



BANAGHER AND BOVEAGH CHURCHES

Ulster-Scots Translation

BANAGHER AN BOVEVAGH KIRKS

Coontie Lunnonderrie

BANAGHER

Tha Stellin

Monie airle kirks wus stellit weel-forrit oan brae-heids an Banagher stanns oan a glacial brae, noo pairt quarrelt awa fur sann an channer. Tha heicht faas noarth-wast tae tha glen o tha Owenrigh wattèr as tae tha sooth-aist an sooth ye'll can sicht tha heicher muntainy airts o Magheramore an tha Sperrins. The mair tha steid micht noo hae tha cast o bein ootlann, lek monie a kirk it wus stellit oan a set o wecht athin tha airle wabwark o gates, nixt tha gates rinnin noarth an sooth inbae tha Owenrigh an Owenbeg wattèrs an jist twa mile sooth o tha heid aist-wast gate throch Dungiven.

Historie

Banagher's scribev historie stairts in a randie gate wi a towmond scrow in 1121: tha 'käng o Ciannacht wus fell't wi his ain kynn in tha mids o tha kirkyaird o *Bennchar*'. We dinnae ken whar tha kirk wus jist new stellit syne ur lang set. Auld fernyeirs hereawa recks o't as yin o St Petèrick's steidins in tha airt o tha Faughan wattèr, an tha mason at cairved tha lettèrs oan tha wast dorr in tha 17 an 30s – 'This kirk wus biggit in ye yeir o Guid 474' – shairly thocht it wus steidit wi St Petèrick.

Auld fernyeirs hereawa recks tha boadie at stellit it wus St Muiredach O'Heney (Ó hEanagh), bot he's no mintit at in onie airle scrows an the dinnae e'en gie hes patròn day. Faut o onie ither pruif, it's likelie tha maist siccar tae reck o Banagher as a hinnèr-enn o tha 11t- ur fore-enn o tha 12t centurie steidin, aiblins unnèr tha maun o tha poustie MacLochlainn kängs. Bae tha hameart wye o't St Muiredach wus wisit wi a steg tae tha stellin frae anither kirk, noo a weethin wrackit, in Templemoyle, hauf a mile tae tha noarth-wast, aiblins a kirk stellin frae afore thon.

Thar's mintin o *Bencarre* as a pairish kirk in a 13 an 06 cess scrow an in 13 an 97 it wus walit fur yin o Aircbishop Colton's howffs throch hes veesit tae Derrie diocese. Ye'r gien wittins o him set afore tha heich altàr jidgin causes thar, an frae Banagher he gaed tae Dungiven furtae sain tha kirkyaird, fyled wi tha skailin o bluid. It's in tha swey-swaw tha siccar date quhan tha kirk wus orra fur tha furst, bot it wus wrackit bae 16 an 22, quhaniver the haed a scance o tha kirks, tae cum tae fowk's tent agane wi tha antiquaarians leukin tha gate o't in tha 19t centurie, quhaniver Bishop Reeves awnt it fur tha maist namelie o aa tha kirk-airtit wracks at staps in tha diocese. Tha wrack gaed intae tha aucht o Lede Tent frae tha Kirk Gear-hannlin Bailzies in 18 an 80. Throch tha 19 an 70s tha kirk wus screenged oot an wus gien a fu hainin darg.

Tha Dwallin-hoose

Jist ootbye tha yett o tha kirkyaird stanns tha laicher bät o a smaa richtang'lar biggin, at's kent frae 19t-century pictèrs fur a thie-flair tooer wi narra wundaes an a dorr at tha heicht o tha furst flair (tha grunn flair thenoo wusnae tha wye o't at tha furst). Kent in a hameart gate as tha Dwallin-hoose ur tha Abbey, the trow at thon's quhaur St Muiredach compeared afore tha fowk ur, mair hamelt-like, a dwallin-hoose. Quhit's maist kittle tae be tha redin is at this wus a stieve-hoose, siccar aisements fur tha rectòr an tha guids an gear o tha kirk, gye an like tha pele toors o Northumberland, bot the haenae shire pruif o its tid. Tha pictèr abune kythes quhit-like tha Dwallin-hoose wus in 18 an 38.

