

## **Making the Case that the Descendants of Sarah Bryan and Ezekiel Harrison are also Descendants of Brian Boru, High King of Ireland, 1002-1014**

### **Connections to the O'Brien Clan of County Clare**

**Sarah Bryan**, who married Ezekiel Harrison, was the daughter of John Bryan, who was the son of Cornelius O'Bryan. Cornelius O'Bryan and his brother, Brian O'Brian were the only two known siblings of Brian O'Brian, immigrant ancestor to America from County Clare, Ireland and ancestral home of the O'Brien Clan.

For a detailed synopsis of these two brothers lines in America, refer to "*Brian O'Brian of Berks County, Penn. and Cornelius O'Bryan of Rockingham County, Virginia, and Their Descendants*" by Michael J. O'Brien found in **Irish Settlers in America: A consolidation of articles for the Journal of the American Irish Historical Society** by Michael J. O'Brien, Volume II, Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1979, pages 344-362.

But particularly from pages 361 & 362 of **Irish Settlers in America**:

What a great pity it was that the lineal descendants of Brian and Cornelius dropped the historic prefix "O," thus so anglicizing the name as to make it appear to readers of history that they were some racial origin other than Irish! Colonel John B. Brownlow, son of Elizabeth (O'Brien) Brownlow, thus wrote: "My grandfather, James Smith O'Brien, was the same family from which sprang William Smith O'Brien, one of the leaders of the insurrection in Ireland in 1648." Accepting this statement as correct, and since William Smith O'Brien was the son of Lord Inchiquin of Clare, of the direct line from Brian Boroihme (Brian Boru), Ard Righ or High King of Ireland in the eleventh century, it is seen that the American families whose history is now under review can look back with pride to a distinguished ancestry.

Brian Boru was the 175th Monarch of Ireland (1002-1014); he is justly celebrated as "one of the greatest of Irish monarchs," and his ancestry has been traced by Irish antiquarians back to the celebrated "Con of the Hundred Battles," King of Ireland A.D. 148. "We may search in vain," writes an analyst of the family, "even among some of the royal houses of the Continent of Europe, for a line of greater antiquity, or one of their country, than that of the O'Briens." The Gaelic motto on the family Coat of Arms is *Lambh Ladir An Uachdar*, signifying "The Strong Hand Uppermost," and since the sixteenth century the O'Briens have been Marquises of Thomond and Earls of Inchiquin in the County of

Clare, and in the seventeenth century other branches of the family became Viscounts Clare and Barons of Burren.

