

## THE PARISH OF GREAN.

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**SITUATION.** Part of this Parish is situated in the Barony of Clanwilliam, but the far greater portion lies in the Barony of Coonagh. This latter portion is bounded on the east by the Parishes of Ballynaclogh, Cluggan and Templebreadon; on the north by Tuogh and Doon; on the west by Aglishcormick Parish and the portion of the Parish of Grean in the Barony of Clanwilliam and on the south by Kiltteely Parish and the Co. of Tipperary.

**NAME.** The name of this Parish is in Irish called Grian, which is generally supposed to signify the Sun, but the real meaning of the word is land, when applied topographically; this name had some distinguishing epithet originally post-fixed to it, but this suffix has been long lost. Many names of places in Ireland originally began with Grian, as Grian Airbh, etc., and though it is generally supposed that such places took their names from the sun having been worshipped at them in Pagan times, it will be found that Grian thus applied is the same word with the English ground, and that the places bearing this name had no connection whatever with sun-worship. This place is mentioned in the Annals of the Four Masters so early as the reign of Cormac Mac Art and it is strange that they do not add any distinguishing epithet even at so early a period. The hill over the Village of Pallis is called Cnoc Greine, i. e., the Hill of Grian, and the territory lying between this hill and the City of Limerick was originally called Aes-Greine, populus Grianiae, the territory being called, as usual, after the inhabitants.

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The Moat of Grian (Móta Gréine) is situated in the north east corner of the Townland of Cloghaderreen, about forty perches south east of the Village of Pallis Grean. It is about one hundred and fifty eight paces in circumference at the base, about twenty four paces in diameter on the top and about (or nearly) thirty feet in height. The northern side of this moat is much injured. An old man, a native of this neighbourhood, told me that about thirty six years ago there were observable on the top of the Moat of Pallis the foundation stones of some building, the walls of which were very thick, the stones being very large and grouted. There is at present not a vestige of it to be seen.

The inhabitants say that there formerly stood a castle about forty yards eastward of this moat, but the stones of which it was built, which were lime stones, have been entirely removed. Archdall (from Smith) places a Collegiate Church at Greany (i.e., Pallis Grean); his words are:-

Archdall Mon. Hib. V.II, p.420, R.I.A.  
Greany.

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"Is situated in the Barony of Counagh and was formerly a Corporation town in which, we are told, there was a Collegiate Church" (MSS. Smith).

This Church must have stood at or near where the late Protestant Church, in use until a few years since, is built; this is pointed out traditionally as the site of some ancient religious edifice. No vestige of it, however, now remains, nor is there any other ancient ruined Church at Pallas.

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The Four Masters in their Annals at the year 241 record a battle fought at Grian by Cormac Mac Airt, against the Momonians; their words are:-

"A.D. 241. A cuig decc do Corbmac. Attiad andso catha Chorbmaic for Mumhain an Cliadhainsi, cath Beirre, cath Loch Len, cath Luimnigh, cath Grene, cath Clasaigh, cath Muirisc" etc., i.e.,

"A.D. 241. The fifteenth (year of the reign) of Cormac. The following are the battles gained by Cormac over the Momonians in this year; the battle of Beir, the battle of Loch Lein (Killarney) the battle of Limerick, the battle of Grian, the battle of Clasach, the battle of Muirisc" etc.

The Townland of Longstone derives its name from a stone which stands nearly erect (leaning a little to the east) in the centre of a large earthen fort in this Townland and which is called by the people "the Long Stone". This stone is nine

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and a half feet in height but as some of the earth seems to have been removed at its bottom, originally it may not have been so high above ground. Its breadth below is three feet at the middle and at top two and a half feet and its average thickness is about one foot ten inches. The fort consists of an external rampart about sixty paces in diameter and about five and a half feet in height. Separated from this by a ditch there is a level space of about ten paces in breadth all round, slightly elevated above the bottom of the ditch, though in some places it is nearly on a level with the top of the external rampart. A shallow ditch then separated the last described ring from the central mound, which is about eighteen paces in diameter at the top and of the same height with the lateral rampart. The centre of this moat around the stone is hollow, or sunk a few feet. The Name Book erroneously calls this Long Stone a "Cromlech".

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In the Townland of Linnfield and a very short distance south west of a rock called Carraig Choluim, there is a small burial ground now (almost) entirely out of use, called by the people variously, Roilig Choluim Cille, Teampull na Cairrge and Teampull Pairc na Cairrge. There is no sign of the walls of an old Church.

About sixty or seventy yards west of this in the same Townland there is a well, formerly visited as a holy well, called in the Name Book Thobar na Rughilly but the name which I got for it from an aged man living on the very spot, is "Tobar na Drochairigh."

In the Townland of Bullytarsna, the foundation stones and small portions of the walls of an old castle remain but they are very much broken and disfigured. The length of this Castle, as nearly as can now be ascertained, was about fifty five feet and its breadth about twenty four feet. This Castle is said to have belonged to the O'Briens.

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The site of an old Castle is pointed out at the small Village of Nicker in the Townland of the same name on a rocky and rising ground. This Castle is said to have belonged to Mc Brien of Coonagh. Not a vestige of it now remains.

For description of Kilduff Castle see letter about Ballynaclogh Parish.

The antiquities of Grean Parish were examined and described by Mr. O'Keeffe.

J.O'D.