

Monastic Ruins

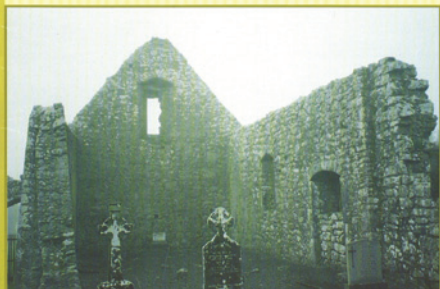
at Annaghdown, Co. Galway



By Rev. Michael Goaley

€5.00

Monastic Ruins
at Annaghdown,
Co. Galway



BY
Rev. Michael Goaley

£3.50

HISTORY
of the
ECCLESIASTICAL RUINS
at
ANNAGHDOWN



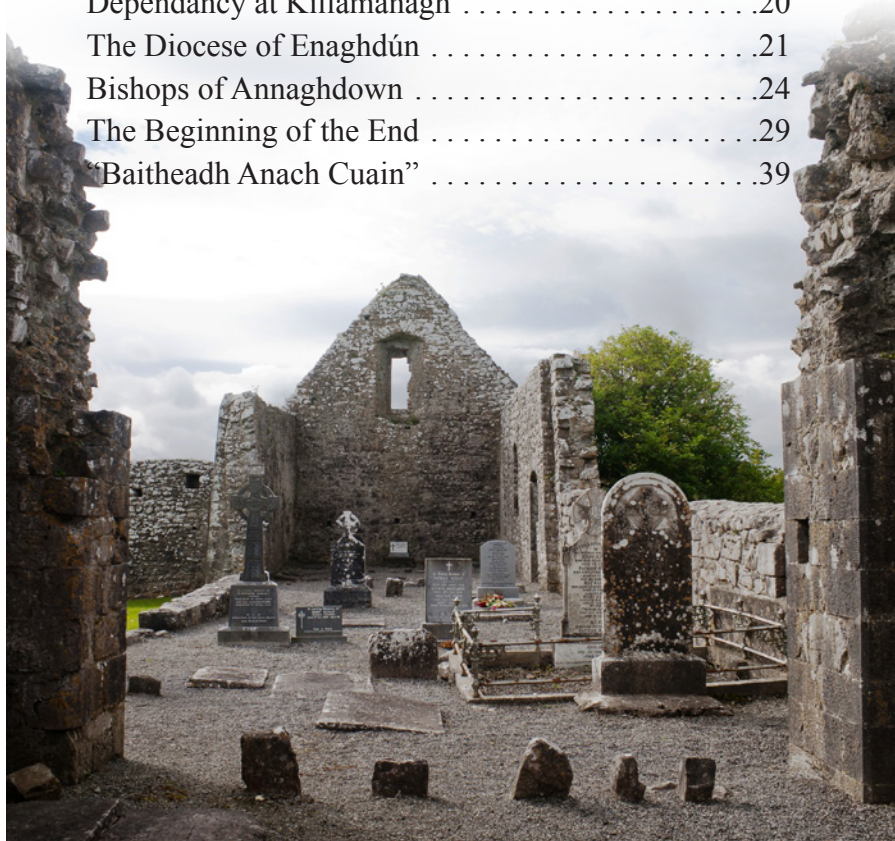
By
Rev. M. Goaley

PRICE 50p

Earlier Editions of Monastic Ruins

Contents

Foreword	2
History of the Ecclesiastical Ruins at Enaghdun, Co. Galway.	5
Monastic Foundations at Enaghdún.	7
Ecclesiastical and Monastic Reforms of the Twelfth Century	9
The Celtic Monastery of Lough Orbsen on the road to the Pier.	12
St. Briga's Nunnery or Convent.	15
Dependancy at Killamanagh	20
The Diocese of Enaghdún	21
Bishops of Annaghdown	24
The Beginning of the End	29
“Baitheadh Anach Cuain”	39



Foreword

As a young boy I often wondered who inhabited the silent ruins in the cemeteries off the little inlet on the eastern side of Lough Corrib at Annaghdown. We travelled so often to the pier, or the Quay as we called it, passing by the Abbey ruins without knowing their history. At the old National School our teacher Robert O'Connell opened our minds to some of the history of our own place. Later on, in Maynooth, with its magnificent library, I began research on these historic ruins so near to my home. During long winter nights in my early appointments in the Diocese I continued the research and tried to fill the gaps in the story of my own native place.

In 1975 I published the first edition of the "History of the Monastic Ruins at Annaghdown". All 800 copies had been sold by 1998 when I published the second edition. I was pleased that I had opened the book to some understanding of who, what, where on the story of the silent ruins of Abbeys, Convents, Diocese, castle so near to our home. I decided to include the story and Antoine O Raftaire's poem of the tragic drowning of twenty people from Annaghdown on their lake journey to Galway in 1828, "Báitheadh Anach Chuain".

That second edition is now sold out, and an age of computer technology has opened up a far wider field for research purposes, and methods of printing have vastly improved. Annaghdown people at home and overseas, are searching for their family and home roots. The story of Annaghdown is a far wider story than what I have written. I have added some extra items of local history in this 3rd edition. I pay tribute to Brother Conal and Annaghdown Heritage Society for the wonderful work of research and publishing they are doing and thank them for their help.

History helps us to know and appreciate that we are a people with a proud past, living in the present, and looking forward to the future with hope and confidence. Enjoy the read, reflect on the roots we came from, and send a copy to family and friends overseas.

Rath Dé ar an obair agus ar ár ndúchas



A HISTORY OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL AND MONASTIC RUINS
AT ANNAGHDOWN
CO. GALWAY

By

Rev. Michael Goaley





Copyright: Rev. Michael Goaley
First published in 1974. Reprinted in 1998

Sincere thanks to Annaghdown Heritage Society
and to all who helped in the preparation of this book.

History of the Ecclesiastical Ruins at Annaghdown, Co. Galway

About twelve miles north of Galway City, on the eastern shore of Lough Corrib, lies a group of ecclesiastical ruins that bear silent testimony to the by-gone glories of Annaghdown, or, as it was originally and more correctly called, Enaghdún, - the Bog of the Fort.

The fame of Enaghdún in Christian times is due chiefly to St. Brendan the Navigator, Patron of the parish, who founded a monastery and convent here in the sixth century, less than a hundred years after the death of St. Patrick. A study of this lonely spot by the lake is a meditation on the growth of the Christian faith from its earliest days in our parish. We invite you to follow us on our journey through the ecclesiastical ruins at this hallowed spot. We can safely say that the mouldering pile of ruins at Enaghdún, - with its traditions of St Brendan and St. Briga, of Bishop's palace and De Burgo castle – is the most interesting in a barony thickly strewn with monuments of Ireland's former greatness. As we now approach this spot of monastic memories, the imagination bodies forth the forms of by-gone generations; the abbeys and cloisters resound with sweet-toned psalms; the voices of saints and scholars are heard in the schools; the cloisters are once again peopled with cowed and sandalled figures walking in silent meditation; the busy fingers of the scribes ply the quill of knowledge. But alas! It is only a day-dream. The place is peopled only by the dead; the reality is an unbroken silence, except for the cry of the lonely curlew on the nearby lake.

From the Book of Ballymote we learn that Enaghdún was conferred on God and St. Brendan by Aodha, son of Eochy the third, King of Connaught, in the sixth century. This was a custom of Kings and chieftains since the time of St. Patrick; as soon as they were converted to the Christian faith, they gave land as an endowment to the missionary who converted them.

St Brendan was born in Kerry in the year 483. As a young man he travelled to Connaught and placed himself under the guidance of St. Jarlath at Cloonfush near Tuam. Later he founded a monastery at Clonfert where he resided, and other monasteries from there. He drew up a monastic rule for these monasteries which, the legend says, was written at the dictation of an angel. As Abbot of Clonfert he was spiritual leader of over three thousand monks. From St. Enda of Aran whom he visited, he got the idea of an island retreat for the better observance of the monastic life. About the year 550 he reached the island of Inchiquin on Lough Corrib, then known as Lough Orbsen, and founded a monastery or Céile Dé (Culdee) establishment there.



Monastic Foundations at Enaghdún

There is evidence of a monastic settlement for men founded by St. Brendan on the present road to the pier at Enaghdún in the year 550. It was called the Monastery of Lough Orbsen, probably on the site of the present Abbey ruins. Some authors think that the Monastery of Inchiquin was an offshoot of the monastery of Lough Orbsen, established by monks who wanted to follow a stricter observance of the monastic life.

It is almost certain that these and other monastic foundations around Lough Corrib suffered from the incursions of the Vikings of Limerick, who pillaged the shores and islands of Lough Corrib in 927 A.D. and subsequently, finding the monasteries an easy prey to their treasure-hunting. It is recorded that a hermit or anchorite died at the Monastery of Lough Orbsen in 1044 A.D. and that the monastery was plundered and burned in the year 1142.



