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Source: *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature*, Vol. 27 (1908/1909), pp. 371-400

Published by: [Royal Irish Academy](#)

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XVI.

TYPES OF THE RING-FORTS AND SIMILAR STRUCTURES
REMAINING IN EASTERN CLARE (QUIN, TULLA, AND BODYKE).

BY THOMAS JOHNSON WESTROPP, M.A.

PLATE XVII.

Read JUNE 15. Ordered for Publication JUNE 17. Published AUGUST 19, 1909.

1.—THE district of Clare with the forts¹ of which we now deal is rather hard to apportion ; so we are making this paper a study rather than a survey ; and this seems best attained by taking certain natural groups to show the prevailing types, and giving accounts of the more exceptional enclosures, even when outside the groups. We hope to complete this study in a third paper, dealing in it with some of the latest “royal” forts still extant, for the mid-thirteenth century “rath of beauteous circles,” “the circular rath and princely palace of earth,”² has vanished from Clonroad. The Killaloe group probably was dug during the ninth and tenth centuries ; unfortunately its most famous edifice, Kincora, has long been levelled, and the very site forgotten. In the subjects of the present paper we have few historical data to help us ; only two of its existing forts, Magh Adhair, with a prehistoric tradition and historical notices from A.D. 877, and Tulla, stated to be a stone fort of the period from A.D. 600–620,³ have won a place even in the local records, and that although the patrimony of one of the ablest, and for long the most powerful, of the tribes in Thomond, the Clan Caisin, Ui Caisin, or Mac Namaras—“sons of the sea-hound.” They were fort-dwellers down till late in the Middle Ages ;⁴

¹We here, as in all our previous essays, use “forts” for earthen or stone structures not necessarily defensive, and certainly not military in intent. We cannot find any means short of excavation for distinguishing the sepulchral from the residential, either in the types or by our early literature, where the uses overlap. We hold, and have long held, that all the types occur in Ireland from the Bronze Age to the fourteenth or fifteenth century of our era, if not still later, and have as a rule no outward marks to show their object.

²Dug by Donchad Cairbreach O’Brien and completed by his son, Conchobhair, Princes of Thomond, who died 1242 and 1269. The latter’s grandson added a peel-tower before 1306.

³In the “Life of St. Mochulla.”

⁴For this fact, see Transactions, vol. xxxii., p. 158—“every ollave rested in his rath . . . and every layman in his liss,” in the winter of 1317–18. We have constant allusions to forts. Death visits the “royal rath” to carry off King Dermot O’Brien. Lochlan MacNamara (slain 1313) is of Liss Brin ; King Donchad (drowned 1233) is of Dun Caoin ; he had three forts near the Fergus. “The dangán” of the O’Gradys was apparently a palisaded camp (1314).

for the founders of the peel-towers lived mainly in the fifteenth century ;¹ and the tribe did not even retain the captured Norman castle of Quin, but gave it to the peaceful monks of St. Francis to use as a convent.

In the district we may note that there are no remains of prehistoric villages, or of any enclosures—primitive towns—like Moghane, and perhaps Turlough Hill fort; there are three forts of the flat-topped mote type, but none of great height. Most of the forts have garths practically level with the field, or, at most, slightly terraced up like the saddle-backed Knockadoon, or the rath of Creevaghmore, the latter having beside it on the summit of the slope, a stone fort like a citadel, and evidently the earlier of the two, as the lower earth-work runs down the slope, and is adapted to the caher. Forts entirely of stone occur rather on the plains than on the hills.² No earthen forts of two or more rings occur; but the side annexe is not unknown. In at least one instance (Tyredagh) the very small ring is found; but whether sepulchral or the ring of a single circular house requires excavation to set at rest, for (in our present knowledge) there are no external characteristics to mark off the sepulchral from the residential; and Irish literature shows us several examples of earth-works used for both, and indeed other, purposes, such as outlook and ceremonial. The stone-fort is very abundant; we find a noble triple-ringed example at Cahercalla, a more massive and larger two-ringed fort at Cahershaughnessy, one in an earthen fort at Caherhurley, and a number of simple cahers. None of the forts have steps or terraces; the wall in all cases I have seen is single, battered, and with upright joints. The gates are always defaced; but in three instances, Langough, Caherbane, and Caherloghan, the foundations can be measured, and show the normal types, two being of coursed masonry and one with gate-posts, the lintels in all cases being removed.³ One very remarkable and anomalous enclosure, the "Dooneen," or Caher, of Ballydonohan, is brought for the first time to notice. It is essentially a promontory-fort in a marsh, which may have been a lake when the fort was built, to judge from the former existence of a causeway. Several souterrains occur in the forts, whether earthen or of stone, given here. One blank is noticeable, that of the square earthen-fort. It is not entirely absent, but nothing unequivocal, nothing like the square earthen

¹The Castle Founders List gives Rossroe Castle as built about 1390–1400. A group of castles, including Lismeehan, about 1430, and the bulk between 1450 and 1490, but several towers were built by King Torlough O'Brien at the close of the thirteenth century.

²Probably because the low hills are of drift, not crag, while the high hills were covered with dense forests. The drift, however, is full of blocks of limestone, sandstone, conglomerate, and even granite, so a stone wall or stone-faced mound could have been made from material gathered on the spot.

³The opes of the gates are from 3 to 4 feet 7 inches wide.

works of Brosna and Killeedy, nothing even like those near Bunratty or Culleen, remains. However, we give a fine example of its stone congener near Knappogue.

The more we study the subject, the less are we able to draw the line between the forts of earth and those of stone; many, if not all, of the first kind examined by us were evidently stone-faced; this also accounts for the usage of "cathair" for the earthen forts as well as for the stone cahers. Though groups of single forts are frequent on the fields, there are no cases of three conjoined forts as at Killulla. Some of the hills have two detached forts on the summit;¹ and we find three cahers in very close proximity in Creevaghbeg. No forts occur on the mountain uplands. Tumuli, pillars, and cairns are practically absent all over eastern Clare; any found are on the smallest scale, and this from no mere lack of stones.²

We have laid before the Academy papers on the stone monuments to which, in the seven intervening years, we have been able to add no further example in the district of the true dolmen, the long giant's grave, or the small cist; but we have found and give a note on the remains of a slab-enclosure on a natural mound at Fortanne. Pillar-stones have also been described in the same papers,³ only a few occurring.

The district with which we deal is a purely Irish one, as soon as we cross the Quin rivers. Apart from some small clans and the slightly more important O'Hehir tribe of Magh Adhair, this part of Clare was occupied from the time of the Dalcassian conquest, A.D. 340-380, by the tribe that evolved itself into the Mac Namaras and others. The English seem to have never formed settlements beyond the river banks save in Tradree. They evidently only held the lower part of Ui Aimrid along the Shannon to Limerick, and at one time the land below Ennis at Clare Castle,⁴ in the Triucha ced an oileán. the cantred of islands. The strongest colony, that of de Clare, did not hold land beyond Quin and Kilmurrynegall.

2.—The only recorded finds in the Clare earth-forts are bronze implements in a fort near Raheen, outside the limit of this paper. Iron objects were found in the (possibly late) partition wall of Cahercalla; the remains of

¹ Such as Kilnoe ridge, Coolreagh, Lismeehan, and Drumbaun forts, near Corbally, &c.

² That there were others long since removed is clear from names like Knockacarran.

³ Proceedings, Ser. III., vol. vi., p. 85. Vol. xxiv. (C), pp. 85, 107.

⁴ Clare Castle itself was probably built late in the period (1240-1270) of the earlier colony (exterminated by Prince Brian Ruadh O'Brien); it was essentially a river-bank settlement. The de Clares claimed Latoon and Tobernafonch; the latter, the "Tiobra na fhuinnsean" of the Cathreim, adjoined the former, and was probably near, if not at, Castlefergus or else St. Kieran's Well on the north border of Dromoland. The Inquisition taken in 1287, on the death of Thomas de Clare, shows conclusively that the English land did not cross the Rine at any points save at Quin itself.

the last were thrown up upon the inner rampart, so future explorers must not be hasty to attribute the latter to the Iron Age, though it may be as late, if not in origin, at least by rebuilding. Finds of the Bronze Age took place on two occasions at Lahardaun, but in a bog, not in a fort. Some apparently of a far earlier period, at Coolasluasta Lake, as already described to the Academy in 1902.¹ North from Tyredagh, Tulla, Maryfort, and Coolreagh hardly any forts, dolmens, churches, or peel-towers exist, save near Feakle and Lough Graney, till we cross the mountains of Slieve Aughty. They, or at least their flanks, were uninhabited, impenetrable oak forests, the same being true of Slieve Bernagh, except for the valley of Killokennedy and its branches up to Formoylè. The opposite is the case in the plains. Here were the earliest of Clare's churches and monasteries, the fifth-century Kilbreacan, Doora and Clooney, the sixth-century Tomfinlough and Tomgraney, the seventh-century church of St. Mochulla at Tulla, and many others of the ninth to the twelfth centuries. Of forts Doora, Clooney, Tulla, and Kilnoe had some fifty each; Quin had over eighty. There are nearly fifty dolmens and at least twenty-five peel-towers, showing how important a centre of population the plain must have been from early time down to and past the Norman Conquest.

