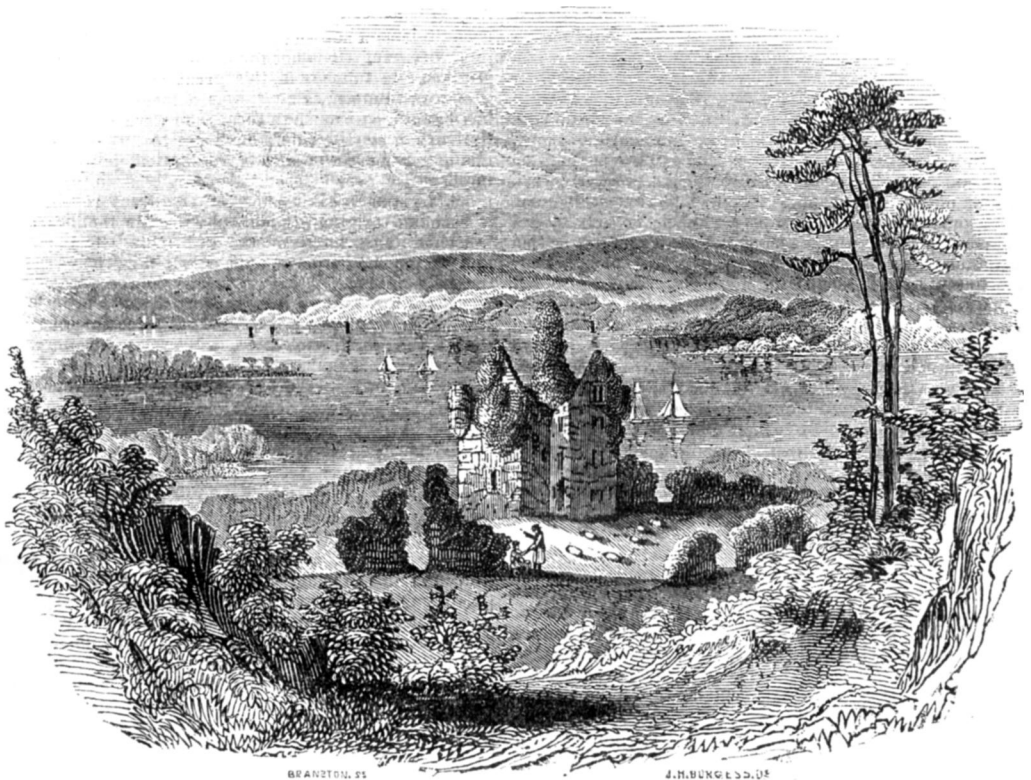


# THE IRISH PENNY JOURNAL.

NUMBER 23.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1840.

VOLUME I.



## TULLY CASTLE, COUNTY OF FERMANAGH, LOOKING OVER LOUGH ERNE.

We have chosen the prefixed view of the Castle of Tully as a subject for illustration, less from any remarkable picturesqueness of character or historical interest connected with the castle itself, than for the opportunity which is thus afforded us of making a few remarks on the beautiful lake—the Windanermere of Ireland, as Mr Inglis happily called it—on the bank of which it is situated. We cannot conceive any circumstance that better illustrates the truth of the general principle *that*, as Shakspeare expresses it, “what we have we prize not at its worth,” than the fact that Lough Erne—the admiration and delight of strangers, the most extensive and beautifully diversified sheet of water in Ireland—is scarcely known as an object of interest and beauty to the people of Ireland generally, and is rarely or never visited by them for pleasure. It is true that the nobility and gentry who reside upon its shores or in their vicinity, are not deficient in a feeling of pride in their charming locality, and even boast its superiority of beauty to the far-famed Lakes of Killarney; yet till very recently this admiration was almost exclusively confined to themselves, and the beauties of Lough Erne were as little known to the people of Ireland generally as those of the sakes and highlands of Connemara, neither of which have ever

yet been included in the books concocted for the use of pleasure tourists in Ireland.

But Lough Erne will not be thus neglected or unappreciated much longer. Its beauties have been discovered and been eulogised by strangers, who have taught us to set a juster value on the landscape beauties which Providence has so bountifully given to our country; and it will soon be a reproach to us to be unfamiliar with them.

