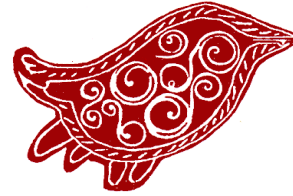


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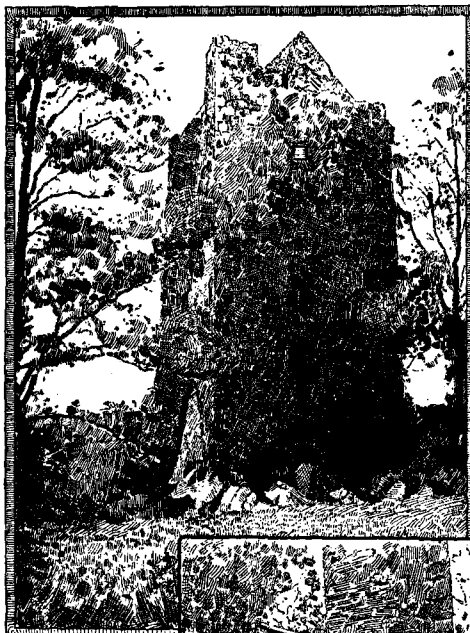
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Carrignamuck Castle, County Cork: a Stronghold of the MacCarthys.

BY HERBERT WEBB GILLMAN, J.P., B.L., M.R.S.A.,
COUNCIL MEMBER.

THE present paper contains a particular description of an old castle in County Cork, with some introductory remarks on such edifices in general. It is desirable to show briefly how the subject falls within the province of this society, and some hope is entertained also that the subject may be followed up by writers who have studied old remains in their respective localities, till something like a complete account of these may be at the service of historians of the county.

The principal object of this society is stated in its rules to be "the collection, preservation, and diffusion of all available information regarding the past of the City and County of Cork" Connected with this past, and standing now as mute witnesses of the history of the peoples that have occupied the county, there still exist, all over its surface, the remains of structures and other objects raised by the successive races. Probably any one resident in a country district could mention off-hand dozens of such objects within a circle of ten miles round his residence. Ogham stones, cromlechs, dal-lans of one period; raths, duns and cathairs, of a later; abbeys and castles of a more recent time. These, or what now exists of them, are still to be found in every part of



CARRIGNAMUCK CASTLE from the south; and east face (part) showing the entrance and causeway thereto, and the flanking fore-building.
From Photos by WARBURTON BEAMISH, Esq.

the county. If even a list of such remains, with a brief statement of their condition, as they stand at this date, could be compiled by this society, good work would be done towards the accomplishment of the society's aims. If, after the compilation of the list, the further step in advance can be taken of putting together all that can be traced of the history of these remains, most important material will be thus secured towards a full and correct county record. Each of the objects just mentioned has played its part, one more, another less, in its own period; and it would probably be found that the separate histories of

all can be pieced together so as to largely contribute to, and also illustrate, what is still a desideratum, a continuous narrative history of the county.

These observations apply, of course, with more force to remains such as abbeys and castles raised in historic times; but, nevertheless, the collection of all that is *locally* known concerning earlier objects would most

probably lead to clear and correct knowledge of these also, and the times in which they were erected.

To illustrate these views a castle has been selected for description of its present condition, and of its history so far as this has been traced—a castle which, like scores of others scattered over the country, was of minor consequence, and has not attracted, in recent or former times, anything like the attention bestowed on such castles as Blarney, Macroom, Dunboy, and the like, by armies or historians and antiquaries. Carrignamuck, generally known as Dripsey Castle, engaged the attention of Mr. Windele only so far as to secure the mention of its name once in his delightful book,⁽¹⁾ while Smith's History has only two brief notices, and its name is not once mentioned in the *Pacata Hibernia*. It is not singular in this silence concerning its past. There is very little in print about the castles of county Cork, with the exception of a few prominent ones. Grose in his "Antiquities" mentions only two. In this connection it is right to add that a manuscript volume on the subject is supposed to be extant in some private hand. A learned member⁽²⁾ of this society allows it to be mentioned that a relative of his, the late Mr. John Lindsay, F.S.A., of Maryville, Blackrock, had studied several of these castles, and left, among his manuscripts, a volume written by himself on this important subject; and that this invaluable book was sold in London with his coins, and appears to have been purchased by the late Earl of Crawford, but that, as the present Earl has disposed of a large portion of his father's library, it is not known where this volume may be at present. Possibly any publicity attending this statement may lead to its discovery.

