

MUCKROSS AND INISFALLEN.  
FRANCISCAN ABBEYS.

By G. T. CLARK.

MUCKROSS.

Among the venerable and, at the least, poetic traditions that cluster round the older ecclesiastical foundations of Christendom, and of which Ireland has a full share, is one which explains the origin of the Abbey, best known as Muckross, or Mucruss, and the cause of the name of the group of limestone rock amidst which it stands. It relates that Mac Carthy More, the bearer, in the fifteenth century, of that distinguished Irish title, being minded to found a religious house, was warned in a vision that the site of his foundation was to be at 'Carraig-an-Chiul,' or the 'Rock of Music,' a place to him unknown. Those whom he, in consequence, sent forth to search his western territory, returning homeward by 'Oirbhealach,' or 'the Eastern passage,' between the lower lake of Killarney and its rocky boundary, were arrested by the sounds of music proceeding from a rock, which Mac Carthy accepted as the indicated spot, and where he erected his Abbey.

The choice, by whomsoever directed, was an exceedingly happy one. The celestial concords indeed no longer vibrate in the air, but if the eye, like the ear, be admitted to be a recipient of harmony, it must be allowed that the site is one to commend itself to all beholders, for around the sacred spot, wood and water, mountain and glen, verdant meadows and over-arching trees are seen in their happiest combination, and if art has contributed to the beauty of the scene, its efforts are well concealed behind the ample vesture of Nature.

It appears from a record cited by Petrie that a church at Irrelagh was burned in 1192, but of this early edifice

nothing else is known. The foundation of the existing structure is far later, and indeed, as compared with the adjacent House of Inisfallen, is but as of yesterday. The Four Masters ascribe it to Donnell, son of Teige Mac Carthy, who was living in 1340, but O'Donovan, their translator, points out that it is Donnell, son of Cormac, who corresponds to that date, and that the real founder was probably Teige Mac Carthy, described on that account in the pedigree of the Sept, as Teige-na-Mainistreach, or 'of the Monastery,' the father of another Donnell, known as 'An Dana,' or 'of the song ;' and he agrees with Ware, that the actual foundation was probably some years before 1440, but that the work was completed by Donnell in that year. Teige Mac Carthy was Prince of Desmond, and recognized by the Sept as 'Mac Carthy More.' The establishment was Franciscan, and lasted till 1589, when the brethren were ejected with some violence. Probably the violence did not extend to the buildings, which, with their modest demesne of 'four acres, two orchards, and a garden, valued at 16s. annually,' were granted to Capt. Robert Collon, also the grantee of Inisfallen, in 1594-5. This did not prevent the Monks, under Father Holan, from returning hither in 1602. In 1626, it appears from a contemporary inscription in the choir, the buildings were repaired by Brother Thadi Ho Leni, but only to be inhabited till 1629, when the fraternity retired, once more, though for a few years only, again to return in 1641. It seems probable, from this repeated re-occupation, that the ejected Brethren ever lingered about the spot they loved so well, and this may account for the unusually perfect condition of the masonry.

The Abbey was naturally the burial place of many of the name of Mac Carthy. Mac Carthy More, Earl of Clancare or Clancarty, was laid in the centre of the choir. Here was also buried in 1600, Patrick, Lord Kerry, the Earl's nephew ; in 1560, Eveleen, daughter of Donnel Mac-Carthy, son of Corman Ladhrach, widow of James Earl of Desmond, and then of Conor Earl of Thomond ; and, in 1582, Catharine, daughter of Teige, brother of the above Donnell, and widow of Wm. Fitzmaurice, Knight of Kerry, a lady who passed her latter days in fear and dread, upon

the adjacent lake, moving from one island to another. Others of, or allied to the family, continue to be buried within the walls; and as late as 1804 the Glencare or Clancare gravestone was obscured by a huge ill-placed altar tomb to O'Donoghue More, of the Glens, but very partially redeemed by an epitaph by Marcus Hare.

