

The Grave of the Princess

— A legend of Castletimon

Where Castletimon rugged heights stand sentinel by the wave,
Long, long ago a princess dwelt where still is shown her grave;
Her father o'er a verdant land for many years held sway,
And proud his banner floated on the shores of Brittas Bay.

Maeve's hair was like the ripening corn a wave 'neath autumn skies,
Her face was fair as any flower that in the woodland lies;
Her voice was sweet as mountain stream low rippling in its way,
Her brow was white as breakers foam adrift on Brittas Bay.

And e'en the druid in his grave sunk deep in mystic lore,
Dreamt of her smile when twilight crept o'er Castletimon's shore;
Like moonbeams on the glistening wave she inspired the poets lay,
He saw her eyes in the stars that shone o'er lovely Brittas Bay.

From far and near rich suitors came and sought her hand to gain,
Strive as they might she heeded not - their pleadings were in vain,
But one she loved, young Donagh bold whose pennon led the way,
Where her Father's war-boats cleft the waves of lovely Brittas Bay.

They met in secret when the moon sailed over land and sea,
They lingered where the shadows slept beneath a spreading tree;
Along the path of youth and love their willing footsteps stray,
'Twas like the path the moonbeams wore o'er lovely Brittas Bay.

But came the day when warriors brave were gathered on the strand,
"To Ship, To Ship", the captains cried for distant Albion's land;
And foremost of that gallant band young Donagh sailed away,
And left his love a-mourning him by lonely Brittas Bay.

Now as the weary months went past from Castletimon Hill,
The Princess fair watched o'er the waves for his return still,
Until at last far out to sea one golden Autumn day,
She spied the war-boats speeding back to lovely Brittas Bay.

She hastened down the rocky slope and waited on the shore,
And soft her fond heart whispered "My love we'll part no more",
But soon alas her hopes were crushed for gallant Donagh lay,
Dead on the field of battle far away from Brittas Bay.

She listened to the dreadful tale like one that's turned to stone,
She questioned not the tidings grim nor uttered cry nor moan,
One wild last look she cast around o'er land and tossing spray,
Then lifeless sank upon the beach of lonely Brittas Bay.

They hollowed out her quiet grave where stands the Ogham stone,
And left her in her long last rest beyond the breakers moan,
And there upon the green hillside by moonbeams sickly ray,
The druid carved her epitaph by lonely Brittas Bay.

Since then the centuries have rolled back the abyss of years,
And changing destinies have swayed this land to smiles or tears,
Yet when the moonbeams on the wave in magic beauty play,
The Princess still her vigil keeps by lonely Brittas Bay.

When twilight shadows softly creep o'er Castletimon Hill,
True lovers wander by her grave and dream as lovers will,
Then when the winds sing through the trees send forth a plaintive lay,
They whisper "Maeve still mourns her love" by lonely Brittas Bay.

Submitted by Seamus O'Duinn

The Arklow Historical Society would welcome information regarding the Author of this poem.