But, even with our present lack of direct published notices, it will be found that, on even a moderate amount of research, Carrignamuck can be made to yield its quota to the history of our county.

It was one of the strongholds erected by the Lords of Muskerry, chiefs of one of the three great stems into which the MacCarthy clan divided at a period before they erected stone castles. Windele (p. 207) says that of

(1) Windele, "Guide to South of Ireland," p. 213.

(2) Mr. Cecil Crawford Woods, F.S.A., of Chiplee, to whom the writer is indebted for access to several books from his library.

160 castles in this county, 56 were built by Irish chieftains, and that of the latter number 26 belonged to the MacCarthys; and as they existed as a clan several centuries before such structures were raised in Ireland, it may prove useful to note concisely here the circumstances, to which is due the delay, on the part of noble Irish families in adopting the practice of building these castles, which, however old, are mere modern fashions compared to the antiquity of the MacCarthy and other families. Windele, at the place last cited, argues indignantly against the assertion that the Irish built no stone castles before the English invasion, and that, when they did build, they borrowed the style from the invaders. He particularizes three Irish buildings of this class before 1169; and his conclusion may be so far admitted that the Irish did not *originally* borrow the Norman style *after* the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland. But, in regard to the MacCarthy castles, at least, a safer guide will be found in the historian⁽³⁾ of one branch (that of Gleannacroim) of the family. His first mention of them is in connection with the invaders. In detailing the fratricidal struggles, such as have been unfortunately common in the family, between the three sons of a chief who died A.D. 1205, he adds—"In these deplorable quarrels, the brothers were ever ready to purchase, by cession of territory, the alliance of the English. These adventurers held their footing in the county mainly by such alliances . . . and readily ranged themselves with one or other of the disputants, and received for their services vast territories, upon which, as their custom was, they hastened to build castles to secure them against the evil day when peace should return"—a statement showing that these settlers found no castles pre-existing on the lands. And Giraldus Cambrensis points to the same conclusion, for it was his "advice to Henry II. from the example of Turges and his Ostmen to sow Ireland with castles at proper places" near enough "to be able to assist each other." Henry, great builder though he was, being called away by the rebellion of his sons, could not act on this advice; but his great feudatories did not neglect so important a business, as, for example, Cogan and Fitzstephen in Cork, and the Fitzgeralds

(3) "Historical Pedigree of the MacCarthys of Gleannacroim," by Daniel MacCarthy (Glas). Printed by Pollard, Exeter. n.d.

in Leinster. Castles, indeed, were long regarded by the Irish as a foreign innovation; their bards sang of them as disfigurements of nature—the more so, probably because of their Norman origin; and MacCarthy (Glas) tells how, after the defeat of the Geraldines and their English allies in 1260 by the Carbery MacCarthys and other chiefs, the victors did not occupy, but burned and levelled the Anglo-Norman castles, Macroom among them. They did this, too, though “experience had shown them that in such buildings consisted the main strength of their adversaries.” It was not till their obvious utility slowly triumphed over native prejudice that the Irish adopted the practice, and themselves commenced castle-building.

Sir John Davies, who wrote his “Discovery” in 1612, assigns the two Irish customs of Tanistry and Gavelkind as the real reason why the chiefs were slow to adopt that practice, and he asks—“who would plant, or improve, or build on that land, which a stranger, whom he knew not, should possess after his death?”—a question, which he explains thus—“By the custom of tanistry the chieftains of every county and the chiefs of every sept had no estate longer than for life in their chiefries, the inheritance whereof did rest in no man, and the chiefries, though they had some portions of land allotted unto them, did consist mainly in cuttings and cosheries, and other Irish exactions, whereby they did spoil and impoverish the people at their pleasure; and when their chieftains were dead, their sons or next heirs did not succeed them, but their tanists,”⁽⁴⁾ whom MacCarthy (Glas), quoting Vallancey, defines as “the oldest male among the near kinsmen of the ruling prince, and of the same name and stock;” and Davies adds, “who were elective, and purchased their election with the strong hand.” In this statement Davies is not contradicted by MacCarthy, for a clan had the right of setting aside any tanist, otherwise entitled

