

SURVEYOR: C. O'Brien.

I. T. A.

PARISH: Cong & The  
Neale.TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY.VILLAGES: CONG, THE  
NEALE, CROSS.

DATE: June, 1945.

COUNTY Mayo.

BARONY: Kilmaine.

COB/MME

**TOWNS & VILLAGES:** CONG (pop. 200 approx.). The village of Cong presents an appearance that is at once unprepossessing & disordered, though quite unnecessarily so. It is situated on an island formed by the various uprisings of the subterranean streams connecting Lochs Mask & Corrib, but this fact, whilst, perhaps, limiting the scope for clearance & building, should enhance rather than mar the aspect of the place. It consists of one main thoroughfare, with a short, narrow intersecting street - occupied mainly by dingy small cottages - & a continuation of the main entrance road, the Circular Rd., which borders a tributary of the Cong River & sweeps westwards in a semi-circle to rejoin the main road at the W. end of the vill. Entering the vill. from the Headford road, a very sharp turn, partly obstructed by the awkwardly-placed "Market Cross", must be negotiated. The principal street (unnamed) rises in a sharp incline for almost 100 yds & then dips equally steeply for a similar distance. At each side of the road, at this W. end, there are large lake-like pools, connected underground, the appearance of which lends a pleasing & distinctive touch to the view. The pool to the left - Poll Tuathail, (that to the right is Poll Liabain) - is fringed with trees &, further left is the Forestry Department's water-driven saw-mill, the big mill-wheel of which is driven by the turbulent Poll-a-Chuardbail, the "Pool of the Whirlpool." The pool on the right is bordered by bare limestone outcrops & in the background is the big stone-built flour mill. This view of the W. end of Cong is one of the prettiest sights in the district.

The houses which comprise the vill. are unpretentious & irregularly built, in some outstanding instances they are mere dark hovels, with grass & weeds thriving on roofs which must surely not have been re-thatched in the present generation.

Cong is a pleasant place to live in, however, amongst friendly, easy-going people.

The lovely ruined Abbey is seen on approaching the vill. from the E. It is quite close to the main street, off the Circular Rd, & at the gateway leading into Ashford Demesne. Ugly dilapidated walls at the roadside mar the view.

(Distances: Galway 26½m.; Headford 9½m.; Ballinrobe 7m.; Maam Cross 16m.)

There are two other tiny villages in this parish, i.e., CROSS and THE NEALE. Neither is important in size, appearance or composition, however, though each, particularly Cross, is pleasantly placed - the ~~corner~~ <sup>corner</sup> on the Ballinrobe road, close to The Neale Park, 3m. from Cong; the ~~corner~~ <sup>corner</sup>, similarly distanced, alongside a small stream which flows into an arm of Loch Corrib nearby.

There is neither public water supply nor sewerage system - a few houses have water & drainage systems installed. The nearest Rly Stn is Ballinrobe (7m.). There is a regular 'Bus service' (Galway/Clifden). Dances are held in a Hall owned by Mr. Patk. Joyce. Joyce's Hall is also used for occasional shows by travelling companies, concerts etc. There is a Private Lending Library at Ashford Castle Hotel. Church Services on Sun. are as follows:- St. Joseph's Cath. Parish Ch, Cong - 9 & 11 a.m.; The Neale Cath. Ch, - 9 & 11 a.m.;