KILFENORA CATHEDRAL—THE CHANCEL.
NOTES ON THE ANTIQUITIES AROUND KILFENORA AND LEHINCH,
CO. CLARE.

PART II.

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(Continued from page 29.)

KILFENORA, as we have already noted, was an abbey with no
very early historic record. The place is first named as having been
burned by Murchad O’Brien in 1055, but no portion of the buildings
appears to date even as early as that period. The fine high crosses and
the noble, though simple, east window, belong to the period, 60 to 80
years later, which produced the high cross of Tuam, Temple Melachlin
at Clonmacnoise, and Temple O’Heyne at Kilmacduagh, as it is
evidently very little earlier than the introduction of Gothic buildings
and the Norman Invasion. There was probably a rebuilding of the
nave in the 13th or early 14th century, and a few later features, such as
the rich shrine or “tomb of St. Fachtman,” to the right of the high altar
and the south windows. The tasteless later rebuilding we will try and
forget till we have to deal with it. As regards monuments, none are
forthcoming of the earlier period, which has left its mark at Iniscaitha,
Iniscairtra, Tomgraney, and even Oughtmama, but the tombs seem to
begin at the end of the 12th century. Whether there was any church
or religious foundation before 1055 rests on the mere name of
“Kilfenora,” Cill Fionn Abhrach, the church of the white ridge, or
brow. In earlier times Noughaval probably was the leading religious
centre between Kilnaboy and Kilmacreehy, the “white brow,” if
“Finnavra” be not a personal name, may be the craggy ridges between
Kilfenora and Ballykinvarga. Let us study the building, trying first to
get our mind into some degree of sympathy with its makers, which in
these days of ready-made churches and world-wide interests is not too
easy to attempt. The great reaction that succeeded the panic terror of
the approaching end of the world in A.D. 1000, had not resulted so much in worldliness or irreligion as in an upspring of gratitude and joy. The world was spared; a new era was opened; the East was to be recovered to Christianity; all Southern Europe was blazing with zeal and excitement, save England, crushed under the heel of the Normans, and disunited Ireland, which took no national part in the crusades. The zeal of the Irish however was not dead; it perhaps was wiser, if more selfish, and broke out in church building, and the rise of a strong party in the church, anxious to do away with its comparative isolation. The attempt to establish territorial sees, about 1172, produced fruit, and cathedrals were vaguely wanted, so the century began to raise buildings on a grander scale, if less daintily adorned, than the earlier oratories and churches; which indeed continued to be made till the foreign Romanesque and Gothic unfortunately cut them off abruptly, before they had completed the promise of their advance at Cashel and Clonfert, and produced a great national school of architecture as was once possible.

To the initiated, the whole fabric of a mediæval church was a "sermon in stone." A bishop, Durandus, who died in 1296, elaborated, what every writer from St. Paul down had hinted, when comparing the Spiritual Temple to a building. We condense but preserve his very words. (1) "The tiles, which keep off the rain, are the soldiers who preserve the church from enemies. The staircases, which wind through the walls, imply the sacred knowledge which those have who ascend to heavenly things. The faithful are the stones; whosoever undertakes painful labour from brotherly love bears up the stones placed above him. Those polished and squared at the angles are men of holier life who, by merit and prayers, retain weaker brethren in the Church. The cement is made of lime (fervent charity) which joins itself to the sand by the admixture of water (an emblem of the spirit), for, as without cement stones cannot cohere, neither can men be 'edified' without charity, which 'the Spirit works in them.' All the stones, polished and squared, are brought by the Great Workman into the church; some (the weaker members) are borne and bear nothing; some are borne and bear; some bear and are borne of none save the Corner Stone. The

(1) The "Rationale" of Durandus, published in "Ars Quatuor Coronatorum."
foundation is Faith, resting on 'unseen things;' the roof, Charity, which 'covers a multitude of sins;' the pavement, Humility; the four walls, the Cardinal Virtues, hence 'the city lieth foursquare.'" That not learned churchmen only but the very guild workers knew and loved such symbolism is a commonplace of archaeology.

