

# Stories from The Schools Collection, 1937-1939

## An Clochar, Baile Caisleáin Bhéara - Oide: An tSr. M. Rosáraí

Extracted\* from this link <https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes/4798739?Route=volumes>

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## 1 Bird Lore

*Sheila Murphy, Derrycreeveen* [\[Back To Top\]](#)

We are told that the blackbird was white at first; that she was sent by a magpie to a castle, where the rooms were full of gold and silver, with orders not to touch any of it until she get to a certain room.

However she could not keep away from it when she saw how beautiful it was; but the minute she touched it a great black demon appeared, blowing smoke through his nostrils at the beautiful white bird and alas! her snowy feathers was one mass of black and her bill is yellow from the gold which remained on it when the black demon interfered with her.

## 2 Local Place Names

*Margaret Murphy, Ardagh* [\[Back To Top\]](#)

*Informant: Jermiah Murphy, Age 50, Ardagh Cross*

‘Scoil’ This field is so called because there was a school there in days gone by.

‘Muintean Caol’ This is so called on account of its being a narrow field.

‘Scrahan Ban’ this gets its name from a clump of briars which grow in the middle of it.

‘The Devil’s Rock’ on this rock which is situated in Lonhart Battery are the print of the devil’s hoof and Our Lord’s foot. When anybody goes there they cast a stone at the hoof and they kiss the foot.

‘Carraig na mBan’ It is said that three women were gathering carraigín moss on this rock and that the tide swept them away.

‘The Middle Stone’ It is said that a giant flung this stone which stands in the middle of Bere Island from Carbery after a chieftain who had wronged him.

## 3 My Townland - Derricreeveen

*Winnie Sullivan, Derrycreeveen* [\[Back To Top\]](#)

Bere Island is a large extent of land separated from Castletown Bere by a stretch of water about one and a half miles in length. It has many townlands the names of which were handed down to us by our ancestors.

The townland in which I live is called Derricreeveen. It is in the very west of Bere Island and owing to its beautiful situation many are the sights that can be seen from it. It is overlooking the placid waters of Berehaven harbour and a vivid view of Dunboy can be seen from its western point.

There are about thirty families in this townland and approximately one hundred and fifty people. The most common family name is Sullivan. Formerly many of the houses were of average size country houses, but all of them with the exception of one or two were slated. The few thatched ones have recently been reconstructed and slated also. So it now possesses nice comfortable farm houses. The houses are not now as numerous as they were in olden times, and there are many ruins still to seen.

In this townland there are not many exceeding the age of seventy. But there is one old woman who is eighty nine and she is a fluent Irish speaker. She relates many exciting Irish stories and crowds gather to hear them. A few months ago when the priest went to hear her confession she related all in Irish. He said he had never heard such fluent Irish and he spent hours listening to her stories. This woman lives close by the hill, Her name and address is -: Mrs Joan Sullivan, Derricreeveen, Bere Island.

The population of this townland has diminished rapidly of late years. As there is not much of a livelihood to be got for the present generation because the fishing and farming are not paying as well now as they were formerly. On this account people are compelled to emigrate to foreign soil to earn a living. A number of people emigrated to America in olden times also, but they were better paid then than they are now.

The land of this townland is for the most part hill, but there is enough good soil in it for the amount of agriculture that is done. In olden times the soil was more boggy and marshy, but the bogs have been drained and the soil is becoming rich and fertile

#### **4 Monuments**

*Margaret Murphy, Ardagh* [\[Back To Top\]](#)

There are three stones standing in the east end of Bere Island, on top of these stones is another stone. It is called the "Druid's Altar" and it is said that the Druids used to offer sacrifice there in olden times.

There are also three Danish graves situated in the south of Bere Island. There are three headstones at the end on which is old writing, but in the course of years the writing wore away and therefore no one can read it now.

## 5 Strange Animals

*Margaret Murphy, Ardagh* [\[Back To Top\]](#)

A strange black dog is seen running into a stone quarry not far from my house every night between eleven o'clock and half-past. A certain man saw him three nights in succession. On the third night he told about the dog to a couple of boy friends. They would not believe him so they said they would pass that way and see what would happen. However they passed that way and were terrified to see him run in and out through their feet. When they cast a light on him he suddenly disappeared.

Local tradition says that the quarry is haunted and that a [...] was seen to appear there a few years ago when some one passing there uttered a curse, He appeared in front of him when he said the curse but disappeared quickly when the man made the sign of the cross.