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Louthiana: Ancient and Modern

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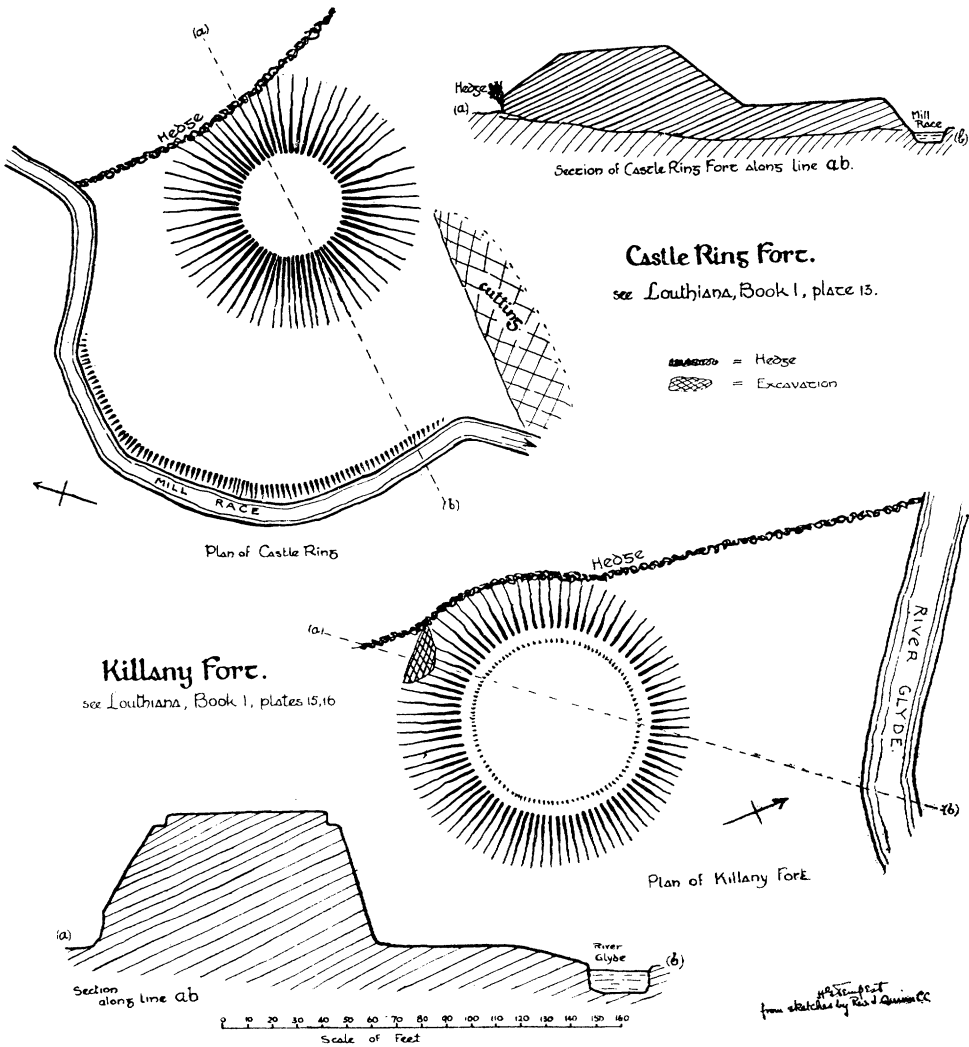
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LOUTHIANA : ANCIENT AND MODERN.




LOUTHIANA IN 1911.



Louthiana: Ancient and Modern.

KILLANY MOAT.

 THOMAS WRIGHT says of this :—" A beautiful green mount, the height upwards of 70 feet and the circumference at the top not less than 120 : with a little camp or fort adjoining it ; bounded on one side (the north) by the river (Glyde) and on the other (the east) by the town wall." The town wall has disappeared, so, for the matter of that, has the town ; so also has the " little camp or fort," and nothing remains of the double, encircling embankments which he shows in his drawings *Figs* I. and II. The " beautiful green " of the mount has given place to an almost hedgehog-like bristling of native blackthorn, but for the continued existence of what is left of Killany Moat no better defence could be desired, and mother nature is to be congratulated alike on her espousal of the good cause, and on her patriotic choice of weapons. Wherefore I experienced extreme difficulty—varied with some mishaps—in obtaining the following measurements, which, from the circumstances could not be more than approximately accurate.