It would be utterly impossible, within the limits necessarily assigned to our topographical articles, to give any detailed account of a lake so extensive as Lough Erne, and whose attractive features are so numerous; but as these features shall from time to time be included among our subjects for illustration, it will be proper at least to give our readers a general idea of its extent, and the pervading character of its scenery, on this our first introduction of it to their notice; and with this view we shall commence with a description given of it by an author of a History of the County of Fermanagh, written in the seventeenth century, but not hitherto published.

“This lake is plentifully stocked with salmon, pike, bream, eel, trout, &c.

Seven miles broad in the broadest part. Said to contain

365 islands, the land of which is excellent. The largest of the islands is Inismore, containing nine tates and a half of old plantation measure. Bally-Mac-Manus, now called Bell-isle, containing two large tates much improved by Sir Ralph Gore; Killygowan, Innis Granny, Blath-Ennis, Ennis-Liag, Ennis M'Knock, Cluan-Ennis, Ennis-keen, Ennis-M'Saint, and Babha.

These are the [islands] most notable, except the island of Devenish, of which I'll speak in its proper place; however, by the bye, in Devenish is remembered the pious St Molaishe, who herein consecrated two churches and a large aspiring steeple [the round tower], and an abbey, which abbey was rebuilt A. D. 1430 very magnificently by Bartholomew O'Flanagan, son of a worthy baron of this county, and was one of the finest in the kingdom. In this island there is a house built by the Saint, to what use is not known, but it is as large as a small chapel-of-ease. It's of great strength and cunning workmanship that may seem to stand for ever, having no wood in it; the inside lined and the outside covered with large flat hewn stone, walls and roof alike. On the east of this island runs an arm of the Lough called in Irish Cumhang-Devenish, which is of use to the inhabitants, viz, if cattle infected with murrain, black-leg, &c, be driven through the same, they are exempted from the same that season, as is often experienced. The said waters run northwards for twelve hours daily, and back again the same course for twelve hours more, to the admiration of the many.

Some authors write this Lough Erne to have been formerly a spring well, and being informed by their Druids or philosophers that the well would overflow the country to the North Sea, for the prevention of which they caused the well to be inclosed in a strong wall, and covered with a door having a lock and key, signifying no danger while the door was secured; but an unfortunate woman (as by them came more mischief to mankind) opening the door for water, heard her child cry, and running to its relief, forgot to secure the well, and ere she could return, she with her house and family were drowned, and many houses more betwixt that and Ballyshannon, and so continues a Lough unto this day. But how far this may pass for a reality, I am not to aver—however, it is in the ancient histories of the Irish. If true, it must be of a long standing, seeing this Lough is frequently mentioned in our chronicles amongst the ancientest of Loughs. Fintan calls it *Samhir*.

We shall not, any more than our old author, "aver for the reality" of this legend, which by the way is related of many other Irish lakes; but we may remark, in passing, that the story would have more appearance of "reality" if it had been told of Lough Gawna—or the Lake of the Calf—in the county of Longford, which is the true source of the river Erne, of which Lough Erne is but an expansion. At Lough Gawna, however, they tell a different story, viz, that it was formed by a calf, which, emerging from a well in its immediate vicinity, still called Tobar-Gawna, or the Well of the Calf, was chased by its water till he entered the sea at Ballyshannon. The expansion of the *Samhir* or Erne thus miraculously formed, is no less than forty miles in extent from its north-west to its south-east extremities, being the length of the whole county of Fermanagh, through which it forms a great natural canal. Lough Erne, however, properly consists of two lakes connected by a deep and winding strait, of which the northern or lower is more than twenty miles in length, and seven and a half miles in its greatest breadth, and the southern or upper is twelve miles long by four and a half broad. Both lakes are richly studded with islands, mostly wooded, and in many places so thickly clustered together as to present the appearance of a country accidentally flooded; but these islands are not so numerous as they are stated to be by the old writer we have above quoted, or as popularly believed, as accurate investigation has ascertained that their number is but one hundred and ninety-nine, of which one hundred and nine are situated in the lower lake, and ninety in the upper. But these are in truth quite sufficient for picturesqueness, and it may be easily conceived that two sheets of water so enriched, and encircled by shores finely undulating, to a great extent richly wooded, and backed on most points by mountains of considerable elevation, must possess the elements of beauty to a remarkable degree; and the fact appears to be, that though the Killarney and other mountain lakes in Ireland possess more grandeur and sublimity of character, Lough Erne is not surpassed, or perhaps equalled, by any for exquisite pastoral beauty. Perhaps, indeed, we

