History Of Thomond.

Before It Was formed Into An English County.
From The Earliest Times, To The Death Of De Clare
In 1318.

The
History and Topography
Of
The County Of Clare,
from the
Earliest Times To The Beginning Of The 12th Century.

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MDCCCXCIII.

The records of Thomond, preserved in the works of the annalists of Ireland are very scanty, so far as regards the early history of the district. There is an ancient poem, which appears to be a compilation from still earlier works, where it is stated that, after the overthrow of the Firbolgs by the Tuatha De Danaans, in the great battle fought at Moytura, near Cong, in the County of Galway, they fled from the country, part of them taking refuge in the Hebrides. Thence they were driven out by the Picts, and they again sought refuge in Ireland. They came in the reign of Cairbre Nia-fear, shortly before the date of the Christian era. At that epoch they were known as the sons of Umór, and were led by their native chief Aengus, the son of Umór. They besought king Cairbre to give them some land in Meath, and they professed their readiness to pay him a sufficient tribute for the accommodation they should receive. The king complyed with their request, but required them to give sureties for their good conduct. They gave pledges accordingly in the persons of four of their principal men. Soon finding the burdens placed upon them by the avaricious monarch too heavy to be borne, they resolved to fly from his rule and take refuge in Connaught, where they hoped to conciliate the favour of Ailill and Medhbh (Maev), the king and queen of that province. They set out accordingly by night with all their property, crossed the Shannon in safety, and were allowed to settle in the southern parts of the province, more particularly in the present counties of Galway and Clare, the latter forming at that time part of Connaught. Aengus, their chief, established himself in the isles of Arran, and built the noble stone fortress that bears his name, and remains almost perfect to this day—Dún Aengus, in the great island. Cutra, another son of Umór, settled at Lough Cutra (Lough Cooter); Conall, a third son, at Aidhne in the same district; Adhar, a fourth son, at Magh Adhar, where in after times grew the oak tree under which the Dalcaisian chieftains were inaugurated; Dael and Endach, the fifth and sixth sons, at Daelach, on the river Davil, on the coast of Burrin, and at Teach Endaich, at the north of Ennistymon, near Lisdoonvarna. [1] From the Life of St Senán and other sources, we learn that the part of the county now called Ibrickan, Moyarta, and Clonderalaw, was inhabited by a race called Ui Bascain, and that the barony of Lower Bunratty was the patrimony, in very early times, long before the Dalcais existed, of a sept called Ui Sedna. Of these people scarcely any mention is made in ancient history. In a previous part of this work, where a description of Mount Callan is given, an extract from the Annals of the Four Masters is produced, giving the very earliest name of any people inhabiting Thomond. These were called the Martini, but no further allusion to them is made by Irish writers.
With these scanty references we must pass on to the period immediately preceding the times of Brian Boromhe, when the history of Thomond really begins. The story of the O’Briens forms the central point, and around it the history of the whole people of Thomond generally groups itself. They were always the chiefs, and their vicissitudes, whether they were prosperous or unfortunate, ever swayed the destinies of their kindred and followers, the inhabitants of Clare. As is well known, that great family was descended from the hereditary kings of the southern half of Ireland, who had their royal residence at Cashel. Lachtna, the uncle of Brian Boromhe, was king of North Munster; he established his home at Cragliath, in the neighbourhood of Killaloe, and there, about the year 953, built his royal palace, called after him Grianan Lachtna. His reign was only for three years, and he was succeeded by his nephew, Mahone, in 954. By the death of the king of Cashel, Mahone united in himself the sovereignty of the southern as well as the northern part of Munster, and reigned over these for a period of sixteen years. He fought various battles against the Connaughtmen, and others of his foes, but the chief objects of his hostilities were the Danes. Against these he waged perpetual war. He beat them in 968, at Salchoid, now Salloghed, near the Limerick Railway Junction, and slew 3,000 of their number, with Manus of Limerick, their commander. Again, in 970, he was equally successful against Iver of Limerick, another of their leaders. He fought and vanquished the united forces of the Danes of Cork, Waterford, and Limerick in the year 975. After a successful reign, distinguished by his patriotic efforts to rid his country of its foreign invaders, Mahone came to an untimely end by the treachery of the chief of the O’Mahonys.

His successor to the sovereignty of all Munster was his brother Brian “the Augustus of the West of Europe” surnamed Boromhe, from the tributes of cattle levied by him from every part of Ireland. As the story of this remarkable man’s life belongs rather to the history of Ireland than to a particular district, we shall not here refer to it further than where it relates to matters connected with Thomond. He annihilated the power of the Danes of Limerick, utterly routing them and driving them from that place, and from Iniscathy, their stronghold on the Shannon. From the annals of these times it is evident that the Northmen must have flocked in great numbers into Ireland. Their armies are spoken of as numbering thousands of fighting men. In the single fight on Iniscathy in 977, Brian put to the sword no less than eight hundred of them, with Harold and his two sons at their head. He afterwards proceeded to the other islands of the Shannon and put every foreigner whom he found there to death. He successively defeated the Connaughtmen, the Leinstermen, the Danes of Dublin, and finally had himself crowned king of all Ireland in 1002. After thus attaining to the highest point of his ambition, he still pursued the Danes with unrelenting hostility, until at length, having fought twenty-five battles against them, he practically cleared the island of them, after they had maintained a footing there for two hundred years. Clontarf was the spot where they made their supreme effort. There, after an obstinate fight, they were defeated on Good Friday, the 23rd of April, 1014, and utterly destroyed. Brian lost his life on the day of battle.

During all the years of his reign he devoted himself with great energy and success to the improvement of the country and to the civilization of its people. He built and repaired many churches and bridges. He erected Cean Coradh as his royal residence in 1012. He rebuilt the churches of Killaloe and Inisceletra. He repaired the round tower (Clogteach) of Tomgraney. He erected bridges and made roads, he constructed fortresses for the defence of every post in Munster, and finally, did everything that a good king should do to make the condition of his subjects secure and happy.
If it were not recorded on unquestionable authority, the quantity of tribute paid to Brian, in each year during his rule as king of Ireland, would appear incredible. From the present baronies of Corcomroe and Burren alone, he received annually a thousand cows, a thousand oxen, a thousand rams, and a thousand cloaks; and from Corca Baskin, a thousand cows and a thousand oxen. All the remaining parts of Thomond, being the patrimony of the Dal Cais, appear to have been exempted from taxation. Every other district of Ireland contributed with equal liberality, and these enormous supplies were devoted to purposes of the most lavish hospitality. A large body of armed retainers were constantly maintained about the person and palace of the king. Subordinate kings had to be received and entertained at Ceann-Coradh, and we have a description of these State receptions as given by an eye witness, which agrees in a singular manner with the accounts of the banquets of the earlier kings of Ireland at Tara.

