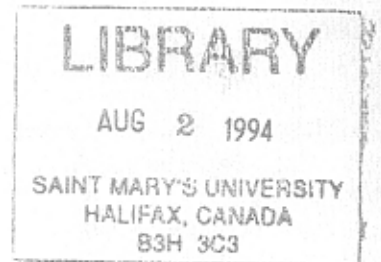
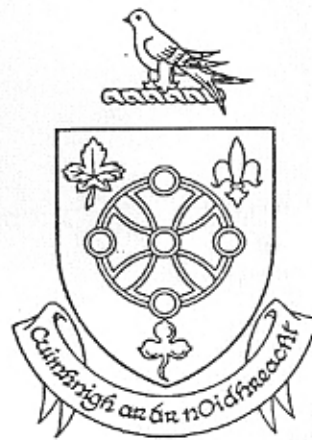


# LAN nASC

D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies  
Saint Mary's University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia



In this issue:

The Irish and The Scots: A Shared Surname Heritage  
Bail na gCúig nArán — Léann á roinnt ar a chéile  
The Ferryland Riots of 1788  
News from the Chair

Volume 7, Summer 1994

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Cyril Byrne

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*AN NASC*

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With special thanks to Virginia Jackson, Public Relations Department, Saint Mary's University.

AN NASC was established as a link between the Chair of Irish Studies and those who are involved or interested in promoting Irish studies and heritage in Canada and abroad. It also seeks to develop an awareness of the shared culture of Ireland, Gaelic Scotland and those of Irish and Gaelic descent in Canada.

AN NASC is provided free of charge. However, we welcome financial contributions which will allow us to extend the activities of the Chair of Irish Studies. A tax receipt will be issued for all contributions over \$10.00.

We welcome letters and comments from our readers.

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*An Nasc 1*

## NEWS FROM THE CHAIR

During the last year, the D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies has sought to maintain a constant level of activity, in spite of financial restrictions and limitations. Overall, the Chair had a successful year, not just as regards its work in the areas of teaching and publications, but also in co-operating with outside community-based organizations and in adding to the Chair's trust fund.

### Academic Offerings 1993-1994

The Chair offered five full credits in Irish Studies. These included courses in language (Introduction and Intermediate levels), literature (Gaelic and Anglo-Irish), folklore and history. Two new courses were offered for the first time: Gaelic Literature in Translation 1600-1800 (IRS 455.2); and Ireland, 1600-1985: From the Plantations to the "Troubles" (IRS 395.0 [His 395.0]).

An Irish Studies Seminar course (IRS 400.0) received approval during the last year. This interdisciplinary course will be offered in the academic year 1995-1996. In addition, Dr. Michael Vance's Early Celtic Britain and Medieval Celtic Britain courses have been crosslisted with Irish Studies.

### Awards and Publications

In July 1993 the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada awarded Irish Studies a two-year \$20,000.00 grant to develop its specialized research collection in the Patrick Power Library. Material to be acquired includes complete runs of important journals such as *Béaloides*, *Éigse* and *Eriu*.

Cyril J. Byrne, Co-ordinator of Irish Studies, was selected as the 1993-1994 recipient of the Father William A. Stewart, S.J. Medal for Teaching. This annual award, administered by Saint Mary's University Alumni Association, recognizes members of faculty whose work in the classroom and whose extracurricular activities have enhanced the life of the university.

## 2. An Nasc

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Moreover, Cyril Byrne contributed to Volume XIII of the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (1994) with a piece on David Bennett (p. 62).

Pádraig Ó Siadhail, the holder of the D'Arcy McGee Chair, was awarded two prizes at the 1993 Conradh na Gaeilge Oireachtas literary and music competitions. He received first prize for the manuscript of a novel in a special competition to commemorate the centenary of Conradh na Gaeilge while his study of Irish language theatre won joint second prize in a research competition. Both prize-winning manuscripts have been published recently: *Eagnairc* (Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 1994) and *Stair Dhrámaíocht na Gaeilge 1900-1970* (Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 1993).

### Fundraising

Our annual fundraising dinner was held on February 26 1994, at Saint Mary's University. Several hundred guests were on hand to honour Mr. Max Ferguson as the Chair's Irishman of the Year. Special guests included Doctor John Savage, Premier of Nova Scotia, Antóin Mac Unfraidh, Irish Ambassador to Canada, Mary Clancy, M.P., and Gloria McCloskey, Mayor of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. Entertainment was provided by Scoil Rince na Mara, the Metro School of Irish Dancing and musicians, John Goodman, David MacIsaac and Scott

MacMillan.

The Chair acknowledges the generous sponsorship of the Bank of Montreal and the valuable support of the Bank's Cyril Kelly.

### Lectures and Community-Related Activities

In October 1993 the Chair and An Cumann, the Irish Association of Nova Scotia, organized an Irish language immersion weekend at Saint Mary's University. Students from the various language classes in the Metro district attended. Pádraig Ó Siadhail was one of the teachers for this course.

