

## **I.T.A. Topographical and General Survey**

Natural Features, Antiquities, Historic Associations, Etc.

### **Barony of *Decies Without Drum***

**Town or Village** Stradbally                      **Parish** Stradbally                      **County** Waterford

#### **TOPOGRAPHY**

Brief description of outstanding scenic views in the district, natural attractions, or unusual topographical features.

The parish of Stradbally has a lovely coast line of about 10 miles in length, rock bound for the most part. High, dark coppery cliffs, rising to a height of 100 to 150 feet fringe the coast line, with here and there secluded little coves and inlets. Bathing may be enjoyed here at all stages of the tide, and is perfectly safe. Paths run along the cliff-tops in many places, and the scenery is really lovely.

Inland, the parish is rather hilly, and is intersected by a network of first and second-class roads. The "Coast Road" from Dungarvan to Waterford, a first-class road, runs through the centre of the parish. Five roads radiate from Carrickahilla Cross about a mile and a half north of the village of Stradbally. The scenery in this portion of the parish is rather uninteresting, but a little further north the view of the Comeragh and Monavullagh mountain ranges makes a very pleasing picture. The land on the whole is very fertile and produces good crops. Fishing is carried on, on a fairly large scale along the coast, Stradbally and Bonmahon villages being the chief centres.

#### **GEOLOGY**

Brief notes on unusual geological features, such as caves, eskers, etc.

In this parish begins the igneous rock formation which runs east through Wexford, and is continued on the Welsh coast. Considerable deposits of copper ores are present in the rocks along the coast, more especially in the Bonmahon area, about four or five miles east of the village of Stradbally. About seventy years ago copper mining in this area formed one of the principal industries in the South of Ireland, and gave employment to hundreds of men.

#### **MANSIONS, CASTLES AND ESTATES**

of imposing character

Location and brief description. Owner. Past associations. Libraries or art collections? Gardens? Open to visitors? Admission charge?

Woodhouse Demesne: Woodhouse Demesne, situated just west of the village of Stradbally, and indeed embracing the village, is the seat of Major Lord William Beresford, who is at present living in India. The late owner, Lord Hugh Beresford, was lost at sea during the Battle of Crete in 1941. The above Lord William is brother of the late Marquess of Waterford. The place is at present in the care of a housekeeper and very reduced staff, and is not open to the public. There are 200 acres of arable land in the estate as well as 400 acres of woods and marshy land. Woodhouse was formerly the residence of the Fitzthomas family and passed from them to the Uniacke Family. Colonel Beresford married Frances Constantia Uniacke during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and so Woodhouse passed on to the Beresford family. The Uniacke Family burial plot may be seen in the cemetery attached to the Church of Ireland at Stradbally. The plot is enclosed by a wall and is attached to the west table of the old ruined church. Keys of the door leading to the enclosure, and also keys of the Church [of Ireland] are kept by Jack Veale, Stradbally, caretaker of the cemetery. In this plot may also be seen the tombs of Colonel George John Beresford and his wife Frances Constantia Beresford.

#### **ANTIQUITIES**

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

Old Church Ruin at Stradbally: This old church ruin is situated in the cemetery attached to the present Church of Ireland in the village of Stradbally, Co. Waterford. This [according to O'Donovan, O'Donovan's Letters, Art. 56] is the ruin of an Abbey of Augustinian Friars. It consists of a nave and choir with a lateral house attached to the north side at the junction of the nave and choir. Its walls are in good preservation except the middle gable which is nearly destroyed, and a portion of the north wall. For a full and detailed description of the ruin, windows, length and breadth of nave and choir etc. see the above mentioned Article from O'Donovan's Letter. The only detail which he omits is the stone stairway in the lateral building. This stone stairway is still well preserved and probably led to the tower or belfry. The rest of the ruin is as well preserved today as it was 100 years ago. The plastering on the east wall looks as if this work had been recently carried out.

Inside the ruin there are two rather interesting stones. One is a headstone on which is cut the figure of the skull and crossbones, beneath which is inscribed "Memento Homo" and the date, December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1717. The remaining portion of the inscription I was unable to decipher. The other stone is flat and coffinshaped. It rests on the ground in a corner of the nave nearest the choir on the north side. Owing to its position I could not photograph it. It is ornamentally inscribed somewhat thus:-



There are some Roman characters round the top edge of the stone. They are now much obliterated. A local R.C. priest deciphered the name "Galway", probably a surname [so I am told by the caretaker of the cemetery.] There are two inscribed bands about 6 inches apart across the wide portion of the stone near the top, and one at the foot. Two bands run down its full length, about 9 inches apart, thus forming three-quarters of a cross. The stone is ornamented with circles, spirals etc. Formerly it was embedded in the earth in the S.W. corner of the ruin and was removed recently to its present position.

Immediately south of the ruin, and about 5 feet from its S.W. corner is the vault of one of the Baron family who was killed in a duel. I was unable to obtain any further information regarding him, except that he was regarded as an expert swordsman. There is another vault of the Baron family immediately north of the ruin and attached to it. There is another vault of the Baron family about ten paces north of the ruin. This vault is surmounted by a very fine cross of cut limestone on which is the following inscription:-

To the glory of God  
 And in memory of Pierce George Baron  
 Who died 10<sup>th</sup> December 1867 aged 71, and of  
 Katherine Elizabeth his wife who died 27<sup>th</sup> December  
 1865 aged 70.  
 This cross is erected by their children.  
 "We sorrow not as those without hope  
 for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again even  
 so them also which sleep in Jesus will  
 God bring with him.

