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Five Cornish Legends

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Source: *Folklore*, Vol. 64, No. 1 (Mar., 1953), pp. 299-301

Published by: [Taylor & Francis, Ltd.](#) on behalf of [Folklore Enterprises, Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1256847>

Accessed: 20/03/2011 04:52

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WHEN YOU SEE THE FIRST NEW MOON OF THE YEAR

Common to both areas

None.

Recorded from Westmorland and North Lancashire

- (102) The first new moon [of the year?] is the most important (2 records).
 (103) Don't view it through glass or trees (1 record).
 (104) Whatever you wish for you are supposed to have before the year is out (1 record).
 (105) The first new moon of the year should not be seen through glass ; with the others it does not matter so much (6 records).
 (106) [It is] very unlucky to see the first new moon through glass. Much worse than any other one. On seeing it out of doors turn three times and wish without telling. You should try to see it over your left shoulder. You should *chink your brass* too (1 record).
 (107) Turn three times and bow.
 (108) Curtsy, blow kisses and wish [for females?] (1 record).
 (109) " Turn your back to it and hold up a hand-mirror, and as many moons as you see in it are the number of children you will have " (1 record).
 (110) Look at it through a silk handkerchief and the number of moons you see signify number of years before you marry (1 record).
 (111) Only the first new moon (of the year) seen through glass will bring bad luck (1 record).
 (112) Bow seven times to it (1 record).
 (113) Do not see the first new moon through glass or you will die during the year (1 record).
 (114) Curtsy three times and wish [for females?] (1 record).
 (115) Bow three times and walk backwards (1 record).

Recorded from Essex

- (116) When you see the first new moon [of the year] take a silk handkerchief and look through it. As many moons as you see through it at once ; so many years of life (1 record).
 (117) It is very lucky to see the first new moon (1 record).

L. F. NEWMAN and E. M. WILSON

FIVE CORNISH LEGENDS

DANDO'S DOGS

THERE was once an old priest, dissolute and debauched, who thought more of hunting and the pleasures of Bacchus than of his flock. One day at a " kill " having drunk all that his fellow-riders and followers offered, he was given a flask from a strange horseman.

Dando drunk to the dregs and reluctantly handed back the flask to the handsome stranger, for never before had Dando tasted such rare vintage nor so stirring in its content.

"I'll gallop to hell for more," he swaggered. "Then come," said the stranger, and whisking Dando on to the pommel of his black steed, raced away with the hounds at his heels. So madly they rode, so great was the speed that soon the pack was outdistanced, and still at night the dogs follow the endless quest of hunting for their master, who now rides with the devil.

On Bodmin Moors, Cornwall, before King Aethelston founded the monastery, there was a pool, said to be bottomless, and haunted by the spirit of Tregeagle, a man of wealth and high rank.

He had sold himself to the devil in exchange for a life of excess and crime. Each day which passed was marked by some damned deed by Tregeagle; but now he pays for his bargain made so long ago.

By day he has to endure the agonies of doing impossible tasks, and by night he flies through the storms, running with dreadful howls and roars, fleeing from the Devil's hell-hound pack.

ST. MICHAEL'S MOUNT

In Mount's Bay there once lived two giants. One was called Cormoran, who built and lived in the Mount, the other was Treerobben. These two neighbours lived either side of the bay, and as they were cobblers possessing only one hammer between them, when one wanted it he would bawl "borrer thammer", and the other would hurl it across from the other side of the bay.

One day as Cormoran was calling for it, his short-sighted and unsuspecting wife came to the door to announce dinner; and it was she who received the hammer.

The giant's grief was pitiful to hear as he rolled her body into the sea. She was the last of the giantesses.

MERMAID OF ZENNOR

For many long months the people of Zennor had long wondered who the beautiful and richly dressed lady was who attended divine service. They neither knew her name nor whence she came, but when she fell in love with and lured away a local lad tongues began to talk.

Neither she nor the youth, Mathey Trewella, were seen again for many years, until one Sunday morning sailors anchored in the nearby cove of Pendower were surprised to see a mermaid rising from the water.

They recognised it as the lady who had previously visited Zennor church, and she called to the Captain to raise his anchor as it was barring the entrance to her home.

Her likeness may still be seen carved on a pew-end in Zennor church.

THE WELL OF ST. KEYNE

St. Keyne was a beautiful woman who spent her life 500 years before the Norman Conquest performing good deeds in the West Country, where she is remembered by the Well which bears her name.

Around this well she planted four trees, an oak, an elm, a willow and an ash, and as she was dying she imparted to its waters a strange power. Whichever of the married couple should drink the water first, he or she would have the mastery of the home.

Southey has related this charming legend in one of his poems.

G. FEY

FOLK LIFE AND TRADITIONS

Fairy Tales by Telephone

The Daily Telegraph of September 5, 1952, announced that Vienna was introducing a childrens' fairy-tale telephone service for 4-minute stories from Grimm, Andersen or Austrian folk-lore. On Sept. 8 it announced that the 50 lines had been increased to 100. (Compare "Czechoslovakia re-writing of Fairy Tales", *Folk-Lore*, Vol. LX, No. 3, p. 305.)

Sheep Fair at South Molton, Devon, "The Hand of Welcome"

The Sunday Times of September 17, 1952, reported the Annual Sheep Fair at South Molton, N. Devon, with "the large white plaster hand on the end of a long pole", beribboned with coloured streamers at the wrist, hung from a window of the Town Hall and known as the "Hand of Welcome". [The London Editor of *The Devon and Exeter Gazette* tells me this fair is held on the Wednesday following August 25.—E. F. C.L.]

Sir Francis Drake's Lodestone

The Times of September 26, 1952, announced the exhibition at the National Maritime Museum of Sir Francis Drake's Lodestone. It is about 1 in. by 1 in. by $\frac{1}{8}$ in., and of the type which were carried by sea captains when on long voyages, in order to "retouch" the compass needles when they became demagnetized.

Games in Season

From *The Times*, Sept. 29, 1952.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Times*

Sir,—Snail shells were either before my time or were not popular in suburban districts, but I can assure you that the dates of the opening of the seasons of hoops and tops were almost as arbitrary as those of cricket and football. Hoops were produced directly the last bonfire of November 5 had been extinguished, and continued to menace the pedestrian until February, when the first Spring day was the signal for the opening of the top season.