Tha Kirk

Tha auldest pairt bes tha **nave**, a hamelt richtang'l 35½ bae 20 fit inbye, at stuid alane in tha fore-enn o its day, wi nae chauncel. Tha pad frae tha kirkyaird yett wises tae tha wast dorr, at wus straucht-heidit ootbye, wi sidelins cheeks, tha apen boorach'd roon wi a muckle owercappin brace wi rind mooldins tentlie feckit. Inbye tha baak o tha gret muckle dorr-heid is apen wi a hauf-roon erch boorach'd roon. The mair this dorr's auldrife in its oweraa cast, tha feckin o't's gye an skeelie, an it redelins gaes baak tae tha furst hauf o tha 12t century, quhilk maun be tha tid o tha hale nave. Thar's jist tha twa o a near swatch tae tha dorr, at Maghera jist 12 mile awa an at Aghowle in tha coontie Wicklow.

Tha smaa sooth wundae is roon-heidit, ootbye happit wi a dorr-piece o a by-ordnar flet mooldin (o tha yin swatch wi yin at Dungiven nearhaun), an inbye richt splaa'ed oot wi a stieve sidelins stuil. Baith tha dorr an tha wundae kythes qwathie boles, a feck o thaim o tha steidin an anither feck claught wi fesnins, bot quhit tha pyke inbye tha dorr cheek wus fur bes a richt pall yit. At the furst tha nave wud hae haed an aist wundae, bot quhaniver tha chauncel wus eikit tha aist waa wus riven sindèrie an a chauncel erch wus inpit tae tha gaw. Tha steids o tha erch steys yit.

Tha **chauncel** mizhures inbye 20¾ bae 14-16¼ fit an it haed thie wundaes tae tha aist, noarth an sooth. Yin cheek is haudin o tha noarth wundae, lowse stanes frae tha aist, an tha sooth is hale, booracht roon inbye an ootbye wi braw eident rowe mooldins. Thir's a mairk o tha athort-gaein cheyngae frae Romanesque tae Gothic biggin-plonnin an the'll can gie tha tid o tha Banagher wundae as 12 an 10 tae 12 an 25 frae tha mak o't. Aist o tha wundae is a stappit neuk, booracht roon wi mooldins tha like o thir yins, at's shairlie a swatch o tha chauncel frae tha furst – nae doot thon's a **sedile**, a hab fur tha priest haudin tha diet o warschip. Ootbye tha aist neuks o tha chauncel is din ower wi steekit shanks wi whuttlet heids, sair forfairn wi tha wather bot wi queefs o plents an bastes at compluthers wi tha tid o tha fore-enn o tha 13t century.

Tha stappin o tha sedile wus tha owercum o thoch-gaun replenishin o tha aist enn o tha chauncel in tha 15t century, at the daednae jalouse frae scievit wittins bot kythed wi screengin in tha 19 an 70s. Tha swatches is pit doon oan oor rede, bot the'r happit fur acause tha sannstane is byous saft an bruckle an wudnae thole wi bein lang furth. A wee smaa chaummer wus divid aff at tha aist enn furtae sair as a sacristie, fur buskin an giein a pose fur tha reikin o tha diet o warschip. Tha altàr stuid agane tha sacristie waa wi tha dorr tae tha sacristie oan its sooth side. Ahinn tha altàr, apen tae tha sacristie, wus a bole fur saunts' banes (St Muiredach's?) an thar's anither aumrie ye'll can see yit in tha aist waa. Oor biggin-airtit wut anent fettlin fur tha diet o warschip in pairish kirks i' tha hinnèr-enn o tha mädde ages is gye an scrimpit an we ken tha guid o this pruif furtae gie tha lave o tha wittins. Ootbye tha kirk, namelie tae tha sooth an wast, tak tent o tha depth o tha mool at's bänged up frae it wus biggit, fur tha maist feck tha owercum o tha happin o kynn throch tha yeirs.

Ither Swatches

Inbye an roon aboot tha kirkyaird is a wheen o smaa-whuttled heidstanes an thrughs, a wee reuch cross aist o tha kirk an a saiconn yin athort tha gate tae tha noarth-wast, oan tha reenge o the toonlann. Tha hameart wittins is thir yins is twa o five at langsyne gien wut o tha mairches o

kirk lann. Forbye, the cud hae kythed tha maurch o *termon* lann, quhaur boadies cud hae gane tae scog thairsel. Jist oobyie tha kirkyaird waa, aist-noarth-aist o tha kirk, is a muckle stane weel scobed oot, an fur ordnar fu o wattèr. This is a **bullau stane** (tha like o tha yin at Dungiven), scobit oot wi lang uise as a knockin-stane fur champin mate ur fother.

