

DONEGAL IN SONG AND STORY

by—
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DONEGAL has the honour of being credited with giving an abode to the first human inhabitants of Ireland. According to the *Leabhar Gabhala* Partholan landed at and settled in the place now occupied by Ballyshannon. His wife had a favourite dog which Partholan slew in a fit of jealousy. The dog was buried on the little island near the estuary, and that island has ever since been called *Inis Saimer*, as *Saimer* was the name of that much prized animal. According to the ancient accounts *Saimer* was also the name of the river and of the lake in Fermanagh. The name of the river and lake was afterwards changed to the *Erne* in memory of a *Firbolg* chief called *Earnai*. The beautiful and useful waterfall, *Eas Aodha Ruaidh*, is supposed to owe its name to the fact that *Aodh Ruadh*, a monarch of Ireland, was drowned there five centuries before the Christian era. This *Red Hugh* was the father of *Macha* of the *Golden Hair* who, it is stated, built the *Royal Fort of Eamhan Macha*, or *Emania*, which figures so largely in the stories of *Conor Mac Nessa* and the *Red Branch Knights*. It was here in the *O'Donnell Castle of Beal-Atha-Seanaidh* that *Red Hugh* was welcomed by his father after his escape from captivity in 1592, and here also, five years later, he won his signal victory over the English forces commanded by *Clifford*.

The principal Castle of the *O'Donnells* was in *Donegal Town*. *Dun na nGall*, or *Fort of the Foreigners*, was so called, it is said, because some *Danes* settled there in the ninth and tenth centuries. At the *Inquisition* held at *Lifford* in preparation for the plantation in 1809, the county was called *Donegal* after the place which had been for 200 years the

principal residence of the Chiefs of the territory. *Aodh Ruadh*, son of *Niall*, and his wife, *Fionnguala*, built a monastery for the *Franciscans* in *Donegal*, in 1474, and it flourished until its destruction in 1601. At that time *Niall Garbh*, who took the side of the English, seized the Abbey. *Aodh Ruadh* laid seige to it and the famous Abbey was burned. Near *Donegal* the famous *Cathach of Columcille* was kept in the custody of the *Mac Groarty's*.

The Family of Mac an Bhaire were Ollamhs and Bards to the O'Donnells.

After the flight of the *Earls* and the death of *Ruaidhri* and *Cathbarr O'Donnell*, *Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaire* wrote a touching elegy. *Nuala*, their sister, who was married to *Niall Garbh*, but who left him when he threw in his lot with the English, is represented by the poet as standing alone in the *Eternal City* weeping over the grave of her departed brothers:

O woman of the piercing wail,
Who mournest o'er yon mound of clay,
With sigh and groan,
Would God thou wert among the
Gael!

This poem reminds us of another beautiful lament, containing the praises of *Donegal*, placed on the lips of *Nuala*, daughter of *O'Neill*, who once reigned in *Tirconail* as the wife of *O'Donnell*.

Ír doibinn, doibinn tír doða na n-eac,
Ír doibinn a blaó ašur a conac;
Ní doibne liom ná ó rin amac
Ó 'Órom Cuama go Muirbeac,
Seoda tú mar biaó ar ro méir
Inbeap éire ar cuan na nŠall,
Caob baile árdeann le spém,
Ír mairpéir sílégal 'Óim na nŠall.
Ír doibinn, doibinn béat an beapra
As éirše amac tuir maroin céodaé;

Mí aobhne liom ná Déal áca Seanadó,
 Ír ó rin amac go tici Órom Cuam!
 Ír aobhinn, aobhinn Inir íllic Naor,
 Ír tnom a braon 'r ír mair a bláe,
 Ír reang an reangac, ír binn an cuac,
 Ír bhuic ballac' le n-a bhuac as pnám.
 Í nÓin ná nSall cá roga sac reob,
 Daité Mí Óomnall ír lior ná Ríog,
 Deir mo deannaic-ra pá óó
 So Déannar Mór Cipe doóa.

Like Oisín she reveals her identity in the final stanza:—

Ír mé Nuada, iníean Mí Néill.
 Dú peat í scéim í nÓin ná nSall.
 Mair sué tom í com teir féin
 Caim 'hoir í scéim 'r mo ceiteabair
 mall.

