

Dromcolliher

Broadford · Killaliathan · Springfield

DROMCOLLIHER derives its name from *Drom Collachair*, which may be a corruption of *Drom-coll-Choille*, Hazelmount, according to John O'Donovan. P.W. Joyce agreed with this rendition, but translated *Druim-Coll-Choille* as the Ridge of the Hazel Wood. The hills to the south of the village form a natural boundary between the counties of Cork and Limerick.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH, the old parish church of Dromcolliher, was located near the village, in the townland of Carhoard West. In 1410 and 1418 it was recorded as *Capella Dromcolkylle*. By 1840

the western gable had disappeared but the large graveyard was still in use. T.J. Westropp examined the site in 1901 but had little to say about it.

KILLALIATHAN CHURCH derives its name from *Cill Acadh Ui Liathain*, the Church of the Field of O'Leehane. According to tradition, one of the *Ui Liathain* women wished to establish a church but was unsure as to where she should locate it. An unseasonal snow-storm at the start of the summer blanketed all but one field in the area with snow. This was construed as an omen indicating where the church should stand and when Killaliathan Church was built it was dedicated

to *Muire na Sneachta*, Mary of the Snows. Killaliathan was the parish church for the area incorporating Dromcolliher and Broadford, and it is not surprising to find that the nearby Catholic church, in Broadford, is dedicated to Our Lady of the Snows, today. The earliest records of Killaliathan Church date back to 1201 and 1209. In 1302 the original church on this site was destroyed by war but it was soon rebuilt. It may have served as a monastery, possibly of the Augustinian Canons, but, if so, it is not listed in *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland* (1988). The division of its east window is one of the church's more notable features. The window niche,



Aerial view of Dromcolliher.

behind the altar, contains a fine baptismal font; the tomb in the north wall dates from the fifteenth century; a gallery was once positioned above the doorway; parts of the sacristy still remain; and the graveyard is still in use for burials.

IN 1837 Samuel Lewis wrote that the parish of Killaliathan contained 1,590 inhabitants. "The lower part of the parish is tolerably fertile, and about 2,000 acres are under tillage, about 800 in meadow and pasture, and the remainder is bog and mountain land. The mountains contain coal, which is worked by Francis Sullivan, Esq., at Banmore; and limestone, of which an excellent quarry is worked near Broadford; iron stone is also abundant". The population of Dromcolliher was 658 in 1831. In 1837 there was a constabulary police station in the village and "a daily penny post to Charleville. Fairs are held on 15 March, 2 May, 17 June, 24 August, 5 November, and 3 December; they are in general large and well-attended".

THE DROMCOLLIHER CINEMA FIRE occurred on the evening of Sunday, 5 September 1926. William "Baby" Forde hired an upstairs room in Patrick Brennan's two-storey shed at Church Street in order to use it as a make-shift cinema. An estimated crowd of 150 men, women and children had arrived to watch two films, *The White Outlaw* and *Baby be Good*, by about 9.15 p.m. A lorry engine generated electricity to power the projector, but lighting within the building was provided by candles. About 9.40 p.m. one of the reels of celluloid film was ignited by a candle. Within minutes a fire had started which rapidly got out of control. Most of the people sitting near, or behind, the projector managed to escape but those nearest the screen were trapped. Forty-six people perished in the blazing inferno, and another two died shortly afterwards in hospital. The victims of this tragedy were buried in a communal grave in the grounds of the Catholic parish church. A large Celtic cross was erected over their grave.

SPRINGFIELD CASTLE "with the surrounding manor, formerly belonged to the Fitzgeralds, Lords of Glenlis, and, on its forfeiture in the Desmond Rebellion, was, in 1591, granted to Sir W. Courtney". The Fitzgeralds of Claonghlais recovered possession of Springfield which was then known as *Gort na Tiobrad*, the Field of the Spring. During the Jacobite war Springfield held out for James II. It became forfeit to the Crown, and the last Lord of Claonghlais, Sir John Fitzgerald, left to serve with the Irish Brigade, in France, where he ended his days in the *Hotel des Invalides*, Paris. The sixteenth-century four-storey-high tower house

was later bought by the Fitzmaurice family, an heiress of whom married Sir Robert Deane who was created Lord Muskerry in 1781. During the eighteenth century a mansion was built adjoining the older castle and, in the following century, a new wing was added, in the then-prevailing Gothic-style. In 1923, during the Civil War, the eighteenth-century house was burned, but the nineteenth-century wing within the sixteenth-century bawn, was converted, and extended, to form the present building. The same Gothic style was used in the renovations, and Springfield Castle is still owned by a Lord Muskerry.