3.—As to name-phenomena, the most noteworthy is the occurrence of a group of "Liss" names, chiefly round Tulla and Bodyke. This fort-name is rare in Thomond, save in the extreme south-western angle, "the Irrus." In the east we get Lisoffin ("Fort of the Fair Hugh," Macnamara), Lismeehan (Ui Miodhacain's fort), Liskenny, Liscullaun, Lisduff (black fort), Lisbarreen, Liscockaboe, &c. Lismeehan is found in the Macnamara's rental in the latter half of the fourteenth century, provisionally dated "1380."² Of "Cathair" names, many survive, as we have shown.³ Cahershaughnessy (Ui Seachnasaig's stone fort), Caherhurley (of Ui Urthaile, "1380"), Cahermurphy (of Ui Murchadha). Probably these names as little represent "the oldest inhabitants" as do those of Caher-Rice or Caher-Power, only called "Kagher" in 1655.⁴ Cahercalla is supposed to commemorate the O'Kellys. Cahergrady, in 1668, was probably a monument of the unlucky colony of the O'Gradys, the Ui Donghaile, planted, about 1280, by Sir Thomas de Clare in Tradree. The other names arise from natural or accidental circumstances, such as Cahereiny, of the ivy; Cahernalough, of the lake; Caherloghan, of the

¹ Proceedings, xxiv. (C), p. 94.

² The rent was levied "1380." Perhaps 1380, Maccon being chief at the later date.

³ Proc., III., vol. vi., p. 437.

⁴ There are the foundations of the caher of fairly laid blocks on a small rock-platform jutting from the hillside below Mr. Knox Molony's house.

marl, there being apparently no "little lake" near it; Cahercreevagh, of the branches; Caherragataska, of the eel-crag, 1729; Cahercottine, of the Common of Tulla; Cahirmore, big fort, 1655; Cahirgal, white fort—two respectively near Maghera and Ballykilty, 1668; Cahirshane, old fort; and unclassified names like Caherdine and Cahergeridan (see Fiant of 1580, and Grant of 1665). The oldest and widest-spread fort-name, "Doon," is found both near Tulla and Broadford,¹ at Doonaun, Doon, and Knockadoon, besides the name Dooneen at Ballydonohan Caher, as well as for a townland with a curious giant's grave near Clooney.² Rath and Sonnach names are non-existent in our district, but are found near Inchicronan.

THE QUIN GROUP (*Ordnance Survey maps 34, 42*).

4.—The townlands to the east of Quin abound in forts; but, being populous and divided into numerous farms, the antiquities have suffered not a little, even since 1839. About half-way between Quin and Knappogue the large fort of Kildrum has been much levelled since that date. It has a souterrain in its garth, but it is now closed. South of the late peel-tower of Ballymarkahan we find, on a crag bushy with hazels, the remains of two cahers, well built, with the usual excellent masonry and small filling, but reduced to 3 or 4 feet in height, and featureless. Farther to the south-west remains the broken dolmen of Knappoge, of which a description and plan are published.³ Across the road and opposite the dolmen is part of the levelled ring of a small fort; another lies to the north-west, levelled, and of the strangely common size of 102 feet wide.

BALLYMARKAHAN (42).—On the crags to the north-east, partly in Knappogue and partly in Ballymarkahan, is a remarkable oblong stone fort. The wall is rarely more than 4 feet high to the south, having been used as a quarry when the boundary-wall was made between the townlands; it is 6 to 7 feet high to the north. It is of good, regular masonry, with two faces of blocks, many 3 feet 6 inches thick and 4 feet long. It varies a little in thickness, being 6 feet 8 inches to the south, 6 feet 4 inches to the sides, and 7 feet 4 inches to the north. The section in Ballymarkahan is better preserved; and we see that the "corners" are rounded off, and excellently built, having, like the straight reaches, a slope or batter of 1 in 3. The

¹ The latter has four earthen "forts"; but the one in the demesne is really a natural round-topped knoll, with a slight bank 3 feet wide, and no fosse; and despite its being shown on the map of 1839 as a fort, we incline to consider it a late plantation-enclosure. The other is a real rath, faced with a very modern wall.

² See Proceedings, xxiv. (C), p. 101.

³ Proceedings, xxiv. (C), p. 102.

garth is hollow and somewhat irregular, the average being 177 feet east and west, and 234 feet north and south. It has slight foundations of enclosures.

Such square forts, we may note, lie in other countries outside the limits of the Roman Empire, and have yielded antiquities of the Bronze Age in Eastern Europe. There, as here, there are no differences, other than in plan, between the "square" and circular forts. In Clare this is well seen, though the corners are, as a rule, rounded, as at Knockauns Fort, Mohernaglasha, and the bawn near the Cashlaun Gar in Tullycommaun. At Poulgorm, and near Noughaval, we find well-built square angles; but the first at least seems a late structure. Near Noughaval, Caherkyletaan and Caherwalsh are of splendid slab-masonry; while the neighbouring bawn at Cahernaspekee, in Ballyganner, is very poorly built. Mohernaglasha has curious huts and slabs, set at right angles from the inner face of the wall; and the "caher" of Gleninshen is of the poorest design and construction. Lisheeneagh and Faunarooska, near Lisdoonvarna, are of excellent masonry. The latter has a round peel-tower at one angle;¹ but others at Cahermaclanchy, Caher village, and Carran are poorly and badly built—probably very late examples. None of these have steps or terraces; and only one known to me, at Cragballyconal, has a gateway. This is, however, very interesting, having upright slabs set deeply in the wall, with the edges out to form door-posts in the middle of the passage. This feature is common in the Scottish brochs, and in the cahers of Fahan in Kerry; but to my knowledge only occurs at one true ring-wall, with terrace-steps and huts, Moherarooan, near Carran. It, too, is possibly a late feature, and (I believe) absent from all the finest ring-forts in Western Ireland, northward from the Shannon. It will be seen how in Clare these rectangular enclosures are most common in the purely Irish district of the Corcomroes.

We pass north-eastward through craggy fields, and find two ring-walls levelled to the ground. Near them is a shallow depression, fenced at its curved end by a considerable bank of stones. The foundation of a little circular hut-ring lies near the more southern caher in this field; the northern caher is barely traceable.

About 100 feet to the north of these is a fine and perfect rath. The garth is not raised, nor has it a fosse; but it consists of a steep ring of earth and stones 7 to 8 feet high, planted with hawthorns, and 150 feet across. There are no foundations inside. It was once stone-faced; patches of the work still remain.

¹ Those acquainted with the neighbourhood of Dingle in Kerry will recall Cabercullaun with its ring-fort, straight-sided annexe, and later peel-tower. The castle-builders frequently chose a fort for the site of the stone building.

5.—BALLYMACLOON (42).—In Ballymacloon East, on a rising ground about half a mile from the last rath, is an even finer specimen. The banks are over 8 feet high, with a deep fosse 16 feet wide, to the south and west, but partly filled at the other points. In the garth, which is 108 feet across, are the foundations of a modern cottage and yards. Below this, in a pit about 6 feet deep, is the ope of a souterrain or "cave." The place was described to me by a farmer as "full of water and badgers," and was habitually too flooded to be easily explored, though the "Irish bear" was not visible. Its sides, as usual, were of small stones, and sloped from 4 feet 4 inches at the floor to 2 feet 7 inches at the roof, being about $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. The entrance has two strong lintels above it, each a foot thick. The passage at the sixth lintel inward is $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide. At 12 feet inward we find a side chamber to the south, 4 feet wide and high, too flooded to explore. Its entrance lintel bears up the seventh and eighth covers of the main passage; so it is part of the original plan. Beyond are several more lintels, and an end-wall of small stones. There are no scribings visible on the lintels of this and other similar "caves," and the rath is nameless.

In the same townland, near the little lough, is a massive but overturned dolmen. In 1840 it consisted of a clumsy cover 7 feet long and 5 feet 3 inches thick, of brown gritstone, resting on three other blocks. One of the rock-outcrops near it resembles a large dolmen, more regular than the real one, an enormous slab, resting on a rock, and framing a view of Knappoge Castle. There is, however, no trace of human handiwork on it. These are more accessible from Ballymarkahan Castle. A killeen, or children's burial-place, a 'holy well,' called Toberanaeve "of the saints," and a nearly levelled fort, are found in the townland, and a small caher in Carrowgare.

6.—CREEVAGH (34).—Across the river an extent of rich meadow and tilled land surrounds a gently rising hill on which is a remarkable double fort. There is a pleasant outlook to the wooded, turret-crowned ridge of Cullaun and the many-hued Slieve Bernagh, and over the thickets and woods to the towers of Knappoge, Ballymarkahan, Danganbrack, with its lofty gables and chimneys, and the slender belfry of Quin "Abbey."

The fort on the summit is a circular ring-wall; the faces are nearly destroyed; but enough remains among the heaps of filling (15 to over 20 feet wide, and 3 or 4 feet high) to show that it was from 12 to 16 feet thick, and apparently in one piece, the double wall not, so far as I know, occurring in this group. The garth is 102 feet wide, and the whole ring about 130 feet across. In the southern segment 18 feet from the wall are steep mounds, evidently of a wooden and earthen house, somewhat oval, and enclosing a cave. It consists of a passage 8 feet 3 inches long and $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, now

nearly unroofed; the next reach has lintels, the outer only 3 feet 6 inches long, and is nearly filled; the sides incline, and it runs southward. The wall is 21 feet thick; and 15 feet beyond it is another fort of earth on the slope of the hill. It is of irregular outline, evidently adapted to cling more closely to its "citadel"; its fosse is from 5 to 6 feet deep in parts, and rarely more than 3 or 4 feet deeper than the field. It is 12 feet wide, and most filled to the east and south; the outer ring is low, and is 12 feet thick. The inner ring and its slope are from 18 to 21 feet thick, rising 6 feet 6 inches above the fosse to the north, and 10 to 11 feet to the south. It is nearly 4 feet high inside to the north, 3 to the west, and rarely 2 feet elsewhere. The garth so

