

## SLIGO HARBOUR.

The first reference we find to the Harbour of Sligo is in the reign of Henry VI., when—"It was agreed by James, Count of Ormond, that William De Burge, Knight, and his brother should have payment for their services in the Irish wars out of the customs of the ports of Sligo and Galway. The Sligo Harbour was always looked upon as being very important, for as early as 1553 Sligo is referred to in a State paper as the best harbour town in all the country." It would seem that O'Connor Sligo was exercising ownership over the harbour at this period, for the State paper adds—"And the same O'Connor and certain of his predecessors keepeth the same by usurpation." O'Donnell was also interested in it, for we found him making over to Henry VIII. "the moiety of the cocket of all ships coming to Sligoghe to trade, from which I have had cocket; so that the King's bailiff or servant, called a marshall, accompanied by my bailiff, shall in like manner exact the tribute. . . . If a multitude of herrings and other fish, called 'Carbusle,' should resort to the country of Lord O'Donnell, or to his sea, one half thereof shall belong to the King, and the other half to O'Donnell." At this period, it should be mentioned, Sligo was much frequented by trading and fishing vessels from Spain. In 1606 the fishing was leased by the King to Sir Henry Ffolliott.

In 1729 an Act of Parliament was passed for improving the channel, and in 1765, a grant being made by Parliament, a pier, 160 feet long, was erected at Oyster Island, but being neglected a trace of it is hardly visible at the present time.

The first appearance of a quay at Sligo was at the time of the erection of the Custom House and Stores, when the portion adjoining was constructed. Martin's Quay, which is private property, was erected by Mr. Charles Martin. The next portion was constructed by Mr. James Cochrane, who charged dues, but he afterwards disposed of the property to the Harbour Commissioners. Next was erected the Ballast Quay, which takes its name from the old ballast bank, and which now extends to about a length of 2,000 feet. Lower down is the New Quay, which can accommodate vessels with a cargo of 5,000 or 6,000 tons.

From 1804 until the middle of the century there was considerable emigration to America from this port. In 1825 Mr. Patrick O'Connor fitted out, on her return voyage, a vessel called the "Belsay Castle," which came from America with flax seed, for emigrants, who were landed at Newfoundland. Among those who sailed in the "Belsay Castle" were 70 passengers sent out by the famous Thady Connellan, the money having been collected by him for the purpose in England. Connellan, owing to the number he was sending, got special terms at 30s. a head, although to others the cost was £2. Emigrants in these times had to supply themselves during the voyage with provisions, which usually consisted of a bag of potatoes and some salt herrings for each passenger. In 1830 Mr. O'Connor sent out a vessel of his own, the "Argo," which carried out 156 passengers, though her tonnage did not exceed 164 tons, Mr. Peter O'Connor making the voyage on the occasion to see that the emigrants were properly treated.

On the abolition of the Corn Laws, in 1846, vessels came more frequently to the port, and on their return voyage brought out passengers.

After the passing of the Borough Improvement Act of '69 a new body of Commissioners was created. The number of members now composing the body is 19—eight selected by traders paying harbour dues to the amount of £5, each trader having an extra vote for every additional £10, the maximum being six votes; eight selected by householders rated at £12; two nominated by the Corporation, the Mayor being an ex-officio member during his year of office. The Commissioners, as pointed out elsewhere, were, before the Act of '69, elected for life, but now the term of office is limited to four years.

In 1877 the "Sligo Harbour Act," promoted by the Commissioners, was passed, and its provisions permitted the Commissioners to borrow, for the purposes of improvement to the extent of £56,000. By the deepening of the channel and the construction of the deep-water berths, for which loans to amount were procured, vessels drawing up to 18 feet can be accommodated at low water; while large steamers, drawing as much as 21 feet, and carrying from 5,000 to 6,000 tons, can now come up the channel in safety. Vessels of larger draught may be moored at Rosses Point, by means of the mooring buoys which the Commissioners have provided there, until lightened of portion of their cargoes, when they can come up and discharge the remainder at the quays.

Some idea may be gained of the progress which has been, and is being made, by a glance at the following figures, which show that the annual revenue of the Harbour has been nearly trebled within the past thirty years. In comparing the number of vessels, it should be borne in mind that one of the large steamers, which are now being accommodated at the New Quay, carries as much cargo as eight of the small vessels which formerly came to Sligo.

