



## VISITORS COMMENTS

### REBEL PARISH

During 1796 and 1797 a certain Monsieur De Latocnaye a philosophizing Frenchman who travelled Ireland and wrote memoirs on all the place. In which he stayed. He makes some remarks of the people and the way in which they treated their clergy at that time.

Several persons near Castleconnell among others the Lord Clare and Mr Bruce in multiplying industries have increased the rate of wages - there can be no better way for a rich man to employ his money. Mr Bruce has built, at his own charges, a great number of comfortable homes for the peasantry, and these people, so often accused with injustice of defects which really do not belong to them, have proved very careful. When he has needed workers he can always find them, even in time when his neighbours cannot get a sufficiency. I have been assured that his labourers do not wish to take from him the price they are willing to receive from others. (To all of which, we can only say, knowing the character of Mr George Evans Bruce in another direction, in the words of the celebrated Mr Croker of Ballynegardo as he gazed on his estate for the last time, and the clergyman told him he was going to a far better land. "I doubt it" The inhabitants of Castleconnell were assessed with a rate to provide means to build a Catholic Church. I do not know what fault had been committed by the priest of the parish but the Catholic Archbishop of Killaloe interdicted the work, and the church remained half-built and without a roof. Mass, however, was celebrated in a corner covered by a few plants, and the people continued to come as before, but resolutely resolved not to finish the church unless and until the favourite priest should be recalled.

Another great visitor to Castleconnell was the famous actor and dramatist John O'Keeffe, who was one of the first people to present a heart warming pretire of the miraculous Spa Well of Castleconnell.

John Bright a M.P. in Britain and Cabinet Minister for many Governments was very impressed with Castleconnell. He was a keen sportsman and fisherman. He spoke very well of the place and in doing so, paid particular attention to its Spa Well, and fishing pool.

## AHANE / LISNAGRY

Athain or Ahane is a corruption of the old Irish name Athainin which means small fort. Ahane itself only comprises of two fields which are situated at Biddiford. The Ahane Church is situated within the townland of Ahane. The Parish has long been a household name regarding its hurling hereos. There are many religious antiquities held within the area and these are dealt with in a following chapter. In 1886 the main Farmers in Ahane, Killeenagarrieff were as follows:

Coffey Michael, Ballyvarra, Egan Andrew, Bunkey, Grant Charles, Mountshannon, Humphreys William, Foyle, Lane Thomas, Rivers, Moloney Timothy, Ballyvarra, Raleigh Timothy Jnr. Garrymore; Richardson Robert, Ardvarna, Ryan Edward, Waterpark, Ryan John, Knocksentry, Ryan John, Laghtane East, Ryan Joseph, Killeenagarrieff, Parish Stradbally: Bourke Patrick, Newgarden North, Macnab Alexander, Portcrusha, Nicholas Patrick, Woodload, Ryan Valentine, Woodpark.

Lisnagry or Lios na Groi (Fort or Breeding ground of the Horses) is a townland situated at Mountshannon near Annacotty. In a field in the Ryan Family Farm at Mountshannon one can find the remains of an ancient moate or Fort. The limestone in this area here is of a very calcious nature and proved effective for the upkeep of race horses.

The area holds the great Mountshannon House seat of the Fitzgibbons. Caherline, that of the Gabbets and Howleys that of the Howley family the last of which died in 1956. The Howley family donated the bell to Ahane Church.

Close to Ballyvarra and the last house within the Parish before the river divisions at Annacotty the Woodsdown House. This was once the greatest of corn farms in the area. In 1780 a man by the name of Lord Brian Gough was born here at Woodsdown House. Records show his baptism in the old parish church. He was a messenger of hope for the poor and exiles from our land. He began his military career in the military regiment of Limerick. He was a hero on the battlefield and regarded amongst the best officers at Porto Rico in West Indies, the Peninsular War The disaster at Corruna and also at Talavera and Seville.



# AHANE CHURCH & RELIGIOUS ANTIQUITIES

## PLACENAME

Situated in Arra of Tipperary and Clanwilliam of Limerick Ahane (athan) translated means small fort of Fort of the Birds. Sadly we cannot tell how or why this name is given to the area. Ahane itself is only one of the smallest areas known as a parish as it is only a small townland consisting of 3 fields. The only religious antiquity of note within the townland is St. Patrick's Church (1838).

## HOUSES OF NOTE

Richill:	Howley
Thornfield:	Bourke (Sir Richard)
Raheen:	Ryan
Caherline:	Gabbett
Woodsdown:	Bannytyne

## SOCIETIES AND ORGANISATIONS

Ahane G.A.A. Club	1926	Founded
Ahane Fife and Drum	1918	- Re organised 1932 - and again in 1941
Ahane Church Choir	1976	

"Come on Ahane the Spuds are Boilin"

This catchphrase did not become the Ahane slogan until the 1930s

## RELIGIOUS ANTIQUITIES

At Killeenagarraff on the boundry of the Parish and Diocese of Killaloe with Murroe and Cashel and Emly Diocese. We find Killeenagarraff which means Church or Chapel of the rocky slope. At Killeenagarraff Cemetary stands a quaint old antiquity in that of a small chapel where Mass was celebrated for the last time in the year 1648. The penals times began and the faithful set up a Mass Rock on the Richardson family farm in Ardvarna. From 1648 to 1758 the rock was used by the people of Ahane.

Despite the declaration against the Mass, The Blessed Eucharist and the supremacy of the Pope the people of Ahane remained faithful. Some did however lavish out £20 received for information leading to the capture of priests. We are told that in turn local men acted as warning centries while Mass was being celebrated. These men stood on a hill close to Ardvarna where they gave notice if any

intruder was seen in the vicinity. The area is marked in map during 1656 as "Cnoc an Aifreann" meaning Mass Vale or small rock.

A Mass House was built in 1758 and was situated near Biddiford. The house was of mud and waffle structure and had a thatched roof. In 1838 Fr. Crotty announced plans to build a new church in Ahane.

## ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH AHANE

In 1838 work began at Biddiford and Ahane on a church which was to be dedicated to St. Patrick. In February of the following year a terrible mishap took place in that the Church was partially destroyed because of the "Big Wind" of that year. Timber and slates were donated by a local politician Frances Spaight of Limerick. During the "Devaney" reconstruction of 1940 some of these slates were retained. Stones for the church came from the quarry at Ballyvarra. The Bell was donated by the Richill Howley Family. The Archway that is surrounding the door was taken from Quin Abbey. Ahane Church was reconstructed in 1977 -1978 and rededicated on October 8th. 1978 by Bishop Harty of Killaloe Diocese. The Stations of the Cross that adorn the Church are of unique class and craftsmanship and were never intended for Ahane in fact they were carved in New York and intended to adorn a small convent chapel in Bonn. West Germany. The stations were purchased for the Church by the Nevin Family of Mountshannon Manor. A memorial which is carefully preserved in the Sacristy acknowledges this. Thomas Nevins of Mountshannon and his daughter are mentioned in this memorial which has incirbed on it the year "1906"

