

## Origins & Colonization

*The history of Ireland from the first colonization of the country.*

George Pepper

1835

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*The origin of the Milesians or Scots traced to Phœnius. An account of his successors ; and their migrations, until they invaded Ireland, A. M. 2736.*

We come now to treat of an epoch of Irish history, which has been, more than any other in our annals, illustrated and attested by a combination of genius and historical testimony that establishes its basis on a rock of irrefragable accuracy, which can no more be shaken by the cavils of doubt and scepticism, than the pyramids of Egypt by the idle blast of the Sirocco. In this era the horizon of our history was overcast by no fictitious clouds ; letters and light were introduced into Ireland by our Milesian ancestors, and TRUTH was the deity they worshipped.

Our Scythian origin has not been even questioned by INNES or Macpherson, in all their visionary essays to despoil Erin of the unfading garlands which her Fingals, [*Fion Mac Cumhal*,) Ossians, and Columbas entwined round her brows. For Buchannon himself says, “ the Scythians becoming too numerous in Spain, many of them forsook that country and settled in Ireland, which they called *Scota*, in honor of the wife of Milesius, their chief.”

Phœnius, who, next to Cadmus of Phœnicia, is most eminent for the invention of letters, was the great progenitor of the Milesian line. He was the descendant of Magog the son of Japhet, the son of Noah. We have scriptural authority for saying that Japhet had seven sons, whose posterity peopled not only Europe, but part of Asia. The descendants of Gomer inhabited Gaul and Germany ; those of Magog occupied Scythia, which they rendered so renowned for martial glory. Madai and Javan settled in the different provinces of Greece. Thubal, who was the inventor of the Jewish harp, possessed Spain and Portugal. Messech, Italy. And Thyras obtained the sovereignty of Thrace. Of the children of Magog, the great progenitor of the Scythian nation, the inspired pensman has given us no account ; but all our chronicles, particularly those that are deemed most authentic, as the Book of Invasions, the White Book, called *Leabar-Dhroma-Sneachta*, and the Book of Conquests, concur in the assertion that he had three sons, *Baath*, *Jobath* and *Fathochta* ; from Baath descended Feniusa Farsa, king of Scythia, who was the founder of the Gadelians. Jobath was the ancestor of the Bactrians, Parthians, and Amazons. Fathochta was the progenitor of Partholanus, and consequently of the Nemedians, Fir-bolgs, and Tuatha de Danans, as well as of the Goths and Huns.

Our Ethiric historians commence their annals of our Scythian origin with Phœnius, the son of Baath, the great source whence flows the Milesian stream. Our antiquarians say that Phœnius got the name of Saisde, or the sage, from his knowledge of philosophy, and his intimate acquaintance with the different languages that originated from the confusion of tongues at Babel. He also gained immortality by inventing eight letters of the alphabet, in addition to the sixteen signs of Cadmus. Possessing sovereign authority in Phœnicia, he selected seventy-two learned men whom he dispersed to the different countries that were then inhabited, to learn the language that prevailed in each, commanding them to return at the

expiration of seven years. When that period was elapsed, these literary missionaries came back to the court of Phænius, with minds enriched and elevated with foreign lore. Schools were founded by the Prince, for these linguists to impart a portion of their acquired knowledge to their countrymen.

But no sooner were these schools opened than Phænius discovered that the memory of the teachers was not sufficiently tenacious of the principles they had studied in their respective peregrinations, so that the necessity of fixing on some arbitrary characters to impress the recollection, and represent the original elementary sounds of the human voice, forcibly suggested itself. To attain so desirable an end, his first object was to ascertain the number of these primary sounds that enter into the composition of words ; and to effect this he judged it expedient to add eight letters or signs to the alphabet of Cadmus. He is said to have been assisted in this invention by Gadel and Gar, two Hebrew philosophers of erudition. The Irish appellation for our mother tongue was “ *Teanga Pheni,*” or the language of Phænius. This Alphabet served to record the transactions of history, philosophy, and science ; but the sacred mysteries of religion were registered in a character which was only understood by the Druids or high priests. Raymond, in a long dissertation, satisfactorily proves that the occult letters or signs used by the Phœnician priesthood, were in formation and identity, the same characters, in which the Irish Brehons preserved their records. Before paper or parchment was invented, the ancient Irish Druids caused the sacred signs to be cut on tablets of marble, and sometimes inscribed with a red hot iron on smoothed boards of the beech tree. Several of these Druidical records are still to be seen in the museum of Trinity College, Dublin. Ware, Camden, and the Welsh antiquarian, *Llhwyd*, have adduced insurmountable arguments and logical deductions to support the fact alleged by our historians, that the use of the Phœnician alphabet was coeval with the landing of the Milesians in Ireland.

