



# Clann Chaomhánach

## E-Newsletter #38

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*Participants at the 2012 Clann Chaomhánach Gathering at Ferns Castle*

### Caomhánach Families

The first to use our name was Domnall Caomhánach, a 12<sup>th</sup> Century King of Leinster. More than 55,000 families world-wide identify with one of over 200 different interpretations of our Irish name Caomhánach, including, but not limited to, the few following examples:

<i>Cavanagh</i>	<i>Kavanagh</i>	<i>Cavanaugh</i>	<i>Kavanaugh</i>	<i>Cavenagh</i>	<i>Kavner</i>	<i>Chabiness</i>
<i>Gabernach</i>	<i>Cavenna</i>	<i>Cavnar</i>	<i>Kavanaw</i>	<i>Chavinas</i>	<i>Cavinah</i>	<i>Cavanacht</i>
<i>Cavana</i>	<i>Kabna</i>	<i>Chabana</i>	<i>Cavanna</i>	<i>Kavenagh</i>	<i>Cavanah</i>	<i>Kavina</i>
<i>Kabina</i>	<i>Caomhanaigh</i>	<i>Chabinaw</i>	<i>Cavagnaic</i>	<i>Cavanogh</i>	<i>Cavino</i>	<i>Cavinaw</i>

No matter how you spell your name today, we are all descendents of the great Caomhánach family.



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## From the Editor

This past 2012 Gathering was another small, but very successful affair. Although past Newsletters have provided rough outlines of Gathering activities, there has been no concerted effort to include the particulars of the various presentations. That was primarily due to consideration of printing costs and space limitations. However, important advantages of an electronic newsletter are that color (versus just black-and-white) can be used and the number of pages it is no longer relevant. This offers significant advantages with regard to costs of printing and postage, and editing to comply with a layout that is based on utilizing four page increments. Therefore, this Newsletter will include many of the written outlines for presentations. Please note that only the basic outline is provided without explanatory remarks, clarification of questions, perhaps a witty or derogatory comment, and other interactions - for those, you will have to attend the Gathering. Information about the 2014 Gathering is also included in this newsletter.

Perhaps the most significant aspect is that Clann Chaomhánach now has charitable status in Ireland (i.e. non-profit status) under Clans of Ireland. This was one of the changes to the Articles of Association (AoA) approved by the membership - the revised AoA is included in this newsletter.

Please welcome two new Members to the Executive Committee: Lisa Kavanagh (Co. Cork, Ireland) and Kathleen A. Sawtell (Michigan, USA).

*James J. Kavanagh*



*Clan Chaomhánach is an international family history association registered with Clans of Ireland. Clann Chaomhánach has requested and received charitable (meaning non-profit) status under Clans of Ireland Charity Number CHY 1185. The Clan Office is currently located at 514 Orwell Park Way, Templeogue, Dublin 6w, Ireland.*

Clann Chaomhánach Publications are assigned to the Executive Committee Office of the "Aralt" (Clann Herald). Submit articles, requests and/or suggestions for publication, comments, and critiques to:

Clann Chaomhánach Publications  
c/o James J. Kavanagh  
12175 Hickory West  
Utica, Michigan 48315  
U.S.A.



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### Is your address current?

Please ensure that you advise us of changes to your address. If the Annual is returned because it cannot be delivered as addressed, we will attempt to contact you for an update. This is why we ask for an email address and a phone number on your membership application. Please help us save postage and time, and keep your address information current.

### When is your Membership Renewal Due?

The mailing label on your Annual will resemble that shown below. Your membership number is in the upper left corner. The "e-m" means that Fergus has an email address on file for you. The date in the upper right-hand corner (Year/Month) gives the date, according to our records, when you last paid membership fees. Your membership fee is due one year after this date.

0999      e-m      2012/03

Charles Cavanagh  
Carrigduff, Co. Carlow  
Ireland

# 2012 Clann Chaomhánach Gathering Account Report

## Income for the 2012 Gathering:

### Registrations to Attend:

28 Registrations for 5 days of Gathering	
4 Registrations for 4 days of Gathering	
5 Registrations for 3 days of Gathering	
6 Registrations for 2 days of Gathering	
6 Registrations for 1 day of Gathering	
Subtotal in Registration fees:	€ 5,570.00

Sale of merchandise and gifts:	€ 265.00
Donations during the Gathering:	€ 70.00
Subtotal 2012 Gathering Additional Income:	€ 335.00

**Combined Gathering Income** € 5,905.00

## Expenditures for the 2012 Gathering:

	(Pre Paid)	Expenses:
Tour Coach + driver tip	(€ 420.00)	€ 460.00
Clonard Court Hotel lunch € 7 X 32		€ 225.00
Ferns Coach + driver tip		€ 180.00
Ferns Courtyard Lunch €8 X 41		€ 328.00
Public Liability Insurance	(€ 218.00)	€ 218.00
Wreaths (2)		€ 70.00
Venue, Millrace Hotel	(€ 1,000.00)	€ 2,090.00
Céilí + Entertainment ( 2 evenings )		€ 1,000.00
Awards to speakers		€ 120.00
		€ 4,691.00

## Unclaimed Gathering 2012 operational expenses or costs:

	Donated
Access to Tour sites.	€ 400.00
Tour Guide Maps + Booklet	€ 200.00
Welcome Pack Handouts Printing	€ 75.00
I.D. Tags	€ 300.00
Misc. Pre-Gathering Expenses (Copies, Postage, etc.)	€ 975.00

**Gathering Total Operational Costs** € 5,666.00 € 5,666.00

2012 Gathering Profit € 239.00

Value of unclaimed costs and expenses (listed above): € 975.00

**Total 2012 Gathering Profit** € 1,214.00

Gathering Account Balance on 31 Dec 2010 € 7,086.66

2012 Gathering profit € 1,214.00

**Gathering Account Balance on 11 Oct 2012** € 8,300.66

Note: 2012 Gathering shows a profit of € 1,214.00. However, if the Unclaimed Expenses were reimbursed, and thus deducted from income, the reduced result would still show an operational profit for this 2012 Gathering of € 239.00. The above list of unclaimed expenses are estimated costs of additional items which are necessary for a successful gathering. The estimated prices are based on previous gatherings and may not be comparable to the actual current costs. These generous and very important facilities are provided by individual members of the Executive and organizers of the Gathering.

**Fergus Kavanagh,**  
Treasurer, Clann Chaomhánach.

11<sup>th</sup> October 2012



## A Message from the Chief:



Despite some initial worries about how the weather might behave, and the concern about a potential dampening effect on attendance of the current economic austerity, the Gathering turned out to be a roaring success. Camaraderie and *craic* prevailed, while much historical and genealogical wisdom was shared amongst us. Ample recognition should go to the herculean planning efforts of James J and John G (of Camolin), which were underpinned by the vital administrative input of Fergus, all resulting in a really memorable Gathering, which sparkled with warmth and friendship.

The innovative field trip by bus on Thursday took us northwards from Bunclody through Clonegal (scene of a last stand by the Caomhánachs against the invading Cromwellians), Tullow (with sad memories of the 1798 rebellion), Baltinglass Abbey (a religious institution founded by Dermot McMurrrough), the High Cross at Moone, and then on to Athy, on the borders of the Pale. From there we proceeded to the very impressive fortress Rock of Dunamase (which once was under McMurrrough's control), on to Oughaval monastery, which had housed the Book of Leinster (compiled under McMurrrough's patronage), to Killeshin Abbey with its magnificent 12th century doorway, then stopped to view the amazing Brownhill Dolmen with its 100 metric ton capstone dating from between 4,000 and 3,000 BC, and finally back to Bunclody

On Friday, the day was occupied with history and genealogical lectures and workshops. The songs, music and dancing laid on by the local *Celtic Roots* group were a sheer delight and added much to the friendly spirit of two successive (Thursday and Friday) evenings. This got all feet tapping as well as launching some enthusiastic *céili* dancing by our Clann members.

Familiar faces included such faithful attenders, as Lorna Harris who, under difficult circumstances, made the journey from South Africa; Doris and Vic from New Jersey; Robert from Peabody, Mass., and Chris and Wendy formerly of Zimbabwe. New faces included Tánaiste Patsy's cousins, the Perry and Gibbs families from New Zealand; Brian and Kathy from W. Australia; Steve and Dee from Montana; Dillon and Sheri from Kentucky; Brian and Rebecca from Seattle; Kerry the Gaelic speaker from Australia, and Kit and Carol, both from Virginia.

The good weather which John claimed to have ordered for us from "on high" continued to hold up for the inauguration ceremony at Ferns Castle on Saturday, and for the subsequent laying of the wreath at the nearby graves of Dermot McMurrrough and his son, our ancestral Domhnall Caomhánach. Personally, I felt extremely privileged to follow in the footsteps of the very erudite preceding Clann chieftains. Moreover, I had great support from family members, including cousin Fr. (Msgr.) Charlie, the three lady cousins from Baltimore, my two sisters and a number of close friends.

The celebratory banquet on Saturday night, enlivened by a very witty speech from Jimmy, the outgoing chieftain, effectively crowned the proceedings, with a last overview and farewell on Sunday morning.

This resounding success represented a most auspicious start to my spell as Chieftain. It filled me with confidence that such momentum can be maintained in future. Needless to say, the organization necessary for such a favourable outcome cannot be accomplished without considerable effort, but the enormous enthusiasm apparent within the Clann should make the achievement of our ambitions possible. I send best wishes for every health and happiness and, drawing inspiration from the words of a well-known Gaelic toast for future wellbeing at the next rendezvous, "*Go mbeirimid beo ar an am seo arís*" ("may we be alive for the next event of this nature"), I look forward to another momentous reunion with those who can make it to the next Gathering in 2014."

Cathal



### Payments to Clann Chaomhánach



We have received queries from our membership regarding the best method for payment of membership fees. The simple answer is to use the web site. The website is straight forward, with step-by-step instructions to make payments using a credit card. The majority of our dues transactions are successfully completed with this system. In our experience, using the web site for payment is safe and reliable: to our knowledge, we have never lost a transaction, nor has anyone been defrauded.

Some members do not wish to use the web site, do not have access to the internet, or do not wish to pay with a credit card. We accept personal cheques (checks) from all countries. Please make these payable to "Clann Chaomhánach". The amount should be made out in the local currency to the value of € 25 (€ 250 for Life Membership) on the date that the cheque (check) is written. It is totally unnecessary and costly, for our overseas members to get a Bankers Cheque, Cashiers Check, or Money Order in Euros, because they will normally have to pay an additional fee for the draft, and another fee for money exchange. Our current account with Enniscorthy Bank of Ireland is not charged fees for cheque processing or money conversion of the foreign currency value into Euros. We ensure this "no fee processing" by maintaining a sufficient minimum balance in that account for that purpose. Upon lodgment or deposit with the bank, the value of the cheque/check is converted into Euro at the exchange rate for that day. This amount is then credited to our account.

Website at: <http://www.kavanaghfamily.com/>

If the form is needed, please print this page

Note that there are over 200 different spelling interpretations of the Irish name "Caomhánach", including Cavanagh, Kavanagh, Cavanaugh, Kavanaugh, Cavana, Cavanaugh, Cavannah, Kavna, etc. Please list your nearest ancestor with a Caomhánach surname.

Print and mail this completed application form together with your cheque to:

Fergus Kavanagh  
514 Orwell Park Way  
Templeogue,  
Dublin 6w,  
Ireland

For questions regarding currency conversion rates, please check with your bank or visit one of the internet sites specializing in this aspect, for example, <http://www.xe.com/ucc>.

You may also join or renew online through the Clann Chaomhánach website using your credit card, at:

<http://www.kavanaghfamily.com>



# Clann Chaomhánach

Registered with the Clans of Ireland

Web: [HTTP://www.KAVANAGHFAMILY.com](http://www.KAVANAGHFAMILY.com)

New Membership Application

ANNUAL Membership (Euro € 25)

LIFE Membership (Euro € 250)

Membership Renewal

ANNUAL Membership (Euro € 25)

(Please indicate your choice)

Given Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a cheque for \_\_\_\_\_, made payable to Clann Chaomhánach.

# Clans of Ireland



Clann Chaomhánach has been a registered member of Clans of Ireland since its founding in 1993. Members of the Executive Committee of Clann Chaomhánach held and hold positions on the Board of Clans of Ireland - currently, Fergus L. Kavanagh, Treasurer of Clann Chaomhánach is also on the Board of Clans of Ireland.

Clans of Ireland is a governing body, with limited liability, established in 1989:

- To organize the family clans of Ireland.
- To authenticate and regulate Irish Clans.
- To promote the interests of Irish Clans and Irish culture.
- To provide authentic and scholarly information related to Irish Clans.
- To maintain a register of organized Irish Clans.
- To provide guidance in establishing and maintaining a successful Irish Clan society.
- To support the activities of the Irish Clans.

Membership in Clans of Ireland is a verification of authenticity, and is only granted to organizations that are fully authenticated and have complied with all of the eligibility requirements for registration by Clans of Ireland.

The Patron of Clans of Ireland is Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland. By so doing, he gave his stamp of approval to the work of Clans of Ireland, and the Irish Clans both here and abroad. This singular honour fully authenticates Clans of Ireland and its member Clans.

Clans of Ireland is an incorporated legal entity in Ireland, with charitable (i.e. non-profit) status under CHY 11585. This means that the Irish Revenue Commissioners (income tax office) will not demand any tax on the Clans of Ireland income or interest earned. This charity number may be extended to the member clans, and Clann Chaomhánach has applied to Clans of Ireland for permission to use CHY 11585. Applicant Clans must submit specific documentation, have a registered office (address) in Ireland, and assure that all funds collected or donated must be used only for educational and cultural purposes. Any officer of a clan operating as a charity under Clans of Ireland may not benefit personally from funds collected or donated to the clan. Up to now the method of applying the system to the clans was vague and unsure. The process has now been clarified. Clann Chaomhánach has applied for, and has been granted this status from Clans of Ireland under CHY 11585.

Clans of Ireland is accredited, by the United Nations, as a Civil Society Non-Governmental Organisation (Irish culture and heritage) with authority to represent Irish Clans at the United Nations.

Benefits of registration with Clans of Ireland:

- Guidance in establishing and maintaining a thriving cultural society
- Featured in the newsletter and the website of Clans of Ireland.
- A contact point with fellow clans people.
- Access to a support forum providing knowledge, expertise and assistance to Y-DNA projects.
- Fáilte Ireland representation and worldwide public relations.

## The Order of Clans of Ireland

Clans of Ireland has instituted an order of merit with the purpose of honouring individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to Irish culture and heritage, or who have brought conspicuous honour to their clan. All clans registered with Clans of Ireland for 3 consecutive years, may nominate suitably qualified individuals. The successful nominees will be admitted as Companions of the Order of Clans of Ireland, and the insignia of membership of the Order will be presented at a ceremony adjacent to the annual general meeting of Clans of Ireland in Dublin.



# Clann Chaomhánach

## 2014 GATHERING

17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> September 2014

Carlton Millrace Hotel, Carrigduff, Bunclody, Co. Wexford, Ireland

The 2014 Clann Chaomhánach Gathering will be held at the Carlton Millrace Hotel, Bunclody, Co. Wexford. The Gathering will include tours, lectures, genealogy consultations and lots more which we hope everyone will enjoy. A listing of the events is included here for your information. The first time that the Clann used this venue for our Gathering activities and accommodations was in 2010, and this proved so successful that we have continued with the combined hotel/activities venue for Gatherings in 2012 and 2014.



### Events

- \* Welcoming Reception
- \* Executive Committee Meeting
- \* Conducted Field Trip to Historic Clann Sites
- \* Traditional entertainment evening
- \* Biennial General Membership Meeting
- \* Family History/Genealogy Presentations
- \* Céilí Evening
- \* Wreath laying ceremonies at Bunclody & Ferns
- \* Inauguration of Chief Patricia O'Shea
- \* Tour of Ferns Castle and historic Ferns
- \* Chief's Banquet with Honors Awards
- \* Open Panel Discussion on General Issues
- \* Gathering Critique
- \* Closing and Farewell

The Carlton Millrace Hotel is in the center of the town of Bunclody and has 40 double rooms, 20 twin rooms (2 people in each room) and 12 family apartments (3 people in each apartment). The hotel has excellent food and great facilities with new restaurants and activity rooms. Very attractive rates for 4 days of the Gathering has been negotiated with the hotel at € 216 Euro per person sharing, or € 276 euro single, including breakfast. If you plan to stay in the Carlton Millrace, the number of rooms is limited, and you should book early by contacting Catherine Connelly at Reservations, e-mail: [cconnolly@millracehotel.com](mailto:cconnolly@millracehotel.com). The subject line of your e-mail should be "Clann Chaomhánach Gathering 2014". This will ensure that you are given the agreed reduced prices for your stay at the Gathering. |

Otherwise, there are some Bed & Breakfast (B&B) facilities in the area, which are in the range of €40-60 per person per night. Fergus will help look after the accommodation reservations. You can contact him at [FergusLKavanagh@eircom.net](mailto:FergusLKavanagh@eircom.net).

