In this new edition of the “Guide through Ireland,” under the name of the “Hand Book,” such additional information has been added as was deemed likely to interest both travellers and tourists; and, while the plan of the former volume has been adopted as the basis of the work, more copious notices of the metropolis and its environs and of the towns and antiquities of the kingdom have been given, as well as of the character and nature of the soil, and, generally, of the physical features of the country. The more interesting parts of the coast have been re-visited, and the magnificent sea cliffs of Galway, Mayo, and Donegal have been described at greater length than in the former edition; and, from the publication of the Ordnance Maps, the heights of the mountains and other remarkable elevations have also been more accurately and much more fully given; and at the same time, from these invaluable sources, all the more useful cross-roads have been carefully measured, the sources and courses of the rivers traced, and for the first time presented in a tangible shape.

The census of Ireland for 1841 having just appeared, correct tabular statements of the population of the different cities and towns, as well as of the counties and provinces, with their acreable contents, are given in the appendix; and, it is hoped, that in this form they will be as convenient as if given in connexion with the description of the towns throughout the work. In addition to the regular inns and stages, notices have been given of the places where accommodation is afforded and conveyances supplied in the smaller towns; and, although in all cases the names of the innkeepers and the proprietors of cars and post-horses (for they are often distinct) have not been given, it is hoped that, from their occasional omission (which was unavoidable), the traveller will not experience much inconvenience.

Dublin, November, 1843.

DUBLIN To ENNIS By LIMERICK

First Road — 141¼ Miles

This is the most convenient way of reaching Ennis from Dublin; for on the arrival of the Dublin mail at Limerick, the cross mail from that city to Galway via Ennis is despatched, and in addition to the mail there is a regular stage coach.

Crossing the Shannon by the Wellesley bridge, the finest of all our bridges, we enter the county of Clare, and, clearing the improving environs on that side of the river, soon reach the low, rich, alluvial lands lying along the northern shores of the lower Shannon. At five miles we pass, on the left, Cratloe Lodge, the occasional residence of Stafford O’Brien, Esq.; and
on the right, Cratloe Wood, the largest remnant of natural forest existing in this part of the
country. It is a very remarkable feature in the district, and the elevated rough lands which it
covers connect with the chain of hills which run eastward to Lough Derg, and form the
boundary of the plain lying along the north side of the Shannon. The road crosses the narrow
estuary of the Owenagarney river, near the old castle of Bunratty. This castle was erected by
the De Clares in 1277, and was subsequently the seat of the Earls of Thomond. Till within
these late years it was the residence of T. Studdert, Esq., who erected a modern mansion in
the demesne, and the old castle is now used as a police barrack; and is the largest, most
perfect, and most remarkable of all the old castles which are so thickly scattered throughout
the county of Clare. Adjoining is the demesne of Thomas Studdert, Esq., and opposite to the
castle, on the left of the road, a piece of land surrounding the old church is pointed out as the
richest in the district. To the right of Bunratty, on the old road leading from Limerick to
Ennis, are Rosemanagh Castle and Springfield; and near the village of Six-mile-bridge,
which is nine miles from Limerick, are Mount Ivers, —— Ivers, Esq., and Castlerine, Henry
Butler, Esq., Castle Lake, and Castle Lake House, —— Gabbetti Esq.; and at three miles is
Belvoir, D. J. Wilson, Esq. A mile from Belvoir is the village of Kilkishen, which contains
a church and chapel; and adjoining it, Kilkishen House, —— Studdert, Esq. and the ruins of
Kilkishen castle.

Returning to the Ennis road, two miles beyond Bunratty, on the road to Ennis, are
Firgrove, —— M’Mahon, Esq., Clonmoney, —— Canny, Esq., and Ballycasey, —— Canny,
Esq. At four miles, and a mile to the left is Carrowbane, —— Creagh, Esq.; and near it,
Carrigerry, —— Creagh, Esq.; and at six miles is the small town of

NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS.