“ The Phœnician and Irish languages,” says Llhwyd, “ are similar in meaning, and generally in orthography ; so much so, indeed, that they agree as much together as any one of the Greek dialects doth with another, and more exactly, in fact, than the languages of two remote parts of the same kingdom.” But it is time to turn to Phænius.

This Prince, thirsting after new knowledge, committed the care of the kingdom to his eldest son, NEANIUL, and setting out on his travels, he visited several seminaries, in order to increase the acquisition of his accomplishments. After a long peregrination, he took up his residence in the vicinity of Babylon, where he opened a school and gave instructions to several Egyptians, for according to Herodotus, the youth of Egypt in those days derived all their knowledge of letters, geometry and architecture from the Babylonians. Leaving this seminary under the supeintendence of competent preceptors, he returned to his kingdom with the view of promoting a general system of education throughout all his dominions ; but shortly after his return he was arrested in his laudable career by the hand of death.

NEANIUL took the reigns of government, and his brother Niul (the remote progenitor of the royal dynasty of O’Neil,) was appointed to the office of high priest. His legislative wisdom and literary attainments spread his fame over Europe and Asia. Pharaoh Cingress, king of Egypt, hearing of the celebrity of this paragon of learning, became so extremely anxious to see him that he sent ambassadors to invite the erudite Prince to his court. Flattered by the invitation, he repaired to Egypt, attended by a gorgeous retinue. At the court of Pharaoh the graces of his person and the insinuation of his manners captivated the heart of the Egyptian princess, Scota, while the display of his talents prepossessed the king and courtiers in his favor. A matrimonial alliance was soon solemnized, and Niul received possession of the territory of Capacirunt, on the borders of the Red Sea, as the dowry of his wife. The issue of

this union was a son, whom Niul named GADEL, in honor of his father's preceptor, who had borne the same name.

Keating and O'Flaherty entertain us with a historical detail of the intimacy of Moses and Niul, which, from the silence of other creditable writers, we think we may more properly call it a *tale* of Romance. CORMOC, the royal historian, nor St. Fiech, the Biographer of St. Patrick, makes no mention of the connexion of Moses and Niul, though each of these authors state that Ireland was anciently called *Tuatha Phæni*, or the Island of Phænius.

Indeed, Ring Cormoc in his Psalter, instead of synchronizing the Jewish Prophet and the Phœnician Prince, informs us, that between the period of the Gadelians quitting Egypt, and that of the deluge, 470 years had elapsed, whereas the era of Moses' departure from captivity, is fixed by the most accurate chronologists 160 years later than that of the birth of Gadelglas. But as the story has been interwoven in our early annals, we have no right to tear the threads of interpolation out of the historic web. Sir Isaac Newton mentions, somewhere, "that if the alloy of fiction could be separated from the pure ore of fact, many ponderous folio volumes, assuming the name of history, might be committed to the flames, without any loss to the republic of letters." But let us give our version of the story, and embody its substance in our own language.

It was during the residence of Niul, at Capacirunt, adjoining the Red sea, that the Israelites, under the command of Moses and Aaron, attempted to free themselves from their Egyptian bondage, and in the course of their march they encamped near the house of the Prince, who surprised at their number and hostile appearance, went in person to know who they were, and whether they came in peace or war. On his approaching the camp he met Aaron, who gave him a brief detail of the Hebrew nation, and the bondage to which they had been so long subjected in the land of plagues. He then related the wonders and miracles that God had wrought for their deliverance, and the punishments which he inflicted on their unrelenting oppressor. Niul moved and affected by the relation of the holy man, proffered him his assistance, and offered to supply him with corn, and such other necessaries as his country produced. Aaron, after giving a feeling expression to his gratitude, returned to his brother, and joyfully informed him of his interview with a neighboring Prince, and the kind offers of assistance that he so generously made. Moses elated at the intelligence, communicated it to the assembled hosts, to whose bosoms it imparted the vivid beams of hope. It happened on the same night, that the young Prince GADEL, was bit in the neck by a serpent, while bathing in the river. The virulent venom quickly diffused itself through his veins, and poisoned the currents of life, so that he was soon reduced to the last extremity. Niul, alarmed at this fatal accident, and aware of the miraculous powers with which Moses was gifted, carried the expiring Prince to his camp, and entreated that he would extend to his son the healing effects of those attributes with which the supreme Being had invested him. Moses touched with pity for the tortures of the child, instantly complied with the request of the afflicted parent, and laying his wand on the wound, the young Prince immediately recovered. As soon as the cure was performed, Moses locked a chain, which he held in his hand, round the neck of Gadel, whence he received the name of *Glas*, or of the lock. Moses then predicted, that wherever any of the posterity of *Gadel-glas* should reign, no venomous reptiles should ever infest the country, or be able to live on the soil on which they would once imprint their footsteps. Niul overjoyed at the recovery of his son, and the promise of the prophecy, cheerfully furnished Moses with such provisions as were necessary to his journey, not however, without apprehensions that his civility to the Israelites might arouse the jealousy, and draw down the vengeance of his father-in-law upon his devoted head. As soon as he imparted these fears to Moses, he solicited Niul either to remove with him into the land of promise, where he should enjoy a part of the possessions destined for the Hebrews, or if this did not

