

ANTIQUITIES

Abbeys, Castles, Fortresses, Round Towers, Early Churches, Sculptured Crosses, Stone Circles, Ogham Stones, Cairns, Souterrains, Pillar Stones, Cromlechs, Forts, Rathes, Moats, Tumuli or ancient monuments of any kind. Exact location of each with short description, noting condition, etc. Relate local legend or tradition associated with building or object. State if in charge of Office of Public Works. Right of way to public? Admission charge (if any). Name and address of caretaker, or where key is kept.

STONE CIRCLE AT ROSSPORT.

A couple of hundred yards to the south of the Garda Barrack at Rossport, a stone circle will be seen on the hillside, near the road and overlooking Sruafadacen Bay. The two concentric circles and an annexe to the north side are in quite a good state of preservation although several of the stones are almost overgrown with moss and grass. ~~One man told me that about forty years ago he remembered the stone to stand about seven feet over the level of the ground.~~

The monument is in a field owned by Mr Patrick MacGuinness, Rossport South and is in the charge of the O.P.W. ~~who forwarded an enamel plate notice of the usual type for erection or attachment to the monument; it appears that some minor technical difficulty was met with, I think it was that a suitable piece of timber to which to affix the notice was not procurable and the plaque has lain at Rossport Garda Barrack for some years as a result. The by-road leading to Rossport South passes within a few yards of the circles.~~

STONE MONUMENTS AT GLENGAD.

At the opposite side of the bay, which is crossed by means of the ferry, a small circle of stones is called by the local people a "Giant's Grave". The fact that a slender stone, taller than the others, being about four feet high, stands on the eastern side may mark this as a ceremonial circle. The circle stands about fifty yards to the left of the road leading to Inver and is on the lands of Mr Ed. Helmes, Ballycrey.

To the south east of this, some huge blocks of rock are formed in such a position as to give an impression of a Cromlech of which the covering slab has slipped sideways. This also is regarded as a Giant's Grave but I do not consider it to be a monument at all.

In front of Mr Barrett's house near here, a mass of very large stones, placed horizontally (locally another Giant's Grave) leave room for much speculation as to their origin; I understand that they baffled the antiquarian, Westrepp some thirty years ago when he examined the spot.

DUNCARTON.

About a mile further, on the Inver Road, the cliff-fort of Duncarton, or rather, the traces of the fort will be found on a grassy cliff which commands a very nice view of Breadhaven Bay. The origin of the fort is unknown but a legend tells that a giant named Kirtaan, Carten, lived here and that his neighbour, another giant named Demnall Dual Bhuidhe of Dun Donald had been robbed of his castle and possessions by Fergus and Demnall's faithless wife, Munchain; Demnall sought aid from Carten and found the latter in a boat on the bay to where he shouted at him and Carten refusing his aid, hurled a large stone which sunk the boat and drowned Carten. Thus Carten also gives his name also to the strand near Inver which is known as Traigh Carten and where a heap of stones marks his grave. Little now remains of the fortification on the cliff excepting the almost levelled walls of some ancient buildings and the Dun is now on the lands of Mr Ml. Cafferky, Glengad. No objection will be raised against visitors.

ST. GALLIGAN'S CHURCH, KILGALLIGAN.

Kilgalligan burial ground is on the verge of the strand which fringes Breadhaven Bay about a mile and a half to the west of Carrewteige. In a corner of the graveyard a large cairn from which several tomb stones are protruding at the top, is believed to represent the site of an early church of St. Galligan. One old man told me that he had heard that the church was built in the sixth century and that it was the third church in Ireland to be consecrated by Rome. Both antiquarians and historians, however,

(Plain sheets of foolscap paper to be used, if necessary, for recording additional information).

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as far as I can trace, are equally baffled by this mound. Some maintain that it was the church of St. Galligan while others assert that it was probably an early cairn and a third school would have us believe that it was a "pyramidal cemetery". Local opinion is unanimously in favour of the first-mentioned theory.

STONE DWELLINGS AT CURRAUNBOY (NOW CORNBOY).

Along the strand which stretches from Coraboy right round to Rinree Point - over four miles, it is said that the remains of several stone huts were exposed some twenty or thirty years ago. It is quite definite that there were traces of some settlements found here about that time but as to whether the buildings had been composed entirely of stone or merely of stone foundations with the rest of timber or seds, there is no indication since the sand has been swept over the remains, hiding them from view. I understand that one group of buildings was found about two hundred yards north-west of the stone pier at Cornboy and that others were found as far over as Kilgalligan.

DUNKEEGAN.

Amongst the many creeks and other rugged indentations which are such an attractive feature of the cliffs and headlands on the north-western coast, the narrow promontory of Dunkeegan is conspicuous because of the seemingly tettering watch tower ~~or gate tower~~ which guards the narrow, neck-like entrance. The land is gradually falling away into the sea and it is likely that the brink on which the twenty foot tower stands will soon collapse. Dun Keegan or Dun an Iarainn as it was also called was once the most important fort of the district; now all signs of its existence are almost obliterated.

It appears that the fort was the chief stronghold of the Ui Caithniadh until the end of the thirteenth century and that "Iron Dick" Burke, Risteard an Iarainn, second husband of the renowned Grainne Uaile held it for some time around the year 1580 - or I ~~should~~ ^{rather} say, held the stone castle which had been erected here.

Dunkeegan is but a short distance up the cliffs from Rinree and is about a mile from Kilgalligan. The greater number of local people now refer to the fort as "Kilgalligan Castle".

DOONVINALLA.

The western point or headland which guards the entrance to the little Harbour of Pertacley, has been divided into two parts like prongs, a little cove separating them. The western promontory is reputed to hold the remains of an early fortification but I did not explore this as the ascent appears so difficult and dangerous as to be impossible; I have since heard however that the neck of land is occasionally climbed by means of an extremely narrow sheep-track. Certain it is that one false step would result in a horrible death.

I have heard a possible translation of the name, Dun Bhinn Ealla to be the Fort of the Peak of the Swans, the Swans obviously being the legendary Children of Lir who frequented the waters of Sruisdacen and possibly came as far as this place. Locally it is known as the Down, the Deen and as Deenealla.

At the landward end of the broken neck of land which connects the isthmus with the mainland, a fosse and portion of a stone wall still remain.

C. B. Brien
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