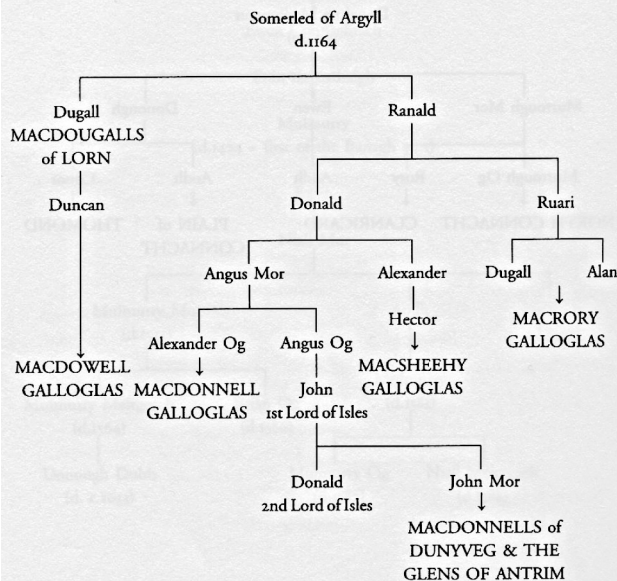


*Descent of the MacDonnell, MacDowell,
MacRory and MacSheehy galloglas kindreds
from Somerled of Argyll*



Hired in larger numbers to combat the Norman knights, they were the decisive military component of the 14th century Gaelic resurgence. These commanders were noble; they were high ranking, important men. They grew in numbers within the “Irish” Macdonnell families (many ‘wives’, sons), – *if the father be a Galloglass, the son be a Galloglass*” (B. Rich) - by bringing over other Scots family, some suitable McDonald seasonal redshanks who stayed (the later “New Scots”), and as time went on, by also hiring promising “locals” (starting as the horseboys). Constables were often given large grants of land as payment for service and in the process becoming landed “Lords” as well as running a big business, providing large professional armies. Some Macdonnell land in Armagh shown on a 1602 map of South Ulster, Nth of The Fews, MPF/136 is described: - 1. “**CLAN KERNIE : Contrie the O’Neales have said to give unto the Captains of their Galliglass for their enjoyment and bonage**”; 2. Sept “**EVER-BUYE : Macdonnelle the Galloglasse his Contrie**”).

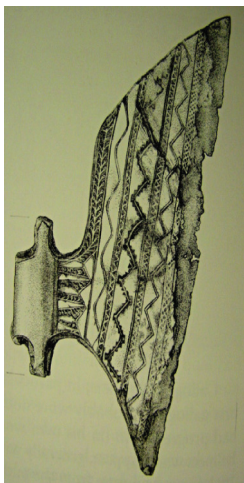
This map does not show the seat of the Tryone Macdonnell Chief and High Constable that was N/W at the many townlands of Knocknaclogha, Annaghmackeown, (named



after Chief “MacEoin”; the local MacOwens), etc, Donaghmore Parish, in O’Neill’s mensal (demesne) lands: - “*The town of Macdonnell..with beautiful herb garden*”- Annals Four Masters 1523. We have recorded in the Irish Annals a Chief and High Constable of Clan Donnell Tyrone Galloglaigh (and *Captayne of his Nation*), with multiple constables of each Battle of warriors. The Archbishop of Armagh noted in 1418: 8 Battles [8 x (84 x2 fighters) = 1344], twice the 700 warrior numbers for a Gaelic unit-state, a *tuath*. (not counting horseboys). Irish Chiefs often selected a trusted *Champion* from the Constable’s family to be his personal body guard, eg. against assassins, and his honorary “helmet/armour bearer”. (see silver adorned axe below). The non-family ‘regulars’ of their forces were usually billeted on the local Irish clan which was subservient to the “hiring” Chief, or later, to the gaelicised Old English, Anglo-Irish Earls. This was usually done a quarter of a year at a time and rotating with others paying taxes and food. This system of *baunnacht* (bonage), which in larger outfits was organised by the “Marshal”, adjacent Ui Neill Clan of O’Donnelly, was very unpopular as one can imagine on the poor tenants. As well, any army’s rank & file have always had some who are quite “rank and defiling!”

The Macdonnell Galloglaigh enterprise prospered and expanded, moving firstly west to Connaught (Mayo Macdonnell Clan) and again later from there south to Wicklow, Leinster, in the employ of and marrying into, important clans along the way such as the O’Connors, O’Mores, O’Rourkes, O’Reillys, O’Byrens, O’Tooles. Other Scots Galloglass families are MacSweeny, MacDowell (from MacDougall), MacCibes and the other Clan Donnell septs – MacSheehy, descended from Alasdair Mor Mhic Donald (large numbers with Fitzgerald Earl of Desmond) and MacRory. Aristocratic Hebridean family leaders stopped coming to Ireland around 1400 to set up Galloglaigh dynasties. It was the less well-harnessed and armed “redshanks” that came from the Hebrides after 1400 as mercenaries. They were effective, much less expensive and so could be hired seasonally in large numbers. (eg, from Clan Ranald). No doubt some stayed and joined the Galloglaigh ranks. Galloglaigh

Battles however were militarily effective until 1600, providing the cutting edge of resistance to the whole period of the Tudor reconquest (Henry VIII; Eliz. I). Firearms and artillery gradually ushered in change and the axemen Battle was swapped for combined pike & caliver/arguebus units; see c.1600 depiction of a unit & its Captain with symbolic “Galloglaigh Axe” (gunners around pikemen).



16th Century Axe Head from the Blackwater R., Clonteevy, Tyrone, near MacDomnaill territory, as expressed c1600, “*Galloglass under the Blackwater*”. It has been classed (Museum, Belfast) and mentioned, as similar to the axe depicted in the O’Neill inauguration c1600 map above. (UJA, VOL 60: *Antiquities from the River Blackwater (III) -Iron Axe Heads*; 2001). It is made from a single folded piece of iron with silver foil decoration of “Celtic” designs. It’s obviously an axe for a high status leader, used as an authority symbol and ceremonially, but also it’s a recognised fighting weapon style. A rare style and quite significantly, mainly only found within miles of the areas that Macdomnaill Galloglaigh occupied. The blade is 30cm long. (Drawing by Diedre Corone).