

## I.T.A. TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GENERAL SURVEY

NATURAL FEATURES, ANTIQUITIES,  
HISTORIC ASSOCIATIONS, ETC.

Page 1.

BARONY OF CARRA

TOWN OR VILLAGE BALLYVARY PARISH KEELOGUES COUNTY MAYO

## TOPOGRAPHY

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

Various derivations are given for "keelogs" - amongst the most popular are "laid yod" - slender sod - and "laid luyges" (ancient Irish plural of) - narrow valleys. Either of the two expresses accurately the configuration of the area. Originally the parish was called "Kildalmonage" - said locally to mean "the church (of the name) of the two washed feet."

There is nothing of outstanding scenic beauty in the district which is chiefly one of low rolling terrain; green and tilled fields and small homesteads. To the south is a bleak bog stretch broken here and there by hills and reclaimed land and visible from the high road that ascends

## GEOLOGY

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

With the exception of a few scattered peat tracks, the parish is completely a drift-topped limestone area. Thus the district is fully agricultural. Excellent potato growing is carried on here - the "keelogs" potato being well-known and usually given market preference by buyers.

## MANSIONS, CASTLES AND ESTATES

## OF IMPOSING CHARACTER

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

**Yurlough Park:** Beside Yurlough village but in Gortafella townland. Present owners is Mrs. Desmond Gerald Fitzgerald.

The residence, which is not of a very imposing character and can hardly be termed a mansion, is nevertheless one showing much ornamentation for its size. [PHOTO] It was built in 1865 and was designed by Sir Thomas Deane who incorporated into it an Italian style (according to present owners). The house is rectangular (about 100' x 80') with a low wing attached to S.E. gable. It is a high two-story structure with roof or attic story - the roof having very steep pitch with dormer windows. Building of cut limestone. Entrance has an Italian portico, columned with ornamented capitals. Above the arch and facing north. Over the portico is window of 3 lights with beautiful painted leads. Two small rose lights over. Flanking entrance are two small round lights. Other windows are sixable, rectangular - columned with decorated capitals.

**History:** The Fitzgeralds of Yurlough originally came from Waterford. Thomas Fitzgerald married the daughter and heiress of John Chief of Kilkenny and assumed the name of Chief until the 16th century. In 1653 John Fitzgerald of Kilkenny was ordered to Yurlough where Walter de Burgo held sway. Half of the de Burgo estate was granted

Topography Page 2.

from Ballyvaugh and goes on to Balla ( $6\frac{3}{4}$  M). The west of the hill affords a good view of the Neptun range, Lough Cullen, the Rosford Hills, part of the Moy valley, the O'Connell range as far as can be seen — and Swan Linn (popular landmark of Millcross parish) some 12 miles away.

In near view are the slopes of Sheel Haven and just to the north the rugged valley as it runs into Balla — with Lough Namias in the foreground and "the Yeare bridge", a popularly named hill, close by.

Ballyvaugh (beal áis bairne) — mouth of Kavin's ford) lies on the main Rosford/Castlebar road. It is a small village which gave rise to the well-known expression — "all to one side like the town of Ballyvaugh". Until quite recently all the village houses were on the same side of the street — a few have been added on the opposite side. Near the village the Castlebar River flows to Lough Cullen — on its course it broadens out to Lake Rigg, which has outlet further north into the Clydeagh River. The lough adds a pleasing touch to the landscape — enhanced by Curran Castle ruins on its south-western shore.

Half miles west of Ballyvaugh is the tiny village of Yurlough. Keelogue parish takes in the southern half of the village street and quaintly enough it is said that "Yurlough is the other half of Ballyvaugh" — for the former has almost all of its houses on the north-west side. There is a pleasant timbered area around ~~Yurlough~~ <sup>Yurlough</sup> ~~Wasser Park~~.

Between Ballyvaugh and Yurlough the Namias River joins the Castlebar River.

Most interesting view is that obtainable from the top of the road that leads from Ballyvaugh past Keelogue Catholic Church. Here, one looks down into the valley just beneath. Yurlough Round Tower is in full view — the Castlebar River — lake — numerous homesteads — patches of timber, and just beyond, the cottage-dotted Yurlough Hills, Neptun range and attendant peaks — Lough Cullen and the Rosford Hills — the Rosford Hills, and further away, the O'Connell range, over to the west Croagh Patrick rears up above satellite peaks; south of it the Parting mountains — in between is rolling plain.

Parish boundaries difficult to define. Roughly it runs from about 3 miles east of Ballyvaugh to a mile west of Yurlough (half of which it included) where it ends a corner north to the Clydeagh River at Yawnylellin after crossing the main road a few miles from Castlebar. The parish runs south from Curran (castle) to about 3 miles of Balla. Another corner of Keelogue projects between the parishes of Belah, Straid and Balla. Taking the main road from Ballyvaugh to Anra, e.g., one turns for Anra at Knockrasan (Straid) — Balla lies the other side of the main road — beyond Anra is Belah parish. Boundaries here are emerging.