

Manx Notes 572 (2022)

CREGNEASH FOODWAYS *

(1903)

ISLE OF MAN, 1648

[93] Their diet is sparing and simple, their drink water and butter-milk; their meat consists of herrings, salt, butter, and oatcakes, thin as paper leaves, yet as broad and large as those of Wales. Beer and ale they only take in the market. The meal of servants consists of two boiled herrings, one entire oatcake and butter, with milk and water to drink (*History of Isle of Man, Blundell, 1648, published by the Manx Society*).

[94] The food chiefly consisted of oatmeal and milk for breakfast; potatoes and fish or salt herring in the winter for dinner, and sometimes beef and broth, made up of shelled barley, *cabbage*, leeks, onions, potatoes, and parsnips, all mashed together. Sometimes potatoes and beans mashed. Potatoes and *white cabbage* mashed for dinner and fresh fish. Sometimes potatoes in the jacket and fish, with plenty of butter-milk and *cowree* or sowans for supper. *Sollaghyn* consisted of porridge and meat broth. *Binjean*, milk turned to curd, with rennet or steep, was taken on Sunday nights. A fine dish was the *prinjeig* or haggis pluck, the liver chopped up and stuffed with chopped onion, groats, pepper and salt, and potatoes. They had also *bonnacks* and *oaten* and *barley cakes*, and in the village killed a quarter or half a beef or pig amongst themselves. They used to drink Manx *ale* (*personally, from Cregneish, Rushen, Isle of Man*).

Karl Roeder, "Notes on Food and Drink in Lancashire and other Northern Counties." *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* xx (1903): 41–104, see 93–94.

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This short passage on Manx foodways is taken from a lengthy article by Karl Roeder on the topic that appeared in the *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* in 1903. Edward Faragher of Cregneash wrote in similar fashion in 1901 about the diet at Cregneash:

The food in those days was chiefly porridge (made of oatmeal) and milk for breakfast, potatoes and fish, or salt herring in the winter, for dinner; and sometimes beef and broth made up of shelled barley and cabbage, and other things such as leeks and onions, and potatoes, and parsnips, mashed up together to eat with, and sometimes potatoes and beans mashed up together—a kind of large bean that grew in the garden. I have sometimes seen potatoes and white cabbage

* I am grateful to David Green of the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds, for a copy of the relevant pages from Roeder's article.

mashed up for dinner, and fresh fish, but it was often groat porridge for supper, and sometimes potatoes in their jackets, and fish of some kind, with plenty of buttermilk. There was no tea in the evening, and only three meals each day.

Edward Faragher, "A Sketch of Old Cregneash." *Skeelalyn Æsop*. Ed. Roeder, Charles. Douglas: S.K. Broadbent, 1901. 81–90, see 83.

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