Conspicuous above all things in Kildena Cathedral, the great east window, three lights in one, symbolised the central belief in the Trinity. It is framed by a huge semi-circular headed splay arch, round which and the ope and sill runs a broad band of moulding. The piers of the three lights have carved capitals, one a design in foliage, one an interesting and as yet uninjured group of clerics with their hands demurely clasped under their cloaks. Dragons writhe at the ends of the main splay arch and the smooth plaister of its head is now fretted into a mass of patterns, circles and curves, which some, unaccustomed to ancient buildings, have supposed artificial. Many overlook the fact that rich colouring was an invariable concomitant of architecture in mediaeval churches. Traces are numerous but fragmentary—Knockmoy (with its pictures of St. Sebastian and the dead and living kings), Adare, Mellifont, Kilkenny Cathedral, and above all Clare Island Abbey, afford proofs of this work. The chancel of the last was a gorgeous mass of brilliant designs, figures of animals and birds (wolf, greyhound, stag, cock, pelican, dove, dragon and giffin), horsemen and chargers, an angel and a harper. Rich golden-yellow foliage, on a blue or purple ground, adorned the spaces in and around the east window; patterns in crimson and maroon were round the arches and monuments, with inscriptions in picturesque lettering. Interesting
SEDILIA, OR "EASTER TOMB," ST. FACHTNAN'S CATHEDRAL.
painting in red, yellow and brown of the Trinity, angels and monks were disclosed in St. Audoen's Church, Dublin. At Quin we have also raised plaister work, doubtless once coloured. So we must conceive of the smooth splays and blank walls glowing with colour before we can try to picture Kilfenora Cathedral in its old condition.

The chancel measures 35 feet 9 inches long by 20 feet 9 inches wide. In the S.E. corner we meet an interesting step in the evolution of the church, a double piscina with two pointed arches having fluted basins and capitals, a generation later than the east end, of the same period as the font and the tower finials which, like it, show the influence of English Art.

There are two doors, a pointed one leading into the sacristy, it is plain and of the 14th or 15th century, parts of a window splay lie near it. The other door is defaced and possibly late. The only other architectural feature of interest is a fine "sedile," or rather tomb, of decorated Gothic, with three arches, divided by pillars, having moulded capitals and bases. The side arches are trefoil, the central, cinquefoil, in an ogee, the rest is filled with bold tracery, forming three quatrefoils, with two trefoils, in a sharp pointed arch, under a strongly moulded hood,
with dropped ends. Over it is a projecting stone, carved with a mitred head, locally reputed to represent St. Fachtmann. The monuments are of considerable interest, but can only briefly be noted. There are two recumbent effigies in high relief, one very rude of a person in a pleated tunic and close cap, holding a book (some regard and even sketch it as a chalice.) The figure has no characteristic to show that it is that of an ecclesiastic, yet it has been drawn by Mr. Frost as such, and described by Canon Dwyer with considerable detail and absolute inaccuracy.— "His costume is remarkable, being evidently the tunicle or dalmatic. His tonsure seems frontal, as that of the Greek church, the manner in which he holds (not a book as erroneously stated but) the chalice is primitive and Catholic." (2) It is a surprising case of "seeing what is not there to be seen." The other monument lies to the N.E., and represents a Bishop, his right hand raised in benediction, his left holding the crozier, under a trefoil canopy. No inscription appears on either monument. The tomb of Dean Neptune Blood, (3) in the north wall, contains a long inscription, pathetic, despite its inflated language, as commemorating the untimely deaths of seven children, aged from 5 to 16 years, and his wife, "Homo quasi flos egreditur et fugit velut umbra, sic tacite fugarant haec pignora chara parentum. Pectora quod cruciat maesta dolore sua." The dates run from 1683 to 1700. Other tombs, of an earlier Dean, Hygate Lone (not Lowe), (4) who ruled the cathedral

(2) Diocese of Killaloe, p. 11. Dr. Macnamara and I most carefully studied and took a rubbing of the hands and oblong object which has no features even to suggest a chalice.

