

## **KILMALLOCK:**

An ancient corporate and post-town, and a parish forming a liberty, 15 3/4 miles (S.) from Limerick, and 109 1/2 (S.W.) from Dublin, on the high road to Cork; containing 2834 inhabitants, of which number, 1213 are in the town. The place, called anciently Killochia and Kilmocheallog derived its name from an abbey founded for Canons Regular by St. Mocheallog or St. Molach, in the beginning of the seventh century. Its early history is involved in great obscurity, and of its progress to that state of distinction and importance which, from the magnificence of its ruins, obtained for it, long after its decline, the appellation of the 'Balbec' of Ireland, little is now known. It appears to have been inhabited at a very early period by several of the chief nobility and gentry, and to have been a corporate town either by prescription or by charter, granted at a very early date, as its privileges as a borough are recited in a charter of Edward 3rd. by which that monarch granted to the provost and commonalty certain tolls and customs towards the repair of its fortifications. It was surrounded with a stone wall of great strength, fortified with mounds of earth, and having four gateway towers of lofty and imposing character, called respectively St. John's gate, Water gate, Ivy gate, and Blossom's gate, of which only the last is now remaining. In 1291, a Dominican monastery was founded to the east of the town, by Gilbert, son of John Callan, Lord of Offaly, which was soon after amply endowed. A general chapter of the order was held in it in 1340, and it continued to flourish till the dissolution, when it was granted by Elizabeth to the corporation. The inhabitants obtained a grant of tolls for murage in 1482; and in consideration of the losses they had sustained in defending the town against the assaults of the enemy, they were again incorporated by Edward 4th., who also made the town one of the cities in which he established a royal mint. In 1483, it is enumerated among the principal towns in which a coin of Richard 3rd., then recently struck, was by act of parliament made current. During the wars in the reign of Elizabeth, the town was a principal military station of the English, and the garrison was frequently employed in the most important services. It was taken by surprise, in 1568, by James Fitz-Maurice, who put the sovereign and several of the principal inhabitants to death, and burned the town, in order to prevent its occupation by the Lord-Deputy, who was marching against him from Buttevant. It was, however, restored by the encouragement of Sir Henry Sydney, Lord-Deputy, who left a garrison for its defence; and in 1572, Sir J. Perrot, the first Lord-President of Munster, compelled Fitz-Maurice to surrender, and to make his submission to the queen's mercy in the church of St. Peter and St. Paul. In 1579, Sir W. Drury came hither with a force of 900 men, to oppose Sir John of Desmond with his Spanish and Irish forces, and issued a proclamation summoning all the nobility and gentry of Munster to repair his standard. Sir W. Pelham, who succeeded him, also issued another proclamation to the same purpose; and Gerald, sixteenth Earl of Desmond, declining to obey, was declared a rebel unless he surrendered himself within 20 days, on failing to comply with which his vast estates, consisting of 570,000 plantation acres, were forfeited to the Crown, and the Earl and his Countess suffered the severest hardships, secreting themselves in the woods and mountains around the town. Sir Nicholas Malby, who succeeded to the command of the forces, leaving a garrison of 340 men here, pursued, with the remainder of his forces, the troops under Sir John of Desmond, whom he defeated at Monaster-nenagh; and in 1582, a detachment of the garrison attacked the Earl in his retreat at daybreak, slew his servants, carried off his provisions, and would have taken himself and his

Countess prisoners, had they not escaped by concealing themselves in the river, immersed up to their chins behind one of its banks. In 1584, after the death of the Earl, Elizabeth granted the town a new charter, with some extensive tracts of land and various tolls and customs; empowering the inhabitants to elect a sovereign, to hold courts of record with jurisdiction not exceeding £20, to levy assessments for the repair of the fortifications, to grant licenses for making spirituous liquors, and various other privileges, as ample as those of Kilkenny and Clonmel, with exemptions from all taxes except those assessed by parliament. In 1590, James Fitzgerald, who had assumed the title of Earl of Desmond, laid siege to the town, at the head of a formidable body of native Irish, but was compelled to retire by Sir Thomas Norris, Lord-President, assisted by the Earl of Ormonde; and in 1600, James, son of the late Earl, who had been educated in England, where he had been detained as a hostage, was sent over to Ireland by the English government to destroy the popularity of the chieftain who had usurped the title. The young Earl was received with loud acclamations by the inhabitants of the surrounding country; but on his attending divine service at the Protestant church on the following day, these demonstrations of joy were changed into expressions of abhorrence and disgust. The garrison soon after surprised and defeated the forces of James Fitzgerald, killed 120 of his party, and took all their arms, cattle, and horses. In 1642, the Irish army under the command of Lord Mountgarret, Lord Purcell, and Garret Barry, took possession of the town, which in May of the following year was besieged by Lord Inchiquin with a force of 700 men, but without success. The Earl of Castlehaven, commander -in- chief of the Irish army, in 1645 deposited all his military stores in this town, which afterwards fell into the hands of the parliamentarians; and the fortifications were soon after dismantled by order of Cromwell; they were subsequently restored by the corporation, but were again destroyed by the Irish forces under the Duke of Berwick, in 1690.