Number and Tonnage of Vessels, and Dues received for the Years 1874, 1884, 1894, and 1904.

Year	No. of Vessels	Tonnage	Dues Received			Total
			Harbour	Import	Export	
1874	412	63,963	£1 418 2 9	£1149 7 2	£789 19 2	£3,337 9 1
1884	498	80,183	2,131 14 5	1710 13 0	634 5 6	4,476 12 11
1894	359	82,270	2,417 19 7	3250 12 10	773 13 9	6,442 9 2
1904	544	97,533	3188 7 6	4136 4 2	635 1 1	7,959 12 9

The facilities afforded by the new Tramway, constructed from the Railway Goods Store to the Deep-water Berths, enable by bringing the railway waggons alongside the steamer's side while discharging, the local merchants to economise a considerable amount of expense, which puts them in a position to compete successfully over a larger area with rivals from the other large ports, a circumstance which means that the trade of Sligo, if not increased, will be at least maintained.

Although the Commissioners, by a Provisional Order in 1903, obtained an extension of their borrowing powers by £100,000, bringing their limit up to £156,000, they have abstained up to the present from taking advantage of the concession, their indebtedness being now, as before, only £56,000.

A circumstance which should be borne in mind is the fact that Sligo is one of the few places that never received anything from the Government in the shape of grants; the vast progress which has been made in developing and extending the Harbour being, therefore, all the more creditable to the zeal and energy of the Commissioners.

#### HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS

Chairman—A. Jackson, Esq., J.P.

Vacate in November, 1906—

Robert Gorman, Esq.  
Henry Lyons, Esq., J.P.  
R. W. Couser, Esq.  
E. J. Tighe, Esq., J.P.

Vacate in November, 1907—

James Campbell (Lieut.-Col.)  
P. C. Kerr, Esq.  
A. MacArthur, Esq., J.P.  
G. T. Pollexfen, Esq., J.P.

Vacate in November, 1908—

James Nelson, Esq., J.P.  
Alex. Sim, Esq., J.P.  
B. Colliery, Esq., J.P.  
Robert Pettigrew, Esq., J.P.

Vacate in November, 1909—

P. Keighron, Esq., J.P.  
H. R. Sinclair, Esq.  
A. Jackson, Esq., J.P.  
Francis Nelson, Esq., J.P.

EX-OFFICIO.

The Mayor of Sligo for the time being  
Nominated by Municipal Council.

John Connolly, Esq., J.P.  
James F. Higgins, Esq.

OFFICERS.

Thos. J. Mercer, Secretary. Joseph  
Mallagh, Engineer. James Keeble,  
Harbour Master. J. H. M'Loghy, Assist.  
Secretary. J. D. Vernon, Check Clerk.  
Treasurer—Ulster Bank.

#### SLIGO FISHERY.

Sligo has been noted for its valuable fisheries from time immemorial. So abundant were shell fish of all kinds that the town derives its name from the circumstances—Slig, a shell. Banks of oyster deposit three or four feet deep are to be found at the lower Rosses. In 1779 the writers of a "Tour in Connaught" affirm that oysters were so plentiful "they are got by cars full, only paying the carriage." In our own days the oyster beds about Sligo are not so prolific, and, although they yield the finest quality, they are not worked as energetically as they might be by the owners.

But the most remarkable is the Salmon Fishery, the fish being in season all the year round, a fact which, up to the present, naturalists have been unable

to account for. The late Mr. Petrie, then lessee of the fishery, having proved the matter to the satisfaction of the Fishery Inspectors, obtained the unusual privilege of opening the fishery on 1st January, though in most other places the season does not open until the 4th February. It certainly is inexplicable the difference between the salmon of Sligo and Ballisodare rivers, though in such close proximity and emptying their waters, as they do, into the same channel. People being unable to account for the singular properties of the Sligo salmon by natural causes, have ascribed the reason to the blessing bestowed on the river by St. Patrick, as recorded in Colgan's Tripartite Life of the Saint:—"Then Patrick told the fishermen to cast their nets for him into the river, namely into Sligeach. They said to him, 'Salmon are not caught in it, in this river, in winter, but since thou sayest it,' say the fishermen, 'we will do it.' They cast their nets and caught great salmon, and gave them to Patrick. And he blessed the river, so that the Sligeach is the milch-cow of the waters of Ireland, for in it fish are caught in every quarter of the year."

