

The Vikings in Ireland (795-1014).

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Scandinavian relations with Ireland during the Viking period.

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THE Vikings made their first appearance [1] on the Irish coasts in 795 A.D., when they plundered and burned the church on Recru, or Lambay Island, near Dublin. During the next ten or twelve years Ireland seems to have been almost free from further attacks, but in 807 they descended on Inis Murray, off the Sligo coast, and from there made their way inland to Roscommon. [2] After that the raids ceased for a few years, then began again with renewed vigour on Connacht and Munster, on some of the inland counties of Leinster, and on several places along the east coast. [3]

The arrival of Turgeis [4] (O.N. Thorgestr) in Armagh, about 832, marks a new phase of the invasions. Hitherto the Vikings had come in isolated parties solely for purposes of plunder; now, however, “great sea-cast floods of foreigners” landed in every harbour, and began to form settlements in various parts of the island. Dublin was first occupied in 836, and four years later the Norsemen strengthened their position there considerably by the erection of a *longphort* or fortress. From their *longphort* at Linn Duachaill (between Drogheda and Dundalk) built in the same year, they made their way to the West and plundered Clonmacnois, while settlers from Cael-uisce, near Newry went south and laid waste County Kildare. [5]

The power of Turgeis was not confined to the north of Ireland. His fleets were stationed on Loch Ree, the centre from which Meath and Connacht were devastated. His wife, Ota (O.N. Authr), desecrated the monastery of Clonmacnois by giving her oracular responses (*a fre-cartha*) from the high altar. [6] The tyranny of Turgeis came to an end in 845, when he was captured by Maelsechnaill, who afterwards became *árd-rí*, and was drowned in Lough Owel. [7]

After his death the tide of battle turned in favour of the Irish, and the Norsemen were defeated in several battles. Weakened by warfare, they had to contend in 849 with an enemy from without the Dubh-Gaill [8] or Danes who had sailed round the south coast of England and landed in Ireland “to exercise authority over the foreigners who were there before them.” Two years after their arrival the newcomers plundered the fortresses at Dublin and Dundalk, but were attacked in the following year on Carlingford Loch by the Norsemen. In this great naval battle, which lasted three days and three nights, the Danes were finally victorious. [8]

“Amhlaóibh Conung, son of the King of Lochlann,” known in Icelandic sources as Olaf the White, came to Ireland about 852 to rule over his countrymen, and to exact tribute from the Irish. [9] According to the *Fragments of Annals*, he left suddenly and returned a few years later accompanied by his “younger brother, Imhar,” who may be identified with Ívarr Beinlausi (*i.e.*, “the Boneless”) son of Ragnarr Lothbrók. Both kings ruled from Dublin, which town now gained a new importance as the seat of the Scandinavian Kings in Ireland. In 865 the Vikings extended their activities to Scotland, whence they carried off much plunder and many captives. An expedition on a larger scale was made by Olaf and Ívarr in 869, when

Dumbarton, after a four months' siege, fell into their hands. They returned in triumph to Ireland in the following year with a large number of English, British, and Pictish prisoners and ended their victorious march by the capture of Dunseverick (Co. Antrim). [10]

Olaf returned to Norway some time after this to take part in the wars there, [11] and we hear no more of him in the Irish Annals. "Imhar, King of the Norsemen of all Ireland and Britain," did not long survive him ; his death is recorded under the year 873. [12]

During the years which followed Ivarr's death the country was comparatively peaceful, and the Irish began to enjoy a rest from fresh invasions, which lasted about forty years. [13] The Danes and the Norsemen again began to quarrel among themselves, and once more their opposing fleets met on Carlingford Lough ; [14] in this battle Albann (O.N. Halfdanr), brother of Ivarr, a well-known leader of the Vikings in England, was slain. Dissensions also spread among the ranks of the Dublin Norsemen, dividing them into two hostile parties, one siding with Sitriucc, son of Ivarr, the other with a certain Sighfrith. [15] This internal strife so weakened Norse power that the Irish captured the fortress at Dublin in 902, and drove the Vikings across the sea with great slaughter.

The forty years' rest terminated abruptly in 913, when several fleets arrived at Waterford and proceeded to ravage all Munster and Leinster. In 916 Ragnall (O.N. Rögnvaldr), grandson of Ivarr, assumed command while his brother or cousin, Sihtric Gale (also nicknamed Caoch, 'the Blind') came with a fleet to Cenn Fuaid, in the east of Iveinster, and built a fortification there. [16] Both chiefs united forces against the *árd-ri* Niall Glundubh, and having defeated him in battle Sihtric entered Dublin and became king (918). In the following year the Irish under Niall made a brave stand at Kilmashogue, near Dublin, but Sihtric won a decisive victory, and Niall and twelve other kings were among the slain. [17]

