

Manx Notes 324 (2018)

“IN ROMANTIC AGNEASH”

(1939)

“If you experience a creepy feeling, don’t be alarmed. This is the most haunted ground in the whole district.”

This was the advice given by Mr James Mylchreest, of Onchan, while leading a party of the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society in an excursion to Agneash, high on the slopes of Snaefell mountain. The particular spot was Glen Foss, the waterfall Glen.

Close by is the site of the old flax mill, which is haunted with a woman with a red cloak. Dead and gone weavers, with white cloaks on, are said to be often seen between twelve midnight and two o’clock.

A tunnel higher up is said to be the home of the Buggane Mooar, the great buggane. Men risked the ghostly presence, however, when they used the tunnel as a hiding-place from the pressgang!

Still higher is a deep and dangerous glen known as the home of the Phynnoderees. The old highway from Laxey to Sulby passed the top of the glen, and travellers would not venture to look downwards.

The Laggan Dhoo (“Black Hollow”), on the opposite side of the valley, was haunted by bugganes, and the midnight sounds from the bugganes on one side, and the phynnoderees on the other were very terrifying.

Near a place where once stood the remains of ancient hut dwellings, the Dooinniey Oie (“night man”) was sometimes heard calling from his haunt away on Clay Head. It always foretold disaster to cattle or crops.

Another name given to the Agneash area was “The City.”

The leader told some interesting stories of the “changed child.” Once a mother went to the well for water, leaving the baby in the cradle. When she came back, it had been changed for a fairy child. Adopting the traditional method in such cases, she kept away from the cradle and let the child cry away. Finding that their babe was neglected, the fairies returned and took it away, and brought the proper child back. At Glendrink, the cradle was left vacant, and the baby was found half a mile away, none the worse.

An interesting place of call was the old halfway house to Snaefell, now uninhabited, but built about ninety years ago by a family known as “Kelly the Fiddlers.”

*

Folklore material here extracted from “In Romantic Agneash,” *Isle of Man Weekly Times*, 10 June 1939, 19c.

STEPHEN MILLER, 2018