A.D. 1014. BRIAN SUCCEEDED BY HIS SON DONOGH.

After the death of Brian, his two sons Teige and Donogh reigned over the southern half of Ireland conjointly. By the contrivance of his younger brother, Teige was treacherously put to death by the people of Eily, but Donogh in expiation of his crime betook himself to Rome and died there in a monastery. While Donogh ruled, the annalists record that the season of 1050 was so inclement that food of every kind both for man and beast perished. Dishonesty and selfishness were the result of the calamity, and so great were the robberies that Donogh had to summon a meeting of the clergy and chieftains at Killaloe. There, certain ordinances were enacted which had the effect of speedily repressing every species of injustice; peace and favourable weather were, as stated by the ancient historians, the consequence of these beneficent regulations. During the government of Donogh, Thomond was invaded by the Connoughtmen, under their king Hugh O’Connor, and the inauguration tree of Magh Adhar cut down. Soon afterwards, it is recorded, Donald Roe O’Brien was slain by O’Hynes, Lord of the territory lying between Gort and Kinvara, at that time called Ui Fiachrach Aidhne, and that Turlogh, grandson of Brian Boróimhe, vanquished Murrogh O’Brien, called Murrogh of the Short Shield, and killed four hundred of his men, together with fifteen chieftains. Murrogh was another grandson of Brian, and appears to have been a man of violence; he was slain in 1068, by the people of Westmeath while on a plundering expedition in that country.

A.D. 1064. TURLOGH SUCCEEDS DONOGH O’BRIEN.

On the departure of Donogh to Rome in 1064, the government of South Munster was conferred on his nephew Turlogh. His reign was long and fortunate. He died at Ceann Coradh in 1086, and was buried in the Cathedral church of Killaloe. His wife was Gormliáth, daughter of O’Fogarty. She died in 1077, “after she had distributed much wealth among churches and amongst the poor of the Lord for the welfare of her soul.” In the time of Turlogh, Mæelisa, archbishop of Armagh, made a visitation into Munster to collect an ancient impost called the tribute of Patrick. This was paid to him in what is described as scraballs, a kind of silver coin weighing 24 grains, and in offerings of other kinds. Shortly before the date of his death Turlogh invaded Connaught, and after despoiling the country about Westport, expelled Rory O’Connor from the government of the province. Immediately afterwards he led his forces to Dublin, and compelled Maelseachlan, king of Leinster to become tributary to him. After a long illness, he died in the seventy-seventh year of his age. His eldest son Teige “died in his father’s bed,” also in the same month of June, and was buried with his parent in the church of Killaloe.
Turlogh was succeeded by his second son, Murtagh More, whose first act was to attack the Leinster men. In a battle at Rath Edair he utterly routed them, and compelled them to acknowledge his sovereignty. [18] He subsequently proceeded to invade Connaught, by means of boats on the Shannon and on Lough Ree. There he was repulsed by his brother-in-law, Rory O'Connor, with the loss of his vessels, and, for some time, of his personal liberty. [19] O’Connor afterwards took steps to organise a force for the invasion of Murtagh More’s kingdom. He secured the aid of Donald MacLoghlen O’Neill, King of Ireland, and both repaired with their united forces to Munster. “ They burned Limerick, plundered the plain of Munster as far as Emly, Lochgur, Bruree, Dunached, and Dromin ; they carried off the head of the son of Caileach O’Ruairc from the hills of Singland ; and they obtained eight score heroes, foreigners and Irish, as hostages. The chief of these hostages was Madadán O’Kennedy, the son of Congalach O’Hogan (of Arddrony, four miles to the north of Nenagh), and the son of Eochaid O’Lynch. Cows, horses, gold, silver, and flesh meat were afterwards given in ransom for these young men by Murtagh More.” [20] With a view to the general advantage of the country a meeting was convened, and attended by the provincial kings—namely, by Donald O’Neill, of Ulster ; Murtagh More O’Brien, of Cashel ; Donald O’Mealachlin, of Meath ; and Rory O’Connor, of Connaught. Here it was agreed that O’Neill, conformably to the ancient institutions, should be the sole King of Ireland. After so deciding they parted in perfect harmony. Their good accord was not of long duration, as we find O’Brien very soon afterwards invading the territory of Meath, and suffering a signal defeat at Magh Lena. He attacked, in succession, the people of Galway, of Leinster, of Offaly, of the northern parts of Connaught, and of Ulster, with varied results. Indeed, his whole time seemed to have been employed in aggressions on his neighbours of the north and east of Ireland. [21] He carried his arms into the remote north, and demolished the palace of Grainán Aileach, near Derry, the seat of the northern kings. He ordered that his men should bring back with them to Limerick a stone of the ruined building “ for every sack of provisions they had,” his object being to avenge the injury done to Ceann-Coradh by Donald Mac Loghlen O’Neill some time before. It is mentioned that these stones were afterwards built into the tower of the existing cathedral of Limerick. [22] Murtagh More combined with his bellicose tastes some religious instincts. He made a gift of Cashel, with its buildings, to the bishop, Ua Dunain, and ordered that it should be appropriated to religious uses for ever. [23] On the occasion of a visit to Armagh he presented to the church there, eight ounces of gold and three hundred and sixty cows. [24] He attended the synod convened at Fiad-mic-Aengusa in Westmeath for the reform of abuses, and in various ways showed his devotion to the interests of order and morality. During his reign, the death is recorded of Cormac Ua Finn, chief lector of Dalcais ; of Ua Mailcain, chief poet of Dalcais ; of Magrath, chief poet of Munster ; and of Gilla Patrick O’Duivrata, lector of Killaloe. About the middle of the year 1114 he was seized with a fit of sickness, which reduced him to the condition of a skeleton. Finding that his capacity for prosecuting further acts of turmoil was gone, he resigned the government of his kingdom. His brother Dermot assumed the reigns of power without permission, but was soon deprived of authority by the warlike Murtagh. Advantage had been taken of his inability to fight, and the men of Ulster and Leinster had visited Dalcais for purposes of plunder. They were met by the inhabitants, and a bloody battle was fought at Tulla O’Dea, with no decisive result. Murtagh, although in feeble health, could not permit that any invasion of his territories should be made with impunity, and he accordingly led an army into Leinster ; finding himself incapable of acting the part of a general, he resigned his power into the hands of his brother Dermot. The Connaughtmen, taking advantage of his absence, pillaged Thomond, as far as Limerick, but Dermot soon avenged himself by carrying the war in turn into their country. He did not survive his accession to power long, for he died at Cork in 1118, and he was followed to the
grave in the following year by his able brother Murtagh. The latter was buried in the church of Killaloe. Dermot O’Brien left six sons, viz., Conor na-Catharac, so called from a cahir built by him in Lough Derg; Turlogh, Teige Glæ, Dermot Finn a man of violent character; Dermot Don, of whom we have no account, and Donogh, who became bishop of Killaloe in 1161. [25]

A.D. 1119. CONOR-NA-CATHARAC O’BRIEN.