DAIBHI O BRUADAIR (c. 1625-1698) was born in Barrymore, County Cork. Seán O Tuama wrote in *An Duanaire 1600-1900: Poems of the Dispossessed* that Dáibhí was "the first of the well-known seventeenth century poets to try to live completely out of verse, in the manner of the medieval professional poets". He spent most of his life in County Limerick. The Fitzgeralds were his chief patrons, and his association with Sir John Fitzgerald led Dáibhí to describe Springfield as a Mansion Abounding in Poetry, Rewards and Crowds of People, *Dúnadh Duanaich Duasach Dreamach*. By "1674 he appears to have been reduced to labouring in the fields ... He ended his life in misery". The inscribed plaque set in the wall, at the entrance to Springfield, commemorates Dáibhí and his patrons, the *Gort na Tiobrad* Fitzgeralds, Lords of Claonghlais. Seamus Murphy, the Cork sculptor, carved the inscription on the plaque.

DROMCOLLIHER, or Drumcollogher, was one of the places in which the Sheehys, or MacSheehys, settled. They came to Ireland, originally, as Scottish gallowglasses, to serve the de Burgos of Galway. When James, the Seventh Earl of Desmond, married Mary de Burgo, early in the fifteenth century, she brought a guard of Sheehy gallowglasses to County Limerick as part of her dowry. The Sheehys prospered under the Earls of Desmond but lost all their lands, and holdings, after the Desmond Rebellion. The Dromcolliher Sheehys maintained a low profile in this area until one of them purchased a considerable amount of land from Lord Muskerry, towards the end of the eighteenth century.

SIR MATTHEW DEANE (1626-1710) acquired vast estates around Dromore, County Cork, and was created a Baronet of Ireland on 10 March 1709. He was married three times: firstly, to Mary Wallis of Somersetshire, from whom Lord Muskerry's family have descended; secondly, to Martha, daughter of Richard Boyle, Archbishop of Tuam, and widow of Lieut.-Col. John Nelson; and thirdly, to