The Abbey is in the barony of Magunichy, and stands upon the eastern shore of Lough Lean,<sup>1</sup> the lowest and largest of the Killarney lakes, in the bay of Castle Lough, one of the numerous inlets of that enchanted territory, a few feet above, and about a furlong distant from, the margin of the water. The walls, though roofless and ivy-covered, can scarcely be said to be ruined, so little have they suffered from time or from violence. The ancient name of Oirbhealach, corrupted in Sir James Ware's time into Irrelagh, and so recorded in the Irish Monasticon, has in these latter days been ill-exchanged for Muckross, a word derived from the swine that fed upon the mast shed annually by the beech trees, which with the ash, the lime, the oak, and the chesnut, there attain almost gigantic dimensions.

The walls, even to the gables, remain perfect. The roofs have disappeared, with the whole of the timber work, but the ground floor of the conventual buildings is mostly vaulted, and the stairs of stone, so that the upper chambers are still accessible, and the plan and details of the whole structure evident to the eye of the visitor. A noble yew tree darkens, but gives solemnity to the interior court of the cloister, and is far more in harmony with the character of the place than are the heaped-up and uncared-for graves of the MacCarthys, whose final spoils encumber and disfigure the church, and are out of keeping with the ivy-draped walls and the velvet sward of the surrounding grounds.

The establishment consists of a church and the conventual buildings, built against its northern side, and forming with it a tolerably regular block of thirty yards square, from which the transept and choir of the church project towards the south and east.

The church, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, is composed

<sup>1</sup> Lough Lean Linfhiaclauch, "Lean of the white teeth," its ancient Irish

name, is derived from Lean, a worker in metal, whose forge was near the lake.

of a nave, south transept, central tower, and choir. The cloister is placed against the north wall of the nave, and the conventual buildings stand outside of and upon the cloisters on the three disengaged sides. The church has three doors--one at the west end, one from the tower into the cloister, and one from the choir into the sacristy. The convent has outer doors to the west and north, and the upper floor was reached by three staircases in different parts of the building.

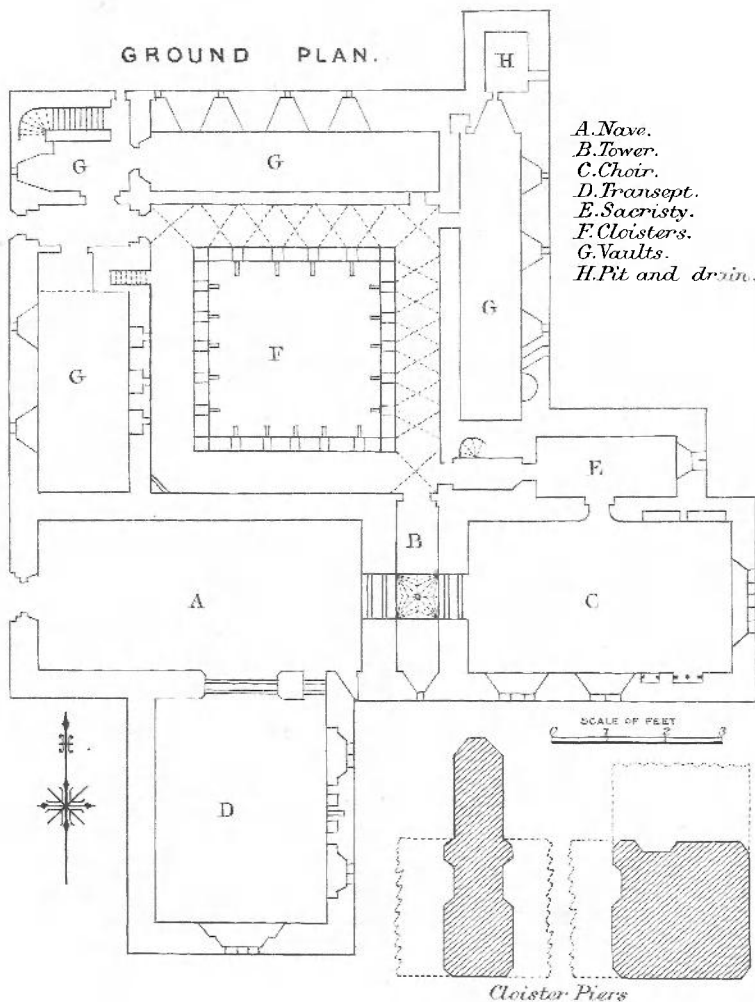
The *nave* is 52 feet by 24 feet, interior dimensions. It is entered by a west doorway, with an equilateral arch, exterior drip, and mouldings of great delicacy. Above is a rather small window of two lights, ogee headed, with a flat top and drip, with plain returns. Above is a sort of hollow projection, or concave table, by means of which the parapet is brought forward about two feet, to give room for a rampart walk in front of the gable, as in Scottish peel towers. The north wall is blank, save that in its upper part is a sort of hagioscope opening from the library. In the east end a lofty lancet arch, 7 feet wide, opens into the tower, and through the tower into the choir. Above the arch is a square chamfered loop, and above that a rude square aperture. Both were within the roof, the pitch of which is marked by a stone weather-moulding, above which is a small window with one light, trefoiled, beneath a square drip, marking the second floor of the tower. Above the north wall of the nave, in a projection from the tower, is a small square headed door, opening upon the gutter, here a rampart walk. In the east wall are three corbels, probably for images.

