

THE PARISH OF MONAGAY.

21

SITUATION. This Parish is situated in the Barony of Conello Upper and near the southwest extremity of the County of Limerick, nearly twenty Irish miles from the City of Limerick to the south west. It is bounded on the south by Killeedy Parish, on the west by Abbeyfeale Parish, north by Rathronan, Ardagh and Newcastle Parishes, and on the east by the Parish of Mahoonagh. Part of the Tow of Newcastle stands on its north eastern boundary.

NAME. This Parish is called by the natives in Irish Móin a' Ghédh, which signifies the Bog of the Goose; it was probably so called from its having been frequented by wild geese. Gédh, is however in the singular number in the present form of the name and it is possible that the place may have been called from a man who was surnamed a "Goose".

Of the old Church of this Parish which is situated on boggy ground in the Glebe of Monagay and is called Teampull na Móna, the walls are perfect with the exception of a breach on the north wall, of which hereafter. It is about twenty nine yards long and twenty seven and a half feet in breadth. The window on the east gable is six and a half feet high by two and a half feet, and seven and a half feet from the ground on the outside where it originally consisted of two parts but the mullion is now removed. On this side the upper part is formed somewhat thus:-

22



On the inside it is considerably wider and round arched. On the south side wall sixteen feet from the east gable and two and a half feet from the ground there is another window formed on the outside similarly to the above and of nearly the same dimensions. It is partly built up with modern masonry. On the inside it is wider and flat-arched. The doorway, which is on this wall twenty

five feet from the west end, and is disfigured on the outside, is on the inside about seven feet three inches high, three feet eight inches wide, and has a flat arch on the upper part. On the west gable seven feet from the ground there is a small square window measuring on the outside about one foot ten inches by six and a half inches. On the same gable, a little above the level of the side walls, there is another narrow window which is almost hidden by the ivy which grows in abundance on the west gable. On the north side wall nineteen feet from the west there is a breach of about eight and a half feet in width, extending from top to bottom. On the middle of this wall, four feet three inches from the ground, there is a window formed thus at the top outside:- 23

On this side it is four and a half feet high by six inches. On the inside it is square and wider than outside. On the same north wall five and a half feet from the east (outside) there is a small square window about six feet from the ground, two feet four inches high and not above two and a half inches (two and three quarters) in width; the inside is much wider. The walls of this Church are about thirteen feet high, three feet five inches thick, and are built of large and small stones, with lime and gravel mortar; attached to the Church is a graveyard still in use.

In the Townland of Rathcahill (qu? east or west. The people do not distinguish the Townland thus.) very near the house of the Rev. J. Donovan P.P., there is a holy well called Tobar Muire, in English, Lady's Well (and sometimes Saint Mary's Well) around which is built a circular wall of masonry. An alder and a willow tree grow over it. On the 15th of August Stations (a Pattern) were held here; they are still partly continued. This well is not noticed in the Name Book. 24

Saint Bridget's Well (Tobar Bríghde) is situated in the Townland of Shangarry; for description see Name Book.

In the Townland of Ballyshane there is a holy well called Banbhán Well (Tobar Banbháin). Banbhan is known by the people to be a Saint, but they do not remember his Festival Day. The Irish Calendar of the O'Clery's has two Saints of this name:- "9 May, Banbhán Espoc Leithghlinne." i.e., Banbhan, Bishop of Leighlin. "1 May, Banbhán Sagart." i.e., Banbhan, Priest.

In the Townland of Templeglantan (Teampull a Ghleanntáin) are the ruins of an old Church which gives name to the Townland. It is seventy feet long and thirty feet broad on the outside.

The gables are nearly destroyed but about six or seven feet in height of the side walls remain; they are built of thin flags cemented with lime and sand mortar. Large aged ash trees grow on the inside near the east end, and whitethorns towards the west 25

and the entire of the inside is so thick set with these and intervening brambles, that one could not examine it there. Fitzgerald in his History of Limerick, asserts that there is a tomb of the Lacy family in this Church but it is now either totally destroyed or so covered with these brambles etc., as to be invisible. Fitzgerald's words are (p.376):- "At a little distance to the south east of Newcastle is Monegea or Teampol na Mena, a Rectory and Vicarage *** The west side of this Parish is mountainous and in this vicinity are Rathcahill *** Gardenfield and Mount Plumer *** West of Rath Cahill is an old Church called Teampol Gheantain, in which is a tomb of the Lacy family."

All the antiquities of this Parish were examined by Mr. O'Keeffe except Teampull a Ghleantain, which was examined by me.

J.O'D.