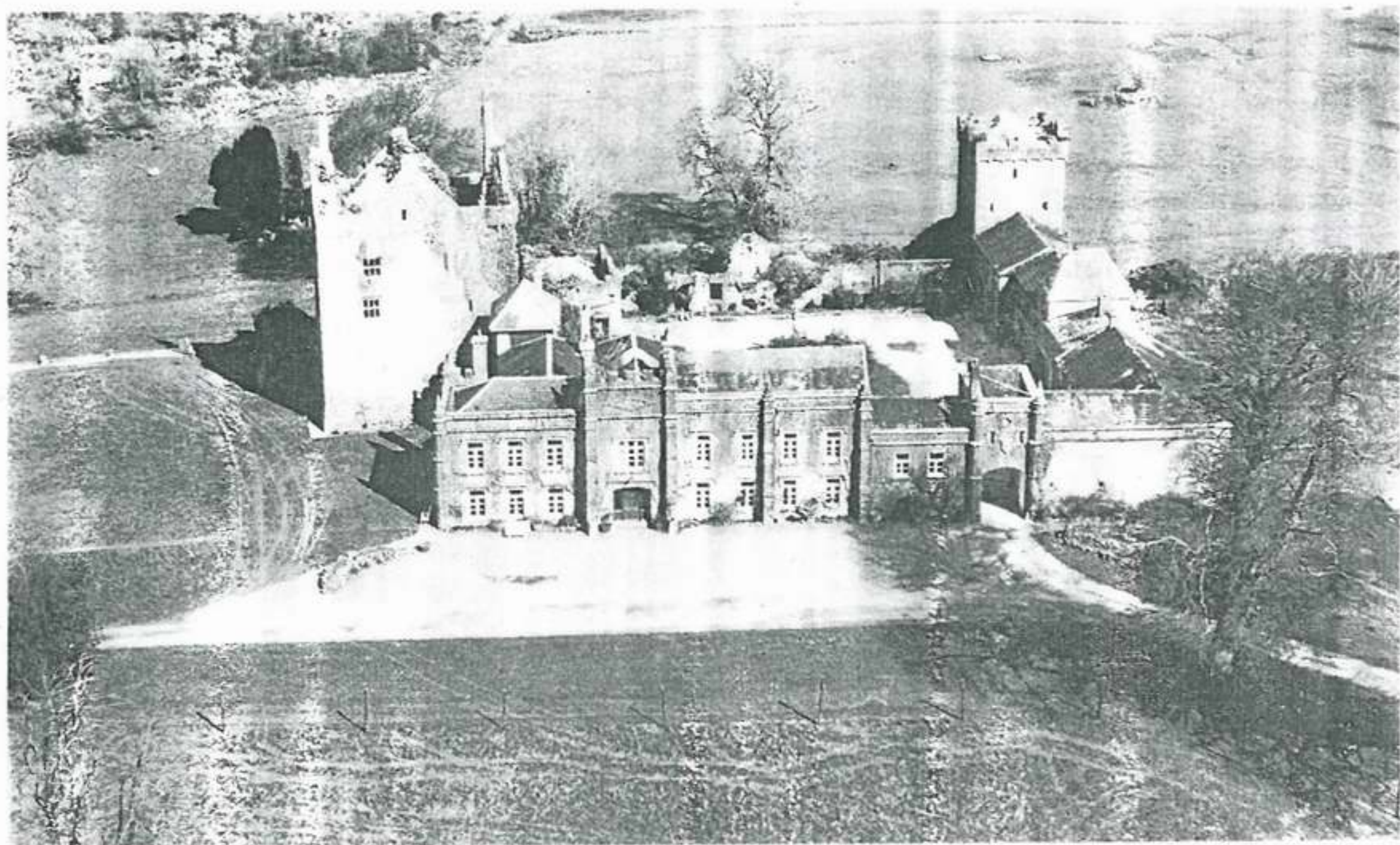
Dorothy, daughter of John Ferrar of Dromore, County Down, and widow of Richard, Second Earl of Barrymore.

SIR ROBERT TILSON DEANE (1747-1818), the Sixth Baronet, married Anne Fitzmaurice, the daughter of John Fitzmaurice, and sole heir of her grandfather, John Fitzmaurice of Springfield Castle, in 1775. Anne's great-grandfather, Thomas Fitzmaurice, was the First Earl of Kerry. On 5 January 1781 Robert was elevated to the peerage of Ireland, as Baron Muskerry. He, and Anne, had four sons: Robert (1776-1796); John Thomas (1777-1824) who succeeded to the title but died without issue; William (1792-1811); and Matthew (1795-1868), the Third Baron Muskerry. Matthew's son, Robert (1826-1857), married Elizabeth Geraldine, the daughter and co-heir of H.K. Grogan Morgan, of Johnstown Castle, County Wexford, in 1847. Robert assumed the additional surname and arms of Morgan in 1855, and his son, Hamilton Matthew Tilson Fitzmaurice Deane-Morgan, became the Fourth Baron Muskerry.

GORTNATUBRID CHURCH, or Springfield Church, was a ruin by 1840. Today only the east gable remains. This may have been erected as a chapel-of-ease by the Fitzgeralds, who are said to have been established as Lords of Claonghlais by the Black Knight, Sir John FitzJohn Fitzgerald, Seán Mór na Sursainge, and his wife, a member of the Collins family.

THE COLLINS FAMILY were Lords of Claonghlais until the end of the thirteenth century when they were dispossessed by the Fitzgeralds. Their name is derived from *O Coileán*, the Descendant of the Whelp. Variants on the name include *O Cuileán*, *O'Collaine*, *O'Collan*, and *Collin*. Originally they were of the same stock as the O'Donovans, and were Lords of *Ui Conaill Gabhra*, now the baronies of Upper and Lower Connello, until they were expelled in 1178 and settled in Claonghlais and West Cork.