Bunclody is a small town which lies north-east of Mount Leinster, in the Slaney River Valley. This is in Caomhánach country. The tower house at Carrickduff, the home of Col. Charles Cavanagh, grandson of Donal Spannaigh, and ancestor of a large group of descendants living in the U.S., is located just outside the town limits to the west.

Just outside the other end of Bunclody there is Kilmysal cemetery, the burial place of Eileen Aroon, whose romantic story is the basis of that famous ballad of the same name. Bunclody is an ideal venue with plenty of facilities to ensure a very enjoyable gathering.





# Clann Chaomhánach

## 2014 GATHERING

17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> September 2014

Carlton Millrace Hotel, Carrigduff, Bunclody, Co. Wexford, Ireland.

Please print and fill out this Registration Attendance form and mail it together with your cheque (payable to Clann Chaomhánach) to: **Fergus Kavanagh**  
**514 Orwell Park Way,**  
**Templeogue,**  
**Dublin 6w, Ireland.**

## REGISTRATION FORM

Please supply contact details of all those of your group who are attending the Gathering:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership # \_\_\_\_\_ (Non-members may attend)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

How many persons are in your group? \_\_\_\_\_ How many of them will attend the gathering? \_\_\_\_\_

Please supply Name, Address, e-mail, and Phone # of all those of your group attending the gathering (please use the reverse).

**IMPORTANT:** Will you have your own transport in Ireland? \_\_\_\_\_

Date of arrival in Ireland \_\_\_\_\_ Date of departure from Ireland \_\_\_\_\_

Full Attendance Registration Fees				
2014 Clann Chaomhánach Gathering 17 <sup>th</sup> to 21 <sup>st</sup> September				
Attendee Type	Full Gathering	No. of Attendees	Fees in Euros	Fee
Member	17th to 21st Sept. 2014		€ 180 per person	
Member's Spouse	17th to 21st Sept. 2014		€ 110 per spouse	
Non-Member	17th to 21st Sept. 2014		€ 200 per person	
<b>Total Due</b>				
Day to Day Registration Fees				
Special Attendance fee per person per day for anyone attending on a day to day basis.				
Day to Day ( any person )		No. of Attendees	Fees in Euros	Fee
Wed.17 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	Registration / Reception		€ 20 per person	
Thurs.18 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	Tour Day / Social Evening		€ 80 per person	
Fri. 19 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	Genealogy / Biennial G.M. / DNA / Céilí		€ 60 per person	
Sat. 20 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	History / Inauguration / Banquet		€ 60 per person	
Sun. 21 <sup>st</sup> Sept.	Open Panel / Farewell Day		€ 20 per person	
<b>Total Due</b>				

**Fees must be paid in full by 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014. Registrations received after 2nd July, will incur a € 25 late surcharge per person. If you cancel before 17<sup>th</sup> August 2014, we will refund 50% of fee already paid.**

For currency conversion rate see website <http://www.xe.com/ucc/> or check with your local bank.

Cheques should be made payable to Clann Chaomhánach and mailed with this form to above address.

If you need accommodations, Clann Chaomhánach can make your reservations and send you confirmation and payment instructions with further information, upon receipt of the Accommodation Reservation Form. This form is available on the Clann website at <http://www.kavanaghfamily.com>, or you can print copies of this and the next page.



# Clann Chaomhánach

## 2014 GATHERING

17th – 21st September 2014

Carlton Millrace Hotel, Carrigduff, Bunclody, Co. Wexford, Ireland.

Please complete and **mail** this form to: Fergus Kavanagh  
514 Orwell Park Way,  
Templeogue  
Dublin 6W, Ireland.

or, if you prefer, you can **e-mail** this as an attachment to: FergusLKavanagh@eircom.net

## GATHERING ACCOMMODATIONS FORM

(non-members may attend)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Important:** Will you have your own transportation in Ireland? \_\_\_\_\_

Please mark (X) required Accommodation B&B 17th\_\_, 18th\_\_, 19th\_\_, 20th\_\_, 21st\_\_, Sept. 2014

Other dates \_\_\_\_\_

How many people traveling with you will need Gathering Accommodations?

How many bedrooms will you need? \_\_\_\_\_ Double beds \_\_\_\_\_ Single beds \_\_\_\_\_

Special Requirements / Comments : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please check your preference below:

[ ] Carlton Millrace Hotel, 4 nights B&B = € 216 per person sharing @ €54 p.p. sharing per night

[ ] Carlton Millrace Hotel, 4 nights B&B = € 276 per person single @ € 69 p.p. single rate per night

[ ] Carlton Millrace Apartments (1 double & 2 single beds) B&B @ €54 per person sharing per night

[ ] Moderate B&B € 40 - € 45 per person per night

[ ] Quality B&B € 45 - € 60 per person per night

Upon receipt of this Gathering Accommodations form, Clann Chaomhánach will make your reservations and send you confirmation, payment instructions and further information.

Currency conversion rates are available at: <http://www.xe.com/ucc/>

# An Overview of Caomhánach History

by Cathal Cavanagh

My aim in presenting this brief historical overview was to illustrate the very distinguished nature of our clan history. The Caomhánachs dominated the Gaelic Irish world of Leinster for some 600 years, and their later descendants have gone on to accomplish major achievements on a world stage. The conflict between Celtic and Norman cultures is at the heart of this saga.

## The Origin and Timing of Our Clan's Emergence

Legend has it that the Laighin or Leinstermen are descended from Gaulish soldiers who came from France, supposedly to assist an Irish exile called Labhraidh Loingseach, who was seeking to revenge the murder of his father and grandfather at Dinn Righ (near Leighlinbridge in Co. Carlow). Irish legends obviously cannot be accepted verbatim, but they often consist of part fictional embroidery invented to help explain an underlying factual framework. Moreover, these legends constitute our only window on prehistory, with of course additional assistance from archaeological evidence and more recently, DNA analysis.

To take just one example, a very well known ancient legend states that a people known as the Milesians migrated to Ireland from Spain. This has recently received what appears to be scientific support via DNA comparisons. A well publicized study by Trinity College Dublin scientists found that over 90% of the Irish males in the study carried the same "signature DNA marker" as that found in around 90% of those sampled in Northern Spain. This may raise more questions than it provides answers, but at least it certainly increases our respect for those legends handed down orally over thousands of years.

The Laighin, from whom the Ui Cheinnsealaigh ("Ui" is often anglicized "Hy", and is merely the plural of the "O" in Irish. It could be translated simply as "the O Kinsella peoples") are believed to be descended, apparently arrived relatively late in Irish prehistory, in around 500 BC. If the general experience of such migrations, backed by archaeological evidence, can be relied upon, the arrival of the Laighin may not have substantially altered the composition of the pre-existing population stock, but rather imposed a ruling class on it. There are indications that in the second century AD, the Laighin took possession of Tara and the surrounding Meath countryside, before being evicted by the Southern Uí Néill in the third century AD. The branch of the Laighin who became the Ui Cheinnsealaigh later migrated from their original base in Rathvilly, Co. Carlow, moving through the Bunclody pass into Co. Wexford and over time they came to dominate the pre-existing tribes in this area.

The Uí Cheinnsealaigh name - which is said to signify "valorous" or "dominant" - derives from a legendary ancestor called Enna Cinsealach, apparently living in an era prior to 500 AD. The name came to be applied not only to the clan, but also to the territory which they occupied. Moreover, it still lives on today in the surname Kinsella. This is a branch of the clan associated with Diarmaid McMurrugh's son, Eanna Cinsealach, who was blinded when held hostage by the Osraí Mac Giolla Phádraigs. .

## Important Aspects of Ancient Irish Society

Some familiarity with the rules by which early Irish society operated is an important help towards a deeper understanding of Irish history. Early Irish society was governed by very ancient and very pragmatic tribal laws, called the Brehon Laws.

The Brehon Laws governed all aspects of day to day life; their practical application was interpreted and administered by a professional class of judges or *breitheamhs*. The existence of these all-encompassing laws acted as a check on the chieftains' powers, since the chieftains, like everybody else, were subject to these laws and could not alter them to suit their own purposes. A person's honour was very important in ancient Irish society, and a central pillar of these laws was the concept of an "honour price". This was what had to be paid by way of reparation for an offence against a person (including murder), and the reparation varied according to the wronged person's status and the gravity of the offence. Plurality of wives was permitted, no doubt with a view to ensuring sufficient male heirs for the noble classes at a period when early death was frequent due to natural causes or war. Females possessed a number of rights which they later lost under Norman jurisdiction. Divorce was also recognized.

The chieftainship was not automatically transmitted from father to son in accordance with the primogeniture (first born succession) rule, which was central to succession under the Scandinavian-origin Normans. Chieftains were elected by the leading representatives of the clan from within a circle of leading families.

In addition to ensuring that the Brehon Laws were upheld, the chieftain's main occupation was dealing with important clan matters arising from outside the clan. He was in effect the equivalent of a minister for foreign relations for the clan, which of course included warfare. It was the chieftain who personally made alliances with other clans, and once he died, previous alliances were liable to fall away. His successor was then often faced with the task of re-constructing alliances all over again. In any event, alliances between clans often altered rapidly, according as perceived advantages for the clans changed.

To put matters into perspective, it should also be borne in mind that Europe in general was riven by savage civil wars during the so-called "Dark Ages", and on into medieval times. Indeed this situation continued up to fairly modern times. During the 12th and 13th centuries, England and France, in particular, experienced vicious civil and expansionist wars, notably during the reigns of Henry II and his sons. Henry's sons even rebelled against him on a number of occasions, backed by turbulent barons.

Probably because a chieftain was expected to lead his men into battle, the Brehon Laws stipulated that no person who had a physical defect could become chieftain. One consequence of this was that one method of getting rid of a rival - short of killing him - in power struggles, was to blind him.

The Brehon laws protected the rights of each class and person in society. The feudal system, whereby a lord had total power of life and death over his serfs, did not exist in ancient Ireland.

The Irish chieftain did not, as was true under feudal systems, own the territory over which he exercised control, and could not re-allocate lands among feudal vassals. The chieftain was simply on a par with other clan land owners and possessed only his family domain. In addition, he was granted a temporary tenure over ("mensal") land set aside to meet expenses of office, including for the provision of hospitality. This temporary tenure terminated when the chieftain ceased to hold office.

It may be noted that although tillage was practiced, the population relied heavily for sustenance, especially in winter, on cattle raising and dairying, which Irish climatic conditions have always favoured. In practice, inter-clan warfare was often confined to cattle raiding.

It is important to understand that in ancient Ireland, political power was very fragmented into some 150 separate kingdoms of varying size. The inhabitants of these kingdoms thought almost exclusively in terms of local issues and had loyalty only to their local chieftains. So while there was a cultural and linguistic unity,

national political unity did not exist.

The twelfth century saw some movements towards the type of centralization of power which had already taken place in much of Europe, but the onslaught of the Normans put an end to this. Disunity and fragmentation of political power were to be major causes of the downfall of the Gaelic system in the centuries following the arrival of the Normans.

Latter day historians tend to question the very existence of a Celtic church as such. They speak rather in terms of the emergence over time of some distinctive local traditions in those countries under Celtic influence. It should be noted that Ireland's contribution to the preservation and spread of religion in Europe during the "Dark Ages" was immense. Irish monks went all over the European Continent preaching Christianity from the 6th Century onwards to such an extent, that many places in France, Germany, Austria and Switzerland are named after these Irish monks, who followed the *peregrinatio* or "white martyrdom" missionary tradition, consisting of going into exile to spread the gospel. They also left their mark in Italy, and even penetrated into the Slavic countries as far as Kiev in modern Ukraine. Moreover, Scotland and the North of England were re-Christianised by Irish monks

The Irish church did not deviate in dogma from that of Rome. Any differences from Roman religious practices which occurred related to very minor matters such as the calculation of Easter, the style of monks' tonsure, etc. These were in any event resolved at the Synod of Whitby in 664. A Synod was held at Kells in 1152, which was attended by the Papal legate, a Johannes Cardinal Paparo. At this, the Irish church voluntarily reaffirmed Rome's primacy and Roman usage. The Pope in turn delivered his blessing to various reforms being implemented. This was one of a series of reforming synods dating back to that of Cashel in 1101 marking the transition to a Roman-type church organization.

With the coming of Christianity the Irish had adapted its administrative framework to a model heavily based on monasticism, which fitted in well with their existing culture, society and religious needs, even if it may not have precisely conformed to a bureaucratic Roman model. In Ireland, because land could not be legally alienated from the clan, the abbots of these monasteries were often members of ruling families. In some cases these abbots were non-ordained lay people. As described in "The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church" (Hamlin and Hughes, Four Courts Press, 1997), the Irish monasteries consisted of a combination of monks, who often followed a highly ascetic regime, and lay people, who lived on the lands and worked them, often with their families. There were bishops living in these monasteries to ordain, consecrate and perform other sacramental functions, but by 700, and probably considerably before, the government was in the hands of abbots.

Monasteries were creators of, and stores of, wealth. As a result, the local chiefs often regarded them as sources of finance for their personal projects. A similar situation prevailed all over western Europe, e.g. in 1066, the 35 monasteries in England controlled one-sixth of the national revenue and needless to say no temporal ruler could resist the temptation to gain control over this. In England and on the Continent, bishops were feudal lords in the fullest sense. Endowed with lands, they levied taxes and mobilised armed men for conflicts. Moreover, married bishops and clergy were common in England at this period and church corruption was rife. In brief, the Normans held no moral high ground in religious matters, and certainly had no justification for calling down fire and brimstone on Ireland to supposedly advance Church reform.

### The Rise to Power of the Uí Cheinnsealaigh

Diarmaid Mac Maol na mBó (c. 1000 -1072) - whose name might perhaps be translated as "son of the cattle

rustler"- was a truly extraordinary man who carved out a remarkable career and boosted his clan's fortunes immensely.

Prior to his rise to the chieftainship, the Uí Cheinnsealaigh were an obscure tribe in the geographically remote South East. For nearly 300 years prior to the Battle of Clontarf in 1014, the kingship of Leinster was shared between the ancestors of the O'Byrnes, O'Tooles and MacGiolla Mac Colmógs, who inhabited the northern part of Leinster. The Battle of Clontarf was the outcome of a power struggle which pitted the O'Briens of Munster against these Northern Leinster tribes, with each side being assisted by Viking allies. These Northern Leinster tribes were weakened both by their participation in the Battle of Clontarf, and by subsequent internal dissension.

The heavy losses sustained in the Battle of Clontarf by the other contenders for power opened the way for the rise of Mac Maol na mBó and his Uí Cheinnsealaigh clan of the South East. In 1042 he had become King of Leinster, and by 1054, he had also become King of Viking Dublin and overlord of the Isle of Man, with political influence in both Wales and Western Scotland. Moreover, he gave assistance to Harold Godwinson, when he was expelled from England by King Edward the Confessor in 1051, and helped to ensure his ascension to the throne. Subsequently, following the Norman victory at Hastings in 1066, Mac Maol na mBó assisted Harold's sons in their abortive attempts to regain the English Kingship.

Mac Maol na mBó acquired and wielded very extensive political influence both at home and abroad during his life time and was dubbed the "king maker". The Book of Leinster speaks of him as "High King with Opposition". As the title indicates, he wielded control according to Irish fashion over the greater part of Ireland. He even wielded influence in Ulster through an alliance with the Ulaid. Just one illustration of how the law of the jungle prevailed at the period, upon Mac Maol na mBó's death in battle in 1072, the Uí Cheinnsealaigh territory was immediately invaded by the O'Briens, who until recently had been their close allies.

Viking raiders had appeared off the Irish coast from around 800 AD. After initial failure to carve out a kingdom for themselves in Ireland, they confined themselves to some coastal cities which they established. Dublin was their most important trading centre outside Scandinavia. Wexford, Waterford and Limerick were also major Viking settlements. The coastal enclaves grew very wealthy from their trading activities. The Irish chieftains, who controlled as overlords those coastal areas in which the Vikings settled, coexisted happily with them, squeezing tribute from them, and treating them, in modern parlance, like "cash cows".

### The Advent of the Normans

The Normans (whose name derived from "North Men") were of Viking origin. They were allowed by the then French king, Charles the Simple, to settle in Normandy (roughly one third the size of Ireland) as a means of buying peace in 911 AD. They adopted French culture and Christianity, but remained a remarkably aggressive and acquisitive people, continuously on the lookout for new conquests and plunder. The "Greed is Good" motto would not have been out of place in their philosophy, and they had a tradition of being totally unscrupulous in pursuit of their piratical objectives.

