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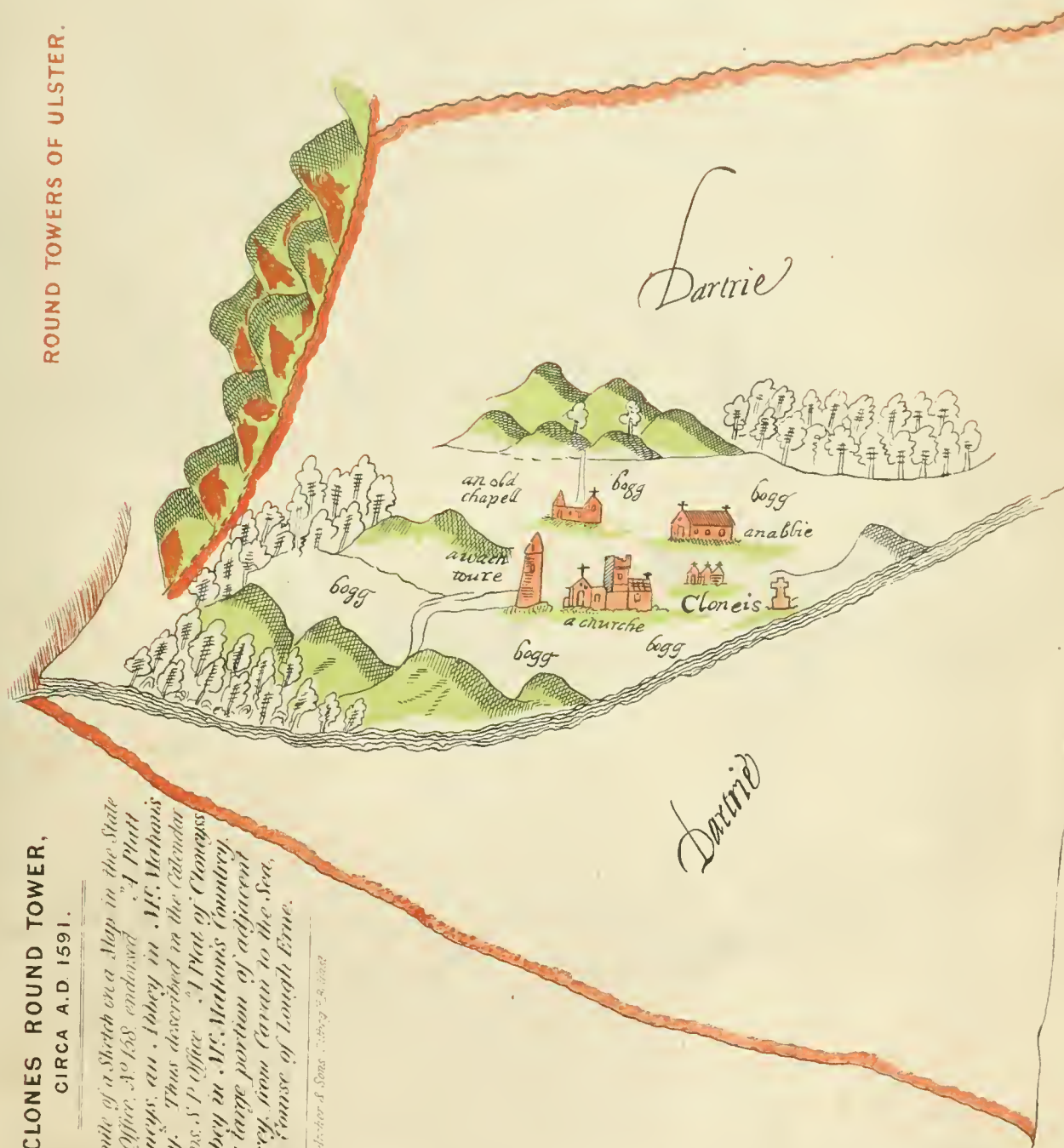




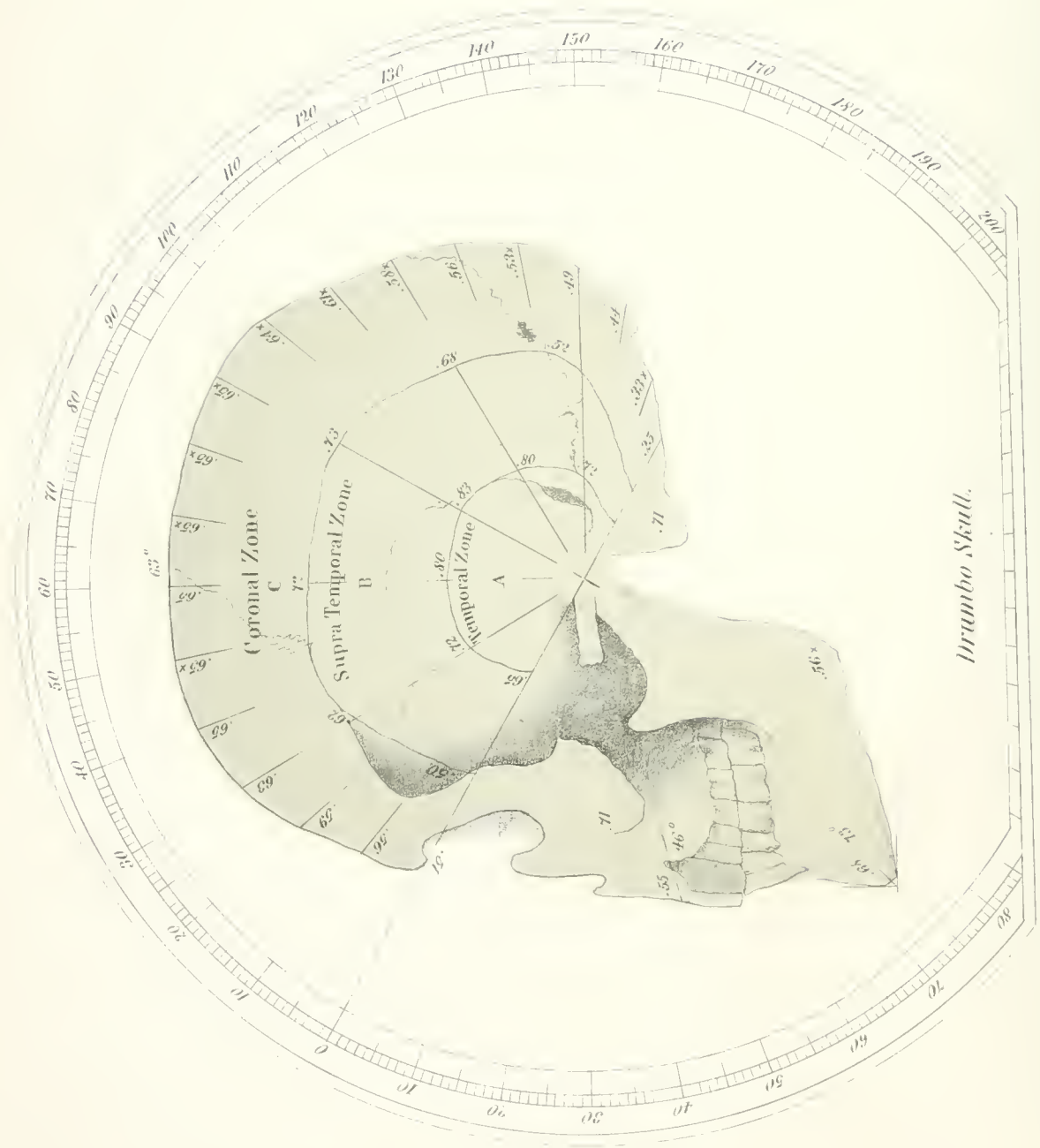
**CLONES ROUND TOWER,  
CIRCA A.D. 1591.**

*The Simile of a Sketch circa Map in the State Paper Office, No 158, endorsed "A Platt of Clonays, an Abbey in Mr. Mathons Country." Thus described in the Calendar of Maps, S.P. Office. "A Platt of Clonays an Abbey in Mr. Mathons Country, with a large portion of adjacent Country, from Caran to the Sea, by the Course of Lough Erne."*

*Arthur & Sons, 25, Abingdon Street, London.*

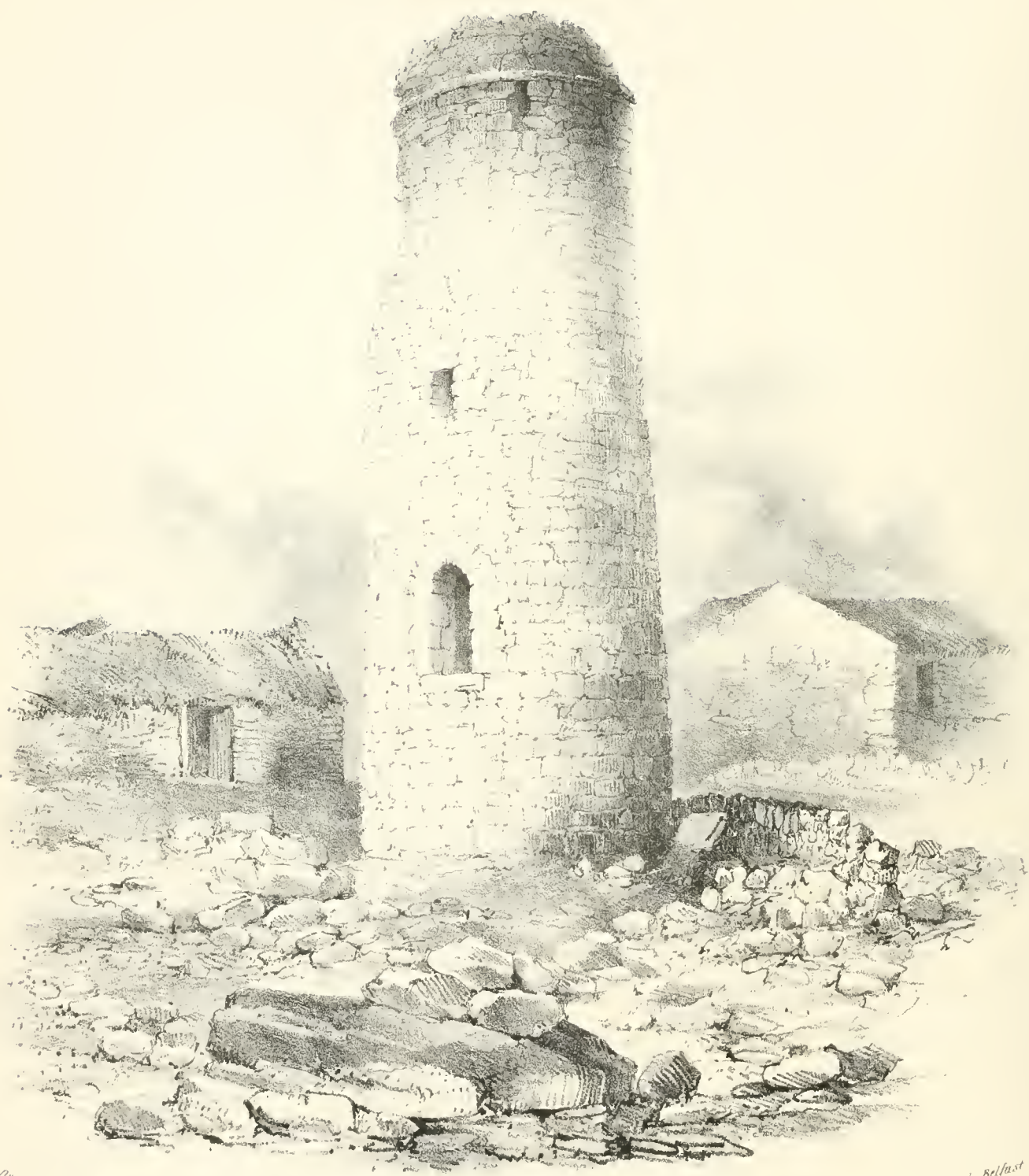


**ROUND TOWERS OF ULSTER.**





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*Drawn by J. Edward Burns*

*Lith'd by M. Ward Belfast*

*Co. Sligo, County Donegal*

## NOTICES OF THE ROUND TOWERS OF ULSTER.

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### INTRODUCTION.

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“ Those lonely Columns stand sublime,  
Flinging their shadows from on high,  
Like dials which the wizard, Time,  
Had raised to count his ages by !”—*Moore.*

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A CASUAL remark made by Giraldus Cambrensis has been often quoted to show that during his visit to Ireland, in the reign of Henry II., as secretary to John, his attention had been attracted by the Round towers, which he considered to be *ecclesiastical buildings* of a style peculiar to the country. The brevity of his notice, however, and the fact of similar edifices not existing in other countries—with the exception of two examples in Scotland, believed to be the work of a kindred people—left an impression that he had not examined their history with sufficient care to enable him to decide on their purpose with much accuracy. These buildings have, in consequence, continued to present so interesting a subject for investigation that even persons usually indifferent to such inquiries have caught some antiquarian enthusiasm, and expressed an anxiety that the mystery wherein their origin is involved should be dispelled, and a definite reply given to the often-repeated questions—what was their use?—by whom where they erected? In recent times it was expected that a final solution of this national enigma would be given by some of the numerous class of inquirers who now, with equal zeal but much better preparation for the task than their predecessors, direct their researches to the ancient history and the antiquities of Ireland.

Accident having caused the writer to take a part, some years ago, in this investigation, he commits these notices to the press, not with any design of advancing a theory of his own, but merely to put on record, for the use of others, a detailed statement of the result of excavations which it is evident cannot be repeated. Here it may not be an unprofitable task to review concisely the various opinions, already expressed and iterated from one writer to another, respecting the origin and uses of these remarkable buildings; even although the theories exhibit little originality and, having, with very few exceptions, been framed without an accurate inspection of the Towers themselves, or a critical examination of the remaining records of the country, (which, as Dr. Petrie has shown, have been in many instances erroneously

translated,) are often supported by weak and inconclusive evidence. It is proper also to notice that, since a more correct method of investigating antiquarian subjects has been encouraged by the directors of the Irish Ordnance Survey, the "*vxata quæstio*," now under consideration has received much elucidation, as well by the inquiries of those who ascribe a very remote Pagan origin to the Irish towers, as by the influential section who, recognizing Dr. Petrie as their leader, confine their views to an early Christian period. It is to be regretted that an unnecessary degree of asperity occasionally displays itself in the controversies of these "ancients" and "moderns" who, while they consider all the historic period back to Christ as *modern*, and take their first step into the *ancient* world from the foot of the Cross, seem to forget that Christianity itself boasts of a considerable antiquity.

In these introductory remarks it is wished, even at the risk of travelling over ground already described by others, to give a *resumé* of what has been done already, and, with the view of meeting a demand often made by persons not familiar with the *mode of construction* of our Round Towers, it is also proposed to give some notices on this part of the subject, illustrated by reference to the accompanying sectional drawing of the fine specimen still remaining in a nearly perfect state at Antrim.

These towers, then—we quote from Dr. Petrie,<sup>a</sup>—"are rotund, cylindrical structures, usually tapering upwards, and varying in height from fifty, to perhaps one hundred and fifty feet; and, in external circumference, at the base, from forty to sixty feet, or somewhat more.<sup>b</sup> They have usually a circular, projecting base, consisting of one, two, or three steps, or plinths, and are finished at the top with a conical roof of stone."<sup>c</sup> In the example to which the accompanying illustration refers, the writer had an opportunity of examining the pinnae stone, the parts of which have been carefully preserved by the proprietor of the building, since it was struck off some years ago by lightning. It is a circular piece of porphyry, perforated in the centre to receive another stone, which likewise still remains, being shaped to fit the cavity, and drawn to a point at the opposite end so as to give sharpness to the cone. A different mode of finishing the building may have been adopted, perhaps in other towers; but it seems improbable that the architects should frequently have surmounted them with a monolithical cross, as suggested by Dr. Petrie. The tower of Hythe Church, in Kent, of which we shall give a wood cut, might certainly have carried such an addition; but, in some examples of Irish towers (of course so many have lost the top that it would be impossible to establish a general rule) this would have been impracticable. In one instance, to be afterwards mentioned, the writer had an opportunity of examining the fragments of one of these conical roofs, which showed that the cone had been constructed by placing an osier frame-work of the desired form on the walls of the tower: this, when encrusted with a thick

<sup>a</sup> Transactions of Royal Irish Academy, volume xx, page 357.

<sup>b</sup> The proportions are referred to in a very curious extract from the Brehon laws, given by Dr. Petrie, at page 361 of his Inquiry, to which we shall afterwards refer.

<sup>c</sup> Here Dr. Petrie has the following words, which are omitted as not agreeing with the writer's own experience; he does not, however, mean to assert that the learned author has made the statement without sufficient evidence,—"*which, frequently, as there is every reason to believe, terminated with a cross formed of a single stone.*"



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body of concrete, could carry the layers of thin stone forming the exterior, but would not have sustained the pressure of a cross on the apex.

“The wall, towards the base, is never less than three feet in thickness, but is usually more, and occasionally five feet, being always in accordance with the general proportions of the building. In the interior they are divided into stories, varying in number from four to eight, as the height of the Tower permitted, and usually about twelve feet in height. These stories are marked either by projecting belts of stone, set-offs, or ledges: or holes in the wall to receive joists, on which rested the floors, which were almost always of wood. In the uppermost of these stories the wall is perforated by two, four, five, six, or eight apertures; but most usually four, which sometimes face the cardinal points, and sometimes not.”<sup>d</sup>

“The lowest story, or rather its place, is sometimes composed of solid masonry: and, when not so, it has never any aperture to light it.”<sup>e</sup> In the second story the wall is usually perforated by the entrance door way, which is generally from eight to thirty feet from the ground, and only large enough to admit a single person at a time.<sup>f</sup> The intermediate stories are each lighted by a single aperture, placed variously, and usually of very small size; though, in several instances, that directly over the door-way is of a size little less than that of the door way, and would appear to be intended as a second entrance.”<sup>g</sup>

In the Memoir of Mr. Telford,<sup>h</sup> the celebrated engineer, the writer, when referring to that gentleman's plans for Irish works, introduces some interesting remarks on the Irish towers, which, as coming from the pen of a practical man, are considered of sufficient interest to be extracted. Some of the views of this writer are new, and his speculations cannot be considered out of place in any attempt to give a summary of the various opinions expressed on the subject.—

“Nothing in the history of masonry is more instructive than the duration of the Irish Round Towers, which will illustrate the excellent principle adopted by Mr. Telford; moreover they afford early instance of erecting such lofty buildings from within (avoiding the expense of scaffolding) as has recently been practised with decided economy in constructing steam-engine chimneys.

“An Irish Round Tower, in some instances, exceeds 100 feet in elevation; and they may be said to average at 90 feet. Their outward circumference is about 45 feet at the base, where the thickness of the wall is from 3 to 4 feet, lessening upwards in a due degree to the summit. The expense of such an edifice (if now built) would not exceed £300 or £400.

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<sup>d</sup> In the two perfect Towers of Ulster, Antrim and Down: h, there are only four apertures in the upper story; and, in Tory, which is nearly perfect, the number seems to have been the same.

<sup>e</sup> This does not apply to the Ulster Towers as far as

the solid base is concerned

<sup>f</sup> When describing the Ulster towers the height of the doorway will be given.

<sup>g</sup> Dr. Petrie.

<sup>h</sup> Note at page 42.

“About 120 of these towers are known to have existed in Ireland, and 90 of them still remain in various stages of decay, with the exception of a few still perfect to the very coping-stone of the roof. These slender edifices (some of them) have withstood the wind and the rain and casual injury, during 1,000 years; for, although the too frequent exaggeration of Irish antiquaries and historians has created very general incredulity, and in consequence, inattention to what is really true of the Western Island, and of its comparative civilization at an early date, it is highly probable that these towers were built in the course of the 500 years preceding the Norman conquest of England: that they were Christian edifices, and in reality the bell-towers of ancient churches, is proved by their constant connection with ruined churches and ancient burial-grounds in Ireland; and, in Scotland—which received Christianity from Ireland—the church of Brechin affords an example of a Round Tower annexed to the south transept, and now entered from it. Over the original entrance of this tower (closed with masonry when the church was built, and another door-way made) is sculptured, in rude relief, the Virgin Mother and her Babe.

“The origin of these Towers is from the Greek Church; and the Turkish disciples of Mahomet adopted them under the name of Minarets, as convenient for the same purpose of summoning the faithful to prayer; substituting merely the well-trained voice of the Mollah for the small bell, not permitted by their religion. In the decline of the Constantinopolitan empire, and long before the Turcoman invaders approached the capital, civilized occupations fled before them, and Greek architects were employed to adorn Italy with the magnificent churches and bell-towers of the middle ages.

“St. Mark’s, at Venice, and its adjacent Campanile, are perhaps some of the earliest productions of the Greek fugitives, who afterwards, in the confidence of their art, not only built Round Towers in Italy, but even built some of them purposely aslope from the perpendicular; thus striking the mind of the beholder with an incongruous sensation of the known fact of their long duration and the appearance of immediate downfall.

“There is no difficulty in supposing that some of the emigrant Greeks were attracted by the fame of Ireland,—then the learned and the pious,—to settle there, and imitate, in suitable manner, the parish churches of their native land in the East. Egypt, the most conspicuous member of the Greek Church, was not likely to be deficient in religious edifices; and the most famous of her sainted hermits is distinguished as Simon Stylites, from his ascetic residence on the top of a pillar,—in fact a Round Tower, connected with religious purposes. All things considered, in a subject confessedly obscure, the best conjecture will perhaps attribute the date of the Irish Round Towers to the four or five centuries of which the reign of Charlemagne may be taken as the middle point.



“The duration of these slender Towers is worthy the attention not only of the antiquary but much more of the architect. The first element of superior durability is seen in the large solid basement or substruction, which was almost unavoidable from the position of the doorway at some distance from the ground; nor could the small diameter of the interior have admitted the entrance of timber spars for successive ladders, unless thrust upwards from a surface lower than the doorway. Among the 90 towers, which, in various states of decay, are still extant in Ireland, there are probably various specimens of the builder’s art; the generality consist of that kind of careful masonry, called “spawled rubble”; in which small stones shaped by the hammer (in default of suitable stones at hand) are placed in every interstice of the larger stones, so that very little mortar is intermixed in the body of the wall, which is raised stage by stage of convenient height; the outside of spawled masonry especially presenting an almost uninterrupted surface of stone; supplementary splinters being carefully inserted in the joints of the undried wall.

“The seemingly rude coverings of these towers are perhaps the best—that is, the most durable—ever devised by human wit. The arch, familiar to the Greeks of the Lower Empire, could not be introduced where lateral abutment was impossible; and timber support was out of the question: so that the overlapping of flat stones consolidated by mortar into a hollow cone, was perhaps the only resource; and a few of these stone roofs still remain surmounted by their cap-stone. A civil engineer, much connected with Mr. Telford’s occasional missions to Ireland, has remarked, that the four windows (or narrow loop-holes) of these Towers, near the summit, very exactly accord with the four points of the compass; but some of the Towers have no more than two such windows; some more in number than four.”

Dr. Petrie states “that spawled is also the style of masonry of the most ancient churches; but, it should be added, that in the interior of the walls of both, grouting is abundantly used.” “In some instances, however,” he continues, “the Towers present a surface of ashlar masonry, but rarely laid in courses perfectly regular, both externally and internally, though more usually on the exterior only; and, in a few instances, the lower portion of the Towers exhibits less regularity than the upper parts.”

At Drumlane, the writer considers it proper to remark, the reverse of Dr. Petrie’s statement is observed; for, in that instance the lower part of the Tower is composed of ashlar of excellent workmanship, while what remains of the superstructure is of the very commonest rubble-work, so that it presents the appearance of the upper portion being a much more ancient work than the lower; and, if the parts were reversed, the general opinion would be, that a more highly civilized people, not wishing to destroy an old work, had continued it in a superior style. At Devenish, certainly the most elaborate work of this kind in the Province, there is an excellent example. The stones seem to have been dressed on the spot to suit the very situations in which they are placed, and the ashlar masonry has not been carried

up in regular courses ; but the stones are laid as best suited the builder's convenience, and proof is given of his having been no mean workman, in the great skill displayed in adapting the materials furnished to him to their positions in the edifice. Thus, in some places it happens, that one large mass of the sand-stone employed occupies so great a space that two or three courses of stones, of the ordinary size used, have been built in before the work was again brought to a level ; and in other cases, where a course was incomplete, and he did not wish to introduce a small stone, a large block in the next course was dressed so as to have a projection on its lower surface of the proper size to fill up the vacancy. The interior of this tower is as regularly dressed as the exterior, and has been happily enough described by Archdall as resembling the smoothness of a gun barrel.

The doorways and openings of the Round Towers present varieties of construction which will be described hereafter ; the former, it may be added, are either semicircular or square headed, and the latter, according to circumstances quadrangular, or arched, or pointed.

On the subject of Round Towers everything written, previous to a comparatively recent period, was vague and unsatisfactory ; and the determination of their uses and periods of erection had not been arrived at. It was on this account, therefore, that the Royal Irish Academy, with a view to the decision of all the questions connected with them, offered the prize for the best essay on this subject, which, after mature deliberation, was awarded, in 1833, to the eminent antiquary, Dr. Petrie. The first part of his admirable work has been published, and the literary world are anxiously expecting its completion. The same competition elicited a singular, though talented, essay, afterwards published by its author, Mr. O'Brien, in which these towers are considered as monuments of a peculiar Eastern superstition, and had the further effect of re-awakening enquiry into the proofs adduced in favour of the Pagan or Christian origin.

It would be impossible, in the confined limits of a memoir such as this, to follow the different writers who have discussed the subject of Irish Round Towers through the course of reasoning they have respectively pursued ; but, at the same time, it seems advisable briefly to notice the theories that have been advanced on the subject from time to time,—a task of some difficulty from the manner in which they are intermingled: those who profess to hold similar views being not unfrequently found in the position of antagonists, as in the case of the advocates of a Pagan Eastern origin, who differ in opinion as to the purpose of the buildings themselves, which is in reality the more important question.

#### THEORIES.

An unnecessary complexity in the consideration of this question has arisen from the attempt made by enquirers (believing the principle of imitation so strong in human nature that mankind are always copying from some previous model) to trace every building to some type ; while in fact it is much

more probable that the circumstances of the individual, or tribe, or nation, have directed in a particular line the tendency at all times exhibited by human intelligence to perpetuate the memory of remarkable events by monuments more or less elaborate in form, and to testify its veneration for a superior existence by the creation of altars. Hence, no doubt, we have the earthen mounds so common in all parts of the old and new worlds, and of which numerous examples still remain in Ireland; hence, also, the Cromleach, the rude altar-tomb, and, as civilization advanced, the more perfect buildings which evidence a high constructive skill.

Of stone works two great divisions present themselves; those that may be considered the earlier, such as the Cromleach, the pillar-stone, the cairn; in which the materials are held together by their own gravity without cement; and the later, to which the term of "fabric" is more properly confined, inasmuch as the use of cement forms a distinguishing feature in their construction: for the artisan had then discovered that by using smaller blocks with cement, an erection equally durable, and of more finished outline, could be built with less expenditure of time and labour than in those works to which the term *Cyclopean* has been, perhaps too loosely, applied. In the former case the inhabitants of a country seem to have contributed, either voluntarily, or under the coercion of a despotic government, their mere physical force to effect a purpose; in the latter, the influence of mind becomes apparent, and a class of operatives present themselves (the Goban Saers of Irish tradition) having as their province to embody the feelings of a community somewhat advanced in its social views.

It is not denied that all men are of one blood; but it is not a necessary conclusion that, from age to age, as the human family extended its branches, each new colony was a mere copyist of some older people: on the contrary, it is more reasonable to believe that, with the same general powers of mind, more or less developed, and more or less influenced by local circumstances, each people adopted customs for itself. Nor is it remarkable that reasoning beings should so act: for we find that even the instincts of the inferior animals are in like manner influenced by circumstances; of which many remarkable examples might be adduced. This tendency of the species to perform, under similar circumstances and at the same stages of civilization, certain acts, to use the same materials, and to form their implements of like shape, deserves the serious attention of every inquirer into the history of human progress. The brazen spears of Homer's heroes are almost repeated in the bronze arms found in Ireland. The flint arrow-heads found in such vast quantities on the fields of Ulster are perfectly identical with those discovered from one extremity to the other of the great American continent. The same may be said of the stone hatchets found in Ireland, and those still used in New Zealand, which it is often impossible to distinguish from one another. Indeed there is no better method of determining the uses of ancient Celtic implements, than to ascertain how the uncivilized man of the present day uses his. Captain Thomas Graves, R. N., saw the natives of Tierra del Fuego in the actual process of manufacturing their flint arrow points: and Mr. G. A. Thomson, in the extensive collection

presented by him to the Belfast Museum, included the very tools which he saw used in the fabrication of stone hatchets; so that, should similar tools at any time be found in our own country, it will not be difficult to determine the use to which they were originally applied. It is not, however, a necessary conclusion that this similarity is the result of imitation.

The discussion respecting Round Towers (which are generally admitted to be genuine Irish works) may be considered as confined to the question of their Pagan or Christian origin—under one or other of which heads all other questions relating to them may be arranged. There is, indeed, a class of writers who believe them to have been erected by the Danes, but not with the view of the celebration of Christian rites.

*The Danes*, in the estimation of the uneducated Irish, appear to have succeeded the giants as wonder-workers; and they have thus presented an easy solution to every antiquarian question: for it was quite sufficient to attribute to this remarkable nation every work of whose erection no record existed. Hence they have received the credit, not of the Round Towers only, but of every earthen mound met with in this country. This might, perhaps, appear to be not an unreasonable view for the ignorant to take, were it not that the Danes are at the same time looked upon, and certainly with more probability, as destroyers of every work of peace existing in the countries they ravaged. Nor is this view confined to Ireland: it is proved by the history of the sister island, where the memory of this remarkable people is always associated with the idea of destruction. It has been asked why they should have spared the Round Towers, which are known to have existed at the time of their several invasions? To some this appears a difficult question:—it may be solved however, by the reflection that, the destruction of these buildings at the moment of conquest, was not a very easy performance, and it may be supposed that they were afterwards found convenient for the conquerors themselves as places of defence.

