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Lough Gur.

"Ye hardy sons of Dardanus, the same land which produced you from your forefathers' stock shall receive you in its fertile bosom after all your dangers. Search out your ancient mother."—ÆNEID iii. 126.

LOUGH GUR lies about three miles north of Bruff, some little distance east of the main road to Limerick. In former days, the old road between Cork and Limerick ran quite close to the border of the lake—too much so, indeed, for the comfort of the English army passing by, whenever the Earl of Desmond, who held the castle at Lough Gur, happened to be on the war-path. Sir George Carew, who received a warm reception from the followers of the Sugaun Earl on his march to Limerick, gives, in *Pacata Hibernia*, an interesting description of Lough Gur. He says:—"The five and twentieth of May, 1600, the army passing by Lough Gur, which was as yet held by the rebels. The President, attended by a troop of horse, went to take a view of the strength and situation thereof, and also by what way he could bring the cannon to annoy the same. He found it to be a place of exceeding strength, by reason that it was an island encompassed by a deep lough, the breadth thereof being in the nearest part a caliver's shot over, on one side thereof a very strong castle, which at the time was manned by a good garrison; for there was within the

island John FitzThomas with 200 men at the least, who shewed themselves prepared to defend the place." The account which the celebrated General Vallancey gives of a visit to Lough Gur will also be interesting. He says:—"We have many cirgors in Ireland; round Lough Gor, or Gur, in the county of Limerick, and from thence to Bruff are many. And if the enquirer will venture in a corach, or leaky punt, to the centre of the lake, he will be shewn the great city and cirgor that sunk in one night, when the waters rose above it and formed the lake. It astonished me to see such immense irregular blocks and rocks under water, when nothing similar is to be found in the vicinity." The lake is plainly of volcanic origin, and there are good examples of the basaltic formation, chiefly of an amorphous form, in the neighbourhood. The old red sandstone also occurs in one of the hills bordering on the lake. Here, then, at some remote period long before the presence of the Lake Dweller disturbed the solitude of this region, a terrible convulsion of nature must have taken place, and the Fire King reigned supreme. At some subsequent period, also, this lovely lake must have entertained another but far different regal guest, for the discovery of the fossil remains of a polar bear proves indisputably that King Ice of old held high revel at Lough Gur.

The old name of the lake is Loch Gair. An intermediate form, Guir, occurs in the Fee-Book of a Limerick physician of the seventeenth century, published in *Kilkenny Archæological Journal* for 1867 (page 139). Gair or Gar may, perhaps, be identical in meaning and derivation with *coire*, the Irish for ring or girdle. The lake in former days had the form of a ring. *C* and *g* very often interchange in Irish. The root is, perhaps, connected with Irish *cor*, which denotes circular motion, and is probably cognate with the Hebrew *garar*, to roll, to encircle. It is interesting that the name of the Jordan valley from Sea of Galilee to Dead Sea is *el Ghur*. Lough Gur is over two miles in circuit, but it was formerly much larger. As mentioned in the extract from *Pacata Hibernia*, it at one time surrounded the lofty eminence called Knockadoon, which contains about sixty acres. Over a hundred years ago Mr. Stackpoole Bayley made some attempts to drain the lake. Fitzgerald, in his history of Limerick, records that he sank a channel several feet deep, by which the water was conveyed to the low grounds on the west. The work was stopped by the death of Mr. Bayley by a fall from his horse. Since Fitzgerald's time (1826) many attempts have been made to drain the lake, but with only partial success. The country-people firmly believe that whoever attempts to drain the lake will incur the vengeance of Garret Fitzgerald, Earl of Desmond. They say that the great earl rides over the lake once every seven years on a horse

whose shoes are made of molten silver, and that, when the shoes are worn out, the spell of the enchantment which now holds him will be broken, and the earl will return to life again. Lough Gur is supposed to be one of the chief entrances to *Tir na n-og*, "Land of the Youth," a province of *Tir na n-daoine maithe*, "Land of the Good People," the pagan elysium of Ireland. Professor O'Looney gives the following description of the "Land of the Good People":—"This elysium is supposed to be divided into different states and provinces, each governed by its own king or ruler, such as *Tir na n-og*, *Tir na m-beo*, 'Land of the Living,' *Tir na m-buadha*, 'Land of Virtues,' and several others. According to traditional geography and history, the 'Land of the Youth' is the most charming country to be found or imagined, abounding in all that fancy could suggest, or man could desire, and bestowing the peculiar virtue of perpetual youth, and hence the name. In the 'Land of Virtues' it is all peace, tranquility, and happiness. The 'Land of Life' is supposed to give perpetual life to the departed spirits of the just. These are supposed to be located somewhere about the sun's setting point, and have means of approach, chiefly through the seas, lakes, and rivers of this world; also through raths, duns, and forts."

In Joyce's translation of "Connla of the Golden Hair," the fairy thus tempts the hero:—"I have come from the Land of the Living—a land where there is neither death, nor old age, nor any breach of law. The inhabitants call us *Aes-sidhe*, for we have our dwellings within large pleasant green hills. We pass our time very pleasantly in feasting and harmless amusements, never growing old, and we have no quarrels or contentions—

"A land of youth, a land of rest,
A land from sorrow free;
It lies far off in the golden west,
On the verge of the azure sea.
A swift canoe, of crystal bright,
That never met mortal view;
We shall reach the land ere fall of night,
In that strong and swift canoe.
We shall reach the strand
Of that sunny land,
From druids and demons free;
The land of rest,
In the golden west,
On the verge of the azure sea."

