

BOOK OF THE



CALLAGHAN

CEALLACHAIN CAISIL

KING OF MUNSTER 934-954

**THE FACTUAL AND TRUE ACCOUNT OF HOW THE
EPONYMOUS ANCESTOR OF ALL O'CALLAGHANS
PACIFIED VIKING INVADERS IN THE KINGDOM OF
MUNSTER**

A HERITAGE BOOK RESEARCHED AND EDITED BY

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PREFACE

Welcome to all who are of, or have an interest in, the sept of O'Callaghan.

Though O'Callaghans, inclusive of those with alternate spellings, have spread throughout the world, apart from a few paragraphs here and some pages there, to date a reasonably complete c.v. of the alpha male from whom many thousands of Irish residents and emigrants trace their name, has yet to be brought together in print.

Even the well detailed book, "The O Callaghan Family of County Cork - A History," that was meticulously researched and painstakingly compiled by Joseph F. O'Callaghan, offers no more than five pages on the eponymous ancestor of the O'Callaghans. Surprisingly, Cellachan Caisil's royal career is then dismissed in this work as follows: "In effect, Cellachan was a typical king of the tenth century, warring against his immediate neighbours in the south, plundering districts in the central parts of the island, and achieving modest success." In fact, Joseph's final, and as will be shown inaccurate, line tells, "He was not, however, the hero-ancestor that the author of the Caithreim made him out to be."

In contrast to the above and expanded in ensuing chapters, six years of research, careful study and the account that follows, shows that Ceallachain of Caisil cannot be so easily discounted. He was undoubtedly a most successful and popular king who, in the face of Viking invasions and O'Neill machinations, between the years of 934 and 954, achieved the military and political objectives required by the elders and the twenty-nine tribes of Munster.

My rudder for researching, compiling and writing "Book of The Callaghan" has not been attached to a long pole formed by a rank of professors of history, each handing down an anciently hewn conviction as if it were a silver cup, to generations of anxious and compliant students. The paddle of my interpretations has been given by the influence of iconoclastic journalism and a full life in Commerce formed by the disciplines of the marketing mix, plus common sense. A challenging place where opportunities and insights have first to be identified before a path can be laid, step by stone.

In order to bring as clear a picture as possible into the slice of history occupied by Ceallachain Caisil and his historic protagonists, the Caithreim in the Book of Lismore, various Annals, the fascinating 942 poem by Cormacan, Bard of the North in which he re-corded The Circuit of Ire land by Muircheartach of the Leather Cloaks, plus many other sources, have each been examined and explained in detail. That the story of Ceallachain could be translated successfully onto the small or big screen by another O'Callaghan there can be no doubt.

Chris O'Callaghan

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