(3) Neptune Blood, who made the monument, and was the next Dean of Killenora, 1692-1716, was (with a son Henry) son of Dean Neptune by his third wife. Beside the numerous offspring who predeceased him he seems to have left surviving issue. His father, Dean Neptune Blood, was son of Edmond Blood of Mackney, in the parish of Duffield, Derbyshire, who migrated to Ireland about 1595. Neptune being born at sea was (it is believed) named from this event which, it is stated, also originated the family crest. Edmond Blood, grandfather of Neptune, died at Mackney in 1588, leaving besides his eldest son and namesake, four other sons, of whom Robert Blood the youngest resided at Tamworth. Neptune was ordained in 1622, and advanced to the Deanery of Killenora in 1664. He had two sons by his first wife (Thomas and Peregrine), and one by his second (Edmund), left descendants. From the first descended the lines of Bohersallagh, Shepperton Roxton, etc., in the County. The Dean had two brothers, Edmund and Thomas, the latter's son, the notorious Colonel Blood, by his attempt to steal the crown jewels, secured a place in English history not accorded to his righteous kindred.

(4) The name at Killenora is HYGATE LONE, in manuscripts the similarity of the u and the n have led many (including ourselves) into error. Some have rendered the name Love. One has given it "Hy. (quasi Henry) Gatelone."
CROSSES IN GRAVEYARD, KILFENORA.

CROSS IN SACRISTY.

NORTH-WEST CROSS IN GRAVEYARD.

That's a pretty cool stuff.

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for 21 years, dying in 1638, just before the Civil War broke out, and of
William MacEncharigg and his wife, Eliz. ni Dea, put up at its
conclusion, 1650, remain. The latter a veritable modern "cist," con-
structed like a dolmen, with a hole in the end but neatly panelled. It
is on the point of falling out from the wall.

The head of a third cross stands in the sacristy, the circle is barely
indicated, and it is carved with the rude late looking figure of a bishop
with a spiral headed crozier. Two beetle-like angels perch on his
shoulders, the left side has a boldly cut interlaced ornament, and there
is a socket on top for the mortice of a cap stone.

The fourth cross—of which only a shaft remains, is plain and
octagonal, its faces are 4 inches wide, the whole 9 inches thick, and
6 feet 10 inches high. The head of a small cross (the left arm lost, the
extremities ending in trefoils) has been stuck on to the shaft with no
regard for taste or fact. It stands in the angle of the sacristy and the
chancel set in a slab of stone.

The windows in the south wall are of the latest 15th century work.
The western has a cross bar and trefoil heads, under a hood ending in
grotesque animals, beyond my power to define, but the left one is like
a lobster. The window in the middle of the wall is closed by a monu-
ment and has a single ogee headed light with a hood. There is no
buttress or corner shaft at the S.E. angle, and the masonry generally is
poor and coarse.

The north wing is a puzzling structure having old features but
giving one an impression of being a late afterthought. It abuts against
the chancel without bonding, there being at that point two recesses with
pointed arches turned over wicker centres evidently to support a gable
which has now fallen. The east wall has three windows, the northern
late, double and nearly destroyed, the next like that in the north wall is
recessed and chamfered, with a round head and neat round arched
splay of the 12th century. Similar in design, save for its pointed head,
is the south light, with a very poorly made splay head of thin stones;
between it and the middle window is a piscina, or ambry, with two
pointed heads. This wing is 19 feet long by 31 feet 3 inches inside;
its north face is embedded in the graveyard wall, the cemetery being
very small in proportion to the size and importance of the place. There are no traces anywhere of residential buildings.