seem a pleasing alternative, he promised to deliver up the Egyptian shipping into his hands, by which means he and his people could keep aloof until he saw how God should settle affairs between him and Pharaoh, who was making preparations to pursue the children of Israel, in order to bring them back to bondage. The latter proposition having been accepted by Niul, Moses instantly despatched a thousand men to secure the Egyptian fleet, who succeeded in their design of putting Niul in the possession of it. He lost no time in embarking with all his followers, and standing out to sea to await the event of Moses' flight from the tyranny of Pharaoh. Next day, according to holy writ, the waters of the red sea were divided, and the Egyptian Monarch, in attempting to follow Moses, perished with all his hosts, by which memorable event, the fears of Niul being dissipated, he returned to his former possessions, and reigned in peace for many years. When our intelligent readers peruse the foregoing ingenious fictions, they will allow, that like the episode narrating the meeting of Dido and Æneas, they serve to decorate with the flowers of romance and story, which the weight of its glaring anacronism must sink in the quagmire of utter discredit.

What credulity can be persuaded that Moses could send a thousand men to seize on the Egyptian fleet, while Pharaoh with all his forces, was in actual pursuit of him? Dr. Keating endeavors to account for the imaginary alliance of Moses and Niul, by supposing that the latter, like many of the characters in scripture, lived some hundred of years; but a hypothesis is a bad ground-work on which to raise a fabric of historical fact.

Those who reject the preceding story, which has indeed no claim to historical credence, derive the word *Glas*, the surname of Gadel, from the brightness and brilliant polish of his arms, which reflected a green lustre. From this *Gadel-Glas* the Milesians received the appellation of *Gadelians*, and from his Mother, *Scota*, that of *Scots*. The etymology of these names, and also of the name Phœnicians, given to our Milesian ancestors, is confirmed by the following ancient verse —

“*Phæm o' Phæmus robearta : brig gan dochta  
Gaoidheal O' Gaoidhal-Glas-garta. scut'o Scota.*”

*That is, we are unquestionably called Phœnicians from our renowned progenitor,  
Phœnius; Gaddians from Gadel-Glas, and Scots from Scota.*

Gadel succeeded his father Niul, A. M. 1996, and seems to have enjoyed a peaceable reign. It was, indeed, too short to witness many revolutions. His son *Easru* assumed regal authority; but his reign, which it is said lasted thirty years, is not distinguished in history. He died in 2036 of the world, and left a son named *Sru*, who succeeded to the throne. At this era, the sovereignty of Egypt was swayed by *Pharaoh an Tuir*, whom our historians represent as a brave and accomplished Prince. He recruited the forces of his kingdom, and exerted himself to repair the ravages with which the divine wrath devastated the country during the reign of his wicked redecessor, Pharaoh Cingress.

This Monarch, either not knowing the descendants of Niul, or according to some authorities, incensed at the assistance which the Gadelians afforded Moses in his flight from the Egyptians, entered the country of Capacirunt with fire and sword.

Sru, unable to cope with so formidable an opponent, found no other resource of safety from the danger by which he was menaced, but in flying into the country of his ancestors. This flight took place, according to O'Halloran, A. M. 2040. The irruption of Pharaoh was, however, so rapid and unexpected, that Sru could only collect four ships, in which he embarked, with the principal nobility, their wives, and such valuable effects as they could

carry with them in so precipitous an embarkation. This event occurred in the tenth year of Sru's reign. Sir Francis Walsingham, in a latin work, published in 1563, called *Hypodigma*, alludes to the flight of Sru out of Egypt in the following passage, which we translate—" After Pharaoh Cingress and all his bands perished in the Red sea, his successor *Pharaoh an Tuir*, burning with resentment against a noble Scythian who resided in Egypt, and who was a blood relation of the former reigning family, whom Pharaoh dreaded as a rival in the monarchy. He therefore resolved to drive this competitor out of Egypt, lest he might attempt to seize the government. The Scythian Prince not having the means of asserting his right to the crown of Egypt, fled to Spain, and thence to Ireland." This account, however, is only true in part, as they did not come direct from Egypt into Spain ; for Dagha, who led the Gadelians into Spain, was the fifth in descent from Sru, under whose command they departed from Egypt, to elude the vengeance of Pharaoh an Tuir. From Egypt, the Gadelians directed their course to the Island of Crete, in the Mediterranean sea, where they obtained a peaceable settlement, and civilized the rude manners of the inhabitants, by introducing the study of literature and the arts. They instructed them in the knowledge of the Divine Being, the reverence and obedience due to him, and the duties which he has thought proper to impose upon man.