*The Phœnician or Eastern origin* of these buildings is the first which presents itself for consideration, at least in as far as those supporters of it are concerned who consider them Pagan, and suppose as such that they were fire-temples, or connected with Druidical observances, or used for astronomical purposes, who may be considered as one class; while a second confine their views to the theory of O'Brien, who supposes them to be Phallic emblems connected with Buddhist worship. When the Christian theory is under consideration it will be seen that some of its advocates also endeavour to show a resemblance to ecclesiastical buildings in the East.

Dr. Petrie in his great work (to which every inquirer in this field of Archæology must now make frequent reference) assumes General Vallancey as the great originator of the first class of views, and proceeds, certainly in a masterly manner, to disprove the reasoning on which that enthusiastic, but at the same time unguarded antiquary has built his theory. Into a brief notice like this it is impossible to condense the statements of the disciples of this school; which is the less to be regretted as Dr. Petrie has given up a considerable portion at the commencement of his volume for this purpose:



and it must be confessed that the thread intended for our guidance through the mazes in which we find ourselves involved when we endeavour to follow the arguments of those theorists, is of such unequal texture, and so changeable in its hue, that the result is dissatisfaction—certainly not conviction. If such would be the reader's feelings when having nothing before him but the case of the supporters, it is difficult to resist the reasoning of Dr. Petrie, which is calculated to convey to an unprejudiced mind the conviction that Vallancey altogether failed in establishing his favourite theory. A resemblance to the minarets of the East, or the mere fact of the ancient Persians and Irish having been fire-worshippers, does not show that the Round Towers were fire-temples. The present writer does not pretend to be capable of examining the conjectural etymologies, taken from the Persian language, produced in support of this theory, and can only regret that some oriental scholar, with the additional light thrown on such enquiries since the General's time, has not taken up this branch of the subject; for it may be that errors as important have crept into this part of the argument as are shown to have occurred with regard to the meaning of Irish words.

It is only an act of justice, however, to remind the reader that facilities for accurate investigation have been greatly increased since the General wrote his papers in the "Collectanea De Rebus Hibernicis," and that in the case of reference to Irish records he may have been deceived by persons on whose judgment he relied: it is indeed probable that an officer having public duties to perform could not acquire a very critical knowledge of the Irish language as spoken and written at various periods; so that Vallancey may have been thrown under the influence of Irish scholars possessed of little judgment, but with just enough of learning to aid in the support of an hypothesis that had taken firm hold on his mind. It must also be recollected that the affinity between the Irish and Sanscrit languages, since so fully established by Pietet, afforded some plausibility to his views. Had such men as Dr. O'Donovan and Mr. Eugene Curry been at hand to direct General Vallancey in his investigation of the Annals and the ancient authorities, he might have been prevented from committing many of the errors charged against him. Indeed we may pardon the mistake of the Saxon when we find our own countryman, Dr. O'Conor—certainly an eminent Irish scholar—blundering, as he is shown to have done, in his translation of some Irish passages connected with the subject of the Round Towers: for perhaps there is not to be found in any literary controversy a more complete exposure of error than Dr. Petrie's refutation of his explanation of the words "Fidh neimhhdh" on which the supporters of the Pagan theory have so broadly built. It is true that O'Brien also exposes Dr. O'Conor's mistake as "a conjecture of the most lunatic ostentation;" but he himself produces a translation, more ingenious perhaps, but equally erroneous.

The writer has considered it just to defend General Vallancey from the sweeping charges often made against him. His faults were in some measure those of the period in which he lived; and any one who recollects Dr. Maitland's exposure of the loose mode of quoting authorities observable in

the histories of Hume, Robertson, Henry, and others, will do well to pause before joining in a wholesale condemnation of Vallancey.

It is impossible here to analyze the extraordinary work of O'Brien, which must be read in full to be appreciated. It certainly does not bring conviction to the mind of the accuracy of the opinions advocated; but it must always hold its place amongst Irish archaeological books as one displaying great, it may perhaps be said, misapplied, talent: still it is difficult to deny that it is a work which few men could have written; and we cannot avoid the expression of regret that so gifted an individual should have been cut off in early youth, and not have survived until his views were rounded into form by attrition with those of more experienced enquirers.

*Ecclesiastical Theory.*—Dr. Smith, so well known by his topographical histories, supports this view; and, as reference is often made to him, and particularly to his statement respecting Irish MSS. mentioning the Towers, it is thought right to quote the very words:—"I was formerly of opinion," he says, "that they were built for the residence of anchorites; and this conjecture was founded from such kind of pillars having been erected in the Eastern countries for the reception of monks, who lived on the top of them, as is mentioned by Evagrius in the life of St. Symeon the Stylite, so called from his living in a pillar forty years, as Petrus Galesinius reports. And it seems probable that our Irish Asceticks had the models of these buildings originally from Asia, which they early visited, as appears from several lives of the Irish saints; but the use to which our ancient Irish MSS. put these Towers was to imprison penitents. Some of our writers have named them *Inclusoria*, and *Arcti Inclusorii Ergastula*—'The prisons of a narrow enclosure;' particularly in the life of Dunchad O'Braoin, abbot of Clonmacnois, into which prison, it is said, he betook himself, where he died in 987.\* The Irish name for a penance is *Turris*, i.e. the Latin name for a 'Tower,' derived from penitents being imprisoned in them. And 'tis no less certain that all the Irish ecclesiastical words are directly taken from the Latin, as *Temple*, *Aghish*, *Ashbeg*, &c., from 'Templum,' 'Ecclesia,' 'Episcopus,' &c. The MSS. add, that these penitents were placed on the top of the tower, and, having made a probation of a particular number of days, according to their crimes, they were admitted to descend to the next floor, and so on, till they came to the door, which always faced the entrance of the church, where they stood and received the absolution of the clergy and blessings of the people, as some of our Irish MSS. particularly relate. In an ancient Irish MS., containing some annals of Munster, there is mention made of the building of the Tower of Kineth about the year 1015, soon after the celebrated battle of Clontarf."

The above extract is taken from the History of Cork. In the History of Waterford we find the

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\* Mr. Eugene Curry, a very high authority, holds the same opinion as Dr. O'Donovan (see Dr. Petrie's work, p. lix.) that Dr. Smith was deceived in this matter, and had not seen any MSS. It is also to be observed that the expression used is very vague, and leads to the inference that the information was derived through a second person.



following remark respecting the Ardmore tower:—"It has, no doubt, been used for a bellfry or steeple, there being towards the top not only four opposite windows to let out the sound, but also three pieces of oak still remaining, on which the bell was hung. There are also two channels cut in the eill of the door, where the rope came out, the ringer standing below the door withoutside. . . . The roof is pyramidal, being of stone very well cut and closely jointed together, being as white and fresh as if but newly done. . . . On the top a kind of cross, like a crutch, still remains."

Mr. Harris, another distinguished Irish writer, had previously compared the Round Towers to pillars in the East used for penitential purposes; and, in confirmation, stated that a tradition existed of an anchorite having lived on the summit of Drumlane tower, in the county of Cavan, "which retained the name of Cloch-aneoire, or the stone of the anchorite."\* Mr. Peter Collinson, in the first volume of the *Archæologia*, has repeated Dr. Smith's views of the Towers being intended for places of penance; and also mentions that Sir Thomas Molyneux supports the idea of the Towers having been bellfries. He further quotes the allusion made by Smith to Irish manuscripts.

The paper of Mr. Collinson is combatted in the succeeding volume of the same work by Mr. O. S. Brereton, who, in communicating the result of personal examination, denies that the Irish Towers give an indication of having contained any floor except the one forming a room within ten feet of the top. He seems to lean to a belief of the Pagan origin theory; for, although he considers the buildings as constructed by the Irish, he at the same time looks on them as belonging to an age which preceded the use of bells. He considers the Towers rather as ancient Irish than as either Pictish or Danish. He had seen Abernethy Tower in Scotland, and objects to the opinion of Gordon that it is a work of the Picts. "What reason there is," he remarks, "for such a conjecture, I do not see: I rather think we may conclude, when the Irish made their incursions into Scotland, they built two towers there, after the model of so many they left behind them in Ireland. However I deem their antiquity greatly to precede the use of bells,—*cast* ones at least,—in that country; and, from their situation near churches, and having a floor and windows only at the top, I verily believe their principal use to have been to receive a person to call the people to worship with some wind instrument, which would be heard from a much greater distance than small *uncast* bells possibly could." He gives his own experience of a similar custom in Holland, and further suggests (as was the practice at one time in Wales,) that a watchman may have stood in the Tower during Church service to guard the houses of the people and their property in their absence. Earl Morton and Bishop Pocock (this writer states) agree with him, "so he is not singular." He does not give any credence to the "Ergastula" theory.

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\* The writer is not aware of this tradition existing at present. He recollects, when pursuing his enquiries at Drumlane, being shewn what was said to be the remains of a cell, at some distance from the church, wherein tradition said a recluse had at some period resided.

It is almost unnecessary to remark that Mr. Collinson could not have examined the interior of the Round Towers with much attention, otherwise he would have observed the evident indications of a preparation for floors at regular intervals; unless indeed he considered these as signs of landing-places, and does not acknowledge as regular floors the stages for supporting the ladder that led to the summit.—

In a later volume of the same work the Reverend Thomas Harmer published some notices of these Towers, where, after mentioning the difficulty of arriving at a conclusion, he quotes from a modern Greek author, Signor Lusignan, the description of a square Tower connected with a religious edifice in the Holy Land, called the monastery of Saint Sabba, of which he procured some further particulars from the author himself.

“On the outside of the wall” (the statement proceeds,) and on the west (of the monastery) is a square Tower of three stories, and of twelve yards in diameter, in which two or three hermits shut themselves, who live in a very austere manner.—On the upper story is a bell, which, whenever any visitors come from Jerusalem, is rung to give notice to the door-keeper of the convent for their reception.—The entrance into it is by a large stone staircase of fourteen steps, and is distant from the walls of the tower about twelve feet. On the top of the staircase is a drawbridge which communicates with the door of the tower, and to which chains are fixed on each side, and it is hoisted up from the inside of the door and never let down except necessity requires.”

The bell mentioned (this the writer seems to have discovered by communicating with the author quoted from) is not in the Tower, but in the monastery itself. Signor Lusignan does not recollect any other example in that country, or anywhere else, except on Mount Athos.\*

Sir Richard Colt Hoare, in his tour in Ireland, in 1806, expresses his opinion “that these singular buildings were erected about the same time as the stone-roofed chapels, and that they were the work of the Irish.” Of course it may be understood from this quotation that the writer, who is no mean authority, adopted the opinion of Gerald Barry, that they were ecclesiastical. A later English tourist, Mr. Robert Gregg, advocates the same views in his paper published some years ago in the *Manchester Transactions*.

Mr. Wilkinson† is an advocate of the Christian theory, and believes the idea of the towers was derived from the Continent. “The Round Towers of Ireland,” he remarks, “which, in the singu-

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\*“In the whole of Christiana there is one Church and one Tower; and in that tower there are four windows to the four quarters of the compass. At every quarter of an hour, through the day and night, a man pops his head out of one window or another, and sings out of each,—“Hear! ye people!”—and then tells them what quarter of an hour it is. Solitary confinement in the Hotel de Scandinavie, with that tower before one, and that voice resounding in one’s ears, must have a fatal result.”—[Miss Bunbury’s *Life in Sweden*.]

† *Practical Geology and Ancient Architecture of Ireland*, p. 66, *et seq.*

larity of their design and peculiar constructive arrangement, are monuments of which Ireland may be justly proud, were erected by the early Christians, and were constructed chiefly for the purposes of affording to them both personal security and safe depositories for the treasures of the church. With regard to the constructive peculiarities of the Round Towers, it is first intended to show that they possess features decidedly in common with the architecture of the Norman period, under which designation is embraced the architecture of the Lombards and Normans before remarked on; it is more particularly entitled to the name of Norman, from their occupying the country nearest to the British Isles, which was the high road from Rome, and it was chiefly through that source that our architecture has been derived, although the priests may have emigrated from the Eastern or Western Empire. The chief peculiarity of the Norman architecture is the circular form of the arch; in arched edifices the doors are much elaborated by repeated columns and successive arches, narrowing in width as they recede into the wall: the character of the masonry is also that of squared masonry, with horizontal courses and vertical joints, where the stone admits of working."

Mr. Wilkinson then goes on to point out the prevalence of the circular-headed doorway as in favour of his view, and that "the masonry in several of the structures is of the exact character peculiar to Norman buildings."—"A more conclusive argument, and one that is more evident to the general reader, is, however, the elaborated execution of the masonry in some of the doorways, displaying some of the finest examples of Norman architecture and construction, and of a character exactly similar to that of the doors of later churches in the localities of these buildings, whose construction in the style of Norman architecture, I presume, is not to be disputed." A reference is then made to the elaborately designed doorway of Timahoe Tower, of which a drawing is given, and to the doorway of Killeslin church "at no great distance;" also to the entrance to Kildare Tower, which is figured as "another fine example of Norman architecture."

Mr. Wilkinson has not succeeded, it will perhaps be generally admitted, in establishing the really important question of how the design of the Irish Tower originated; nor has he produced any proof that they are not an original design of the Irish themselves. That in after ages this may have been improved on, is a very probable circumstance, and no doubt resulted in such works as Timahoe, or Kildare, or Devenish; and it is not difficult to understand that the Irish ecclesiastics, who carried their national form of Tower into Scotland, may have consented to changes of detail in the ornamentation to suit the taste of an age posterior to that in which the primary design had its origin, though they, at the same time, from custom used the prescribed form of their own country.

It is almost unnecessary to remark that Dr. Petrie considers these buildings ecclesiastical, serving the joint purpose of *belfries* and "*keeps*, or places of strength in which the sacred utensils, books, relics, and other valuables, were deposited, and into which the ecclesiastics to whom they belonged could retire for security, in case of sudden predatory attack." Two cases are mentioned

in the subsequent pages, which may be considered as bearing on this view of the question: the superior construction of the lower part of the Tower at Drumlane, and the secret chamber in the one at Tory.

The writer's attention was a few years ago attracted to the peculiar form of a stair-tower, in the ancient church of Hythe, in Kent, by his friend Captain Hardeastle, who was much struck, on coming to this country, by the resemblance of the Irish Towers to one familiar to him in England. By the politeness of Alfred Burges, Esq., the eminent engineer, the following particulars have been obtained respecting this Tower, as also the drawing from which the accompanying wood-cut was made.

"Yesterday I paid a visit to Hythe from Dover, and without much difficulty found the object of my enquiry; the position is precisely as shown upon the sketch, being at the N.W. angle of the chancel. The external appearance you may judge of by the enclosed sketch; the masonry is similar in character to that of the church—*rubble*; the mortar forming a large proportion of the mass. The roof is also of rubble masonry; there are the remains of a thin projecting course where the roof

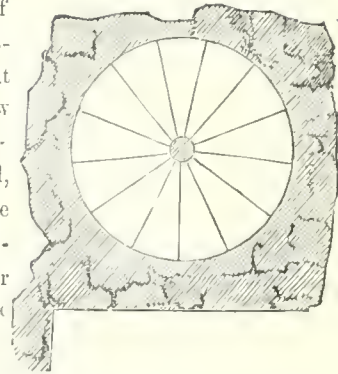


leaves the upright of the wall; this may have been a moulded course. One small window is shown in



the sketch; and on the opposite side is a narrow slit or cyclet hole for the admission of light and air:—so much for the exterior.

“The lower part of the turret (I mean that portion below the roof of the church, is square upon plan, looking like a great pier or buttress in the church. The interior of the turret is circular, about 4 feet 9 inches in diameter: entered from the church by a narrow doorway level with the pavement, a stone stair (a common turn-pike stair, with stone newell) leads up to the roof over the chancel, at which level there is a doorway similar to the one below. The inside masonry is of the same description as the outside; the thickness of the wall about 18 inches. The roof inside is circular or domed, with cut stone cross-ribs; the part between is rough stone and mortar.



“The stair-case originally led to the rood-loft, the doorway to which is now filled in; a few steps up another doorway communicates with the triforium, and, a few steps higher, opens to a passage over the chancel arch, where originally a window had been opened looking into the chancel. This passage, no doubt, also communicated with the triforium on the south side of the chancel.

“From the above I think there can be no doubt of the original use of this part of the building, viz.,—a stair-tower, of which most good churches had one, and many two. In some churches they formed a marked feature in the elevation, being raised above the roof and finished crochets, &c.

“The stone steps, I have not the least doubt, were put in at the time of building: the lower ones are the most worn, having been used (as the man who attended me observed) the most, being the way to the rood-loft. This part of the church (the chancel) is a very interesting example of the “first pointed.” The east window is very good.”\*

Within the last few years the *sepulchral* origin of Irish Round Towers has excited some interest; having been taken up vigorously in this country by the South Munster Antiquarian Society of Cork. Ardmore, in the County of Waterford, was the first of these structures examined by this body, and in it the remains of *two skeletons* are reported to have been discovered. At Cloyne, in the County of Cork, three others were found; and at Roscrea several fragments, but no distinct skeleton. In all these cases a flooring of lime or concrete was found over the remains; and in Ardmore and Cloyne Towers, a stone floor lay beneath. In the anxiety, however, to ascertain the simple fact of the use of the towers as burial-places, little importance appears to

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\* A Round Tower is figured, in architectural works, in connexion with Beekley church, in Oxfordshire, having a close resemblance to the Irish buildings. Little Saxham church, Suffolk, has also a truncated Round Tower; this, however, is built of flints, and in this respect differs essentially from any in this country.

have been attached to the preservation of the bones themselves; and it is a subject of much regret that in all these investigations the archaeological value of human remains found in such remarkable situations was overlooked, as from the absence of this additional information the interest arising from the inquiry is much diminished.

The accompanying lithographic illustration is a *fac-simile* of a rude drawing on a map preserved in the State Paper Office. It offers a reply to an argument used by Dr. Petrie, Dr. Wilde, and others, against the views of the supporters of the "sepulchral" theory, to the effect that Towers may have been erected within burying-grounds, and that either the human remains were thrown into the buildings, long after their erection, or that the builders, with a proper reverence for the dead when erecting a Tower in a burial-ground, instead of disturbing existing remains, included them within the walls. In the course of the present notice it is proposed to adduce other reasons against the views just referred to; it is, therefore, only necessary to note here what appears to be shown by the drawing, namely, that there was a period when Clones Round Tower was not surrounded, as at present, by a burying-ground, and that in the reign of Elizabeth it stood detached from all other buildings. It has a further interest: for it shows that while the parties who prepared the map for the English Government marked correctly the uses of other buildings as *ecclesiastical*, their own experience did not lead them to infer that the Round Tower there shown was a *belfry*, and that they did not receive any such information from the inhabitants. This seems a fair inference from the fact of its being named in the map "*a watch tower*."

Within the present year (1854) additional interest has been given to the subject of Round Towers by the publication of some researches in the Greek islands by Captain Thomas Graves, of the Royal Navy; and a very valuable communication in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature, from that gentleman and Colonel Leake, is at press. The writer has to acknowledge the politeness of the latter gentleman, who has sent him drawings of two Towers nearly perfect, one in the island of Naxos, the other in the island of Andros, and of the remains of another, showing the entrance to a similar building in the island of Siphnos. The following notice is found in the proceedings of the Society just mentioned, under date 8th March, 1854:—

"Mr. Vaux read a paper, communicated by Colonel Leake, V.P., illustrative of some drawings, forwarded to him by Captain Graves, R.N., of ruined Hellenic Round Towers, still existing in the islands of Andros, Ceos, Cythnos, Seriphos, Siphnos, Naxos, and Paros. In a letter addressed by Captain Graves to Colonel Leake, he notices their resemblance to the Round Towers of Ireland. The Irish Round Towers," he adds, "when perfect, are generally from 70 to 100 feet in height, and from 50 to 60 feet in circumference. *Pyrghi* in the Greek Islands—those of Andros and Naxos, for example—are about 60 feet high, and generally exceed the Irish Towers in circumference by about 40 feet." Colonel Leake remarks that, though remains of *Pyrghi* are found in many parts of



Greece, it is extremely rare to meet with them in a state of preservation so perfect as those described by Captain Graves; and that they are seldom so near to one another as they appear to have been in Siphnos, where they were evidently intended for the *defence of the silver mines*, for which that island was celebrated. It is probable that in Ceos, Cythnos, and Seriphos they were used for the same purpose; these three islands being apparently the summit of a ridge, in continuation of the argentiferous mountain Laureion, in Attica. In Seriphos, traces of ancient mines were noticed by the surveying officers. The drawings were accompanied by a brief memoir on each of the islands.

Having thus briefly glanced at the principal opinions advanced regarding the origin of the Irish Round Towers, it may be remarked as worthy of notice that all the writers on this subject seem to have overlooked the fact of the extraordinary similarity existing amongst the buildings themselves; a similarity certainly not observable in Christian churches and spires, nor, as far as the writer is aware, even in the minarets and mosques of the Mahometans, to which latter they have been often compared. In other countries of Europe a diversity of style is very observable: and a similarity of character, if prevailing at all, is generally confined to a limited district. In the case of the Irish Towers a remarkable family likeness is preserved throughout: and, whether they are found in the more fertile districts, or in the barren plains, or almost inaccessible islands, the general character never varies. There seems little doubt that some cause for this similarity existed in the early ages of Irish civilization; and it is not improbable that the inquiry now carrying on respecting the Brehon laws will enable archæologists to solve this difficulty. Dr. Petrie, at page 391 of his work, so often referred to, gives a very interesting extract from a "fragment of a commentary on a Brehon law, relative to the payment of artificers for the erection of three chief buildings which are usually found grouped together in ecclesiastical establishments, namely, the *Duirtheach*, *Dainhliag*, and *Cloitheach*." This leads to the inference that the plan of such buildings was an established rule not likely to be departed from: and it seems not improbable that the Irish, being fondly attached to the memory of the first missionaries who had introduced Christianity amongst them, endeavoured to conform to a plan originally adopted under their instructions; for that they were very tenacious in maintaining their own views is fully borne out by the ecclesiastical history of the country. Of this the discussion respecting the time of holding Easter is a familiar example. It may also be the case that the number of small churches sometimes found clustered together arose from a desire to maintain the ancient form and size even when additional accommodation was required; so that, instead of rebuilding and enlarging the original edifice, they preferred erecting another small one in its vicinity.

The Danish element, which eventually became so important in the population of Ireland, seems to have paved the way for great changes in the national church, by connecting itself with the English establishment rather than by conforming to the rules of the Irish clergy: and from this period the Papal influence appears to have gradually increased, until it was finally confirmed by the Norman invaders.

Less than half-a-century before this event, Malachy, Bishop of Down, and afterwards Archbishop of Armagh, exerted all his influence in favour of the newly introduced system; and it is stated in his life, that one of the objections made to his innovations was the changing of the form and size of the ecclesiastical buildings. The English invaders, therefore, seemed to have found the Irish church in a transition state; and we may suppose that all their prejudices were enlisted against the ancient primitive Christianity of the Irish; so much so that ecclesiastics, like Giraldus Cambrensis, were loath to acknowledge the Irish clergy as members of what they called "the Church." For it is a singular fact, that the expression used by this author in reference to the Round Towers does not occur in his account of the country itself; but when recording a superstition of the fishermen at Lough Neagh, who were so precise in their description of a submerged city as to describe its Round Towers, which the natives considered ecclesiastical, but to which Giraldus with his Norman prejudices would not of himself perhaps have applied this expression, as he probably did not consider them the ecclesiastical buildings of a true Church.

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The circumstances which led the writer of the present article to direct his attention to the subject of the Ulster Round Towers were the following:—

The Rev. Horatio Maunsell (the incumbent of the parish, where it is situated) having at the suggestion of a friend in England determined to excavate the interior of the Round Tower of Drumbo, in the Co. of Down, the writer along with the late William Thompson, Esq., received an invitation from the proprietor of the estate, Robert Callwell, Esq., to be present; and his attention having been thus directed to the subject, and his curiosity excited by the result, he was induced subsequently to examine the other Round Towers of Ulster.

Mr. J. Grattan, of Belfast, who on several occasions, assisted in these investigations, has agreed to prepare a notice of the human remains found in several of these buildings, which, it is hoped, may prove interesting at a period like the present when the history of the human family is considered so important a branch of study. The drawings and illustrations were most of them executed by Mr. Burgess, of Belfast; those of the skulls having been reduced to a scale with extreme accuracy by means of a *camera lucida*. The originals have been placed in the Museum of the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society, where they are preserved for the inspection of scientific persons, and where they formed part of the great Exhibition of Irish Antiquities during the Meeting of the British Association in 1852.

The subsequent notices of the different Towers will be given in the order in which they were examined. The writer takes this opportunity of stating emphatically that no injury whatever was caused to any of these remarkable buildings by his investigations. On the contrary, Antrim Tower,

one of the most perfect, has, perhaps, been saved from destruction; as the dangerous state of its foundation, made manifest during the examination, might not otherwise have been discovered until too late. The proprietor of the building, G. J. Clarke, Esq., at once ordered the necessary repairs, which were executed according to the instructions of C. Lanyon, Esq., C.E.; who has thus been enabled to add many years to the probable duration of the THE CLOICTHEACH OF AONDRUM.

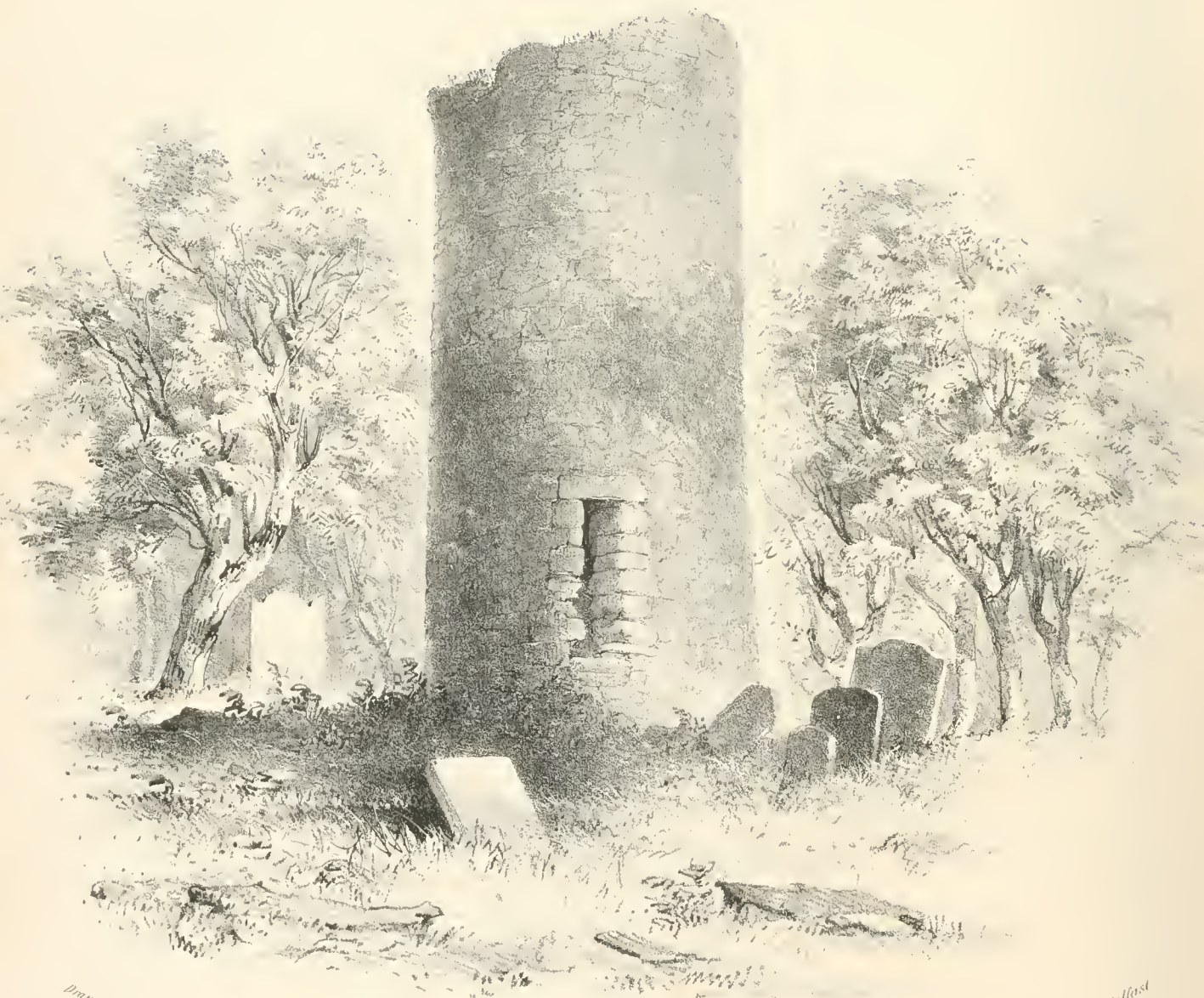


Sculptured over the Door of Antrim Tower.









