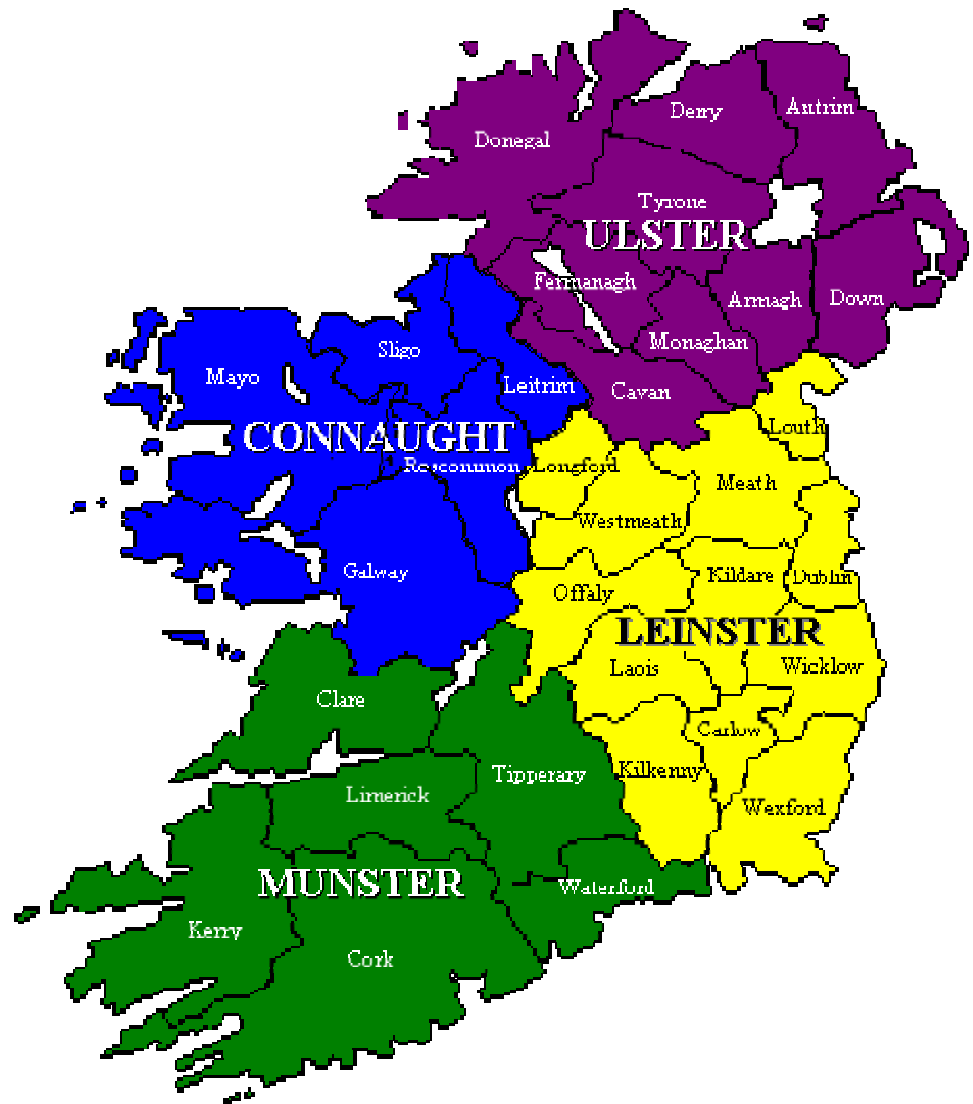


# History of the O'Connor Name

O'Connor, with its variants Connor, Conner, Connors etc., comes from the Irish Conchobhair, from the personal name Conchobhar, perhaps meaning 'lover of hounds' or 'wolf-lover'. This was one of the most favoured of early Irish names, and gave rise to the surname in at least five distinct areas, in Connacht (O'Connor Don), in

Offaly (O'Connor Faly), in north Clare (O'Connor of Corcomroe), in Keenaght in Co Derry, and in Kerry (O'Connor Kerry).

The Offaly family take their name from Conchobhar (d.979), who claimed descent from Cathair Mor, a second-century king of Ireland. They remained powerful in their original homeland until the sixteenth century, when they were dispossessed of their lands. The O'Connor Kerry were chiefs of a large territory in



north Kerry, displaced further northwards by the Norman invasion to the Limerick borders, where they retained much of their power down to the seventeenth century. Today, the descendants of these O'Connors are far and away the most numerous, with the majority of all the many O'Connors in Ireland concentrated in the Kerry/Limerick/Cork area. However, the most famous of all the O'Connor families is that which arose in Connacht. The ancestor from whom they take surname was Conchobhar, King of Connacht (d.971), and direct ancestor of the last two High Kings of Ireland, Turlough O'Connor and Roderick O'Connor, who ruled through the twelfth century. Unlike the vast majority of the rest of the

old Gaelic aristocracy, the O'Conors of Connacht managed to retain a large measure of their property and influence through all the calamities from the seventeenth century on. The line of descent from the last Chief of the Name is also intact; the current 'O Conor Don', recognised as such by the Chief Herald of Ireland, is Denis O Conor. The family seat remains in the ancestral homeland, in Castlerea, Co Roscommon.