The circumference at the base of the mound is 126 yards ; the slope is 54 ft. ; the circumference at the top is 200 feet, which would represent a much larger area than would Wright's measurements. The difference in height must be largely accounted for by the levelling up of the fosse, for an indentation, to the breadth and to a depth below the moat surface of five feet, runs round the top (*vide* section given), and was in all probability the bed of the foundations of the octagonal building shown in Wright's drawing, *Fig* II. At the present moment the moat affords very few features to comment on : on the south side one sees evidences of an attempt to cut away the mound itself ; on the east slope about one-third the way up and where the embankment is almost perpendicular I saw some stones protruding. Prompted by the hope of a discovery, even that of a souterrain, I managed to reach the spot. My available foot-hold was nothing to speak of, so I clung to a branch with one hand and dislodged some of the stones with the other. But the branch broke and thus derermined both investigation and the time and place of my descending. I could obtain no local information on the subject, but Mr. Orpen¹ in the "Chartulary of St. Mary's Abbey," Dublin, finds a charter, whereby

1. *vide* Sept., 1908, issue of R.S.A.I. Journal.

Ralph de Repentini, one of Roger Pippard's feudatories granted to the abbey "the Church of St. Ultan of Cullifan, with all its appurtenances, and with the ecclesiastical benefices of my whole fief about Cullifan, with the tithes of the mills and fisheries of the same fief, and with the land which lies on the other side of the river opposite the Church and land of *Lecchach*, that is to say, in length from the road which leads to the Castellum as far as the meadow [pratum], and in width, from the river as far as *Ruffa Mora* by the boundaries there perambulated."

He concludes that the aforesaid Ralph de Repentini dwelt in a Norman Castellum which was built on top of the present mound or moat of Killany, and, that as one witness to the grant, Willelmus Parus (Petit), died in 1213, we have the date or period. The following are his reasons for equating "Cullifan" with "Killany." Cullifan=Cott- α '- β anar θ =the wood of the hill-slope; the β being aspirated, is silent, and gives "Killany," while copied into a Latin Document the name would remain Cullifan, or Coyllefan, or Cuillephan, or Kulifan, or Cuyliffan (all of which forms appear), that "Lecchach" and "Ruffa Mora" are respectively "Stonetown" and "Redbog" which adjoin present-day Killany, and that St. Ultan mentioned as patron of Cullifan Church is also¹ patron of Killany. Fathers Lawless, Gogarty, and Murray have had much to say on the derivation of Killany too, and as Mr. Orpen is assured of gentle treatment at their hands, I shall not intrude. In February, 1594, the MacMahons "burnt and brake down the House and Bawne in Killany, and burnt all the churches in fferney lest any garrison should be laid in them."

