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# Journal of the Cork Historical and Archæological Society.

(Fifty-second year of Issue)

## The Cistercian Abbey of St. Mary de Fonte Vivo, Diocese of Ross, Co. Cork.

By DENIS O'SULLIVAN.

Historically, owing to the dearth of documentary evidence, very little is known of this twelfth century Cistercian foundation, which was situated in the diocese of Ross and flourished there up to the close of the fifteenth century. Furthermore, unlike the other Cistercian establishments of Cork County, the sites of which are known, the house of Fons Vivus has so completely vanished that even its name is forgotten and its location for many years past the subject of much controversy. And the "bone of contention" is the strange alternative name by which the abbey was also known, namely, Maure.

Smith, the author of *The Ancient and Present State of the County and City of Cork*, which was published in the year 1750, wrote,<sup>1</sup> "On the west side of Glandore is the parish of Miross . . . In this parish was antiently an abbey called De Sancto Mauro, also De Fonte Vivo, founded anno 1172, by Dermot Mac Cormac Carty of Kilbawne, who was King of Cork, for Cistercian Monks which he brought from the abbey of Baltinglass. At a place called Carrigiliky, in this parish, the foundations of extensive ruins were discovered, together with a large cemetery, with great quantities of human bones, which probably was the site of the abbey de Sancto Mauro, which some falsely place at Abbeymahon near Timoleague. The house of Abbeyshtrowry was a cell to this."

In the year 1904 the late Mr. James Burke, B.L., of Skibbereen, a staunch upholder of the Abbeymahon claim to the title of Maure, wrote in the *Journal* an interesting paper<sup>2</sup> on our abbey designed to establish the Abbeymahon claim and to explode the "myth" of Dr. Smith relative to Carrigillihy which, through the years that followed the publication of his

<sup>1</sup> I, 271. (1750 Ed.).

<sup>2</sup> *J.C.H.A.S.*, X (1904), 251-3. If Mr. Burke had consulted Archbishop King's MS. *Collectanea*, which is preserved in the National Library of Ireland, Dublin, he would have hesitated to name his paper "The Abbey de Sancto Mauro," as he would have read in the *Collectanea* (396) that the abbey was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, not to St. Maurus—" *Ut Jus Ecclesie St. Mar. de Fonte Vivo, etc. . . .*" Thus reads part of the entry in the MS. bearing on our abbey. Smith also erred in naming the abbey "de Sancto Mauro." Burke's chief authorities are the fiants of Henry VIII and Elizabeth.

*History of Cork*, had been in the main upheld by antiquaries, writers, and many others interested in our county's past. Burke's contribution to the *Journal* is styled "The Abbey de Sancto Mauro." In it he essays to prove that the Abbeymahon ruins near Courtmacsherry are those of Fons Vivus or Maure Abbey, and that the Carrigillihy discovery was but a myth of Dr. Smith's own invention. How far Mr. Burke has succeeded I do not venture to say, but that he has not been totally convincing is patent from the remarks of a highly competent authority on such matters—the Rev. Professor Power, D.Litt., who, twenty-five years after the appearance of Burke's paper, wrote in the same Society's *Journal*<sup>1</sup> on Maure. Professor Power inclines to agree with Mr. Burke in that Smith's statement is incredible, but he admits that the subject "is very complicated and it requires further investigation," and left it thus. So Fons Vivus Abbey still has two rival groups of antiquaries in the matter of its location—one section upholding Smith's statement that Carrigillihy is the site, and the other championing the late Mr. Burke's claim for Abbeymahon.