The south wall is pierced by a large pointed arch of 13 feet span, which opens into the transept. The wall piers are plain, with slightly chamfered angles. The arch is more boldly chamfered, and has besides a central rib or member, which springs from two polygonal corbels. East of the arch is a small, plain, full-centred doorway, of four feet opening, the use of which is not clear. East again of this is a very long, narrow, lancet loop, boldly splayed, which opens between the transept wall and the tower.

The *transept* is spacious, 36 feet by 28 feet; its west wall is blank. In its east end is a window of three equal lights, each tall, narrow, and round headed; and above,

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## GROUND PLAN.



SCALE OF FEET.

30 20 10 0 30 60

the mullions are interlaced, so as to form six lights in the head. The lights are quite plain, without cusps. In the south wall are two tall pointed windows of two lights each, ogee headed. Between these are two full centred niches, of 2 feet 4 inches opening and 1 foot 4 inches deep, rather high for seats, and too low for images; and in the wall between there is a deep chase or recess 3 inches broad and 2 feet 6 inches deep, as though to allow a screen to be pushed back.

The *tower* is placed over the junction of the choir and nave, which is carried through it. It is 32 feet wide by 16 feet deep, or east and west, and its lofty base is pierced east and west by an arch 7 feet wide, and north and south by another of 6 feet 10 inches, each being divided into two parts by its intersection by the other. The nave and choir arches are lancet, and strengthened by a chamfered rib, springing from plain corbels. The north and south arches are in fact plain pointed barrel vaults. At the south end this vault is lighted by a tall, narrow loop, having a curious crenellated head, very peculiar. At the north end a door leads into the cloister. The central opening of the tower, a space 7 feet by 6 feet 10 inches at the intersection of the arches, is vaulted and ribbed. There is a central boss with two ridge ribs, which are abutted upon by twenty springers, five from a corbel at each angle. The vault is pierced for a bell-rope. Above the vault are two floors, and above the level of the second a string course and parapet. This, however, has been repaired and partially pulled down, so that it is uncertain whether there may not have been a third floor.

