



Extract from Samuel Lewis' Topographical Dictionary 1837

ABBEYSTREWRY, a parish, in the Eastern Division of the barony of WEST CARBERY, county of CORK, and province of MUNSTER; containing, with part of the market and post-town of Skibbereen, 5570 inhabitants. This parish is situated near the southern coast, on the road from Cork to Baltimore, and is intersected by the river Ilen. It contains 9362 statute acres, as apportioned under the tithe act; and is said to derive its name from a religious house, the ruins of which are situated close to the northern bank of the Ilen, one mile west from Skibbereen. About one-third is waste land or bog, the former consisting of rocky elevations which in some parts afford tolerable pasturage; the bog is only of small extent, and peat is becoming somewhat scarce. Generally the system of agriculture is not much improved: the heavy old wooden plough is still used. The substratum is entirely of the schistus formation: there are quarries of excellent slate at Derrygoole, but not much worked; and throughout the parish is found clay-slate for building and repairing the roads. There are numerous large and handsome residences: the principal are **Hollybrook**, the seat of **R. Becher***, Esq.; Lakelands, of T. J. Hungerford, Esq.; Coronea, of Mrs. Marmion; Gortnamucalla, of H. Newman, Esq.; Carriganare, of Mrs. Evans; Laghartydawley, of A. McCarthy, Esq.; Mill House, of J. Clark, Esq.; Clover Hill**, of J. Sweetnam, Esq.; Weston, of D. H. Clarke, Esq.; the glebe-house, the residence of the Rev. R. B. Townsend (*Richard Boyle Townsend [332]*); Abbeyville, the seat of G. Brenham, Esq.; and Rossfort, of J. Ross, Esq.; The living is a vicarage, in the diocese of Ross, and in the patronage of J. S. Townsend (*John Sealy Townsend [507]*), Esq.,

the impropiator of the rectory: the tithes amount to £647, of which £200 is payable to the impropiator, £20 to the vicar (under an appropriation grant of the late Earl of Shannon), and the remainder to the lessees of Col. Townsend (*Colonel John Townsend [230]*). The church, situated in the town of Skibbereen, is a large edifice, in the early English style of architecture, with a lofty square tower at the east end: it was built on a new site in 1827, at an expense of £1200, of which £900 was given by the late Board of First Fruits; and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have recently granted £180 for its repair. The glebe-house, near the town, was built in 1824, by aid of a gift of £450 and a loan of £50 from the same Board, on a glebe of fifteen acres purchased by the Board and subject to a rent of £13. 7. per annum. The male and female parochial schools are situated near the church, and were built in 1825, at the expense of the vicar. An infants' school was built in 1835, and is supported by subscription; and there is a Sunday school for both sexes, under the superintendence of the vicar.

* *Becher connections here also with Philip Townsend [304].*

** *Richard Townsend [310] died here in 1814.*

CREAGH, a parish, in the Eastern Division of the barony of WEST CARBERY, county of CORK, and province of MUNSTER; containing, with the greater part of the post-town of Skibbereen, 5914 inhabitants. It is situated on the southern coast, and comprises 6897 statute acres, as applotted under the tithe act and valued at £4849 per annum, of which about 80 are woodland. The surface is very uneven, rising into mountains of considerable elevation, and of the schistus formation, extending over about one-third of the parish; they are mostly rocky and bare, but in some places afford excellent pasturage. There are few fields where the rock does not appear, but there is scarcely an acre which does not afford some pasture or tillage, which is carried even to the top of the hills. There are about 20 acres of bog. The land under cultivation yields tolerable crops, mostly produced by spade labour. The parish is bounded on the north by the River Ilen, along the banks of which the land is very good and in many places richly planted. The whole of the corn exported from Skibbereen is shipped at an excellent quay at Oldcourt, on this river, to which vessels of 200 tons' burden can come up at high water, being conveyed thither in small four-oared boats. A manor court is held every three weeks, for the recovery of debts under 40s.; and here are the ruins of an ancient castle, now converted into corn-stores. Near the southern boundary of the parish, which opens upon the Atlantic, is Lough Hyne, a curious and extensive bay, penetrating nearly two miles inland, and the passage from the sea being very narrow, and between craggy cliffs, the water rushes through it with great violence on the ebb and flow of every tide. The best oysters and several kinds of sea fish are found in it; and in its centre is a small island, containing the ruins of Cloghan castle, one of the castles of the O'Driscolls. The surrounding scenery is very beautiful, the mountain sides being clothed with young and thriving plantations. A new road has lately been formed, and other improvements are in progress. Good slate is obtained in many places. The principal seats in the parish are **Creagh House**, the residence of **Sir W. W. Becher*** Bart.; Killeena, of the Rev. John Wright; the glebe-house, of the Rev. H. B. Macartney; Lough Hyne Cottage; of D. McCarty, Esq.; Inane, of H. Marmion, Esq.; Glenview, of S. Lewis, Esq.; Green Park, of John Gallwey, Esq.; and there are some large and substantial farm-houses. The living is a rectory in the diocese of Ross, and in the patronage of the Bishop: the tithes amount to £500, and there is a glebe of 15 acres. The church is a small neat edifice, with a square tower ornamented with pinnacles: it was erected by aid of a gift of £600, and a loan of £400, in 1810, from the late Board of First Fruits. The parochial school was built on the glebe in 1834; it is in connection with the Cork Diocesan Association, but is principally supported by the rector; and there is a national school in Skibbereen. In these about 150 boys and 60 girls are taught; and there is also a private school of about 50 children. The ruins of the old church adjoin the present edifice; on the glebe is a holy well.

* *Becher connections with Mary Townsend [121] and Edward [401].*