

THE PARISH OF KILKEEDY.

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SITUATION. This Parish is situated in the north of the Co. of Limerick and Barony of Pubble-Brien. It is bounded on the north by the River Shannon; south by the Parish of Croom (West) and Killanahan; on the east by Mungrett Parish and on the west by Kildimo Parish.

NAME. The name of this Parish is in Irish Cill Chaoide, which signifies the Church of St. Keedy or Cedfa. See Kilkeedy Parish near Glencolumbkille in the County of Clare.

The old Church of this Parish, situated in the Glebe of Kilkeedy, appears to have been a lateral building formerly

attached to a larger one, as it lies contrary to the direction of almost all old Churches, the greatest length of this Church being from north to south (twenty nine feet). The modern Church would seem to occupy the site of the ancient main building, the north wall of the former being attached to the south end of the present ruin, which has lost the southern wall. Its breadth from east to west is eighteen feet. The east wall had a window, the form of which is now destroyed. There is a doorway on the west wall twenty feet from the north wall and five feet from the wall of the new Church. It is six feet high by four feet two inches and arched with thin stones on the inside; on the outside it is five and a half feet high by three feet five inches and has a round arch of cut lime stone. The walls are about ten feet high and three feet two inches in thickness. This Church does not appear to be very old. There is another small portion of a wall nine feet east of this, but it is utterly featureless. There is a large grave yard attached.

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St. Margaret's Church is situated on level ground in the Townland of Newtown and about a furlong south of the River Shannon. The walls are perfect with the exception of the upper part of the west gable. It is fifty six and a half feet long by twenty two and a half feet in breadth. There is a window on the east gable nine feet high by four and a half feet inside, having a round arch of cut lime stone. On the outside it consists of two parts in the pointed style; here it is eight feet from the ground, five feet eight inches high by one foot seven inches, each division being seven inches in width. On this side also, it is formed of cut lime stone. On the south side wall at the distance of six feet from the east end there was a window, the form of which is now destroyed. The doorway which is on this wall is thirteen feet ten inches from the west gable; its form has been destroyed by the ravages of time. On the north wall there was another doorway which is also now disfigured. On this north wall at the distance of eight and a half feet from the east gable there was a window, which has also lost its form. The walls are about twelve feet high, three and a half feet in thickness and built of regular sized stones, not quarried, irregularly laid, with sand and lime mortar. Still-born children only are interred here at present.

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The ruins of Carrigogonnell Castle stand in the Townland of the same name. Various detached fragments of this ancient Castle of the O'Briens remain, but they are so broken and scattered that the measurements of the building cannot now be taken. These ruins are situated on a large rock.

Antiquities examined by Mr. A. Curry; notes arranged by Mr. P. O'Keefe.

July 1840.

I here append what the Irish Historians have collected about this place.

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(Annals 4 Masters).

Carraic O gConnail (Carrigonnell).

"A.D. 1577. The President (Sir William Drury) already mentioned, went to Thomond a fortnight before the Festival of St. John, attended by a great multitude of the English and the Chiefs of the two Provinces of Munster. He held a court for eight days in the Monastery of Ennis, and the Dalcassians having refused to become tributary to the Queen he placed over them a Marshal with a fierce and merciless body of soldiers to reduce them to subjection. The President then returned to Limerick and proceeded to behead the Chiefs and Dynasts of the territories adjacent to Limerick; and among the rest Morogh, the son of Mortogh, who was son of Mahon, who was son of Donogh, who was son of Brian Duff O'Brien, the most renowned and noble of the heirs of Carigonnell and Htherlach.

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"A.D. 1580. James, son of John Oge, who was son of John, who was son of Thomas the Earl, was slain by the Lord of Poble-Brien and Carrigonnell, viz., by Brian Duff, the son of Mahon, who was son of Donogh, who was son of Brian Duff O'Brien. This James was worthy to have inherited the principality of his ancestors."

"A.D. 1585. A proclamation issued to the men of Ireland commanding their Chiefs to assemble in Parliament in Dublin on the 1st of May, for the greater part of the peoples of Ireland were at this time subject to their Sovereign (Queen). They all accordingly met together as was ordered. Thither went the Lord of Carrigonnell and of Fasach-Luimnigh viz., Brian Duff the son of Donogh, who was son of Mahon, who was son of Donogh, who was son of Brian Duff O'Brien, etc."

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(Gough's Camden, R.I.A.)

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Carrigonnell.

The Templars had a house on the Shannon at Carrigonnell six miles west of Limerick. In 1530 it was the seat of Donogh O'Brien, Lord of Poble O'Brien, and in 1691 it was a place of strength. (H).

Cunnigar - Curick-O-Gamel.

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Four miles from Limerick near the Shannon is Cunnigar, the seat of the Bishop of Limerick, about a mile from which are the ruins of Curick-O-Gamel Castle, a place of great strength on a lofty hill dismantled by Cromwell. (Wilson 185).

(Archdall's Mon. Hib. Vol. II., R.I.A., p.119).

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On the River Shannon and situated six miles west of Limerick. There was an house for Knights Templars in this village (MSS. Smith) which in the year 1530 was the seat of Donogh O'Brien, Lord of Poble O'Brien. In 1691 it was a place of strength.

In the account of "The Second Siege of Limerick (1691)" to be found among Smith's Collections for Limerick (MSS. R.I.A.) we read:-

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"On the 25th (Aug.) the army took possession of Ireton's and Cromwell's forts, which were ordered to be called Mackay's and Nassau's because gained under these officers. That evening Col. Dinep, who led on the advanced party of horse and who was a Danish Officer of good character, had the misfortune to be slain by a random shot. Two days after Castleconnel and that called Carrick-a-Gunnel, the first situated five miles above the town and the other as many below, were taken from the Irish. The garrisons, consisting of 400 men, were made prisoners of war; and the following month they were both demolished."