Scandinavian power in Ireland was now at its height. Large fleets occupied all the lakes in Ulster, so that no part of the surrounding territory was safe from their attacks. [18] The Vikings also retained their grip of the coast towns, and successfully withstood the efforts made by the Irish leaders to dislodge them. Between the years 920 and 950 the importance of Dublin increased considerably through its connection with the Scandinavian Kingdom of Northumbria. Ragnall, grandson of Ivarr, captured York about 919 [19] and reigned there until his death in 921. [20] He was succeeded by Sihtric Gale, who had been expelled from Dublin in the preceding year, [21] probably by his brother, Guthfrith. After Sihtric's death in 927 Guthfrith, King of Dublin (d. 934), with the Vikings of Dundalk, left Ireland in order to secure his own succession in York, but he would seem to have been driven out by Aethelstan, for the Irish Annals mention his return to Dublin after an absence of six months. [22]

Guthfrith's son, Olaf, came forward about this time. Supported by the Norsemen of Strangford Lough he plundered Armagh, but his subsequent attacks on Ulster were checked by Muirchertach MacNeill, son of Niall Glundubh. Olaf fought in alliance with Constantine in the battle of Brunanburh (937), and after the defeat inflicted on them by Aethelstan's forces he fled to Dublin. [23] He is probably the "Anlaf of Ireland" who was chosen King by the Northumbrians in 941, [24] but he died about a year later. [25]

Another Olaf, the famous Olaf Cuaran, also called Sihtricsson to distinguish between them, also played an important part in campaigns in Ireland and England. He went to York about 941, and was elected king by the Northumbrians, but was expelled after a few years along with Raegenald, son of Guthfrith. [26] He then took the Dublin Kingdom under his rule, and in the following year was defeated in battle by the Irish at Slaine (Co. Meath). Leaving his brother Guthfrith to govern in his stead, he departed to York, where he became king a

second time ; but the Northumbrians drove him out after three years and placed “ Yric, son of Harald” (i.e., Eric Bloodaxe, late King of Norway) on the throne. [27]

Henceforward Olaf limited his activities to Ireland, where he reigned, the most famous of the Dublin Kings, for some thirty years. In 980, having summoned auxiliaries from the Scottish isles and Man, he prepared to attack the *árd-rí*, Maelsechnaill II. A fierce battle was fought between them at Tara in which the Norse armies were completely routed, Olaf’s son Ragnhall being among the slain. Maelsechnaill followed up this victory by a three days’ siege of Dublin, after which he carried off a number of hostages from the Norsemen, and also obtained from them 2,000 kine, together with jewels and various other treasures. [28] Olaf himself, utterly disheartened by his defeat, went on pilgrimage to Iona, where he died soon after.

Some fifteen years before, a severe blow had been struck at the power of the limerick Vikings under Ivarr, grandson of Ivarr and his sons. The attack made on them at Sulcoit (968) by two princes of the Dal Cais, the brothers Mathgamain and Brian, resulted in victory for the Irish, who took Limerick shortly after. [29] Mathgamain was treacherously murdered in 976, and Brian then became King of Thomond. He soon brought the Kingdoms of Ossory and Leinster under his control, and by the terms of a treaty made in 998 Maelsechnaill consented to leave Brian master of Leth Mogha (*i.e.*, the southern half of Ireland). The leinstermen under King Maelmordha, dissatisfied with this arrangement, began to make trouble and revolted, assisted by the Dublin Norsemen. An important victory was gained over their combined armies at Gleann Mama (Co. Wicklow) in the year 1000 by Brian, who after the battle captured Dublin. King Sihtric (O.N. Sigtryggr), son of Olaf Cuaian, had to submit to Brian’s authority. Having accepted his allegiance Brian married Goimflaith, mother of Sihtric and sister of Maelmordha, and at the same time gave his own daughter to Sihtric in marriage. [30]

Brian became *árd-rí* in 1002, and after that for about twelve years there was peace. Towards the end of that time Gormflaith, who had meanwhile separated from her husband, incited her brother Maelmordha to make war on Brian. Maelmordha and Sihtric began to gather forces for the coming struggle. Sihtric at his mother’s command sought the aid of Sigurthr, Earl of Orkney and of Brodar, [31] a Viking whose fleet then lay off the west coast of Man. Fleets also came from Norway [32] and Iceland to help their kinsmen. The armies under Brian and Maelsechnaill marched towards Dublin, and having encamped near Kilmainham set fire to the district of Fingal (*i.e.*, *Fine Gall*, “ the Foreigners’ territory”) north of the city. The two armies met at Clontarf on Good Friday morning and the battle, one of the most famous ever fought on Irish soil, raged all that day. The Norsemen suffered a severe defeat, and in attempting to fly for refuge to their ships were slaughtered by Maelsechnaill at Dubhgall’s Bridge, near the Four Courts. Brian himself did not take part in the fight, but he was slain in his tent by Brodar after the battle. [33]