Conor-na-Catharach was inaugurated King of Munster in succession to his father, and at the same time his brother Turlogh became King of Thomond. During Conor’s reign of twenty-two years he led his forces successively into Meath, Connaught, and Leinster. Joined by MacMurrogh, King of Leinster, he laid siege to Waterford, then held by the Danes, who were the owners of 200 ships. The foreigners surrendered the town and gave hostages for their future good behaviour. In 1141, just two years afterwards, he compelled the Danes of Dublin to submit to him as their king, and he likewise reduced to subjection the MacCarthy’s of South Munster. In the course of his reign, Thomond was the scene of two raids by the people of Connaught. The first was in 1119, when they possessed themselves of Killaloe, and the next, five years later, when Turlogh O’Connor conveyed a fleet of boats over Eas Danaire, now called the falls of Doonass, and plundered the shores of the lower Shannon, as far as Faing (Foynes Island). The death of Conor-na-Catharach occurred at Killaloe, in the year 1142. He was succeeded in the government of Munster by his brother Turlogh, who, up to that time, had been King of Thomond. [26]

A.D. 1142. TURLOGH O’BRIEN.

No time was lost by Turlogh on his accession to power in showing his prowess to his neighbours. He plundered Leinster forthwith but brought away no booty. His next exploit was to cut down the Ruidh Bheithagh (the red birch tree), under which the O’Hynes were inaugurated chiefs, at Roevehagh, in the county of Galway. Next he ravaged the O’Kelly’s country in Galway, and made a prisoner of Teige O’Kelly, their chief. Then he invaded Leinster a second time, with more success than attended his first expedition. Lastly he harried Meath and Dublin; but whilst he was employed on that work his own dominions of Thomond were plundered by Turlogh O’Connor, with his Connaughtmen. This was not his only misfortune, for O’Connor joined his brother, Teige Glæ O’Brien, in deposing him from his sovereignty and driving him as a fugitive into Kerry. He was determined, however, not to give up his power without a struggle. He assembled his forces, and prepared to do battle against O’Connor and MacMurrogh, of Leinster, both of whom had united their men in a plundering expedition into Munster. The armies met at Moinmore, near Emly. A sanguinary engagement ensued, in which the Munstermen were utterly routed, with the loss [27] of seven thousand men slain. Among these were the following chief men belonging to Thomond: Murtagh, the nephew of Turlogh, and his heir-apparent; Lughaid and Conor, his cousins; Cumara Beg, Lord of Ui Caisin; two of the O’Kennedys, of Gleann Omra; eight of the O’Deas; nine of the O’Shanahans; five of the O’Quins; five of the O’Gradys; twenty-four of the O’Hogans; four of the O’Hehirs; four of the O’Neill’s (buidhe), of Clann Delbaith in Tradraighe; and five of the O’Aherns. Only one shattered battalion of the Dalcais survived the dreadful slaughter. Turlogh was obliged to fly, and O’Connor assumed full power over Munster, ravaging the country in all directions according to his good pleasure. Loss of life by famine followed his proceedings, as a natural consequence. He divided Munster into two parts, assigning to MacCarthy the southern division, and the northern to the O’Briens, namely to the two brothers, Turlogh and Teige Glæ. Shortly afterwards he banished Turlogh to the north of Ireland, and left Teige sole ruler of North Munster. Teige’s authority, so conferred, was not
left long uncontested, for O’Neill led an army of northerns to Thomond, and by their means defeated his forces, and restored Turlogh to the sovereignty. This man appears to have been a sort of shuttle-cock between O’Neill, of Ulster, and O’Connor, of Connaught, who deposed and again restored him at will. At length, in 1165, he resigned in favour of his eldest son, Murtagh, but he resumed his authority in the following year. His death happened in 1167, presumably at Killaloe. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Murtagh-na-dun-na-sgiath, who, having been killed by his cousin, Conor O’Brien, in the year following, was succeeded by his brother, Donald More.

A.D. 1168. DONALD MORE O’BRIEN.

Almost the first act of Donald More, after his accession to power, was to deprive of sight his brother, Brian na Sleibhe, who had been inaugurated King of Ormond. This inhuman procedure of blinding their enemies was commonly practiced by the O’Briens about this time. Several instances of it are recorded, but we refrain from further dwelling on the revolting fact. Donald More lost no time in imitating the aggressive practices of his ancestors. He fought several engagements with Rory O’Connor, King of Connaught, who had came to Munster in 1169 to inflict punishment upon the Dal Cais for the murder of his half-brother Murtagh-na-dun-na Sgeath in the previous year. O’Connor was accompanied by O’Ruarc. They met O’Brien at Aine-Cliach (Knockany), and exacted from him as an eric, for the death of the murdered man, seven hundred and twenty cows. [28] The strife between the people of Munster and the Connaughtmen continued almost without interruption for four years, with varied results; ultimately O’Brien bethought him of calling in the aid of the English. With that object in view he swore homage and allegiance to Henry II, and obtained in return the support of FitzStephens and his party of mercenary adventurers. That was the first occasion in which the English gained a footing in Munster. [29] O’Brien was not long faithful to his new allies; in 1174, joined by several others of the Irish chieftains, he gave battle to the English at Thurles and routed them with the loss of seventeen hundred of their best men killed. At Limerick likewise he attacked and drove out of the city many others of the invaders. [30] Again in 1185, he routed the English under John. He invaded Galway, and saw his own territory invaded in turn by Cathal O’Connor, and his town and palace at Killaloe burned. After living for some years longer a life of strife and contention he died in 1194, and Murtagh Dall, his eldest son, assumed his place. Of Murtagh Ball’s story nothing has come down to us except what is told by Bishop O’Brien in his pedigree of the family published in the *Collactanea de Rebus Hibemicis* of Vallency. There it is stated, that shortly after his accession to the Sovereignty of Thomond, he was taken prisoner by the English and deprived of sight. His brother, Conor Roe, was inaugurated king in succession, but his tenure of power was not long, inasmuch as he was dethroned in 1198, and deprived of life by his nephew in 1201. Another of the brothers, Murtagh Finn, struggled for the possession of the Government, but the third son of Donald was the one who finally succeeded in establishing his right to the throne of his father. His name was Donogh Cairbreach, so called from the place of his education, Cairbreach Aova, now Kenry, in the county of Limerick. With a determination to render himself supreme over his brother he allied himself with the English. Having done homage to King John at Waterford, he purchased from that monarch, the lands of Carrigoguinniol, in the county of Limerick, together with its lordship, for himself and his heirs for ever at the yearly rent of sixty marks. The Kingdom of Thomond was at the same time granted to him, and his other brothers, who might claim any title to it, were declared usurpers and enemies of John, as supreme Lord of Ireland. In requital of his baseness in recognising the power of the English enemy, Donogh was soon afterwards, deprived by them, of the city of Limerick, with its surrounding country, and he was compelled to remove his residence to Clonroad, near Ennis. Donogh Cairbreach is the direct ancestor of the succeeding Kings and Earls of
Thomond, of the titled families of Inchiquin, and of the Viscounts Clare. [31] In the course of his reign, it is mentioned that, in 1223, the son of Gilla-na-naev O’Shaughnessy was slain by the MacNamaras, of Clan Cullein, presumably in the church of Cill mac Duach, because the *Four Masters* say, that “the Bachal-more (crozier), of St. Colman Mac Duach was profaned.” [32]

