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Nolan Clan
Clann Ó Nualláin

*includes the families of O'Nolan, Nolan, Nowlan, Nowlin,
Nolin, Nowland, Noland, Knowlan, Knowland,
and any other variant.*





The Late Des Nolan Our Former Chief

Des was born in Burrin St. Carlow in 1922. He attended the local Christian Brothers School and from there went to Rockwell College, Co. Tipperary for his second level education. Among his greatest interests in those formative years were history and the Irish language, both of which were to remain central parts of his life. He loved every opportunity to speak in Irish and whenever taking part in ceremonies and formal occasions, he always slipped a little Gaelic in at some point.

On leaving school Des opted for a career in the Irish Army, a career that was to span 38 years and see him rise through the ranks to Regimental Sergeant Major (R.S.M.). His service in the Army saw him posted on U.N. Service to the Congo in 1960 and to Cyprus in 1964, 1965, 1966, 1969 and 1971. He always spoke of his years in the army with pride and fondness having built life-long friendships with those who had served alongside him both at home and abroad.

On his retirement from the Army in 1978 Des did not sit back and take life easy; he became involved in many projects in his 20 years of retired life. He gave generously of his time and talents to the Carlow branch of O.N.E. (Organisation National Ex-Serviceman) and in recent years to the Ó Nualláin Clan. He had a fantastic knowledge of local history, which could be witnessed in the large collection of newspaper articles and old photographs of Carlow that he had collected over the years. His wish to have local history available for future generations came to fruition in a number of articles he wrote for Carloviana, in particular a Register of Carlovians who served in the Defence Forces from 1922-1984 which he compiled in 1997.

In the last 2 years of his life Des worked tirelessly on his book entitled "The Cavalry Corps Compendium" and it was a source of great pride to him to see it published by the Defence Forces Printing Press.

His great moment in 1998 was surely his inauguration as Clan Chief of the O Nuallain at Leighlinbridge, last July. He had great plans for Clan celebrations to mark the next millennium and was looking forward to the publication of the complete history of the Nolan Clan. Sadly his death on December 11th 1998 has left a void in the Carlow Clan but his work will ensure that the clan history will be there for future generations of Nolans.

In words of his beloved Irish Language

O Bhas go críoch

ni críoch ach ath-fhas

I bParathas na nGras, go rabhaimid

Suaimhneas siorai da anam uasal

(from death to end)

(not an end but re-birth)

(in God's Kingdom that we may be)

(Eternal rest to his noble soul)

Majella Ni Riain

Nolan Clan History

Art Kavanagh, noted historian and Author is almost finished writing a book on the history of the Nolans. Due to his successful publication of his book on the history of the Kavanagh Clan he has been given a suitcase full of historical data relating to the Nolan Clan so he can compile a similar book on our history.

This suitcase of historical data is dating back to the 1920's and almost certainly contains some reference to our ancestors. In 1920 Fr. James Nolan began writing the history but he died before he could complete the work. His collection of documents was then passed to a relative of his, a Professor Nolan. He too added some bits and pieces to the overall body of the work before his death. The suitcase was then given to a local Carlow Historian, Fr. Swayne who wrote 'Carlow' in 1798. He added additional material to the collection and subsequently died. The suitcase then found its way back to a descendant of Professor Nolan who contacted Art Kavanagh with a view to writing the definitive work on the Nolan using the compiled material. Art has the book almost completed and it will be launched at the Clan gathering next year.

Art is a retired school teacher and he has written five books on history matters pertaining to the South East.

The following story about Philip Nolan, is an extract from a talk given by Art Kavanagh on Famous Nolans, at the last Clan Gathering

Philip Nolan - Nolan Co. in Texas

Philip Nolan was born in 1771 in Belfast, the son of Peter Nolan and Elizabeth Cassidy. According to the article written about him in the New Texas Handbook he received a good education. He was described as a "mustanger and filibuster"

He seems to have gone to America in 1787 and obtained a post as bookkeeper and shipping clerk with General James Wilkinson of Kentucky the following year. According to the same authority he managed Wilkinson's business affairs in New Orleans from 1788 until 1791.

At that time, Texas, which was very close geographically to New Orleans, was controlled by the Spanish. Philip soon realised the vast potential for trade with Indians of that region. Between 1791 and 1801 he made four expeditions into Texas from neighbouring Spanish Louisiana. These forays into unknown territory were regarded by early historians as filibusters - I suppose a filibuster might be described as a primary expansionist move - and Gen. Wilkinson is supposed to have been the man behind these early forays into Texas which led eventually to the absorption of that state into the Union. Philip might be described as an undercover agent.

