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The Gallowglass

Limited Edition Irish Sword

(Oakeshott Type XIX)

The term Galloglas (or "Gallowglass") is an Anglicisation of the Irish, Gallóglaigh ("foreign soldiers"), incorporating the word, Óglach, which is derived from oac, the Old Irish for "youths", but later meaning "soldier".

The galloglas were a mercenary warrior élite among Gaelic-Norse clans residing in the highlands and Western Isles of Scotland (or, Hebrides) from the mid 13th century to the end of the 16th century. As Scots, their tradition descended from the Irish, but they had intermarried with the 10th century Norse settlers of the islands and coastal areas of Scotland, and the Picts, and so the Irish called them Gall Gaeil ("foreign Gaels").

They were the mainstay of Scottish and Irish warfare before the advent of gunpowder, and depended upon seasonal service with Irish lords. A military chieftan would often select a gallogglas to serve as his personal aide and bodyguard, because as a foreigner, the gallogglas would not be as subject to local feuds and influences.

The first record of gallogglas service under the Irish was in 1259, when Prince Aed O'Connor of Connaught received a dowry of 160 Scottish warriors from the daughter of the King of the Hebrides.

They were organised into groups known as a "Corrughadh", which consisted of about 100 men. In return for military service, gallogglas contingents were given land and settled in Irish lordships, where they were entitled to receive supplies from the local population. By 1512, there were reported to be fifty nine groups throughout the country under the control of the Irish nobility. Though initially they were mercenaries, over time they settled and their ranks became filled with native Irish men.

They were noted for wielding the two handed Sparthe axe (a custom noted by Geraldus Cambrensis to have derived from their Norse heritage) and broadsword or claymore ("claíomh mór"). For armour, the gallogglas wore chain mail shirts over padded jackets and iron helmets on the head; he was usually accompanied by two boys, one of whom carried his javelins or throwing spears while the other carried his provisions.

The importation of gallogglas into Ireland was a major factor in containing the Anglo-Norman invasion of the 12th century, as their ranks stiffened the resistance of the Irish lordships. Throughout the Middle Ages in Ireland, gallowglass troops were maintained by Gaelic Irish and Hiberno-Norman lords alike. Even the English Lord Deputy of Ireland usually kept a company of them in his service. The 16th century in Ireland saw an escalation in military conflict, caused by the Tudor re-conquest of Ireland. Gallogglas fighters were joined by native Irish mercenaries called buanadha (literally "quartered men") and by newer Scottish mercenaries known as "redshanks".

The flow of mercenaries into Ireland was such a threat to English occupation that Queen Elizabeth I took

steps against them in 1571 - around 700 of them being executed after the first of the Desmond Rebellions. In spite of the increased use of firearms in Irish warfare, galloglas remained an important part of Hugh O'Neill's forces in the Nine Years War (Ireland). After the combined Irish defeat at the Battle of Kinsale in 1601, recruitment of galloglas waned, although Scottish Highland mercenaries continued to come to Ireland until the 1640s (notably Alasdair MacColla).

Though the Galloglas ceased as a military unit, their family names lived on to this day - often concentrated in areas where their ancestors were settled in the service of Irish lordships. The most common names derived from gallowglass families include: MacSúibhne (MacSweeney) MacDomhnaill (MacDonnell) MacSiothaigh (MacSheehy) MacDubhgaill (MacDougall) MacCaba (MacCabe) MacRuari (MacRory) (source: [Wikipedia](#))

Our Gallowglass is patterned after the large swords carried by its namesake, with a blade of Type XIX. Oakshott describes the Type XIX as having a broad flat blade that has clearly chamfered edges that run nearly parallel, a fuller that runs through the upper third, and a flat ricasso section at the base of the blade. The blade is of hexagonal cross-section

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Eric Meulemans

"An Anglicized form of the Gaelic "gallóglach", which translates to "foreign soldier", the Gallowglass were Irish mercenaries of Scots descent. While well known for their use of the axe (sparth), they were also no stranger to such ring-hilted swords as this. Shakespeare speaks of, and Dürer pictures, both Kern and Gallowglass together. Why then not have blades named in honour of both?"

Specifications

Overall length: 47.5" (121 cm)

Blade length: 37.375" (95 cm)

Blade Width: 1.6925" (4.3 cm)

CoG: 6.5" (16.5 cm)

CoP: 23.75" (60 cm)

Weight: 2 lbs 9.2 oz (1.17 kg)

You can customize your [sword's grip color](#) -- see the standard grip colors [here](#).

The Gallowglass (Type XIX)... \$1,430

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