The Celtic monastery was a simple affair. The monks lived in cells constructed of wood or wattles, the Abbot's cell slightly apart from the rest, all surrounding the main building, which included a church built of oak with a stone altar, a refectory, a kitchen, a library and a workshop nearby. Outside the ramparts were the lands belonging to the monastery, farm buildings, a mill and a lime-kiln. The Rule was a very strict one of prayer, fasting and work.

This Monastery of Lough Orbsen is of importance to our story; it was on this site that the later Augustinian Abbey was established. It was here the later Diocese of Enaghdún began.

We have already mentioned the Monastery on the island of Inchiquin, an island on Lough Corrib, founded by St. Brendan about the year 550 A.D. He placed this monastery under the wise guidance of St. Meldan. It was here St. Fursey received his early secular and religious education. St. Meldan was a descendant of Conn of the Hundred Battles (Conn Céad Cathach) hence the name of the island. He died here in 626 A. D. It is probable that the monastery at Inchiquin suffered at the hands of the Vikings in 927 A.D. and subsequently.

It is recorded that St. Brendan founded a Nunnery or Convent at Enaghdún for his sister St. Briga circa 550 A.D. – tradition places this Convent at the site of the ruins inside the large gate of the present new cemetery. We note in passing that the ruins there now are obviously of a much later date. We will return to this site to pursue its subsequent history.



Twelfth Century

To understand the subsequent history of these ruins by the lake at Enaghdún it is necessary for us to understand the reforms undertaken in the Irish Church in the 12th century.

The monastic system introduced to Ireland by St. Patrick was the one he knew in Rome and in France – that is, the monasteries being under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of the Diocese. The very success of monasticism in Ireland brought a development St. Patrick did not intend. The monasteries were powerful; the Abbots exercised jurisdiction in the monasteries and in the Dioceses, not the local Bishops. The Bishop was usually a monk of the Abbey under the jurisdiction of the Abbot and did the Confirmations and Ordinations.

Obviously this was a trend the Church could not allow continue. Also, with the passage of time many abuses had crept into the monastic discipline. Reforms were necessary in the Irish Church.

It is important to remember that the reforms undertaken in the 12th century were part of a general reform taking place in the whole Church at the time. They can be grouped under two headings –

Diocesan Reforms:

Ceallach or Celsus, Archbishop of Armagh, convened the Synod of Rathbreasail, near Thurles in 1111 A.D. to restore the Diocesan episcopate and arrange for the Church reforms. The Synod decided the number of Archdioceses and Dioceses for the country. The division was found to be unsatisfactory in time, so a further Synod of the Irish Church, the Synod of Kells in 1152, gave us, more or less, the arrangement of Dioceses we have today. We notice in passing that the Diocese of Enaghdún was not mentioned at either of these Synods.

Monastic Reforms:

Religious discipline had become very lax in Celtic monasteries by the 12th century. Numbers had fallen, discipline was lax, and many monasteries and Abbeys were in a sorry state.

The dominant figure in the reform was, undoubtedly, St. Malachy, Archbishop of Armagh. From his knowledge of the monastic system in France he concluded that the best means of instilling new life into the Irish monasteries was to introduce the Augustinian rule. He copied the Cistercian rule also from St. Bernard of Clairvaux and he introduced this contemplative Order to Mellifont and elsewhere to concentrate on prayer, learning and study. He copied the Augustinian Rule from St. Gervaise, Abbot of the Augustinian Canons Regular at Arrouaise and directed the Cathedrals and monastic foundations of Ireland to follow this Rule. It is important to remember that these Canons Regular of Augustinians at Arrouaise were not monks; they were secular priests living the common life of prayer, but also dedicated to the pastoral ministry in the area around.

This was the model adopted by St. Malachy for monastic reform in Ireland. It was a drastic change from the old settled ways, and of course, met with opposition. Nevertheless, many monasteries did change over gradually to the Augustinian Rule, Enaghdún, Cong, Ballintubber, etc. Many of the Cathedral monasteries, like Enaghdún, were allowed to retain their identity as a College of Vicars attached to the Cathedral. Some Cathedral foundations followed both models, the Canons of the cathedral attached to the Bishop and Cathedral, and the Abbey of Augustinian Canons Regular, living the common religious life and serving the pastoral needs of the area. They were priests, not monks; the canons of the Cathedral had their own living quarters attached to the Abbey, and had their own land and property. There was confusion of duties at times; lines of responsibility and property rights were not always defined.

Had Enaghdún a Bishop at this time, from 1132 onwards? Was it a Diocese? It was certainly not listed among the Dioceses at the Synods of Rathbreasail or Kells. But we know that St. Malachy had the wholehearted support of King Turlough O'Connor of Connaught in his reforms; we know, too, that King Turlough O'Connor built the Abbeys of Cong, Ballintubber and elsewhere as Augustinian Abbeys as his contribution to the reforms of the Irish Church.

Having studied the changes brought about by the ecclesiastical and monastic reforms of the Irish Church in the 12th century, we can now resume our study of the history of the ruins at Enaghdún.



The Celtic Monastery of Lough Orbsen on the road to the Pier

We saw that it suffered at the hands of the Vikings in 927 A.D. and subsequently, that it was plundered and burned in 1142 by the same Vikings. It was rebuilt by King Turlough O'Connor in 1189. It was then established as an Abbey of Augustinian Canons Regular of the Order of Arrouaise. The Abbey was re-named the Abbey de Sanctae Mariae de Portu Patruum – Abbey of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Shores of our Fathers. They were, as we say, priests living the common religious life serving the pastoral needs of the surrounding area. There was a Convent of nuns nearby, and as was usual in Abbeys dedicated to Our Lady, the Canons Regular and the nuns lived by the same Rule and used the same church in common. In the same year in which King Turlough O'Connor re-built the Abbey 1189, the Cathedral immediately north of the Abbey and attached to it was finished. It appears that Enaghdún was determined from this time to have its own Cathedral, Diocese and Bishop, perhaps with the support of King Turlough O'Connor. The Norman invasion had taken place; there is evidence of Norman favour for Enaghdún from these early days.



Sketchy References to the subsequent history of the Augustinian Abbey

In the Taxation of Ecclesiastical property in the reign of King Edward the First (1302-1306), the Abbey de Sanctae Mariae de Portu Patruum was valued at £2-8-0.

The Canons Regular did not overlook material interests, as can be seen from a difference of opinion that took place between Bishop Gilbert and Abbot Nicholas of the Abbey. The Canons of the Abbey had somehow, come into the possession of a portion of land in the townland of Shankill – 20 acres of arable land, six of meadow, forty of wood and sixty of pasture – which, the Bishop claimed, was rightly his. The issue was decided in favour of the Bishop.



- A. 1428: Richard de Burgo left the Abbey to enter the Abbey of Cong.
- B. 1443: Cornelius O'Flaherty became Abbot.
- C. 1455: One of the Canons was absolved from serious irregularities.
- D. 1456 & 1492: Abbots were accused of various abuses in those years. Such complaints to Rome were very common at the time, if one wanted to pull somebody down from their pedestals, or oppose their advancement. The faults attributed were not necessarily true; indeed, Rome issued a warning about such baseless accusations.

Suppression

The suppression of the Abbeys after the Reformation proceeded slowly in Connaught; it was a long way from the centre of power and also, the Anglo-Irish Lords refused at first to accept the new doctrines.

Most Abbeys in Connaught survived into the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1 (1555-1603). The Abbey at Enaghdún was probably in a poor state at this time.

Suppression finally came to Enaghdún in the year 1562. In that year the Abbey de Sanctae Mariae de Portu Patrum, with its lands was granted to Richard, Earl of Clanrickarde, a descendant of the de Burgos. The College of secular Vicars, that is the remaining few Canons of the Cathedral Chapter, remained on at Enaghdún for some time longer, as we shall see. The last Abbot of the Abbey, Abbot Florence, took refuge with the Blake family at Enaghdún; his name appears as a witness to some Blake family documents in 1559, 1562 and 1563.

In 1578 the Earl of Clanrickarde leased the lands to the Wardens and Vicars of the King's College at Galway. In 1598, the lands were leased to John Rawson and Henry Deane. In 1611, the Queen confirmed the lease of these lands to the Earl of Clanrickarde.

St. Briga's Nunnery or Convent

We have already seen that this Nunnery was founded by St. Brendan for his sister, St. Briga, circa 550 A.D., and that it probably suffered at the hands of the Vikings in 927 and subsequently. We noted, too, that the present ruins opposite the main gate of the present cemetery are of a much later date, probably 14th or 15th century.

What happened to St. Briga's Nunnery after her death?

We are completely in the dark as to its history from its foundation by St. Brendan in 550. Here we surmise, but, I maintain, based on solid historical facts.