*Drawn by J. Howard Burgess*

*Engr'd by M. Ward, Belfast*

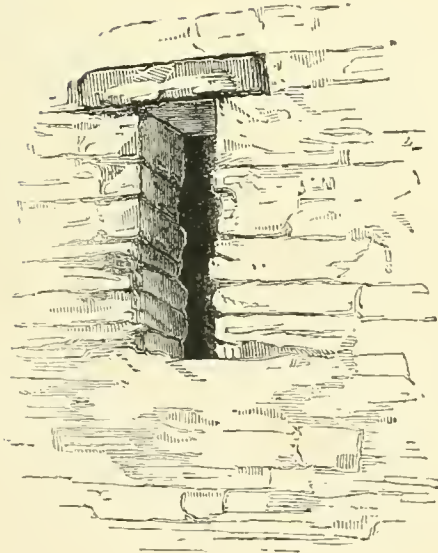
*Drumboe County Down*



## NOTICES OF THE ROUND TOWERS OF ULSTER.

### DRUMBO, COUNTY OF DOWN.

What does not fade? The tower that long has stood  
The crush of thnnder, and the warring winds,  
Shook by the slow but sure destroyer, Time,  
Now hangs in doubtful ruins o'er its base.—*Akenside.*



**HE** remains of the Round Tower of Drumbo—**DRUMBO**, *Collum bovis*, “ox-hill”—consisting of a portion of the shaft, about thirty-two feet in height,—stand in the ancient burial ground of the parish, where, it is said, some foundations of the former ecclesiastical structure remained a few years ago. In the “Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, and Connor and Dromore” the taxation of Pope Nicholas recites, as contained under the deanery of Dalboyn, in the diocese of Down, the Church of Drumbo<sup>a</sup> with its chapel. “This deanry is called *Dalvanie* in the Terrier, and *Deluin* in the Ulster Visitation. The name occurs also in the “*Trias Thaumaturga*,” where Colgan, speaking of Tulach-ruse (Tullyrusk) states it to be in the diocese of Connor and “in decanatu Dalmunensi.”—*P.* 182, *col.* 2—*n.*199. Also, where he describes Lann-

abhaich (Glenavy), as a parish church of the same diocese “in regione Del-munia in Dalaradia.”—

<sup>a</sup> *Drumboo*—Now the parish of Drumbo.—Ord. Sur., ss. 9, 15. In the life of St. Patrick, which is contained in the Book of Armagh, as also in that written by Probus, this name is expressed by the Latin words *Collum bovis*—Reeves, p. 44 n.—A religious house existed here at a very early period. St. Mochumma, abbot of Drumbo, was, according to *Ængus* the Culdee, brother of St. Domangart, whose death is placed by the Calendar of the Four Masters at the year 506. In the same Calendar, the names of Luighbo and Cumín occur at the 24th July and 10th of August, in connexion with this church.—Dr. Reeves' *Ecc. Antiq.*, p. 45 n.

p. 183, col. 1., n. 209. And again, when treating of Magh-Commuir (Muckamore), he places it "in regione Delmunia"—p. 183, col. 1, n. 211. This ecclesiastical district, which embraced a tract of country lying on either side of the river Lagan, from Spencer's Bridge, near Moira, to the Drum Bridge, near Belfast, borrowed its name and boundaries from DAL MBUINNE, ('the portion of Buinn') an ancient civil sub-territory of Dal-Aradia, which was so called from Buinn, whose father, Fergus Mac Roigh, King of Ulster, was dethroned in the year B.C. 12. It is represented by the modern rural deaneries of Hillsborough and Lisburn.<sup>b</sup> The chapel, formerly called St. Malachi's of Crumlin (CRUIM OLBHANN) "crooked glen" is now in the parish of Hillsborough.<sup>c</sup> "The Chapell of St. Malachias (situate on the church land of Crumlin, near Hillsborough, and being really no distinct parish) was a part and parcel of Drumbo."—Letter of Archdeacon Matthews to the Bishop of Derry, 1703. The old building occupied part of the present pleasure-ground of Hillsborough demesne, and the place of the cemetery was pointed out by an aged willow-tree, which was blown down in the storm of the night of January 6, 1839, and exposed in its roots several human bones, among which the fibres had insinuated themselves. The site had been changed in 1662 (not in 1636 as is stated in Archdall's Lodge, vol. 2. p. 325), and the new church was consecrated the same year. The present church, which is a monument of the munificence of its founder, was built in 1773, at the sole cost of Wills, Earl of Hillsborough.<sup>d</sup> By the charter of James I. the rectory and vicarage of Drumbo, with Hillsborough, were placed in the corps of the Archdeaconry of Down. It is probable that the rectory was at the date of the Taxation appropriate to that dignity.<sup>e</sup>

The following is the taxation—"The church of Drumbo, with the chapel, 3 marks. Tenth 4s. The vicar's portion 20s. Tenth 2s." In the record of the See Estate of Down, given by Dr. Reeves, mention is made of Drumbo with twelve carucates of land—"Item Drumbo cum duodecim carucatis." The Inquisition 17 James I. (Dr. Reeves adds in a note) finds that "the twelve towns of Drumboe are not, neither have been, in the possession of the Bishop of Down, within the memory of man. Jurors say that the twelve towns are spiritual lands."

The same Inquisition finds that the four towns of Blaris, namely, *Blaris*, *Shiane*, (now Ballintine), *Ballemanelisbery*, alias *Taghebrack* (now Taghnabrick), and *Downeagh* (now Duneight), are parcel of the possessions of the See. All these lands in Clandermot and Dalboyn, with the exception of *Dundesert*, *Mileae*, and *Drumbo*, were set in fee-farm by Bishop Todd, and are the property of Lord Hertford, for which he pays to the Bishop the annual sum of £44 6s. 2d.—[*Report of 1833, pp. 112-113*].<sup>f</sup>

In the King's Books, in the taxation of the See, we find—

"Terræ de Dromhoe.....LXs.<sup>g</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Reeves, p. 44.

<sup>c</sup> *Ord. Sur.*, ss. 14, 21. *Down*. "Crumlin, membrum Archidiaconatus, parcella de Drumbo"—*Reg. Vis.*, 1633.—*Dr. Reeves' Ecclesiastical Antiquities*.

<sup>d</sup> Reeves, p. 45.

<sup>e</sup> Reeves, p. 46.

<sup>f</sup> Reeves, p. 172.

<sup>g</sup> Reeves, p. 174.

When King James I. created a new Chapter in 1609, for the diocese of Down, which had been without one from the time of the Reformation, Drumbo was one of the benefices appropriated to the Archdeacon. <sup>h</sup>

Dr. Reeves has doubts of the entry in the Calendar of the Four Masters applying to the place now in question, and in the appendix to his work he considers the entries by Celgan, ascribing the foundation of Drumbo to St. Patrick, as applying to some place near Downpatrick.<sup>i</sup> The event in the Saint's life mentioned by Celgan, and found in the Book of Armagh as well, is of high interest as an indication of the strictness with which the father of the Irish Church insisted on the observance of the Lord's Day; abstaining from travelling himself, and preventing others from labouring at their accustomed tasks.

Ængus, the Culdee, in his tract on the mothers of the saints of Ireland, refers to a place named Drumbo, evidently not the one now under consideration :—

“ Derinilla, of the four provinces, was mother to Saints Domangart, son of Euchody, and Ailleán, and Aidan, and Muran of Fahan, and Moehumm of Drumbo, and Cillen of Achadhcaill in the territory of Lecale, on the shore of Dundrum bay.”<sup>k</sup>

Two festivals are noticed in the calendar of the O'Clery's in connexion with the abbey of Drumbo, viz.,—July 24th, Lughaidh of Drumbo; August 10, Cumin, abbot of Drumbo in Ulidia.

In the secular history of the country the references to Drumbo are few: one of some interest is found in a tract upon the princes and families of Dal Fiatach, taken from Duaid Mac Fírbis's genealogical work. Bec Boriche had twelve sons, viz.,—Edirgal, from whom the clann Edirsgel; Conco-bar, son of Bec, from whom O'Dachua, that is, Dachua son of Conco-bar, son of Bec; Ceallagh, son of Bec, from whom the clann Ceallaigh (clann Kelly) at Drumbo.<sup>l</sup> The Slut Kellies occupied the greater part of Comber and Tullynakill. On Norden's map the name *Kellies* is laid down in the situs of Comber, and *Slut Kellies* a little W.S.W. of Drumboe. Jobson's map places *the Kelles* between Castlereagh and Dufferin, on the East and South, and Slut M<sup>c</sup> O'Neale and Kinelarty on the West. The family was originally settled near Drumbo.<sup>m</sup>

In the year 1003 a battle, according to the Four Masters, was fought between the men of Ulidia and Tyrone, at a place called CRAOBH TULCA, (Creeve Tully) that is, 'the tree on the hill.' The wounded Ulidians fled to DUNEATHACH (Duneight, in the parish of Blaris?) and DRUMBO (Drumbo, the adjoining parish). In 1099 another battle was fought between the same parties at the same place, where the invaders gained the day, and afterwards cut down the CRAOBH, or 'tree,' which was probably one under which the prince of the district was inaugurated.—(See A.D. 1111.) The name is mentioned again at 1148, in connexion with the same parties, and from the narrative it would

<sup>h</sup> Reeves, 178.

<sup>i</sup> Reeves, 235.

<sup>k</sup> Reeves, 236.

<sup>l</sup> Reeves, p. 358, 359.

<sup>m</sup> Reeves, 348.

appear that the place lay towards the north of the modern County of Down, somewhere in Castle-reagh.<sup>a</sup>

According to the Ulster Visitation-book, preserved in Trinity College, Dublin, the tower of Drumbo was in a ruinous state as early as 1622. Though forming part of the Rector's freehold, the church-yard is now in the occupation of the Presbyterian parishioners, who have built their Meeting-house on this site, the church of the Establishment being at Ballylesson. In the same neighbourhood are two other remarkable monuments of antiquity;—the Giant's Ring, and the vitrified fort on Tullyard hill. The notice of this tower by Harris, in his 'County of Down,' who describes it in 1744 as being in a state not different from what it now appears, shows that its dilapidation occurred a century at least before the present time.

The following dimensions will be found accurate:—circumference at the base, 51 feet 4 inches; diameter at the base, 16 feet 4 inches; thickness of the wall, 4 feet; from the present level of the ground to the bottom of the door, which is quadrangular, 4 feet 8 inches; height of door, 5 feet 7 inches; width of door, 1 foot 8 inches at bottom, and an inch less at top. The initial letter taken from a drawing made by Mr. J. W. Murphy, exhibits the quadrangular doorway. Dr. Petrie has also delineated it with his usual accuracy. The material, however, used in the construction is not "the limestone of the country," but the greywacke of the neighbourhood, and the dimensions given above are more correct than those contained in his work.

The examination of the tower of Drumbo occupied three days, the 27th, 28th, and 29th December, 1841, and was directed by the Rev. Horatio Mannsell, the present incumbent, and Mr. Durlam, of Belvedere, who carefully noted the most minute particulars. On the last day, when the human remains were discovered, the late Mr. Thompson<sup>b</sup> and the writer were present.

For a depth of two feet, earth mixed with fragments of bones and portions of charcoal was thrown out, together with stones bearing marks of fire. The bones were evidently an accidental accumulation from the burying ground, and the stones were of the common greywacke or clay slate of the County Down, the material used in the construction of the tower. Marks of fire similar to those they presented are observable on the interior of the building itself, and this slight superficial vitrification is noticed by Dubourdiou in his Survey, published in 1802, where he remarks—"At some former time *very strong fires have burned within this building*, and the inside surface towards the bottom has the appearance of vitrification." These marks seem quite accidental, being most probably caused by fires lighted by children or persons taking shelter in the tower, to which also the charcoal may be ascribed; those on the stones, still forming part of the structure, are observable on the side opposite the door—the most likely position for a chance fire; and similar marks were not noticed on the part laid bare

<sup>a</sup> Reeves, p. 342 n.—Four Masters at the year.—see vol. 1.

<sup>b</sup> President of the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society.



by the excavation, nor to any height on the walls. The stones thrown out, it may be added, had formed a very small part indeed of the portion which has fallen. O'Brien, in his work, combats the idea of Fire Worship, insinuated by Dubourdieu, and imputes this appearance of vitrification to accident. "I cannot but here too," he says, "express more than a surmise that it was not 'the *Sacred Fire*,' which, when religiously preserved, was not allowed to break forth in those volcanoes insinuated, but in a *lambent gentle flame*, emblematical of that emanation of the Spirit of the Divinity infused, *as light from light*, into the soul of man." Such a view seems correct. Mr. O'Brien has a further allusion to this vitrified appearance of Drumbo tower, but, by an extraordinary error, he transfers the tower to the site of the Giant's Ring, that remarkable vestige of antiquity in the same county, at a few miles distance. In combating the argument in favour of the Christian origin of these towers, deduced from the fact of known ecclesiastical edifices being generally found in their vicinity, he says:—"But even this *stronghold* of the *moderns* I cut away from them by stating that, at the 'Giants' Ring,' in the County Down, the indisputable scene of *primordial* veneration, we have an instance of a Round Tower *without any church hard by*;" and while recalled by this circumstance I must observe that the vitrification manifest within the walls of that structure arose from the *burning of the dead bodies* therein, and not from the indications of the *Sacred Fire*. Having already given an opinion that these marks are unconnected with the uses for which the towers were originally intended, whatever they may have been, it is only necessary to add that the stone is one easily vitrified by a moderate application of fire, and is the same used, probably from this circumstance, as well as for convenience, in the formation of the remarkable vitrified fort at Tullyard.

A quantity of lime rubbish, formed it was supposed from the ruins of the upper part of the building, was next removed. At the depth of four feet, the nature of the material changed to a rich black mould formed of decomposed vegetable substances, having charcoal and bones intermixed; the bones being principally those of the lower animals; among others some boars' tusks and jaws, a few short horns of oxen, and other remains of those animals, were distinguished by Mr. Thompson. Below this stratum, which continued to a depth of about three feet, a very different one was reached at a total depth of seven feet from the level at which the excavation commenced. It was similar to the soil of the neighbourhood, and of a yellowish or light brown colour. This was covered, as far as could be traced, by a slight coating of mortar about an inch in thickness. Almost immediately under this floor, a *human skeleton* was discovered, extended nearly east and west: the head reposing at the western side, and the opposite extremities lying towards the east. The skull was in a tolerable state of preservation; all the vertebræ remained in their places, the left arm only was found—both legs as well as the right arm being wanting. In the earth the patella of one knee was found; and parts of the ribs as well as a portion of the pelvis were distinguishable. The writer has since met in other towers with more remarkable examples of deficiency of parts than are here described; and a similar observation has, it is said, been made in the case of bodies discovered in ancient sepulchres in Cornwall,



and elsewhere. The interior diameter of the building, at the spot where the skeleton lay, is nine feet; and the body, which had evidently been interred with care, seems to have been laid at equal distances, (supposing it perfect,) from the walls at head and foot, in the line of the diameter of the tower. The lime floor appeared less perfect immediately under the door than at any other part; it is not therefore unreasonable to suppose that it had been disturbed by some former inquirer, with views very different from those of an antiquary, and whose superstitious fears may have caused him to abandon his search for treasure: still, however, there is a probability that a partial mutilation had taken place at the time of interment.

No appearance of dress or covering of any kind accompanied these remains, which, *fossil like in appearance*, lay imbedded in the soil.

The following measurements of the skeleton were taken as it lay before being disturbed:—from the crown of the head to the knee, 4 feet 3 inches; from the hip joint to the knee, 1 foot 10 inches; length of the vertebral column, 2 feet and half an inch:—or to put it more systematically—length of the head and trunk, by measurement, 2 feet 5 inches; femur or thigh bone by measurement, 1 foot 12 inches; tibia, or leg bone, by calculation, 1 foot 5½ inches; os calcis, by calculation, 5½ inches: giving as the probable height of the individual, 6 feet 2 inches.

Dr. Wilde, in his lecture on the Ethnology of the ancient Irish, delivered at the King and Queen's College of Physicians, having referred to a cast of the Drumbo skull furnished to him by Mr. Grattan, the writer avails himself of this opportunity of making a few remarks on his notice, which carries with it deservedly a great weight, in consequence of the high standing of the lecturer in the literary and scientific world. At page 14, Dr. Wilde says,—“Here, however, is a very beautiful cast of the skull found within the Round Tower of Drumbo; and the moment it was presented to me I felt convinced that if it is of a contemporaneous age with the structure beneath which it was found, then the Irish Round Tower is not the ancient building we supposed it to be; for this, compared with the other heads which I have laid before you, is of comparatively modern date. Now, nearly all the Round Towers are in connection with ancient burial-places, and this one in particular was so; and I need only dig around and without it to find many similar remains. We read that the skeleton was found at full length embedded in the clay, within the ancient structure. Now I respectfully submit it to the antiquarian world that if the Round Tower was erected as a monument over the person whose skeleton was found within it, it certainly would not have been buried thus in the simple earth without a vault or stone chamber, such as the enlightened architects who built the tower would be thoroughly acquainted with. Moreover, I do not believe that a skull, thus placed loosely in the earth without any surrounding chamber, would have remained thus perfect for the length of time which even the most modernizing antiquaries assign to the date of the Round Tower.”

The writer has no wish to enter into a controversy regarding the age indicated by the form of the skull found in this tower, or inferred from its state of preservation. By so doing he would depart

from the lime already laid down for himself, and cease to be a simple recorder of facts, one of the most important in this case being that, under a lime floor, in the very lowest part of the tower, resting on a portion of till, within the circle formed in digging the foundation, placed with care at equal distances from the walls, a skeleton was discovered to which the skull alluded to belonged, the principal bones of the body remaining in their proper positions. No one who was present, or who attends to the detail of circumstances already given, can believe that these remains had been deposited here without care or without design, or had been accidentally introduced from the adjoining burying-ground. From the manner in which the skeleton lay, the inference seems in favour of these remains being of an age contemporaneous with the tower, and that it was intended to mark respect for the individual by interring him in this place. The duration of the skull of a body deposited,—not loosely in the earth, but—compactly, and covered by a lime floor, may be difficult to calculate; and perhaps it is not easy to fix a limit in such a case, particularly when we reflect that, in all probability for centuries after its interment, the tower was a building covered at top by a conical roof, and having a strong door closing up its narrow entrance. Even after dilapidation had commenced, the fallen ruins protected the lower part where the body lay. It may be added that the circular sides of the tower, the hard clay surface below, and the floor of lime and concrete above, form a tomb, simple indeed, but not more so than we might expect to find covering the remains of those whom a comparatively rude people designed to honour.

On reaching Mr. Calwell's house, Mr. Thompson observed traces of *hair* on his shoes, which he supposed had been mixed with the clay he trod on in the tower; and Mr. Maunsell afterwards exhibited a piece of very thin metal, having some appearance of a coin; but so much corroded that a proper judgment could not be formed respecting its character.<sup>p</sup>

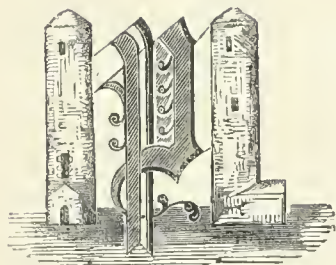
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<sup>p</sup>At pages 209 to 228 of Dr. Petrie's book, so often quoted, is a very carefully written notice on the subject of ancient Irish coins.

[*To be continued.*]

## TRUMMERY, COUNTY OF ANTRIM.

“ — Though mean and mighty rotting,  
Together have one dust,—yet Reverence  
(That Angel of the World) doth make distinction  
Of place 'twixt high and low.”—DIGBY.



**ERMISSION** having been granted by the Rev. Robert Hill, incumbent of the parish, to excavate the ruins of the Tower of Trummery, the examination took place on the 4th of June, 1842, in presence of Mr. Hill and his sons, Mr. Godwin, C.E., Mr. Grattan, Mr. Rogan (the contributor of an article respecting this tower in the *Dublin Penny Journal*), and the writer, besides several inhabitants of the neighbourhood who felt interested in the proceedings.

All that remained of this building was discovered near the north-east corner of a ruined church, within the ancient burial-ground of Rathmesk<sup>a</sup> parish. In several respects the site is deserving of notice. In the Record of the See Estates of Down, given by Dr. Reeves,<sup>b</sup> we find this parish recited :— “ Item, *Rathmesge cum duabus carucatis in temporalibus;*” but it does not occur in any very old manuscripts, which leads to the inference that, ecclesiastically, it was not of ancient fame, nor of sufficiently early foundation to be noticed in the calendars. Its want of interest in connection with the early Christianity of the country is in some measure compensated to the antiquarian by its being in the vicinity of Moira, one of the classic spots of Irish Pagan history. The battle, described as having been fought here in the seventh century, between Congal Claen and Donnall King of Ireland, is celebrated in a very curious historical romance, published some years ago by the Irish Archæological Society, which derives much additional interest from the topographical and antiquarian information with which the learned Editor, Dr. O'Donovan, has enriched its pages. An ancient pillar-stone is stated to have stood on the summit of the hill, supposed by some to have been erected over Congal Claen, one of the heroes who fell on the occasion. Mr. Rogan, in a memorandum dated 8th Oc-

<sup>a</sup> Rathmesk, now Magheramesk, a parish in the union of Aghalee.—Ord. Survey, S. 67, Antrim. The Terrier gives the name in the form Ramisq, without the modern prefix. In the townland of Trummery is the church-

yard, with the ruins of the ancient church, measuring 51 by 14 feet.—Ecc. Antiq., p. 4; Taxation, the Church of Rathmesk,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mark, Tenth 8d.

<sup>b</sup> Ecc. Antiq., p. 169.





*Casey's Quarry, near South Hill*





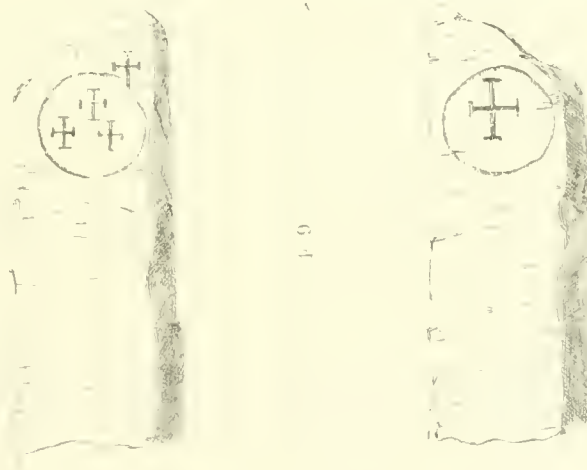


ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, DUBLIN.

HANLON. 1861



tober, 1834, describes it as having been "inerted with gray moss, and measuring about four feet eight or ten inches in height; on the side facing the north were four crosses neatly executed, three of them being within a circle. On the opposite side a large cross was observable, also encompassed by a circle. With regard to the time, or by whom erected, tradition is quite silent; but, that on some occasions this had been used as a place of interment, there cannot be any doubt, as human bones in a very decomposed state were often turned up. Report says that a former proprietor caused it to be carried away and used in the arch of a lime-kiln; but a mortality which exhibited itself amongst his farm-stock having been attributed to this cause, the stone was restored to its ancient site." In Oct. 1848, Mr. Rogan adds, "a few years subsequent to writing the above, this interesting relic was wantonly, perhaps I should say maliciously, broken to fragments, and spread on the entrance into a



field; an accurate drawing, however, was taken at one time by Mr. Alexander Colville Welsh, of Dromore, in whose possession it may be seen. The eminence on which the stone stood was many feet higher, it is said, ninety years ago, than at present, and was partly artificial. It has been since levelled in improving the farm. I am inclined to believe this is Tullough-na-Dalga (Hill of the Saints), mentioned in the account of the great battle of Magh Rath, fought in 636 or 637, when the unfortunate Congal King of Ulidia, lost his life and empire the same day." Mr. Welsh,

<sup>c</sup> The tradition is given as received, nor does the writer propose to account for the symbol of the cross employed. Tulchan na d-Tailgen is the correct orthography of "the hillock of the saints." It is inte-

resting to preserve Mr. Welsh's illustration; and, it may be added, that Mr. Hanna produces powerful arguments, which he proposes to publish, ignoring Moura as the site of this celebrated engagement.



when applied to, forwarded the sketches made by him, from which the accompanying illustrations are taken. The measurements were made by Mr. Welsh at the time, and he states, in a note received from him, as follows:—"I remember when I made the sketch (such as it is), that the stone was lying on the ground, and Mr. Rogan and I turned it over to see both sides. Had there been any characters on it I would have certainly copied them; but part of it may have been broken off, for it had been brought from its original site to where it now lay."<sup>d</sup>

From the moderate elevation on which the tower stood, the spectator looks down on the plain through which the Lagan—the Casan Line or Logia of ancient writers—pursues its course from Slieve Croob towards the Bay of Knockfergus—the *Λογία ἐκβοῦται* of Ptolemy—the Loch Laogh of Reeves. An ancient fort or rath stands to the north, and is the only work of antiquity, besides the rath of Moira, observable in the immediate neighbourhood. It is worthy of observation, that in the romance just mentioned no reference is made to the tower; at a short distance, however, a pit of rich soil was cut through, during the formation of the Ulster railway, supposed to have been caused by the decomposition of dead bodies buried there at a remote period, and thus to furnish a proof of the battle as an historical event.

Mr. Rogan's son, in the 4th volume of the *Dublin Penny Journal*, describes a cromlech in the townland of Cairuloehran, in this parish, beneath which, on its removal, three lunettes of gold were discovered; and also points out near Lady's-Bridge the site of another similar monument, which was destroyed by the engineer who erected the bridge. At some distance from the rath of Moira is the hill where the curious pillar-stone already mentioned stood, and towards the Lagan river is observed a rath,—higher up the stream another rath,—and, not far from Magheralin, on the declivity of a hill, an earth-work resembling an encampment.

No portion of the tower remained above the surface, and there was difficulty in ascertaining, from the recollection of some old inhabitants, the precise spot where it had stood. The total destruction of this building is one of many melancholy instances of the little care taken to preserve our national monuments, many of which, after braving the perils of preceding ages, have been permitted to perish within the present century. This tower is described by the Rev. John Dubourdieu, in his *Statistical*

<sup>d</sup> In a review of Dr. Reeves' *Ecclesiastical Antiquities* in the *University Magazine*, Feb. 1848, it is remarked:—"All local memory of this event (the battle) is now gone, save that one or two localities preserve names connected with it. Thus, beside the Rath of Moira, on the east, is the hill of Carn Albanagh, the burial-place of the Scottish princes, Congal's uncles; and a pillar-stone, with a rude cross and some circles engraved on it, formerly marked the site of their resting-place. On the other hand, the townland of Aughnafoskar probably preserves the name of Knock-an-choscar, from which Congal's Druid surveyed the royal army below on the first morning of the battle. Ath Ornaidh, the ford crossed by one of the armies, is probably modernised into Thorny ford, or the river at some miles distance."

Dr. O'Donovan, in a note lately received from him,

says:—"I always considered Trummery a modern term derived from *Trom*—i.e. the elders, or bore-trees growing upon the mound—Trom-Rath. There is another place of the name in the west of the county of Clare."

"Rathmesk is, of course, like Loughmesk, called after an old Irish chief. I examined the localities of Moira, rather minutely, in 1834, but have no recollection of any remarkable names, or of any names preserving any memorial whatever of the great battle. I saw the sites of several raths then lately levelled."

The reviewer in the *University Magazine*, speaking of the round tower, adds the following inaccurate observation:—"Some of the Belfast antiquaries, we believe, expedited the fall of the upper portion of Trummery tower by the ardour with which they prosecuted their search for an interment beneath."

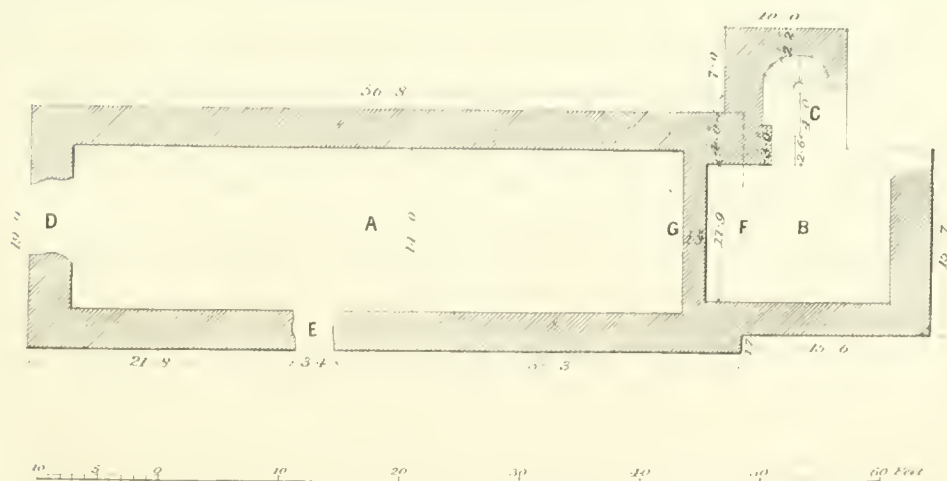
*Survey of the County of Antrim*, as standing at the date of its publication, 1812; and he gives a sketch, evidently far from correct, but showing that the conical roof was then entire. The building was 60 feet high, but the exterior part of the stone-work at about one-third of the height, and constituting nearly half the thickness of the wall, was completely destroyed. It fell in the year 1828, in consequence, it is supposed, of the ivy, by which it was partially covered, having been cut away. A view taken by Mr. Welsh, referred to in the succeeding paragraph, is the best authority remaining for its general appearance.

Mr. Rogan, who resides within a short distance of Trummery and is an accurate observer, has given an interesting notice of this tower, accompanied by a wood-cut, in the *Dublin Penny Journal* for Saturday, 21st Sept., 1833, only five years after its destruction.\* He states the height at sixty feet, and describes the roof as eupola-shaped, and turned on a frame of basket-work, forming the centering for a dome of concrete, whereon thin flags of limestone, decreasing regularly in breadth from the wall to the apex, constituted the external covering. During the present exploration several portions of this roof, still retaining marks of the rods that had formed the centering, were observed, affording a proof of the accuracy of Mr. Rogan's statement.

The ground plan in the text explains the relative position of the ruins before the commencement of the excavation; it is drawn to the scale of one-sixteenth of an inch to the foot:—

*GROUND PLAN, of Ruins at Trummery Co. Antrim.*

*1/16 of an inch to 1 foot*



\* This tower, as all the drawings show, was injured by removing the outer stones for buildings in the neighbourhood. Dean Stannus, as agent for the Marquis of

Hertford, had determined on having it repaired, but unfortunately the work was delayed too long, and the building fell some time in the year 1822.



A—representing the ancient Church of Trummery ;

C—the site of the Round Tower ;

B—the remains of a later building, which Mr. Hill stated was a sepulchral chapel erected by the Spencers, whose mansion-house still remains at a short distance. They possessed considerable property in this district ; and so far back as 1623 one of the family held a military command in the immediate neighbourhood. This chapel is in an equally ruinous condition with the other buildings.

D—marks the west window ; and

E—the chief entrance.