S. O'C.

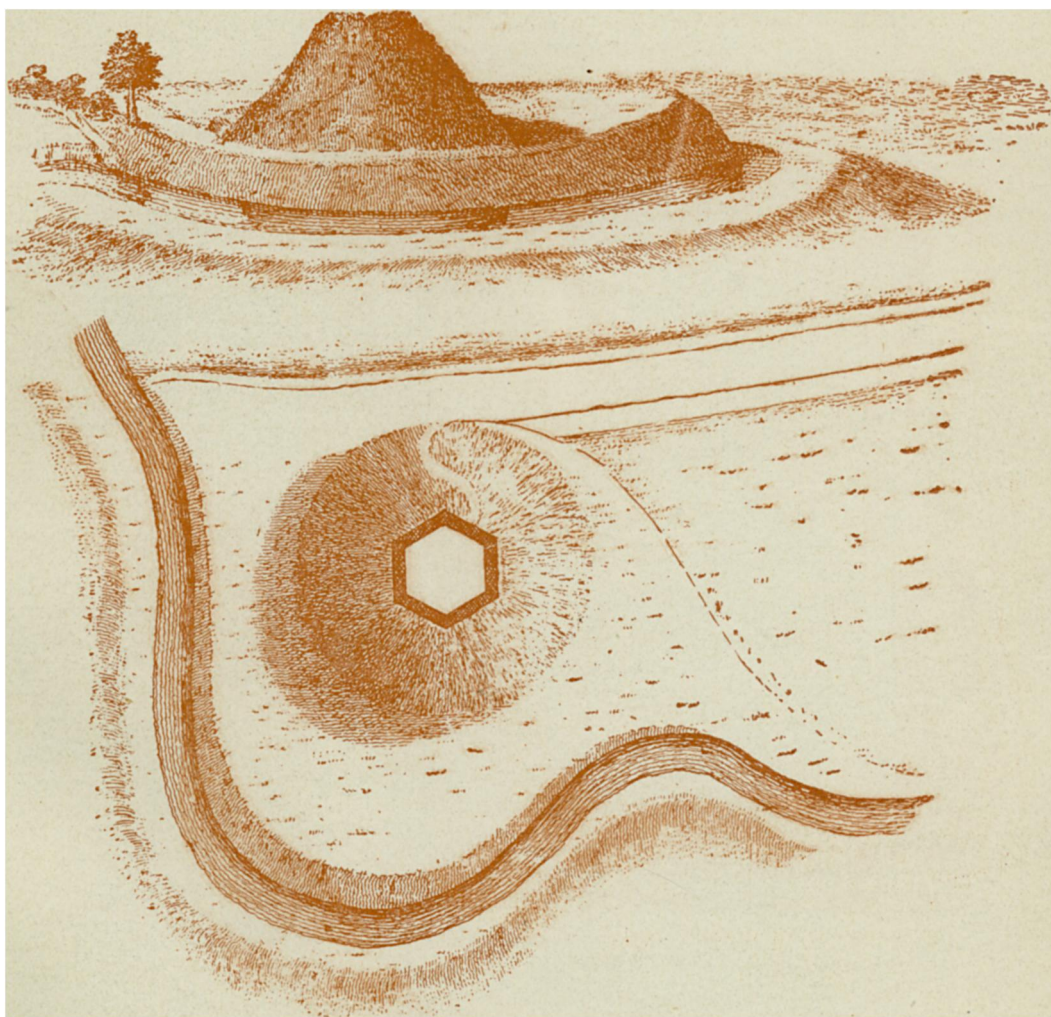
FORT AT BALLINAHATTINA, DUNDALK.

WRIGHT only gives a perspective view of this fort in *Louthiana, Book I. Plate I*, which we reproduce. He gives no description of the fort nor of its position, further than this line in the List of Contents:—

"View of a Fort or Bode upon a rising ground near Ballinahatney Plain."

Ballinahattina (or -hatchina as it is pronounced), "the townland of the furze or whins," lies to the west of the Newry road about the New Inn or Red Cow. The railway line runs through it, and it has been presumed that the stone circles described as then existing at the place by Wright (see *L.A.J.*, Vol. 1, 4, p. 61) were destroyed by the making of the great railway embankment. An old man who lives close to the line there, told us this summer that he remembered the railway being made quite well, but never saw nor heard of the rings of stones and other old men confirmed this. According to Wright the circles were there in 1747 and so must have entirely disappeared between that date and about 1855, when the connecting line between Drogheda and Portadown was laid down, and probably some time earlier. Similarly there is now, so far as we know, no local memory of the circles near Balriggeran Castle nor of one a little to the north of Lurgankeel, although an old man who died last year

