

**Journal of the Cork Historical and
Archaeological Society**

www.corkhist.ie



Title: Local names

Author: Various

Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, 1892, Vol. 1, No 10,
page(s) 211-212

Published by the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society

Digital file created: June 7, 2013

Your use of the JCHAS digital archive indicates that you accept the Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.corkhist.ie/info/tandc.pdf>

The Cork Historical and Archaeological Society (IE-148166, incorporated 1989) was founded in 1891, for the collection, preservation and diffusion of all available information regarding the past of the City and County of Cork, and South of Ireland generally. This archive of all content of JCHAS (from 1892 up to ten years preceding current publication) continues the original aims of the founders in 1891. For more information visit www.corkhist.ie.

arenaria, locally called "sugar-loom," is abundant. It is generally sought for by fishermen as bait for their lines, and is a great pearl-producer. In the *Cork Constitution*, October 23rd, 1884, was a paragraph headed "Blackwater Pearls." It described a large "find" of pearls in *M. arenaria*, and proceeded:—"A few days ago a gentleman encountered a young lad, who had several of these pearls in his pockets; and one of them having been sent to an expert, has been valued at £5. There is no doubt but that a large number of pearls of considerable value are lying concealed in the mud of the "[Blackwater] river." Dr. G. Gray Crichton, writing to Rev. Samuel Hayman, in April, 1886, from Pier View House, Blackrock, Cork, says:—"I obtained a fine pearl on the brink of the Blackwater, below Lismore, last September, by purchase from a poor man whose little daughter had found it a short time previously in a live shell about four inches long. That pearls are to be frequently met with, if looked for, I have no doubt; for, on my buying this, the boy who was carrying my fishing bag and gaff said he was terrible sorry he had lost a lot that he had through a hole in his pocket, and he described them as little white bright marbles. They were found, he said, from time to time in the mussels, when the fish was taken out for bait." Regal fisheries were at one time established in England for obtaining the hidden wealth of the *margaritifera*, so prolific is it in pearls, and there can be no doubt but the pearls set in the British Crown are native, and were probably furnished by the fresh-water mussel. A. M.

Linum angustifolium (the pale-flowered perennial flax). This interesting plant was probably one of the first cultivated in this country. It grows wild in pastures around the harbours of Cork, Kinsale, Dublin, and Wicklow, and is also recorded from Tipperary. In Cork it is found on the banks of the Lee, Little Island, Mountdesert, Blarney, and Clonmult. Being of eastern origin, it was doubtless brought to our shores at a time when this country had a glacial connection with the adjacent continent. Its presence inland proves the fact (see note on "Glaciers," by J. C., September number of this Journal). It has a well-defined and rather large area, growing wild in the regions of which the Mediterranean forms the centre, extending from Palestine to the Canaries and south of the British Isles. Its cultivation and manufacture was known to the inhabitants of the south-west coast of Europe at a date quite as ancient as that of the annual flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) of the Egyptians and Persians. The annual flax is said to be a form or condition of the pale-flowered flax, altered by the influences of soil and climate. The pale flax is always annual in very hot countries. On the shores of Sicily, along the border of trodden paths, it lasts longer than on the sand, where the sun dries up the roots, and the acidity of the soil prevents the plant from enduring more than a