Over the last year several distinguished Irish figures have visited Nova Scotia as guests of the Chair. In August 1993, Méadhbh Ní Chonmhidhe-Piskorski, a consultant on educational programming with Radio Teilifís Éireann, the Irish public broadcasting network, met with representatives of production companies in the region to discuss joint television productions between Ireland and Canada. On March 16 1994, the celebrated Irish poet, Paul Muldoon, who is the director of the creative writing programme at Princeton University, read his work at Saint Mary's University.

Pádraig Ó Siadhail gave a presentation on Irish Studies in Canada to faculty and staff in the Irish Studies Graduate Programme at University College Galway

in February of this year. Cyril Byrne has visited University College Galway subsequently to discuss an exchange scheme between Halifax and Galway. Moreover, he travelled to Aberdeen to discuss a similar exchange. We are keen to establish such a venture in the near future to facilitate Saint Mary's University students who wish to undertake Irish/Celtic Studies abroad and Irish and British students who are keen to study in Canada.

In April 1994, Pádraig Ó Siadhail read a paper on Thomas D'Arcy McGee at the Benevolent Irish Society Irish Lecture Series in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

#### **Irish Studies' Student Activities**

Elizabeth Horne, who has been a fine student in the Irish Studies Programme, has been accepted as a Graduate Student

at Concordia University, Montréal. Beth's Master's thesis will be on Anglo-Irish drama.

Marnie Hay and Pauline Hingston, Intermediate Irish language students, will be travelling to Ireland this summer to attend Irish language courses in the Donegal Gaeltacht.

#### **Plans for the Future**

In July 1995 the Chair will be holding a major conference. Entitled "Nasc/Links 1995", the theme of the conference is the genealogical connections between Ireland and Atlantic Canada. Guest lecturers include Donal Begley, Chief Herald of Ireland, Brian Trainor, Director of the Ulster Historical Foundation, Julian Walton, Waterford Heritage Project, and Terrence Punch, the celebrated Nova Scotian genealogist.



*Simon Kouwenhoven and Cyril Kelly from the Bank of Montreal with Max Ferguson, CBC radio host, at the recent Irish Studies Fund Raising Dinner.*

## The Ferryland Riots of 1788

Gerald J. Barnable

In September 1788 Captain Edward Pellew, Governor Ellet's surrogate, assisted by justices Robert Carter and Henry Sweetland, his son-in-law, held court in Ferryland, Newfoundland, and convicted one hundred and eleven men of rioting the previous winter. Following is a list of those convicted:

William Coman	Walter Lundrigan
James Murphy	Pat McGrath
Patrick Galligar	John M'cDanial
William Morrissey	Edward Long
Michael Daddeen, (or Rahaley) transported	Edward Whalen
James Neil	Philip Fahey
John Martin	Richard Dillen
Thomas Brazil	Thomas Murphy (Salter)
Lawrence Quinn	John Kenaught
Thomas Burk	John Morrissey
Cornelious Shannahan	James Lawless
Matthew Morrison	Nicholas Murphy
James Cornisk	John Sills
Magne Larey	Moses Avoy
Robert Quinn	James Burk
Danial Dunnava—not found	Dennis Gorman, alias Meagher, transported
Richard Power	Francis Cummins
Matthew Cannon	John Barry
John Delahunty	Patrick Gaulton
Edward Farrol	William McDanial
James Burk	John Dunn
James Kelly	Dennis McCarthy
Stephen Quinn	John Cornick
Michael Power	John Drew
John Walsh (Grant)	Lawrence Fennelly
Edward Costley	James Bryan
John C. Murphy	John Dwyer
John Dellin	William FitzGerald

John Walsh  
Arthur Sheeche  
William Reddy  
John Dunphy  
William Gibbins  
John Shannahan  
James Foreham  
William Day  
Michael Cox  
Danial Giery  
Michael Lundrigan  
William Neil  
Terry Harrington  
Edward Huolahan  
James Whalen  
John Hogan  
Dennis Sullivan  
Thomas Kelly  
Edward Wallis  
John Moran  
John Walsh  
Thomas Howlan  
John Flevon  
Andrew Fewer  
Patrick F. Caulborn  
Walter Fewer  
James Power  
Simon FitzGerald  
John Bryan  
Michael Coughlin  
Thomas McMaunahan  
John Grace  
Thomas Quinn  
Thomas Culliton  
John Cane (Father)  
John Ronan, transported, 39 lashes  
John Rogan  
Martin Fogarty

James Sheeche  
Kearon Reddy, transported  
Philip Doolin  
Thomas Murphy  
Jack Forestal  
Andrew Jacob  
Nicholas Ryan  
Samual Butler  
Michael Mahar  
Jeffery Power  
Patrick Ward  
James Carney, 90 lashes  
William Fogarty  
Francis Doyle  
Michael McCarthy  
John Aid  
James Doolin

The following men were identified as being the ringleaders.