On the opposite side from Knockadoon, seven hills, varying in height from three hundred and fifty to five hundred and forty feet, rise above the lake. These hills are Carrigcrimmear, Knockfennell, Carriggally,

Knocksentry, Keilialough, and Ardalougher. A subterranean watercourse formerly ran from the lake through a large hole at the foot of Knockfennell, called *Poulavaddra*, "hole of the dog." No one has been able to discover the outlet of this watercourse. There are two caves in Knockfennell; the one on the south side of the hill is small, the other on the east side facing the lake is much larger. It is called the "Red Cellar." On the north side of Knockadoon there is a third cave twenty-two feet deep, and twelve feet broad. Fitzgerald mentions that a gun fired off here has a surprising and grand effect, as the echo is reverberated loudly from the surrounding hills. The flocks of waterfowl, consisting of heavy duck, widgeon, teal, and diver, which are continually hovering over or floating on the surface of the water, add to the picturesque beauty of a most charming scene. Eagles, in former years, frequented Lough Gur, and built their nests on Carriguller, "eagles' rock," which is the highest point of Knockadoon. Fitzgerald says that in summer, when the wind blows from the south-east, the water becomes thick and green, emitting a very fetid smell. A writer in the *Dublin Magazine* for 1764, page 328, also alludes to this extraordinary change. He says:—"This 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." Dineley, who visited Lough Gur in the reign of Charles II., says:—"The lough, or large mote, which encompasseth the island and castle, aboundeth in fishes, pike, eels, but roches in vast quantity. Mr. Henry Bayly, son to the said John Bayly, told me of a prodigious pike, there lately taken, of four foot and a-half in length, with one in its belly of above two foot long." Lough Gur was the centre of one of the hunting districts of the ancient Irish. In the *Imtheacht an Ghiolla Deacair*, or "Tale of the Lazy Fellow," a vivid description is given of a 'meet' of Finn MacCumhaile and his companions on Knockaney hill, which lies a short distance south of Lough Gur, with which, according to tradition, it is connected by an underground passage. In the *Book of Lismore* mention is made of ancient royal hunts in the vicinity of Lough Gur, one of which is described as having taken place over the brow of Knockfennell. As in this lake have been found the finest extant specimens of the *Cervus Hibernicus*, or gigantic deer of Ireland, and also numerous remains of various other animals of the chase, I feel sure that when Finn and his warriors and hounds came to Loch Gair some rare, good sport must have been had. The celebrated race-course of Oenach Clochair, according to O'Curry, Mainister, about three miles west of Lough Gur, was also patronised by Finn, and

it was here Fiacha Muilleathan, King of Munster, made Finn a present of the enchanted black mare, the property of his grandfather, the Druid Dill, son of Dachreca, which was tha cause of no small trouble to Finn. In the lake are two small artificial islands (formerly there were many more), the work of the early colonists, made by driving piles at intervals into the soft mud at shallow parts of the lake, placing cross-beams on these, and then precipitating into the water stones, rubbish, boughs of trees, and whatever material was at hand, to fill up the intervals between the piles, to make it a solid structure, and to raise it above the surface of the water. These structures are known by the name of "crannogs," from *crann* "a tree." On them the ancient inhabitants placed their dwellings, being protected from their enemies by the surrounding lake. On and near these crannogs have been found many of the simple instruments which were used by the lake dwellers. Bone implements in the form of large pins and pincers, and many stone weapons, have been found. Lough Gur has also yielded remains which belong to a more recent pre-historic period than the stone age. Bronze weapons of various kinds have been found in it, and also copper celts. Near Bolin Crannog was found a remarkable brown leaf-shaped spear. The head is seventeen inches long, and it is, I think, now fixed on a bog-oak handle about seven feet long. When discovered there was about eighteen inches of the old handle left. Around the socket of the spear is a band of gold a little over two inches in breadth, ornamented with a lineal pattern, alternating in perpendicular and horizontal order. This spear belonged to Lord Guillamore, was purchased at his sale by the Rev. Dr. Neligan, of Cork, and is now the property of General Pitt Rivers. As if to match this spear, a small beautiful bronze circular shield was also found in the lake. It is in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy. Vast quantities of the bones of various animals have been found near the crannogs. The lake is one of the greatest animal deposits in Ireland. The bones were those of the *bos longifrous* or ancient Celtic ox, with short horns, curved sharply forward, and a ridge somewhat elevated between them; of reindeer, ass, sheep, goat, pig, and fowl. Relics from Lough Gur are scattered widely. They are to be seen in many museums of the learned societies, as well as in numberless collections of private individuals.

On Garrode Crannog are the remains of an old stone fortification, and, as Brian Boroimhe is said in the *Wars of G. G.* to have strengthened the fortification of the "Island of Loch Gair," which is termed one of the royal forts of Munster, many people nowadays are inclined to believe that it is this small fort on Garrode Island that is referred to, forgetting that Knockàdoon was an island in King Brian's