The Frankish Pepin was crowned king of Gaul by Pope Stephen in 754 AD, and in return Pepin supported the creation of the Papal States, to help provide stability in the face of the disintegration of the remnants of the Roman Empire in Northern Italy, due to the pressure from invading Lombard tribes. As a result, the Papacy then became a temporal, as well as a spiritual, power.

The Normans had infiltrated into Italy, initially as mercenaries, and established their first permanent base there in 1029. At this period the Papacy was badly in need of protection from belligerent German Emperors. The Normans ingratiated themselves with the Papacy by providing the protection sought against the German Emperors. With Papal approval delivered in 1059, the Normans conquered the remnants of the Byzantine Empire in Southern Italy (which led to Latin rite replacing Greek, and to further deteriorating relations between Rome and Constantinople), as well as Muslim-controlled Sicily. Subsequently the Normans expanded along the Adriatic coast, occupying Dubrovnik and other Byzantine towns in Dalmatia. They were disciplined and formidable military adventurers, not easily overawed by whatever military odds were stacked against them. An army of 16,000 even set out under a Robert "Giscard" d'Hautville to conquer Constantinople, supposedly in support of the deposed emperor Michael VII, whose son was conveniently affianced to Giscard's daughter. This proved unsuccessful when the Norman army was decimated by plague in Greece in 1085, leading to Giscard's death.

When William the Conqueror decided to invade England in 1066, he managed to obtain the public approval of the Papacy, despite William's flimsy justification for this invasion. This helped him to recruit soldiers who had a "win-win" situation; if they survived they got plunder, if they were killed they assumed that they had a place in Heaven. William defeated the English King Harold at the Battle of Hastings, and seized the English throne. He then divided English lands among his assorted army of Normans, Bretons, Flemish and other mercenaries. William's promise to hold England in feudal dependence on the Vatican was thereafter quickly jettisoned.

Following the 1154 coronation of Henry II, a Conference was held at Winchester which discussed a proposed invasion of Ireland. The Queen mother, the Empress Matilda, argued against it, and as a result of her intervention, the invasion was postponed. Henry was apparently merely biding his time for a suitable opportunity to take action. The question of whether the only English Pope, Adrian IV, did or did not grant approval for a Norman takeover of Ireland has given rise to prolonged academic controversy. Particularly since this was transmitted via Henry's alleged intermediary, an intimate friend of Adrian's named John of Salisbury. Even John of Salisbury's claim to have gone to Rome as Henry's intermediary has been subjected to challenge by some historians. The Papal approval in question is supposedly contained in the text of a papal Bull called "Laudabiliter". Rather suspiciously no original of this Bull was ever found, and it is also suspicious that its existence was kept under wraps for some two decades, until 1175 at the earliest. Indeed, our sole source of its alleged contents is a Norman-Welsh monk named Giraldus Cambrensis (or Gerald de Barri), who was a nephew of the leading Norman mercenary family, and a grandson of the famous Welsh princess Nesta. He came to Ireland with Prince John in 1185. He was hostile to the Irish and is not regarded as a reliable source. One commentator remarked – perhaps unkindly - that Giraldus never told the truth except by accident. Since the *Laudabiliter* "document" deviates from the standard Vatican format, the suspicion must be that the letter allegedly given by Adrian to John of Salisbury in 1155 was not in a form which suited the Normans, and Adrian's alleged letter was subsequently reformulated to alter its meaning. Moreover, the basic legal premise underlying any alleged Papal permission to intervene in Ireland, i.e. that Rome had a temporal right to control all Western Europe and the Isles, was in any case based on an acknowledged 8th or 9th Century forgery known as the "Donation of Constantine". This was concocted to give the false impression, that when the Emperor Constantine was leaving for the Eastern Byzantine Empire, he bequeathed secular control over Western Europe to the Papacy. An attempt to bolster the legitimacy of the creation of the Papal states in the 750's is felt to have been behind this forgery. Around the year 1000, the German Emperor Otto III had already publicly declared this fraudulent document to be a forgery, and it was acknowledged as such by Pope Pius II in 1453, when a scholar named Lorenzo Valla carried out a forensic analysis, which demonstrated that the Latin used in the document was not that of the 4th century.

Therefore the more one examines the alleged Laudabiliter justification, the clearer it becomes that this was designed to camouflage Henry II's objective, already made explicit just after his coronation, to launch an invasion of Ireland for purely selfish and secular motives.

### Diarmaid McMurrugh (1110 – 1171)

Diarmaid McMurrugh was the great-grandson of Mac Maol na mBó, and became one of the most controversial figures in Irish history. This was mainly due to a lack of understanding of the historical context on the part of certain historians.

Diarmaid was a supporter of the so-called "reform" movement in religious matters, designed to introduce Roman discipline and standards. He founded a number of monasteries for Cistercians and Augustinians as well as a number of convents. He sponsored and attended the Synod of Clane in 1162, which confirmed the primacy of Armagh, and introduced further church reforms. This was one of the series of reform synods aimed at aligning Irish church practice with that of Rome. This reform drive followed on a chaotic era of church schismatic crises, with more than one pope being simultaneously elected by various factions on a number of occasions. There is extant a letter from St. Bernard of Clairvaux in France, addressing Diarmaid as "King of Ireland", and thanking him for his work for the church. It should be noted that this aforesaid St. Bernard, in a biography of St. Malachy of Armagh, unfairly painted the Irish people and their church in the most barbarous terms, apparently with the objective of highlighting Malachy's reforming zeal and heroism. Bernard's criticism of the Irish church and way of life would of course have linked in nicely with Norman allegations.

As an interesting sidelight to Bernard's criticisms of the Irish, there is a rather jaundiced view of Bernard himself by historian John Julius Norwich in a book on the "Decline and Fall of Byzantium" (Penguin). This runs as follows: "All his life Bernard exemplified that fortunately rare phenomenon, the genuine ascetic who feels compelled to intervene in the political field; and since he saw the world with the eye of a fanatic his interventions were almost invariably disastrous. His launching of the Second Crusade led to the most shameful Christian humiliation of the Middle ages". Thus, Bernard's views are not universally admired.

Diarmaid was born into a chaotic era when first the O'Briens of Munster, then the O'Connors of Connacht and, for a time, McLochlainn of Ulster, were each vying for the High Kingship, and overall power in Ireland. These power conflicts continued on throughout the 1100's, with the weakened Uí Cheinnsealaighs for a time being deprived of the overlordship of Dublin by the O'Briens, who were in turn challenged by the O'Connors.

The unexpected death from natural causes in 1126 of Eanna McMurrugh resulted in the election of his 16 year old brother Diarmaid as chieftain. Turlough O'Connor immediately sent a major invasion force into Uí Cheinnsealaigh to ravage it and to stamp out any potential competition for overall power from the Uí Cheinnsealaigh source. The bellicose leader of this expedition was Tiarnan O'Ruairc, Prince of Breifne, who from that time onwards was to become Diarmaid's bitterest and most implacable enemy. O'Ruairc's father had been king of Connacht and historians suggest that his frustration at being unable to succeed his father as king was a major psychological factor motivating his belligerent behaviour. From the moment of his election as chieftain, Diarmaid and the Uí Cheinnsealaigh thus lived under constant threat from the O'Connors, and the O'Connors' venomous ally, O'Ruairc.

From 1152-1166, Diarmaid astutely allied himself to Muirheartach McLochlainn of Ulster, who was also a contender for the High Kingship, and who forced the O'Connors to come to an uneasy truce. Under McLochlainn's protection, Diarmaid was free to pursue his own course without interference from O'Connor.



McLochlainn's death at the hands of his own clan in 1166 was a disaster for Diarmaid. Ruairi O'Connor deprived Diarmaid of his suzerainty over Dublin and his Kingship of Leinster, while O'Ruairc ravaged Uí Cheinnsealaigh with the intention of killing him.

Diarmaid then followed a precedent which had been set on a number of occasions previously in history. He went to look for allies. The request by the northern Leinstermen for Viking assistance at Clontarf in 1014, already constituted one relatively recent precedent. Moreover, in 1124, David of neighbouring Scotland had regained his kingdom with Norman help. Diarmaid's search for overseas mercenary assistance to regain his kingdom was therefore nothing unusual.

Upon discovering via his agents that no Norman could act without the King's permission, Diarmaid went to Aquitaine in France to meet Henry II, to whom he had already rendered military assistance shortly before in 1165, in the form of the support of Dublin Viking war galleys and warriors from Leinster. Henry was fully occupied with urgent matters in his French possessions but, perceiving a possible future advantage for his own plans, he gave Diarmaid permission to recruit mercenaries from among his English subjects. The most available ones for such a risky enterprise were those led by Richard de Clare, a Norman Earl on the Welsh borders, nicknamed Strongbow, who was down on his luck and heavily in debt. The mercenaries who volunteered were a mixed bunch of Normans, Norman-Welsh, Welsh and Flemish. These were veteran soldiers seasoned in the art of war during Welsh conflicts. Their disciplined heavy cavalry charges were preceded by deadly showers of arrows from their Welsh archers. The generally unarmored Irish were normally unable to withstand or outmaneuver them on open ground. With the assistance of these mercenaries Diarmaid quickly recovered his clan territory, recapturing Leinster and Dublin, and then invading Meath and Breffni. He was well on his way to fulfilling his ambition of wresting the High Kingship from Ruairi O'Connor, when he fell ill and died in 1171 at the age of 61.

Eminent historian F.J. Byrne has pointed out that if Diarmaid had lived some years longer, and had achieved his ambition, then he might be revered as the King who united Ireland, rather than being unjustly castigated as the man who facilitated the Norman invasion of Ireland. As historian, Nick Furlong put it "for it happened in this period that the mercenaries most freely available were of the Norman civilization. They created problems not associated with previous mercenaries. Their arrival in small numbers caused ultimately the name of the man who hired them to be cast in the role of the scapegoat for several national defeats."

Diarmaid gave his daughter Aoife in marriage to Strongbow as an added incentive to come over to Ireland. Whatever the desperate Diarmaid may have promised Strongbow in order to secure his assistance, under Brehon Law this marriage gave Strongbow no right to "succession". Irish chieftains were elected, and in any event, succession was not possible via the female line. Moreover, the chieftain ruled the people of the clann but could not dispose of the clann lands. However, Strongbow interpreted it as giving him the right to succeed Diarmaid under Norman law, claiming, in order to eliminate him, that Dónal Caomhánach and Enna Kinsella were illegitimate. Illegitimacy was, of course, a Norman concept - to be used when it suited them, since William the Conqueror (known as the "the Bastard") was illegitimate.

### Henry II in Ireland in 1171-72

In the course of a bitter earlier English succession struggle which resulted in civil war, the de Clare family of Strongbow had supported the faction of King Stephen against that of his cousin the wily Henry II. This left a hostile legacy between Henry and Strongbow. As a result Henry had deprived Strongbow of his Earldom of Pembroke. Despite the fact that Henry's main interest was in his French domains, since most of his income was derived from them, Henry was nonetheless keen to prevent Strongbow establishing an independent

Norman kingdom in Ireland. Even before Diarmaid's death Henry had tried to order Strongbow and his men to return from Ireland, and had placed an embargo on supplies and reinforcements going from England to Strongbow. Henry arrived in Ireland in October 1171, with a well-equipped army of 4,500, which the local chieftains were in no position to oppose. Moreover, some senior Irish Church figures influenced the chieftains to pledge fealty to Henry II, clearly under the illusion that Norman overlordship would promote better church practices. Henry apparently gave the Irish chieftains the impression that he would protect them from the incursions of his rapacious Norman barons, while behind their backs Henry was giving these barons *carte blanche* to seize whatever land they could conquer. Although the act of pledging fealty meant little to the Irish chieftains, who would normally have no compunction about reneging on it, they were unwittingly being lured into a feudal situation where under Norman law their territories could be forfeited at the English monarch's whim, and could be re-assigned to others. The Norman barons had been able to seize the richer, more fertile, lands during the initial years following their arrival, thus forcing the native chieftains on to the less fertile, boggy and hilly areas. This meant that the native chiefs were at a major disadvantage in terms of the resources which they could now mobilize for war. The leading Norman-Irish families, notably the related Kildare and Munster FitzGerald, and the Butlers, seized possession of much of the richer agricultural land, and henceforth possessed bigger war chests than the native chieftains.

### Dónal Caomhánach (abt 1128 – 1175)

Dónal is, of course, the ancestral figure from whom we derive our family name. Caomhánach is an adjectival name arising from his being fostered by a family who were the keepers of a monastery of St. Caomhán. Indeed there is also one tantalizing reference in the Annals of the Four Masters to his foster family already having been known by this Caomhánach name, so that Dónal might possibly have inherited the name from his fosterers. The very able Dónal was Diarmaid's right hand military man throughout the latter's career, and thus earned the influence that would favor him as a potential successor. Following Diarmaid's death, Dónal initially continued his father's alliance with Strongbow. Conflict subsequently erupted between them when the extent of Strongbow's ambitions became obvious. Jim and Dr. Gary have carried out extensive research on succession in the rather confused period following Diarmaid's death. It appears that Dónal was elected King of the Uí Cheinnsealaigh, but was then superseded by his uncle, Diarmaid's brother Murchadh. Upon Murchadh's death at the hands of the Normans in 1172, the chieftainship was contested between Dónal and his cousin Muirheartach (Murchad's son), and it appears that Strongbow brokered a compromise: Muirheartach became King of Uí Cheinnsealaigh, while Donal was recognized as the leader of the Irish of Leinster. Within about a year, Dónal was recognized in contemporary documents as "King of the fifth of Leinster", at which time there were armed clashes with the Normans. Donal was killed in 1175, but the Annals of the Four Masters and the Annals of Tighearnach differ as to who, in the pay of the Normans, treacherously slew Dónal, and where this occurred.

There are only sparse and inconclusive references in contemporary records until the mid-1200's, when the Caomhánachs together with the O'Byrnes went into rebellion. While under a safe conduct pass, Muirheartach (Murtagh) Caomhánach and his Tánaiste, his brother Art, were treacherously murdered at Arklow in 1282, when they were invited to a feast by Stephen de Fulbourn the Lord Justice. These murders coincided with a rebellion in Wales, and thus were probably designed to head off the possibility of the Caomhánachs seizing the opportunity to also go into rebellion. From then on, the Caomhánachs had to ward off successive attempts by colonists, who frequently employed treachery and murder, to encroach on their territories.

In the early 1300s, the Caomhánachs began networking with their Murphy allies, and with the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles. These participated together in the Edward Bruce campaign. Though taken prisoner in 1323, the

McMurrough, Dónal Mac Airt Caomhánach escaped in 1329, and sparked off a major campaign aimed at destroying the strongholds and possessions of the English settlers. This set the pattern for future relations between the Caomhánachs and the settlers for centuries. The Irish chieftains began to employ well equipped Gaelic-speaking mercenary soldiers from Scotland known as Gallowglasses (meaning foreign warriors), whose modern descendants are notably the McCabes, McSheehys and McSweeneys. The 1314 -17 campaign of the Edward Bruce to establish himself as king of Ireland, though ultimately unsuccessful, weakened the settlers. The Black Death plague in 1348 hit the settler city dwellers harder than the rural Irish. Moreover, from 1337 to 1453, England repeatedly invaded France on the pretext that her kings had a right to the French throne and this preoccupation with France diverted attention and resources away from Ireland. In view of the deteriorating situation, King Edward III sent his son, Lionel Duke of Clarence, to Ireland in 1361. A decision to move the administration from Dublin to Carlow at this time proved to be an "own goal" for the authorities, due to the difficulty of access to Carlow, which was virtually surrounded by the native Irish. The degree of desperation is observable from a parliamentary act known as the Statutes of Kilkenny, passed by Parliament in 1366, in a vain effort to prevent the settlers from intermarrying, going native, and lapsing into Gaelic culture and customs. During this disturbed period, the local Irish chieftains won back a considerable amount of their clan territories despite substantial resources expended by the English administration on efforts to subdue them.

### Art Óg Caomhánach (1357 – 1417)

The high point of success of this Irish resurgence for the Caomhánachs came under the leadership of the then McMurrough, Art Óg Caomhánach. In 1398, the young and impetuous Roger Mortimer, Earl of March and heir to the English throne was killed in a fierce battle against Art's troops and their O'Byrne allies in Kellistown, Co. Carlow. Richard II came to Ireland in 1399 with a very large army determined to punish Art Óg. However, roads like those engineered by the Romans in Britain, did not exist in Ireland, where travel through the densely forested regions, bogs and hills followed relatively narrow pathways. While marching, the huge army that Richard brought to Ireland would have been strung out along very few paths and subjected to constant hit and run attacks and barricades. These would have disrupted and severely delayed Richard's forces, so that they expended food rations they carried, probably did not have access to potable water, and were unable to live off of the land. The starving and weakened survivors were only relieved when they reached the coast, where they could be resupplied by ships. A thoroughly enraged and frustrated Richard returned to England, where he was overthrown and met his death at the hands of his cousin, Henry of Bolingbroke, the future Henry IV.