The *choir*, 42 feet by 24 feet, is entered at the west end through the tower. In its east end is a large window of five narrow lancet lights, and in the head ten lights, the whole very plain and meagre, without mouldings or cusps, but a very common Irish window of the 15th century. In the north, an equilaterally arched doorway opens into the sacristy, and east of this are two full centred recesses, 6 feet broad by 2 feet deep, containing altar tombs. One has been adapted to a modern intruder. It is probable that these tombs are those of the founder and his son, this being the usual place of sepulture of such. High up near the west end a small door opened

upon a short wooden balcony, entered from the dormitory and over the sacristy door is another small opening, for the convenience of the sick, who could thus take part in the service. The south wall is pierced by three windows, two of two lights, and one, more westward, of three. All are lancet of equal height, quite plain, and placed in splayed and low pointed recesses, slightly four centred. Below the window cills, next the east wall, is first a double piscina, with a central and two flanking octagonal shafts and ogee arches; next is a single recess, with a trefoil head and flanking octagonal shafts, probably a sedile. West of this is a sepulchral recess 4 feet broad by 2 feet deep, full centred, an insertion. The choir roof, like those of nave and transept, was of timber, with a high pitch.

The *sacristy* is a small chamber, 23 feet by 10 feet, attached to the choir. It has a small two-light window to the east, and to the west a door, leading by a dark passage, 17 feet long and vaulted, to the cloisters. From this passage a well stair ascends to the dormitory.

The *cloister* is contained within four walls, and composed of four alleys, 7 feet broad and 44 feet and 46 feet long. In the north and east alleys are five arches, in the south and west, six arches, all opening into the cloister court, which is about 28 feet square. The western alley has an acute barrel vault, quite plain. The south and east alleys also have pointed vaults, but groined, as has the north alley, though but slightly pointed. There are no ribs, and the vaulting shows fragments of reeds imbedded in the mortar with which the centring was thickly spread. The arch piers are double octagons, connected by a sunk panel, and each stands upon a low parapet, and is supported from the court by a buttress 10 inches wide and of 22 inches projection at the base. Each buttress has parallel sides, but tapers on the front, and finally dies into a string course above the top of the arches. The arches of the north and east alleys are slightly pointed; those of the south and west full centred.

The cloister lavatory is a mere triangular bin formed by a wall six feet long, which cuts off the south-west angle of the cloister. It is said to have been only a support for an image, but for this it is unnecessarily large, nor need it have been hollow. Probably above the basin was an

image. From the court are seen the walls and windows of an upper floor resting on the arcades, and it thence appears that the range on the north and east are of one date and slightly pointed, and those of the south and west full-centred. Along the top of each arcade runs a projecting string, which carries the upper wall, and into which the buttresses die, so that each arch is enclosed in a sort of panel. The string along the south and west sides is about six inches lower than that on the other two, showing a difference in date, though not a considerable one, answering probably to the founder and his son. The yew tree already mentioned stands in the centre of the court, and is remarkable for its clean unbroken stem, rising about twenty feet before its branches are given off.

In the cloisters are seven doorways; one from the tower of the church at the east end of the south wall, and two in the east wall, one from the sacristy, and one from the eastern vault. In the north wall one doorway leads into the northern vault, which is also lighted by a narrow loop placed horizontally. In the west wall is a pointed doorway, opening by a passage upon the west front, and there are doorways in the passage, right and left, the former through a vaulted lobby to a stair leading to the kitchen, and to a door in the north front; the latter into a room under the library, which appears to have been vaulted, or to have been intended to have been vaulted, and which has three loops into the cloister and two upon the west front. A second doorway in the west wall of the cloister opens into a straight stair leading by eighteen steps to the library. The two great vaults were probably cellars and store rooms. One of them, 45 feet by 9 feet, is lighted by four loops to the northward, the other, 46 feet by 11, has a fire place, a sort of squint or oblique loop, and three loops to the eastward. In the east wall is a loop, and by its side a small mural wardrobe. The loop has probably been blocked, for it now opens into a sort of cess-pit which has been added.