Niall Garbh was detested and little compassion was felt for him when he was imprisoned by the English whom he had assisted. When he died in London in 1626, some poet, probably one of the O'Clery's, was charitable enough to write an elegy. This poem emphasises the one virtue that could be admired in Niall Garbh, his personal bravery. Here are a couple of verses from the poem:—

Niall Garbh O Domhnall do dhul
 A ttor ghiall Grianan Lundan,
 Creach ra-domhain do ghabh geall
 Ar bharamail Fer nEirenn.
 Fedh a therma a ttor an ríogh
 Foirm Gaoideal gabus dimbriogh,
 San tor-sain an tann do-choidh
 Dob am osnaidh da a n-onoir.

Leaving untouched the wealth of historic data associated with the Castles and Abbeys of Ballyshannon and Donegal, we pass through Inver Nalle and Dun Congalle, near which, according to the fireside stories, Gaibidin Gabhna forged armour and taught prowess to the young nobles, and pause by the quiet harbour of Killybegs. This place is called in Irish "na Cealla Beaga," or little cells. These were evidently hermit cells, but their exact location has not been ascertained with certainty. Curiously enough, the parish is dedicated to St. Catherine of Egypt. There is a story that a ship once arrived there from foreign parts with a bishop on board. The bishop conducted his fellow passengers to a little nook where he returned thanks for their safe delivery from the perils of the sea. He blessed a well there and dedicated it to St. Catherine of Egypt. In the 15th century the Mac Suibhne of Banagh erected a Franciscan Abbey near his own castle, and that also was called St. Catherine's Abbey. There were three branches of the Mac Suibhnes in

Donegal: those of Fanad, Doe and Banagh. They came across from Scotland to Fanad in the 13th century, and were captains of the Gall Oglagh of the O'Donnells. After a couple of generations one of the Fanad Mac-Suibhnes settled in Doe having wrested their territory from the O'Boyles. Some of the Mac Suibhnes also settled in Connaught and Munster, and those of Banagh were a branch of the Mac Suibhnes of Connaught.

A few ships of the ill-fated Spanish Armada in 1588 sought shelter in the harbour of Killybegs. One of them sank at the harbour mouth; the others, three in number, under the command of Don Alonzo de Leva, refitted at Killybegs and sailed for Scotland. These were wrecked on their way east of Portrush. The survivors of that disaster were seized and hanged by the English. Eight years later, in 1596, three other Spanish ships arrived in Killybegs, bringing an ambassador from Philip of Spain to O'Neill and O'Donnell. Killybegs must have been well known to the Spaniards in those days.

For a period of about twenty years during the 18th century, Killybegs was the centre of a considerable whaling industry.

We must now hasten on to Glencolumbkille, merely bowing our acknowledgments to St. Carthach as we pass. Over Glencolumbkille towers the majestic Sliabh Liag, whose sea cliffs, rising 1,900 feet above the restless waves, have no serious scenic competitors in all Europe. Aodh Mac Bric had his hermit cell on Sliabh Liag in the 6th century, and blessed a well there. To this mountain, according to Colgan, St. Assicus, the guileless Bishop of Elphin, repaired for six years to do penance because he had unwittingly told an untruth.

Manus O'Donnell, in his life of Columcille, tells a strange story about the glen. When St. Patrick banished the demons from Croagh Patrick, they came across the bay and settled in the Sean Ghleann, which they forthwith enveloped in a thick fog. There they remained until the time of St. Columba. When the Saint approached the glen the demons became very angry and one of them threw a javelin which struck Cearc, one of Columcille's attendants. This took place beside a stream, and the spot has ever since been called Srath na Circe, or Cearc's Holm. St. Columba threw back the javelin and a holly bush grew where it fell. Some will perhaps venture to point out that bush still in

Meenaneary. The Saint then threw a stone, before which the fog receded. Finally he threw a bell, and the demons fled before it into the sea, where they were converted into fishes. Lest any one should catch and be tempted to eat one of these metamorphosed demons, an identification mark has been placed upon them: they bear a red mark, and are blind of one eye. Manus O'Donnell further adds that the advent of Columba was foretold not merely by prophets but by pagan Druids as well. The celebrated Finn Mac Cumhail, by chewing his salmon-scorched thumb, could penetrate the secrets of the future and discover the hidden mysteries of the present. One day he pursued a stag as far as the Sean Ghleann, but his usually keen dog refused to close with its quarry. Suspecting some mysterious cause for the hound's inaction, Finn applied himself vigorously to his Ordog Feasa, and it was revealed to him that a man, who should be known as Columba, would be born nine generations from Cormac, the High King, and that the place where the stag stood would be sacred to him. The place was called Bealach Damhain, or the path of the stag.

