

All Ireland Review

Nick-Names of Places

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Source: *All Ireland Review*, Vol. 1, No. 32 (Aug. 11, 1900), p. 7

Published by: [All Ireland Review](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20544878>

Accessed: 10/06/2014 04:42

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NICK-NAMES OF PLACES.

Nearly every place in Ireland is famous in some way or other. Some are known all over Ireland; others are more or less local. For instance, every one is familiar with the saying "That bangs Banagher." This refers to the Banagher, in King's County; but there is another Banagher in County Derry not so well known, which has a saying "The Banagher sends."

The town of Kilkenny is rendered famous by the well-known saying—

"To fight like Kilkenny cats";

and Mullingar is immortalised by

"As fat to the houghs as a Mullingar heifer."

"Cork lads and Limerick lasses" is a saying that should make these places feel proud.

Dublin is known as "The most car-drivingest city in the world," and "Dear, dirty Dublin" is an alliteration that after all is quite complimentary.

Not so well known are the nick-names—

"The Banbridge beggars."

"He has a face as long as a Lurgan spade."

Seapatrik, a village near Banbridge, is known as "Blazes," but I think this is a corruption of Hayes's—a large mill-owner there.

The following rhyme is not very complimentary to Tandaragee, a little town in Co. Armagh;—

"Tandaragee, no pinch,
Plenty of water, but no meal."

Clogher is a town in Co. Tyrone. The houses are built all to the one side, and hence the old saying—

"All to the one side like Clogher."

In the North of Ireland this rhyme is quite common:—

"Magherafelt for buttermilk,
Maghera for brandy,
Tubbermore is a dirty place,
But Cookstown is a dandy."

I heard this varied a little as—

"Lisnaskea for drinking tea,
Maguiresbridge for brandy,
Clogher is a dirty hole,
But Fivemiletown's a dandy."

Not so complimentary to Tipperary is the saying "As light as a Tipperary ragman." Sometimes counties are distinctively known as

"Tyrone among the bushes,
Fermanagh among the rushes,"

and

"Co. Armagh for man and horse,
But Co. Down for purty lass."

Newtown-Limavady shares with Dublin and Limerick the honour of having pretty girls—

"Newtown is a pretty place,
And stands upon the Roe,
If you want a pretty girl
To Newtown you must go."

Cookstown is nick-named "Long Cookstown," as the only street is about 2 miles long. More local still is the rhyme—

"Upper Binn beagles,
Lower Binn brocks,
Killycor capons,
And Clandy game-cocks."

Notice the Shakespearian use of the word for fowls—capons.

"Gulladuff for lads and lasses,
Moyagull for goats and asses."

These are two townlands in Co. Derry. Certainly in the latter place you will hardly see anything else but goats and asses. Some parts of the country are inhabited almost by people of the same name. The West part of Cork is known as the "O'Sullivan country," the West part of Mayo as the "Joyce country," and Co. Fermanagh is sometimes called

"The Maguire's country." Fermanagh is also dubbed "The country of the lakes." Portora and its Royal school is known as "The Irish Rugby." Munster has a lot of good things in its favour—

"Oh, were I but so fortunate
As to be back in Munster,
'Tis bound that from the ground I'd be,
I never more would once stir,
For there St. Patrick planted turf
And plenty of the praties,
With pigs galore,
Ma gra, ma store,
And cabbages—and ladies."

People are often sent to Connaught instead of a warmer place, as "Go to Connaught." Rathfriland is nick-named "the hilly town," while Cork is known as "Rebel Cork." "The parish next to Bundoran" means America. Who has not heard of "the Mallow rakes"? Derry is "the maiden city," and Kilkenny "the holy city." Belfast is commercially known as Linenopolis, and Beleek as "Ireland's only pottery." Portrush assumes the proud title "The Brighton of the North." Ros-trevor is not behind hand in the title "The Montpelier of Ireland." Wicklow shares with Armagh the proud distinction "The garden of Ireland." Lough Gill is "the Killarney of the West." Lough Swilly is "the lake of shadows" and the Blackwater is "the Irish Rhine." Bandon is "the Derry of the South," and Mallow is "the Irish Bath."

Geographically, Newry is "the frontier town of Ulster," Dungannon is "the Volunteer town," Limerick "the city of the violated Treaty," Galway "The City of the Tribes," Armagh "The Primatical City."

Who has not heard of the Black North, the Sunny South, "The Wild West."

W. DOUGLAS,

Killaloo, Co. Derry.

P.S.—I have only touched the fringe of the subject. Perhaps some of your readers could add more.

POEMS---By Paul Gegan.

VOICES.

The faeries are singing
In Silver-Cloud Land,
The sea-bells are ringing
On Daffodil Strand.

The little star-maidens
Sit silent and pale,
They are tranced by the cadence
From Singing-Bird Vale.

And over the reaches
Of Lily-Foam Sea
The elves on the beaches
Are calling to me.

—:o:—

THE GODS.

I watch the Ocean Sweeper glide
Across the crystal lawn,
And, rising from the saffron tide,
The Deer of Mananaun.

And Angus in the Land of Love
Lies dreaming hour on hour,
I hear the singing of a dove
About his hidden bower.

I see from ancient shadows now
The queenly Dana start,
She bears the moon upon her brow,
The sunset in her heart.

—:o:—

THE CALL.

From out the three-times fifty isles afar,
Where Mananaun in mystic shadow reigns,
A voice is calling from the Happy Plains—
A voice whose calling is a shining star.

And I will go, for lo! a radiant train
Of bard and sage, and warriors of old!
And Midir shakes his locks of flaming gold,
And calls me as he called of old Etain.