Before proceeding to mention the result of the investigations now detailed, it may be observed that Mr. Rogan makes the following statement in the article already referred to :—“ There were two great entrances into the tower—the first a low, narrow, strong arch-way of red freestone, opening on the south, through which you first enter the Church ; at the east gable a door led to the apartment alluded to (Spencer’s Chapel), and from thence into the tower. The second entrance or doorway was right over the arch-way, about five feet high by three wide, handsomely cased with yellow and red freestone, at the height of six feet from the floor. The Church and Tower must have been built about the same period, as large portions of the same freestone are indiscriminately used throughout the work of both—the smaller pieces being used for what masons call “ hearting the wall ”

During the excavation the materials thrown out were evidently part of the ruins mingled with remains of small animals which had constituted the food of owls that inhabited the tower. After sinking two or three feet, a large black stone, resembling a rude step, appeared ; but persons who had been familiar with the tower when perfect did not immediately recollect that it had contained a stair. Two similar steps were soon uncovered ; and, as the inquiry proceeded, several others of a better material (red sand-stone) and higher finish were discovered turning on a newell, which, not being in the centre, showed that the stair had not continued beyond half a turn, and terminated at the second door mentioned by Mr. Rogan. After uncovering seven steps the original floor of the building was reached, and the stones of the walls seemed to project according to the usual form of foundation observed in these edifices. An unusual character was now observed in the lower part of the tower, for, instead of being circular it projected on the south side so as to form a rectangular building like a porch. This had been originally closed at the outer extremity by a door, the jambs of which still remained. Persons who, when they saw it uncovered, had an indistinct recollection of having entered the tower by this passage, believe it was arched over, and that it was with difficulty they had reached the lower step : this is easily understood, as the entire building must have been very confined, the internal diameter of the tower being three feet eight inches, and the projection only measuring six feet six inches by three feet five inches. The entire building seems to have been constructed with outer walls of rubble-work, and a well-wrought interior facing of sand-stone.

The peculiarity of form just described had been concealed in more recent times from casual observers by the erection of the Spencer Chapel against buildings of an earlier date, and thus Mr. Rogan was not aware that the low, strong arch-way, through which he had so often passed into the tower, projected several feet from the main building. The passage was necessarily low, as the second door, described as being immediately over the first, was only six feet from the floor.<sup>1</sup>

The ground plan I shows the base of the tower, with the projection already described, and a rude pavement that appeared when the whole was uncovered. This was formed by two large stones covering about one-half of the space from the entrance to the first step of the stair, firmly retained in their places by the side-walls of the passage, and jambs which were built upon them in such a manner that they could not be removed without the destruction of the remaining portion of the building. The space immediately between them and the first step was not found paved, but there is little doubt that one or more similar flags must have been removed therefrom; and this opinion was confirmed, in some degree, by several old persons who were present, and recollected having, in their youth, ascended in this way to the great door of the tower.

Advantage was taken of the breach in the pavement to continue the excavation, when it appeared evident that the ground here had been moved, at some former period, as deep as the original soil—about two feet and a half below the floor; and by means of the opening thus made the clay under the stair was afterwards removed, which, it was evident from its texture, had not been disturbed since the erection of the building. In this were discovered human remains;—of these and their position a particular note was made. In the first place a small portion of a skull was observed, and by proceeding with extreme caution, cutting out the clay in which it lay imbedded like a fossil, what remained of it was procured, but so decayed, that it crumbled to dust when handled, so that only a small portion of it could be preserved. It rested on its occipital protuberance, the crown or apex lying towards the west, and the base, or spinal opening, towards the east. With the skull were found the atlas, or uppermost vertebra—a fragment of a rib, portions of a tibia and fibula, or bones of the leg—five metatarsal bones and one phalanx, being part of a foot—a portion of the under jaw and seven teeth, part of them “in situ”—all the bones being in a state of great decay.

It was now apparent that the tower, with its projecting entrance, was built over a rudely formed sepulchral chamber, of which the position and general character are best shown by a reference to plan 2, where a cell, six feet six inches long, two feet three inches wide, and two feet six inches deep, is exhibited, rudely constructed on the undisturbed till or sub-stratum soil, having the side-walls of rough undressed stones, put together without mortar, the floor neither paved nor flagged. This receptacle of the dead at some period had been entirely covered:—the portion C, by the stairs, still remaining;—G by one or more flags, supposed to have been removed at a comparatively recent date,

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<sup>1</sup> The initial letter of the present chapter is intended to suggest—merely to suggest—the mode in which this porch may have been originally finished.

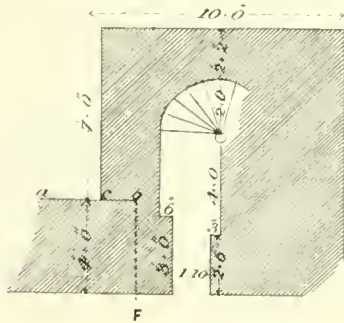
when the part it covered had been examined, previous to the present inquiry;—and H and I by two large flat stones retained in their places by a part of the projecting building resting on them. Under the stone marked H were found a pelvis and spinal column; part of a femur or thigh-bone, including the neck and trochanter; a humerus or arm-bone; a rib, and some undistinguishable fragments. Assuming that the bones found are all of the same individual, it seems not improbable that other portions of the skeleton may have been destroyed when the space G was disturbed, most probably during the erection of the burial-chapel; for it may be supposed that while the burial-place remained perfect it was secured against intrusion, and the quantity of remains of small animals which covered the floor, and almost buried the stairs, show that the tower had, in all probability, been tenanted by owls for a long period previous to its fall.

Several points with regard to the remains thus discovered are deserving of notice, particularly the position in which the bones were arranged. The cell is sufficiently long to have received a body deposited in the usual manner; but the bones found were laid transversely: the position of the skull has been already mentioned; the tibia lay beyond, having its upper extremity towards the east, and the skull about the centre; the spinal column lay across, and the pelvis against the western side; the femur lay with its upper extremity towards the east, its lower extremity towards the west; the bones of the foot and the ribs were placed irregularly. When the skull was first uncovered, a run of dry charcoal, in very small fragments, perhaps what would have measured half a pint, occurred, which, on examination, proved to be charred oats and barley; a portion of a charred hazel-nut shell was also found amongst the grains examined, but unfortunately the greater part was lost before its peculiar nature was observed. Near the skull, a portion of iron without definite form was obtained, which must have been introduced at the same time with the bone. From the position in which the remains lay, it is evident either that the body had been barbarously dismembered, or that the bones had been removed from some previous depository to be finally interred in this place.

It seems also reasonable to conjecture that the architect, in consequence of the limited circumference of the tower, may have adopted the peculiar plan already described of attaching a porch-like building (a restoration of which is attempted in the vignette), with a view of effectually protecting the stone cell. A fact deserving of notice is, that the stairs, which, being firmly built into the walls, could not be removed without injury to the whole structure, form a part of the covering of this sepulchre, which is only covered with flags on the part beyond the stairs. It is also worthy of observation, that, where the rectangular cell under the tower extended, as shown in the plan, somewhat beyond its circular wall, great care had been taken to secure this angle by carrying up its side-wall with large stones without mortar, allowing every course to project inward until narrowed, or “gathered” (to use a trade term), so as to form a section of a rude arch or dome; a mode of masonry still practised in this country in covering wells. This dome was supported internally by an equally rude pillar, the stones of which remained in their original position until the time of

the present inquiry, when they fell down in consequence of the removal of the earth on which they rested: for there had been no means of withdrawing them after the completion of the building. As these stones stood over the human remains imbedded in the clay, a most satisfactory proof is thus afforded that no change in their position had taken place from the period of the erection of the tower till the time of their removal.

The observations just detailed, made at the period of the first visit to Trummery, seemed so important that it was determined to verify them by still further examination, and these interesting ruins were inspected on several successive occasions. On one of these the writer was accompanied by Mr. Joseph Huband Smith, of Dublin, Mr. Robert McAdam and Mr. James Carruthers, of Belfast, all careful investigators of Irish antiquities, as well as by Mr. George Smith, C.E., and Mr. Godwin, C.E., who were joined by Mr. Rogan, and again made a minute examination of the ruins. At Mr. G. Smith's suggestion (who was strongly impressed with an opinion that the tower could not claim an earlier



date than the church), an extensive excavation was made at the point of their apparent junction, and the result was, a conviction on the minds of the parties present that certain circumstances pointed out by the engineers above-named could not exist if the tower had been of earlier erection than the wall against which it abutted. These were the following:—that the masonry of the two buildings is not bonded together, as would most probably have been the case had they been carried up simultaneously, although, from the materials used and other circumstances, there may not have been a long interval between their erection; that the church had, to the height now remaining at least, been built before the tower, which is proved by its wall being continued without a break its entire length, showing at the junction a clean joint between, as if it had been built and faced in this part like its other portions, and the tower afterwards built against it as shown in the sketch, where *a*, *b*, represent the wall of the church, and *c* shows the wall of the lower part of the tower abutting on it. Had the reverse been the fact, it is evident that the tower must have been erected before the church. The plan herewith is an enlargement of a portion of the ground plan already given, and is on the scale of one-eighth of an inch to the foot.

The addition of the Spencer Chapel to the original building has evidently caused a considerable change in the arrangement of this church. If the reader will imagine all the walls removed from the angle at the S.E. end it will give a pretty good idea of the original design. The east end of the church seems to have stood on the dotted line *F*, immediately behind the shaded foundation *G*, which most probably represents the site of the chancel arch; the chancel itself had occupied the place between *F* and *G*. It would appear that, to form the burial chamber, the east end of the church had been removed and the chancel arch built up.



It is considered useful to add an

EXPLANATION OF GROUND PLANS 1 AND 2 OF RUINS OF ROUND TOWER.

- A.—Highest part of ruins of tower; 7 feet 6 inches above remains of stone floor H and I.
- B.—Ruins on a level with seventh step; 4 feet 4 inches above remains of stone floor.
- C.—Stone stairs, consisting of seven steps averaging  $7\frac{1}{4}$  inches in height; 1, 2, 4, and 5, being of sand-stone; 3, 6, and 7, of field-stones; 2 and 7 are inserted into the wall, and built up with it.
- D.—Newell of sand-stone 1 foot 9 inches high and 8 inches diameter. It is not situated in the centre of the tower, being 2 feet 2 inches distant from its northern side and only 11 inches from its southern—which, with 8 inches, makes the entire internal diameter of the tower 3 feet 9 inches.
- E.—Western jamb,  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches wide.
- F to F.—Western side of entrance, 3 feet 4 inches long.
- G.—Cell or crypt extending under the stairs C, and part of the large stone H. That portion of it bounded by the first step and the stone H had evidently been opened on some previous occasion, and was not covered with flags or stones when examined.
- H & I.—Two large stone blocks forming part of the floor, and on a level with the foundation stones; both extend under the entire walls and form part of their foundation.
- K.—Eastern jamb, 3 inches wide.
- K to L.—Eastern side of entrance, 3 feet four inches long.
- M M M.—Walls of tower, 2 feet thick.
- The internal length of tower and projection, from commencement of entrance, is 10 feet; diameter of chamber over G, 2 feet 6 inches; and over I, or entrance, 1 foot  $9\frac{3}{4}$  inches. The building was carried up for some feet, as in the plan; the entrance and chamber appear to have been then arched over, and the cylindrical structure continued, as marked by the dotted lines, upon a portion of the arch.
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Painted by J. H. P. Burgess

Litho<sup>d</sup> by M. Ward, Belfast

St. George's Harbour

## THE ROUND TOWERS OF ULSTER.

CLONES TOWER,

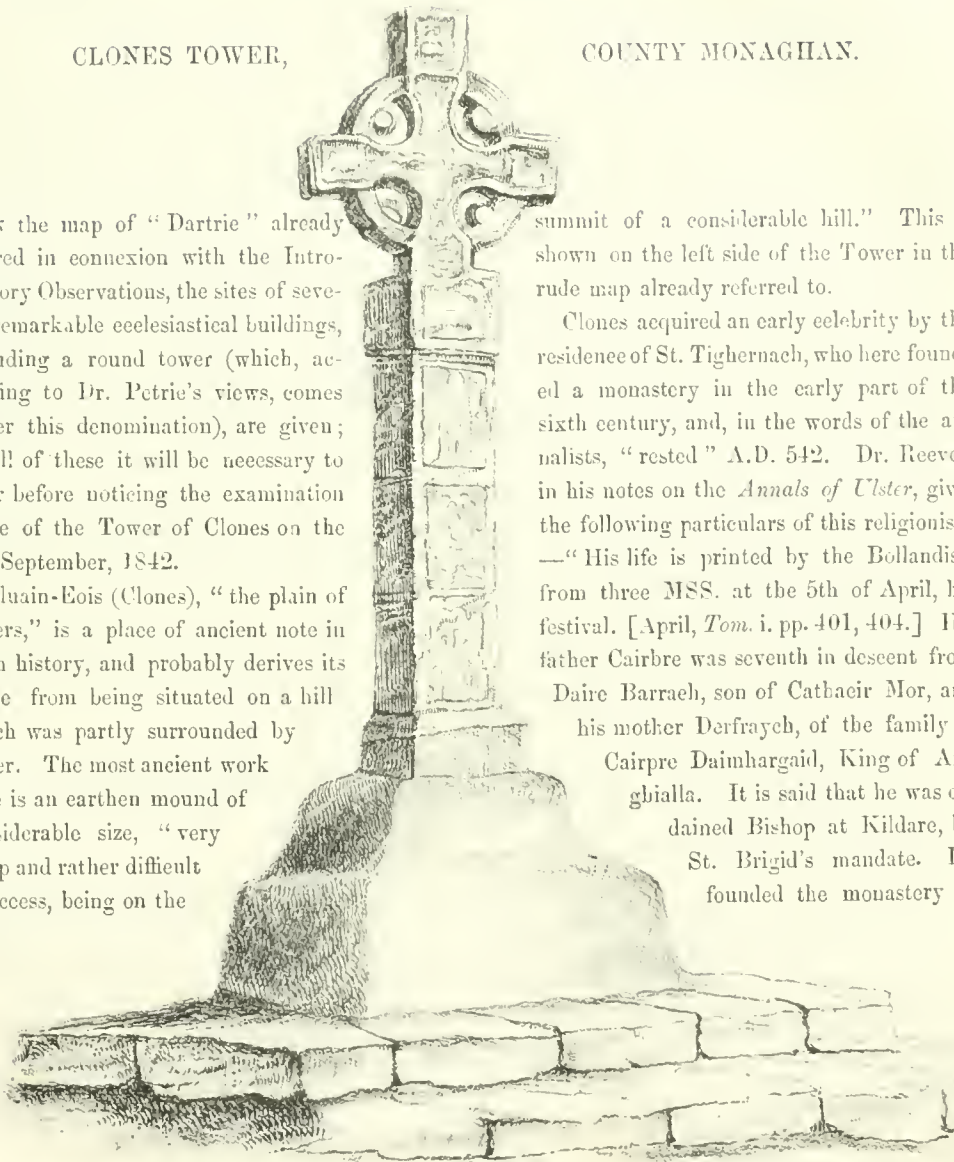
COUNTY MONAGHAN.

In the map of "Dartrie" already figured in connexion with the Introductory Observations, the sites of several remarkable ecclesiastical buildings, including a round tower (which, according to Dr. Petrie's views, comes under this denomination), are given; to all of these it will be necessary to refer before noticing the examination made of the Tower of Clones on the 5th September, 1842.

Cluain-Eois (Clones), "the plain of waters," is a place of ancient note in Irish history, and probably derives its name from being situated on a hill which was partly surrounded by water. The most ancient work here is an earthen mound of considerable size, "very steep and rather difficult of access, being on the

summit of a considerable hill." This is shown on the left side of the Tower in the rude map already referred to.

Clones acquired an early celebrity by the residence of St. Tighernach, who here founded a monastery in the early part of the sixth century, and, in the words of the annalists, "rested" A.D. 542. Dr. Reeves, in his notes on the *Annals of Ulster*, gives the following particulars of this religionist:—"His life is printed by the Bollandists from three MSS. at the 5th of April, his festival. [April, *Tom. i.* pp. 401, 404.] His father Cairbre was seventh in descent from Daire Barraeh, son of Cathacir Mor, and his mother Derfrayeh, of the family of Cairpre Daimhargaid, King of Air-gbialla. It is said that he was ordained Bishop at Kildare, by St. Brigid's mandate. He founded the monastery of



Galloon [Gaballinense monasterium] in Lough Erne, which he committed to St. Comgall when he departed to found his chief monastery of Clones. Ware states that he was also venerated at the church of Derimoalain [Derryvullen, in Fermanagh] and that his office was preserved in S. Benet's Library at Cambridge.

"Here," (Clones) "there is St. Tierney's Well, and the abbey lands form what is called St. Tierney's manor. From a mistaken notion that the Irish had in primitive ages a succession of Diocesan bishops, Irish writers have represented St. Tigernach (Tierney) as successor of St. Mac-carthen of Clogher, and as transferring the see from that church to Clones."—[See Harris's Ware, p. 177; Archdall, *Monast.* p. 582.] This is not a place for entering on the discussion of this curious point of Irish history, which is so ably treated by Mr. King in his admirable work, *A Memoir Introductory to the Early History of the Primacy of Armagh*; and the writer will only add that a curious example, in our own time, of the ancient custom of ordaining bishops unconnected with dioceses is found in the fact that the Pope confers on each new abbot of St. Lazaro, near Venice, the title and dignity of archbishop, although he has no province or bishops under him.\* The well called Tubber Tierney is still shown near the fort or earthen mound already mentioned.

The following entries with respect to the ancient ecclesiastical history of Clones, are found in Dr. O'Donovan's edition of the *Annals of the Four Masters*:—

The age of Christ, 548, Saint Tighearnaich, Bishop of Cluain-eois, died on the 4th April. [Under the same date the *Annals of Ulster* record, Tighernach of Cluain-eois rested. This may be considered the most important entry, as giving the death of the founder of the religious house.]

The age of Christ, 700, Diucuill, abbot of Cluan-Eois, died.

The age of Christ, 714, Cele-Tighearnaigh [that is, servant of St. Tighearnach] abbot of Cluain-Eois, died. The *Annals of Ulster* give this under the year 715.

The age of Christ, 741, Dabhdabhoireann Ua Beccain, abbot of Cluain Eois, died.

The age of Christ, 746, Nuada, son of Dubhsleibhe, abbot of Cluain-Eois, died.

The age of Christ, 773, Finan, abbot of Cluain-Eois, died.

The age of Christ, 805, [recte 810], Gormghal, son of Dindaghaigh, abbot of Ard-Macha and Cluain Eois, died.

The age of Christ, 839, the eighth year of Niall.—Joseph of Rosmor, bishop, and distinguished scribe, abbot of Cluain-Eois and other churches, died.

The age of Christ, 877, Daibhlitir, abbot of Cluain-eois and Tigh-airindan, died.

The age of Christ, 912, Maelciurain, son of Eochagan, abbot of Cluain-eois and Mucnamb, died. He was foster-son to Fethghna. [In the *Annals of Ulster* (Cod. Clar.) this entry reads thus, as quoted by Dr. King, in his *Primacy*, A.D., 914, [als., 915.] "Mael Ciarain Mac Eochagain, prince of Clonauis, and Bushop of Ardmach, in the 70th year of his age, dies in Christ."—Perhaps, however, it should be prince of Clonauis, [i.e., Clones] and foster-son of Fethgna, Bushop of Ardmach; the error originating in a mistake of the transcriber.]

The age of Christ, 929, Ceannaefladh, son of Lorcan, Comharba of Cluain-Eois, and Clochar-mac-Daimheini, died.

The age of Christ, 943, Maeluille, son of Dunan, successor of Tighearnach, died.

The age of Christ, 956, Flann, son of Mochloingseach, successor of Tighearnach died.

The age of Christ, 961, Caen-Comhrae, son of Curan, distinguished bishop and abbot of Cluain-Eois, died.

\* *Armenia*, by the Hon. Robert Curzon. London: Murray. 1854; p. 229.



- The age of Christ, 978 (*recte*. 979) Rumann Ua h-Aedhagain, abbot of Cluain-Eois, died.
- The age of Christ, 1010, (*recte*. 1011) Flaithbheartach Ua Cethenen, successor of Tighearnach, a (venerable) senior and distinguished bishop, was mortally wounded by the men of Breifne; and he afterwards died in his own church at Cluain-Eois.
- The age of Christ, 1030. Eochaidh Ua Cethenen, successor of Tighearnach, chief paragon of Ireland in wisdom, died at Ard-Macha.
- The age of Christ, 1039, Ceileachair Ua Cuileannain, successor of Tighearnach, died.
- The age of Christ, 1084, Muireadhach Ua Ceithnen, Airchinneach of Cluain-Eois, died.
- The age of Christ, 1095, Cluain-Eois burned.
- The age of Christ, 1139, Cathal Mac Maelfhinn, successor of Tighearnach, of Cluain-Eois, fountain of the prosperity and affluence of the North of Ireland, bestower of food upon the laity and the clergy, died.
- The age of Christ, 1247, Hugh Mac Conchaille, abbot of Clones, died.
- [On this name Dr. O'Donovan makes the following observation] :—" It is still extant in the neighbourhood of Clones, in the county of Monaghan and in the county of Fermanagh, but Anglicised by some to *Woods*, and by others to *Cox*, because it is assumed that *Caille* or *Coille*, the latter part of the name, may signify *of a wood*, or *of a cock*.
- The age of Christ, 1257, Mac Robias, abbot of Clones, died.
- The age of Christ, 1353, John O'Carbry, Coarb of Tighearnach, of Cluain-Eois, died.—This person's name appears inscribed on the Cumhdach, or case of Saint Patrick's copy of the Gospels given to St. Mae Carthenn, of Clogher.—[*Trans. R. I. A.*]
- The age of Christ, 1435, Donn, the son of Cuenought Maguire, died, in canonical orders, at Clones, after the victory of penance, having retired from the world for the love of the Lord.
- The age of Christ, 1444, Manus Mac Mahon, heir to the lordship of Oriel, died, and was interred at Clones.
- The age of Christ, 1453, Mac Mahon, Hugh Roe, son of Rory, an affable and pious man, well skilled in each art, distinguished for his prowess and noble deeds, died in his own house at Lurgan, (in the barony of Farney,) on Easter night, and was interred at Clones.
- The age of Christ, 1486, Philip son of the Coarb, (i.e., James son of Rury son of Ardgall) Mac Mahon a Canon chorister at Clogher, Coarb of Clones, Parson of Dartry, &c., died.
- The age of Christ, 1499, Mac Donnell of Clann Kelly, i.e., Cormac the son of Art, a charitable and truly hospitable man, died, and was interred at Clones.
- The age of Christ, 1502, James, son of Rury Mac Mahon, Coarb of Clones, died.
- The age of Christ, 1504, Gilla Patrick O'Connolly (i.e., the son of Henry) abbot of Clones, died, after having obtained the bishopric of Clogher. (He died of the pestilence called *cluichi in righ*, i.e., the King's game.)
- Rory Mac Mahon, Vicar of Clones, died.
- The age of Christ, 1506, Thomas Boy Mac Cosgraigh, Erenach of Clones, died.

The following entries, on account of their general importance, and being more full than those usually found in the Annals, have been kept separate :—

- The age of Christ, 836. The fifth year of Niull Caille. Dubhlitir O'ihar, of Teamhair, was taken prisoner by the foreigners, who afterwards put him to death in his gyves, at their ships, and thus he fell by them! A fleet of sixty ships of Norsemen on the Boyne. Another fleet of sixty ships on the Abhainn-Liphthe (Liffey). These two fleets plundered and spoiled Magh-Liphthe (plain of the Liffey) and Magh Breagh, (in Meath), both churches and habitations of men, and goodly tribes, flocks, and herds. A battle was gained by the men of Breagh, over the foreigners in Mughdhorna-breagh (in East Meath), and six score of the foreigners were slain in that battle. A battle was gained by the foreigners at Inbhear-na-mbare (near Bray?), over[all] the Ui Neill, from the Sinainn to the sea, where such slaughter was made as never before was heard of; however, the kings

and chieftains, the lords and toparchs, escaped without slaughter or mutilation. The churches of Loch-Eirne were destroyed by the foreigners, with CLUAIN-EOIS, and Daimhinis, &c.

The following notices of the castle erected by the English, and the English bishop of Norwich, are found in the same work. Of this building some remains still, or lately, existed; and some of the inhabitants speak of extensive subterraneous passages occasionally observed, which are supposed to have been connected with it.

The age of Christ, 1211. The Castle of Clones was erected by the English and the English Bishop, and they made a predatory incursion into Tyrone; but Hugh O'Neill overtook them, and routed and slaughtered them, and slew among others Meyler the son of Robert.

The age of Christ, 1212. The Castle of Clones was burnt by Hugh O'Neill and the men of the North of Ireland.

The writer has been thus prolix in the notices given of the early state of Clones, in consequence of the position it holds (though apparently an unimportant place) in the general history of Ireland; indeed, were a monograph of it prepared, it might serve as an epitome of the entire history of the country, both in its state of independence under its own chiefs, and as gradually reduced under British rule; the struggle made by its chiefs, the MacMahons, Normans become more Irish than the Irish themselves, against the introduction of English law and sheriffs; and its final forfeiture and division amongst new proprietors.

The Cross is a good example of the sculptured crosses found in this country; and the illustration shows it as it stood some years ago, before the ruthless hand of party-spirit had mutilated a part of the circular head. It stands in the Diamond, as the market-place of Clones is called; the sides are divided into compartments containing rudely-sculptured subjects from Holy Writ, which are now difficult to decypher. They give an epitome of sacred history, commencing with our first parents in the garden of Eden, passing in regular gradation through the most remarkable events of the Old Testament, and terminating with the crucifixion. The dimensions are as follows:—Base, 3 feet; sculptured shaft, divided into three compartments, 8 feet; head, 4 feet; total height, exclusive of platform, 15 feet.

The only ancient ecclesiastical remains now existing are the walls of a small chapel on one side of the road leading to Coote-hill; they are built of square hewn freestone on the outside, and of limestone within: the remains of an ancient burying-ground are found in connection with these walls, which are well enclosed. It seems not improbable that the walls or chapel spoken of may be all that remains of the large building denominated "*a church*" in the old map in the State Paper Office, and that the road now occupies a part of the site of the transept tower there shown; for it has evidently been cut through the grounds or yard of the church, severing from the portion just described the larger space now extensively used as a burying-ground by the parishioners, and at the opposite or western side of which the tower (called "*a watch toure*," in the map) stands. The map, it may be added, does not indicate that a cemetery existed here at the period when it was drawn (1591), a circumstance worthy, as before stated, of attention, when taken in connection with Dr. Petrie's opinion

that the human remains found in round towers are accounted for by the buildings having been erected in burial-grounds. In the present instance his view is disproved by the manner in which the inclosure wall of the grave-yard has been built, which does not include the tower *within* its lines, but cuts it in the direction of its diameter, so that one half of its base is within, and the other half projects beyond into an adjoining garden. In fact, the entire tower may be considered as distinct from the grave-yard, its eastern side only forming, as it were, a part of its enclosure. A confirmation of this is found in the fact that no objection was made to the inquiries made within the tower, though much anxiety was expressed by the lookers-on lest any disturbance of the cemetery itself should take place. The level of the soil in the garden above-mentioned is six feet and a half below that of the burial-ground, and shows what the surface was on which the tower was originally erected. Here two offsets—as is usual in such buildings—of nine inches each, can be traced projecting beyond the line of the shaft; but the half of them is concealed by the accumulated soil of the grave-yard. This evidently proves that instead of having been built originally in a cemetery, the soil of the latter, as now seen heaped up against one section of the building, must have been a subsequent raising of the level from frequent interments.

The tower when perfect must have been of considerable elevation, and an imposing example of this kind of architecture. As far as could be ascertained by several calculations made from the shadow at different periods of the day, the remaining portion is about 75 feet high above the foundation already mentioned, or sixty-eight feet and a half above the level of the burying-ground. At about five feet above the first offset the circumference measures fifty-one feet, and the thickness of the wall is three feet six inches to three feet seven inches. The interior diameter is nine feet, which is considerably more than the average of other towers examined. The door, which is quadrangular-headed, stands due east, and is eight feet above the level of the first offset, or three feet above the present level of the surface on that side of the building. This tower is considerably off the perpendicular, with a decided inclination towards the north, and has suffered a diminution in height by the falling of a portion of the upper part, where several stones, particularly on the west side, overhang so much as to lead to the impression that, unless some means are taken to secure them, another portion will before long be precipitated into the interior.

The persons present at the inquiry, besides the writer and Mr. Grattan, were the Rev. Mr. Welsh, Mr. Casebourne, C.E., and Mr. Dargan, brother to the well-known contractor, to whose kindness, indeed, the parties were indebted, not only for permission to make the necessary excavations, but for the services of a number of men, taken from the works of the Ulster Canal.\*

The interior of the tower was filled up to within three feet of the eill of the door, that is, to the level of the burying-ground, or five feet above the first offset of the base, with remains of jack-daws'

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\* An interesting fact was mentioned by Mr. Dargan, that a labourer, employed in excavating the canal, was supposed to have found a gold pectoral cross; perhaps that worn by the abbot. The man decamped with his prize, and was not afterwards heard of. Those who saw the cross described it as large and massive.

nests, broken glass, human bones—probably thrown in from the grave yard—horns of oxen, hair, leather, fragments of coffins—and stones, which had formed part of the roof and upper walls when the tower was perfect; these were mixed throughout with a rich dark mould formed from decomposed organic matter. All this was evidently an accumulation resulting from accidental introduction at periods subsequent to the erection of the building. Having cleared this away to the depth of three feet and a half, a well defined clay floor was uncovered (totally different from the material excavated previously) described by Mr. Casebourne as formed with puddled clay. This was broken through in the centre, and the excavation continued to the depth of eighteen inches farther, with no other result than laying bare, a few inches beneath the clay floor, two thin irregular-shaped flags, with traces of fire on their surface, and near them some remains of charcoal, or perhaps burned bones. In the earth thrown out a few fragments of thigh bones and other human remains were also remarked. A second floor was now discovered, formed by a *thin coat of lime*; it extended across the tower at the part where the first internal offset of the base occurred, on the same horizontal line as the first external one.