After the Battle of Clontarf the Norsemen became gradually absorbed in the general population except in a few coast towns, where they continued to live more or less distinct and governed by petty kings until the English Invasion (1169). In the chronicles of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries they are generally alluded to as “ *Ostmen*” (corruptly *Houstmanni*, *Nosmani*, etc.), [34] and it would seem that when Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford were captured by the English the “ *Ostmen*” had to withdraw to certain districts outside the walls of these towns. Thus, near Dublin, north of the River Liffey, we hear of Ostmaneby [35] (*i.e.*, *Austmannabyr*) afterwards called Ostmanstonry, and now known as Oxmanstown. Mention is also made (c. 1200) of a “ *cantred*’ of the *Ostmen* and holy isle,” near Limerick and (c. 1282) of a “ *vill* of the *Ostmen*” [36] near Waterford. [37] In the records of the fourteenth century, however, there is an almost total absence of references to the “ *Ostmen*” in Ireland. [38]

Intercourse between the Gaill and the Gaedhil during the viking period.

THE existence of the Gaill-Gaedhil or foreign Irish in Ulster and various parts of Munster [39] during the years 854-856 shows that even in the early part of the ninth century there must have been considerable intercourse between the Vikings and the native population. For some of the Gaill-Gaedhil were partly of Irish, partly of Norse extraction ; others, as the annalist explicitly states, were Irishmen who had been fostered by the Norsemen, and in consequence had forsaken Christian practices and lapsed into Paganism. [40] From a chance allusion in a tenth century text [41] it would seem that they could speak Gaelic, but so badly that the expression “ the gicgog of a Gall-Gaedheal ” was generally understood to mean halting or broken Gaelic.

They are mentioned in the Annals for the first time [42] in 854, in which year Aedh Finnliath, King of Aileach, won a great victory over them in a battle fought at Glenelly, in Tyrone. [43] After this they took an active part in the Irish wars, fighting like mercenaries on different sides at one time in alliance with the *árd-rí*, Maelsechnaill, who was at war with the Norsemen ; [44] again, with an Irish clan against the Dublin Vikings under Ivarr, [45] and still later we find them joined with the men of Waterford in opposition to the *árd-rí*. [46] Led by Caittil Find (O.N. Ketill + Ir. find—fair) they made their last stand against the Dublin Vikings under Olaf and Ivarr, but were defeated with heavy losses, and after this there is no further record of their activities in Ireland. [47] On one occasion at least, they fought with the Viking armies in England. According to the account of the siege of Chester (c. 912) preserved in the *Three Fragments of Annals*, many Irishmen, foster-children of the Norsemen, formed part of the besieging army under the chieftain Hingamund, [48] who had been expelled from Dublin some time previously. To these Irishmen Aethelflaed, the lady of the Mercians, sent ambassadors appealing to them as “ true and faithful friends ” to abandon the “ hostile race of Pagans ” and to assist the Saxons in defending the city. The Irish then deserted their former allies and joined the Saxons, “ and the reason they acted so towards the Danes, ” adds the chronicler, “ was because they were less friendly with them than with the Norsemen. ” [49]

The Vikings who formed settlements in Ireland during the reign of Turgeis (839-845) seem to have mingled freely with the Irish, for we find them not long after their arrival stirring up the clans to rebellion against the *árd-rí* [50] and joining the native princes on plundering expeditions. The annals mention several such alliances. Cinaedh, Prince of Cranachta-Breagh, who had revolted against Maelsechnaill with a party of plunderers, laid waste the country from the Shannon eastward to the sea. [51] Another Irish prince, Lorcan, King of Meath, accompanied Olaf and Ivarr when they broke into the famous burial-mounds [52] at New Grange, Knowth and Dowth, on the Boyne, and carried off the treasures which they found there. After the great naval battle between Danes and Norsemen in Carlingford Lough (A.D. 852) Danes and Irish frequently united forces against the common enemy, and on one occasion after the two armies had won a victory over the Norsemen in Tipperary the Danish chieftain Horm and his men were escorted in triumph to Tara where they were received with great honour by the *árd-rí*. [52] Even after the arrival of Olaf the White, who brought about a temporary reconciliation between the two parties of “ Foreigners, ” a detachment of Danes remained on in the service of Cearbhall, King of Ossory. [53]

The Irish chronicler, in alluding to the Norse practice of billeting their soldiers in the Irish farmhouses, lays stress on the feelings of hostility entertained by the Irish towards this “ wrathful, foreign, purely Pagan people. ” Yet, we not infrequently find instances of friendly intercourse, as in the well-known story of Olaf-Trygvason and the peasant. [54] It appears that after Olaf’s marriage to Gyda, sister of Olaf Cuaran, he occasionally visited Ireland. Once he

sailed there with a large naval force, and being short of provisions went on land with his men on a foraging expedition. They seized a large number of cows, and were driving them towards the shore when a peasant ran after them and begged Olaf to give him back his cows. Olaf told him to take them, if he could separate them from the rest without delaying their journey. The peasant had with him a large sheepdog, which he sent in among the herd, and the dog ran up and down and drove off as many cows as the peasant claimed. As they were all marked in the same way it was evident that the dog knew all his master's cows. Then Olaf asked if the peasant would give him the dog. "Willingly," was the reply. So Olaf gave him in return a gold ring, and assured him of his friendship. The dog was called Vígi, "the best of all dogs," and Olaf had it for a long time.