Art was then the undisputed lord of his territories, and continued to drive back the encroaching settlers. He controlled Carlow, most of Wexford, and virtually all of the East coast in alliance with the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles. He retook Ferns Castle, and recovered his wife's (Elizabeth de Veale) barony of Norragh, in Co. Kildare, which the administration had tried to deprive him of, under the discriminatory Statutes of Kilkenny. He collected "black rent" (or protection money) from the settler towns in his area. Upon his death in 1417- according to tradition he was poisoned - Art's lands were divided between his two sons, Donogh, King of Leinster, and Gerald, Lord of Ferns. These and their successor chieftains were less able to maintain the momentum which Art Óg had created in retrieving and holding on to ancestral lands.

### Decline in Clan Power in the 1500's

During the Wars of the Roses in England (1455-1485), English attention was distracted from Ireland. The English administration set to work in the 1500's to destroy the Irish clan system by preventing a concentration of power in the hands of the main leaders. Various stratagems, one of which involved

supporting one claimant to chieftainship against another to weaken the clan, were adopted aimed both at splintering land ownership and at depriving the native leaders of their lands wherever possible.

Art Kavanagh in his book *“The Kavanaghs Kings of Leinster”* states that in the mid-1500s, there emerged a determination on the part of the administration of Henry VIII and his ministers to bring Ireland definitively under English rule, and to extend English law there. Accompanying this development was the arrival of an unscrupulous breed of adventurers from England who were corrupt, calculating, ruthless and, above all, greedy to advance their fortunes at the expense of the native Irish, with a readiness to indulge in genocide if this furthered their objectives. Consequently the power of our clan began to slowly erode as they gradually lost control of territory due to both external and internal pressures (as Dr. Gary Cavanagh points out in his article *“Caomhánach Internecine Warfare”* in the 2010 Clann Chaomhánach Annual).

### Dónal Spáinneach Caomhánach (1550 -1632)

Dónal was the last, and one of the most able, of the Caomhánach chieftains and claimants to the Kingship of Leinster. He went to Spain as a young boy in the company of an English adventurer named Thomas Stukely. Because of his outstanding ability, on Dónal’s return to Ireland he was elected chieftain, even though his Clonmullen branch had not possessed the chieftainship for quite some time. Dónal was at the head of his clan during various subsequent rebellions, and was an ally of Hugh Ó Neill during the Nine Years War (1594 – 1603). Despite being forced to come to terms with the English Crown, Dónal still managed to hang on to a substantial portion of his clan lands. He died in 1632, greatly feared by the colonists to the very end. Dónal’s reign marked the swan song of the old Gaelic clan system which was then in the process of being destroyed. The last flickers of clan continuity saw the Clonmullen descendants of Dónal Spáinneach (Sir Morgan and his sons Dónal and Charles) to the fore in the 1641 rebellion, and finally in the Williamite Wars in 1689/90, Col. Charles (or Cahir) Caomhánach led a Jacobite regiment to the Siege of Derry, which also participated in the Battle of the Boyne, and in the defence of Waterford and Cork against the forces of William of Orange.

### Further Reading

Jimmy Kavanagh’s books, *“Caomhánach People, Places and Papers”* and *“Caomhánach Pioneers in America”*, constitute an absolute treasury of information on Caomhánachs.

*“Clan Kinsella’s History of Ireland”* by John and James Kinsella , Old Baldy Press Rochester, 2008.

*“Diarmait, king of Leinster”*, Nicholas Furlong, Mercier Press, 2006.

*“The Norman Invasion of Ireland”*, Richard Roche, Anvil books, 1995.

*“The Kavanaghs, Kings of Leinster,”* Art Kavanagh, IFN, 2003. Art Kavanagh draws on the work of Nicholls to describe the fortunes of the various clan septs.

*“War, Politics and the Irish of Leinster 1156-1606, Emmett O’Byrne, Four Courts Press 2003. O’Byrne’s book consists of a strategic overview of the history of the main political players among the leading families in Leinster.*

*“Saints and Sinners – a History of the Popes”*, Eamon Duffy, Yale University Press, 2001. (Chapters 2 and 3 contain material relating to Papal interactions with the Irish and other matters of interest from the 9th to the 13th centuries)



# Clann Chaomhánach

## Articles of Association

Clann Chaomhánach is a perpetual hereditary association comprised of people who descend from the great Caomhánach family of Uí Cheinnsealaigh. The first person to use our family name was Domhnall Caomhánach, a 12<sup>th</sup> century King of Leinster. The Clann welcomes individuals who are not descendants of our name but who do support the aims and aspirations of the Clann as outlined in these Articles of Association. Clann Chaomhánach is a non-profit organisation open to any and all qualified individuals without regard to race, colour, creed, religious affiliation, age or gender.

### ARTICLE I - NAME

1. Official Name.

The official name of the association is “Clann Chaomhánach” hereafter referred to as “The Clann”.

2. Surname Coverage.

Clann Chaomhánach encompasses all of the several hundred known surname interpretations of the Irish name “Caomhánach”, as first taken by Domhnall Caomhánach, a 12<sup>th</sup> century King of Leinster.

3. Meaning.

Clann Chaomhánach means the “Noble Clan”, as “Caomhánach” is the masculine form of an Irish adjective meaning noble or exalted.

### ARTICLE II - PURPOSES

1. To foster kinship, friendship and goodwill within the extended Caomhánach family.
2. To bring members together at Gatherings on former clan lands in Ireland and to encourage and promote events around the world that are in keeping with the purposes of The Clann.
3. To establish and maintain an Executive Secretary Office as a central point of communication for Clann members.
4. To develop and promote communications between Clann members by collecting, publishing and distributing information about our clan history, genealogy, personages, and events, including publishing an Annual Journal, periodic newsletters, books, and by maintaining electronic communications media.
5. To create and promote awareness of the history, culture, traditions and contributions of the clan and it's members within the general public, industry and government.
6. To establish a "Central Information Archive" of printed and electronic materials relevant to the extended Caomhánach family, both past and present, to include both a Library and a Data Bank, in order to assist Clann members in researching their families and thus help re-establish family ties.
7. To identify historic or archaeological sites of Caomhánach ancestors such as graves, castles and residences. Where possible the Clann will endeavour to assist in the marking and preservation of such sites as deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee.

## ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

### 1. Eligibility.

Membership of The Clann shall be open to any individual who agrees to abide by these Articles of Association and supports the purposes of The Clann as set out in this document. Every member must pay in full any required fees appropriate to their membership as established by the Executive Committee at the time of application or renewal.

### 2. Membership Types

The Clann recognises the following membership types:

*Individual Member.* To qualify as an Individual Member an applicant must pay the required fee as set forth by the Executive Committee at the time of application. A n Individual Member shall have one vote.

*Life Member.* To qualify for Life Membership a one-time payment is required as set forth by the Executive Committee at the time of application. An individual may become a Life Member at any time. A Life Member shall have one vote.

### 3. Renewals

- (i) All memberships except Life Memberships must be renewed annually.
- (ii) Individual Membership automatically terminates one calendar year after acceptance as a Clann member.
- (iii) If a renewal payment is received before the termination date, membership will continue without termination.
- (iv) In the event of automatic termination, membership will be reinstated, and considered continuous, with full rights and privileges, upon receipt of the full amount of outstanding fees.

### 4. Termination of Membership for Cause

Membership in the Clann may be terminated for cause by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall report such termination proceedings at the next General Membership Meeting.

### 5. Reinstatement of Terminated Membership

A membership that has been terminated may be reinstated by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall report such reinstatement proceedings at the next General Membership Meeting.

## ARTICLE IV – COMMITTEES

### 1. Comhairle Ardflatha - The Executive Committee.

- (i) Purpose. The business of The Clann shall be the responsibility of the Executive Committee. This Executive Committee shall be composed of elected and appointed officers and councillors.
- (ii) Qualification. To serve on the Executive Committee a candidate must be a member of the Clann in good standing and be of Caomhánach descent.
- (iii) Officers. The Executive Committee shall consist of the following offices:
  - (a) Ceannaire - Chief of the Clann
  - (b) Tánaiste - Deputy Chief
  - (c) Ard Rúnaí - Executive Secretary
  - (d) Comhaltas Rúnaí – Membership Secretary
  - (e) Sparánaí - Treasurer
  - (f) Aralt - Clann Herald
  - (g) Sloinnteoir - Clann Genealogist
  - (h) Seanchaí - Clann Historian
  - (i) Bolscaire - Public Relations Officer
  - (j) Comhairleoirí - Councillors. A maximum of six Councillors are nominated by the Clann membership. In the event that six Councillors are not elected, the Executive Committee may appoint members. Councillors nominated by the Executive Committee will serve until the next election.

(iv) An Cathaoirleach (Chairman). The Executive Committee will elect a chairperson, drawn from the Executive Committee membership, to preside over their meetings and deliberations.

## 2. Coiste Ginereálta - General Committee.

The General Committee shall vote on all motions and referenda concerning policy, programmes, and changes in the Articles of Association submitted to them by the Executive Committee, or from The Clann membership. The committee will be composed of all Clann members in attendance at The Clann General Meeting, and shall be presided over by the elected Chief of the Clann, or, in the elected Chief's absence, the elected Tánaiste.

## 3. Coiste Eile - Additional Committees.

Special Committees may be appointed or created by The Clann members at any Executive Committee or General Committee meeting for the purpose of furthering the programmes and activities of The Clann. The membership of such committees and the responsibility of such members will be announced at the time of formation. The Executive Committee may add or delete members from time to time at their sole discretion.

# ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

## 1. General Meeting. - Ard Fheis

A General Meeting (hereafter GM) shall be scheduled during each Official Clann Gathering. All Clann members present at the General Meeting will constitute a quorum.

## 2. Executive Committee Meetings.

The Executive Committee shall meet at every GM. A quorum shall consist of six or more members. If a quorum is not present any decisions taken shall be submitted to the full Executive Committee for simple majority approval.

Executive Committee decisions approved by the General Meeting shall be binding upon all The Clann members.

The Executive Committee shall meet at such other times and venues, either in person or by other communications means, at the direction of the Chairman, or request of any Executive Committeeperson, as approved by a simple majority of the Committee. A quorum will comprise all those Executive Committee members present.

Should both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson be unable to attend any Executive Committee meeting then the members present must elect a chairperson for the duration of the meeting.

The Chairperson of every Executive Committee Meeting must record the motions and votes that occur at such meetings and distribute the results to every Executive Committee member.

## 3. Clann Gathering - Ard - Chruinniú na Clainne

The Official Clann Gathering shall be organized at a venue in Ireland. The exact time and location of the Official Gathering will be at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Additional gatherings may be organised at any time and place by regional coordinators or Clann members.

# ARTICLE VI – VOTING

## 1. Eligibility.

All Clann Members in good standing are entitled to vote on all items of business brought before the General Meeting (GM) and on all matters submitted to the membership for vote by ballot, as may be directed by the Executive Committee.

## 2. Voter Classification.

The Clann distinguishes between two types of membership for the purpose of voting:

- (i) Clann Member - Comhalta Clainne. All Clann members.
- (ii) Fine Member - Comhalta Fine. Any Clann member whose mother or father has a surname derived from Caomhánach. "Fine" is the Irish for the kinship or family group, and membership in this category is open to those sharing the kinship.

### 3. Motions & Resolutions.

All nominations, motions, resolutions, referenda and/or other items of business to be acted upon must be submitted to the Ard Rúnaí (Executive Secretary), at least 30 days prior to the GM, to be prepared in an Agenda to be distributed to the voting members for review prior to the meeting. Any item of business submitted must state the item in summary and include the name and signature of the author. Any motions or resolutions submitted must give the wording of the motion or resolution to be voted upon, the author of the motion and the seconder of the motion. The author and seconder of any item of business, motion, resolution or referendum must be a member of The Clann in good standing. All motions, resolutions and referenda resulting from items of business properly submitted for the Agenda will require a simple majority vote to pass.

### 4. Timetable & Procedure.

All motions, resolutions, referenda and/or other items of business resulting from items of business not published in the Agenda and brought up for action from the floor during the GM, will require a two thirds majority vote to pass.

### 5. Changes to the Articles of Association.

Any proposed changes in these Articles of Association must be submitted for consideration and action at the GM. Changes in the Articles of Association require a two-thirds majority vote to pass.

## ARTICLE VII - OFFICERS

The Officers of The Clann shall include both elected and appointed officials. Unless otherwise stated any member in good standing may nominate any other eligible member in good standing for any office. An appointed or elected officer of The Clann may be removed and replaced for failure to perform the duties of the office to which they have been elected by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee.

#### 1. Ceannaire - Chief of the Clann.

The Chief of the Clann is the elected head of The Clann and shall represent The Clann, where required, as its rightful leader during his or her period in office. The Tánaiste shall automatically become the Ceannaire after his or her term as Tánaiste has expired. In the event the Ceannaire becomes unable to perform his or her duties, for any reason whatsoever, the Tánaiste shall, at the direction of the Executive Committee, assume the dual roles of Ceannaire and Tánaiste for the balance of the elected term as Tánaiste.

#### 2. Tánaiste - Heir & Deputy to the Chief of The Clann.

The Tánaiste will be elected at the General Meeting by the members of The Clann to serve as Heir to the Chief of the Clann for a period of two years. Any Clann member whose mother or father has a recognised surname derived from Caomhánach may be elected to the office of Tánaiste.

#### 3. Aralt - Clann Herald.

The Herald shall be responsible for The Clann publications and creation and preservation of the genealogical and historical archives of The Clann. The Officer shall prepare and present a summary of the Herald activities at the GM. The Herald is an officer appointed by the Executive Committee.

#### 4. Sloinntoir - Genealogist.

The Genealogist shall be responsible for creating and maintaining the Clann genealogical records, and shall prepare and present a summary of the genealogical activities at the GM. The Genealogist is an officer appointed by the Executive Committee.

#### 5. Seanchaí - Historian.

The Historian shall be responsible for maintaining the Clann records, and shall prepare and present a summary of the Historian activities at the GM. The Historian is an officer appointed by the Executive Committee.

#### 6. Cathaoirleach - Chairman.

The Chairman shall be the presiding officer of the Executive Committee. The chairman shall be elected from members of the Executive Committee at the General Meeting of the Executive Committee.



7. Ard Rúnaí, - Executive Secretary.

The Executive Secretary shall be responsible for keeping the records of The Clann. This office shall be the communication and coordination centre of The Clann activities. The Clann Executive Secretary shall prepare and present a summary of the activities of the office at the GM. The Executive Secretary is an officer appointed by the Executive Committee.

8. Comhaltas Rúnaí – Membership Secretary.

The Membership Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining records of the Clann membership. The Officer shall prepare and present a summary of the activities of the office at the GM. The Membership Secretary is an officer appointed by the Executive Committee.

9. Sparánaí - Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the collection, distribution, safekeeping and accounting of the funds of The Clann, and shall prepare and present an accounting summary at the GM. The Treasurer is an officer appointed by the Executive Committee.

10. Bolscaire - Public Relations Officer.

The Public Relations Officer shall prepare or assist in the preparation and distribution of press notices and releases, as directed by the Executive Committee. The Officer will also be responsible for the promotion of The Clann and its activities via electronic media such as the World Wide Web. The Officer shall prepare and present a summary of the public relations activities at the GM. The Public Relations Officer is an officer appointed by the Executive Committee.

11. Comhairleoirí - Councillors.

The Councillors are Clann members elected to serve on the Executive Committee to participate in running the business of The Clann. The term of office will be four years. Councillors may be elected at each GM.

12. Scriobhaithe - Scribes.

Each committee and country Clann Association shall have a Scribe to record the associations' activities. All Scribes shall send copies of minutes, records, publications or other communications to the Executive Secretary for the Archives of The Clann.

## ARTICLE VIII - CHARITABLE STATUS

Clans of Ireland is the governing body, approved by the Irish Government, and established to promote world-wide interest in Irish origins, heritage and culture. The organization maintains the Register of Irish Clans, provides guidance in maintaining successful clan societies and supports the activities of the Irish clans. In recognition of the special role which Irish clans play within the national cultural revival, Clans of Ireland has been accredited as a Registered Charity.