A.D. 1242. CONOR-NA-SUIDAINE O’BRIEN.

The death of Donogh Cairbreach occurred in 1242, and he was succeeded by his eldest son, Conor-na-Suidaine. At his death, Donogh’s kingdom comprised the country lying between Loop Head and Birr, thence by Cashel, round by Knockane, to the bay of Galway. His residence, at Clonroad, is described as an earthen fort, of a round form, and this fortress continued for generations to be the principal home of the O’Brien. Donogh Cairbreach was the first who was styled The O’Brien. [33]

A.D. 1258. TEIGE CAEL UISCE O’BRIEN.

As if things were not bad enough already, a new element of strife now begins to appear in the story of the O’Briens, namely the English invaders. In the south of Munster, these began to grow powerful, and they sought to extend their power to the northern parts of the province also. Conor na-Suidaine, however, was determined to preserve his territories intact, and in 1257 he gave battle to and defeated the enemy. Again, in 1257, he attacked and worsted them on the Galway side of his kingdom. At length, it appeared to the Irish, that their only hope of safety from the aggressions of the stranger was union amongst themselves. They saw that, by keeping asunder, they would become the prey in detail, of an astute enemy, who omitted no opportunity of fomenting their differences.

A general meeting of the provincial kings of Ireland was therefore convoked, at a place called Cael-uisce, on Lough Erne, near the present Castle Calwell, and Conor O’Brien, being unable to attend in person, sent his eldest son Teige, called in after times, from that incident, Teige Cael-uisce, to represent him in the assembly (A.D. 1258). As the best means of resisting the English, it was proposed, that one supreme king of Ireland should be acknowledged, with full powers vested in him, to call out and command the forces of the whole country. This was agreed to, but when it came to the selection of the supreme ruler, a contest arose between O’Neill and O’Brien as to which of the two should be the man to be chosen. O’Neill’s right was regarded as paramount and unquestionable, but O’Brien would not yield, and as a consequence, the conference broke up without arriving at any definite settlement of the question. Since Ireland was first inhabited up to the present day, no act more fatal to her true interests ever happened than this. The opportunity was lost, never to return, of annihilating the power of England, then in its weakness. The example of Brian Boromhe, who by means of his sole sovereignty over the whole island was able to extirpate the Danes, was forgotten by his descendant Teige Cael-uisce, and by his act of vain folly, the island has since remained a scene of anarchy, fomented by the machinations of the unscrupulous stranger. [34] Teige died in the following year, but it had been better for his country that he was never born. [35]

A.D. 1261. BRIAN ROE O’BRIEN.

A.D. 1261. This year his father was involved in a quarrel with the inhabitants of the eastern parts of Thomond, and with their kindred, who occupied the left banks of the Shannon. These were called the Ui Bloids. They refused to pay the customary tribute to Conor na Suidine, and he resolved to enforce it. He assembled the forces of Ui Caisin under Sioda, son of Niall MacNamara, and those of Ui Dongaile under Anneslas O’Grady. The chief command he
entrusted to his own son, Brian Roe. Brian Roe immediately burned Caislean Ui Chonaing (Castleconnell), and proceeded to devastate the country of the enemy lying between Birr, in the King’s County, and Knockaney, in the county of Limerick; and between Cashel and Killaloe. Hostages and booty were brought to the royal residence at Clonroad. Just at that time, the O’Loghlens of Burren had given some cause of offence to Conor, and to punish them, he assembled his followers, aided by the people of Cineal Fearmaic, under the guidance of Donogh O’Dea, and of O’Hehir. Having repaired to the “Upper Cantred” Burren, they drove all they met before them, through the valley of Duvgleann (Gleannamanagh, near Corcomroe Abbey), thence by Beal-an-clogaid (at Pouldoody), westwards, and making their way by the sea northwards, they encountered Conor Carrach O’Loghlen. An obstinate battle was fought, in which O’Brien lost his life. He was buried in the neighbouring abbey of Corcomroe (A.D. 1268), where his monument is yet to be seen in a good state of preservation.

Besides the king, several other principal persons were slain in this engagement, to wit, his son called little John, his daughter, his nephew, the son of Rory O’Grady; Duvloghlen O’Loghlen, and Thomas O’Bealán. [36]

A.D. 1276. THOMAS DE CLARE.

