

(Mayo North)

14

FORM A.

# I.T.A. TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GENERAL SURVEY

## NATURAL FEATURES, ANTIQUITIES, HISTORIC ASSOCIATIONS, ETC.

BARONY OF Erris

~~TOWN~~ VILLAGE Banger-Erris PARISH Kiltane COUNTY Mayo (North)

### TOPOGRAPHY

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

A little village at the feet of the mountains of the Nephin Beg Range and set between two dark, rugged hills, Banger-Erris is the chief centre of the extensive parish of Kiltane. Banger is situated approximately in the heart of the parish and the scenery of all that district around about the village and eastward past Bellacerick, comprises mainly wild mountain and moorland. The main Ballina-Belmullet road winds pleasantly through the valley of the Owenmore River from Bellacerick to Banger and river and road, running parallel for several miles, are flanked on either side by tall heath-clad hills, varying in hue from deepest purple to bright green. To the west, the land-locked waters of Blacksod Bay are the boundary and the long coast-line is one almost continuous belt of strand and sandhills. Geesala (Gweesalia) is the most convenient centre for the exploration of

### GEOLOGY

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

Nothing remarkable excepting that several huge and devastating landslides have been recorded in the mountainous regions of Banger. One landslide which threatened the whole village of Glencullin, was prominently reported on in the Irish and British presses in 1931; fortunately nobody was injured on this occasion but the entire possessions of one family were lost, cattle included. In 1817, five acres of mountain bog slid down the mountainside at Laragon, sweeping away three houses and several members of one family with two soldiers of a Highland Regiment who had been staying for the night with them. The bodies were discovered some days later in Tullaghsun Bay, about twelve miles distant.

### MANSIONS, CASTLES AND ESTATES OF IMPOSING CHARACTER

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

None

TOPOGRAPHY = cont'd.

this district. From here delightful excursions may be made to Tullaghan Bay, noted for its splendid fisheries, to Deehema, Muingsdeerran (Mweedeerran Deeyerck, Deelough and Shraigh (Shraigh <sup>Belmullet Parish</sup>))

Deehema is six miles from Geesala and the miles of beautiful golden strands and the sandhills and splendid bathing and fishing obtainable here are in themselves, notable attractions. But Deehema has more to offer, for Achill Island is but a few miles across the Bay and the villages of Deegert and The Valley, towering Slievemere and the Saddle Head are plainly visible from village and strands. The Mullet Peninsula runs parallel to the western shore of Kiltane parish and from Deehema, it is but another few miles across the water to Blacksed Point; boats may be hired here for the trip to Blacksed or Achill. Black Rock Lighthouse is directly west of Deehema and the warning flashes from this and the lighthouse at Blacksed Point may be clearly seen on the mainland - Black Rock is over twenty miles away. Limited accommodation is available at Geesala and there is another small hotel at Deehema.

Mweedeerran is an ideal bathing place, the very pretty little cove being an almost perfect natural bathing pool, safe and suitable in all tides; it is four miles from Geesala.

Deeyerck, Deelough and Shraigh also provide safe, good bathing places and excellent strands, all being within a few miles of Geesala.

Part of the northern boundary of the parish skirts the eastern shore of Carrowmore Lake and the road, which runs alongside for a distance, affords a really good view of this very pretty and extensive sheet of placid water. Almost any one of the numerous hills and mountains will provide an all-embracing view of the surrounding mountains, countryside, moorland and ocean but one of the prettiest views is to be had from the much more accessible and convenient summit of Tristia, four miles north-east of Geesala. This hill is 430 feet in height and is known locally as Mount Jubilee in commemoration of a religious meeting and Mass celebration in 1828 when Archbishop Jean MacHale celebrated the appearance to a local man of a sublime image, by holding a religious festival on the hillside at the site of the visitation.

From the summit, a wonderful panorama is unfolded. To the southeast, the Nephin Beg Range stretches in curved formation, westward, the narrow inlet of Blacksed Bay with, on the far shore, the Mullet Peninsula, the sandy mouth of Tullaghan Bay close at hand to the south and further south, Achill Island and the strip of sea, enclosed and narrowing to Achill Sound - these are the most remarkable views from the hilltop.

Banger Erris is twenty eight miles from Ballina, thirty four miles from Castlebar and twelve miles from Belmullet. Any report on this entire district is incomplete without reference to the deplorable state of the roads. With the exception of the main Ballina-Belmullet road which is tarred and in fair condition, all the roads are stony and unevenly surfaced, being practically impassable for cars and bicycles in wet weather.

*C. J. Quinn*  
11/8/23