The upper floor is necessarily of the same general plan with the ground floor, resting upon it, and the room having the additional breadth afforded by the cloister. Over the sacristy is what appears to have been the *infirmery*. It has a small door which opened upon the

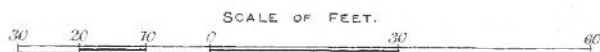
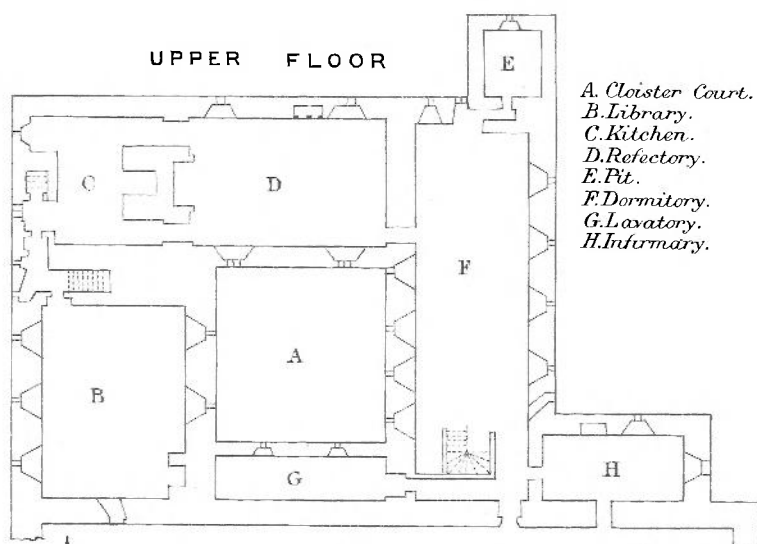
choir, and in the wall is a fire place and a small window. In the east end is a window of two lights, and in the west end a door leading into the dormitory. The floor was of timber.

The *dormitory*, 57 feet by 20 feet, stands over the eastern vault. It has four loops and an oblique loop in the east wall and four others opening upon the cloister court. Doors in this wall lead into the refectory, and what is called the lavatory. In the south end a door opened upon the balcony in the choir. Above, to be reached by a ladder, is a small door opening into the belfry. In the north end is a narrow tall pointed window, and a mural passage opening into a gardrobe. In the passage is a window of two lights. The gardrobe is an addition, and is a room, nine feet by eleven feet, with walls only two feet thick, and a loop to the north. The floor was of wood and the basement seems to have been a cess pit. In it is a large drain to the east, and above the ground level. In the centre of the dormitory, near its south end, is the entrance of the staircase from below, which seems to have had a sort of hood, like the companion, or head of the cabin stair in a ship. Between this hood and the wall a narrow passage, walled off, led into the lavatory. The dormitory walls are thick, and the roof sprung from corbels along its inner face. The object of this was to admit of a broad gutter, for a rampart walk, between the roof and the parapet, and in the tower are two small doors which opened upon this walk, and upon that of the nave. This was, of course, for defence. The dormitory must have been very cheerless and cold, receiving but little light, and having an east aspect. It has no fire place.

The *lavatory*, entered from the dormitory near its south end, is a narrow room 25 feet by 8 feet, placed over the south cloister. It has two small windows to the north looking into the cloister court, and had a lean-to roof against the nave wall. In its west end is imbedded a large stone trough which conveyed the water from the church roof to a spout in the inner court. Possibly this was intercepted for the use of the lavatory.

The *refectory* stands upon the northern cloister and its adjacent vault. It was a cheerful room, 31 feet by 20 feet, with two windows of two lights to the

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court, and two, one of one light only, to the north or exterior face. Between these latter, and in the north wall, is a recess of 5 feet 5 inches opening and 1 foot 6 inches in depth, containing an arcade of two pointed arches, divided and flanked by three octagonal shafts with bell caps. The recess is six feet high and its cill four feet from the ground. This seems to have been intended as a station for a reader, whose position must have been equally inconvenient whether he sat or stood. From this room an east door opened into the dormitory. In the west end is a large fire place 7 feet long and 3 feet deep, with a flat top and a broad mantel piece. On each side of it is a door opening into the kitchen.