We refer the reader once again to the 12th century reform of Irish monasticism and the Irish Church. We saw that St. Malachy adopted the monastic system of St. Gervaise for men; that is, he converted the old



Celtic monasteries to the Augustinian Canons of Arrouaise. St. Gervaise had reverted to the older monastic custom of admitting men and women to the religious life at Arrouaise. St Malachy introduced a similar system to Ireland; many Augustinian Abbeys became “double” houses, with houses for men and women in close proximity; the Sisters looked after the material needs of the Canons. It is recorded that, in Abbeys dedicated to St. Mary, as Enaghduín was, the Canons and Sisters used the same church jointly. They followed the Augustinian Rule. It seems a reasonable assumption based on the evidence that this is what happened at Enaghduín; the Convent of St. Briga became an Augustinian Arrouasian convent.

Some pointers: in 1195, referring to the Abbey church of Sanctae Mariae de Portu Patrum, we find the following reference in Papal Letters: “A Papal

decree did confirm this church, together with the town of Kilgel, to the nuns of Arrouasia”. The reason for this Papal decree is not difficult to find; in that same year of 1195, the Cathedral north of the Abbey and attached to it was finished. The Canons would now have the use of the Cathedral for their services. In that same year of 1195 the Convent of Arrouasian canonesses at Enaghdún was made subject to Clonard, the mother-house in Ireland.

1223: The convent at Enaghdún was made subject to the Nunnery at Kilcreevanty, near Tuam. Clonard had by now become impoverished. Kilcreevanty had been a Benedictine foundation until this year, when it became Augustinian.

After 1223 there is no further reference to a Nunnery at Enaghdún.

Indeed, there is evidence that it was not there in 1302, as it is not mentioned in the Ecclesiastical Taxation of 1302-1306. So, what happened the Arrouasian Nunnery at Enaghdún after 1223? We do know that Rome issued instructions some time before this about the placing of Nunneries in too close proximity to Abbeys for men. Henceforth they must be six miles apart. The implementation of the new rule by Rome took some time. We know, too, that many of these smaller foundations were severely short of numbers and in an impoverished state at the time; it appears that a certain amount of rationalisation and amalgamation took place. Some authors think that the Nunnery at Enaghdún was so impoverished that Kilcreevanty ordered the transfer of the nuns to Inishmaine, a Dependency of Kilcreevanty, whose ruins can still be identified on the southern shores of Lough Mask, off the Ballinrobe to Clonbur road. We shall see some other proofs later that the Nunnery of Enaghdún closed down in 1223.

We have, therefore, come to the end of the road for another ecclesiastical foundation at Enaghdún. The Nunnery built by St. Brendan for his sister St. Briga in 550 A.D. finally closed its doors in 1223.

What became of the Nunnery thus vacated in 1223?

It is recorded that in the same year in which we surmise that the Augustinian Sisters left Enaghdún for Inishmaine, the Premonstratensian Canons of St. John Baptist were introduced to Enaghdún by Bishop Murtough O’Flaherty.

The Order of Premonstratensians was founded by St. Norbert in Premontre in France in the year 1120. They followed the Rule of St. Augustine with some modifications from the Cistercian Rule. They came to Ireland in 1223, founded the Abbey of St. John Baptist in Tuam. From there they established a small foundation called “Parva Cella” – Little Cell, in Enaghdún.



Where did Bishop Murtagh O’Flaherty settle them in Enaghdún?

Is it not reasonable to assume that he settled them in the recently vacated Nunnery? This conclusion is not based on mere conjecture or surmise; we advance the following reasons:-

1. There is no mention of a Nunnery at Enaghdún in the Ecclesiastical Taxation of King Edward 1 in 1302 – 1306. There is mention of “The Abbot and Convent of the Little Cell of Premonstratensians” being valued at 10 shillings taxation. The use of the word “Convent” could be another indication that it refers to the former nunnery.
2. The existing ruins at the site opposite the main gate of the present cemetery date from the 14th or 15th century in the opinion of no

less an authority than Sir William Wilde, the noted antiquarian. Who undertook these later repairs then? We presume it was the “Little Cell” of the Premonstratensians.

3. There are no other ruins at Enaghdún where the Premonstratensians could have had their foundation.

We can trace the subsequent history of Parva Cella from subsequent historical references:-

1226: One of the Canons of “Parva Cella”, Donald, became Archdeacon of Enaghdún. Papal registers say he usurped the exalted position.

1238: A Cloigtheach, or Round Tower, was built at Enaghdún. Authors speculate that there is no evidence of such a Round Tower at Enaghdún. But, Board of Works’ improvements in the 1940’s revealed its foundation and location – immediately to the southern side of the ruins of the Old Protestant church in the present graveyard. Round Towers were built as a place of protection during the incursions of the Vikings.

1242: Thomas O’Malley, Abbot of Parva Cella, became Bishop of Enaghdún. His election, however, was challenged by the Chapter, they alleged he was the illegitimate son of a Bishop and a nun, who got himself elected by a ruse when the Diocese became vacant. (May or may not be true; remember the prevalent custom of making complaints to Rome if you wanted to “blacken” somebody or stop their promotion in the Church).

1252: The Abbot of Parva Cella was granted Letters of protection by King Henry the Third.

1302-1306: The “Convent” of Parva Cella is mentioned in the Ecclesiastical Taxation of King Edward the First.

1400-1500: The Abbey of Parva Cella is frequently mentioned in the Calendar of Patent Rolls, mainly in references to its Abbots acting as Papal mandatories in ecclesiastical appointments, in conjunction with the Abbots of the Augustinian Abbey de Portu Patruum.

1400: Another Thomas O'Malley was provided as Abbot to Parva Cella.

1423: Patrick O'Dubaig, a Canon of the Cathedral Chapter, was to be appointed Abbot of Parva Cella after he had taken his vows in the Order. It appears he did not become Abbot, because we still find Thomas O'Malley Abbot in 1434.

1440: The Abbey of Parva Cella was unlawfully detained by John O'Reilly, a Canon of the Cathedral. The matter was settled when Patrick O'Dubaby, Abbot of St. John Baptist at Tuam, was appointed Abbot.

1445: Patrick O'Dubaby resigned as Abbot, and Eugene Maccagayn (Eugene McEgan?), a Canon of Newark Augustinian Abbey, was appointed.

There are no further references to the Premonstratensian Abbey after 1445. It is assumed it had become impoverished as many Abbeys had at that time. The Mendicant Orders had arrived in Ireland and were attracting most of the people. The older Abbeys were often in a state of disrepair. We have no evidence, therefore, if the Abbey of Parva Cella survived until the dissolution of the Abbeys in Connaught in 1562.

The Premonstratensians are also known as the Norbertines from their founder, St. Norbert.



Dependancy at Killamanagh

The Abbey of Parva Cella at Enaghdún had a dependant Priory at Killamanagh (Cill Na Manach) in the parish of Caherlistrane. It was founded in 1260 by the Abbot of Parva Cella to serve the pastoral needs of the area. Its possessions included 123 acres of land and the rectory at Donaghpatrick. Three or four canons served there in rotation, and, together with their spiritual ministry, they acted as bailiffs of its property and lands for the parent Abbey. The Dependancy paid an annual rent to the Abbey at Enaghdún; the Abbot at Enaghdún had the right to appoint a Prior to Killamanagh.

We can find only a few sketchy references to its history:-

1399: A Papal indulgence was granted for contributions towards the repairs of its church.

1426: A further Papal indulgence was granted for repairs to the priory itself, whose buildings, it was said, “have long been afflicted with ruin”. It is recorded that a multitude of pilgrims resorted to the Priory to gain the indulgence.

1448: A secular priest, Eugenius Mac Aodhagáin, Vicar of Kilmoylan, Cummer, resigned his parish and entered and was professed at Killamanagh. It is recorded that in 1453 he was a Canon of St. Mary’s Killamanagh.

This is the final reference I have to the history of the Dependant Priory of Killamanagh. Like its parent Abbey, it is unlikely to have survived until the Suppression of the Abbeys in Connaught in 1562.

THE DIOCESE OF ENAGHDÚN

Historical Background

The Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland took place in 1167. In 1171 King Henry the Second visited Ireland to receive the homage and fealty of a number of Irish chieftains. The Irish Bishops, notably Archbishop Laurence O'Toole of Dublin, made strenuous efforts to ensure that the partial conquest of Ireland by the Normans did not cause an ecclesiastical division in the newly-reformed Irish Church, which the Normans tried to bring about. For this reason, Laurence O'Toole played an important part in the negotiations leading to the Treaty of Windsor in 1175.

It is strange, and yet true, that there is evidence of an Anglo-Norman colony at Enaghdún very early after the Norman invasion; this will explain Anglo-Norman influence in the affairs of Enaghdún from these early days, and royal backing for Enaghdún in later history.

We have already noted that there was no mention of a Bishop of Enaghdún, or a Diocese of Enaghdún, at the Synod of Rathbreasail in 1111 A.D., or at the Synod of Kells in 1152. The first positive reference



to a Bishop of Enaghdún was in the year 1171, when it is recorded that the Bishop of Enaghdún pledged fealty to King Henry the Second on his visit to Ireland in that year.