Years later, after the great naval battle in which Olaf lost his life, "Vígi lay on a mound and would take no food from anyone, although he drove away other dogs and beasts and birds from what was brought to him. . . . Thus he lay till he died." [55]

Moreover, the evidence of both Norse and Irish sources goes to show that all through the ninth and tenth centuries there was extensive intermarriage between the two peoples. Marriages of the invaders with the women whom they had carried off as captives must have taken place from an early period, [56] and we know definitely that the kings and chieftains on both sides frequently strengthened their alliances by unions between members of the royal families. According to the *Landnámabók* many distinguished Icelanders traced their descent to Kjarval, *i.e.*, Cearbhall, King of Ossory (d. 887), an ally of Olaf and Ivarr. His grandson, Dufthak (Ir. Dubhthach) [57] was the founder of an Icelandic family, and three of his daughters, Kormlöth (Ir. Gormflaith), [58] Frithgerth [59] and Rafarta [60] married Norsemen. The *Landnámabók* speaks of Kjarval as having been King of Dublin while "Alfred the Great ruled in England . . . and Harold Fairhair in Norway," [61] a statement which is often doubted because unsupported by the evidence of the Irish historians ; but it is not at all unlikely, since Cearbhall was remotely connected with the Dublin royal house through his granddaughter Thurithr, who married Thorsteinn the Red, son of Olaf the White. [62]

There is no mention of Authr, Olaf's Norse wife, in the Annals, but we hear incidentally [63] that Olaf, while in Ireland, married a daughter of Aedh Finnliath, King of Aileach. After he became *árd-rí* (864) Aedh turned against the Norsemen, and having plundered all their fortresses in the north of Ireland marched towards Lough Foyle, where they had assembled to give him battle. Aedh was victorious, and some years after he again defeated the Foreigners, who were at this time in alliance with his nephew Flann ; Flann himself and Carlus, son of Olaf the White being numbered among the slain. We also hear of other Irish Kings who were closely related to their Viking opponents. *Laxdaela Saga* contains an interesting account of a slave-woman who was bought at a market in Norway by an Icelander called Höskuldr. The woman was dumb, but Höskuldr was so struck by her appearance that he willingly paid for her three times the price of an ordinary slave, and took her back with him to Iceland. A few years later, happening to overhear her talking to their little son, Olaf Pái, he discovered to his amazement that her dumbness was feigned. She then confessed that her name was Melkorka (Ir. *Mael-Curcaigh*) and that she was the daughter of Myr Kjartan, a king in Ireland, whence she had been carried off as a prisoner of war when only fifteen years old.

When Olaf was grown up his mother urged him to visit Ireland in order to establish his relationship with King Myr Kjartan, "for," she said, "I cannot bear your being called the son of a slave-woman any longer." Before they parted she gave him a large finger-ring and said : "This my father gave me for a teething-gift, and I know he will recognise it when he sees it." She also put into his hands a knife and belt and bade him give them to her nurse : "I am sure she will not doubt these tokens." And still further Melkorka spoke : "I have fitted you out

from home as best I know how, and taught you to speak Irish, so that it will make no difference to you where you are brought to shore in Ireland. . . .” [64]

The saga goes on to describe the voyage to Ireland, the landing there, and Olaf’s reception by King Myr Kjartan.

Myr Kjartan may be identified with Muirchertach “ of the Leather Cloaks,” King of Aileach, who like his father Niall Glundubh distinguished himself by his spirited resistance to Norse rule in the first half of the tenth century. [65] Donnflaith, another of his daughters and mother of the *árd-ri*, Maelsechnaill II., married Olaf Cuaran. Their son, Gluniarainn, reigned in Dublin after his father’s retirement to Iona, and appears to have been on friendly terms with Maelsechnaill. [66] The relationship between these two families becomes more complicated owing to the fact that Maelsechnaill’s own wife, Maelmuire (d. 1021), was a daughter of Olaf. [67]

But perhaps no figure stands out so prominently in the Irish and Norse chronicles [68] of the second half of the tenth century as Gormflaith (O.N. Kormlöth) who first married Olaf Cuaran, then his enemy Maelsechnaill II., and finally Brian Borumha, from whom she also separated.

