

CLANN Ó NUALLÁIN

No. 2 NEWSLETTER

(RN: remastered version – March 2005)



November 1996

THE NOLAN CLAN GATHERING (9th August 1996)

'Nolan is the predominant family name in Co. Carlow and in the general South Leinster region', as we read in "The Nationalist" early in the year, but this is something we already knew. Just come to Carlow and see for yourself. "The Nationalist" also expressed the hopes of 'a small group of people that Nolans from all over Ireland and from abroad, bonded by sharing the same surname, will attend the weekend celebrations.'

This was a mighty dream, however daunting the task. When personal tragedy and realisation of their limitations hit this small but slowly growing group, a revised schedule was agreed upon. The first Nolan Clan Gathering and AGM was organised to take place at Rathcroogue House, Carlow on Friday night the 9th August 1996. The commitment, enthusiasm and festive atmosphere was apparent. It was indeed a 'celebration'. Up to thirty people attended, and having partaken of refreshments in the lounge, proceeded upstairs to where the AGM was chaired by Mr Jim Cavanaugh. Jim was the chief of the Clan Chaomhanach and chairman of the Clans of Ireland Ltd. Indeed the Cavanaugh Clan has been a great support to the Nolan Clan committee.

The clan historian Bridget K. Dalton was also a guest at our gathering and she took the opportunity to invite, on behalf of the Cavanaugh Clan, our chief to Ferns in September to inaugurate the chief of the Cavanaughs (more of this to follow).

Our clan's first Honorary Membership was granted to Martin Nevin, chairman of the Old Carlow Society. This honour was granted by the executive committee in appreciation for significant services by Martin to the clan.

Great pleasure was also taken by our chief in presenting Anne Nolan with a Distinguished Member Certificate in appreciation of the recognition and honour brought to the Nolan Clan for her achievements in her professional life. Anne was the Carlow Person of the Year. (More on both of these fine clan members in next issue).

Tom Nolan was elected Clan Chief and retained his position as chairman. Sean Nolan, Ardattin was made Tánaiste and will be inaugurated as chief in 1997. A full committee was elected, which is working very well.

Jim Cavanaugh announced he was hungry, closed the meeting and so we set off to enjoy the wonderful meal, and the wine was good too. After the meal the gathering was addressed by Professor Kenneth Nichols who is Professor of History at UCC and an expert on Irish Clans. Many of us had the pleasure of hearing him before when he was the Clans' guest speaker at

Rathcrogue last year. The gathering was entertained by our own Jim Nolan, Myshall, who treated us to some of his best loved recitations.

Members travelled from Dublin, Limerick and the U.K. to join local clans folk in Carlow. A special welcome was extended to Judith Nolan who made the trip especially from Bristol, to join family and friends at the first Nolan Clan Gathering. That was August. Since then the clan has organised a most successful meeting in Templepeter (more about that in next issue). Our members have increased threefold. Those dreams of a few a year ago are now the aspirations of a greater few. A date has been set --the 8th, 9th and 10th August 1997 .

Together we can make it happen --- The Nolan Clan Gathering '97.

Martin Nevin
A penny for them!



*Judith Nolan (R) Bristol
with her Limerick relation*

THE NOLAN CLAN WISHES TO THANK
ALL THEIR SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS.

OUR NEW CHIEF

It is with great pleasure that we introduce the Chief of Clann O'Nuallain, Tom Nolan, Slyguff, Muine Bheag, Co. Carlow.

At our Clan gathering in Rathcrogue in August, we elected Tom as Chief of our Clan for the next year. Tom is also our Committee Chairman and has indeed been so since 1995. As a founding member of the Nolan Clan, Tom is the heart and soul of the Clan Executive Committee. Leading us in the establishment of the Clan, Tom is deeply committed to the Clan's development.

Tom Nolan was raised at Slyguff Lock during the 30's. His family originated in Kellistown, Co. Carlow, were evicted from there and then moved to Bagenalstown. They moved to Clashganny near Borris, where they settled as Lock Keepers. His grandfather moved to Slyguff Lock where two generations of Nolans were raised.

Following the family tradition Tom became a Lock Keeper and remained so for 21 years. He spent most of these years at Fenniscourt Lock, a mile and a half from Bagenalstown. However, his first love was woodwork and as was said at the time, Tom left the river to paddle his own canoe. He established a small wood work business at Slyguff where he has continued to work for the past 12 years.

A devoted family man Tom enjoyed the great support of his wife Kathleen, until her sudden and tragic death earlier this year. True to his nature Tom carried on in close harmony with his son Jim and daughter, Aileen. Obviously a source of great pleasure to Tom is the keen interest Aileen now takes in the Clan and both his childrens' natural musical talents. Tom also has a strong love for traditional music which was also a family tradition. He has been a prominent member of Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann for thirty five years playing both fiddle and button accordion.