At a place which, I think, is called Bun na dTri Sruthan, there stands the remains of what is known as the Spanish Church. In 1756 a Spanish cruiser was wrecked on the coast. It was a stormy night, and a Father Owen Carr took shelter from the storm at Malinbeg. Returning home afterwards with an attendant he heard moaning coming from the direction of the cliffs. He climbed down and found a dying Spanish officer praying earnestly. Father Carr, who had been educated in Salamanca, spoke Spanish well. He heard the dying man's confession, and gave him the last rites of the Church. The officer gave him his belt, which was filled with gold coins. This he gave as an offering of thanks for the ministrations of a priest at his last moments. With this money Father Carr repaired the church at Faugher, and built the Spanish Church, whose walls are still standing.

Much could be said about the monastery, the wells, the crosses, and the Turas of Glencolumbkille, but time does not permit.

There is a poem entitled "Cruach an tSagairt" which has Sliabh Liag for its setting. It begins:

Raéaró mipe riar go mullaé Stéibe
Liag
So bfeicé mé an fial déair Domhnall.
I' finte tiom ná bliam go tóin lá a

raib mé as cruall,
Carrannac ar an cléir ar fógnam.

The poem is rather obscure. It describes the hospitality of the priest, and gives an exaggerated description of the natural wealth and beauty of the place. Probably this poem was written in the Penal Days when an tAthair Domhnall spent a month on the mountain to minister to the faithful of the surrounding district. It ends thus:

Tiocfaró orainn an lá a mbéiró cruim-
nú ar an bán,
Sin nuair a béar cáé as éirge 'r nil
don péacadó ariam a nveairn muro
I nghan fíor nó ór áro, nac mbéiró
Linn 'nár lám-rcéibinn.
Faraon, ir rinne acá, mar éairis
béaró ar ríaró,
Ó éairl muro ar péaró tóim, 'ré an
cdeair Domhnall acá mé páo,
So scumrougíó Ri na nSárc' é, 'r
San asainn air ac rpar míora.

In all mountainous districts the sheep is a very important possession. Up till very recent times the old Brehon Laws governing the grazing of sheep were observed in Teelin and Glencolumbkille. The sheep were coralled and counted in the spring. Some trusted man acted as brehon, and allotted the sheep to each farmer in proportion to the amount of arable land he possessed. The people were fond of their sheep, and one does not wonder that some poet should be moved to express in song what is felt by the poor owners of a few valued sheep. The Teelin poet, Eamonn O hAsgain, wrote a song, in the form of a dialogue between himself and a little sheep, in which he warns her to keep from nibbling the young corn, lest dire consequences should follow:

A éaira beas tóir, fan éair go cionn
míora,
I' ná bí túra as írlú an seairn sac
lá;
Nó beirfeair 'un coige tú, béiró oíog-
báil a' bíó ort,
'Snac truaig tuit an ní óéanaí éair-
feair tú 'un báir.
Ní éorlam fan oíóce ac as ornaigil-
ir as rmaoicú,
So mbéiró túra i bhíorún fearta faoi
cám;
Ac a rcoirín mo éroíóe, roacáin an
ní áraí,
Cuirfeair an tñiom ar to rseabaman
bán.

Going eastwards we pass through the land where the names of Conal Caol, Seanachan and Dallan Forgall still linger on the lips of the seanachaidhe. Around the Gweebarra we may pick up

a few songs. The lament for Eamonn Buidhe O'Boyle was picked up by the late Henry Morris, and placed in his splendid collection. This Eamonn Buidhe was buried over two hundred years ago in the graveyard of Inis Caol at the mouth of the Gweebarra, where St. Conal Caol built a church. The O'Boyles' were a powerful family once and gave their name to the Barony of Boylagh. This is the first stanza of the song:—

Á Éamonn Duíde-mo míle léan 'r mo
 éad—
 'O ópa faoi lías, 'r cá'n c'ir reo 'o
 úarú mar cá;
 'r cá báirín ba 'óire 'o fíor-roic
 Saébeal Críe' Fáil,
 In Inir Caol, fapaor, i s'cne 'o brát.

In another stanza the poet reminds the tombstone of the treasure that lies beneath it:

Án eol tuire, á móir-éloc nó iar-leac
 úr,
 Án reoic á síme ar éir beic in ar
 c'ir reo ar 'óar?
 Níl beo den pór rin ác 'óir nó crúir,
 'r bíod b'óro oic cá óir-circe 'sac
 'Daoig'ileac rúc.

