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Next select County Limerick on the left-hand list.

Finally select Monaleen at the volume field 0524 in the centre column.

The teacher who organised the collection was Mrs. M. O Farrell. The Monaleen collection begins with a preface by her:

With reference to your instruction on the matter of the collection (of) folklore, I desire to report that I found it extremely difficult to any acquire any information that would be of great interest. A too close proximity to the city of Limerick may account for this. Even the old people who are very few have no record of any old stories.

However the children have done their best and I hope that their efforts have not been entirely fruitless.

M. F.

Hidden Treasure

P 105 Hidden Treasure

Three men who had dreamt of gold being buried in Castle Troy by the Shannon set out with a bag to dig for it. When they went into the old Castle a terrible storm arose and they were obliged to come out again. The storm ceased and they entered the ruin again and started digging the earth. They filled a bag of gold and brought it out. They had to cross the Shannon, and lifting the bag, one man found it very light. Looking inside, he told the others that the bag only contained leaves. They lifted the bag and turned the contents into the river. They found out then that instead of leaves it was gold that they had thrown away.

Collector Mary Houlihan
informant Patrick O' Neill

relation relative (other than parent or grandparent)
age circa 35
address Newcastle, Co. Limerick

P 106 Hidden Treasure

There was a fort in Nolan's farm in Ballysimon. There was a treasure supposed to be hidden in the fort. One night long ago a man went to dig it up and made a very large hole. He came to a big flat flag. He lifted it up and a white hare ran out of it. The man got such a fright that he ran home and nobody every tried to find the treasure since.

Collector Mary O' Shea
address Ballysimon, Co. Limerick
informant Mrs Nolan
age 45
address Ballysimon, Co. Limerick

P 106/107 Hidden Treasure

Long ago there lived an old woman in Newcastle who dreamt that one of her family should find the hidden treasure which was beneath the old ruin. On the following morning she related the dream to the men in the neighbourhood and some of them went in search of the treasure. She also dreamt that first of all should be found a stick and then a sod of turf. As the men were digging they found the stick and a sod of turf but at that moment they heard the noise of chains of a bull who was guarding the treasure and they went away.

Collector Margaret Burke
address Newcastle, Co. Limerick
collector Kathleen Burke
address Newcastle, Co. Limerick
informant Mrs Burke
relation parent
age 45
address Newcastle, Co. Limerick

P 108 A Funny Story

Long ago at Monaleen Cross there was a tailor's shop. One night a man under the influence of drink was walking up and down outside, He was looking for somebody to fight and kept saying "I'll cut! I'll cut"! The tailor became angry and said "what will you cut?" The man becoming cowardly answered said " I'll cut cloth".

Informant Peter Burke
address Kilmurry, Co. Limerick

P 108 A Funny Story

There was a boy once and he went to America. When he was at dinner with his friend one day he began to cry. His friend asked him what was wrong and he said "God be with the day when I could not see my brother across the table with the heap of skins that was between us". He had got only two potatoes for his dinner.

Informant Eily Sexton

P 109 A Funny Story

There was a man who went to the doctor because he was ailing. The doctor gave him a bottle and told him to take it in water. Every time the man drank from the bottle he sat into a bucket of water.

Informant Teresa Foley address Annacotty, Co. Limerick

P 109/110 Riddles

1. What is that which is full of holes yet holds water? (A sponge.)
2. What is it a poor man has, a rich man wants, a deaf man hears and a blind man hears (sees?) Ans. (nothing).
3. If you get up on an ass, where would you get down? (Off a goose.)
4. What is it that walks with its head down? (A nail on your boot)
5. What is it that has hands and can't wash its face? (A clock)
6. What did Adam first plant in the Garden of Eden? (his foot)
7. What is it you shouldn't like to have and if you had it you wouldn't like to lose it? (a bald head)
8. When does a cow become landed property? (when it is turned into a field)
9. What word in the English language is both sweet and sour? (Tart)
10. What insect feeds on holes? (The moth, because it eats holes)
11. What coloured letters do we eat? (Green peas)
12. Which is the grey goose or the white goose the gander? (Neither)

