

ANTIQUITIES

Abbeys, Castles, Fortresses, Round Towers, Early Churches, Sculptured Crosses, Stone Circles, Ogham Stones, Cairns, Souterrams, Pillar Stones, Cromlechs, Forts, Rathes, Moats, Tumuli or ancient monuments of any kind. Exact location of each with short description, noting condition, etc. Relate local legend or tradition associated with building or object. State if in charge of Office of Public Works. Right of way to public? Admission charge

ABBEY AT ARDNAREE. Name and address of caretaker, or where key is kept.

Alongside St. Muredachs Cathedral, on the Ardnaree bank of the River Moy, are the remains of an Abbey, said to have been erected in 1427 A.D. for Benedictines, of the Order of St. Augustine. There is much doubt as to the founder, though the name of St. Bolcan is associated with the Abbey. It is generally accepted that the Abbey was founded in the time of Teige Riagh O'Dubhda, which would confirm the date mentioned; but the Annals of the Four Masters, and Annals of Lough Ce, under the year 1402, mention that Murtagh, son of Donogh O'Dubhda, died and was interred at Ardnaree. The slight remains include a doorway, which is remarkable for its beautiful design and carving. The Ballina Urban Council has assumed responsibility for the care of the ruins, and visitors may inspect the Abbey on application to the Town Clerk, Mr. Isaac J. McMahon, Dillon Tee.

OLD CHURCH AT LEIGUE

The ruins of an old Church may be seen at Leigue Cemetery, less than a mile outside Ballina, on the Killala Road. There is no local information about the Church, the ruins being in bad condition, and not in charge of the Office of Public Works. The public are admitted to the Cemetery by the Caretaker, Mr. Gerald Ginty, who lives in a Gate Lodge on the main road. There is a huge flat stone near this Church, from which stone (or flag) Leigue gets its name, Leac or Liog being the Irish for stone. This stone, which is regarded as one of the oldest Christian Monuments in the country, has engraved on it the "Crucis Christi", a cross within three concentric circles. This engraving is attributed to St. Patrick, who is said to have concentrated on this district for some time. It is believed that St. Patrick founded a Community at this spot.

OLD CHURCH AT BELLEEK MANOR

In the grounds of Belleek Manor are the ruins of an old Church, and it is claimed that St. Patrick here founded the Church of Cill Mor Muaidhe; from which is derived the name Kilmoremoy. Near the Church is a peculiar round shaped stone structure, regarding which there is no authentic information; some consider it to have been connected with the Church; but others refer to it as "The Cell of St. Sere". The old Church and Cell may be visited on permission from Mr. J. Frank Beckett, Mill Street, Ballina, or the Steward, Mr. Patrick Doherty, Killala Road, Ballina.

QUIGNALEGAN PILLAR-STONE

At Quignalegan, about 1 1/2 miles from Ballina on the main road from Ballina to Sligo, is a pillar stone on the left-hand side of the road. It is not a very high one; and, though identified as such, no excavation or thorough examination have taken place. It is on the lands of Mr. McCann, Victualler, Ballina, and there is no right-of-way; but visitors are allowed inspection. The stone, the top of which is broken off, does not bear Ogham, and there is no tradition or legend attached to it.

FORTS

There are several forts in the locality, but none of any known importance. The most remarkable is that on the lands of Mr. Gallagher at Gurteens Cross, a short distance outside Ballina, on the Crossmolina Road. A souterram connects with the Fort, and local legend is that a tunnel leads from the fort, under the River Moy, to Ardnaree; almost a mile distant. This theory is said to have been tested, and proved true many years ago; but the fort is now blocked and filled with loose and fallen stones, and exploration would be dangerous. Mr. Gallagher who lives convenient to the fort, readily consents to inspection.

CROMLECH OF THE FOUR MAOLS

Near the Railway Station, and about a half mile from Town, is the Cromlech of the four Maols. Legend relates how Ceallach, bishop of the district, and son of the King of North Connacht, was murdered by the four Maols (students and foster brothers), at the instigation of Guaire, King of South Connacht. Muredach, brother of Ceallach, disguised as a shepherd, entered the territory which the murderers had gained, near Ballycastle. Summoning his followers, he surprised and captured the four Maols, and had them brought to Ardnaree, where he put them to death. Thus does Ardnaree get its name, Ard na Riagh, the Hill (or Height) of the Executions. The four Maols were interred under the Cromlech on what is now called Primrose Hill. John O'Donovan, in his footnotes to MacFirbis's "Genealogies, Tribes and Customs of Hy Fiachrach", states this is the only Cromlech in Ireland which can be satisfactorily connected with history.

(Plain sheets of foolscap paper to be used, if necessary, for recording additional information).