I am the resurrection and the life,  
 He that believeth in me altho' he be dead shall live."

Old Church Ruin in Church of Ireland Cemetery, Stradbally  
 O'Donovan's Letters, Arts. 56, 57, 58, 59:

"This church ruin consists of nave and choir with a lateral house attached to the North side of the junction of the nave and choir. Its walls are in good preservation except the middle gable which is entirely destroyed. The nave is 58 feet in length and 25 feet 8 ins in breadth [on the inside] and the choir 37 feet 5 ins by 20 feet 6 ins.

The east window is round headed and measures on the inside where it is constructed of thin stones, seven feet three ins. in height and four feet five and a half ins. in width. On the outside it is constructed of cut stone placed five feet from the present level of the ground and measures three feet three and a half ins. in height and in width ten ins. at top and ten and a half ins. at bottom. At the distance of two feet nine ins. from the east gable the south wall of the choir contains a window measuring six feet seven ins. in height and three feet five and a half ins. in width on the inside where it forms a semi-circular arch at top; on the outside it is pointed and formed of cut stone, and measures three feet four ins. in height and eight ins. in

width; the lower part of it is three feet from the present level of the ground. At the distance of 16 feet from this window there is another of the same shape and dimensions.

The north wall of the choir contains another window which does not look as old as the others; it is placed at the distance of one foot one inch from the east gable and measures six feet four inches on the inside, and three feet eight ins. in width, and on the outside four feet eight ins. in height and seven and a half ins. in width; it is rectangular on top on the inside and round on the outside. There is a breach of nine feet in the north wall at the distance of two feet from this window where there was probably another window. The choir arch was 13 feet ten ins. in width but its height cannot be easily determined as only four feet eight ins. of its sides now remain. No cut stone was used in its construction.

Picture opposite is of an Old Headstone in Church Ruin at Stradbally

At the distance of two feet six ins. from the middle gable the south wall contained a window which is now entirely destroyed on the outside, but on the inside it is in good preservation and measures six feet seven ins. in height and four feet one in. in width; it is rectangular on top. A doorway is placed on this wall at the distance of 21 feet from the west gable. It is disfigured on the outside but in good preservation on the inside where it forms a flat arch at top constructed of thin hammered flag stones and measures seven feet in height and four feet seven ins. in width. The west gable has a window in its middle and a belfry at top but they are both almost veiled in ivy.



There is another doorway on the north wall almost opposite the one already described, but not exactly opposite as it is only 19 feet 7 ins. from the west gable. It is pointed on the outside and forms a flat arch on the inside and formed of thin flags on a rude style. It measures on the inside seven feet two ins. in height and five feet six and a half ins. in width and on the outside five feet eight ins. by three feet ten and a half ins. At the distance of five feet from the middle gable there is a window on the north wall of the nave measuring on the inside five feet six ins. in height and four feet ten ins. in width but it is totally disfigured on the outside.

The lateral building above mentioned was obviously the tower of the abbey; It was 14 feet eight ins. by 13 feet. Its west and north sides and three feet of its east side remain to the height of about 24 feet.

The walls of the nave of this abbey are three feet six ins. in thickness and about twelve feet in height and built of grit and slate stones cemented with lime and sand mortar. The side walls of the choir are two feet ten ins. thick and about ten feet high and built of the same kind of stones. The nave, however, looks much older than the choir”

Drumloghan Stone Cave: Here there is a large number of Ogham Stones situated at the entrance to souterrain. Six or seven of the stones, which are in a very good state of preservation stand upright on both sides of the passage leading to the souterrain, others lie crosswise over the entrance and some others still stand beneath those and help to keep them in position. The whole is surrounded by an iron railing recently erected to preserve the monument.

The following are some of the inscriptions on the ogham stones:

“Calun ovica maqi mucoi litos”

“Bir maqi mucoi senai”

The first stone in the roof of the cave [according to Hansard, History of Waterford, p.296] reads thus:

“Manu, son of Unoga; Timoce, son of Arb”

The fourth stone in the roof reads thus:

“Cal unofi q maq I mucoi li to f”

Translated:

“Sleeps Unofic, son of Mucoi, [under this] stone, mute” [or] “in silence”

For further notes on this Ogham cave see Hansard’s History of Waterford, pp. 286-300.

The monument is situated on the farm of Mr. Patrick Kirwan, Drumloghan, and is about half-a-mile north of his residence. No right of way. It is in the care of the Board of Works.

There is a grove about 20 paces to the S.E. of the stone cave above, in the centre of which is a pile of stone and rubble supposed to be a church site. The grove is more or less circular in shape. Just inside the fence of the grove at a point nearly opposite the Ogham Stone monument is a stone circular in shape and

about two feet in diameter. There is a fairly deep cavity about 4 inches in diameter in the centre of this stone. The cavity is usually filled with water, and is treated locally as a Holy Well, with a special property for curing warts. Personally, I think it is a portion of a large quern. There is another portion of a quern embedded in the opposite fence of the grove.