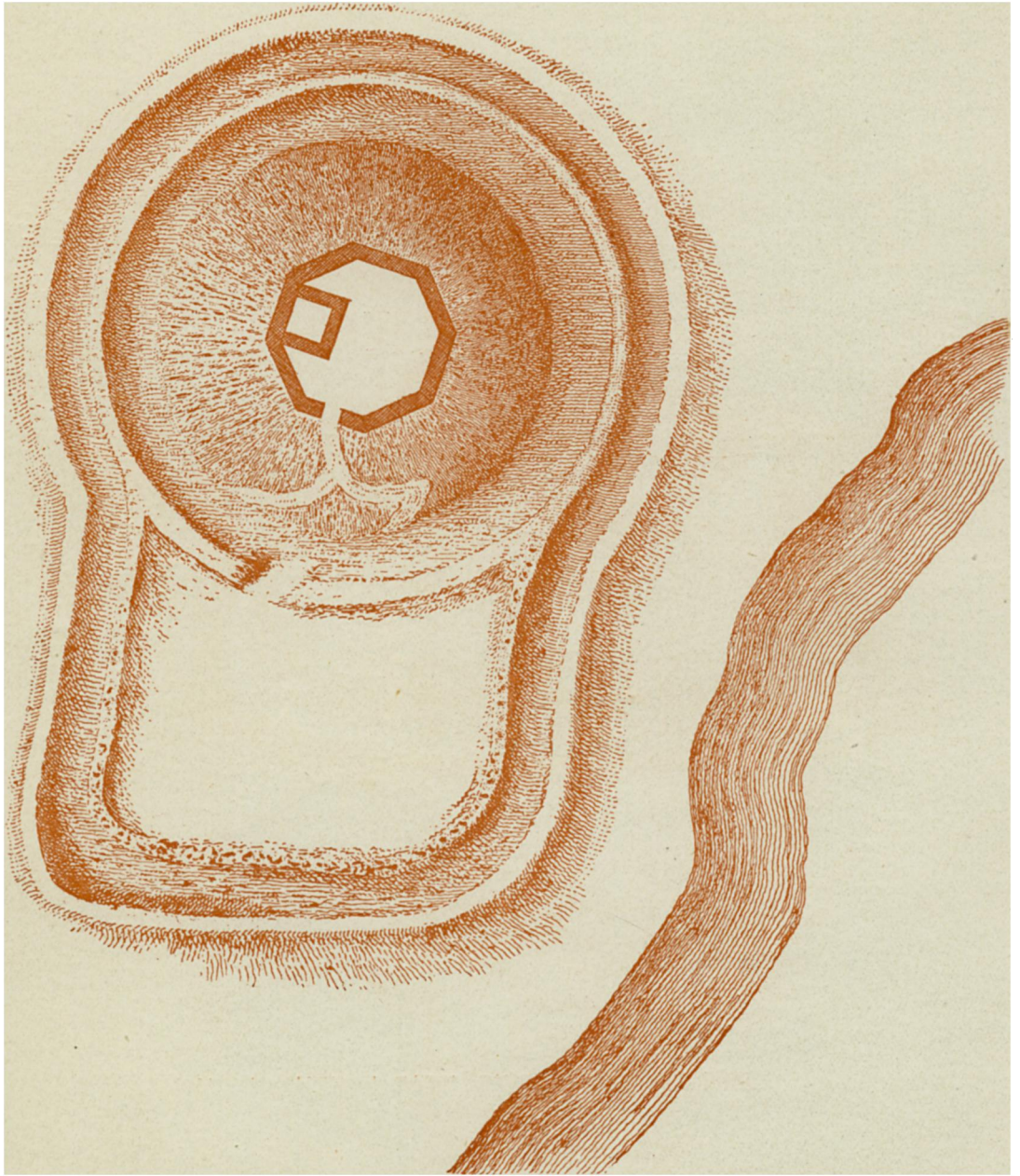
1. Ordnance Survey Letters; Co. Louth MS. R.I.A. Shirley's Monaghan, p. 99.



MOAT OF CASTLE RING, NEAR LOUTH, IN 1749.