The nave alone was retained for the present Protestant church, though there was in 1878 a tradition that the chancel was roofed and had an oak ceiling, painted blue, with gold stars, till the last century. This part is entirely detached from the chancel which enabled the conservation of the latter as a National Monument to be made. The nave measures 67 feet long, and (like the chancel) 20 feet 9 inches wide. It had side aisles, opening into it by five very plain pointed arches, which, plastered and whitewashed, are impossible to date closer than from perhaps 1200 to 1400. If the corbel, showing a man’s head with luxuriant hair, be of the same period as the arches they may be of the 14th century. The aisles were levelled and walls built up against the arcade, with windows to the south; this was possibly done in the later 17th century, for the MacDonough tomb occupies one bay, and had the curtailing dated after 1700, would, in such vandalistic times, have been removed or destroyed. The west bay was walled off to form a porch and vestry, leaving a reach 51 feet long for the church. A flight of 12 narrow steps lead up through the west gable to a spiral stair of 18 steps at the south-west corner, but it is hard to guess their ultimate destination as they are evidently partly defaced. There are fluted finials, dating about 1180, at the corners of the tower. Ugly and mean as the little belfry is, it may be mainly ancient, and is little worse than that at Corcomroe Abbey. Nothing can excel in ugliness the west front. Canon Dwyer compares it to “a pile of emigrant’s luggage, with a rabbit hutch or bird cage overhead.” (5) Besides the corbel there are only two objects of interest in the nave, the fine old fluted font resting on four pillars and the MacDonough monument. The last is of the poorest “classic taste” of its period, with obelisks and elaborate armorial bearings, it commemorates Donald MacDonough and his wife Maria O’Connor, and was built in 1685. It apparently combines the worst extremes of human vanity, “the pride that aces humility,” “Noscere quid sit Homo, post Hominem vermis, post vermem factor et horror,” and the pride of acquaintance. “He was intimately acquainted with

THE HIGH CROSS, KILFENORA.

EAST

WEST 1887-1900
men of the first rank.” The lower part commemorates Dr. Patrick MacDonough, a dignitary of the Church of France, in 1752. It is curious to contrast the gloom of the less hopeless period of 1685, with the cheerful worldliness of the period of 1752, so dark for the Irish Roman Catholics. The mitred head of a bishop projects above the present door. In the graveyard the only tomb of more than local interest is that of Patrick Lysaght, 1741. After a cheerful life, honest, but largely dedicated to Mars and Bacchus, he died at the ripe age of 85, and a local wit in the “seventies” translated the line of his epitaph “Marti et Baccho sēpe tributa dédi” by “I paid my respects to faction fights and potheen.” Lysaght, I believe, fought bravely on the continent.

There is one of John Neylan, 1718, and another of a Bishop of Kilfenora and Kilmacduach, Dr. Lawrence Arthur Nihelle, a learned scholar, who died June, 1795. Of older monuments there are two early coffin lids, or floor tombs, without carvings or inscriptions, in the N.W. corner, and to the south of the nave a fine slab with a cruciform interlacing, probably of the 12th century. Against the S. chancel wall lie three fragments of a high cross with rich interlacings and fret work like the perfect cross. The head of another cross, with a plain knob on one face and interlacing in high relief on the other, stands in the N.W. part of the cemetery. There is also a very curious monumental stone which we illustrate more easily than we could describe it. The monument seems to be of early date. The “head” has been chipped level for a rude late inscription, + I.H.S. X (Christus) 1752 V. n. D. (6) and a heart. The figures under this are indescribable. Facing in the other direction at the narrow end or “foot” are two interesting figures of clerics, their arms linked and holding croziers. The one to the spectator’s left has a fine pastoral staff, with the drop end, so characteristic of early Irish metal work of this class. The cleric to the right holds a tau-headed, crutch-like staff such as is still used by Greek monks and clergy, and of which at least one Irish specimen is preserved. The tau crosses of Torry Island and Kilnaboy are well known. Outside in the craggy field is the noble high cross—an encircled Celtic cross of the

