

The Myth of the Moddey Dhoo

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In the days when Charles II was King in England, and Charles, Earl of Derby, was King in Mann, Peel Castle was always garrisoned by soldiers. The guard room was just inside the great entrance of the castle and a passage used to lead from it, through one of the old churches, to the Captain of the Guard's Room. At the end of the day one of the soldiers would lock the castle gates and carry the key through the dark passage to the Captain. The soldiers used to take turns to do this.

About this time a big black dog with rough curly hair was seen, sometimes in one room, next time in a different room. He did not belong to anyone there and apparently no one knew anything about him. Every night, when the candles were lit in the guard room and the fire was burning bright, he would come down the dark passage and lay himself down by the hearth. He made no sound but lay there until the break of day, when he would then get up and disappear into the passage.

The soldiers were at first terrified of him but after some time they were used to the sight of him and lost some of their fear, though they still looked upon him as something mythical. Whilst he was in the room the men were quiet and well behaved. When the hour came to carry the key to the Captain, two of them would always go together - no man would face the dark passage alone!

One night, however one foolish man began to brag and boast that he was not afraid of the dog. It was not his turn to take the keys but to show how brave he was, he said that he would take them alone. He dared the dog to follow him.

"Let him come," he shouted, laughing. "I'll see whether he be dog or devil!" His friends were terrified and tried to hold him back but he snatched up the keys and went out into the passage. The Black Dog slowly got up from in front of the fire and followed him.

There was a deathly silence in the guard room, no sound was heard apart from the dashing of the waves on the steep rocks underneath the Castle.

After a few minutes, there came from the dark passage the most unearthly screams and howls. Not one soldier dared to move to see what was going on. They looked at each other in horror.

They heard steps and the man came back into the room. His face was ghastly pale and twisted with fear. He spoke not a word, then or afterwards.

After three days, he was dead and nobody ever knew what had happened to him that fearful night. The Black Dog was never seen again...