Biryal Hooses

Sooth-aist o tha kirk is a wee steidin at maun haud ur hap tha maist braw o Banagher's deid – in tha hamelt wittins, St Muiredach O'Heney (pictèr oan tha happin). It is o tha yin tid wi tha chauncel, an micht hae bin biggit furtae intak banes pit ajee wi tha eikin o tha chauncel. Tha steidin taks o a wee-bouk kirk ur hoose, o tentilie med stane, wi a bordèrt flatch oan tha wast gavel kythin a kirk boadie, skaithit bot aiblins wi a crummick an a hann uphauden furtae sain. Tha kirk kent tha muckle guid o a saunt's banes, fur acause the inbrocht tha pilgrims an siller, an tha wecht o tha Banagher banes is hauden yit in tha aye-bidin threap anent 'Banagher sann'. Sann frae ablow tha lair haes aye bin trowed tae inbräng sonse tae O'Heney yins; in tha fore-enn o tha 19t centurie ilka faimlie haed a pose o tha sann aboot thaim. The threap anent tha feck o't e'en in tha hannlin o kempin tha naigs!

Tha Banagher 'hoose' is tha maist forritsum o a wee Ulstèr curn o biryal hooses, quhase boun is frae Doon tae Dunnygal. Tha patròn at BOVEVAGH is howffed in a weel-forrit airt, nixt tha sooth-wast neuk o tha kirk. The mair it's mair wrackit nor tha Banagher 'hoose', its fettlin inbye is mair shire. At tha aist enn a wee hann-bore gies an ingang tae tha heid enn o a bole tha mak o a corp, brustit noo, bot at tha furst redelins hale booracht roon barrin tha hann-bore. It wus a prattick fur ordnar o tha kirk langsyne furtae lat an ingang tae banes thawye fowk cud ken tha guid o awnin straucht ur sidelins throch dauds o claith at haed cum agane tha banes. Tha Bovevagh 'hoose' bis o redd wi a stane sclatit riggin an inlaiks swatches at wud gie a yeir bot ye cud jalouse tha 12t centurie.



BOVEVAGH

Bovevagh kirk is stellit oan a stieve neb abune tha Bovevagh wattèr, a burn-grain o tha Roe, ten mile noarth o Banagher an 6 mile noarth o Dungiven, athin sicht o tha muntains o Ben Bradagh and Craiggore. It's caa'ed thonwye frae *Both Maeve*, tha hoose ur kirk o Maeve. This maun be an auld monastic steidin, bot tha furst scrievit wittins o't is in 1100 quhaniver its timmer kirk (*dertech*) wus wrackit in a bleeze. E'en its patròn is dootsum: hereawa it's likent wi St Ringan, at's ense no kennt, bot yins haes awnt forbye wi trockins wi Petèrick, Columba, Adamnan an Aidan sin o Fintan. Throch tha medieval tid this wus tha parish kirk, wrackit bae 16 an 22 bot replenisht an aiblins yaised tae tha fore-enn o tha 19t centurie, quhaniver the flittit tae a mair hantie stellin tae tha aist.

Tha airliest swatch bis tha biryal hoose, o quhilk ye hae a pictèr hereawa an at's descreevit

aareadie. Tha kirk bis a richtang'lar huil wi reuch gaws fur wundaes, an it inlaiks tha mooldins an ither makkins at fowk yaises furtae gie a yeir fur biggins. It's shire frae tha sailrie clootit an cheyngit mak o't at it's lang yaised: tha lave o tha aist wundae micht cud be as auld as tha 13t centurie an tha wast as newlins biggit as tha 18t. Tha swatches taks in tha perr o wee aumries in tha aist waa, oan ayther cheek quhaur tha altàr yuist tae stann, an tha plain steid sklent o tha waas ootbye, furtae gie siccariness, namelie quhaur tha heicht faas tha maist stey-wise tae tha wattèr.

Mair Raidin D. M. Wattèrman in Ulster J. Archaeol. 23 (19 an 60) anent biryal hooses an anent Banagher in Ulster J. Archaeol. 39 (19 an 76).

Ither Kirks i' tha Tent o tha Lede bis Dungiven an Maghera. Ye'll can hae sicht o ither biryal hooses at Saul, i' tha coontie Doon, Tamlaghtard, i' tha coontie Lunnonderrie an Moville, i' tha coontie Dunnygal.

Innin Banagher at gräd nummer C6750666 is aisie wun til wi tha gate frae noarth ur sooth-wast; Bovevagh at gräd nummer C667141 is wun til wi sweein tae tha wast frae B192 (Limavadie-Dungiven) gate. Aisie pit thegither wi a veesit tae Dungiven Priorie at C692083.