(6) The modern initials may be “V. ni Davoren” or “ni Dca.”
TOMBSTONE AND DETAILS, KILFENORA CATHEDRAL.
period about 1140. The figure of Our Lord, crucified, in the long garment reaching nearly to the ankles and the wrists, is on the east face; overhead is an animal, and the feet rest on a triangle, with a triquetra knot surrounded by a cable moulding which runs down the shaft to another triangle, the side spaces being filled with beautiful, but irregular, frets and interlacings, in very low relief. The west face is entirely covered with such patterns down to about a third of its height, below which is a very large inverted triangle, with a coarse, but effective, interlacing, quite out of character with the rest, and probably an afterthought. The bottom panel of the low relief work is of an older pattern than much of the rest, but it is probably no older, as such designs may be copied from a shrine or other exemplar in later times.

Another cross, somewhat like the last, but without its delicate fretwork, was removed to Clarisford, Killaloe, in 1821, as a present for Bishop Mant. (7) The site of another cross is shown in a field fence to the North of the church, there is said to have been yet another, making “seven crosses,” but we much doubt this.

The holy well of St. Fachtnan was covered by Donald MacDonough, and bears this inscription and date—“Deo et B. Fachtnano hocce opusculum fundavit Donaldus MacDonogh licentia et permissione Episcopi Finaborensis Anno Dni 1687.

Of other remains near the village, the ancient church of Kilcarragh has left no trace. Only a small fragment of wall, 14 feet long, and the foundation of the church (measuring 26 feet by 14½ feet) remained even in 1839. The building was founded for a hospital and lay about a quarter of a mile from the village.

The featureless walls of what is known as Cashlaunwogga, “the absurd castle,” stands on a rock to the N.W. of the village. Its history, tradition and origin are equally forgotten. Beyond it, at the turn of the road, was a once fine stone fort, named Caheremon or Edmond’s Caher.

(7) Canon Dwyer’s “Diocese of Killaloe,” p. 473, gives the letters of Rev. Richard Brew (afterwards of Tulla), and Bishop Mant, together with the inscription on the re-erected cross:—“Quem spectas crucem, In agro Finaborensi vetustate collapsam, Ne penitus incuria situque abolereset, Hic, Apud sedem Laonensem, erigi curavit. R. M. S. T. P. Utriusque dioeceses episcopus, A.D. MDCCCXXI.” The Bishop found “two or three out of the five or six crosses lying covered with weeds.”
It is praised by Petrie, (8) if he does not confuse it with Ballykinvarga, and is said to have had two rings, its walls were overgrown with orpine. The faint outline of its oval foundation is now easily overlooked in the field. There is a much injured ruin of a finer caher to the east of the village, not far from the road from Lemanagh. The two earthen forts at Tullagh, “Tulach Chuirc,” are good specimens of their kind, with large fosses and high inner rings covered with beautiful ridged green sward; they lie near Caherminaun Castle. There is a large stone ring wall in the garden of Fanta Glebe, it was retained as a sort of pleasure ground but is now quite featureless.

Though we do not propose doing more than laying a general account of the objects of interest and their history before visitors, we may give a few facts relating to the See of Kilfenora before leaving that venerable place.

There were of course early bishops of the Corcamodruad district, but the claim of the tribes to separate episcopal government was ignored in the Synod of Rathbreasail, about 1112, and only recognised in that of Kells in 1152, under Cardinal Paparo. Its bishop was a suffragan of Cashel. The name of the See in Latin documents varies. It is usually in later times “Fenaborensis,” but in 1273 it is “Finnabrensis,” and even “Funbranensis,” when Florence O’Tigernach, Abbot of Kilseing or Kilshanny, was chosen to be its bishop. Its earliest known bishop “A” witnessed King Donald O’Brien’s charter to Clare Abbey, in 1189, if the copies are reliable. The next known is Christian, who died 1254; Maurice, 1265; Florence, 1273; Charles, Dean of the church, 1281; Congal O’Loughlin, who died 1300; Simon O’Currin, died 1303; Murchad, Mortough or Maurice O’Brien, died 1321; Richard O’Loughlin, died 1359; Patrick, who swore fealty to King Richard II. in 1394; Felim O’Loughlin, died 1434; Denis O’Cahan, resigned 1491; Maurice O’Brien, till 1523; John O’Nialan, held his own through the troubled period of the Tudors, till 1572; Mortough, son of Sir Donall O’Brien, was “elect” in 1573. In 1617 it was united to Limerick under Bernard Adams. In 1627 William Murray was bishop, till he had the good fortune of being translated to Wales. His successors were James

