



A history of the
ROGAN SURNAME

Feature article
**Mayo's traditional
three-roomed cabins**



**Book of
the Week**



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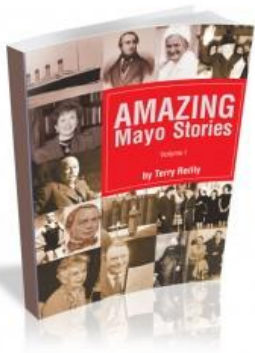
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Cover image: cottage at Kilvine, Co. Mayo, 1953 from dúchas.ie (Caoimhín Ó Danachair - A015.03.00138)

Book of the Week

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Mayo's traditional three-roomed cabins

The three-roomed 'long cabin' is a familiar sight across the Irish countryside and nowhere more so than County Mayo. They are so commonplace that we hardly notice them, either roofless and in ruins along a country lane, or upgraded to the familiar family homes of the 1960s and '70s, or sitting forlorn next to the bright new family home of the more recent past.

Most of these stone-built houses date from the 1800s and they were built to a floorplan traditional to the area. In Mayo the layout had facing doors, a bed outshot and a byre. The combination was unique to Mayo and Sligo. They were built by hand and from material available locally.

"House building was a communal activity, carried out by a 'meitheal' ('work team') of family and neighbours. Lord George Hill described such a meitheal at work in Gweedore, Co. Donegal in 1887: the person who has the work to be done ... [hires] ... a fiddler, upon which engagement all the neighbours joyously assemble, and carry, in an incredibly short time, the straw and timber upon their back[s] to the new site: men, women, and children alternately dancing and working while daylight lasts, at the termination of which they adjourn to some dwelling where they finish the night, often prolonging the dance to dawn of day".

Extract from *Hearth and home: the vernacular house in Ireland from c.1800*
by Barry O'Reilly (RIA)

Traditionally the houses had a thatched roof, tied down by rope or fishing net in homes on the wild Atlantic coast.

The long cabin farmhouse was built with the back to the public road, facing the farmyard. The cabins were one room deep with a central kitchen where most of the domestic work, and a lot of the farm work, was carried out. At one end of the kitchen was the hearth, where the cooking was done. By the hearth was the outshot, a recess where the older members of the family could participate in the life of the house or where hard working parents slept. Beyond the kitchen was a room usually with a sleeping loft reached by a stair that ran at the back of the hearth.

The kitchen had two doors facing each other front and back to allow cows to be brought in the front and let out the back during milking. Originally, at the other end of the kitchen from the hearth was a space that served as an animal byre, where animals could be housed in winter.

Threshing too might take place by the door in the kitchen and the flails left many a sunken flag inside the front door.

Over time, the cattle and pigs got their own outhouses and the old byre room evolved to a separate room, the cottages now had a 'room above' and a 'room below' the kitchen. The wall of the new room facing the kitchen hearth became home to the Welsh dresser. The top shelves provided space for the family kitchenware. Open spaces at the bottom of the dresser provided a home for roosting hens or geese, though in later times poultry too were excluded beyond the half door and the open spaces in the dresser converted to cupboards with their own doors.

Saint Valentine, officially known as Saint Valentine of Rome, is a third-century Roman saint widely celebrated on February 14 and commonly associated with "courtly love". Although not much of St. Valentine's life is reliably known, and whether or not the stories involve two different saints by the same name is also not officially decided, it is highly agreed that St. Valentine was martyred and then buried on the Via Flaminia to the north of Rome. In 1969, the Roman Catholic Church removed St. Valentine from the General Roman Calendar, because so little is known about him. However, the church still recognises him as a saint, listing him in the February 14 spot of Roman Martyrology.

Source: Catholic.org



A brief history of the surname

ROGAN

Ó Ruadhacháin, Roughtan, Roohan, Rohan, Rowan, Rogan; 'descendants of Ruadhchán' (diminutive of Ruadh, red); a variant of Ó Ruadhagáin; common in West Ulster and Connacht. Its anglicized forms cannot always be distinguished from those of Ó Robhacháin.

Ó Ruadhagáin: O'Rogane, Rogan 'descendants of Ruadhagán' (a diminutive of Ruadh, red); also written Ó Ruadhacháin; the name of an Oriel family who were chiefs of Uí Eatchach, or Tuath Eathach, a district embracing the present barony of Armagh; common in Ulster and Connacht.¹

(O) Rogan Ó Ruadhagáin. (the basic word here is probably ruadh, red). An Oriel sept formerly of considerable importance. It is well known also in Co. Leitrim.²

Of the 24 Rogan births registered in Ireland in 1890 – including variants – 6 occurred in Leinster, 1 occurred in Munster, 13 occurred in Ulster, while 4 were in Connacht. The surname was principally found in Antrim, Down and Leitrim.

¹ Extracts taken from 'Irish Names and Surnames' by Rev. Patrick Woulfe, (p.635)

² Extract taken from 'The Surnames of Ireland' by Edward MacLysaght, (p.259)