The Herring Fishery, although it has, comparatively speaking, fallen into desuetude, was at one time a very profitable industry, attracting fishermen from the Continent, notably from Spain. There is still an occasional good season, and it is needless to say that the hardy and industrious fishermen of the district always take advantage of it, when it comes, to the fullest extent. In addition to salmon, oysters, and herring, the Sligo waters are equally prolific in turbot, cod, lobsters, mackerel, and whiting.

#### MARKETS AND FAIRS.

The weekly markets of Sligo are now in existence close on three centuries. A grant was made to Sir James Fullerton on the 25th June, 1604, permitting him to hold a market in Sligo on every Saturday, and also to hold two fairs every year on the 24th June and 29th September. And on the 5th March, 1627, a further grant was made to Sir James Craige to hold another market on every Tuesday, and two additional fairs on the 17th March and 1st August. These privileges were afterwards confirmed to William, Earl of Stafford, and Thomas Radcliffe.

In 1885 the Fairs and Markets were acquired by the Corporation by virtue of the Sligo Borough Improvement Act of 1869 from Mr. Wynne, who then enjoyed the rights, the purchase money being £6,500. Since then many improvements have been effected in the management of the markets, though they are rather a white elephant to the Corporation instead of being the source of any pecuniary benefit.

A yearly Horse Fair was established in May, 1890, and in the following September weekly markets were started for pigs on Thursday, and for fowl on Friday.

The Butter-making Industry used to be very considerable in this district for over a century. It would seem, however, that as far back as 20 years ago Sligo butter began to lose its popularity in the English and Scotch markets, the Danes having superseded us to a considerable extent. This was said to be owing to the system of packing. The subject was before the Corporation in 1864, and a committee was appointed to inquire into the matter. They recommended in their report the introduction of smaller kits or firkins, stating also that the sooner butter could be sold the better the quality would be, this being specially the case with reference to butter made during the winter months, when cattle are housed. The recommendation does not seem, however, to have any effect on the farmers, as they still continued to pack on the same old system, until the reputation of the Sligo brand passed from bad to worse. It is not surprising, then, that when the creamery movement started here some ten years ago the farmers in almost every district of the county, except Tireragh, adopted the creamery system. And thus the Butter Market, which used to be a hive of industry on every market day, is now practically a howling wilderness, and the coopers of the town who, half a century ago, when Sligo meat and Sligo butter were packed for exportation, were numerically the strongest body of tradesmen in the town, are now, all that is left of them, practically idle with their occupation gone.

#### THE WATER WORKS.

The Water Works, one of the greatest boons ever conferred upon the town of Sligo, was long the subject of heated controversy. Whilst the scheme was in contemplation it had its advocates and opponents. Many of the ratepayers were reluctant to submit to further taxation, and were content to drink from the polluted wells with which the town was then supplied. Samples from all the wells were submitted to eminent analysts, and nearly the whole of them were pronounced unfit for use, some of them being contaminated by the sewerage "to such an extent that the constituents of the water were practically the same as you might expect to find in a graveyard."

At length the people were awakend to a sense of the danger of using such unhealthy supplies, and powers were got from Parliament through the Sligo Borough Improvement Act of '69 to borrow £25,000 to construct regular water-works. Then another controversy arose. Some were for taking the supply from Kilsellagh, while others were for taking it from the lake by means of a wind-mill and reservoir on Cairns Hill. At any rate, the scheme remained in abeyance until the statutory term had expired, and then it became necessary to apply to Parliament for a short Bill to revise the powers previously conferred. In 1881 tenders were taken for the contract, the sums being £14,000 for the construction of the reservoirs, &c., and £4,000 for the piping. The designing and engineering were conducted by Mr. Hassard, of London, the contractors being Messrs. Sweeney & M'Larnon, Mr. Creary, C.E., acting as clerk of works. The works were brought to completion in 1884, during the Mayoralty of Mr. Colliery. The reservoir is capable of containing 50,000,000 gallons of water, and it is confidently stated that the supply from the Kilsellagh source is sufficient for the needs of a population twice as large as that of Sligo.

The first water rate of 1s. in the £ was struck in 1883, but it was afterwards increased to 2s. A few years ago it was reduced to 1s. 9d., but in a short time it was advanced to the 2s rate, at which it stands at present.