About a mile to the east of Newmarket is Ballycar, —— Colpoys, Esq.; and at two miles,
Rathlin; and a mile east from Ballycar are Loughs Fin and Rosroe; and adjoining
Newmarket-on-Fergus is Carrigoran, the seat of Sir William Fitzgerald, Bart.; and near it
Shepperton, —— Gabbett, Esq. At a mile from Newmarket-on-Fergus, the traveller passes
Dromoland, the beautiful seat of Sir Lucius O’Brien, Bart., where a fine stately castle has
lately been erected. The park is adorned by a pretty sheet of water, and the grounds connected
with the demesne are extremely rich and well cultivated.

In the beautifully romantic pastoral hills which lie to the east of the demesne, on a little
eminence called Lawnguh, are some curious Druidical ovals and circles, first noticed by
T. Steele, Esq., in 1826. About three and a half miles north-east from Dromoland, in the flat,
rocky country which stretches far around, are the beautiful ruins of Quin, one of the finest
and, most perfect abbeys in Ireland. It was founded for Franciscans, in the fifteenth century,
by Con Macnamara. A limpid stream washes its massive walls; and adjoining are the ruins of
the old church, the plain but substantial modern church and chapel, together with the small
hamlet of Quin—the whole forming a very interesting group. Near the abbey is Quinville,
John Singleton, Esq. In the neighbourhood of Quin are Hazlewood, Dangan, —— Creagh,
Esq., Knockpogue Castle, —— Scott, Esq.; and a little to the eastward, Cullaune, formerly
the residence of Thomas Steele, Esq. Dangan Castle is said to be the oldest of these structures
so common throughout the central parts of Clare; and Lough Cullaune, adjoining the
demesne of that name, is a considerable sheet of water, being about a mile in diameter.

Resuming our road, a little beyond Dromoland, to the right is Castle-fergus, William
Smith, Esq. It is situated on the bank of the Quin river, which we cross at Latoon bridge. A
mile and a half farther, on the left, is the handsome demesne of Carnelly; and near to it the
small town of
which, as Mr. Inglis observes, “from its situation, ought to be the county town instead of Ennis. There is a fine navigation up the estuary of the Fergus to the bridge of Clare; so that Clare is the export point of the Ennis market. A very trifling expenditure would, however, extend the water communication to Ennis.” This little town is beautifully situated at the mouth of the Fergus, which, falling over a ledge of rocks, meets the tide water under the walls of Clare castle, and gives the name of the Fergus river to that large estuary, or rather internal basin of the Shannon which runs up to this little town. Clare Castle is occupied as an infantry-barrack, and is enable, with the large buildings adjoining, of containing a considerable number of men. To the left of Clare, on the opposite bank of the Fergus, ara *Newhall*, the handsome residence of John M'Donnell, Esq.; and *Buncroggy*, an old, neglected, but beautifully-situated seat of the noble family of Burton.

Here the aspect and character of the country change. The rich, deep, alluvial lands which accompany the banks of the Shannon from Limerick, and in many places stretch several miles inland, are succeeded by that craggy, bleak, but good pastoral district which occupies so large a portion of the limestone district of the county of Clare. The interesting ruins of Clare Abbey, erected by Donald O'Brien, King of Munster, in 1194, stand near the Fergus river, about a mile above the town and nearly midway between Clare and

ENNIS

the county town of Clare, and returning a member to the imperial parliament, which stands near the centre of the county, and also near the commencement of that craggy, pastoral plain which stretches across the country from the estuary of the Fergus, and along the head of the bay of Galway, to that rocky tract through which the road from Loughrea to Galway runs. Ennis is watered by the Fergus, which receives the Clareen a little above the town. The old parts of the town lie huddled together close to the river, without any wall or other boundary whereby to mark its ancient limits. The modern additions straggle out along the public roads in long lines of cabins and detached houses, so that both the new and old parts of the town, suburbs, and outskirts are ill defined, scattered, and do not present a single good street. The retail trade of Ennis, except in provisions, is not so extensive as might be expected from its central situation, and the great extent of well-inhabited country westward. This is accounted for by its being too near Limerick, the rapid means of communication, and the conveniences of transport afforded by the Shannon. A considerable extent of agricultural produce is, however, weekly purchased and forwarded for shipment to Clare; and a little is done in the linen and flannel trade.