Brian Roe O’Brien was inaugurated King at Magh Adhar, in succession to his father, and MacNamara, as the principal man amongst the chiefs, made proclamation of their choice. Brian was not the eldest son of the deceased monarch; Teige Cael-uiisge was the senior. He was dead, leaving a son, Turlogh, who was too young to assume the reins of power after the death of Conor. For nine years, therefore, Brian Roe was permitted to reign unmolested, but then his nephew, assisted by the MacNamara, who were his maternal kinsmen, and by his foster-brothers, the O’Deas, contested his right to reign. (A.D. 1276). They attacked Clonroad, and being unable to defend it, he fled with his dependants to take refuge amongst the people of Ui Bloid. These received him warmly, and they advised him to go, accompanied by his son Donogh, to solicit aid from Thomas de Clare, son of the Earl of Gloucester, who was then at Cork, and who had received from Edward I. a grant of all the lands he could conquer in Munster. An agreement was concluded between them, to the effect that de Clare should have all the land lying between Limerick and Athsolas, on condition of rendering assistance to Brian in his endeavour to retain the chieftaincy. A summons was issued by de Clare, calling upon the Geraldines, Butlers, and all others, whether English or Irish, whom he could influence, to meet him at Limerick on a certain day. Nor was Brian Roe idle. He promised to bring to the confederacy the aid of the people of Coonagh, Ui Bloid, and Uaithne (Owney); but these latter refused to contest the right of Turlogh, whom they regarded as their lawful ruler. With their combined forces, Brian Roe and de Clare marched to the attack of Clonroad, the stronghold of Turlogh. Its owner was absent, having gone to Corcabaskin to obtain aid from Teige Buidhe MacMahon, from Rory MacMahon, and from the O’Gradys, and O’Hehirs. Thus reinforced, he attacked and wasted Ui Cualachta and Ui Fearmaic, the patrimony of the O’Quins, O’Hehirs, and O’Deas. Thence he invaded Ui Caisin, but the MacNamara, to escape from him, temporarily removed their cattle to Sliaeve Echtghe. About that time (1277), De Clare built the Castle of Bunratty, [37] and after conquering the old families of Tradraighe, he bestowed that district upon his own followers. As a further defence of his new territories, he built a wall from “the stream to the sea,” supposed to be from Athsolas to Sixmilebridge; no trace of it exists in our time.

A.D. 1277. BATTLE OF MOYGREASAN.

In the meanwhile, Turlogh was busy seeking support for himself. He was joined by the MacMahons, that is, by Donogh son of Rory; and by Bryan, son of Teige Buidhe; by Cumeadha MacGorman; by Donald, son of Teige Alainn O’Brien of Tromraidh (Tromroe);
and by Donald Mantach O’Connor Corcomroe; by the MacNamaras of Clancullein; and finally by the de Burgos and O’Kellys of Connaught. All these being ready, in the following autumn, they ravaged Moynoe and Tomgraney, and encountering Brian Roe and his auxiliaries at Moygreasan utterly defeated them in a pitched battle. In this engagement was killed Patrick Fitzmaurice, the brother of de Clare’s wife. This woman believing that her brother’s death and her husband’s defeat were occasioned by his connexion with Brian Roe, persuaded de Clare to invite that chieftain to Bunratty, and then to assassinate him. It was done according to her wish, and the murder was consummated under circumstances of peculiar atrocity. The parties were gossips. They had sworn mutually to defend one another, with the most solemn rites. They made oath upon bells and crozier, and upon the relics of the saints; blood was drawn from the veins of each and mingled in a vessel; the holy Eucharist was divided between them. In spite of these guarantees, O’Brien was torn to pieces by horses, at the command of his savage confederate. Such was the horror excited by this atrocious act, that it was referred to, as a proof of English perfidy, in the eloquent memorial presented, a few years afterwards, to Pope John XXII., by the chieftains of Ireland. [38] Brian Roe at his death left several sons; the eldest, named Donogh, assumed his father’s place. One would suppose that abhorrence of de Clare should be the guide of the young man’s conduct towards such a monster, but we read that, in the following year, they were united together to crush the power of Turlogh, who, immediately upon the death of Brian Roe, had himself solemnly inaugurated at Magh Adhar as king of Thomond. Donogh resented this act, claiming for himself the chieftaincy in succession to his father. He was backed up in his efforts by de Clare, that being the best method of dividing the two Irish parties. Donogh soon put himself at the head of his own and the English forces, and marched “eastwards of the Shannon.” There, he exacted submission from the section of the Ui Bloids, who resided in that district. His next act was to plunder Uaithne (Owney and Ara), and carry away the spoils to Bunratty. Afterwards, he was joined by Mahone O’Brien, grandson of Donald Connachtach, and he marched to Burren and Corcomroe, despoiling “the posterity of Fergus MacRoigh” (the O’Loghlans and O’Connors); thence proceeding due west through the district of “Triuchead na Naumeadh,” he reached the residence of MacMahon of Corcabaskin. After this, he directed his march towards Clonroad, on his way ravaging Ui Cormaic and “Imire Uaine.” Finding that Turlogh had fled from Clonroad on his approach, he pursued his cousin to Quin, and wasted the country as he went along. At Quin, he was opposed by Sheeda MacNamara, but in the en-counter which ensued that chieftain lost his life. Cuvua MacNamara, son of Sheeda, fled for protection to Turlogh O’Brien, who was at a place called Forbair (Furroor)? Together, they retreated westwards, and the country about the Fergus being thus left without protection, was ravaged by de Clare and his ally. The work of MacGrath, called Cathreim Thoiridhealbaigh (the Wars of Turlogh), from which the above account is mainly taken, goes on to describe the struggle between the O’Briens for supremacy, but the contest is merely a wretched tissue of strife, plunder, and robbery, unworthy of record. We shall therefore content ourselves with making such selections only as may serve to illustrate the topography of the country, and afford information as to the families who inhabited the various districts composing the country of Thomond.

A.D. 1279. DEATH OF DONALD AT QUIN.

Keeping in view these objects, we shall mention that de Clare, in 1279, assembled a large force to surprise Turlogh at Feartain (Fortane). His auxiliaries marched to his aid through Beal-coille-Druinge (Bealkelly)? There they were met and utterly routed by Turlogh. De Clare, as was his wont after defeat, fled to his stronghold at Bunratty, but Turlogh taking advantage of his victory spoiled Tradraighe and drove out from it its English settlers.
A.D. 1280.—At the instance of MacCarthy More, a division was made of Thomond between Turlogh and Donogh, the latter getting the western portion. He did not long survive to enjoy his acquisition, for he was drowned in the Fergus in three years afterwards. His brother Donald having come to Quin, “close to that town where he bought wine for the nobles who came on a visit to his house” was, for some unexplained reason, stabbed in the groin by “a soldier of the English garrison of the strong-walled castle of Quin.” He returned the blow with equal effect, both wounds proving mortal.

During the years between 1286 and 1306, the *Cathreim* contains only an account of uninteresting raids made upon the country by the rival chieftains while endeavouring to decide their respective rights to the supreme power. In the course of these contests we are told that Donogh O’Dea was slain by his kinsmen Loghlen and MacCraith O’Dea; O’Liddy was slain at Quin by the English; the town of Bunratty was burned by Turlogh O’Brien and by Cuvea MacNamara, the approach to the place being made by a wooden bridge laid across the river, near the castle. It is also mentioned that Turlogh made a visit to west Thomond, passing through “Disert Murthaile,” now Killadysert.

A.D. 1306. DEATH OF TURLOGH.

