

Barry, Edmond

by Helen Andrews

Barry, Edmond (1837–1900), priest and antiquarian, was born 7 March 1837 in Midleton, Co. Cork, elder son and second of three children of Edmond Barry, gentleman of Birch Hill and Midleton, and Mary Anne Barry (née Murphy). He was educated in the seminary at Midleton and at St Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, where he became a Dunboyne scholar. Returning to Co. Cork after ordination, he was appointed chaplain in Youghal, and curate successively at Aghada, Mitchelstown, and Youghal. As parish priest (1886–1900) in Rathcormac, Co. Cork, he encouraged his parishioners to buy their holdings under the land purchase acts and was a strong advocate of abstinence from alcohol.

One of the earliest authorities on ogham inscriptions (his interest having been kindled as a student), he made it a lifelong study; he published articles in several journals on ogham stones in Counties Cork, Kilkenny, and Waterford, and was writing a memoir at the time of his death. A member (1882), fellow (1888), and Munster vice-president of the RSAI, he served on its publications committee and assisted in the standardisation of Irish names and placenames for the society's publications. A founding member (1892), committee member, and contributor to the *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, he wrote several articles (1899–1902) on the history and genealogy of the Barry family, later published as *Barrymore: record of the Barrys of County Cork from the earliest to the present time* (1902). Elected MRIA (1886), learned, and with a great knowledge of Irish literature, he catalogued and arranged the valuable library of Maurice Kenefick (his predecessor as parish priest of Rathcormac), which contained a variety of works including manuscripts, historical works in Irish, sacred and political poetry, and genealogical accounts of leading Irish and Anglo-Norman families, which he deposited (1888) in St Colman's College library, Fermoy, Co. Cork. His brother, James Barry, MD, served as a surgeon major in the British army in several countries of the empire and was subsequently appointed JP in British Honduras (Belize). Barry died 23 May 1900 at Rathcormac and is buried nearby in the churchyard of Bartlemy Church, which he had restored.

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*Irish Catholic Directory*, 1886, 192; *Cork Examiner*, 28 May 1900; Edmond Barry, 'Barrymore. Records of the Barrys . . . The Barrys of Rahanisky and Dundullerick', *Cork Hist. Soc. Jn.*, viii, no. 55 (July–Sept. 1902), 147; J[ames] C[oleman], 'Some past members of our society', *Cork Hist. Soc. Jn.*, xiii, no. 75 (July–Sept. 1907), 141–3

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