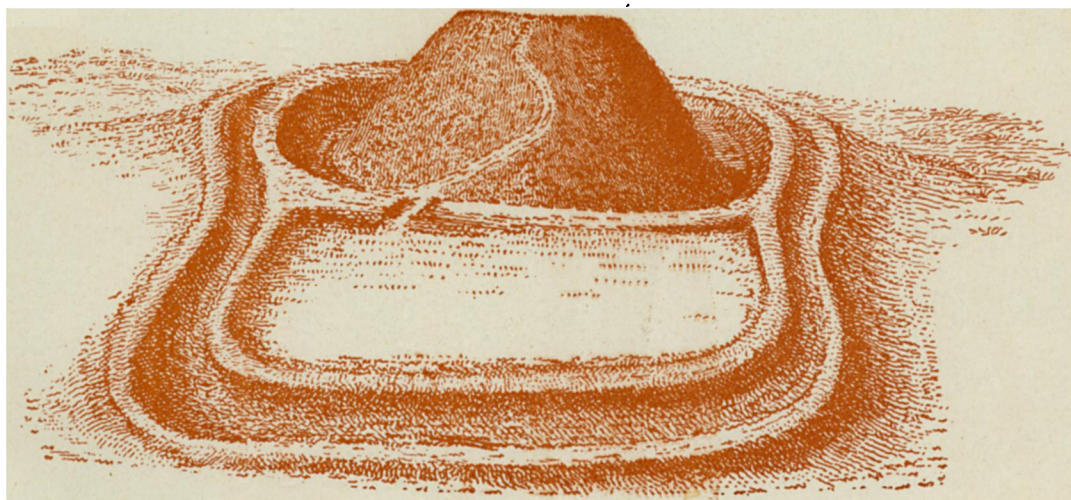
ELEVATION AND PLAN.

(Wright's Louthiana, Book I, plate XIII.)



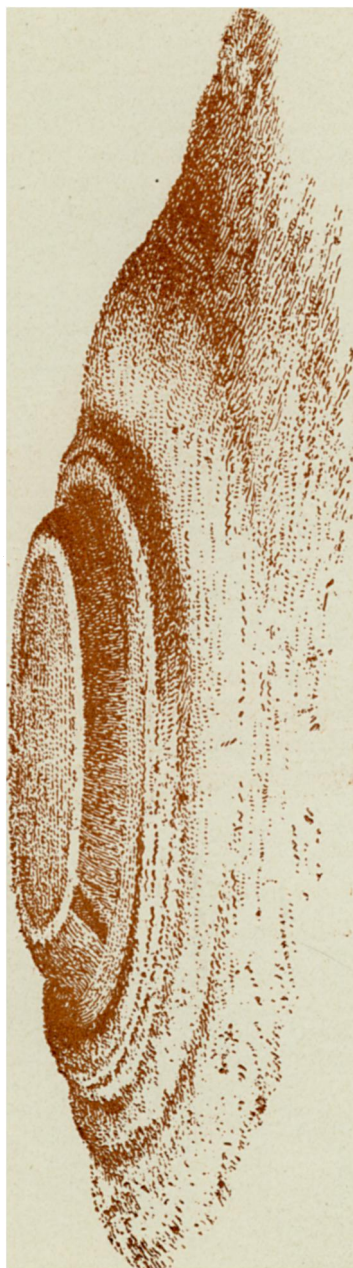
ICHTHOGRAPHY OF KILLANNY FORT, NEAR LOUTH IN 1749

(Wright's Louthiana, Book I, plate XVI.)



KILLANNY FORT, NEAR LOUTH, IN 1749.

(Wright's Louthiana, Book I, plate XV.)



“VIEW OF A FORT OR BODE UPON A RISING GROUND, NEAR BALLINAHATNEY PLAIN.”

(*Wright's Louthiana, Book I, plate I, 1749.*)

remembered a circle surrounding the cromlech south of the latter place near the river. They must have been remarkable enough remains in Wright's time.

It is almost impossible to attempt to identify the fort above-mentioned. By the drawing it is an ordinary ring with one fosse and the remnants of an outer one. There is shown what apparently is an entrance through the very much lowered rampart of the innermost and highest circle.

One fort whose position would suit the description was excavated and the earth used to form the railway embankment. Its position was at the north end of a peculiarly shaped field of Anthony Byrne's, in Faughart townland, adjoining the embankment on the east and just to the north of Whitemills Bridge (often called the "Long Bridge"). There is nothing now to be seen except a ditch, 10 feet high or more at that end of the field. The Irish name of the fort was *Uor a' rothar*—"Fort of Light." It is upon rising ground and quite close to Ballinattina plain.

