

**Schools' Collection material from Co. Sligo now available on [www.duchas.ie](http://www.duchas.ie)**

Folklore and local history from Co. Sligo is now available to read on [www.duchas.ie](http://www.duchas.ie).

The Schools' Collection, an important component of the National Folklore Collection, UCD, contains the folklore material recorded by pupils between 1937 and 1939. It consists of over 500,000 pages of material recorded by around 50,000 pupils in more than 5,000 schools in the 26 counties.

A significant portion of the Schools' Collection will be available online in a new repository of Irish folklore, dúchas.ie, before the end of 2016. Folklore material from Dublin, Mayo, Donegal, Waterford, Galway, Leitrim, Kildare and Kerry has already been made available on the site since the end of 2013. dúchas.ie is the result of a partnership, beginning in 2012, between the National Folklore Collection (UCD), Fiontar (DCU) and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

The site will be of interest to a great many Irish people and to the Irish diaspora. For specialist researchers in the fields of folkloristics, local history, archaeology, genealogy, linguistics, and a range of other disciplines, dúchas.ie offers considerable research potential. The site can currently be searched by place or by person, and a search facility according to topic will be made available in the near future.

Almost 150 schools in Sligo took part in the scheme and 34 large volumes of material were compiled.

The Minister of State for Gaeltacht Affairs, Joe McHugh, TD, said, 'This is yet another important step in this innovative project as material relating to traditional life in Ireland in years past will be made available to the general public. This new material will enable researchers and many others to contrast life as it is today and life as it was over 80 years ago.'

The site dúchas.ie is developed by Fiontar, the Irish-medium teaching and research unit in DCU, and the National Folklore Collection in UCD, one of the largest folklore collections in the world. The project is jointly financed by UCD and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht with support from the National Lottery.

The Digital Repository of Ireland acts in an advisory role in the work of dúchas.ie relating to standards and interoperability in digital archiving.

ENDS

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Notes for the editor:

Sligo people had many customs and superstitions long ago; customs relating to the weather or certain days were particularly prominent.

Of course, there were no cars at that time, and on wedding days, just after the couple left the church, people from [Ahamlish](#) were known to ride to the bride's house on horseback as quickly as possible - there was a [glass of whiskey](#) ready and waiting for the first one to reach the house! Read up on the [Strawboys](#) (or the *Cleithri* as they were also known) as well as other interesting customs: [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Customs surrounding wakes were also widespread. Some of the games played included *My Nine Daughters* and *Catching the Goat*. Read about these games and more [here](#).

Another custom to be found in [Cliffony](#) was the custom of *Mummers* - this involved a group of ten people dressed up in strange clothes, masks and old tattered hats. Similar to the tradition of the *wren boys*, the *Mummers* went from house to house dancing, singing songs and playing music. The following is a verse they used to sing:

Here comes I wee Paddy Clout  
With the wrong side of his shirt turned out  
Money I want, and money I crave  
If you don't give me money I will sweep  
you all away to the grave.

*The May Queen* was another custom alive and well at the time. Read more on this custom and the *Mummers* by following this [link](#). Read about *Bríghid Óg* [here](#) with further customs to be found at the following links: [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

As regards the weather, the people of Ahamlish believed that a red sky over [Garrison](#) was an indication of impending strong winds. Here is another piece of weather-lore:

No matter how good the morning may be  
if Benbulbin wears its "white cap" (of mist)  
the day will be showery.

Find more weather-lore [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

It is hard to miss certain notable places on a visit to Sligo town. Benbulbin, of course, is one such place and you can read [here](#) about the wild boar that killed Diarmaid and Gráinne's lamentful howl that can still be heard in the area to this day. There is a cairn on Knocknarea to the west of the town, Maeve the Queen of Connaught's grave according to this [story](#). There is also an [account](#) of the battles that took place in Moytirra when the Tuatha Dé Danann beat the Fir Bolg and, subsequently, the Fomorians.

There are tens of thousands of stories to be discovered on [dúchas.ie](#), not only customs and superstitions but a wide-range of other topics including but not limited to - [seanfhocail](#) [old sayings], [songs](#), [patron saints](#), [the good people](#) [fairy-lore], [strange happenings](#), [cures](#) [at times amusing to our modern sensibilities] etc.