The *kitchen* is 18 feet by 22 feet, resting on the vaulted passage and staircase below. Its north and south walls are blank. In its east end are two clumsy walls of 7 feet projection, 2 feet thick, and 8 feet apart, which contained the fire place. This has been reduced in breadth to 4 feet 6 inches, by thickening the walls. The west wall is 6 feet thick, and contains a loop and a two light window, and in the block between them ascends a mural staircase of twenty-one steps from the ground floor. This stair opens into the recess which contains the two-light window, and in the opposite side of the same recess is a door which opens upon the head of the cloister staircase, and, with a western loop, leads on to the pulpit door and to the door of the library. The pulpit doorway is flat-topped and only 1 foot 9 inches wide. It opens in the west wall, at the first floor level, and led into a small wooden balcony, the holes for the beams of which remain. This was evidently to enable the Abbot (whose personal dimensions must have been moderate), to bestow his benediction upon the people, assembled in the churchyard below, or possibly for occasional preaching.

The *library*, 31 feet by 23, must have been a pleasant room though, like the rest, rather badly lighted. It was directly accessible from the cloisters. It had three single-light windows to the west and two to the cloister court, and near the south-east corner a fire place. In the south wall a hagioscope looked into the nave. This completed

the suite of the conventual accommodation, which, it will be seen, was of a very simple description.

The Abbot seems to have lived with his monks, at least there is no trace of any private sitting or sleeping room. The revenues of the monastery were very small, and the brethren certainly had no inducement to indulge in idleness or luxury. It is to be hoped that when the Dissolution came it found them faithful servants, free from the laxity which certainly prevailed at that period in too many of the English establishments. Muckross has many points in common with other Irish Franciscan Abbeys. The single south transept is found also at Adare, Buttevant, Dromahaire, Kilconnell, Kilcrea, Roserick, and Sligo. Irregularities in the cloister arches are found at Adare, Askeaton, and Quin, and in the centre of the cloister court of the two latter is a yew tree, making it probable that these trees were planted before the Dissolution. At Adare every fourth cloister pier is buttressed ; but the buttresses are not taper as here, but have setts off, and are stopped at the spring of the arch. The central tower is also a common feature, and the door from it into the cloisters.

The building throughout is of mountain limestone, cut as ashlar for the windows and a few of the doorcases, most of the latter being mere rude apertures. The walls are of rubble, only occasionally coursed. The west door of the church is the only one with any pretensions to ornament. It has rather a deep splay, occupied by two bands of ogee moulding, separated by a square nook. The doors from the choir into the sacristy, and those from the cloister to the west and north fronts are also arched and slightly moulded. Others, also pointed, have plain, chamfered edges. The windows generally are either square-topped loops, or long, slender lights of 8 to 11 inches broad, lancet or ogee headed, and, if more than one, of equal height. Probably the small apertures suited the wet climate. The whole building seems very nearly of one date, but few years intervening between the commencement and completion of the cloisters. In England, the style, so far as it is there found, would be called the very Late Decorated, but the larger window of the transept and choir, and the full-centred recesses would be later. The

absence of cusps and quatrefoils in the heads gives to the two large windows a poverty-stricken aspect. The buttresses applied to the cloister and piers are unusual, at any rate, in the taper form. Upon the inner face of the north wall of the choir two plates of limestone are thus inscribed in relief:—

ORATE PRO FELICI STATU FRATRIS  
THADI HO LENI QUI IUUNC SACRUM  
CONVENTUM DE NOVO REPARARI  
CURAVIT. ANNO DOMINI MILLESIMO  
SEX CENTESIMO VIGESIMO SEXTO.

