

Family Name History



McGonigal

The Irish surname McGonigal is an anglicized form of the Gaelic surname Mac Congail. This surname is derived from the Gaelic personal name Congal or Conghal, and signifies "son of Congal". The Gaelic personal name Congal is derived from the Gaelic "congall" meaning "brave, fierce as a hound (wolf)". One of the more common early Irish personal names, Congal, which is often anglicized Connell, was borne by such important personages as Congal Caech, king of Ulster, in the early seventh century and Congal Cenmagair, high-king of Ireland, who died in the year 710. The surname has a long been associated with the county of Denegal. Except for adjacent parts of county Derry, the name is very seldom found elsewhere.

Although some of this family did take part in various wars within Ireland, the McGonigals were principally an erenagh family, that is, their first allegiance has always been to the Church. In most erenagh families by the eleventh century, the head person of a church had often become a lay lord, whose family held the office and the church property from generation to generation. In this case, the church of the McGonigals was at Killagtee. The McGonigals were best known as ecclesiastics, having provided many priests and two bishops to the diocese of Raphoe in Donegal, Patrick and Malachy Magonigail (d. 1589).

Variants of the surname McGonigal include McGonnigal, McGonagle, and McGonegal, and Conwell. Among Irish passengers bound for New York was John McGonigal and Michael McGonnigal who departed Liverpool in 1851.

BLAZON OF ARMS: Vert an eagle rising or, between four annulets argent.

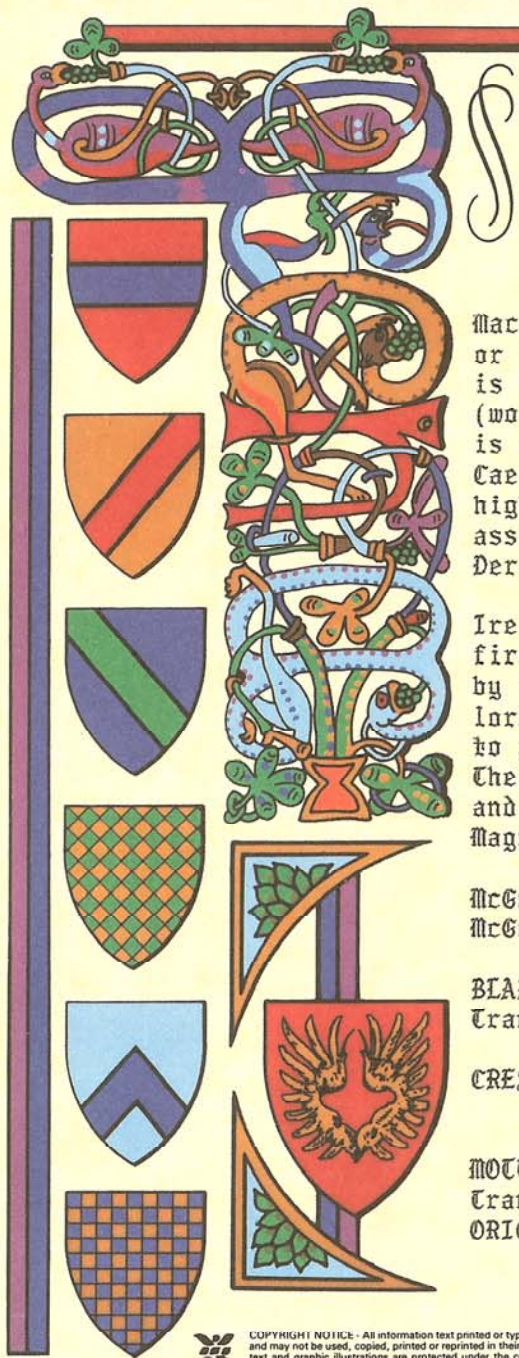
Translation: Vert (green) symbolizes Mercury and denotes Wisdom, Beauty, Truth, Joy, Hope and Loyalty.

CREST: Out of a ducal coronet or, a staff also or, with two serpents entwined thereon proper.

MOTTO: Fide et Amore.

Translation: By Faith and Love.

ORIGIN: IRELAND



H.R.C.
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