

KILKEEDY:

A parish, partly in the county of the city of Limerick, but chiefly in the barony of Pubblebrien, 4 1/2 miles (S.W. by W.) from Limerick, on the road from that city to Tarbert; containing, with part of the town of St. Patrick's Well, 4160 inhabitants. The castle of Carrigogunnell, or Carrig Oge Connuil, was held by O'Brien, Prince of Thomond, in 1316, when he joined the standard of Edward Bruce. It was strengthened by Dhubh, son of Conogher O'Brien, but in 1483 was in the possession of the Earls of Kildare; but it seems, however, to have reverted to the O'Briens, as they were besieged in it, in 1536, by the Earl of Ormonde, and it was surrendered by and regranted to Brien Dhubh O'Brien, in 1584. The insurgents obtained possession of it in 1642, surrendered it in 1648, and retook it soon after, but finally evacuated it on Cromwell's approach in 1651. At the Revolution it was held by the adherents of King James 2nd., but surrendered to General S'Gravenmore, and was destroyed by gunpowder, 84 barrels being necessary on account of its great strength. The castle was built on a basaltic rock, 500 feet above the level of the Shannon; two of its towers are still moderately perfect, and several of the foundation walls have been recently repaired by W. Monsell, Esq. The Knights Templars had a castle at Carrig-a-Quincy, which at the suppression of their order was granted to the O'Briens. The parish comprises 8518 statute acres, as applotted under the tithe act, of which about 150 are ornamental plantations, and 50 bog; the remainder are arable, pasture, and meadow land, some of which, on the banks of the Shannon, produces abundant crops of hay. The soil is based on limestone; and near Faha and Carrigogunnell the loose stones are so numerous as to impede tillage, which, however, is rapidly improving. The River Maigue is navigable here for lighters of 40 tons' burden, which pass by means of a canal, over which is a swing bridge, and near it a small wharf. A bridge of three arches was built over the river in 1792: it is sometimes called the Ferry bridge, but more frequently Court bridge, from the old residence of that name in the adjoining parish of Kildimo. The Lord-Protector Carew built a tower to protect the ferry, which is still called the Ferry Castle. The principal seats are Elm Park, the residence of Lord Clarina; Tervoe, of W. Monsell, Esq., commanding some fine views; Cooper's Hill, of Mrs. Cooper; Faha, of G. Tuthill, Esq.; Cragbeg, of G. Vandeleur, Esq.; and Vermont, of the Rev. R. Dickson. The living is a rectory and vicarage, in the diocese of Limerick, and in the alternate patronage of the Crown and the bishop: the tithes amount to £850. The church, which is a neat building, with a square tower and octagonal spire, was rebuilt by aid of a loan of £660, in 1813, from the late Board of First Fruits. The glebe-house was erected in 1792, by aid of a gift of £100 from the same Board: the glebe comprises 44 acres. The R. C. parish is co-extensive with that of the Established Church, and has two chapels, one of which is a large plain edifice of hewn limestone, roofed with slate, commenced in 1831, but not yet finished. The parochial school for girls and boys, situated in the modern village of Clarina, was built in 1826, and is principally supported by the rector and his family; and there is a school for the children of the tenants of Mr. Monsell, by whose family it is maintained. About 130 children are taught in these schools, and about 220 in four private schools. Mrs. Tuthill bequeathed £10 per annum to the poor Protestant parishioners, which is distributed at Christmas. At Clarina are a dispensary and a constabulary police station. In 1815, a meteoric stone, weighing 56 lb., fell in the demesne of Faha: it consists of iron pyrites strongly impregnated with sulphur, and

is in Mr. Tuthill's possession. Clarina gives the title of baron to the ancient family of Massey. -See Patrick's Well (St.).