
*“THE
QUEEN’S
BOOK”*

Text of the Book presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, on her
“Coronation Visit” to Ballymoney, County Antrim, Northern Ireland,
with an appendix and additional notes.

TO HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY
QUEEN ELIZABETH THE SECOND

The Ballymoney Urban District Council, on the occasion of Your Majesty's Coronation visit to Ballymoney accompanied by His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, desires humbly to convey to Your Majesty the loyal greetings of the people of the town, and their earnest hopes that Your Majesty may enjoy a long and happy reign.

The Council prays Your gracious acceptance of this Book which traces Your Majesty's Descent from the ancient Kings of this northern district of the County of Antrim, thus illustrating the significance of the words of King James the First, spoken at the Council Table in Whitehall, on April 21st, 1613 : "There is a double reason why I should be careful of the welfare of the Irish people. First as King of England and also as King of Scotland, for the ancient kings of Scotland are descended of the kings of Ireland."

The third day of July in the Year of Our Lord 1953.

HISTORY OF THE DESCENT
of
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN FROM THE KINGS
OF DALRIADA

About the year A.D. 260 Riada (the Reuda of the Venerable Bede), of a Munster Line of Kings, founded his kingdom in North Antrim. This was naturally called Dal-Riada. Two and a half centuries later Fergus, son of King Erc of Dalriada, founded, in Albany, a second Dalriada, in the district which we call Argyle. The Annalist Tigernach thus records the event :—"A.D. 502. Fergus the Great, son of Erc, accompanied by the race of Dalriada, occupied a part of Britain and died there."

During the next three centuries, the kingdom set up by Fergus the Great was engaged in a life and death struggle with the warlike Picts. But in 844 a dramatic change took place. Kenneth MacAlpin, King of Dalriada, brought the Picts under his rule and thus laid the foundations of the mediaeval kingdom of Scotland.

The name Scotia, the land of the Scots, had hitherto applied to Ireland alone. Until the eleventh century a Scot meant an Irishman to the people of Western Europe. It was the Scots of Dalriada who gave the name, which they had brought with them from North Antrim, to the country we now call Scotland.

Besides the name, Dalriada also gave to Scotland its royal family. All the subsequent kings of Scotland were, like Kenneth MacAlpin, descended from Fergus the Great. Even when the male line failed in 1286 it was to a descendant of his, Robert Bruce, that Scotland turned when the country sought a king.

Through Bruce's daughter Marjory, who married Walter, Steward of Scotland, the House of Stuart was founded, the first of the dynasty being Robert II. Through the accession of James VI of Scotland as James I of England, the line of Fergus the Great came to occupy the English throne.

Her Gracious Majesty has other connections with the Kings of Ireland. She is descended from Niall of the Nine Hostages, High King of Ireland (A.D. 379-405), through Aidan, great-grandson of Fergus the Great, who was consecrated King at Iona, by his relative St. Columba, and according to the old tradition, upon the Stone of Destiny, now in Westminster Abbey. Here, however, in Ballymoney, the administrative centre of the district formerly known as Dalriada, and now as The Route, and within a dozen miles of Dunseverick, whose ruined castle marks the site where the sons of King Erc were cradled, we particularly rejoice to acclaim Her, on this happy occasion, as the descendant of the Kings of Dalriada.