time. The fortress on Knockadoon is also mentioned in the *Book of Rights*. It is called Dun Gair, and is given in the list of the seats of the King of Cashel in Munster. From it the hill takes its name, Knockadoon, "the hill of the Dun." According to O'Reilly's *Dictionary*, Dun and Dunadh mean a fortified house, or hill, a fortress, fastness, a city, a camp, or dwelling. The word occurs in many languages. London is the Celtic *longdun*, "the fort of ships." Connellan says, "The Irish Duns were circular forts, or fortresses. It appears the earliest were built of large undressed blocks of stone, without cement, and were erected by the Firbolgs, Danaans, and Milesians. In later times many of these fortresses were constructed of earth or gravel, and sometimes faced with stone. They are variously called by the terms Dun, Cathair, Cumhdach, Caisiol, Lios, Rath, etc., and we hope that no person is so ignorant of Irish history as to name them all indiscriminately Danish forts. Within these circular enclosures, strengthened by fosses and ramparts, were the mansion and dwellings of the chief and his people, built of stone or wood, but more probably of the latter material, and, therefore, these Duns may be considered to have been on a small scale walled towns in early ages." No trace is now left of the royal seat on Knockadoon, but Lewis mentions that in his day there were traces of an ancient fortification on the hill overlooking the lake. Vandalism has, unfortunately, reigned supreme at Lough Gur, and destroyed many of its choicest monuments. Amongst the rest, the Desmond fortifications on Knockadoon have suffered so dreadfully—one of the castles having been actually taken away piecemeal to build a mansion in the neighbourhood—that I must refer to Fitzgerald's History for a description. He says, "The hill of Knockadoon on the south side was defended by two very strong castles, the approach to which was by a causeway[1] fifteen feet broad, and six

(1) In a number of the *Kilkenny Archæological Journal* there are some interesting particulars of this causeway, which were supplied by the late Mr. John FitzGerald. "It is 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 to the ground, but shown in Dineley's sketch) placed 77 feet from the head of the causeway. The foundations of this castellated gateway are quite visible, and are 23½ feet square. One hundred and sixty-two feet farther on is a very wide and deep foss, and 177 feet from this, at the insular end of the causeway, still stands the ruins of a fortified gateway, from which a strong wall was drawn along the edge of the lake till it met the Black Castle." From State Papers, quoted in same number of the *Journal*, it appears that the Earl of Desmond was living at the Black Castle in the year 1564, and that it was from it he marched to Affane, where a conflict took place between him and the Earl of Ormond, in which Desmond's thigh was broken by a pistol shot fired by Sir Edmond Butler. The story is told that Desmond was carried from the battle field on the back of one of the Butlers, who tauntingly asked him, "Where is now the great Earl of Desmond?" and received the ready reply from Desmond, "Where he should be, with his feet on the neck of a Butler." Some of Desmond's followers wounded in this battle retired to Lough Gur to be cured of their wounds.

feet high. One of these, called the Black Castle, still remains. Both were connected by a wall nearly fifteen feet high and eight feet thick, made up of immense blocks of stone. They are the largest that can be seen in any building of this kind in the country. A very strong arched gateway in this wall was the entrance into the hill. Over the arch, which is about fifteen feet in depth, was another strong building, and on each side of it were two lodgments with loopholes." These castles were probably built in the thirteenth century by the Desmonds, or perhaps by the Clangibbon branch of that great family; but I am inclined to believe that there were fortifications on the site of these castles to defend the ancient ford long years before ever a Geraldine pressed the sod of ancient Erinn. This old ford may possibly be the stout *ath Toradcle* referred to in the elegy of Mahon's blind bard, contained in the *Wars of G. G.*

> "From *ath-na-neck* of the armour,
> 'Twas there the great defeat was given;
> The foreigners did not recover their countenances
> Until they had reached the stout *ath Toradcle*.
> When they had come hither,
> The foreigners and the Tradraighe,
> They had left many shields and spears
> At *Ath Cliath* of the victories."

The *Ath Cliath* mentioned in this elegy, I think, must be *Aine ath Cliath*,[2] "Knockaney." The ford can still be seen. A great battle is said to have been fought there by Mahon, "when by him great spoils were taken from the Ni Enna of Ane, and there it was that Cathal, son 2

(2) According to the *Book of Rights*, the King of Cashel had a seat on Knockaney hill, and also one in the island of Loch Ceann, a lake which formerly existed between Knockaney and Lough Gur. These two forts King Brian Boroimhe is said in *Wars of G. G.* to have repaired. According to *Chronicon Scotorum*, Gorman, son of Lonan, royal heir of Cashel, was slain at Loch Ceann, A.D. 856. Sir Geoffrey de Marisco, uncle or nephew of Strongbow, who was appointed Justiciary or Chief Governor of Ireland in 1212, had a grant of a yearly fair, lasting for six days, in his manor of Awny, and a similar grant in his manor of Adare. He founded the Commandery of Knights Hospitallers near Aney, and one of the statues of the knights in the old church is said to be his. Thomas FitzMaurice, father of John of Callan, married Eleanor, daughter of Jordan de Marisco. The Desmond Geraldines probably obtained in this way some of the estates of de Marisco. There is a parish near Hospital called Rath Jordan, and it has occurred to me that its name is probably derived from Jordan de Marisco. I have throughout the paper followed the generally accepted view that the Black Castle was built by the Desmonds, but as Geoffrey de Marisco was a great castle builder, as well as church builder, he may have been the builder of the Black Castle.

From an old legend recorded in *Silva Gadelica*, it appears that the "very high hill of Eogabail" must be identified with Knockaney hill, and that *Sidh Eogabail* is its ancient name. Aine was the daughter of the Tuatha de Danaan chief of the Sidh Eogabal. Being one time surprised by Oilioll, King of Munster, who tried to seize her, she bit off one of his ears, so that ever afterwards he was called Olum. "docked of an ear." The peasantry say that Aine every moonlight night goes to dance on the strand at Kilkee. The legend is especially interesting when taken in connection with the name of the cromlech—*Leabha na muice*. This cromlech is actually in Aney parish, and swine were sacred to Aine.