Informant Teresa Foley
address Annacotty, Co. Limerick

P 111 Weather Lore

1. When there is a halo around the moon it is a sign of rain.
2. Stars shining brilliantly on a dark night is a sign of frost.
3. Rainbow in the morning is a sign of coming rain; in the evening sign of fine weather.
4. The south-west wind brings rain to this district.
5. When the seagulls become plentiful and come inland stormy wet weather is coming.
6. The crying of the curlews is a sure sign of rain.
7. Swallows flying low is a sign of rain. When they fly high - fine weather.
8. When the cat turns its back to the fire is a sign of bad weather.
9. When hens pick their feathers it is a sign of rain.
10. Soot falling down the chimney is a sign of rain.
11. A dry February will bring a wet March. "a ????? head on a winter's morning"
12. When dogs eat grass it is a sign of rain.
13. People's corns generally ache when rain is calling.
14. A blue blaze in the fire indicates any frosty fire.
15. If a cock goes crying to bed he is sure to rise with a watery head.
16. Flowers budding the second time indicate the coming of a bad winter
17. The smoke going up straight - sign of frost. General beliefs in the district.

P 112 Local Heros

1. Michael Kerley of recent years was a cyclist and won many victories. He now lives in Dublin.
2. Robert Nolan of Kilbane was a good high jumper.
3. Old Mr. Coffey, now 82 years was a great mower, and often mowed 3 acres in a day.
4. Pat Barron a famous dancer who lived near the bridge in Annacotty.
5. Nick Danaher and Ned Crotty were good hurlers for Annacotty.

P113 Local Happenings

1. The R.I.C. barrack at Newcastle was burned during the 'Black and Tan' Regime as also was the R.I.C. barrack at Ballysimon.
2. Near Annacotty stood the famous mansion called 'Mount Shannon' and which formerly belonged to Lord Clare. During the Black and Tan war it also was burned to the ground and many valuable treasures destroyed. It now stands a wreck.
3. Many drownings have taken place on the Shannon where people go swimming and fishing. One man named Madden who had saved many lives during his life,

was drowned with two others at Plassy bridge. This happened about six years ago.

P 114 Old Schools

There are only vague recollections of an old school which was situated on the side of the Dublin Road near Annacotty. There are no accounts of who taught there.

P 114-115 Local Marriage Customs

Marriages at the present time in this district are few and far between among the farming community. When they do take place it is generally about Shrove Time.

Marriages otherwise take place at any time during the year.

Marriages of farmers are brought about by matches. Money is given as dowry to the farmers' daughters.

Long ago marriages often took place late in the evening or at night.

When the wedding guests were returning home they went a different route than that which they came.

A dance was sometimes held at the cross roads instead of a house. After a month the bridal pair came back to the brides home. They were accompanied by many guests and the horses were taken from under the car of the couple and then drawn in home. This was known as the "hauling home".

P 115 In the Penal Times

There are no traditions nor stories as far as can be gathered connected with this district

P 115/116 Local Place Names

Kilmurry got its name from an old church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. On the same spot is a Protestant Church and Churchyard at the present day.

Annacotty is so called because of a ford on the river Mulcair where the bridge now stands. It means the ford of the small cots or boats of the fishermen.

At Ballyclough was another ford, means the ford of the stones. There is a salmon leap near the place now.

Castletroy after the castle so called near the banks of the Shannon. Some say it means the Castle of the Troys, others the Castle of the Strand. A Clan of the McKeoghs is said to have lived there.

Blackguard Hill, Kilbane was the site of a racecourse on which there is now a golfcourse.

Monaleen probably meant the meadow of flax because there is no indication that there

ever was turf or a bog there.

Ballysimon is a big district to the south-east of Limerick, the townland of Simon, or perhaps St, Senan.

Keyanna near Killonan the way of the river - the Groody.

Scart the district of the bushes.

Parish Monaleen

Barony Clanwilliam

County Limerick

P 117/118 Bird Lore

1. The wild birds commonly found in this district are the lark, the finch, the robin, the sparrow, the wren, the blackbird, the thrush, the magpie, the crow, linnet.

2. Birds which visit but migrate are the cuckoo, the swallow, the corncrake, the wild goose, and wild duck.

3. River birds - swans in great numbers, cranes, snipe and plover, water hens and water ducks.

4. The seagulls come in on land.

5. The wild pigeon is very plentiful.

The lark builds its nest in the meadows.

The finch " " " in the bushes.

The robin " " " in walls or bushes

The sparrow " " " broken walls

The wren " " " in bushes

The blackbird " " " in trees

The thrush " " " in trees

The magpie " " " in trees and bushes

The crow " " " on tops of trees

The linnet " " " in trees and bushes

The swallow " " " eaves and holes in houses

The corncrake " " " meadows

Swans in sides " " " islands or rivers

If boys rob nests it is said they will get sore hands or warts.

If the seagulls come far in on land stormy weather will come.