Then we meet with humorous songs. In the song called "An Ghiobog," a young man bewails his marriage to a wife who has proved herself a useless housekeeper:

Uiam mór 'ra' cáca reo, ba 'óar mo
 culaic éadúis;
 'Dá lúim'ar, éadúrom, aigeanta, á
 'óean'ann bean á bréasú.
 Ác fann'cuis m'ire an 'sibós, mar bí
 cúpla bó mar r'p' síce,
 Ásur 'ó'fás rí ar an anar mé, ásur
 mo 'óroiceann 'seal 'san léimú.

Á buacailí, 'r á buacailí, an méro
 ásur cá 'san póras,
 Ná fann'cuisú 'óire an 'sibós mar
 'seal ar beasán bólaic;
 'Ó'feárr liom caúin 'slan ásam á
 pilleadú 'oah tréchnóna,
 Ná luat' buíde na reáctame le cur
 amac 'Día 'óóim'ais.

The emigration of our boys to Scotland has always been a source of grief and anxiety to the parents they leave behind them at home. Here are a couple of verses from a song in which a father reveals his anxiety and love for his sons:—

Nuair á c'óim an f'áim'ise 's'arú 'r'é mo
 é'p'óide bíor c'ráide,
 Smaoicú ar ná buacailí má bíom

riao ar ná báraib;
 Suróimre Rí na ndáing'eat-Sé 'ó'c'ur-
 'sear na plánerú—
 'So leig'ó Sé plán na buacailí 'san
 'contabairc ar bíc bároce.

Cá aóib'ear i n'óime Leac Conaill
 nac 'brac'ar ar'ia'í pan áic rin;
 Cá cupar á'g Naom' Conaill ann ásur
 m'p'ó'áil'ic 'so lán'har;
 Ác beir'c níor f'únta'ise ná mo élan-
 ra ní rab riao le fáil ann,
 Cá uáil ásam ná'p 'peacúis riao ó
 baic'readú 'o na bráir'icú.

Coming through the Rosses we cast our eyes seaward, and note the many isles that lend enchantment to this part of the Donegal coast. One of these, Inis Mac Duirn, or Rutland, has passed on a legend which has been relieved in a cameo of beautiful verse by Brigid MacGinley, the poetess of Glenswilly. This poem I find in William Harkin's "North-West Donegal."

Arranmore, which was the scene of a tragic drowning disaster a few years ago, has witnessed more than one tragedy in the course of its history. The following is the brief outline of a story that has come down to us from the latter half of the 17th century. There lived at that time on Arranmore two splendid types of manhood, who were also fast friends: Aodh Ban O'Donnell and Seamus Crone O'Gallagher. Aodh Ban was then in the prime of life, the sole support of an aged mother, and Seamus Crone was in his declining years. One of Cromwell's captains, named Conynham, lived in Doe Castle whence the Mac Suibhnes' had been expelled. This captain used to raid the country around for booty whenever the evil impulse incited him. He raided Arranmore and took possession of all the cattle and sheep on the island.

The people fled in terror and some hid themselves in the caves. Unfortunately one woman looked out from her hiding place and was observed by a picket of soldiers. Conynham, on hearing of the presence of refugees hidden on the island, set a party of soldiers by land, and another by sea, to seek out the hapless people whom he had robbed. A horrible massacre ensued. Some of the people escaped, including Aodh Ban and Seamus Crone. Among the victims was the aged mother of Aodh, and he swore a solemn oath that he would avenge his mother's murder. He and Seamus made their way in due time to the vicinity of Doe Castle, and awaited their opportunity. One day they observed Conynham ride forth with only a single attendant.

There were two paths, any one of which Conynham might choose. Aodh lay in wait along one path, and Seamus took the other. The captain came along the path which Seamus, the elderly man, was guarding. The captain noticed him, and prepared to give fight, but Seamus was too quick for him: he discharged his blunderbuss, killing the horse and wounding the captain in the leg. The captain appealed for mercy, but Aodh Ban, hearing the report of the blunderbuss, rushed up and ended the career of Conynham, saying: "I will show you mercy when you restore the life of my mother and my friends whom you have slaughtered without provocation." Both men were outlawed, and a reward of £500 was offered for their capture. They made their way to Owey Island, and a party of 21 soldiers under an officer, on information received, was sent to arrest them. Arriving at the shore, the soldiers had no means of crossing to the island, and they began to pass the time by playing games on the strand. Seamus Crone, dressed in female garb, but carrying his blunderbuss under his cloak, made a pretence of gathering shellfish. He gradually approached the soldiers, and suddenly opened fire, killing five of them before they recovered from their surprise. Getting behind a rock he despatched a few more. He was soon joined by his friend, and not one of the party of soldiers escaped. The last man fell at Olean na gConrach, or the Island of the Coffins, on Cruit strand. A ship was once wrecked on the island and the Arran people helped themselves to what they could find. One poor boy merely took a rope which he needed as a buarach, or halter, for a cow. He was arrested, brought to Lifford, transported, and never heard of again. The incident is commemorated in a song which we find in Henry Morris' collection.

