

Schools' Collection material from Co. Louth now available on www.duchas.ie

Folklore and local history from Co. Louth is now available on 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 half a million pages recorded by around 50,000 primary school pupils in the 26 counties.

Material from the Schools' Collection has been published on an ongoing basis on dúchas.ie since the end of 2013 and all volumes from the Collection, covering all 26 counties, will be available by the end of 2016. Folklore material from Dublin, Mayo, Donegal, Waterford, Galway, Leitrim, Kildare, Kerry, Sligo, Limerick, Monaghan, Laois and Kilkenny 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 this year.

Almost 75 schools in Co. Louth took part in the scheme and 25 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 dúchas.ie project 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:**Stories from County Louth**

'From the Drowes River to the Boyne' has been associated with the ancient territory of Ulster. Louth has always had a strong connection with Ulster which is clearly evident from [this](#) piece of native Irish that was collected as part of the Schools' Collection in the [Cooley](#) peninsula:

*'An i do chodladh atá tú, a mháthair?
Chan eadh ach ag téanamh aisling a ghrá
Goidé an aisling é, a mháthair
Tá go bhfaca mé fear caol dubh...'*

There are other snatches of Irish to be found in volumes from the north of the county, several [prayers](#) from Omeath for example along with the song [Seán Ó Daoighre](#) that was collected on the [Armagh](#) border in [Creggan](#) parish.

It is no surprise that there is so much folklore associated with the Cooley region and those majestic mountains. Fionn Mac Cumhail used to frequent the area, it seems, and he was certainly not pleased when he saw an opponent opposite on the [Mourne Mountains](#). Read several accounts [here](#) and [here](#) of how he threw a stone at him - [Cloughmore](#) (An Chloch Mhór), that can still be seen to this day.

While Fionn's achievements were still spoken of, Cú Chulainn, the Ulster hero, was not forgotten either. Read [here](#) how he tied himself to a stone - [Cloughfarmore](#) - and how he fought his enemies until death.

[Long Woman's Grave](#), a megalithic tomb in the Cooley mountains is very well known, and this [story](#) tells how a local man met a tall beautiful woman while in Spain. He enticed her back to Ireland by promising her the moon and the stars, but she dropped dead when she realised how poor he was. A song about these events was also composed and it can be read [here](#).

In terms of commemoration, 2016 is an important year for all Irish people. In Louth, however, it is especially significant as it is 200 years since the Burning of the Wildgoose Lodge in [Reaghstown](#). One of the Lynch family and his son-in-law were in the lodge one night when members of the Ribbonmen attempted to loot the house. A fight occurred and three Ribbonmen were hung due to their involvement with this event. As an act of vengeance, the house was burned to the ground with the family inside, including a young child - read more [here](#).

Among the other interesting stories, the Jumping Church of [Millockstown](#) deserves a mention. In one version of the story, that can be read [here](#), a local Protestant died and his family wanted him to be buried within the walls of this old church, even though it was a Catholic church. They succeeded in the end. The day after his burial, however, it was noticed that his grave was outside the walls. The reason for this was that the Church jumped over the grave in order to keep him out!

In terms of saint-lore, St Brigid has a strong connection with [Faughart](#) and you can read [here](#) about the origins of the St Brigid's Cross. There is a story to be found [here](#) about Brigid's stream and the power it holds. [Ardpatrick](#) is associated with Saint Patrick himself and Saint Oliver Plunkett as well. [Here](#) is a story about how he escaped English soldiers and by hiding in a tree in that area.

There are many other stories of course: legends about the [Boyne](#), like this [one](#), and this one about [Fionn and the Salmon of Knowledge](#). Of course no collection would be complete without a notorious villain - enter Cromwell. There are many stories about him to be read [here](#) and his malevolent deeds in [Drogheda](#).