

Irish Roots

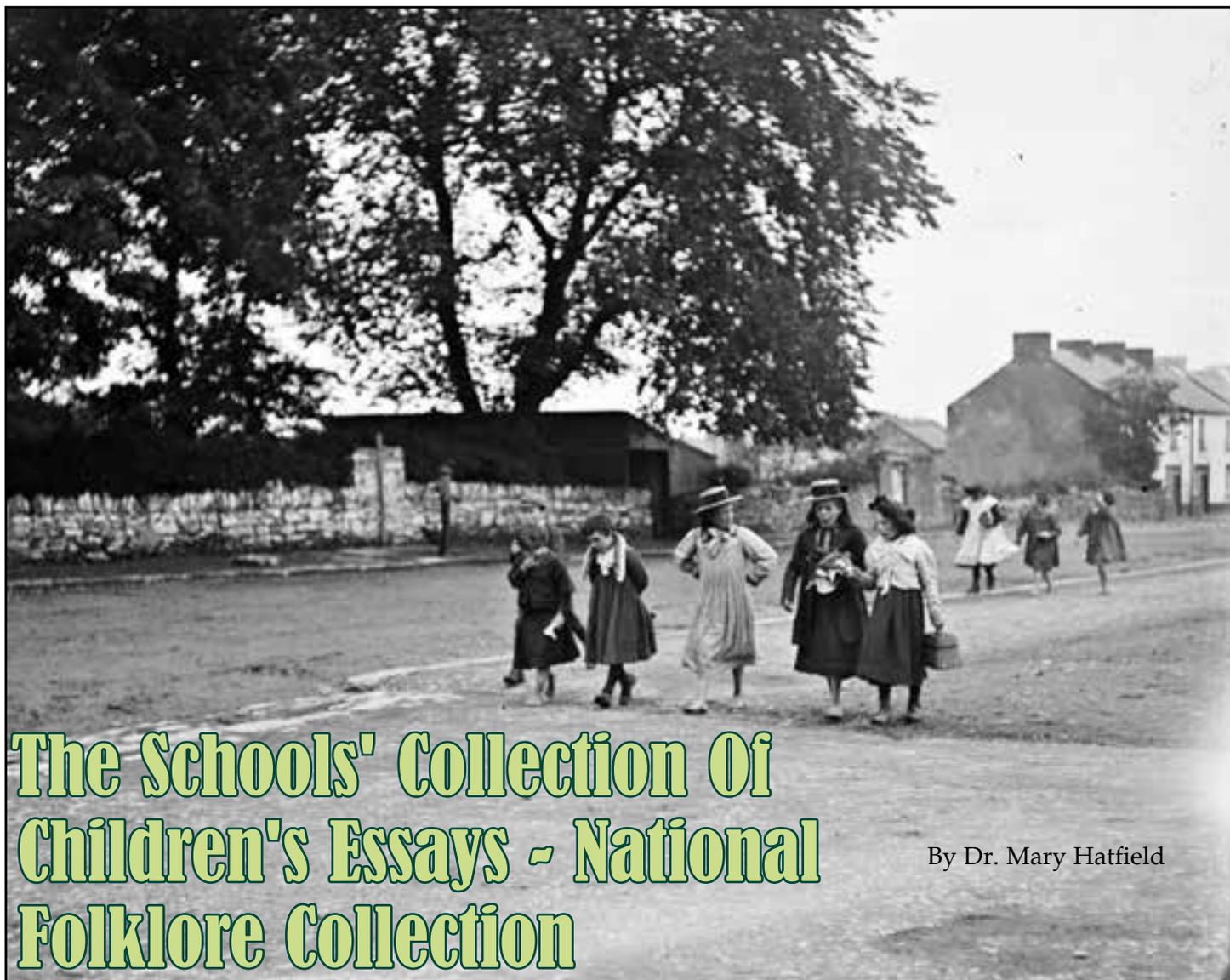
Tracing Your
County **WICKLOW**
Ancestors

Lots Of Great Articles
Inside To Help You
With Your Irish Family
History Research!



Celebrating Irish Ancestry

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News From The World Of Irish Genealogy And Lots Lots More!



The Schools' Collection Of Children's Essays - National Folklore Collection

By Dr. Mary Hatfield

In 1938, thirteen-year-old Maisie Nesbitt, a student at Drumakill School in Muckno, co. Monaghan wrote a short essay describing the types of games she played. Her essay described, '...throwing rings and an old king cole's nose, dominoes, tea-out, drawing with chalk, marbles, blind man's buff. We play the singing games when we have visitors...In the summer I play swing, ball, tig, hiding and go seek. I play house. On Halloween nights I play catching an apple in a basin of water. The ones that take a bit out of an apple hanging from the ceiling will get it. At tea time the one that gets the ring in the cake will be married first.' (Maisie Nesbitt, Drumakill, Muckno, Co. Monaghan, Vol 943, page 207.) Maisie's essay is located in the largest archival collection of Irish children's writings from the twentieth century. As part of a scheme sponsored by the National Folklore Commission in the late 1930s, Maisie, and over 100,000 other children, participated in a project to collect and preserve folklore within their communities.