Martin Fogarty  
William Fogarty  
Philip Doolin  
Thomas Murphy  
James Sheeche  
Keran Reddy  
James Doolin  
Michael Burk  
James Burke  
John Ragoan  
Willian Bulger  
Stephen Harper

The court document described them as ... "the ringleaders and open abettors of the riots caused to the great and manifest

danger to the inhabitants of this place, and their property. And the said offenders, having absconded to avoid being brought to their trial in open contempt of the lawful authority, after they had been summoned to appear. We are of the opinion that the threats now made use of, towards the principal Inhabitants of this District, will, in the winter, be carried into execution if the same notorious offenders are permitted to return. We therefore decree the crimes with which they stand charged, have been fully proven. That all and each of them forfeit all the wages which may be due to them for their services in the fishery. That they are, all of them, banished from this District as vagabonds, and to receive, if they should be so dearing as to return, 39 lashes on their bare backs with a cat of nine tails. For those not on wages the product of the voyages is to be forfeited."

The record also noted that Dennis Gorman, Thomas Kerrivan, Lawrence Dwyer, and Michael Rahaley had already been transported for their part in the riots.

A further order, modifying the original decree that those who had fled away were to be whipped, was made at the end of September and Stephen Harper, Philip Doolin, and William Fogarty surrendered.

As already illustrated, some were

punished more severely than others. Another decree forbade anyone giving shelter to the escaped rioters. Nicholas Murphy must have done so, and also have been a man of some property. His land was sold to pay the amount of the fine imposed on him—20 pounds. Thomas Norris bought it.

William Coman was fined this same amount. During one episode he has taken the constable, William Cox, by the collars and dragged him to the door of the Vice-Admiralty judge, William Carter, as if to say "Take him, you're responsible for this state of affairs". The fines collected were placed in the hands of a Protestant committee so that they could build a court house and jail. A naval ship with marines remained stationed in Ferryland the following winter to insure that there wouldn't be a recurrence (Ref. PANL GN5/4/C1, Ferryland Court Records, 1786-1812).

The court records do not give the cause of these riots. Even the historians have been very circumspect. Pedley, for instance, mentions them and says they were "of a religious nature." This would mislead one to think it was a case of the Irish rising up against the English Protestant rulers. Not so. These riots were a spill-over of the feud going on at



the time between two priests, Father Patrick Power and Father James O'Donel (later, Bishop O'Donel).

O'Donel had come to Newfoundland in 1784, at the instigation of the Waterford merchants, the bishops of Waterford and Dublin, and the newly-emerging Irish gentry of St. John's, Newfoundland. His mission was simple. He was to take control, drive out the itinerant clerics who had operated secretly in the recent penal times, insure that no others came, and generally, to insure that the large number of poor and bitter Irish on the Island didn't do something disruptive and contrary to the economic interests of the Waterford merchant class, and their agents and factors in Newfoundland.

Shortly after he arrived, O'Donel confronted two of his predecessors and successfully banished them back to Ireland. Then he had to deal with Father Patrick Landrigan who had encouraged an assault on William Saunders, a Protestant merchant in Placentia, who had ran off with Dr. Michael Dutton's wife in Renew, and she a Protestant also. Fortunately for O'Donel, Landrigan was prone to alcohol and was found dead one morning on a bench beside the fire in a planter's house in Fogo.

But then Father Patrick Power walked

in on Father O'Donel, armed with a recommendation from one of the Irish prelates, eager to serve in the Newfoundland mission, and not given to a weakness for strong drink. He stayed with O'Donel for over two months, while O'Donel took his measure. Gradually, they sized each other up. O'Donel didn't have a vacancy anywhere for Power. He would give him a recommendation for Spain, but no closer. Power feigned to agree. Then, one day he took bag and baggage and fled to Ferryland where he had kinsfolk. Thomas Nash, a respectable old planter at Calvert, was his cousin. In Ferryland also were plenty from his county, Kilkenny. Power gave out the report that O'Donal's dislike was based on the fact that he was from Kilkenny, in the Irish province of Leinster, while O'Donel and the other two priests supporting him were from Waterford and the province of Munster. In addition, Power tended to gather the support of the poor, the dangerous people who were to be curbed by the likes of O'Donel. Curiously, Power also won the support of the Protestant ascendancy in Ferryland. Mrs. Peter Weston, Judge Carter's mother-in-law, gave him her favor. In his letters of complaint O'Donel claimed that the Protestants saw in Power a way of

frustrating the establishing of Roman Catholicism. They saw that Power would soon create enough trouble to get all priests barred from the Island. Nevertheless, O'Donel could only proceed cautiously, writing pleading letters to Power inviting his surrender, writing complaining letters back home to the bishops who backed him, asking them to exert political influence, writing to Rome. But Power could play that game too. His Latin was good and soon he was writing Rome. He got some of O'Donel's more intemperate letters to him and presented them to the English authorities, especially, his friends the Carters, who received them with delight, and proclaimed them in Court.

O'Donel didn't come up the Shore in the dead of winter to excommunicate Power as he had done with Landrigan. In Power he recognized a more formidable foe. Indeed, he used the excuse of distance and winter to explain why he delayed. At last he gained a powerful ally. Father Thomas Ewer, his third choice of an additional priest for the Newfoundland mission, arrived and was willing to go to Ferryland and confront Power. Ewer lacked the ability to speak Irish, he had few friends he could go to up there except William Coman, agent of a Scottish firm,

and merchant in his own right. But Ewer had an iron will, and a dominating way, and was Power's equal. He excommunicated Power and all who followed him. Power, in turn, excommunicated Ewer and all who followed him. Thus are all Ferryland parish people the descendants of excommunicated Catholics.