Whilst in the following pages is told all that, historically, is known or can be ascertained up to the present of the story of the Abbey of St. Mary de Fonte Vivo, diocese of Ross, Co. Cork, I have also set down the results of my own research on the origin of the name Maure as applied to the house of Fons Vivus. I have endeavoured to show that it is an abbreviated and colloquial form which has survived of the obsolete and forgotten name of that particular territory in the diocese of Ross wherein once stood an important Cistercian foundation of the twelfth century known as Fons Vivus or Maure Abbey. My aim is to prove that Maure Abbey was distinct from, yet closely related to, the sixteenth century ruinous building which we of to-day know as Abbeymahon, situated on the seashore in Courtmacsherry Bay. And, finally, that its site is the present Carrigillihy, in the parish of Myross, and not that of the ruin in the barony of Barryroe, County Cork.

St. Mary's Abbey de Fonte Vivo was founded in the year 1172. Its founder was Dermot MacCormac MacCarthy, King of Desmond, and monks from Baltinglass were settled in occupation there. Sir James Ware, writing under "Maur. al. de Fonte Vivo, M. B. Mariae" has the following notice: "*Fundatum anno Dom. 1172, et monachis Cisterciensibus repletum ex coenobio Baltinglassensi: Dermotium Cormaci filium fundatorem ferunt. Chrysostomus Henriques Coenobium de Re in Hibernia inter coenobia Cisterciensia enumerat. Inchrie, opinor, intelligit, quae postea cella fuit Coenobii Maurensis.*—Founded, as they say, by Dermot MacCormac in the year 1172, and supplied with Cistercian monks from the Abbey of Baltinglass. Chrysostom Henriquez reckons the Abbey of Re in Ireland among the Cistercian abbeys. I believe he means Inchrie which was afterwards a Cell to the Abbey of Maure."<sup>2</sup>

Following Ware and Henriques, Allemande has a brief notice of Fons Vivus Abbey: "At Maur or Mawr was the abbey de Fonte Vivo which Henriques calls the abbey of Re. It was founded by Dermot Cormac . . . and was Daughter of the Abbey of Baltinglass whence the first monks

<sup>1</sup> *J.C.H.A.S.*, XXXIV (1929), 26.

<sup>2</sup> Ware, *De Hibernia et Antiquitatibus Eius*, 231. (Edit. 1685); MS. Laud, No. 526.

came to settle in the Bishoprick of Ross in the County of Cork.”<sup>1</sup> Allemande seems to have overlooked the remark of Ware concerning Henriques’ Abbey of Re—“*Inchrie, opinor*, etc.—I believe that by Re Henriques means Inchrie which at a later period was a cell to Maure Abbey.”

The earliest record we have of Fons Vivus Abbey is that one Patrick was abbot there in 1252. In 1291 it is recorded that the abbot of Maure de Fonte Vivo sued Dovenald O Maythan for a messuage and four carucates of land in Ardocherys.<sup>2</sup>

The name of another early abbot of Fons Vivus—John—is preserved in the *Calendar of Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland* (Dublin, 1828) under date 1303. The record runs: “*Cork, 8. Oct. 31. Edw. I, Fr. Joh. Abbas de Fonte (Vivo), ad ptes tnsmar’ pfectur’ attor’ Walt’ Cod.*” (Page 6, No. 79).

From 1303 to 1390 we have no records of Fons Vivus Abbey, and so far as I am aware none have been discovered. The first entry in the *Papal Regesta* concerning our abbey occurs under date 1390. The mandate commissions the bishop of Ross, the Abbot de Fonte Vivo, in that diocese, and Donatus O Deaygh, canon of Ross, to summon John Omurchilly, priest of the said diocese, who is in wrongful possession of the perpetual vicarage of Lislayg, in the same diocese . . . and to collate and assign it, if the facts be as stated, to Gillacius Ohuollachayn, canon of Ross. The Pope’s mandate is dated 15. Kal. Dec., St. Peter’s, Rome, 2. Boniface IX.<sup>3</sup>