The removal of this *lime floor* was an operation of considerable difficulty, and attended with some delay, in consequence of the tenacity of the upper stratum of clay, and of the desire to use as much care as possible. An opening was then made in its centre, and, on excavating to a depth of fifteen or sixteen inches, the leg-bones of an adult person were found. In the hope of finding the skull and trunk lying towards the west, a commencement of removing the clay in that direction was made; at the distance, however, of less than a foot from the first opening, in a rather south-westerly direction, a skull was unexpectedly discovered, but so cracked and broken that it could not be saved entire. The fragment preserved was sufficient to show that the skull must have been that of a child not exceeding eight years of age, the permanent incisor teeth not having penetrated through the jaw.

In consequence of the depth to which the operations extended it was found necessary to erect a scaffold or stage across the eastern side; and the western half was carefully examined from its southern to its northern boundary. Considerable human remains, in a state of very great decay, some of a child, some of adults, were thus exposed, especially at the northern extremity, where the bones of several lower limbs, a pelvis, feet, &c. were crowded together within the curve formed by the wall, and in close contact with the side, but without order or regularity. Having carefully examined one half to the depth of three feet, without meeting anything further, the stage was removed and the material upon which it had rested cautiously thrown upon the part already explored. Upon the same level with the child's skull and the other bones already detailed, and occupying, as nearly as possible, the north-eastern quarter of the floor, the remains of four skulls were reached, all greatly fractured, either by walking over them before the removal of the soil, or by the erection of the scaffold. They were so damaged that the exact position they lay in could not be correctly ascertained, although the relative position occupied by each was sufficiently perceptible. They

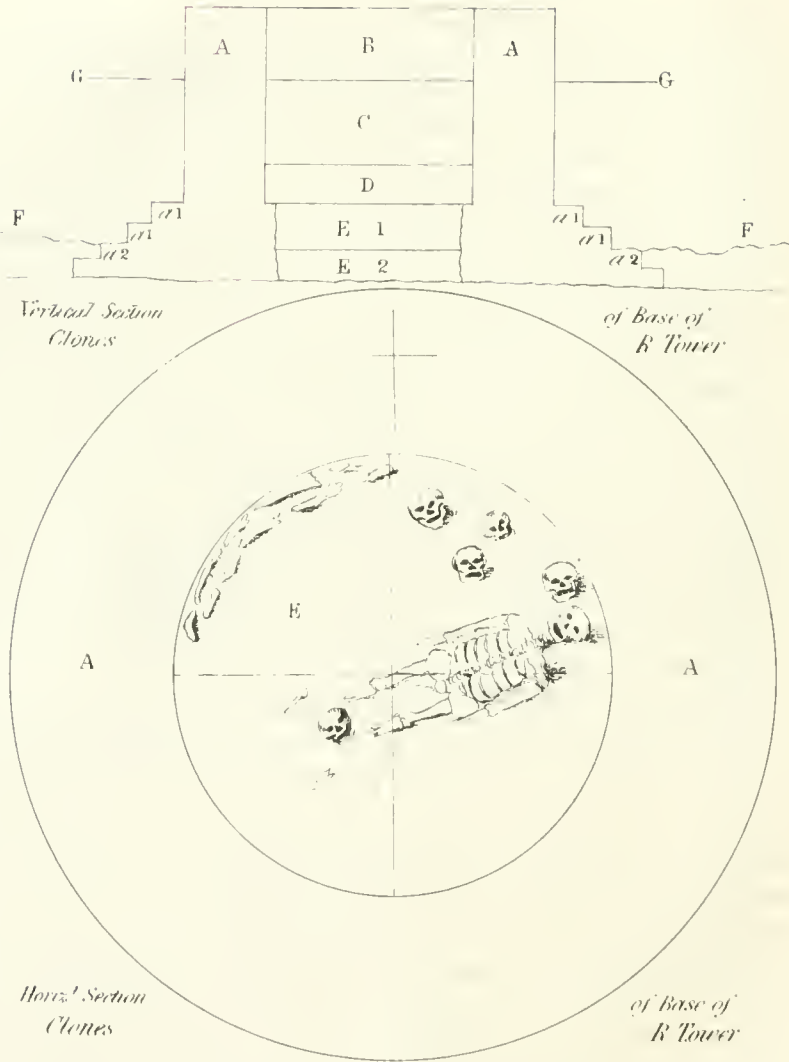


lay nearly as marked on the accompanying plan, and unconnected with the other remains; proving, as far as they were concerned, that it must have been human *bones*, and not *bodies*, that had been thus deposited. To the south of the fourth skull, and in close contact with it, lay a fifth, also broken into fragments, but connected with a complete spinal column and ribs, extending in the direction of the adult lower extremities found beside the child's skull: this had every appearance of having been interred before the integuments had been removed from the bones by decomposition. No pelvis, however, was found; but the bones generally were in such a state of decay, that it is quite possible that it may have crumbled away during the search. If the body had been deposited in a perfect state as supposed, the position was very different from that usually adopted at the present day, having a direction nearly N. by E., with the feet directed towards the south-west. One of the skulls was overlaid by a projecting portion of the offset, the interval between it and the others being in part filled up with moderate sized stones, as if so placed before the laying on of the projecting offset during the progress of the building. Indeed, there was no doubt on the part of the intelligent observers of the proceeding, some of them professional men, that the remains discovered must have been deposited in the position they occupied before the building had been carried up higher than the first offset. Mr. Grattan, who gave great attention to the inquiry throughout, was strongly impressed with an opinion that the walls, having been carried up to the height of the last offset but one, the remains were then deposited, the place filled in with clay to that level, the last offset then set on, the surface levelled and coated with lime, and the remainder of the building then proceeded with.

Along with the four skulls described, and under such circumstances as necessarily proved it to have been interred at the same time, a portion of a pig's or boar's jaw was discovered. It was in such a singular state of preservation that, when shown to Dr. Scouler, by Mr. Grattan, he declared his opinion that it could not have remained long in the ground; a conjecture which is valuable as a proof of the difficulty of determining their age from the mere inspection of such remains. Reference has been already made to doubts expressed of the age of the skull found at Drumbo tower, from its high state of preservation. Now, indisputably, the pig's jaw must have been as long here as the skulls with which it was found deposited, and they manifest all the characters of extreme antiquity; consequently, the difference in their present condition must be the result of original difference of individual structure. It is clear, therefore, that the fresh and sound condition of the Drumbo skull by no means proves it to be recent; no part of the skeleton being subject to greater varieties in density, solidity, and texture, than the skull, not merely in different races, but also in different individuals of the same race. The greater part of the fragments of the different skulls found on the present occasion were preserved, though unfortunately not all of them; no idea being entertained at the time that they could have been so satisfactorily put together as was afterwards found practicable. The perfect form of three has been preserved; a fourth, though not absolutely, is pretty nearly correct; and the posterior part of the child's is quite so. All these are deposited in

the Museum of the Natural History and Philosophical Society of Belfast; and, in a concluding chapter of these notices, their measurements, taken by the Cranio-meter, will be given, with such other information as Mr. Grattan's experience may suggest.

At the time of making the investigations, some notice of which has just been given, the writer was induced to inquire respecting a mode of sepulture practised at Clones, to which his attention had been drawn several years previously, when he first visited this interesting locality. The following note, taken at the time, contains the tradition connected with it, which now became a matter of increased interest: — "Among the tombs, in the



- A. Walls of Tower.
- B. Space between doorway and floor.
- C. Stratum of debris, &c.
- D. 1st Stratum of Clay.
- E. The 2nd Stratum of Clay.
  - 1. separated from D by a floor of lime, in which the remains were found at

the depth indicated by the line separating E 1 from E 2.

- F. Level of ground in Garden.
- G. Level of ground in Church-yard.
- a a 1. Offsets visible externally.
- a a 2. Supposed continuation of Base.

burying-ground near the tower, is shown that of the McMahon family, once the powerful chieftains of this part of Ireland. The top of the sepulchre, which is above ground, is very heavy, and shaped like the roof of a house, with inscriptions on each of the sloping sides. The mode of sepulture, according to the tradition of the country, was curious. When the body of any of the family was brought hither for interment, it was taken out of the coffin and deposited in the tomb, and the empty coffin was buried in a separate place. A quantity of lime was then thrown over the body for the purpose of consuming it, and the roof of the tomb replaced, until it was taken off to admit another tenant." On pursuing the inquiry, it was stated by several intelligent persons, that the name of the family was MacDonnell, not McMahon, and that on several occasions the right of interment here had been litigated by parties claiming to be the lineal descendants of the original party. The bones found in the stone coffin, when a fresh interment is to be made, are carefully removed, and, being afterwards placed in a wooden coffin, wherein the *recent* body was brought to the grave-yard, are buried near the stone sepulchre. Several men who were in the crowd at the examination of the tower, affirmed that they had witnessed an interment here, where all the ceremonies above-mentioned were strictly observed. It was considered the duty of the heir of the lately deceased person, after having cleared out the tomb by removing the bones, to raise the body of his relative, and, without any aid from others, to deposit it in its temporary resting-place. This occurred within the last fifteen years,\* but it is not expected that any other similar interment will take place, as the person considered as the last lineal descendant of the family, which claimed this honour, is believed to have died lately in Scotland. His social position was little above that of a labourer, yet he clung pertinaciously to his right; the privilege in question having been a source of litigation and dispute between him and another individual until death, by carrying off his rival, left him the undisputed possessor, in reversion, of a barren honour, of which, in the hour of his own death, he knew his remains would be deprived. This singular mode of sepulture acquires increased interest when considered in connection with the discovery just made, of deposits of bones in the tower, and originates the conjecture that, for some reason not now to be explained, this building may have become the second place of interment of the remains of some important family, at an early period of history. It should be added, that several inscriptions have been defaced from the sloping sides of the tomb described. Some parties affirm this was done in consequence of disputes respecting the right of interment already alluded to.

The family mentioned in the above notice is MacDonnell of Clankelly, whose territory lay in this neighbourhood; many entries having reference to individuals of this illustrious race are found in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, and other records. The only one that bears decidedly on the present subject is here extracted:—

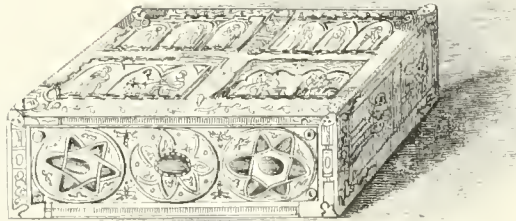
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\* i.e., within fifteen years of 1842.

The age of Christ, 1489. "MacDonnell of Cuan-Kelly, i.e., Cormac, the son of Art, a charitable and truly hospitable man, died, and was interred at Clones."

Dr. Petrie, in a paper on the "Domnach-Airgid," published in the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*,\* has given an ancient monastic seal, believed to have been made for Abbot John O'Carbri, of Clones, who flourished in the fourteenth century. The name of the same ecclesiastic appears on the *cumdach* or case already mentioned, of which the drawing at foot is a correct representation. It is a shrine in the form of an oblong box, nine inches by seven, and five inches in height. A copy of the Gospels contained in it is believed, by the eminent antiquary referred to, to be "perhaps the oldest copy of the Sacred Word now existing." John O'Karbri is described as *comharb* of Saint Tighernach. He, as already mentioned, died in 1353. "As the form of the Cumdach," says Dr. Petrie, "indicates that it was intended to receive a book, and as the relics are all attached to the outer and least ancient cover, it is manifest that the use of the box as a reliquary was not its original intention. The natural inference, therefore, is, that it contained a manuscript which had belonged to Saint Patrick; and as a manuscript copy of the Gospels, apparently of that early age, is found within it, there is every reason to believe it to be that identical one for which the box was originally made, and which the Irish apostle probably brought with him on his mission into this country." Several ancient authorities exist in proof of Saint Patrick having made a gift of the "Domnach" to Saint Mac Carthen.

Carleton, in one of his most powerful tales, has described the superstitious use made of this relic, and in a note gives some curious information respecting it.†



\* Vol. xviii., p. 23 of Antiquities.

† *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry.*



## THE ROUND TOWERS OF ULSTER.

DOWNPATRICK, COUNTY OF DOWN.

“Here good Columba showed in Christian skies  
The lucid day-star of salvation rise.”

IN Harris's *County of Down*, or rather in the work published in 1744, which commonly bears his name (though the editor's introduction states that “it is not a revised edition of a treatise formerly published on the same subject, but an entirely new work”) the following passage follows the notice of the Cathedral:—“There is at the West end a very high Pillar, that has been neatly repaired at the expense of Dean Daniel.” In another work, *A Tour through Ireland in 1779*, is found the following notice:—“No antient monument remains in the old abbey, but here is a round tower which stands about 40 feet from the old cathedral, is 66 feet high, the thickness of the walls 3 feet, and the diameter on the inside 8 feet. On the west side of it is an irregular gap, about 10 feet from the top, near a third of the whole circumference being broken off by the injury of time: the entrance into it is two feet and a half wide, and placed on a level with the surface of the ground; in which last particular it is pretty singular, for in others the door is placed from 8 to 12 feet above the ground, without any steps or stairs, so that there is no getting into these buildings without a ladder; unless it may be judged (which is probable enough) that this difference has been occasioned here from the raising of the ground by the rubbish of the old cathedral near it, fallen into ruinous heaps.”

The Rev. John Dubourdieu in his *Statistical Survey of the County of Down*, published in 1802, gives the following particulars regarding the fate of the same building:—“It was pulled down in the year 1790, to make room in the rebuilding of that part of the old Cathedral next which it stood, and from which it was distant about forty feet. The height was sixty-six feet, the thickness of the walls three feet, and the diameter eight feet. When the Tower was thrown down and cleared away to the foundation, another foundation was discovered under it, and running directly across the site of the Tower, which appeared to be a continuation of the church wall, which at some period prior to the building of the Tower, seemed to have extended considerably beyond it. This curious circumstance was observed by several gentlemen at the Spring Assizes of the<sup>e</sup> above-mentioned year.”—These and similar notices

rendered it desirable to include Downpatrick in the places explored. In the present instance the inquiry was limited to an attempt to ascertain the site of the Tower, and by excavating the place, perhaps discover some remnants of the base. Mrs. Hall, the sextoness of the cathedral, who had been born close to the spot, had no difficulty in pointing out the place where the building had stood; and this being on the gravelled area near the south-east angle of the cathedral, and the permission of the Dean, the Rev. Theo. Blakely, having been obtained by the kind interference of the late Dr. McDonnell, of Belfast, no objection was made to the investigation. Mr. Aynsworth Pilson, of Downpatrick, communicated any information that he possessed.

The exploration took place on the 19th Sept., 1842, in the presence of Mr. Grattan, Mr. R. MacAdam, Mr. Smith, C.E., of Belfast, and the writer. From the nature of the ground it soon became evident that the very foundation of the tower must have been removed in lowering the level of the surface when the cathedral was repaired. No person was found who had any recollection of the cross-walls mentioned by Dubourdieu; but an old man who was drawn to the place by curiosity, stated that he had a distinct recollection of the appearance of the foundation, which he had seen when it was uncovered; and he described it with its offsets at the base just as found in the other round towers previously examined. The evidence, however, of Dubourdien is not to be slighted, though it does not lead to any definite conclusion. It seems improbable that the tower was raised on the foundation of an older building, for this would throw back works of stone to a very early date; and besides, practical builders, such as the architects of these towers undoubtedly were, would not have balanced a cylindrical edifice of such elevation on a cross-wall of this kind. It may perhaps be allowable to suggest that the cross-wall seen by Dubourdieu's informants was part of a cell similar to one already described as found at Trummery.

It has been said that the destruction of the Tower was determined on in consequence of the rivalry between two great nobles of the county, and that Lord De Clifford, the proprietor of the town of Downpatrick, opposed this piece of Vandalism. No reference is made to the Tower in the Act which received the Royal Assent on the 6th April, 1790, sanctioning certain arrangements for raising funds to repair the Cathedral. In the *Belfast News-Letter*, 20-25 Dec., 1789, No. 5465, an advertisement is found soliciting subscriptions for the restoration of the Cathedral of Downpatrick, estimated at £6,000; of which sum his Majesty King George III. had agreed to contribute, by a royal letter, £1,000, if the remainder were made up. A long list of noblemen and others, with their respective contributions, is appended. It is further stated, that the loss of the fund for the economy, belonging to the Dean and Chapter, having been the obstacle to the repair—the Dean, the Hon. and Rev. Mr. Annesley, had agreed to give £300 of his official income, to be allotted out of the tithes of his deanery during his incumbency, and to petition Parliament to pass an Act to perpetuate and secure the same from him and his successors;—all the patronage to be at the disposal of the Dean, for the time being.



A VIEW OF THE OLD ABBEY OF DOWNPATRICK.  
BEFORE IT WAS REBUILT, ANNO 1790.

Our illustration is taken from a drawing in the possession of Dr. Reeves, and it corresponds with a ruder sketch in the writer's collection. In 1795, Mr. John Turner, architect, issued a prospectus and received subscriptions for two prints to be published—a south view and a south-east view of the old Cathedral, but it is not ascertained if any of these are now to be found. The prospectus contains the following words :—“As it has been a misfortune, in this and many other countries, that remains of antiquity have been taken down, or sometimes new-modelled, without leaving a trace behind to give to future ages an idea of beauties that ornamented a country, it may not be improper, at this period, to offer to the public an exact outline of that Gothic piece of architecture, as beautiful, perhaps, as any that ever adorned this kingdom.”

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SAUL, COUNTY OF DOWN.  
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The Right Rev. Dr. Denvir, R.C. Bishop of Down and Connor, having expressed an opinion that, near Saul, were traces of a Round Tower, indicated by marks on the sward and by the colour of the crops grown on the spot, Dr. Hodges, the present Professor of Agriculture in Queen's College, Belfast, was good enough to make the necessary inquiries. The following is his report :—

“*Downpatrick, February 20, 1844.*”

“I visited and carefully examined the fields and ruins in the neighbourhood of Saul Church. I also conversed with several of the old inhabitants, and find that the appearance of the place, tradition

and history, all agree in proving that no Round Tower ever existed at the ancient 'Barn of St. Patriek.' The remains of a wind-mill, which appear in the field adjoining the church, must have deceived Dr. Denvir. This mill, though now only to be discovered by an elevation in the field, was at work in the memory of some of the old people. Saul was not occupied as a place of worship before the arrival of our national saint. A barn belonging to the chief of the Dal Diehu at that time stood where the present church is erected. The Life of St. Patrick very carefully relates the cession of this barn by the chieftain upon his becoming a convert, for the purpose of its being employed as a Christian temple. It is not probable that all mention of an edifice so important as a Round Tower would have been omitted if it had existed there."

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MAGHERA, COUNTY OF DOWN.  
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"A mile east of Briansford, on the road to Dundrum, at Maghera, are the ruins of an old church, where is a noted burial-place, and near it formerly stood an high Round Tower, which, about 30 years ago, was overturned by a violent storm, and lay at length and entire upon the ground like a huge gun, without breaking to pieces, so wonderfully hard and binding was the cement in this work." Such is the brief notice found in *The Ancient and Present State of the County of Down*, published in 1744. The tower, therefore, fell about the year 1711, or 145 years ago. The South Munster Society of Antiquaries, in a document quoted by Dr. Petrie,\* gives the authority of Sir William Betham, for a statement that "the Tower of Maghera has also been opened" and human remains found. Mr. Joseph William Murphy, of Belfast, having made some inquiries respecting this, received the following note from Mr. Andrew Lindsay, dated Maghera, 5th Nov., 1843:—"I have just been over to see the Round Tower and to ascertain in what state it is. I find that Mr. Duffin, in whose glebe it is, has had it dug about to a considerable depth, and all the soil cleared off, and that the inside has been sunk several feet deep."

The name of this parish was originally Rath-Murbhuilg, afterwards, as in the Taxation of Pope Nicholas, edited by Dr. Reeves, simply Rath; and subsequently with a prefix, Machaire-Ratha. Only about twenty feet of the lower part of the tower now remain, containing the doorway, which is towards the east, and about seven feet from the ground.

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ANTRIM, COUNTY OF ANTRIM.  
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"Off on those shores they bade the youth advance,  
With measured footstep, in the martial dance,  
Or with a solemn, slow, majestic tread  
Round the tall tower the holy circuit led."—*Drummond's Giant's Causeway.*

By the kind permission of the proprietor, George J. Clarke, Esq., of Steeple, the writer was enabled, on the 29th April, 1843, to examine this very perfect example of the Irish Round Tower,

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\* Transactions R. I. A., vol. xx., p. 89.



which stands in his lawn, near the centre of the parish, and at the distance of about half-a-mile from the town of Antrim. The ruins and foundations of other buildings have been removed from its vicinity within the memory of persons still living, as well as large quantities of human remains, proofs of the existence formerly of a religious establishment having a cemetery in connection with it. Dr. Reeves, in his excellent work so often quoted, gives the ancient name as *Oentraibh*, the "one ridge," and distinguishes it from *nOendruim*,\* which name he considers only applicable to the *Nendrum* of Strangford Lough, where that rev. gentleman discovered the remains of a Round Tower, of which a description is given in a paper read by him before the Down and Connor Architectural Society, and published in their transactions, which he has kindly permitted to be printed so far as is necessary, in the present series of papers.

The tower of Antrim, one of the most perfect in Ireland, is constructed of rubble masonry, and owes its admirable preservation very much to the anxious care of the father of the present proprietor, under whose judicious directions it was repaired, without, however, the slightest interference with the original design. It is still cared for with equal watchfulness, as will be shown towards the conclusion of this paper. According to measurements taken at the time of the repairs alluded to, the height of this building is 93 feet: the writer, calculating by the shadow, made it 91 feet. The outer circumference near the base is fifty feet two inches, and the greatest internal diameter nine feet. The thickness of the wall at the door is three feet nine inches. All the openings in this tower, and they are numerous, are square-headed. The door is on the north side, about seven feet four inches above the true base of the building or the original level of the ground. Contrary, however, to the usual occurrence, the level of the ground about this tower has been considerably lowered by removing not only the accumulations of ages, but a part also of the original soil, so that it had been found necessary to form an artificial bank up to the base or first offset of the foundation. This bank, it could be seen, on examination, covered a second offset, and, according to the evidence of the labourers employed, a third also.

The door-way, as well as the original apex of the conical roof, are formed of a dark-coloured porphyry, brought, probably, from the district near Doagh called Sandybrae: on a stone of the

\* In the introductory paper of this series, last time, we have used *Aondruim* in error for *Oentraibh*. "It is very true," says Dr. Reeves, "that the name Antrim is but another form of the word *Aondruim*. Thus Keating styles Randal M'Donnell, Earl of Antrim, '*Iarla Aondroma*;' and thus Colgan and O'Flaherty use the adjective '*Andromensis*' to denote 'of Antrim.' But that the name, in the instances cited above, does not apply to Antrim on the Six-Mile-Water, will appear from the following passage in the *Felire Enguis*, or the Festioly of Angus Ceile De, a writer who flourished about the end of the eighth or the commencement of the ninth century:—

"The renowned and prosperous champion  
of Oendruim celebrate."

That is Mochoe of Oendruim, in Delvin Ethra or nine hills that are in the place wherein is his church.

Or, Oendruim, that is, one hill, is the entire island, and in Loch Cuan it is. *Festiol*, 23d June. This testimony is confirmed by the ancient Biographies of St. Patrick, which describe *nOendruim* or *Endrumia*, as paying an annual tribute to the Church of Down:—"et redditur adhuc." *Vita ii. a Patricio Juniore*, Cap. 32. How much more reasonable is it to understand this of the Oendruim of Strangford Lough, so contiguous to Down, and recorded in a document of the twelfth century, to have been then tributary to its bishop, than of Antrim, which was situate in a distinct and independent diocese."

same material, surmounting the lintel, but somewhat shorter, a cross is sculptured, that has been figured as a tail-piece in our introductory notice. Dr. Petrie, at page 400 of his *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*,\* gives a very accurate drawing of the door-way; but, contrary to his wont, gives a very incorrect outline of the cross.

It has been doubted that either the door-way or the cross belonged to the original work, particularly the stone with the cross: this idea receives some confirmation from the finish of the part inside where the wrought stone joins the tower-wall, leaving a space somewhat angular. Mr. Clarke says it was supposed that a wooden door-way fitted here: this might, however, have been an after adaptation. It is proper to add, that the work of the cross is very ancient, and that the similarity of the stone employed is a reason in favour of considering all these parts of cotemporaneous construction. There are four small quadrangular windows immediately under the roof, one of them in a direct line above the door; four other windows are spaced at different heights around the tower; one on the north-east, one on the south-west, and two on the south side, nearly on a line with the upper window. The door itself is four feet four inches high, and very nearly two feet wide. From the cill of the door the interior of the building narrows downwards, and the stones of the foundation from the level of the offsets project inwards. The masonry of the base is very bad indeed; so much so that the tower has quite the appearance of having been built on a cairn of stones, without the use of mortar;—for this reason, after several tons of loose stones had been thrown out it was considered advisable to leave the exploration unfinished, and Mr. Lanyon, C.E., who was present, recommended that the interior of the foundation should be filled up by a solid mass of mason-work, formed of large stones, carefully grouted together: this has been accordingly done, and it is satisfactory to reflect, that the exploration, if devoid of archæological result, has most probably been the cause of the preservation of this very perfect monument of bygone days. The tower tapers considerably; the breadth of the shadow of the top is only ten feet and a half, while that of the part near the base is upwards of seventeen feet. The only modern restoration is the very point of the conical roof, which had been struck off some years ago, by lightning. The remains of the original stone are preserved by Mr. Clarke. In form it very much resembled a Scotch lowland bonnet, and it has a square hole in the centre, into which a small wedge-shaped stone fitted, giving the appearance, when viewed from the ground, of a sharp point.

The exploration of this tower having been imperfect, no deduction can be drawn from it; but, as far as could be ascertained, the building did not contain any human remains. The sectional drawing which accompanies the introductory paper of this series, exhibits the position of the several openings.

The early notices of ecclesiastical buildings at Antrim are not numerous. Lewis, who is often

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\* Transactions of R. I. A., vol. xx.

correct in his statements, seems to confound Antrim with Nendrum, when he speaks of a monastery founded here in 495 by Aodh, a disciple of Saint Patrick. The *Four Masters* have the following references:—

Age of Christ, 612, Fintan of Oentrebh, abbot of Bangor, died.

Age of Christ, 822, Bangor plundered by the Danes, and its oratory destroyed, and the relics of Comghall scattered from the shrine which contained them, according as Comghall himself predicted, when he said:—"It will be true, true by the will of the supreme King of Kings, my bones shall be brought, without defect, from the beloved Beanchair to Eantrobh.

Age of Christ, 877, Muredhaeh, son of Cormac, abbot of Oentraibh, died.

Age of Christ, 941, Cellach son of Bec, lord of Dalaradia, was slain in Oentribh, by his own tribe.

Age of Christ, 1018, Antrum spoiled by Fermanach.

"This last passage," says Dr. Reeves, "which is wanting in the *Four Masters*, but supplied by the *Annals of Ulster*, is thus translated in the old English version, made for Sir J. Ware. O'Conor renders it a *prædonibus maritimis*. The original is *do feraib*, which does not seem properly rendered in either case."

Age of Christ, 1030, Kindred Owen, broke O'Longsy, his ship in midst of Antrim. [To the old English translation Dr. Reeves adds in a note, "O'Conor renders the passage:—The men of Tyrone destroyed O'Longsy's ships in sight of Antrim. The *Four Masters* are silent concerning the occurrence. The lordship of Dalaradia was hereditary in the O'Longsey (Lynch) family from 985 downwards."

Age of Christ, 1096, Flann O'Muregan, superior of Aentruibh, died.

Age of Christ, 1147, Roserea and Oentrob were burned.

The name occurs also in the annotations on the *Felire of Aengus*, at July, 31.\*

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#### CARRICKFERGUS, COUNTY OF ANTRIM.

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In an old document amongst the state papers entitled "*The contents of a survey or informacion given in the xxith of Julye, 1588, before two commissioners, by certeyne aldermen and Burgesses withe others, men of good sufficiencie, to geve judgement in these acccons for the repairinge of decayes whiche be founde in the mill and abbey, beinge store houses and houses of office, to be employde to the use of her Magest' garrison within the towne of Carigfergus, &c.*," the following words occur:—"Also we do finde one wachehouse or Turret sometymes caled a steple withe certeyne lofts belonginge to the same, whiche is to be repaired, rooved, and slatted, the estymacion of whiche charge is xvli." The expression "steeple," so often applied by the settlers to the round towers, induced the writer to suppose that Carrickfergus had at one time possessed one of these buildings, and this view is confirmed by a map published in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*,† as furnished by E. P. Shirley, Esq., M.P., where a building is shown almost close to the wall next the sea, that, as far as can be judged, is intended to represent a Round Tower.

\* Reeves, p. 278.

† Vol. iii., p. 276.