An lá rin a t'fás mire rúro a' Clóicín Láe,
 Dí na botcaí ar mo éoin-cópp, aSur
 ríon as out i m'áráio;
 Ar out anonn ar béal a' Ohoicéto
 oam, éluic mé mo béal,
 'S as ceac mór Ohoie Locáin o'ól mé
 mo fáie.
 'S an lá rin dí an capta lán i nSeann
 'oo Baile Féib,
 Táimic Paréolán Ó Baoigill ip éus ré
 oam tréac;
 Ar a out ríó Baile an Ohoicéto oam
 ba éhónac mo rceal.
 'S sur as phíorán oab i leit-beann
 fuair mé oerpeab 'ac aon rceal.

The most stirring event connected with Gweedore is the arrest of Father

MacFadden, and the killing of Inspector Martin, on Sunday, the 3rd of February, 1889. Father MacFadden had championed his people's cause against the grinding tyranny of the landlords. An order was given for his arrest but, like the Chief Priests of the Jews long ago, the civil authorities feared a tumult among the people. The priest's house was guarded by police. A night or two before the arrest, Constable Keenan was patrolling in front of the house when something happened that made him chill with terror. He averred that he saw, in the moonlight, the form and face of Inspector Martin lying dead, adorned with helmet and sword, but robed and shrouded as for the grave. He gazed at this form in wonder for a few moments. Then a cloud passed over the face of the moon, and when the moon shone forth again the apparition had disappeared. Martin very unwisely decided to arrest the priest on Sunday morning. Police surrounded the church, and Martin, with seven men, took up his position on the steps that led from the church to the residence of the priest. After Mass, as Father MacFadden was returning to his house, Inspector Martin intercepted him, and said: "I arrest you." "Produce your authority, sir," said the priest. Thereupon the Inspector grabbed the priest's soutane by the collar, rather roughly, and at the same time brandished the sword which he held in his hand. The cry went through the people that the priest was being killed. The crowd rushed in and the Inspector, releasing his hold, tried to keep them back with his sword. Father Mac Fadden was escorted to his house by two policemen, while the Inspector strove to ward off the angry crowd. In the ensuing confusion Inspector Martin received a violent blow, and he fell to rise no more.

'Twas on the 3rd February on the
 morn of that day,
 From Derrybeg they thought to take
 our holy priest away,
 All by the late Inspector, with his
 naked sword in hand,
 He did his best for to arrest our holy
 clergyman.
 The wolf is seen, his looks were keen,
 that morning on the rock,
 His eyes did gaze all for to seize the
 shepherd of our flock.
 To save the priest that morning, they
 faced both steel and ball,
 How the tyrant fell no one can tell,
 that day in Dongal.

A few years prior to this incident Gweedore was stirred by the news of the execution of one of her sons, Pat O'Donnell, for the shooting of James

Carey. There is no need to repeat that sad story, as it is well known to young and old. A young man is compelled to kill the informer who has betrayed those who took part with him in a senseless assassination. That young man pays the extreme penalty, and becomes the subject of a song which is still frequently heard:

My name is Pat O'Donnell, I'm a native of Donegal,
I am, you know, a deadly foe to traitors one and all.
For the shooting of James Carey, I lie in London town,
And on the dreadful scaffold my life I must lay down.

Time does not permit us to dwell on the many associations of Cloghaneely and Tory, the legendary tales of Fomorians and Nemidians, and the division of the territory by Columba, Dubhthach, Fionan and Beaglaoch for the spreading of the faith on the islands and mainland.

We cannot, however, pass over the harrowing episode connected with Tory. After the abortive rebellion of Cahir O'Doherty in 1608, a remnant of the insurgents followed Sean Mac Mhagh-nuis Og O'Donnell to Tory.