Tom has been a long time member of the Green Party and activist in environmental issues for many years. Tom has been interested in his Ancestral history and genealogy for quite some time. Tom finally got involved with a group of other Nolans.

In 1995 Clann O' Nuallain was founded. Tom has been chairman ever since and the Clan has gone from strength to strength.



Our Chief as seen at our 'Gathering 1996' chatting to another Clan member, Miriam Nolan from Limerick, now living in Naas.



THE NOLANS AND THE KAVANAGHS
COME TOGETHER AGAIN AT THE END OF
THE TWENTIETH CENTURY



Inauguration of the Chief of the Kavanagh Clan

The Kavanagh Clan, in its modern form, has three principal objectives. The first is educational developed through history and genealogy, the second is memorial where we remember and re-enact rituals and events of special significance to our foreparents, and the third is social, where we make all our people welcome with entertainment and hospitality at our clan gatherings.

The inauguration Ceremony is a modern adaptation of an ancient and sacred ritual reflecting a very special relationship between the ruler, his people, his territory and his god or gods. Responsibility and accountability, good stewardship were important requirements in a ruler.

At each Clan gathering the Kavanaghs elect a Tanaiste, or Chief in waiting, who is then inaugurated as Chief of the Clan at the following Gathering two years later. This reflects the notion of being chosen and then being groomed for leadership in a complex society where strength of character a deep understanding of one's role, along with establishing one's own power base were all essential for success.

The ceremony itself is held on a sacred site, for the Kavanaghs the Hill of Knockavocca, a small low hill just outside Ferns. For ease of access we choose the ruins of the ancient cathedral of Ferns where the dignitaries of the Clan assemble; O'Doran, the Brehon or chief judge and lawgiver of the Kavanaghs, the O hEocaidh (Kehoe) the file or keeper of the Clan's history who recites the genealogy and ancient history of the clan and its leaders, and other important social and military personages.

The inaugurator of the Kavanagh Chief is the Chief of the O'Nolan Clan. Thus it was that we were honoured to have the Chief of Clan Ua Nuallain, Thomas Nolan with us on September 15th to pass the hazel wand of wise leadership from the outgoing to the incoming Chief of the Clan, Daniel J. Kavanagh of Yelm in Washington State.

While it is not known how far back this arrangement between the Nolans and the Kavanaghs goes it was a well established precedent during the 15th and 16th centuries up until the Gaelic system of leadership came to an end.

It is not all that surprising that it is the O'Nolan who should have such a pivotal role in the Kavanagh inauguration ceremony. The O'Nolans are aware of their rather unique history as one of the very old clans of Ireland, being traced through folklore back to the time of the mystical Tuatha de Danaan, bearers of special powers, special insights into the secrets of wisdom. Who would be more fitting to present to the Chief of the Kavanaghs, the hazel wand, ancient symbol of wisdom, key to deeper understanding, than the chief of the O'Nolans. W.B. Yeats, in his poem, "The Song of Wandering Aengus" explores the mysticism of the hazel, the entry to an

ancient and precious wisdom, such as that conferred on Fionn mac Cumhaill, who ate of the salmon of knowledge which had fed on nuts from the hazel overhanging the river.

On more practical level it points to a long and useful alliance between both neighbouring clans in face of the increasing pressure from the Normans, the Tudors and the Cromwellians throughout our history.

It is specially significant that the two clans, the Kavanaghs and the O'Nolans should once again come together at the end of the 20th century to celebrate all that is best in their past and combine their resources to develop an interest in the heritage and history of our own people both here in Ireland and scattered throughout the world.

Bridget Kavanagh Dalton Clan Recording Historian

OUR CHIEF TAKES HIS PLACE IN HISTORY

....Let him take you to Ferns through his own words .. On September 15th 1996 the inauguration of a New Chief of the Kavanagh Clan took place in Ferns Co. Wexford.

I was invited to represent the Q'Nolan Clan. When I arrived there, the ancient town was bathed in sunshine and remained so for the rest of the afternoon.

The ceremony took place within the walls of the old church. It was carried out with great dignity and I felt very honoured to be involved. It was my job to hand the wand, the seal and the cup to the new Chief, Daniel J Kavanagh of Yelm Washington State.



When all was completed the entire group marched up the long street to the old Castle where a pageant took place. Two groups took part, one representing the Tuatha The Danaan and the other the Milesians. After this there was a mock battle which was very effective.

When this was over I reluctantly took my leave of Ferns. I have very good memories of the whole thing and look forward to the time when we can to a proper Inauguration of an Q'Nolan Chief

Tom Nolan

Clan Chief/chairman of Executive Committee.



