

THE PARISH OF BALLINLOUGH.

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SITUATION. This Parish is situated in the Barony of Small County and is bounded on the north by the Parish of Kildeely; on the west by those of Ballynard and Ballynamona;

on the south by Hospital and on the east by the Co. of Tipperary.

NAME. The name of this Parish is in Irish Baile an Locha, which signifies the Town or Townland of the Lough. No lough is now, however, to be found in the neighbourhood, but from the low situation of the old Church it is likely that there was a small lough near it originally.

The old Church of Ballinlough is now nearly destroyed, only fragments of the walls containing no features remaining. The building was fifty five feet six inches long and twenty one feet broad and its walls were three feet thick. There is nothing else worth description about it.

There is a holy well on the north side of the Townland of Ballinlough called Tobar Brighde or St. Bridget's Well, from which it may be inferred that St. Bridget was the Patron Saint of this Parish.

On a lofty hill of beautiful slopes and hollows in the Townland of Cromwell in this Parish, there is a conspicuous moat which goes by the name of the Townland, and this is said to have been derived from the circumstance of the great rebel Cromwell having encamped upon it; but this is scarcely possible, as the name appears on the engraved Map from the Down Survey as Crumlin, which seems to be the true original name.

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There are two small tumuli near this moat, one towards the east and the other towards the west point of the hill. There is a Trigonometrical Station belonging to the Ordnance Survey on the latter tumulus.

Near the western extremity of the same hill and not far from the Trigonometrical Station above mentioned, there is a large Cromlech in tolerable preservation, which is, as usual, called Leaba Dhiarmada agus Ghraine, i.e., the Bed of Dermot and Grania. The lie of this bed is nearly north east and south west; its length is twenty feet and its breadth on the clear five feet. On the south side there are five stones standing on edge and the same number on the north side. The height of these standing stones is at an average, four feet, but they differ in shape and size. They were originally covered at top by several large flags placed nearly in a horizontal position, but of these only one remains firm in its original position; it is a remarkably massive limestone flag, nearly of the form of a diamond and measuring nine feet five inches in length, seven feet in breadth and one foot two and a half inches in thickness.

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The stone which formed the west end of this bed has fallen, but its exact original position can be determined. It is seven feet long and one foot two inches thick. Between this and the

large horizontal flag above described, there is a smaller flag which was originally placed in a horizontal position and covered the western end of the grave, but it has slipped off its south supporter and its southern head has fallen into the grave (bed), its northern extremity still resting on its original supporter; it is five feet three inches long, three feet two inches broad and one foot one inch thick.

Near the north west extremity of this grave there is a large rude stone laid prostrate, measuring eight feet four inches in length and four feet in breadth. This stone probably stood erect originally in its present position. At the south east corner of the bed there are three stones of rectangular shape standing erect.

The flag stone which formed the north east end of this bed is still in its original position; it is five feet in breadth, but the earth about it is raised so that its height could not be easily determined.

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I was of opinion that the moat above mentioned was the Dún Eaclais of the Irish authorities and that the Cromlech is the monument of an Uster Chieftain, but this subject is still very obscure to me and will remain so till I see more of the localities of Munster. Dún-Eaclais is described as in the immediate vicinity of Emly, but there is no fort near Emly at present.

Examined by me.

J. O'Donovan.

Tipperary.  
Aug. 17th 1840.