore,  
And ghostly heroes flit to ruins hoar?

Out on the lake the dreamy mist, with morn  
In wreathing phantom vapour yet abides;  
There pearly clouds evolve a warrior form—  
An armed knight who o'er the water rides  
On a dark war-horse, shod with silvery charms;  
Aine, the fairy queen, following glides  
With countless fays and elves—her ethereal train—  
For Desmond here asserts his ancient reign.

Thrice round the lake that steed doth bear  
The shade of Geraldine, his spectral host,  
Mystic, silent, floating ambient through the air,  
On past the grey keep, where glimmering ghost  
Of gallowglass or Bannagh wildly glare;  
Soon as May sun rols high the spell is lost;  
The pageant fades in the shimmering west;  
Again the Earl in Tyr nan Oge finds rest.  
May, 1903.

—E. B. F.

## NOTES AND QUERIES.

### WILLIAM THOMPSON, THE COMMUNIST.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL.

In the "History of Co-operative Farming at Rahahine, Co. Clare (London, 1882), its author, Mr. E. T. Craig, who died a year or two back, writes in reference to Thompson, of whom a sketch recently appeared in the "Dublin Penny Journal":—

"Among others we were visited by Mr W Thompson, a disciple of Jeremy Bentham, and author of a volume on the 'Distribution of Wealth,' and other works on political and social economy, in which he sustains in an argumentative and exhaustive manner the principles of mutual co-operation and association for the production, distribution, and consumption of wealth. He was highly gratified with what he saw at Rahahine. Mr. Thompson contended that in social efforts it was necessary always to keep in view the complicated nature of man, for without this constant reference to it, the regulating principle of utility is sacrificed, and the grand object of political economy, the indefinite increase of wealth, or its yearly products, become worthless objects, consigning to the wretchedness of unrequited toil three-fourths, or nine-tenths of the human race, that the remaining smaller portion may pine in indolence midst unenjoyed profusion. He contended that it is not the mere possession of wealth, but the right distribution of it, that is important in the community. It is with communities or societies as with individuals. Men cannot be happy without the physical means of enjoyment, which in all civilised societies consist chiefly of wealth. It is not the multitude, but the use and the distribution of the objects of wealth, with which society is chiefly interested. He held that force, fraud, chance, prescription, are every where the main arbiters of distribution; and have almost frightened reason from daring to contemplate the mischief they have made." Mr. Thompson was much pleased with the simplicity and economy of our social arrangements. He was the owner of large estates in County Cork, and told us he would leave his property to establish an association on a system somewhat similar to what he saw at Rahahine. On leaving us he presented me with a copy of his work on practical instructions in the formation of communities in connection with agriculture and manufactures. This book is a very valuable one, and is full of practical suggestions, both in relation to tillage and the architectural arrangement of dwellings of an economical construction. He died in 1833, before he could realise his intentions, but left Mr. Pare and others trustees of his property. The will, however, was opposed by some distant relatives, who contested the legality of a demise of land for the purpose intended, and set up a plea of insanity, which was said to be proved by the nature of the bequest. I had known Mr. Thompson by personal acquaintance with him in England, and among all the men I have since known I have never met one more under the control of reason and reflection. His physical constitution was not strong, and he maintained a constant control over his appetites, passions, and emotions. His temperament was sanguine-nervous, with little muscular power, and a slender frame, a medium-sized head, and a well-balanced brain. He was a laborious student in sociology. During the last twenty years of his life he avoided intoxicating beverages and animal food, as he could pursue his literary studies much better without them. Like his friend Jeremy Bentham, he bequeathed his body for dissection for the benefit of humanity. At that time there existed a strong prejudice against the medical profession. The peasantry were opposed to the dissection, and threatened a riot at Clonkeen, Rosscarberry, where he died. Mr. Thompson, in his day, was one of the most earnest advocates of mutual co-operation, and although he is somewhat prolix and redundant in his great work on the distribution of wealth, he was of a very practical turn of mind, as was evident by the pointed inquiries he made as to our working and social relations. The legal contest respecting his property was sustained in the Irish Probate Court, afterwards in the Court of Chancery, and ultimately the decision was in favour of the claimants, and the property became theirs—another illustration of the evils of delay in application of means to legitimate and benevolent purposes."

LECTOR.