RAM'S ISLAND, COUNTY OF ANTRIM.  
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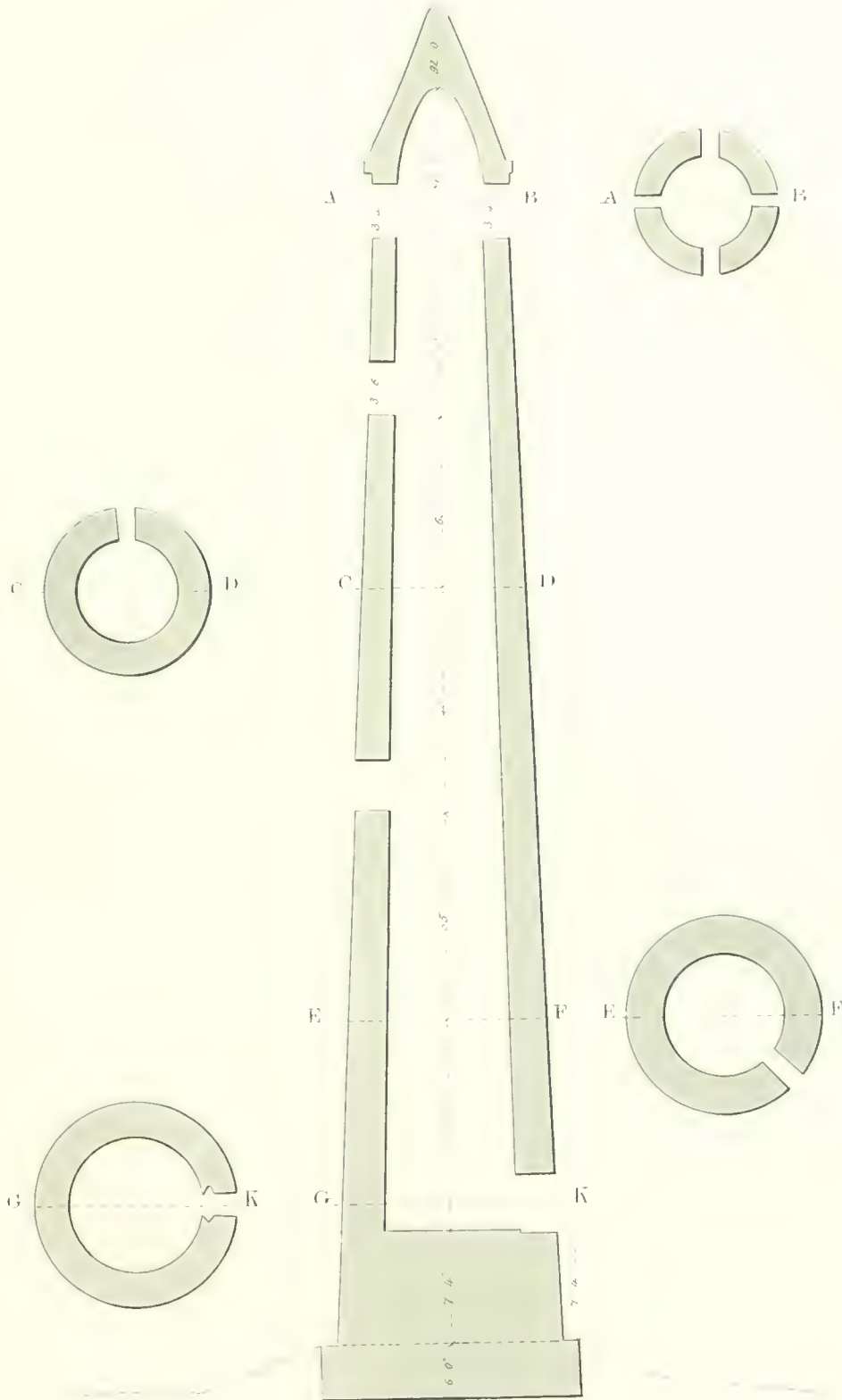
On this island, the largest in Lough Neagh, the remains of a Round Tower exist, which on application to the late Viscount O'Neill, of Shane's Castle, the writer was permitted to examine on the 10th September, 1844. Mr. George C. Hyndman, and Mr. Burgess, of Belfast, were also present. The island, which contains rather less than six acres, is included in the parish of Glenavy; and Dr. Reeves supposes that "*the chapel*" mentioned in connection with the church—"the Church of Lennewy, with the chapel," in Pope Nicholas's Taxation, was situated here. The remains of such a building no longer exist; but vestiges of a burying-ground are, it is said, still observable. Of the tower, which forms a striking object, a portion measuring 42 feet in height is still to be seen; the original doorway was eight feet above the offset which determined the level of the floor. This has, however, at some time been closed, and admission is now obtained by an aperture broken through the western side of the building. Two windows remain, one nearly on a line with, and immediately over the true entrance, which faces S.S.W. This is, or rather was, rudely pointed. The other is on the E.S.E. side. The interior diameter is eight feet three inches, and the thickness of the wall two feet six inches, which gives a circumference of nearly forty feet. The lower part of this tower had been filled up to a considerable depth when the pleasure-grounds which surround it were laid out. It was excavated under the direction of the persons named, to a point beyond where a lime floor had originally existed, but which had been broken through at some former period. Of course the examination, under such circumstances, was void of interest. Dr. Petrie quotes a statement from Mr. Windele of Cork, of "human bones having been found interred within that at Ram-island, in Antrim, and similar relics;" but that gentleman's authority is not given. Sir William Betham seems, from a statement afterwards made, to have adopted the same opinion. In the clay, beneath where the floor had been, bones were indeed discovered; but they were remains of a sheep which had been thrown in, most probably at a late period. No information was procured respecting the nature of any previous investigation. The name of this island is a subject worthy of some notice as an antiquarian question, for it is not probable it was received from the animal of the same name, nor from the surname which is sometimes found in England; and, if the writer mistakes not, it was that of an Irish bishop since the Reformation. It seems indeed, probable, that this word is corrupted from an ancient Irish term which had for a time been superseded by Enis Garden, another corruption of the same.

The writer is indebted to the kindness of Dr. Reeves, for several references in the *Annals of Ulster*, and of the *Four Masters*, which seem to apply to this place.

Enis Garden, it seems not improbable, is a corruption of a name which occurs twice in the *Annals of Ulster*—Inis Daircairegn—and most decidedly applies to some locality in or near to Lough Neagh.



ROUND TOWERS OF ULSTER



SECTION OF THE ROUND TOWER  
AT ANTRIM.

*Boyle*



AN. 1056, Gormgal prim annara innsi Daireairgren plenus dierum in penitentia pausavit. *Gormgal præcipuus anachoreta Insulæ Durcargreniæ, plenus dierum in penitentia pausavit.*"

AN. 1121. Cumaighi mae Deoradha hua Flaínd ri Derlais do badhadh i Loch nEachach iar ngab innsi Dareareren fair d Uib Eachach da itorehair u er ar xl.

*Cumagius filius Deoradii O'Flan rex Derlassie [a territory in or near Hy Tuirtre] demersus in lauc Each (Lough Neagh) post expugnatam Insulam Darearerenii contra Eachios [Ivagh men] in qua occisi sunt supra xl.*

No doubt can exist as to these entries having reference to an island in Lough Neagh, and the *Four Masters* bear testimony to the event mentioned in the latter, but mention the island under another name—*Rechrann*.

The age of Christ, 1121. Cumaighe, son of Deoraidh Ua Floinn, lord of Durlas, was drowned in Loch-Eathaeh after [the island of] Inis-Draierenn had been taken upon him by the Uí-Eathach, where forty-four persons were slain.

Dr. O'Donovan, in a note on this passage, says :—" Inis-Draierenn, now Rathlin, a small island opposite Rockland, where the upper Bann falls into Lough Neagh, in the north-east of the county Armagh." Dr. Reeves has given the writer the following note, in addition to what is found in his published volume, at pages 48 and 292 :—" I was once of opinion that this island [Daireairgren] is the modern Rathlin in the Montiags, barony of O'Neilland east, Co. of Armagh; but the statement of the *Annals of Ulster*, at 1056, leads me to suppose that ecclesiastical remains would be found in this island of Daireairgren, wherever it was: however, I have not heard that any such exist in the Rathlin of the Montyags. The island spoken of is certainly in Lough Neagh; and the question is between Ram's Island and Rathlin. You might look in the *Ordnance Survey of Armagh County*, sheet No. 6, and see whether any ruins of such are marked as existing on this island. If not, I should unhesitatingly pronounce in favour of Ram's Island, which was called Inis-Garden (a corruption, I suspect, of the above name) and is so marked on some old maps." Besides searching the maps, the writer has lately examined the spot itself, and can find no trace of any building having existed on Rathlin Island, in the Montiags.

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#### NENDRUM, COUNTY OF DOWN.

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The antiquarian world is indebted to the sagacity of Dr. Reeves for determining the true site of the ancient Priory of Nendrum; and some notices of its Round Tower are introduced in this paper, because it has been confounded with Antrim on account of a similarity in the Irish names. By that gentleman's permission his paper has been used, as far as required in this place, as it appeared originally in the "Papers of the Down, Connor, and Dromore Church Architectural Society."

Setting conjecture aside, a sure guide to the real site of this ancient house presents itself to the inquirer in the *Taxation of Nicholas IV.*\* This document, which is a record of the year 1291, eu-

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\*Since edited in part by Dr. Reeves. See *Ecc. Ant. of Down, Connor, and Dromore*.

merates all the parishes and chapelries in Ireland, arranged under their several dioceses and rural deaneries. Accordingly, among the churches in the diocese of Down, and in the rural deanery of Blaethwyc, the “*Ecclesia de Nedrum* is introduced between *Kilwyinchi* [Killinchy,] and *Kilmode* [Kilmood,] a position corresponding to that which the modern parish of *Tullymakill* occupies on the county map. An eastern portion of this parish, insulated by Strangford Lough, is called *Mahee Island*; and on this ground have been discovered the long-forgotten remains of the *Church* of Mahee Island—in Irish, *Inis-Moehaoi*—lying at about a quarter of a mile from the shore, containing 176A. 3R. 38r., and, with Reagh Island, 304A. 3R. 8r., being nearly all under tillage. It is a long narrow strip, contracting as it approaches its western extremity, and then dilating in an oval termination. Regarding its history the country people know nothing, saving that they have an impression of its being an ancient place, with an indistinct tradition that burials took place here centuries ago. On the Ordnance Map there are no marks to draw attention to the spot, except the name Old Town in one place, Castle Ruins in another, and a small dot, like that which indicates a lime-kiln, near the western end. The following particulars, which were observed by Dr. Reeves on a visit to the island, are well worthy of the antiquarian’s notice.

The western portion of the island rises from the water by a gentle slope to the elevation of sixty-six feet, and is surmounted by a small ivy-mantled ruin. On approaching this object, the way leads through a gap, in what appears to be the remains of a large circular enclosure. Ascending from this, a second nearly concentric ring, apparently the foundation of a wall or terrace, is crossed; and within this, at an interval of about fifty yards, a third ring, which encloses a nearly level space about seventy yards in diameter. At a distance of twenty-five feet from the inner circumference, on the west, stands the little ruin which possesses the main characteristics of the remains of a Round Tower. The diameter inside is six feet six inches. The external circumference at the basement course, which projects a few inches, is forty-four feet six inches, or nearly fifteen feet diameter. The materials of which it is constructed are undressed stones, yet so well disposed as to present an even surface inside, and so firmly compacted by grouting that, though the outer table of the wall has been picked away, the inner has maintained its surface unimpaired. The highest remaining part is about nine feet, and is covered with ivy. There is a fissure on the S.W. wide enough to admit a man; it extends to the ground, and was probably caused by the entrance having been there in the original plan. The view from the top of this building must have been very extensive, as a moderate addition to the natural elevation of the ground would afford a prospect of the whole length of Strangford Lough.

The usual accompaniment of a Round Tower was next sought for; and at the distance of forty-three feet to the S.E. an oblong space was observed, defined by something like a ridge in the grass, in which small portions of wall and mortar here and there projected through the soil. This space, which, from its proportions and its bearings to the east, resembled the enclosure of a place of Chris-



tian worship, was next examined, and, by the aid of some labouring men, the angles of a quadrilateral building and parts of the sides were exposed, to the depth of about two feet. Its proportions are as follow :—

|                   |     |     |     |     |     |                   |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------------|
| Total length,     | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 58 feet 4 inches, |
| Total breadth,    | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 22 feet 4 inches, |
| Length in clear,  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 52 feet 4 inches, |
| Breadth in clear, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 15 feet 8 inches, |

thus allowing a thickness of three feet for the end walls, and three feet four inches for the sides. At the west end were two projections, at the angles, of dressed stone, apparently the rudiments of shallow buttresses, measuring two feet six inches in breadth, by nine inches in depth.

The building stood E.N.E. : such a deflection from the exact east is not uncommon in ancient churches, and is supposed by some to have been regulated so as to correspond with the point of the sun's rising on the morn of the day which was commemorative of the patron saint. There were no marks of graves, by unevenness in the ground or by head-stones, to betoken a burial-place, near the ruins ; but upon turning up the ground, perfect skeletons were exposed to view in several places, both within and outside the foundations, having their feet turned eastward. The floor of the tower was found to be on the same plane as the ground outside. In the hope of discovering some human remains within it, an excavation was made as deep as the lowest part of the foundation ; but no animal remains were found except some fragments of large bones, not human, and some large and curious molar teeth. An inhabitant of a neighbouring island stated that, some years ago, a man visited the spot in consequence of his dreaming that money was buried near the ruin ; and that in the process of digging near the N.W. base of the tower he came upon a human skeleton of very large dimensions, which was seen by several persons afterwards.

At the northern extremity of the island are the roofless walls of an ancient square eastle, similar in structure to those which abound along the shores of Strangford Lough :—in length, 41 feet 6 in. ; in breadth, 21 feet 6 in. ; in height, 30 feet 6 inches ; and varying in thickness from 4 feet 10 inches to 3 feet 3 inches.

From this building a causeway leads to Island Reagh, which is covered only at high water, and was probably coeval in its construction with the eastle.

With Nendrum is to be associated the name of Saint Mochoc, one of Saint Patrick's early converts ; and its honour is to have been set apart for the worship of the True God in the very dawn of Christianity in Ireland.

The name signifies "the single hill," and is thus derived :—*oen* is an obsolete form for the numeral *an*, one ; the particle *na*, or before a vowel *n*, prefixed to the compound, gives the name as it is found in native authorities ; and this in an English form is written Nendrum, and contracted into Nedrum.

The following notices of this place appear in the *Annals* :—

*Tighernach*, A.C. 497. Mochae of Oendruim died.

*Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 493. Mochoei nOendroma quievit, [which is the same event stated, but in a different year, caused by the mode of computing time.]

Another edition gives the year 498.

*Annals of Innisfallen*, An. 490. Rest of Mochae of Noendroma.

*Four Masters*, age of Christ, 496. St. Mochaoi, abbot of Aondruim, died on the 23rd of the month of June.

These passages, until the error was pointed out by Dr. Reeves, were understood as applying to Antrim. In the notices of the Tower there, this has been further alluded to.

With this island-church is also to be associated the name of Saint Caylan, the first bishop of Down. Colman, the first bishop of Dromore, was his pupil; and of Finnian of Moville we are informed, that when a lad he was sent to the venerable old man, Coelan, abbot of Noendruim, for instruction.

## THE ROUND TOWERS OF ULSTER.

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### ARMOY TOWER, COUNTY OF ANTRIM.

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“—— renown, and grace is dead;  
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees  
Is left this vault to brag of.”—*Shakspeare.*

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IN the barony of Carey, County of Antrim, is situated the village of Armoyn, once an important place in the ancient territory of Dalriada. The first entry respecting it, in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, records the fact of its being set on fire by Cumee O'Flynn in 1177, during an expedition of John De Courey. In 1247 it is again mentioned, casually, in connection with a predatory excursion made by Eachmarcach O'Kane, Lord of Kianaghta and Firnacreeva, into the territory of Manus O'Kane. The present name is contracted from the Irish Airthar-muighe (Arthermoy, the eastern plain). From Dr. Reeves, the great authority in such matters, and the notes to the *Four Masters*, the following particulars are collected:—In early times Dalriada was divided into sixteen *tuoghs* or districts, of which the *cynamond* of Armoyn and Raghlin was one. The taxation in 1306 was—“The Church of Ethirmoy, £4 11s. 4d.; Tenth, 9s. 1½d.” Its foundation, according to Dr. Reeves, was in A.D. 474. The Tripartite Life relates that St. Patrick, having baptised Olean, on the subsequent evidence of his great advance in piety and learning, placed him as bishop over the church of Rath-mugia or Arthir-mugia, the chief town of the Dalredini. Jocelin and Ussher call this church Derean. With this place is connected the curious legend respecting St. Patrick and Olean the bishop, wherein the latter, having offended his master by receiving into communion Saran, a prince of Dalaradia, whom Patrick had excommunicated, showed his contrition by prostrating himself before the saint's chariot. The charioteer, on seeing this, pulled up, but was ordered to

proceed on his course; this he declined doing; and the matter ended by the prophecy that the church of Armoyn should be three times destroyed and polluted with blood in punishment of Olean's fault.<sup>a</sup> Here, at a very early period, there is a record of the existence of a water-mill, found in the "Inquisitio post-mortem" of the property of William de Burgo, Earl of Ulster—such a mill, probably, as is described in the *Ulster Journal of Archæology*, vol. 4, p. 6. By King James the First's charter this church was appropriated to the archdeaconry of Connor. Dr. O'Connor mentions, on the authority of a MS. of the fourteenth century, in the Stowe Library, Armoyn as one of twenty-one ancient monasteries which had schools of instruction attached to them. The present church, Dr. Reeves states, stands on the old foundation, but is not so long as the original. Near it, and surrounded by graves, stands what remains of the Round Tower, which was carefully explored by the writer on the 21st and 22d September, 1843. The other parties present were the Rev. Mr. Harvey and his son, of Turnarobert; Mr. Arthur McGee, of Ballycastle; and, on the second day, Mr. T. M. Birnie, of Carrickfergus; and Mr. Edward Benn, of Glenravel.

What remains of the tower has been fitted up as a belfry, by putting a wooden roof on the walls, of which about forty feet are still standing. The door, the only opening, is on the south side, and measures one foot seven inches wide, and five feet nine inches in height. From it to the floor was eight feet six inches; but now, to the level of the burying-ground, is only five feet four inches. The walls are of mica slate; and during the excavation a part of the original roof was discovered, formed on the same plan precisely as the stone preserved at Antrim, and already described in the notices of the tower there. The door is semicircular-headed, the arch being cut out of one block, and ornamented by an architrave also cut on the same lintel stone. It follows the curve of the arch and it is probable that originally the sides of the door-way exhibited a continuation of the same projection. They, however, have been repaired at some period. There is no appearance of cross or other decoration. A view of this tower, given in the *Irish Penny Magazine*, is incorrect, for it shows an ornament over the door that does not exist. The wall of the building is three feet five inches thick. The interior diameter is eight feet two inches, and it does not seem to vary in this dimension. At the door there is a projection of the walls for the support of a floor, and another about ten feet higher up. As the tower had been cleared out several times by persons anxious to procure the droppings of pigeons, which build in the roof, it did not promise any very important result; but the inquiry was fortunately proceeded with.

In the course of the excavation only loose *debris*, with small portions of wood and stone, and jaws of animals, were thrown out for several feet; but at length a skull and other human remains were found, packed up against the wall on the north side. These were evidently in the same position as at first placed. Portions of horn were also found, and remains of the fallen part of the

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<sup>a</sup> Colgan Vit. Trip. p. 47.



tower. Anything observed hitherto was considered of little importance, as all to this depth may have been disturbed at some period posterior to the erection of the building. The skull, nevertheless, had an appearance of considerable antiquity. When the search was continued to a further depth of some feet, another skull was found, imbedded like a fossil, lying on the south-east side of the line of the entrance, but without any other bones of the skeleton with it. This skull lay with the upper part towards the centre of the tower, and the lower jaw towards the wall. The material it was imbedded in was stiff clay; and there was this peculiarity attending it, that it was contained in a hollow space in the wall, which appeared to have been constructed to contain it, in the manner of a rude niche. Mr. Benn and Mr. Birnie, with the writer, examined it *in situ*, and were all equally struck by the fossil-like appearance it presented—an appearance previously observed in similar instances. It is an interesting circumstance to notice, that the three upper cervical vertebræ were found in connexion with this skull, or *in situ* as respects the cranium, and no other bones were found in the same place that seemed to be parts of the same body. The inference drawn by the parties present was, that the head buried here had been, when in a recent state, severed from the trunk. The under jaw and vertebræ were nearly in the same horizontal line;—in fact just so much of the vertebral column remained as must have been removed with the head if taken off while the muscles and integuments were recent.

This relic was obtained, fortunately, in a nearly perfect state. In the place where it lay a fire had been burned, and it had been deposited on a bed of peat ashes and charcoal before being covered with the clay. Several pins, formed of deers' antlers, were found: they seemed to have been used by the builders in setting out their work. A portion of a line, made of twisted hair, was also discovered, and a piece of sand-stone, most probably used for whetting the workers' tools.

The discovery of a head so distinctly interred separate from the body gives more than usual interest to the skull exhumed from this tower. That such a practice was not without precedent with the ancient Irish is proved by several facts. For instance, in the case of the skulls found in an ancient burial-ground near the Giant's Ring, so accurately detailed in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. 3, p. 360, and in several instances recorded by the *Four Masters*.

Age of Christ, 558. After that Dermot, son of Fergus Cerrbeoll, had been twenty years King of Ireland, he was slain by Aodh Dubh, son of Suibhne, King of Dalrædia, of Rathbeg, in Moy-line. *His head* was conveyed to Clonmaenóis, and his body was buried at Connor.

The Editor of the *Four Masters*, in a note on the name Kinnity, says “Cenneitigh, i.e. the head of Etech, so called according to a note in the *Felire Aenguis*, at the 7th of April, from Etech, an ancient Irish heroine, *whose head* was interred here.”

Under the year 1432, the following entry occurs:—“Great and frequent depredations were committed by Manus Mac Mahon upon the English, many of whom he slew; and he placed their heads upon the stakes of the garden of Baile-na-Lurgan, Mac Mahon's own mansion seat, hideous and horrible spectacles to the beholders.” This statement is also confirmed, according to Dr. O'Donovan's note, by the Dublin copy of the *Annals of Ulster*.

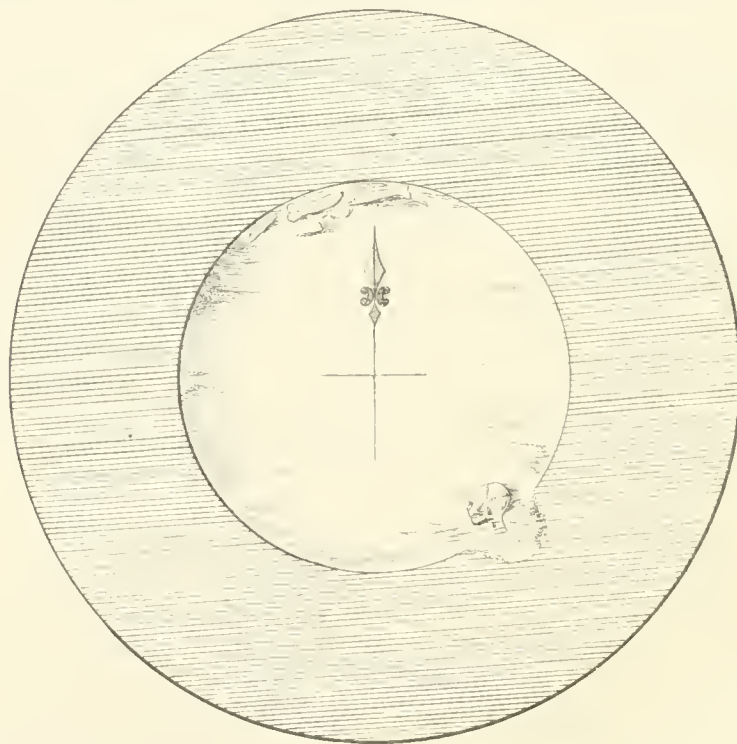
1547. The *Annals of Ulster*, at this date, record an incursion made by O'Rourke into Maguire's country, when the heads of sixteen leaders of the former party were cut off and affixed on Maguire's mansion.

Under the year 1556 mention is made of a Mac William, called Ulick na-gceann; with this note, "Ulick of the heads, so called from the many heads of enemies which he had cut off."

Under the year 1603. Dr. O'Donovan, in his edition of the *Four Masters*, gives some notices of the different branches and individuals of the Maguire family:—one, named Cuconnaught More, was killed at the pass of Aughrim [temp. James II.] "He was struck down by a grape-shot, and left dead on the field: but one of his followers named O'Durnan, is said to have cut off his head with his sword, and to have carried it in a bag to the island of Devenish, where he interred it in the family tomb of the Maguires." Mr. Bryan Maguire, of Tempo, believed that a descendant of this man resided in Dublin in 1811.

The entire excavation extended to a depth of eleven feet from the sill of the door.

The accompanying diagram is intended to show the relative position of the several remains found in this tower.



*Scale 1/4 in. to a foot*

The circumstances of this skull differ from any discovered during the various explorations now recorded, in the fact of the three upper cervical vertebrae remaining in connection with it; leading to the conclusion that the head must have been severed from the trunk before the decomposition of the body had proceeded far. This circumstance struck all the parties at the time, and has since led to the conclusion that the cranium found had been separated from the body in a recent state. Mr. Grattan in his notices of the skulls found in Round Towers will discuss this matter; Mr. Benn, in a communication dated Glenravel, 25th September, 1843, thus refers to it:—

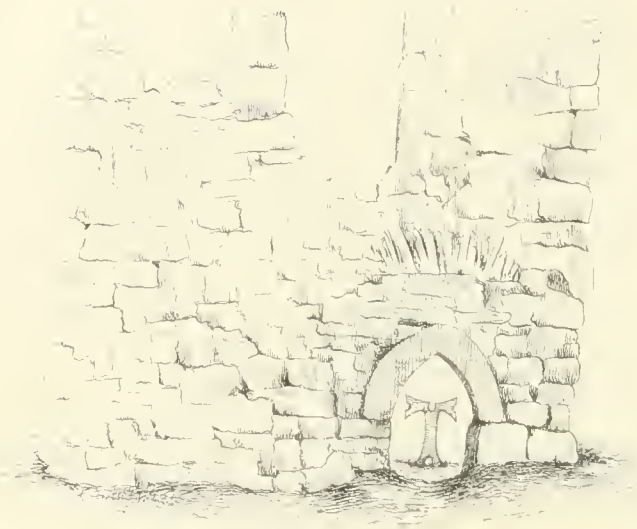
“From what I saw, I think your theory of these skulls having been taken from other places and put under the tower cannot be supported; I did not see the conclusion of the matter, but as I understand, these are the facts:—the skull was found close into the wall, two joints of the neck were found attached; these neck-bones were turned to the wall; the skeleton was not found; remains of the hair were found; the under jaw was found in its place quite entire. If these are the facts, it is plain that this was the head of a person who had been decapitated, but whether before or after death could not be ascertained. You should examine the neck-bones very closely to see if any marks of a cutting instrument are to be seen; it is quite evident that the circumstances under which this skull was found, could only be accounted for by supposing a human head to have been placed there, and not a skull which had been buried elsewhere previously.”

Mr. Benn seems to allude in his note to the writer's remarks on the peculiar mode of burial observed at Clones, which were not intended to be produced as a theory on the uses of Round Towers. In like manner, the extracts given from the *Four Masters* are not introduced to support a supposition that the heads of enemies cut off in war amongst rude tribes were interred in Round Towers, but to show that decapitation was not uncommon. If an inference can be drawn, it seems to be that, in some cases, the heads of great leaders were recovered by their friends, and honoured by a careful burial.

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## DEVENISH TOWER, COUNTY FERMANAGH.

"I've wandered through the wrecks of days departed,  
Far by the desolated shore."—*Shelley*.



**HE** island of Devenish, in Lough Erne, about two miles below Enniskillen, like many other retired spots in the country, is rich in ecclesiastical remains. Its tower was explored by Mr. Grattan, Mr. J. W. Murphy, and the writer, on the 27th of May, 1844;—permission to do so, as well as excavate within the ruins of a stone roofed chapel in its vicinity, having been granted by Paul Dane, Esq., through the polite attention of Lord Enniskillen, at the request of the late Mr.

William Thompson, who has been already mentioned as taking an active part in the examination of Drumbo.

In navigating the narrow strait forming the junction of upper and lower Lough Erne, the cot (so the boat in use here is named) passes under Portora hill, at whose base, a short distance from the water, are seen the remains of the ancient castle of "The Maguire." Beyond this point the lake becomes wider, and the tower of Devenish, one of the most perfect works of the kind, is discovered, standing like a giant in the midst of ruins. The island contains upwards of seventy acres; and like most others in this beautiful lake, rises gradually from the water, in the form of a low hill covered with rich herbage, which affords, and as its name denotes—for the term *Daimh-inis* (now pronounced Devenish) signifies Ox-island—seems always to have afforded, pasturage to large herds of cattle.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>"In a life of St. Aedan, quoted by Ussher (*Primord.*, p. 962), the name of this island is translated *Bovis Insula*, and in a life of St. Aedus *Bovium insula*."—"Devenish, *daimh inis*, i.e., the ox-island or *bovis in-ula*, as it is translated in the life of St. Moidoc. It is situated in Lough Erne, near Enniskillen, in the county of Fermanagh. Laisrean, or Molaisse, the patron saint of

this island, flourished in the 6th century; having died, according to the *Annals of the Four Masters*, in the year 563, but according to the *Annals of Ulster*, in the year 570. The ruins of an ancient church and of an abbey of the 15th century, and a beautiful Round Tower in good preservation, are still to be seen on this island."—*Dr. O'Donovan*.



Besides the tower and the stone-roofed chapel already mentioned as in ruins, called Saint Molissi's house, there are remains here of an abbey, a church, and a monastery. By means of the several illustrations given it is proposed to show the position of the ecclesiastical buildings that existed on this island. The accompanying drawing, copied from Ledwich, proves that about the year 1792 two buildings, now in the last stage of dilapidation, were nearly perfect—the ancient church seen in the fore-



ground, and the stone-roofed chapel. The stone-roofed chapel is most probably the oldest building here; then the tower. The church and monastery adjoined one another, and now present little more than a heap of ruins surrounded by an ancient burying-ground. In 1806 Sir Richard Colt Hoare thus describes the church:—"The eastern window is divided into three narrow compartments, with lancet heads, and banded on the inside." The initial letter of the present paper shows what now remains of that building. A writer in the *Belfast Magazine*, 1825, says—"part of the east window of the church still remains, but in a very dilapidated state. A great part of the walls seemed to have but lately fallen, which induced us to inquire of our boatman what had thrown them down, when, to our astonishment, we learned that these interesting remains, which had braved the effects of time for so many centuries, had been destroyed, in this age of boasted civilisation, for the purpose of procuring the stone frames of the windows and other ornamental parts, for the decoration of houses in Enniskillen."