Again, in a mandate dated 1394 the abbot of Fonte Vivo, in the diocese of Ross, is mentioned, but no name given. It is not necessary to quote from the *Calendars of the Papal Letters* the many entries wherein the Fons Vivus Abbey is mentioned, as they may be read from the first notice in Vol. IV and continue right through the series up to the year 1481 (Vol. XIII). There is one, however, which must be quoted, namely, a mandate dated 1399 (10. Boniface IX) addressed to Macrobius Olachnan, Cistercian monk of Maure (de Fonte Vivo)—an “extension to him of Papal dispensation to hold any offices, administrations, and dignities of his Order below the abbatial, so that he may hold any such dignities, even abbatial.”<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to note that this is the only Papal mandate in which the name Maure is applied to the house of Fons Vivus.

From 1481 until 1492 the records are silent concerning the abbey of Maure de Fonte Vivo. Brady in his *Episcopal Successions* points out that Thady, bishop of Ross, was abbot of Maure *in commendam* in 1489. In a Bull of Alexander VI—*Anno Primo, i.e., 1493*, it is recorded that Dermotius Ohualachain, abbot of the monastery of Fons Vivus, was created bishop of Ross, vacant “*per obitum bonae memoriae Episcopi Corkagensis et Clonensis commendatarii.*” The bishop referred to in the Bull was Thaddeus—our Blessed Thaddeus MacCarthy—who obtained the Fons Vivus Abbey *in commendam* in 1489. Thaddeus was consecrated bishop of Ross in 1482 at Rome. He was only twenty-seven years old at the time, but dispensation in the matter of age was granted by the reigning pontiff. He was afterwards,

<sup>1</sup> Allemande, *Histoire Monastique D’Irelande*, 185. (English Trans., 1772).

<sup>2</sup> King, *Collectanea*, 396. (MS. in Nat. Library of Ireland, Dublin).

<sup>3</sup> *Cal. Papal Letters*, IV, 413.

<sup>4</sup> *Cal. Papal Letters*, V, 193.

in 1490, translated to the important sees of Cork and Cloyne vacant by the resignation of William Roche. Thaddeus died a little over two years after his appointment to Cork and Cloyne.<sup>1</sup>

Theiner records the resignation in 1517 of a bishop of Ross named Edmund Courcey in favour of the then reigning abbot of Fons Vivus.<sup>2</sup> The same writer quotes a letter to the pope written by Henry VIII asking the Holy Father's approval of Courcey's resignation and the abbot's promotion to the see of Ross, at the same time requesting that the abbot be allowed to retain his abbey of Fons Vivus owing to the poverty of the bishopric.<sup>3</sup> The abbot, Johannes Horzyle (John Hurley), was consecrated bishop of Ross in that year.

From 1517 onward, historical records are silent concerning Maure Abbey, and we are without knowledge of Cistercian affairs in the diocese of Ross until we find the Bernardines making effort at refounding their Order, which for close on two hundred years had been steadily declining, on the Courtmacsherry side where now stands the Abbeymahon ruin. At the dissolution of the monasteries Queen Elizabeth granted the abbey of Fons Vivus with its appurtenances to Nicholas Walsh for ever. Nicholas Walsh was a chief justice of the Court of Common Pleas in Munster, who signalled himself by his bitter hostility and cruelty to the Catholics of the period. The wording of the queen's grant, quoted by Archdall, runs as follows: "5th Dec., 30. Queen Elizabeth. This abbey 'with its appurtenances in the towns of Maure, Leshinan, Curraghanin, Lehenaugh, Le Graunge . . . and the rectories of Maure and Lyslie or elsewhere in this county and belonging to the monastery of Carrigiliky [italics are mine] is granted to Nicholas Walsh for ever at the annual rent of £28 6s. 6d.'" <sup>4</sup>

Thus far from the scanty documentary evidence which has come down to us have I outlined the story of the Abbey of Maure de Fonte Vivo. That it was an abbey of importance is evidenced by the excerpts in the *Calendars of the Papal Letters*, but that it could have in a few centuries passed so completely into oblivion is incredible; and we shall in all probability never know the reason why it should have so utterly disappeared that its name is forgotten and its site disputed.