The English, under Sir Henry Folliot and Captain Gore, having hunted and slain the fugitives on the mainland, burned all the boats, set guards on the shore and invested the garrison on Tory. According to the abominable practice, which they had been in the habit of adopting, the lives of a few were promised on condition that the heads of so many of the insurgents were handed over. One cannot think without a feeling of horror at the callous butchery that marked this last episode of the rebellion. Let us now withdraw from the gloomy shade, and look at the light that relieves the picture.

The "Crubach" is a very popular song. The Crubach was the name of a cow that had been bought, it is said, by Eamonn O Dubhgain, of Tory. The cow disappeared, and Eamonn's search for his cow was made the theme of a humorous song:

An lá cuairt an crúbac' go corraib,
níor dóigal ní fódar ná féar,
'S níor leis píre báireac' le hocraib,
ac' cumhaib' a beir uiré' out riar.
Níorb' fáda a reat ar an oileán sur
éimall ní ar air go cior móir,
'S veir baime nac' scoirceiró ní an
tuar go nglanraib' ní timceall
Saoit' Uobair.

D'éirig Eamonn Ó Dubhgain 'na fea-
raib, ir' O'fiarraib' cá' veceairb'
a bó,
Níorb' go raib' i' Min a' Cluairis, nó
in tuir Uó Finne ná cómair.
Veir baime má cuairt ní go Croid'
Stige nac' baogal' of pilleair níor
mó,
Nó cá' Cormac Ruair' veánair' curraib'
'r Sur' airse cá' croidceann na bó.

Cormac Ruadh, of Crolly, was suspected, because there was a party gathered there that could keep a bishop in conversation while the pot kept singing on the fire:

Ir' uona a' cluairó mé mo tuar-an
riubar' nár' fás' croid' in mo ruidic
On tuinnir' 'nonn' ríro' Dun na teice, 'r
go Croid' Stige curis Cormac Ruair'
Uí' táillíur' 'na tíre ann, tuce' teagairc,
'r níor' móir' leo-ran' marbaib' na bó
Comneóair' riar' cóirpáib' le neairbos,
'r an' roca' ar' an' teimr' sabáit
ceoil.

We now come to Doe Castle. The Mac Suibhnes' came to Fanad in the 13th century. One of these, Domhnall Mor, came to Doe in 1360. The last of the Mac Suibhnes' of Doe was Maol Muire an Bhata Bhuidhe, who with Niall Garbh, took the side of the English. He was not, however, allowed to remain in possession of his estates. He was a proud man, and rejected with indignation the suit of Turlogh Og Boyle for the hand of his daughter, Eileen. Turlogh lived at Faugher, and the walls of his residence may still be seen on the right-hand side of the road as one approaches Port na Blagh from Creeslough.

With haughty pride, he says: "Abide, at Faugher by the sea; for you'll never wed the daughter of Maol Muire an Bhata Bhuidhe."

O'Boyle persisted in seeing Eileen, but Maol Muire became aware of their secret meetings. He ambushed, seized, and eventually slew the unfortunate O'Boyle, or allowed him to die of hunger in a dungeon. When the corpse was being consigned to the earth Eileen, from the tower of the castle, recognised the features of her lover. She died of grief, but a balled states that she threw herself in frantic dismay from the castle battlements.

Moving southwards, we come to Gartan, the birthplace of Columcille. This was the scene of a heartrending spectacle in 1862, when Stewart, the landlord, evicted 125 tenants to be shipped

to Australia. The cries of those people could be heard for miles around as they bade farewell to the hills and moorlands that had afforded them a meagre sustenance. Not far distant is the Doon well beside the imposing rock, where, according to tradition, the princes of Tirconail were successively inaugurated as chiefs over their people. It is more likely, however, that the inauguration took place in the monastery of Kilmacrenan.

Near Kilmacrenan, there lived in 1798 a man named Manus O'Donnell, who was then about 40 years of age. He had joined the United Irishmen, and was appointed captain and second in command of the local forces. He was arrested on the information of a spy and cast into a loathsome dungeon, where for some weeks with hands and feet bound in chains, he endured extreme discomfort. An attempt was made to bribe him, but he scornfully refused to purchase his liberty and a pension at the expense of dishonour. Next year, 1799, he was tried at Lifford by a military tribunal. As sufficient evidence to secure a conviction was not forthcoming, he was promised liberty on condition that he engaged in combat with a mounted dragoon. The dragoon was to be armed with a sword and lance, while O'Donnell, on foot, should have only his pike. O'Donnell was restricted to defensive measures, but the dragoon had received secret instructions to kill his adversary. The day was fixed, and the encounter took place between Lifford and Strabane, in a field near where the Finn and Mourne become the Foyle. Manus, with the first tilt of his pike, cut the reins of the horse, making him unmanageable for the rider. He succeeded in eluding the next attack by the dragoon, and, as the rider was passing, caught his jacket with the hook of his weapon and unhorsed him. The dragoon lay at the mercy of O'Donnell, who, however, made no attempt even to wound him. Instead of getting credit for this feat, Manus incurred the displeasure of the president of the court for not dying by the hand of the dragoon. He ordered that Manus should receive 500 lashes. The timely arrival of Lord Cavan prevented this outrage. Having heard what had transpired, Lord Cavan ordered Manus to be set at liberty. Manus O'Donnell ended his days in peace, and was buried in Gartan in 1844.

