

ANEY, or KNOCKANEY::

A parish, in the barony of Small County, 3 miles (E.) from Bruff; containing 4542 inhabitants, of which number, 514 are in the village. This place, which is situated on the River Commogue, and bounded on the north by Lough Gur, appears to have been distinguished at a very early period of Irish history. Its parish church and a monastery, or college, are said, by ecclesiastical writers, to have been founded about the time of St. Patrick, but the earliest authentic notice of the place occurs in 941, when a convent for nuns of the order of St. Augustine was founded, but by whom is not recorded. This establishment, which was called Monaster-ni-Cailliagh Juxta Aney, and was refounded, in 1283, by a branch of the Fitzgibbon family, and appears to have subsisted till the dissolution; of the building only some small fragments are remaining. In 1226, a preceptory was founded here, which subsequently became the property of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem; and in 1349, a friary for Eremites of the order of St. Augustine was founded by John Fitzgerald, or, as he was sometimes called, Fitz-Robert, which, after the dissolution, was granted by Queen Elizabeth to Edward, John and Mary Absley. This place was equally celebrated for its numerous stately castles; the most important was a spacious and very strong fortress, erected in 1248 by John Fitzgerald, sometimes called John of Callan, on the western bank of the River Commogue, in which the founder died in 1296; some very inconsiderable fragments only are remaining. In the fourteenth century the same powerful family erected two very strong castles on the shores of Lough Gur, called respectively Doon and the Black castle, to defend the two entrances to Knockadoon, a lofty eminence nearly surrounded by the lake, and by most writers considered as an island. The present castle of Doon, supposed to have been erected on the site of the original by Sir George Boucher, in the reign of James 1, is in a very perfect state; but the Black castle is a heap of ruins. A smaller castle was built in the village, soon after the erection of those on Lough Gur, probably by the family of O'Grady, who also built a very extensive castle at Kilballyowen: the former is, with the exception of the roof, in a very perfect state; and the latter has been incorporated with the modern dwelling-house, and contains four rooms in perfect order. Though the surrounding neighbourhood is fertile, and the inhabitants in general opulent, yet the village, which is the property of the Provost and Fellows of Trinity College, and of the Earls of Aldborough and Kenmare, is in a state of neglect and ruin. The parish comprises 8312 statute acres, as apploited under the tithe act: the land is remarkably productive, particularly round Killballyowen; about one-fifth is under tillage, more than three-fifths are meadow and pasture land, and there is a small tract of very valuable bog. The great fertility of the soil seems to have obviated the necessity of paying much attention to the improvement of agriculture, which throughout the district is generally disregarded. The surface is adorned with rich plantations: the principal seats are Kilballyowen, the residence of De Courcy O'Grady, Esq. (who retains the ancient title of O'Grady of Kilballyowen), a handsome modern building in a richly planted demesne; Elton, of Mrs. Grady; Lough Gur castle, of Miss Bailie; Baggotstown, of J. Bouchier, Esq.; Milltown Lodge, of T. D. O'Grady, Esq., and Rathaney, of T. Bennett, Esq.

The living is a vicarage, in the diocese of Emly, with the vicarages of Ballynard, Ballynamona, Long or Knocklong, Kilfrush, Ballinlough, and Hospital, which seven parishes constitute the union of Aney, in the patronage of the Crown during the legal

incapacity of the Earl of Kenmare; the rectory is impropriate in E. Deane Freeman, Esq. The tithes amount to £860, of which £573.6.8 is payable to the impropriator, and the remainder to the vicar; and the entire tithes of the benefice amount to £748.0.41/2. The church is a neat edifice, with a handsome octagonal spire of hewn stone, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have lately granted £183 for its repair. The glebe-house, nearly adjoining the church, but not habitable for a family, is built on a glebe of 7a. 1r. 38p. The R.C. parish is co-extensive with that of the Established Church, the chapel is in the village of Aney, and has been rebuilt and was consecrated on 9 October, 1836; there is also another at St. Patrick's Well. There is a school aided by a donation from the parish, which is held in the R.C. chapel; and a school is also supported by Count de Salis. In these schools are about 220 boys and 130 girls; and there is also a pay school of 20 boys and 8 girls. Lough Gur, the only lake of importance in the county, is about four miles in circumference, and bounds the parish for nearly three miles; it has two beautiful small islands, and is of very picturesque and romantic character. On one of the islands are the remains of ancient fortifications; and midway between Knockadoon and Knockfennel is the other, about three-quarters of an acre in extent, which was strongly fortified, and the walls are now nearly in a perfect state. Not far from the Black castle are the ruins of the New Church, so called from its being founded by the Countess of Bath, when resident at Doon castle, by whom it was also endowed with £20 per annum for the support of a chaplain; but the property having descended to the Count de Salis, and the church not being registered in the diocesan records, that nobleman discontinued the appointment of a chaplain, and the church has fallen into ruins. The plate presented to this church by the Countess of Bath is now used in the parish church of Aney. At St. Patrick's Well are some remains of a church, with an extensive burial-ground; and near Elton are also some fragments of another, in a church-yard. Not far distant are the picturesque ruins of Baggotstown castle, built by one of the Baggot family in the reign of Charles 1, and forming, with its lofty gables and chimneys, a singular object when viewed from a distance. On the hill of Knockadoon, just over the lake, are some rude traces of an ancient fortress.