In 1175, King Ruaidhri O'Connor chose Concors, or Conn O'Mellaigh, Abbot of Clonfert, to assist in the negotiations leading to the Treaty of Windsor. In 1189, the same Concors, or Conn O'Mellaigh, now called Bishop of Enaghdún, assisted in the coronation of King Richard the First in Westminster Abbey, and afterwards at a Council of the Realm at Pipewell. It seems, therefore, that this Concors figured highly at the English Royal Court; it is an indication too of Anglo-Norman influence in the affairs of Enaghdún. In 1191, Enaghdún is mentioned among the list of Irish Dioceses at a Synod in Dublin. We have seen already that the Cathedral at Enaghdún was completed in the year 1189. We can safely give the date 1189 as the year the Diocese of Enaghdún began.

The ruins of the Cathedral can be seen immediately north of the Augustinian Abbey on the road to the pier. It is in a bad state of decay, which is to be deplored as it is probably one of our earliest pre-Norman buildings. The remains of the fine Hiberno-Romanesque doorway, which originally formed the entrance to the Augustinian Abbey from the road-side by the lake, have been collected and set up at the southwest angle of the Abbey. A pity it is that this beautiful portal could not be restored to its original place.

The exquisitely-wrought Hiberno-Romanesque east window was pillaged from the Cathedral and placed in the later Protestant church whose ruins can be seen in the present cemetery. We will be dealing with this church and window later in our history.

We can now proceed to trace the history of the Bishops of Enaghdún in chronological order and the troubled history of the Diocese from 1189 to 1551.



Bishops of Enaghdún

Pre-Reformation Bishops of Annaghdown [1]			
From	Until	Incumbent	Notes
bef. 1189	1202	Conn Ua Mellaig	Present at the coronation of Richard 1 of England (17 September 1189); died in office; also known as Concors
c. 1202	1241	Murchad Ua Flaithbertaig	Died in office
c. 1242	1247 or 1250	Tomas Ó Mellaig, O.Praem.	Consecrated circa 1242; acted as a Suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Lincoln 1246; possibly deprived of the bishopric 28 May 1247; died after 27 May 1250
1251	Unknown	Conchobar	Elected before 12 January 1251; took control of temporalities after 8 May 1251; also known as Concors
1253	1306	The bishopric and its temporalities were united to the archbishopric of Tuam, although there were two bishops during this period. The first was Thomas, who died before 12 September 1263. The second was John de Ufford, who was elected before 14 March 1283, but never consecrated, and resigned circa 1289	
1306	1323	Gilbert Ó Tigernaig, O.F.M.	Elected circa 1306; consecrated before 15 July 1308; took control of temporalities 15 July 1508; acted as a Suffragan bishop in the dioceses of Winchester 1313, Worcester 1313-1314 and Hereford 1315; died before 16 December 1322

1323	1324	Jacobus Ó Cethernaig	Appointed 16 December 1323; translated to Connor between 7 and 15 May 1324
1325	1328	Robert Petit, O.F.M.	Formerly Bishop of Clonfert 1320-1323; appointed 8 November 1325; took control of temporalities after 22 June 1326; acted as a Suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Salisbury 1326; died 28 April 1328; also known as Robert Le Petit
1328	Unknown	Albertus	Appointed before September 1328; took control of temporalities 23 September 1328
1329	Unknown	Tomas Ó Mellaig	Elected circa 1328 or 1329 but never consecrated
1359	Unknown	Dionysius	Elected before March 1359, but probably never consecrated
1393	1394	Johannes	Appointed before 6 July 1393; died before October 1394
1394	1402	Henry Trillow, O.F.M.	Appointed 26 October 1394; acted as a Suffragan bishop in the dioceses of Exeter, Salisbury and Winchester 1394-1401; died before 25 January 1402
1402	Aft. 1402	John Bryt, O.F.M.	Appointed 25 January 1402; acted as a Suffragan bishop in the dioceses of Winchester 1402, Lincoln 1403-1403 and York 1417-1420; died after 1420

1408	Unknown	John Wynn	Appointed before 17 December 1408
Unknown	1421	Henricus (or Matthaeus)	Died before June 1421
1421	1446	John Boner, O.S.A.	Appointed 9 June 1421; acted as a Suffragan bishop in the dioceses of Salisbury and Hereford in 1421 and Exeter in 1438; died before 1446; also known as John Camere
1425	Unknown	Seán Mac Brádaigh, O.Carm.	Appointed 15 October 1425
1428	1429	Seamus Ó Lonnghargáin	Appointed 10 December 1428; translated to Killaloe 9 December 1429
1431	Unknown	Donatus Ó Madagáin	Appointed 19 November 1431
1446	Aft. 1458	Thomas Salscot	Appointed 8 July 1446; acted as a Suffragan bishop in dioceses of Lincoln in 1449 and Exeter 1458; died after 1458
1450	1451	Redmund Bermingham	Appointed 18 May 1450; consecrated May 1450; died 1451
1458	Aft. 1485	Thomas Barrett	Appointed 17 April 1458; acted as a Suffragan bishop in the dioceses of Exeter in 1458 and 1468-1475, and the Bath and Wells 1482-1485; died after 1485
1494/96	Aft. 1504	Francois Brunand, O.Carm.	Appointed after 4 December 1594 or on 8 February 1496; acted as a Suffragan bishop in Geneva; died after 1504
c.1504	c.1539	See vacant	

Bef.1540	Aft.1553	John O'More	He was imprisoned on the grounds that he had accepted the bishopric from the pope, although there was no record of a papal provision; he was released in 1540 and then appears to have been recognized by the crown; in 1551 and 1553, he was officially referred to as the bishop of the see; died after 1553; also known as John O'Moore
1540	Unknown	Henry de Burgo	Provided (appointed) 16 April 1540
After 1555, Annaghdown was held by the Archbishops of Tuam. The union of the Diocese of Annaghdown and the Archdiocese of Tuam was finally decreed on 17 October 1580.			

NB: We notice the number of Bishops of Enaghdún who acted as Suffragan or Auxiliary Bishops of English Dioceses. The question is raised: did these Bishops ever live in Enaghdún or act as Bishops there?

The Last Bishop of Enaghdún?

We are glad to record that the Diocese of Enaghdún or Annaghdown is not completely forgotten in the Church. It has been and is the practice of the Church to give the title of a former Diocese, now defunct, to Auxiliary, Coadjutor and retired Bishops. In 1974 Bishop Gerald Mahon, Auxiliary Bishop in the Diocese of Westminster, had the title Bishop of Annaghdown. (He visited Annaghdown in July 1981 for the re-dedication of St. Brendan's church, the first Bishop of Annaghdown to set foot in the Diocese in over four hundred years).

Titular Bishops of Eanách Dúin

Titular Bishops of Eanách Dúin			
From	Until	Incumbent	Notes
1970	1992	Gerald Mahon	Appointed titular bishop of Eanách Dúin and auxiliary bishop of Westminster, England on 24 April 1970; ordained bishop 23 May 1970; died 29 January 1992
1992	1995	John Jerome Cunneen	Appointed titular bishop of Eanách Dúin and auxiliary bishop of Christchurch, New Zealand on 6 October 1992; ordained bishop 30 November 1992; appointed diocesan bishop of Christchurch on 15 December 1995
1995	2000	Titular see vacant	
2000	2003	Michael Aidan Courtney	Appointed titular archbishop of Eanách Dúin and apostolic nuncio to Burundi on 18 August 2000; ordained archbishop 12 November 2000; died 29 December 2003
2003	2006	Titular see vacant	
2006	Present	Octavio Cisneros	Appointed titular bishop of Eanách Dúin and auxiliary bishop of Brooklyn, New York on 6 June 2006; ordained bishop 22 August 2006



The Beginning of the End

From 1484 onwards, Archbishop Donatus O'Murray of Tuam exercised jurisdiction over the Diocese of Enaghdún and tried to ensure that it would never again become an independent Diocese.

In a Papal Letter of February 5th 1485 Pope Innocent VI confirmed the Archbishop of Tuam as Bishop of Enaghdún also. The Pope also directed the Archbishop to raise the Church of St. Nicholas in Galway to a Collegiate church. The city of Galway was almost completely Anglo-Norman, and King Richard III had requested the Pope to make it an independent Wardenship. This was intended to keep Galway City English and independent of the "Irishry" all round it.

This was the beginning of the end for the Diocese of Enaghdún. From 1484 onwards, various parishes surrounding Galway City and which were formerly in the Diocese of Enaghdún, were transferred by the Pope to the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas, thus building up the Wardenship and the later Diocese of Galway. The Dean and Chapter of Enaghdún Cathedral continued to object, all to no avail. There are some references to Bishops being elected still to Enaghdún by the Chapter, but it is presumed they were not sanctioned by the Pope.