Sru ruled over his followers in Crete 25 years, and by his death the government devolved upon Heber Scot, his son. After a period of twenty years administration, in the Island of Crete, he for some cause, unexplained by our annalists, abandoned the Island, A. M. 2096, and set sail for Phœnicia, the country of his ancestors, where he was kindly received by his relatives, and after obtaining the regal authority, he died full of years and virtue. His son, *Bamhain*, ascended the throne in spite of the opposition of *Naoine*, the legitimate descendant of Neaniul, and the rightful heir of the crown of Phœnicia. The contention of these competitors filled the kingdom with all the horrors of civil war. Fortune seemed long undecided, and the contending rivals alternately experienced the rewards of victory, and the vicissitudes of defeat. *Bamhain*, however, after a disturbed reign of 35 years, fell by the sword, and made way for his son, *Oghamhain*, who took command of the shattered forces of his father, and by fortune and perseverance, retrieved, in some degree, the losses which had been sustained during the former reign. He met, however, with that fate to which a scene of continued hostilities must have necessarily exposed him, and died in battle, A. M. 2176. His son, Tait, of whom nothing memorable is recorded, became his successor. After his death, which is supposed to have happened in 2211, the command devolved on *Aghnoin*, who defeated and slew his rival Riffleoir, the son of Riffil, the lineal descendant of Neaniul, the son of Phœnius. This victory, however, was productive of consequences which proved worse than a defeat ; for the followers of Riffleoir, collecting all their strength, vowed vengeance on the house of Niul. To evade the storm that foreboded such terrible results, *Aghnoin* and his adherents resolved to abandon a country where peace and happiness could not be enjoyed any longer by them. They accordingly embarked on board of their fleet, and committed themselves to the guidance of winds and waves, without having shaped their course for any particular port of destination. On this voyage of chance, *Aghnoin*, was accompanied by his brother Heber, who presided as High Priest ; by his three sons, *Ealloid*, *Laimh-Fionn*, and *Laimh-Glas*, as well as by Caicer, and Cing, the two sons of Heber.

His fleet was wafted about for two years, by the caprice of tempests and billows, daring which perilous period, *Aghnoin* died, A. M. 2241, and was succeeded in the command by his eldest son, *Laimh-Fionn*, the white-handed. Shortly after, he and his marine wanderers were driven by a storm into the Island of Cherine, (Cyprus,) where they stopped to refit their fleet and recruit themselves, for a space of fifteen months. Here death deprived them of the high priest, Heber, and his nephew *Laimh-Glas*, who were interred with all the pomp and honors due to their rank. Heber was succeeded in the pontificate by his son Caicer, whom the Gadelians consulted relative to their future destinies. Having sacrificed to the gods, and

particularly to Neptune, he foretold, that the settlement reserved for their posterity, was the most western Island in Europe, and one which Princes of their race would rule over for many centuries ; but that some generations should intervene before they could get possession of the “ Green Isle of the Ocean.” Having made the necessary preparations for a long voyage, they set sail, and directed their course to Gothland, where Laimh-Fionn had a son, who was reputed a Prince of wisdom and valor.

In this voyage they encountered every species of danger, as their course lay through perilous seas full of rocks, peopled by seducing sirens. To steer clear through these difficulties, we are gravely told by the Psalter of Cashel, that, as soon as the fleet reached the straits of Messina, the high priest, Caicer, caused the mariners to stuff their ears with wax, by which contrivance they escaped the rocks and quicksands, to which the magic influence of siren fascination drew so many hapless barks. We think that some poet, and not a historian, foisted this fable of the sirens, which originated with the Phœnicians, into the Psalter of Cashel, unknown to king Cormoc. The Gadeliens succeeding according to their wishes in avoiding the dangers to which their voyage exposed them, at length effected a landing at Getulia, on the African coast.

As soon as they went on shore they proceeded to return solemn thanks to the gods for their safety. Having explored the country, and ascertained the character of its inhabitants, they came to a determination of making a permanent settlement in a land which appeared to be fertile and verdant.