Ogham Stones: Besides those Ogham Stones at Drumloghan mentioned above there are Ogham stones also at the following places in this parish:

Three ogham stones beside Tobar Cill Aodha, a reputed Holy Well [reputed cure for sore eyes and stomach ailments, vomiting etc.] on the farm of Mr. John Grady, about half-a-mile east of Stradbally village and south of the road leading from this village to Ballylaneen and Bonmahon. There is a Right of Way for about 100 yards and then one must cross three fields. The Waterford Co. Council have recently erected a wall to protect the stones and the well.

Ogham Stones at Stradbally [Tobar Chill Aodha] Inscriptions

“Neatvroqi Maqi Qicea”

“Qrit [iana] Maqi lobacon Avi Seagracolinea”

Ogham Stone at Island, Stradbally. Inscription

“Cunanetas Maqi Mucoi Netasegamonas”

There is an ogham stone by the side of the fence of a large rath in the townland of Island in this parish. Landowner, Mr John Quinlan. This stone is broken in half and is lying neglected by the side of the fence about 20 yards south of the entrance to the rath. There is grave danger that it will get lost or at least further broken unless some protection is placed round it, or the stone removed to a place of safety. Situation: About one mile south of the Coast Road leading from Ballyvoyle to Stradbally village, on the farm of John Quinlan. Right of Way for about three-quarters that distance. There is another basin-shaped stone embedded in the fence of this rath [almost opposite the ogham stone on the other side of the rath; a little further north]. This has a sandstone composition and is being gradually worn away by rain and weather. It may have been a holy water font in former times.

Another ogham stone was found at Fox's Castle in this parish. This is now in the National Museum.

Large Rath: Large Rath at Island mentioned above.

Megalithic Tomb: There is a gallery grave or megalithic tomb surmounted by a cairn at Ballyvoyle on the land of James Morrissey. It is now partly covered by furze and gorse and doesn't present a very striking appearance. It is situated about 70 yard N.E. of Mr. Morrissey's house. There is no Right of Way beyond this house, but I understand that Mr. Morrissey never objects to people who must pass through his land to visit the monument. It is in the care of the Board of Works.



Fortified Headlands: According to Westropp's "Fortified Headlands" there were two such headlands in this parish, one at Island Hubbock and the other at Ballyvooney. The remains of the old fort at Island Hubbock may still be seen, and is locally known as "The Castle". The remains consist of portion of an old wall, in height about 18 feet in one part and 50 paces in length. Two doors, now walled up, led through the wall to the cliff top, which at this point is about 200 feet above sea level. The old fort or castle is situated on the land of Mr. O'Sullivan and is about one mile directly S.E. of Ballyvoyle bridge, and was occupied up to about 80 years ago. The last owner was a Mr. Goff, who later removed most of the stone to build his new dwelling about half-a-mile distant. This is a Mr. Goff, son of the above, still living in the district. There was formerly a carriage drive leading from the fort to the public road some three-quarters of a mile distant. At present the right of way leads to half-a-mile from the fort. There was also a fortified headland at Ballyvooney, but all traces of this fort have now disappeared. I take the following from Hansard's History of Waterford, page 284: "Dr. Smyth states that at Ballyvooney was an extensive building – of what description he does not state – but that the length of it was 150 feet and the breadth 90 feet. An open well in front of the building communicated by a subterranean passage of 200 feet with another well within the walls. The water which supplied these wells was brought through an aqueduct

extending nearly half a mile. The Rev. Mr. Ryland mentions this building as supposed to have been one of the houses of the Knights Templars?.

Soutterrains: Besides the soutterrain at Drumloghan, already mentioned, there are three others in this parish viz. Fox's Castle, Millerstown and Boheraval. The first two are now filled in and are of no interest to tourists, but the soutterrain at Boheraval is partly open. It is situated in a small lios about 20 yards west of the bye-road leading north from Boheraval crossroads, and 200 yards from the cross. Portion of the opening has now caved in. Landowner, Mr. Kirwan, Drumloghan. No Right of Way from the road.

A Cemetery of Stone Coffins was discovered about 100 yards East of Ballyvoyle Road Bridge in a field on the side of the main road some years ago by workmen who were building an embankment for the road at this point. As the men were removing clay and earth in the course of their work, they uncovered several stone coffins containing bones. They embedded the stones and bones in the embankment, and, unfortunately, nothing remains now except the hollow or cavity in the field from which they were taken.

Falachta Fliaidh or ancient cooking places. There are several of those in this parish. About 200 yards North East of Carriganna House there are seven or eight together in a field. There are also eight or nine in the lowlying land to the west of Carrickahilla [The five] cross roads. There are also some on James McKeogh's land, Thomas Coffey's land and Richard Curran's land, all in Ballydowane Townsland. They are lowlying mounds 2 to 6 feet high and 15 feet to 60 or 80 in diameter, horse-shoe shaped found usually near streams or wells. They are composed of burned stones and black mould. They are for the most part covered with a thick growth of furze and shrubbery, and would scarcely interest tourists.