On the 10th of April, 1306, Turlogh died, and at a meeting held at Magh Adhar, his son, Donogh, was unanimously chosen to rule in his stead. Cuvea MacNamara, in virtue of his office, announced to him his election as king of North Munster, then comprising the following territories, viz.:—Owney, the two Elys, Ormond, O’Luigheach, Aois-greine, Cunach, Eoganacht of Cashel, Aois-tre-mughe, a part of Connaught, and the whole of the present county of Clare. His reign was short, lasting only four years and four months, and Cuvea’s death happening just at the same time, “he was buried near the grave of his king, in the abbey of Ennis Clonroad, and his son, Donogh MacNamara, was appointed chief of Clan Culein in his stead, by the states, who assembled for the purpose of his election.” A.D. 1307. In this year a raid was made by Sheeda, brother of Donogh MacNamara, into Connaught, and he drove away many cattle. On his way home he was attacked at Moynoe, by the tribes of Maolmana O’Cormacain, and O’Cindeargain, and his foster-brother slain. In revenge, Sheeda, aided by his nephews, ravaged the termon lands of Moynoe. The Ui Bloid, composed of the families of Clan Turlogh and Clan Dermot (O’Brien), the O’Kennedys of Killo-kennedy, the O’Gunnings of Castle Connell, the O’Coffeys of Owney, the O’Shanahans of Kilnoe and Killuran, the O’Hogans, of Ara, the O’Aherns of Cratloe, the O’Muldoons, the O’Duracks of Ogonnelloe, the O’Lonergans, the O’Fahertys, and the O’Moloneys rose to revenge this onslaught, but O’Brien, the chief king of Thomond, interposed, and made peace between the belligerents. The truce, however, was but of short duration, as in 1309, the Ui Bloids assembled and met their enemies the MacNamaras, who had been joined by the small sept of the O’Dovarcans, at Baile-in-Cuilin (Ballycullen), near Sixmilebridge. From this place they went along, skirmishing as far as Kilgorey (Cill-n’-Guairé). Here, Donogh MacNamara addressed his men, and in the course of his speech, enumerated those families who were favourable to his cause. They were the MacInerneys, Claras, Maninains(Mannions), Moloneys, O’Hallorans, O’Cormicks, Slattery, Hartigans, Hanleys, Cindregans, O’Malleys, O’Meehans, O’Liddys, and the Clan-an-Giolla-Mhaoil. He then dressed himself in his war panoply, namely, a tunic (cotún), extending from the neck to the knee, over that a coat of mail, a saffron-coloured belt, with a dagger and a spear thrust into it; over the coat of mail a shirt (scabal), on his head a helmet, a sword at his side, a javelin in his right hand to cast at his enemies, and a spear in his left. Both parties joined battle at Kilgorey, and the Clan Culein were victorious. Among the slain of the Ui Bloids are enumerated the following:—Turlogh, son of Turlogh Fionn; Mahone, son of Dermot Fionn; O’Ahern; the chief of O’Floinn Feathneadh; Rory
O’Shanahan; Esles O’Hagan, of Forgabhail; [41] together with fifteen of his kindred. Eleven of the O’Kennedys were spared, and with them Maoelseachlin, son of Murrogh O’Shanahan, and Aodh O’Shanahan, his elder brother, the chief of O’Rongaile. These were carried away prisoners by the MacNamaras. Immediately after-wards, another struggle took place between the Clan Culein and the Ui Bloids, in which Donogh MacNamara, the chief of his tribe, lost his life, but his kinsfolk, being joined by the O’Briens, and by de Burgo, of Galway, defeated the Ui Bloids, and killed one of their princ-iptal chieftains, Donald O’Grady, of Cineal Dongaile. The MacNamara selected as successor to Donogh, was Loghlen, son of Cuvea.

A.D. 1310. In this year, it is recorded that O’Brien and de Burgo laid siege to de Clare, in his castle of Bunratty. He sallied forth and, on the hill above the castle, defeated and put to flight his assailants. It is also related that the sons of Brian Roe ravaged the termon lands of St. Cronan, and burned Clonroad.

A.D. 1311. Accompanied by Dermot, the grandson of Brian Roe, de Clare, made an incursion into Burren. They marched in two separate divisions. The first night, Dermot encamped at Criothmaill (Crughwill) and de Clare at Cnoc Dloghain. [42] Donogh, son of Turlogh O’Brien, prepared to oppose them, and that night he lay at Sliabh Cairin. On the following day, advancing towards the enemy, he arrived at Glean Caoin (Glenquin). There, he was treacherously slain by Murrogh, son of Mahone O’Brien, a man distantly related to him by blood. De Clare, whose policy it was always to depress the power of the lawful king, resolved to supply the vacancy thus created in the chieftaincy, by the appointment, as king over Thomond, of his ally Dermot, the grandson of Brian Roe. With that design, he summoned the adherents of Dermot to assemble at Magh Adhar, and they named him king accordingly. He was installed by Loghlen, son of Cuvea MacNamara. But an opponent soon appeared in the person of Murrogh, brother of the late king. Supported by the de Burgos, he marched into Thomond, by Bealach-an-Fhiodhfail, [43] where he was joined by Loghlen Reagh O’Dea, and by the sons of Donogh O’Dea, at the head of the forces of Cineal Fearmaic. Thus reinforced, he placed himself to guard the entrance of the wood. Dermot instantly arrived, fully deter-mined to contest the pass. A fierce fight followed, in which Dermot was worsted. An as-sembly of the partisans of Murrogh was convoked at Magh Adhar, and at this meeting, he was chosen king of Thomond, and Loghlen MacNamara nominated as its hereditary Lord Marshall.