M. J. Nolan T.D.

*extends a warm welcome
to Tony and Alice (Dublin)*



*'Two ladies
with a lot to say'
Bridget K. Dalton (L)
& Anne Nolan (R)*

**The Nolan Clan Gathering
(9th August 1996)**

*Who told the Joke?
Jim Nolan Myshall (L) and
Enda Nolan P.R.O. Nolan Clan*



SEAN OG TAKES US THROUGH THE AGES

The exact origin of the O'Nolan clan is lost forever to the Contemporary Historian. The reason for this is that the Clan predates written documentation. Examination of the clan's homeland shows evidence of Habitation as far back as 7,000 years ago. However, it would be taking liberties to assume that our clan goes back that far, but it can be said with certainty that it predates the arrival of the celts in about 350 BC.

The formation of a clan in Bronze Age Ireland was vital for survival. The economy was totally rural and towns were non-existent. It was a very hostile environment with wild animals and outlaws a major threat to individual families. This danger in everyday life must have been the main factor in the formation of clans. They also had the mammoth task of land clearance as Ireland was almost completely afforested.

Clan membership comprised of many separate families in a particular area not necessarily blood relatives. The size of a clan often increased quite suddenly by the merging with an adjoining small clan or due to a take-over. A clan's numbers would also be swollen by the taking of slaves. The only law was the words of clan elders and remained so until the arrival of the Celts, who seemed to have merged quite peacefully with the inhabitants of the Carlow area at any rate.

The Clan O Nuallain seems to have been quite a powerful clan. Evidence of this is held in several factors. One of course, being the number of people carrying the name today. (It is one of the top 30 names in Ireland). Another being the quality and extent of the clan's Homeland which they managed to hold until the middle ages.

References in authoritative works of some early Historians.

There is little else that can be said with certainty about the clan's existence before the arrival of Celts. Thankfully, the Celts not only brought their chariots, ploughs of iron, but gave us a vivid history filled with colourful characters and events. More about the Celts next Issue.

Sean Og Nolan

Clan Genealogist

ENGLISH SOURCES

After 1850 nearly half of all Irish emigrants found jobs and homes in England. Hardly surprising then, that I found James, John and Peter Nolan in the 1851 Census Index for North West Kent, Woolwich Parish. The London Docks attracted many Irish migrant workers.

An excellent guide for anyone tracing ancestors in the U.K. is 'Basic Sources for Family History' by Andrew Todd. Available from:
Society of Genealogists, 14 Charterhouse Blds., Goswell Rd., London E.C.1M 7BA

The society maintains a bookshop. It publishes and sells a wide variety of books of interest to Genealogists. Many are available by post and a list may be had on request.

SHARING

If any member would like to recommend publications or sources of information please do so. And remember our Newsletter is a forum for sharing our Heritage, information and our common interests.

Established in 1936, the IRISH GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY maintains a unique library in central London, containing books and other material relating to Irish genealogy. Enquiries welcome.

For two and a half centuries Irish people have distinguished themselves throughout the world in politics, religion, business, the arts and science and the following is an account of a Nolan who did just that. Source: (not given)

Michael Nolan was born in Ireland and was admitted an attorney of the Court of Exchequer about 1787. He was called to the English bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1792. He was a legal author. In 1793 he published 'Reports of Cases relative to the Duty and Office of a Justice of Peace from 1791 to 1793.

He practised as a special pleader on the home circuit and at the Surrey sessions, gained great experience of the details of the poor law. In 1805 he wrote 'A Treatise of the Laws for the Relief and Settlement of the Poor'.

As member for Barnstaple in the parliament of 1820-6 he introduced the Poor Law Reform Bills of 1822-3-4. He retired from parliament in March 1824 on being appointed Justice of the counties Brecon, Glamorgan, and Radnor. He died in 1827.

Besides the work on the poor laws Nolan published 'A Syllabus of Lectures intended to be delivered in Pursuance of an Order of the Hon. Soc. of Lincoln's Inn in their Hall, 'London 1796' and a 'Speech ... delivered in the House of Commons, Wed. July 10, 1822 on moving for leave to bring in a Bill to alter and amend the Laws for the Relief of the Poor.'

YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW

A little over a hundred years ago it was estimated that during a ten-hour day a man could reap at the following rates.

Wheat:	2.3 acres with a scythe
	1.1 acres with a hook
	1.0 acre with a sickle

Barley and Oats:	4.0 acres with a scythe
	2.2 acres with a hook
	2.0 acres with a sickle

(Br. Acres)

POORHOUSES, POOR LAW ETC.

The Poor Law Act of 1838 divided Ireland into 159 districts called poor law unions. In each of these unions a workhouse was established to house the poor. A board of guardians was then elected to administer poor law relief in each union.

