

CLARE-ABBEY, a parish

From [A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland](#), 1837

CLARE-ABBEY, a parish, in the barony of ISLANDS, county of CLARE, and province of MUNSTER, 2 miles (S.) from Ennis; containing, with the town and commons of Clare, 3881 inhabitants. This parish is situated on the river Fergus, and on the road from Ennis to Limerick, and was the seat of a richly endowed abbey, founded in 1195, for Augustinian friars, by [Donald O'Brien](#), King of Limerick. At the suppression, in 1543, it was granted to the Barons of Ibrackan by Henry VIII., and in 1620 was given in fee to Donough, Earl of Thomond, which grant was confirmed, in 1661, to Henry, Earl of Thomond. The parish contains 6694 statute acres; there are about 200 acres of bog, and the rest is principally in pasture; sea-weed is procured for manure on the shores of the Fergus, and limestone exists in abundance. Two fairs are held annually at Clare; and a seneschal's court for the recovery of small debts is held there monthly for the manor of Clonroad.

The principal seats are Buncraggy, finely situated on the banks of the Fergus, and surrounded by a richly wooded demesne, the property of the Marquess of Conyngham, but now occupied by J. James, Esq.; Carnelly, the seat of the representatives of the late Colonel Stamer; and Barntick, of D. Roche, Esq. The living is an impropriate cure, in the diocese of Killaloe, and in the patronage of the Bishop; the rectory is impropriate in the Earl of Egremont, the representatives of Giles Daxon, Esq., and the Rev. F. Blood. Of the 6694 acres, the tithes of 1153, amounting to £35. 1. 6., are paid to the incumbent alone; of 1005, amounting to £27. 13. 10., to the impropiators alone; and of 1904, amounting to £54. 2. 9., in equal shares to the incumbent and impropiators: the remaining 2632 acres being unprofitable land, pay no tithes. The church is a neat structure with a square tower, erected in 1813, by aid of a gift of £800 from the late Board of First Fruits, and repaired recently by a grant of £162. 4. 7. from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The glebe-house was built in 1822, by aid of a gift of £450 and a loan of £50 from the former Board. The glebe comprises 15 acres, subject to a rent of 10s. per acre, as £450 was paid by the late Board of First Fruits to reduce the rent. In the R. C. divisions this parish is the head of a union or district, called Clare, comprising the parishes of Clare-Abbey and Killone, in each of which is a chapel; that at Clare is a thatched building, which it is intended shortly to re-erect on a larger scale. There is a school under the care of the incumbent, in which are about 50 children; and there are two hedge schools, containing about 80; also a school under the superintendence of the parish priest. The remains of the abbey consist of a tower in tolerable preservation, surmounted by graduated battlements, and the ivy clad walls of the abbey church, which together form a very picturesque object when viewed from a distance.