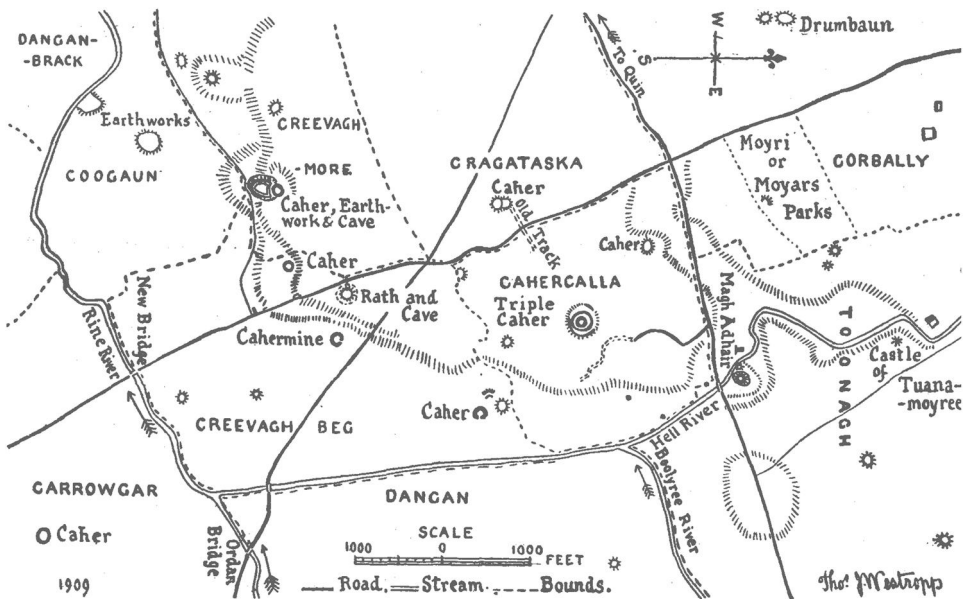


FIG. 1.—The group of Forts round Cahercalla.

enclosed is irregular, somewhat straight to the north, and gently sloping southward, being terraced up in that direction; it measures 144 feet across N. and S., and 141 feet E. and W. There are no foundations or signs of the original entrance, which may have been a wooden bridge next the caher. Both forts are planted thickly round the edges. An old woman assured us that to her knowledge "the fairies were never heard in that fort," though the bohereen (lane) ran past it; so local belief is evidently dying out at Creevagh.

There are four other forts, of little general interest; one near the river Rine in Coogaun is about 250 by 300 feet over all, but much injured by a house and enclosure. In Creevagh, to the east of the caher and its neighbour, we find portion of an unmarked ring.

CREEVAGHBEG (34).—Besides the faint traces of two small forts at the Rine, there is another caher, thickly planted with hawthorns, near the great fort. It has a wall greatly dilapidated, nearly circular outside, evidently 12 feet thick; but the debris is heaped outside for 16 feet more; the garth is 78 feet across. It has a curious feature worth recording. The inner face of the wall is nearly intact, and is built in short straight lengths about 40 feet long, forming a fairly regular hexagon.

Passing up the road northward, we find close to it on the east side on high ground a rath in good preservation. It is circular, girt by a fosse and two steep rings, each thickly planted with hazels and hawthorns, and, on my visits, sheeted with celandine and hyacinth. The outer ring is of earth,

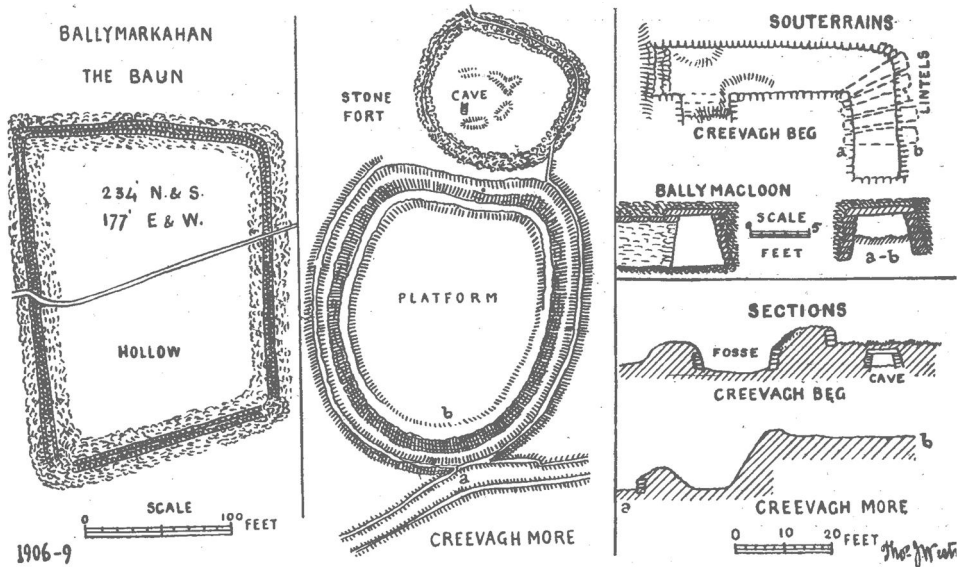


FIG. 2.—Forts near Quin, Co. Clare.

12 feet thick and about 5 feet high, the fosse is 15 feet wide, and 3 or 4 feet deep, and the inner ring 7 feet high over the fosse, and 8 to 10 feet thick, the faces still partly revetted with stonework. The garth is level, 63 to 65 feet across; in the S.S.W. segment, we find a souterrain or "cave" much filled in; it is entered by a pit, 3 feet by 4 feet wide at the top, with sloping sides of rather small stones, having a sort of rude cornice of longer stones under the ends of the roof-slabs. The outer lintel is 5 feet 3 inches long by nearly a foot square; after four more lintels, the last 6 feet long, we find that the passage is again open, and running north and south at right angles to the last for 21 feet at this point; there is a side recess to the east 4 feet wide. We could not trace the main passage farther, as a modern fence crosses the garth, and there is no trace beyond it.

A caher lies at a short distance down a gentle slope to the south-east. It has been already briefly noted in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries*,¹ but needs a fuller description. It was a massive fort, 87 to 90 feet across the garth, and 114 feet over all. There are no signs of foundations inside, but the interior was evidently levelled. The wall is 12 feet thick, and 8 feet to 9 feet high, being best preserved to the N.E. Some has been removed since my first visit in 1892. The gateway faced E.N.E., and is quite defaced; the masonry is good, with two faces, the outer, as usual, being built with the largest blocks; it has a batter of 1 in 5, and some upright joints remain (see Plate XVII.); the outer facing to the N.W. is nearly all removed. There was a stone fort in Creevaghbeg in the later seventeenth century, called Caherumine in the "Book of Survey" in 1655; Cahermine, Cahermunigan, or Caheroine, in a grant of 1660, Caherbane in 1675, and Cahermine in 1679.² If these forms give us Cahermeane, "the middle fort," they probably refer to the above caher, it being near the middle of the townland with other forts around it. Caherbane would still be a very appropriate title, as, on a sunny day, its white limestone walls form a conspicuous object.

There are three forts close together on the border of the townland near Dangan and Cahercalla. The southern is a caher very like the last, but better preserved; most of the inner facing and the larger outer facing to the N. and N.W. are intact. The wall is nearly uniform, 12 feet thick, with two facings of excellent masonry set with great skill to the curve, and to a straight batter varying from 1 in 3 to 1 in 6. It is from 6 feet to 7 feet 8 inches high, and has no terrace or steps; the gate facing the S.E., but quite defaced; the garth measures 118 feet through, and 140 feet over all.

There is a trace of a two-ringed caher, in two low concentric segments of stone-filling in the next field to the west, and hardly 200 feet from the more perfect fort; a ring of filling of a third caher rests on a low ridge of crag to the north; the double fort and its satellites must have nearly joined each other when the large one was entire. I could get no names for these forts, though, with very intelligent guides, I was told by them (accurately) that "the castles of Knappoge, Ballymarkahan, and Dangan were built by the Mac Namaras, but no one knew anything about who built the cahers or what they were called." There are no forts worthy of notice in Dangan, only the Mac Namaras' chief castle of "Dangan Ivigin" and a liss.

7.—CRAGATASKA.—This townland, with Cahercalla, lies north of the

¹ *Journal*, xxiii., p. 432; xxvi., p. 150. See also our *Proceedings*, xxiv. (C), p. 439.

² "Book of Distribution," p. 141; *Proc. R.I.A.*, Ser. iii., vol. vi., p. 439.

Creevagh. It has the foundations of a caher, evidently the "Caher-cragataska" mentioned in 1729, in a deed of the Creaghs, and other records down to at least 1787.¹ It is a ring of filling with lines of facing-blocks, enough to show that the wall was 12 feet thick, and the garth 102 feet wide, with curved enclosures inside. Both the facing and filling were small, which accounts for its complete overthrow. It had a rounded annexe to the north, whence an ancient road ran across the crags towards Cahercalla triple fort to the north-east. It is on a craggy upland, with a wide view to Aughty and Tulla.

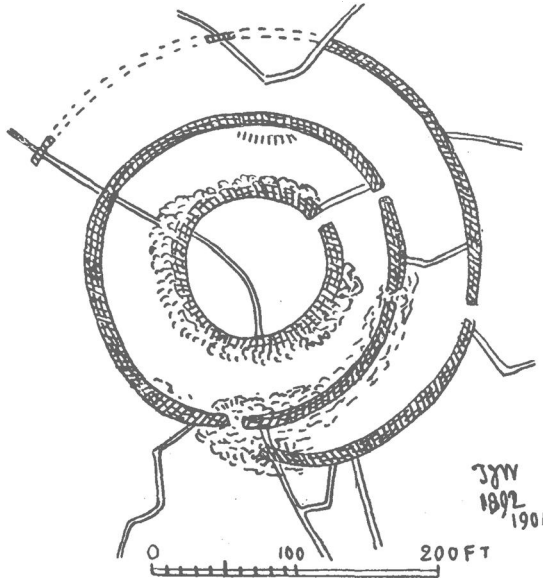


FIG. 3.—Cahercalla Fort (triple-ring walls), near Quin, Co. Clare.

