

THE PARISH OF CASTLETOWN (or Corcomohide,
Barony of Upper Connelloe).

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SITUATION. This place is situated in the Barony of Upper Conello and is bounded on the north by the Parish of Balingarry; on the east by Colman's Well and Bruree; on the south by Killagholehane and on the west by the Parish of Kilmeedy.

NAME. The name of this Parish was originally Corcomohid, the name of Mc Eniry's Territory, but latterly it is called Castletown Mac Eniry from the family of Mac Eniry, the ancient Chiefs of Corca-Muiceat, who were dispossessed by Cromwell about the year 1650, at which period the family of Coniers obtained possession of this place, from whom it is now sometimes called Castletown-Coniers.

Gough in his silly additions to Camden asserts that Cluain Chreadhail or Kileedy is the same as Castletown Mac Eniry but in this he mistakes the words of Archdal, who knew nothing at all about it but what he learned from O'Halloran, who is a very stultified authority. I here insert what they have said on this subject:-

Gough's Camden, R.I.A.
Cluain Chredail - Castle Mac Eneiry.

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In the Barony of Conillo at Castle Mac Eneiry, formerly the seat of Mac Eneiry, are the ruins of a very large Monastery and some other buildings, which sufficiently evince the piety, dignity and splendour of that antient family (H. ex O'Halloran). St. Ita or Mida of the blood royal of Munster is said to have founded a famous Abbey at Cluain Chreduil or Kilita, at the foot of the Mountain Luacra (H).

Archd. Mon. Hib. C.11, p.419, R.I.A.
Castletown (Mc Eneiry MS.).

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In the Barony of Conillo and formerly the seat of Mac Eneiry; here we find the ruins of a very large Monastery (Cluain Creahail) and some other public buildings, which sufficiently evince the piety, dignity and splendour of that ancient family (O'Halloran).

The Church of Castletown which is "the very large monastery" mentioned by O'Halloran, is a very long Church, but certainly not a very extensive nor anything bordering on a splendid Monastery.

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It is one hundred and twenty seven feet in length on the outside and twenty six feet nine inches in breadth on the inside. Its walls are fourteen feet high and three feet six inches thick, and well built. The east window is in tolerable preservation, but not so gorgeous as one might be inclined to infer from the words of O'Halloran, as copied by Archdall. It forms a flat point on the inside and measures about eleven feet five inches in height and seven feet six inches in width; on the outside it is divided into two compartments, which are roundheaded and constructed of reddish sandstone; both together are two feet seven inches in width; each is ten inches and the mullion between them, which consists of seven separate stones, is nine inches in width. They are eight feet five inches in height and eight feet two inches from the level of the ground on the outside. Near this window, and between it and the north east corner there is another small window placed at a considerable height from the ground, which is rectangular inside and outside; it is covered on both sides with small lintels and is about three feet by two on the inside and two feet six inches by three inches on the outside.

At the distance of twelve feet four inches from the east gable there was a pointed doorway on the north wall leading into an Iardom or Sacristy, but the Iardom is destroyed and the doorway is nearly reduced to a breach.

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At the distance of five feet from the east gable the south wall contains a window which is in tolerable preservation, and measures on the inside (where its head is a flat pointed arch) seven feet six inches in height and four feet eleven inches in width. On the outside it is placed at the height of six feet from the present level of the ground and divided into two compartments which are pointed at top in the Gothic style; both these compartments taken together measure in width one foot seven and a half inches, and the mullion between them is seven inches wide and six inches thick. They are four feet in height.

At the distance of thirty six feet six inches from the west corner, the doorway is placed; its internal part is destroyed at the top, but its internal sides remain, which are five feet five inches asunder; its outer part forms a semicircle at top, but its sides are destroyed; it is six feet seven inches in height and four feet in width.

From this doorway across to the north wall, there is a modern wall lately built to enclose the west end of the Church as a burial place for the family of Coniers.

At the distance of twenty four feet eight inches to the east of the doorway above described, there is a breach in the south wall where there was a window, as appears from one side of it still remaining.

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The side walls of this Church are fourteen feet in height.

The west gable contains a small rectangular window placed at the height of about seventeen feet from the ground. I could not get up to it to take its exact dimensions, but I would take it to be two feet six inches in height on the outside and five inches in width.

I could not learn from any tradition on the spot whether this was a Parish Church or a Monastic one.

There is a small portion of Mac Eniry's Castle standing near Mr. Conier's house; it should be shewn on the Ordnance Map.

For the names of wells, etc., in this Parish see Field Name Book.

Examined by me.

John O'Donovan.

July 26th 1840.
Ballingarry.