The abbey is the finest ruin on the island, and indicates an advanced state of the arts at the period of its erection. If a stone built into one of its walls refers to this building, Mathew O'Dubegan

erected it in 1449, when Bartholomew O'Flannigan was Prior. Although this inscribed stone is built into the abbey, it may, however, have been removed from the ruins of the old church, and placed where it is now seen with a view to its preservation. The material differs from that used in other parts of the building; but it is right to state that Sir R. C. Hoare describes it as being near the east window in 1806. "This church," the same writer observes, "which is the most easterly building, was large and beautiful, with a noble carved window over the high altar." It is built of a very compact limestone, (perhaps black marble is the proper expression,) a material not used in any other building here. Some parts of it, particularly the transept and square tower by which it is surmounted, are still in good preservation. On passing through its fine arch, a visitor is struck by the sharpness of the lines of the work, which are so highly polished and so perfect as to seem fresh from the workman's chisel. On the northern side a small pointed doorway leads to a winding stair communicating with the square tower, in which a bell or bells had been placed; and the apertures still remain in the groined floor of the upper compartment, through which the ropes had passed. This fact is interesting in connection with the uses of the Round Towers; for it seems unlikely that the Cloigtheach was a belfry in the usual sense of the term, standing close to this abbey, and at the same time that bells were also placed in the latter building. It may, indeed, be said that the buildings belonged to distinct religious bodies; but it seems more probable that the tower, as an ecclesiastical building—for that it was such Dr. Petrie in the writer's estimation has proved—was used as a place of safe deposit for the church furniture, including the altar bells, rather than as a place in the summit of which a bell was suspended. Sir R. C. Hoare says:—"The little pointed doorway leading up to the tower, deserves notice, from being excellently well fluted in its angles, and finished the same way at bottom as at top; a peculiarity I do not recollect ever to have seen before, and producing a light and elegant effect."

This island was the scene of a curious interlude mentioned by Sir John Davis, when he, as Attorney-General, held the first assizes for Fermanagh in 1607. It was on the occasion of an inquiry respecting some property of the Maguire Family. The jury, who sat in the old abbey, "referred themselves to an old parchment roll remaining in the hands of one O'Brislon, a chronicler and principal Brehon of that country; whereupon O'Brislon was sent for, but was so aged and decrepid as he was scarce able to repair unto us. When he was come, we demanded of him a sight of the ancient roll. The old man, seeming to be much troubled with this demand, made answer that he had such a roll in his keeping before the war, but that it was burned, among other of his papers and books, by certain English soldiers. We were told by some that were present that this was not true. Thereupon my Lord Chancellor did minister an oath unto him, and gave him a very serious charge to inform us truly what was become of that roll. The poor old man, fetching a deep sigh, confessed that he knew where the roll was, but that it was dearer to him than his life, and therefore he would never deliver it out of his hands, unless my Lord Chancellor would take the like oath that the roll

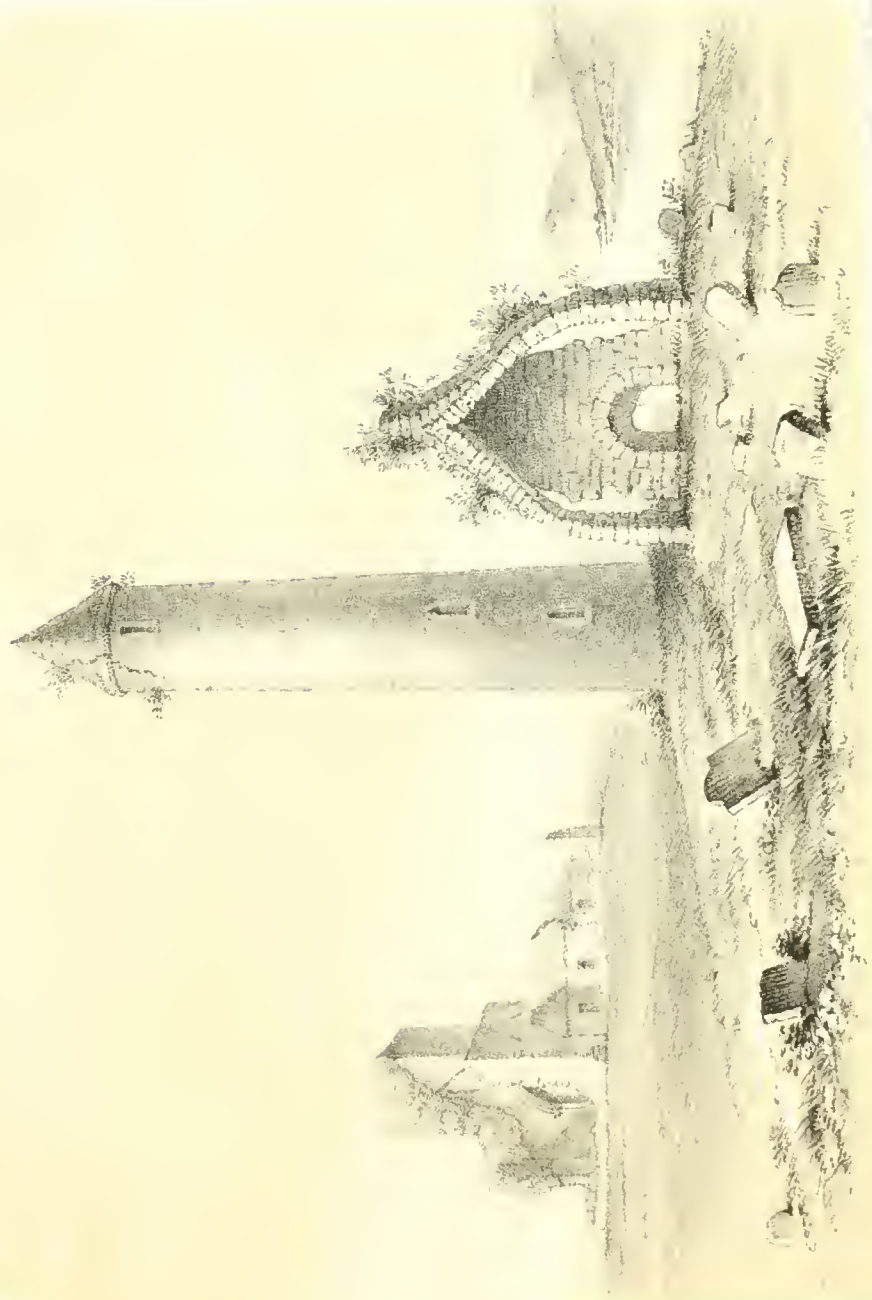


Fig. 1.

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should be restored to him again. My Lord Chancellor, smilingly, gave him his word and his hand that he should have the roll re-delivered to him if he would suffer us to take a view and a copy thereof. And thereupon the old Brehon drew the roll out of his bosom, where he did continually bear it about him. It was not very large, but it was written on both sides in fair Irish character."

In the Fermanagh Inquisition, held 18th September, 1699, some particulars are found respecting this island and its ecclesiastical condition. "The Bishop, say the jurors, receives out of the *herenagh* lands of Devenish, conteyninge in all fower quarters of the newe measure, of which soe much as lay in the iland Devenish (except Rossimartina, conteyninge a fourth part of a tate) is free, and belonged to *the corbe, or chiefe herenagh* of that place, fower markes per annum, makinge as before, and eight night's cosherie in his visitacion as before, and not else, and three score sroaghans of oate-bread and a beofe per annum, or tenne shillings in liewe of the said bread, and a noble per annum in liewe of the said beofe, and that there are *three herenaghs* of the said land." According to the same authority, the parish church of Devenish stood on the island: there was both a parson and vicar, collative. The tithes were paid in kind—one-fourth to the bishop of Clogher, another fourth to the vicar, and the moiety to the parson, who paid one-third of the church repairs and the vicar another third. "Having made mention of eight tates of land on the south side of Lough Erne, all of which they observe together with the tithes thereof belonge to the late dissolved abbey or house of Channons of Devenish, the jurors report further that the said abbey, or house of Chanons of Devenishe, with one orchard or moore thereunto belonginge, are scituate and being in the iland of Devenish, and that out of the said abbey the said bushopp of Clogher had yerelic a refeccion for a daie, or tenn shillings in liewe thereof in his visitation, and not else, but not to staie all night; and they alsoe saie upon their oathes, that the late priorie or house of secular priests of Collidea (Culdees) with an orchard thereunto belounginge, is likewise scituate in the said iland of Devenish, and that to the said late priorie doe belonge four tates of land of the ould measure, with the tithes thereof, in the barronie aforesaid."<sup>b</sup>

The following notice was pointed out to the writer by Mr. R. MacAdam, in an ancient Icelandic work quoted by Johnstone, as probably referring to Devenish. It is found in the *Kongs Skuggsio* (Speculum Regale.) It is here given in the Latin translation which accompanies the original Icelandic:—

"In stagno, cujus mentionem antea injecimus, Logherne dicto, insularum est una Misdrilan<sup>c</sup> vocata, ubi sanctorum quidam Diernicis templum, ubi permaneret, habuit. Idem verum templum, et quod ei adjectum est cœmeterium, nemini creaturæ femineæ fas erat ingredi, a quo et sibi cavere animalia, aves et id genus reliqua, humanæ rationis expertia poterant; nec profecto est, quæ audeat ingredi, vel possit, etsi tentet, templum hoc aut cœmeterium sequioris sexus creatura."<sup>d</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Rev. R. King's *Memoir Introductory to the Early History of the Primacy of Armagh*, p. 50.

<sup>c</sup> The following various readings of the name of the island are given:—Inisdredan, Iniscloedran, Inhiskledran, Inhiskladran, Inhisoladran, Inhisdradren, Inhosdoran, Inholsdro, Inholsdo, Inshodo, Misolodrava, Ni-

chisdodran, (ex variis librorum conjecturis.)

<sup>d</sup> Dr. Reeves says he can find no name resembling Inis-Dredan, or Inis-Trodan, or Inis-Tretan, or Inis-Gredan, or any likely form of twisting which the name, as given in the Icelandic, might undergo.

“In the lake of which mention has already been made, named Lough Erne, one of the islands is called Misredan, (Inisdredan?) where a saint, a certain Dermot, had a temple in which he abided continually. No female was permitted to enter this temple or the cemetery adjoining. Other animals, birds, and such like, devoid of human reason, were able instinctively to avoid this place. Nor, indeed, is there any creature of the weaker sex which dares, or could, if it attempted, enter this temple.”

Dr. Reeves, to whom the writer submitted the above notice, has made the following observations on the subject:—

“There is an island of Loch Erne, the only one I have ever met with whose name at all approached in form to Inisdredan (for that evidently is the word intended), called Inis-Inesclaind, where was once a cell of which Fergus, commemorated at Nov. 10, was patron saint. But either of him or of his island there is no further notice. I have come to the conclusion that *Logherne* is an error, and *Loch-Ribh* in the Shannon is the true place, and for the following reason:—St. Diarmait, of Jan. 10, is the patron of Inis-Clothrann, in Loch-Ribh, now called Iniscloughran,<sup>c</sup> or Quaker Island. Colgan has collected all that he could find about him, at Jan. 10, but he has nothing to show that this Diarmait had any connection with the Norse legend.—However, in looking over the *Index Sanctorum* in *O’Clery’s Calendar of Donegal*, voce Diarmait, I have found the following insertion, which almost settles the question:—

‘ “*Diarmait epscop Insi Clothrann [for Loch Ribh i cCuirene, acas ni thaghuill bean no leanobh og muu a reileg. Do sharuigh bean eireceeh Sharonach sin goirid o shoin acas teasdu go grad. Inis Diarmada ainm na hinnsi go niomul regles 7 mainistir.]*”

“ ‘*Diarmait, bishop of Innis Clothrann. [On Lough Ribh in Cuirene (now Kilkenny West, in Westmeath), and no woman or female child resorted to his cemetery. An English heretic woman, a short time ago, infringed this, and she quickly died. Inis Diarmada is the name of the island, and it has several cemeteries and monasteries.]*”

The following notices of Devenish are extracted from the *Annals of the Four Masters*, edited by Dr. O’Donovan, and the *Annals of Ulster*, published by Dr. Reeves in connection with the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*.

The age of Christ, 563, Saint Molaisi, abbot of Daimhinis, died, on the 12th September.

The age of Christ, 1259, Hugh O’Conor and Brian O’Neill held a conference at Devenish, in Lough Erne.

The age of Christ, 1450, Nicholas O’Flanagan, parson of Devenish, died at Rome, whither he had gone on a pilgrimage.

The age of Christ, 1462, the prior of Devenish, i.e. Bartholomew, the son of Hugh O’Flanagan, died, on Lough

<sup>c</sup> Iniscloughran.—The island of Clothra. Dr. O’Donovan, *Four Masters*, An. 1193, says:—“This Clothra is said to have been the sister of the famous Meadhbh or Meave, Queen of Connaught. The island lies in Lough Ree, near St. John’s, and is now sometimes called by the people of the counties of Longford and Roscommon, dwelling in its vicinity, the Seven Church Island, from the ruins of seven old churches still to be seen on it; and sometimes Quaker’s Island, from Mr. Fairbrother, the present oc-

cupier. These churches, to one of which is attached an old belfry, called in Irish *Clogas*, are said to have been erected by Saint Dermot in the sixth century; but some of them were re-edified.” Many memorials of Meave are still found here.”

<sup>f</sup> Saint Diarmait flourished in the early part of the sixth century, Anno. 540; Colgan’s notice of him in *Acta Sanctorum* is at p. 51.

Derg. This was the prior who repaired or re-built the great abbey church at Devenish, as appears from an inscription on a stone in the wall.

The age of Christ, 1479, Piarus, the son of Nicholas O'Flanagan, who had been a canon chorister at Clogher, a parson and prior of Culdees, a sacristan at Devenish, an official on Lough Erne, a charitable, pious, truly hospitable, and humane man, died, after having gained the victory over the Devil and the world.

The year of Christ, 1503, Laurence O'Flanagan, prior of Devenish, died.

According to the catalogue of Irish saints published by Archbishop Ussher, taken from the ancient authorities, these holy men are divided into three orders,—the first “most holy,” the second “very holy,” the third “holy.” The first was confined to contemporaries of Patrick. In the second is found the name of Laisrean. “There were three famous saints of this name who generally appear in Irish hagiology, with the prefix *Mo*, in the form *Molassi*.” The one, however, to whom it is at present desirable to refer is Molaissi, son of Nadfraich, whose festival is the 12th September.—“He was of the race of Irial, son of Connal Cearnaigh, and seventh in descent from Cruinn Badhraighe, son of Eochaidh Cobha, son of Fiacha Araidhe.”<sup>a</sup>

Like Columba, and many others of the illustrious men by whom Christianity was extended over Ireland and firmly fixed in the minds of the people, Molaissi was a man of high birth, and his name is found associated with that of the Abbot of Iona. Indeed, according to a statement made, the principal cause of that remarkable man leaving his native country after the battle of Cuidremne, (which tradition states was caused by a dispute between the saint and King Diarmait,) was the decision of Saint Molaissi—“that Columba should spend the rest of his life an exile on a foreign soil, where he should attach more persons to Christ than had fallen in the war.” This is, however, not the place to introduce a biography of the illustrious founder of the religious establishments at Devenish. The life of St. Aedan has the following notice of Saint Molaissi :—

“Beatissimus Lasreanus ad aquilonalem partem Hiberniæ exivit, et construxit clarissimum monasterium in Stagno *Herne*, nomine Daimh-inis, qui sonat Latine, Bovis insula.” And the Life of Saint Aedus :—“Regebat plures monachos in insula posita in stagno *Erne*, quam Scoti nominant Daimhinis i.e. Bovium insulam.”<sup>b</sup>

The death of this saint is entered twice in the *Annals of Ulster*, first under the year 563 (æ. com. 564) and again 570. The *Four Masters* record it at 12th Sept. 1853. Any of these dates carries back the history to a very early period, and his name is still found associated with the most ancient ruin on the island, which is always mentioned as Saint Molaissi's house. A stone coffin also, now exposed in the neighbourhood of the tower, is called his bed : by the superstitious it is believed that any one who can lie within it will be cured of rheumatism and similar complaints. Sir R. C. Hoare

<sup>a</sup> Dr. Reeves, *Annals of Ulster*, p. 28.

<sup>b</sup> Blessed Laserian retired to the North of Ireland and erected a very celebrated monastery in Lough Erne called Devenish, meaning in Latin “Bovis Insula.”—

(Ox-island.) He ruled many monks in an island in Lough Erne called by the Scots Devenish, that is, “the Island of Oxen.”

says—"And the vulgar tradition is, that many people have endeavoured to fit their shapes to it, but have not succeeded."<sup>i</sup>

In the burying-ground near the abbey the base of a cross remains; but the other parts have been destroyed before the time of any one now living. There is also, not far from the abbey and tower a well dedicated to Saint Nicholas; but this is nearly filled up.<sup>j</sup>

Having given the foregoing details, it is proposed, in the remaining portion of this paper, to describe the tower, and mention the excavations made within it and at the stone-roofed chapel.

The tower is still perfect; for its integrity has been carefully attended to even in the midst of the wilful devastation of the other buildings. Sir R. C. Hoare, in 1806, had noticed the possibility of injury to the top from the elder-trees that had rooted in the crevices of the roof; and the writer already alluded to, in the *Belfast Magazine*, had called attention to the same facts. These plants were removed, soon after the last mentioned reference, by Mr. O'Beirne, a son of the learned master of Portora school, at some personal risk; but at a later period, the trees having again shot up, the dreaded catastrophe did take place, and a large portion of the conical top and cornice fell to the ground. A sufficient sum having been at once subscribed, a perfect restoration, stone by stone almost, was made; and Devenish remains as perfect as at first, the pride of Fermanagh in its unequalled beauty;—unequalled in Ulster at least, for it is superior to any in the province, both as regards the character of its decorations and the style of its architecture. It is said to be eighty-two feet in height and forty nine in circumference. The elaborate cornice immediately below the roof, which distinguishes this from all similar buildings, is figured by Dr. Petrie, Mrs. Hall, and others, from drawings furnished by Captain Stothard taken during the Ordnance Survey. It evinces the care and expense lavished on the erection; and the four heads, which surmount the windows next the roof, exhibit an advanced knowledge of the sculptor's art. The masonry of the entire building is excellent; and it may be further remarked that the stones employed, though dressed, are not laid in regular courses; but in such a manner as best suited the builder's convenience. Thus in some places, one large mass occupies so great a space that two or three courses of stones, of the ordinary size, have been used before the whole was brought to a level; and in some other instances, when a vacancy occurs in a course, the use of a small stone is obviated by a block in the next being so dressed as to key into the space below. A similar mode of proceeding was afterwards remarked in Drumlane Tower.

The entrance is by a door, at about nine feet from the ground. The projections remain which had supported the floors; and, besides the four windows usually found near the top of such buildings, there

<sup>i</sup> Besides its patron Saint Molaisi, the other saints commemorated there were Osnat, 6th January; Naile, 27th January; Siollan, 17th May.

<sup>j</sup> In a note under the year 1439, Dr. O'Donovan informs us that Mr. Meehin, who still possesses the Termonlands of Ballagh (in the parish of Rossinver, in the north of the county Leitrim) now known as Ballagh-

meehin, of which one of his family was the ancient Coarb, is in possession of a curious relic consisting of a brass box, in which it is said St. Molaisi's gospel was preserved. This box exhibits a curious Irish inscription, containing the name of the artist and person for whom it was made.



are two others at different heights ; one of these, which the builder considered should appear as an angular-headed opening on the exterior, is quadrangular within. Dr. Petrie, in his work on Irish Ecclesiastical Architecture,<sup>†</sup> directed attention to the fact that “ in many of the apertures, which exhibit semi-circular and angular heads, these forms are only external, and their internal construction preserves the quadrangular form, by a lintel more or less recessed, which rests upon the jambs.” In illustration, the learned author gives wood-cuts of such openings in the towers of Cashel and of Dysert, which exactly correspond with those observed at Devenish. This peculiarity seems deserving of more notice than it has received from inquirers, as it argues some architectural rule strictly observed, both as regards the form of the opening and its position in the building :—for, if the form had been arbitrary, the square-headed would have been chosen ; and if position had depended only on convenience for admitting light, it would have been placed a few feet lower on the building, by which the necessity of blocking up a part of a window of very small dimensions, intended to light one of the stories into which the interior was divided, would have been obviated. It seems probable, in the present instance, that the blocking up of a part of the opening was to exclude from the view of persons without some part of a floor or stair that crossed this part of the building ; or we may perhaps go a step further and infer that the stair was spiral, and that the architect, calculating from its point of commencement, foresaw that it would of necessity cover this part of the window, and be an unseemly object from without : still it is difficult to understand why the openings were so spaced as to require this provision. The roof of this tower has been constructed with great skill ; its apex is formed of one large stone cut into the form of a bell. As much care seems to have been taken in finishing the interior of the whole tower as the exterior ; and Archdall does not err in comparing its appearance to that of a smooth gun-barrel.

The excavation made within this building was conducted with the same care used in those previously examined ; but no remains of any kind were found to elucidate the former investigations. It is therefore only needful to note the negative facts, that after the removal of a large quantity of accumulated material, a lime floor was discovered on a level with the second off-set of the base ; that after sinking somewhat deeper, a second lime floor was uncovered, beyond which the examination was continued to the foundation ; no remains of any kind, with the exception of a boar's tusk, being thrown out.

During the investigation at the tower, a similar proceeding was going forward at the ruins of the stone-roofed chapel already alluded to more than once in this notice of Devenish. In Dr. Ledwich's *Antiquities*, and in the plate published in Gough's *Camden*, this building is represented as perfect ; but its dilapidation had commenced in 1806, when Sir R. C. Hoare only speaks of its fragments. “ It has,” he adds, “ a small round-headed entrance-door towards the west. This was certainly the original chapel, and perhaps the habitation of the saint who first sought retirement in this island. A little to the north of these ruins is a stone coffin on the ground, said to have

<sup>†</sup> Transactions R. I. Academy, vol. xx., p. 411.

been the saint's grave." In 1824, when the writer first visited the island, important portions of Saint Molaissi's house were still standing; and in a drawing made at that time by a French gentleman, Mr. Besaucele, teacher of drawing in the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, the very curiously shaped arch that supported the roof is shown. According to the statements then made by the boatmen and others, the injury to this interesting structure had been occasioned by persons from Enniskillen stripping it of the few large flags which formed the roof.

Saint Molaissi's house was a very small rectangular building, having an entrance, as already mentioned, in the west end. It had been erected with a view to great durability; and very large blocks of stone, carefully shaped so as to fit on one another without any filling up or spawling, had been employed: even in forming the arched roof the same ponderous materials had been used. It is further to be noticed that proofs still remained of the arch having been turned on a centering of basket work or wattles. Mr. Murphy suggested that so heavy an arch could only have been formed by filling up the internal space with clay shaped to the requisite curve, and then covered with the basket work and concrete, of which the remains were still observable in the *debris* thrown out. This, when the work was believed to be sufficiently consolidated, he supposed to have been gradually withdrawn. The roof stones were coated inside by a kind of tufa, caused by water having percolated through the arch. This building stood east by north, and was precisely parallel with the old monastic church. The examination of it, though attended with considerable labour and difficulty, was not without result. As, however, this interesting monument had sunk under its own weight, after the removal of the large flags which formed the exterior of its roof and fitted it to endure, for ages, the ravages of all save the hand of man, its interior was nearly filled by the massive stones which formed the arched roof. The explorers paused in their labour to admire the industry of those who, in the supposed infancy of the builder's art, had constructed this ponderous piece of masonry; for nothing but the immense thickness of the walls could have enabled them, without buttresses, to bear the heavy roof, whose lateral pressure must have been very great.

The view of the tower here given shows the stone-roofed chapel as it appeared at the period of the writer's first visit; but now its ruins can be traced with difficulty. It is not improbable that the form of arch represented had been caused by the whole building having sunk and warped on the removal of the centering at the time of its construction. The interior arch supported a high pitched stone-roof of flags, as already mentioned.<sup>1</sup>

As it would have been a work requiring a considerable time to remove all the great stones which now filled the original ground plot of this chapel, it was found necessary to confine the exploration to the west; and only to that part opposite to the entrance, on which side of the building it is supposed, or stated by some writer, that the stone coffin of Saint Molaissi at one time stood. The

<sup>1</sup> Lewis, who is generally accurate, gives the following measurements of the buildings on Devenish. The lower church 76 feet by 21 feet, with a large aisle on the north;

—St. Molaissi's house 30 by 18 feet; abbey church 94 by 24 feet, with a large aisle northward;—Tower 82 feet high, and 49 feet in circumference.—

ground on this side having been opened along the wall, some human bones were discovered, and a detached skull deposited in the south-eastern corner. The inquiry was pushed further, but no other discovery was made. It seemed, however, probable that all the remains found formed part of the same body originally.

The following conjectures, formed at the moment, have been rather strengthened by farther consideration. There seems little doubt that this remarkable cell or chapel has been always associated with the name of one of the ancient Irish saints; nor is it improbable that after his death it was the sanctuary wherein his stone coffin stood: for it is not likely that in an age when his memory was fresh, his body would have been laid in the exposed position where this curious relic was now observed.<sup>m</sup> It is more probable that in a subsequent age the cell was opened, and the stone coffin discovered and desecrated by persons who found it their interest to turn it to profitable account, but who had sufficient reverence for the dead, and of superstition, to cause them to inter the remains found within it inside the chapel itself. The coffin, removed to the exterior, became the saint's bed, in which he was reputed to have rested during his life of strict penance, and which was held to be most efficacious in the cure of all the disorders man is heir to. The lid of this coffin had been, purposely perhaps, removed from it; but the writer, after diligent search, had the good fortune to find it placed as a headstone in the cemetery near the abbey. A full length figure could still be traced sculptured in very low relief on its surface. It seems therefore not improbable that the remains were truly those of the saint; and on examining the skull it was evident that the individual had been partially deformed, perhaps wry-necked: the writer, therefore, concluded that this deformity might lead to a circumstantial identification; and he, in consequence, inquired of those friends who had distinguished themselves by their researches into ancient manuscripts, whether any reference was found in the lives of Saint Molaissi to his personal appearance. The only response to the inquiry was from Mr. Eugene Curry, who some time afterwards, on meeting the writer in Dublin, mentioned that in one life of this saint he had met a statement which seemed to him to bear upon the point in question. Mr. Curry at the time repeated the general statement he referred to, and at a future day made a written communication, which seems too valuable, coming from so high an authority, to be omitted or abridged. It is here given *in ipsissimis verbis*. It will be seen that Mr. Curry does not pretend to consider the statement as more than a legend; but the legend may have been invented to account for an actual fact. With this explanation, the reader must be allowed to draw his own conclusion as to the identity of the remains with those of the saint in question; for it is only an inference from the legend to suppose that retarded parturition caused deformity.

<sup>m</sup> Seward, *Topographia Hibernica*, published in 1795, says, speaking of Saint Molaissi in connection with Devenish—"And here are his relics contained in a vaulted building of hewn stone, called St. Molaisi's house." Dr. Ledwich says—"The oldest erections here are St. Molaise's house and a fine round tower. The former

contains the reliques of St. Laserian or Molaise. Saint Molaise's house is a vaulted building of hewn stone; it and the round tower have every appearance of being built by the same architects." Dr. Ledwich considers all similar buildings as erected for the purpose of containing the reliques of saints.

“ 11, *Judd-Street, London, 23rd September, 1855.*

“ DEAR SIR,—I recollect that some time ago you mentioned to me in Dublin that you had procured from *Damh-Inis* (Devenish Island), a human skull, which you had reason to believe was the skull of Saint Molaise, the patron of that island. You remarked to me, at the same time, that the skull had some peculiarity—the precise nature of which I now forget—from which you had inferred that the head, when living, must have been awry, or inclined to one side of the neck. With the recollection of this curious fact on my mind, I, as soon as time would permit me, on my arrival here in April last, looked into an ancient Irish Life, on vellum, of Saint Molaise of Devenish, preserved in the British Museum; and it gives me much pleasure to send you, shortly, the result of my examination, which, if it does not clearly establish the identity of the Saint's skull, will certainly, in my mind, go very far to do so.

“ In every case of forcibly procrastinated birth that I have met with in ancient Irish manuscripts, the subjects retained, for ever after, the mark of the unnatural procedure; as in the case of Conall Cearnach, the great Ulster champion; Fiacha Muilleathan, or Fiacha the broad-pated, King of Munster; Tuathal Maelgarbh, or Tuathal of the rugged pate, monarch of Erin, &c. &c. And although the Life of Saint Molaise does not record any deformity of his person as the result of the forcible delay of his birth, yet there can be no reasonable doubt that his head was marked by some peculiarity; to account for which, perhaps, this legend of the manner of his birth was made up.

“ *It condaire mathair Molaise aisling isin oidche .i. secht u-ubhla cãmra d'fhaghail di; 7 in t-ubhal deighinach do ghabh ina lámh dibh nír tacmaic a glac é re remhed. Inlarré nír áille in t-or ina i t-ubhall. Innisidh da fir in aisling sin. Tuicimsi sin amh, bar in fear, ocus bera-sa gein amhra, ocus cinnfidh ar a chomh-dinc.*

“ *Cidh tra acht tainic aimsir asaidhe mathar Molaise, ocus ro gabsat idhma hi. A dubairt an drai fria: Da fuirge do ghein gan a breith no go turgaba grian amárach, bid airdeirc ocus bid ordan mór mirbuilech, firén, fir-uasal; ocus bid gein sochair slanaighthi iarthair in domhain in degh-ghein breth, a bhean.*

“ *Do fuiridh in fir-dhia in gein a m-broinn Monca gur tuisim i n-Airiud Bhairr for an leic chloich iar n-eirge greine arnubharach; ocus tuad chum espuic Eochaidh gur baistadh, ocus gur bennaiged: ocus is esin tue cét gradha fuir iartain.*

“ Molaise's mother saw a vision in the night—viz., that she found seven sweet apples; and the last apple of them which she took in her hand, her hand could not encompass it because of its bulk; and it appeared unto her that gold was not more beautiful than the apple. She told her vision to her husband. I understand it, said the husband, and you will bring forth an illustrious being who will excel all his contemporaries. In the meantime, the time of Molaise's mother's travail came, and a druid [wise man] said to her:—If you can delay the birth of your child till after the sun has risen tomorrow, he shall be an illustrious, dignified, miraculous, truly righteous, and truly noble man; and



that precious being which thou wilt bring forth, O woman, will be a being of profit and salvation to the western world. The true God detained the infant in Monca's womb until she brought him forth at Airiud Bhairr, upon the flag-stone, after sunrise on the morrow. And he was brought unto Bishop Eochaidh, who baptised and blessed him; and it was he that conferred first orders upon him afterwards.'