The public buildings are the court-house, prison, union work-house, county infirmary, hospital, and the usual offices common to a county town. Ennis lays claim to high antiquity. The remains of the Franciscan abbey, founded in 1240, by Donald Cabrac O’Brien, Prince of Thomond, are interesting. Only a small part exists; but that contains a fine window of very exquisite workmanship, and several other relics. The parish church is attached to the venerable ruin. The Roman Catholic chapel is a large building; and there is another chapel attached to the Franciscan friary. There are an Ursuline nunnery, and meeting-houses for Independents and Methodists. Ennis college, which is one of the four classical schools founded by the munificent bequests of Erasmus Smith, is a handsome building, within a short distance of the town; to which may be added various other schools. The Banks of Ireland, National and Provincial, have offices in the town; and at the inns horses and carriages can be obtained. A county club-house has been established; and there are also two subscription newsrooms. In and about the town are many neat detached houses; and though the country around, in its general appearance, is very bleak, cold, and craggy, there is much good land,
and several lovely villas in the romantic dells which are encompassed by the low rocky hills. Among the latter we may enumerate Edenvale, Richard J. Stackpole, Esq.; Ballyalla, Andrew Stackpole, Esq.; and Stamerpark, Michael Finucane, Esq.; Abbeyville, Willowbank, Greenlawn, Hermitage, Cahircalla, Beech Park, Ashline, Brookville, and Green Park. Two miles north of Ennis are the stump of a round tower, and the ruins of Bromcliffe church.

DUBLINTOENNIS
Second Road — 141 Miles
By Killaloe and Broadford.
Kilmastulla
Killaloe
Broadford
Croas-roads at Tulla
Tulla

We may premise that few travel this road to Ennis, unless those having business on the line, or anxious to see this part of the country.

Killaloe can be conveniently reached by the well-appointed boats plying daily along the Grand Canal and Lough Derg; and as the steamers which navigate the latter are of considerable power, the beauties of that splendid inland lake can be agreeably and quickly seen. There are no public conveyances across the hilly country lying between Killaloe and Ennis; but post-horses and cars can be obtained at Killaloe.

The roads from Nenagh to Killaloe, along the shores of Lough Derg, are very hilly; and we would therefore recommend those who do not proceed by water to keep the Limerick road as far as Birdhill, and thence, three miles along a level road to Killaloe. This is the shortest and most convenient way of reaching it, and at Birdhill post-horses and cars can be obtained.

About a mile below Lough Derg, the finest enlargement of the Upper Shannon, and where its broad waters again assume the river character, and dash over the rapids, stands the ancient and thriving little town of Killaloe. It has long been a diocesan site, and by the late episcopal arrangements, Clonfert has been united with this see. The cathedral is a plain, ancient, long, massive building, originally built in 1160; and near it are the ruins of the mausoleum of Brian Boroiomhe, and the oratory of St. Molna. The long lines of cabins which mainly constitute this little town, are scattered along the higher slopes, and towards the new pier. A bridge of nineteen arches here crosses the river, and connects the counties of Clare and Tipperary; and the village on the opposite side of the bridge is called Ballina.

We may here state that in the projected improvements of the Shannon, the rapids will be lowered, a new bridge erected, and the navigation of the river between Killaloe and Limerick materially altered.

Killaloe is now the head quarters of the Inland Steam Navigation Company, who have fitted up a good inn, and have built new quays and extensive stores. From this point there is a regular steam communication for goods and passengers up the Shannon; and downwards by packet boats to Limerick. The extensive slate quarries in the neighbourhood export about 100,000 tons yearly. An extensive mill has been erected for sawing marble; and new level lines of road connecting it with the country around, have lately been formed. Killaloe was formerly an important military pass; and here, in 1691, Sarsfield intercepted the artillery of King William, which was coming up to aid in the siege of Limerick.
A little below the town, and on the Clare side of the river, is Clarisford House, the diocesan seat of the Bishops of Killaloe; and opposite to it, on the Tipperary side. Fort Henry, ——White, Esq.; and near it, Brien’s Fort. Above the town, also on the Clare side, is Ballyvally, ——Parker, Esq.; and opposite, Derry Castle. These two seats occupy prominent and beautiful situations on the bold banks which here bound the lake. Above Derry Castle, on the slopes of the hills which skirt the shores of the lower reach of the lake from Nenagh to Killaloe, are the slate quarries which have been so long and successfully worked; and on the margin of Lough Derg, about two miles above Derry Castle, is Castlelough, ——Parker, Esq.