Records of the poor in Ireland are found in board of guardian minutes, in workhouse registers and in the British Parliamentary Papers (unpublished), workhouse registers and board minutes may include names, dates of admission, places of birth or residence, ages, occupations and details of conditions in the workhouse.

The repositories of poor law records in Ireland are identified in the following book as mentioned by the Family History Society. 'Research Outline...Ireland'.

Nolan, William. 'Tracing the Past: Sources for Local Studies in the Republic of Ireland. Dublin. Geography Publications, 1982.

RECOMMENDED READING

(Family History News and Digest. New Titles & Editions Apr '96)

'Clans and Families of Ireland' by John Grenham with foreword by Donal Begley, Chief Herald of Ireland. This book provides a fascinating account of the origins of the Irish people from prehistoric times down to the present, with particular emphasis on placenames and surnames. It tells of the effects of invasion, war, famine and emigration, and how these have influenced the make-up of Ireland and the Irish. 188 pages. Price £12.99.

'Tracing Your Irish Ancestors' by John Grenham

Here is the most comprehensive and authoritative guide for people who wish to trace their ancestors in Ireland.

FOR FURTHER READING

Recommended by Clan Member:

'Tracing your Roots as an Amateur Researcher'

by Chris Ryan, of the Ballinteer branch, Irish Family History Society (Dublin)

BOOKS ABOUT OR RELATING TO CARLOW AND/OR THE NOLANS

1. 'Carlow in Old Picture Postcards' MI Purcell
2. 'Come Capture Castles in County Carlow' Victor Hadden
3. 'Heirs to a Heritage' Parts I & 2 Willie White
4. 'They First Arose' William Nolan

In one man's tribute, 'to those who "first arose" to write a protest in their blood against the galling and savage oppression under which they suffered during the Penal Days: we read of a 'childhood and early youth' spent 'on the eastern side of the hill of Ballon, which arises in sudden yet gentle lines from the plain in the middle of Carlow County, near the northern extremity of the Barony of Forth' and we read how 'from our restricted vantage point on our native hillside, we regarded with the fresh interest of youth the rolling farmlands that stretched verdantly away in every direction. It was a beautiful country as I remembered it, gently undulating for many miles on every side, until the Queen's County hills, where the collieries lay, arose behind Carlow town to the north, and the sheer grandeur of the Wicklow ranges split the skyline beyond Tullow to the east, and the western plain gave way to the broken terrain between Nurney village and the Leighlin hills where they bordered Kilkenny, and, nearest of all, to the southern or Wexford side, the foothills of the mighty Blackstairs climbed one over the other to the towering peak of Mount Leinster.'

(From: 'They First Arose' William Nolan)

THIS IS NOLAN COUNTRY.

CLANN O NUALLAIN



OFFICERS

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TOM NOLAN

CLAN CHIEF AND CHAIRMAN OF CLAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A job going for begging.. anyone who wishes to investigate the following information please do so, (let us know).

NOLANSVILLE: Former name of Navasota.

NAVASOTA: City in E Texas, in Grimes County, NW of Houston, cotton gins and cottonseed-oil mills. It was established in 1858. It is believed that the explorer La Salle was killed in the area, (1687). From New Century Encyclopedia of Names.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The Clan membership continues to grow as more Nolans are aware that their Clan is again organised. We welcome the following new members.



ENGLAND:

- *Judith Nolan, Bristol (Organiser)
- *William Nolan; "Ned Kellys', London.

IRELAND :

- *Miriam Nolan,Naas, Co.Kildare.
- *Alice Nolan Brady, Sandymount, Dublin.
- *Anne Nolan, Carlow/Dublin.
- *Eileen Nolan Kirby, Cappamore, Co. Limerick
- *Olive Nolan O'Sullivan, Foynes, Co. Limerick

- *Ms.Tony Nolan Dublin 6
- *Sean Nolan, 'Acorn Books', Dublin 30
- *Eileen Dalton, Corries, Co.Carlow.
- *Desmond, Eileen and Des Nolan, Clane, Co.Kildare.
- *Sean Nolan, Brownshill, Co.

*** Currently cur female members out-number our male members ***

SO PROUD OF THE NEXT GENERATION OF NOLANS

** Currently our youngest Clan Member is Jack Nolan, Park, Carlow. Jack is four. Congratulations! **

*** The youngest girl spot is held jointly by two seven-year olds who share the same birthday ... 5th June Congratulations to Bernie Nolan, BaIlon, Carlow, and Mary-Grace; Nolan Sturley, London.

JUST A THOUGHT

'They who derive their worth from their ancestors resemble potatoes, the most valuable parts of which are underground.'(Remark made by Lord Bacon)