Swallows flying low indicate bad weather.

If the cuckoo comes early it is the sign of a bad harvest.

The cry of the curlew also indicates rain.

The story of the robin's red breast is that when Our Saviour was dying the robin came and picked a thorn from His Head and when doing so a drop of the Precious Blood fell

on his breast.

P 119 Local Cures

People in olden times in this district sought remedies for their ailments in the herbs found in the fields and ditches. Also in certain holy wells.

1. Garlic was a cure for coughs and colds. It was first boiled and then the liquid strained and drunk.
2. Dandelion was a cure for jaundice. It was boiled in milk. Some say it was also for curing rheumatism.
3. Cockle root found in woody places was a cure for rheumatism. It was boiled, strained, and the juice taken fasting in the morning.
4. The milk of dandelion and chicken weed was used for curing warts.
5. Yarrow was also gathered, boiled, strained and drunk for pains in the joints.
6. Onions were used raw for chilblains.
7. Dock leaf cured the sting of a nettle.
8. A man with a white horse was supposed to cure "chin" cough. Should a mother of a child suffering from this cough meet a man with a white horse and ask him for a cure whatever he said was a sure cure. Even a drink of water.

P 120 Home Made Toys

Long ago boys played with marbles which they made themselves by mixing mud and water, shaping the mixture into the marbles and letting them harden.

Girls played with "gob" stones which were small smooth stones.

Nowadays girls often make dolls of rags or thread and play with them.

They make "daisy chains". Also "toss balls" made of cowslips.

Boys also made "tectotum" of timber.

P 120/121 Travelling Folk

"Travelling" still call to the houses. Some of these have been doing so for many years. Sometimes in times gone by when they were younger, they worked for the farmers in many ways. The women sometimes did a day's washing, or weeded the gardens, or helped building the sheaves of corn.

The men also helped and got fed and paid.

One traveller named Nelly Boody often came from the west of Limerick and spent a few nights in the houses, especially in houses of the poor. She did not beg, but was very pious and prayed and said rosaries. She often brought the children to the church to pray and sing hymns. She died last year and was buried in Templeglantine in the west.

The other tramps are glad to get anything money, flour, potatoes.

Others come in caravans, especially in Summer and encamp by the road side.

The so-called "tinkers" come when the fairs are held in Limerick.
The gypsy class come also in caravans and sell articles such as chairs, mats and ornaments etc.
The local people do not mix with them.

P 122 Fairy Forts

1. There are very few forts in this district. One in Annacotty is situated at the back of a number of cottages. The people there believe that one of these cottages is haunted or disturbed by the fairies and that the fire irons make noise and even move about at night.

informant Teresa Foley
address Annacotty, Co. Limerick

2. There is an old fort in Scart and once about fifty years ago a man named Ml Whalen was going to Bidy Early for a cure for his son and he had the bottle in his pocket. When he was passing the fort he heard music and his horse reared. The bottle was taken out of his pocket and broken in front of him. He had to return home and his son died.

collector Mary Coffey
informant Mr Coffey
relation grandparent
address Scart, Co. Limerick

P 123 Local Poet

The only poet spoken of was Canon Ross Levin who was pastor at Kilmurry Protestant Church. He composed several songs and verses, the best known of which is "The Hill of Monaleen"

P 123 Games

The outdoor games the girls play are 'spy', rounders, 'stag', 'rings' with songs and 'verses 'tag', 'button'.
They also play games in Irish all of which are described in the children's note books.

P 123 Famine Times

No account could be got of the Great Famine in this district.

P 124 The Local Roads

1. The main roads in this district are those commonly known as the Dublin Road leading

from Limerick to Nenagh and on to Dublin.

The Ballysimon road leading from Limerick to Tipperary.

There are many back old roads still in use connecting these two.

The old Dublin Road passed through Singland back through Kilmurry.

Workmen on the roads got sixpence, fourpence and twopence a day.

There are paths through the fields which the children use in Summer coming to school.

There are several cross roads at which the workmen and boys meet in the evenings and play games and chat.

P 125/126 The district of Monaleen

This district is situated to the East of the city of Limerick, about 3 miles.

The barony is Clanwilliam, there are several townlands, Newtown, Milltown, Kilmurry, Castletroy, Rivers, Ballyclough, Peafield, Ballysimon, Cooleyhenan.

The oldest families in the district are the Leonard's, O'Brien's, Slattery's, Kerley's, O'Shea's Fitzgibbon's.

There are very few old people, about one or two over eighty, and these know no Irish.

