

The Origin of the Ancient Clan MacIntyre

The MacIntyre's are an ancient and Royally Blooded Clan of the Gael, being both Scots in the most ancient sense and also Milesian, another name for the same race that came out of Galatae in Spain and conquered Ireland in 400BC, at which time they took a third name for their race, The Gael. MacIntyre's are further numbered among the ancient Clans of Scotland as their origins easily predate 1300 AD and Robert The Bruce. As with most mac names, MacIntyre is indeed a Patronymic, taking name from their ancestor Muirdach, mac Nial, mac meic Airilt, whom the feudal English further nick-named Maurice while he dwelt for a time at the English Court. The name MacIntyre anciently translates from the Gaelic as "sons of The Shipwright", while centuries later, the translation has morphed into "sons of the wright". Muirdach was born a true Prince of Eirinn, into the great Royal Clan of the Ui Neill of Eirinn, more specifically into the main Royal line of the Cenal Eoghan, who are the direct descendants of one of the greatest Ard Righs to ever rule over Eirinn, the great Nial of The Nine Hostages, who founded the long lived Dynasty that honored and utilized his name. In turn, King Nial was himself directly descended from the Mighty Conn of The Hundred Battles, re-uniter of Eirinn and first Ard Righ over Ireland since the time of Eremon mac Milesius who conquered that Isle with the help of his brothers in 400 BC. This main branch of the Cenal Eoghan were also among the first to use a surname, in this case O'Neill, which translates from Gaelic "descendants of Nial".

Muirdach was born in Eirinn in the year 1095 AD and shortly thereafter was fostered to Godred Croven, King of the Kingdom of Mann, in order to seal a war pact between the Northern Ui Neill and that Kingdom. This being the same Godred, who took Mann from the hands of the Danes and who's father was Airilt, King of Dublin, Waterford, Wexford, and the Northern Hebrides. Unfortunately, Godred died of the plague within that same year upon Islay and thereafter Muirdach was raised a Prince of Mann alongside Godred's younger son Olaf, by Lagman, who as Godred's firstborn, succeeded his father as King of that Kingdom. Sadly, Lagman himself died soon thereafter while upon pilgrimage to Rome, at which time the High King of the Norse, Magness Barelegs, appointed his man Ingemund to be his temporary governor over that Kingdom until such time that young Olaf came to be of the age of Kings. However, Ingemund proved to be such a heavy handed governor that the Gael of The Isles soon rose up and slew him upon Lewis, which in turn caused the great sacking of the Hebrides by King Magness in 1098. This being the same expedition that deposed Gillebride, the father of Somerled The Mighty, of his Kingship of the Kingdom of Argyll and The Isles.

Shortly after the Death of Lagman and Ingmund, and following the great sacking of the Isles by King Magness in 1098, Donal Mac Tagd arrived from the South of Eirinn with a sizeable raiding party and over-ran Mann, at which time Prince Muirdach and Prince Olaf barely escaped with their lives, fleeing then to the relative safety of the English Court. The two young Princes stayed thereafter with the English King until the year 1114 during which Mac Tagd was forced to return to Southern Eirinn to defend himself against the Men of Connaught. Mac Tagd was killed in battle with the

Connaughta the following year, 1115, at which time the two Princes raised an Army and returned to Mann to claim the Manx Kingship for Olaf. The next several years were then spent reconsolidating and reconstituting his grandfather Godred's Kingdom, until such time that peace, stability, and prosperity, once again returned to the Kingdom of Mann. This relative peace lasted until the year 1139 when Viking Danes over ran Skye, Uist, Sleat, and several other of Olaf's Northern Isles while at the same time several local Chieftains seized the opportunity to split from Olaf's dominion.

