

CURIOSITIES

Curious objects, structures, monuments, landmarks, sights, etc. For example, Wishing stones or "chairs," freaks of nature (i.e. grotesque rock formations)—in fact, any scene or object which may be regarded as queer, quaint or mirth-provoking. Location and description. Any story or legend to be related.

What might perhaps be considered a curiosity is an upright slender flag 45" long, 10" wide at apex and about 2" at base and averaging 4" thick, near the eastern south wall of Straide Abbey. The stone projects about 2' ft above ground, the earth being excavated at its rear enables an approximation of its full length. On the stone, by means of lightly incised lines, is the representation of a human being such as a child would draw. A circle (3½") for the head and straight lines for arms and legs. The figure is 14" long.

Although perhaps an incongruous similitude—readers familiar with the "sign of the Saint" in the novels of Leslie Chester's, will be instantly reminded of the same on viewing this stone.

CUSTOMS, PATTERNS, ETC.

Brief account of old customs, traditional cures, etc., still practised in the district. Pilgrimages to Holy Wells, Shrines, etc. Patterns.

January 1st. Many people will not pay out money.

St. Bridget's Eve. The 'bavoygs'—boys and girls who go around carrying a 'biddy' i.e. a dressed up doll. They visit each house, provide entertainment and are suitably rewarded.

May Day. Milk will not be given, but is sold. Now, especially if it falls on a Monday, will a coal be given to help light a fire. Some people refuse to part with anything on May Day.

June 23rd. "Bonfire's night." Fires lighted at night in the open. Some people throw the ashes into their crops for luck.

Hallow E'en. Entertainment for the youngsters' interests.

Pancake night—Tuesday before Lent. Pancakes made.

St. Martin's Eve. Fowl killed and its sprinkled in the four corners.

St. Stephen's Day. Green boys. Same as 'bavoygs' but often

they carry a wren in a box. The 'biddy' is not carried.

(Signed) Donal J. Faghan.

Surveyor.

DATE June 10th 1924.

Deaths

Funeral takes the largest route to the graveyard.

The gravedigger places shovel and spade in front of a cross over the open grave and they remain so until interment.

The chairs on which a coffin sits are tipped over as soon as the coffin is taken to the hearse. Some people tip over all the chairs and forms used at the wake the night before.

The coffin must be taken out so that the corpse leaves feet first. The saying is that the deceased "goes against his feet to the graveyard."

The number of candles lighted at a wake must always be odd.

Four men of the same name, if at all possible, carry the coffin to the hearse, from hearse to church, from church to hearse and from hearse to graveyard. If four of the same name cannot be obtained then two of the same name carry one end of coffin and two men with similar names the other end. This is thoroughly observed.

Sometimes, if death takes two or more of a family in a short period, the mourners will step three across the grave of the last-buried. This to prevent any further deaths.

Wakes are always held. They are quiet and solemn.

Usually the coffin, having been taken from the hearse, is left resting on chairs outside for a few minutes before being taken to the hearse.

Marriages

The bride should not return to her own home until a month after marriage.

She should borrow something on day of her marriage - also "something blue - something old and something new."

Births

A baby should not have as god-parent someone who has already stood for a child that year.

Games

The bargain is sealed by the purchaser taking a scrap of mud on the end of his stick and rubbing it on the animal's back.

oftentimes, when a man is going out of the door to a fair in early morning, his wife or woman of the house throws the tings along the ground after him for luck. This is done ^{too} when a girl leaves for her wedding.

If a man, journeying to the fair, meets a red-haired woman, "he may as well turn for home again" so unlucky is it.

Churning

A visitor must always "give a hand with the dash."

A man may not light his pipe with a coal of the fire while churning is in progress.

Some houses insist that the visitors remain until the churning is done lest he or she "steal the butter."

Some people, before churning, place a quenched coal under the churn. This to "keep the butter from being stolen."

"stealing the butter" is believed in by a good many. There is no remedy unless the suspected person comes and "gives back the butter" with an apology for "taking" it.

Evil eye.

Believed in by a good few people. No cure. If a red death occurs e.g. a young person, usually healthy, he is said to have been ^{overlooked}.