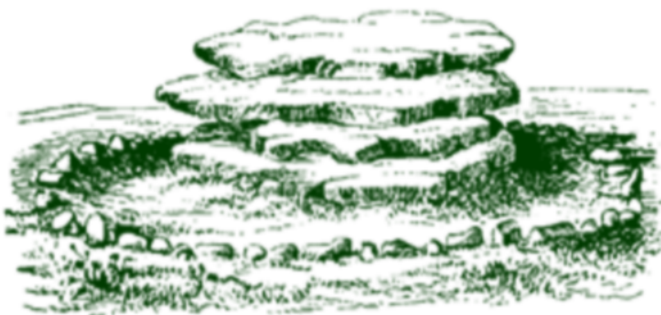


THE CELTIC MEMORY

gael dom revisited



Compiled and Edited by Wayne Laurence

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The Celtic Memory Gaeldom Revisited

By

Wayne Lawrence

PREFACE

THIS OVERVIEW OF THE GAELIC CELTS WILL BE OF INTEREST NOT ONLY TO PEOPLE OF IRISH AND SCOTTISH DESCENT, but also to anyone with ancestral ties to the 'British Isles'. A geographical name which appropriately reflects on a bygone era of Celtic domination when England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland were populated by Britons (Brythonic speaking Celts).

The Gaelic speaking Celts (the Gaels) the last to migrate to the British Isles, went directly to Ireland from the Continent (perhaps from France & Spain) in the first century BC. Their language became the 'lingua franca' of the Irish, and their descendants in Scotland, hence the name Gaelic Celts. Their history encourages nostalgia and their culture deserves acclaim and envy. Nevertheless, the realities of history must be recorded with impartiality.

A perusal of the contents will alert the reader to historical facts which have been omitted or minimised by most popular historians. We believe the reader will acknowledge these pertinent facts which explain the misfortunes and ultimate decline of the Gaelic Celts ascendancy in Ireland and Scotland.



Celtic Expansion - Scythia to the British Isles

WHO WERE THESE PEOPLE AND WHERE DID THEY COME FROM? Some came from the area known as Scythia in Eastern Europe. In the Declaration of Arbroath or the Scottish Declaration of Independence, a letter to Pope John XXII by King Robert the Bruce in 1320, it states that the Scots came from Greater Scythia, which is in the far eastern part of Europe north of the Black Sea. In the etymology of the word Scythian we have Skuthia in Greek, and the Scythians called themselves 'Scoloti'. According to Professor Waddell others came via the Mediterranean, such as the Milesians and the Tuatha de Danaan, who resided for some time in Greece.

During their migrations across Europe they were known by different names such as Cimmerian, Kumri, Gauls (Celtae), the Greeks called them Keltoi and the Romans Gallia. The Ancient British or Britons were called Welsh, a Saxon word that means foreigner, the proper name is Cymru. According to the Myvyrain MSS. Hu Gardan Hysicion or Hu the Mighty, lead the first colony of Cymru into Britain from Defrobane, where Constantinople now stands. It is said that Hu was the inventor of the Welsh Triads and to him is attributed the founding of Stonehenge.

The term Celtic or Celt is primarily a linguistic one, denoting one group of Indo-European languages. Already before 500 BC the Celts had emerged as a recognizable people in an area comprising Bavaria, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary and Bohemia. Archaeologists have found valuable remains of this early Celtic civilisation at Hallstatt in Upper Austria and of somewhat later Celtic culture at La Tene in Switzerland. They spread over much of France and part of northern Italy in the sixth century before Christ, invaded northern Spain in the fifth century, sacked Rome at the end of the fourth century and got a footing in Greece and Asia Minor in the third century.

Before their power in Europe was finally overthrown by the Romans, they had left their name on Gaul, on Galatia in Asia Minor and Galicia in Spain; individual Celtic tribes had given names to Belgium, Bohemia and Aquitaine, to Bologna and Treves, Paris, Arras and Rennes. The greatest

of the Celtic Gods, Lugh, had been commemorated in the names of Lyon in France, Leon in Spain and Leyden in Holland, not to mention London and Louth. Many of the river names of Europe are Celtic - the Rhine itself and its tributaries from the east, the Main, the Lahn and the Ruhr, also the Isar and the Inn in Bavaria, also are scores of place-names in Central Europe with the elements bri (a hill), mag (a plain), dun (a fort).

Celtic Society and Customs

THE CELTIC SOCIETY WAS BASICALLY A RURAL SOCIETY WITH NO CITIES OR TOWNS. In Ireland important abbeys (universities) like Clonmacnoise, Armagh, Clonard and Bangor grew into centres with a large population: one has to wait for the Vikings to see the rise of towns as commercial centres. The ordinary homestead of the farming classes was the rath, often erected on a hilltop and surrounded by a circular rampart and fence. These are the 'ring forts' of present-day Ireland. They have often left their imprint as rath or lios on the local place-name, as in Rathfriland, Lismore, Lisdoonvarna, and so on. The king's residence was of course more elaborately built, as at Eamhain Macha, Clogher and Downpatrick in Ulster.

Gaelic civilisation placed great emphasis on family relationships. The normal family group was the derbhfhine made up of all those who were descended from one great-grandfather; his son used the prefix 'Mac' (meaning 'Son of'), and his grandson, ("CO" meaning 'Grandson of').

Groups of interrelated families living in a particular area combined to form a Tuath (people) under a righ (chieftain), who, with others of similar rank, was in turn subordinate to an Ur-righ (over-king). These petty kingdoms, roughly equivalent to independent clans, were then combined in a loose hegemony under the Ard-Righ (High King). The ownership of land was vested in the family group or clan.

The Gaelic king was ruler of his people in peace and Military commander in war. He presided over the annual Aonach, which was often held at an

earlier century, and included the promulgation of laws and athletic competitions as well as buying and selling.

The High King or Ard-Righ had to be a man without physical blemish - and it is told that the great Cormac Mac Airt was obliged to resign the Kingship after he lost an eye in battle. Nor, as guardian of the tribe's customs and taboos, could there be any stain upon his enech (honour). A king who lost his enech, either through defeat in battle, or by some act of custom-breaking, or from whose brow the mark of sovereignty was thought to have passed, could be - and often was - deposed.

The king's inauguration was originally looked upon as his symbolic marriage with the sovereignty of his kingdom. The High King was brought to the coronation stone 'to be made'. Robed in white with a torque about his neck and carrying a wand of white hazel, the king would set his foot upon the stone and swear to walk in the footsteps of his ancestors, and to do right between man and man. The oath was witnessed by the sub-kings, chieftains and clansmen ranged in the courts of the dun below who had come to the feis or festival gathering to acclaim the king-choosing. Afterwards, there followed a nuptial feast in the great Mead Hall of the royal dun, its walls lined with the shields of warriors, when the king's champion was given the choicest of the meat, and the harper waited by the hearth to recite the Genealogy and sing the tales of tribal heroes.

Even after the conversion of the Irish by St Patrick during the fifth century AD, the High Kingship retained a strongly sacral aspect inherited from Druidic times. The office of king had always been closely connected with the pagan tribal religion.

In the elder days, when the succession passed through the female line, the sovereignty resided in the person of the queen, who, as high priestess, was also the reincarnation of the Great Earth Mother and chose from among her warriors a man to mate with, lead her war band, and after the cycle of seven years, become the king-sacrifice and die to ensure fertility for the soil and prosperity for the tribe. By Dalriadic times, under a system of patrilineal succession, the High King had become rather the symbolic incarnation of the Tribal Ancestor. He was responsible for the tribe's buada

(fortune), the preserver of its taboos and traditions, and the Sovereignty itself was conceived as a maiden to whom, as representative of the tribe, he was wedded in the ritual of investment at the crowning-stone or Lia Fail.

The popular belief that Druidism was merely the religion of ancient Britain and Ireland and nothing more is entirely erroneous. Druidism was, in fact, the centre and source from which radiated the whole system of organised civil and ecclesiastical knowledge and practice. Members of the order were statesmen, legislators, priests, physicians, lawyers, teachers and poets. It is believed that the system of education adopted by the Druids was developed by Hu Gardarn Hysicion. It is unfortunate that Julius Caesar in his propaganda belittled the Druids. His statement that the Druids performed human sacrifice is completely unfounded.

The Druidic colleges were of such a high standard that many major families in Europe sent their children to Britain and Ireland to be educated. The Romans found the Druids to be a great hindrance to their conquest of the British Isles, and it is interesting to note that the Druidic motto is 'The Truth Against The World'.