There is no Aine ath Cliath. The name is Aine cliach. See "[illegible] Ulad"

of Feradach, the king soldier of Erinn, was slain." Lough Gur Castle is on the east side of Knockadoon. Lewis mentions that it was built by Sir George Bourchier, son to the second Earl of Bath, who got a large grant of land in the Lough Gur district. Dineley says that John Bourchier, Lord Fitzwarin of Tawstock in Devonshire, was descended from William Bourchier, Earl of Ewe in Normandy, a younger brother to Henry Bourchier, first Earl of Essex, and that John Bourchier was, the 9th of June, 1536, created Earl of Bath by Henry VIII.

From the fact of his having built a castle, we know Sir George Bourchier must have been granted two thousand acres in the district, for the lands to be planted were to be divided into three proportions, the greatest to consist of two thousand English acres, the next of fifteen hundred, and the least of one thousand. The undertakers of two thousand acres were to hold of the King *in capite*, they were to build a castle, and enclose a strong courtyard or bawn. The holders of fifteen hundred acres were required to finish a house and bawn within two years. A bawn or strong enclosure was all that was required of the third class. We have an interesting example of the second class at Raleighstown, about two miles north of Lough Gur, where there are the remains of an ancient building, which consisted of a bawn 180 feet long, and 120 feet wide, with a wall 12 feet high, and 4 feet thick. Within the bawn there was a strong house of lime and stone, three storeys high, and 80 feet long by 30 feet in breadth, and at each of the four angles a square tower, with port holes. This estate is supposed to have been granted to Carew Raleigh, son of Sir Walter Raleigh, as a sort of expiation for Sir Water's death. Dineley gives a very good illustration of Lough Gur, which he says is "a fair castle, in the tenure of John Baily, esq. It belonged to the Countess Dowager of Bath. It now belongs to Sir Henry Vane, or Fane, part of his estate." "The sayd Countesse was Dowager of Henry Bourchier, Earle of Bathe. This castle, during the time of the Irish Rebellion, was alwayes a Garrison for one side or other, beside being in an island of above a mile in circumference, encompassed with a large and deep Lough or Poole, it was a receptacle not onely for man, but beast, to defend from the enemy." Dineley marks a gatehouse at the end of the causeway leading to Black Castle, of which there is no trace left, and the long bridge, with draw-bridges, near Lough Gur Castle, of which there is now no need. Lough Gur Castle is very strongly built, and likely to last for centuries yet to come. The entrance is on the east side, by a pointed arch doorway, which is strongly fortified by all the devices known to the period. The heavy oak door, thickly studded with bolts, still bars the entrance to the castle. In the roof of the porch there is the usual *poul na morrough*,

"murdering hole," through which boiling oil, pitch, darts, and other missiles could be thrown at the enemy who succeeded in entering the porch. A splendid spiral stone stairs leads to the upper apartments. Since Dineley's day, when it was inhabited by the Bayley family, the battlements, the roof, and the bower chamber have fallen away, and many of the beautiful well-cut stones have been torn from their places. The effects of ruin and spoilation are visible everywhere, but still enough remains to give one a vivid idea of the former greatness of this stronghold. Near the castle are the ruins of the old Bayley mansion. A little to the south-west are the ruins of a building, marked "turret" in the Ordnance Map, but which Dineley calls the Pigeon-house. That part of Knockadoon which towers above the castle is called Carrickmore Hill. On this hill, I think, Dun Gair was situated.

Knockfennell is the highest of the hills which surround the lake. It lies at the north-west side of the lake, and has two pinnacles, divided from each other by a deep valley. Up to a recent period there were the remains of two ancient circular forts on these pinnacles, but very few stones are now left. Fitzgerald, however, gives a very fair description of these forts, but in order to realise the full strength of this fortified hill, it will be necessary to remember that in former days it was surrounded on three sides by the lake. He says, "On the west side of Knockfennell is one of the strongest Danish forts in the country. It is circular, and about three hundred and sixty feet in circumference. The wall that surrounds it is ten feet in thickness, and must have been proportionately high, from the quantity of stone that has fallen outside. That part of the wall that still remains is built of large stones nearly three feet every way, regularly fitted to each other, and the interstices filled up with small ones, but there is no sign of mortar. From this down to the lake walls of similar construction extend, at about sixty yards asunder, to the north side of the hill, where they terminate at some deep marsh or morass. Those walls are connected by others of the same kind. On the east pinnacle of Knockfennel, which is very high, there is a smaller fortification; and along the valley, which lies between these high points, the remains of walls can be traced, terminating in like manner at the lake to the south, and the deep ground to the north." In the opening words of Molloy's "Call to Battle," contained in the *Wars of G. G.*, there is a reference to the hill of Eoghabhail, which Dr. Todd has identified with Knockadoon.

"Let the men of Mumhain be assembled by you,
O heroes (Danes) of populous Luimnech!
Come forward now right ahead,
To the very high hill of Eoghabhail."