#### SLIGO CEMETERY.

The site chosen for the new Cemetery is all that could be desired. It is one of the finest and most beautifully situated burial grounds in all Ireland. After the famine of 1846, and the pestilence which followed, the public were aroused to the danger arising from the overcrowded state of the burial grounds within the town—The Abbey and St. John's. The Corporation accordingly allocated a portion of "The Commons," giving in 1848, with the sanction of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, a trust deed of the place to a Cemetery Committee. This Committee consisted of the clergy of all denominations in the town, and some of the principal laymen. Up to 1885 the Cemetery was managed by this Committee, but then the management was transferred to the Corporation, who, as Urban Sanitary Authority under the provisions of the Public Health (Ireland) Act of 1878, undertook the charge. The different religious denominations have separate portions allotted to them, the western side being used for Protestant and the eastern for Catholic interments. An excellent map of the cemetery has been recently prepared by Mr. Gilchrist, C.E., Sligo, which may be consulted at any time in the Town Clerk's Office.

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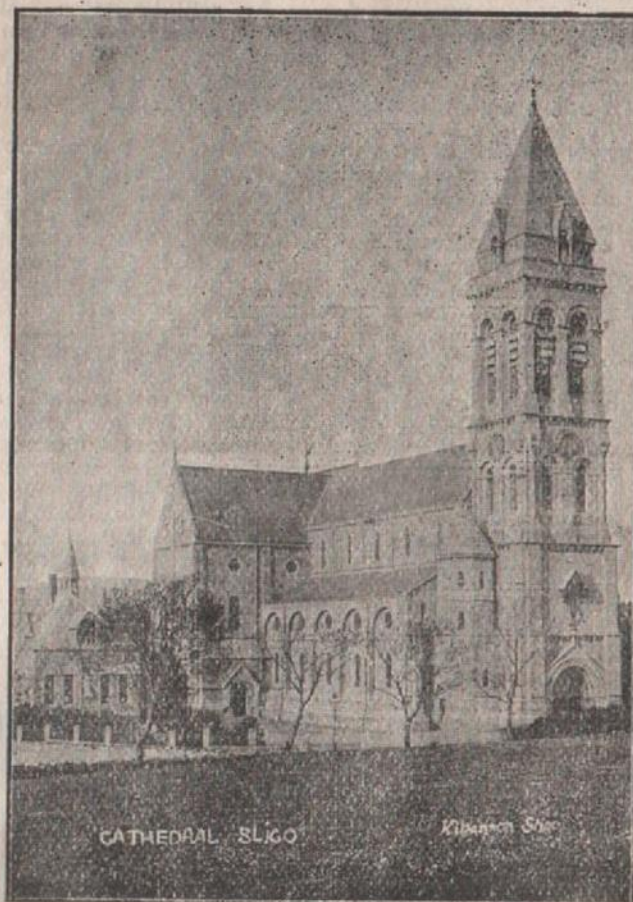
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## PLACES OF WORSHIP.



### SLIGO CATHEDRAL.

The Diocese of Elphin, of which Sligo is the Cathedral Parish, has been formed by the amalgamation of the three old dioceses of Ardarn, Drumcliffe, and Roscommon, the first prelate of the new Episcopal See being, it is believed, St. Asicus, who was consecrated bishop by St. Patrick. The festival of St. Asicus is celebrated on the 27th April, but the year of his death is not known. His incumbency is stated to be about 450.

The Cathedral, which owes its erection to the zeal and energy of the late Dr. Gillooley—the most distinguished prelate who has ruled the See since Asicus—stands on a rising ground towards the south-western portion of the town, and the style of the architecture has been described as “a kind of Romanesque combination of the Norman and Byzantine.” The building has a seating accommodation for over 4000 people seats being provided in the nave, aisles, transept, and galleries, to use the architectural terms, triferna. The sacred edifice was opened with great splendour and solemnity on the 16th July, 1875, by the late Cardinal Cullen.

Bishop—Most Rev. Dr. Clancy, D.D.

Clergymen—Very Rev. Canon Harte (Administrator), Rev. Dr. Hurley, Rev. P. Martin, Rev. J. J. Hynes, Rev. P. J. Flynn, Rev. D. J. O'Doherty, Rev. J. Connington.