(4) Tanist, derived from the Irish ordinal number *tanise*, meaning *second*, the second person in the land, successor presumptive to the ruling lord. The regular course of tanist succession, if not interrupted by the clan or by usurpation, was “laterally from brother to brother, cousin to cousin, or the eldest in years of equal blood, leaving to certain hereditary officers” (O’Sullivan Mor, in the case of the MacCarthys) “the trust of deciding on whom such inheritance devolved, and of making this fact known by public inauguration, and the delivery of the white rod.”—*MacCarthy (Glas)*, introd. p. viii.

by Brehon law to succeed to the chieftainship, if they thought him unsuitable, owing to a bodily or mental defect; or if, as sometimes happened, some strong man forced his will on the clan. Davies further points out that the Irish custom of gavelkind tended in the same direction, for by it “the inferior tenancies were partible amongst all the males of the sept, legitimate or not; and, after partition made, if any of the sept died, his portion was not divided among his sons, but the chief of the sept made a new partition of all lands belonging to that sept.”

To one familiar with the subject of village communities, the consequences of these customs will not appear surprising. There being no absolute property, occupiers were deterred from making improvements, though Davies goes, as we shall see, too far in asserting that “never did any person, before or after the time of Henry II., build any stone or brick house for his private habitation, but such as had obtained estates according to English tenures,” for there were certainly Irish-built castles before such tenures came into fashion.

Whatever the cause may be—and probably many combined, and among them the devastating civil wars and forays among the clans—custom ran in wattle and mud buildings, which are by no means uncomfortable dwellings, *crede experto*. Giraldus Cambrensis, quoting Hovenden, tells how, thirteen years before he wrote in 1185, Henry II. built a palace in Dublin of smoothed wattles, constructed according to the custom of the country: *de virgibus levigatis ad modum illius patriæ constructum*; and Cox (p. 33) mentions that Sir John De Courcey built and bestowed two castles on MacMahon in the latter’s country, but that in a month MacMahon demolished both, saying that he did not promise to hold stones but land, and that it was contrary to his nature to live within cold walls whilst the woods were so nigh. The manner of life of the Irish made them look on the confinement of a castle with something like abhorrence.

It is hoped that the length of the foregoing observations will be pardoned. Some writers have made it a reproach to the Irish that they had no stone buildings at an earlier age, and it seemed proper to investigate the reasons why their inception was comparatively modern, a matter which will help also to the understanding of the types and forms to be found in our local castles.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CASTLE.

The castle of Carrignamuck stands on a solid rock of lucustrine old red sandstone, near a bend of the river Dripsey, and about a mile from the village of the same name. It is a striking and beautiful object in the scenery of the district, and forms one of a chain extending from Blarney to beyond Macroom—all formerly in the hands of the Lords of Muskerry—and it is built close to the old road between these places.

The meaning of the name is "rock of the pigs," animals whose abundance is commemorated in a great number⁽⁵⁾ of local Irish names. It is said to have been so called from a pass by the river near it, where pigs, domesticated or wild, used to be killed. A clever, but uneducated, writer,⁽⁶⁾ who published about 1845 a small volume of travels through this county, mentions a tradition that the name is properly "Carrig-cormac," in memory of a fratricide committed there, as will be mentioned in the history of the castle; but the change thence to the present name seems too forcible to admit of this etymology being accepted.

Among castles in this county built on the plan of Carrignamuck there is probably no other one in so admirable a state of preservation as this—a thing due to the care bestowed on the pile by the Colthurst family since it came into their possession. On this account it is advisable to place on record some accurate details of its form and structure.

Externally, the castle presents the appearance of a rectangular tower or keep whose base measures 42 feet from north to south, and 32 feet from east to west, with a rectangular flanking-tower or fore-building projecting from the east wall at its northern end, of dimensions 17 feet from north to south, and 10 feet from the east to its junction with the wall of the keep. The entrance to the keep is in this east wall, and two feet from the fore-building which flanks it. The northern face of the latter is flush with that of the keep itself; and thus the ground plan of the castle is a gnomon whose western and northern sides measure 42 feet each, and the southern face 32 feet. The exterior faces "batter" or slope inward but very slightly. The height is 66 to 70 feet, from the top of the battlements, as

(5) *Vide* Joyce, "Irish Names," 3rd edition, p. 461.