The interchange of family and personal names which took place to such an extent during the Viking period also points to the close connection between the foreigners and the Irish. As early as 835 mention is made of one Gofraidh (O.N. Guthröthr), son of Fergus, who went to Scotland from Ireland in order to strengthen the Dal Riada and died some time after as King of the Hebrides. [69] The Dublin Viking who led an attack on Armagh in 895 had an Irish name, Glun-iarainn, obviously a translation of O.N. *Jarn-kné*. He was in all probability a relative of Iercne or Jargna (corrupt forms of *Jarn-kné*) who ruled in conjunction with Zain or Stain (O.N. Steinn) as King of Dublin (c. 850) ; [70] while other earls of Dublin, Otir mac Eirgni, [71] Eloir mac Ergni or Largni [72] and Gluntradna, son of Glun-Iarainn would also appear to have been of the same royal family. [73] Irish names occur more frequently in Norse families during the tenth and eleventh centuries ; we find Uathmaran, son of Earl Bairith (O.N. Barthr) ; Camman, [74] son of Olaf Godfreyson ; Giolla Padraig, Dubhcenn [75] and Donndubhan, sons of King Ivarr of Limerick ; [76] Niall, son of Erulb (O.N. Herjulfr) ; Cuallaidh, son of King Ivarr of Waterford ; Eachmarach, and very many others. [77] On the other hand, we may note the prevalence of such common Norse names as Ivarr, Guthröthr, Sumarlithi among the Irish, especially in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Several of these names still survive, as, for instance, MacAuliffe (O.N. Óálfr) ; MacCaffrey (O.N. Guthöthr) ; MacCalmont or Lamont (O.N. Lögmathr) ; Kettle (O.N. Ketill) ; Kitterick (? Ir. Mac-N. Sigtryggr) ; MacKeever (O.N. Ivarr) ; Manus and MacManus (O.N. Magnus) ; Quistan (Ir. Mac. O.N. Eysteinn) ; Reynolds (O.N. Rögnvaldr) ; Sigerson (O.N. Sigurtbr) and MacSorley (O.N. Sumarlithi).

Both Gaill and Gaedhil, so dissimilar in many ways, benefited by their intercourse with one another. In Ireland the Vikings played an important part in the development of trade ; they also promoted the growth of town life. We may trace the beginnings of the seaport towns, Dublin, limerick, Waterford and Wexford, to the forts built by them near the large harbours in the ninth and tenth centuries. In Dublin coins were minted for the first time in Ireland [77] during the reign of Sihtric Silken Beard (c. 989-1042). Moreover, the large number of loan-words from Old Norse which made their way into Irish shows that the Irish learned in many other ways from the invaders, notably in shipbuilding and navigation.

So far as literature and art are concerned, the period of the Viking occupation is one of the most interesting in the history of Ireland. In spite of the destruction of the monasteries and the departure of numbers of the monks [78] to the Continent the work of the great schools was carried on and there was considerable literary activity ;[79] in 914 and 924, respectively, the great crosses at Clonmacnois and Monasterboice were set up ; cumhdachs, or book-shrines of plated gold and silver, were made for the three great manuscripts, the *Book of Kells*, the *Book of Durrow* and the *Book of Armagh* ; carved gold, silver, and bronze work reached a high level of excellence in the famous Ardagh Chalice and the Tara Brooch ; and during the years which intervened between the battles of Gleann Mama and Clontarf, Romanesque architecture was introduced into Ireland. Irish art did not remain wholly free from Scandinavian influence. In the Cross of Cong (A.D. 1123) the Celtic interlaced patterns are found side by side with the “ worm-dragon ” ornament, while the crosier of Clonmacnois, the psalter of Ricemarth and the shrine of St. Patrick's Bell are decorated in the style known as “ Hiberno-Danish.” [80]

The Vikings, on the other hand, came under the influences of Irish art and literature. We find marks of Celtic influence not only in the sculptured crosses erected by the Norsemen in the North of England and Man, but even in Scandinavia itself. [81] Moreover, there are strong reasons for supposing that the rise of the prose saga among the Icelanders may be the outcome of their intercourse with the Irish in the ninth and tenth centuries.

A glance at the bibliography shows that comparatively little has been written in English on this interesting period of our history. On the other hand modern Scandinavian scholars — Alexander Bugge, Marstrander, and Vogt — have thrown a good deal of light on the subject, but unfortunately very few of their books have been translated into English. The present dissertation is based principally upon the Old and Middle Irish annals and chronicles and the Icelandic sagas ; reference has also been made to the work of Scandinavian, English and Irish scholars on the subject.

[1] Zimmer was of the opinion that the Norsemen made their way to Ireland as early as the seventh century. He bases his theory on an entry in the *Annals of Ulster* and in certain other Irish annals (under the year 617) recording “ the devastation of Tory Island by a marine fleet.” (über die frühesten Berührungen der Iren mit den Nordgermanen, p. 279 ff. in *Sitzungsberichte der kgl. preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*. 1891. Bd. I., pp. 279-317.) But this attack is likely to have been due to Saxon or Pictish raiders rather than to the Norsemen.

[2] *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 807.