Castle Sites: There are two castle sites in this parish: one at Carrickahilla not marked on the O.S. map, and the other at Fox's Castle. The Carrickahilla castle was situated on a high rocky mound some 80 yards South of the main tarred and steamrolled road leading from Carrickahilla [five] cross roads to Kilmacthomas and about three-quarters of a mile east of the Five Cross Roads. No traces of the castle now remain. Fox's Castle, whose position is marked on the O.S. map, was also situated on a high rocky mound. Only a few feet of broken wall in one corner now remain. Landowner, Mr. Patrick Power.

Tumulus: There is a very small tumulus surmounted by a standing stone on Mr. Conner's land. [Mr. Conners, Park, Stradbally] situated opposite the Parish Priest's house, about a quarter of a mile north of the village of Stradbally. The tumulus is not important. There is another very large hillock or tumulus on the woodhouse demesne, immediately in front of Woodhouse House. I am not quite sure that this is not a rock covered with clay and earth. Not important.

#### Historic Sites

Royal Seats, scenes of historic events – battles, mass meetings, historic festivals, &c. Location. Landowner. Historical or traditional notes.

#### Carriganaffrin [Carraig an Aifrin] Mass Rock.

This is a high rock on the roadside just beside [on the east side] Carriganaffrin Bridge about one mile east of Durrow and Stradbally Railway Station. I was told that mass was celebrated here during the Penal period, and hence the name Carraig an Aifrin or Mass Rock. I could get no further details regarding this place.

#### Historic Houses; Burial Places

Birth places or one-time residences of distinguished Irishmen or other personalities. Location and description. Present owner or occupant. (b) Burial places of distinguished personalities.

[b] Burial Places of distinguished personalities:

Tadhg Gaodhalach O Suilleabháin, poet of the Decies, is buried in the old cemetery [beside the National School] at Ballylaneen, 5 miles N.E. of the village of Stradbally. The inscription on the Headstone, which is in Latin, reads as follows:

“Thaddeus hic situs; oculos huc flecte viator,  
Illustrem vatem parvula terra tegit!  
Heu! Jacetexanimis fatum irrevocabile vicit,  
Spiritus atque volans sidera summa petit!  
Quis canet Erinidum laudes? Quis facta virorum?  
Gadelico extincto musa tacet.  
Processit numeris doctis pia carmina cantans.



“Evadens victor munera certa tulit.  
Laudando Dominum praeclara poemata fecit,  
Et suaves hymnos angelus ille canet.  
Plangite pierides, vester decessit alumnus;  
Eochades non est, cunctaque rura silent  
Pacem optavit, pace igitur versatur in alto  
As superi tendit regna beata Patris.”

Tadhg Gaodhalach was born about 1715 and died 1795. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century his works were better known than those of any other poet, especially among the people of Munster. His religious poems were published in Clonmel in 1802. It is generally believed that he was born in Co. Limerick, though he spent most of his life in the Decies. In Dungarvan, Co. Waterford he wrote most of his religious poems. He died in Waterford City in 1795.

The Baron Family tomb in the R.C. Cemetery, Stradbally:

Inscription reads as follows:

Sacred  
To the memory of  
Pierce W. Barron, Esq.,  
And his sisters  
Margt., Matilda, Catharine & Eliza,  
Who all perished in an early and watery grave  
By the wreck of the Wm. and Mary Packet Oct. 25<sup>th</sup>. 1817.

The pen of tender feeling  
Can but ill depict  
The many unostentatious virtues  
Of friends endeared  
By every sympathetic tie.  
But if manly rectitude of conduct  
And female delicacy of mind  
Could claim our love and admiration  
Humanity indeed may shed a tear  
Over this perishable monument.

#### Spas or Mineral Springs

Spas formerly in use. Location and present condition. Access. Right of way to public? Mineral content and curative properties so far as known locally.

None in this area.

#### Curiosities

Curious objects, structures, monuments, landmarks, sights, etc. For example, Wishing stones or “chairs” freaks of nature (i.e. grotesque rock formations) – in fact, any scene or object which may be regarded as queer, quaint or mirth-providing. Location and description. Any story or legend may be related.

Cloc Lowrish [Cloch Labhrais]: This hugh stone [marked on O.S. Map Cloghlowrish] is situated about one mile North of Durrow and Stradbally G.S.R. Station on the side of the River Deelish, a tributary of the Tay. The stone is about 18 feet in height, and roughly hemispherical in shape. A split, about four or five feet in width divides the stone in almost two equal parts. The split runs N. and S., and is now about half-filled with rubble, stones, earth etc. The usual legend attached to this rock is as follows: In former times this was a meeting place for many secret societies. Some men were discussing important business here one night. One of the men swore “by Cloch Labhrais” that what he said was true. The stone, to which was attributed power to discern truth and falsehood, split, and a human-like voice came from it, saying: “Tá an fhirinne searbh” [The truth is bitter], thereby proving that the oath was a lie. Hence the local phrase “Tá an fhirinne searbh arsa Cloch Labhrais ag preabadh”, and hence too, the term Cloch Labhrais or Speaking Stone. For further details, dimensions, and another version of the



legend [perhaps the better of the two] see O'Donovan's Letters Art. 60 to 62. This rock is situated just inside the road fence and is easy of access.