DR. NICHOLAS SANDERS, an English Jesuit and papal diplomat, arrived in Ireland with James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald in 1579. They landed in Smerwick, County Kerry, with arms and money. Fitzgerald was killed in a skirmish with the Bourkes but Sanders remained with the rebel forces. He was present at the battles of Gortnatubrid and Monasteranenagh but spent his last months, as a fugitive, hiding in the wooded hills to the south of Broadford. He died of dysentery towards the end of 1581, but is said to have received the last rites from Bishop O'Maoilrian of Killaloe. Tradition relates that he "was borne by four Irish Knights to" *Gort na Tiobrad*, but the site of his burial is not



Springfield House.

remembered.

THE BATTLE OF GORTNATUBRID was fought between the Geraldines and a superior English force, in the area around *Páirc na Staille*, the Field of the Stallion, in the last days of September, 1579. The English were defeated; three hundred of them were slain, including three captains, Eustace, Herbert and Price; and their military stores, and standards were captured.

THE LEHANE SURNAME is associated with Sligo and Cork, the home-places of two distinct but separate families. The Lehanes of Cork are descended from the *Ui Liatháin* of south-west Limerick, who later settled in the baronies of Barrymore and Kinnataloon, County Cork. The name is often anglicised to Lyons, from *O Liatháin*, the descendant of *Liathán*, the diminutive of the Grey. Other variants of the name are *O Lyhane*, *O Leaghan*, *O Lehane*, *O Liatháin*, Leehan, Lyhane, Leehane, O'Leehane, Leyhane, Lihane, Leeane, and O'Lyons.

THE SULLIVAN SURNAME is the most numerous one in Munster and the third most numerous one in Ireland. This family's principal seat was at Knockgrafton, about two miles north of Cahir, County Tipperary. In 1192 they were driven westwards by the advance of the Anglo-Norman invaders and settled mainly in the mountains of Cork and Kerry. The name is derived from *O Súilleabháin*, which

Rev. Patrick Woulfe defined as the descendant of the Black-eyed, *Siúl-dubhán*, although Edward MacLysaght was in some doubt about this translation. *O'Sullivan*, *Sullevan*, *Soolivan* and *O Súilleabháin* are variants on the name, and this family were of the same stock as the MacCarthys and O'Callaghans. They were divided into several branches, the major heads of which were the O'Sullivan More (Dunkerron, Kenmare), the O'Sullivan Beare (Beare, Bantry), and the O'Sullivan Maol. Another minor branch of the family appear to have settled in this part of south-west Limerick. Many of the Sullivans lost their estates during the confiscations of the seventeenth century and went abroad where they distinguished themselves in Spain, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, and the Americas.

RATHURDE RING FORT derives its name from an *Rath Ard*, the High Fort. This is located on a rise of ground overlooking the Springfield demesne.

THE ANKETELL FAMILY are descended from Robert Anthessel of Compton, Wiltshire, who was given a grant of the lands of Killaliathan, 2600 acres, in Elizabethan times. Variants of this surname include Annesley, Ansloe, Anhezell, Antikle, Ankettle, Antle, *Ankettil*, Anketell, Ankethill, and *Ancoitil*. The original version of the name, Anthessel, may be English; the name

Anketell, is derived from a Teutonic personal name, the son of Ancytel, and can be found in the *Domesday Book* and early Dublin rolls, although it has also been found as an Anglo-Norman name; and the Ansloe-Aynnesley name was introduced into Munster, from Nottinghamshire in 1606. In 1611 the Anketell family held the castle and lands of Rathurde. This castle was, apparently, located between Rathurde Ring Fort and *Páirc na Staille*, 200 yards south-west of the entrance to Springfield castle. An area south of this was still known as Farrihy Anketell in 1842. Robert Anketell was the last member of the family to live here. He died in 1771, and was buried at night "by the light of torches according to the aristocratic custom of bygone days". The name is still found in Boherbue, County Cork.

CLONCREW CHURCH derived its name from *Cluain Creamh*, the Insulated Meadow, or the Bog Island of the Wild Garlic. It was mentioned as Cluoncrema in 1201 but was destroyed in the war of 1641. By 1840 only the two gables remained standing. Rev. G.F. Hamilton wrote that the pre-Norman east window was still preserved in 1930.