In the interval between the years 1311 and 1316, scarcely anything deserving of description happened in Thomond. It is stated in the work from which we have been quoting, that the struggle for supremacy between the O’Briens went on without cessation. It is mentioned that a fruitless attempt was made to seduce Loghlen Reagh O’Dea and his clan from their alleg-iance to Murrogh O’Brien; that Sheeda MacNamara plundered Burren, and while carrying his prey home by way of Connaught was seized by an illness of which he died, “ bequeathing his body to St Brendan of Birr.” It is further recorded that Murrogh O’Brien plundered Ui Dobharcan, [44] and immediately afterwards the district of Cille-o-na-Suileach (Kilnasoolagh near Newmarket-on- Fergus); that Loghlen MacNamara was made prisoner by de Clare, at Bunratty; that the adherents of Brian Roe, of Ara, killed Loghlen and Maoelsaghlen MacNamara, beheading them and casting their bodies into Coolmeen Lake, near Sixmile-bridge. Mahone MacNamara, being elected chief of the tribe, and called the MacNamara, lost no time in taking steps to avenge the death of his kinsmen. He summoned to his aid the O’Kellys, de Burgos, O’Madigans, and Butlers of Galway; M’Crath O’Dea, and Donald O’Dea, of Inchiquin; the O’Loghlens, and Comyns, of Burren. Joined by these, he marched to a place called Ballyiconway, where he was apprised by O’Shanny, that his enemies waited for him at Tulla O’Dea. He immediately attacked and defeated them. In 1314, Donogh,
grandson of Brien Roe, was elected king at Magh Adhar, in opposition to his cousin Murtagh, who was the legitimate ruler. The MacNamaras, in this year, invaded Uí Rongáile (Kilnoe and Killuran), and subdued the O’Shanahans and O’Kennedys. Being reinforced by the O’Kellys and the O’Madigans of Galway, they proceeded on their marauding expedition to Inis-na-moná and Dangan-i-Grada (in the parish of Tomgraney). After burning the last named place they encamped next night at Magh Maolain. There they defeated the grandsons of Brian Roe, and made them flee westwards by Bealach-an-Fhiodháil, in the parish of Kilkeedy. About this time Edward Bruce, with his Scots, invaded Ireland. The principal men of Munster being assembled at Limerick, selected Murrogh O’Brien as their chief to oppose him. Murrogh shortly afterwards went to Dublin to attend the Parliament held there, his main business being to take care that de Clare should not traduce him before the assembly. In the following year (1317), he resolved to make a decisive effort to overmaster his rival and cousin, and at the same time to crush the power of the English strangers. He got his brother Dermot to call together his partisans at Rath Laithin (Rathlaheen), to consult with them as to the best mode of attaining those objects.

A.D. 1317. CHIEFS MEET AT RATH LAITHIN.

There came to this meeting (August 15th), Felemidh O’Connor, son of Donald of Corcomroe; the O’Deas, Loghlen O’Hehir, Rory MacCrath, Donald O’Dubhduin, and Cu-eabha MacGorman. It was decided that each one should go home, call together his followers, and meet again, on a certain day, at Ruadhan (Ruan). This was accordingly done; from Ruan they marched northwards through the gap of Bearnaidh-an-Cailin, by Leacht-inghen-i-Lochlain, through Upper Clan Culein, through Caraidh Eachdroma (Augrim), leaving Tulla O’Dea on the left, by the banks of Beascnaton, through the weirs of Caraidh-mac-a-at’burion, where they slept that night. Next morning, they marched along Bothar-na-mac-Riogh, across Mullach Gaoil, along the Lionans (Leana), along Cill-mic-i-Donain, along Caher Crailehdigh, through the middle of Crioch-maile (Crughwill), through the valley of Duvgleann (Glennamanagh), they proceeded through Coill-an-air, out into the arable lands of the abbey of Corcomroe, and slept in the abbey that night. A list of Dermot’s followers is given by Mac Grath.

A.D. 1317. LIST OF THE SEPTS OF THOMOND.

In addition to those just mentioned, there came to his aid the O’Hehirs, the M’Graths, the O’Dubhduins, the MacGormans, and the following septs of the clan Culein (the MacNamaras), viz —The MacInerneys, the clan Lorcain, the O’Claras, the clan Meanman (Mannions ?), the clan Giolla Maoel, the O’Maøel Domhnaigh (O’Moloneys), the clan Alivaren (O’Hallorans), the clan Comhremaigh (O’Currys), the O’Sllaterys, the O’Hassets, the O’Malleys, the O’Hartigans, the O’Cindergains, the clan Aillie (O’Haleys), the O’Conways (Conduibh), and the O’Meehans: then came the M’Mahons, of Corcabakin, under the command of Donogh, son of Rory, son of Rory; the O’Lynchis, and the O’Kellys (Caolaidhe), of Galway; the MacRegans, the clan Mahowna, the O’Griffeyes, the O’Howards (Muinter Iomhair), and the MacEncroes (Mac Con Cros) of Inagh; the O’Galvins (Muinter Chealbhain), the O’Liddys, the O’Doyles, the O’Kelliersons, the O’Cuinins (Cuneens), and the O’Gerans.

A.D. 1317. BATTLE OF LOGHRASKA.

To oppose these, Donogh, grandson of Brian Roe, summoned to his assistance his brother Brian Bane, his cousin-german, Murtagh Garv, son of his uncle Donogh; Brian Bearra, Tiege
Luimneigh, son of Brian Roe; the clan Mahon, the clan Teige (O’Brien), the inhabitants of Tuachadh-na-Faiseach (*i.e.*, Ui Bloid); Loghlen, the O’Gradys, the clan Giolla Mochaine, the clan Flaherty O’Dea, the MacDonagans, the O’Shanahans, the O’Aherns, the O’Hogans, and the O’Kennedys. These being assembled, slept the first night at Cill-Litire-Maoel Odhrain.[47]

Thence they proceeded to Loghraska, and there came in sight of a hag, whose hideousness is described by the Irish historian in terms of laughable exaggeration, and whom they found employed in washing the blood off a pile of limbs and carcasses of dead men. These, she said, were symbolical of the heads and limbs of Donogh himself and his followers, who were doomed to perish in the approaching combat. Nor was that combat long a-coming: Dermot leading his forces that same day from the abbey of Corcomroe, came in sight of his enemies, and gave them battle at Druim Lurgain. Before the fight began, he addressed his troops, and his exhortation was followed by another in verse, from his chief poet, it being the custom amongst the Irish that the bard should accompany and encourage his kinsfolk in battle. In the conflict that ensued Donogh was slain by the hand of O’Connor of Corcomroe, his party utterly defeated, and nearly the entire following of Brian Roe extirpated. The victors purchased their success dearly, no less than twenty-one principal men of the MacNamaras, four leaders of the O’Moloney’s, and two of the O’Hallorans having fallen. After the battle, the chiefs of either party were buried by Dermot, with all honours, in separate graves, in the neighbouring abbey. The victory thus gained, finally decided the right to the chieftaincy of Thomond, and placed it, indisputably, in the race of Turlogh. It moreover led to the annihilation of de Clare, and to the expulsion of the English from the country, for the final struggle took place not long afterwards.

A.D. 1318. BATTLE OF DYSERT O’DEA.