State of the Irish Church and Irish Society at this time

The Irish Church was at a very low ebb at this time. There were continuous inter-tribal wars, warring between the Irish chieftains and the Anglo-Norman lords and Connaught suffered more than most. Up until now English policy was to keep the Irish chieftains apart and to control Ireland through the Anglo-Norman lords. This was no longer possible. In 1504, Gerald, Earl of Kildare, defeated the de Burgos at the Battle of Knockdoe. From 1519 onwards, King Henry VIII tried to take a more direct control of Irish affairs. In 1533 he broke with the Pope.

What was the condition of Enaghdún at this time?

We get some idea of the impoverished state of ecclesiastical affairs at Enaghdún at this time in a letter from the Earl of Ossory to Secretary Cromwell in 1531:- *“The bearer has petitioned me to ascertain you (i.e. to acquaint you) of the value of a bishopric in Connaught, near Galway. It is called Enaghdún, far from the English Pale, amongst the inordinate wild Irishry. It is not meet for any stranger of reputation and does not exceed £20 annually. The clergy of it are far out of order and the See-Church in ruins. It is necessary that there should be a herd appointed who has the favour of the people”*. Apart from the uncomplimentary picture he paints of Enaghdún and its people, we note that the Cathedral was in ruins in 1532, probably from the inter-tribal wars of the time.

Suppression of the Abbeys

In 1536, Parliament in Dublin declared King Henry VIII Head of the Irish Church and decreed that all Abbeys were to be suppressed and their property confiscated. The Decree was effective in the Pale almost immediately; the Reformation was strongly resisted in Gaelic Ireland. Most of the Abbeys of Connaught survived until the Composition of Connaught in 1562.

There is one further reference to the situation at Enaghdún in a report of the Archbishop of Tuam to the Pope in 1555: he describes Enaghdún as *“a small unfortified town distant four or five miles from Tuam. It has a small Cathedral under the invocation of St. Brendan, with its Dean, Archdeacon and some Canons, who, however, do not reside there. The Cathedral is quite abandoned, and only one Mass is said there, on festival days; there is also a tower and a cemetery, one chalice and one vestment; the Diocese is very small and is situated among wild and evil men”*.

We ignore the uncomplimentary remarks to note two interesting pointers:-

1. The Round-Tower or Cloigtheach was there in 1555.
2. He makes no mention of either Abbey in his report. The Abbeys were not suppressed until seven years later, in 1562, but they were probably so impoverished as to have been insignificant.
3. Some of the Cathedral Chapter were still there in 1555, and the Cathedral was still being used for Mass.

Dissolution of the Abbeys:

After the Composition of Connaught in 1562 the Abbey and its property were taken over by the Queen and granted to the Earl of Clanrickarde at a yearly rent of £68-9-6, payable to the Crown.

We have already noted that the last Abbot of the Augustinian Abbey de Sanctae Mariae de Portu Partruum, Abbot Florence, took refuge with the Blake family, - that his name appears as a witness to some Blake family documents in 1559, 1562 and 1563. In 1578 the Earl of Clanrickarde leased the lands to the Wardens and Vicars of the King's College, Galway. In 1598 the lands were leased to John Rawson and Henry Deane. In 1622, the Queen confirmed the lease of these and other lands to the Earl of Clanrickarde.



College of St. Brendan at Enaghdún?

In the inquisition of Abbey property in 1585, seven years before its suppression, it is stated that the College of St. Brendan was in the hands of two vicars, Clement Skerret and Thaddeus McInyilly, and four priests. Their possessions were stated to be *“a church in ruins, a small cemetery, a garden and a half and acre of land on which some labourer’s cottages had been erected, now untenanted. There is also twenty acres of wet pasture-land on which the tenants grazed their cattle in common, and for which they paid tithes to the College.”* It states that the College owned 23 quarters of tithes, each quarter worth £3-6-0 in Irish money at the time. Each quarter was 120 acres, so the College got their tithes from 2,760 acres, a considerable amount of land.

The tithes were distributed as follows:-

Annagh	2 quarters (240 acres)	£6-12-0
Cahirmorris	4 quarters (480 acres)	£13-4-0
Balroeback	4 quarters (480 acres)	£13-4-0
Kilcahill	4 quarters (480 acres)	£13-4-0
Woodvillage	1 quarters (120 acres)	£3-6-0
Drumgriffen	4 quarters (480 acres)	£13-4-0
Clonboo	4 quarters (480 acres)	£13-4-0

This gives a total of 23 quarters, 2,760 acres, yielding £75-18-0 to the College.

So, who, or what was this College of St. Brendan?

It was the former Cathedral Chapter, which was allowed to continue after the Suppression of the Abbeys and monasteries. The property concerned was, therefore, Diocesan property. Some Cathedral Abbeys were allowed to continue in existence as Collegiate Churches after the suppression. In the case of Enaghdún, it is probable that Abbey and Diocesan property ended up in the hands of the College of St. Brendan, the remains of the Cathedral Chapter. Eventually, they too lost their property and lands in the reign of Queen Elizabeth the First.

Was there a Franciscan Abbey at Enaghdún?

Some authors mention a large Franciscan Abbey at Enaghdún, but there is no evidence for it. There were such Abbeys at Claregalway and Ros-Erilly, both within the Diocese. The best opinion seems to be that the confusion arose from reference in historical records to a large Franciscan foundation at Nenagh, Co. Tipperary – in Irish Aonagh, Annagh or Enagh. It is easy to see how confusion of place-names could arise. There was also a house of the Third Order of Regulars at Killeenbrenan, between Shrute and Kilmaine – their principal house in Ireland. As this was near Enaghdún it may have led to confusion about its location.

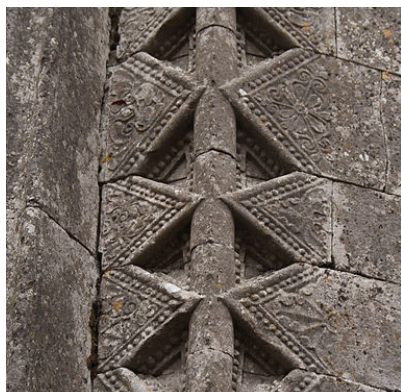


The Old Protestant Church

Standing unroofed and abandoned on the southern side of the new cemetery at Enaghdún is the old Protestant church, a monument of oppression and yet of failure. It was built about 1798 from a gift of £461-10-9 and one half-pence granted by the Board of First Fruits. It is completely unadorned except for the magnificent oriel Hiberno-Romanesque east window which

was taken from the eastern side of the nearby Cathedral. The window is deeply splayed internally, the height to the top of the splay being 12 feet, and to the top of the ope of the round-headed window, eight feet. Richard Hayword in *“The Corrib Country”*, referring to this window writes: *“This window gives us everything in the way of stone carving and decoration that we would expect from that marvellous twelfth century, when Irish craftsmen evolved a really native style of architecture and left as a memorial of their genius such fertility of conception, and such variety and delicacy of design and execution, that nothing more beautiful or more perfect in its kind has ever been done... I do not think that anything more delightful and satisfying to the eye could be constructed than this lively, varied and perfectly-contrived product of Irish genius at its best”*. High praise indeed!

It is recorded that about 200 services were held here annually, with an average attendance of twelve to twenty worshippers. The hopes of those who built this pretentious building from the stones of a glorious monastic past were quickly blighted; even in these years of persecution, Enaghdún Roman Catholic church had an attendance of 600 to 700 people; Woodpark school, then used as a Mass-centre, had a congregation of 125. Out of a total population of 6,093 in the parish in 1831 there was only 27 Protestants.



Woodpark school was also used as a Sunday school at the time, and was aided by the interest of a £100 bequest from Rev. Raymond Hargadon, Catholic clergyman of the parish from 1830 to 1840. We have no record of the length of time the Protestant church remained in use.

The Dispensary

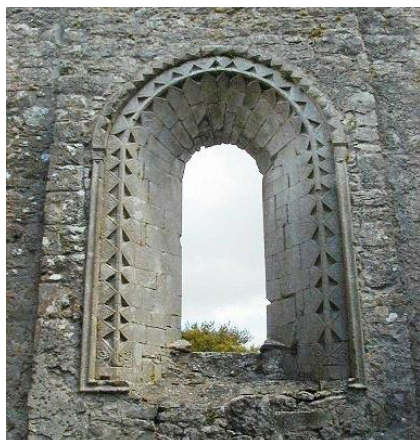
On your left as you travel towards Blakes' from the Quay Road stood the Dispensary or Poor Law Relief Centre. (Des Nolan's house stands there now). This Dispensary was built in 1840 – 1841; in its first year it got a grant of £175-0-0 and spent £180-11-6. It should be pointed out that not all Soup Kitchens were used to turn Catholics from their faith in return for soup or Indian meal. Some Evangelisers were guilty of such cruel proselytising, but the vast majority of Protestant clergymen were not. Rather, they were very charitable and helpful.