year. When we add the study of two intermediate forms, growing on the shores of Provence and Italy, we are led to consider them individually as constituting a single species, although slightly differing in their annual or biennial character, and possessing a certain degree of heredity, and date, perhaps, from very early times. The annual flax, although having a large range (from India to Southern Russia and Egypt), is only found "half wild," or escaped from cultivation. That the pale-flowered flax was cultivated and wove by the Swiss and Gauls before the introduction of its more advantageous rival, the annual flax, by the Phœnicians, has been proved by Heer, who discovered it in the sediment of the lake dwellings of Eastern Switzerland and the peat mosses of Lagozza, in Lombardy. An illustration by him shows a root surmounted by three or four stems, after the manner of perennial plants. This was at a time when stone implements were used. There were no traces of flax found in the Austrian lake dwellings at the age of bronze, showing the Swiss had no connection with Greece. The Greeks got their supply of linen stuffs from Colchis at the time of the Trojan war. This shows that the *Linum angustifolium* alone was cultivated in these countries. History records that Ireland was inhabited from a very early time by tribes who immigrated from eastern countries where the flax plant was known. Still it is improbable, from their warlike character, that they settled down to till the soil; their supply, if any, was taken from the sea-coast in a wild state. The real cultivation was probably due to the Gauls, a nation well skilled in the culture of flax, who established several thriving colonies around our coast, and attracted the Phœnicians, a maritime nation trading along the Mediterranean. The introduction of the annual flax is due to the Phœnicians, who brought it from Egypt several centuries before the Christian era. J. G.

Local Names.

TOPOGRAPHICAL AND PERSONAL.

NOTE.—Mr. Timothy Gleeson, writer of an interesting paper which appeared in the last two numbers of this Journal, has kindly undertaken to furnish, or suggest, the derivations of Anglicized-Celtic Place-Names; on which subject, from his intimate knowledge of the Irish language, he may be regarded as an authority.

PARISHES IN COUNTY CORK.

Abbeymahon. "Mahon's Abbey," a name of English formation. Formerly constituted part of the parish of Lis-Lee, (*Uor-ljāc*, *Lios-liath*, "grey fort"), from which it was separated and received its present name on the erection of an abbey by Cistercian or Bernardine monks. The dissolution of monasteries was enforced before it was roofed, and the walls now stand a picturesque ruin on the shore of Courtmacsherry bay. The field-names, as in other parishes, are mostly descriptive of the character of the ground—marshy, rocky, hilly, woody, etc., as the case may be; the principal

townland is named Lislevane (ΛΙΟΒ-ΛΕΑΜΗΑΝ, *Lios-leanhain*, "elm fort"). Barony Ibane and Barryroe, diocese of Ross.

Abbeystrowery. "Abbey of the stream." ῤῤῤῤῤῤ, *sruithair*, the stream, and the abbey a sub-branch of the Cistercian abbey de Sancto Mauro, founded at Myross 1172 by Dermot McCarthy, king of Desmond at the English Invasion. Dives Downes (consecrated bishop of Cork and Ross 1699), in his interesting *Journal* describing a visitation of all the parishes of Cork and Ross, says that the rector of Abbeystrowery demanded as a burial fee "the second best suit of clothes of the dead man, or 6s. 8d. in lieu thereof." Barony West Carbery, diocese of Ross.

Aghabullogue. "Field of the cow." Ἀῖῖῖῖ, a field, and βῖῖῖ, a cow—Ἀῖῖῖῖ-βῖῖῖ. Ἀῖ, a ford, and ἄῖῖῖ, a field, are, however, both anglicized *agh* or *agha*. Near the church of Aghabullogue is a holy well dedicated to St. Olan, and in the churchyard is a pillar-stone inscribed with ogham characters (illustrated in the July number), called St. Olan's tomb. In the demesne of *Clonmoyle* (bald meadow) is the ancient cemetery of Kilcolman, or St. Colman's church, and at Kilberrihert (church of St. Berrihert), a remarkable ogham stone was discovered in 1826. R. R. Brash, in his *Ogham-Inscribed Monuments of the Gaedhil*, says, "the whole district abounds with cromleachs, stone circles, pillar-stones, raths, and holy wells." In the demesne of Peake (remarkable for its ancient timber) is a fort supposed to have subterranean communication with two others on adjoining lands. Smith, in his *History of Cork* (book iv., vol. ii., chap. x.), quotes a letter from the Rev. Marmaduke Cox, dated Peake 1755, describing some ancient subterranean chambers accidentally discovered by workmen in digging; they contained a large number of human skeletons. The romantic glen of Mullinassig in this parish derives its name from a mill—ῤῤῤῤῤῤ, *Muileann*. Barony East Muskerry, diocese of Cloyne.

