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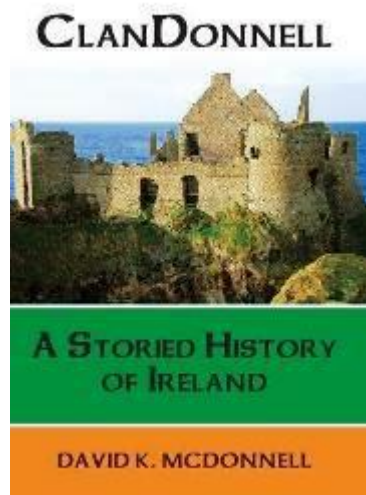
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## Clan Donnell

By David McDonnell



***IR Verdict:*** “CLAN DONNELL is a well-written account of an Irish clan that was present at every major milestone and tragedy of the Irish people, of the North and South, Catholic and Protestant. The Gaelic Knot of Irish History has been undone in these pages making it accessible to all readers. What may have started as genealogical curiosity has evolved into a significant historical work.



David K. McDonnell’s book is a history of his own family intertwined with the history of Ireland. It is a balanced, well-researched history beginning with the hunter-gatherers of the Stone Age up to present times. The Clan Donnell ancestors of the author are highlighted throughout the recounting of Ireland’s struggles and triumphs and the author deftly leads us through the sometimes confusing occurrences in both the culture and history of the island’s people.

Students who read Caesar’s Commentaries know that Roman armies fought a Gaulic tribe known as the Belgae. Mr. McDonnell illuminates this fact with the further knowledge that the Belgae called themselves the Erainn. They migrated to Ireland and it became known as the “Land of Erin”. Such illumination is present from the first page of the book to the last. Although the religious differences became a flashpoint during the reign of Henry VIII, the Catholic/Protestant struggle is presented in a balanced discussion of its political roots without the usual rhetoric from either side. The domino effect of invasion, clearings and loss of clan influence lead to the depredations of The Hunger, the Irish diaspora and, finally, the Rising. Not every Irishman is a hero nor are all of the British seen as villains. What was striking about these centuries of struggle is that the suffering was mostly due to the ignorance of the British Parliament rather than overt malice. There is one major sticking point with this important work: in a history of this size (888 pages) there is no index. When Mr. McDonnell uses his considerable talents putting together pieces of this complex work there was a need to revisit earlier parts of the history and, without an index, this was somewhat cumbersome.”

Reviewed by Ed Bennett for IndieReader