One of these Mr. Coffey 82 yrs lives in Scart, Killonan, Co. Limerick.

Houses were much more numerous than they are now as there were industries in the district other than farming which kept people employed. There is an old quarry in Ballysimon from which black marble was quarried. Many of the old houses in Limerick were built of this stone. The old mill, now a residence is still there.

A cathedral in Newfoundland was built of the same stone. The stone was sent to England up to about 20 years ago. Mr. McAuliffe the owner living in Ballysimon could give all particulars. There were many flour mills in the district also, one in Annacotty, one in Ballyclough, one in Plassy, one in Peafield and one in Ballysimon, the latter was used as a place for receiving milk until some years ago.

The soil of the district is very good, being part of the "Golden Vale" of Munster. The rearing of cattle and production of milk are the chief industries now-a-days. Quite a number of farmers deliver their milk in the city and suburbs.

There is no wood in the district, but Castletroy, Ballyclough and Ballysimon are nicely planted with trees.

On the northern side of the district at Castletroy and Plassy the Shannon flows, and here fishing is carried out for trout, salmon, and eels. Into the Shannon flow two rivers the Mulcair which comes from the direction of Keeper Hill in Nth Tipperary. In this river there are great quantities of salmon, trout and eel. The Groody rises somewhere to the south east of the county, and flows through Ballysimon and Kilbane into the Shannon. The Catholic Church is built on the hill of Monaleen.

P 127 Holy Wells

1. St. Mary Magdalene's is situated in Kilbane near the Groody. There is the remains of

an old churchyard quite near it. Rounds are made there on 22nd July, the feast of Mary Magdalene. The legend connected with this well is that while some men were haymaking at the spot, they stuck their wooden forks into the ground and went away. When they returned they found the fork grown into a tree which still shelters the well. The water was supposed to cure ailments of the stomach.

2. St. Simon's well in Ballysimon situated in a field called the Church Field at the back of Ballysimon Churchyard. There are no visits paid to this well, but the old people often used the water as a cure for sore eyes.

3. Not far away is St. Patrick's well nearer to Limerick. For about a week before St. Patrick's Day people visit and make rounds there. The water was a cure for sore eyes. It is now forbidden to be drunk.

P 128/129 Proverbs used locally

1. It's an ill wind that blows nobody good.
2. Many hands make light work,
3. A stitch in time saves nine.
4. All is not gold that glistens.
5. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
6. There are two sides to a bargain.
7. Make hay while the sun shines.
8. A rolling stone gathers no moss.
9. One good turn deserves another.
10. Hard work is not easy.
11. Every beginning is weak.
12. A friend in need is a friend indeed.
13. It's never too late to mend.
14. It's never too old to learn.
15. Don't judge a man by the coat he wears.
16. It's better to be born lucky than rich.
17. A constant friend is hard to find.
18. There is hope from the ocean but none from the grave.
19. A good run is better than a bad stand.
20. The good hurler always sits on the ditch.
21. A friend's eye is a good mirror.
22. Never judge a book by the cover.
23. An excuse is nearer to a woman than her apron.
24. Learning is no load.
25. Don't meet the devil half way.
26. When wine is in wit is out.
27. Look before you leap.
28. A fool and his money soon part.

29. Dead men tell no tales.
30. Money speaks all languages.
31. Doctors differ and patients die.
32. Never too late for a bad market.
33. A bad workman quarrels with his tools.
34. Far away cows have long horns.
35. Every one has his own story.
36. Don't spur a willing horse.
37. Never judge a book by the cover.
38. Tell me your company and I'll tell you what you are.
39. Too late to spare when all is spent.
40. He who goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing.

P130/131 Festival Customs

1. A candle is lighted and placed on the window by the youngest member of the family on Xmas Eve. Houses are decorated with Holly and Ivy.
2. On St Stephen's Day boys dress up and go from house to house collecting money. They sing and dance and play music generally on the melodeon and fiddle.
3. On St. Brigids Eve a ribbon is hung out, and then kept for a headache.
4. St. Patrick's Day people wear shamrocks, boys and girls home made harps.
5. Shrove Tuesday. Pancakes are made. Long ago a great quantity of bacon was put down and a piece of the fat kept. This was hung up during Lent with a cross made of straw. On Easter Saturday this was taken down and kept to cure sores on cows.
6. Ash Wednesday, people go to Mass and get ashes on their foreheads.
7. 'Chalk' Sunday, the first Sunday of Lent, the boys and girls who are unmarried are chalked. This is dying out.
8. People eat many eggs on Easter Sunday morn.
9. May Day people go to Mass and get May water. This is sprinkled over the land and cattle. Long ago the farmers stayed up to watch their wells as they believed that if the water was taken the cattle would run dry. Bonfires were lighted on May Eve.
- 10 On St. John's Eve long ago, bonfires were lighted, the farmers walked the land with torches of furze. They struck the tails of the cows. No bonfires are lighted now.
11. St. Martin's Day. a fowl or goose is killed so as to draw blood.
12. November Eve. There is a feast in every house and apples, nuts, beans and barm brack is eaten. Games are played by the children.