The scheme asked older schoolchildren in primary education, age 11-14, to write essays, in Irish or English, based on material collected from their parents, grandparents and older members of their community about local lore, traditions and customs. Over 5,000 primary schools contributed material from their district. The topics the children were instructed to research and write about included local history, monuments, folktales, legends, local place names, descriptions of the landscape, riddles, proverbs, songs, customs, beliefs, games, pastimes, traditional work practices, crafts,

festivals, and food. They are one of the largest archives of children's writings in Europe and form an invaluable resource for genealogical researchers to find detailed information about lore, history and customs unique to a particular parish, or perhaps a researcher might be lucky enough to find an essay written by their relatives.

The Irish Folklore Commission (1935-1971)

The Irish Folklore Institute, which drew from the membership of An Cumann le Béaloideas Éireann, was established with government funding in 1930. The

Institute was expanded in 1935 and became Coimisiún Béaloideas Éireann, the Irish Folklore Commission. The Commission was active until 1971, when it was replaced by the Department of Irish Folklore and incorporated into University College Dublin. Seamus Ó Duilearga (1899-1980) strongly influenced the character and direction of the Folklore Commission. His Handbook of Irish Folklore (1940) became the standard for collectors and directed interest in certain features of Irish life. The rapid decline of the Irish language prompted Ó Duilearga to emphasise collecting as the most pressing activity of the Commission.

What's New?

Review

By Claire Santry

Claire has been stirring the genealogical news pot this quarter and the tempting mix of records is bound to whet every Irish family history researchers appetite no matter how you try to resist!



After a slow start to the year in terms of new Irish genealogical releases and updates, you'll hear no complaint from me (well, just one) about the level of activity in the most recent quarter. 'Action packed' would be over-egging the reality, but it was clear the main Irish record suppliers were returning to near-rude health after two-years of lockdowns.

An early spring delivery came from the free, state-managed [IrishGenealogy.ie](#) database, where a rolling additional year of civil births, marriages and deaths records was uploaded, each indexed record being linked to an image of the relevant register entry.

With this update, the General Register Office records available to search and view (index + register image) span the following dates: Births – 1864 to 1921; Marriages – 1845 to 1946; Deaths – 1871* to 1971. The asterisk identifies the source of my only complaint about the recent crop of record releases.

IrishGenealogy was designed to provide online access to both an Index AND Images of civil registrations since the system was introduced in 1864 for births and deaths, and 1845/1864 for marriages. The online index achieves this but the site is still failing to provide access to images of the death registers from 1864 to 1870 inclusive. There must be few genealogists

– by far the largest single group of users of this database – who would not rather the oldest death records were prioritised for index+image status rather than the more recent registrations. After all, there are alternative routes to learning of deaths in the last 50 years, not least legible headstone inscriptions, memorial cards and [RIP.ie](#), and, in particular, newspaper death announcements, funeral reports and obituaries which remain a staple of local titles both in print and online.

Access to historical and more recently published Irish newspapers continues to grow. While the Dublin-based [IrishNewsArchive.com](#) has not uploaded any new titles for some months, the [BritishNewspaperArchive.co.uk](#) database is still making regular deliveries as it races through its project to digitise the British Library's Newspaper Collection. It's latest count of pages was over 52 million.

Among recent arrivals were six Irish titles: *The Limerick Gazette & Advertiser*, *The Leitrim Journal & Carrick-on-*

Shannon Advertiser, *The Dungannon News & County Tyrone Advertiser*, *Ireland's Saturday Night* (sports reports), *the Frontier Sentinel & Down, Armagh and Louth Advertiser* and *The Evening News (Waterford)*. The latter is the ninth newspaper in the BNA database covering County Waterford.

[RootsIreland.ie](#) has also been busy, as you'd expect from one of the few suppliers who kept a stream of releases coming our way during the worst of the pandemic. These have included:

- more than 4,500 records from East Galway (Galway Emigrant Index, 1829-1866 and the Reproductive Loan Index);
- a County Westmeath bundle of 3,400 burial records and just over 200 marriage transcriptions;
- an upload to the County Kerry database of more than 7,600 Roman Catholic baptismal records for Kilgarvan Parish;