This was the situation leading to the rioting that broke out in the winter of 1787-1788, when no man or woman could go outdoors without an armed guard. In his letters to the Irish bishop, Troy, O'Donel blamed Power, claiming that he had resurrected the ancient faction fighting that traditionally plagued Ireland. However, not lacking in diplomacy, he refrained from blaming Power when he was forced to hurry to the Governor and attempt to counteract Captain Pellow's recommendation that both he and Power were equally to blame for the disorders, and should both be banished from Newfoundland. Rather, he subtly explained that faction fighting resulted from the frustration of a people being too long repressed, causing them to turn on each other. He presented himself as a force for order among the Irish, and must have been convincing for neither of the two was banished. Indeed, after the

riots, the balance of power gradually shifted to Ewer in Ferryland. Power had his own house and chapel. Ewer had his. Power came once more and berated Ewer from the body of the church while Mass was being said. In O'Donel's relating of this event, he said that Power hoped to get his followers to rise once more, but still smarting from the legal punishments inflicted on them the Fall before, they were reluctant to oblige.

Finally, after a four year fight, Power's force was spent. He took the 20 pounds that Ewer and O'Donel were still offering him and left for a parish in Ireland. Father Ewer became the undisputed priest in Ferryland. Mr. Thomas Nash thought it prudent to move to Branch, and the riots became history, a history conveniently forgotten for the sake of inter-denominational peace.

*For more details on Bishop O'Donel, see Cyril Byrne's **Gentlemen-Bishops and Faction Fighters: The Letters of Bishops O'Donel, Lambert, Scallan and Other Irish Missionaries.** (St. John's: Jesperson Press, 1984).*

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## Bail na gCúig nArán — Léann á roinnt ar a chéile.

Méadhbh Ní Chonmhidhe Piskorski

Thugas cuairt ar Ceanada an Fómhar seo caite mar ionadaí de chuid Radio Telefís Éireann, agus de chúram orm ar an gcéad dul síos blas éigin a fháil ar an deis a bheadh ann comhléiriú a eagrú idir lucht teilifíse Ceanada agus ár n-eagraíocht féin abhus in Éirinn.

Ní nach ionadh, bhí teagmháil le bheith agam le lucht teilifíse, rud a bhí, ach mheasas féin i ndeireadh na dála gur mó ar fad an toradh a bheadh ann dúinn go léir aithne a chur orthu siúd atá ag saothrú in ithir a bhfuil ár muintir scaipthe uirthi le cúpla céad blian anuas, is iad sin lucht saothraithe Léann na hÉireann.

Bhí an t-ádh liom gur tharla mé i Halifax, agus in Ollscoil Mhuire: Dheineas iontas den dul chun cinn atá déanta i dtéimhse ghearr ag Ollúnacht Léann na hÉireann, agus a rá go bhfuil cumas labhartha Gaeilge ag daoine nár sheas riamh ar fhód na hÉireann, go bhfuil mic léinn dá gcuid ag déanamh cúrsaí iarchéime in ollscoileanna in Éirinn taobh le mic léinn de chuid na hÉireann, agus go bhfuil taighde nach beag déanta ar ghnéithe de stair na n-Éireannach thall.

B'fhéidir gur deacair do mhuintir Ceanada a thuiscint cé go tábhachtach is atá an ceangal seo do mhuintir na hÉireann: Is tír bheag sinn gan thar cúig mhilliún duine ar an oileán idir theas is thuaidh. Tá ár bhféiniúlacht ag brath go mór — ar fad b'fhéidir — ar an teanga a

bheith beo bríomhar: d'fhéadfadh drochmhisneach sinn a bhascadh muna mbeadh i gceist ach ár nOileáinín beag bídeach féin.

Ach tá sliocht ár muintire fairsing ar fud an domhain — agus pé méid dá saoithiúlacht a chuireadar i ndearmad de dheasca na himirce, tugann Scoil Léinn mar Chathaoir *D'Arcy McGee* chun saibhris arís í. Agus neartaíonn ar an gcomhlúadar Éireannach, in Éirinn féin — pé brú atá á chur orthu ag saol lucht gaimbín arb é an Béarla a meán nádúrtha.

Don turasóir i gCeanada is é an rud is suntasaí ná an dátheangachas: tá an Fhraincis chomh maith leis an mBéarla le feiscint go forleathan — fógraí, lipéidí — agus le cloisint taobh amuigh de na ceantair a bhfuil an Fhraincis mar phríomhtheanga iontu. Tugann sé sin dath agus blas áirithe don saol — cuireann sé leis an spreagadh a gheibheann duine as an timpeallacht.

Dhéanfainn amach do mhuintir Ceanada féin gur oiliúint agus foinse saoithiúlachta ann féin é an dátheangachas mar go dtugann sé le fios — gan aon ghá le seanmóireacht — go bhfuil níos mó ná an t-aon bhealach amháin ann leis an saol a mheas. Is saibhre de Ceanada gur cuid thábhachtach de bhéascna na tíre é an t-íolchultúrachas.