### Charitable Status:

Clann Chaomhánach, as a registered member of Clans of Ireland, can apply to have the charitable status extended to Clann Chaomhánach. The following conditions are compulsory:

1. The Clann must have an office in Ireland, and be registered with Clans of Ireland.
2. The Clann operating as a Charity under the Charities Act (2009): all funds collected MUST ONLY be used for educational and cultural purposes, and no officer of the Clann may benefit personally from any funds collected or donated to the Clann.
3. The Clann, with Charity Status, would be free to collect funds and donations without incurring a tax liability, and should quote the Clans of Ireland Charity Number CHY 1185 on the Clann website and Clann publications.
4. If the Clann's income is € 100,000 or more in a year, fully audited accounts must be provided to Clans of Ireland, who will forward them to the Irish Revenue Commissioners.

## ARTICLE IX - CONFERRED HONOURS

There are individuals, who by their actions, labours or deeds, contribute to the advancement of the goals of The Clann; or by their achievements bring added honour to The Clann and its name. The Clann may acknowledge such actions, labours, deeds or

achievements by conferring upon a deserving individual one or more Clann honours. Any member in good standing may nominate an individual, either living or deceased, for honours. A nomination, together with a full explanation of the nomination, must be received by the Executive Secretary at least one month prior to the Clann Gathering. The following honours are recognised:

### Special Thanks Award

Any individual or institution may be awarded a Special Thanks Award Certificate for services or contributions to the Clann. This award is an honour and does not carry any membership privileges. Approval of the Executive Committee is required.

### Meritorious Service Certificate

Any individual, whether or not a member of The Clann, whose conduct or actions benefit The Clann, may be awarded a Meritorious Service Certificate upon recommendation by a member of the Executive Committee. Such certificate is an honour and does not carry any membership privileges. Approval of the Executive Committee is required.

### Honorary Member

Any individual, whether or not a member of The Clann, who has given significant services or other contribution to The Clann, may be made an Honorary Member by special vote of the Executive Committee. Such award is an honour and does not carry any membership privileges.

### Distinguished Member

Any member of The Clann, who has brought recognition and honour to The Clann by their achievements in their personal or professional lives, may be made a Distinguished Member by special vote of the Executive Committee.

### The Order of The Rose

A high honour, which may be awarded to any member of The Clann for extraordinary and meritorious services, actions, deeds and/or contributions. This honour is granted by special vote of the Executive Committee. Recipients of this Honour shall be entitled to wear the insignias of the Order; a badge bearing the emblems of Clann Chaomhánach, with the words "Clann Chaomhánach" in the top and in the base the words "Order of the Rose". They may use the postnomial "OR". This honour runs for the lifetime of the recipient.



### The Order of The Lily

A high honour, which may be awarded to members of The Clann for extraordinary and meritorious services, actions, deeds and/or contributions. Eligibility is restricted to members whose surname is derived from Caomhánach. This honour is granted by special vote of the Executive Committee. Recipients of this Honour shall be entitled to wear the insignias of the Order; a badge bearing the emblems of Clann Chaomhánach, with the words "Clann Chaomhánach" in the top and in the base the words "Order of the Lily". They may use the postnomial "OL". This honour runs for the lifetime of the recipient.



### The Order of Domhnall Caomhánach

A high honour conferred upon the elected Chief of The Clann at the conclusion of his or her full term in office. The newly elected Tánaiste will present the honour to the outgoing Chief of The Clann at the Clann Gathering. Recipients of this Honour shall be entitled to wear the insignias of the Order; a badge bearing the emblems of Clann Chaomhánach, with the words "Clann Chaomhánach" in the top and in base the initials **ODC**. The recipient may use the postnomial "ODC". This honour runs for the lifetime of the recipients.



### The Michael Kavanagh Award

This award is the highest honour award of Clann Chaomhánach. Eligibility is restricted to members of the Clann and can only be granted by special vote of the Executive Committee, and must be presented to the recipient by the Chief of the Clann. This award is acknowledged as being the ultimate Honour over all other Clann Chaomhánach honours.

## ARTICLE X - CLANN COAT OF ARMS

The Clann Chaomhánach emblem is described thus:

*A round field argent, in chief a lion passant, and in base two crescents, gules, encircled by the words Clann Chaomhánach of the last., the whole encompassed by knotwork argent on a band gules. A simplified logo, minus the knotwork but otherwise identical, may also be used.*

The field and knotwork signify the world-wide relationships of this family association, while the displayed arms honour the oldest known coat of arms of this family.

The arms now distinguishing the Clann may have been part of the seal used by Domhnall Caomhánach, the First Caomhánach of the Name. Although most have been removed or lost, two examples of this seal exist: on 3 April 1475, and again, on 28 August 1525, it was used by The MacMurrough, King of Leinster, to seal a document. One Caomhánach Chief was named Donal, but the other was Maurice or Murrough, and so this seal was not a personal seal, but instead, the great seal of The MacMorrough, the King of Leinster.

Coats of Arms are granted to a specific individual, and thus are the personal property of that individual. However, with Irish Clan Arms, it has become common practice for all members of a clan to assume the emblem of that clan for their personal use, if they wish, but in doing so, such arms only signify a relationship to the clan, and are not their arms of personal identity.

Every clan member is entitled to a personal Coat of Arms of his or her own design, which would be his or her exclusive personal property. The Chief Herald of Ireland grants and registers such personal arms. Clann Chaomhánach members creating personal arms may incorporate the Clann Emblem into a proprietary device for their personal Coat of Arms to be submitted for registration. All applications for personal Coats of Arms should be coordinated through the Clann Herald.



## ARTICLE XI- LIABILITY

It is expressly agreed and understood that all officers and members working for, or assisting The Clann in achieving it's goals and purposes, will make personal decisions and judgments that may, in hindsight, be detrimental to the interests of The Clann or an individual member. It is a specific condition of membership that no member at any time, or for any reason whatsoever, shall hold any appointed or elected officer of The Clann, or member of any committee, or any volunteer assisting The Clann, liable for any good faith action taken by such officer or member on behalf of The Clann, except where:

- (i) Such action involves the commitment of a crime, or
- (ii) Where such action was taken to expressly cause damage to the reputation or property of the Clann, or
- (iii) Where an individual having custody of the property of The Clann fails to deliver such property when directed by the Executive Committee, or causes damage to property of The Clann through gross negligence, or a wilful act.

## ARTICLE XII - CLANN PROPERTY

All materials, records and accounts purchased by, donated to, or owned by The Clann, shall be the sole property of The Clann. Any member or non-member of The Clann in possession of Clann property shall hold said property as a custodian only. The Executive Committee may at any time of its choosing order any individual to surrender any or all Clann property held by that individual. For such surrender orders the Executive Committee will nominate to whom the property should be delivered and a reasonable time limit. Unless a prior agreement was entered into or subsequently approved by a majority vote of the Executive Committee, no compensation shall be paid to any individual surrendering property of The Clann.

Revised at the Gathering in 2012

## FIELD TRIP

The field trip at the Caomhánach 2012 Gathering departed from the Carlton Millrace Hotel, turning right at the hotel exit and proceeded toward the center of Bunclody. The following provides turn by turn directions and explanatory notes and pictures of selected sites of Caomhánach interest.

Turn north at Bunclody Town Square onto Rural Road (R) 746. Travel in this part of the trip is through the former lands of the Leverock Sept.

Turn off on Local Road (L) 2001 toward Clonegal.

Cross the River Slaney on the New Bridge. From the bridge, off to the right, you can see the junction of the River Derry with the Slaney.



Clonegal Tidy Towns in conjunction with Carlow County Council, in 2007. It reads: *Before the Bridge and this road existed, the River Derry was crossed by means of a ford located at the end of a lane that came over Drumderry Hill. Here emigrants from Clonegal parish had their last view of their native valley and the Wicklow Hills, here too they made their final goodbye to their relatives.*

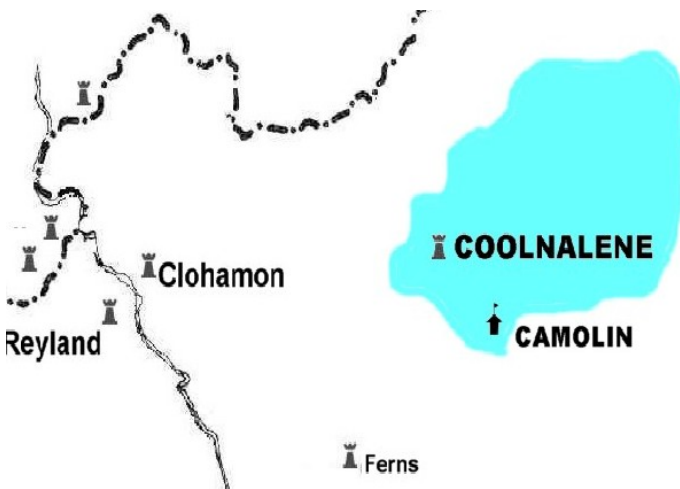
Travel continues through the former FitzWilliam Estates toward Tullow. Off on the right is the Yellow Mountain, which marks the lands of the Coolnaleen Sept, which is located roughly at the three-way junction of counties Carlow, Wicklow and Wexford.

### Gate of Tears (GEATA NA nDEOR)



Several counties have a vale of tears, bridge of tears or a similar feature or location, where the emigrants would take leave of their family and friends, knowing that they would probably not see each other again. In the case of the Gate of Tears (GEATA NA nDEOR), it marked a ford across the River Slaney, just south of the junction of the River Derry with the River Slaney. Discussion with several locals showed that the ford may have been used for two emigration patterns, meaning in both directions. Those going to the Irish Sea ports (Dublin, Arklow) came from inland going to the coast, for example, the FitzWilliam Estate migration. Those going down to New Ross or Cork would come across in the other direction. Either way, this ford across the Slaney marked the parting of families, in many cases, for the remainder of their lives.

The plaque, as is stated, was erected by Historic Section,



Continue on, cross the River Derry, and enter Clonegal.

### Battle of Clonegal

This was the last stand of the Clonmullens and their allies against the Cromwellian Roundheads in 1651. The Irish side was commanded by Dónal Óg Caomhánach, son of Sir Morgan and grandson of Dónal Spáinneach. It was a very unequal battle pitting the poorly-armed, mainly farmers, against seasoned professional soldiers.

The most notable strong point to fall in this area was the town of Carlow on 24 July, followed by the surrender of Tullow Castle,

which was controlled by the Butlers. It was after the capture of Tullow that Cromwell's troops, commanded by Colonel Hewson and Reynolds, marched on Clonegal and into the heart of the country held by the Clonmullens and their allies.

The Clonmullens had hoped to ambush the Cromwellians at two places on the Slaney River, Ballyshonagh and Kilcarrig. At Clonegal the Irish initially appeared to be carrying the day. For some moments the surprise shocked the invaders, but their military training showed through, and they rallied with volleys of deadly musket fire. This was followed by close quarter fighting. One group of Irish, led by the youthful Fiach O'Byrne, tried to cross the river, but the Cromwellian vanguard lined the banks, and soon the River Derry was red with blood, and choked with dead and dying bodies. In a letter home one of Cromwell's soldiers wrote, "by evening we could cross the river dry-footed over the bodies of the Irish."

Moreover, when the clansmen at Ballyshonagh were overcome, the Cromwellian reinforcements swung back to the battle at Kilcarrig. Help promised from the Leverocks at Huntingdon Castle never arrived and the Clonmullens and their allies were defeated, with heavy casualties.

The local houses in Clonegal were put to the torch. The Cromwellians placed garrisons throughout the area, including Clonegal, Clonogan, Carnew, and Clohamon. Cromwell seems to have determined that the Caomhánachs should never again give him trouble. He transplanted them, so that it was said, that from Clonegal to the Nine Stones not one of that name remained.



Village of Clonegal

Turn left in Clonegal onto local route L2021.

Pass back over the River Slaney at Kilcarrig Bridge.

Turn right onto National Road (N) 80 going northwest toward Ballon.

Turn right on the N81 toward Tullow.

## Tullow



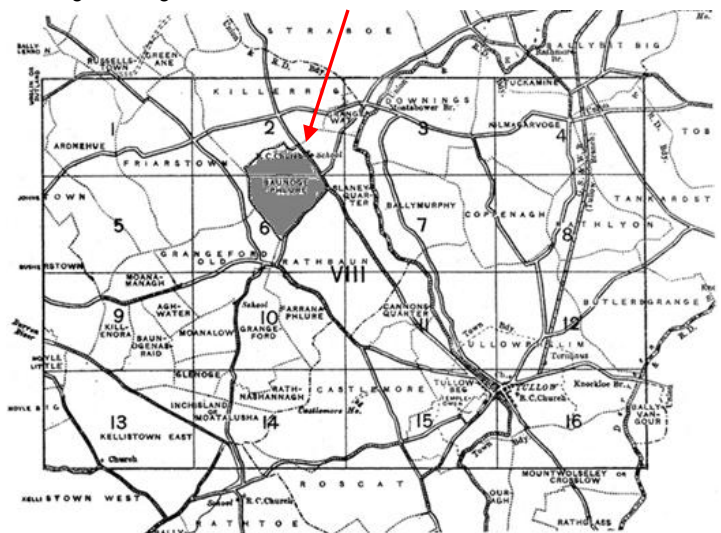
Market Square in Tullow

Tullow (Irish: *An Tulach*, meaning "The Mound"), formerly Tullowphelim (*Tulach Ó bhFéidhlim*), is a village in County Carlow, located on the River Slaney where national route N81 intersects with rural route R762. Tullow is "known locally as the granite town because of its granite public buildings." There has been a stone bridge over the Slaney in Tullow since at least 1680. A memorial statue of Father John Murphy, one of the leaders of the 1798 Rebellion, is in the Market Square. He was captured near Tullow and brought to the village, where he was tried for treason and sentenced to death by a military tribunal. He was executed in the Market Square, where he was stripped, flogged, hanged, decapitated, his corpse burnt in a barrel of tar and his head impaled on a spike.

Follow N81 through Tullow, crossing the River Slaney in town. Note the small museum just across the bridge on the left next to the Slaney, and, as the road climbs toward the town's small market square, where there is a memorial to Father Murphy.

## Ballygorey (Field)

Ballygorey Field is just north-west of Tullow about 3 miles. During the reign of Richard II. *"the Irish chiefs saw that*



submission was inevitable. At a place called Ballygorey, near Carlow, Mowbray Earl of Nottingham received the submission of a number of the southern chiefs, in 1395; and amongst them Art MacMurrough, the most dreaded of all. The King himself received the northern chiefs at Drogheda. Altogether about seventy-five chiefs submitted to the King and to Mowbray. They were afterwards invited to Dublin, where they were feasted sumptuously for several days by the King, who knighted the four provincial kings: O'Neill of Ulster; O'Connor of Connaught; MacMurrough of Leinster; and O'Brien of Thomond. . . . As for the submission and reconciliation of the Irish chiefs, it was all pure sham. They did not look upon King Richard as their lawful sovereign; and as the promises they made had been extorted by force, they did not consider themselves bound to keep them (Joyce, *Concise History*, p. 110). Quoted from *Some Ethical Questions of Peace and War*, Rev. Walter McDonald, London, 1919, p. 43.

The only "Ballygorey" (townland & village) currently listed under townlands is in Co. Kilkenny, Iverk Barony, Portnascully Parish, Waterford PLU, meaning west-northwest of Waterford in South Kilkenny. This cannot be the "Ballygorey" field in question.

*Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, Volume 8*, p. 204, referencing "State Papers related to Ireland" in item 1367 (977) states specifically, that Ballygorey was in Co Carlow. In the notes for the "Register of the Hospital of S John the Baptist without the New Gate, Dublin", the Irish Manuscripts Commission (1936, Notes, p. 269) states that "Bahogori [mentioned in the register] is perhaps the Ballygorey of Richard II's campaign in Carlow of 1395". The *Old Kilkenny Review 1977*, by the Kilkenny Archaeological Society, p. 325, states "Ballygorey, a place recently identified by Edward O'Toole as Baunogephure in the parish of Grangeford, Co. Carlow"

Continue up N81 and just past Rathvilly, cross the Slaney again at Rathvilly Bridge.

The N81 swings to the right around a settlement (on the right) identified as "Cuckoo Corner".

Continue up N81 to Baltinglass. In town, turn right on R747, and cross the bridge over the Slaney. Immediately after the Slaney Bridge, turn left and proceed several hundred meters to Baltinglass Abbey (on the right).

## Baltinglass Abbey

Historically known as Baltinglas (Irish: *Bealach Conglais*, meaning "Road of Cúglas"), it is located on the River Slaney near the border with County Carlow and County Kildare, on the N81. According to Fitzgerald, its Irish name means "the way of Conglas", Conglas being a member of the mythological warrior collective, the Fianna. According to other antiquaries, the name derives from *Baal-Tin-Glas*, signifying "the pure fire of Baal."