Shortly after their arrival, their chief, Laimb-Fionn, died. A. M. 2281, and was succeeded by his eldest son, HEBER, called *Glun-Fionn*, or, the white-knee. Our annalists characterize him as a prince that united the prudence of the sage to the intrepidity of the warrior ; but we are not told when or where he displayed these accomplishments ; nor indeed is there any particular notice taken of the transactions of the Gadeliens for a period of 315 years, which they are supposed to have remained in Getulia. By an ancient poem, written by *Giolla Caomhan*, we are informed that the Gadeliens remained only thirty years in Gothland. But though Keating agrees with the author as to the country, he rejects the period of time which he assigns for their continuance, and asserts that there are Irish records of great authority which relate that the Gadeliens remained 150 years in the country, where eight generations passed away during their rule. This is indeed a period of history which is involved in a dusky mantle of obscurity through which the eye of inquiry will never be able to penetrate. Heber’s throne was successively filled by his son Adhnoin-Fionn, his grand-son Feabhar-Glas, his great-grand-son Neannail, and by the descendants of the latter, Nuagliadh, Allad, Earachda, and Deaghfatha, the father of the renowned BRATHA. The latter prince, in early life betrayed a capacity for governing, and a spirit of ambition that spurned the narrow limits of his father’s territories, and bid fair to shine with lustre in a suitable sphere of action.

No sooner had he assumed the sovereign authority than he formed, the determination of gaining by conquest a country that would afford a sufficient scope for the display of his genius. He quickly fitted out a fleet, and having sailed through the Mediterranean Sea, and passed the pillars of Hercules, with some difficulty he succeeded in landing on the coast of Galacia, where he gallantly repulsed the natives, who flocked to the shores to oppose him.

BRATHA, after repelling the hostile attacks of a warlike and ferocious people, caused breast-works and entrenchments to be raised to secure his army from the further molestation of the natives. According to the Psalter of Cashel, Bratha and his son Breogan had to fight fifty-four pitched battles before they were able finally to establish their dominion in Spain.

Death terminated the glorious reign of Bratha, A. M. 2597, when his valiant son, BREOGAN, mounted the throne of Spain by the consent of the nation.

He built a city for the residence of his people, which he surrounded with a wall and deep fosse. From him the city was called Breogan Sgiath, or the shield of Breogan. He also erected a light-house for the direction of shipping from England and Ireland, with which countries his subjects carried on an extensive trade. This Pharos was furnished with reflecting and refracting glasses, globes, and other nautical instruments. This heroic prince, from whom the dynasty of the house of Braganza is descended, was the father of ten legitimate sons, namely, Cuailyne, Cuala, Blath, Aibhle, Nar, Bregha, Fuadh, Muirtheimhne, Ith, and Bille. The latter was the father of GOLLAMH, who was designated, by way of distinction and dignity, "*Mil-Espaine*," or the hero of Spain, who, under the name of Milesius, cuts such a distinguished figure in the annals of Erin.

Breogan and his sons gained many victories in Spain, and finally succeeded in reducing that country and Portugal to his subjection. His son GOLLAMH covered himself with glory in every battle, and his skill and heroism generally secured the victory.

Having finally established their settlement in Spain, Gollamh (Milesius) became desirous of an opportunity of entwining new laurels in his wreath of fame. By his father's consent he fitted out an expedition with which he sailed from the port of Corunna, in order to assist his friends in Phœnicia, who were at this time greatly distressed by foreign wars. He was accompanied by twelve literary and scientific men who were to take observations in astronomy and the arts, and keep a regular journal of the discoveries they might make, or the improvements they might meet.

The chivalric prince was received with warm demonstrations of respect and regard by his cousin Reffleoir, at the Scythian court. His acknowledged military talents and undaunted courage pointed him out to the king as a person every way qualified to command his armies. In order to knit the bonds of relationship still closer, and add "a tower of strength" to his power, the king gave Milesius his daughter, the beautiful Seang, in marriage. At the head of the army he soon expelled the invaders from the dominions of his father-in-law, suppressed revolts, and humbled all the enemies of the Scythian nation.