THE ROYAL DESCENT

Riada founded the kingdom of Dal-Riada between	-	-	-	A.D. 254— 277
Erc, twelfth in descent from Riada	-	-	-	— 474
Fergus, son of Erc, founded the Dalriadan monarchy in Albany				502— 529
Domangart, son of Fergus the Great	-	-	-	529— 534
Gabran, son of Domangart	-	-	-	558— 560
Aidan, son of Gabran	-	-	-	574— 608
Eochaid Buide, son of Aidan	-	-	-	— 630
Donald Brecc, son of Eochaid Buide	-	-	-	630— 643
Domangart, son of Donald Brecc	-	-	-	— 673
Eochaid, son of Domangart	-	-	-	695— 697
Eochaid, son of Eochaid	-	-	-	726— 735
Aed Find, son of Eochaid	-	-	-	748— 778
Eochaid, son of Aed Find	-	-	-	781—
Alpin, son of Eochaid	-	-	-	839— 841
Kenneth, son of Alpin, first king of Scotia minor	-	-	-	841— 858
Constantine, son of Kenneth MacAlpin	-	-	-	862— 877
Donald II, son of Constantine	-	-	-	889— 900
Malcolm I, son of Donald II	-	-	-	943— 954
Kenneth II, son of Malcolm I	-	-	-	971— 995
Malcolm II, son of Kenneth II	-	-	-	1005—1034
Duncan I, grandson of Malcolm II	-	-	-	1034—1040
Malcolm III (Canmore), son of Duncan I	-	-	-	1058—1093
David I, son of Malcolm III	-	-	-	1124—1153

Robert I (Bruce), great-grandson of Isobel, daughter of David, Earl of Huntingdon, the grandson of David I - - -	1306—1329
Robert II (Stuart), grandson of Robert I. His daughter, Jean, married Sir John Lyon of Forteviot and Glamis, whence the House of Bowes-Lyon - - - - -	1371—1390
Robert III, son of Robert II - - - - -	1390—1406
James I, son of Robert III - - - - -	1424—1437
James II, son of James I - - - - -	1437—1460
James III, son of James II - - - - -	1460—1488
James IV, son of James III - - - - -	1488—1513
James V, son of James IV - - - - -	1513—1542
Mary, Queen of Scots, daughter of James V - - - -	1542—1567
James VI and I, son of Mary, Queen of Scots - - - -	1567—1625
George I, son of Sophia, granddaughter of James I - - -	1714—1727
George II, son of George I - - - - -	1727—1760
George III, grandson of George II - - - - -	1760—1820
Victoria, granddaughter of George III - - - - -	1837—1901
Edward VII, son of Victoria - - - - -	1901—1910
George V, son of Edward VII - - - - -	1910—1936
George VI, son of George V, married Lady Elizabeth Bowes- Lyon - - - - -	1936—1952
Elizabeth II, daughter of George VI, married Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, great-great-grandson of Queen Victoria - -	1952

BUCKINGHAM PALACE,

6th July, 1953.

Dear Sir,

I am commanded by the Queen to convey Her Majesty's sincere thanks to you and to the members of your District Council for the book which Mrs. Leslie presented to Her Majesty on your behalf last Friday.

The Queen is very glad to possess this beautiful illuminated account of the descent of her family from the Kings of Dalriada. The volume will always recall to Her Majesty her visit to your town when she had the pleasure of meeting the members of your Council and seeing such a large gathering of your citizens.

Yours sincerely,

M. ADEANE.

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,
BALLYMONEY,

Co. Antrim.

July, 1953.

Dear Sir,

I wish to convey, on behalf of Ballymoney Urban District Council, our humble duty and warmest thanks to the Queen for her most gracious message, as conveyed in your letter of July 6th. The Council rejoices to know that the book, which traces the Royal descent from the Kings of Dalriada, has given pleasure to Her Majesty, and that it will always remind her of her visit to our town. The visit of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh was a most moving experience for all our citizens and neither young nor old who shared in it will ever forget the joy of the occasion.

Yours faithfully,

G. C. ASHE, Chairman.

Members of Ballymoney Urban District Council and Representatives
of Ballymoney Rural District Council presented to Her
Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness
the Duke of Edinburgh on the occasion of their
visit to Ballymoney.

