

SHESKIN IS TOWNLAND OF MCTERNAN'S
 MCTERNAN'S ARE BURIED AT THE ABBEY OF CREEVELEA

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clan are inscribed on the base of the chalice with the date 1596. These two members are Sorley Buidhe MacDonnell and his eldest son and successor, James MacDonnell, the donor of the chalice. It was given to the Third Order Franciscan Friary of Bonamargy (one mile east of Ballycastle) where both are buried, the father in January 1590, and the son in 1601. We are fortunate to have a letter written in his own hand by James MacDonnell from Dunluce on 13 October 1599 to Albert, Archduke of Austria, requesting him to ascertain what forces Philip III of Spain was prepared to send to Ireland to fight for the Holy See. The writer commenced his letter with the very title on the Cloonclare chalice: '*Jacobus filius Sorlini Flay: Mac Donnail*,' i.e., 'James son of Sorley Buidhe MacDonnell'.
 How this historic chalice, or at least the part of it which holds the MacDonnell inscription, came into the possession of the Church of Ireland parish of Cloonclare (Manorhamilton) is the subject of the following enquiry.

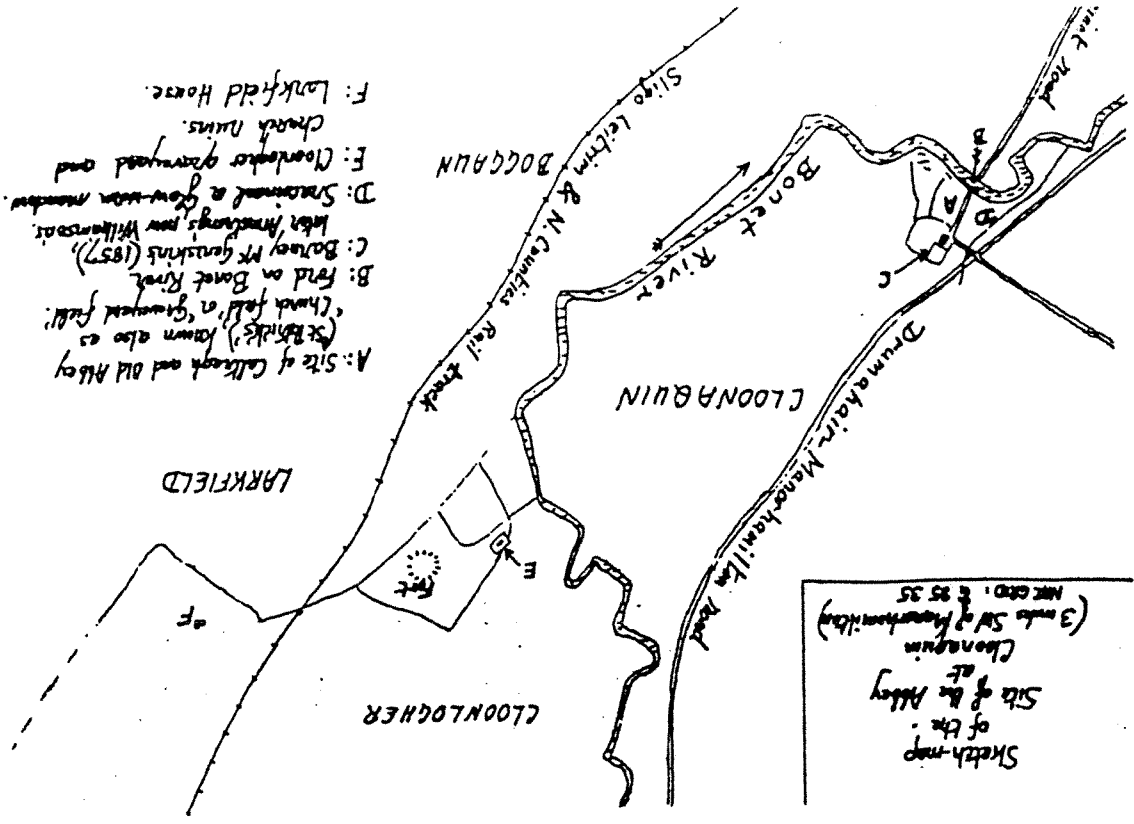
The Chalice and the Abbey at Cloonaquin

In 1907 Rev. Charles Comey, curate of Cloonclare, Manorhamilton, found in the former St Clare's Chapel, then used as a classical school, a quantity of books and papers which remained over from an auction of the effects of Rev. Stephen McTernan, PP, Killasnett, who had died in April 1906, aged 85, having been pastor there since 1888. Father Stephen was interested in historical matters and in gaelic literature for which he was made a member of the Royal Irish Academy. Among the items in the unsold collection was a tattered copybook which contained a sort of curriculum vitae of Fr Stephen himself, in which he mentioned that he was a teenage youth when the Cloonclare chalice was found in the late 1830s in a pile of stones believed to be the remains of a monastery. The site was in the townland of Cloonaquin, close to a ford on the Bonet River, not too far from Sheskin in the parish of Killargue, where the McTernan family resided. Cloonaquin was in the ancient parish of Cloonlogher, now included in the Catholic parish of Drumlease (also called Drumahair), Co. Leitrim. The chalice had apparently been kept in a wall-press in the 'Abbey' whose collapse left a pile of stones.

That a religious foundation existed at one time on the site in question is absolutely certain. On Larkin's map of Co. Leitrim, drawn in 1812 and engraved in 1819, Cloonaquin 'Abbey' is clearly shown on the west bank of the Bonet River. On the east bank Cloonlogher 'ruined Church' and 'Larkfield' (the seat of the O'Donnells) are also clearly indicated. What precise kind of religious institution, and when exactly it flourished, is an extremely complex problem to which conflicting answers have been given.

5 *Archivium Hibernicum*. III, pp. 236-37.

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 ON THE LOCATION OF THE COPY BOOK - THANKS FOR
 ANY HELP M.M.



- A: Site of College and old Abbey (X-Bridges), known also as 'Church field' or 'Gravelly field'
- B: Ford on Bonet River
- C: Boundary of Grants (1857)
- D: Stranmillis, now Williams' Mill
- E: Cloonlogher graveyard and Church ruins
- F: Larkfield House

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