

KNOCKLONG PARISH.

SITUATION. This Parish is situated in the Barony of Coshlea and is bounded on the north by the Parishes of Hospital, Kilrush and Emly; on the west by the Parishes of Knockainy, Athanasy and Emlygrennen; on the east by the Parishes of Ballyskaddan and Galbally and on the south by Glenbrohaun.

NAME. The local Irish name of this Parish is Cnoc Luinge, which signifies the Hill of the Camp, i.e., Collis Castrorum. The Hill of Knocklong, on which there are still to be seen the ruins of an old Church and of a Castle or strong mansion house, stands six miles due east from Kilmallock. This hill was at an early period called Druim Damhghaire as appears from a romantic tale entitled "Forbuis Droma Damhghaire" namely, the Encampment on Druim Damhghain, preserved in the Book of Lismore

fol.169 p.a.a. (R.I.A.). It obtained the name of Choc Loinge, Hill of the Camp as above remarked, on the occasion of Cormac, Monarch of Ireland, pitching his camp on it when invading Munster, after that Province had refused to pay him his tributes. The hill is now highly cultivated and no traces of an encampment are observable thereon.

The old Church on this hill is a very rude one and all its architectural features are destroyed with the exception of one quadrangular little window placed on the north wall close to the east gable. It is wide inside and measures two feet four inches by seven inches outside, where it is six feet eight inches from the ground. The east gable is nearly destroyed and there is a large breach in the south side wall where the doorway was placed and another nearly opposite it in the north side wall. The lower part of the north wall is built of very large stones up to the height of four feet but from that up is of much smaller ones. This Church measures in length forty five feet and in breadth twenty two feet inside; its walls are four feet thick, built of lime stones cemented with good lime and sand mortar and their greatest height is at present nine and a half feet inside and twelve feet outside.

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A short distance to the north east of the Church there is a Castle or rather strong built mansion house measuring twenty one feet from north to south in length and eighteen feet in breadth on the inside. It was three stories high and its south wall is six and a half feet thick and about thirty feet high. There were two apartments in the thickness of the north wall near the top lighted by two quadrangular windows. This building was lighted by several large windows, but they are now much disfigured. There are two large quadrangular ones on the south wall, one on the west and I think two on the east, but these last are only breaches in the wall at present.

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There are two holy wells, St. Patrick and St. Paul's wells on the east side of Knocklong Hill.

In Ballinahinch Townland is situated a burying ground at present much used, which is called Cloheen, in Irish Cloichín or Cloichín, which means a little stone. It is situated in a pasture field and is enclosed with a stone wall of mason work. No traces of a Church are now found here. Many monumental stones belonging to respectable families are seen within this burial ground. I am informed a Patron is held here on the 3rd of August, Lady Day. This burying ground lies in north of the townland and in the south of it about one mile distant therefrom, stands Ballinahinch Castle in ruins. This Castle measures forty two feet by twenty two and a half feet inside the walls. Winding stairs of stone steps ascend in the north

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end of the building, twenty eight feet in perpendicular height. There are two gables, north and south, with a chimney on each, built with bricks inside and with stones outside. Bricks are in several parts of the walls on the inside and plastering remains in several places on them inside. The side walls are about thirty feet high. The wall at the doorway is six feet thick. The doorway is on the west side where there is a Bavel about twelve feet high, the wall over it being only four feet thick. The doorway is quadrangular, built with chiselled lime stone. Its breadth is three feet five inches and height six feet eight inches. Windows on this building are quadrangular; there is a narrow round one on west wall near north end and two narrow four-cornered ones over it. The materials of this building are lime stones with some bricks inside and cement of lime and sand mortar. It seems grouting was made use of in raising the walls.

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There is a well in this townland called Tobar Gobnait (rectius Gobnaite) or Deborah's Well. I learned nothing more respecting it. Fitzgerald in his Hist. of Lim. Vol.I, p 336, has these references to the two castles just now described:-

"In the west of this Parish (Knocklong) is the old Castle of Ballinahinch, built by a branch of the Clan Gibbon family. On the Hill of Long are the walls of an old Church and the ruins of a Castle formerly the residence of Sir Thomas Hurley whose beautiful monument we notice in our description of Emly."

Local information tells that Knocklong Castle was built by one, Hogan, and lastly inhabited by one, Hurley.