

COLLECTED

FOLKLORE

OF

THE

TOWN

## Harbour Grace Murder Solved

Thomas Pike and Alfreda Pike were not related, but they were in love with each other. The attractive seventeen year old Alfreda left Harbour Grace on the cold winter Wednesday evening of January 5, 1870 to walk to her home at Bristol's Hope by way of Mosquito Hill. That, according to Thomas Pike, was the last time he saw her alive. The next morning, a boy named Flannery found her mutilated body in a pool of blood a short distance from the road. People suspected that young Thomas Pike committed the deed, but there was no evidence to link him to the killing. In spite of this, townspeople made it so difficult for Thomas Pike that one day he left Newfoundland for the United States and never returned. Thomas Pike was not the killer of his sweetheart, Alfreda. The real murderer was an ex-Harbour Grace policeman, who fifty years after the murder, as he lay on his deathbed, confessed that he was the man who killed and mutilated Alfreda Pike. The murderer was a Mr. Forsey, a much respected man in Harbour Grace area at the time.

## Fairy Flick

As the story was related by Mr. Buff Dwyer and his wife Francis, they told of how Mr. Dwyer's grandfather, Mr. Reynolds, was chasing his cows on their pasture in Riverhead one evening. As Mr. Reynolds got closer to the animals they would run away as if they were afraid of something. Mr. Reynolds again proceeded to chase the cows and once again they ran. Mr. Reynolds gave up trying to reach the cows and proceeded home again. In the days to follow, Mr. Reynolds developed a blister-like sore on his thumb. He had some people look at his thumb and each one told him that it was a "fairy flick". ( A type of mark or sore that is found after a person is supposedly "fairy led"! ). Mr. Reynolds finally realized that the reason why the cows were avoiding him was because he was being "fairy led" and the cows could see the fairies and were scared by them and ran away!

## **Funeral by Waterhouse**

People say that years ago there was a family of six, who used to live at the end of Bannerman Lake Road around the Waterhouse that is there today! When one of the family members died they had a funeral procession with a horse and cart, with the hearse and family following behind. They say, At midnight on the anniversary of the funeral you can see the ghostly image of the entire funeral as it proceeds up the old road. There have been people in the town who have seen and heard this frightening tale but only the brave speak word of it, since many are doubtful.

## **The Dog Still Waits**

People say if you go in Bannerman Lake Road ( Pipetrack) and you turn up Travis's Hill going toward the airport. At the top of the hill an old lady used to live there with a large black Newfoundland dog. The lady died, the dog would not leave the house and it too eventually died. If you go in around the road, they say you can still see the dog sitting and waiting for the old lady to return.

## **Lighthouse Hill**

The lighthouse hill in Harbour Grace has a very important significance in the eyes of many who live in the area. As many people know, there are caves and tunnels in the face of the cliff. Supposedly these tunnels run from the cliff all the way to Lady Lake. People have tried to go into these caves but there was a scent of brimstone, too strong to venture any further. Eventually the caves were blasted in at the entrance to restrict access.

## **Morrissey's Brook**

Across from what is presently Hunt's Pick Me Up was a small brook with a bridge over it. People say that a young girl is often seen dressed in a long, white frilly dress. They say that she actually walks right into the brook and disappears.

## **At Midnight**

Billy Harris's house had to be moved. Every night at 12 O' Clock, a man would be seen at the bottom of the stairs with no head.

## **The Lynch's House**

Every night a loud banging noise was heard and the house had to be moved. The house was built on a walking trail and apparently the trail was used quite regularly. After the house was moved everything was fine. They say that the house was in the way of the people still walking .

## **The Murder In Bristol's Hope**

Marcella O'Keefe was murdered in Bristol's Hope. Her blood is seen on a rock on a certain time and every now and then she's seen sitting on the rock!

## **Forest Scare**

About forty years ago on one beautiful summer day, my uncle Bob, my brother Don and his friend Jim went into Easter Island pond for a day of trouting. After setting up camp in a clearing near the pond, they trouted until dark and then decided to go back to camp for a good night's rest. Inside the tent they had a small portable oil stove and a flashlight hung up from a pole in the middle of the tent for lighting. They were about to go to sleep when suddenly they heard a man's voice say, "go on". Immediately after they heard a horse and sled go by, the galloping was so loud it seemed as if the horse passed right next to the tent. Bob mustered up the courage to take a look outside, leaving the others to sleep. When he looked outside, there was nothing. No horse or sled to be seen, and not even a blade of grass was flattened. Next day the three packed up and left for home, and on the way back Bob asked the others if they heard any noises the previous night. They said yes and then asked what the noise was. Bob then claimed that, despite no physical traces on the ground, a horse and sled passed through the campsite. They didn't believe him until they heard the story of that particular area of forest. As the story goes, a man was returning home with a load of wood on a horse and sled. Along the way the sled capsized on top of the man, crushing him to death. The man died on the very same clearing as the campsite.