Ballymoney Urban District Council

Chairman : Mr. GEORGE C. ASHE

Vice-Chairman : Mr. JAMES DONAGHY

Members : Messrs. WILLIAM BAIRD

JAMES H. BEARE

HUGH G. CAMPBELL

THOMAS CARSON

JOSEPH R. HARRISON

JAMES L. McAFEE

JAMES McCRACKEN

JOSEPH P. OWENS

ROBERT B. PRICE

ARCHIBALD STUART

Clerk to Council : Mr. WILLIAM HANNA

Ballymoney Rural District Council

Chairman : Mr. SAMUEL TORRENS

Clerk to Council : Mr. JAMES HANNA

(An Appendix to the Queen's Book)

North Antrim and the Rebirth of European Civilisation

It might seem as if nothing more could be added to the account we have given, in our introduction to the Royal Descent, to show the historical importance of the expedition which our district sent across the channel at the beginning of the sixth century. That account, however, makes no reference to the vast consequences, not only for Scotland and these islands but also for Europe, which resulted from the fact that the Colony which Fergus the Great founded in Argyle represented a Christian bridge-head thrust into the pagan world. This story cannot be properly told unless we set the expedition against the dark background of the European situation as it was when Fergus sailed from the shores of North Antrim.

The fifth century is memorable for the fall of the Roman Empire, the great power that had for centuries defended European civilisation against the constant threat of barbarian invasion from across the Rhine. The sack of Rome in 410 marks the beginning of the decline of her power, and before the end of the century the triumph of the barbarian tribes, which had poured out of the dark forests of Germany, was complete. Stayed only by the Atlantic, they had in their course brought desolation to many fair cities and well-ordered countrysides. The almost total collapse, of civilisation and of Christianity, which resulted from the dread upheavals of those times, is fitly described as the "Dark Age," which culminated in what Rashdall, in his 'Universities of the Middle Ages', has called the "almost total night of the seventh century."

This collapse of civilisation also involved Roman Britain, for from the country which we now call England, the mainly Christianised inhabitants were driven by the pagan Anglo-Saxons into the mountains of Wales and Cumberland.

Ireland alone of the Countries of Western Europe remained outside the dark curtain which now shrouded the Continent, and here Christianity, introduced in the century which saw the Roman Empire shaking on its foundations, flourished unhindered, as well as that love of learning which was deeply rooted in the people of this land.

But the Dark Age, after enduring for four centuries, at last passed away, and European civilisation experienced its first renaissance. This rebirth of civilisation was chiefly due to the efforts of Irishmen, who won such reputation for this country that the Continent knew it as "the Island of Saints and Scholars."

I.

The first step (and experience shows that the first step is often the most important), on the way to the Continent, was taken when this Christianised district of North Antrim sent its expedition into pagan Argyle and thus ended the isolation of Ireland from the pagan world.

It was natural that the whole country should follow, often with grave concern, the varying fortunes of the Dalriada colonists in their struggle with the warlike Picts. The disastrous defeat which they sustained in 561 at the hands of Brude, king of Pictland, was of special concern to Columba, renowned amongst his contemporaries as a statesman, poet, scholar and saint, who saw the strategic importance of the new Dalriada from a missionary point of view, when he planned to leave Ireland.

There was, however, another powerful reason behind Columba's decision to go to Argyle. Columba knew that wise counsels were needed in the colony if it was to recover from the disaster it had sustained in recent battle. These he was specially fitted to offer, because he was a member of the Dalriadic royal family, his father Fedlimid being the grandson not only of Conall Gulban, son of Niall of the Nine Hostages, but also of Loarn, one of the two brothers who accompanied Fergus, son of Erc, king of North Antrim Dalriada, on the expedition. These reasons, and there may have been others, made it inevitable that Columba, when he decided to leave Ireland on his mission, should go to the territory held by his kinsmen.

Columba and his twelve companions left Ireland in 563, and having received from Conall, king of the Dalriadic colony, the small island of Iona, he established his community there. What Iona became is best told in the memorable words of Dr. Samuel Johnson in his 'Journey to the Western Islands' :—"We were now

treading that illustrious Island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and blessings of religion . . . That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plains of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona."