[3] *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 811, 820-824, 827, 830.

[4] Some writers would identify Turgeis with Thorgils, son of Harold Fairhair, who with his brother Frothi went on a viking expedition to Ireland. They captured Dublin, and Thorgils reigned there for a long time as king. In the end, however, he was betrayed by the Irish and was killed. (*Heimskringla : Haralds saga hins hrfagra*, ch. 35-)

This account of Thorgils certainly bears a resemblance to that of Turgeis contained in the Irish chronicles and Giraldus Cambrensis (cf. Todd : Introduction to *War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, I., ii.), but it is of course incorrect to say that Turgeis was a son of Harold Fairhair.

[5] *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 841.

[6] *War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, p. 13.

[7] *ib.*, p. 15.

[8] The Irish chroniclers use a variety of names for the Scandinavians : *Dibearccai* (outlaws),

Gaill (foreigners), *Gennti* (Gentiles), and *Pagánaigh* (Pagans). They also distinguish between Danes and Norsemen. The Danes were known as *Danair*, *Danmarcaigh*, *Dubh Gennti* (Black Gentiles), and *Dubh-Gaill*. The word *Dubh-Gaill* (Black Foreigners) still survives in the personal names Doyle and MacDowell and in the place-name Baldoyle. The Norsemen were called *Finn-Gaill* (Fair Foreigners), *Finn-Genti*, *Nortmannai* (Lat. Northmanni) and *Lochlannaigh* (i.e., men of *Lochlann* or Norway).

[9] *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 851 (= 852).

[10] *Three Fragments of Annals*, p. 127.

Vogt (*Dublin som Norsk By*, p. 66) suggests that Olaf was related to Turgeis, the first Norse King of Ireland, and to Earl Tomrarr (O.N. Thórrarr), “*tanist* of the King of Lochlann,” who fell in the battle of Scaith Neachtain (847). On the other hand it may be noted here that the Annalist errs in making Olaf a brother of Ivarr the Boneless.

[11] *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 870.

[12] *Three Fragments of Annals*, p. 195. The *Landndmabok*, II., ch. 15 says that “Olaf fell in battle in Ireland,” but this is surely a mistake.

[13] *Annals of Ulster*, sub anno, 872 (= 873).

[14] War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill, p. 27. Cf. also the entries in the *Annals of Ulster* : “Ruaidhri, son of Muirmenn King of the Britons came to Ireland, fleeing before the Black Foreigners” (an. 876).

[15] It is extremely difficult to identify these two princes owing to the similarity between their names. It has been suggested that Sighfrith is the Siefredus or Sievert who ruled jointly with Guthred-Cnut (d.c. 894) as King of Northumbria, while Sitriucc son of Ivarr is probably the “Sitric comes” whose name appears on a coin dating from this period. (See A. Mawer : *The Scandinavian Kingdom of Northumbria*, pp. 11-13. *Saga-book of the Viking Club*, VII. Part I.)

[16] *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 916.

[17] *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 918. *War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, p. 37. An entry in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (A.D. 921), referring to the result of this battle, runs : “In this year King Sihtric slew his brother Niel.” There is, however, no evidence in Irish sources that Sihtric and Niall were brothers, or even half-brothers.

[18] *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 920, 921, 923, 925.

[19] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, A.D. 923.

[20] *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 920.

[21] *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 919.

[22] *Ib.*, A.D. 927.

[23] *Ib.*, A.D. 937. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. A. Annal, 937.

[24] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, D. Annal 941.

[25] *Ib.*, E. Annal 942 ; *Annals of Clonmacnoise*. A.D. 934.

[26] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, A. Annal 944.

[27] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, E. Annals 949, 952.

[28] *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 978, 979 ; *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 979 (= 980).

[29] *War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, p. 77.

[30] *War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, p. 115 ; *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 997.

[31] *War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, p. 153. *Njáls Saga*, ch. 155. In the *Annals of Loch Cé* (A.D. 1014) Brodar is called the earl of York (*iarla Caoire Eabhroigh*).

[32] *War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, p. 151.

[33] *Ib.*, pp. 151-191 ; *Njáls Saga*, chs. 155-157, *Annals of Loch Cé*, A.D. 1014 ; *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 1013.

[34] *Calendar of the Ancient Records of Dublin* (ed. by J. T. Gilbert), II. 81 ; *Chartularies of St. Mary's Abbey, Dublin* (ed. by Gilbert), I. 258 ; II. 251 ; Giraldu Cambrensis : *Topographia Hibernica*, V. 187.

The name “Ostmen” is generally supposed to have been first given to them by the

English, but the word is Norse (i.e., Austmenn, plural of Austmathr, “ a man living in the East”) and therefore must have been current in Ireland before the English invasion. It may be suggested that the name was applied to the original Scandinavian settlers in Ireland, to merchants and other later comers from Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. Cf. the nickname Austmathr, given to a certain Eyvindr by the Scandinavian settlers in the Hebrides because he had come there from Sweden.