His first expedition was the stuff of a real adventure. Wilkinson got him a trading permit from the Governor of Louisiana, Esteban Rodriguez Miro. However when he arrived in the state with his wagons his goods were confiscated and Nolan disappeared for two years. It seems he went to live with the Indians and began mapping the territory. He resurfaced again after the two years and arrived back in New Orleans with 50 mustangs. He was greeted by the new Governor of Louisiana, Louis Hector, Baron of Carondelet in person, as "risen from the dead".

The next year again in 1794 Philip was back in Texas with a permit from the Baron to obtain horses for the Louisiana militia. By 1795 he had returned to Louisiana with 250 horses. As on the previous trip, he spent a lot of time surveying the areas he visited and aroused the suspicions of the Spanish authorities. These suspicions were further aroused when he went on a mapping expedition up the Missouri river with Andrew Ellicott, a boundary commissioner for the U.S. By 1797 he seems to have won over the governor again and got another permit to find horses for the Louisiana militia. This time he took with him many wagon loads of trade goods, even though trade between Louisiana and Texas was strictly forbidden. During the course of this he seems to have tried to stir up the Indians against Spanish rule and so incurred the displeasure of some Spanish officials. He arrived back in Louisiana in 1798 with 1200 horses.

He married in 1799 and his wife was Frances Lintot, the daughter of a Louisiana planter. At this time Thomas Jefferson was in correspondence with Nolan about the huge numbers of wild horses in Texas, but the two never met.

He was unable to get another permit to go to Texas but despite this, he set out in 1800 with a large body of armed men. He moved into the interior of Texas and set up a small fort near the Brazos River and he and his men began rounding up horses. The Spaniards sent a force against the Irishman and his troops and in a battle fought there in March 1801 Philip Nolan was killed. Most of his men were captured and spent a long number of years in prison.

His wife died shortly afterwards and his only son died in childhood.

He became famous as the first of a long line of filibusters that eventually helped to free Texas from Spanish and Mexican rule. He was one of the first men to map Texas and in 1804 Wilkinson published a map of Texas based on Nolan's work.

Today Nolan country in west central Texas and the town of Nolan also are called after Philip Nolan. In addition there is Nolan's creek and Nolan's River in Texas.

Amazingly the area of Nolan County was not populated with Anglos until well after the Civil War when buffalo hunters moved in. It was established as a distinct area in 1881 when Sweetwater, built by the Texas and Pacific Railway company, was named as the County seat. Settlers began arriving in big numbers after that and by 1910 there were 12,000 people in the county. Oil was discovered in Nolan county and was worth \$100 million to the county in 1900. Nolan county is today largely agricultural- cattle, sheep and angora goats -- cotton, wheat and hay with potatoes, peaches, tomatoes, and watermelons.

“Early Irish Farming” by Fergus Kelly

Tom Nolan got permission from Fergus Kelly to take the following extracts from his book which will give us an idea of how our Nolan ancestors lived. Fergus is from the School of Celtic Studies in the Dublin Institute For Advance Studies

Slaves

Adult slaves were put to heavy work on the farm and in the kitchen. The male slave (mug) is associated particularly with the cutting and carrying of wood. According to the accompanying commentary the slave cuts wood, gathers it into a bundle (dial), ties it with a with (gat) and brings it home on his back.

In the texts, the female slave (cumal) is sometimes represented as being engaged in milking (milegon) or churning (maistrel). She is often associated with the laborious process by which grain is prepared for breadmaking.

Fuidir (Semi-Freeman)

It is clear from the shon law-text on the fuidir (semi-freeman) that this term is used to describe persons in a variety of servile situations. In general the Lord provides maintenance for the fuidir in return for labour and is responsible for any fines or liabilities incurred by him or his family. The ordinary fuidir is so dependant that he cannot make a contract without the permission of his Lord.

Ocaire (Freeman)

According to the law texts on status, an ocaire has a small farm worth seven cumals. It is likely that he does all the regular farm work himself, with the assistance of his wife, children and other dependent relatives.

Bóaire (Landman)

Further up the social scale is the Bóaire who owns land worth twenty-one cumals. He possesses full ploughing equipment, and therefore does not need to become involved in co-operative ploughing

arrangements.

Flaith (Lord)

The law-texts present a picture of a very class-conscious society with rigid ideas about the distinctions between a commoner and a Lord (Flaith). A Lord is clearly not expected to carry out physical work.

Women

The lines of demarcation between male and female work in the house and farm are not always clearly drawn in our sources, and it seems that many tasks could be performed by either sex. It is clear from Cáin Lánamna that it is regarded as normal for a farmers wife to be involved in the major tasks of the farm, such as ploughing (ar), reaping (buain), looking after livestock in enclosures (croud) and fattening pigs.