The beautiful line of road lately made by the Board of Works from Killaloe to Scariff, between the shores of Lough Derg and Slievebernagh, and round the point of Aghanish, while it shows how much the pleasures, comforts, and business of the country are promoted by the application of science and practical skill to road-making, displays some of the most interesting mountain and lake scenery in this district of the island. Indeed it will bear a comparison with any scenery we enjoy, except the finer parts of Kerry, Cork, Connemara, and Donegal. Tinamara, Simon Purdon, Esq., lies about four miles from Killaloe, near the lake. From any of the more elevated points of Slievebernagh, splendid views are obtained of Lough Derg, those parts of the counties of Galway and Tipperary which bound its shores, a considerable part of the counties of Limerick and Clare, and reaches of the broad waters of the Lower Shannon lying between them.

Leaving Killaloe for Ennis, we keep along the right bank of the Shannon, and under Crag-namanagh mountain, whose picturesque slopes are cultivated almost to the summit, passing at three miles, Ross, the residence of ——Westropp, Esq.; and at five, Cloneboy, John Brown, Esq. Here, turning to the right, we leave the village and church of O’Brien’s-bridge a little to the south, and cross, by an interesting valley, the chain of hills reaching from Six-mile Bridge to Scariff, and which, under the name of the Clare mountains, form so important a feature in the scenery north of Limerick. Eight miles from Killaloe we pass, on the left, Glenomara wood, and soon reach Ballyquin, the seat of ——Arthur, Esq.; and at about thirteen miles reach the hamlet of Broadford, close to which is Hurleston, ——Bentley, Esq.; and one mile beyond it, Doon glebe-house. To the left of the small Lough of Doon, are Kellyderry and Woodfield.

Glenomora, through which our road from Ballyquin to Broadford runs, is refreshed by the stream that takes its name and carries down all the waters of this district to the larger tributaries of the Shannon. The glen is bounded on the one hand by the southern acclivities of Cragnamanagh and Glennagaligh mountains, which respectively attain an elevation of 1729 and 1428 feet, and whose sides are cultivated as high as corn will grow.

The village of Broadford is romantically situated at the lower end of Glenomora, and contains a chapel and small parish church.

Drimineen wood, and the lough of Doone are passed at a mile and a half from Broadford, and the hamlet of O’Callaghan’s Mills is reached at three miles. As we proceed to Tulla, we pass on the right, and in the neighbourhood of O’Callaghan’s Mills, Kilgory House, ——O’Connell, Esq., and Derrymore, and Ballynahinch. A little beyond the above places are the small loughs Bridget and Loughanilloon.

The small town of Tulla is reached at three and a half miles from O’Callaghan’s Mills; and the country between these places is dreary and uninteresting.
Tulla contains a small church, a chapel, and a little inn, where a car can be hired. From the summit of the hill on which the little town of Tulla is situated, and on which there are the ruins of a small and very ancient church, an extensive view is obtained of the singularly diversified country around, in which tillage, bog, pasture, lake, and rock, are strangely mingled.

A mile to the east of Tulla is Garruragh; and at two miles are Mary-fort, O’Callaghan, Esq., and Fort-anna, Westropp, Esq. Four miles to the north-east is Ayle House, Macnamara, Esq.; and at seven, the village of Feakle, which possesses a church, chapel, &c. This remote and dreary district of country has been much improved of late by the new line of road from Gort to Limerick; previously it was difficult of access.

