

BRUREE, or BRUGHRIGH:

A parish, partly in the barony of Small County, but chiefly in that of Upper Connello, 4 miles (N.W.) from Charleville, on the direct line of road to Limerick; containing 4364 inhabitants, of which number, 451 are in the village. This place was distinguished at a very early period for a half-yearly meeting of the Irish bards, which, according to O'Halloran, was continued till the year 1746. The parish comprises 8530 statute acres, as apportioned under the tithe act, of which the greater portion is pasture and meadow and connected with extensive dairy farms, and the remainder under tillage: the land is remarkably good, and the system of agriculture is improving. The River Maigue winds through a beautiful valley, of which the rich meadows on its banks slope gently to its margin: the meadows in the southern part of the parish are subject to frequent inundations from the overflowing of this river. The eastern portion of the parish consists entirely of limestone, which is extensively quarried for agricultural purposes and for the roads; but the grit is generally worked for building. The scenery is pleasingly varied, and in the parish are several handsome houses, of which the principal are Harding Grove, the residence of H. Harding, Esq.; Rockhill, of J. Cushin, Esq.; Bruree House, of R. Fetherston, Esq., J.P.; and Bruree Lodge, of J. Langton, Esq., J.P. The village, containing, in 1831, 87 houses, is a constabulary police station, and is much improving; several good houses have lately been built; here are also a boulting-mill, a grist-mill (used chiefly for oatmeal), and a manufactory for combing, carding, and spinning wool, and for napping and tucking the cloth, which is of great advantage to the population for many miles around. Fairs are held on 9 May, 25 June, 14 September, and 25 November, for cattle, sheep, pigs, and pedlery. A new road has recently been formed from Croom to Charleville through the western part of the parish, which will become the principal road between Limerick and Cork.

It is a rectory and vicarage, in the diocese of Limerick; the rectory forms part of the union and corps of the deanery of Limerick, and the vicarage is in the patronage of the dean. The tithes amount to £600.4., of which two-thirds are payable to the dean and the remainder to the vicar. The church is a neat edifice, in the early English style, with a square tower and octangular spire of hewn stone; it was built near the site of the old church, by aid of a gift of £800 from the late Board of First Fruits, in 1812. The glebe-house, which belongs to the vicarage, was built by a gift of £400 and a loan of £380 from the same Board, in 1813. Attached to the rectory is a glebe of 7a. 1r. 8p.; the glebe belonging to the vicarage comprises 15 acres. In the R.C. divisions this parish is the head of a union or district, called also Rockhill, which comprises the parishes of Bruree and Colemans-well, and contains three chapels, situated respectively in the village of Bruree, at Rockhill, and at Colemans-well. The parochial schools are situated on the rector's glebe, and endowed by the present dean with half an acre of land; and there are two pay schools, in which are about 100 boys and 60 girls. In the village are a dispensary, and a good building erected during the prevalence of the cholera, in 1832, and now used as a fever hospital. Here are the ruins of a strong fortress erected by the De Lacys, who formerly possessed the surrounding country: it consisted of three strong castles enclosed by a wall and ramparts more than 120 yards in circumference; two of the castles are remaining. Adjoining the church is a large and strong castle in a tolerably perfect state, erected by the Knights Templars in the twelfth century. There are some

remains of the small church of Cooleen, or Temple-Colman, now called Howardstown, built by the Knights Templars in 1287, and on the suppression of that order annexed to this parish.