8.—CAHERCALLA.—The fine triple fort of this townland has been described more than once; the fullest account is in these pages.² We give an illustration of its ramparts, which are fairly preserved and typical (Plate XVII.). There are remains of two little forts near Creevagh and of a larger caher, on a hill near a pool, towards Corbally and Toonagh; the forts of the latter townland we reserve for a later section of this paper.

MAGH ADHAIR.—Beyond these are the mound, pillar, and basin-stone of Magh Adhair, also fully described in these Proceedings. They formed the place of the inauguration of the Kings of Thomond from at least the ninth century. We need only further note that the argument that it is a purely

¹ "Dublin Registry," Book 62, p. 220, and Book 387, p. 273.

² Proceedings, xxiv. (C), p. 438; also Ser. iii., vol. iv., p. 56.

ceremonial¹ and not a residential fort, because the ridge overlooks it (or rather is near it, being slightly lower), has no weight when we consider how the evidently residential stone forts of Caherlisaniska, Cahernamweela, Caherduff, a small one near Cahercommaun, and in a lesser degree Cahermore in Glenquin, are all commanded by high rock-ridges, close at hand or overhanging them, on top of which they could have been built as easily as on their present sites. The cliff forts, too, are often overhung; we may give as examples Island Hubbock in Co. Waterford, the great fort of Doon near Dingle, and the small but strong cliff fort at Foillnanná at Ventry in Kerry. Also we find trace of a stone wall of fairly large blocks round the top at Magh Adhair.

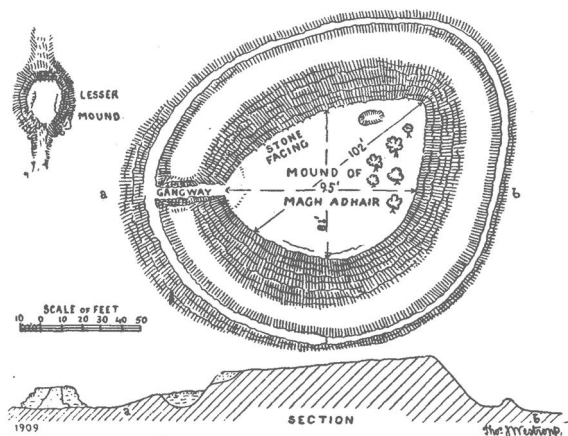


FIG. 4.—Plan and section of Mounds at Magh Adhair.

I regret that I did not use my own plan for the description published in these pages, as, on re-examination, I find the plan on the large-scale maps inaccurate, being the one used in that paper.² I give a new plan with a section.

I may also note a very significant name, occurring, as it does, so near the Inauguration place of the early Kings of Thomond—"Boolyree," "the milking-ground of the King," which gives its name to a little brook which joins the Hell River,³ just below the mound, and forms the Rine, the ancient Gissagh or Missagh.

¹ Of course such mounds as the Forradh at Tara and Magh Adhair played their part in ceremony and perhaps in worship. Virchow regarded the high mounds with annexes (like Lismore and other Irish examples) in central Europe as temples; and if the Teach Cormaic was (as Borlase thinks) a temple of Cormac mac Airt, then a field of speculation (as yet untouched, but which would be full of dangers) is opened to Irish antiquaries, who have as yet done little to identify or illustrate the temples of "the Elder Faiths in Ireland."

² Proceedings, Ser. iii., vol. v., p. 55.

³ The strange name is taken literally by O'Donovan and O'Curry in the Ordnance Survey Letters. There is no explanation of so grim a title.

These forts which we have been describing, with three small and levelled rings in "Moyar's Park" (Moyri and Moyross Park) in Corbally, and a ring-wall and four other foundations in Toonagh (Tuanomoyre, 1584, Tuanamoyree, 1655-1683), show how important a centre lay here round the mote and triple-walled caher, and may account in part for the selection of the former by the proud conquerors of the plain of Adhair, as the place "where the Kings were made."

TULLA GROUP.

9.—The most striking feature in this district is the number of low rounded green hills, on one of which Tulla itself is seated; nearly every one of these (ten) is crowned by an earthen fort. They are not in any sense contour forts, not following the natural lines of the hill,¹ but are usually oval or round, with steep banks, once stone-faced, and fosses. In some cases the ditches are filled up with the outer rings to enlarge the field space; but local feeling was, till very recent times, everywhere (and is still in some places) averse to meddling with the earthworks. When a landlord insisted on his men levelling a fort, a sort of ceremony was performed, the men making him stick the spade into the ground; they waited to see if it was expelled or knocked over by the fairy occupants. If not, the invader of the "sheevra's" abode cut the first sod, assuming thereby full responsibility, and then the men went to work without scruple.²

No "finds" in forts are recorded, but the parish has yielded bronze antiquities from several spots: a flat axe is said to have been found in Maryfort—some said, very doubtfully, in a fort. The townland of Lahardaun, near Tulla, yielded, in May, 1861, a number of antiquities. They consisted of two small socketed celts, a dish-headed pin, plain bronze rings, and a fibula, with slightly expanded ends, rare in bronze but common in gold, numbers having been found at Moghaun, and one at the dolmen of Knocknalappa. Since then Dr. Michael Molony, of Tulla, has shown me a flat axe-head, also found at Lahardaun.³ When the Kennedys and others removed the dolmens of Miltown, they found a bronze sword and numbers of fragments of clay vessels, all now lost; stone implements were ploughed up in the lawn before

¹ This disregard for contour is well marked at Moghane, where the outer rampart at either side "climbs" down and up steep slopes.

² This was the procedure in more than one case told to me. In one, a relation of mine was struck in the eye by a splinter of rock, which the workmen long regarded as a case of undoubted fairy vengeance.

³ The first group were found by James Moroney at a depth of 7 feet below the bog. Proc. R. I. A., xxvi. (C), p. 124. The other was found "under 6 feet of bog" in the same place, and was shown to Dr. Molony as a "tobacco-knife." The finds may belong to the seventh or eighth century before our era.

Fortanne, near the trace of a levelled fort, and were long preserved, but were lost when the place was sold.

There are some thirty forts in the 6 square miles at Tulla; the stone forts near the village are entirely removed. A Cahercutteen was given to Tulla church in about 1380 by Mac Namara.¹ It was evidently in Cutteen townland, either the levelled ring-fort or the one on the rising ground near Lisoffin Castle; but there were several in Bunnavoree, Miltown, Clonmoher, and Caelvagh, the last in Fortanne, reduced to mere foundations, or rather rings of filling.

10.—CAHERLOGHAN (35).—"The stone-fort of the marl" is in Clooney, but only divided from Tulla by the Affock river, and it naturally belongs to the Tulla group. It lies not far south from the curious group of demidolmens and cists already described.² The fort is much levelled; but the foundations of several late houses near it and the ruin of a limekiln fully account for the destruction. It measured 165 feet across the garth and about 200 feet over all; the facing is nearly all removed, but the mounds of stones are 15 to 18 feet wide and 5 to 7 feet high to the north-west. The foundation of the gateway is extant. It faced the south-west, was of good coursed masonry, the blocks about 18 inches square; the opening was 4 feet 7 inches wide. In the garth we see a semicircular foundation, a cross-wall or traverse, and traces of other early-looking enclosures. There are several outcrops of natural rock in the garth.

LISOFFIN (35).—To the south of Lisoffin Castle, between it and the large lake of Cullaunyheda, "Sheeda (Mac Namara's) Cullaun," famous for the enchanted city, or palace, under its waters, runs an ancient cross-road from Dangan to Tulla. It passes through Derrymore (not the better-known demesne of the Gores bearing that name, and farther westward); beside it lie several remains worthy of examination.

CRAGNAGANAHA.—A defaced caher, overgrown with hazels; the facing was small and poor, so little remains, the wall being 15 feet thick and 5 to 7 feet high, with small filling, enclosing a circular garth, 71 to 72 feet across, with no foundations inside.

LISOFFIN CAHER lies north from the last, and is best reached from the main road, an old house, or "cowl," being a landmark for its position. The ring-wall measures 117 to 123 feet over all, being oval; the walls, usually 12 feet thick, faced with good small masonry, with small filling; the eastern part, where best preserved, is 5 feet high. The other cahers round Tulla are

¹ Inquisitions P.R.O.I., 27th October, 1604, and 30th April, 1611.

² Proceedings, xxiv. (C), p. 100.

mere low rings of filling; but enough has been said to show that they differ in no respect, even in dimensions, from the normal ring-wall of Burren and the other craggy districts where such remains are better preserved.

11.—Along the old road we pass three levelled earthworks, defaced by the farm-buildings of Derrymore. There is a rude pillar, 6 feet 3 inches high and 23 inches by 10 inches thick, near them, at a pool choked with willows and marsh plants. Derrybeg has two lisses on the edge of Creevosheedy Bog, called, like Cullaun, after some Sioda Mac Namara, probably the great chief who built, or rather restored, Quin Abbey in 1402. To the east lies Lahardau, noted above for its bronze "finds," with a liss, a killeen graveyard, and a holy well of St. Mochulla.