Other Buildings at Enaghdún

As we walk along the south inlet of Lough Corrib from the present Handball Alley, we can visit the holy well of St. Cormac and St. Brendan. In between we see the De Burgo Anglo-Norman castle, built sometime after 1256. With its battered base, its high-pitched gables, and the various defensive features of that period, it is in a sufficient state of preservation to warrant closer examination. In the year 1256 the O'Flaherties were driven west of Lough Corrib, to Iar-Connaught, by the Anglo-Norman de Burgos. These castles were built as a defence against attack. We have no definite evidence of when the Castle at Enaghdún fell into disuse, but it is recorded that 35 castles were inhabited in the Barony of Magh Seóla in 1585. We can presume Enaghdún castle was inhabited until sometime after that date. See later insert under 'Castle at Enaghdún'.

The Bishop's House

There are ruins of a house beside the castle which local tradition says are the ruins of the Bishop's house.



The official entrance to the Castle and Bishop's House was at the bend on the road between the present church and the old National School.

The Light is extinguished.....

And so we come to the end of the monastic and Diocesan history of this hallowed spot on the eastern shore of Lough Corrib. As you stand amid these ruins off the road to the pier, or the Quay as we knew it, we can reflect in silence on the great historical and monastic events that took place around this area over eleven centuries. The sixteenth century saw its final collapse; the bells fell silent, and the lights of the sanctuaries along the road to the quay at Enaghdún were extinguished forever.

Addenda:

1. Cutteenty Village – The name of this village is said to be derived from the Latin “Via Quotidiana”, in English the daily walk of the friars of the Abbey, in Irish “Bealach Coitianta”.
2. Population Trends: the parish had a population of 6,093 in 1831, of 6,531 in 1834 and 7,108 in 1841 in 1180 houses.
3. The level of Lough Corrib reached up to the walls of the Abbey on the Quay road until drainage of Lough Corrib 1848 – 57. The level of the lake was then lowered by three feet, and the navigation channel was deepened and marked. A later drainage of the Corrib took place in the 1950s.
4. In 1852 the first steamer, the “Father Daly”, was employed on Lough Corrib for transporting passengers and goods to and from Galway. It was so called from the priest who was mainly responsible for its introduction. It was later replaced by “The Eglinton”.

“Báitheadh Anach Cuain”

I include in this booklet the tragic story of “Báitheadh Anach Cuain”, the drowning of 19 people from Annaghdoun on their way to Galway

on the 4th September 1828. I give the complete poem of Antoine O Raftaire commemorating this sad event, a version of the poem we do not always find written; it came from an old Annaghdown man who spent most of his life in the United States of America.

“The Connaught Journal”, September 4th 1828

“It is with unaffected sorrow we have to record a most distressing circumstance which took place this day, by which it is supposed that at least 19 unhappy fellow-creatures perished. An old row-boat in a rotten leaky condition started out from Annaghdown early in the morning, a distance from Galway up Lough Corrib of about eight miles, having, it is calculated, about 31 people on board, who were coming to the fair of Galway; the boat and passengers proceeded without obstruction until they arrived off Bushy Park within two miles of Galway, when she suddenly went down and all on board perished except about 12 persons who were fortunately rescued by another boat.

Eighteen of the bodies of these unhappy creatures were taken out of the lake in the course of the day and presented a most heart-rending scene, being surrounded by their friends who came to identify them and by whom they were removed in a boat to Annaghdown.

The boat was in such an unsound state as to render her unfit for the passage. The unfortunate accident happened by a sheep putting its leg through one of the planks, which produced a leak, in order to stop which, one of the passengers applied his great coat to the aperture and stamped on it with his foot. In doing so he started one of the planks altogether, which caused the boat’s immediate sinking, having been overloaded; ten sheep, a quantity of lumber and about 31 persons being aboard.

Eighteen of the bodies have been found; 12 have escaped and one is missing. Major Dickson and a party of the 64th regiment attended and rendered every assistance in their power. An inquest was held on the bodies by John Blakeney Esquire, Coroner, at which James O'Hara, M.P., and J.H. Burke, Mayor, attended, and the jury returned a verdict of "accidental drowning".

The following are the names of the persons taken out of the lake:- Bridget Farragher, Mary Costello, Judith Ryan, Bridget Hynes, Mary Newell, Winifred Jourdan, Mary Flynn, Bridget Curley, Catherine Mulloy, Mary Carr, Michael Farragher, Michael Cahill, John Cosgrove, John Concannon, Thomas Burke, Patrick Forde, John Forde and Timothy Goaley".

It is said that two more were drowned and their bodies were discovered later, Thomas Cahill and Mary Ruane, making a total of 20. John Cosgrove saved two women, but was drowned in saving the third. He was a lime-burner by trade. The remains of his house are still to be seen in the Blake Estate in Annaghdown Wood, - "Teach Chosgordha". Raftery's poem appears to be in error in mentioning only 19 victims.

On Monday 22nd of September 1828 the "Connaught Journal" reported: *"The 21 unfortunate persons drowned in the boat at Annaghdown on the morning of the Fair of Fairhill (4th) were almost exclusively the tenants of Col. J. Staunton of County Carlow and Charles Staunton Cahill of County Clare".*

Báitheadh Anach Cuain

Antoine O Raifteara

Ma fhágaim-se sláinte, is fada bhéas tráchtadh,
Ar an méad do báitheadh as Anach Cuain,
Is mo thrua amárach gach athair is máthair,
Bean is páiste tá a' sileadh súil.
A Rí na nGrásta cheap Neamh is Párrthas,
Nár bheag an tábhacht dúinn beirt ná triuir,
Ach lá comh breá leis gan gaoth gan báisteach,
Lán an bháid acu do sguaibeadh ar siúl.

Nár mhór an t-íonadh ós cómhair na ndaoine
A bhfeicsint sínnte ar chúl a gcinn,
Sgreadadh is caoineadh do sgannróch daoine
Gruaig dá chlaradh is an chreach da roinn.
Bhí buachaillí óga ann ag tígheachth an Fhómhair
D'á síneadh ar chróchar is da dtabhairt go cill,
Is gurb e gléas a bpósta a bhí d'á dtóramh
'S a Dhia na Glóire, nár mhór an feall.

Ansiúd Dé h-Aoine cluinfeá an caoineadh
Ag teacht gach taobh, agus greadadh bos,
'S a lán thar oiche trom tuirseach claoite,
Gan ceó le déanamh acu ach ag síneadh corp.
A Dhia agus á Chríost a dfhulaing íodbhairt,
Do cheannaigh go fireannach an bocht is an nocht,
Go Párrthas Naofa go dtugair saor leat,
Gach créatúir diobh dá'r thuit faoi'n lot.

Milleán géar ar an ionad céanna
Nar Iasa réalt ann ‘s nár eirigh grian,
Do bháith an méad úd do thriall in éineacht,
Go Gaillimh ar aonach go moch Diardaoin.
Na fir do ghléasach cliath agus céacht
Do threabhadh bréanra’s do chraitheadh síol,
‘S na mná da réir sin do dhéanadh gach aon rud,
Do sníomhadh bréid agus anairt chaol.

Baile Chláir do bhí in aice láimhe,
Níor leig an t-ádh ortha a ghabháil aníos,
Bhí an bás chomh láidir nár tug sé cáirde
d-aon mhac máthar dá rugadh riamh.
Muna sgéal a cheapadh dóibh an lá seo a mbáithte
A Rí na nGrásta ná’r bhocht an niadh,
Ach a cailleadh uile gan loch ná sáile,
Ar sean-bhád gránna ‘s iad láimh le tír.

A Rí na nGrásta, chruthaigh Neamh’s Párrthas,
Is a Dhia cé’n cas dúinn beirt ná triúr,
Ach lá chomh bréagh leis gan gaoth gan báisteach,
Agus lán an bháid acu do sguabadh ar siúl.
Bhris an bád agus báitheadh na daoine
Scaip na caoirigh anonn sa t-snámh,
Is a Dhia nach annsin a bhi an tár mór déanta,
Ar aon fhear déag agus ochtar mná.

Bhí aithre is máithre ann, mná agus páistí,
Ag gol is ag gárthaoil’s ag silt na ndeór,
Is mná da réir sin do dhéanadh aon rud,
Do sníomhadh bhréidin is anairt caol.
A Thomáis Uí Chathail, ba mhór an sgéal thu,

Do threabhfá bréanra, do chuirfeá síol,
Is a líochta buachaill do chraitheadh láimh leat,
Mo lean 's tu báidhte in Anach Cuain.
A Sheáin Uí Chosgair, ba bhreá an radharc thu,
Gur theas tú ariamh I luing no i mbád,
'S a líachtaí coiscéim úthmhar siúl tú,
O Lonndain anall go dtí Béal an Trá.
An uair do shíl tú snámh do dhéanamh
Rug na mná óga ort 'bhus is thall,
'S gur thíl do mháithrín dá mbáithfí céad fear
Go dtiocfá féin chuice abhaile slán.

