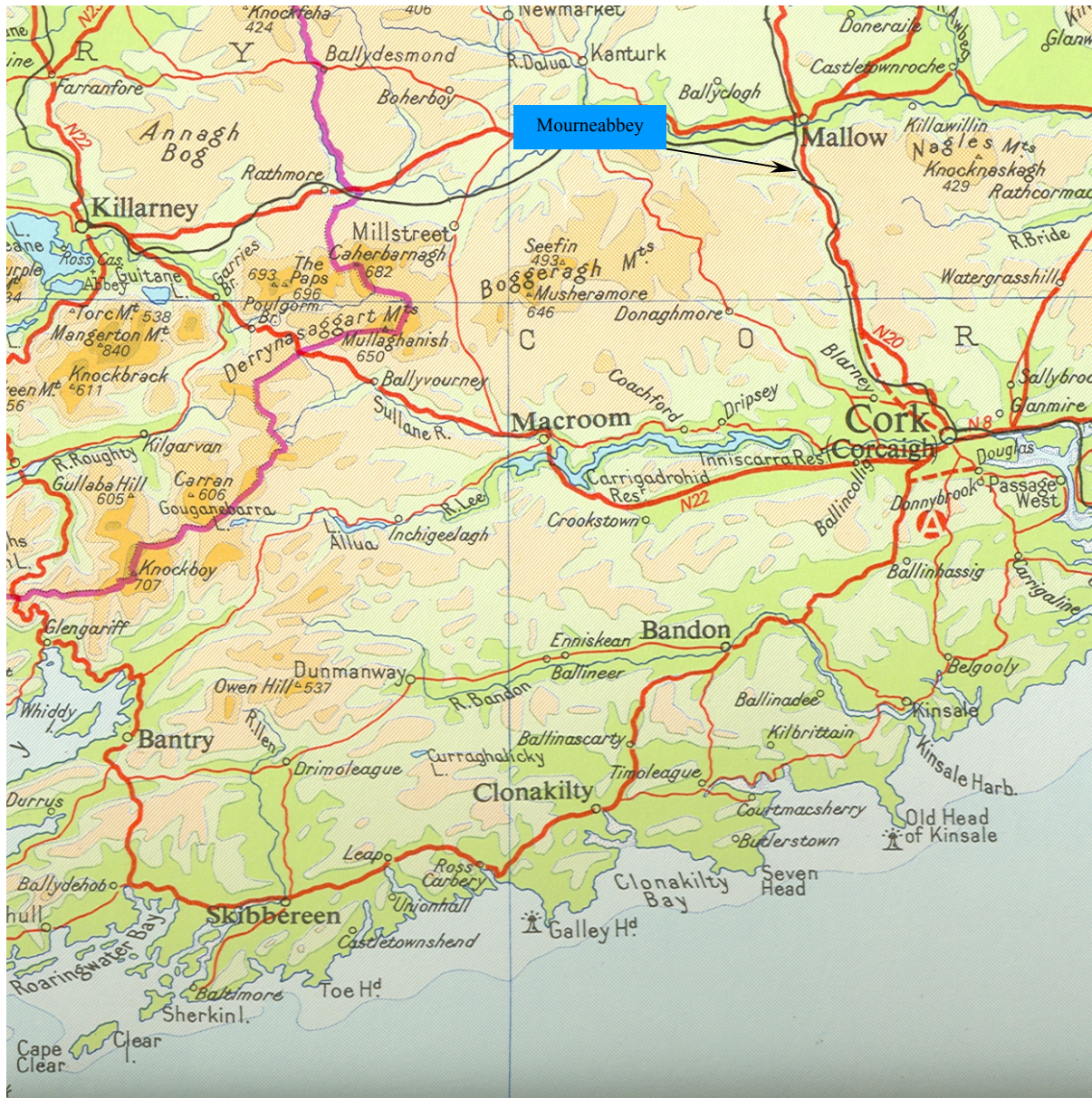


Reverend Francis Townsend [132]



Extract from Brady's Clerical and Parochial Records of Cork, Cloyne and Ross Volume III
1863

TOWNSEND, FRANCIS, A.M. Licensed on 12 July, 1748, to the curacy of Mourneabbey, Cloyne. Perhaps this was Francis (son of John Townsend, esq.), who entered T.C.D. on 20 Nov., 1724, being then 19 years old.

