

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.

The Rahins Cenotaph: This is situated in Rahins in the land of Mrs. J. McKenna. No right-of-way. Its form is that of a pyramid surmounted by a stone (splined) ornament resting on an eleven feet square base some 12 feet high. Total height of the memorial is perhaps 70 feet. It bears ~~two~~^{three} inscriptions, one in Irish on the base in a stone slab: "Súro tu oio cuimne n' ceas o mo mhúnyrú díly d'únyz coice do tairz go bráic a uasraio uayn". And on same slab in English: "This cenotaph was built in memorial of Maria Brown O'Donnell daughter of Sir Noel O'Donnell."



Higher up is a Irish inscription in relief— "A Maria (person) et a C. Amours pare son there pent — Dodwell 1809." There is also the profile in stone (relief) of the deceased lady and the words "Maria O'Donnell Brown".

On the opposite face of the cenotaph is the relief inscription— "Go gaiety and innocence." (Contd. on page 9)

CUSTOMS, PATTERNS, ETC.

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

Few customs survive.

There are the usual ones of: Pancake night — Bonfire night — Hallowe'en — St. Martin's Eve — and St. Stephen's Day (numbers).

A few people yet make the straw-cresses on St. Bridget's Eve.

Funerals take longest route to graveyard.

Chairs on which coffin rests are tipped over as soon as coffin is taken out to the hearse.

Clocks are stopped when death occurs in a house and set going after funeral.

Wakes, when held, are solemn affairs.

Visitor should give a hand with the dash in spinning.

Some women retain the old method (by hand and wheel) of spinning and weaving their own "breeway".

(Signed) Daniel A. Youngman,
Surveyor.

DATE Sept. 15th 1945

Period of Ireland. Barony of Lema.

Co. Mayo. IFA 11/18 (6)

Leicester. page 9

This cenotaph is said to be the first in the country - (at least of family monuments). Built entirely of stone, well-dressed at the angles. (Photo.)

Date of erection as given on the memorial is 1809. The land on which it stands was formerly part of the Brown's estate. The family residence, a neat cut stone building, whose last family owner was Mrs. Brown who died in 1932, is situated near the cenotaph. A fine hedge runs along the avenue leading from the main road to the house - now untenanted but owned by Mrs. McKenna.

Dodwell Brown owned the estate in 1800 and with his family resided in a house, now in ruins, beside the present residence. His wife, to whom is the cenotaph, was Maria Dowell, a daughter of the well-known Dowell family of Newport, (early in the 19th century). Some years afterwards she became gravely ill and was ordered to Dublin for treatment. For some unknown reason the horses drawing her carriage stopped on the avenue and despite the entreaties of the driver, refused to move for some time. Maria Dowell died in Dublin and her husband caused the cenotaph to be erected just opposite the spot on the avenue where the horses had stopped in mysterious fashion.

(Surviving members of the family are Mr. Dodwell Brown (Australia) and Mrs. Lucy Wright his sister - with him in Australia.)

(The family burial vault is near the residence.)