He had two sons by the Phœnician Princess, Don and Aireach in giving birth to the latter of whom she died. The father was assiduous in instructing his sons in military talents, and in all the accomplishments that can adorn and polish intellect. His victories and his generosity raised him so high in the estimation of the people that his popularity filled the mind of the king with alarm and jealousy, who, apprehensive that the Spanish prince might attempt to usurp the sovereign power and wrest it from his family, after the example of his ancestors, took measures to have him assassinated. But some friend intimated privately to Gollamh the fate that was intended for him, who on hearing the treachery of his father-in-law, resolved to have vengeance. In order to deceive the king he feigned indisposition, whilst his adherents were making the necessary preparations to accomplish his intention. All being ready for the execution of his plan, he at the head of a chosen band of his countrymen forced the gates of the palace, and dispatched the ungenerous Reffleoir. Milesius not thinking it prudent to entrust himself any longer to the faith of the Phœnicians, set sail for Egypt, where he proffered his services to Pharaoh Nectonebus, the king, who was then engaged in war with the Ethiopians. Pharaoh wishing to avail himself of the assistance of a prince whose exploits were the theme of universal applause, immediately appointed him generalissimo of his armies.

He engaged the Ethiopians in several conflicts, with incredible success, and proved himself worthy of the dignity conferred upon him by the Egyptian Monarch, who, in consideration of the important services which he experienced at his hands, gave him his daughter, *Scota*, in marriage. By *Scota* he had two sons, born in Egypt, *Heber-Fionn*, and *Amhergin*. During the absence of *Milesius*, his father *Bille* died in Spain, and in consequence, the Spaniards began to revolt from the *Gadelian* government. The moment *Milesius* heard of the disaffection of the Spaniards, he took a final leave of his father-in-law, and hastened back to chastise the rebels of his country. No sooner was he landed than his very name, like that of him who threw *Alexander*, *Hannibal*, and *Cæsar* into the shade. *NAPOLEON*, communicated fear and consternation to the hearts of the insurgents. Tranquillity was soon restored, and *Milesius*, before his death, had the happiness of reigning over a well affected and united people. He died, A. M. 2706, advanced in years, who, after a short time, and was succeeded by his son *Heber-Fionn*, shared the royal power with his younger brother, *Heremon*. *Dr. Keating* alleges, but we know not on what authority, that *Milesius*' voyage from Egypt to Spain, was perilous and protracted, occupying, according to his unauthenticated account, a period of two years, during which he visited *Thrace*, where his wife *Scota* was delivered of a son, called *IR* ; that after refitting his fleet in the *Hellespont*, he again put to sea, and passing through a series of circumnavigations, in the course of which he touched the north of *Britain*, (where another son was born to him, whom he named *Colpa*, or the swordsman,) he at length made the coast of *Spain*. "There is certainly no question" says the profound and erudite *CHARLES O'CONNOR*, "but that the account of the feats and exploits of the *Gadelian* chiefs, taken in a great measure from our *Bards* and *Fileas*, rather than from our authentic annals, is mixed with much fable and colored with the die of invention ; and we need not doubt of the corruption of the stream, as it is mixed with the current of succeeding ages : it is enough that the chiefest heroes mentioned by our old *Bards*, were equally celebrated in the traditions of other learned nations."

Our annalists tell us that *Milesius* had eight sons born in wedlock, and twenty-four who were the fruits of illicit love.

*HEBER-FIONN*, his eldest son by *Seang*, his first wife, in conjunction with his younger brother *Heremon*, assumed the reins of sovereignty, and *Amhergin* was elevated to the pontificate. By the assistance of the twelve *Philosophers*, who accompanied *Gollamh*, alias, *Milesius*, to *Phœnicia* and *Egypt*, these Princes were able to give ample encouragement to the arts and sciences. While they were employed in the salutary endeavor of ameliorating the condition of their people, by diffusing knowledge and morals among them, the country was visited with the dreadful calamities of pestilence and famine, by which they were so weakened, that the neighboring states were once more encouraged to attack them.

In this fallen state of their fortunes, they were unable to surmount the difficulties and dangers that environed them ; nor could they devise any means to resist the hostile attacks with which they were threatened. While bewildered in the mazes of this emergency, without a ray of hope to warm their despair-chilled hearts, *Amhergin*, as if suddenly seized with prophetic inspiration, reminded them of the ancient prediction of his predecessor, *Caicer*. His words raised their spirits from the deepest despondency to the summit of expectation. He informed them that the *Western Island* of the *Atlantic*, which was unknown to their ancestors in the days of *Caicer*, was that destined for the posterity of *Milesius*. The people, on hearing the speech of the high *Priest*, called on their chiefs to conduct them to that *Isle*, where the gods promised them prosperity and happiness. After deliberating in council, they resolved on sending *ITH*, the son of *Breogan*, on whose prudence and sagacity they could rely, to visit the *Island*, and ascertain the strength and character of its inhabitants.



ITH, accordingly set sail from the port of Corunna, in Spain, A. M. 2735, in a strong ship, attended by his son, *Lughaidh*, and a select body of 150 armed men, besides the crew.