VOL. III.

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Trinity College, Dublin



Extract from Samuel Lewis' Topographical Dictionary 1837

MOURNE, or MOURNE ABBEY, also called BALLINAMONA, a parish, partly in the barony of FERMOY, partly in that of EAST MUSKERRY, but chiefly in that of BARRETT'S, county of CORK, and province of MUNSTER, 3 3/4 miles (S.) from Mallow, on the mail road to Cork; containing 4148 inhabitants. It was anciently called Temple-Michael, from a preceptory of the Knights Templars, founded here in the reign of King John, by an Englishman named Alexander de St. Helena, which, on the suppression of that order in Ireland, in 1307, was granted to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, commonly called the Knights Hospitallers; and on the general dissolution of religious houses, its possessions were granted to Cormac McTeige McCarthy. His descendants, who retained these possessions until they were forfeited in the civil war of 1641, were styled "The Masters of Mourne." In 1571, a sanguinary battle was fought here between the forces of James, Earl of Ormonde, and those of Cormac Oge McCartie, in which the former were defeated with the loss of above 1000 men; and John and Gerald, two brothers of the Earl, were taken prisoners. By an inquisition taken at Cork in 1584, it appears that this place was an ancient corporate and walled town, destroyed in the reign of Edw IV by Murrough O'Brien, who appeared in arms against the government, and destroyed several towns in Munster. The parish, which is bounded on the west by the River Clyda, in its course to the Blackwater, comprises 11,061 statute acres, as apportioned under the tithe act, and valued at £10,675. 7. 4. per annum, of which about 4000 acres are arable, about 3500 pasture, and the remainder, with the exception of about 75 acres of woodland, consists of mountain and waste, a large portion of which is reclaimable: the state of agriculture is gradually improving. Slate of a rough quality is found at Carrigduff, and was formerly worked to some extent. Fairs are held at Ballinamona on Whit-Monday, Aug. 21st, and Dec. 5th, for cattle and pigs. At Quartertown are two extensive flour-mills, worked by the River Clyda. The northern part of the parish, containing the townlands of Gortnagrague and Quartertown, is within the jurisdiction of the manorial court of Mallow, held every three weeks by the seneschal of C. D. O. Jephson, Esq., lord of the manor. The seats are Quartertown, the residence of J. D. Croker, Esq.; Harrierville, of the Rev. J. Lombard, commanding a picturesque view of the town of Mallow, and Rockvale House, the recently

erected mansion of S. G. Beamish, Esq. The late Lord Muskerry built a splendid mansion in the vicinity, on which he is said to have expended upwards of £30,000; but before it was inhabited, it was taken down, and the materials sold: the foundations still remain. The living is a rectory and vicarage, in the diocese of Cloyne, and in the patronage of the Crown. The tithes amount to £553. 16. 11.: there is a glebe of 5 1/2 acres near the town of Castle-Lyons, 14 miles distant. The church, situated at Ballinamona, is a small plain building, with a square tower: it has lately undergone a temporary repair, but has been condemned by the provincial architect, and will probably soon be rebuilt. The parochial school, of about 50 children, is partly supported by the rector, under whose superintendence a Sunday school is also held; and there is a private school of about 60 children. The extensive, but now uninteresting ruins of Mourne Abbey, stand between the old and new roads from Cork to Mallow; they appear to have been surrounded by a high walled enclosure, the angles of which were defended by strong bastions. The skeleton of the church, said to have been 180 feet long, still remains, but destitute of the mouldings and other ornamental parts of the masonry. On the summit of a ridge on the opposite side of the Clyda, which here separates the baronies of Muskerry and Barretts, is Castlemore, an ancient ruined structure of gloomy appearance, with a tower attached: it was built by the Barretts, and long continued the chief residence of the head of that family.