Baltinglass Abbey in 1793 from the Northwest (Gross' *Antiquities of Ireland*)

A previous Irish-language name for the village was *Mainistir an Bhealaigh*. The town was incorporated by charter of Charles II in 1663, under the designation "Sovereign, Burgesses, and Free Commons of the Borough of Baltinglass."

Fitzgerald (1) tells us, "Until the year 1148, when the Abbey of Baltinglass (or "Balkynglass," as old documents more correctly write it), was founded, there is nothing recorded about the place; and, what is very strange, "The Annals of the Four Masters" make no mention whatever of Baltinglass at any period, although the Abbey was founded by a King of Leinster."

Baltinglass Abbey (styled "De Valle Salutis," or the Valley of Salvation) was founded either in 1148 or in 1151 by Dermot-na-nGall MacMurrough, King of Leinster (d. May 1171). It was the second house to be colonised from Mellifont. Four other monasteries sprang from Baltinglass Abbey (1):

- (1) Jerpoint (De Jeripout), County Kilkenny, founded about 1158 by Donough MacGillaPatrick, Chief of Ossory.
- (2) Abbey Mahon alias Mawre (De Fonto Vivo), County Cork, founded by the Cistercians in 1172.
- (3) Monasterovin alias Ross-glass (De Rosea Valle), County Kildare, founded in 1178 by Dermot O'Dempsey, Chief of Clanmaliere, who died in 1198.
- (4) Abbeyleix alias the Monastery of Leix (De Lege Dei), Queen's County, founded in 1183 by Cucogry O'More, Chief of Leix.

The buildings date to the middle of the twelfth century, and are typical of the Irish versions of the Cistercian style. In 1228, it was recorded that there were 36 monks and 50 lay brothers living in the abbey.

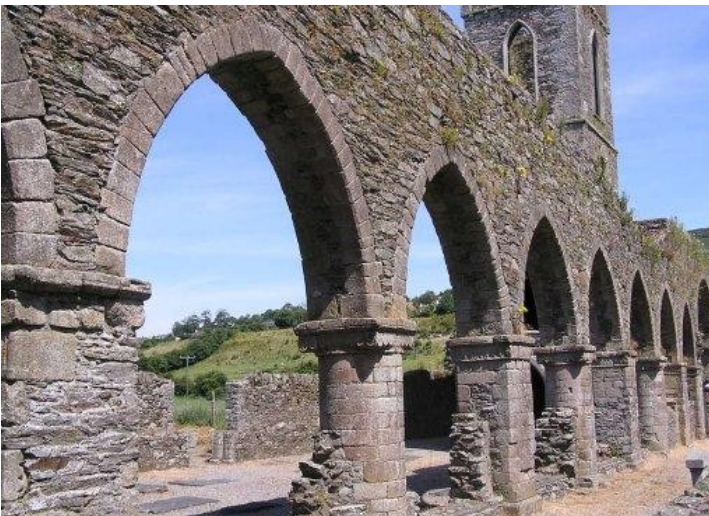
According to Fitzgerald, "The Castle, originally the residence of the Abbot, and afterwards of the Viscounts Bultinglass, is an

*irregular and not very extensive structure, evidently built at different periods. The outward doors are in a circular mode of architecture, whilst other parts are of various less ancient ages."*

The church and buildings were probably complete by 1170. The monastery was suppressed in 1537, and with its extensive possessions, including the castle and manor of Baltinglass, was granted in 1541, to Thomas Eustace, Lord Kilcullen, whom Henry VIII. created Viscount Baltinglass. In the reign of Elizabeth, a parliament was held here, in which was passed an act rendering every kind of inheritance forfeitable for high treason, emphatically called the *Statute of Baltinglass*. Following the Dissolution, the old Cistercian presbytery was adapted as a Protestant. The tower house was broken down, along with parts of the monastery, when James FitzEustace rebelled in 1580. In 1587 a house was erected on the site, possibly a rebuilding of the former tower house (This survived until 1882 when it was knocked down to provide building materials for the glebe house and new church).



seven pointed arches springing from alternated round and square pillars with curiously carved capitals (crafted by the so-called "Baltinglass Master" who subsequently worked on the abbey at Jerpoint). This formerly separated the south aisle from the nave.

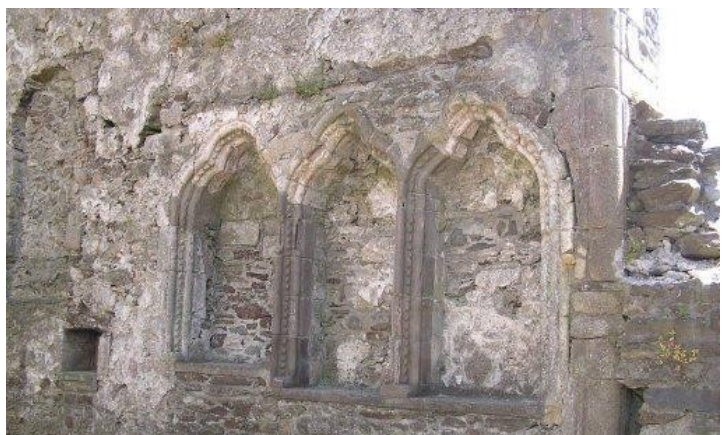
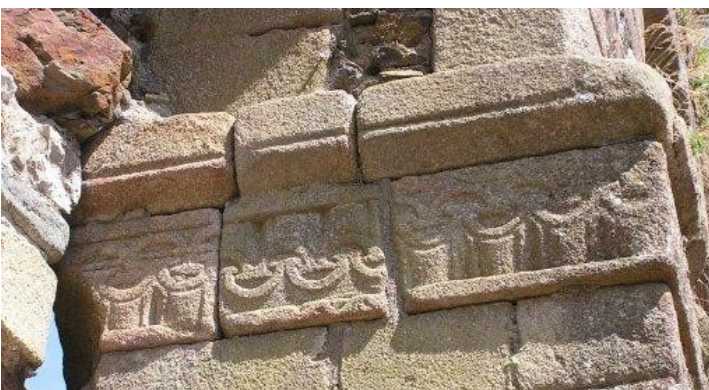


The church, which occupied the site of the chancel of the ancient abbey, was repaired and a square tower added to it, in 1815. The churchyard is the burial place of the Aldborough family, and the earl erected a massive mausoleum of granite, terminating in a pyramidal spire, over the remains of his deceased ancestors in 1832. The new church was completed in 1883 and the abbey church was then abandoned.

There are considerable remains, chiefly consisting of a series of



The church appears to have been a spacious cruciform structure, and the west end, which is still standing, has the remains of a lancet-shaped window of three lights; the walls enclose a large area, which appears to have been surrounded with monastic buildings. Carved fragments and some medieval tiles from the Abbey are housed in the tower. Other features of interest are the bases of two Romanesque doorways in the nave aisle, and the well-preserved *sedilia* in the presbytery. Joining the south aisle to the cloister is a 12th century doorway, while excavations in 1931 brought to light a north door in the aisle, parts of the

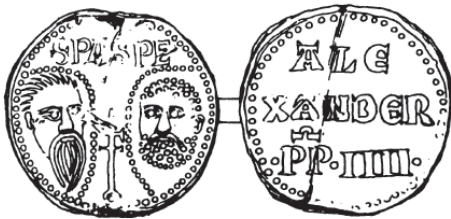




19th Century Abbey Church (C of I)

original cloister, and an early tower which blocked the eastern two-thirds of the transept arches.

The Castle of Baltinglass stood in a small field adjoining the Abbey burial-ground on the south-east side. It was demolished about the year 1882 by the Rev. John Usher, Rector of Baltinglass, to supply materials for building the glebe house and new church. During the course of its destruction, a cannon-ball and the Seal of a *Papal Bulla* were discovered within the walls. The latter has two bearded heads engraved on it, and over them the initials "S PA. S PEM", while the other side shows "ALEXANDER PP IIII". The heads represent St. Peter and St. Paul, and the initials refer to them (S. PA. = St. Paul, and S. PE. = St. Peter).



Several sources from the 19th century cite Baltinglass as a burial place for Dermot-na-Gall MacMurrough. Fitzgerald unknowingly offers an explanation. Several memorial slabs were discovered under the flooring of the former Protestant church, when this was dismantled in 1883. The earliest has a date of 1699, but the inscription (in small incised capitals) is now illegible except for a few letters due to flaking of the stone caused by weathering. Fortunately, Fitzgerald transcribed this memorial in November 1896, when the inscription was still decipherable: *Here lyeth the body of Robert Stratford Esq. who departed this life on the 26th of October 1699.* Fitzgerald then points out that "the Stratford slab has been pointed out as the tomb-slab of King Dermot MacMurrough, the founder of the abbey!" This seems to be yet another instance where "someone," who could no longer read the inscription, decided that the memorial was ancient, and "could possibly mark the grave of Dermot, who endowed this abbey". This was then picked up and repeated, until - by pure repetition - it was accepted by some as being true.

According to Fitzgerald: "A large circular granite font, in a rough, unfinished-looking condition, now lies at the base of one of the pillars near the church tower. It was dug up several years ago in what was the north aisle, and removed to the Hector's garden, where it remained till 1905, when the late Rev. John Usher had it placed in its present position. This font has no outlet for the water."



There is another known affiliation of "Baltinglass" with the Caomhánach family. James Eustace, Viscount Baltinglass, in rebellion at that time, decided to flee Ireland. Accompanied by a priest named Rochford, he moved south through Caomhánach territory. Although a number of people were arraigned in connection with this first attempt of Baltinglass to escape through Wexford, it was difficult to get a jury to convict members of the landed gentry of the Wexford Pale, and no persons of high standing in the Wexford Catholic community were convicted on this charge of treason. Nevertheless, Lord Deputy Grey de Wilton was determined that exemplary and public punishment would be meted out in Wexford. A sailor, Patrick Cavanagh, and his companions, were poor and obscure men of low social status, and their refusal to abjure their Catholic religion was, of itself, considered treason. Unlike Baltinglass and others, there is no reason to believe that they were consciously involved in a plot against Queen Elizabeth I or her administration. Their only actions were to supply transport by boat, and they may not even have been aware of the status of their passengers. One, the baker Matthew Lambert, was held solely as a result of association. They were hanged, drawn and quartered in Wexford, probably on 5 July, 1581. On 27 September 1992, Pope John Paul II beatified the "Wexford Martyrs": sailors Robert Meyler, Edward Cheevers and Patrick Cavanagh, and baker Matthew Lambert.

Source for this Baltinglass segment:

(1) "Baltinglass Abbey, Its Possessions, and their Post-Reformation Proprietors", by Lord Walter Fitzgerald, *Journal of the Co. Kildare Archaeological Society and Surrounding Districts*, Vol. V., 1906-1908, Dublin, 1908, pp 379-414,



Reverse direction on the Baltinglass Abbey access road, and turn right onto R 747 toward Ballitore. The nearly unmarked turn onto R747 is at the western limit of the town of Baltinglass. Turn right, and follow R747.

Just past Tonoranhill, turn left onto L8287, and go west toward Moone (Maoin).

Turn right on the N9, and then shortly afterward, left onto the narrow lane signposted "Moone High Cross".

The access to Moon is sign-posted and there is a small recess to pull off of the road out of traffic.

## Moone High Cross



Moone (Irish: Maen Colmcille, meaning "Colmcille's property") is marked by the ruins of a medieval church in the vicinity of Moone Abbey, the site of an ancient monastery. The church is believed to have been founded by St. Palladius, who came to Ireland in 431. It was later dedicated to St. Columcille. In 1835, the cross

head and stepped base of the granite high cross were discovered during some work that was being done in the graveyard of the ruined church. They had been well preserved because the carvings were not exposed to the elements. The Duke of Leinster arranged for the re-erection of the cross in 1850. Later, another section was found, but was not added to the cross for another sixty years. The cross itself, stands 17½ feet (5.33 m) high, including the base. It is believed to date from the eighth century. Such crosses were not intended to mark burials. They were constructed as embellishments or boundaries for monasteries, and probably for religious instruction. This seems conclusive as the iconography of the cross pertains to that of the popular form of prayer at that time, with references to both the old and new testaments.

*East face:* The Twelve Apostles, the Crucifixion, a Lozenge, a Whirligig, Angels and Spirals

*South face:* Monsters in the desert, Temptation of St. Anthony, Raven brings bread for St. Peter and St. Anthony, Animals from the bestiary, and a Figure

*West face:* Daniel in the Lion's Den, Sacrifice of Isaac, Adam and Eve, Heads and Monsters intertwined, Christ with Dolphin above

*North face:* Multiplication of loaves and fishes, Flight into Egypt, Three children in the fiery furnace, and a Figure

A section of another highly ornamented cross was found and both crosses were moved to the interior of the church ruin in 1995, and some conservation work was done on the large cross. The crosses have been recently cleaned and a modern Plexiglas roof was installed over the shell of the church to provide protection from the elements.

When departing Moone, continue ahead up the road toward Athy to the first junction on the left.

Turn left and then half-right onto R418 toward Athy, then Left on the main road, N78, toward Athy.

Lunch was at the Clanard Court Hotel, which is on the right hand side of N78, at the eastern fringe of Athy, where we were welcomed by the hotel's greenskeeping crew.



Continue westward on N78 toward Athy.

In Athy, on the east bank of the Barrow just before and adjacent to the bridge, is the severely modified tower house called White's Castle. This was cut down and used as a police post. Continue thru Athy, and just past the Barrow bridge turn right onto R428 toward Stradbally.



*The Bridge and White's Castle at Athy*

Turn right at the N80 toward Port Laoise.

Turn right on L7830 toward the Rock of Dunamase, which is visible during the half-right turn.

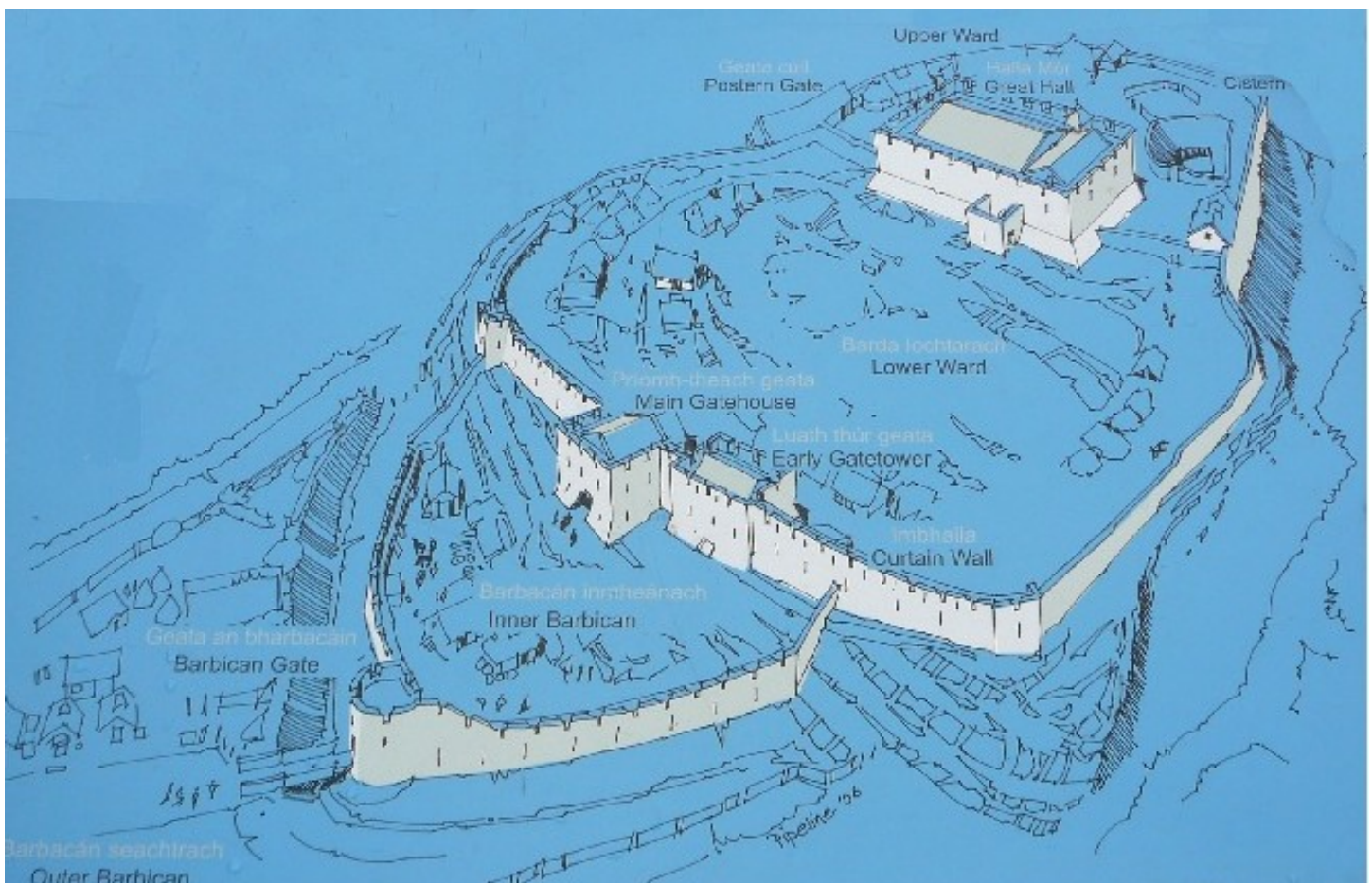
## The Rock of Dunamase

The Rock of Dunamase originated as Dun Masc, an Early Medieval Dun or Cashel, and is probably the best-known

archaeological monument in Co. Laois. Excavations from 1993-1997 have revealed a wealth of new information about the site. "The Rock" stands 46m tall in the heart of what is otherwise a flat plain, and was ideal as a defensive position with its view right up to the Slieve Bloom Mountains.