As we are dealing with song as well as story, we must linger for a while around Glenswilly. There is a very popular song, entitled "The Hills of Glenswilly", written long ago by Michael Mac Ginley, who died here in Ballybofey a few years ago.

Then we have a poem of considerable merit, written by Brigid Mac Ginley, whom we have already mentioned. This poem is entitled, "The Hills of Donegal."

I love their purple heather, and their
rushes, waving green;
I love to see their summits gilt with
sunset's golden sheen;
I love the smiling valleys, where the
cooling dew-drops fall,
Mid the heath-clad hills, the cloud-
capped hills, the hills of Donegal.

There is another song, entitled "The Hills of Donegal", composed, I believe, by the late Niall Mac Giolla Bhrighde, of Creeslough. The exile, having described his sympathetic reaction to all the familiar scenes from Creeslough to Moville, becomes reminiscent on reaching Tory.

Among those hills St. Columcille left
miracles and cures,
In shrines and dells and holy wells,
with powers that still endure:
Green Gartan's cell and old Doon
Well, St. Fionan's waterfall,
Are faithful shrines of Christain times
on the hills of Donegal.

We have not time to dwell on the many associations of Letterkenny and its surroundings. At any rate, the defeat of Scarif Hollis and the victory of O'Donnell over Shane O'Neill at Fearsat Mor are well known incidents of history. From the lore of this district I shall select one episode, because it has always appealed to the imagination of the people. Godfrey O'Donnell had defeated Maurice Fitzgerald, the Lord Justice, at Credan Cille, in Sligo, and was recovering from his wounds in his crannog on Lough Veigh, when word was brought that O'Neill was marching on Tirconail. He was carried on a litter at the head of his army to Conwall, where the forces met. The forces of Tyrone were routed, but Godfrey died at the moment of victory, and was buried at Conwall. Aubrey de Vere has related the incident in a stirring song, from which I take a stanza:

All worn and wan, and sore with wounds
from Credan's bloody frey,
In Donegal for weary months the proud
O'Donnell lay;
Around his couch in bitter grief his
trusty clansmen wait,
And silent watch, with aching hearts,
his faint and feeble state.

We must pass over Rathmullan, with its Abbey, the kidnapping of Red Hugh, and the Flight of the Earls. Opposite the Church of Massmount, in Fanad, across the eastern arm of the Mulroy,

lies the townland of Lurgacloghan. There, according to a persistent tradition, was born the Miss Patterson who became the wife of Jerome Bonaparte in America. Opposite this place, on the other side of the water, towards the south, lies the townland of Moross, where still stands the remains of one of the Mac Suibhne residences on Carraig Feile. In a house in Moross, on the night of the 1st April, 1878, a crowd of men came together to decide upon putting an end to the Earl of Leitrim, whose tyranny was becoming daily more unbearable. Three men crossed the bay to Cratloe and waited for Lord Leitrim to pass that way in the morning of the 2nd of April. Only two men lay in ambush; the third man was away on the hillside acting as scout. Lord Leitrim came along with his clerk and driver. A car bearing the Earl's luggage was a considerable distance behind, as the horse that drew that car was conveniently lame. The men who awaited the landlord had no practice in the use of arms, and their gun was only an old mended pistol. They opened fire. One of Lord Leitrim's attendants was shot, the other died of heart failure, but the object of attack was untouched. The frightened horses galloped off to Milford, and Lord Leitrim faced his assailants. He was armed, and the issue of the attack remained for a moment uncertain. One of the men, who was a giant in strength, broke the Earl's shoulder with the butt of his pistol as he was on the point of firing. A few blows broke his skull, and Lord Leitrim fell to rise no more. The two men took to the boat and came across to the Hawk's Nest, on Ranny Hill. One came home by road; the other took to the hills, crossed Knockalla, and reached home before the day was far advanced. Neither was apprehended. The scout was arrested, and died in Lifford Jail. The giant died of fever a good many years ago; the other lived until he had passed well over his 80th year, and only died a short time ago. Many songs were composed to keep this event in mind. One of those songs would make it appear that the men who killed Lord Leitrim met him by accident, and made their decision or the spot.