The pointed reference to the great height of the hill seems to me to mark it out as Knockfennell, the eastern pinnacle of which is one hundred feet higher than the highest point of Knockadoon. In the time of Molloy, the Northmen evidently had possession of Knockfennell, which name may, perhaps, be a contraction of *Knockfionnghaill*, "the hill of the White Galls or Norse." At the foot of Grange Hill, and close to the border of the lake, there is a small earthen fort or lios. It is not far from Garrode Island. On the two pinnacles of Carriggally, at the east side of the lake, there are similar forts to these on Knockfennell. These forts are connected by a wall on the west. Very little of the fort on the south pinnacle is left. It had a diameter of one hundred and thirty-eight feet, with walls eleven feet thick. The fort on the north pinnacle had a diameter of one hundred and forty-two feet. Part of the surrounding walls, eleven feet thick, can still be seen. Some of the stones are of great weight. There is no mark of a tool upon them, and no mortar was used. These forts belong to the same class as the Staigue Fort, near Kenmare, but are much larger. On a high rock, at the south side of the lake, there is a stone fort, which is called Carriggalla in the Ordnance Map. I think Dineley terms this "Drummon." About a mile to the west of the lake, near Rockbarton, Lord Fermoy's seat in county Limerick, there is, O'Donovan says, in the *Book of Rights*, a cyclopean stone fort, which he has identified with Cathair Chinn Chon, one of the seats of the King of Cashel in Munster. In the *Chronicon Scotorum*, under the year A.D. 639, there is a record of the battle of Cathair Cinn Conn, in which King Ængus Liathana, from Glen Damhain (Glanworth, county Cork), defeated Maelduin, son of Ædh Bendan, arch-king of Munster. In vol. iv., p. 226, *Transactions of the Ossianic Society*, there are some stanzas, which were written by Caoilte MacRonain on the occasion of some feud arising between the King of Munster and Fionn MacCumhaill, in which there is a reference to Cathair Chinn Chon.

CAOILTE RO CHAN.

D'Fhogradh catha ortsa, a Fhinn!
A Fhir! na m-briathar, m-bith-bhinn,
Os tu thainig go Ceann Con,
Gan aithcheo, gan eiliughadh.
Comhrac Fhinn a's righ Mumhan,
Sochaide da m-biadh rudhar,
Airgsi cach diobh a cheile,
Ba curata a g-coimheirge.

CAOILTE SANG.

Proclaiming war on thee, O Fionn!
O man of the sweet, melodious words,

Because thou hast come to Ceann Con,
Without reproaching, without accusation.

The combat of Fionn with Munster King—
A meeting that gave occasion to grief—
One of them plundered the other;
Their contention was most heroic.

About half a-mile to the north-west of Rockbarton, on the farm of Mr. Hayes, there is the site of circular stone fort, which an old man informed me he dismantled nearly fifty years ago, and that he found in it some quern stones, and also human remains. A quarter of a mile north of Rockbarton there is a romantic and precipitous rock called Grange Rock, on the top of which are the ruins of an old fortification called Grange Rock Castle. Most of the stones were taken from this castle to build Raheen House, which is now in ruins. North of this there was a large earthen entrenchment of former days. Near the old graveyard of Tullybracky, a short distance south-west of the lake, Fitzgerald mentions there was the site of an old castle. In the deer park of Caher, adjoining Rockbarton, there are the remains of an ancient city, locally called Caherguillamore, from which the Right Hon. Standish O'Grady, Chief Baron of the Exchequer in Ireland, who was raised to the peerage in 1831, took his title of Viscount Guillamore. Lewis, writing under the head of Tullybracky Parish, says:—"A few portions of the ancient church are still in existence, and numerous vestiges of antiquity, but the most remarkable ruins are those in the demesne of Caherguillamore, which indicate the former existence of an ancient city of great extent. The sites of streets, gates, and fortifications are still to be traced, extending in some places into the adjoining parishes, and connected with the ancient forts on several of the adjoining hills." The two chief streets of the city cut each other at right angles, and there are several side streets. Some of the houses, judging from the size of the sites, must have been on a large scale. Stones were taken from the city to build the houses of Rockbarton and Caher, and also to carry out various improvements in the two demesnes. There is a tradition in the district that a large copper pot, full of money, was found in the city by some lucky individual. Near the site stands a pillar-stone "lone and solitary," fit emblem of departed greatness. It is now much worn and weather-beaten by the ravages of many winters. Strangely enough the writers of the various histories of Limerick do not even mention the existence of this remarkable site, so that very few persons are aware that there once existed a city near Lough Gur. There cannot be much doubt that the city is called Cathair, with reference to *Cathair Chinn Chon*, the royal seat of Munster kings. Guillamore one would be inclined to