might add, that if it were further improved by planting and agricultural improvements, it might justly claim the rank assigned to it by Mr Inglis, that of "the most beautiful lake in the three kingdoms."

Long anterior to the arrival of the English in Ireland, the beautiful district on each side of Lough Erne, now constituting the county of Fermanagh, was chiefly possessed by the powerful family of Maguire, from the senior branch of which the chiefs of the territory were elected. This territory, which was anciently known as "Maguire's country," was made shire ground in the 11th of Elizabeth, by the name which it still bears; but the family of its ancient chiefs still remained in possession till the plantation of Ulster by James I., when the lands were transferred to the English and Scottish undertakers, as they were called, with the exception of two thousand acres, left as a support to Brian Maguire, chief representative of the family. It is not for us to express any opinion on the justice or expediency of this great confiscation, but we may venture to remark, that it was a measure that could hardly have appeared proper to those who were so deprived of their patrimony, or that would have led to any other feeling than one of revenge and desire of retaliation, however reckless, if opportunity ever offered. Unhappily such opportunity did offer, by the breaking out of the great rebellion of 1641, a rebellion originating chiefly with the families of the disinherited Irish lords of the confiscated northern counties, and having for its paramount object the repossession of their estates.

Amongst the English and Scottish settlers in Fermanagh, the most largely endowed with lands was Sir John Humes, or Hume, the founder of Tully Castle, the subject of our prefixed wood-cut, and who was the second son of Patrick, the fifth Baron of Polwarth, in Scotland. The property thus obtained, consisting of four thousand five hundred acres, remained in the possession of his male descendants till the death of Sir Gustavus Hume, who dying without surviving male issue in 1731, it passed through the female line into the possession of the Loftus family, in which it now remains.

The Castle of Tully was for a time the principal residence of the Hume family; and on the breaking out of the rebellion in October 1641, it became the refuge of a considerable number of the English and Scottish settlers in the country. The discontented Irish of the county having, however, collected themselves together under the command of Rory, the brother of the Lord Maguire, they proceeded to the castle on the 24th of December, and having commanded the Lady Hume and the other persons within it to surrender, it was given up to them on a promise of quarter for their lives, protection for their goods, and free liberty and safe conduct to proceed either to Monea or Enniskillen, as they might choose. But what trust can be placed in the promises of men engaged in civil war, and excited by the demoniac feelings of revenge? With the exception of the Lady Hume, and the individuals immediately belonging to her family, the whole of the persons who had so surrendered, amounting to fifteen men, and, as it is said, sixty women and children, were on the following day stripped and deprived of their goods, and inhumanly massacred, when also the castle was pillaged, burnt, and left in ruins. Let us pray that Ireland may never again witness such frightful scenes!

The Castle of Tully does not appear to have been afterwards re-edified, or used as a residence. After the restoration of peace, the Hume family erected a more magnificent mansion, called Castle Hume, nearer Enniskillen, and which is now incorporated in the demesne of Ely lodge.

In its general character, as exhibited in its ruins, Tully Castle appears to have been a fortified residence of the usual class erected by the first Scottish settlers in the country—a keep or castle turreted at the angles, and surrounded by a bawn or outer wall, enclosing a court-yard. It is thus described by Pynnar in 1618:

"Sir John Humes hath two thousand acres called Carrynoe.

Upon this proportion there is a bawne of lime and stone, an hundred feet square, fourteen feet high, having four flankers for the defence. There is also a fair strong castle fifty feet long and twenty-one feet broad. He hath made a village near unto the bawne, in which is dwelling twenty-four families."

The Castle of Tully is situated on the south-western shore of the lower lake of Lough Erne, about nine miles north-west of Enniskillen.