

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

Folklore and local history from Co. Kildare 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, [duchas.ie](http://duchas.ie), before the end of 2016. Folklore material from Dublin, Mayo, Donegal, Waterford, Galway, Leitrim and Kerry has already been made available on the site since the end of 2013. [duchas.ie](http://duchas.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, [duchas.ie](http://duchas.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 60 schools in Kildare took part in the scheme and 11 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 [duchas.ie](http://duchas.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 [duchas.ie](http://duchas.ie) and on standards and interoperability in digital archiving.

ENDS

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Notes for the editor:

County Kildare is closely associated with Saint Brigid and this is highlighted by the fact that both Kildare Town and County are named after her monastic settlement. This association is plain to see from the material collected in Kildare during the course of the Schools' Collection. For example, there is an account of the [origin of Kildare town](#) and its connection with Brigid in the material collected from the Presentation Convent in the town as well as this [story](#) which tells of the trick she played on the King of Leinster, which led to the foundation of the Curragh Plains.

Saint Brigid's day is celebrated on the 1st of February every year, and to this day Saint Brigid's crosses are made in homes and schools across the county around this time of year. [This story](#) from Rathangan gives us an insight into many of the customs and practises that were observed on St Brigid's day in years gone by.

Dan Donnelly, the 19th century boxer, is a character whose memory lives on amongst the people of Kildare (despite the fact that he was a Dubliner) to this day through the place name Donnelly's Hollow. The trace of footprints can still be seen at Donnelly's Hollow, and it is said they are the mark of Donnelly's footprints as he made his way down to the ring for his famous victory against the Englishman Cooper. Two students from the Christian Brothers School in Naas give accounts of that fight, [here](#) and [here](#).

The Bog plays a central role in life in large parts of the western half of the county, but [this story](#) from the school in Skerries would have us believe that turf was even used as building material in that area. On top of that, [this story](#) about an ancient shoe that was discovered in the Bog near Carbury proves that turf isn't the only thing to be found in the bog.

The rising of 1798 is one of the most important events in the history of Kildare and there is no shortage of stories about that eventful period in the in the Schools' Collection including [this account](#) of the Battle of Rathangan and the fate of rebel leader John Doorley and [this description](#) of the infamous event which took place at the Gibbet Rath.

The vast majority of the material collected in Kildare is in English, however there are some examples of lists of Irish words that were still in use in the English spoken at that time. Just a couple of good examples of such lists are these from [Milltown](#) and [Ballymore Eustace](#). There are also a number of lists of Place Names, but [this one](#), showing the unofficial place names of the townland of Suncroft, stands out with its comprehensive explanations and neat drawings.