His voyage having proved prosperous, he reached the northern coast of Ireland, in a few days after his departure, and landed with all his followers at *Daire Calgach*, now *London-derry*, where he immediately offered sacrifices to Neptune, the favorite marine god of the Phœnicians and Gadelians. The omens did not prove as propitious as he expected, but relying on the fulfilment of the ancient prophecy, he did not sutler his mind to brood in sadness on the discouraging divination. As soon as the Gadelians pitched their tents, numbers of the inhabitants approached their camp to know who they were, and what the strange adventurers wanted in the country of Innis-fail. ITH was astonished to find himself addressed by the people of a foreign clime, in his vernacular language, [1] and gave the inquiries to understand, in the same idiom, that the identity of their language convinced him that he and they must have sprung from one common source of Japhethian ancestry ; that he was driven on their coasts by stress of weather, and that he intended to return as soon as possible to his friends in Spain. The people sympathizing in his distresses, informed him that the Danan Princes, who then ruled the nation, were holding a Congress at *Oilcach Nead*, in the peninsula of *Innis-Shone*, not far from his camp, whither they advised him to repair. This congress assembled here, (where in days of yore the kings of Ulster held their courts,) for the purpose of making an equitable partition of the crown Jewels between three brothers, who had disputed about them. He accordingly presented himself before this assembly, and by his courtly bearing and eloquent address, impressed the Belgian chiefs with so high an idea of his character, that they unanimously agreed to make him their umpire in deciding an unfortunate difference, which, if not averted, was likely to kindle the flames of civil war in the country. The contending brothers unanimously declared that they would cheerfully submit to his decision.

ITH, unwilling to incur the displeasure of either of the Princes, adjudged, that the jewels should be equally divided among the three brothers. He expatiated at the same time, on the advantages resulting from peace and concord, and observed that a country so fruitful, indented as it was with rivers that watered green meadows, and verdant valleys of flowery pasturage, which were never visited with the devastation of the hurricane, seemed designed by bountiful nature, as the abode of contentment and prosperity.

Having reconciled the brothers to each other, he took his leave, and departed with the presents that they presented him, for his ship. No sooner was he gone, however, than the congress began to reflect on the warm eulogium which he had pronounced on the beauty and fertility of the Island ; and many of the chiefs expressed their fears, that so clever and sagacious a leader, would, on his return to his own country, induce the Gadelians to make an attempt to possess the kingdom by conquest. This apprehension, the moment it was expressed, possessed the opinions of the whole assembly. Accordingly a resolution was instantly adopted to cut off the foreigner before he had time to embark. MAC CUIL, one of their military Chieftains, with a force of 150 soldiers, immediately pursued Ith, and soon overtook him, as he marched through a circuitous route, in order to have a better view of the country. ITH, perceiving his pursuers armed, soon concluded what their object was, began to retreat precipitately to his ship, with his little band, and succeeded notwithstanding the celerity of the enemy's march, in gaining the shore. Here, within a cable's length of his vessel, resigning himself to the impulse of that military ardor which he inherited from his ancestors, and which neither the sagacity of age, nor the presence of fatal danger could restrain, he bravely turned on his assailants. The conflict, which soon became sanguinary, was supported with accustomed valor on the one side, and with that confidence which is usually inspired by superior numbers, on the other. After a long and doubtful struggle, the gallant Ith was mortally wounded, and his brave companions in arms, more desirous to preserve the body of

their beloved commander from insult than to contend for the honor of an uncertain victory—a victory from which they could derive no immediate advantage—made good their retreat to the ship. The place where this battle was fought is called to this day *Mugha Ith*, or the scene of Ith's defeat, on the banks of Lough Foyle.

The Gadelians had not proceeded far to sea before their heroic leader died of his wounds. His son LUGH AIDH assumed the command, and conducted them safely to Brigantium. He was careful however to preserve the body of his father till he arrived on the Spanish coast, where it was brought on shore and exposed to the view of the Gadelians, to inspire them with a just resentment of the treachery which they experienced from the inhabitants of Ireland.

Lughaidh then took occasion to inform his countrymen of the salubrity of the climate and luxuriance of the soil of Erin, and that as discord and division prevailed amongst its rulers, that it might be easily conquered. The effect of this speech was to kindle the ambition and resentment of the Gadelians, and the hope of conquest and the desire of revenge gave an impetuous incentive to their resolution of invading Ireland ; with what success shall be seen in the next chapter.

Having now given a brief history of the origin and wanderings of the Gadelians, it is necessary to notice some objections which may be urged against the account we have given of their voyages and travels.