Cloch Labhrais: [O'Donovan's Letters, Arts. 60, 61, 62]

"In this parish [Stradbally] is situated the celebrated rock called Cloch Labhrais, which means, as it is supposed the "Speaking Stone". Ryland describes it as "an enormous rock or mountain mass which seems to have rolled down from the adjoining hill, and is now firmly fixed in the centre of a stream near the road" [the old road] from Waterford to Dungarvan. The stone is split in a remarkable manner, the fissure dividing the mass into two nearly equal parts. There is a tradition that some person, as he passed this rock, expressed a wish that it might speak and divide into two parts if the declaration which he was making were not true; the story goes that the stone did split and also speak and the appellant was consequently convicted of falsehood. The rock is a very coarse pudding stone and might have been induced to convict the perjurer by the influence of frost upon water which can easily percolate the mass; whether the sound emitted on the occasion was an articulate one it is not so easy to determine" p.304

Mr Ryland describes this stone very well, but he does not preserve the legend connected with it in anything like a correct form. This rock is situated on the west side of the Deehan River, the waters of which were on one side of it. There is a split five feet in width extending north and south nearly in the middle, and dividing the rock into two nearly equal parts. The east division of this rock is 33 feet in length from N. to S. and 19 feet 6 ins. from E. to W., i.e. from the east side to the split, and is 18 feet in height on the east side, eleven feet at the south side, twelve feet at the split and seventeen feet at the north side. The other division is 27 feet from N. to S. along the split and fourteen feet across, and of the same depth at the split as the other division. It is fifteen feet high at the south side eleven feet at the west and thirteen feet at the north side. At the north end of the split there is a large spalla about four tons weight which broke off the west part and which nearly closes the split at the north end.

"Cloch Labhrais, during the times of Paganism in Ireland, was not only gifted with the power of forming articulate sounds like a human being, but was acquainted with the truth or falsehood of every point disputed throughout the whole country, and whenever it was consulted on any disputed point it would invariably tell the truth. This was at a period when men were honest and free from equivocation. At length a certain man who had some suspicions of the fidelity of his wife defied her to appear before Cloch Labhrais to attest her innocence, and the wife went along with him before the tribunal. The wife contrived to have her gallant placed on the stone, and kneeling before the tribunal of truth and justice she declared that she had no more to do with the man suspected by her husband than she had with the man who was standing on the summit of the opposite mountain! Is this statement true, Cloch Labhrais, asked the husband. It is the truth responded the stone, but truth itself is often bitter, bíonn an fhirínne féin searbh; and this being the first instance of equivocation it had ever witnessed among mankind, it was so horrified at the wickedness of it that it split asunder!"

"The Bishop's Library": This is a rather curious rock formation, and is situated on the cliffs at Tankardstown, about three-quarters of a mile east of Bonmahon village. I take the following from F.R.C. Reed's "The igneous rocks of the Waterford Coast" [1900]: "...The finest and largest sheet of felsite showing columnar jointing is that known as the Bishop's Library [Haughton, Journ. Geol. Soc. Dubl. vol. Vii (1857) p.284]. It is at least one hundred feet thick, and the columns, which are from four to six sided, are arranged in tiers at right angles to the bounding surfaces of the sheet. It is by far the most conspicuous example of columnar jointing along the whole Waterford coast."

Situation: On the cliff face at Tankardstown, between Cassaunagreana Rock and Foilnaneena Cove. Not of outstanding interest to the casual visitor.

Portion of the Old Wall of Fort at Island Hubback



Customs, Patterns, Etc.

Brief account of old customs, traditional cures, etc., still practiced in the district. Pilgrimages to Holy Wells, Shrines etc. Patterns

The only traditional cure now practised in this district is the application of the water of the holy well, Tobar Cill Aodha, for the cure of sore eyes, stomach ailments, vomiting etc. (already mentioned in the "Ogham Stones" section). I am told that this old custom is practised rather regularly. Some people here

sprinkle holy water or Easter water on the crops, cattle etc., on May eve, an old custom carried out in many other parts of the county.

Date 20-4-43

(Signed) Micheal O Domhnaill

Surveyor.





Sea Angling

Brief Notes on Fishing grounds:

Very good opportunities for sea fishing in this district. Good whiting ground three miles off Ballyvooney Head, and there is a very plentiful supply of this fish from May to September. July, August and September are the months for the mackerel, and this fish is so plentiful during season that the local people sometimes salt portion of the catches and preserve the fish until December or January. About three or four local men own boats, and several others fish from the cliffs with spinner and line. The area is much fished by Dungarvan fishermen.

Kinds of fish to be caught:

Salmon, mackerel, whiting, pollack, turbit, and occasionally lobster and crab.

Owners of boats, type of boats, and charges per day:

The following, who live in the village of Stradbally, own boats, but have no fixed charges. They sometimes take visitors for trips, and usually leave it to the visitor to settle "the account".

William O'Brien and John Foley, Stradbally  
John Power, Stradbally.

Bait available locally? No Fishing Tackle? No. Some available in Dungarvan, 10 miles west.