# Dublin Penny Journal

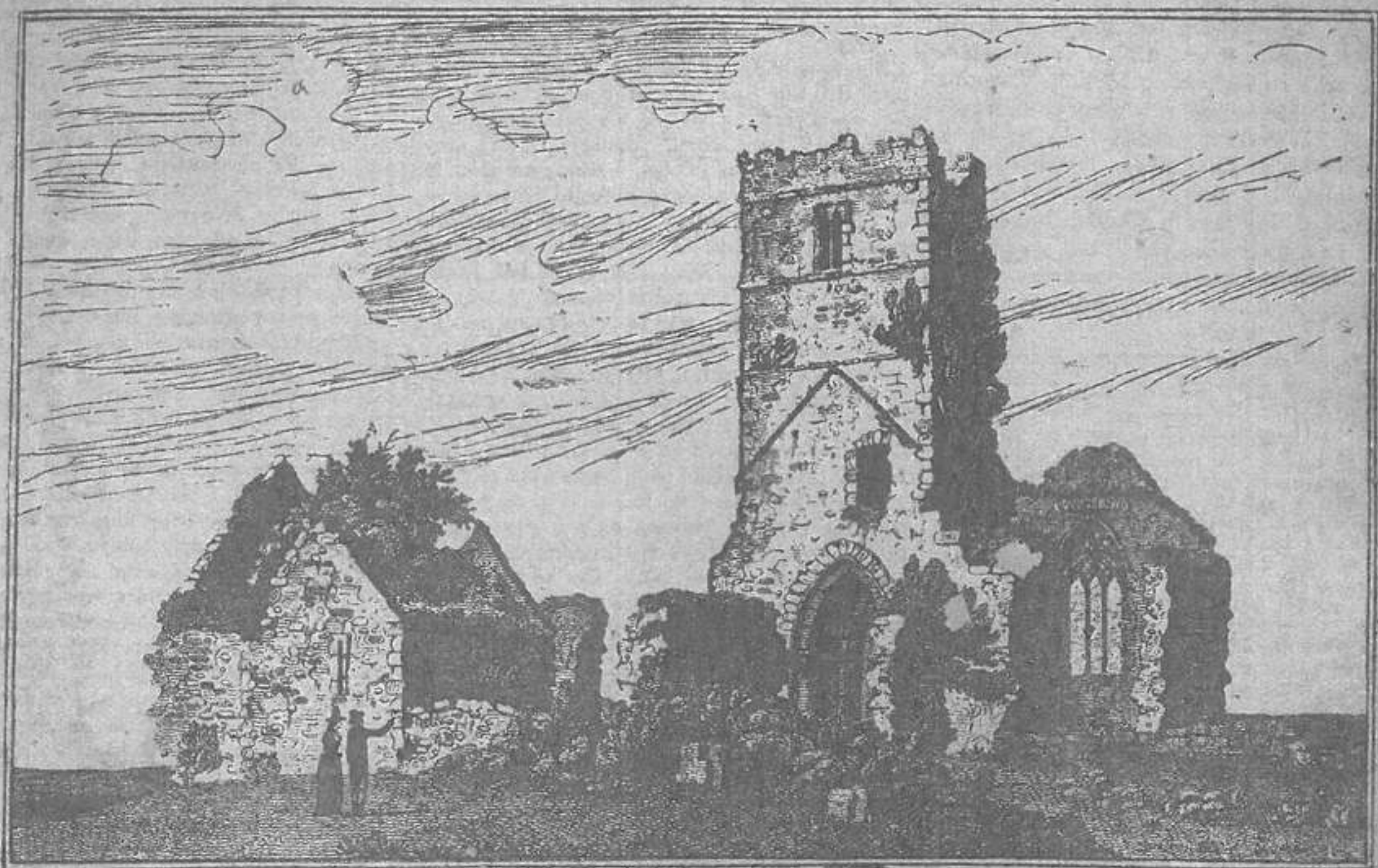
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## CLONSHANVILLE ABBEY, COUNTY ROSCOMMON.



FROM A VIEW BY T. COCKING, 1791.

### CLONSHANVILLE ABBEY.

This monastery stands upon the edge of a very extensive bog, the country for a great distance round being flat. In Irish it is named "Cluain-fean-mbil," or the retreat of the old Leper. It stands in the barony of Boyle, and seven miles from the town of that name. A legendary account ascribes the foundation of the church to St. Patrick.

It was erected in 1535, by MacDermot Roe, for Dominicans. The Mac Dermots formerly had large possessions in this and

the neighbouring county of Sligo, the representative of which was the late Prince of Coolavin, of whom Young, in his Tour in Ireland, thus speaks: "Another great family in Connaught is Mac Derr — — — calls himself Prince of Coolavin; he lives at Coolavin in Sligo, and though he has not above £100 a year, he will not admit his children to sit down in his presence. This was certainly the case with his father, and some assured me even with the present chief. Lord Kingsborough, Mr. Ponsonby, Mr. O'Hara, Mr. Sandford, &c., came to see him, and his address was curious. 'O'Hara, you are welcome; Sandford, I am glad to see your mother's

son (his mother was an O'Brien); as to the rest of ye, come in as you can.'"

The monastery consists of two distinct parts, which seem to have been formerly ~~very~~ but now very much in ruins. The eastern window is entire; the tower sixty feet high, standing upon an arch, and has offsets. There are no remains of cloisters.

Near the belfry is a vault, the cemetery of the Frenches, of French-park; on the eastern wall of this vault are their arms, and this inscription:

"Pray for the Souls  
"Of Patrick French Fitz Stephen of Galway,  
"Burgess, who lived in this world 86 years."

This monastery was granted by the