Most histories propose that Dunamase is the "Dunum" mentioned by Ptolemy in the 2nd Century, however, the total absence of excavated material earlier than the 9th Century AD does not support this. Further evidence is given by the fact that the earliest reference in the Annals is 843 or 844 (AI, 844; AFM, 843, and AU 844): "*Dun Masg was plundered by the foreigners, where Aedh, son of Dubdharchrich, Abbot of Tir-da-glas and Cluain-eidhnach, was taken prisoner; and they carried him into Munster, where he suffered martyrdom for the sake of God; and Ceithearnach, son of Cudinaisg, Prior of Cill-dara, with many others besides, was killed by them during the same plundering expedition*". In this case, "the foreigners" refers to the Norsemen or Vikings, and a Viking base on the Barrow at Dunrally is believed to have been the starting point for launching this raid. The earliest dateable finds from Dunamase, "two bits of 9th century metalwork and a coin of Ecgberht of Wessex (802-39)" correlate with this event.

We do not know when Dunamase was founded, nor who founded it. We believe that it was an established fortification in the



*Information panel at the entrance to the site*

territory of Demot MacMurrough, King of Leinster. It apparently passed to Strongbow, who married Dermot's daughter Aoife. With the marriage of their daughter in 1189, this manor passed to William Marshal. In 1210 King John took Dunamase into his own hands as punishment for Marshal's supposed half hearted support for John's expedition against the de Lacys, but restored it to Marshal in 1215. William himself had 5 sons and 5 daughters by Isabel. The sons each died without issue and so the Lordship passed successively from William the Younger (1219-31) to Richard (1231-34) to Gilbert (1234-41) to Walter (1241-45) and finally Anselm (1245). On the death of Anselm, the Marshal inheritance was divided between the daughters. At the partition of the Marshal lands in 1247, the town and castle of Dunamase fell to William's youngest daughter Eve. She was married to William de Braose (Bruce), but by the time of the partition both were dead, so the inheritance was split between their three daughters. It was the eldest, Maud, who received Dunamase and because she was by then married to Roger Mortimer of Wigmore, the lands passed to the Mortimer family. In the early 1320's Roger Mortimer was dispossessed of his lands for opposition to Edward II and the king granted Dunamase to the Earl of Kildare. For a time Roger was imprisoned in the Tower but he escaped and fled to France. After a period in exile he returned to England with his lover Queen Isabella, and overthrew Edward II who was subsequently murdered. Mortimer and the Queen ruled England from 1327 to 1330 as regents for the young King Edward III. In 1330 Edward was secretly declared of age, whereupon he ordered the arrest of Roger. After Roger's execution the Mortimer lands reverted to the king. By the time the Mortimers were rehabilitated, and Roger's son allowed to take back his father's lands, Dunamase seems to have passed out of Anglo-Norman control.

The State Papers mention that David de Offynton, for his "expenses in bringing Moryadach McMurtheh (*The MacMurrough, King of Leinster, who was executed at Arklow in 1282*) to the parts of Dunamase and in bringing him back to

Dublin to be imprisoned again (in 1281-82), by writ £10".

The archaeological record stops in the mid-14th century, although the State Papers note that: the O'More, "reiterates his submission of 14 Jan 29 Henry VIII, and in addition will pay 20 marks a year to the king and renounce claim to Dunamase Castle and all Kildare's lands in Leix. Ormond, Butler, O'Chonour, O'Karell, McGyllpatrick and McMorgho (i.e. MacMurrough) to be his securities".

Local tradition has it that the castle was besieged and blown up by the Cromwellian generals Hewson and Reynolds in 1651. Although claims like this are presented in virtually all the previous histories, that Dunamase was besieged then razed by Cromwellian forces, there is no documentary evidence to support that claim. Virtually nothing of Dunamase was documented between the 16th to 18th centuries, when, at the end of the 18th century, Sir John Parnell began to restore Dunamase to create a banqueting hall. It was his importation and inclusion of later medieval cut stone windows, doors etc., taken from local ruins, which has given rise to the impression of a "later phase of occupation".

B. J. Hodkinson (<http://homepage.eircom.net/~dunamase/Dunamase.html>) describes the archaeological finds: *There is a range of medieval pottery, mostly local wares, with imports from England, and more specifically the South-West dominating the imported wares. There is a small amount of French wares. A handful of potsherds have been converted into circular gaming pieces/ counters. Later medieval wares are absent and post-medieval wares are few, reflecting the disuse of the castle after c. 1350. There is a large amount of metalwork, most of which is in good condition. Among the ironwork it is possible to list weapons and armour, in the form of a range of arrowheads (studied by A. Halpin for his PhD thesis on medieval archery in Ireland), fragments of mail and an assortment of knives (some of which may have been tools rather than weapons); door furniture, in the*



form of fittings, locks and keys; and horse equipment e.g. shoes and nails, rowel spurs and various buckles. Copper alloy objects include two fragments of Early Christian metalwork, an assortment of stick and ring pins. There is one minute fragment of gold with filigree decoration which appears to have been a panel on an Early Christian object which was broken up in the 13th century. There are ten coins of medieval date, one of which is a 9th century penny of Ecgberth of Wessex, two are from Irish mints, (one of John as Lord of Ireland and one as king), five are English long and short cross pennies and, one is a Scottish halfpenny. The 10th is a jeton from S.E. France dating to the late 14th century which was found in the early destruction layers of the hall and this is the only object from the site which can be positively dated to the late 14th or early 15th centuries. Among the other materials there are dice as well as evidence for dice-making in the form of waste. These fit neatly with a stone nine-man morris board and the previously mentioned pottery counters/gaming-pieces. Fragments of 10 skulls were found in the early destruction levels of the gate tower, and these are assumed to have once adorned the roof of this structure. Examination of the skulls by Lauren Buckley has shown that they were all beheadings"

Leave the Rock of Dunamase by the same route used to enter, i.e. L7830.

Left at the N80 toward Stradbally.

Oughaval Church is located just past the Stradbally town limits on the right (west) side. There is a parking lot next to the cemetery entrance on the right side, just past the church.



## Book of Leinster

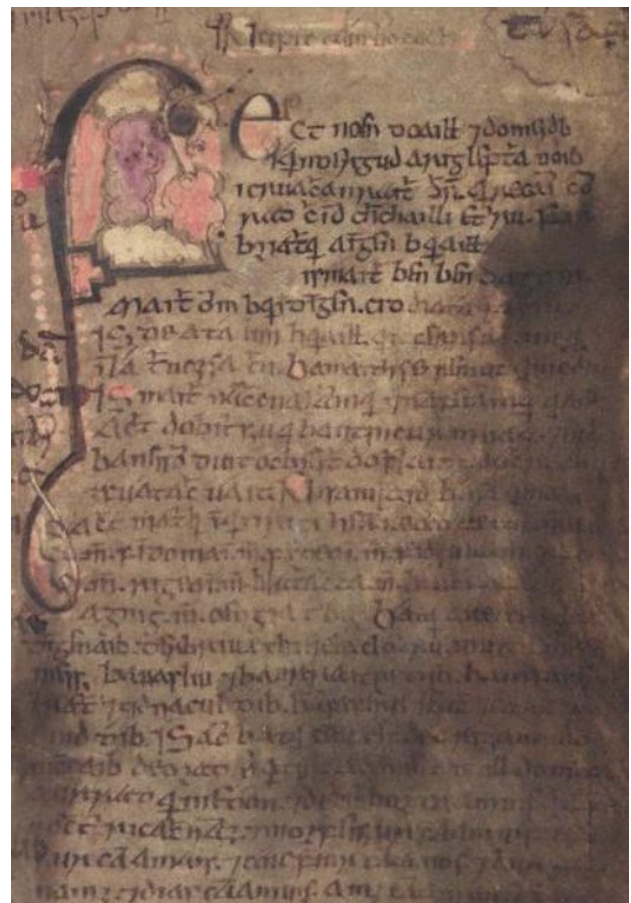
The Book of Leinster (Irish *Lebor Laignech*), is a medieval Irish manuscript compiled ca. 1160 and now kept in Trinity College, Dublin. Called the Book of Leister because of the location of most events it contained, it was also known as the *Lebor na Nuachongbála*, meaning "*Book of Nuachongbáil*", for a monastic site known today as Oughaval.

Eugene O'Curry suggested that the manuscript may have been commissioned by Diarmait Mac Murchada (d. 1171), king of

Leinster, who had a stronghold (dún) in Dún Másc, near Oughaval (An Nuachongbáil). Dún Másc passed from Diarmait Mac Murchada to Strongbow, from Strongbow to his daughter Isabel, from Isabel to the Marshal Earls of Pembroke and from there, down several generations through their line. When Meiler fitz Henry established an Augustinian priory in Co. Laois, Oughaval was included in the lands granted to the priory.

The manuscript has 187 leaves, each approximately 13" by 9" (33 cm by 23 cm). A note in the manuscript suggests as many as 45 leaves have been lost. The book, a wide-ranging compilation, is one of the most important sources of medieval Irish literature, genealogy and mythology, containing, among many others, texts such as *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* (the Book of Invasions), the most complete version of *Táin Bó Cuailnge* (the Cattle Raid of Cooley), the Metrical Dindshenchas and an Irish translation or adaptation of the *De excidio Troiae Historia*, and before its separation from the main volume, the Martyrology of Tallaght. (Source: Wikipedia). See the CELT Project (Corpus of Electronic Texts at <http://www.ucc.ie/celt/>) for translations.

The Book of Leinster was reportedly kept at Oughaval for generations. Most of the existing church ruins generally date to a more modern period. For example, the Cosby family added a chancel with a raised floor that accommodates a vaulted mortuary chamber underneath it, and a barrel vaulted stone ceiling, in the 18th century. The triple window in the east gable end of the chancel was added in the 19th century.



Continue southbound on N80 to the N78.

Turn right onto the N78 toward Castlecomer.

At Newtown, turn right onto the R430 toward Carlow.

Continue on the R430 to Killeshin.

In Killeshin, follow signposting to the "Romanesque Doorway" to the right, and almost immediately take a second right. Killeshin Monastery Church Doorway is on the right - access and a parking niche are signposted.

## Killeshin Church

Killeshin is a small rural community situated 5 km west of Carlow town, overlooking the Barrow River valley. The name Killeshin is from *Cill Uisean*, meaning church of Uisean. He was an abbot at Killeshin monastery, an important center for learning and culture. St Comghan founded the monastery at the end of the 5th century. St Diarmait and St Moling are also associated with the foundation. It is mentioned many times in the Annals. Ferns was burned by Donnchad mac Briain, in 1042, and in revenge for this, the Killeshin oratory was burned, 100 men were slain, and 400 taken by mac Mael-na-mbo. It was burned again in 1077. The last historic reference to the monastery is in 1082, and the existing church was built after that date.

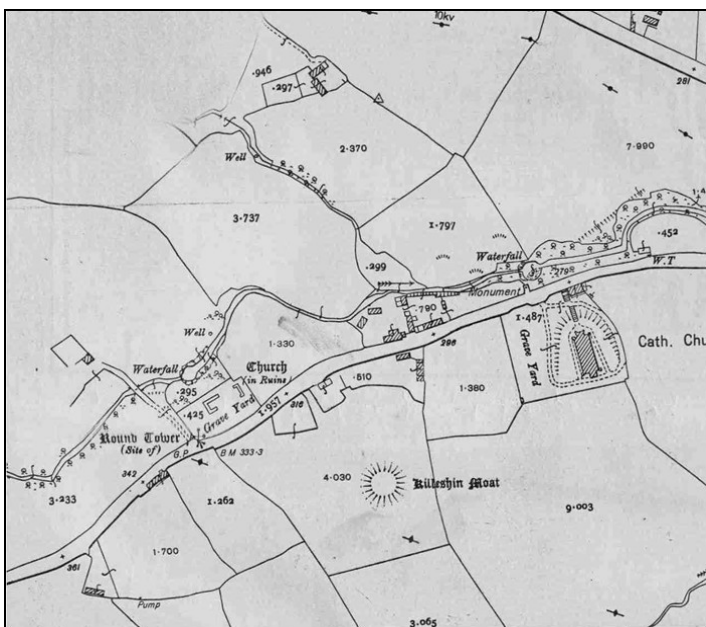
All that remains of the 12th century building are the gable end and some of the N wall. The ornate doorway has four orders with human heads on the capitals with intertwined hair. The arch of the doorway has a large triangular hood, and is decorated with animal and floral patterns. There are two inscriptions on the doorway. On the N side of the doorway an inscription reads *ORAIT DO DIARMAIT RI LAGEN* - 'a prayer for Diarmait, king of Leinster' (Diarmait Mac Murchada also built the Cistercian Abbey at Baltinglas, Co. Wicklow.), and this dates the construction of the

church to the 12th Century, before 1170. The other is not legible. A font sits by the doorway. It is believed to be the oldest decorated font in Ireland and possibly dates from the 1st millennium. Traces of carvings are also present on the jambs and arch of the round-headed window in the north wall.

Encompassed by walls 40" (1 meter) thick, the internal dimensions of the church were believed to have been roughly 24.5' wide (N/S) by 40' long (E/W), divided by a chancel arch into a nave and a chancel, each having a window on the north and south sides (4 windows total), of which only one remains. All traces of the other monastic buildings have vanished - these were probably timber-framed with clay/wattle walls and thatched roofs.

Next to the monastery church are the remains of a 16th Century C of I church, 38' long and 20'6" wide with three windows on the south side, and a door and two windows on the north side. The present window visible in the gable end was a later adaption. The C of I church probably dates to the sixteenth century, when it was erected alongside of, and using some materials from, the older monastery church.

No trace remains of the 105 ft round tower believed to have once been the tallest in Ireland, and stood next to the monastery. The



base of the tower was 50 ft in circumference. The position of the round tower is shown on old maps and, strangely enough, the center point of the structure is indicated today by an existing electrical transmission line pole. The round tower was demolished in 1703 by order of Capt. Wolseley, the landowner at that time, who was afraid that the tower could collapse and injure his cattle. (Sources: Wikipedia & Archaeology & History of Co Laois by Roger Stalley)

Return along the same route back to R430, and turn right onto R430 toward Carlow.

Entering Graigue, and then cross the bridge over the Barrow. Carlow Castle is briefly visible on the right as while crossing the bridge.



Remains of Carlow Castle

Follow signposted routes R430 and then R726 through Carlow Town toward Brownes Hill Dolmen.

The parking lot for Brownes Hill Dolmen is on the right. The Dolmen is visible across the adjacent field. The access walkway is signposted.

## Brownshill Dolmen

A *cromlech* is a huge stone or cap resting on three, four, five, or more upright stones. Mostly for sepulchral use, a few would appear distinctly religious. Some are called Giant's Graves, and are associated with Fenian or other heroes. The Brownshill Dolmen (*Dolmain Chnoc an Bhrúnaigh*) is a megalithic portal tomb situated 3 km east of Carlow, in County Carlow, Ireland. The capstone at Brownshill, weighing an estimated 100 metric tons, is reputed to be the heaviest in Europe. It was built between 4000 and 3000 BC by some of the earliest farmers to inhabit the island. Officially known as the *Kernanstown Cromlech*, it is also called Brownshill Dolmen, and is also known as Brownshill Portal Tomb, so-called because the



entrance to the burial chamber was flanked by two large upright stones (*orthostats*) supporting the granite capstone, or roof, of the chamber. The capstone is thought to have been covered by an earthen mound and a gate stone blocked the entrance. At Brownshill both portal stones and the gate-stone are still in situ; the capstone lies on top of the portals and gate-stone and slopes to the ground away from the entrance. Not much additional information is available on Brownshill because it has never been excavated. A fourth upright stands close by and could be the remains of a forecourt. The extent of the chamber cannot be determined.