A mile and a half north-west from Tulla, is Kiltunan, the handsome seat of J. Molloney, Esq. The Affick rivulet, one of the numerous tributaries to the Fergus, which here change their name every townland they pass through, runs through the demesne, and, in its progress for a short distance and at a few feet under the surface, passes through a succession of limestone caverns, not an unusual occurrence in this limestone district. A path leads along the limpid stream; and through the chiosks and apertures of the rocks the ivy and other trailing plants hang down. This subterraneous course of the stream forms an interesting and romantic appendage to the demesne, and is a place of considerable resort during the summer mouths.

A mile beyond Kiltunan is Newgrove, the residence of Browne, Esq.; and near the former is Tyredagh Castle, Mrs. Browne.

Proceeding to Ennis, at four miles Toonagh is passed on the left; at five, Clooney, Burton Bindon, Esq.; at six, Cranagher, B. Blood, Esq.; close to which is the village of Spancel hill, noted for its horse fairs; and a mile to the south of it, Moyriesh, the seat of the late Lord Fitzgerald and Vesey. From this to Ennis the distance is about five miles; and in the desolate rocky country which lies around this side of the town there is little to remark.

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DUBLINTOENNIS

Third Road — 148 Miles.
By Loughrea and Gort.
        Longhrea
        Gort
        Crusheen

On the arrival of the Galway mail at Loughrea, a mail-car is despatched to Gort, where conveyance can be hired to Ennis. The Galway and Limerick mail-coach, via Gort and Ennis, also runs a part of this road, but not in connexion with the above mail-car. In addition to the mail-car, good horses and cars can be obtained at Longhrea. Although this road is not so generally travelled as by Limerick, it is very convenient for those who may have business in Athlone, Ballinasloe, Loughrea, or any where northward of these towns.

Leaving Loughrea, we cross the ridge of land lying between that town and the village of Kilchreest, whence we obtain a good view of the town, the lake, and country around.

Kilchreest is situated near the base of the hills along which our road runs to Gort, and which hills connect with the Slieve Aughty mountains.
A mile from Kilchreest we reach Roxborough, the beautiful and finely-wooded seat of D. Persse, Esq.; at two miles, Castleboy, the seat of B. P. Persse, Esq. The plantations connected with these extensive parks are remarkable in the flat and bleak country lying northerly. As is common with this part of Galway, there are numerous small castle ruins in the above demesnes and all around. A little to the north of Roxborough are Woodville, —— R. D’Arcy, Esq., and Monkstown, —— Morgan, Esq. ; and adjoining Castleboy is Castle Daly, —— Daly, Esq. ; above which the summits of Slieve Aughty, to which we have just referred, attain an elevation of 1080 feet. By this road to Gort, we leave at from one to two miles to the right, the hamlet of Ardrahan, with its church and round tower ruins ; adjoining which is Cregaclare, James Lambert, Esq., and Tullira, John Martin, Esq., and in the same direction, and a mile from Ardrahan, is Castle Daly, —— Daly, Esq.; all these places are from seven to eight miles from Loughrea. Cappard is passed on the left at six miles from Loughrea. And here we may remark that the fine pastoral country we have passed through is succeeded by the more rocky, broken, but good tillage lands lying between Castle Daly and Gort.

The thriving and prettily-situated small town of Gort stands on the borders of the county of Galway, in the plain lying between the hills of Burren on the west, and those in the barony of Loughrea on the east. It is watered by a stream which bears the surplus waters of several small loughs above the town into the bay of Galway at Kinvarah harbour, is environed by some extent of good, though bleak and craggy lands, and considerably beautified by the plantations and other improvements connected with the residence of the noble proprietor, Viscount Gort. The town of Gort contains a handsome church, large chapel, cavalry-barrack, and union workhouse; and at the inn post-horses and carriages can be hired.

It is pleasing to observe that in the alignment of the streets, and building of the houses, considerable attention has been paid to order and convenience. The shops look smart, and supply the country around with every necessary. For this kind of trade Gort is well circumstanced, being fifteen miles distant from any other town.

To the east of the town, near the new road leading to Portumna, are Forthill, Lysbrane, Annagh, Russan, Ballyturin, and several other villas.

About a mile north from the town on the road to Galway, is Coole Park, the seat of Robert Gregory, Esq.; and at two miles, Raheen, the seat of John O’Hara, Esq. The river that runs through Coole Park is remarkable from its sinking into the caverned limestone, and re-appearing several times its progress through the demesne.