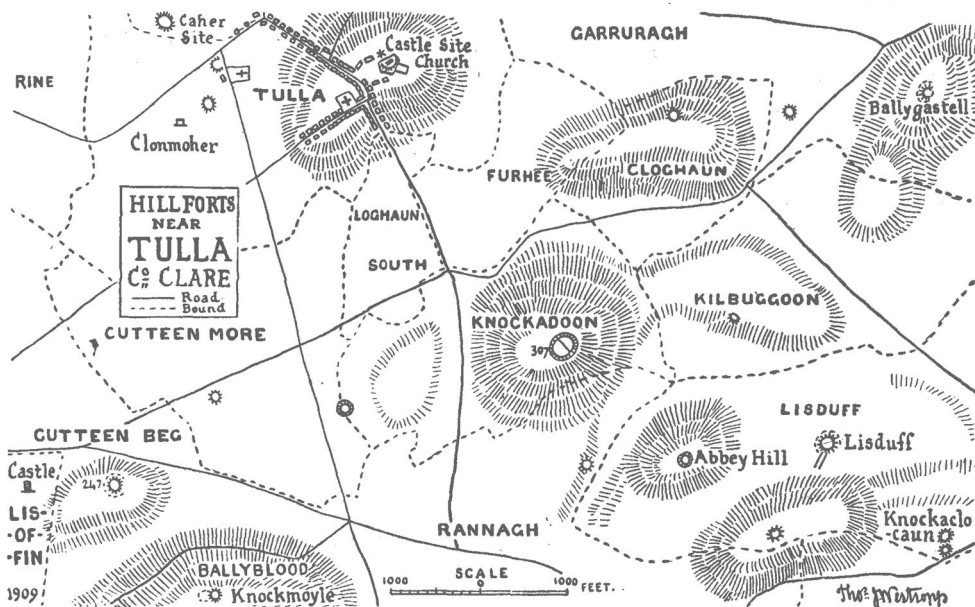


FIG. 5.—Group of Hill Forts near Tulla, Co. Clare.

The road curves round the northern face of Knockmoyle Hill; rising 247 feet above the sea and 150 feet above the plains, it commands a wide and interesting view from Callan, Inchiquin, and Burren in the west, on to Knockfierna in Limerick, and over Cullaun Lake.

KNOCKMOYLE Fort is a conspicuous object resting on the summit, and ringed with tall, gnarled old hawthorns and bright furze. It is, however, a low earthen ring, 4 feet high to the north and 8 feet to the south, where it is levelled up, being on a slight slope. The garth is 93 feet across, with no foundations or fosse; a curved rise lies to the south-west, marking an annexe

levelled when the field was tilled. This partly terraced fort is a characteristic of the Tulla and Bodyke groups.

CUTTEENBEG, the grant of which, about 1380, was noted, has a low ridge near Lisoffin Castle. On this is another earth-work, greatly damaged in recent years, the eastern side being much levelled. It has at the other sides an inner ring, 3 to 4 feet high and 6 feet thick, a fosse 12 to 15 feet wide and 5 feet deep, and a slight out-ring 6 feet thick and 3 to 5 feet high. All is much overgrown; and it contains a pit 45 feet long north and south, 30 feet wide, and 9 feet deep, planted with fine ash-trees, and with a small well or pond at the bottom.

12.—TULLA.—The graveyard on the hill-top gives clear traces, showing that the Church of St. Mochulla had been built inside a large terraced fort. The medieval church and its successor, dating from about 1700,¹ stand on a level platform, semicircular to the south and east, and from 5 feet to 9 feet higher than the lower part of the older graveyard. Its trace runs into the level of the hill at the summit; but the graveyard is 3 feet or 4 feet higher than the field: there is a terraced plot to the S.W., but of doubtful age. The ring probably included the old castle, which stood near the north-west corner of the graveyard down to about 1835, but was levelled before 1839. This had vaulted rooms, and the door faced the east towards Garruragh.²

The existence of the semicircular terrace, which we first noted in 1883, is of interest as being probably the fort alluded to in the ancient "Life of St. Mochulla," the founder of the church,³ who is said to have cleared and levelled the platform "with his own hands," finding a block with a basin in it. St. Mochulla (still locally remembered for his miracle of turning seven robbers, who attacked his tame bull, into the pillar-stones of Classagh) was "pupil of St. Ailbe, of Emly," who died *circa* 540.⁴ Clare, or at least its northern or western portions, seem to have been still pagan in the early seventh century.⁵ The saint, leaving the mountains, followed a doe (constantly recurring in folk-lore) to a hill, "Dorsum riscarum," now called "Episcoporum collem" (Tulach na n-espoc), covered with trees, brambles, and

¹ The Molony tomb, built on the east end of the older church, dates 1702.

² Told me by Michael O'Loughlin, of Fortanne, who died last year, aged 83, and had reliable traditions of other matters tested by me.

³ The "Life," sought for in vain by Colgan about 1637, has recently been recovered in Austria, but is in a fragmentary condition. It is published in "Analecta Bollandiniana," vol. xvii., p. 135. It is of the year 1141, and confirms the local legend about the saint's tame bull—an interesting case of survival by tradition alone for over 250 years.

⁴ In these early Lives a saint is often named long after his death, his "coarb" (successor) being intended; so also the term, "the saint is at" a place, refers to his body or relics. So we may evidently discard the time-indication of Ailbe and cling to those of Guaire and Forannan.

⁵ From the prayer in the Stowe Missal (late sixth century), folio 25.

bushes. Mochulla found a smooth rock with a cavity (bullaun, or basin-stone, not infrequent in the district), which the doe fills with milk, and here he and his brother hermit found a cell. "King Guaraeus" (evidently Guaire "the hospitable," of Aidhne, near Gort, c. 620, who died at an advanced age in 662), sends seven soldiers to capture Mochulla. They join the community and toil for a year "in erecting an impregnable stone fort as a refuge against further attack." It had ramparts, very deep fosses, and outworks ("muros, fosseta profundissima necnon et antemuralia"). The enraged Guaire comes by night across the mountain passes, and, remaining on a spur, sends his troops across the plain to the monastery. A female anchorite, "Glasnetis" (unknown to local tradition), who had gone to "fetch away fire" from the place, meeting the soldiers, drops the burning embers and (as is the case at, perhaps, the very "spurs" while we write) the heather and furze catch fire and make a dense smoke; the soldiers fall insensible in the reek, Guaire becomes humble, and "afterwards becomes renowned for his liberality." Mochulla is consecrated a bishop, and the Life ends abruptly. The legend alludes to an ill-disposed chief, Forannan, who appears as King of Thomond in the Book of Ballymote, probably in the early seventh century, as he married a daughter of Guaire. It also tells how King Torlough O'Brien, and his son and tanist Teige, blockaded the monastery in which one of the chiefs (who had killed a favourite courtier) had taken refuge, and nearly starved it into surrender. The monks, to whom St. Mochulla appeared in a vision, found a well on the left of the altar, which abated their thirst. The punishment of Teige, and his father's offer to the Abbot of all the lands he could see "from the top of the hill where the saint was known to be buried," ensue; but Teige dies the same day and his father the same month, in 1086, as recorded in the Annals. The church is called "Tulach" in the Papal Taxation of 1302. From some translations of the "Cathreim Thoirdhealbhaigh" it appears that it was at "dewy Tulach" that Death, in "a raid that takes a king, came to visit Brian's Rath." King Dermot O'Brien, in 1313, after a brave struggle against his deadly illness, took to his bed there, and "death divorced him and his disease." The Mac Namara chief, Melachlin, having come to visit him, was seized and chained; and after the king's death he and their other chief, Lochlain, were cruelly put to death. "Green Moyare's two horsemen" being killed, this misfortune crushed Tulach, as corn is crushed in the quern. Five years later King Murchad O'Brien, after his useless conference with the Norman nobles in Limerick, came to "Tulach na n-espoc" (of the bishop's), "sanctified by bell and precious mass, by relics, gold-enshrined, by rare piety and notable miracles"—another indirect allusion to the now almost forgotten founder. At the close of the century in 1397 the Mac Namaras confirmed a

number of lands in the "Termon of Tulla" to the church.¹ The deed was preserved down to 1611 in the "Black Book of St. Mochulla," now unfortunately lost.² Little is told of the place till Tudor times, save occasional mention of one of its priests, Donchad, son of Maccon Mac Namara, its rector in 1397, Reginald O'Halharan in 1407, and Gilbert O'Lean in 1421. The Castle was built a little later by Shane Mac Teige Mac Donough Mac Namara; the church of "the Colidei," *circa* 1367, by "Convara" Mac Namara.

Evidently, however, we have at Tulla a trace of a ring-wall which, in the twelfth century, was attributed to the early seventh century. It surrounded the church, like the fosses and mounds made by St. Enda round his sister Fanchea's cell, at the end of the fifth century, or the existing ring-walls round Glencolumbkille and Templenaratha, and the flat-topped fort on which Moyarta church was built, all being in county Clare.³

Before leaving the subject we must note the strong local colouring of the Mochulla legends. The hills, or rounded mounds (Tulach), covered with bushes and thorns, the spurs of the mountains thick with furze beyond the plain, the name "Drumreask," the ridge having a marsh at its foot, the shallow well on the hill-top, the bullaun or basin-stone, and the caher made round the cells, have their existing counterparts.

13.—KNOCKADOON.—South of Tulla, the most commanding of the hills, rises 307 feet above the sea; it is central, with two "fortified" hills to each quarter, and is crowned by the largest of the Tulla forts. The "Doon" lies centrally across the ridge, and, though each wing has been terraced up, the garth is "saddle-backed." The "dorsal ridge" lies north-east and south-west, being 211 feet along the fort and 165 feet in the opposite direction. The garth is raised 4 to 5 feet over the field to the north and south, with a ring 3 feet high, in all $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 8 feet over the field. There is no trace of a fosse; the garth is tilled, and the ring of the eastern half is levelled, the fort being divided between two farms.

ABBHEYHILL.—Knockadoon Hill slopes steeply to the south-east; at its foot in a field in the bottom of the hollow is a low enclosure where, local tradition says, the Mac Namaras began to lay the foundation of the Franciscan Monastery; but they changed their intention, and built it at Quin instead. This interesting and not improbably true story gives the name of "Abbey-

¹ The Termon lands were in 1397 (as copied into the Inquisition of 1611) Tulla, Killeen, Lisoffin, Cloonteen, Dromlig (Knockdrumleague), Moymore, Fomerla, Kiltanon, Tiresheeda (Tyredagh), Dromcaha *alias* Kilconalballagh (Ardbooly), Ballyore, Cregganryen, Dromagmartin, Bunavorey, Furhee, Loughann, Cutteen or Cahercutteen, and perhaps Rine.