Depart the parking lot at Brownshill Dolmen by turning left onto R726 toward Carlow.

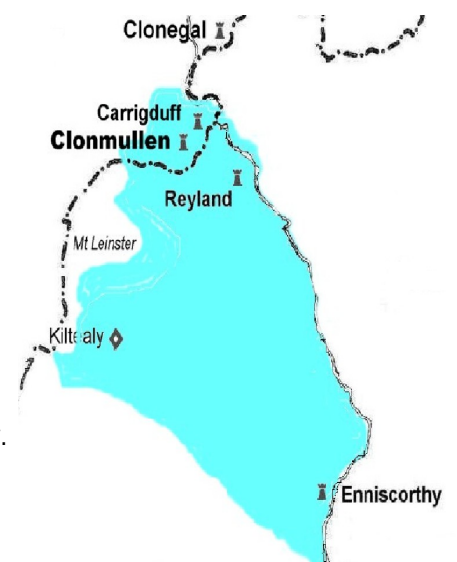
Turn left on the lane before the industrial park, going south.

Turn half-left onto the N80 going southbound toward Bunclody.

Pass through some of the former lands of the Clonmullen Sept.

The castle at Carrickduff is located on the right-side, just before entering the town limits of Bunclody.

Return to the Carlton Millrace Hotel.



## DNA Project

The lab at Family Tree DNA has received eighty-two (82) Y-DNA kits from male participants to date in the Caomhánach DNA-Y project located located at:

[www.familytreedna.com/public/CavanaughKavanagh](http://www.familytreedna.com/public/CavanaughKavanagh).

Results from these kits have been assigned to eight groupings:

- Group 01: Five (5) members, all with Caomhánach surnames. Two (2) matches at 67 markers, and five (5) at 37 markers.
- Group 02: Twenty-one (21) members at 37 Markers, with fifteen (15) Caomhánachs and six (6) non-Caomhánachs (surnames: D'Arcy, Gaston, O'Connor, Raese, Welsh and Zimzores). This grouping also showed four (4) matches at 111 markers and eighteen (18) at 67 markers.
- Group 03: Six (6) members, with five (5) Caomhánachs and one (1) non-Caomhánach (surnamed Nolen). This included three (3) matches at 67 markers.
- Group 04: Two (2) members with 67 marker matches, both Caomhánachs.
- Group 05: Two (2) members with 37 markers, both Caomhánachs.
- Group 06: Three (3) members. Two (2) with 67 marker matches, and 3 with 37 marker matches, all Caomhánachs.
- Group 07: Two (2) Caomhánach matches at 37 markers; one (1) participant did take the 67 marker test.
- Group 08: Two (2) members with 67 marker matches, both Caomhánachs.



All matches at the 67-marker level are considered “close” within several generations, depending upon the number of mismatches (i.e., the fewer mismatches, the closer to the most recent common ancestor).

All members with less than 37 marker matches have been removed from the groups. Some of these members only took the 12 marker tests, and attempts to have them upgrade to at least 37 markers have not been successful. After removal of the results based on less than 37 markers, groups with only one remaining member having a 37 or more marker test were eliminated, and the Group Number was reassigned. As administrator, I have found less than 37 marker matches are not predictive to a usable degree, and so I have placed these results into the “Unassigned” section until the tests are upgraded.

DNA testing has progressed from standard tests of 12, then 25, and then 37 markers. 37-markers tests were the standard until recently, when the 67 marker, and very recently, the 111-marker tests were released. These latter tests are much more predictive. However, there are some promising matches at 37 markers, and participants with close matches at this level, who have not ordered a higher-level test might consider upgrading to at least 67 markers.

We have thirty-nine (39) participants with no significant matches with any other Caomhánachs in the project. Of these ungrouped people, twenty-nine (29) are Caomhánachs but six (6) of these men took only 12 marker tests. One additional 12 marker test by a Caomhánach has been upgraded to 37 markers, assigned a new kit number, and the individual has been placed in Group 03. This still leaves twenty-two (22) Caomhánach of 37 markers or better with no significant matches. This group is larger by one than the largest identified Group 02, which has twenty-one (21) members. The ten (10) other surnames with no matches (i.e. surnames of Bassett, Chaban, Cunningham, Lenker, Margulies, Mullin, Sutton, Trignano, Williams, and Wood) remain in the project unassigned.

We did have a total of ninety-four kits submitted. The lab has removed the seven (7) female participants from the Y-DNA database, however, we still have several participants whose mothers were Caomhánachs and assortments of people who are not surnamed Caomhánach, but believe they may be Caomhánachs. These hope to prove it via testing, and have so far been unsuccessful. We have one Caomhánach who has not authorized release of his test results, and the previously described occurrence, where one person took a 12-marker test and then, rather than upgrade, ordered a complete new 37-marker test with a different kit number. It should be noted that seven (7) men with non-Caomhánach surnames have significant matches with Caomhánachs, and have been assigned to groups. We also have one unassigned Caomhánach whose test results strongly indicate he may be a Byrne or Burns.

The project continues to show slow growth, and the small database remains the defining and limiting issue for people who have not found matches, or those who have found matches but desire more information. Further progress will continue to be slow unless there is a substantial increase in the number of participants. Known obstacles to enlarging or expanding the DNA database are those who view the cost of testing as too high, and others, who fear that DNA test results might be used for unauthorized purposes.



# Irish Genealogy

Clann Chaomhánach Gathering  
12th – 16th September 2012

The Carlton Millrace,  
Bunclody,  
Co. Wexford, Ireland.

Prepared by: John G. Kavanagh

Revision # 2 - Sep 2012

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John G. Kavanagh of Camolin, County Wexford, is an avid family historian, who is known to many of you through Facebook. John prepared and gave a Powerpoint presentation that pretty well covered resources and materials available to individuals conducting family history research in Ireland. A similar presentation that John gave at the 2010 Gathering was so successful, that he was asked to return and give “the same” presentation again in 2012. Accordingly, he updated the information, and presented 100 slides on this topic in a workshop atmosphere.

During the presentation, John would review the material on the slide and then take questions or comments, before going to the next slide. Attendees had received a paper handout with multiple slides in grayscale on each page. This allowed participants to make notes for those slides of particular interest, or annotate those with commentary not included in the information on the slide.

Generally, it can be said that the slides actually presented only about half of the information scope - the remainder came out during questions from the floor and from John’s comments. It really is a case of “having to be there to appreciate it”. For this reason, it would not be beneficial to present just the slides here without commentary or background information.

The following page contains a table: “Irish Record Sources by Time Period”, which is a type of abstract of some of the information contained in the Irish Genealogy Presentation. The table contains two information elements: it provides keywords necessary to search for more information on specific records, and also clearly shows via color coded ranges, the periods when the specific records were applicable. We hope that this chart will be of assistance.





Irish Record Sources By Time period	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963		
The Irish folklore Collection 1937 - 1938																																				
Irish Land Purchase Act 1903 - 1909																																				
Pension Claim Form 1908 - 1922																																				
Irish Census Records 1901 & 1911																																				
National School Records 1931																																				
Civil Registration																																				
Petty Sessions Books																																				
Ireland Land Registry																																				
Griffith's Valuations																																				
Cancelled Books																																				
Perambulation Books																																				
The House & Field Book																																				
Tith Applotment Books																																				
Charleton Trust Fund Marriage certifications																																				
Land Survey																																				
Landowners of Ireland by V. H. Hussey de Burgh																																				
Register of Deeds																																				
The Convert Rolls																																				
Civil Records																																				
Catholic Parish Registers																																				
Church Of Ireland Records																																				
Muster Rolls																																				
Civil Survey																																				
The Down Survey																																				
Book of Survey & Distribution																																				
Subsidy Rolls																																				
Wills																																				
Heart Money Rolls																																				
Census of Ireland																																				
Religious Census																																				
Spinning Wheel Premium Entitlement Lists																																				
Persons who suffered Loss in the 1798 Rebellion																																				
Freeholders																																				
N. Ireland Property Records																																				
Pension Records																																				
Wills																																				
Betham's Abstracts																																				
Ships Registers																																				
Historic Texts																																				
Local Sources																																				
Law and Order Records																																				
Irish Prison registers																																				

## Inauguration of a Caomhánach Chief

The ancient laws of Ireland, known as the Brehon Laws, governed the lives of our ancestors. These laws guided the lives of the Irish people and provided a strict code of conduct for our forefathers. The inauguration ceremony is adapted directly from the ancient ritual described in the Irish Annals, and is the same as that used for the inauguration of the first of our name, Domhnal Caomhánach. The ceremony affirms the Chief's responsibilities as custodian of the lands and protector of the people. The law was clear as to how a Chief should behave. The Chief was charged with being honest, impartial and courageous.

The position of Clann Chief in Ireland was not hereditary but was selected from eligible candidates by Dearbhthine, descendants of previously elected chiefs. The Caomhánachs were inaugurated as Chiefs of Ui Cheinnsealaigh, often referred to as Hy Kinsella. This territory was comprised of the modern counties of Wexford and Carlow with parts of southern Wicklow and eastern Kilkenny. The Chiefs of Ui Cheinnsealaigh, since the 11th century, were powerful enough to be accepted as Kings of the entire Province of Leinster. One of them, Diarmait mac Maol na mBo, who was great grandfather of Donal Caomhánach and a direct ancestor of our clan, was described in his obit as King of Ireland, King of Dublin, King of the Isle of Mann and the Western Isles of Scotland.

The inauguration ceremony of our Caomhánach ancestors took place on the hill of Knockavocca, located near one of the important Caomhánach seats in Ferns, Co. Wexford. The great inauguration stone of Mac Eochadha, called Keogh or Kehoe, was traditionally the inauguration stone of the Ui Cheinnsealaigh and later the Caomhánachs. This stone was known as the Leac Mic Eochadha, and is sadly now lost to the Clann.

The inauguration of the Caomhánach Chief was traditionally the responsibility of the O'Nuallain, Chief of Fothartha Feadha. O'Nuallain or O'Nolan, as marshal of the Clan performed the ceremony of passing over the symbols of the chieftainship. The Fili (poets or bards of the Clan) were the Mac Eochadha. They preserved and recited the Chief's genealogy. The Kehoes are descended from the Mac Eichaidh and were the Chief poets of Leinster. The Brehon or law giver, O'Deoradhain or O'Doran ensured that the selection and inauguration were performed according to the ancient Brehon Laws. The O'Dorans were the great law givers of Leinster and served the people for many centuries.

## Inauguration Ceremony

Initially, modern Caomhánach Clann Chiefs were inaugurated in Ferns, as the early Clann Gatherings were held at that location. For various reasons - primarily a lack of personnel on location to plan and coordinate the Gathering - it was decided to hold Gatherings at other locations, and in 2004 and 2006, the event was held in the West Wing of Borris House in Borris, County Carlow. Although it was a beautiful facility, there were difficulties due to the lack of on site accommodations. This led to selection of a joint venue, with a hotel providing both conference and accommodation rooms. Accordingly, in 2008, the Gathering was held at the Lord Bagenal Inn, in Leighlinbridge, County Carlow, and in 2010 and 2012, at the Carlton Millrace Hotel, in Bunclody, County Wexford. In keeping with this, the practice evolved that the Taniste (incoming Chief), would select his or her inauguration site.

This ceremony was researched and prepared by the late founder of Clann Chaomhánach, Michael A. Kavanagh of Bunclody, Co. Wexford. It was first used at the 1995 Gathering. Participants are not actors, nor do they have the benefit of rehearsals. Instead, Gathering participants are asked to participate in this pageant by taking on one of the roles that ancestors would have fulfilled at much earlier "Gatherings". Participants are provided with a copy of the Inauguration Script.



Inauguration participants will assemble at a point adjacent to the inauguration site. The procession will consist, in order, of the Captain of the Guard and the Guard of Honour, the Brehon, the outgoing and incoming Chiefs, the incoming Chief's family, the ladies in waiting, the Marshall and the other participants in the ceremony, and the members of the Clan and guests.

The Captain of the Guard and the Guard of Honour will step up to the inauguration site. The Brehon, File and other participants will step up to the site next in that order. Then the outgoing and the incoming Chiefs will position themselves at the site in a central position. The new Chief's family and the Ladies in Waiting will step up on the right hand side of the Chiefs. The Usher will lead the other Clan members and guests to an area in front of the inauguration site for convenient viewing of the proceedings. He will then take up a position to the right of the new Chief's family and the Ladies in Waiting. The Narrator will take up an advantageous position adjacent to where Chiefs and other participants are assembled. All will turn and face the two Chiefs.

Narrator: *Let the inauguration begin.*

Brehon steps towards the centre and faces the Clan: *Is the Clan gathered ?*

All Participants: *The Clan is gathered.*Brehon: *Has the Marshall readied our warriors?*

Marshal: *Our warriors, horsemen and kerns are ready.*

Inaugurator steps to the centre and faces the Clan.

Brehon: Chief ... of ... , ... , has reached the end of his (or her) Chieftainship.

Outgoing Chief hands:

the Seal to the Seal bearer  
the Wand to the Wand bearer  
and the Cup to the Cup bearer

Brehon: *Has the clan elected a new Chief?*

All Present: *The clan has voted. (Name) of (Location) is our choice.*

Brehon: *Is (Name) a proper choice?*

File steps forward, faces the Clan and recites the genealogy.

*(Name) is the son/daughter of ... of ..., the son of ..., of ..., etc. The family line stretches back through the mists of time, through our ancestors and the throne of Leinster, Donal Caomhánach, King of Leinster, the 1st Caomhánach, who was son of Diarmaid McMurrough, King of Leinster, who was grandson of Murchada Mac Diarmaid, King of Dublin and the Isles, and progenitor of the Mc Murroughs, son of Diarmait Mac Maol na mBó, King of Ireland with opposition, the Isle of Mann and the Western Isles of Scotland, who descended from Enna Ceannsealach, King of Leinster of the line of Cathair Mór, ancestor – deity of the free Septs of Leinster and the King of Ireland.*

The new Chief steps forward and stands on the Inauguration Stone

## The Bishop steps forward and faces the new chief

Bishop: With the guidance of God will you guide your people with honour and wisdom?

New Chief: *I will (, and I will stand with sword in hand before any man who goes against my Land or Family ... Optional oath of Caomhánach Kings of Leinster, 1176-1648).*

The Inaugurator stands in front of the New Chief

Inaugurator:

*See before you the heavens of God, that will bring you good weather, fat cattle and abundant crops, if you are deserving.*

*See before you the land of your ancestors, which will bring prosperity to your people if you are just.*

*See your people, who will honour you if you brave and fair.*

*See before you the sky, which will shower storms and distruction, if you place your own desires before the needs of your people.*

*See the lands of your ancestors, which will become barren and desolate, if you are evil in your judgement.*

*See your people, who will turn their backs and walk away from you, if you are cowardly and without honour.*

The bearer of the Seal steps forward and hands the Seal to the Inaugurator and then returns to his/her place.

Inaugurator places the Seal over the head of the New Chief, and says: *Wear this Seal, the symbol of your leadership, carved in silver and gold, bearing the Lion and Crescents of your ancestors.*



The bearer of the Wand steps forward and hands the Wand to the Inaugurator and returns to his/her place.

Inaugurator hands the Wand to the New Chief, and says: *Carry this Wand carved from the life giving and fruitful hazel tree. This Wand is the symbol of truth, shown from the whiteness of its flesh, a symbol of strength and impartiality as it is straight, and a symbol of justice and equity as it is without blemish.*

The bearer of the Cup steps forward, hands the Cup to the Inaugurator, and returns to his/her place.

Inaugurator hands the Cup to the New Chief, and says: *Place this Cup before you to remind you that the mead you drink from it, is from the labours of your people and will only be refilled from their labours, for a good and honest Chief.*

Inaugurator faces the Clan and raises the chief's right arm with a clenched fist and says: *With honour and fidelity I give you your Chief, (Name), son/daughter of (Name), son of (Name).*

All Present raise their arms, with fists clenched, and shout: *Caomhánach, Caomhánach Abu!*



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## Interested in becoming an Area Organizer?

Clann Chaomhánach created the system of Area Organizers as contact persons for our cousins who may be seeking information about our association. Through the years, many people have been helped in their search for ancestors through the efforts of our Area Organizers, who have also been very effective in bringing in new members. If you are interested in becoming an Area Organizer, please contact any of the Organizers listed above or any of the Executive Committee, listed on page 2.