Like most positions in Gaelic Ireland and Scotland the learned professions tended to become hereditary. In late medieval times the O'Davorens in Ireland were the experts in law as were the Morrison Clan in Scotland. (The chiefs of the Clan Morrison held the post of hereditary brieve or judge administering Brehon Laws until the 17th century).

The O'Hickeys and O'Sheils provided the medical men. The poetic families were particularly numerous: O'Dalys in many parts of the country, Mac a' Wards in Donegal, O'Husseys in Fermanagh, Mac Brodys in Clare, O'Higginses in Sligo, Mac Namees in Tyrone. Numerous also were the hereditary families of chroniclers and historians: O'Clerys in Donegal, O'Keenans in Fermanagh, Mac Egans in Tipperary, O'Mulchonrys in Roscommon, Mac Furbises in Sligo. The craftsmen have often ensured remembrance by engraving their name on their work: Noonan on the shrine of St Patrick's Bell, O Brolchain on the stonework of Iona. Even in the church hereditary succession prevailed.

The law system in the British Isles was developed by the Lawgiver-King Molmutius, 450BC, who based his laws on the code of Brutus, the Trojan, 1100BC. King Brutus founded New Troy that later became known as London. Molmutius is referred to in ancient documents as Dyfn-val-meold, and because of his wisdom has been called the 'Solomon' of Britain. The Brutus and Molmutius laws have always been regarded as the foundation of the laws of the British Isles.

The main influence in the development of law in Ireland was Ollamh Fodhla, the great sage and legislator of cir. 586 BC and the Brehon Laws, which is said to be the oldest code of laws in Europe and in parts is a re-publication of the Mosaic Law. (Chronicles of Fri, The Annals of the Four Masters, Irish Nation - Cusack, The Celtic Church in Ireland – Heron)

Ireland's Celtic Predominance

THE CELTS WERE MIGRATORY SETTLERS IN IRELAND AND NOT CONQUERORS. Although they predominated, they readily assimilated with earlier settlers. Archeological evidence, particularly in Ulster, records mesolithic fishers and fowlers, neolithic farmers, passage grave diggers and the Beaker Folk.

Until the mid 1980's Roman relics discovered in Ireland were thought to be imports brought in by travellers. But the surprisingly large archaeological site unearthed at Drumanagh, 24 km north of Dublin, testifies to a Roman presence in Ireland of great historical significance. By January 1996 the site excavation area covered 1,618 square metres (40 acres) which suggests Drumanagh was a massive Roman coastal fort accommodating possibly thousands of Romans. Coins discovered at the site bear the names of the emperors Titus, Trajan and Hadrian (79 - 138 AD).

Since writing arrived in Ireland only with the Roman alphabet, we know little about Celtic Ireland before the coming of Christianity. Roman writers called it both Scotia and Hibernia. But the epic tale of Tain Bo Cuailnge and other stories of the heroic age, written down centuries later, though

not strictly history, are probably an accurate enough reflection of life in the immediate pre-Christian era.

They depict an Ireland divided into five major kingdoms; Meath, Leinster, Munster, with Connacht and Ulster at war, and the heroic Cu Chulainn defending the north against the forces of Queen Maeve. 'But the Tain, perhaps first written down in the monastery of Bangor, gives the victory to the north.

In reality the Ulster capital at Eamhain Macha, the Navan Fort, near Armagh, was finally overthrown by the Connacht dynasty - perhaps as late as the middle of the fifth century AD and the rule of the Ulaidh (one of the Erainn tribes) was confined to territory east of the Bann. From there they founded a colony in Argyll, whose rulers were one day to become kings of Scotland.

The most powerful king of the Connacht tribe, Niall of the Nine Hostages, famous for his raids on Britain in the early fifth century, annexed the ancient ritual site of Tara and was also the progenitor of the greatest dynastic tribe in Irish history, the Ui Neill or the descendants of Niall. This must be carefully distinguished from the later surname O'Neill, for the Ui Neill were much wider, and included also ruling families which later took the surnames O'Donnell, O'Hagan, OKane, O'Donnelly, Quinn and so on. The descendants of Niall set up a new provincial kingdom in northwest Ulster, into which they later incorporated the central part of the province.

Each provincial kingdom comprised a large number of petty kingdoms or tuatha, so that the whole country had ultimately between a hundred and a hundred and fifty of them with a few thousand people in each. Local wars were frequent but not prolonged. The unity of the country was cultural, social and legal rather than political.

In the 1990's we are witnessing a revival of Celtic culture and languages in Britain and Ireland. For example 'The Riverdance Company' (the world acclaimed Irish dancing spectacle) has helped to dramatically increase interest in Ireland's Gaelic Celtic heritage. Gaelic music, language, Irish history and ancestral research information are very much in demand.

Celtic Languages in the British Isles: Brythonic And Goidelic

THE CELTIC LANGUAGES OF THE BRITISH ISLES AND EUROPE fall into two groups, Continental and Insular Celtic and are part of the Indo-European family of languages. The Indo-European language includes most of the languages of Europe and the Celtic languages stretched from Europe right across Northern India. The origin of Indo-European is believed to be as far east as the Steppes of Russia and has been associated with the archaeological remains of the Kurgan culture.

Continental Celtic consists of those fragments of Celtic languages which have been unearthed in the former Celtic territories Germany (especially the Rineland), Italy and notably in Spain and particularly France where it is called Gaulish. In earlier times Celtic languages would have been spoken throughout much of Europe as far east as Romania and Turkey, and many European cities bear witness to this in their names. (The Galatians of the Bible were a Celtic people and some of their language remains).

The Insular Celtic group consists of two main branches, Goidelic or the Gaelic languages, which include Irish Gaelic, Scottish Gaelic and Manx Gaelic, also known as 'Q' Celtic. The other branch is British, Brittonic or Brythonic, which is represented by Welsh, Cornish and Breton, also known as 'P' Celtic. In the Brythonic group we could include Cumbrian and a form of Pictish.

The British or Brythonic language was spoken throughout most of mainland Britain and Ireland and gave birth to what we now know as Welsh (Cymraeg or Cymric), Cornish and Breton. Breton was taken by migrants from what is now South West England to France in the fifth and sixth centuries. Because British was pushed west by the encroaching Angles, Jutes and Saxons, it became associated with the area now called Wales (Cymru) and Cornwall (Cornwall was once called West Wales). The word Welsh is a Saxon word that means foreigner. The different Brythonic languages start to emerge between 450 and 600 A.D., around

the period of the Anglo-Saxon invasion. Cornish is now a dead language, but is being revived by scholars as is Breton, Welsh is still a living language. These three languages were subject to sometimes brutal suppression by the French, English and British governments in order to consolidate political power. Welsh or Cymraeg is closely related to The Etruscan language (a people found in ancient Italy) as they both came from the same place in Eastern Europe.

The Goidelic or Gaelic languages are Irish Gaelic (Gaelige or Gaeilge), Scottish Gaelic (Gaidhlig) and Manx. Manx as a native language is now dead with the last native speaker, Ned Maddrell, having died in 1974. Manx is still kept alive by enthusiasts of the Manx Language Society, 'Yn Cheshaght Ghailckagh', as well as being used for ceremonial purposes in the Manx Parliament or Tynwald. Manx has a close relationship to Scottish Gaelic caused by the Scandinavian domination of the Western Scottish seaboard and Man itself.

Modern Irish Gaelic or Irish as we have seen developed from Middle Irish and divided into three different dialects according to the three main kingdoms, Munster, Connacht and Ulster. Since setting up an independent state and the need for a standard language, Munster Irish was chosen, but in the late 1960's there has been a shift to Connacht Irish. The beginnings of writing in Irish came with the introduction of the Latin alphabet in the fifth century AD. Before that time the Irish had evolved a system of writing known as Ogham, which was used mainly on inscriptions on stone.

The early Celtic colonisation of Ireland seems to have been undertaken by two principal tribes or groups, 'P' Celts and 'Q' Celts, and this has led historians to distinguish between two separate 'waves' of Celtic invaders. The earlier 'P' Celts, identified with the old clans of Ulaidh (Ulster) of the Erainn whose capital was Ermania and whose heroes of the 'Red Branch' feature in the Ultonian story cycles, were, by their Brythonic speech, akin to the people who inhabited the rest of Britain and to the Cruithne (Picts of the north).

The later 'Q' Celts, otherwise referred to as Goidels, Milesians, or Scotti, whose speech was closer to Gaelic Urse (and later Manx), came possibly

from Galicia in Spain in about 100 BC. (The name of their legendary leader Milesius is probably a derivation of Aliks Hispaniae) Although perhaps they were in the minority initially, this second strain of Goidelic Celts became militarily powerful during the latter half of the first century AD, when after a period during which Ireland was torn with rebellion and internecine war, a Goidelic chieftain called Tuathal (the Legitimate) founded a principality in Meath with a stronghold on the sacred hill of Tara. Under his grandson, Conn of the Hundred Battles, (ancestor of Somerled the Thane of the Western Isles and Man and ancestor of the Clan MacDonald), this kingdom grew to challenge the rival states of Munster and Leinster, and encroach upon the old Ultonian clans of the north Ulaidh.