As stated in the opening paragraph of this historical sketch, the origin of the name Maure, as applied to the abbey of Fons Vivus, appears to have been, and continues to be, the stumbling block in fixing its site. While agreeing with the Rev. Professor Power that the abbey did not derive its name from St. Maurus, the result of my investigation on the name does not allow either his alternative derivation from Magh-odhar, "the dun-coloured plain," or his suggestion that it may be "a corruption of Mahon, a copyist's error."<sup>5</sup> Maure is not a corruption of the name Mahon. Neither is it derived from Magh-odhar. It designates the ancient name of an area in

<sup>1</sup> Costello MS. quoted by the Very Rev. Canon Kiely in his "Episcopal Successions of Cork and Cloyne in the fifteenth century," *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, August, 1932.

<sup>2</sup> Theiner, *Vetera Monum. Hibern. et Scotorum*, 519. (Rome, 1864).

<sup>3</sup> Theiner, *Op. cit.*, 520; see also "Processus consistorialis super resignationem Episcopi Rossensis," p. 528.

<sup>4</sup> Archdall, *Monasticon Hibernicum*, 60. (Edit. 1786). In Elizabeth's grant the word "towns" represents "townlands."

<sup>5</sup> *J.C.H.A.S.*, XXXIV (1929), 24.

the bishopric of Ross (wherein the Fons Vivus Abbey stood) which has been preserved for us in an abbreviated form, namely, Maure. It will be noted that I take the word Maure to represent the shortened form of the ancient name of the district as colloquially used<sup>1</sup> long prior to the fourteenth century (when we find it in the records), and afterwards, until it became obsolete and passed into oblivion.

In the tract called *Seineatad Corca Laidhe* there is written<sup>2</sup>: “*Tuath n-Uí Conneid, .i. an Garrgha, ó Chinn Mara co Loch an Bhricin, acur ó Midhros co béil in ata rólair. O Conneid a tairrech.*” In English—Tuath Uí Conneid, *i.e.*, the Garrgha,<sup>3</sup> [extends] from Ceann-mara to Loch-an-Bhricin,<sup>4</sup> and from Midhros (Myross) to Beal-an-atha Solais (Aghasulis). O Conneid is its chief.” Ceann Mara—the Head of the Sea—was the ancient name of the head of Cuan Dor or Glandore Harbour. If this quotation from the *Seineatad Corca Laidhe* be borne in mind, the significance of the name Maure as applied to the Fons Vivus Abbey becomes apparent. The Kennedy’s country extended from Cean Mara to Myross right on to Aghasulis on the river Ilen, above Skibbereen, to the west of the town; and the present-day Carrigillihy, the disputed site of the Fons Vivus Abbey, is part of the Myross parish. The entire territory was, in all probability, named from Ceann Mara. This seems obvious from the excerpt given above, and from Ceann Mara comes the shortened or colloquial name “Maure” with its Latinised forms “Maurus” and “Maurensis” surviving to our day.

Thus is it made evident that Maure must represent the colloquial name of that area in the diocese of Ross of which Carrigillihy and Myross form part—a name which in its original form is long obsolete, completely forgotten, and known to us only in the present abbreviated form as found in the *Papal Regesta* of the fourteenth century, in the Reports (from which Archdall extensively copied for his *Monasticon*) of Elizabeth’s Auditor-General in Ireland at the time of the dissolution of the religious houses, and in the works of seventeenth and eighteenth century writers on monastic affairs who must have had access to, and transcribed from, those earlier records (other than the Vatican archives) which were preserved in our own country until 1922.