Rith an smaoineamh sin liom mar gur bhraitheas go raibh na daoine a casadh

orm, thall is abhus, leathanaigeanta oscailte, daoine a chuir fáilte roimh thuairimí úra; níor ghá do dhuine bheith umhal mar nár chainteoir dúchais Béarla é (rud a bhí fíor in Éirinn i ré an choilínithe — ré nach bhfuil a port seinnte ar fad in Éirinn go fóill).

Pé scéal é, tá an obair agus an taighde atá ar siúl in Ollscoil Muire ag Cathaoir Léinn *D'Arcy McGee* fiorthábhachtach — ach mar a dúirt Raymond Williams, is cuid dhílis de chúrsaí an tsaoil — den bheatha — mar a dheinimid *trácht* air: ní mór cuid éigin den obair atá ar bun a chur i láthair go poiblí: ní hamháin i scríbhinn — *An Nasc* agus sna tréimhseacháin acadúla ach ar mheán cumarsáide ár linne .i. an Teilifís.

Agus mar sin tar éis an timpeall a ghabháil, táimid tagtha ar an teilifís arís. Ba mhaith an rud é dá mbeadh ceangal idir dhá chomhlucht léirithe — ceann thall agus ceann abhus — agus iad a chur ag obair as láimhaibh a chéile chun cuid den saibhreas atá tochailte cheana féin a chur i láthair. Tá láthair léirithe in ollscoil Naomh Uinsion i Halifax agus tá a mhacsamhail i gColáiste na hOllscoile i mBaile Átha Cliath. D'fhéadfaí an t-ábhar a chraoladh ar *Theilifís na Gaeilge* in Éirinn — rud atá fógartha inniú féin (24ú Samhain 1993) ag an Aire Ealaíon, Cumarsáide agus Gaeltachta, an Teachta Michael D. Higgins, i nDáil Éireann. D'fhéadfaí an t-ábhar céanna a chraoladh, cuirim i gcás, ar an *Multilingual Channel* i gCeanada. (Tugadh le tuiscint dom nuair a ghlaos ar a n-oifig i dToronto go mbeidís

sásta ceist chláir Ghaeilge do phobal Éireannach Cheanada a phlé).

Smaoinigh ar an bpobal mór a bheadh buíoch dinn thall — gan trácht ar an spreagadh a thabharfadh sé dúinn in Éirinn a shamhlú gur saol mór fairsing é saol na hÉireann agus na Gaeilge, más thar lear féin é. B'fhéidir go n-éireois as an gceann faoi a bhíonn orainn uaireanta i dtaobh na Gaeilge agus ár mórtas cine á chraobhscaoileadh gan náire.

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### IRISH STUDIES COURSES 1994-1995

**(IRS 201.1) An Introduction to Modern Irish  
(First Semester)**

Mon. & Wed. 2:30pm-3:45pm

Instructor: P. Ó Siadhail

*This course will introduce students to Modern Irish, with emphasis on the spoken and written forms.*

**(IRS 202.2) Modern Irish Language  
(Second Semester)**

Mon. & Wed. 2:30pm-3:45pm

Instructor: P. Ó Siadhail

*This course will develop the student's ability to speak, write and read Modern Irish.*

**(HIS 388.2)/(IRS 388.2) Early Celtic Britain: from  
Prehistory to the Twelfth Century.**

(Second Semester)

Mon., Wed. & Fri. 9:30-10:20am

Instructor: M. Vance

*Britain's Celtic past is shrouded in myth and legend. This course will provide students with the historian's and archaeologist's understanding of this same period by exploring the origin of the Celtic peoples in the British Isles and examining the impact of Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Viking and Norman invasions.*

**(IRS 401.1) Advanced Modern Irish  
(First Semester)**

Mon. & Wed. 5:30pm-6:45pm

Instructor: P. Ó Siadhail

*This course will deal with modern spoken and written Irish, with emphasis on acquiring a facility in spoken Irish.*

**(IRS 402.2) Advanced Modern Irish II  
(Second Semester)**

Mon. & Wed. 5:30pm-6:45pm

Instructor: P. Ó Siadhail

*This is an intensive course designed to develop further the student's ability to speak and write modern Irish.*

**(IRS 430.1) Irish Folklore  
(First Semester)**

Tues. & Thurs. 4:00pm-5:15pm

Instructor: P. Ó Siadhail

*A comprehensive study of folklore in Ireland. All aspects of folklore will be examined, with special emphasis on the storytelling, song, and folk drama traditions.*

**(Egl 441.1)/(IRS 441.1) The Irish Short Story  
(First Semester)**

Tues. & Thurs. 5:30pm-6:45pm

Instructor: C. Byrne

*This course will examine the short story as a major form in the fiction (in English) of Ireland, tracing its development from the Irish folktale to the sophisticated modern stories of internationally read practitioners such as Joyce, O'Connor, O'Faolain and Lavín.*