(6) Michael Pyne—"Biographical Memoirs of Travels through this County."

they now stand, to the base (which is not level), thus conforming to the rule limiting the height to about $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the diameter of the base. The keep is of a late Norman pattern.

The entrance to the keep is in the middle of the eastern wall at about 2 feet from the southern face of the fore-building. The opening is 5 feet wide, but narrowed to 3 ft. 9 in. by stone posts meeting in a pointed arch above, all set in a rectangular recess into which a drawbridge may have fitted originally. The thickness of the main wall in this face would be over 8 feet if it were solid; but it is pierced on the basement and on the first and second floors by mural galleries, all vaulted, of widths about 3 ft. 6 in., and of varying lengths; the height being 7 ft. 4 in. to the crown of the arch. Thus there are on the eastern side two parallel walls, that on the outside being about three feet thick at the base of the keep, and not more than 2 ft. 3 in. to 2 ft. in the higher floors, and that on the inside being about 2 ft. thick. The wall is not, therefore, on its face, of the great strength often attributed to these structures; against cannon it is very weak, and was, in fact, the part breached by the Parliamentary troops in the Commonwealth period.

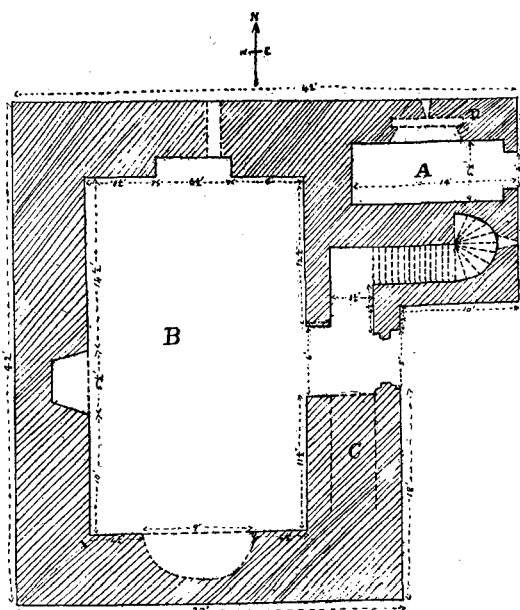
On the left of the entrance the mural gallery has been quite solidly built up, probably in anticipation of a siege—the breach just mentioned was made in the gallery above it. The mural gallery to the right of the entrance is 7 ft. 9 in. in length, and at its farther end has an opening 3 ft. 2 in. wide to its right, where the stairs commence in the body of the fore-building. These begin with seven straight steps going east, the next being the first of a flight of 39 circular steps (or 46 in all) leading to the first and second floors and to the mural galleries thereon. These circular stairs are formed in the south-eastern angle of the fore-building.

Opposite the entrance is an opening in the inner of the parallel eastern walls, originally 6 feet wide, now partially built up, with an arch formed of *overlapping* stones, and which leads to the basement chamber. This room is 30 feet from north to south, and 18 feet from east to west, and is in the body of the keep, and it leaves the northern, southern, and western walls thereof 6 feet thick and solid. The floor is not levelled, the rock there preserves all its natural irregularities of surface—a fact which points to the customary

use of the basement as a store-room. Nevertheless, there are indications of this having been used at some period as a kitchen also, (and, if so, the floor was probably then levelled over with earth or beaten lime and sand,) for there is on the northern side of this chamber a recess 6 ft. 6 in. wide, and about 2 feet deep and 6 feet high, with what appears to be a chimney rising 3 or 4 feet, and leading to an exit (now stopped up) in the northern wall of the keep. There are also hobs on either side as of a fireplace.

A circular recess, not extending to the floor, of 9 feet in width and 3½ feet in depth, is situated in the southern wall, and runs up to the first floor above, where it has a window opening therefrom. On the basement it probably opened into a narrow loophole for the admission of air, and formed also a seat. In the western wall there is also a semi-hexagonal recess of the same depth, and 5 feet high, not extending to the floor.

At the height of about 9 feet from the rock-floor of the basement there are signs of a floor, made, doubtless, of rough oak planks on oak joists. This supposed oak floor would be that of the room above, which is arched over with stone, the crown of the arch being at a height of about 20 feet from the basement rock. The room itself is of exactly the same size and shape as the one below it, and the access to it is obtained by ascending 17 of the stairs before described, the last 10 being of the circular flight. The height of each step is about 7 inches, but they vary in this respect. At the seventeenth step one can leave the circular stairs and enter a lobby extending east and west to a length of 5 ft. 8 in. This leads to a mural gallery at right angles to itself, which runs to the right and left through the thick-



CARRIGNAMUCK CASTLE, BASEMENT. (1891.)