At that time King Olaf counseled with his foster brother prince Muirdach and decided to mount an expedition to re-take the Northern Isles from the Danes, along with any others found to be in rebellion to Mann. And with this goal in mind, Olaf then sailed his fleet North through the Hebrides in order to reclaim those Isles. Prior to sailing, Muirdach advised Olaf to seek to enlist the assistance of his Uncle, Somerled, King of Argyll and the Southern Isles in the expedition, and to this end they sailed through his Kingdom and indeed these two Kings soon met. At that time, the two negotiated a split of the spoils of the raid in return for Somerled's assistance and men at arms, while limiting Somerled's potential claims to sword-land, although King Somerled aspired to greater heights and tried to engage Olaf's daughter Ragnhilda in marriage, which Olaf refused. However, while spending the night in the company of his Uncle, Muirdach hatched a bold plan to win Somerled Ragnhilda's hand in marriage, which involved holing his foster brother's great 40 bench skuta, and then filling said holes with wax plugs, which were sure to be short-lived in the open sea. And upon sailing the next day, if all of this went according to plan, once the fleet rounded the point of Ardnamurchan King Somerled would be able to renegotiate for Ragnhilda's hand in marriage with great leverage. Muirdach's bold plan indeed worked exactly as intended and Olaf and his 40 bench Skuta were only saved from a cold watery death after he gave his good oath granting his daughter Ragnhilda in marriage to Somerled.

Following a successful re-taking of the Northern Isles, the taking of spoils, and the winning of sword-land by Prince Muirdach upon Sleat, Olaf indeed made good upon his promise to give his daughter in marriage to King Somerled, and the same occurred in The Year of The Lord 1140. Thereafter, Muirdach came to be widely and popularly known by his nickname from his bold deed, as "The Shipwright", while Somerled's marriage to Olaf's daughter led to the birth of four sons and his later inheritance of many additional Isles. Now of the four sons sprung from that marriage, the eldest, Olaf, died while yet a youth, leaving in birth order, Ranold, Dugald, and Angus, from whom in turn are sprung the great Clan Donald and all its branches along with The Lordship of The Isles, and the Clan MacDougall, while Angus and all his sons were sadly killed in battle fighting Viking Danes.

As a further result of Muirdach's bold plan and great feat, Somerled pronounced his nephew a Prince of the Kingdom of Argyll and the Isles, and at the same time indeed granted him any lands of his choosing within that Kingdom. Muirdach then decided to use the ancient method of following his white coo roundabout Argyll in order not to appear overly greedy to his Uncle and the other Chieftains of the Kingdom. Know, that his white coo laid down and took its rest in the Glen known as Glennoe, upon Loch Etive,

just beyond the Brander Pass, under the watchful gaze of Cruachan Ben, at the place now long known among the Gael as Larach na ba Baine, which translates from the Gaelic as, "the site of the white cow". Know further, when Somerled made his grant of land in perpetuity unto Muirdach, that he also gave his nephew all the lands that lie Southerly of the Brander Pass and roundabout Loch Etive, whose waters drained to that Loch, along with all the lands roundabout Cruachan Ben who's waters drained from that great mountain.

Following Somerled's grants and pronouncements Muirdach was thereafter also known among the Gael as, "The Prince of Three Kingdoms", while again being popularly called by his nickname "The Shipwright". Know, both of these namings were indeed true and correct, for Muirdach was; born a True Prince of Eirinn into the Royal line of the Cenal Eoghan, came to be a Prince of Mann by way of fostering to Godred Croven, while by Somerled's pronouncement he came to be a Prince of The Kingdom of Argyll and The Isles. Know further that the latter is also true by way of Blood in the female line for Muirdach's Mother was Somerled's older sister. And, Prince Muirdach's descendants thereafter came to be known as MacIntyre's, or sons of The Shipwright, and they thrived and prospered upon their lands while raising their white cattle until they were the most numerous Clan in Argyll, capable of raising 2,400 fighting men of the Gael. Know that this indeed was true until after 1440 and the time of the coming of the Campbells to the Highlands, which in turn prompted "the Great Flitting of Lorn". And as a result of this sorry event, half of Argyll's population chose then to leave the Highlands rather than be subjected to feudalism. Even with this sad development, the Sons of The Shipwright, or MacIntyres, continued to hold their ancestral lands and raise their white coos until such time that the Campbell's were able to utilize the legal powers granted them by the now long feudal and non-Gael, Scots Crown, to force them, and indeed a huge number of the ancient Clans of the Western Highlands, to forfeit their lands. Understand, the MacIntyre Chiefs continuously made their home at Glennoe, near unto larach na ba baine, until the last Scottish born MacIntyre Chief left Glennoe for America in 1783.

The Seannachie
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