

Mary Townsend [314]



Extracts from 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 applotted 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

impropriator, £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 with Philip Townsend [304] and Barbara Townsend [306].*

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

Abbeystrewry Church



Abbeystrewry is said to have got its name from a Cistercian abbey, the ruins of which are situated on the river Ilen on the road to Ballydehob. A new site was found in the town and a new church was given a license for divine service on 11th April 1827.

The present church was opened by Canon Goodman on 18th December 1890 after extensive renovations at a cost of £3,000 of which he contributed £700 himself.

SKIBBEREEN, a market and post-town, partly in the parish of ABBEYSTROWRY, but chiefly in that of CREAGH, Eastern Division of the barony of WEST CARBERY, county of CORK, and province of MUNSTER, 42 miles (S. W.) from Cork, on the mail road to Bantry, and 167 1/4 (S. W.) from Dublin; containing 4429 inhabitants. In 1691, an engagement took place in the vicinity between the forces of Jas. II and Col. **Becher***, who commanded about 500 of the militia, when the former were put to flight, with the loss of 60 men and a large number of cattle. Three years afterwards, a party of 40 rapparees came into the town and plundered the custom-house, which belonged to the port of Baltimore, and killed two revenue officers. The town, from its situation in a wild, unenclosed part of the country, has frequently been the rendezvous of disaffected parties, but it has been much improved of late years, and is now a very flourishing place. It is situated on the southern bank of the river Ilen, and comprises seven streets; that part which extends into the parish of Abbeystrewry is called Bridgetown, and consists of three streets, one of which has been recently formed. The number of houses in the whole town is 1014, many of which, in the eastern part and in the parish of **Creagh****, are large and well built: the approaches have been much improved by the formation of new lines of road at each extremity. This place had formerly a very considerable trade, arising from the manufacture of woollen cloth, linen, checks, and handkerchiefs, which has altogether declined: it is, however, very advantageously situated for trade in an extensive and improving district; the tide from the harbour of Baltimore flows up to the town, and the river is navigable for vessels of 200 tons' burden to Oldcourt, two miles below Skibbereen. In the town are capacious storehouses for corn, and a considerable quantity of flour is also exported from the mills of Mr. J. Clark, on the bank of the Ilen, a quarter of a mile from the town. A porter brewery upon an extensive scale was established in 1809; it is the property of Daniel Mc Carthy, Esq., and is in full operation, many of the neighbouring towns being supplied from the establishment. The market days are Wednesday and Saturday, the former for the Bridgetown portion, and the latter, which is the principal market, for Staplestown. Milk and fuel are also exposed daily in the market-place for sale. The supply of provisions is very abundant, particularly fish and poultry: pigs and sheep are also sold in great numbers. The marketplace being small, and the market-house old and inconvenient, the articles brought for sale on the regular market-days are exposed in the public streets and in a place called the square. Fairs are held on May 14th, July 10th, Aug. 2nd, Oct. 12th, and Dec. 11th and 23rd; and petty sessions on Wednesdays. The sessions-house and bridewell is a large and handsome building in the Grecian style, occupying an elevated site near the entrance to the town from Cork. There is also an infantry barrack; and Skibbereen is the residence of the inspecting commander of the coast-guard stations of the district, of which it is the head, comprising those of Milkcove, Glandore, Castle-Townsend, Barlogue, Baltimore, Long Island, Crookhaven, Dunmanus, and Whitehorse, and extending from Sheep Head to Rosscarbery. The parochial church of Abbeystrewry is situated in Bridgetown; it is a large edifice in the early English style, with a tower at the east end, erected in 1827, at an expense of £1200, towards which £900 was contributed by the late Board of First Fruits. Parochial schools for boys and girls were erected near the church, in 1825, by the vicar; and an infants' school was built in 1835. There is also a Sunday school under the care of the Protestant clergyman. Near the R. C. chapel are large school-houses, built by the late Dr. Collins, which are supported by the National Board. A dispensary is maintained in the customary manner. There are numerous large and handsome houses near the town, the principal of which are noticed in the description of Abbeystrewry.

* Col Becher was the father of Elizabeth who married Horatio Townsend [104]

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

	Curates
1896	Horace Webb Townsend
1915	Edwin Sikes
1951	Vivian William Darling
1963	Oliver Arther Pa
1688	Samuel Moreton
1692	Benjamin Bousfield
1709	Richard Baldwin
1745	Francis Dutham
1766	John Corkee
1771	Horatio Townsend
	Curates Since the Diestablishment in Diocese Ross
1883	William O'Neill
1887	Edmond Beatty
1892	Charles Tottenham
1898	William R. Cole
1900	Edward James
1911	Robert W.H Hadden
1914	Harold Hadden
	No curates after H. Hadden until 1949
1949	Phineas Bury
1950	Edward Rainsbury
1953	Leonard Buckley-Jones
1959	David Clarke
	Vicars Rectory Improprate
1781	William Robinson
1819	Richard Boyle Townsend
1850	Horace Thomas Townsend
	Rectors
1857	James Goodman