We have 'The Life of St. Columba,' written by Adamnan, one of Columba's successors in the abbacy of Iona. This records Columba's journey to the royal residence of Brude at Inverness, where, after an interview which began in stormy fashion, he secured permission from the King to preach to his subjects. Using the bridge-head held by his kinsmen, Columba was able to pass readily into all parts of Pictland and before he died in 597 he knew that Christianity was firmly established in that land.

Adamnan also records Columba's success in reorganising the colony. It was on his advice that Aidan was chosen to succeed Conall in place of the prince already nominated. The wisdom of this decision was amply justified for Aidan proved to be a king of outstanding merit, who won a place for his kingdom such as it had not held before. He is the most famous of the kings who ruled between Fergus the Great and Kenneth MacAlpin, a period of three hundred and forty years. The setting aside of the legal successor to Conall at that troubled time, so contrary to Brehon or Irish law, illustrates the powerful influence of Columba acting, not as a missionary, but as a senior member of the Dalriadic royal family.

It should be mentioned that Adamnan tells us that Columba inaugurated Aidan as King on Iona. He records that there "laying his hand upon his head he ordained and blessed him." This reference to the Christian inauguration of a monarch is probably the earliest anywhere to be found.

II.

The conversion of the Picts had a profound effect upon the whole of Ireland and men flocked to Iona in great numbers. It was natural that the minds of these should turn southwards to the country held by the Anglo-Saxons. They were therefore prepared to answer the appeal which came from Oswald, king of Northumbria, in 635, who having regained his throne asked Iona, where he had found refuge when in exile, to send him missionaries for the conversion of his pagan subjects. St. Aidan was sent in response and on Lindisfarne was founded a second Iona, which brought light and learning to the people of north and middle England.

One of these Englishmen, the Venerable Bede, born forty years after the founding of Lindisfarne, and known as the "Father of English History," acknowledges the debt which his nation owed to Ireland in the seventh and eighth centuries. He records, in his famous History, that "many of the nobles and also of the lower ranks of the (English) nation set out thither (to Ireland), either for the grace of learning or for a more austere life. All these the Irish willingly received and saw to it to supply them with food day by day without cost, and books for studies and teaching free of charge." (Bede, Hist. Eccl., Bk. 3, ch. 27). Every School in Ireland, from Derry to Lismore, was open to these English men and a "Saxon Quarter" was opened for them in the old "university" of Armagh.

But it will be asked, what did these Englishmen learn in these Irish schools? In view of the number of documents available the answer can readily be given. As these schools were religious institutions, the Holy Scriptures and theological subjects were closely studied. Hebrew, Greek and Latin were, therefore, taught. What is remarkable, however, about these schools of long ago was the wide range of subjects taught, but the most surprising feature of their curriculum was the importance that was attached to the study of the ancient writers of Greece and Rome. We thus find that during that period when the Continent was plunged in darkness, literary as well as spiritual, Virgil, Ovid, Cicero, Lucian, Terence, were studied in the schools of Ireland. The Greek classics also received attention and as C. H. Robinson writes, in his 'Conversion of Europe':—"It was commonly said in the days of Charles the Bald (823-877) that anyone on the Continent who knew Greek was an Irishman or had obtained his knowledge from an Irishman." We shall show later how important was this preservation of the wisdom of the ancients in the schools of Ireland.

We conclude this brief account of the schools of Ireland by quoting the words of another Englishman, the historian and antiquarian, William Camden, born in London in 1551, who as a result of his researches wrote:—"Cur Anglo-Saxons of that day used to flock together to Ireland, as a market of learning; whence it is that we continually find it said in our writers concerning holy men of old, 'He was sent away to be educated in Ireland'."

III.