translate "great foreigner." I, however, thought, from the presence of the pillar-stone, that the name of the city might mean, "the city of the big pillar-stone." In Cormac's *Glossary* we read that pillar-stones were called *gall*, because they were first erected in Ireland by the Galli, or primitive inhabitants of France; and Dr. Joyce, in *Irish Names*, gives some places, whose names he derives from *gall*, "a pillar-stone." I have been shown lately, however, by Mr. Hayes, the postmaster at Lough Gur, an Irish manuscript, which belonged to his father, in which the name of the city is written *Cathair Ghiolla Moir*, and Mr. Hayes told me that in his young days he heard Collins, an Irish poet from Skibbereen, call the city *Cahergillamore Weety*, "white." As it will be shown later on that the Clangibbon, to which branch of the Fitzgerald the White Knight belonged, founded monasteries at Lough Gur, I think we can infer that the name which Collins gives the city—the City of the Great White Ghiolla—has reference to the White Knight. Lewis says that the *Monaster na Calliagh* was refounded in 1283 by the Fitzgibbons at Lough Gur. The head of the family then was Gilbert, son of John Fitzgerald (great-grandfather of the first Earl of Desmond), who was slain at Callan by MacCarthy in 1261. This Gilbert was father to Maurice Fitzgibbon, the first White Knight. It was from Gilbert the name Clangibbon came, as Gilbert had for foster-father Gibbon O'Cunyne, and hence was called "Fitzgibbon." I am of opinion that it was Sir Maurice FitzGerald, the first White Knight, who founded the city of *Cathair Ghiolla Moir*, which I would translate the "city of the great assistant." This meaning of *Giolla* will be illustrated by an extract which I take from an old writer:—"This Sir Maurice, the first Whyte Knight, by God's assistance increased dayly more and more, in honour, lands, and worldly wealth, and was greatly beloved by all sorts of people. Hee was very affable, kynd, and courteous, as well as he was full of honour, and boldnesse of courage in tyme of warre, he was no lesse mild and meeke in tyme of peace. He was a gentleman endowed with all excellent parts, since his first beginning; in hospitality, he was sumptuous and liberall, but rather to maintayne charity than vayne glory; very liberall and bountyfull he was to ye clergye, especially to the Dominicans. His hands were always streatched out to relieve the needy, and was much given to goodness and pious workes. Hee was always employed by Desmond, the Lord Justice, about the important businesses and affayres of the Kingdome. The Earle of Desmond was wont to call him his right hand, and the same title hee ordayned his posterity to continue unto his death; that is to say, that the White Knights should be (as it were) the right hands of the Earles of Desmond, to preserve, uphold, keepe, protect, and defend them, in all perrills and dangers against

theyre enemyes, and should (as it were) bee the chief pillars and champions of that family and house of Desmond, as being the next branch to that maine body. This Sir Maurice built the castle without the walls of Killmallock, and alsoe the church there. Att the last, being stricken in years, to avoyd ye toylesome cares and affayres of this world, and to applye himselfe to devotion and pious works, haveing built and repayred many Oratoryes, he took on the habit of St. Dominick in that monastery at Killmallock, where he stayed not long before he removed to the monastery of St. Dominick without the north gate of Youghall, and there ended his daies, being about sixety years of age, and in the year of our Lord God 1357, being about two yeares after the death of Maurice FitzThomas, Earle off Desmond and Lord Justice of Ireland, and ordained his body to be interred in that monastery, in one tombe with the Princesse his wyfe, for there shee was buryed."

About three miles to the west of the old city is Tory Hill; stretching from this hill to Lough Gur is the celebrated plain of *Magh n-Asail.* The King of Cashel had a seat on this plain called *Magh n-Asail.* It is mentioned in the list contained in the *Book of Rights.* The old name of Tory Hill is *Druim n-Asail.* It took its name from Asal, son of Umore, a leader of the Firbolgs, who settled here in the first century of the Christian era. I give the following from a poem by MacLiag, chief bard and secretary to Brian Boroimhe:—

"Luid Asal a tuaid tar tuind,
Co riacht sa Mummain morgluind,
A tuaid na laiding do luid,
As uaid druim naibind nasail."

"Asal proceeded from the north across the water (Shannon),
Till he arrived in Munster of great vallies.
From the north in his boat he passed over;
From him charming Drom-Asail derived its name."

This district must also have been taken possession of by the Milesians at a very early date, for, in a poem by Cinnfaela the Learned, A.D. 678, there is a record of the erection of Rath Arda Suird (a few miles north of Lough Gur), by Fulman the Fair, chief Druid of the Milesian invaders.

In the tale of the *Cath Fintraigh*, or "Battle of Ventry Harbour" (supposed to have been fought between the army of Duire Donn, monarch of the world [Severus, the Roman Emperor], and the Irish troops under Finn MacCumhaill), it is said that a body of warriors which set out from Lough Gur under Conncrithir, son of Bodh Derg, were the first to engage the invaders. Professor O'Curry says that the tale of the *Cath Fintraigh* is a pure fiction, but the many names of places preserved in it render it of considerable interest to the student

in Irish history. It seems very strange, however, that the Romans never attempted the conquest of Erinn. That they did entertain the idea we know from Tacitus, who, speaking of Agricola, says:—"I have often heard him say that Ireland could be conquered and held by a single legion and a moderate contingent of auxiliaries, and that such a conquest would help greatly to consolidate our power in Britain. With the arms of Rome everywhere, freedom would be, so to speak, out of sight of its people." Roman historians relate that Emperor Severus died in the year 210 at Eboracum (York), worn out with the fatigue and disappointments of the Caledonian expedition. In the *Agallamh na Seanorach*, "or Dialogue of the Ancient Men," Finn is said by Caeilte to have marched from Ard-Patrick, previously called Finn Tulach, to the great battle of Finntraigh. Finn had a daughter called Samhair, who was married to Cormac Cas, King of Munster, the ancestor of the O'Briens of Thomond. Her name may have been given to the river which flows through the Lough Gur district, now called the Morning Star, but the old name of which was Samhair. O'Donovan says that an old tribe of Firbolgs, named Mairtine, was located in Small County, the barony in which Lough Gur lies. These would probably be the descendants of the Firbolgs, who settled at *Druim n-Asail*. I find a reference to the Mairtine so late as the year 845 A.D., for referring to that year in the *Wars of G. G.*, we read—"A fleet (Danish) came to Ciarraighe Luachra, and all was plundered by them to *Cill Ita*, 'Killeedy,' and Cuil Emhni, and the Mairtine of Mumhain were plundered by the fleet of Liumnech." Lough Gur might be included in the territory of Ara, which, according to O'Donovan in the *Book of Rights*, "was divided from that of Ui Fidhginte by the river Samhair, which appears from various reasons to be the Morning Star. In the course of time, the people originally called by the name Ara were driven out or suppressed by the dominant race of Oilioll Oluim, and a tribe of the race of Eoghan, son of this Oilioll, gave it the name of Eoghanacht Aine Cliach." About forty-five perches south of the Black Castle, close to the old road running near the south border of the lake, there is a stone structure, to which the local name of "Giant's Grave" is given. In some parts of Ireland monuments of this class are called Druid's altars, *Leabthacha na bhfeinne*, "tombs of the Fenii," and *Leaba-Dhiarmada agus Grainne*, "the bed of Diarmaid and Grainne." These structures are now generally termed Cromlechs by antiquarians, from *Crom*, "sloping," and *lech*, "a stone," the table or covering stone having usually a sloping position. This term is not of native growth, but is said to have been introduced from Wales, and in the Welsh Dictionary. *Cromlech* also means "covenant." Vallancey says, *Collectanea*, p. 211:—"It is remarkable

