

The Surname

COLEMAN



While the Anglicized versions of Irish names are familiar to most people, many Irish names have a long and proud Gaelic heritage that is often unknown.

The Coleman surname stems from two distinct Gaelic names O'Clúmháin, derived from the Irish root "clúmh," meaning "Down," or "feathers," and from O Colmain, derived the Latin word "columba," which means "dove."

The illiterate population found in Ireland during the Middle Ages could only define their names orally. The archives that survive today demonstrate the difficulty experienced by the scribes of this period in their attempts to record these names in writing.

Spelling variations of the name Coleman dating from that time include Colman, Coleman, O'Colman, MacColeman, McColeman, Coalman, Coulman, Coleman, Colmen, Coalmen, Colmin, Colmen, Coulmen, Coulmin, Colemin and many more.

The first recorded spelling of the family name is shown to be that of Hervicus Coleman, which was dated 1166, in the "Red Book of the Exchequer", Yorkshire, during the reign of King Henry 11, known as "The Builder of Churches", 1154 - 1189.

Source: House of Names