Representative of B.S.A.S. or other Sea Angling Assn. No

Golfing

Name of Club None. Ballinacourty is the nearest course, 9 miles distant. No. of holes -----

Situation and brief description of course:  
None

Name of Professional -----  
Is there a Clubhouse on course? ----- Licensed? -----  
Green Fees (Visitors): per day ----- Per week -----

Racing  
(Including "Point-to-Point" and "Flapper" Meetings)

No. of meetings normally held during the year None

Under which rules? -----

Situation of Course -----

Hunting

Hounds which hunt in the district:

Foxhounds East Waterford Pack.

Harriers

Beagles

Coursing

Names of Club None Meeting held annually? -----

Greyhound Racing

Name of Company -----

Races on (nights) -----





Form C.

**I.T.A. Topographical and General Survey**

Holiday Amenities and General Information. Seaside Resorts

**Barony of *Decies without Drum***

<b>Town or Village</b>	<b>Stradbally</b>	<b>Parish</b>	<b>Stradbally</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Waterford</b>
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Location and brief description of town or village.

Population 200

The village of Stradbally is situated on the coast, 10 miles east of Dungarvan, seven miles s.w. of Kilmacthomas and 5 miles w. of Bonmahon. It is a very pretty little seaside resort but very undeveloped. There is one hotel here [licensed], Whelans. This hotel does not accommodate visitors, though dinners, teas etc. are sometimes served. The accommodation is very inadequate. The whole place presents the appearance of being neglected --- "dead and alive" --- ruins and crumbling walls meet the eye from whichever side one enters the village. The trees growing round the village pump in the centre of the "Square" give the place a charming appearance, and the cliff walks are really delightful. But lack of entertainment, lack of public lighting or an electric supply for private use, lack of an improvements committee, and above all, lack of suitable accommodation all prevent Stradbally village from becoming any kind of fairly decent tourist resort. Visitors are very often unable to obtain a cup of tea here. The "Cove Tea Rooms" and Whelan's Hotel are the only two places where one might be able to obtain refreshments, and these look cold and must, even dirty. The nearest picture house is at Dungarvan, 10 miles away, the nearest bus service [Dungarvan to Waterford I.O.C.] passes within about 4 miles of the village. The parish has a good network of first and second class roads, though the "coast road" leading from the village to Vallyvoyle is rather broken. There is a very fine convent girls' school here and boys' national school [which is rather dilapidated]. There is a Garda Station in the village, also a post office, public telephone etc.

On the whole it is really a pity that this little place is not more developed, as I think it has good possibilities as a tourist centre.

Bonmahon Village:

Bonmahon, with its population of 62, is situated on the coast, 15 miles east of Dungarvan, 6 miles south of Kilmacthomas [nearest railway station] and 15 miles s.w. of Waterford city. There is a really lovely strand here, some 500 or 600 yards in length, where bathing may be enjoyed at all stages of the tide. The beach is sandy --- a dark grey sand --- smooth and even, with very little trace of rough stone or shingle. The River Mahon runs into the sea at the N.E. end, beyond which the strand is fairly good for a short distance. On either arm of the bay the cliffs rise to a height of 200 feet and more, vast and jagged and rough. On the N.E. side the coast road, a first class road, tarred and steamrolled, runs along the cliff top. In places, not 20 yards from the road, the cliff drops over 100 feet, and it seems to me rather dangerous, as there is no protection of any sort for several hundred yards in places. Copper mining was carried on here about 70 years ago [a later working, boring etc. about 35 years ago lasted only 2 years], and thousands of tons of copper ore were exported from this district. Some of the mining shafts may still be seen at Tankardstown and Kildwan and elsewhere. They are for the most part unprotected [except perhaps for a single row of barbed wire]. I climbed down the cliff face at one place, by zig-zag path and dried up gully to examine a rather curious and interesting rock formation known as 'The Bishop's Library', between Cassaunagreana Cove and Faillaneena Rock [see notes re this rock formation in Geology section]. The green verdigris oozing from the copper seams may be seen here plainly, and also many borings for levels -- - huge holes in the rock face --- from which the water constantly drips. Though the climb down to the beach is rather arduous, a visit will well repay the trouble. "Faillaneena Castle", a tall narrow rock tooth nearly 100 feet high stands within 20 yards of the foot of the pathway and is entirely surrounded by water at high tide. A little further east is the rock known locally as Carraig Drom Capaill, low in the centre, slightly higher at either end. Overhead the brown coppery cliff hangs rugged and rough, almost awe inspiring! The sea has undermined the clay seams in many places and landslides are fairly frequent. Also, sea mines have of late, damaged the cliffs in many places. Looking across the bay we see the "Stalca Rock" off the western entrance to the bay. Further away Ballyvoyle Head, Ballinacourty Head, Helvick Head and Mine Head, each in turn "ag bagairt a gcinn thar druim a chéile".

Coming to the western side of the bay we find a lovely even pathway, five or six feet in width running right along the cliff top in the direction of Stradbally. This is a most delightful walk leading past high rutted cliffs which drop perpendicularly 150 feet and more to the beach below, and secluded little coves where bathing may be enjoyed at all stages of the tide. Rocks, rocks everywhere, huge black rocks, some standing upright, isolated from the parent cliff, others leaning at crazy angles, the result of eruptions and volcanic action which took place thousands of years ago. This is an igneous rock formation. At one place a passage has been worn away beneath the overhanging cliff, so forming a natural archway, beneath which one may pass at low tide. Altogether a delightful walk.