- A. Chamber, probably for dejecta.
 B. Basement chamber 30 × 18 feet; floor of natural rock unlevelled.
 C. Mural gallery, probably a guard-room; now built up solidly.
 D. Shaft opening into A from two garde-robes above.

Plan by WEBB GILLMAN, Esq., Lieut. R.A.

ness of the east wall of the keep as before mentioned. Facing the lobby across the gallery is a doorway (now stopped up) which led to the vaulted chamber on the first floor, and which was probably the state-room of the castle. The total length of this gallery from end to end is 34 feet. It is lighted by a splayed loop in the southern wall, which is here only 3 feet thick, and by another loop in the eastern wall, which is only 2 ft. 3 in. thick at that point. It varies in width from 3 ft. 6 in. to 3 ft. 9 in., and is 7 ft. 4 in. in height, and is directly over that in the basement. It also has in its floor straight above the entrance a machicolated opening, through which the garrison could pour missiles on a storming party forcing their way through the door below. At its northern end there is a turning to the right (*i.e.*, east) leading to a passage, 8½ feet high and 2½ feet wide, situated in the body of the fore-building, and lighted by a loop at its far end. This passage has a recess at the end, 3 feet deep northwards, in the thickness of the wall of the fore-building, which is manifestly a *garde-robe*.

Nothing is more remarkable than the provisions made for sanitation and cleanliness in semi-military buildings of this type. In the present instance the dejecta would fall through a rectangular vertical shaft, about 10 inches in width, made in the thickness of the northern wall of the fore-building, and ventilated by a longitudinal loop in that wall, and they would then pass down to a small vaulted chamber in the basement having an entrance from the east. This chamber⁽⁷⁾ has no other opening

(7) A similar chamber existed in the castle of Coyty, Glamorganshire, and there are other examples.—*Clark* "Mediæval Military Architecture," vol. i. 169.

then the shaft into the body of the building. In the floor above that on which this *garde-robe* is situated there is another, not directly above this one, but to the west of it; both of these open into the same shaft. From the ledges on which a wood seat probably rested in the former, and the absence of these in the latter *garde-robe*, it may be inferred that they were intended for different sexes.

Ascending from the seventeenth stair and rising fourteen more, which are lighted by two loops, one arrives at five straight steps leading west to the entrance to the chamber which forms the second floor, and rests upon the top of the vaulted chamber mentioned as the first floor. This chamber is of the same length from north to south (*i.e.* 30 feet) as the one below, but from east to west its dimension is larger, being 21 feet—an increase owing to a ledge of 18 inches deep in the walls on these sides, which are so far thinner than below. This apartment also was vaulted over with stone, the arch being, as in other examples, more pointed than that of the chamber underneath. Most of this arch has now disappeared. Between this and the top of the castle there are marks of two additional floors, making four in all in addition to the basement of the castle. In this chamber there is a window in the southern wall 5 ft. 8 in. high on the outside, and splayed to 6 ft. 2 in. on the inside. The thickness of the wall there diminishes to 5 feet. In the northern wall is a high fireplace rising to nearly the top of the arch.

Leaving this chamber and ascending fourteen more circular steps, lighted by two loops, one arrives at four straight steps leading west to the door (now blocked up) of the third floor. This completes the 46 steps of the circular staircase. Turning to the south one arrives, by means of 18 straight steps made in a mural gallery in the east wall, at a passage to the right in the southern wall; and on proceeding to the western end of this one reaches a flight of 20 steps (of which 12 are circular) in the wall of the south-west angle of the keep. These steps lead to the battlements. It will be thus seen that any of the garrison leaving his post on the battlements would have to pass by the two sides of the principal sleeping chambers, and probably could not evade detection—a matter often considered in these castles. There was apparently a watchtower on the north-eastern corner at the top of the fore-building, as also a small tower at the south-

west angle, covering the head of the stairs just mentioned, leading to the battlements. The castle at present has a ridged roof of slate, placed there, for preservation of the building, by the late Mr. Joseph Colthurst, predecessor of the present proprietors. In former times it is possible that the roof covering was of a fissile slaty rock found at no great distance from Carrignamuck.