### ST. JOHN'S CHURCH.

Next to the Abbey in point of antiquarian interest comes St. John's Church. It has been generally considered that this structure of St. John's was erected between the middle of the 13th century and the year 1315, whilst the Anglo-Normans were in power in Sligo. St. John the Baptist appears to have been a favourite with them, as very many of their churches were named after him;

and as the Celts would be unlikely to build a church under the patronage of their enemies' favourite Saint, antiquarians have inferred that St. John's was erected during the period immediately preceding the regime of the O'Conors. But Dr. O'Morke unearthed the will of Sir Roger Jones, the principal Anglo-Norman in Sligo in his day, and from this document it seems clear that the church was built by Sir Roger himself, for in his will he says—"My body I commit to the earth in my tomb in the chapel I lately erected in the parish of St. John's, in Sligo"; and further he bequeathed the advowson, which he acquired by the erection, to his wife. The original building must, therefore, be regarded as a work of the 17th century instead of the 14th, as has been heretofore supposed.

In 1739 a new church was built on the site of the old one erected by Sir Roger Jones, from designs by a German architect named Castels. The new structure was erected somewhat in the shape of a Celtic cross, "the eastern limb being finished with a polygonal apse." Pococke, when making his tour in Ireland in 1752, thus describes it—"The church is the design of Mr. Castels; it is in the form of a cross, with galleries at every end, except the east. The roof is a curious piece of work." A semi-circular arch topped the windows, while the approach to the chancel was under a round arch. "This can now be seen above the ceiling of the present chancel; the old chancel was much shorter than the present one, and was lighted by windows, one in each side of the apse; the whole church was built of stone quite unchiselled, and the roof rested on the walls, as in an ordinary dwelling-house." A second row of galleries was added in 1773 to accommodate the children attending the Charter Schools.

In 1812 the church underwent a regular course of remodeling, at a cost of £5,059 6s. 11d., and was transformed into a Gothic edifice. The old windows were replaced by those which we see at present, and the present chancel was substituted for the old polygonal apse. In 1883 it underwent other alterations which cost about £1,000. "When the present chancel was built, the old vestry was taken in and made part of a new chancel, and a new vestry erected on the south side. A handsome east window, of Gothic design, with a frame-work of cut stone, containing a stained glass window, on which is depicted in handsomely and artistically blended colours a representation of our Lord's Ascension, was at the same time erected, and was the gift of the Ven. Archdeacon Kearney, as a memorial to his mother. The eleven apostles are depicted in the lower side panes, and angels are represented in the upper side panes, and a dove, the emblem of the Holy Spirit, occupies the central top pane. Under this stained glass window is the Communion Table, and in front of the railings is a wide space with choir stalls on each side, and behind these, on the north side, is an organ chamber. The new chancel is approached from the body of the church by a flight of three stone steps."

Another handsome stained glass memorial has been added recently, in 1888, in the west side of the church, to the memory of the late Mrs. L'Estrange, of Kevinsfort. The scriptural subject represents "the rising of Dorcas," the window showing the garments she had made for them. Three other stained-glass memorial windows were erected in 1901 in the nave. One to the memory of the late Harper Campbell, Esq., of The Hermitage; another to the late Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Pollexfen; and the third to the late Mr. and Mrs. C. A. L'Estrange. A caen-stone and marble pulpit, a very fine specimen of the sculptor's art, has been erected by the widow of the late Rector, the Rev. Mr. Dav; and a prayer desk to correspond, which is admitted to be one of the handsomest in Ireland, bears the inscription—"To the glory of God, and in loving memory of Christopher Carleton L'Estrange, and Charlotte Annie L'Estrange, erected by their children, 1890."

The only old monument connected with St. John's is what appears to have been a mural tablet to the memory of Sir Roger Jones. This memorial now stands outside the walls of the church, but as the building has been re-edified several times it is supposed that it was originally placed in the sidewall of the nave.

Colonel Wood-Martin says that the soil of the churchyard presents some peculiarities, and that bodies buried in it do not decay in the ordinary manner; that adipocere in large quantities has been noticed where the ground was opened for fresh interments. This is a soft waxy substance, of a light brown colour, into which the fat and muscular fibre of bodies are converted by burial in soil of peculiar nature. It is also alleged that, by reason of chemicals in the soil, yews will not grow in the churchyard, except in freshly imported earth.

Rector—The Very Rev. Dean Kearney, M.A.

Curate—Rev. J. Cathcart Phair, B.A.

Organist—H. Norman Taylor, A.G.O. (late assistant music master Cheltenham College, and organist Parish Church, Cheltenham). John St., Sligo.

Sexton—John Parsons.