The little village presents a rather neglected appearance. From whichever side one enters the outstanding feature seems to be ruins, old half-tumbled down houses, broken walls, boarded-up windows, where pieces of tin and lath slam constantly in the wind, all that remains of the copper works --- that huge industry which gave employment to hundreds in former years. It has a somewhat depressing effect to see doors from which the paint is peeling, a pane of glass in one window, the next boarded up, huge gaping holes in the walls between the road and the beach. Parts of old motor cars lie strewn about, chassis looking very dilapidated leaning against a broken wall, various paraphernalia such as rusty mudguards, tin cans etc. lie round about. Were all this cleared up and cleaned away it would much improve the appearance of the place.

There are two hotels here: The Spring Valley, owned by Mr. N. Fitzgerald, and The Glebe House Hotel, Mrs. Buckley, Prop. The former, which has 7 bedrooms, 1 bath, 1 W.C. and is not licensed, is comparatively good, rather clean and well looked after; there is also a shop attached to this hotel, a general store, hardware and drapery, where everything from the proverbial needle to the anchor is sold. The other looks rather neglected, the doors are rotting in their frames and paint peeling from the windows. This house was originally built as a clergyman's residence. Its blackening grey walls are not encouraging. I was assured however, that the same patrons return here year after year, though the proprietress told me that she was thinking of closing down this year owing to ill health. There are two licensed premises and a number of smaller shops, a school, a dispensary open on Mondays and Fridays [Dr. Riordan local M.O., Nurse Dermody is Jubilee Nurse, and Mrs. Cunningham, Osburne Tce., Bonmahon, is Maternity Nurse]. There is a petrol station at Edmond Fitzgerald's Post Office. No garage or car for hire. The following have boats for hire, though they have no fixed charges: Tim O'Leary, Knockmahon, Dan Dwan, do, James McGrath, Osburne Tce., and Hannigan of Knockmahon. The Spring Valley Prop. Also owns a boat [motor boat] which is sometime hired, but oil cannot be obtained at present. For details re. Accommodation see Form E. There is a P.O. in the village, Public telephone, Telegram delivery service, M.O., Pensions etc. There are no bathing boxes, diving facilities. There are no bye-laws re. mixed bathing. There is no public car park, though about 40 cars may be parked on the Spring Valley Hotel grounds. There is no beach attendant, but there are two Co. Co. lifebelts on the strand. Also a rocket service. No dance hall or other amusements hall. Red Cross lectures are held in the local N.S. and dances were held in an old garage once or twice. There is no bus service here at present though an I.O.C. Dungarvan - Waterford bus connected this village before the war. No public water supply or sewerage scheme, though there are two Co. Co. pumps in the village. There is no public lighting, though the two hotels gave a private water supply and the "Spring Valley" has a lighting plant [oil engine]. Sea fishing is carried on here on a fairly large scale; average salmon weighs 10 to 15 lbs., white trout 1 ½ lbs., also pollack, sole, plaice etc. are taken. There is a good whiting bank about three miles off the bay. Nearest R.C. Church is at Knockmahon [parish of Kill] about three-quarters of a mile distant. Nearest R.C. Church in this parish is at Ballylaneen 3 miles distant. Formerly a Ch. of Ireland Service was held here but this is now discontinued. There is a branch of the Public Library in the school at Knockmahon. No private lending library. There aren't any antiquities of interest in the district round about nor are there any amusements or past-times in the village. Gaelic football is played to a fair extent.

Description of beach (? Length, Sandy, Shingle, Safe, Currents, &c.):

There is a really lovely beach and cove about 300 yards south of the village. Beach is about 500 yards in length, sandy for the most part, with some shingle. Bathing may be enjoyed here at all stages of the tide and is perfectly safe. The land in the immediate vicinity of the beach is the property of Lord William Beresford, Woodhouse, and though open to the public, is closed for one day each year, the 14<sup>th</sup> of September, by the steward of the estate to retain their Rights of the land. The land in the immediate vicinity of the beach is very suitable for camping sites.

Public right of way to beach or swimming places?

Yes [see note above re Woodhouse Estate Rights]



Banking  
Banks           None

Sports and Photo Supplies, &c.  
Sports Dealers   None

Photographic Stores

Social Clubs, Cultural Societies, &c.  
Social Clubs           None  
Cultural Societies   None

Industries and Handcrafts

Industries   Agriculture is the chief occupation in this area. Also fishing on a small scale. No industries of any sort in the village.

Handcrafts or Cottage Industries (Give names of craftsmen, employer, &c.):           None

Public Monuments

(Brief description; inscription to be quoted)

No public monuments in this area. There is a stone on Ballyvoyle Road Bridge on which is the following inscription: "Erected 1860 to 1862. Central arch destroyed 1922. Rebuilt 1923".