It has been suggested that the name is un-Irish, and as an example of alien origin the name of another Cistercian establishment in Ireland, namely, Bective, in the diocese of Meath, three miles south of Navan, has been cited. The name Bective derives from the Cistercian title of their abbey, *De Beatitudine*; but a casual glance at the name Maure, apart from its pronunciation in its present form,<sup>5</sup> will suggest its native origin, although

<sup>1</sup> For example, “Bere” for Castletownbere, “Ring” for Ringaskiddy, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Miscellany of the Celtic Society*, (Dublin, 1849), edited by John O’Donovan, p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> The parish of Myross is still known to the country people by the name of Garry or the Garden—an Garrdha—which is said to have formerly designated a larger district.

<sup>4</sup> *Loch an Bhricin* is the present designation of a lake situated a little east of Glandore Harbour.

<sup>5</sup> I would suggest that in pronouncing the name Maure the final -e be sounded. The similarity between the Irish word *mara* and the name Maure, if this be done, is at once apparent. The spelling of the name, as we have it, is probably phonetic—representing the sound of the name as heard and set down by the mediaeval scribes.

Professor Power has written: "As the name, Maure, is obsolete locally it is not possible to test it by the safest of all criteria—its pronunciation by a native Irish speaker."

The fact that Smith mentions the site of our abbey as at Carrigillihy does not make his statement a myth. Carrigillihy is a townland in the parish of Myross, and there is nothing evidential to show that this particular district of the Myross parish was known in the twelfth century, the date of the foundation of Fons Vivus Abbey, as Carrigillihy. The various interpretations of the name are of no historical value and, etymologically, lead to nothing definite. The whole region was, as I have already stated, probably known by the ancient name, of which Maure, its variant, has survived, and the name Carrigillihy came at a later period to be given to that part of Myross parish where, in Smith's time, the discovery of the foundation of extensive ruins was made.

The actual place-name, Carrigillihy, is not found in the *Papal Registers* and this fact has been used as evidence to support the Abbeymahon claim to the title of Maure de Fontevivo, notwithstanding that Abbeymahon is not mentioned in the official list of Cistercian houses in Ireland nor in the papal archives, and that Janouschek, the chronicler of the Order, states that it is an abbey of doubtful existence. With the exception of a copy of one State document of Elizabeth's reign, namely, the grant to Nicholas Walsh by that queen of the Fons Vivus Abbey, no other contemporary documents have, so far as is known, been brought to light to uphold the claim of Smith's "myth." Archdall has preserved this grant for us in his *Monasticon Hibernicum*, and his transcript is the only historical document extant wherein the actual site of the Maure Abbey is given.

I have already quoted a mandate of Pope Boniface IX to "Macrobius Olachnan, Cistercian monk of Maure de Fontevivo, in the diocese of Ross," and it is in the sense of place-name that the name Maure must here be understood. Again, I would draw attention to Allemande's words, "At Maur or Mawr was the Abbey de Fonte Vivo," where the name Maur is given to the district wherein the abbey was situated, and I would add Sir James Ware's descriptive title of the abbey—*Coenobium Maurensis*—which, when rendered into English, is simply "The Monastery of Maure." Here again Maure is a place-name—not a title given to a monastic foundation.

In the absence of documentary evidence, or architectural remains, there is still another source which is called Tradition, and, in the case of Fons Vivus Abbey, tradition is very much alive in the Myross district. The local tradition at Carrigillihy is that a monastery of the White Monks existed there "in the old days." On Mr. Ted O'Driscoll's land at Carrigillihy are the remains of an ancient church or oratory. It is marked on the Ordnance Map as a "Cill."<sup>1</sup> The people of the district say that it belonged to the old monastery which one time stood in the neighbourhood, and the field in which the little ruin stands is known locally as "The Monks' Cemetery." Again, it is well known at Carrigillihy that Blessed Thaddeus McCarthy was abbot of the monastery there for a time—that this fact had been "handed down to them"—and, historically, we know that Thaddeus held the abbacy of Maure de Fontevivo *in commendam* in 1489.