In 500 AD. Irish Gaelic was introduced into Scotland by the Dalriada Scots who established a colony in Argyll. Gaelic became the main language when Kenneth MacAlpin became the king of a united kingdom of the Scots and Picts and the language exerted an influence in almost every part of the country. Scottish Gaelic had developed into a separate language by the 15th century with the accretion of Norse, Norman-French, Pictish and English loanwords.

The surprising thing is that it has survived to the present day, considering how much effort was devoted, over many centuries, to subdue both the language itself and the people who spoke it. Studies have shown that there is a possibility that Gaelic may have been spoken in the Western Isles in the first century. It is interesting that until the 17th century Irish, Scottish and Manx scholars could communicate readily with each other. With the break-up of Gaelic civilisation in Ireland, however, the languages became increasingly divergent. (There is another language spoken in Scotland known as Scots or Braid Scots, this is of Teutonic origin as is English).

An example of the difference between the Celtic languages:

'The woman came'

Breton	Manx	Welsh	Cornish
Devas ar wreg	Haink yn ven	Daeth y wraig	Deth an venen

Irish Gaelic **Scottish Gaelic**
Thang an bhean Thainig am boireannach

(Celtic Languages article courtesy of 'Tinne', a magazine promoting the Gaelic language, published in New Zealand by George Halliday and based on a lecture given at the New Zealand Gaidhealtachd - Celtic Summer School ' at the Whangarei Heads School).

The Establishment of (Celtic) Christianity in Ireland

CHRISTIANITY WAS ESTABLISHED IN IRELAND AS EARLY AS THE 1ST CENTURY AD. According to Gildas, a British Celtic cleric and historian. Christianity had been planted in Ireland (and Britain) before the defeat of Queen Boudicca of - the Iceni Celtic or British tribe in 61 AD. But the evidence of Christian practises in Ireland from the 1st Century AD until the 5th Century, the era of St. Patrick, offer scanty information.

Although the British Celt, Patrick, was not, as is popularly supposed, the first missionary to take Christian teaching into Ireland. He was undoubtedly the most successful missionary but, as already pointed out, we find Caranoc, mentioned by the Book of Ballymote, as the first recorded Christian in Ireland. According to Prosper of Aquitaine it was Pope Celestine 1 (AD 422-432) who sent a missionary called Palladius to be 'the first bishop to the Irish believing in Christ', thereby implying that there were already Christian communities in Ireland at that date. Palladius was a Gaulish Celt who had been deacon at Germanus's monastery of Auxerre.

According to some scholars, Pailadius is supposed to have died in Britain about AD 431 and been replaced by Patrick. Professor James Carney, however, maintains that Palladius worked in Ireland for many years with three other missionaries from Rome, Secondinus, Auxillus and Iserninus. Professor Thomas O'Rahilly argues that Palladius did not reach Ireland but died in Britain.

Professor Carney argues that it was Secondinus who founded the religious centre of Armagh, which is now the seat of the Irish primacy, in AD 444. We can argue that Secondinus's companion, Iseminus, was certainly in Ireland long before Patrick, having been imprisoned by the petty king of Leinster, Ende Censelach, and released only after Patrick's arrival and the conversion of Censelach's grandsons.

Patrick was a British Celt and according to early traditions, he was born at Bannarem Tabemiae, which has been identified as Alclud (Dumbarton) and was originally named Sucat. Patrick was taken as a hostage, when aged sixteen years, during an Irish raid by a chieftain named Milchd. He was forced to work in the area of Mount Slemish, Ballymena, Co. Antrim.

He eventually escaped to Gaul and joined a Christian settlement there, taking the name Patricius. Traditionally, this foundation was said to be Lerins where the British Celt, Faustus, was abbot. Patricius went on to Auxerre when Getmanus was bishop there. The date of Patrick's mission to Ireland is disputed. It is agreed that he replaced Palladius as 'bishop to the Irish believing in Christ', but Carney argues that this was in AD 456 while O'Rahilly suggests AD 461. The formerly accepted date of AD 432 is no longer considered tenable.

Patrick is reported as landing in Strangford Lough with a follower named Seginis. We are told that, on hearing of his arrival, Milchd, the chieftain who had taken him hostage in Britain, burnt himself to death. If this is true, one wonders what manner of man would instill such fear as to cause self-immolation. Mochaol, Milchd's grandson, became one of Patrick's followers.

There survive copies of Patrick's Confession recounting his life, and a letter addressed to a British Celtic ruler named Coroticus, whom we can identify as Coirthrech, or Ceretic (Caradoc), king of Patrick's original homeland, the Strathclyde kingdom, around AD 450-480. His name appears in the Harleian genealogies as the first historical king of Strathclyde, grandson of Cinhil, whose capital was at Alclud, where Patrick was reputedly born. Patrick addresses Ceretic as a fellow Christian, and ruler of a Christian kingdom, but accuses him of leading raiding parties

on Ireland and carrying off his newly converted Irish flock, and selling them into slavery to pagan kingdoms. It would seem from this that the raids by the Irish and Picts on the Christian British Celts were not a one-way venture.

The following excerpts from 'Patrick's Confession' show Patrick's humility, scholarly knowledge of the Scriptures, and dedication. Patrick was of the British, Culdee or Celtic church and not the Roman Catholic or Latin church. The Irish can proudly proclaim Patrick as their Patron Saint. Patrick (Patricius in Latin, and Padraig in Irish)

"I, Patrick the sinner, am the most clownish and the least of all the faithful, and contemptible in the eyes of very many. My father was Calpomus, a deacon, one of the sons of Potitus, a presbyter, who belonged to the village of Banavem Taberniae. Now he had a small farm hard by, where I was taken captive."

"I was about sixteen years of age. I knew not the true God; and I went into captivity to Ireland with many thousands of persons, according to our just deserts, because we departed away from God, and kept not his commandments (Laws), and were not obedient to our priests, who used to admonish us for our salvation. And the Lord poured upon us the fury of his anger, and scattered us amongst many heathen, even unto the ends of the earth, where now my littleness may be seen amongst men of another nation."

"And there the Lord opened the understanding of my unbelief that, even though late, I might call my faults to remembrance, and that I might turn with all my heart to the Lord my God, who regarded my low estate, and pitied the youth of my ignorance, and kept me before I knew him, and before I had discernment or could distinguish between good and evil, and protected me and comforted me as a father does his son."

"Wherefore then I ought exceedingly, with fear and trembling, to dread this sentence in that day when no one will be able to absent himself or hide, but when all of us, without exception, shall have to give account of even the smallest sins before the judgment seat of the Lord Christ."

The British, Culdee or Celtic Church was ruled by bishops and elders, elder and priest (from presbyteros) being synonymous terms. From an ancient authority we learn that the Culdees made no alteration in the terms used by the Druids; and they retained the white dress of the Druidic priests. A superintendent among the Druids in Britain was a deon, i.e. a dean.

The clergy of the Culdee Church came into office hereditarily; the principal of hereditary succession ran through the whole Celtic polity. The crown was hereditary with certain modifications peculiar to the Celts themselves. In Ireland there was a hereditary succession in the bishopric of Armagh for fifteen generations. The property of the Culdee or Celtic Church was owned by the family and not by the 'church'. When the celibacy of the priesthood was established after the suppression of the Culdees, the properties were taken over by the Latin church, which gave it immense wealth over night.

Giraldus Cambrensis, Latin Bishop of St. David's, in the twelfth century, a strong supporter of the Latin Church, complains of the Celtic Church that, "the sons after the deaths of their fathers, succeed to the ecclesiastical benefices, not by election, but by hereditary right'."

Abbeys, or more correctly colleges, were attached to the early British Churches, seats of learning were styled Cathair Culdich - the Chair of the Culdees. The mode of life in these Abbeys, however, was very different from that of the generality of those institutions that have been called monasteries in later ages. In each college there were twelve brethren, and one who was 'provost' or 'abbot'; wherever the Culdees formed a new settlement or college of presbyters, the fixed number of the council was twelve, following the example of the apostles of Jesus Christ.