Important Public Buildings

(Give brief notes on architectural features)

None

Schools and Colleges

Convent of Mercy, Stradbally, for girls. Also boys under 7 years

Stradbally Boys' National School

Ballylaneen National School, Mixed

Bonmahon National School, Mixed

Hospitals

Dispensary in the village [Kilmacthomas District] open on Fridays. Nurse for the village of Stradbally is provided by the Woodhouse Estate.

There is also a dispensary in Bonmahon [Osborne Tce.] open on Mondays and Fridays.

Fairs and Markets; Half-Holiday

Monthly Fairs and Markets	None		
Weekly market day	None	Half-holiday	None

Garages and Petrol Stations

None in the village of Stradbally. There is a petrol station in Bonmahon at Edmond Fitzgerald's Post Office

Conveyances for Hire (Owners):

Taxis           None in Stradbally or Bonmahon, but Joe McGrath, Ballylaneen has a car for hire.

Motors (Touring)   Owing to scarcity of petrol, none at present.

Boats (State Type)           [See note under heading "Owners of boats, type of boats and charges per day"  
Section, Form B.]

Bicycles                       None

Caravans                      None

Horses                         None

Camping Sites

Location: Stradbally Cove

Landowner: Mr. Hunt, Agent,

Woodhouse Demesne

There are several very nice sites round the cliffs of Bonmahon where camps may be pitched by permission of landowners.



Local Improvements Committee: None

Secretary: -----

Date: 20-4-43

Signed: Micheal O'Domhnaill

Surveyor

Form E.

**I.T.A. Topographical and General Survey  
Accommodation and Catering**

**Barony of *Decies without Drum***

**Town or Village** Stradbally & Bonmahon **Parish** Stradbally **County** Waterford

**Hotels** **No. of Bedrooms** **No. of Bathrooms** **Licensed?**

Stradbally Village:

Whelan's Hotel Accommodation is not available here Yes Dinners & teas are sometimes provided. Depressing and not very clean. The "licensed Premises" portion of the House seems to be the only part attended to.

Bonmahon Village:

"Spring Valley" Hotel 7 1 (1 dining rm, w.c.) No This is a good hotel – or very fair. Fairly good meals are provided and the place looks clean.  
(Mr. Nicholas Fitzgerald)

"Glebe House" Hotel 4 1 (dining rm, sitting rm, w.c.) No Not very encouraging. This place seems to be on the decline.  
(Mrs. Buckley, Prop.)

**Guest or Boarding Houses**

Stradbally Village:

Miss Molly Cunningham, High St. 2 (sitting rm., no bath, dry lav) No I stayed here for a time and found the place comfortable. It is neat and clean.

Mrs. Frank Crowley, Gen View 5 (sitting rm, no bath, dry lav) No Fairly good though there is an air of neglect about the place.

Mrs. Queally 3 (sitting rm, no bath, dry lav) No Fairly good  
Mrs. Phelan, Cove Cottage 4 (sitting rm, no bath, 1 w.c.) No This lady lets her house to during summer months. Nuns

She doesn't keep boarders.

Mrs. McGrath, Cove Tea Rooms 2 (sitting rm, no bath, dry lav) No Not up to average. Looks dirty and dreary generally.

One might or might not get Tea at the Cove Tea Rooms.

Bonmahon Village:

Miss Katie Power, Seaview Tce. 3 (sitting rm, no bath, dry lav) No Fair  
Miss Rosie Lynch, Osburne Tce. 3 (sitting rm, dining rm, no bath, dry lav) No. This house is to let. Miss Lynch does not take boarders.

Date: 8/8/42

Signed: Micheal O'Domhnaill

Surveyor

Form Ba.(Supplementary)  
**I.T.A. Topographical and General Survey**  
**Sports and Games**

**Barony of *Decies without Drum***

**Town or Village** **Bonmahon**                      **Parish** **Stradbally**                      **County** **Waterford**

Angling (Fresh water)

If there is only one river or lake in the parish this form (B) will suffice. For additional waters Form Ba to be used.

River or Lake    Mahon River                      Nearest Point to Town (distance)    Flows through the village

Kinds of fish held:

Brown trout, Numerous white trout and Pale round the mouth of the Mahon (near Bonmahon)

Average Weight of:

Salmon 10 to 14 lbs.                      Sea Trout 2 to 4 lbs.                      Brown Trout ½ lb. to 1 lb.

Best Seasons for:

Salmon Feb. to May                      Sea Trout June, July & August                      Brown Trout Feb. to Sept.

Suitable Flies:

Salmon                      Dusty millar, Spring blue, Gold finch, Lemon grey.

Sea Trout                      Alexander; Rails (Green, Silver, Brown, etc.) after dark

Brown Trout                      Red Quill, Wigham's Fancy, Hare's ear in yellow, Green Well's Glory.

State if angling is – "entirely free"; "free except on preserved stretches"; etc.

Entirely free

Preserved stretches, with names and addresses of Proprietors:

Owners of boats for hire, and charges per day:

No boats used for fishing the Mahon

Convenient Angling Centres (where accommodation is available):

Bonmahon; Kilmacthomas

Local Angling Club                      None  
Secretary (and Address)                      -----

Membership Fee -----

Date 21-4-43

(Signed) Micheal O Domhnaill

Surveyor