Children

In our sources, the farming chore most commonly associated with children is the herding of livestock.

Nolan 3rd fastest in the world.

James Nolan set the 3rd fastest time in the world, in his mile debut. He clocked 3.56 minutes at Gateshead, England in March; Hile Gebreselassi of Ethiopia won the race.

In February he was at the Melrose games in Maddison Square Gardens and he was pipped on the line by Johnny Grey. He says he is going back next year to finish the job. In March he came 5th in the final of the world 800M indoors in Maelbashi, Japan. He clocked 1:47:66 in the 800M qualifiers for Sydney and Seville, held in Hengelo, Holland on the 31st of May, i.e. the fastest time by an Irish man this year.

He is running in the under 23 European finals in Finland and the World Championships in Seville in August. He is also looking forward to Sydney 2000. Best of luck from all the Nolan Clan James.

John Nolan, Ballytarsna, Nurney, Co. Carlow is our new Chief in waiting. John has five daughters whose families are all registered members of the clan, Alice in Australia, Geraldine in England, Catherine, Mary and Madeline in Ireland.

Funds for the Book

The Clan has to raise £5,000 towards the publishing/writing of the book and the total costs are estimated at £9,000. So we are open for sponsorship, all donations, big or small will be gratefully received. We would also welcome loans for any amount, which would be refundable from revenues for the book. If the book is to be published at all we have to raise this money, so we are looking forward to your support.

Tracing your Ancestors in Ireland

In order to make good progress with research in Ireland, you must first gather as much basic information as possible on your ancestor, such as:

1. Name of ancestor who left Ireland.
2. Approximate date of birth.
3. County and parish of origin in Ireland.
4. Religious Denomination.
5. Names of ancestor's Parents.
6. Name of ancestor's spouse and date and place of marriage.

Millennium Clan Gathering

The Lord Bagenal Inn, Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow

14th & 15th July 2000

The **Lord Bagenal Inn** is an 18th century bar and restaurant which gives excellent "old world" value and service. Ph. +35350321668. In 1994 the Lord Bagenal Inn won the supreme award for the Best Wine List in Ireland against opposition from leading hotels, bars, clubs and restaurants. It won the International Decanter award twice sponsored by Decanter Magazine, the largest wine magazine in the world. It has received star ratings and several other awards such as Co. Carlow Pub of the year etc.

Leighlinbridge is ten miles south of Carlow town just off the N9. The village was developed on the original site of the Black Castle built by Hugh de Lacy in 1181 and was one of the earliest Norman fortresses in Ireland. It was replaced by the present castle built by Edward Bellingham in 1547. Today however only the western half remains. Access to the castle is direct from the footpath. The town is noted for the number of famous sons it has produced - John Tyndall, the mountaineer, scientist and writer; Cardinal Moran who was Bishop of Ossory in Ireland and later of Sydney in Australia; Captain Myles Keogh whose spectacular Career conclude with his early death at the Battle of the Little Big Horn with General Custer.

Two miles to the west of Leighlinbridge lies the village of **Old Leighlin**. Here stands the fascinating cathedral of **Old Leighlin** otherwise known as Saint Lazerian's Cathedral. Although built in the 13th century, this cathedral stands on the site of an old monastic church founded in 630 A.D. This site was one of the foremost monastic houses in Leinster at the time and was the location of a church synod in 632 A.D. which decided the date on which Easter Day would fall for the entire Christian world. The pub across the road holds the record for the oldest single family pub in Ireland and has been in the ownership of the Carey family since 1542.

Accommodation

Dolmen Hotel, Kilkenny Road, Carlow. Ph. +35350342002

John and Connie Nolan and their family stayed there for the 1998 Clan gathering and they give it top marks. It is a three star hotel built in 1997 on the river Barrow, great for the fishing. It has 40 ensuite bedrooms and 10 one bedroom lodges adjacent to it.

Other types of accommodation in Carlow include Guest/Farm House, Self Catering, B&B's and Town Guesthouse.

Other Hotels:

Royal Hotel, Dublin Street, Carlow. Ph. +35350331621.

Seven Oaks Hotel, Athy Road, Carlow. Ph. +35350331308.

Mount Wolseley Hotel, Golf and Country Club, Tullow, Co. Carlow. Ph +35350351674.

Dinn Ri, Tullow Street, Carlow. Ph. +35350330334.

Martin Nevin our Clan Adviser has a B&B next door to the Lord Bagenal. +35350321202

Carlow Rural Tourism may be contacted at 36 Dublin Street, Carlow.

Phone +35350330411, Fax +35350330477. They can organise itineraries etc.