

## CURIOSITIES

(u) 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.

## CUSTOMS, PATTERNS, ETC.

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

Most of the streets of Ballina, and many Townlands in the Parish of Kilmoreemoy, celebrate St. John's Night with huge bonfires, and the youngsters of the district, attired in "fancy" dress, parade the streets, and make merry. Another old custom, strongly adhered to by the younger generation, is that of "burying the wren" on St. Stephens Day. On the eve of May Day (May 1), the practice of placing whins and May flowers outside the front doors of houses is still observed by the majority of householders.

A local belief is that the seventh son in a family has a natural cure for ringworm. I have not met with any instance of the success of the cure, but a school teacher informed me that, about a month ago, he allowed a boy, the seventh son of a family, to leave school in order to minister to a person so afflicted. The local people place great faith in the practice, and am assured this faith is founded on fact.

*caps.* For centuries past, pilgrimages have taken place to St. Patrick's Well, throughout Summer, from July, to Lady Day in September. It is claimed that several miraculous cures have been effected here (the Well is on the way from Ballina to Leigue Cemetery, which closely adjoins); and pilgrims from all surrounding districts, as indeed also from distant parts, make the rounds here on Sunday (the ~~2nd~~ <sup>1st</sup> Sunday in July); also on other Sundays and Fridays. In addition to praying at and circling the Well, Statue, Mound, etc., and the stone and bush of Leigue Cemetery nearby, the pilgrim drinks and sprinkles water from the Well on any infirmities. It is believed St. Patrick blessed this Well, and baptised many here.

(Signed)

Donald O'Brien

Surveyor.

DATE August 1<sup>st</sup> 1942.