It may be that brother Thady repaired the roofs and church fittings. There is no trace of any decay in or reparation of the actual walls.

This is an excellent example of a small and compact Franciscan Abbey, fairly perfect, and in its position and surroundings very favourable to the practice of virtue, if only “fugitive and cloistered.” The silence of the woods, the deep shade of the mountains, and the lone bosom of the lake expanded to the sky, are all favourable to a life of contemplation, though there is ample evidence that the inhabitants of such places, in Ireland, gave up a portion of their time to the pursuits of the arts of jewellery and of illumination, as well as to the more strictly religious duties of their profession.

Muckross is fortunate in its owner. Mr. Herbert does all that, and no more than, is necessary to keep the ruins in their present condition. The only drawback to their appearance is the utter want of taste and even of decency in the graves and monuments by which the area of the church is crowded, a nuisance which is supported by the continued practice of the country, and which probably nothing but a general consent could remedy. The area should be cleared, the remains deposited, with all due reverence, beneath the surface, the gravestones laid flat above them, and no more burials allowed, save in the exterior churchyard, and there only under restrictions of position and dimensions in the monuments.

## INISFALLEN.

This is an island near the centre of Lough Lean, and distant about a third of a mile from the point of the peninsula named from Ross Castle. It is in area about twenty acres, thickly wooded with ash, oak, beech, lime, and holly, mostly of large size, and the surface is exceedingly irregular, and the shore composed of bays and low cliffs, the latter thickly draped with ivy. This broken surface or outline, which adds much to the beauty of the spot, is produced by the disposition of the mountain limestone of which the island is composed, and which is here interstratified with a number of thin shaly beds, the whole arranged vertically.

Upon the island are two buildings ; one, a chapel upon a small promontory at the north-east corner, about 30 feet above the water; the other a group of walls, a short distance inland. They are the remains of Inisfallen Abbey, a religious house of great renown in its day.

The chapel stands east and west, and is rectangular, 19 feet by 11 feet inside, with walls 3 feet thick. The gables remain, and appear to have supported a timber roof. In the east wall is a narrow but rather tall loop-like window, splayed internally, and with a round head cut out of a single stone. The recess is also round-headed, and the vaulting is supported by a plain chamfered rib. Near the centre of the north wall is a breach, where, probably, was a small window. The south wall is much broken down, but in it also is something like a trace of a window.

The doorway is in the western wall, and though its ornaments are weatherworn, it is in substance quite perfect. The opening is 2 feet 9 inches broad, with a very slight but perceptible taper of the jambs. The arch is full-centred. By way of exterior moulding are two nooks, the outer of which is occupied by an engaged shaft, cylindrical, with bases and capitals carved in a light and now all but effaced pattern. The ring stones are worked in a chevron pattern, never deeply cut, and now scarcely visible. The head is included in a bold member, of a character rarely, if ever, found in English Norman, and not easily

described. The stones are cut in ridge and furrow, radiating from the centre, and returned inwardly below, so that the pattern is continued in the soffite. It is bold, simple, and effective, and at a little distance resembles the chevron moulding, of which it is, in fact, a variety. Above is a bold drip or head-moulding, the under or chamfered face of which is set with what appear to be small leopards' heads, full faced, or, as the heralds describe it, "cabossed." It may be that the heads alternate, three and three, with heads of a different animal.

A fireplace has been inserted in quite modern times in the north-east corner of the building, the flue of which is worked into the wall. It is an insertion of the last century or later.

The chapel appears to be all of one date, and that, probably, towards the middle of the 12th century. The masonry is imperfectly coursed rubble, rude but substantial; the door and window of excellent ashlar. The peculiar Irish features of the building are its small dimensions, the taper of the doorway, and the variety of the chevron moulding round the head. Possibly some of the Irish readers of these pages, conversant with the ecclesiastical antiquities of their country, can give the saint to whom this chapel is dedicated, and some particulars of its history, which, from its proximity to so celebrated an abbey, is probably on record.

