

## **The Dorlish Cashen Buggane**

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From a lonely homestead, situated high up on Dalby Mountain, there has during the last few weeks drifted into Peel weird and uncanny tales of bizarre happenings and strange noises emanating from within and about the farm-house on Dorlish Cashen.

The Manx mind is, by nature, superstitious and ever ready to believe in fanciful happenings of an untoward nature, such as those which are abounding in the west of the island at the present time. In a district steeped in tales of folklore; of fairies and fairy music; of bugganes and phynnoderee; the happenings are regarded with a strange awe, of unnatural belief; that an evil spirit has taken possession. The inhabitants view the events with a chariness befitting their forefathers of the last decade.

The buggane or spook (to use the modern term) has chosen an ideal spot to sport his musings. No lonelier place could be found from Cronk-ny-Arrey-Laa (the home of the fairy band) to Greeba Mountain (another trysting place for the little people of a fanciful world). Dorlish Cashen is a small double-fronted homestead high on Dalby Mountain, isolated from the outside world by a half hour's fast climb up a narrow lane, abounding in loose stones, mud and slippery rock surfaces. The farm is occupied by Mr and Mrs J. Irving and their daughter of school age.

The buggane, as we shall call this creature which has set aflame the fumes of fancy, has, I understand, been seen by none other except the occupiers of the croft. Therefore, to describe him, it needs a vivid and fantastical mind. He has been seen in many forms and resembles many animals, principally of the feline species. With a body of a weasel or a cat (this is extremely doubtful as he has been heard to say he has no stomach), and a pig's head, with great glowing eyes, hissing breath and a high pitched voice, this is the apparition which has thrilled the neighbourhood.

Small wonder then that he has installed into the minds of the superstitious, a sense of fear and awe. He speaks of domestic and rural events and has no time for the "skeets" who come to hear him. Very few have heard his voice, but the many who have sat and listened have at the sound of the voice (which is said to come from out of the walls and the ceilings) felt their hair rising and their spines shivering - sure signs of the presence of the unnatural.

That the young Manxman is no longer superstitious, and has now no room for the myths that one time enraptured the countryside, has been prominently shown during the past week. The young bold spirits of Peel have their own ideas of the buggane, though they will admit the thought of seeing once again the old time scarecrow has incited a desire to probe the mystery and to see for themselves whether the buggane really exists. Thus all roads after the moon has risen have led to Dorlish Cashen. Being of a similar disposition a "Peel City Guardian" representative undertook to make the ascent to the buggane's lair on Tuesday evening. To those who have not yet enjoyed the experience of "spook-hunting" I recommend them to start forthwith.

From the moment we left Glen Maye and commenced our tortuous climb up the narrow steep lane, which was just freezing on the surface, we found we had stepped straight into the midst of fairy land or should it be spookdom? More spooks abounded round that country lane that night than ever walked abroad before. Strange white creatures popped up from behind high hedges which fairly made your heart thump; strange eerie sounds rent the air; many a ghost must have sighed for an opportunity such as this; but we pressed on unflinchingly - "duty called and none dare disobey".

Shortly before eight o'clock the objective was reached, but already the spook-hunters had gathered and as we approached his domain we were warned in hushed excited tones to keep quiet. The buggane was expected to show his hand. We waited, tensed ears strained; minds alert; but the buggane failed to ease our curiosity. Had our courage out-generalled him? Or would he show his contempt for mere man?

We waited in vain and we waited long; the night was cold and chilly; but still we held on. A faint sound, unusual to City ears, broke out. We turned and faced the out-buildings. Something was stirring. We stood stock still, and then a nanny goat appeared. What fools we had been not to think of that before. Time dragged on and no buggane appeared, but the investigators increased and about forty roamed the farm buildings in their quixotic attempt to lay the spook.

Shortly before ten, excitement reached fever-beat; the curtains rustled in a small upstairs window; every eye was glued on the spot; flashlights snapped into action; silence reigned. The window rattled; with expectant eyes and bated breath, we stood; the noise ceased, the window moved again, and a small hand came into view. Now were we to solve the mystery? A face appeared for one brief instant, we saw enough and our hopes were dashed. A well-known local young lady had braved the consequences of the fictitious happenings which would befall those who interfered where they had no call and was keeping house.

Ten o'clock came, eleven and midnight and still no sign of the buggane. The occupier had informed us earlier that a visit from the buggane was almost impossible that night. There were far too many people about. But he added, "Come some stormy night when there is no moon and you may hear him". I don't think we'll bother. We may meet one and our false pride of unbelief in such things would get a rude awakening. Strange things may happen on Dalby Mountain when the moon is hid. I will be no party to them. Better safe than sorry. Cha vel y Vanninagh dy bragh creeney dys y laa lurg y vargee. "The Manxman is never wise till the day after the market" (or after the Fair).

While listening for the buggane, Mr Irving stated that he had appeared just before six o'clock, just after Mr C. Cashin (the well known authority on the Manx language) had departed, and screamed and said "They are all mad". That was the buggane's last visit that night. Probably it has been his last. There were enough bugganes on Dorlish Cashen that night to make any self-respecting buggane turn green with envy.

"ARGUS"