Gildas states that in old phraseology -sanctorum speluncae- the monasteries, were the caves of the saints; this makes intelligible the old records of the Culdees that they lived in kells or caves in Britain. Kings and nobility frequently passed their declining years in the peace and seclusion of these monasteries. According to Jamieson there is a general tradition in the Highlands of Scotland that the Culdees immediately succeeded the Druids as the ministers of religion. The tradition is

supported by a circumstance of an interesting nature, which has been mentioned by several writers, that 'Clachan', the name still given in the Highlands to a place where a church stands, belonged originally to a Druidical temple. Hence it is still said, 'Will you go to the stones?' or 'Have you been to the stones?'; that is, 'Will you go to church' or 'Have you been to church?' At the end of the seventeenth century there was in a Highland parish of Scotland an old man who, although very regular in his devotions, never addressed the Supreme Being by any other title than that of 'Archdruid', accounting every other derogatory to the Divine Majesty."

Toland states that two Druids acted as tutors to the two daughters of Laegaire (Leary), the high king of Ireland, in whose reign St. Patrick conducted his great revival; that Ida and Ono, Lords of Roscommon, were Druids and that Ono presented his fortress of Imleach-Ono to St. Patrick who converted it into the religious house of Elphin, later an episcopal see; this writer also states that the Druidical college of Derry was converted into a Culdee monastery or college." Adamnan, the successor and biographer of St. Columba, states that Columba was wont to say of the Lord Jesus, "Christ the Son of God is my Druid."

The sixth century was the great era of the new Irish monastic foundations. Many of the founders studied under St Finnian at Clonard. His twelve disciples were affectionately known as the Twelve Apostles of Ireland and each became an outstanding monastic pioneer in his own right; among them were Colm Cille in Durrow, Derry and Iona, Ciaran in Clonmacnoise, Canice in Aghaboe, Mobhi in Glasnevin, Molaisse in Devenish, Brendan in Clonfert. Once the movement had taken off, it was imitated by others who had not been alumni of Clonard: Comgall in Bangor, Kevin in Glendalough, Jarlath in Tuam, Finbar in Cork. Religious establishments for women were far less numerous: Killeavy near Newry founded by Moninne, Killeady in Co. Limerick by Ita and St Brigid's double monastery for men and women at Kildare.

A sixth-century Irish monastery must not be pictured like one of the great medieval monasteries on the continent. It was much closer in appearance to the primitive settlements in the Nile Valley than to a fully developed Monte Cassino. A modern holiday camp like Butlin's would be closer to

it in appearance than a modern Mount Melleray. But it was far from a holiday camp in spirit and, the penances imposed for infringements of the rules had no equal in Western Europe.

Scholars trained in the Irish monastic schools show an extensive knowledge of Latin and Greek classical authors, but their chief study, was the Bible. Many of them reached a very high standard as copyists and in the Book of Durrow (from the second half of the seventh century) and the Book of Kells (from shortly after 800) they attained a standard of calligraphy and miniature painting which has never been surpassed. Indeed their artistic achievements in this field are among the greatest glories of Gaelic Ireland.

The Dalriada Kingdom of North Antrim Annexes Argyll in Scotland

FOR ALMOST A THOUSAND YEARS, THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS AND THE HEBRIDES have been haunted by the memory of the great Lords of the Isles, chiefs of the Clan Donald who traced their ancestry back to the legendary Irish king, Conn of the Hundred Battles, and who embodied the poetry, the grandeur, and the ultimately doomed aspirations of the Celtic tradition in Scotland. In early Celtic times the name 'Alba' applied all the lands of northern Britain beyond the great estuaries of the Forth and the Clyde, which were inhabited by the Caledonian Pictish Celts called the Cruithne. (The name 'Cruithne' derived from the Gaelic word *cruithneachd*, which means wheat, they did not paint themselves).

At the beginning of the sixth century three Gaelic clans of Irish Scotti of the Dalriada, descendants of the warlike people who, in alliance with the Picts, had fought the Roman legion along Hadrian's Wall - landed in the western peninsula of Kintyre and established the Albain kingdom of Dalriada. Their leader was a chieftain called Fergus Mor Mac Erc who was descendant of the famous Irish king, Conn of the Hundred Battles, and the ancestor of the Clan Donald. This Fergus Mor Mac Erc settled his

people along the West Highland coastline c Lorne and Argyll, and colonised the southern islands of the Inner Hebrides. Remote behind the great mountain ranges of Druirn Alban, the Scotti consolidated their position, warring against their Pictish neighbours and the Celtic Britons of Strathclyde, and often threatened by Angle invaders who were spreading northwards from Northumbria into the Lowland plains of southern Alba.

Fergus asked Murcheartach, the high king, if he could have the Stone of Destiny or Lia Fail to be crowned on. Murcheartach sent it over to him and Fergus was crowned King of the Dalriada Scots at Dunadd, in Argyll. The Stone of Destiny or the Stone of Scone, as it became known, remained in Scone in Perthshire until Edward I, Plantagenet king of England stole it and took it to England. However it has recently been returned to Scotland.

In AD 843 the Dairiadic king, Kenneth MacAlpin, either by conquest or inheritance, assumed the crown of Alba and occupied the ancient Pictish capital at Scone. The Picts as a race thereafter seemed to disappear from history, but this is not the case as they were of the same race as the Dalriadic Scots, and assimilated with their cousins from the south. The Scotti or Scots gave their name to the emerging realm of Scotland.

A seventh-century manuscript called the Senchus fer N'Alban ('History of the men of Alba') provides a brief and later recollection of early Dairiada and the ordering of its society. From this and other early traditions it is clear that whatever process of settlement or gradual colonisation might have preceded Fergus Mor's landing, in about AD 500 so there was a definite migration involving three tribes led by three brothers of whom, presumably, Fergus was the eldest.

The lands of Albain Dalriada were divided between them. Fergus, apart from establishing the king's seat at Dunadd in the Crinan isthmus, settled his people in Kintyre, Knapdale, Arran, and Bute, with principal strongholds at Tarbert and Dunavertie. It was the custom for each 'kindred' to adopt the name of its leader, but in recording the subsequent history, the old chronicles refer to the Cinel (Clan) Gabhran after Fergus Mor's grandson (from which one may infer that Fergus himself, possibly died

within a year or so of his crowning). Gabhran's elder brother Congall also founded a small clan which occupied Cowal with a fortress at Dunoon.

The second brother, Lorne (or Loam), (from whom the Cinel Mac Labhruinn or Clan MacLaren come) established a stronghold at Dunollie, and settled his people in Colonsay, Lorne proper (to which they gave the name) and in the coastland north to Morvern where they encroached into the debatable lands beyond Ardnamurchan and the ill-defined boundary of northern Pictdom. Accompanying the Clan Lorne (but not part of it) were some men from Oriel who claimed descent from Colia Uais and made their settlement in Argyll.

Finally, the third brother, Angus, took his kindred and occupied the islands of Jura and Islay. Of the three clans, the Clan Oengus was least prominent in Dalriadic' history. In early times the Kingship passed at irregular intervals between Clan Gabhran and Clan Comgall, and in the Ulster Chronicle the wars of Clan Gabhran received the greater attention. During the seventh century the Comgall dynasty appears to have died out and from about AD 700 it was Clan Lorne who challenged Gabhran for the Kingship.

The Senchus allows some calculation to be made concerning the relative strengths of the clans and of early Dalriada as a whole. The size of each clan was estimated in 'houses': Clan Gabhran having 560; Clan Lorne 420; and Clan Oengus 430: relating presumably to the number of families in client relationship to the chief. The numbering was important in relation to each clan's contribution to the war-muster when the High King called the hosting, and at the time of Fergus' landing it is possible that Dalriada could field a war band of 2000 fighting men out of a population of between 7000-8000.

In addition, every twenty houses had to furnish twenty-eight oarsmen and two galleys or currachs, which would indicate that Dalriada was a maritime power to be reckoned with, and this tradition was later inherited by Somerled and the Lords of the Isles. Almost without exception, Dalriadic (and later, MacDonald) strongholds commanded natural harbours or inlets where the galleys could be beached beneath the fortress

walls. In some places, the keel marks, grooved into the rocks, are still visible today.

The custom of matrilineal descent, however, persisted among the pagan Picts, with whom the Dalriads were now in continuous contact. The catalytic properties inherent in this situation would contribute eventually to the fusion of the two peoples as Dalriadic Scots took Pictish wives and the inheritance that went with them. In later centuries, the difference between Celtic custom and imported ideas of primogeniture also prompted the struggles for succession which punctuated the early history of Scotland.

There are many great clans that come from the Dalriada such as MacGregor, Robertson, Moncreiffe, MacDuff, Clan Chattan as well as Clan Donald. The present British Royal House are descended from the Dalriada kings.