There is a group of forts further to the west, beyond the railway, but it seems likely that Wright would have mentioned the group when picturing one of them, especially as they lie so close to each other. Mr. Michael Byrne, of Clanbrassil-st., Dundalk, who lived for a long time near the fort, remembers it being cleared away, and gave me the Irish name. He says he made careful enquiry for Rev. Fr. Lawless and racked his memory, but could find no trace of the stone circles nor of any other fort which would agree with the description Wright gives.

H. G. T.

CASTLE RING MOAT.

In that portion of Mr. John Bolton's land which lies north of the main road from Dundalk to Carrickmacross there is a ridge—or as it would be termed in Irish a "Drom" running north-west. It ends abruptly in a marsh close by the river Fane, and here the moat of Castlering is built. Viewed from the south, the point from which the accompanying photo was taken, the impression as of a section is made, the outer embankment and intervening enclosed space is dug away leaving sheer depth. From the north-west, the point from which Wright's drawings were made, we have in the foreground the marsh, and close under the fort a mill-race which winds round the enclosure for almost one-third its circumference. It is therefore on this side unchanged since Wright's day. From the normal level of the mill-race there is a rise of about 21 feet, then a flat surface, which, measured across to the bottom of the mound is at its widest point about 17 yards and at other points thirteen, ten and nine variously. Wright's drawing (*Fig. 1*) shows an inner fosse carried right round; this evidently has been filled by levelling into it portion of the outer embankment, so the original accommodation of the enclosure was more meagre than present appearances would suggest. The circumference at the base of the mound is 115 yards, the slope is 13 yards high and the flat surface on the top gives an area of about 150 square yards. Traces of stone building are visible still, but give no idea of the plan. However, Wright (*Fig. 11*) supplies the evidence of an octagonal structure built flush with the edge of the mound. This building therefore would have been more spacious than Dunmahon Castle.

Mr. Orpen, in the R.S.A.I. Journal, September, 1908, brings to light that this place was otherwise known as Castlefranc,¹ which name he rightly concludes associates it with the Normans: "The Castle of the French."

In 1234 King Henry III commanded "Maurice Fitzgerald justiciar to cause seisin to be given to Richard Carbonel of the land of Castlefranc extended at 40s. which he held when Richard de Burgh was justiciary (1227-29) and whereof he was disseised by Maurice."²

In 1256 the Manor of Lowethe and Castlefranc was granted to Geoffrey de Lusignan. Forty years later he was deprived of these because "he was in ligeance with the king of France," and the issues of Castlefranc were accounted for at the Irish Exchequer.³ They were restored to him in 1300, and during the period he was dispossessed, John de Somersete account⁴ shows he was "allowed £30 as a fee for custody of castle and various sums paid to men to defend it from the hostile Irish, including 40s. paid to ⁵Obren MacMahon to defend it against the Irish." In the 1908 issue of the Co. Louth Archæological Journal, p. 84, speaking of Inniskeen tombstones, I wrote: "a third (stone) gives almost a life history of the Rev. Brian MacMahon, who was born at Castlering (1736), educated at Louth and Antwerp, and died a Canon of the Archdiocese of Dublin in his eightieth year. Did this important family once own Castlering as its headquarters?" Mr. Orpen's diligence has, at anyrate, revealed their paternal interest in it as far back as 1300 A.D.

S. O'C.

¹ Chan. Inquis. Louth, 4 Jac. I., 49 Car. I., "*Maneria de Louth et Castlering aliter Castlefranke.*"

² C.D.I., Vol. I., 2127. Cf. No. 1664.

³ Pipe Roll, 29 Ed. I., 38th Ref. D.K.R., p. 53.

⁴ C.D.I., Vol. V., No. 143.

⁵ O'Byrne MacMahon. This is an interesting example of the black-rent paid by the Palesmen to the Irish chieftains.