Before the era of cannon a tower such as this was intended to rely for its defence very much upon its passive strength. If well provisioned, and with the drawbridge (if any) up, it was safe long to defy the attack of an enemy unprovided with military engines. The active defence of the tower was directed chiefly from its battlements. The loops in the walls of Carrignamuck are so constructed that they are no use for close defence, their ostensible purpose being the admission of light and air, and there are no arrangements for a flank defence, not excepting even the loops in the fore-building which flanks the entrance into the tower. In this castle the battlements do not, as in other cases, overhang the walls, and, therefore, there are no machicolated openings through which missiles could be shot on the besiegers; but very probably the want was in this castle supplied by a contrivance known as a "*bretasche*"—a word connected with the English word "brattice." This was a gallery of timber put up when a siege was expected, and running round the walls outside⁽⁸⁾ the battlements and supported by struts, and covered in with a sloping roof. The west and southern faces of the castle show, at the level of the battlement walk, numerous holes where the beams may have rested originally. The woodwork has, of course, wholly disappeared.

It was usual to have a walled *enceinte* around a tower of this kind, enclosing a space known as the "bawn." In the present case the enclosure seems to have been divided into two parts, one around the castle itself, and the other stretching down to the river bank over the steep ground to the north and east sides of the castle. This latter space was enclosed by a wall, much of which still remains, and which, at the places nearest the castle, was made six feet thick, while in the other parts it is only about twenty to twenty-four inches in thickness. It would seem as

(8) *Vide* Clark, Vol. i., 151; also Viollet-le-duc, "Annals of a Fortress." Engl. ed. 1875, p. 192.

if this strengthening of the wall near the castle was of a date later than that of the building itself, and was, perhaps, contemporaneous⁽⁹⁾ with the general use of cannon, for the entrance to the tower is commanded by a hill on the east at the other side of the river (the hill, in fact, from which it was breached in the time of Cromwell), and the thickened wall lies between the entrance and that hill. The wall at this part may formerly have been higher than it is now, and there are traces of its having had a breastwork on its top. There is in it a narrow passage, like a sally-port, with steps leading from the level of the castle to the lower ground of the enclosure. This exit is made in an oblique direction through the wall, so as to prevent missiles passing through it into the space round the tower. Along the lowest part of the enclosure runs a moat, fed by a channel from the river Dripsey; and it was probably from this that the garrison drew water, for there is no trace found of a well.

This enclosure is, as just stated, to the north and east of the castle, but there are traces of a wall enclosing a more regular "bawn" around the castle itself. This supposed wall joined the thickened wall, above mentioned, at its western end, and ran then past the north-western angle of the castle and at a distance of about two yards from that angle, where a small piece of the wall still remains. It probably then went along the level area on which the castle stands, in a south-west direction, and was met by a similar wall starting from a point about 130 feet south of the castle in the west wall of the other enclosure. The extent of this "bawn" cannot now be ascertained, though, perhaps, the digging of a shallow trench across the supposed line of the enclosing walls might lead to the discovery of the original foundations. There are the remains of two pieces of masonry, including a pillar of a gateway, on the site of this bawn, but these remains are of a modern date, as shewn by the ordnance map of 1844. The building of which they were part may have been built out of the materials of the wall of the bawn.

The narrow passage in the thickened wall above described, was the only opening connecting the two bawns. The only other entrance originally into the lower enclosure—

⁽⁹⁾ The solid building up of the mural gallery to the left of the entrance is probably also of the same date.

the one extending to the river—was apparently a low opening in its western wall, now overgrown with shrubs, large enough for swine to pass through, or for a man to creep through on all-fours. The other bawn was the chief one, used by the occupants of the castle, and, no doubt, cattle were driven into it for safety in times of threatened foray. In both bawns there were probably huts for some of the retainers of the lord of Carrignamuck.

On the whole, this castle, preserved by the care of its more recent owners, affords a valuable and most interesting memorial of the period during which it formed the dwelling of certain members of the princely family by whom it was erected.

HISTORY OF THE CASTLE.