The town is pleasingly situated on the western bank of a small stream called the Lubach, and its walls enclosed a spacious quadrilateral area, in which are several castellated mansions inhabited by noble and wealthy families. They were all built of hewn stone, and communicated by noble castellated gateways with the streets of the city, inhabited by the trading and commercial classes, of which only the foundations can now be traced. Considerable portions of the walls are still remaining; but of the ancient mansions and castles only two have been preserved, one belonging to the Earl of Buckinghamshire, and the other to the family of Godsall. In the centre of the present town is the noble castle with its gateway, through which the road, now diverted to the east, formerly passed, and in which the Earl of Castlehaven deposited his military stores; it is still in good preservation, and was before and subsequently used by the corporation, whose property it is, as an armoury and citadel. On the south-west is Blossom's gate, through which the Charleville road passes; it is in good preservation, and from it is continued the ancient wall, nearly perfect, for about a quarter of a mile. Till lately the town had remained in such a state of decay as to present only the appearance of a rural village; but since 1816, several good houses of stone have been erected in the principal street, which is now a handsome thoroughfare, inhabited by respectable tradesmen. The streets are neither paved nor lighted, and the inhabitants are supplied with water chiefly from the River Lubach. The property is much divided, probably from its great eligibility as a place of residence at an early period; the principal proprietors are the Earls of Buckinghamshire, Sandwich, Kenmare, Ranfurley, and Cork, Lord Lisle, Sir Leonard Holmes, and the Maunsell family. Close to the town are very extensive flour-mills, the property of Mr. Creed; and not far distant; on the same river, are the Glenfield oat-mills, belonging to Mr. Ivers, built in 1825, at a very great expense, on the site of the old manor mills, and employing about 20 persons. There is also a tanyard in

the town; but except for the supply of the immediate neighbourhood, there is neither trade nor manufacture. The markets, formerly held on Monday and Thursday, have been discontinued for many years; but fairs are still held on 21 February, 25 March, and Whit-Tuesday, chiefly for pigs, and sometimes for cattle and sheep, though very indifferently attended. By charter of the twenty-seventh year of Elizabeth the corporation consists of a sovereign and unlimited number of burgesses, of whom 12 form the council, assisted by a town-clerk, serjeant-at-mace, and other officers. The sovereign, who may appoint a deputy, is annually elected from the burgesses on the Monday after Michaelmas-day by the council, and immediately on his election appoints 12 of the burgesses to be of the council for the ensuing year; and by this body all the corporate functions are performed. The sovereign is justice of the peace within the borough, and also one of the county magistrates, who have concurrent jurisdiction. The burgesses are elected by the council; there is no separate class of freemen distinct from them. The corporation continued to return two members to the Irish parliament till the Union, when the borough was disfranchised, and the sum of £15,000, awarded as compensation, was paid to Richard Oliver, now Richard Oliver Gascoigne, Esq. The borough court, which had jurisdiction extending to £20, has been discontinued; and a court in the nature of a court of conscience is held every alternate Friday before the sovereign, or the deputy-sovereign, for the recovery of debts not exceeding 40s. Petty sessions are also held on alternate Fridays, and a constabulary police force is stationed in the town. The corporation, though nominally existing, is to all available purposes extinct.