Bhí Máire Ní Ruadhain ann, buinneán ghléigeal,
An chailín spéirúil bhí again san áit,
Ghléas sí í fhéin go moch Dia Chéadaoin
Le dul chun aonaigh i gCnoc an Doláin.
Bhí cóta uirthi de thogha éadaigh,
Caipín lasa is ribín bán,
Agus d'fhág sí a máithrín brónach cráite,
Ag silt na ndeór aris go bráth.

Losgadh sléibhe agus sgalladh cléibhe,
Ar an áit ar éagadar, 's a milleán cruaidh,
Mar is iomdha créatuir d'fhág sí ag géar ghol,
Ag sileadh is ag éagcain gach maidin Luain.
Ní díoghbhail eolais do chuir d'á dtreoir iad,
Ach mí-ádh mór 'bhí sa gCaisleán Nua,
Se críochnú an amhráin gur báitheadh mórán,
D'fhág ábhar dóláis ag Anach Cuain.



Báitheadh Anach Cuain

Antoine O Raifteara

Partial English Translation:

If my health is spared I'll be long relating
Of that boat that sailed out from Anach Cuain,
And the keening after of mother and father
And child by harbour, the mournful croon!
O King of Graces who died to save us,
'Twas a small affair for but one or two,
But a boat-load bravely, on calm day sailing,
Without storm or rain, to be swept to doom.

What wild despair was in all their faces,
To see them there in the light of day,
In every place there was lamentation,
And tearing of hair as the wreck was shared.
And boys there lying when crops were ripening
From the strength of life they were borne to clay,
In their wedding-clothes for their wake they robed them,
O King of Glory, man's hope is vain.

And then on Friday you'd hear them crying,
On every side as their hands they wrung,
And morning found them, unnerved and powerless,
When the laying out of each corpse was done.
O Jesus Christ, by the Cross You died on,
To offer Your Life for the poor and the slave,
Bring them safely home to the light of glory,
Oh! Rest the souls of the drowned that day.

Misfortune light on the spot they died in,
May no star shine there or dawning ray,
It drowned such numbers who made the journey
That fatal Thursday to Galway fair.
Men who could manage the plough and harrow,
And break the fallow and scatter seed,
And women whose fingers were deft and nimble,
To spin fine linen and frieze the weave.

On the shore beside Baile Chláir was lying,
But fate was unkind when they made for shore,
Strong death was sudden, no pity stirred him,
No mother's son could escape his stroke.
If their drowning day wasn't fixed or fated,
O King of Glory, their lot was hard,
Not on lake or ocean, yet weak and hopeless,
In a wretched boat and in sight of land.



Memorial to Annaghdrown Drowning:

Annaghdrown Angling Club have erected at the Quay a memorial to all who were drowned on that tragic journey from Annaghdrown to Galway on the 4th of September 1828. It is a very impressive tribute in stone, naming all who were drowned. It is well worth a visit.



Picture of Drowning Monument

Drowning Boat Wreck Found by Divers?

The September 6th edition of the “Galway Advertiser” reported that a team of divers from the Galway Sub Aqua Club, in cooperation with the Annaghdrown Anglers’ Club, are confident that they have discovered the wreck of the boat involved in Báitheadh Anach Cuain. The place of their discovery is the place in the lake traditionally believed as the location of the sinking of the ill-fated boat, opposite Bushypark, about two miles from Galway, and one hundred yards up river from Menlo Pier,--“láimh le tír” according to Raftaire’s poem.

At first divers found what they thought were planks from the boat. The divers are convinced that the wreck they found are the remains of the boat because of the width of the boards, measuring about ten to fifteen feet in width, pointing to a boat of about forty feet in length. To make a full search and bring the boat to the surface would be very costly without special equipment for a boat so long in water.

The divers claim has been substantiated by a fisherman in Menlo who told the “Connaught Tribune” that he had found an anchor, chain and shackle in his fishing nets while fishing in the area where the divers claim to have made their discovery. There is no memory of any other boat of that size having sunk in that area.

Priests of Currandulla—Annaghdowen Parish:

Fr. Pat Gallagher P.P. died on February 14th 1771, aged 109, and was buried in Annaghdowen Cathedral cemetery.

Parish Priests:

1817-1824: Raymond Hargadon
1827-1839: Thomas Loftus
1840-1849: Myles Sheridan
1849-1858: Thomas Keaveney
1858-1877: Peter Waldron
1877-1910: Laurence Ansbrow
1910-1920: Thomas Hosty
1920-1928: Michael Hannon
1928-1940: Edward McGough
1940-1963: Patrick Garvey
1963-1980: Thomas Martyn
1980-1989: Patrick V. O’Brien
1989-2006: Martin Newell
2006 Hughie Loftus

Curates:

1826: Bartley Adams
1828: James Browne
1847: Frank Keogh
1847-1850: Eugene Coyne
1850-1851: John Lally
1851-1854: Vacant
1860-1862: Edward Thomas
1866-1867: John O’Malley
1867-1869: Michael Joyce
1869-1875: Thomas Hosty
1875-1877 John McGreal
1877-1880: Vacant
1880-1883: Peter Corcoran
1883-1884: Pat Colgan

Curates after 1884:

1885-1887: Pat O’Flaherty
1887-1888: John McHale
1888-1889: Martin Colleran
1889-1890: William Rattigan

1890-1893: James Godfrey
1893-1894: John Tuffy
1894-1896: Michael Higgins
1896-1897: Martin Moran
1897-1907: John O'Dea
1907-1910: Thomas Heany
1910-1919: Pat Nicholson
1919-1921: Pat Waldron
1921-1924: Edward Egan
1924-1931: Michael Lavelle
1931-1934: John Fitzgerald
1934-1942: Andrew Colgan
1942-1943: Michael Mooney
1943-1948: John D.O'Malley
1948-1958: Thomas McEllin
1958-1974: Thomas Gibbons
1974-1980: Christopher Kilkelly
1980-1987: Micheál Faherty
1987-1990: Pádraic O'Connor
1990-1996: Enda Howley
1996-1997: Michael Nohilly
1997-1998: Joe Feeley
1998 - : Oliver McNamara

Notes:

- A. Fr. Hubert (Henry?) Burke, a native of Cregduff, born in 1744, was Parish Priest of Knock/Aughamore 1787 to 1822. He is buried beside the ruins of the old church in Knock cemetery.
- B. Fr. Martin Colleran was curate in Annaghdown from 1888 to 1889. He was son of James Colleran and Bridget Gardiner (Annaghdown). He served in Achill and as Parish Priest in Ballyhaunis where he is buried.

The Castle at Enaghdún:

Referring back to page 28 of the previous edition of this booklet, under the heading of “Other Buildings at Enaghdún” I mentioned the holy wells of “Tobar Chormaic” and “Tobar Bhraonáin”, then, and I quote: *“In between we see the Anglo-Burgo Norman Castle, built sometime after 1256. With its battered base, its high-pitched gables, and the various defensive features of that period, it is in a sufficient state of preservation to warrant closer examination. In the year 1256 the O’Flaherties were driven west of Lough Corrib, to Iar-Connaught, by the Anglo-Norman de Burgos. These castles were built as a defence against attack. We have no definite evidence of when the Castle at Enaghdún fell into disuse.....”*.

We can now, thankfully, give this story two headings;

Annaghdown Castle
as it was:



Annaghdown Castle
as it is:



Happily, Annaghdown Castle has been carefully and authentically restored in recent years by Ray Cooke and his family. Their daughter, Dr. Jessica is an archaeologist who is doing research at the moment on Round Towers and other aspects of the history of the ruins and Diocese of Enaghdún. She is welcome aboard. Her scholarship and research will throw further light on the story of this hallowed spot on the eastern inlet of Lough Corrib.

Some Scholars and Poets in Enaghdún:

1. Bartley Keane ((Beartlaí Ó Catháin):

Beartlaí Ó Catháin was a native of Rosmuc in Conamara, born about 1815. He was a former sailor, served in the British Navy in his younger days and received a good education there, surprisingly knowing Latin and Greek, although Geography was his favourite subject. He moved to Lisanoran School in Annaghdwn, a sort of Hedge School with a roof, when National Schools were not yet accepted in the Diocese. My father attended this school and had memories of Beartlai Keane. Master John O’Flynn taught for a time in Lisanoran until he moved to the then new National School in Woodpark.

For a time English laws wanted to impose the learning and speaking of the English language only. Teachers were ordered to punish children whom they heard speaking Irish. The children wore a stick tied with string around their necks called “Bata Sgoir”, and a notch was supposed to be cut on the stick each time they spoke Irish! Pupils were supposed to report to the teacher any pupil they heard speaking Irish!

There was a rhyme frequently recited by Beartlaí on his bad days as he walked around the classroom: “*Ag múineadh Béarla, Gaeilge, ‘s Laidin, níl ag Beartlaí ach píghin sa tseachtain*”. Of course, at the time conditions were not good in school, in pay or otherwise.

