

CROAGH:

A parish, in the barony of Lower Connello East, 3 miles (N.E. by N.) from Rathkeale, on the road to Adare; containing 3394 inhabitants, of which number, 274 are in the village. This place appears to have been anciently of considerable importance; so early as the year 1109, it had a very rich abbey, a corporation, and two castles. James 2nd. after his defeat at the Boyne, is reported to have slept one night at Amigan castle, now in ruins; but it is not certain that he came farther south than Waterford. Near it is a small stream, supposed to be efficacious in cutaneous disorders. The parish is divided into two parts by a portion of that of Adare, which separates the townlands of Ballinvira, Ballinagoold, Ballinacurra, and Lisnamuck from the rest of the parish; it comprises 8100 statute acres, as applotted under the tithe act, almost all of which is under an improving system of tillage. The greater part of the land is good, though light, and rests on a substratum of limestone; the remainder is meadow and pasture, there being no waste land, and but little turbary. Superior lead ore is often found amidst the limestone rocks, and large masses are sometimes turned up by the plough at Ardnapehane, but no search has ever been made for it. The village consists of one irregular street, containing 46 small houses, and has fairs on 1 March, 1 May, 3 August, and 1 November. Within the parish are several large and handsome houses, the principal of which are Ballylin, the residence of R. Smith, Esq.; Hollywood, of J. Hewson, Esq.; Smithfield, of R. Smith, Esq.; Ballinvira, of Gerald Browne Fitzgerald, Esq.; Newpark, of Gerald Evans Fitzgerald, Esq.; and the glebe-house, the residence of Rev. W. Ashe, rector and prebendary.

The living is a rectory, in the diocese of Limerick, being the corps of the prebend of Croagh in the cathedral of Limerick, and in the patronage of Matthew Barrington, Esq.; the tithes amount to £553.6.11. The glebe-house, a handsome residence, was erected in 1831, by a gift of £100, and a loan of £900, from the late Board of First Fruits, and is situated about half a mile from the village, on a glebe of 10 acres purchased by the Board; and near the church is a small glebe of 1r. 14p. The church, formerly a large cruciform edifice, is nearly in ruins; the eastern portion, or chancel, is the only part now roofed; there are considerable remains of the old walls. In the R.C. divisions the parish is the head of a union or district, comprising also that of Kilfinney; the chapel, a large plain edifice, is near the village of Croagh. There is a school under the Baptist Society in that village in which upwards of 300 boys and girls are taught, also one at Lisnamuck under the National Board, in which are about 100 boys and 100 girls; and about 70 children are taught in a private school. The late John Walcott, Esq., of Clifton, near Bristol, but originally of Croagh House, built in his lifetime three alms-houses at Ballylin for six poor widows of this parish, and endowed each with half an acre of land for a garden, and a weekly allowance of 1s. to each inmate, and 10s. each at Easter and Christmas, payable for ever out of his estate at Croagh. Mount Alymer, in this parish, was the birthplace of William Butler Odell, author of several poetical pieces of considerable merit.