² See mss. R. I. Acad. 24. D. 10, copy by Chevalier O'Gorman.

³ Killilagh and Rathborney churches also closely adjoin flat-topped circular mounds.

hill" to the ridge to the south of Knockadoon. There is a low green liss with the usual charming outlook and venerable thorns. There is no fosse—only a ring 5 feet high in parts and 6 feet thick, and a garth 3 feet higher than the field, measuring 66 feet across east and west, and 78 feet north and south, or rather north-east and south-west.

LISDUFF.—The next hill to the south has a nearly levelled fort, barely traceable, but marked by a thick mass of furze. At the foot of the slope we find trace of an old banked road leading to another liss, which Mr. Burke, of Ranna, tells me is known to the neighbours as the "Right Fort," being, in their opinion, the true "Lisduff." The ring is 5 feet high to the north, with a very slight hollow, scarcely a fosse; at the south it runs into a steep natural slope, and is 12 to 14 feet high; it hardly rises a foot over the garth; the fort measures 132 feet across, and has been dug into in parts. It is planted with unusually fine hawthorns. The old road between it and the hill-fort runs straight for the latter. There are two low earthen rings to the south-west of Lisduff in the same townland, the northern called Knockaclocaun; at the house to the west of them, by the roadside, are two fine "bullauns" or basin-stones.

CLOGHAUN.—Barely noticing a low fort near the "Abbey" site, and some trace of a terraced one in Kilbugoon on a low ridge towards the north-east from Lisduff, we ascend the large ridge of Cloghaun, nearer Tulla. Here we find a terraced fort¹ hardly a foot higher than the summit, but terraced up from 8 feet to 10 feet high at the north, with a very steep bank and no fosse or appreciable ring. It is 78 feet east and west, 96 feet north and south over all; and from its lofty furze ring, 12 feet high, is one of the most conspicuous and deceptive of the hill forts.

GARRURAGH.—The last of the bold drift-hills lies farther east, at the cross-road in Garruragh. It has two ridges, with a deep hollow between, and on the western lies another ring-fort. An old lane leads up to it and around its side. The ring is 7 feet high in parts without a fosse. The garth is level with the field to the east, and the bank entirely removed to that side. The ring is about 13 feet thick and 6 feet on top, enclosing a space 114 feet north and south, and 93 feet east and west. It is known as Ballygastell Fort.

The whole group suggests a central "Doon" of the chief at Knockadoon, the entrenched houses of other magnates on each of the other hills around

¹ This type, of which three nearly perfect examples are given under Fortanne and Coolreagh, has a ring for about half its circuit up the slope, but none where the terraced part occurs.

him;¹ and though they have left no trace, the wicker, clay, and wooden houses of his more obscure followers and serfs among the stone ring-walls of an older settlement. Then, about A.D. 620, the Church asserts itself, establishing a "culdee" mission monastery, probably but little unlike the other hamlets in and around one of the lisses at "Tulla of the bishops," where a stone church and eventually a peel-tower were built.

14.—MARYFORT.—Closely connected with the Tulla group, and isolated in the other directions by a considerable district devoid of forts—we may very briefly complete our record with the slight remains in the townlands of Lismeehan and Fortanne. The local names are numerous, and as a rule unmarked, even on the large scale maps. The surveyors usually appealed to the landlords, who were profoundly indifferent as to the recording of the names, though the latter often have cleared up great difficulties in questions of title. I may give four here—"Reisk-na-raba," the marshy "Calf Park" south of the lake of Creggankeale, "Garreengae" ("little breezy garden") to the east of Maryfort House; "Caelvagh," a craggy field to the east of its front gate between the roads and the "Roughans" adjoining Garruragh along the Tulla road. In Maryfort, whose western bound has not altered since the "1688" Trustee maps were made, we find the Mac Namaras' Castle of Lismeehan. The name Lis Miodhachain is in the "1380" rental of the Mac Namaras, meaning the fort of the O Meehans, who still live on the adjoining townland of Fortanne, and figure, with the O Molonys, in the wars of 1313 in the "Cathreim Thoirdealbhaigh." The castle stood on an earlier earthwork. Very slight traces remain of an outer ring, 14 feet to 18 feet wide, and in parts 4 feet over the marsh, with an apparent "annexe," 63 feet across to the north-west. The inner mound is 108 feet across north and south, and 11 feet to 12 feet high. It is covered with debris; and two great masses of the angle of the peel-tower of strong grouted masonry, 6 feet thick, lie on its slope, fallen but rocklike. The mound is about 260 feet round the base. The tower was built about 1420 to 1440 by Mahon or Ruadri Mac Namara, the first being best attested.² South of the castle on the low plateau of Lismeehan were two earthworks. The northern, on a commanding bastion of the ridge, is 100 feet across and 3 feet or 4 feet high, with no

¹ Two to each face of Knockadoon, Tulla, and Cloghaun to the north; Cutteen and Lismoye to the west; Abbeyhill and Lisduff to the south; the terraced fort in Kilbugoon and Ballygastell to the east. Cragg and Lahardaun Hills being at present without forts. Several forts, such as Scovagh and Clonloughaun lisses and the half-levelled Liskenny, Lisculaun, and Lahardaun, belong to the group.

² The Castle Founders' list has only reached us in corrupt copies. Mr. Standish Hayes O'Grady collates two in the Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum. There are two others used by me from the mss. of this Academy. Only one gives Ruadri as founder of Lismeehan.

fosse; the larger one, oval, 130 feet north and south, 114 feet east and west; it had a fosse and rings, but, like its companion, has been levelled and planted. Opposite to the castle and to the east, a low mound in the marsh has been adapted as a fort by digging an oval fosse, 7 feet or 8 feet wide, enclosing a space 129 feet north and south, and 78 feet east and west, with an outer ring 6 feet to 8 feet wide. The excluded part of the mound forms a pear-shaped annexe, 60 feet across to the north. The beautifully wooded hill behind the house has another sloping fort near the top. It measures 108 feet north and south, and 130 feet over all, falling southward (6 feet in 108 feet) along the slope, with a fosse and low inner ring, each 9 feet wide, the latter 4 feet to 5 feet high. The hill, despite its planting, has a beautiful outlook, the faint blue hills in King's County being visible beyond Lough Derg; the old castle of Fortane or Roslara and three lakes showing from the slopes.

15.—FORTANEBOG.—“Fertane,” corruptly modernized to Fortanne, is first recorded as “Fertain,” in the De Clares' wars of 1279. We find in “Caelvagh,” the foundation, 6 feet thick, of a ring-wall, 69 feet across the garth, and a small knoll, walled, either as a house or grave enclosure, 30 feet by 40 feet across, by an oval rampart of large blocks and small field-filling. Behind, and north-east of the gate lodge, is a low mound of earth and small stones, partly artificial; on this was a slab-enclosure of a type not unfamiliar in north-west Clare. It was somewhat oval, 25 feet to 29 feet across; five slabs remain, 7 feet by 3 feet by 1 foot thick, 6 feet by $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet by 8 inches, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet by $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet by 15 inches, the others nearly buried. The slight trace of a ring-fort is found on the lawn; and beyond the road, on a steep, low ridge, is a terraced fort, not marked as such on the maps. It is of irregular plan, the garth 5 feet to 6 feet higher than the slope to the west. The bank is 9 feet thick, and much repaired when the site was planted. The garth is level with the summit of the ridge, and 78 feet across, similar to several in the Tulla group. We will notice a better example at Liscockaboe. It lies in view of Abbey Hill, Lisduff, and Knockadoon, and is the most eastern liss of the group, there being no trace of entrenchment on the larger hill behind Fortanne House, only an old unfenced Killeen graveyard, which gave the place its name, lies on the slope beside a holy well of St. Mochulla. There are traces of old roads in the craggy fields near Tulla, near a levelled caher, and in Maryfort demesne; the latter track passes close beside a little dolmen of limestone slabs already described and planned.¹

¹ Proceedings, xxiv. (C), p. 115. We need not include the simple little forts of Drummaghmartin, Lecarrow, and Ayle, or the site of Cappaknockane fort, though in some sense part of the group.

BODYKE GROUP (28).

16.—The next most characteristic group lies around the little village of Bodyke. We find no early record of the village; but its name is evidently “Both dTeige,” Teige’s hut. The townlands treated by us comprise Clonmoher and the Coolreaghs, with outlying forts at Ballydonohan and Caherhurley. There are, however, many earthen forts that naturally belong to the group; for instance, in Drumod (or, as it is better known, Knocklare and Knockbrack) are four raths and Knockbrack fort, Lurragabawn, a fine liss with a fosse and two rings, the inner nearly perpendicular, and 6 to 8 feet high; Kilderry, a large oval fort, about 250 by 200 feet, in Newtown;¹ Tondrislee, an old low-banked enclosure, pear-shaped in plan, with a shallow fosse on a slope; it is 93 feet across. There are also three more circular lisses in Coolreagh, three in Lisbarreen, and one in Coolready (St. Catherine’s), usually steep banks without fosses, with garths over 100 feet across; one, south of Bodyke, being terraced and on a slope. There is a somewhat larger ring on the Annaghmullivan River, opposite Caherhurley, and four others beside the Caher; the terraced graveyard, a probable church site, called Killanna in Parknakilla, and a ring-fort on the ridges flanking the valley in which Ballydonohan Caher lies. Of these places we find mention in the early rental of Cluana mothair, the Culriabaghs, and Caitir Urthaile. The Mac Namaras, and in later days a branch of the O’Briens, held Coolreagh; but, from the time of the Commonwealth, most of these lands came into possession of the O’Callaghans, a family transplanted from Duhallow in Cork.

CLONMOHER.—Cluanamothair, the latter term being frequently used in Clare for a fort. The long, green ridge overlooks a boggy country from which forts and other antiquities are absent, the valley of the river Graney and its affluents. There are two fine forts on the ridge, each on a rounded, rising ground.