[35] *Chartularies of St. Mary's Abbey*, I. 267 ; *ib.*, I. 227, 234, etc.; *Calendar of the Ancient Records of Dublin*, I. 55; II. 96.

[36] *A Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland* (ed. by H. S. Sweetman), I. 24.

[37] *Ib.*, II. p. 426.

[38] For interesting articles on the Ostmen in Ireland see A. Bugge : *Sidste Afsnit af Nordboernes Historie i Irland*, pp. 248-315 (Aarb ger for nord. Oldk. 1900) ; and E. Curtis : *The English and the Ostmen in Inland* (English Historical Review, XXIII., p. 209 ff.).

[39] *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 855, 856 ; *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 856.

[40] *Three Fragments of Annals*, pp. 128, 129; 138, 139.

[41] *Airec Menmam Uraird Mate Coisse*, sec. 29 (Marstrander : *Bidrag til del Norske Sprogs Historie i Irland*, p. 10).

[42] With the Gaill-Gaedliil are often identified a body of plunderers, members of Meath and Cavan clans, who in the year 845 devastated large tracts of territory “ after the manner of the Gentiles” (*Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 845). The Annalists call them “ sons of death” (maic báis), possibly a term applied by the monastic chroniclers to a people who had abandoned their Christian baptism, and who had profaned churches and religious houses. (Cf. Marstrander, *op. cit.*, p. 7, n.)

[43] Cf. *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 854. *Three Fragments of Annals*, A.D. 852, referring to the same event, mention the “ fleet of the Gaill-Gaedhil.”

[44] *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 855.

[45] *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 856.

[46] *Fragments of Annals*, A.D. 858.

[47] There was also a mixed Norse and Gaelic population in Galloway (the word is a corruption of *Gall-Gaedhil*, Welsh Galwydel) as well as in the Hebrides (Ir. *Innse Gall.*, i.e., the “ Islands of the Foreigners or Norsemen”) and other parts of Scotland. There is a reference to these Gaill-Gaedhill in the Four Masters (A.D. 1154) : “ The Cinel Eoghain and Muirchertach, son of Niall, sent persons over the sea to hire the fleets of the Gaill-Gaedhil of Aran, Can tire and the Isle of Man and the borders of Scotland in general, over which Mac Sgelling was in command” (For other references see Marstrander, *it.*, p. 9.)

By *Gaddgethlar* the Norsemen understood “ the place . . . where Scotland and England meet” (cf. *Orkneyinga Saga*, ch. 28). It is also interesting to note that, in Norse sources the inhabitants of Galloway are called *Vikinga-Skotar*, a direct translation of Gaill-Gaedhil.

O'Flaherty (*Ogygia*, p. 360) thought that the Gaill-Gaedhil mentioned in the Annals of the mid-ninth century came to Ireland from Scotland, but the ancient *Three Fragments of Annals*, which contain the fullest accounts of the Gaill-Gaedhil (pp. 138-141) speak of them as *Scuit* (i.e., an Irish form of the Latin *Scoti*, a word which is always used with reference to the Irish before the tenth century). Moreover, the impression received from reading the *Fragments of Annals* is that the Annalist had in his mind the Norse-Gaelic population of Ireland, not of Scotland.

[48] *Ann. Cambriae*, A.D. 902 ; (Steenstrup : *Normannerne*, III., pp. 37-4i)-

[49] *Three Fragments of Annals*, p. 230 ff.

[50] *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 845, 852 ; *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 846. *Three Fragments of Annals*, A.D. 862.

