

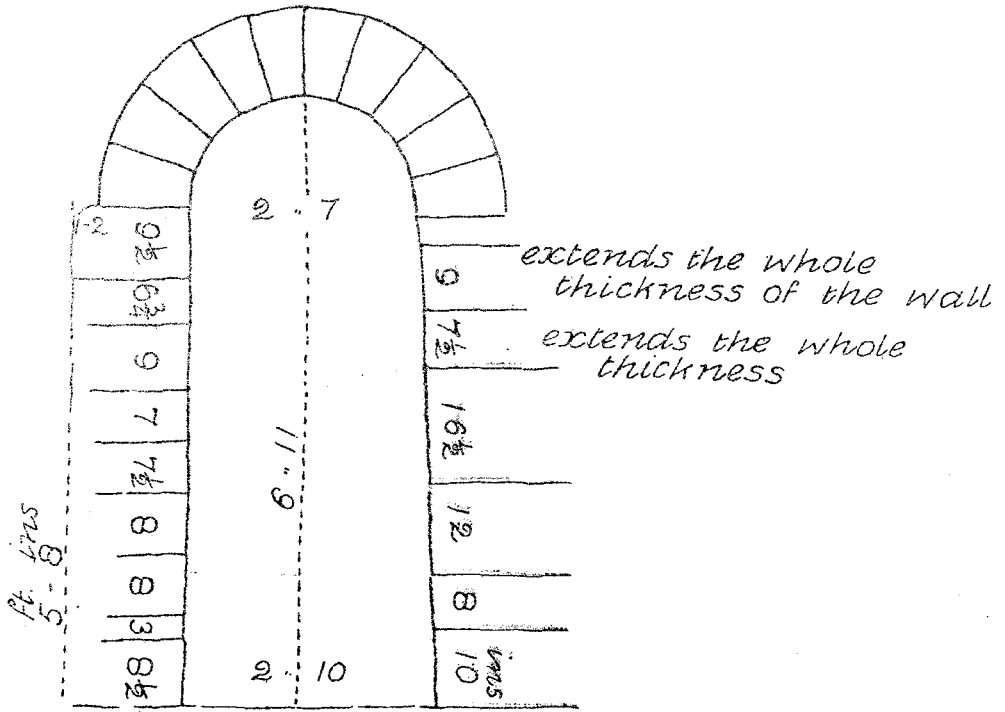
SITUATION. This Parish is situated in the Barony of Glenquin and is bounded on the north by the Parish of Rathkeale; on the east by Clooncagh; on the south by Mahoonagh and on the west by Grange.

NAME. The name of this Parish is not of ecclesiastical origin but derived from that of the Townland in which the original Church was placed, which Townland derived its name from Cluain, an insulated meadow or bog island, and Eilte, the genitive case of Bilit, a Doe. See my letter on Annahilt in the Co. of Down. Cluain Eilte, i.e., pratum cervae.

The old Church of Cloonelty, which is situated in a Cluain in the Townland of Ballynoe and about three and a half miles westwards of Ballingarry. It is an ancient building which was partly modernized and fitted up for a Protestant Church after the Reformation. It was never divided into nave and choir, but forms an oblong little building measuring on the inside thirty three feet five inches in length and twenty one feet in breadth. Its side walls are thirteen feet in height and three feet in thickness. The east gable is destroyed except a few feet of its base and a small fragment at the south east corner six or seven feet higher than the south side wall, but the side walls and west gable are in good preservation, and the west gable is clothed with strong ivy which will soon tumble it by catching the storms and separating the stones by the insertion of its roots. 168

At the distance of three feet from the east end there is on the south wall a small window which measures on the inside four feet six inches in height and four feet two inches in width and on the outside where it (i.e., its lower part) is placed at the height of five feet five inches from the present level of the ground, three feet in height and only six and a half inches in width. On the inside it forms a flat arch at the top and its sides are built of cut freestone, but on the outside it is rectangular and constructed of cut lime stone.

The west gable contains a semicircular headed doorway measuring six feet eleven inches in height and in width two feet seven inches where the arch springs, and two feet ten inches at the bottom. It is built of fine blocks of chiselled sand stone and looks very ancient. The west gable was surmounted with a small belfry, the top of which is now destroyed. There is a fragment of a wall extending southwards from the west gable, which would



Doorway in the West Gable
 old Church of Cloonelty

seem a part of a lateral building and another extending northwards from the east gable. 169

The doorway in the west gable is constructed thus on the outside:-

See sketch opposite.

This doorway appears very old, but I would not say that it is as old as the time of Saint Maidoc or Columbkille. It is, however, a very curious specimen of ancient architecture and well worthy of preservation.

In the Townland of Ballynoe, the same in which this Church 170 is situated, there is a fragment of a Castle lately much destroyed but I could learn nothing of its history on the spot.

In the Townland of Lissaniska in this Parish, there is a holy well dedicated to Saint Mida or Ida, who was probably the Patroness of the old Church above described. For her history see Parish of Killeedy. This Parish examined by me.

John O'Donovan.

July 25th 1840.