A.D. 1318. De Clare called together his partisans, English and Irish, the latter under the command of Brian Bane, who was almost the only person of his race that escaped death at Corcomroe. They decided to invade Ui Fearmaic, and to attack O’Dea in the first instance. The two brothers, Murrogh and Dermot O’Brien, resolved to support him, and with that object in view, drew their forces together at Dysert O’Dea. De Clare made a division of his troops into three bodies: the first he posted at Tulla O’Dea, under command of his son, with instructions to intercept the O’Connors, who were expected to come from Ennistymon. His second detachment was to march from the Fergus to Magowna. The third, under his own leadership, he brought to Dysert. When he arrived there (May 10th, 1318) he found O’Dea posted in defence of a small stream that descends from the hills and falls into the neighbouring lake. The O’Deas opened their ranks on his approach, and he, mistaking that movement for a sign of fear, rushed onwards without thinking of consequences, and thus separated himself from the main body of his supporters. The Dal Cais closed in upon his troops, overwhelmed, and cut them to pieces, he himself being killed by the axe of Conor O’Dea. His son shared the same fate, being slain by Felim O’Connor, as that chieftain was rushing down with his followers from the neighbouring hill of Scamhall to support O’Dea. At that moment, Loghlen O’Hehir, with the men of Ui Cormaic coming up, the united forces of the Irish fiercely attacked the foreigners, and these being already dispirited by the loss of their leaders, gave way on all quarters, and a total rout ensued. Never was victory more decisive. [48] Its effect was to rid the country of Thomond for more than two centuries of everything Saxon. De Clare’s widow, hearing of the loss of her husband and son, set fire to the castle of Bunratty, and with what remained of her followers made sail for England, never to put her foot on Irish ground again. After this time, the name of de Clare disappears from the page of the history of Ireland. [49]
MacLiag’s account of the Carn Conall in O’Curry’s Lectures, on the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish, Vol. ii., Lee. 6, p. 122, and Vol. iii. Lee. 22, p. 74. The places last mentioned cannot be identified.


Idem, A.D. 977.

Annals of Inisfallen, A.D. 975.

A.D. 982. Dalcais was plundered by Maelsaghlin, King of Leinster, and the tree of Aenach Maigh Adhair cut down. Ann, Four Masters.

Ann, Four Masters.

Keating’s History of Ireland, A.D. 1012, p. 90.

See Petrie’s Description of Tara in Vol. xviii. of ‘Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy’; — And see in this volume under the head “Killaloe a description of Brian’s great banquets, p. 176 See also O’Donovan’s Book of Rights, p, 43.

Ann, Four Masters, A.D. 1050.

Idem, A.D. 1051.

Idem, A.D. 1055.

Idem, A.D. 1068.

Ann, Four Mast., A.D. 1077.

Idem, A.D. 1068.

Idem, A.D. 1019.

Idem, A.D. 1080.

Idem, A.D. 1086.

Idem, A.D. 1087.

Ann, Inisfallen, A.D. 1089.

Ann, Four Mast., A.D. 1088.

Idem, A.D. 1090, 1091, 1092, 1093.

Idem, A.D. 1101.

Idem, A.D. 1101.

Idem, A.D. 1130.

The bishop had been a widower age. at the time of his ordination. His descendants became a powerful family in Clare; said to be represented in 1770, by Francis O’Brien, of O’Brien’s Castle. See Lodge’s Peerage of Ireland, by Archdall, Vol. ii., p. 13.

The story of Conor-na-Catharach is taken from the Annals of the Four Masters.

A.D. 1151. Four Masters.


A.D. 1159. Donald MacNamara was drowned in the Shannon.

Ann. Four Masters, A.D. 1169.


A.D. 1170. Lorcan Ua h Echthighern (Ahem) was slain by the sons of MacNamara, and the Uí Caisin. Four Mast.

A.D. 1171. The O’Connors, of Connaught, plundered O’Liddy, of Thomond. Four Mast.

Four Mast, A.D. 1174-1176.

A.D. 1182. Brian, son of Turlogh O’Brien, was slain by Regnal MacNamara Beg. Four Mast.

Bishop O’Brien’s pedigree, apud Collectanea, and apud Lodge.

This relic is yet extant, but in very bad preservation, in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy.

Wars of Thomond.


It is right to remark, that the Four Masters say, that O’Neill was voted to the supreme
authority, at this meeting, but M’Grath, author of the *Wars of Turlogh*, asserts that it broke up without making choice of any king of all Ireland. His account is the more worthy of credit.


[37] King Henry III had granted to Robert Mucegross the patent of a market and fair at Bunratty, but he never used the privilege.—*Camden*.


[41] These districts comprise the present baronies of Elyogarty, Kilnamanagh, Ormond Upper and Lower, and Clanwilliam in the county Tipperary; and in Limerick the baronies of Owney, Clanwilliam, and Conoagh.

[42] This place cannot be identified.

[43] Supposed by O’Donovan to be Cnoc-a-Daingin, in the parish of Dromcreehy. See Letters of *Ordnance Survey of Clare* in Library of Royal Irish Academy.

[44] This is the road from Gort to Killinaboy through Rockforest Wood.

[45] This place cannot be identified.


[47] Although some of the places mentioned by MacGrath cannot be identified, there is no doubt that Dermot marched by the road which leads from Ruan to Corofin, thence by the hill of Lena, to Castletown, and to Corcomroe Abbey.

[48] This place cannot be identified. Perhaps it is Leitra in Kilkeedy Parish.

[49] Among the killed were four knights, Viz.: — Sir Henry Capel, Sir Thomas Naas, Sir James Caunton (or Condon of Fermoy), and Sir John Caunton. Also, Adam Appleyard and 80 more. De Clare’s body was removed to Limerick, and buried in the Franciscan church there.

[50] We here lose the valuable information contained in the *Cathereim Toirdhealbaigh*, or the History of the Wars of Turlogh O’Brien, written in 1459. Although the work is compiled in the vilest style of bombast, it gives many incidents relating to the history and topography of Thomond of great interest and value. The writer lived so near to the times of which he narrates the story, and his office of historiographer gave him such facilities for collecting information, that his narrative may be received with implicit faith. His name was John, son of Rory MacGrath. An excellent transcript of the tract was made in 1721, by Andrew MacCurtin, of Ennistymon, one of the best Irish scholars of his day, and is now deposited in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin. See O’Curry’s *Lectures on MS, Materials of Irish History*, Dublin, 1861, p. 234.

I cannot discover where the patrimonial lands of the family of Magrath were situate in Thomond. Several references are made to them, and to their learning, in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, I subjoin them here:

“A.D. 1410. Thomas, the son of Maoelmurry Magrath, Ollav of Thomond in poetry, died.

1411. Dermot, the son of Gillaise Magrath, Ollav of Thomond in poetry, died.

1425. The son of Flan Magrath, Ollav of Thomond in poetry, a prosperous and wealthy man, died.

1461. Aengus Magrath, a learned poet, died.

1573. William Magrath, son of Aengus, Ollav of Dalcais in poetry, a learned man, distinguished for his knowledge of the sciences and of agriculture, died.”
The history and topography of the county of Clare, from the earliest times to the beginning of the 18th century (1893)
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