



## Brian Boru's

March 6/8

Trad.

### Brian Boru's March

**B**rian Boru (c. 941 AD - 23 Apr 1014 AD) – Brian of Béal Bórainmhe, was born near Killaloe in County Clare – was from a Munster (*So. Ireland*) family formerly of no great distinction. At that time, Ireland was hidebound by tradition, where political power was dominated by a single great dynasty, the Uí Néill. These descendants of the eponymous and perhaps mythical Niall of the Nine Hostages occupied a vast swathe of Ireland and had held exclusive rights to the almost High Kingship of all Ireland. This meant that, although at any one time upwards of half a dozen provincial rulers were powerful enough to bid for national supremacy, the force of tradition and Uí Néill propaganda combined to deny them the honour.

Brian Boru flouted this convention. For 20 years he led a political and military struggle to undermine the ruling dynasty. And by the year 1002 Brian had succeeded in forcing the Uí Néill high king, Máel Sechnaill mac Domnaill, to recognize him as his superior. It was a landmark in Irish history. Brian had demonstrated that one did not have to be a descendant of the eponymous Niall to put forward a claim to the high kingship. Brian Boru led the Irish to victory at the Battle of Clontarf in 1014, ended the would-be Viking conquest and secured Irish freedom from foreign oppression. He was killed during the battle on Good Friday, 1014.