**(Egl 442.1)/(IRS 442.2) Irish Drama  
(Second Semester)**

Tues. & Thurs. 5:30pm-6:45pm

Instructor: C. Byrne

*Irish dramatists from Farquhar and Sheridan to Shaw, O'Casey and Beckett will be studied from the point of view both of their contribution to theatre in the English-speaking world and of their special Anglo-Irish or native Irish cultural background.*

**(IRS 450.2) Modern Gaelic Literature in  
Translation**

(Second Semester)

Tues. & Thurs. 4:00pm-5:15pm

Instructor: P. Ó Siadhail

*This course will cover works in translation by prominent 20th century writers in Irish. Emphasis will be placed on the plays of Douglas Hyde, the prose writings of Pádraic Ó Conaire, Máirtín Ó Cadhain, the Blasket Island writers and modern Gaelic poetry.*

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## The Irish and The Scots: A Shared Surname Heritage

Dónal Begley

Chief Herald of Ireland

*An edited text of address given at the Saint Andrew's Society Dinner in Edinburgh,  
November 1993*

I shall be taking as my starting point, that well known historical figure, Colum Cille, also known as Columba in Latin, who was born in Gartan in County Donegal in the province of Ulster in the year 521 A.D. Colum Cille, meaning 'dove of the church', is of course a sobriquet or nickname, because in the sixth century in Ireland that was a style of name calling. Had this man lived in the tenth or eleventh century he would certainly possess a hereditary surname, and would no doubt have been an O'Donnell or an O'Friel since he was of the royal house of Uí Néill and traced his ancestry through Conall Gulban of that house.

You will probably be aware from early Irish history that Colum Cille was chided for making a copy of a Gospel book (the Cathach) the property of a fellow saint, namely St. Finnian. A dispute arose as to the right to make such a copy, and in a subsequent judgement Colum Cille lost his case, and following the battle of Cúl Dreimhne in 563, the saint, as a penance,

was forced to leave Ireland and cross the seas to a bare island, subsequently known as Iona, where he died in the year 597. His lonely exile in Iona is evoked in a quatrain from early Irish literature, the text of which is as follows:

<i>Fil súil nglais</i>	There is a grey eye
<i>Fégbas Éire tara hais</i>	Which will look back on Ireland
<i>Nicon féceba iarmo-thá</i>	Never more will it see
<i>Firu Érann nach a mná</i>	The men of Ireland or its women

It is a matter of historical fact that Colum Cille brought with him to Iona the Christian message, the Gaelic language, the scribal tradition and the monastic instructions which were the hallmark of his *paruchia* in Ireland. This *paruchia* or sphere of ecclesiastical influence stretched from Tallaght in Dublin to the most northerly part of Ireland, and later on to the area we now call Scotland. This saint is commemorated in a number of hereditary patronymics and surnames on

both sides of the Sea of Moyle, for example MacColum, Malcolm, Malcomaon, and Columbane. In due course we shall be looking more closely at the composition of these surnames and the circumstances which gave rise to them.

It should not be supposed that Colum Cille, a member of a powerful dynastic family in Ireland, namely Uí Néill, could take up residence in a foreign territory without reference to the local political power. Again we know from our history his settling on this particular island was facilitated by Conall, king of British Dál Riada who granted him the island for sacred purposes. The kingdom of Dál Riada which initially covered the northern part of the present County Antrim was expanded in the sixth century overseas, as it were, to encompass Alba or Britain, by the Firth of Clyde in the south and on the east by Druim Alban which separated it from the Picts. Thus, institutional, political and social elements of Gaelic Ireland were introduced into what we now call Scotland. Gradually this influence spread to affect most of that country. This influence is reflected in language, culture, tradition, music, local political structures and, of course, surnames. The Gaelic founder of Scottish Dál Riada was Fergus Mac Ercae, a person

commemorated in the well known Scottish surnames Ferguson and its shortened variants Ferris and Farris found in Ulster. Incidentally, tradition has it that Colum Cille's ancestor was also called Fergus.

The twelfth century saw the development of the political entity known as the Lordship of the Isles, focusing our attention on two of Scotland's outstanding families, MacDonald and MacDugald. This was an essentially Gaelic régime which profoundly affected the course of political development in Scotland right up to the seventeenth century. Even after that Gaelic Scotland was still a force to be reckoned with right up to the Battle of Culloden in 1745. I should remark that Scotland derives its name from *scotus*, meaning 'an Irishman', the Irish in Alba being known as '*Scoti in Britannia*'.

The picture therefore that emerges is one of a great commonwealth of Gaelic peoples stretching from Kerry in the extreme south-west of Ireland to the islands and highlands of present day Scotland.

The fourteenth century saw a reversal of the trend of movement of peoples from Ireland to Scotland, a homecoming, as it were, when fighting men from Scotland were invited by the Irish kings to do some



of their fighting for them. These mercenaries or *gallóglai* as they were known in the Irish language, ludicrously translated 'gallowglasses', enjoyed names like MacCabe, MacSweeney, MacSheehy, MacSorley, MacDonald, MacNeill, MacAllen and many more such. The point I want to make here is that because of a shared language and cultural commonality the *gallóglai* readily fitted in to the Gaelic régime in Ireland. The descendants of the *gallóglai* are readily traceable through their surnames and even today are associated with specific areas in Ireland, for example the MacSweeneys are one of the most prominent families in north County Donegal, the MacCabe are numerous in County Cavan, the MacSheehys in County Limerick, the MacSorleys in County Tyrone and the MacDonalds, of course, in Antrim.