(This information translated from “ Oideachas in Iar-Chonnacht sa Naoú Céad Déag” by Brighid Bean Uí Mhurchadha, published by Government Publications).

2. Séamus Ó Maoildhia (Molloy), Cloonboo:

Séamus O Maoildhia was born in Cloonboo in September 1881. He was a son of a small farmer, one of a family of nine, seven boys and two sisters. He spent only four years in formal education. He had a very keen mind and a great love for the Irish language.

As a young man he spent a number of years as an Irish teacher for Connradh na Gaeilge in different parishes in counties Galway, Mayo, Sligo, and Leitrim. He was a familiar figure at feiseanna, aeríochtaí, and the Oireactas, gaining many awards for recitations, essays, and poetry. Dr. Douglas Hyde, President of Connradh na Gaeilge and later President of Ireland, stated that Séamus Ó Maoildhia was one of the most fluent Irish speakers he met. He published his poems and folklore in the “Connaught Tribune” and other journals.

Séamus died on June 22nd 1928 and is buried in the family plot in Annaghdown cemetery. His book “Dánta agus Ámhráin” is long out of print. It is our wish that this treasury of poetry and folklore be reprinted and that this Annaghdown man not be forgotten.

Archbishop Michael Courtney:

We have mentioned already on page 28 of this booklet the third Titular Bishop of Enaghduín, Archbishop Michael Aidan Courtney. It had been, and is now once again, the custom of the Church to give the name of a Diocese long defunct to new Auxiliary or Coadjutor Bishops who have no Diocese of their own. The evening of his visit to the church of St. Brendan will long remain in the memory of those who were privileged to be present and have a quiet cup of tea with him afterwards in the local National School. He promised to come back

for the Centenary of the church in July 1903 and to bless the castle so authentically restored by Ray Cooke and family.

Born in Nenagh in 1946 Archbishop Courtney had a most distinguished career in parish ministry in his home Diocese of Clonfert. In Rome he took Degrees in Canon Law and in Moral Theology, and then entered the Pontifical Academy where he studied political science as well as civil and international law. On completion of his studies in 1980 he entered the diplomatic service of the Holy See in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Senegal, India, Yugoslavia, Cuba, and Egypt. In 1995 he was appointed Special Envoy of the Holy See to the Council of Europe and allied institutions in Strasbourg.

On the 12th November 2000 Michael Aidan Courtney was ordained Titular Bishop of Eanach Dúin in St. Mary's church, Nenagh, and shortly afterwards he was appointed Apostolic Nuncio in Burundi. Considering the turmoil in that region of Africa, it was an appointment requiring both personal courage and great diplomatic skill. As we sat down to tea with him after his visit to St. Brendan's church on that now memorable evening, one could not but be impressed by his humility, his courtesy, and the lightness with which he carried his great distinctions. We in Annaghdown feel honoured to have our district associated with such a man. I remember the lights going out in the school that evening, leaving us dependant on candlelight. The light of his own life was extinguished shortly afterwards in Burundi, in December of 2003. His funeral took place on January 3rd 2004 in the church of St. Mary of the Rosary, Nenagh, where he was baptised and ordained. On his coffin lay a mitre prepared by the people of Annaghdown, his titular Diocese, which was to be presented to him in a special ceremony there the following Summer.

Archbishop Michael Courtney was buried beside a 17th century church near his holiday home in Dromineer on the shores of his beloved Lough Derg. He will always be remembered on the shores of another lake, where we were privileged to have had a martyr as third Titular Bishop of Annaghdown.

Ar dheis De go raibh a anam uasal.

Some Extra Historical Notes of Enaghdún:

St. Brendan's church by the Lake:

The present Roman Catholic church at Enaghdún was built in the years 1901 to 1903 when Fr. Laurence Ansbro was Parish Priest. In charge of the building committee was school-master John O'Flynn who taught in Lisanoran school and then on the old National School at Woodpark. Fr. Ansbro offered the first Mass in the partially completed church on Christmas Day 1901. The church was dedicated by Archbishop Healy on the 12th July 1903 in the presence of a large congregation.

Tragedy struck the church on the 1st December 1936 when a major fire destroyed all the church roof and many of the church contents. Fr. Andy Colgan was curate at the time and presided over the subsequent restoration.

Native Priests overlooking the Monastic Ruins:

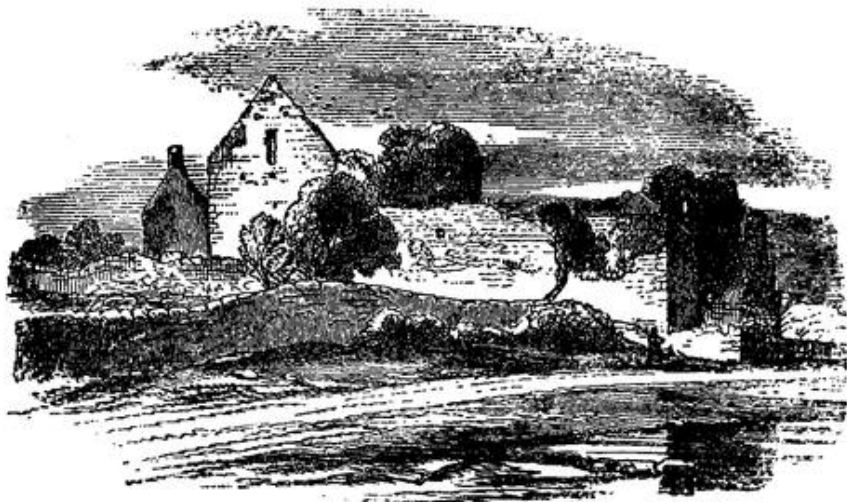
A. Fr. John O'Flynn was born in Ballylee on January 30th 1909, son of school-master John O'Flynn. He was educated in Woodpark old National School, St. Jarlath's College, Tuam, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, where he was ordained for the Diocese of Tuam. He did Scripture studies in Rome, winning a Licentiate in Sacred

Scripture. Sadly, his thesis for Doctorate in Sacred Scripture was lost in a fire at Maynooth College where he was Professor of Sacred Scripture from 1936 to 1974.

Fr. John was a particularly brilliant student in every subject. He died on the 23rd April 1974 and is buried near the family grave close to the ruins of St. Briga's Convent and later Premonstratensian Abbey.

B. Fr. Brendan Kavanagh was born a neighbour to the Abbey and Cathedral Ruins on the 1st September 1926, son of William Kavanagh, a small farmer, and Catherine O'Boyle, a school-teacher in Woodpark National School. There were twelve in family, six boys and six girls.

He was educated In Woodpark National School, St. Jarlath's College, Tuam, and St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. He was ordained priest for the Archdiocese of Tuam on the 22nd June 1952. He was appointed Professor of Science at St. Jarlath's, and



was a very successful trainer of the College football teams, leading them to winning the All-Ireland Colleges' Hogan Cup on a number of occasions. Fishing and golf were his other pastimes.

Fr. Brendan was appointed Parish Priest of Cong where he died on the 6th October 1994. He is buried in the parish cemetery of Cong.

- C. Fr. Martin Goaley**, uncle of the author, was born in the village of Annaghdown on the 29th October 1889, son of Denis and Mary Goaley, nee Gardiner, the eighth of a family of ten, six sons and four daughters. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Leeds in St. Patrick's College, Thurles in 1916. He served all his priestly life in parishes in Leeds in Yorkshire. He retired to Annaghdown when he reached the Golden Jubilee of his priesthood.

He died on the 29th June 1979 and is buried in the family grave in Annaghdown cemetery.

Go ndéana Dia trócaire ar a n-anamacha uasal.

Bibliography:

Irish Ecclesiastical Record, 1889, 1900, and 1913.

Galway Archeological Journal, June and December 1904.

Archdall, Monasticon Hibernicum, Vol. 2.

Annals of the Four Masters.

Annals of Lough Cé.

D’Alton’s History of the Archdiocese of Tuam.

Wilde’s Lough Corrib.

Theiner: Papal Documents.

Kieran Waldron: Catholic Archbishops of Tuam.

Saints and Shrines of Lough Corrib.

Journal of Society of Antiquities of Ireland, Vols. 2 and 21.

Hardiman’s History of Galway.

Knox: Notes on the Archdiocese of Tuam.

O’Flaherty’s History of Galway (Hardiman).

Lewis: Topographical Dictionary of Ireland (1837).

Calendar of Papal Registers 1198 to 1471.

Gazeteer of Ireland.

Carew Manuscripts, 1555 to 1574.

O’Hanlon’s Lives of the Saints.

A History of the Catholic Church (O’Doherty).

A Course of Irish History.

Medieval Religious Houses (Gwynn & Hadcock).

A History of Irish Catholicism (Corish).

Compositions of Connaught.

The Corrib Country (Richard Hayword).

Historical Archives of Tuam Archdiocese.

Historical Websites in the Internet.