LUGALASSA, the more northern, is of the lower mote type, like Lisnaleaun, near Kilkee, its platform being 8 feet above the field, and 11 or 12 feet above the fosse. The summit measures 139 feet east and west, 132 feet north and south. The mound was faced with stonework, and probably a ring-wall of dry stone girt the summit, as the base of the inner face of large blocks is traceable. The inner ring at the base is about 14 feet wide; the shallow fosse 21 feet to 25 feet wide; the outer ring 14 feet to 16 feet wide, and 5 or 6 feet high. In all it measures 267 feet north and south, and 240 feet

¹ Newtown was part of Ballymacdonnell, as shown in a map of Thomas Neville, 1764, made for Donat O’Callaghan.

east and west, being somewhat pear-shaped in plan. The name Lugalassa means "the hollow of the liss."¹

LACKENREAGH, or Lackareagh, usually called Clonmoher Fort, lies to the east of the last, and is of the common type, a low garth, hardly 2 feet higher than the field; it is pear-shaped in plan, being about 150 feet to 170 feet over the garth, and 70 to 212 feet over all. The inner ring is well preserved, 14 feet thick, and 7 to 9 feet high at the fosse, which is 11 feet or 12 feet wide, and 3 or 4 feet deep; an old bohereen runs through it. The outer ring is much levelled to the north and east, is 6 feet thick, and rarely 4 feet high. The whole is covered with beautiful sward; a garden, according to the season, of bluebells, wild strawberry, and foxglove.²

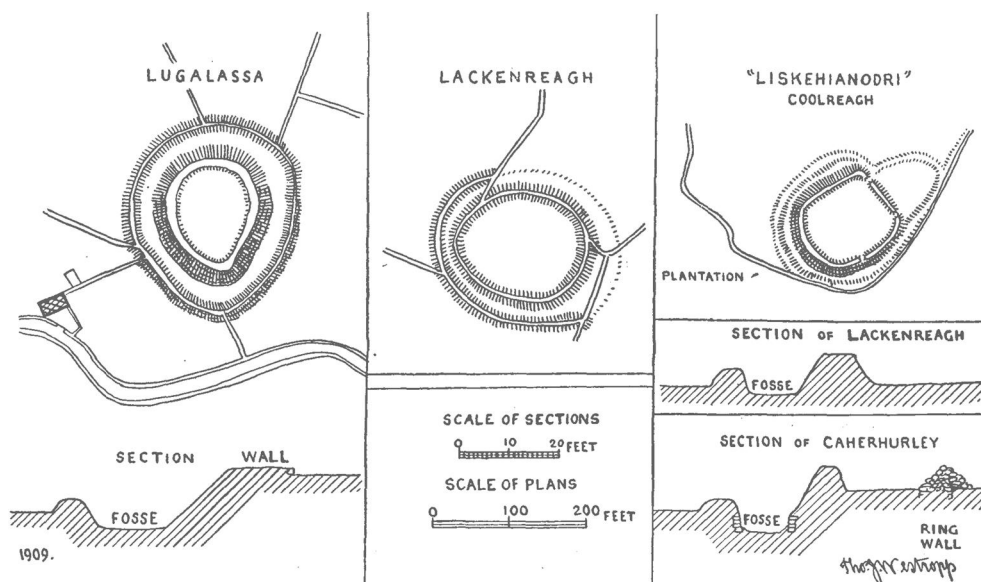


FIG. 6.—Forts near Bodyke, Co. Clare.

17.—COOLREAGH.—An old by-road runs northward from Coolready Hill, along the ridge whose summit is named Knockacarran, from a levelled cairn, and brings us across a valley to a bold ridge rising 250 feet above the sea, with a beautiful view of the river valley, the lakes of Bearnadearg (Red Gap), and Lough O'Grady, with their creeks and reedy fens, and far away, Lough Derg, with the lofty, slender round tower of St. Caimin's monastery of Iniscaltra. Since 1839 the fort on the bluff near the house has been levelled; the fosse is barely traceable.

¹ A surprising meaning was suggested to me, "Lugalassa," like "Lugdunum," fort of Lug, the sun-god!

² These forts were briefly noted in *Journal Roy. Soc. Ant. Ireland*, vol. xxxiv., p. 75; "200 to 210 feet" in that note are misprints for "260 to 270."

LISKEHEENODRI.—The name of this fort, “the little bushy sod fort,” is preserved by a partition deed between Matthew O’Brien, his son Thady, and brother, Kennedy, of Coolreaghbeg, May 26th, 1736, lent me by Col. O’Callaghan Westropp, the present owner. The O’Briens held as tenants in common; and, fearing to lose their lands under the Penal Laws, got their Protestant neighbours, F. Drew of Drewsborough, and John Westropp, of Lismeehan, to act as trustees, making a fictitious and friendly “discovery.” Legal advisers recommended a partition of the lands, which was carried out. The division-line started from “Cnocnaspige, over against the north point of the Rushy Island on the Derrymore [above Bearnadearg, the name still attaches to some houses], and running south close by the house of Daniel O’Brien at Gortnakilly [wood-field], on the said lands of Coolreaghbeg, and thence south to the bounds of Coolbaun [still a field-name], ending west of Liskehianodri.” Of other lost names found in the O’Brien papers, we can only note “Moneliberine,” 1736, or “Libbereen Bog,” in a map of 1775, in the north of Coolreaghmore, next the river; “Droumnagour” (Goat’s ridge), the ridge in Coolreaghmore, south from the liss; “Dermee,” north of the river at Core-bridge; “Rosnure,” in the bend between it and Derrymore. The place had 30 acres of wood in the western half alone in 1772.

The fort still deserves its name, being well sodded and ringed with small bushes. The garth is irregular, horseshoe-shaped, with a fairly straight reach to the north-east; 126 feet north and south, 144 feet east and west. The inner ring is 9 feet thick, and rises 5 feet over the fosse to the west, and 8 feet and 9 feet to the south-west, being on a slope, and terraced up for a few feet. The fosse, 8 to 10 feet wide, and 3 feet deep, runs round the curve, and then girds a conical space outside the ring to the north-east, 78 feet across, with trace of a bank 12 feet thick. The outer ring of the curved section was 10 feet thick; it has been dug away in parts. There are two old ponds on the hill-top east from the fort, overshadowed by old willows.

The main ridge lies east and west. South from it is a forked ridge lying north and south. Several nameless forts lie in the hollow, between the by-road and the tall fragment of the “castle” or peel-tower. They were house-rings, the eastern planted, and 5 feet thick; the garth barely 3 feet high, and 130 feet across. The ring, in the next field to the west, is nearly levelled, 2 to 4 feet high, and 105 feet across, the ring 5 feet thick. They have no fosses, and are probably very late. As we have pointed out, similar circular trenches, or banks, are still made to protect small plantations, and usually have a fosse outside from which the material was taken. Dry-stone ring-walls are also built for the same purpose.

On the western fork of the ridge is a fort terraced up on the slope, 6 feet

higher than the field at its northern end, with steep banks to the south, and no fosse, 105 feet across the garth, the ring 12 feet thick.

18.—LISCOCKABOE.—Lies on the eastern ridge beyond a marsh and stream. Like the last, it has no fosse, and lies on the slope of the ridge. The platform is 2 feet high at the summit, and terraced to 6 feet over the field at the south-east. The ring, like the last fort, was highest up the slope. It is 6 to 7 feet high on the top of the ridge, and 3 feet over the garth to the sides. It is very steep, and so evidently had a stone facing till very recent times, but none remains, with a thick hedge of tall hawthorns all round its summit—probably lineal descendants of the old quickset hedge. The garth measures 126 to 128 feet across. The name implies that it was used to pen cattle, and dates at least from 1617. It, and the third ridge, called Dromscale, formed separate townlands from Coolreagh, down to 1655, if not later.

An old road runs from the fort eastward, along the back of the ridge. Beside it are two curious little mounds with rounded tops, each 15 feet across, and 4 feet high, of doubtful date and character. They lie 330 feet and 470 feet from the fort. At about 500 yards from the liss is another fort. The garth is 6 feet, and the ring 8 to 10 feet above the field. The ground is dug away to the north-west, but no fosse remains. The garth is hollowed like a plate, and is almost exactly 100 feet across; the ring 12 feet thick, but hardly 2 feet high, forming a rim round it.

BALLYDONOHAN (36).

19.—This very singular stone fort is so exceptional¹ that I dare not venture to theorize, but describe it as I found it, stating the difficulties, in the hope that some other worker may be able to throw light upon it. It was first pointed out to me by Col. O'Callaghan Westropp, not being marked on the older maps of 1839, or shown accurately, or as an antiquity, on the new ones.

The people near it call it "the Caher," "the Dun," "the Dooneen," with a valueless tradition "that it was an old fortification of the Danes." Messrs. Bolton and Daniel O'Callaghan heard, from a very old woman who died 20 years ago, that "she remembered a cellar and rooms under it 70 years ago" (about 1820). The former remembered a dry-stone wall or causeway to the north-east across the marsh, and heard that "one of Cromwell's regiments, going into Galway by Scariff, had overthrown the Dooneen." I have failed to get any historic evidence for this event, and the tendency in Munster is to accredit every destruction to "Cromwell." Still, the very definite detail as

¹ Of course some of the outline results from its following the contours of the ridge; but the great slab facing, the stone ridge and souterrains, with the problematic building enclosed, make it very exceptional.

to the route of the regiment is worth recording. All agree that it was not a castle; certainly it is as unlike a medieval castle or peel-tower as it is unlike an early caher; and the silence of the records bears out their opinion.