that all the ancient monuments found in Ireland, and now distinguished by the name of Cromlechs, or sloping stones, were originally called Bothal, or 'the House of God.'" Wakeman gives the following definition :—"A Cromlech, when perfect, consists of three or more stones unhewn, and generally so placed as to form a small enclosure. Over these a large flat stone is laid, the whole forming a kind of rude chamber. The position of the table or covering stone is generally sloping, but its degree of inclination does not appear to have been regulated by any design." Various theories have been advanced as to the origin of these Cromlechs, but it is now generally accepted that they are the tombs of great men, for under many of them have been found human remains. O'Curry is of opinion that "they never were intended, and never were used, as altars or places of sacrifices of any kind, that they were not in any sense of the word Druidical, and that they were in every instance simple sepulchres or tombs, each making the grave of one or several personages." The dead bodies are said to have been burnt on the table stones, and the ashes collected in urns, which were deposited in the graves. It is reported of the British Celts, on the other hand, that they invariably buried their dead, though heavy fines were imposed on them by the Romans, who wished them to adopt their own custom of cremation. The Irish seem to have practised both methods. In the tale of the *Battle of Moytura*, it is stated that the Firbolgs raised *Dumhas*, "tumuli," over their nobles; *Leaca*, "flagstones," over their heroes; *Ferthas*, "graves," over their soldiers; and *Knocks*, "hillocks," over their champions. On the other hand, the Tuatha De Danaan, in some cases at all events, raised stone circles round their dead. The Cromlech near the Black Castle is sixteen feet eight inches long, by five feet five inches wide, and two feet over the surface. The sides are formed by eight flagstones on edge. The cover has been displaced. It consists of four large stones of great weight. The grave lies east and west, and at its head there is part of a second grave, which was destroyed many years ago by a farmer, who took two stones to make pillars for his gateway. The vicinity of the graves to the ancient ford leading to Dun Gair has caused me to think that there may possibly be some connection—that the ghosts of the entombed warriors might watch, as it were, over the passage leading to the royal city. That others than warriors and great men were sometimes interred in these graves, we may see from the beautiful lines which Sir Samuel Ferguson has written on the burial of the "loved Aideen."

"They hewed the stone; they heaped the cairn;
Said Ossian, 'In a queenly grave
We leave her 'mong her fields of fern,
Between the cliff and wave;'

The cliff behind stands clear and bare,
And bare above, the heathery steep
Scales the blue heaven's expanse, to where
The Danaan Druids sleep.

"And here, hard by her natal bower
On lone Ben Adair's side, we strive,
With lifted rock and signs of power,
To keep her name alive,
That while from circling year to year,
The Ogham letter'd stone is seen,
The Gael shall say, 'Our Fenians here
Entombed their loved Aideen.'"

The poet's words will apply very appropriately to those graves at Lough Gur. They lie "between the cliff and wave;" behind is the steep hill of Keillalough, and in front is the lake, whose waves beat constantly on the southern shore, and will not the "ever forward faculty" aid us with the supposition that those whose graves are here had for "natal bower" the royal fort hard by on Knockadoon. Some distance to the west, too, on the top of Ballynagallagh hill, there is another Cromlech, whose name, *Leaba na muice*, marks it as the bed in which "the Druid sleeps." A corresponding name to this is that of a cairn on the bend of the Midleton river called *Cairn na Muck Vian*. Now, however much we and our ancestors may value the "gintleman that pays the rint," I do not think that a "giant's grave" and a cairn would be named from him. Sir Samuel Ferguson has rendered an Ogham inscription found on a stone in Claragh Church, county Kilkenny, "Tasegagni Mucoi Magrette," in which he understands *Mucoi* to mean "pig." Here again, I ask, who would dignify a common pig with an Ogham inscription? It would seem that because the pig was a sacred animal, and was offered in sacrifice, the priest came to be called *muc* or "pig."

Mr. Gladstone says:—"Although swine and their herdsmen were deemed unclean, there was a very particular and solemn injunction for the sacrifice of two swine to Osiris, and to the Moon, by every Egyptian. The poor who could not supply the animals offered the figures of swine made of dough." There is a story told in the *Leabhar na h-Uidhre*, the oldest Irish manuscript, about a spy peeping into a certain temple and hearing one mystical being order another to slay his pig, and divine who was at the door. O'Beirne Crowe, referring to this, says "that this story is valuable as telling us the animal from which divination was made in ancient Erinn, and that it is also valuable as an illustration of the war-like character of our ancestors, inasmuch as the pig was the only animal sacrificed to Mars Sylvanus, the primitive god of battle."

