

Richard Townsend [513]

Myross Wood, Leap, Co Cork



Extract from Samuel Lewis' Topographical Dictionary 1837

MYROSS, a parish, in the Eastern Division of the barony of WEST CARBERY, county of CORK, and province of MUNSTER, 6 miles (S. W. by W.) from Ross; containing, with the village of Union-Hall, (which see) 3459 inhabitants. Here was formerly the abbey of Maure, or of the Clear Spring, founded in 1172 by Dermot McCormac McCarthy, King of Desmond, for Cistercian monks; the

foundations of the buildings, and the burial-ground, may be traced at Carrigiliky. The parish forms an obtuse peninsula between Castlehaven and the harbour of Glandore, having the main ocean to the south; it comprises 3319 statute acres, as applotted under the tithe act, and valued at £3333 per annum. The surface is very uneven, but the land in general is fertile, producing excellent crops of corn, flax, and potatoes; the more elevated parts, however, afford only scanty pasturage for cattle; there is very little waste or bog: near the centre of the parish are some interesting lakes. Agriculture is much improving, particularly near Brade and Myross Wood, the rector having introduced the most improved implements. The soil is generally shallow, resting upon a substratum of schist, in some places rising into hills of considerable elevation. Considerable efforts are now being made to work the slate more efficiently: many of the inhabitants are engaged in the fishery. A fair for cattle is held on Holy Thursday. **Myross Wood**** (*acquired by John Sealy Townsend [507] sometime between 1837 and 1846*), the demesne of F. H. Copinger, Esq., is very large, extending northward to the Leap, and affording the best woodland in the barony; Clontaff is the residence of R. Townsend (*Richard Mellifont Townsend [236]*), Esq.; Bawnlahan, of Major Powell (*father of Rev Francis Powell who married Caroline Townsend [5B20]*); Brade (Braad), of the Rev. E. P. Thompson (*Braad formerly belonged to Philip Townsend [500] and then his son Richard [501]*); Union Hall, of Capt. Somerville*; Ballincolla, of Capt. Lyster; and Rock Cottage, of J. French, Esq. The living is a rectory and vicarage, in the diocese of Ross, and in the patronage of the Bishop: the tithes amount to £500. The church is a very handsome cruciform edifice, with a tower: it occupies a gentle eminence, near the western termination of Glandore harbour, having been erected on that new site in 1827, at a cost of £900, a gift from the late Board of First Fruits, at which time this living was separated from those of Kilmacabea and Kilfaughnabeg: the present situation was adopted from its contiguity to the village of Union Hall. The parochial schools, which are aided by the incumbent, who also supports a Sunday school, are situated in Union-Hall, as also is a national school for females; and about 170 children are educated in three private schools. On a lofty eminence, above the wood of Myross, are the remains of the church of the union, which was left to fall to decay in 1827: it occupied the site of the abbey De Fonte Vivo, or "the clear spring," being near the sea shore, on the south-western side of the parish. On the haven, opposite to Castle-Townsend, are the ruins of Rahene castle, which in former times protected this ferry; and about a mile to the east are fragments of Castle Ire, on a bold and commanding eminence. At Rock cottage, now the residence of J. French, Esq., Dean Swift wrote his poem of "Carberiae Rupes."

* *This might be the same person as Captain Philip Somerville who is shown in 'An Officer of the Long Parliament' living at The Prairie, Schull. If this is the case there are connections here with Henrietta [242], Anna [408] and Maria [5D07].*

** *Richard's father.*

Memorial Tablet - Helen Townsend