(8) “Military Architecture of Ireland.”
Hygat in 1630; Robert Sibthorp, 1638 till 1642. By that time the English power had gone in County Clare. After the Restoration the See was given to the Archbishop of Tuam, 1660, and in 1741 it was united to Clonfert. Afterwards it was joined to Killaloe in the Protestant episcopate, and to Galway in the Roman Catholic.

The great inaccessibility of Kilfenora to the English led to considerable strain with the authorities, as its occupants had little regard for foreign regulations. Maurice was made a bishop without the King’s permission, and there was some unpleasantness at the election of Florence. However it is curious that three of the bishops, Christian, 1254; Simon, 1303, and Mortough in 1321 were buried in the Dominican Friary in Limerick. Readers of the early histories of that city will remember the grotesque, versified translation of the epitaph:

"Christian and Maurice I should name before
And Simon, Bishops, late of Fenabore.
Therefore, kind Father, let not any soul
Of these good men be lodged in the Black Hole.
You who read this kneel down in humble posture
Bellom three Aves, say one Pater Noster." ! ! (9)

John O’Neylan was a worthy emulator of Myler McGrath and other prelates of his century, he kept on some sort of terms with everyone through all the contradictory chances and changes of the times, down to 1572. Then followed a period of confusion, the See was ruled by Vicars General in the Church of Rome, and, as we have said, went as a prey to the neighbouring bishops in the State Church, being held along with Killaloe and Limerick by Bishop Bernard Adams, (10) who wrote for his epitaph:

"Sufficient God did give me, which I spent,
I little borrowed and as little lent,
I left those whom I loved enough in store,
Increased the Bishoprick, relieved the poor."

The Roman Catholic episcopate was nearly as unsettled,—it was under Vicars from 1572 to 1647; Daniel O’Griffy bridging over that long period to 1634. Its bishop, Andrew Lynch, fled with the Nuncio,

(9) "Ergo, benignem Pater locus non comprimat ater,
Qui legis ista, 'pater' dicas, et Ave reboa ter."

So in Ware’s "Bishops," ed Harris. The original is in the calendar of the Limerick Dominicans. See also Ferrar’s and Fitzgerald’s Histories.

(10) His portrait was or is preserved in Trinity College, Oxford (Oxford Almanac, 1732.)
Rinuccini to France, and assisted the Bishop of Rouen till he died in 1673. Vicars administered the See till 1732, when James Augustine O'Daly was consecrated its bishop but left its administration to Limerick. In 1751 it was administered by Kilmacduach, and the Sees were practically united thenceforward, an arrangement being made that the bishops should be alternately of the one See and administer the other. The disendowment of the Abbey left the provision of the bishop entirely inadequate; the revenue of the bishop, as such, was, even in 1302, £5 6s. 8d., and in 1615 it was worth 6s. 8d. less. The cathedral was then about to be repaired by Bishop Adams, who, at least, was anxious to keep the sacred buildings in his See in decent maintenance and order. In 1638, Lord Strafford jests at the poor little See. "The old Bishop of Killenora is dead and his bishoprick, one of those which, when it falls, goes begging for a new husband, being not worth above four score pounds to the last man." An understanding prelate, he adds, might bring it up to £200, but would have to spend money in law suits. The wise policy that united it to Limerick or Killaloe was abandoned, and the result was of course what might be expected.

(TO BE CONCLUDED.)