

CAHIRELLY, or BALLYBRICKEN:

A parish, in the barony of Clanwilliam, 8 miles (S.S.E.) from Limerick; containing 1346 inhabitants. This place appears to be of considerable antiquity, and its church is said to have been founded by St. Ailbe, Bishop of Emly, in the time of St. Patrick; it would also appear to have attained an early degree of importance, as three castles were erected within its limits. The parish is situated on the River Comogue, by which it is bounded on the south; the main coach road from Limerick to Cork passes within a quarter of a mile of its western extremity; and it is intersected from north to south by the road from Limerick to Hospital. It comprises 2636 statute acres, as apportioned under the tithe act, of which 33 acres are roads and waste, and the remainder arable, pasture, and meadow land, of which last a great portion is frequently overflowed by the river: the western portion is rich grazing land, mostly belonging to large dairy farms, and the greater part of the eastern portion is in the occupation of small farmers, and is generally cultivated by spade labour. A patent for a market and four fairs on 14 May, 26 August, 6 November, and 21 December, was granted to Micheal Furnell, Esq. On Mr. Furnell's estate are quarries of very excellent limestone, worked at present chiefly for the proprietor and his tenantry. On this estate are West Cahir Elly castle, and the residence of Mr. Furnell, a neat building in the cottage style, with tastefully disposed grounds, situated near Longford bridge (an ancient structure of nine arches), where are some fine specimens of the moose deer and coins, dug up on the estate; also the residence of Mr. Hannan, in well-planted grounds ornamented with shrubs and evergreens. The living is a vicarage, in the diocese of Emly, and in the patronage of the Archbishop of Cashel; the rectory is appropriate to the vicars choral of the cathedral of Christ-Church, Dublin. The tithes amount to £140, of which £90 is payable to the appropriators, and £50 to the vicar. The glebe, in two detached portions, comprises 9 1/4 acres, but there is no glebe-house. In the R.C. divisions the parish is the head of the union of Ballybricken, which also comprises the parish of Carrigparson; the chapel is a substantial and handsome edifice, recently erected on the site of a former chapel in the townland of Ballybricken. There is a parochial school, in which are about 50 boys and 20 girls; and Mr. Furnell has given a site for a national school. Of the three ancient castles, one, called the Black castle, has lately fallen to the ground; West Cahir Elly castle is in perfect and substantial repair; and Ballybricken castle is in ruins. Here are also the ruins of Cahirelly abbey, the burial-ground of which is enclosed and planted, and contains the ancient tomb of the Furnell family.