<sup>1</sup> Cork (6") 142. E, 9.7 cms; S, 18.7 cms.

It does not follow that because no traces of the abbey of Maure exist in the Myross parish to-day the abbey was never there. The Cistercians had houses in Fermoy, Middleton, Tracton (near Carrigaline)—all in the county of Cork. No traces of them now remain, but that they were there is not disputed. Records of these Bernardine foundations of Cork County are preserved to our day, and there are many records (other than State Records) preserved in the papal registers of their abbey at Maure. The same fate which overtook the abbeys of Fermoy, Middleton, and Tracton, must have befallen the buildings of Fons Vivus when the monks departed, and only the ruined "Cill" on Mr. O'Driscoll's land remains and helps to perpetuate the district's tradition of the existence there of a religious house of which Blessed Thaddeus was at one time abbot.

Tradition is not myth, and the one must not be confounded with the other.

Why the monks departed from the Myross district is not known, but that they were there in the twelfth and up to the early sixteenth century is verified by the local tradition at Carrigillihy of the White Monks' monastery which existed there "in the old days," and the Report of Elizabeth's Auditor-General in Ireland which Archdall has preserved and which I have already quoted. Archdall would not have made copy of the queen's Auditor-General's report and handed it on to posterity if that particular document did not exist in his time at the Office of the Auditor-General in Dublin.<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to understand why all those who are dogmatic in that the Abbeymahon ruin is that of Maure de Fontevivo should have ignored Archdall's transcript; but the task of explaining away in favour of Abbeymahon the local tradition at Carrigillihy of a White Monks' Monastery which once was there, as well as Elizabeth's Auditor-General's report, is to my mind an impossible one.

With regard to Abbeymahon and its claim to the title of Maure—Abbeymahon is not mentioned in the official list of Cistercian houses in Ireland, and it was held as doubtful whether Abbeymahon and Abbeystrowry were Cistercian before they were merged in the possessions of Cistercian abbeys. This statement also applies to other religious establishments in the country which are named Cistercian.<sup>2</sup> That Abbeystrowry, however, was Cistercian is made clear by a note from the Acts of the Chapter-General at Citeaux, A.D. 1261, No. 15, which states that the Chapter-General grants that the place called De Flumine Vivo shall be restored as an abbey of the Order and be, as formerly, Daughter of Fons Vivus. Abbeystrowry—Mainistershruthra, the Monastery of the Stream—Latinised "De Flumine Vivo" from its association with De Fonte Vivo, or from the river near which it was built. The traditional place-name of the townland, Mainistir—"Achadh Mainaistir," the field or ford of the monastery—mentioned

<sup>1</sup> All historical records kept in the Auditor-General's Office were at a later period transferred to the Public Record Office, Dublin, where they remained until the buildings, and the priceless, irreplaceable documents housed there for preservation, were destroyed in 1922.

<sup>2</sup> "The Cistercian Order in Ireland," by A. H. Thompson, A. W. Clapham and H. G. Leask. *The Archaeological Journal of Gt. Britain and Ireland*, LXXXVIII (1931), I f.



by Burke in his paper on the Abbey de Sancto Mauro, has no connection with the Abbeymahon ruin. The ruins that remain in the townland of Mainistir are those of an early ecclesiastical building. Whether it formed part of a monastic foundation, or not, cannot now be determined; but it can definitely be said that it was not belonging to any Cistercian foundation.