It will be obvious from what I have already said that one would expect to find a concordance in the manner in which surnames were formed in the two countries. While we believe that the origin and development of surnames in Scotland would have lagged behind similar developments in Ireland, the technique of surnames formation in the two countries was almost identical. Huge

numbers of family names in both countries are formed by prefixing, as you are no doubt aware, the Gaelic element *mac*, meaning 'son', to the name of an immediate antecedent.

I now cite a few examples of such surnames: Mackay means 'son of Aodh', MacDómhnaill means 'son of Dómhnall', MacLachlainn means 'son of Lachlann', Mac Giolla Eoin 'son of Giolla Eoin, MacThaidhg 'son of Tadhg', Mac Giolla Fhaoláin, son of Giolla Fhaoláin, and so on.

In addition to *mac* surnames of patronymic origin in both countries there is a variety of other surnames which relate to occupations, places, status, and so forth. Examples of such surnames are: MacNabb, 'son of the Abbot', MacTaggart, 'son of the priest', MacPhearsúin 'son of the parson', MacCrae 'son of the rath', MacLey 'son of the physician, MacKennon: Mac an Ionn, 'son of the well beloved', MacTier 'a wolf' and MacTuirc 'son of the boar'. The very characteristic formative element *Ua* or *Ó* which is such a feature of surnames in Ireland is altogether lacking in the Scottish system.

The pronunciation of Gaelic in Scotland has profound effects on surname variations found, for example, in County

Antrim. In Ireland *mac* was pronounced with a hard 'c' only, for example, Mac Donnchadha, Mac Daibhidh, Mac Diarmada and so forth. Note here that the 'D' sound is unaffected. However, in Scotland, *mac* meaning 'son' is pronounced 'mach—c' which tends to soften the initial subsequent letter of the patronymic. This combined with the fact that the vowel, for example, is open in the case of MacDómhnaill which leads understandably to MacConnell in its anglicised version. Thus MacDhómhnaill has become McConnell, a name people in County Antrim will be very familiar with. Thus the McConnells of Antrim are really MacDonalds.

### Picts

Gaelic was not the only linguistic influence which affected the composition, shape and development of Scottish family names. For the sake of being comprehensive I want to make a brief mention of another people who inhabited ancient Scotland. These were the Picts whose kingdom was united to that of the Scots under Kenneth Mac Ailpin in 844. It is therefore possible that some Pictish elements may be traceable in Scottish surnames but this is a highly refined area best left to Pictish scholars. In any case by

the time surnames came to be formed in Scotland it is generally agreed that the language of the Picts had virtually disappeared.

### Norse

When we come across in Ireland or in Scotland well known surnames such as MacDugald, MacLochlainn, MacSorley and so on we should be alerted to a further influence in the formation of both Irish and Scottish surnames. If we derive, say, MacDugald from its roots, it dissolves into *Dubh* (doo) meaning 'black' and *gall* meaning 'Viking'. Similarly with MacLochlainn, *Lochlannach* being the Gaelic word for an inhabitant of Scandinavia, in other words a Viking. MacSomhairle recalls an outstanding Viking name in Scotland namely Somerled, ruler of the Isles, who died in 1164. Incidentally, it was one of his grandsons, Domhnall, who was the ancestor of the MacDómhnaill of the Isles and Antrim. However, we have to be careful not to conclude that all bearers of such names are descended from Vikings. Viking personages in both Ireland and Scotland, when they wanted to adopt hereditary surnames, simply resorted to the Gaelic fashion of placing 'mac' before the name of an immediate forebear as, for

in Ireland MacRaghnaill (Reynolds), MacBruadair (Broderick) MacSitric and MacOitir (MacCotter), MacOlaf, and in Scotland MacLeod, MacSorley, MacKetterick, MacCorquadaile (Thor's kettle).

### Norman

An entirely new type of surname was introduced to Ireland and Scotland as a result of the Norman conquest of England in 1066 and the Norman invasion of Ireland a century later in 1169. Many of the prominent Norman families who settled in Britain and Ireland derive their names from ancient fiefs in various localities in northern France. The tell tale element in this type of name is the prefix *de*, for example, *de Laschi* whence the Norman-Irish name *de Lacy*, *de Coursai* whence the Irish and English *Courceys*. Such names for the Normans had a nobiliary connotation which carried through into the countries of their adoption. Whereas many of these Norman families came to Ireland from the Welsh area the Norman families who settled in Scotland came from England. When Malcolm Canmore (d. 1093), King of Scotland, married an Englishwoman, Margaret, English influence began to be formalised in Scotland. One result of this

was the settlement of English and Norman families in Scotland over the following century and a half. Examples of such families are very numerous and we would instance Ramsay, Sinclair, Montgomery, Comyn, Bruce, Drummond, Haig and Hannay, all names which would have originally have been preceded by the element *de*, for example *de Sainte Claire*, (*Sinclair*), *de Haga* giving rise to Haig and so on.

