



McOsker – McCusker – McCosker Family Newsletter



December 2012

This will be our final newsletter of 2012. We wish you and your families great joys and blessings in the coming year. As we near the holiday season, I would like to share a bit of our ancestral religious background. We hope you enjoy this newsletter, and “Remember the Reason for the Season”.

OLD NEWS: Historians state that McOsker – MacCusker – MacCosker are principally a branch of the Maguires (Mag Uidhir) in Fermanagh, a county in Northern Ireland, centered at Carrickmacosker.

NEW INFO: Fermanagh is from Old Irish “Fear Manach” meaning “men of Manach” or “men of the monks”. The early Maguire chieftains were well known as devoted benefactors of the church, and there were many Maguire men who served as Bishops and Deacons. Indeed, the church played a vital and vibrant role in medieval Ireland.

OLD NEWS: Researchers at Queens University at Belfast believe that the townland of Carrickmacosker may have been named after Maurice Mic Osgair (d. 1423), named “The Great ArchDeacon” in the Annals of Ulster. (See our website www.mcosker.com for this information)

NEW INFO: Maurice may have had greater influence than we first realized. Below is an excerpt from a paper titled “Cathal Mac Maghnusa and the Annals of Ulster” presented to the Clogher Historical Society, by Aubrey Gwynn in 1958. Gwynn (1892 – 1983) was an Irish Jesuit historian, and the subject of his paper, Cathal Mac Maghnusa (1439 – 1498), was a principle compiler of The Annals of Ulster. Gwynn states:

“Here in the diocese of Clogher things were no better, and no worse than in most other Irish dioceses. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, when the Papacy was itself fatally divided into two rival camps by the Great Schism, which began in 1378 and was not ended until 1418, Muiris Mag Uidhir son of Matthew son of Oscar was archdeacon of Clogher, parson of Aghalurcher and lord of Cleenish (Clain-inis) and Rossory (Ros-airrther). He died on 26 April, 1423, and Ruaidhri Ua Luinin has added in the margin beside this obit the brief commentary : ' the great archdeacon.' Those three short words tell the whole of a long story. To put it very briefly and plainly, no one who was not himself a direct descendant or a close kinsman of the great archdeacon had any real hope of obtaining a good living in the diocese of Clogher for the next two generations.”

Let us close the year with a traditional Irish prayer.

***May there always be work for your hands to do.
May your purse always hold a coin or two.
May the sun always shine on your windowpane.
May a rainbow be certain to follow each rain.
May the hand of a friend always be near you.
May God fill your heart with gladness to cheer you.***

Very Sincerely

Ken McOsker

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