- [51] *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 848.
- [52] The plundering of these burial-mounds “ a thing that had never been done before” made a deep impression on the Irish Annalists ; it was thought that the Vikings discovered the existence of the treasure by magic, “ through paganism and idol worship” (*War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, p. 115).
- The same source (p. 25) records the plundering of Karry by Baraid (O.N. Barthr) and Olaf the White’s son “ who left not a cave there underground that they did not explore.”
- Several references to this practice of the Vikings occur also in Icelandic literature. It is interesting to compare the Irish accounts with the following passage from *Landnamabok* (I., ch. 5) : “Leifr (one of the earliest settlers in Iceland) went on a Viking raid to the West. He plundered Ireland and found there a large underground house (Icel. *jarlh-hus*). It was dark within until he made his way to a place where he saw a light shining from a sword which a man held in his hand, ieifr slew the man and took the sword and much treasure besides.”
- [52] *Three Fragments of Annals*, p. 135.
- [53] *ib.*, p. 137.
- [54] *Heimskringla : Óláfs Saga Tryggvasonar*, ch. 35.
- [55] Cf. The story of Samr, (*i.e.*, probably Ir. sam, “ happy” or “peaceful”) the Irish hound which Olaf Pai gave to Gunnarr. Samr was killed while defending his master's homestead. (*Njáls Saga*, chs. 69, 75.)
- [56] *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 820 ; *Fragments of Annals*, p. 166 ; *War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, p. 79 ; *The Victorious Career of Callachan of Cashel*, p. 9.
- [57] *Landnámabók*, V., ch. 8.
- [58] *Ib.*, V., ch. 13.
- [59] *Ib.*, III., ch. 9.
- [60] *Ib.*, III., ch. 12. Rafarta was the wife of Eyvindr the Easterner, “ who settled down in Ireland and had charge of Kjarval’s defences” (cf. *Grettis Saga*, ch. 3). *Orkneyinga Saga* (ch. n.) makes Edna (Ir. *Eithne*) another of Kjarval’s daughters to be the mother of Sigurthr, Earl of Orkney (killed in the battle of Clontarf, 1014) ; but owing to the chronological difficulty this is hardly likely.
- [61] *Landnámabók*, I., ch. i.
- [62] *Ib.*, II., ch. 15.
- [63] *Three Fragments of Annals*, p. 151. The same source (p. 173) mentions still another wife of Olaf, “ the daughter of Cinaedh,” *i.e.*, in all probability Cinaedh Mac Ailpin, King of the Picts (d. 858).
- [64] *Laxdaela Saga* (translated by M.A.C. Press), chs. 12, 13, 20, 21.
- [65] *The Annals of the Four Masters* record his death under the year 941 : “ Muirchertach of the leather Cloaks, lord of Aileach, the Hector of the West of Europe in his time, was slain at Ardee by Blacaire, son of Godfrey, lord of the Foreigners.”
- Muirchertach’s grandson was killed by Olaf Cuaran. (*Ib.*, A.D. 975).
- [66] *Ib.*, A.D. 981.
- [67] *Ib.*, A.D. 1021.
- [68] *War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, p. 142 ff. ; *Njáls Saga*, chs. 153, 154-
- [69] *Annals of the Four Masters*, AD. 851.
- [70] *Three Fragments of Annals*, pp. 119, 123. *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 852.
- [71] *Chronicon Scotorum*, A.D. 883.
- [72] *Ib.*, 886 ; *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 885.
- [73] See A. Bugge : *Nordisk Sprog og Nordisk Nationalitet, i Irland*, pp. 284, 285. Professor Marstrander (*op. cit.*, pp. 45, 46) takes *Gluintradna* to be an Irish adaptation of an O.N. nickname Trönu-Kné, to which he compares *Trönubeina*, the daughter of Thraell, in the *Rígsthula*, 9.
- [74] Cf. the name Grímr Kamban (*Landnámabók*, Hauksbók MS., ch. 19) which seems to be

a Norse form of the Irish *Camman*.

According to A. Bugge, *Dubhcenn* is a translation of the O.N. *Svarthöfthi*, but Marstrander (*op. cit.*, p. 45) holds that the name was known in Ireland before the Viking age. It may be suggested that it was a nickname given to Ivarr's son by the Irish. Cf. Olaf *Cuaran* (Ir. *cuaran*, a shoe made of skin) ; *Olaf Cenncairech* (i.e., "Scabby-head.")

[75] Their mother was an Irishwoman, sister of Donnabhan, King of Ui Fidgenti. Donnabhan himself was married to a daughter of Ivarr, King of Limerick. (*War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, p. 207).

[76] *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 931 ; *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 960, 1036, 1042, etc. See also Whitley Stokes : On the Gaelic Names in the *Landnámabók* (*Revue Celtique*, III., pp. 186-191).

[77] From the contemporary Irish poems the *Book of Rights* and *The Curcuit of Muirchertach Mac Neill* it may be inferred that in ancient Ireland all payments were made in kind. With the extension of trade, however, it is probable that many Anglo-Saxon and other foreign coins including those of the Scandinavian Kings of Northumbria, several of whom also reigned in Ireland came to be circulated in Ireland. The Vikings in England struck coins there during the reign of Halfdanr (d. 877). (Cf. C. F. Keary : *Catalogue of Coins in the British Museum*, I., p. 202).

[78] One of these fugitives wrote the following lines on the margin of Priscian's Latin Grammar in the monastery of St. Gall, Switzerland :

“ Is acher ingaith innocht fufuasna fairge findfolt,
Ni agor reimm mora minn dond laechraid lainn na lothlind.”
(*Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*. Ed. Stokes and Straohan, II., 290.)

i.e., Bitter is the wind to-night.
It tosses the ocean's white hair ;
To-night I fear not the fierce warriors of Norway
Coursing on the Irish Sea.
(Translation by Kuno Meyer : *Ancient Irish Poetry*, p. 101.)

[79] See Margaret Stokes : *Early Christian Architecture in Ireland*, p. 127.

[80] G. Coffey : *A Guide to the Celtic Antiquities of the Christian Period* (National Museum, Dublin) pp. 29, 49 and 62.

[81] *Ib.*, p. 17.

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