

CAHERELLY PARISH.

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SITUATION. This Parish is situated in the Barony of Clan William and is bounded on the east by the Parishes of Ballybrood and Inch St. Laurence; on the north by Ludden Parish and on the west by Rochestown Parish and on the south by Rathjordan and Cahercorney Parishes.

NAME. The name Eillidhe of this Parish is pronounced in Irish Cathair Eillidhe, which signifies - - - (Qu? Cathair Ailligh, i.e., the Fort of Ailleach. The word Aill-each means a stone house, quasi Aill Theach).

Caherelly old Church stands in ruins and is situated on

level ground. It consisted of a nave and choir; only the middle gable and the side walls of the choir and six feet of the east gable at the south side wall remain. No trace of the nave is observable. The choir was thirty two feet by twenty feet and has two large pointed windows on the south side wall built with chiselled lime stone. They were divided by mullions in the middle, which have been removed out of them. They measure about eleven feet by four feet one inch. The choir arch on the middle gable is pointed and built with chiselled lime stone on both sides. It measures ten feet in height and ten feet in breadth. The side walls are about twenty feet high and three feet thick and are built with regular sized lime stones cemented with lime and sand mortar. The structure does not seem old. A small grave yard lies here much in use.

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Caherelly old Castle stands in the Townland of Caherelly West and about half a furlong west of the old Church. It is placed on an eminence, is about sixty feet high and twenty feet wide. It is square, in good preservation and retains its roof still.

An old Castle called Black Castle stood in Caherelly East Townland. It is now razed to the ground. In Fitzgerald's Hist. of Limerick Vol.I, p.289, Caherelly is described thus:-

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"Cahirelly to the south east of Luddenbeg is a Vicarage. There is no Church or Glebe-House in this Parish, but the walls of an old Church are to be seen which is said to have been built by St. Ailbe or Alibeus, so early as the date of St. Patrick; the stone with which it is constructed is similar to that with which the Cathedral of Emly was built. It contains many tombs belonging to families now unknown, with inscriptions which are scarcely legible. In this Parish are two Castles (Black Castle above spoken of); one in the eastern part is much dilapidated, but the other (Caherelly Castle also noticed above) founded by the Hynes family and situated in the west of the Parish, has been lately handsomely fitted up.

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Fitzgerald in the volume above referred to p.284, note speaking of circumstances relative to William Burke of Dromkeen and Mac Keogh of Cloonkeen, now called Rivers, who was this William's father-in-law, asserts that in the time of Cromwell there was not a gentleman living from Ballynaguard to O'Brien's Bridge, but a Burke, except Hynes of Caherelly and Clanchy of Ballyvorneen.

Situated in the north end of Ballybricken South Townland are the ruins of an old Castle commonly called in the language of the people, Old Court. It stands in a cultivated field and is a square structure measuring sixteen feet in the

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clear. The walls are fifty feet high and seven and a half feet thick. There are four stories in it; the floor next over the ground one is arched; locality is low ground.

We find Ballybricken Castle mentioned in Fitzgerald's History now often referred to, but placed in the Parish of Luddenbeg. This work (Vol.I, p.289) speaking of the Castle of Luddenmore in this last mentioned Parish, informs us that:-

"In this Castle lived James Goold, who died September 6th 1600 and who was seized of the famous Dominican Convent in Limerick and also of the Castle, town and lands of Corbally as is found by the Inquisition taken August 23rd 1623."

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In a Note (ibid) we are told:-

"The above J. Goold was married to Thomasin, daughter of Sir Thomas Browne of Hospital and widow of Alexander Fitton of Knockaney in this County, Esqr., by whom he had Mary, who was married to Col. Sir George Ingoldsby, by which alliance he got the lands of Corbally."

"To Col. Ingoldsby also was granted Ballybricken Castle, situated in the Parish of Luddenbeg, together with a very large tract of land around it; this Castle is still in good repair."

We rely on the authority of the Name Book, which places Ballybricken Court in Caherelly Parish. The Name Book of Ludden Parish has no Townland called Ballybricken among those set down in it. Inch St. Lawrence Parish Name Book mentions Ballybricken East and West, but we find no Castle ruins remarked as lying in either of them.

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A stone called Cloch a Liagáin which measures five feet in height and three feet in diameter, stands erect in a green field in (near) the centre of the Townland of Friarstown and a few yards to the west of Ahanvocky, Aith an Bhacaigh.

This Parish was traversed by Mr. A. Curry and his notes put into the present form by Mr. T. O'Connor.

J.O'D.