MUSKERY NOWNAN, the north-eastern portion of Dromcolliher, was investigated, by English Undertakers, soon after the survey of the confiscated Desmond lands in 1585. By 1593 a jury had concluded, in an inquisition,



Broadford village.

that Sir Henry Oughtred had no claim to the demesne lands here, and that most of the tenants "were mere Irish and especially the persons whose names ensue: Conagher O'Begley, Teige McDermody, O'Brien, Geoffry O'Conyll, Teige O'Connell and others". This latter point was a direct violation of the deed of grant which Sir Henry Oughtred had obtained from Robert Stroud, the first grantee. The Undertakers generally let their estates to free tenants, farmers and copy-holders, who in turn left them in convenient farms to the native Irish who, in all probability, were already in actual possession. By the time of the Cromwellian confiscations the Irish practically formed the entire population of the parish, as the Elizabethan grantees set their lands in much the same way as the Fitzgeralds of Desmond. Even the Williamite confiscations, which were comparatively few, made little difference to this system. The Catholics of the old Anglo-Norman and English families who lost their estates were admitted as tenants, but the "mere Irish" were excluded by the terms of these deeds of grant. Muskery Nownan belonged to the Nunan family, supporters of the Geraldines, until Donough Nunan was slain in the Desmond rebellion, and his lands and castle, Gardenfield West

Castle, or Muskery Nownan, were granted to Robert Stroud. By 1840 the castle had been levelled and a barn built on its site.

BROADFORD, rather than Killaliathan or Killagholehane, is better known today. The history of the village is more recent than that of the ancient parish in which it lies, and is closely associated with the premier landlord family of this area, the Plummers of Mount Plummer.

CONNIE NEENAN, of Cork, was one of the men interviewed by Uinseann MacEoin in his book *Survivors* (1987). Connie recalled how, on hearing of the attack on the Four Courts, in Dublin, the Republican forces decided to reinforce Limerick. "My party was stopped at Buttevant but we reached Broadford in Limerick the first night. We were caught between two Free State posts. With me were a number that I recall, Corney Sullivan and a lad called Spillane. Next thing the shooting started and Spillane fell. We all lay prone. I could see his rifle had dropped away from him. He died in five minutes. That was the start of it for us. We went from there to Rathkeale where we met Liam Lynch. We moved on to Adare; we captured a post there. Then we arrived in Limerick. We lost a couple of great lads there. One fellow that I recall

now, Paddy Naughton, he was very good in the Tan war. We were crossing Georges Street separately when he was hit ... Dear Christ, but he was a terrific man at a time when we needed men".

RICHARD PLUMMER, of Bodwyn, Wiltshire was the progenitor of the Plummers of Mount Plummer. His son, another Richard, was the first member of the family to settle in Ireland, first in Cork, and, later, in Donoman, County Limerick. Robert's son, Daniel, lived in Castle Quin, and married Mary Williams of Mundill. Daniel's will was dated 24 August 1728, and proved on 17 January 1729. Brudenell Plummer, Daniel's grandson, married Frances Fitzgerald, daughter of Thomas, the Knight of Glin, and was High Sheriff of Limerick in 1808. Brudenell's second son, also named Brudenell, later became a county inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary. The family are still remembered in Broadford. Their surname, Plummer, may be derived from Plumber, a worker in lead, or Plumer, a dealer in plumes or feathers.

KILCOORA CHURCH no longer exists but the site, on the northern bank of the Darrery River, about half a mile above its meeting with the Camuisce, was identified by T.J. Westropp at the turn of the century. This is located mid-way between Gortnatubrid Church and Killeedy Church. The name was derived from *Ceill Curtha*, the Sweet-smelling Church.

KILLILA CHURCH derived its name from *Cill Adhladh*, possibly Adhladh's church, but I was unable to discover any translation of *Adhladh*. This site is located about twelve yards west of Killila Bridge and consists of an oblong, raised mound with a double rampart, or wall, on the western side, and the river to the east. It was used as a *cillin*, or children's burial ground, in 1842 but was re-opened as a graveyard during the *Great Hunger*, 1845-1847. It is still remembered locally as the Kyleen; was fenced off, and planted with trees, in the 1960s; and in ancient times gave its name to the townland now known as Mount Plummer.