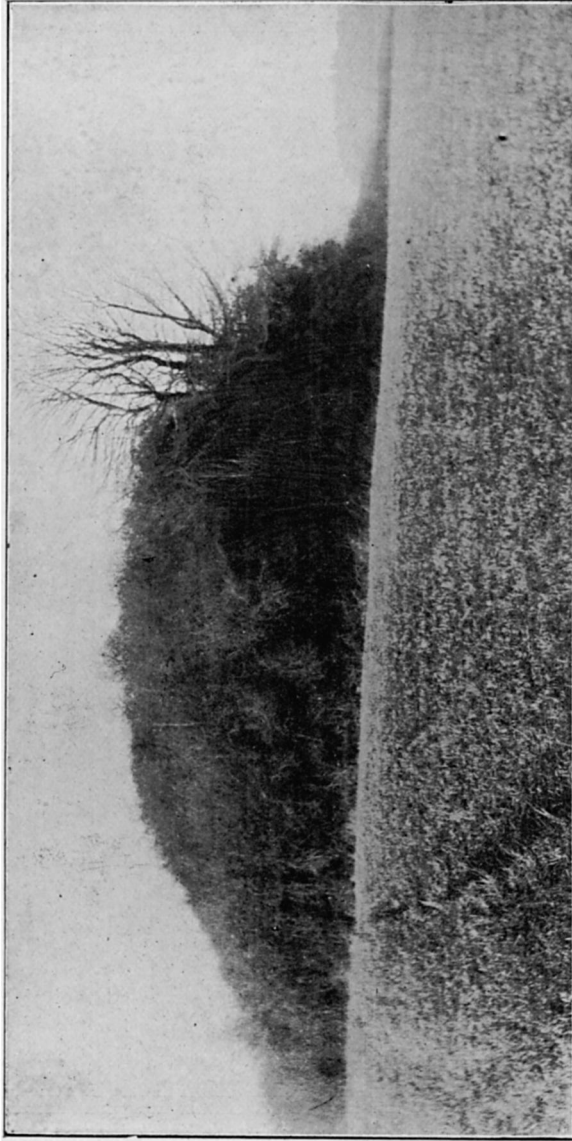


Photo by]

KILLANNY MOAT IN 1911.
(From the East.)

[Rev. Jas. Quinn

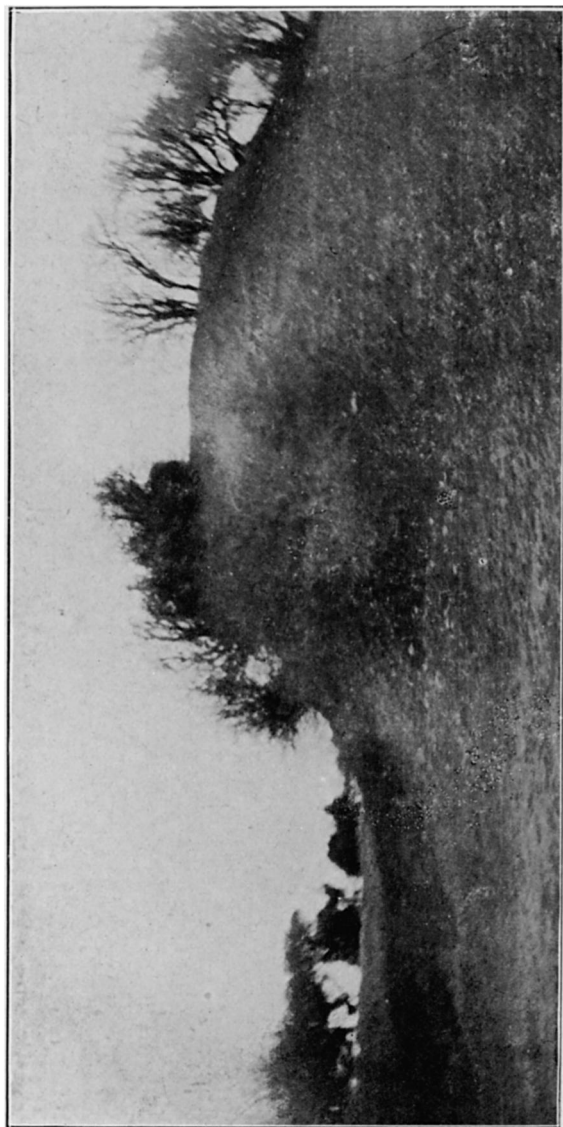


Photo by]

MOAT OF CASTLERING IN 1911.
(From the South.)

[Rev. Jas. Quinn