P 132 Churning

No churning is done in this district in the houses now as the milk is sent to the creameries or sold in the town.

P 132 The Care of the Feet

Long ago the people did not wear boots until they were grown up and some never wore boots. Very few children go without boots now even in the Summer.

The water which is used for washing the feet is always thrown out down low over the threshold as the people believe that if they threw it high it would hit some poor soul.

Boots are repaired in the city of Limerick. Long ago there were boot makers and cobblers in the district. Sometimes the boots are mended in the homes by the men and boys of the houses.

Wooden clogs were worn in the past.

P 133 Forges

There are no forges in the district. The only near one is at Killonan. Long ago there was one at Kilmurry where MacMahon's shop is now. There was also one at Ballysimon Cross.

P 133 Local Patron Saint

The parish of Monaleen which is attached to St. Patrick's parish in Limerick has its patron Saints St. Patrick and St Mary Magdalene. Near St. Patrick's well there is an old flag on which there are the footprints of the Saint. The old legend says that the people near the place took St. Patrick's ass and that he cursed them.

P 134 Food in Olden Times

People had three meals.

At the breakfast they ate "stir-a-bout" bread and milk.

Bread was made at home of flour and milk and baked in a bastable with turf. They also made bread of oatmeal.

Stampy bread was made of grated potatoes and baked in fat.

Grated potatoes were also used as starch.

Potatoes were used at dinner and supper. Butter was used with these.

Fish got in the rivers near was used.

Bacon home-cured was used, and eggs.

Wooden vessels and pewter vessels were used before cups.

P 135/136 Local Ruins

1. There is an old castle at Castletroy by the Shannon. The history of this is very vague. Some say that the Troy's lived there. Others that the McKeogh's lived there. It has been derelict for a very long time. According to Lenighan's history of Limerick it is a twin castle of that at Castleconnell Co. Limk. It is said that Ireton on his way to Limerick shattered the walls of the castle. There is an old legend that McKeogh had a daughter who was woo'd by a chieftain and that one night that man and others raided the castle and took the girl away. Learning that his daughter was captured McKeogh raised an alarm and attacked the raiders and defeated them. In the struggle his daughter was killed and it is said that her shrieks can be heard and that there are stains of blood on the stones.

Collector John Collows
address Castletroy, Co. Limerick

2. In Newcastle, Castletroy there is another ruin called Newcastle, it is not a castle but the ruin of a very large mansion. No-one living ever remembers anybody living in this house. It stands on a height by the side of the Dublin Road and overlooks the Shannon. There is a belief that King William lived there while besieging the city of Limerick. It was also said that it will fall on the prettiest girl who passes it. There is a spot on the road where horses always fall if they see it.
3. There is a ruin of a castle or tower in the field behind the reservoir which water to the city. No account can be got of this tower.
4. In Ballysimon in Hanley's farm there is the site of an old church and of a bishop's house, also a well near it.

P 137 Graveyards

There are three graveyards still in use (in) the district, and they are very old.

1. Kilmurry graveyard is situated in Kilmurry; it contains very old headstones. There is a Protestant church near it. Both Catholics and Protestants are buried there.
2. Ballysimon is a small graveyard by the side of the Road in Ballysimon. it is raised up and contains many crosses and headstones.
3. In Killonan there is an old churchyard called the Killeen. People are also buried there.
4. Near St. Magdalene's well was an old burial place, it is not in use now.

Members or descendants of the local families are brought and buried in each of the graveyards.

The burial place of the Jews in Limerick is also in Monaleen.

P 138 Historical Tradition

The district being so near the city of Limerick is closely historically connected with it. No doubt Ireton passed through it on his way to Limerick. There is a road in Kilmurry called "Cromwell's Road" altho' Cromwell never visited Limerick.

It was also on the Singland side of the district that King Wm. of Orange set his gun to besiege the city.

Sarsfield passed through the district on his way back to the city after blowing up the siege train at Ballyneety.