In the *Leabhar na h-Uidhre* allusion is made to the swineherd of Bodb, from Sid Arfemain, that is, to the priest of Bodb, the chief of the Irish Furies. Bonwick, in *Irish Druids*, says that "the Phœnician priests, like those of Druidism, were called 'swine'; that a Welsh poem begins with, 'Give ear, little pigs,' meaning 'disciples'; and that the priest of Ceridwen or Hwch was *Turch* 'the boar.'" Professor Connellan, of Queen's College, Cork, in the *Imtheacht na Tromdhaimhe*, which he edited for the Ossianic Society, gives a note from Mr. William Hackett, from which I take the following:—"To a people addicted to hunting as were the ancient Irish, the chase of the wild boar must have formed a very favourite amusement, and yet one may wonder how an animal so dear to the hunter could have been chosen for religious reverence, unless it may have grown out of respect and admiration for his prowess and fierceness, or become associated with some process of symbolism. Could we accept the interpretation recently given to the Ogham inscription upon the pillar-stone at Ballyquin, in the county Waterford, it would appear that the hog was sacred to the goddess Ana or Aine. Mr. Williams, of Dungarvan, a zealous and successful Ogham investigator, reads the characters on this monument as forming *Cathabar mocob li rica Anne*, which he translates, "A sacrifice of swine is the sovereign right of Ana."

The grave of the pagan priest is within full view of Knockaney hill, which the peasants of the neighbourhood regard as the Sidh, or dwelling of the fairy Aine or Anu, concerning whom they have some wonderful stories. Anu is the Bona Dea of the Romans, and it is thought that the Celtic land gave this goddess and her worship to the Romans. Anu was the goddess of prosperity and wealth. O'Beirne Crowe quotes from a manuscript in Trinity College, Dublin:—"Greater its (Munster) wealth than is the wealth of each province, for it is in it used to be adored the goddess of prosperity. Ana is her name, and it is from her is called the Two Paps of Anu above Luachair Deda." O'Beirne Crowe adds—"These 'two paps' appear to me to be evidently a trace of the peculiar worship of Bona Dea. They are also mentioned in Cormac's *Glossary* on Ana." There is a State Paper quoted in Linehan's *History of Limerick*, that James Duke of York (James II.), received in county Limerick the grant of the lands of Labanamuck. Fitzgerald mentions that a stone coffin was found with a human skeleton close to Labanamuice, and there is a tradition in the neighbourhood that two gold swords are buried near the grave. About three quarters of a mile south-west there was formerly another giant's grave. Not a stone is now left. Many years ago an old man, when taking stones from a quarry near it, opened a beautifully finished cave, from which a passage

led in the direction of the grave. The passage was not examined, and the cave was closed at once. The making of one of these graves by Finn MacCumhaill is thus described in the *Cath Fintraigh*—

"He hath them buried in a tomb high placed,
It kept the harbour to the north and east,
It faced the bosom of the open bay,
And swept the ocean to the west away.
A tripod pyramidal stone he reared,
Said he, 'This monument for ever bared
To all the elements—earth, ocean, air,
A triple significant truth shall bear,
And tell to ages with the rising sun
That here the battle of true faith was won.'"

(To be continued.)

The Flags of the Cork True Blue, 1745.

BY ROBERT DAY, F.S.A., PRESIDENT.

THESE flags, which have been given to me by a dear old friend in trust, are both alike in their design and size, but differ in colour, one being purple, the other a pale yellow.

What we may call the obverse of one is the reverse of the other, and *vice versâ*. One side has the well-known arms of the Volunteers, the harp crowned, the same that is found upon the gorgets and belt badges, and on the engraved presentation medals that are of such rare occurrence. Upon the flags this armorial bearing is surrounded with a wreath of shamrocks and orange blossoms, timbered with a battle axe, spear, gun, mace-head, etc., etc.; and on either side of the shield are flags, one a Volunteer colour, the other a Union Jack of 1606, before the saltire of St. Patrick was added.(1) Beneath the shield are drums, cannon, round shot, and other warlike emblems, and under all, upon a ribbon, the motto of the Volunteers, *Pro Aris et Focis*—"For our hearths and homes." The other side has, within a wreath of the same kind, a seated figure of Britannia, holding in her right hand the olive branch of peace. It is a question if this figure may not be intended

(1) The term "Jack" is supposed to derive its name from King James I., the author of the Union flag. His name in French would be *Jacques*—Latin *Jacobus*. Prior to 1606 the ensign of England was the emblem of St. George, *a red cross upon a white field*. In that year the first Union Jack was formed by proclamation of King James by placing the red cross of St. George, edged with a portion of its own white ground, on the banner of St. Andrew, which was blue with a white saltire: or, in other words, a white cross in the shape of a letter X upon a blue ground. This is the Union Jack depicted upon the flags. On the union of the Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland a new National ensign was designed, in which the red cross of St. Patrick was incorporated, being narrowed in width and placed side by side with that of St. Andrew, also narrowed in width, the two crosses alternately having precedence in each quarter, the red cross of St. George remaining unaltered; so that the well-known banner that has led our fleets to conquest and our armies to victory, and beneath which the slave becomes a freed man, is composed of the red of St. George and the saltires of St. Andrew in white and of St. Patrick in red.—*Vide Our National Ensigns*, by John Vinycomb, M.R.I.A.