Saint Columba (Columcille), Irish Prince and Evangelist Arrives at the Island of Iona

"Unto this place, small and mean though it be great homage shall yet be paid, not only by the Kings and Peoples of the Scots, but by ruler of foreign and barbarous nations and their subjects". St. Columba

The precarious foothold which the early Dalriads had secured in western Alba was to be finally consolidated by two contrasting figures of early Scottish history: a saint and a warrior Columcille and Bruide Mac Maerchon. St. Columcille - the man who is better remembered as: St. Columba - was born at Garten in Ireland in AD 521.

By birth he was descended from Nial of the Nine Hostages, and was thus a prince of the northern Ui Neill. His father, Phelim, was chieftain of the Clan O'Donnell, and his great grandfather, a son of Niall of the Nine Hostages was the warrior King Connall Gulbair of Donegal from whom the province of Tyrconnell in north-west Ulster took its name. His mother was Ethne, eleventh in descent from Catlaire Mor, King of Leinster, and, to complete his genealogical credentials, he was through his father's

mother, a great grandson of Lorne Mac Erc, the co-founder of Albain Dalriada.

According to the tradition which has grown up around St Columba, the first remarkable fact of his life was that despite the secular advantages which such a lineage undoubtedly afforded, he decided to enter the church. It has even been claimed that he was eligible for the High Kingship of Erin itself but rejected the crown in favour of the cloister. He entered the ecclesiastical school at Moville, and was ordained deacon.

After leaving Moville, he completed his Celtic education under Gemman, the Christian bard of Leinster, and then studied under St Finnian at the famous monastic school of Clonard where he became one of the 'twelve apostles of Erin. When an outbreak of the Yellow Plague caused the community of Clonard to disperse, Columba returned to Ulster, and the early part of his career, AD 545-62, was devoted to good works and the foundation of churches and monastic societies throughout Ireland - as at Deny, Kells, Swords, Tory Island, Raphoe, Boyle, and Drumcliff. These, and numerous other foundations attributed to Columba, were meticulously recorded by his eighth century hagiographer Adomnan MacRonan, the ninth abbot of Iona.

Later tradition has also woven a story around Columba's coming to Iona, portraying him as a once proud and contentious man in defence of whose honour 3000 men died in battle - and who came to Iona as an exile in expiation of this sin. The tale is not redolent of simple piety. According to this version, Diarmid, the High King of Ireland, had dragged from sanctuary and murdered a kinsman of Columba's, and aside from this sacrilege and an impending blood-feud, he also imprisoned the priest himself at Tara after passing judgment against him in a suit concerning the ownership of a psalter which Columba had allegedly copied. Columba was rescued by members of his clan and the whole Ui Neil rose to avenge the insult.

The armies met at Cooladrummon near Sligo, and Diarmid's host was slaughtered in this trial by battle. Diarmid thereafter arranged for a Synod at Meath to excommunicate Columba, but even in those early days the

Church would not permit mere kings to meddle, and the sentence was annulled. However, for Columba, conscience-stricken and admonished, the consequence was a self-imposed penance of exile, never to look again upon his native Ireland until he had converted to Christ as many souls as he had caused to perish at Cooladrummon. And so he went to Iona, the Island of Hu, the Island of the Druids, where Ireland was over the horizon, and founded a small sanctuary in the Bay of the Coracle in sight of Mull - at first a simple structure of mud and wattle, but which was to become the heart of the Celtic Church in Scotland.

Some parts of this tradition have their basis in known fact. Other parts, however, are inaccurate, or at the least, distorted. Moreover, the biographer's preoccupation with recording acts of saintliness and piety (however true many of these might be) has tended to obscure the central purpose behind Columba's mission and the circumstances which gave rise to it.

Cooladrummon was fought in AD 561. The same year, Columba embarked for Dalriada, probably at the request of King Conall, who had only recently become High King. The reason for such a request may be guessed at. Conall's predecessor Gabhran had been killed in battle the previous year, almost certainly by the Picts, and thus the indications are that Dalriada was under serious attack from the north. From Columba's point of view, if this Christian beachhead in Alba was to be preserved, security from attack was a first priority, but given Dalriada's size and vulnerability, this could only be achieved by treaty. The first task therefore, was to establish a Christian base and open negotiations with the Picts.

Columba was a diplomat of the first order, arranging negotiations with Bruide Mac Maerchon of the Picts, and evangelizing his people, Columba also exerted an extraordinary influence in Ireland, being on friendly terms with the new Irish High King, to whom he was related. And also with the Strathclyde king, Rhydderch Hen. Several poems ascribed to him have survived and he is remembered as a pastor, a scholar and a man of tremendous strength of character. He was to die in Iona just after midnight on the Sunday morning of 9 June AD 597. Nearly a hundred years later (AD 688-91) Adomnan, an abbot of Iona and a worthy successor to

Columba as both scholar and diplomat, wrote his celebrated Life of Columba, providing a major source of information on the Celtic Church.

Differences between the Celtic, Culdee or British and Roman or Latin Church

THERE WERE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CELTIC CHURCH AND ROME. Let us now examine the main disparities which were to be such a 'bone of contention'. It is argued that Rome looked to Simon Bar-Jonah, Christ's disciple, who was nicknamed 'The Rock' (cephas in Creek and petrus in Latin), and is more popularly known today as Peter, as the founder of the Church after Christ. The Celts, however, cited the authority of John, son of Zebedee and brother of James. Jesus confided his mother to John's care, a fact which appealed to the mother-goddess orientated Celts, and tradition was that John was the unnamed disciple whom Jesus loved. This was the argument also put forward by the theologians of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

One visible difference between the Celtic clergy and Roman clergy at this stage was that while the Romans adopted what they described as the tonsure of St Peter, shaving the head on the crown as symbolic of the crown of thorns, the Celts used what they called the tonsure of St John, shaving a line from ear to ear. The Roman argument was that this was merely a Druidic practice which had been maintained, and it was thus regarded as 'barbaric' by Rome.

The Celtic Sabbath ('day of repose') was celebrated on a Saturday, the last day of the week and Hebrew holy day. The Romans had now begun to observe Sunday, the first day of the week, as their Sabbath, it being symbolic of the Resurrection.

More often than not, until the seventh and eighth centuries, the services were conducted in Greek, not Latin, by the Celtic clergy. Greek was, of course, the original language of the Christian movement after its break from Judaism. Greek was the language of the Byzantine rites of the Eastern Church. In fact, the Celtic services had much more in common with

Orthodox services than with Rome. The Eucharist, bread and wine, was given by the celebrant who stood facing the altar, not behind it. The wine was given by a deacon. When the blessing was given, the Celtic priest raised the first, third and fourth fingers to represent the Trinity.

The Roman priest held up thumb, first and second finger. The blessing in the Celtic Church was given before communion and the breaking of bread was at the end of the service. As in the Orthodox Church, the Celtic bishops celebrated the mass, so called by Rome from the Latin *missa* (dismissal) but called the 'offering' in the Celtic and Eastern Churches.

The Celtic Church emphasized active participation in the worship by the people; while the deacon led the congregation in prayers, the people would respond with psalms and hymns. The deacon fulfilled an important link between priest and people. Celtic bishops were under the authority of abbots. The clergy could, of course, marry but this was not unique because it was only in the eleventh century that Rome expressly forbade its clergy to marry. Pope Leo IX (1002-1054) launched a programme of clerical reform, discouraging priests from marrying.

The institution of celibacy of the priesthood meant the church properties came under the ownership of Rome which became very wealthy overnight. In the Celtic world there were mixed monasteries in which the religieus of both sexes lived and worked. Of course, in the Eastern Church today, the clergy can still marry. Confession was not obligatory but voluntary and could be made in public or to a chosen soul friend'. Absolution did not follow immediately, and sometimes a penance could last some years.

The most famous difference between the Celtic Church and Rome was the dating of Easter. The rules governing the Christian calendar were originally agreed at Nicaea in AD 325 with the years reckoned from the year of the birth of Christ. Rome altered its computations during the time of Pope Leo 1 (AD 440-461) when the 'Alexandrian computation' was adopted in AD 444. Amendments were added by Victorius of Aquitaine during the time of Pope Hilary (AD 461-468) and more were adopted following proposals by Dionysius Exiguus during the pontificate of Felix III (IV) in AD 527.

The last time Rome seriously altered the calendrical system, which now affects the entire Christian calendar, was in 1581 when Pope Gregory XIII ordained that ten days be dropped and the years ending in hundreds be leap years only if divisible by 400. The Gregorian Calendar was eventually adopted throughout the Christian world, by England in 1752, and by the Eastern Orthodox world this century.

