

## Brian Boro

### High King

Mahon the King of Dal Chaise, Co. Clare waged war for years on the vikings who occupied The City of Limerick, which they had founded, about 812 A.D. After a truce between the two, Brian Boro, Mahon's younger brother kept up the struggle until the vikings were reduced to a small army. Brian then urged Mahon once again to join the fight. Aided by the chiefs of Thomond and Desmond another victory was recorded against a yet larger Viking force at Sulchoid, in Co. Tipperary in 968. As a result Mahon was acknowledged King of Munster. Almost 10 years later Mahon was slain by Mulloy . Brian retaliated and forced the remaining vikings, of the south to surrender, thereby claiming the title, King of Munster for himself.



Malachy II was High King of Ireland and had defeated the vikings in several battles. Brian now set his sights on Tara, confident, that only he was capable of uniting the country against the viking aggressor. Brian claimed the title High King from Malachy. Malachy and Brian reciprocated with several raids on each others territories until they arrived at an agreement, whereby they would divide the country between them, Malachy in the north and Brian in the south.

Maelmordha, King of Leinster refused to recognize Brian as King and allied himself with Sitric, Dublin King of the Vikings. Brian met his opposition at Gleann Mama and defeated the two armies in 999. In 1002 Brian once again challenged Malachy. Malachy appealed for help from his northern chiefs who refused and Brian became the undisputed High King of All Ireland - breaking 700 years of unbroken rule by the northern tribes. Ireland now entered a period of peace, with the building of churches and schools, roads and bridges. Monasteries and schools were reopened. But peace would not last.

Maelmordha and Sitric began preparations in retaliation of their defeat at Gleann Mama. The Vikings had just recently conquered England. Now they called all their forces to Dublin, with Ireland to be their prize. Brian, aware of this, led the armies of Munster, he was joined by the chiefs and armies of Connacht, even the Scottish armies came to Brians aid.

Good Friday 1014 the two sides faced off, just north of the Walled City of Dublin. Brian's son Murchadh, led the Irish forces. Brian, now 73, remained in his tent to pray. All day long they waged battle and by evening the victory lay with the Irish. The Vikings fled, many were slain, others were drowned in the rising tide as they tried to make it to their fleet anchored in the bay. Brian's two sons and most of the Irish chiefs were, also slain in battle. Even Brian as he knelt in prayer was slain by Brodir, a fleeing viking. Malachy II was restored as High King. Brian Boru was the last of the great High Kings of Ireland.