

Schools' Collection material from Co. Roscommon and Co. Westmeath now available on
www.duchas.ie

Folklore and local history from Counties Roscommon and Westmeath 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, Kilkenny, Louth, Tipperary, Clare, Cavan, Longford and Meath 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.

Over 160 schools in Co. Roscommon took part in the scheme and 44 volumes of material were compiled. In Co. Westmeath, over 100 schools took part and 31 volumes of material were compiled.

The Minister of State for Gaeltacht Affairs, Seán Kyne, 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

For more information, contact Clare Coughlan

clare.coughlan@dcu.ie

(01) 700 6577



*An Roinn
Ealaíon, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta
Department of
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht*



Notes for the editor:

Stories from Co. Roscommon and Co. Westmeath

There is a wide range of material to be found in the material relating to Counties Roscommon and Westmeath from the Schools' Collection, recently published on duchas.ie.

The famous harpist Turlough O'Carolan is buried in Kilronan in Roscommon, and [this](#) story delves into his life and his connections with the county. Roscommon's connections with Irish mythology are also explored within the material, as can be seen in [this](#) story about Queen Meadhbh and the Cattle Raid of Cooley. According to the same account, Queen Meadhbh herself lived in Rathcroghan.

The Schools' Collection is a valuable resource for local historians and this is evident by [this](#) multi-coloured map showing the townlands in the parish of Kiltreevan in Co. Roscommon. Another story which shows the artistic inclinations of the people of Roscommon is this one about the different types of [churns](#) used in the Kiltreevan area.

Lough Ree straddles the border between these two counties, and it also features in the Schools' Collection. [Here](#) is a story from the Christian Brothers School in Athlone about a mermaid in the lake.

There are a number of songs written in the material from County Westmeath, among the most interesting of which is [this](#) song about the trials and tribulations of a man who was sent to Van Diemen's land.

As well as written material, there are also a number of photographs in the Westmeath material, a good example of which is the material from the boys' school in Castlepollard, which contains a lovely picture of the [main square](#) in that town as well as a picture of the nearby [Tullynally Castle](#).

Not to be outdone by their neighbours, there is also an artistic element to the Westmeath material, as can be seen in [this](#) wonderful drawing of the town seal of Mullingar. Another story from the same school gives us an insight into the [brewing industry in Mullingar](#) as it was in the 19th century. The storyteller informs us that there was a huge demand for whiskey and porter in the town at the time because it was a military town.

The above is merely a taste of the stories and folklore that is to be found within the Roscommon and Westmeath collections. The stories referred to above along with thousands more can be read now at www.duchas.ie.