

## ***The De Garis Family and the Pouques***

In the very early years of the nineteenth century, not far from the church of St. Pierre du Bois, the De Garis family lived in their farmhouse alongside the stream known as *le Douit d'Israel*. Locals said that the stream and the pretty little valley through which it ran had always been a special place for the *Pouques*, and that the De Garis family were on good terms with the fairies. In fact, many claimed that on moonlit nights the fairies would go to the De Garis farm and borrow the family cart.

Neighbours said that they would hear the 'little people' under the farmer's window calling up to him asking to take his cart for the night:

'Garis, Garot,

Lend us your little cart,

That we may go to St. Malo,

To fetch us rocks and pebbles,

Washers, wheels and timbers,

If we break we will repair.'

De Garis would always be heard to



call down from his window, giving the fairy-folk permission to take the cart.

The neighbours claimed that they would then hear the cart being wheeled from the barn and the jingle of harness as the fairies hitched their horses. Some claimed that the cart could be heard trundling all along the lane towards the cliffs at Pleinmont where the sounds eventually died away. It was well known that anyone brave enough to peek out of their windows to try and witness these events was unlikely to see anything, as the *Pouques* and their horses remained invisible to most.

No one ever heard the party return, but the farmer's cart and harness was always back in his barn the following morning. Also, it was sworn that any damage that had been caused to his cart during the night had been repaired as promised – in pure silver!

Artwork by David Wyatt. © Guernsey Museums & Art Gallery

Story by Guernsey Museums, adapted from Marie de Garis' *Folklore of Guernsey*