#### THE ABBEY.

The island of Inisfallen has for many centuries maintained a great reputation for sanctity, and seems from an early period to have been in request as a place of burial. Hence there is nothing improbable in the general belief that its abbey was founded in the seventh century, or in the statement that the name of one of its abbots occurs as early as A.D. 640. The Irish annals also make mention of "Maelsuthian Ua Cearbhaill, one of the family of Inis-Faithleann, chief Doctor of the Western World in his time, and Lord of Eoghanacht of Loch Lein [the later Barony of Magunichy], who died in 1008, after a good life," and record that "in 1144 died Flannagan of Innis-Faithleann, a distinguished 'Anmchara,'" or counsellor. The founder of the monastery is generally considered to

have been St. Finan Lobhor, founder also of Ard-Finan in Tipperary, a saint who died late in the 6th century, and whose day in the Irish Calendar was the 16th of March.

But Inisfallen is known to fame not so much for the Saints or Chieftains, with whom it has been connected, as for the celebrated annals, ecclesiastical and historic, composed within its walls, and which are regarded by Irish critics as dating from the 11th century, and second in antiquity only to the history of Tighernach. They have been attributed to Maelsuthian, whose connection with the monastery has already been mentioned, and who was probably one of many persons who at various periods took a share in their compilation.

Of an establishment so famous in the West, and which has contributed so largely to the early history of the country, it might be expected that the remains would be considerable, or at any rate that their fragments would bear witness to the taste and magnificence of the community. This, however, is by no means the case; the ruins are very restricted in area, were evidently never more extensive, and are of the rudest description, both in material and workmanship. Not therefore the less, but much the more, is honour due to a poverty which has erected a monument far more important and more durable than any material structure.

The abbey was composed of a church, conventual buildings attached to it, the abbot's house, and a kitchen. The church is rectangular, with no present distinction between nave and choir, and no trace of a tower. The door at the west end is at present a mere breach. In the fragments of the choir wall may be seen the southern jamb of the recess of the great eastern window, and contiguous to it that of a south window. Both seem in the Perpendicular style, and contain the only trace of ashlar to be found in the buildings. The walls are mostly ruinous, but the gables remain and shew the roof to have been of timber. The area of the church was nearly that of Muckcross without the transept.

The cloister was on the north side of the nave, and may be traced by its containing walls. Its arches and inner walls are gone. A roofless building on the east side of

the cloister was probably the dormitory, and another to the north the refectory. From the dormitory was an aperture to the choir, now closed. There does not appear to have been an upper floor.

A building, detached a few yards from the church, westward, seems to have been the abbot's house. It resembles a long cottage, and is divided into three compartments, of which the eastern was evidently a chapel, and the western a kitchen. The central was probably the sitting and bed room.

A few yards north of the abbey refectory is another, and smaller, detached building, which contains a large fireplace and an oven, and was evidently the public kitchen.

The whole structure is as simple and rude as possible. Such doorways as remain are mere square headed apertures with rough unhewn lintels. There is no vaulting, no arch, no quoins or dressings of ashlar, save in the two fragments of windows in the choir. Still the rudeness has no mark of antiquity, and nothing now remaining points to an earlier period than the fifteenth or even the sixteenth century. The stones are mere plates of shistose limestone, showing no mark of the tool, and probably broken by the hammer. Mortar is very freely used. The charm of Inisfallen is certainly not in the remains of the abbey, which are overgrown with weeds and nettles, rude, untidy, and quite devoid of beauty. The charm is in the history of the past, and in the natural loveliness of the place, which within its narrow and water-girdled area includes a considerable variety of scenery, rising at one point, which seems to have been the abbey cemetery, to near ninety feet. The great attraction to Inisfallen is, and ever should be, the monastery for which, for centuries, it was famous, but, once upon the island, the ruins of that monastery would be the last object to engage the attention of an ordinary visitor.