The Celts saw the early amendments taking them further from the original dates and rendering the commemorative ceremonies and anniversaries arbitrary and without meaning. Celtic computations remained those inherited from the early Council of Aries in AD 314, attended by four British Celtic bishops, and were based on the Hebrew lunar calendar which allowed Easter to fall, as did the Passover, in the month of Nisan.

This was the seventh and spring month of the Hebrew calendar (March/April) in which the Passover fell at the full moon. Under this method, the first Easter had been on the fourteenth day of Nisan. Using this calculation, the Celts celebrated the festival on whatever Sunday fell between the fourteenth and twentieth days after the first full moon following the spring equinox. They would do this even if Easter then fell on the same day as the Passover.

The early Christians adopted the name of the Passover festival as the name for the commemoration of the death of Christ because he had been executed at that time. Paul, in his first epistle or letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 5:7), had referred to Christ as their 'Passover lamb' or sacrifice. So the Christians celebrated the Hebrew Passover in memory of Christ's execution and called it, in the Latin calendar, Pasca from the Hebrew Pesach (Passover).

To the Celts, it became a little nonsensical when, in AD 325, the Council of Nicaea declared it unlawful to celebrate a Christian festival on the same day as a Hebrew one. After all, Jesus, a Hebrew, was known to have been executed during that particular Hebrew feast. The Christian Easter then became an arbitrary date for the commemoration and not one with any relevance to the actual anniversary. Seen from this point in time, it could well be argued that the Celtic dating of Easter was far more accurate than the later reformed calculations.

If we argue that the Celts became imbued with the same ideas as the Eastern Orthodox Church, simply because these were, in fact, the original concepts of the Christian movement before the decisions of the Council of Nicaea, in AD 325, began to change the attitude of Rome, then we must also take into account another aspect - intercourse with another Celtic country which was clearly part of Eastern Orthodoxy. Galatia stood on the central plains of Asia Minor in what is today modern Turkey.

The Celts at the time of their eastern expansion in the third century BC, had established their 'Commonwealth of Galatians' and been recognized by the surrounding Hellenized kingdoms. Indeed, their state presents us with our first information on how a Celtic state was governed. In 25 BC Galatia had eventually been conquered and became a Roman province.

But Galatia was not cut off from the rest of the Celtic world. In Ancyra, capital of Trocmi, one of the three Celtic tribes to settle Galatia, stood a monument from around AD 14 which mentions the names Of two British Celtic kings. St. Jerome (Euseblus Hieronymous, C.AD 342-420) visited Ancyra (Ankara) at the beginning of the fifth century and was able to report that while educated Galatians used Greek to communicate with the surrounding Hellenistic world, among themselves they still spoke Celtic and, moreover, he likened their Celtic language to that spoken by the Treveri (of Trier) in northern Gaul. Jerome knew what he was talking about, for he had lived in Trier. The Gaulish Celtic language was mutually understandable with British Celtic.

The Galatians were the first Celts to be converted to Christianity, sometime between AD 40 and 50 when Paul of Tarsus visited Pessinus the chief city of the Tolistoboi, a city in Cilicia bordering on Galatia. The Galatians received a permanent place in Christian history through Paul's famous letter to them in which he reveals the reasons for his argument with Christ's disciple Peter.

The Galatians subsequently developed, at least outwardly, as part of the Eastern Church; however, because of the close relationship between all parts of the Celtic world, no matter how far removed from one another, it is more than likely that travellers from Galatia were in contact with western

Celts, in Gaul and in Britain, reinforcing their differences with Rome. Pelagius was certainly in that part of the world during his later travels.

The argument that these differences with Rome came about through the isolation of the Celtic Church in Britain and Ireland is no longer tenable.

The Vikings: Invasions, Alliances and Settlements

THE TRADITIONAL PERCEPTION OF THE VIKINGS AS MARAUDERS AND PLUNDERERS OF IRISH MONASTERIES is incomplete: it concentrates on the early years of Viking activity, ignoring that the Vikings eventually settled peacefully, integrating into Irish society and making a positive contribution as traders and town-dwellers.

The arrival of Viking sea raiders in Irish waters in the late eighth century heralded the first influx of new peoples into Ireland since the major settlement of the Celts had been completed in the last Centuries BC. From about the second century BC until the late eighth century AD Ireland had enjoyed freedom from external attack or settlement. This was in marked contrast with the experience of neighbouring Britain or the continent during the same period. Britain, for example, like Ireland had been settled by Celts and at approximately the same time.

But Britain, unlike Ireland, was also to experience conquest by the Romans in the first century AD and to be further colonised by Germanic peoples during the fifth and sixth centuries. By contrast, Ireland experienced neither Roman nor Germanic settlement. Rather, it was the Irish who engaged in colonising ventures between the fourth and sixth centuries, attacking and settling parts of Britain, notably in Scotland, Wales and Cornwall. This is an aspect of Irish colonial history which is generally overlooked.

In the late eighth century Ireland shared once again a common historical experience with Britain and the continent, namely attacks from

Scandinavian sea pirates who came to be known as Vikings. The first recorded Viking attack on Ireland occurred in 795. In that year the annals of Ulster recorded the burning of Rechrú by the heathens'. Although it is usual to identify the Irish place-name of Rechrú or Rechráinn with the island monastery of Lambay off the coast of Co. Dublin, this identification is not secure. It is possible that this entry may refer to an attack on Rathlin Island off the Antrim coast, that Rathlin was in fact the first place in Ireland to experience a Viking raid.

The term Viking conjures up for most Irish people bands of marauders and robbers who plundered Irish monasteries and churches, causing widespread destruction and terror, and carrying off the precious objects of the monasteries. Why did the Vikings concentrate their raids on Irish monasteries? One popular view is that the Vikings were pagans and as such violently anti Christian. But the Vikings did not initiate raids on Irish monasteries. Less well known is the fact that the Irish had attacked monasteries even before the arrival of the Vikings.

What was the Irish reaction to Scandinavian attempts at colonisation in Ireland? There certainly was no united Irish military response. The individual Scandinavian footholds, such as that established at Dublin about 841, seem to have been absorbed rapidly into the existing complex Irish political pattern of shifting hostilities and alliances. The first recorded alliance between an Irish king and a Viking leader against a fellow Irish king occurred in 842. Thereafter, Scandinavian Irish alliances became commonplace.

A simplistic notion of a united Irish army fighting to preserve the political independence of Ireland against an attempted Scandinavian take-over bears no relation to the much more complex reality. At no time during the Viking age was there a clear-cut division between the Scandinavians as aggressors and the Irish as defenders.

The battle of Clontarf, fought in 1014, has often been portrayed as a major victory by the Irish against the Vikings, as a battle at which the Irish king Brian Ború (Bona) allegedly defeated the Vikings and put an end to Scandinavian aspirations of conquering Ireland. This is quite simply

untrue. Legends die hard and perhaps no legend will die harder than the legend of Brian Boruma and the battle of Clontarf.

Popular conceptions of Viking activity in Ireland have been molded by two different kinds of historical writing. The first, the monastic annals, emanated from ecclesiastical circles, and highlighted the plundering of monasteries. The second kind of Irish historical source dealing with the Vikings is royal propaganda tracts which were commissioned by a number of Irish royal dynasties in order to enhance their claims to kingship.

The most important of these propaganda tracts is entitled the War of the Irish against the Foreigners. It was compiled in the twelfth century on behalf of the descendants of Brian Boruma. It set out to depict Brian as the saviour of Ireland from the Vikings, detailing a series of ever more aggressive military campaigns mounted by him against the Vikings which culminated in a splendid victory at the battle of Clontarf.

The War of the Irish against the Foreigners portrayed the Vikings as almost invincible, having no match in Ireland apart from Brian Boruma, who ended a career spend fighting against them with a decisive victory at Clontarf which finally freed Ireland from the threat of a Scandinavian takeover. As the very title suggests, its intention was to imply a united

Irish opposition to Scandinavian activity in Ireland. This pseudo-historical propaganda tract was written to enhance the prestige of the twelfth-century descendants of Brian Boruma.

The reality is that the battle of Clontarf was occasioned by a revolt of the king of Leinster against the overlordship of Brian Bonuma. It was a battle of Munstermen against Leinstermen with Vikings participating on both sides, the Scandinavians of Limerick and Waterford fighting on behalf of Brian Bonuma and the Scandinavian king of Dublin fighting on behalf of the king . of Leinster, to whom he was related by marriage' just as there never was a unity of purpose on the part of the Irish against the Vikings, so there never was a unity of purpose among the Scandinavians in Ireland. In the 850s, for example, Dane had fought Norwegian for control of the Scandinavian settlement at Dublin.

