

ATHNEASY PARISH.

SITUATION. This Parish is situated in the Barony of Coshlea and is bounded on the north by Parish of the same name; on the west by the Parish of Kilbreedy Major; on the east by the Parishes of Knocklong and Emylgrennen; on the south by the Parishes of Kilbreedy Major and Kilfinnan.

NAME. The Irish name of Athanasy is Béul Atha na nDéisig (it is likewise pronounced Béul Atha na nDéiseach, which is the correct sound) by which name the grave yard or principal burying ground (place) of the Parish, situated in the north west of Ballanvane Glebe, is always called by the people living in the country around it. This burying ground is situated near Elton Bridge, a short distance to the left of the road leading from Kilmallock by Kilbreedy Major to Elton Cross and to Knocklong. It is four miles from Kilmallock to the eastward. The name given for this burying ground and applied to itself particularly is Teampall Bhéul Atha na nDéisig (and na nDéiseach - J.O'D.) the term Teampall being the Irish name of the Church that formerly stood here and of which not a trace is now to be found. Beul Atha na nDeisig signifies the Mouth of the Ford of the Desii, i.e., Ostium vadi Desiorum, and Teampall Bhéul, etc., means Church of the Mouth of etc., i.e., Templum vel ecclesia ostii, etc.

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To the north west of the burying ground and very close to it stands a moat or dun, which is called Dún Bhéul Atha na nDeisig (nDeiseach) the Dun of etc., i.e., munitio ostii, etc. A trench ran round the base of the dun, which was twenty one feet broad therefrom to the Foss (by foss is meant here the circular rampart or earthen mound that ran round the trench at the base of the moat) that enclosed it. The foss has been entirely destroyed. It enclosed the trench on the east, south and west by north sides and on the north east side a square flat which measures thirty eight yards = one hundred and fourteen feet from north west to south east and seventy two feet from north east to south west. The circumference around the base of this dun is one hundred and twenty eight paces = three hundred and eighty four feet. It measures twenty six feet on the east side in the ascent from the base to the summit. It is twenty five paces = seventy five feet in diameter at top.

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About half a mile from the above mentioned Church yard to the eastward, there lies on the river called Morning Star or Abhainn (Corra rather) na nDeiseagh, a ford which is commonly called Áth a Dúin, the Ford of the Doon, i.e., Vadum munitiois, being designated from the doon just now described under the name

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of Dún Bheul Atha na nDeisig (nDeiseach). It lies a very short distance to west or south by west of Knocktoran Fort, which is planted with trees and is situated in west of Knocktoran Townland in the Parish of Knocklong. There are thirteen stones placed as stepping stones (Cloghán) across the river here. A common name in English for this is the Passage. The breadth of the ford or Passage is about ten or twelve yards, the river on each side of it being much narrower. This river has its source in a well in the Bog of Griston (this bog is in Glenbroughaun Parish) and running from south east to north west, terminates westwards in the Maig between Ahlacky and Bruree. The ford just described is Ath na nDeisi. Beol-Ath-na-nDeisi is mentioned in the Annals of the Four Masters at A.D. 1579. See extracts to the right. Bruff is called Brugh na Deise - J.O'D.

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Beol Atha na nDeisi - Annals 4 Masters.

A.D. 1579. *** (See Limerick at this year, p.460, for the whole of this article).

The Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, Sir William Drury, was at this time in Cork and with him were also the Earl of Kildare and Sir Nicholas Maulby. These (noblemen) set out towards the Co. of Limerick and pitched their camp in the neighbourhood of Kilmallock. Hither the Earl of Desmond came to meet them and endeavoured to impress it upon their minds that he himself had not participated in the proceedings of James Mac Maurice and had not been instrumental in drawing him into the country nor in the crimes committed by his relatives and he delivered up to the Chief Justice his only son and heir as a hostage to ensure his fidelity to the Crown of England. A promise was hereupon made to the Earl that his territory should not be plundered in future; but although this promise was made it was never adhered to, for his people were slain, his cattle destroyed, his corn and edifices burned. The Chief Justice set out afterwards from the camp of Kilmallock attended by three or four Captains and four hundred English and Irish soldiers to search the woods of Coill-Mor and try whether they could discover any of their enemies in them. They fell in with the young sons of the Earl of Desmond, viz., John and James Oge at Gort-na-Tiobrat - Field of the Spring (Springfield to the west of Drumcollaher, Lord of Muskerry's place) and here a furious engagement took place in which the people of the Lord Chief Justice were defeated and three of their Captains slain, viz., Capt. Herbert, Capt. Eustace and Capt. Spris, together with three hundred of their men. Many made their escape to the camp by flight. The Chief Justice then removed his camp to Beol-Atha-na-nDeisi, which is situated in the very centre of Cliu-Mail-Mic-Ughaine, and here he contracted a disease which (subsequently) brought on his death.

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Lady's Well is about a quarter of a mile to south west of the old burying ground of Athanasy and close to Michael Cleary's house.

In Adamstown Townland is situated a burial ground much in use, within which is seen the side wall of an old Church nineteen feet seven inches long to a breach on it near the east end where a small portion of it, with a portion of the east gable attached thereto, stands detached. Both form a corner. This side wall is about seven feet high. Materials are rude stones and cement of lime and sand mortar. The burial ground lies in a potatoe field and is enclosed with a stone wall of mason work.

The old Castle of Gormanstown stands in ruins in an orchard to the left of the road that leads from Kilmallock by Bulgaden to Elton Bridge and to Ballinahinch in the Parish of Knocklong. It measures inside seventeen feet seven inches by eight feet. The thickness of its walls is three feet nine inches. There are two doors on it, one on the south and one on the west side, both opposite each other and placed at north wall. They are built with chiselled lime stones and pointed. The south one is four feet broad and was eight feet high originally. West door is four feet three inches broad and twelve feet high. Some crosses within circles and various other figures (ornaments) are sculptured in relievo on each side of the west door outwardly. One arched floor above the ground one remains. The height inside is about twenty four feet. The materials of the building are stones of various quality with cement of lime and sand mortar. It seems the work was grouted.

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Examined by Messrs. T. O'Connor and J. O'Donovan, whose notes have been put into the present form by the former.

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