They rambled over moor and mead,
 their hearts from care being free,
 Until they came to a wooded shade
 convenient to the sea.
 And there awhile at rest they lay, for
 they had come afar,
 when scarcely half-a-mile away they
 did observe a car.

With steady pace it onward came, and
 as it near them drew,
 The hated form of Leitrim appeared

to them in view.
 Says one: "It is the landlord, for him
 right well I know,
 This day I am determined to prove
 his overthrow."

The other being quite satisfied with
 what his friend did state,
 Says: "We'll hold the ground whereon
 we stand and for the landlord
 wait:

For he has caused full many a tear
 these thirty years and more:
 We'll put an end to his career this day
 on Cratloe Shore."

An effort of resistance he instantly did
 make,
 But in firing off his pistol he made a
 great mistake;
 His enemies escaped him, as you may
 understand,
 And his driver fell a victim to his
 cruel, tyrannous hand.

In Carrigart we find a tombstone,
 which records that the Rev. Dominick
 O'Donnell departed this life in 1793. He
 had been a priest, forsook the Faith,
 married the rector's daughter, and later
 was, himself, appointed rector. He had
 a brother who was a priest. To this
 brother is attributed the song, which
 represents the mother lamenting her
 son's defection.

Cráó ort, a Dóimnic Uí Dóinnall,
 Nac maire aríam a connaic tú;
 Bí tú 'o fásart Dia Dóinnall,
 Ar maoin Dia Luam 'o míniort.

Pill, pill, a rúin ó,
 Pill, a rúin ó, asur ná h-iméig uam
 Pill ort, a curu an traoḡal móir,
 Ir céiró tú 'n ḡlóir má pilléam tú.

Dá bfeicteá 'o deaire ar an alcóir
 Dia Dóinnall,
 As léigean de leabair a borpannar,
 A bíor ar a leicinn 'o b'ónac,
 Ir é gur fán traoḡart ós 'na míniort.

A similar story comes to us from Inishowen. In the beginning of the 17th century, a man named MacLaughlin lived in Claar, below Moville. He had two sons, Domhnall and Peter, who were to study for the priesthood. It was necessary for them to go abroad for their education. On their voyage to the Continent they were shipwrecked and cast on the shore of England. A gentleman took them to his house and offered to educate them if they conformed to the Protestant religion. Domhnall accepted the offer, but Peter refused. Peter went to the Continent and became a priest, while his brother remained in England,

where he became a minister of the established church. By a strange coincidence, one became in after years the parish priest, and the other he rector, of Clonmany. The mother, like Dominick O'Donnell's mother, expressed her grief for her son's error.

U'péápp' tuit beic as buacáilleacé b6,
 'Do báca 'no úorin ir pluroeog ort,
 Níá no fuidé ar fúinneogáí árhoa,
 As éirteacé le slórcéab minircir.

With less of sorrow could I view to-morrow

My lost one herding on the mountain brown,

Than strange doctrines teaching, and new tenets preaching,

At yon lordly window in his silken gown.

We take our last stand on Aileach. Much that would have been of interest I have to omit. But I have tried to make my sketchy talk as fair and as comprehensive as the extent and variety of the subject matter allowed. Aileach stands there like a messenger from the

past, tantalisingly revealing the relics of ancient splendour, yet holding from us its inscrutable secrets. It stood there in its strength long before the dawn of history. Its wall, 10 to 15 feet thick, built with huge stones, without cement, like those of Dun Aenguis, Staigue Fort and Knockfennel, indicate either a race of giants or a marvel of co-operative strength. This style of building has been called Cyclopean Architecture, because it resembles the construction of the walls of Mycenae, which, the Greeks thought, were built by the Cyclops. The kings of the royal line of Niall, the O'Neills and the O'Lochlainns, lived there until it was burned by Murtagh O'Brien in 1101.

But the ruins still remain to remind us of the past.

God bless the grey mountains of dark Donegal,

God bless Royal Aileach, the pride of them all;

For she sits evermore like a queen on her throne

To guard the deep valleys of green Inishowen.