

## St. Biorróg's (Barbara)bed and holy well

Veronica O'Malley

There are traces of a very early religious foundation at Burrishoole, East of the Abbey. In the vicinity is St. Biorróg's bed and a holy well called Tobar an Súil, the well for the eyes. Many years ago a Protestant Minister was appointed over the area "The Glebe" where the bed and holy well are situated. He inquired what was the stones (i.e. the bed) in the middle of the field. When told it was St. Biorróg's resting place the Minister had a wall built around it, which stands to this day.

The story of the well is one of a love story. A British soldier fell in love with St. Biorróg. She asked him which part of her body he had fallen in love with and when he replied her eyes, she is said to have ripped them out and thrown them onto the ground where the well then sprung up. There is no record of her death, except that she is buried in the blessed bed which lies to the South of the well. This bed and well is still a favourite place of pilgrimage for people with afflictions of the eyes.

There have been several accounts of people who have been cured of ailments to the eyes after doing the station.

Further history can be found in Dept of Folklore, U.C.D. Belfield, Dublin.

### Station

1. The station must be carried out before sunset on three days, as follows :  
Monday, Thursday, Monday  
or  
Thursday, Monday, Thursday.
- 2(a). The pilgrim stands at the foot of the blessed bed facing West and says :  
7 Our Fathers  
7 Hail Marys  
7 Glories
- (b). They then walk around the bed 7 times saying prayers of their own choice.
- (c) They then repeat part 2(a)
3. The pilgrim then goes to the holy well which is situated to the North of the bed, along the wall which surrounds the field and repeats the station as at  
2(a) - (c)



*Saving the hay near the seven arch bridge at Burrishoole. Possibly mid 50's or early 60's.*