The success of Iona, in lifting a corner of the dark curtain which shrouded Europe, stirred Ireland to further action and, seven years before the death of Columba in 597, there sailed from Bangor (one of the most famous of Irish schools) Columbanus and his twelve companions. Arriving in Gaul (France), which had been swept by successive invasions during the previous century, Columbanus passed through a land where all the bonds which hold society together were dissolved, until he came to the kingdom of Burgundy, in the south-east. From Sigebert, the king, he received permission to settle his community in the old Roman castle of Annegray, in the wild and mountainous district of the Vosges. This was accomplished in spite of great hardships and soon men were attracted in large numbers by the light and learning which they received from Columbanus and his Irish companions. Soon another house was founded eight miles away at Luxeuil. This had been a Roman town, famous for the splendour of its buildings but which had been left a pile of ruins by Attila and his hordes. Its few remaining inhabitants were all pagans. Here too the appeal of this champion of Christianity and civilisation was found irresistible, and a further house was founded at Fontaine. Among those who went to these houses were hundreds of the sons of the principal men of the Franks and Burgundians, descendants of the barbarian invaders from Germany.

At the end of twenty years the crisis came which gave a new direction to the activity of Columbanus. Burgundy was ruled at the time by Brunehilda as queen-regent for her grandson Thierry. Like her enemy, Fredegonde, queen of the western kingdom of the Franks, known as "the enemy of God and man," Brunehilda was utterly unscrupulous as to the means she used to preserve her power. Rebuked by Columbanus for her unconscionable conduct in respect of the young king, Brunehilda ordered that he should be driven out of the country.

Columbanus, accompanied by St. Gall and other followers, made his way into Switzerland and there succeeded in settling a number of religious communities as he had done in Burgundy. Brunehilda, however, succeeded in stirring up the population against him and Columbanus, leaving St. Gall behind, crossed the Alps into Italy where he was warmly welcomed by Agilulf, king of the Lombards, who endowed him with the church and territory of Bobbio in the Apennines. There he founded his abbey and school and thus lit the lamp of learning which long illuminated northern Italy. St. Columbanus died in 615, a quarter of a century after he first set foot in France.

IV.

The mission of Columbanus at the end of the sixth century was the beginning of that unparalleled flood of missionaries which Ireland poured on to the Continent during the next four hundred years. These missionaries established themselves in one hundred and five religious settlements in those countries which we now call France, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy. As a result of the influence which these settlements exerted in their respective districts, where men were often more ferocious than wolves, a great expansion of Christianity took place.

It should be added that these disciples of Columbanus were later joined by numbers of Englishmen, who had spent years in Ireland or had been trained by Irish teachers, and these did notable work in those parts of Germany from which their Anglo-Saxon ancestors had come.

As might be expected these disciples of Columbanus were all animated by the spirit of those schools, which Christopher Dawson, in his history 'The Making of Europe,' says :—"made Ireland the leader of Western Culture from the close of the sixth century." The importance of this leadership must now be stressed.

If we are Europeans it is because we have inherited a different tradition of civilisation from that inherited by the people of, for example, India or China, who also have long traditions of civilisation. The difference lies in the importance which we give to the ideas of responsible government, of freedom, of progress, of democracy and democratic education. Now these ideas had their birth in the city life of an ancient European people, the Greeks. Even the scientific outlook, which we are apt to assume as modern, derives its origin from the same source. If we add to Greek thought the concept of Roman law (the basis of British law), we have the secular foundation of European civilisation, now such a pervasive force throughout the world. There was indeed a time when the preservation of Europe's heritage rested solely on Ireland, where as we have seen, the classical tradition was deeply entrenched. Its restoration to the Continent was mainly the work of Irishmen, or Englishmen who had been trained in the schools of Ireland.

All that we have said is thus summed up by Dr. M. R. James in the 'Cambridge Medieval History, iii,' :—"It is safe to predict that sober and critical research will not lessen but increase our sense of the debt which the modern world owes first to Ireland, and after her to Britain, as the preservers and transmitters of the wisdom of old time."