About two miles from the town and on the left of the road to Ennis, is Loughcooter Castle, the fine residence of Viscount Gort. The demesne is well wooded. The mansion rises proudly over the beautiful lough which gives its name to the place; and though of moderate dimensions, possesses much of that boldness and picturesqueness of outline which constitute the charms of castellated architecture. The castle and entrance lodges are in the same style, and were built from designs of Mr. Nash.

"The river which flows from the beautiful 'Loughcooter,' passes through a deep ravine, till it reaches 'the Ladle,' a precipitous hollow, clothed with trees to the water’s edge, where it sinks under a perpendicular rock. About one hundred yards from this spot, it re-appears in 'the Punch Bowl,' a circular basinning about thirty yards in diameter, and at least fifty deep; a pathway leads down the sides of this pit, which are very steep, and clothed with trees. After flowing about three hundred yards from the Punch Bowl, it emerges, takes the name of the Blackwater, and after running rapidly for a short distance, again disappears. At the 'Beggar-man's Hole,' a smaller circular basin than the Punch Bowl, it is again visible, and soon
afterwards enters the ‘Churn,’ which is like an extremely deep well, ten feet in diameter. A quarter of a mile from the Churn it re-appears from under a beautiful arch formed by nature in the rock, passes through the town of Gort, and in Coole Park sinks again, and after alternately appearing and disappearing, once more flows, by a subterraneous channel, into the bay of Kinvarra.

Three miles from the town, near the road leading to Corrofin, are the ruins of the lonely round tower, seven churches, and cemetery of Kilmacduagh. The tower is nearly perfect, but considerably off the perpendicular.

A part of the ruin, dignified by the name of cathedral, still exists; but the relics of the others are only discernible; and judging from what remains, they must have been at best mere huts worse than even those which the virtuosi have pressed into the service at Glendalough and Clonmacnoisë; and though wanting that interest arising from the lake and mountains surrounding the former, or that effect which is produced by the low range of pastoral hills and the deep sullen waters of the Shannon bounding the latter, there is a sternness and coldness of character about Kilmacduagh, where all, mountain and plain, as far as the view extends, seem one vast sheet of denuded limestone.

Close to the ruins is Rockville, the residence of—— Darcy, Esq. At a mile westward, on the road to Corrofin, is Lough Bunny; at four miles Rochforest, the wooded seat of—— Lysaght, Esq. The country lying between Kilmacduagh and the town of Corrofin is strangely varied with bog, marsh, rock, and lake. In many places the country around Gort exhibits a remarkable appearance; the limestone is laid bare, and the intervening spots of cleared level seem only to have been won, by incredible labour, from the general waste. And we may here remark, that extensive tracts of this description are met with throughout the counties of Galway, Clare, Roscommon, and Mayo.

As we proceed from Gort to Ennis we pass, about two miles from the former, Ashfield,—— M’Nevin, Esq.; and beyond it, Cregg, F. Butler, Esq.; also Sallymount, and Bunnehowe, William Butler, Esq.; at four miles enter the county of Clare, and at eleven we reach the village of Crusheen.

A mile to the south of Crusheen, are the beautiful demesne and lake of Inchicronan; and on the little peninsula formed by the outlines of the lake, are the ruins of the abbey founded by Donald O’Brien, King of Munster, about 1190. The surface of the country around Crusheen, though generally wild and craggy, is in many places beautifully varied, and in travelling through it exhibits some singularly picturesque localities.

A mile beyond Crusheen the traveller passes, on the line, Ballyline, the seat of Augustine Butler, Esq.; near which, on the same side, is Port, Hugh O’Loughlin, Esq., and Dromore,—— Crowe, Esq. These places are beautifully situated near the shores of the picturesque lake of Dromore. On the left of the road, opposite to Ballyline, is Williams-town,—— Butler, Esq. Passing through what we are sure will still appear to the traveller a very extraordinary country, being one of those craggy tracts to which we have referred above. At four miles from Crusheen, we leave, on the right, Drumconora, and the beautiful demesne of Ballyalla, with its lovely lake.