"Should this short extract be found in any way useful to you in your honest and valuable antiquarian researches, it will indeed be the cause of much satisfaction to, dear Sir, yours very faithfully,

"Edmund Getty, Esq."

"EUGENE CURRY."

The opinion of Ledwich, that stone-roofed chapels were erected to receive the relics of certain holy men, is open to objection; for these buildings may, with equal plausibility, be considered as the original churches erected contemporaneously with the towers. At the same time, it is highly probable that the relics of such persons were deposited in them or in the towers, at the time of their erection, or at a subsequent period, and that this was the case with respect to St Molaissi at Devenish.

Another question, however, arises out of the facts observed during the explorations made at this famous seat of our early Christianity, more closely connected with an inquiry into the uses of the Irish Round Towers.

There are few candid investigators, whatever may be the views with which they commence, who do not feel compelled to admit that the most reasonable conjecture on the subject is the one so ably supported by Dr. Petrie in his celebrated essay. The writer, however, cannot join the learned author and his admirers (many of them very injudicious friends,) in altogether ignoring the conjectures of such persons as the gentlemen who compose the South Munster Antiquarian Society; for it is one of the cases in which both views may be correct. Indeed it is difficult to imagine any more natural course than for an enthusiastic people to deposit in such buildings the recent bodies or the remains of those whom they highly venerated during life, and whose good works had become associated with the place. That this may have actually occurred, the human remains found in the towers give some reason for believing, without, at the same time, adopting the extreme view of what is called the "sepulchral origin" theory; for it is a very different thing to view the towers as sepulchres, and to consider them as ecclesiastical buildings appropriated, as a secondary object, to the reception of the bodies of those venerated in connection with the religious foundations of the locality. Indeed this very system exists to the present day in the old churches of these islands and causes no surprise; it is therefore quite compatible with all Dr. Petrie's views that this might have been the case with the ecclesiastical buildings of the ancient Irish: so that his theory is weakened—not, certainly, strengthened—by the sensitiveness of his supporters in this matter, and by the unsatisfactory manner in which he himself endeavours to account for the human remains from time to time discovered.

In the case of Devenish, the absence of human remains in the tower, so far from shaking the

writer's opinion that, in many instances, these buildings were places of deposit for the remains of the honoured dead, confirmed this view; for he believes that if the stone-roofed chapel had not presented what appeared a still more fitting place, the sarcophagus of the founder would have been deposited in the tower: thus the exception, in some measure, proves the rule.

There is another question respecting the towers that may be usefully discussed here—the object of the lime floors mentioned by most of those who have taken part in the explorations of those buildings. Were they or were they not connected with the sepulchral use?—Some time before examining Devenish, the writer had doubts as to the intention of these floors, and was inclined rather to consider them as a finish made by workmen, than as having any connection with the remains found under them. It seems probable that as the building proceeded, the workmen filled in with clay the interior, and at each offset levelled it off; and having smoothed the surface with care, gave it a covering of dry lime rubbish, so as to produce the appearance observed; and that this was done as high as the intended base extended. In those cases where a body, or the remains of one, was intended to be deposited, the floor was afterwards made; but in any case the floor seems to have been formed. Of this an unmistakable instance was found at Devenish; where, though no remains had been deposited, the floors were formed in an equally careful manner as in other towers where interments had taken place.

Saint Molaissi's death is generally assumed to have been subsequent to the erection of the tower and of what is named his "house;" and we may suppose that, if any one before his time had been connected with Devenish, the remains of such earlier saint might have been found in the tower; but we do not meet with any name, except his, associated with the ruins here. If a building such as the "house" had not existed, it is the writer's opinion that the saint's remains would have been discovered in the tower: and he was so much impressed with this belief that it led to a more diligent investigation in the ruins of "St. Molaissi's house" than would otherwise have been made.

It is further to be observed—for where the investigation of truth, not the establishment of a theory, is the object in view, every fact requires to be fully set forth—that, with the exception of Trummery tower, this is the only instance in which the remains seem to have been deposited with the amount of care that seems likely to have been bestowed on the bodies of persons held in high esteem by their fellow-men; although in the other cases mentioned, the bones deposited in the towers were, in the writer's estimation, not the result of accident but of design. It is not now to be anticipated that these difficulties are ever likely to receive a satisfactory explanation.

The learned Muratori, in the first volume of the *Anecdota*, when commenting on a poem of St. Paulinus, who died at the commencement of the fifth century, and on the following passage therein—

"Tegit una latentem  
Cellula de multis, que per latera undique magnis  
Adpositæ tectis præbent secreta sepultis  
Hospitia"—

roduces a dissertation on early Christian sepulture, in which he shows that, from a very early period indeed, the bodies of holy men were deposited in churches; and that a Christian temple could not be consecrated unless it contained the body of a martyr or other relics. This sentiment is also expressed by Paulinus in a line in the same poem—

“Quæ cineres reveranda tegunt altaria sacros.”

It is not in place here to give the various authorities quoted by Muratori; but there is one part of the dissertation that applies to the relics found in Saint Molaiss's house—*Cellule* this author translates by the Italian word *Capelle*, and he considers the Latin *Cubicula* as of equivalent signification. “Eadem Cubicula,” he adds, “quoque *οικίστοι* appellabantur à Græcis.” It is not mentioned at what time the stone-roofed chapel at Devenish acquired the name “house;” but if this appellation has come down from early times, it does not seem improbable that the idea was acquired from these *οικίστοι*, which were tombs. Conjecture may, perhaps, proceed a step further, and instead of considering buildings, so much out of proportion with the towers near which they are found, as the original churches, may look on them as cells or chapels attached to large churches, perhaps of timber, which have now altogether disappeared. “Lateribus autem Basilicæ cellulæ istæ, seu Cubicula, insita erant, eodemque, procul dubio, ordine, quo præsentium templorum Capellæ dispositæ conspiciuntur.” “These cells or resting-places were joined to the Basilicks, doubtless by the same rule as is observed in placing the small chapels of the present period.” Such is the view taken by Muratori. It is proper nevertheless, to keep in view the statements of Dr. Petrie's in his Sub-section iv., entitled “HOUSES.”

## THE ROUND TOWERS OF ULSTER.

### DRUMLANE TOWER, COUNTY CAVAN.

"Alack, and what would good old Mogue there see,  
But empty lodgings and unfurnished walls,  
Unpeopled offices, untrodden stones?"

Drumlane (*Druim-leathain*, "the broad ridge," or "hill,") is the name of a townland and parish in the barony of Loughtee, and county of Cavan, where are the ruins of a church, and remains of a Round Tower, which are situated near the village of Milltown, and about three miles S.W. of Belturbet. The burning of this place is recorded by the *Four Masters*, as early as the year 1246. Saint Maedhog ("Maidoc," or "Mogue,") is the reputed founder of the monastic church here, of which he was considered the patron saint. Dr. Lanigan, however, considers that Colgan errs in making this assertion; and the only connection he finds of the saint's history with the place is a statement which goes to prove the previous existence of Drumlane; for his parents are represented, after being married some time without issue, as having prayed to God to grant them a son, for which purpose they also gave great alms, and often went to the monastery of *Druim-leathan*, where they used to request the prayers of the holy men who resided there.<sup>a</sup>

Entries of an early date in the *Annals* are found having reference to a religious house here. For example, the *Four Masters*, in 1025, record the death of Duibhinsi Ua Faircheallaigh [O'Farrelly] abbot of Drumlane; and again, in 1059, the demise of another member, it may be presumed, of the same family, Conaing Ua Faircheallaigh, *airchinneach* of Druim leathan, successor of Saint Maedhog, in Connaught, &c. "The O'Farrellys were the hereditary *coarbs* of Saint Mogue, or *Erenuchs* of Drumlane till the suppression of the monastery." A good example is afforded by this sept [natio] of Munster, Farrelly, of the peculiar tenure by which church-lands were held under the early Irish system; but it would be out of place here to do more than make a reference to the information

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<sup>a</sup> Lanigan, vol. 2, p. 233.





Placed by Howard Palmer

by Howard Palmer

Dunham County, Iowa



afforded by Dr. Reeves in his *Acts of Archbishop Colton*; by Mr. Porter, the translator of that work, in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*; and perhaps most of all by Mr. King, in his admirable *Memoir Introductory to the Early History of the Primacy of Armagh*.

It may be interesting to collect a few of the other general notices of this place, now obscure, but at one time important in Irish history, which are found in the Annals:—

The age of Christ, 1261, a great depredation was committed by Hugh O'Connor, in Breifny, and he advanced to Druum-lahan, where a part of his army was defeated, and many of the less distinguished of them were slain.

The age of Christ, 1314, the O'Reilys were defeated at Drumlahan, by Rory, the son of Cathal O'Connor.

The age of Christ, 1343, John MacDuibhne, Archdeacon of Drumlahan, died.

The age of Christ, 1368, Murray O'Farrelly, Coarb of Maidog [i.e., abbot of Drumlane, near Belturbet, Co. Cavan] and Archdeacon of Breifny [i.e. Kilmore, Co. Cavan] died, after a victory over the world and the devil.

The age of Christ, 1369, Murray O'Farrelly, coarb of Saint Maidoc, and Archdeacon of Breifny, died.

The age of Christ, 1391, O'Rorke (Tiernan) with a small body of troops, repaired to Drumlahan, to meet O'Reilly (John);—when the Clann Murtough O'Connor heard of this, they met him, with all their forces, at Belagh-an-Chrionaigh the [read of the withered trees, or brambles] but O'Rorke with his small body of troops defeated them, and made them retreat before him, &c.

This extract is peculiarly interesting in regard to this locality; for it is not difficult to believe that the road now leading to the church and tower is the very passage described in the ancient record.

The age of Christ, 1407, John, the son of Teige O'Rourke, heir to the lordship of Breifny, died in Moyling and was interred in Drumlane.

The age of Christ, 1418, Richard, the son of Thomas O'Reilly, Lord of East Breifny, was drowned in Lough Silean, [now Lough Sheelin] and with him were also drowned his son, Owen Reilly, Philip, the son of Gilla-Isa, son of Godfrey O'Reilly, Deacon of Drumlane, and Vicar of Eanaeh-garbh, and many other distinguished persons. Finola, however, daughter of Mac Rannall, and wife of O'Reilly, escaped by swimming. [*The Annals of Ulster* call O'Reilly King of Breifny, and state that he went in a cot to meet the English.]

The age of Christ, 1490, the Canon MacTiernan, of Drumlane, died.

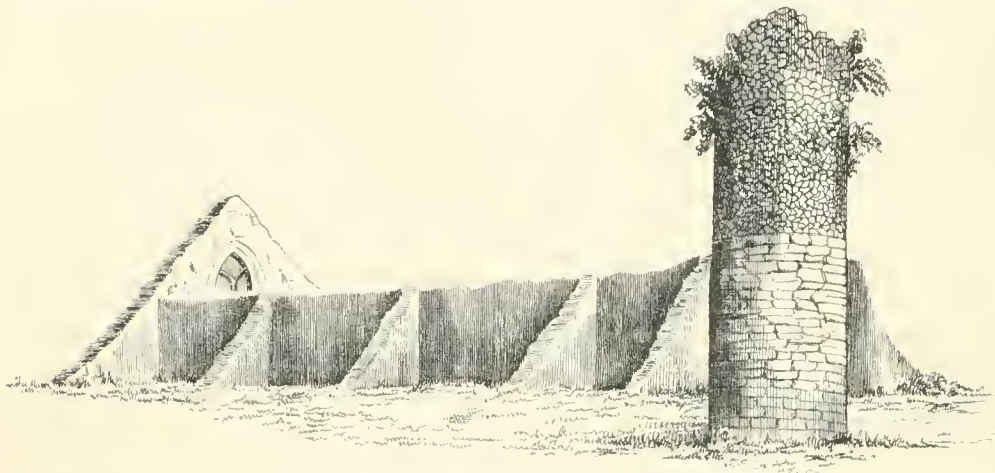
The age of Christ, 1512, Hugh O'Mael-Mocherighe, Coarb of Drumlane, was drowned.

It is not stated whether this "chief of the early rising," as his name is translated by Dr. O'Donovan, was one of the Farrelly family; perhaps he was, as the learned editor just quoted states that "Early" is now the family name representing O'Mulmogherry. In the same year an entry is found of the death of Failghe, the son of Maclnora O'Reilly, slain at Drumlane, by some persons of his own name.

The tower at this place was opened by the writer and Mr. Grattan, of Belfast, on the 26th July, 1844; assisted by Mr. O'Reilly, a Roman Catholic clergyman, residing in the vicinity. It stands in the church-yard, close to the ruins of a former parish-church,<sup>b</sup> and very near the margin of Lough Oughter, one of the many inland lakes found in this part of the country. According to Colgan, it is situated on the boundary of the two Breifnys. At a short distance are the remains of the monastery already spoken of; and the approach to all these ancient structures is by the road already mentioned, *Belagh-an-Chrionaigh*.

<sup>b</sup> It is on the north side; and the church, which is a long building, extends beyond it some distance towards the west.

The *Annals of the Four Masters* use the expression “the great church of Drumlane;” but it seems doubtful whether the remains now standing are those of the building mentioned by them in 1484. It is of considerable length, extending some distance to the east, but much further to the west, of the tower, as shown in the sketch.



It will be observed that the side-walls are strengthened by little buttresses, at short distances apart; and, that the west end, which is tolerably perfect, is constructed in a peculiar manner, but in conformity with the plan adopted in the sides. It consists of a triangle of heavy masonry intersected by the side-walls, so as to cut off a part that corresponds with the buttresses; or perhaps it is more correct to say that the buttresses were constructed to correspond with the projection of the western wall. The reason for giving this great strength to the building is not very apparent. A part of the west window still remains, and fragments of stone mullions. The east end of the church is in ruins; materials having been taken from it for the erection of other buildings. There are small side-windows, one of them exactly opposite the door of the tower, (which faces the church.) It looks towards the south, and is ten feet two inches above the level of the church-yard.

The *Annals of the Four Masters* have an entry, at the age of Christ 1484: the quotation of which has been purposely deferred on account of its connection with this part of the subject.

John O'Farrelly, a canon of the family of Drumlane, and Brien O'Farrelly, a priest, who had commenced building an anchorite's cell at the great church of Drumlane, died.

Persons who have given attention to the discussions respecting Round Towers, will probably recollect that this simple entry has been used as a proof that these buildings were *Anchorite Towers*, and that Dr. Petrie has fully discussed this question in his work. Here it is only necessary to copy the interesting note of Dr. O'Donovan, on the text of the *Annals*:—“Anchorite's cell. (*Cloch Angeoire*, i.e. the stone of the domicile of the recluse. The late Mr. Kennedy, of Killyear, near Drum-



lane, who was maternally descended from the O'Farrelly's, told the Editor, in May 1836, that the *Cloch-Angeoire*, or Anchorite's stone domicile, was a small, low, stone cell, situated near the great church of Drumlane. Harris, in his edition of Ware, states that *Cloch-Angeoire* was the Irish name for the Round Tower of Drumlane: but Mr. Kennedy, who knew the Irish language and the traditions of Drumlane better than Harris, told the Editor that the Round Tower of Drumlane was always called *Cloigtheach* in Irish, and that he always understood that this was the Irish term for *belfry*; and added, that the constant tradition among the O'Farrellys was, that the round steeple at Drumlane was originally built, and always, till about two centuries since, used as a belfry."

The tower, when viewed in connection with the church, as shown in the sketch already given, inclines the observer to consider the opinion, that one object of these buildings was defence, as having some plausibility; and this is confirmed by the very remarkable mode of building adopted in the tower; for the lower part, to the height of twenty-two feet, is constructed of carefully-wrought sandstone, and is equal in execution to the tower of Devenish itself; the stones being fitted to their places with great care. The door-way, which is in this part of the structure, partakes of the same skilful and admirable workmanship; being formed of stones of the full thickness of the walls, which in this part is three feet three inches. Its architrave projects boldly 3 or 4 inches from the general line of the ashlar; and the top, which is arched, is keyed in a workmanlike manner, as shown in the accompanying sketch.

In the upper part of what now remains of this building, a peculiarity of



DOOR OF DRUMLANE TOWER

construction is observed which deserves to be noticed. After the point already mentioned is reached, a change takes place both in the material and workmanship; the remainder of the tower being built of coarse rubble-work, of the meanest description. As there is no evidence whatever of the lower portion having been repaired or cased at a period subsequent to its erection, there is little doubt that this work, at least what remains of it, now stands as originally erected; another mystery connected with Round Towers. The probable solution is, that the object of the builder was to make the structure a place of defence; and this was fully attained by the plan pursued: for the lower portion would have resisted a degree of violence quite sufficient to destroy the upper part. It may also be noticed that the height of the ashlar-work reaches to about the same elevation as the walls of the church. If the parts had been reversed, the conclusion would have been that the building was the work of different periods; one part exhibiting the first efforts of a rude people, and the other showing unmistakeable evidence of an advanced state of architecture.

Of this tower about forty feet only now remain. Its exterior circumference at the base is fifty-two feet; at the same part, the interior diameter is ten feet six inches; and, as already mentioned, the thickness of the wall, measured at the door, is three feet three inches. The entrance itself, which is several feet above the level of the ground, is five feet six inches in height, and two feet wide at the sill, tapering to one foot eight inches-and-a-half at the spring of the arch. Above the door, in the upper part of the tower, a small angular-headed window is observed, the top formed, in the most simple manner, by two pieces of sand-stone inclined towards one another and meeting at the top.

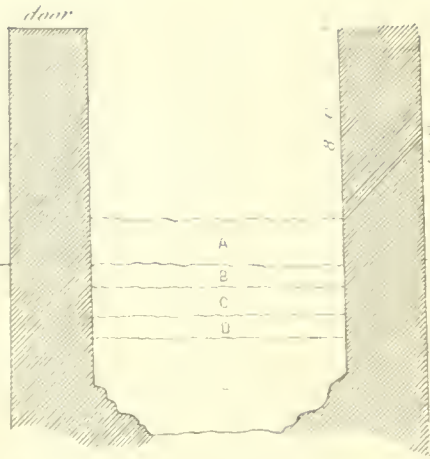
On the north-east part of the exterior of this tower some rude efforts at sculpture are observable, which, if not co-eval with the building, possess some pretensions to antiquity. Of these, two figures in low relief may be mentioned, which are named by the country-people, from the rude resemblance they bear, "the Cock and Hen."

On commencing the examination, the tower was found to be filled, up to within eight feet of the entrance, with a quantity of material which it was necessary to remove. The first two feet in depth consisted of the usual kind of *debris* found in similar buildings; after which about a foot of soft compressible mould, of a reddish-brown colour, not unlike the upper part of a peat moss, was thrown out. This had apparently originated from the decomposition of a quantity of twigs, or small branches of trees. A solid floor of clay was then reached, having distinct traces, over the greater part of its surface, of the sprinkling or coating of lime observed in other towers. In the clay, lying on its side in the north-west quadrant, as shown in the plan, was found the greater part of a human skull.

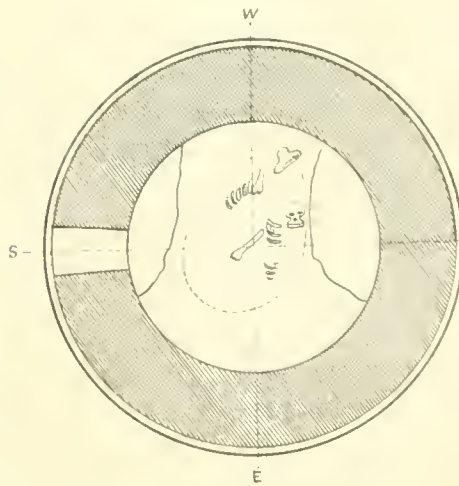
There were also the principal bones of the skeleton scattered through the remainder, but without order or regularity; being, however, chiefly crowded into a central space, as marked by the dotted lines; with these were also found a large portion of the lower jaw of an ox, and fragments of the upper jaw of a deer or goat, and of a dog; great quantities of bones, considered at the time

to be those of oxen; remains of some small birds; fragments of charcoal and unconsumed peat; frequent traces of decomposed wood; and, in two circumscribed spaces, a  
*Ground*

mould identical in composition with that which had been last removed. In the patch of mould lying at the northern edge of the floor, a fragment of glass was found, nearly four inches in diameter; being that part known commonly by the name of "the bull's eye." It became a difficult question to account for the presence of the glass, and the two patches of clay so different from every other part of the floor. Mr. O'Reilly, who had very kindly aided in the inquiries made, directed attention to the fact that, though the greater part of the lime floor remained perfect, yet evident proofs were to be observed of the surface having been partially disturbed subsequent to its



*Section from Base to Door*



*Plan showing Door and Base*

*a of an inch to a foot*

original formation, which it may be supposed was at the time of the construction of the tower.— It still remained impossible to account for this fact; but the difficulty was un-  
*like*

expectedly solved, after the close of the proceedings, by a young man, Philip Roden, who, without being aware of our perplexity, informed us that the floor of the tower, just opposite the "Cock and Hen," had been formerly dug into by parties in search of money, who were induced to make the attempt in consequence of an old woman having dreamed that gold was concealed in that particular spot. It is most probable that (as generally occurs in such cases) the parties became alarmed, and did not pursue their inquiry; or that their curiosity was satisfied when they found no gold in the immediate locality of the birds, which seem to have made a deep impression

A. Common debris.

B. Red coloured mould.

C. Solid clay floor, with coating of lime.

D. Here the skull was found.

E. Chips of sand-stone and traces of fire, &c.

on the old lady's brain. After passing through this floor so full of remains, a stratum was reached composed of chips of sand-stone, lime, sand, &c., ten inches in depth, being evidently formed during the construction of the lower part of the building: a few large bones and fragments of charcoal were also met with. Finally, the excavation was continued in that part where the glass had been found, to a depth of four feet, and the spot was reached where the foundation stones narrowed the interior: nothing more, however, was discovered. Large "spawls" or chips of sand-stone, exhibiting traces of fire, were observed, lying in a material similar to moist peat ashes; and some large field-stones were also turned up. Amongst the ashy material a few minute particles of burned bone, and a part of a nut-shell, were also picked up.

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INISKEEN TOWER, COUNTY OF MONAGHAN.

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 "Those pointed spires that wound the ambient sky,  
 Inglorious change! shall in destruction lie."—*Prior*.  
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On the very borders of Ulster, but encroaching somewhat on Leinster, is found the parish of Iniskeen, [the "beautiful island,"] the chief part of which lies in the barony of Farney, County of Monaghan. It is distinguished by the *Four Masters* from other places of the same name in this country by the addition of *Deagha*, the name of its patron saint.

"The river Fane formerly divided here, and meeting again, lower down," says the Rev. G. H. Reade, in the *Transactions* of the Kilkenny Archæological Society, "thus made *Inniskeene*, (called by some 'pleasing island;') but, as it was used as a burying-ground, may mean the island of *keeving* or mourning." Mr. Reade mentions a large moat or carn, composed of great stones and covered with earth, containing, very probably, a chamber and passage like the one at Dowth.

Mr. Shirley, in his very interesting account of the barony of Farney, gives the following notices of this parish. "The rectory was anciently appropriate to the abbey at Louth; its value, at the time of the suppression, was 40s. In the fourth of James I. it was found to be of no value, on account of the rebellion in the County of Monaghan; but formerly let for twelve *lagenæ* of butter, and the sum of £2 annually. These tithes, like the moiety of those of Donaghmoynne and Magh Ross, which also formed part of the spiritual possessions of the Abbey of Louth, were restored to the church during the episcopate of Bishop Montgomery, between the years 1633 and 1639, as we have noticed before in the account of the parish of Donaghmoynne. The value of the vicarage of *Iniskeene*, in 1622, was £10; it was held by John Davison, M.A., who was also vicar of Killanney, and resided in this parish "in a house of his own building on temporall lands, for he hath no glebe." The church was ruinous. In 1634 the living was only worth £18 per annum."

"The Parish of Iniskeen, like that of Killanney, is partly in Monaghan and partly in the County of Louth. The church which, although it appears to be modern, is really a building of some antiquity, is in the former county, and contains nothing worthy of notice; the only remains of the



original architecture of the place (with the exception of the Round Tower) being a sculptured head in freestone, much defaced, which may be observed built into the wall of a vault in the eastern extremity of the church-yard."

Close to the church, and not far from the banks of the rapid river Fane, is a Round Tower, the only one in the barony. It is, however, one of the less interesting specimens of these remarkable buildings, having lost much of its original height. It is constructed of hammered whin-stone, the summit (of what remains of it) having been transformed into a modern belfry.<sup>c</sup> The door at the bottom, which Sir Charles Coote mentions in his Survey of Monaghan as remarkable, is undoubtedly modern; the walls are three feet in thickness. The same author gives notices of inscriptions on tombs, burial-places, and caves, in the neighbourhood. Mr. Reade says, in reference to this building:—"Of the Round Tower there remain only forty-two feet, but it must have been one of the highest when perfect, if built in the proportion of six diameters; as it is fifty-one feet in circumference, at four feet from the present surface, which has been raised many feet by interments: it is well and carefully built of very large stones, many of them nearly four feet long, and some eighteen inches deep; they are of the hard porphyritic trap and some other stones of igneous origin abounding in the district, and which are so well exhibited in the cuttings of the Dundalk and Enniskillen Railway alternating with the clay slate, in many spots altering the slates by their intense heat, and inclined with them at all angles up to the perpendicular."

"These large and very hard stones have been formed to the curve of the tower by a heavy pick, or some such instrument; the deep sharp marks of which are distinctly visible at each end of the stone, leaving the centre as in nature. The door, which is placed at the height of fourteen feet eight inches above the present surface, faces exactly the same point as the small old church, S.E. by S.; none of the original stones of the door-way remain, except the sill-flag, which is of very large size, passing through nearly the entire breadth of the wall; there are two shallow drills cut across its depth in front, as if to fit a ladder; its dimensions are four feet six inches long, twelve inches thick, and three feet six inches broad; on the left side of its surface there is also a shallow groove or drill cut along its whole breadth close to the jamb of the wall. The thickness of the wall, at the height of the door, is four feet, and the inside diameter of the tower, near the bottom, is eight feet seven inches at the top of the second floor."

"The tower is divided into three floors, by a projection of the building stones of from seven to five inches; the height of the first floor from the present bottom being fifteen feet, and the height of the second floor twelve feet six inches above that. About thirty years ago there was erected on the top an arch for a belfry, a most inappropriate and unsightly appendage. In order to get a firmer foundation for that purpose, about four feet of the original building was then taken down. Some glass beads of great thickness were found on the summit at that time. This belfry I caused to be removed a short time since, and have thereby probably saved the further dilapidation of this venge-

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<sup>c</sup> Removed afterwards by Mr. Reade

rable structure, as the upper part had bulged out considerably, from the weight of the arch and bell. The whole building was originally coated with cement both inside and out; a small portion of the outside remains, and it appears to be of a much harder nature than that within; it is composed of lime, sea sand, sea shells, and small quartz pebbles, and also contains *charcoal*, which would go far to identify its age with that of the small church before mentioned. One of the original stones, and only one, about one-third of the height, is of granite, which may have been a portion of a boulder from Slieve Gullion, or perhaps from Clermont Carn, about fourteen miles distant, as no granite is found in the neighbourhood. To my mind, this white stone, alone among its dark companions, gives evidence of great antiquity—at least that those who erected this tower were the first builders in stone and mortar in this locality, who naturally had appropriated the lone boulder of granite—a stone so much more easily wrought than the porphyritic whins of the country.”

Mr. Reade has the following reference to an inquiry made by Mr. Grattan:—“The sexton who was employed to dig *did* find a skeleton, without any flags or coffin, lying in the earth east and west under a thin stratum of mortar. Unfortunately Mr. Grattan was not present at the moment, and the skull was broken to pieces, so that nothing could be determined from its shape; the portion of the bones which I saw seemed too modern to bring conviction to my mind that they had lain there since the introduction of Christianity—say 1300 years—without coffin or protection from the moist clay around. Some years ago a road contractor made a great hole in the side of this tower to obtain material for the repairs of the bridge adjoining, but was fortunately prevented doing much mischief by Mr. Norman Steele. The breach has been repaired, and a door placed in it. There are no local traditions of any value connected with the tower: the common legend is, that it was built in one night by a woman with three aprons-full of stones, an apron-full for each story; and that next morning some passers by deriding her work, she leaped from the top into a pool in the river Fane, called ‘the church-pool,’ and was drowned. At the foot of the tower was found a very large stone, of porphyry, with a hole in the centre large enough to thrust the arm through, and which was, I believe, once used for superstitious purposes; in more modern times a pole was placed in the hole, up which the young country-folk used to climb at Easter for some trifling prize.”

“There are no windows whatever in the part remaining of this tower. About two-thirds of the way up, the builders seem to have exhausted their supply of large stones, and then, after a few courses of inferior materials, to have again procured larger and better. A narrow ledge, or eave-course, at the top, was placed there at the time of the erection of the belfry arch, which ill accords with the lichen-covered walls beneath. On some of the stones inside, the trickling of the rain-drops for long years has formed small marks not unlike *ogham* of a coarse kind.”

The following notices are found in the *Four Masters*:—

The age of Christ, 636, Maelduin, son of Ardh, was burned at Inis-caein. [This entry immediately follows the notice of a victory gained by Aenghus Liath, over the same individual.] The *Annals of Ulster*, under the year 639, notice this battle, and the flight of the defeated chief; and in the succeeding year, 640, “Combustus Maelduin in insula Caini.” The burning does not seem to have been of a dead body.



*Plaque n. 1. - Edward Burgess*

*Trinity Society, Astoria*

*1874*











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