

### **English-language folklore material now available for transcription on dúchas.ie**

The public have been transcribing Irish-language material from the Schools' Collection on dúchas.ie as part of Meitheal Dúchas.ie, a voluntary online transcription project, since its launch in early 2015. Now all of the English-language material is also being made available to the public for transcription.

There are currently over 200,000 pages of folklore and local history on dúchas.ie recorded by primary school students in the 1930s. This includes content from Dublin, Mayo, Donegal, Waterford, Galway, Leitrim, Kerry, Kildare, Laois, Sligo, Limerick, Monaghan and Kilkenny. Further counties are being added to the site on a regular basis, with the aim that material gathered from all 26 counties which took part in the Schools' Collection will be available on dúchas.ie by the end of the year.

Users of dúchas.ie are being invited to transcribe the stories that were collected as part of the Schools' Collection. It is hoped that this work will increase community participation in the project and that it will also improve accessibility of the material. This will result in the ability to search the text of transcribed stories in their entirety as opposed to viewing the manuscripts as images only.

Meitheal Dúchas.ie was officially launched by Joe McHugh TD, Minister of State for the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in April 2015. Since it was launched, Meitheal Dúchas.ie has transcribed almost 10,000 pages in Irish and a similar number in English with thanks to the public in Ireland and abroad.

[You can log in or register here](#), and see the latest statistics [here](#). We will keep members of the Meitheal informed of progress by [email](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), and on the [projects blog](#).

ENDS

For more information, contact Clare Coughlan ([clare.coughlan@dcu.ie](mailto:clare.coughlan@dcu.ie), (01) 700 6577).

Notes for the editor:

### **dúchas.ie**

dúchas.ie is the culmination of a joint project which began in 2012 between the National Folklore Collection in UCD; Fiontar, a teaching and research unit in Dublin City University which runs its academic programmes through Irish; and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Digital Repository Ireland also has a role in the project, as an advisor to dúchas.ie regarding standards and operability in digital archiving. The current project, which will run until the end of 2016, is being funded by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht with support from the National Lottery.

This partnership has three objectives: 1) to digitise the content of the National Folklore Collection, starting with the Schools' Collection (folklore and local tradition compiled by primary school pupils between 1937 and 1939) 2) to give the public access to that content and 3) to create a content management system for the Collection.

dúchas.ie is an invaluable resource for those who have an interest in local history, archaeology, genealogy, linguistics and other research areas. Subjects covered include professions, riddles and proverbs, prayers, games and pastimes, and local history, amongst others. You can search the collection by place or by person; a new search by topic will be launched soon. There is also a collection of Irish surnames on the site.

### **Meitheal Dúchas.ie**

dúchas.ie is taking a huge leap forward and is inviting members of the public to transcribe the material on the site, on a voluntary basis. This includes stories and content in the English language, as well as Irish-language material collected in the Gaeltacht and in other areas where it has since disappeared. To see what is available to transcribe visit [www.duchas.ie/en/meitheal/](http://www.duchas.ie/en/meitheal/). Transcribed text from the stories can then be published in its entirety. Currently they can only be accessed as scanned images of the handwritten pages.

Participants will have the chance to view each other's work and improve it if appropriate. Social media will provide a forum where participants can discuss the work and share tips. When the Schools' Collection was undertaken, the Irish Folklore Commission was relying on the goodwill and generosity of the community. Meitheal Dúchas.ie continues that tradition.

Meitheal Dúchas.ie is an opportunity to help with the dissemination of this valuable material and to obtain a deeper insight into the Schools' Collection. Participants will discover material relating to traditional lore, crafts, customs, prayers, local history and lots more. You don't need to be a computer expert or a linguist. There is a poster and brochure pack available to support teachers and lecturers who would like to get their students involved in this project - excellent material for a lesson plan.

### **Would you like to organise a training session in your area?**

If you are a teacher or lecturer, or if you are a member of a local history or genealogy group, we would be delighted to help you use this resource.