TULLYLEASE is about three miles southeast of Broadford but is actually located in County Cork. The original foundation on this site is said to have been founded by St. Berechert, an Anglo-Saxon saint, who is believed to have come to Ireland with St. Gerald of Mayo, during the seventh century. Berechert is also known as St. Benjamin. An inscribed stone, with an incised cross and other patterns, was once used to mark his grave, rather than that of a later namesake who died in 839. The inscription on the stone reads, *Quicumque hunc titulum legerit orat pro berechtuine. Dunadach Ua hInmainein*

was recorded as the Erenagh of Tullylease, *Tulcha Leis*, *Tulach-Leis*, *Tollelyche*, *Tullales*, *Tulachles*, or *Tolleleyse*. He died in 1059, but his family, the Nunans, remained as hereditary coarbs of Tullylease into the sixteenth century, and were considered the custodians of the site of Kilcoora church into modern times.

TULLYLEASE CHURCH, a nave and chancel church, with work dating from the twelfth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was built by Mathew son of Griffin, as an Augustinian priory, some time before 1170. Soon after 1193 it became a cell of Kells. Tullylease Church is mentioned in the taxation of 1302-1306, but it may have ceased to be conventual by then. In 1541 the *ville* of Tullylease contained 480 acres. The inscribed stone, mentioned earlier, is an eighth-century early Christian cross-slab. It is now fastened to the interior of the eastern gable and implores its readers to pray for Berechert. Berechert's House and Berechert's Well can be seen nearby, as well as a bullaun stone known as *Cloch na hEilte*, named after a doe who was milked here. The south end of the east wall is probably the oldest part of the church; the window and door in the south wall date from the thirteenth-century; and the present chancel was built in the fifteenth century.

THE NUNAN FAMILY derive their name from O'hlonmhaineàin, the descendant of Ionmhaineàn, the diminutive of *Ionmhain*, the Beloved. This name was later shortened to *O Nuanain*, and the family were erenaghs of St. Berechert's Church, in Tullylease. This surname is now numerous in Cork, Limerick, Tipperary and Clare. Variants of it include *O'Hununane*, *O'Hinownan*, and Noonan. Anlane Nunan was Bailiff of Limerick in 1279, 1280 and 1295, and the family gave their name to Muskery Nownan.

GLENDUFF CASTLE, west of Broadford, is now a roofless ruin although some of its out-offices and yards are still in use. This castellated house, with a tower at one corner, dates from the early nineteenth century. In 1837 Glenduff, or Glanduff, Castle was the property of Eyre Massy, and was apparently leased by R.J. Stevelly.

THE BEGLEYS SURNAME originated in County Donegal. During the fifteenth century some of the Begleys travelled southwards, with the MacSweenys, to serve as gallow-glasses, in Kerry. During the sixteenth century this surname was almost peculiar to the counties of Cork and Donegal, although some Begleys had apparently settled in Muskery Nownan. The name *O'Beaglaioich* may be derived from *O'Beaglaoch*, descendant of the Little Hero, or from *O'Beighhile*, descendant of the little poet. Other variants of the name

are O'Beagly, O'Begely, O'Begley, Bagley, and Bigly.

CONNELLAN, is a surname found throughout all of Ireland in the sixteenth century. In Irish *O'Conallain* means the descendant of Conallàn, the *diminutive* of Conall. Variants include Conlan, Conlon, *O'Connellane* and *O'Conlan*.

THE O'CONNELL FAMILY in this region may be descendants of the *O'Conaill* of East Kerry, who were chiefs of *Màgh O'gCoinchin* until they were dispossessed by the O'Donoghues towards the middle of the eleventh century. They became followers of the MacCarthy More, and were hereditary castellans of Ballycarbery, near Caherciveen, from the time of the Anglo-Norman invasion until the seventeenth century. Maurice O'Connell, the head of the family at the time of the Cromwellian confiscations, was transplanted to the *Brentir*, or Foul Land, the

Kilnamona-Inagh region, in Clare. The name is derived from *O'Conaill*, the descendant of *Conall*, the High-powerful. O'Connell and Connell are the more commonly used versions of the surname.

O'GORMAN was described by Rev. Patrick Woulfe as a rare and scattered name. It is derived from *O'Gormain*, the descendant of *Gormàn*, the diminutive of *Gorm*, *Blue*. Variants of the name include Gorman and *O'Gormane*. It should be distinguished from *MacGormain* which is often anglicised to O'Gorman and Gorman.

SOURCES

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129 154
159 192 208 212 233 246 269 282



Killaliathan Church.