The grounds on which this account is founded have been furnished by our most creditable historians. It may be said that from the imperfect knowledge of navigation in those remote times, it is not probable that the Gadelians could accomplish so many voyages from Egypt to Crete—from Crete to Scythia—thence to Africa—thence to Spain, and thence to Ireland. To remove this objection we must refer to what we have already said with regard to the early knowledge of navigation, in vindicating the history of the four Ante-Milesian Colonies.

“ Voyages and transmigrations,” says M'Geoghegan, “ where the humor of these ancient times. Men had not yet taken root ; and territorial possessions were not established by law, nor defended by justice. The Tyrians, after coasting Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, Gaul, and all the countries which surround the Mediterranean Sea, without stopping at any, entered the ocean by the straits of Gibraltar, and established themselves on the western coast of Spain, where they built the city of Cadiz, a long time before Utica and Carthage were founded, and while naval knowledge was yet in its infancy.” In addition to the remarks of the Abbe M'Geoghegan, we might observe that the Phœnicians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Carthaginians sent colonies into different countries, at a very early age. We are told by the historians that even Carthage, in the age of her glory, after founding 300 cities on the coast of Africa, finding herself still surcharged with inhabitants, sent General Hannon with a fleet of 30,000 volunteers, to survey the countries lying beyond the pillars of Hercules, and to establish colonies, as Strabo terms it, “ *on these remote confines.*”

The Scythians, from whom the Gadelians descended, and who were masters of the vast regions which extend from the Boristhenes to the county of the Massagetes, and from the Saces to the east of the Caspian Sea, had neither cities nor houses. They were always itinerant, and dwelt in tents, now in one country, and again in another.

The ships of King Solomon traded to Arabia, Persia, India, and even to the western coasts of Africa, so that it is more than probable that from the earliest times, and immediately after the flood, men had discovered the secret of constructing vessels after the model of the ark, which had preserved their ancestors from the waters of the deluge.

“ Whatever truth,” says Dr. Warner, “ there may be in the Gadelian voyages, it appears incontestible that the people derive their origin from the Scythians. Their name, *Kinea-Scuit*, (*i.e.* the clan of Scythia,) or Scots, denote their eastern lineage. The agreement of foreign writers with their Fileas and Bards confirms it. Newton, after Appian and others, says that Greece and all Europe have been peopled by the Cimmerians, or Scythians, from the borders of the Pontus Euxinus, who led a wandering life, like the Tartars of the north of Asia.”

It is true indeed that our Senachies have made some mistakes in their manner of conducting; the Gadelians from Scythia to Spain, which, instead of sailing through the Mediterranean, they would fain make us believe that they bent their nautical course through ways that were utterly impassable. But though they have mistaken the line which the Gadelian emigrants pursued, yet they have carefully preserved the names of the different places where they had landed, in their passage from Phœnicia to Spain. This proves satisfactorily that the names related in our annals have been scrupulously preserved without alteration or correction. The testimony adduced from foreign writers by Mr. O’Connor, (which we shall insert in a future note,) in support of the emigration of the *Scota Milesians* from Egypt to Spain, adds strength and solidity to our historical monuments.

[1] The great antiquity of the Irish language, which is the same as the ancient Scythian, affords another proof of the Phœnician origin of the Irish nation, and that the elements of their idiom were brought to Ireland when the use of letters was in its infancy. Indeed, the old Irish bears so great an affinity to the ancient Hebrew, that to those who are masters of both, they appear plainly to be only dialects of the same tongue. This surely lays a fair foundation for an ancient history to be built upon : “ for a nation and language are both of an age, and if a language be ancient, the people must be as old.”—WARNER.

“ In order to discover the original of the Irish nation, I was at the pains to compare all European languages with that of Ireland, and I found it had little agreement with any of them. I then had recourse to the Celtic, the original language of the ancient Celtæ, or Scythians. and I found the affinity so great that there was scarcely a shade of difference. There being such an exact agreement between them, and the Irish having no affinity with any known language in the world, excepting the Hebrew and the Phœnician, this is sufficient, I think, to procure that credit to Irish history which it may justly challenge.”  
—RAYMOND.

The history of Ireland, from the first colonization of the country, down to the period of the English invasion, comprehending the topography of the scenes of battles, and memorable events, as well as a review of the rise and progress of Irish literature and the fine arts .. (1835)

Author : Pepper, George, 1792?-1837

Subject : Ireland — History To 1172

Publisher : Boston, Devereaux & Donahoe, printers

Language : English

Digitizing sponsor : MSN

Book contributor : Columbia University Libraries

Collection : ColumbiaUniversityLibraries; americana

Source : Internet Archive

<http://archive.org/details/historyofireland00pepp>

Edited and uploaded to [www.aughty.org](http://www.aughty.org)

February 12 2013