

GRANGE AND NEARBY PLACE NAMES

By John Carroll

The following seeks to explain the meanings of ‘place’ names. In some cases, a place was named differently over hundreds of years. Included are distinct place names that occur within Grange Parish, but I have also included ‘places’ that lie outside but near to the parish as they may be of interest to the reader.

Ardanreagh – *Árd an Riach: The grey hillock*. It is sometimes called *Árd Na Rí*, the height of the king. In 1840, this townland was the property of Lord Limerick. A fort existed in the northern part of this townland.

Ballingirlough – *Baile na gCailleach: The town of the nuns*. These nuns were known as the “black sisters” and were of the Order of St Augustine, who came to this area in 1283, and remained there until the reign of Henry VIII.

Ballingoola – *Baile Ghúala: Town of the shoulders*. Also perhaps *Baile Gaibhle: Town of the river-fork*. In 1840, this townland was the property of John Croker Esq of Ballinagarde. Here there was a fine glebe house, the ruins of which can still be seen. This house was built by aid of a gift of £450 and a loan of £120 from the Board of First Fruits and was the residence of the various Church of Ireland ministers appointed to Cahercorney Parish, including Rev Patrick Fitzgerald, a native of Bruff who was co-author with John McGregor of their two-volume *The History, Topography and Antiquities of Limerick*. Rev Fitzgerald also served as Vicar of Cahercorney from the late 1820s until his death in 1855. In 1840, Ballingoola had a paper mill which employed twenty people. This mill closed in 1861 and was situated near the Camogue River. On the opposite side of the river near the mill are two fragments of a small abbey named *Mainister na mBráthar Beag* or Little Friarstown, to distinguish it from Friarstown in the parish of Fedamore. This friary with three acres and a string of arable land was granted forever *in capite*, with the yearly rent being 12d to Robert Browne. A small stream which runs into the Camogue River here divides the diocese of Cashel from that of Limerick.

Cahercorney – *Cathair Choirne: Coirne’s stone fort*. Samuel Lewis described it in 1837 as “a vicarage in the diocese of Emly, episcopally united in 1681 to that of Kilcullane, together forming the union of Cahercorney; in the patronage of the Earl of Kenmare, during whose legal incapacity the presentation is in the Crown; the rectory is impropriated to John Croker, Esq. The church is an ancient structure and contains a handsome monument to the Croker family, erected in 1723.”

Caherguillamore – *Cathair an Giolla Mhóir: The Stone Fort of the Big Custodian*. Who was the big custodian? Samuel Lewis stated that “round Rockbarton are numerous vestiges of antiquity but the most remarkable ruins are those in the demesne of Caherguillamore, which indicate the existence of a city of great extent, the sites of street gates and fortifications are still to be traced extending in some places into adjoining parishes and connected with ancient forts on the surrounding hills”. It was obviously a place of considerable importance at one stage. According to the Book of Rights, “it was one of the royal forts of Munster” and there is a record of a battle fought here in 639 AD between Angus, Prince of Uí Liathana in Co Cork, and Maelduin, son of the then King of Cashel. In 1298, Caherguillamore was in the possession of Thomas Fitzmaurice. In 1564, an order was made by Queen Elizabeth I’s commissioners stating that Dominic White of Limerick should have possession of the lands of Caherguillamore. In 1639, it was held by James Stritch, and in 1667 it was granted to Captain Robert Morgan and to A Reymon under the Act of Settlement. Nioclás Ó hAodha, one of the great 19th century scribes, was a native of Caherguillamore.

Corcass – *Carcas: The marshland*, encompassing several townlands from South Camass to Grange. This was one of the sites identified for the location of an airport, which was later set up in Shannon.

Glenogra – *Gleann Ógra: The glen of Ógra*, and a parish in its own right for many years. According to John O’Donovan, author of the “Field Name Books” Ógra was an ancient local chieftain. Glenogra Castle was built by Thomas, Earl of Desmond in the early 1400s. Five small glebes comprising 29½ acres belonged to this parish. These glebes were originally the endowments of charities connected with the Abbey Church, which was founded there by the De Lacys. At the time of the Reformation, the Abbey comprised nine chantries governed by a prior. Four of the chantries are located in the ruins of Glenogra Church and are still evident today. The Desmonds held Glenogra Castle until 1583. As a result of the Desmond confiscations, it passed to Edmond Fitton, and in 1598, Fitton, who was the Sheriff of Limerick, abandoned Glenogra to the rebels. In 1600, the Earl of Bath held

Glenogra and Caherguillamore. In 1841, the population of Glenogra parish was 1,128, with 151 houses. Fairs were held on May 31st and October 28th. Attendance at the Catholic Church at this time was 650, and all except one were Catholic. Part of this townland is in Fedamore Parish.

Grange – *An Gráinseach: The grange, or granary.* The part of Grange next to the Camogue river was called “Gráinseach na hAbha” or “Riverside Grange”, and the side by Lough Gur was called “Gráinseach na Locha” or “Lakeside Grange”. The Desmond roll of 1583 refers to “Grange” or “Sixmilebridge” (*Droichead an Bhun Bhriste: The bridge of the broken base*). The Annals of the Four Masters refer to this bridge as above under the year 1600. There was a Desmond castle here called Caisleán an Droichead (The castle of the bridge). In 1655, Grange was held by Lord Bath. In Grange, on top of a solid rock about 35 feet high, John O’Donovan located the remains of an old castle, but he could not gauge its dimensions, due to its poor state of repair. The rock on which this castle stood was called Cahercon rock, but locally it was referred to as *Carraig a Mhéara. (The rock of the finger)*. Part of the townland of Grange is in the parish of Fedamore. Patrick O’Neill, DD who was Bishop of Limerick from 1946 to 1958, and who previously served as PP of Bruff from 1941 to 1945, was a native of this place.

Grillagh – *An Ghriollach: The swampy land.* This townland is also called Girlough.

Lough Gur – *Loch Guir: The lake of the incubation, or hatching of birds, or lake of Guir.* In 1840, this was the property of the Count de Salis and contained 1,285 acres, of which 140 acres were of water. A trigonometric station existed in the northern part of this townland called Centrehill. The ruins of Lough Gur Church (New Church or Teampall Nua) and Carraig Aille fort are in the western part of the townland. The lake was said to be enchanted and from it Gearóid Iarla, third Earl of Desmond, was said to make his appearance on horseback from the lake once every seven years.

Knockfennel – *Cnoc Fionnghaile: Hill of the fratricide.* This townland was the property of Count de Salis and in 1840 contained 238 acres of arable land. On the hill, there was a trigonometric station, which stated the height of the hill above sea level and was used for mapping purposes. Trigonometric stations were common on hills in Ireland at this time.

Rahin – *Ráithín: The little rath.* From this townland hailed Bishop John J Hogan, who was Bishop of Kansas in the early 20th century.

Raleighstown – *Takes its name from an English family.* In this townland are the remains of an ancient substantial building erected in the reign of King James I by Thomas Raleigh Esq, who was reputed to be an uncle of Sir Walter Raleigh. Ellen Raleigh, widow of Richard of Raleighstown was a daughter of de Lacy of Bruff, and she and her children Edward and Margaret held considerable landed property, but this was confiscated. Their house and lands in this townland later became the property of the Croker family.



Camogue River at
Grange Bridge.

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