Our country historians give only two or three brief references to this castle. The writer has therefore had to search in the Public Records for information as to its history; and, though this has been now done to only a limited extent, yet one class of records, lately made available in print with the luxury of an excellent index—to be more particularly described presently—discloses the remarkable fact that, while the Lord of Muskerry held Blarney as his residence and while tanistry lasted, his tanist (successor presumptive) was always posted at Carrignamuck, and had a manor and demesne there, which thus followed the fortunes of the superior lords. Hence the history of the MacCarthys, Lords of Muskerry, is suggested for investigation in connection with this castle.

The list of the successive lords of Muskerry is preserved among the Carew MSS. in the Lambeth Library, and their pedigree is given by O'Hart from these and Irish sources.⁽¹⁰⁾ The powerful clan of the MacCarthys, which had lived from the third century generally under single rulers, though with oft-disputed successions, broke up in Munster in the thirteenth century into two great stems, and in the next into three, namely—first, MacCarthy Mór, the main line; 2nd, MacCarthy Reagh, so called from Donald surnamed "reagh," or the "swarthy," first Prince (1366) of Carbery; and, third and wealthiest, the MacCarthys of Muskerry. The first of this third stem was Dermot Mór MacCarthy, a son of Cormac MacCarthy Mór, of the main line. Dermot

⁽¹⁰⁾ "Irish Pedigrees, or the Origin and Stem of the Irish Nation." Dublin, 4th edition. 1887.

was born in 1310, and in 1353 was acknowledged or created (as O'Hara puts it) the first Lord of Muskerry by the English. From him the honors and demesne lands went by regular tanist descent, though with intervening civil struggles, to Cormac McTeige MacCarthy, surnamed Laidir, ninth Lord of Muskerry, who succeeded in 1449. He was a great builder, disproving thereby Sir John Davies' statement before quoted, for the writer has found no trace of his having taken a grant from an English king to hold the lands of his country under English tenure. He built Blarney castle, and also that of Carrignamuck, and one at Kilcrea—Carrignamuck being about eight miles from each of the other two—besides abbeys and churches.

It became the custom for the Lords of Countries to place some relative in each of such castles, who was then as his lieutenant, or "attorney," (to use a word appearing in a patent of Q. Eliz. time,) and headed the "rising out" from the district under his charge when the lord called out his country's muster: and Cormac Laidir's own brother Eoghan (Owen), the lord's tanist, was stationed at Carrignamuck. This lord's period of rule did not pass without some of the usual fratricidal commotions. The Four Masters tell that in 1477 "Cormac, grandson of Donagh, son of "MacCarthy Riavach in Desmond, was taken "prisoner by Cormac, son of Teige, son of "Cormac," (*i.e.* this ninth lord of Muskerry) "and by the sons of Dermod-an-Dunaidh, his "uncle's sons; and a commotion arose over "all Munster through that death, and the "southern half was completely spoiled between "both English and Irish." It so happened that in this lord's time the English interest in Munster was much weakened by the Wars of the Roses, and many of their castles were taken by the Irish clan. The power of the latter therefore rose, and Cox tells that, in Muskerry the English settlers paid MacCarthy £40 per annum for protecting them from the insults of his countrymen; and the residents at Carrignamuck shared in this prosperity. Cormac Laidir's end, however, was unfortunate, for, on some quarrel between him and his brother, at this very castle, he was wounded by the latter, Eoghan (his brother, not *cousin* as Smith, i. 174, mentions) and by Eoghan's sons, and died of his wounds, and was buried at Kilcrea 1494. This brother would, by tanist law, have succeeded to the lordship of

Muskerry, but from precedents we may be sure he was formally set aside by the clan; at all events, the Lambeth pedigree places the murdered man's son, Cormac Oge, and not Eoghan the murderer, as tenth Lord of Muskerry.

