

Manx Notes 332 (2018)

“MORE WITCHCRAFT”

(1847)

A farmer, near Poortown, in the vicinity of Peel, lately had disease among his cattle, and lost one or two of them. To detect the evil eye, or avert its malice, he resolved on a cow-fire. With turf, coals, and gorse, a large fire was kindled in the centre of the road, upon which the carcase of the defunct cow was placed. But an after thought delayed proceedings for awhile. The hide had been sold to the tanner, and an entire sacrifice was deemed essential. The hide was sent for—the purchase-price refunded, and then the barbacue went on. The actors in this scene, with holy dread, awaited the appearance of the witch. Very shortly a poor wight, returning from a *mbellia*, half seas over, came up. He was declared to be the witch, and he had to cut his lucky, and hide from popular indignation, to avoid the fate of the old cow.

“[Local News] More Witchcraft.” *Manx Sun* 2 October 1847: 4b.

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