In the late ninth century Viking activity and interest in Ireland had slackened temporarily and almost ceased for approximately forty years. In 902 the Scandinavian settlement which had been established at Dublin was actually abandoned. But in the second decade of the tenth century, that is from about 920, a new Scandinavian movement into Ireland began again, at a time when the Vikings were finding that their activities were being curtailed in other parts of Europe.

This phase of activity has been designated by some historians as the second Viking age. A similar sequence of events to that of the first Viking age occurred with an initial phase of raiding, followed by attempts at establishing permanent bases. These once again proved enduring only along the coast. A Scandinavian settlement at Dublin was re-established in 917. The Scandinavian settlements at Limerick, Waterford and Wexford also date from the so-called second Viking age.

By the mid-tenth century these Scandinavians had settled permanently and peacefully in Ireland. They had been absorbed and assimilated into Irish society. Although we know little about the process, they had converted to Christianity.

Dalriadic Descendants: Lords of the Isles and Scottish Kings

DESPITE THE PERIOD OF VIKING OCCUPATION, in 1140 there was a Gaelic revival under the warrior Somerled, Thane of Argyll, who claimed descent from the ancient rulers of Dalriada, and recovered the southern Hebrides from the Norse kingdom of Man. Somerled was the great progenitor of the Clan Donald, to which his grandson Donald gave the name, and through whom the succession passed to the later MacDonald Lords of the Isles.

In Central Scotland meanwhile, the Celtic identity had been eroded by the influx of foreigners - Angles, Normans, Danes, Flemings, and others who had settled in the country, and Macbeth was the last Celtic ruler worthy of the name. The medieval kings of Scotland resented the Norwegian

authority over their western seaboard, and the growing power of Somerled and his descendants excited the jealousy of the feudal baronage.

After the Battle of Largs in 1263, the Norwegian kings were forced to renounce their sovereignty over the Hebrides, and from this time the history of the western Gaels inevitably became more closely linked with events and developments in Scotland. Despite attempts by the Scottish crown to assert its authority, the descendants of Somerled continued to maintain their independence, and their support for Robert the Bruce during the Scottish War of Independence resulted in their being allowed to consolidate their hold over extensive territories in the western highlands and the Isles.

When the Stewart dynasty succeeded to the throne of Scotland in 1371, the Chief of the Clan Donald, John of Islay, by inheritance, marriage, and other acquisition, had come to control a vast dominion in the west, far wider than the territories of early Dalriada, and began formally to style himself 'The Lord of the Isles'. During the period of the Lordship, from approximately 1350 to 1493, the entire Hebrides and the West Highland coastline formed a single Atlantic principality, and the Lords of the Isles conducted their affairs and governed this dominion as independent rulers in the west.

Their need for territory led them to challenge the Scottish crown for possession of the Earldom of Ross which they eventually acquired for a time, thus adding to their domain a great tract of land in the north-west Highlands. In maintaining their claim to independence they exploited the political divisions within Scotland and the constant wars against England, frequently entering into conspiracy and alliance with the English kings - a policy which ultimately contributed to their downfall.

For at the height of their greatness the symptoms of decline were already becoming apparent, as feudal impositions gradually undermined the early Celtic polity. In 1493, after an unsuccessful and ill-advised rebellion, John, fourth Lord of the Isles, proved incapable of controlling the clansmen, and upon such excuse the Lordship was formally forfeited to the Scottish crown. John died in a small lodging house in Dundee in 1503.

James IV unfortunately did not have the experience or foresight when he destroyed the power of the Lordship and this effectively removed the only focus of authority and effective government in the Western Isles. The many clans of the Lordship embarked on a policy of individual aggrandisement which encouraged their constant feuding and rendered them vulnerable to the predations of the Campbells, Gordons and other neighbours who long had envied the fabled wealth of the Isles. Thus later seannachies (historians) have reflected the saying, "It is no joy without Clan Donald. It is no strength to be without them".

From Somerled descend a number of other clans and monarchs of Scotland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain, such as Stewart, Campbell, Cameron, MacLean, Hamilton, MacNeil and of course Clan Donald or MacDonald.

England's Angevin King Invades Ireland with Papal Blessing

IN 1154 HENRY OF ANJOU, ruler of the Angevin Empire was crowned Henry II, King of England. In the same year an Englishman became Pope Adrian IV. Under Henry II the Angevin Empire stretched from Scotland to the Pyrenees, taking in England, much of Wales and Ireland, Normandy, Anjou, and Aquitaine. They were also known as Plantagenets after Geoffrey Count of Anjou. The Angevins were noted for their ruthless exercise of royal power, which they greatly extended and which aroused considerable baronial and ecclesiastical hostility.

Normandy was part of the Angevin Empire in Europe, but the Anglo-Normans in England had independent political ambitions. The Earl of Pembroke (Strongbow) led an expeditionary force of Anglo-Normans into Ireland in 1169, after Dermot MacMurrough, King of Leinster sought help from King Henry to combat the superior strength of Rory O'Connor, High King of Ireland. Henry, not to be undermined by his Anglo-Norman subjects, laid claim to Ireland with the authority of a 'Papal Bull'. When King Henry II of England landed with an army of 4,000 at Waterford in October 1171, he came at the Pope's behest and carrying his authority the

Papal Bull 'Laudibiliter', by which the Roman Pontiff claimed the right to bestow Ireland as a gift to the English king on condition that he suppressed the ancient Celtic or Culdee church, and brought the island and its people into submission to Rome.

We reproduce herewith the Bull Laudibiliter by which Pope Adrian IV gave Ireland to England

"Adrian, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our well beloved son in Christ, the illustrious King of the English greeting and Apostolic Benediction. Laudably and profitably does your majesty contemplate spreading the glory of your name on earth and laying up for yourself the reward of eternal happiness in heaven, in that as becomes a Catholic Prince, you propose to enlarge the boundaries of the church, to proclaim the truths of the Christian religion to a rude and ignorant people (the Irish), to root out the growth of vice from the field of the Lord: and the better to accomplish this purpose you seek the council and goodwill of the Apostolic See.

In pursuing your object the loftier your aim and the greater your discretion, the more prosperous we are assured with God's assistance will be the progress you will make: for undertakings commenced in the zeal of faith and the love of religion are ever wont to attain to a good end and issue. Verily as your Excellency doth acknowledge, there is no doubt that Ireland, and all the islands on which Christ the sun of righteousness has shone and which have accepted the doctrines of the Christian faith, belong to the blessed Peter and the Holy Roman Church, wherefore the more pleased are we to plant in them the seed of faith acceptable to God, inasmuch as our conscience warns us that in their ease a stricter account will hereafter be required of us.

Whereas then well beloved son in Christ you have expressed to us your desire to enter the island of Ireland in order to subject its people to law (Papal canon law) and to root out from them the weeds of vice (the ancient Culdee faith) and your willingness to pay an annual tribute to the blessed Peter (the Pope) of one penny from every house, and to maintain the rights of the churches of that land whole and inviolate. We therefore meeting

your pious and laudable desire with due favour, and according a gracious assent to your petition, do hereby declare our will and pleasure, that with a view to enlarging the boundaries of the church, restraining the downward course of vice, correcting evil customs and planting virtue and for the increase of the Christian religion (Romanism) you shall enter that island and execute whatsoever may tend to the honour of God, and the welfare of the land: and also that the people receive you with honour and revere you as their Lord: provided always that the rights of the churches remain whole and inviolate and saying to the blessed Peter and the Holy Roman Church the annual tribute of one penny (Peter's pence) for every house.

If then you should carry your project into effect, let it be to your care to instruct that people in good ways of life...that the church there may be adorned, that the Christian religion (Romanism) may take root and grow...that you may deserve at God's hands the fullness of an everlasting reward and may obtain on earth a name renowned throughout the ages."

Pope Adrian's successor Alexander III wrote to the Bishops of Ireland calling on them to submit to King Henry:-

"Understanding that our dear son in Christ Henry, illustrious King of England stirred by divine inspiration and with his united forces has subjected to his dominion, that people a barbarous one, uncivilized and ignorant of the divine law (Roman canon law) - we command and enjoin upon you that you will diligently and manfully assist the above said King to maintain and preserve that land and to extirpate the filthiness of such great abominations. And if any of the King's Princes or persons of the land shall rashly attempt to go against his due oath and fealty pledged to that said King you shall lay ecclesiastical censure on such a one."

In a similar vein Pope Alexander addressed these words to the Princes of Ireland:-

"Whereas you have received our dear son in Christ, Henry, illustrious King of England as your king and Lord and have sworn fealty to him ...we ward and admonish your noble order to strive to preserve the fealty which by solemn oath you have made."