This lord was then of mature age, having been born in 1447, and it was his lot to lead the Muskerrymen in many a "rising out" in the troublous times till his death in 1537. Who the lieutenant at Carrignamuck was in his time is not certainly traced as yet, for he appears to have had no brothers, and, of his uncles, one was dead, and one—his father's murderer—set aside, as before stated; but it may be inferred that he was the lord's son and tanist, Teige, afterwards the eleventh lord, who thus had early training in those civil strifes. A long-standing feud had existed between the Earls of Desmond and the MacCarthys ever since the defeat of the former at Callan, near Kenmare, in 1261, after which it was said, "no Desmond durst "put plough in ground for twelve years in his "own country." Ever since then the feud had continued; many sanguinary conflicts had taken place between the two races, and another bloody fight was now again to happen. In 1521, the head of the Fitzgeralds, James Earl of Desmond, burst with a powerful force into Muskerry, and ravaged, and burned, and destroyed, till Cormac Oge collected his "rising out," joining also to himself as allies the forces of his son-in-law, Cormac MacCarthy Reagh of Carbery (second husband of his daughter Julia). The opposing forces met near Mourné Abbey, and Desmond was totally defeated with the loss, as a writer of the time tells us, of "xxiv. "baners of horsemen, which bee xx. under "every baner at the leest, and under some "xxx., xl, & i.; and amonges others was slaine "the said Erle his kinsman Sir John Fitz "Gerot ('Gerald'), and Sir John of Desmond "taken and his son slayne, &c." The Lord Lieutenant writing on 25th September to King Henry VIII., reported that it was no great hurt that Desmond, Anglo-Norman, though he was, was punished, "for of late he "had lent more to the counsaile of Irishmen "than of me your Grace's lieutenant," and added that, though the Irish "may wax more prouder" in his discomfiture, still he regards the said Cormac as the man of all Irishmen (save one), "who would most gladly fall into

English order." It was after this, perhaps in consequence of it, that in 1528, Cormac Oge attended parliament as "Lord of Muscry."

There is no further record found of interest after this up to the death of the tenth lord, which took place in 1537. He was buried with his father, at Kilcrea, and was succeeded by his son Teige McCormac Oge MacCarthy, above mentioned, the eleventh lord of Muskerry, who was fifty-five years old at his accession. He had no brother, and his tanist and lieutenant at Carrignamuck was his eldest son Dermot (born 1501). The sixteenth century, generally, was a period of unrest

in Munster, disturbed by feuds between rivals of the house of Desmond, and by other local commotions, and finally by rebellions against the sovereign power, whose policy of annihilation of chieftainships and dissipation of sept territories was, very naturally, disliked by the chieftains. In these contentions, every family whose home was in the disturbed country took a part. But the Muskerry MacCarthys astutely managed to hold their own during this century, saved thus from the fate of the Desmonds, whose vast territories of over half a million of acres were confiscated at the close of the century.

(To be continued.)

An Ancient Spear-Head.

[Read before the Society by ROBERT DAY, J.P., F.S.A., M.R.I.A.]



HAVE much pleasure in exhibiting on behalf of Alfred William Allen, Esq., of Clashenure, a very well preserved bronze spear-head, which he found when accompanying his ploughman at Mount Zephyr, in the Duhallow country, near Millstreet, county Cork. The man was ploughing a field that had been reclaimed from bog land, when the spear-head was turned up by the ploughshare. It is fourteen inches long, with feather-edge, leaf-shaped blades, that terminate in loops. The socket, which is three inches long, has six concentric circles round its base, otherwise the weapon is without ornament, but it is of beautiful proportions, and is coated more or less over its entire surface with a dark brown patination.

We have it upon the authority of O'Curry⁽¹⁾ that the Tuatha Dé Danaan were armed with sharp-pointed weapons, with which they conquered the Firbolgs, whose weapons "were rounded at the top." A most interesting account of the arms used in the warfare of ancient Erin is given in the description of the great battle fought between the Firbolgs, who were the older

(1) "O'Curry's Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish," vol. ii., p. 241. Williams and Norgate.



occupiers of the country, and their invaders, the Tuatha Dé Danaan, at the first battle of Magh Tuireadh, the date of which is fixed, according to O'Flaherty's chronology, A.M. 2737, or B.C. 1272, and according to the chronology followed by the Four Masters A.M. 3303, or B.C. 1890. From this an idea can be formed of the period in which these bronze weapons were used.

The preservative nature of our peat bogs will account in some measure for the beautifully sharp and clean condition of this spear-head, but the component parts of the bronze used by the people of Northern Europe, being 90 parts of copper with 10 of tin, was singularly hard and durable, and is still capable of bearing a keen and sharp cutting edge.

To illustrate this, I have brought a few from my own collection of the same variety, and with them one which is described in the transactions of the Society of Antiquaries, London, that was dredged from a depth of 17 feet below the mud level of our river, in the Blackrock reach. It was presented to me by the late Alderman William Hegarty, who was on board the dredge when it came up in one of the buckets.