### English

A major influence on the formation of Scottish names is provided by the Anglo world south of the river Tweed. English influence in Scotland widened in the late Middle Ages because of the marriage alliances of Malcolm and his descendants, a number of whom had English wives. The lowlands of Scotland were settled by a mixture of families of Scots and English descent, for example, Ferguson, Kirkpatrick, Grierson, Carlisle, Johnston, Maxwell, Douglas, Hamilton and so on. We now move to the border country between England and Scotland, the notorious borderers, whom James VI of Scotland and I of England despaired of bringing under any sort of law. Many of these families were forced to move to Ulster in the early seventeenth century

along with their tenants and many modern Ulster names reflect this migration. In this connection we would instance Hume, Kerr, Rutherford, Hamilton, Graham, Irvine, Johnston, Stuart, Maitland, Armstrong, Nixon, Elliott, Riddle, Pringle, Edgar, Trotter, Nesbitt, Douglas and Dunbar. Needless to say many surnames from Donegal to Antrim reflect the fact that settlers in Ulster came from other parts of Scotland, including the lowlands.

### Major Categories

Surnames, whether Irish or Scottish, generally speaking fall into four categories:

- (1) those that derive from the names of people or mythological characters, in other words names that are patronymic in origin;
- (2) names which are toponymic, that is to say surnames which are grounded on the names of places;
- (3) next we have what we might call occupation surnames which relate to the trade, office or profession of an antecedent of the nametaker;
- (4) personal characteristics, usually attributed surnames, Short, Brown, White and so on.

All four classes are well represented in the commonage which we find in Ireland and Scotland. This is a handy guide to have at hand when we are faced with the task of deriving a surname from its roots. Surnames are, of course, the gateway to the study of our families and we should remember that those same surnames whether in Ireland or in Scotland have the capacity to link us with specific regions, for instance, O'Doherty of Inishowen, MacNeill of Barra, MacDonnell of the Glens in Antrim, Campbell of Argyle, O'Neill of the Fews, Walker of Derry, Young of Inishowen and one could go on. This capacity is especially so in the case of the great Gaelic families of both Ireland and Scotland.

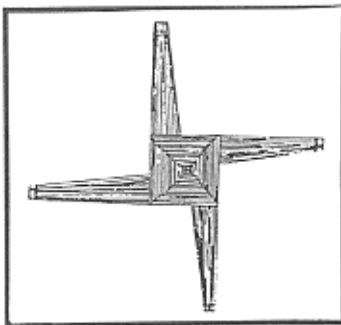
For those interested in a more refined distribution of surnames in Ireland, one can always turn to the county indexes for the 19th century based on the tithe and general valuations.

In the Irish and Scottish traditions the family name has never been looked on as a mere tag for the purposes of identification, because in both instances these surnames often embody a thousand years of civilization. They are an integral part of our heritage, the living witnesses of the fortunes and misfortunes of families in the past. In many ways there is a

strange parallel between the stories of Scotland and Ireland. Both, for example, have experienced unprecedented diaspora of peoples from their shores, so much so that there is scarcely any part of the world that does not now bespeak surnames that are at once characteristically Irish and Scottish.

I began by evoking the name of Saint Colum Cille and I will finish with Colum Cille. There is a tradition relating to his last hours in the monastery of Iona in the year 597, almost 1400 years ago, of two admonitions he made to his fellow monks. The first of these is recorded as *mutuam habeatic caritatem*—‘respect and love one another’ and the second of his admonitions might be rendered in the English language; ‘Here I lay down my pen, let Adamnán write the rest.’

I hope that some other Adamnán will take up where I have left off, because here too I propose to rest.



## Metro School of Irish Dancing Rose Marie Paul

Dancers from Scoil Rince na Mara, the Metro School of Irish Dancing, have begun the *feis* season a positive note. On May 20, thirty-one dancers travelled to two *feiseanna* in Montreal and Ottawa. Competing various categories, from beginner to preliminary championship, they returned to Halifax with a total of 250 individual and team awards. Notable individual performances were given by Stephen Cushing, the only male dancer travelling with the group, who placed first in each of his four solo events, and by Aisling Porter, who won the under 16 preliminary championship competition. One of the highlights for the group came when twelve of the dancers placed first for their figure choreography entitled “The Book of Kells”.

On June 11 and 12, five dancers competed at two *feiseanna* in the Boston area. Siobhán Martin, Deirdre Porter, Sinéad Greene, Marcy Clark and Aisling Porter came home with over 50 awards. Both Aisling and Sinéad placed in their preliminary championship competitions.

The dancers will have many performances over the summer months, including an appearance at the Irish Festival in Chatham, New Brunswick. Several of the dancers will also be travelling to *feiseanna* in Ontario and New York State.

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*Proceedings of the Second North American Congress of Celtic Studies*

Saint Mary's University, Halifax, August 1989

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(Published by the D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies, Saint Mary's University ISBN 0-9696252-0-0)

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