

# NAMES & STORIES

Place names often become a way of remembering stories, people or events. Where the origin of a place name has been lost or is uncertain, myths and legends arise.

## TEMPLASTRAGH CHURCH possibly 'the flaming or fiery church'

There is a story that each day's building work on the ancient church was undone by night. This was taken as a sign that the site was unlucky. When a burning light was seen nearby, the church was moved there and completed without incident.



Templastragh Old Church

## THE WAR HOLLOW, ROYAL PORTRUSH GOLF CLUB

In around 1103, Vikings led by the so-called King of Norway, Magnus Barefoot, were raiding the north coast of Ireland. Apparently local Irish clans the - O'Flynnns, O'Donnellys and O'Corrs - trounced them in a battle here. However, the same story is also told about a spot near Downpatrick.



The War Hollow, Royal Portrush Golf Club

## GIANT'S CAUSEWAY *Clochán na bhFómhorach* 'the Causeway of the Fomorians'

The Fomorians were a mythical race of giants said to have invaded Ireland in prehistory. This reference grew into the story that a contest between two giants, Fionn Mac Chumhaill in Ireland and Benandonner in Scotland, created the Causeway. Fionn appears in many other old stories, sometimes as a warrior and sometimes as a (small) giant.



'West View of the Giant's Causeway' by J. Howard Burgess. Reproduced courtesy of Coleraine Museum.

## THE HORSE LEAP, BALLINTOY

The Irish word *léim*, meaning 'leap', often refers to a passing place for animals. This crossing point over a stream has taken on a more dramatic meaning in local folklore. One story tells of the escape of the Stewarts' heir from what became known as Burnt House in Ballymoy during an attack in 1641; his horse evaded pursuers by leaping the stream. Another version has a smuggler escaping the law in the same way.

The Horse Leap, Ballintoy