The parish comprises 3868 statute acres, as apportioned under the tithe act, and valued at £5497 per annum: of these, about eight are in common, and the remainder nearly in equal portions in pasture and under tillage; there are several quarries of stone for building, and the system of agriculture is improving. Near the town is Mount Coote, the seat of Chidley Coote, Esq., a spacious and handsome modern mansion, finely situated in the centre of an ample and picturesque demesne, highly improved by the proprietor with ornamental plantations, in which, and in the general improvement of his large estate, many of the labouring classes have found employment. Near the town is the Towers, the splendid seat of Eyre Evans, Esq.; a large castellated mansion now in progress of erection in the ancient baronial style, consisting of a centre flanked by lofty circular towers, and two extensive wings, of which one on the west is connected with a noble gateway leading to the offices, which occupy the sides of a quadrangular area; the whole is of hewn limestone, forming a large and magnificent structure in a richly wooded demesne, commanding some fine views of mountain and vale, and embellished with a picturesque lake extending to the walls of the town. Abbey View, the residence of the Rev. J. Gabbett, is situated close to the town, and commands some interesting views and picturesque scenery; Mill View, that of E. Moore Creed, Esq.; and Riversfield, of T. Weldon, Esq., are pleasantly situated in the immediate vicinity. The parish is in the diocese of Limerick; the rectory is appropriate to the vicars choral of the cathedral of Limerick, and the vicarage to the dean and chapter, to whom it was granted in 1674 by royal charter, which also united it to the rectory of Kilbreedy-Major, and to the rectories and vicarages of Particles, Ballingaddy, and Athnassy, together forming the economy fund of the cathedral. The parochial duties are performed by a stipendary curate, who receives £90 per annum from the dean and chapter. The tithes amount to £300, of which £200 is payable to the lessee of the vicars choral, and £100 to the economy fund; and the aggregate tithes for the whole union amount to £805.4.7 1/2. There is no glebe-house; the glebe lands of the union comprise 89 1/4 acres, of which 18 1/4 are in this parish. The church, dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul, and formerly collegiate, is an ancient and spacious structure, built in various successive styles of

English architecture, and consisting of a nave, aisles, and south transept, which have been roofless since 1657, when it was partly destroyed by Cromwell, and of a spacious and lofty choir, which is fitted up for divine service. The nave is separated from the aisles by a series of massive square pillars, supporting lofty pointed arches, and the choir has an east window combining five lancet-shaped lights. In the aisles and transepts are altar-tombs to the Fitzgeralds, Verdons, Healeys, Blakeney, and Coppingers; they are generally of the seventeenth century, and rudely sculptured; the figures are sunk, and the inscriptions in relief. In the choir is a handsome monument to the family of Coote, of Castle Coote. The exterior of the church is embattled, and at the west end of the north aisle is an ancient round tower, pierced with numerous windows, and differing greatly from others of that class. In the R.C. divisions the parish is the head of a union or district, comprising also the parishes of Tankardstown, Ballingaddy, and Kilquane, and parts of the parishes of Bulgadine and Uregare; and containing two chapels, situated at Kilmallock and Ballingaddy. The chapel in the town is a spacious building, erected in 1814, and subsequently enlarged: that at Ballingaddy is two miles from the town, and near it are the ruins of a former chapel, the cemetery of which, still used as a burial-ground, has been planted with trees by Mr. Coote, of Mount Coote. The male and female parochial schools are held in the castle belonging to the corporation, and are chiefly supported by the dean and chapter, by whom they have been endowed, with about an acre of land, and by subscriptions; and there are three private schools, in which are about 190 children. The remains of the Dominican monastery, situated on the banks of the Lubach, are extensive and beautifully picturesque; they consist of the lofty square central tower and the choir of the church, the former in a state of great delapidation, and the latter tolerably perfect; the east window is of the lancet form, combining an arrangement of five lights, and the windows on the south side are enriched with delicate tracery; the choir is unrivalled for symmetry and elegance of design, and contains the broken tomb of the last of the White Knights, the representative of whom is the present Earl of Kingston; parts of the conventual buildings on the north are still tolerably entire. Close to the bank of the river are the ruins of the abbot's private residence, which after the Reformation was the residence of several of the sovereigns of the borough, and afterwards inhabited by the White Knight, in 1604. About half a mile to the north of the town are some ruins of ecclesiastical buildings, and the site of an ancient hospital for lepers is still called the Spital field. There are several traces of military encampments around the town, and great numbers of human bones have been discovered in the grounds of Mount Coote, which have been collected and interred near the spot where they were found, under a monument erected over them by the proprietor of the demesne. Kilmallock formerly gave the title of Viscount to a branch of the Sarsfield family, by whom it was forfeited in consequence of their adherence to James 2nd.