The memorials of those Irishmen who transformed the European scene are scattered over the Continent but here we can only mention a few. In Luxeuil-Les-Bains there stands the statue of St. Columbanus, erected in honour of that Irishman who made the city which he found desolate, the great religious and cultural centre of France during the Middle Ages. One of the Cantons of Switzerland bears the name of St. Gall, one of his faithful followers, as does also the town whose library is famous as having one of the largest collections of Irish manuscripts and books on the Continent. Glarus, another Canton, recalls the memory of a second Irishman. In north-east France are two towns well known to many of our soldiers who fought in that region, St. Omer and St. Valery. They perpetuate the names of two others of those Irishmen who helped St. Columbanus to found Luxeuil and who later founded churches in that part of the country.

V.

This brief account of that missionary and cultural activity of Irishmen, which played a major part in bringing about a rebirth of religion and classical learning in Britain and Western Europe, will show the expedition of the Dalriad Scots from North Antrim as one of the great seminal events in the history of European Civilisation. It was the first of a series of events which included the foundation of the Christian "university" of Iona, the conversion of the Picts of North Britain, and the spread of Christianity and classical learning over the western world.

When this record is added to our earlier account of the expedition, which recalls the fact that the very name, the kingdom, and the royal family of Scotland, and, therefore of England, through the House of Stuart, had their origin in the new Dalriada which Fergus the Great founded, it becomes apparent that no other district in the British Isles has a more important event in its history. North Antrim has a great and noble tradition of which we should be immensely proud. We must not let it be forgotten.

Additional Notes—Fergus, Loarn and Angus

“In the year 503 three brothers named Fergus, Loarn and Angus, sons of a chief named Erc, a direct descendant of Carbery Riada, led a colony to Scotland from their own district in the Irish Dalriada : descendants of the Munster settlers of three centuries before. They took possession of a large territory, of which Fergus, commonly called Fergus MacErc, and also known as Fergus More (the Great), was the first king. The descendants of these colonists ultimately mastered the whole country, and from them its name was changed from Alban to Scotia or Scotland. Fergus was the ancestor of the subsequent kings of Scotland; and from him, in one of their lines of genealogy, descend, through the Stuarts, our present royal family.

The memory of these princes is deeply graven on the history of Scotland ; and many Scottish persons and places have been named from them, of which examples will occur to anyone moderately acquainted with the history and topography of Scotland.”

—From ‘A Social History of Ancient Ireland.’
Vol. I, p. 82, by Dr. P. W. Joyce.

Nature of Celtic Kingship

The kingship introduced into Scotland by Fergus More was of the semi-divine type, with which archaeological research has made familiar. To a Celtic people, the fertility of the soil, the increase of the flocks, the favourableness of the weather, the success of the battle; in short, the whole prosperity of the tribe, depended upon its having a king of the true lineage, inducted by the proper ceremonial.

Kingship did not necessarily pass immediately from father to son but, in obedience to the law of Tanistry, to “the oldest and most worthy man of the same blood.” The vital necessity of having a king of the true lineage made it essential that the pedigree of all claimants should be preserved, either in documentary form, or in the memories of the sennachies. It was customary for the High-Sennachy to recite the pedigree of a new king at his induction.

Scottish Coronation

The Lord Lyon King of Arms, Sir Thomas of Learney, who is the highest authority in such matters, in his revision of ‘The Clans and Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands’ by Frank Adam (1952), shows that the custom of pro-

claiming the pedigree of the king was followed in Scotland. He gives on page 37, as one of the two distinctive features of their Coronations, "the inaugural rites of the kings of Dalriada. These included the declamation of the Royal lineage back to Fergus Mor MacErc, by the High-Sennachie (who evolved into the Lord Lyon King of Arms, whose judicial robe of crimson velvet is that of the Celtic Royal Sennachie)."

