

## Irelands Influence

Ireland was one of the first countries in which a system of hereditary surnames arose, they were known in Ireland long before the Norman invasions, brought English-style surnames to the country. The Irish prefixes Mac (son of) and O (grandson or descendant of) gave rise at an early date to a set of fixed hereditary names in which the literal patronymic meaning was lost or obscured. O'Diamhin, for example, is known as a hereditary byname from the 14th century onwards. During the long centuries of English domination, Irish surnames' were crudely anglicised.

The Irish Gaelic language was proscribed and surnames were anglicised phonetically or by translation. At its mildest, the prefixes Mac and O' were abandoned, so that O'Manachain and Mac an Fhailghigh became Mc Nally and then Nally. At worst, Irish surnames were distorted, beyond all recognition. Thus, Mac Giolla Eoin' son of the servant of Eoin' was transmuted into Munday by confusion of the name with Irish Luain, genitive of Luan Monday. O'Diamhin became Devine. Only since Irish independence in 1921 has a reversal set in, so that Irish people are now adopting Gaelicised forms of their names, even though they may not be able to speak the Irish Gaelic language. Gaelicisation of a surname has become a statement of national and political identity, so that some whose names are actually of Norman, French or English origin nevertheless create Gaelic versions of them.

Up to the fifteenth century the chief of the Devine sept was Lord of Tirkennedy in County Fermanagh. This branch is descended from "Daimhin" who died in 966, son of Cairbre Dam Argait, King of Oriel. The name Daimhin stems from daimh, meaning fox. A brother of Daimhin called Cormac was ancestor of the Maguires and the O'Devines, of Tirkennedy. The family was a leading County Fermanagh sept up until and including, the fifteenth century. Later the power of the Leading Family was broken by pressure from the O'Neills, in the north, and the Maguires in the south.

The name Devine is mainly found in Ireland today, in the counties of Tyrone and Fermanagh. Though the etymology of the name has been questioned, the scholar O'Donovan attests that it is, in Irish, O'Daimhin. This is also anglicised as Davin, which is not a common name, but it is to be found in and around County Tipperary. The Davins of the midlands are probably a branch of the O'Devines of Fermanagh and so ultimately an offshoot of the Maguires. The Four Masters mention one O'Devine, (Dunchadh Ua Daimhene -who died in 1066), as coarb (hereditary possessor of church land) of Derry, as well as several who were chiefs of Tirkennedy at various dates up to 1427. The sept gave Clogher in County Tyrone its original name Clochar Mac nDaimhín.

In modern times the best-known "Devine" was Professor Edward Thomas Devine (1867-1948), of Columbia University, notable as an organizer American charities.

*The above text is based on research from Mr J. Jordan, Namecraft -Heritage and Heraldry.*

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### DEVINE ~ COAT OF ARMS

The Devine Coat of Arms is found recorded in Sir Bernard Burkes' General Armoury.



#### **Crest:**

A naked arm couped below the elbow grasping a sword flammant proper.

#### **Arms:**

Gules a Lion passant guardant and at the base a human heart Argent.

The lion is said to be the emblem of "deathless courage".

In Ireland the lion also represented the 'lion' season,  
prior to the full arrival of summer.

The lion symbol can also represent a great Warrior or Chief.

The heart used in heraldry signifies a man of sincerity and one who speaks the truth from his heart, and is also used as the emblem of Sincerity, Truthfulness, and Charity.

#### **Motto:**

**FORTITER ET FIDELITER~ BRAVE AND FAITHFUL**

This coat of arms was classed as for a person "of more than ordinary excellence", "divine". It was first found registered under the spelling of Nicholas Le Devin in 1187.

*Other information collected from*  
**HISTORY OF THE DEVINE FAMILY**  
*compiled in 1998 by Thomas Edward Devine (born in the Bronx, NY).*

The Devines originally belonged to the country of Fermanagh, and are descended from the Gruoch na Colla or three brothers, who conquered the clan Rorays and destroyed the ancient palace of Emania, which was for centuries the great fort or stronghold of the Red Branch Knights. The names of these brothers were Colla Maen, Colla Da-Crioch and Colla Uais. They took possession of a portion of Counties Down, Armagh, Louth, Monaghan and Fermanagh. The Devines claim Colla Huiss as their ancestor. The name Devine is derived from King Cairbre, second of one of the Collas, who was the Ard Righ or High King of Ireland, a man distinguished for his generosity and liberality towards his friends. Hence, he was called Cairbre, Arigiod na Daimh, or the Dispenser of the Golden Presents. The word Daimh is pronounced 'duif', hence Divin-Devine-Devane-Davin-Devenny-Diver, etc. The Annalists tell us of the race of Daimens being settled in Fermanagh along the river Erne. It is related that in the thirteenth century in an election held for the chieftaincy, the Devines were defeated by the McGuires, after which the Devines seem never to have regained their supremacy in Fermanagh. After their failure to maintain their power in Fermanagh, the clan seems to have scattered out seeking settlements in the neighbouring counties, especially Tyrone, where they settled in the district of Donaghady, north of Strabane, becoming active and firm supporters of the O'Neils. Many of the race of Devine are found in Sligo, Mayo and Donegal. There are also quite a few of the name in County Derry in the districts adjoining Tyrone.

There is a town land along Burndennet in Donaghady, Co Tyrone called Lisdivin, translated as Devine's Castle of Fort. This would confirm the tradition of the Devines owning the district of Donaghady from the Ferry at Donelong on the Foyle to the Butter Lox above Donaghmana. In the district or country above and around Donananna, the name is still very plentiful. There are also many of the name to be found in the Southern part of County Derry, Altahoney and Fir Glen district.

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### Glossary of Terms:



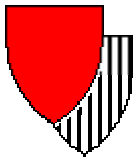
**Couped:**

Cut off smoothly; used especially for the head or limb.



**Flammant:**

Engulfed in Flame



**Gules:**

Gules The colour red, used to represent a Warrior a Martyr or Military Strength, indicated in seals, blazons and engraved figures of escutcheons by parallel vertical lines.



**Passant:**

Being a beast facing and walking toward the viewer's left with right front leg raised

**Guardant:**

Looking at the observer



**Argent:**

The white colour in coats of arms, intended to represent silver, or, figuratively, purity, innocence, beauty, or gentleness.

Information on Heraldry gathered from  
<http://www.pipcom.com/~thule/heraldry/index.html>