The same Roman Pontiff in a letter congratulating Henry on his conquest of Ireland wrote:-

"We have been assured how you have wonderfully triumphed over the people of Ireland and over a Kingdom which the Roman Emperors, the conquerors of the world left untouched, and you have extended the power of your majesty over the same people, a race uncivilised and undisciplined. We understand that you, collecting your splendid naval and land forces have your mind upon subjugating that people ...so we exhort and beseech your majesty and enjoin upon you that you will even more intently and strenuously continue ...and earnestly enjoin upon your majesty that you will carefully seek to preserve the rights of the See of St. Peter (the Papacy)."

This was indeed what King Henry did and one of his first acts was to call the Council of Cashel in 1172 at which the ancient Celtic Church of Ireland was brought into submission to the Roman or Latin church.

An interesting background to this part of history was in the year 753 when Pope Stephen III produced a document called 'The Donation of Constantine' and used it to claim wide ranging powers. It purported to be a document from the Emperor, dated 315, giving the then Bishop of Rome and his successors this incredible commission:

"Inasmuch as our power is earthly, we have decreed that it shall venerate and honour the most holy Roman Church and that the sacred See of Blessed Peter shall be gloriously exalted even above our Empire and earthly throne... He shall rule over four principal Sees, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople and Jerusalem, as over all churches of God in all the world.... Finally, lo, we convey to Sylvester, universal Pope, both our palace and likewise all provinces and palaces and districts of the city of Rome and Italy and the regions of the west."

In 1440 it was proved to be a forgery in a style of Latin not used until four centuries after the death of Constantine. But the damage was done. The Pope cited it as his power to give Ireland to the Norman English, seeking to bring Ireland under his jurisdiction. So a poor eighth century forgery could be said to begin the political problems which have since dogged Ireland.

The Norman conquest of Ireland was not entirely successful as the development of a powerful state under a strong monarchy in England was very slow, so the help from England was not forthcoming as was hoped. Many of the Normans became Gaelicised as did the Normans in Scotland. In Ireland the Normans became quite independent from their Anglicized cousins in England, such as the Fitzgerald Earls of Kildare, Desmonds, Butlers and Burkes etc.

King Robert the Bruce's Quest for a Gaelic Kingdom

IN 1314 ROBERT THE BRUCE, KING OF SCOTS, fresh from triumph over the English at Bannockburn, after the death of the Scottish patriot Sir William Wallace, embarked on a project to create a united Gaelic kingdom of Scotland and Ireland, with his younger brother Edward Bruce as the King of Ireland. He was supported by a number of the Ulster chiefs who realized the advantage of uniting against their common enemy, the Crown of England. When Edward Bruce landed in Ulster in 1315 with six thousand troops from Scotland he was joined by five Ulster chieftains: O'Neill of Tirowen, O'Kane, Lord of Keenaght, O'Hanlon, whose territory was in the present County Armagh, O'Hagan of Tullaghogue in County Tyrone, and Mac Cartan of Kinelearly in County Down. In their first march south they sacked Dundalk and pushed as far as Ardec. After retreating to the north they marched south again, this time reaching Kildare.

Edward Bruce was crowned King of Ireland, but he made a tactical error by not marching on Dublin; instead he turned back to Ulster and made Carrickfergus Castle his headquarters. There he was joined by his brother Robert with a large army; together they marched south destroying the monastery at Downpatrick and sacking Greencastle. They thrust deep into the southwest of Ireland, but although they were at Castleknock on the outskirts of Dublin, again it was decided not to attack the city and instead they turned back to Carrickfergus. When Edward Bruce marched south once again the Crown had had time to consolidate its forces; moreover, the Pope, who championed the English king, had excommunicated Bruce

and his allies, thereby undermining the support of the Irish chieftains** (see below). In 1318 an army with the Primate Archbishop of Armagh at its head defeated Edward Bruce's forces near Dundalk, Edward was killed where he had been crowned King of Ireland two years earlier. Robert the Bruce's dream of a Gaelic kingdom in Ireland was ended, but not the desire of the Ulster chieftains to rid themselves of the Anglo-Norman presence.

**A tactic used by the Papacy many times. Ironically Robert the Bruce had the support of the Pope in his struggle with Edward I of England. The Papacy played politics in a similar way when William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy, made claim to inherit the English throne in 1066. William had secured the blessing of the Pope and an excommunication of Harold II, the then King of England. William kept the excommunication from Harold until Harold's campaign in York was finished and used it to destroy his political base in England.

Later in history we have another example of the Papacy playing politics in the affairs of Ireland and of Great Britain During the struggle for the Crown between James VII & II and William of Orange (William III, who was also James' nephew and son-in-law) there were a number of battles that culminated in the Battle of the Boyne (1690), where James was defeated by William. It is assumed that the Pope would have supported the Catholic James, but this was not the case. The fact is that the Pope, because of shifting European alliances, actually favoured William against James, a fact that has been conveniently forgotten by both sides.

Conclusion

WITH THE MIGRATION OF DIFFERENT PEOPLES INTO THE BRITISH ISLES from Europe there was inevitably going to be conflict. Sometimes the assimilation developed almost naturally as with the Scots and Picts (Cruithne). When the Angles and then the Normans moved into Scotland they became Scots. This is made clear when Robert the Bruce, who was of Norman descent, made it quite clear that he considered himself a Scot even though when he fought against the English, he fought against many of Norman descent also. The same situation developed in Ireland when many Vikings and

Normans invaded and then settled down and became in many cases more Irish than the Irish. This not surprising as many historians have pointed out that the people who settled in the British Isles are ethnically / racially the same, and when they spilt blood it was that of a kinsman.

As you read the different portions of the book it is hoped you will be encouraged to do your own research in any of the books that have been recommended. The study of history reveals the basis of what is going on today and it is hoped this will give you, the reader, an appreciation of the depth of the heritage we have. Even though the Celts in the British Isles succumbed to the more powerful Germanic tribes it is surprising how much the 'invaders' embraced Celtic culture, and today the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, Elizabeth II, is of the great royal houses of Ireland, Scotland, the Netherlands, Norway and other Brito-Scandinavian royal houses.

Today, the main areas of Celtic influence are found in Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, Brittany and the Isle of Man. Gone are the great Celtic and Gaelic kingdoms, such as the Lordship of the Isles and the Dalriada, but the memory of these still lives in the revival of the language and culture of these areas. One may lament the passing of an era and that we cannot undo the past. History tells us of the fortunes and losses of our ancestors and we have to accept what has happened, but we need to understand the reasons for what has happened and to dispel the myths that cloud these events. This is the reason for this book.



Recommended Reading

The Older Mother Tongues of the United Kingdom - C. V. James

Celt, Druid and Culdee - Isabel Hill Elder (Merch O Lundain Derri)

Celt and Saxon, The Battle for Britain - Peter Ellis

Celtic Britain and Ireland - Lloyd and Jennifer Laing

The Picts - Isabel Henderson

The Picts and the Scots - Lloyd Laing

Ancient Ireland - Nic Constable

Ireland - Brian de Breffny

The Land of Ireland - Brian de Breffny

The Oxford Illustrated History of Ireland - R.F. Foster (ed.)

Irish Battles - G.A. Hayes-McCoy

Ireland Through the Ages - Michael Jenner

The People of Ireland - Patrick Loughrey

Scotland Through the Ages - Michael Jenner

William Wallace - James MacKay

Robert the Bruce - Ronald McNair-Scott

Scotland - Michael Lynch

Scotland's Story - Tom Steel

Life and Death of a Druid Prince - Anne Ross and Don Robbins

Phonetic Origins of Britons, Scots and Anglo-Saxons - Prof. Waddell

Nigel Tranter's Scotland - Nigel Tranter

Clans & Tartans of Scotland - Robert Bain

Scotland's Glorious Heritage - Rev. Dr. Norman Court

The Lords of The Isles, The Clan Donald & the early Kingdom of the Scots - Ronald Williams



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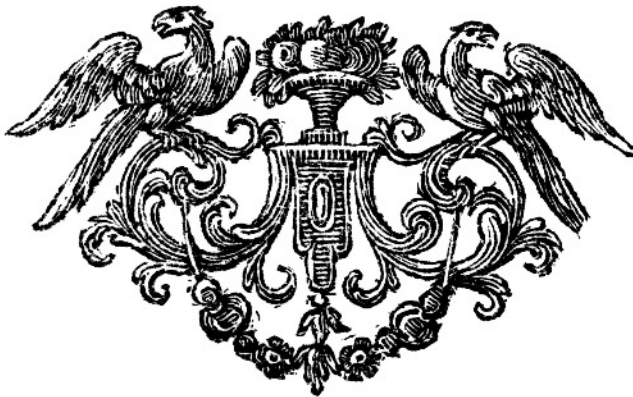
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