The caher stands on the eastern end of a low craggy ridge, highest to the west, and surrounded by marshy meadows running up a valley and little stream. The valley was probably once a lake, like the depression to the south, further up the mountains. The foundations, evidently of some very old fences, cross the ridge at intervals; we then reach a rock-cutting forming a path down the steep southern crags. Beside it is a massive stone wall

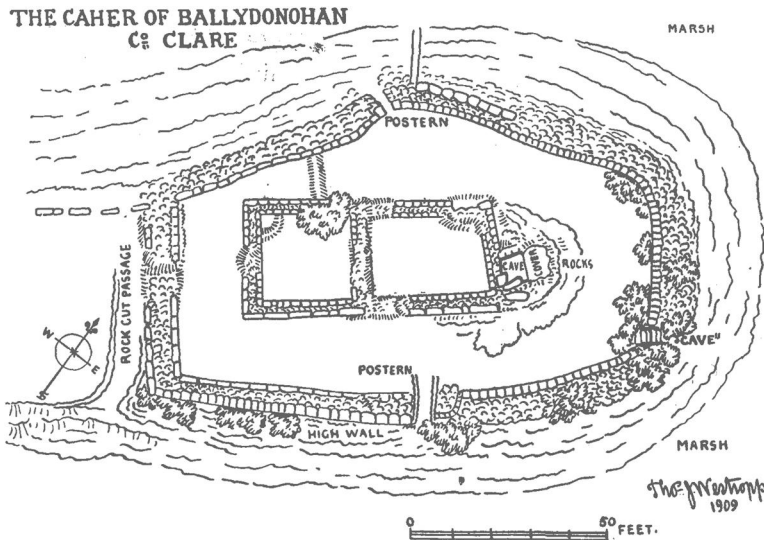


FIG. 7.—Ballydonohan Caher, Bodyke.

faced with large slabs set on end. The fort is very irregular in plan, somewhat resembling a footprint in outline.¹ It is 132 feet long east and west, and 72 feet across at 66 feet from the east end. The wall is of large gritstone slab masonry, roughly coursed to the south, and of fine but rude blocks, 3 feet to 5 feet long, 24 feet high, to the north; the filling is of small stones and earth; no upright joints occur. The inner face, like the outer one to the west, is "veneered" with long, thin slabs, 4 feet to 5½ feet high, and from 5 feet to 7 feet long. This feature is not unknown in more "orthodox"

¹ The curved end, side-lines, and rectangular cross-line of the plan suggest (on a very small scale, and of different material) the plan of Winkelbury, near Salisbury. See Allcroft's "Earthwork of England," p. 82. There is a somewhat similar structure, with three cross-walls, at Ranguin Carimai, in Alpes Maritimes, France. It has dry-stone walls, and is over 130 feet long; it in no way resembles the true Castellaras (or French cathairs). We, of course, suggest the resemblance with all reserve, and refer to the "Rapport," No. xxiv., t. vi., p. 37, of the Prehistoric Society of France.

cahers, but is a doubtful criterion of age, being found at the entrances in the very ancient and large forts of Moghane and Turlogh Hill in Clare, the upper work of the remarkable cliff-fort of Doon, near Dingle, and the facing of the entrances in the earth-works of Dunbeg in Fahan, and other Kerry forts. It occurs in some late-looking ring-walls and their annexes, in fences round dolmens and the bases of early huts. It is even found in modern, dry-stone walls, fencing villages among the Berbers, and in the bawns of Ballinalacken and other late peel-towers. The south wall of the Dooneen is 12 feet high and 6 to 8 feet thick, forming a revetment to the hill-side, which may account for its comparative thinness. The south-west corner is carefully constructed, and nearly a right angle; the wall here is $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, defended outside by the sunken way. At 50 feet from it was a postern, a rock-cutting, 6 feet wide, leading down through the crag ridge, such as we find at Cahercashlaun in the Burren, in a natural cranny.¹ There is a hollow, with several lintels, in the sharply curved south-east corner, perhaps a souterrain or sallyport, such as we have noticed at Creevaghmore caher and in some earth-forts.

The north side is fairly preserved for about 24 feet in the middle reach; it, too, has a postern, 3 feet wide, rebuilt, but the inner posts seem *in situ*. Large blocks, set in the ground, run westward along the ridge from the end wall, and are each in a continuous curve: so it is probable that the fort extended westward; if this be so, it is more than probable that the present west wall and the slab veneer to the south were afterthoughts of the same period as the central enclosure. No entrance is traceable in the west wall.

An irregular enclosure (unlike any house-foundation of the later centuries and still more unlike early house-sites,² as at Ballyganner and elsewhere) crowns the rock-ridge inside the rampart, 45 feet from the east end. It is roughly 67 feet long and 30 feet wide over all (59 feet by 23 feet inside, and is divided at 21 feet from the west wall. A tapering enclosure, 9 feet long, outside the east end, encloses a pit, probably a souterrain. The main walls are faced by the largest slabs in the caher, one 7 feet long.

The other forts near it are simple, low, earthen rings, often without fosses.

¹ Also in Kildreelig caher, Kerry, described by Mr. P. J. Lynch, *Journal Roy. Soc. Ant. Ir.*, vol. xxxii., p. 328.

² There were usually a number of houses in a caher, so we see by the foundations in Burren, by the "Tripartite Life of St. Patrick"; the 1675 partition deed of Cahermacnaughten, and the 13th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Records of Ireland, p. 71, which latter mentions at Larhoe, Co. Tipperary, "twelve cottages compassed within a great ditch" in 1577.

CAHERHURLEY (28).

20.—Though we have described this fine fort (very briefly) before, the clearing of its area from bushes enables us to examine it for the first time with ease.¹ It is, as we noted, the Caitir Urthaile of Clan Hasneisis in the rental of “1380,” deriving its name from the family of Ui Urthaile or O’Hurley. In 1620 it and other places in the district were confirmed to Sir John Mac Namara by patent as “Cariruly.” The ruined castle of “Cahirhurly” was held by John Burke in “1675” (a few feet of its wall remain on a steep rock-knoll near the river), while Clonmoher and Ballydonohane belonged to Donough O’Callaghan² and the Coolbricks to John O’Brien. Up a long old by-road up the mountain, or by the pretty glen, deep, dark pools and shallow reaches, the haunt of the water-ousel, of the little river, we reach the fort on the summit of a ridge, half ringed by the stream and valley at its foot. It overlooks the whole northern valley with its lakes, and commands the pass along the great pink-brown flanks of Slieve Bernagh, but still lies on so sunny a spot that we have gathered primroses in its fosse at the beginning of January. It consists of an outer ring 8 to 10 feet thick, and 6 feet high

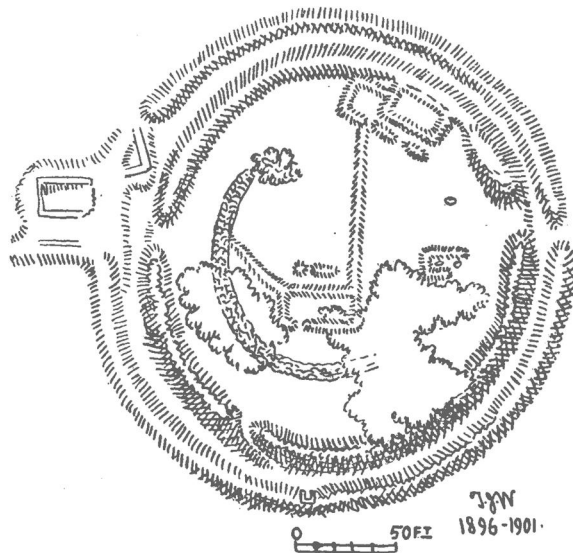


FIG. 8.—Plan of Caherhurley.

¹ In the plan made by us in 1896 (when much of the fort was covered with impenetrable thicket) we only find that the stone wall should be continued in same curve to the eastern house-site ; otherwise we have no correction to make. *Proceedings*, xxii., p. 443.

² The existing O’Callaghans are a collateral branch of the older settlers, being cousins of the Lismore O’Callaghans. They acted as trustees to the old branch of Kilgorey, and in one document seem to be next-of-kin. The old branch died in the male line with Edmond O’Callaghan, who fell in a duel in 1785.

at the field, and 10 feet over the fosse. The latter is 12 to 18 feet wide, and 4 to 8 feet deep below the field. The main fort has an outer bank, very steep, 12 feet thick and high, over the fosse, and where most perfect 6 feet high inside, being much levelled round the north segment. The garth is about 180 feet east and west, and over 190 feet north and south. At 14 to 18 feet inside the outer bank was a strong ring-wall; little of the outer facing remains, but three parts of the circle can be traced, and the southern semicircle is a heap 5 feet to 6 feet high. A late house lay inside it, and two others between it and the bank to the north-east. There are gangways and gaps, probably late, to the east and west; and a limekiln in the outer ring accounts for the disappearance of much of the stonework. The fort measures over 230 feet over all.

Reserving the parts round the hills, at Killaloe and elsewhere, and the hill-fort of Lisnagree for a later paper, we close this paper, acknowledging with pleasure the kind help of Mrs. O'Callaghan, Col. George O'Callaghan Westropp, Mr. Robert Twigge, F.S.A., and the Rev. John Bolton Greer. The last devoted much time and trouble in helping me in this field-work, and Mr. Twigge gave me especially valued help in elucidating the Life of St. Mochulla of Tulla. The first, besides other help, secured me much local information. This is important, for the traditional beliefs and names are dying out with the old people, the younger inhabitants of all classes rarely showing the slightest interest in such matters. As for the ancient remains themselves, they are vanishing, and with the progress of sales will vanish, like the woods of the country, whenever even the paltriest advantage is supposed to be derivable from their removal. Should this at present hopeless materialism and vandalism not be mitigated by education, it may be that the end of the century will hardly find a tithe even of what we see around us of the early remains of the Kingdom of Thomond.

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FIG. 1.—Cahercalla, Quin: Triple Fort.



FIG. 2.—Creevagh-leg: Lower Caher.

WESTROPP.—TYPES OF THE RING-FORTS, ETC., IN EASTERN CLARE.