Aghacross. "Field of the cross." Ἀῖῖῖῖ, a field, and κῖῖῖ, a cross; or Ἀῖ, a ford, and κῖῖῖ, "the ford of the cross;" probably from a cross erected here in early Christian times. The parish church, at the confluence of the Sheep river, ἄβῖῖ-ἡῖῖ-ῖῖῖῖῖῖ, takes its name from St. Molagga, and on Easter Sunday a pattern is held in the burial-ground (with remains of the ancient church) attended by large numbers. Barony Condons and Clongibbons, diocese of Cloyne.

Aghada. "Long ford." Ἀῖ, a ford, and ῖῖῖῖ, long, i.e., Ἀῖ-ῖῖῖῖ. A townland in this parish is called Βῖῖῖῖ-ἡῖῖ-ῖῖῖῖῖῖ, i.e., "town of the pools," from βῖῖῖῖ, town, and ῖῖῖῖῖῖῖ, pools of water on the strand at ebb tide. This is anglicized *Ballynafarsid*, and the village which forms part of the townland is shortened to *Farsid*. The

pools which gave this place its name are still to be seen, some of them inside the demesne walls of Rostellan, the property of the late Sir John Pope Hennessy, M.P., and the others at low water near the village of Farsid. Outside the pools is a mole several hundred feet in length projecting into the sea, from Rostellan castle across the creek nearly to Ballynafarsid, and which is visible at low water. By means of this mole the creek was easily forded, and, from its great length, was called Ἀῖ ῖῖῖ ῖῖῖῖ, i.e., "the long ford," which gave the name to the parish. Barony Imokilly, diocese of Cloyne.

Aghadown. "Field of the fortress." Ἀῖῖῖῖ, a field, and ῖῖῖῖ, a fortress. At Whitehall are ruins of Rincolisky, built by the O'Driscolls in 1495; at the summit of Rahine hill, "little rath or fort," are two large upright stones, supposed remains of some ancient monument; and in the grounds of Lakelands are picturesque remains of an ecclesiastical edifice, called by the people of the neighbourhood "The Abbey of our Lady." Barony West Carbery, diocese of Ross.

Aghern. "Ford of the judge." Ἀῖ, a ford, and ῖῖῖ, a judge. Two castles were erected here by the Fitzgeralds to command the pass of the Bride, at that time a ford of great importance, one at Aghern West, and the other in Ballymacsimon townland. The former was of great strength, and powerfully garrisoned by the Earl of Desmond against the forces of Queen Elizabeth; of the latter scarcely a trace remains. Barony Kinnatalloon, diocese of Cloyne.

Aghinagh. "The ivy-covered field." Ἀῖῖῖῖ, a field, and εῖῖῖῖῖῖῖ, full of ivy. The principal remains of antiquity are the ruined castles of Carrigadrohid (καῖῖῖῖῖῖ-ῖῖῖῖῖῖῖ), rock of the bridge) and Mashanaglass (ῤῖῖῖῖῖῖῖ, my stronghold). The former, according to some writers, was built by the MacCarthys in the fourteenth century, and the choice of the situation is attributed in a chivalric anecdote to the lady Una O'Carroll, wife of Dermot MacCarthy. It is situated on a steep rock in the midst of the river Lee, and the castle and bridge, commanding one of the chief passes of the Lee, was the scene of many conflicts in the civil wars of 1641. Before its walls, in 1650, Lord Broghill, the Commonwealth general, hanged the titular bishop of Ross, who, with a force of about 5,000 natives he had defeated at Macroom, for refusing to call on the garrison to surrender. Mashanaglass was a fortress of the McSwineys. Smith (*History of Cork*) quotes a letter addressed by James I. to the Lord Deputy Sydney, directing him to accept the surrender of the lands of Owen McSwiney, otherwise "Hoggy of Mashanaglass." In the glebe lands are remains of a cromleach, several pillar-stones are standing in the parish, and raths, forts, and artificial caves are numerous. Barony East Muskerry, diocese of Cloyne.