On the other hand, it is quite feasible that a house was built on the Courtmacsherry side as a cell or rectory to the parent house of Maure on the site of an earlier building, and that in the course of time this came to be known as, and was called, Abbey Maure after the parent house. This may well have led in later years to the confusion in fixing the site of our abbey. I have already stated that the present ruin called Abbeymahon was an attempt of the Cistercians in the early sixteenth century at a completely new foundation (and that on the site of an original cell or branch-house of Maure Abbey) for their Order. Professor Power has written: "One strongly suspects that there was a second foundation or a restoration in the early sixteenth century." The new building, Abbeymahon, was endowed by the Lord Barry of Barryroe with eighteen ploughlands until the completion of their house, and this would explain away why all the lands belonging to the Fons Vivus Abbey, as mentioned in the Report of Elizabeth's Auditor-General in Ireland and in the fiants of that queen, are on the Courtmacsherry side. The edict of dissolution, unhappily, vetoed the Cistercian effort at a refounding of their Order, and to-day nothing remains but a crumbling ruin to mark the undertaking on the site of the original "Rectory of Maure." It will be of interest to here add that when Timoleague and Abbeymahon were sacked in 1642, it was found that Abbeymahon had never been lived in. Furthermore, local opinion has it that Abbeymahon of Timoleague was from time immemorial of no importance either as a Cistercian or other monastic establishment.

Henriques' Abbey of Re, which Ware identifies with Inchrie, is now identified with Abbeystroury, near Skibbereen. It was founded by Donovan of West Carbery, to the north of the river Ilen, and endowed by the founder with twenty ploughlands. It formed part of the parish of Lislee. After the dissolution of the religious houses it was used as a parish church, later becoming ruinous. It was a sub-branch house, or cell, of the Cistercian abbey of Fons Vivus, the rectory proper of the Maure Abbey being where the Abbeymahon ruin now stands.

I have shown in this study of the subject that Abbeymahon is not the abbey of Maure de Fontevivo. Professor Power, alluding to the name of our Abbey—Fons Vivus or De Fonte Vivo—remarks that "the Cistercian name of the abbey may have been suggested by a well near the abbey, but to-day there is no spring visible in the immediate neighbourhood of the ruin," and he further adds that "the site of Abbeymahon is rather un-Cistercian—not according to tradition, on a stream or river, but on the sea shore, in Courtmacsherry Bay, barony of Barryroe."<sup>1</sup> This interpretation of the Latin title is too literal, for the old monks would not have named their abbey from its proximity to a spring. They gave to their house the beautiful and poetic title of their abbey's Patroness, the Blessed Virgin

<sup>1</sup> *J.C.H.A.S.*, XXXIV (1929), 25.

Mary—the “ Quickwell ” or “ Living Font ” of Graces. Thus was their house named *Coenobium Maurensis sub invocatione Beatae Mariae Virginis Fontis Vivi*—The Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Living Font, Maure.

Between Smith's time and our day there is a wide span of nigh two centuries, and the old historian of Cork and its County must therefore have had opportunities for gathering more local information concerning the discovery at Carrigillihy than we of to-day have. If Smith's statement concerning our abbey be only a myth, it follows as a matter of course that the records of Maure Abbey preserved in the papal archives are but a collection of fairy stories, and that the various popes named in the *Papal Regesta* issued their mandates to mythical abbots of a mythical abbey called Maure de Fontevivo which was situated at a place which is now known as Carrigillihy in the parish of Myross, diocese of Ross, County Cork. So, too, must the local tradition of a White Monks' monastery, which is so persistent at Carrigillihy, be relegated to the realms of myth. All the fiants of Elizabeth relating to the Fons Vivus Abbey are fiants concerning the Maure foundation—not Abbeymahon. In one of the fiants of Henry VIII Maure Abbey is incorrectly styled the Abbey of Mayo, alias “ de Fonte Vivo ”—Lease to Osborn Echingham, Knight, of the site, etc. (No. 394, appendix to 10th Report D.K.R.I.) The name Abbeymahon is not actually mentioned in any State document or Ecclesiastical record of the period. The Report of Elizabeth's Auditor-General, which is preserved in Archdall's *Monasticon*, definitely specifies the site of the abbey, and Carrigillihy in Myross cherishes the tradition of the time when Blessed Thaddeus MacCarthy was abbot there of the Monastery of Maure.

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