The last occasion on which a King was crowned according to the Scottish rite took place in 1651, when Charles II was crowned at Scone, "with great solemnity and magnificence. The Lyon King of Arms rehearsed the Royal line of the Kings upward to Fergus the First." ('History of the Rebellion,' Clarendon.)

Fordun, the first Scottish historian, states that at the coronation of Alexander III, in 1249, the Highland Sennachie's recitation of the pedigree was continued past Fergus More MacErc, back to the first of our Irish Kings. It is likely that this was customary and that James I had his own coronation in mind when he reminded his Council that "the ancient kings of Scotland are descended of the kings of Ireland."

Descent of Erc from Riada

Fergus, the son of Erc, the son of Eochaid Muin-remor,
the son of Angus Fir, the son of Fedlimid Aislingech,
the son of Angus Buidnech, the son of Fedlimid Ruamnach,
the son of Sen-chormac, the son of Cruitlinde, the son of Findfece,
the son of Archircir, the son of Eochaid Antoit,
the son of Fiachra Cathmail, the son of Eochaid Riata,
the son of Conaire.

(from 'Early Sources of Scottish History,' p. clvii, by A. O. Anderson
Conaire II, father of Riata or Riada, was High King of Ireland, A.D. 212-220.

KING LISTS

King lists will be found in 'Early Sources of Scottish History,' by Alan O. Anderson, vol. 1, p.p. CXXIX et seq. Also in 'Scottish Kings,' by Dunbar, 2nd Ed., p.p. 280 et seq. From these lists the descent from father to son can be worked out.

A former Royal Visit to Dalriada

When a high-king ascended the throne he usually made the circuit of Ireland. This was always done in one direction—sunwise. The following extract is taken from the entry in the *Annals of the Four Masters* relating to the march of Brian Boru :—

“A.D. 1005. Brian, son of Cennetigh, proceeded with an army to exact hostages as far as Tirconnell and Tirone. Thence he passed across Fertais-camsa into Dalriada, Dalaradia, Ultonia, and Conallia Muir-theimhne.”

The King leaving his palace at Kincora (Killaloe) marched through Connaught, thence by Assaroe into Tirconnell, always “keeping his left hand to the sea” in accordance with custom. Leaving Donegal he passed through Tirone (which reached up to the sea at Castlerock) and crossing the Bann at the famous ford of Camsa or Camus (two miles above Coleraine) he entered Dalriada. A road ran from the ford southwards until it joined the Tara to Dunseverick road, somewhere in the region of Kennedy’s Corner, and this was probably the route which he followed on his way to Dalaradia, the kingdom which lay south of Dalriada.

Five years after this visit Brian Boru fell in the battle of Clontarf, but not before he had gained a final victory over the Danes, who had for two centuries devastated Ireland. The beginning of their era of supremacy began in 831 when Thorgils or Turgesius, the Danish leader, entered the Bann at Coleraine and sailed his fleet of “swift-ships” up to Lough Neagh. From thence he assaulted Armagh and established there the pagan worship of Thor.

The interest which has been aroused in London by the discovery of the ruins of a temple of Mithras is symptomatic of a growing interest in local history. Therefore all North Antrim people should be grateful that the Ballymoney Urban District Council presented to the Queen, in such handsome fashion, on the occasion of her visit, a book which recalled so memorable a page in the annals of this district. The Appendix, now added, will, I hope, emphasise still further its great importance.

I wish to express my sense of obligation to Mr. G. E. Gordon, Headmaster of Dalriada School, for the trouble he has taken in reading my manuscript, and for the many valuable suggestions he has made. I also wish to thank most warmly, Mr. William Hanna for the helpfulness he has shown in the reproduction of this book, as well as Miss Jean Hogg, for the marvellous accuracy with which she has translated my often obscure writing into print.

J. T. ARMSTRONG, Canon.

The Rectory,
Ballymoney.
October, 1954.