## **Funeral Procession**

A number of years ago, my father and his two friends went to Bears Cove bridge for a walk. It was a beautiful moonlit night and not a breath of wind. As they walked along talking about things, they approached the gate going into the Roman Catholic church. Upon crossing the gate my father couldn't move ahead, his friends kept going, not aware of what was happening. My father moved to the left and to the right, but he still was stuck there, as if an invisible wall was blocking his path. After a few minutes the force was gone and he finally caught up to his buddies, and they asked him what he was doing. Father told his story and the friends concluded that a ghostly funeral procession was blocking his path.

(Stories told by C. Peddle)

## Forest Barrier

My uncle told a story of a man who went in the woods hunting rabbits. After finishing for the day he started back home, and along the path he was suddenly stopped by some invisible force. However, since the path was only narrow he couldn't walk around the barrier without problems. Later he told his story to some friends and they told him that in that particular area of woods an old man died on the very same spot as the blockade in the path.

## Ghostly Similarity

A woman and her husband went to visit the husband's father, who lived a few houses from where they lived. It was at night and they had to walk up a lane to get to the father's house. On the way up they passed a woman coming down the lane. The man looked for a moment and then insisted to his wife that the woman was his dead mother. When they looked back, to their disbelief, the woman started getting smaller the nearer she got to the end of the lane. She totally disappeared when she reached the bottom. They reached the father's house and saw him on the porch, a solemn look etched on his face. He asked his son if he saw anyone going down the lane. The son said yes and added in the similarity to his mother. "Yes", the father replied, "that's because it was your mother".

## The Checked Shawl

My grandmother died many years ago. Some time after her demise my father was home alone and a ghostly figure appeared in front of him. She wore a white dress and a checked shawl. After a quick moment she vanished. When grandfather came home father described his experience to him. Grandfather explained that grandmother used to wear a checked shawl. It was her that he saw.

(Stories told by C. Peddle)

## **Hangman's Tree**

Down on the Feather point on the South Side there is a tree which is known as the hangman's tree. They say that they were supposed to hang a prisoner there in the 1800's. It is said that the man was never hanged but the rope was hanging from the tree ever since. The tree was there for many, many years and it was supposedly used for one purpose only. The tree was the perfect shape and height for hanging, and only recently has the tree been cut down. Nobody knows for sure to this day if any actual hanging had ever taken place there.

## **Whistlers**

Down on the end of the South Side is a place called Feather Point. This is where today people keep all their animals. It is said that years ago pirate ships used to pass by there. Now when you are down there on a foggy night and the wind is east you can hear a whistling. They say that if you answer the whistle strange things will happen to you, such as the whistling seems to surround you and get louder. Nobody has ever stayed there long enough to see what will happen, but to this day people still say, "do not answer the whistle." Very few people go down on the South Side on a cold foggy night.

## **Ghost/Shadow**

There is a house on the South side that they say holds a spirit. The story is that there was an elderly woman living there who was on her death bed. She swore to her family that she would not die until it was a rainy, stormy night. She waited and waited and finally one stormy night she died. The family found it really strange that she would wait for this type of a night to die. After her death the family started hearing and seeing strange things. One rainy and stormy night the family was coming home and they thought they saw someone in the window. The man went in and checked it out but there was nobody to be seen. This went on for a while and they finally realized that it only happened on rainy, stormy nights. They say that to this day in that house you can see the lady in the window on a stormy night.

## Graveyard Scare

A man named Frank Spurrell left one night in June to go over to Bryant's Cove to get some caplin. When he got over there he waited for a few hours and when the caplin didn't roll he decided to go back home, when he got in the buggy the horse started out and took him up over Bryant's Cove ridge. When he got down by South Side Anglican grave yard the horse suddenly stopped so he assumed that something was loose on the horse, so he got out of the buggy and checked the harness and the buckles but nothing was loose. He got back in the buggy and gave the horse the signal to move but he still wouldn't. Just as it happened he glanced down towards the grave yard and he saw a lot of white figures down there, this frightened him. Someone or something was calling out his name. He slapped the reins down on the horse and took off, when he got down by the gate he saw his mother and of course he stopped the horse to see what she was doing. She told him she was coming to look for him because it was late. When she got up by the grave yard she had noticed that someone had left the gate open and some sheep had drifted in there, so she was driving them out. The reason he did not see her in the graveyard was because she had on a black dress and a white apron.

## Fairies

Years ago on the feather on Southside Harbour Grace, houses once stood. A woman put her child out on the side of her house in a stroller on a beautiful day, then returned inside to tend to her house work. Around dusk the woman went outside to get her child. The stroller was empty, everyone started to look for the child thinking that maybe someone had taken the baby or a dog may have taken the baby off into the woods. For days the long search had turned up nothing, the 2 month old baby was presumed lost for good. About 6 months later under a fishing flake there was a baby found. When people gathered along with the mother of the lost child they were amazed to find a 8 month old baby with the facial features of a 90 year old man. It was believed that fairies had taken the child.