

Castlebar — Carlean & Bannagh.

After the subjugation and ejection of the O'Connors from Carr
by Richard de Burgo in 1236 — Carr was divided into
(1) Carr and (2) Clancuan. The Carr area went to Adam Stanton.
The Clancuan area to De Barry who built his castle on the
site of the present convent at the head of Castle St.

In 1333 the castle and territory was in the ownership of
De Logan. Hence it passed to Edmund de Burgo or Edmund
"the Fesserg" his sons Richard and Ulick were the founders
of the powerful Burke families — Shoor Kesteven and
Shoor Ulick.

Edmund Burke lost Castlebar in 1576 — F.M. 1576
"Edmund son of William Burke went forth from Carlean
& Bannagh to assist the sons of the Earl of Clanrickard
whom the Lord Chief Justice had taken prisoner and conveyed
to Dublin, and the consequence to him (Edmund) was that the
Lord Chief Justice took Carlean & Bannagh and banished
himself, wife and children into Clanrickard."

The castle was however restored to Edmund in 1585 but in
1588 he lost it to a Russian Yid William who sold it to
Captain John Bingham a brother to Sir Richard Bingham,
Governor of Connaught. Captain Bingham had already
got Cloonagashel Castle near Bellinake (11-1) In 1593 he
restored and rebuilt Castlebar. He was later knighted and
got a Charter to hold fairs — also a Royal Charter to send
two members to the Irish parliament. Since that time up
to the present century's beginning — the Bingham's held Castlebar
and estates around. The head of the family became Earl of
Lucan — the title is still extant. In 1800 the two M.P.s for
Castlebar voted for the Union. The Earl received £15000 compensation.
No M.P.s were afterwards returned and the compensation ceased.

Lord Lucan — i.e. the Earl's residence in Castlebar at beginning
of the century, had his residence in The Lawn in the
house now occupied by the Sisters of Mercy. It is
now St. Joseph's Convent — the Cause however due to

a fire some years ago has in its renovation been somewhat altered architecturally.

In 1412 Brian O'Donnell burned Castlebar (Annals of Coe Ci)

"A.D. 1412 Brian O'Donnell marched with a great army into Galway, Carr, Carrick and Carrigrohane. The sons of William Burke; O'Sheehy, O'Dally, Barrett, and Costello assembled to oppose him. They refrained from engagement but he consumed their territories by fire and burned their fortresses viz. Carrick & Carrigrohane of Carrigrohane and Carrigrohane." (Annals of Carrigrohane)

In the 17th Century civil strife, Sir Henry Bingham held the castle for the Irish Parliament but about 1658 it was besieged and taken by the confederated Irish chiefs Viscount Burke and his son Sir Theobald. Bingham surrendered on condition of safe conduct to Galway but his men were massacred at the bridge of St. Andrew on the way back.

As the County Capital - Castlebar has been the venue and of many meetings, sessions, conferences etc. in connection with various movements - e.g. the Land League - Fenianism etc. etc. and has had visits from most national leaders. Parnell, Devitt etc. spoke here - a list of such is impossible to obtain.

1798 bullet marks. (Castellar).

In Linen Hall Street, Castellar, is a stone building which in 1798, was a linen hall. (The Catholic Club now has its rooms here). The doorway is flanked by a column of limestone to either side. On one of these at about least eight or ten or five markings close together. Said to be bullet marks made in 1798. There is a story that a Frenchman and an English soldier shot it out between them across the street's length. The French soldier took his position around the angle of the linen hall - the English somewhere close to the bridge. The Frenchman was killed as he stepped out too far from the angle of the building.

Surveyor's note - no bullet marks on Castellar bridge. There is only one wall to the bridge - the other has lanes. On the wall are several repeated shippings which may have been caused by anything there no distinctive features for photo if they are bullet marks - the residents in the bridge vicinity have no knowledge of bullet marks on the wall which has none corresponding to these on the old linen hall's two columns.

Enclosed is rough sketch of monument as photo was refused taken in dull light + may not show clearly.

{ ADDENDUM: Small roadside memorial near French Hill Hall to Mrs. Ann Lynch killed here from a horse and side-car on July 9th 1923. No inscription on memorial.

monument at French Hill.

Situate in the land of John Doherty, (Townland of Lugapwell), the right-of-way. The memorial is erected close to the main Lestobers/Bellassa road but due to its position on the eastern slope, is not visible from the roadway. Its location is best arrived at by its proximity to a cross-roads an hundred yards further on (towards Bellassa) - the French Hill dove hole stands at the crossing.

The monument takes the form of an obelisk or pyramid - not ending, however in a point apex - is perhaps 15' wide at its top on which is a smallish, light iron cross. Built of cut stone, the pyramidal portion is 10 feet wide and rests on a low rectangular base which is 3 inches wide to each side. The monument is perhaps 22 feet high. On its southern face is a plain inscription: "Erected by public subscription in grateful remembrance of the brave French soldiers who were killed here in 1798 fighting gloriously for Ireland's freedom - Erected in July 1876"

Local account says that three of a party of five Frenchmen, separated from the rest of the French army - were ambushed and shot dead by some English soldiers. The area immediately adjacent has since been called French Hill.

Historic Site - Meeting.

In 1898, on the anniversary of the French action in Ireland, a large concourse of people assembled at the monument to hear several speeches relating to Irish affairs and the French invasion. Principal speaker was Michael James McKeown. The assembly then moved on to the Green in Lestobers, some 3/4 miles distant, where further addresses were delivered. So great was the throng that, according to local tradition, "when the first of the crowd was in Lestobers, the last of them had it yet left the monument."

(monument situate in Ballyhean portion of parish). 22/11/06. O. Faughnan

FRENCH HILL MONUMENT (NEAR CASTLEBAR)
(LAND OF JOHN DOHERTY)

