



PREHISTORIC TIMES Part 2

Iron Age

IRON AGE

THE IRON AGE is not represented by many archaeological finds, travellers at that time must have chosen the Slíge Mor (Great Road) south of Athlone (the track leading to Clonmacnoise)

But it's during the Iron Age that Athlone got its name Áth Luain.

According to the legend Estiu, the wife of Nár, had a lover, Buide.

Buide and his brother, Luan used to visit her as a pair of birds.

When Nár found out he was so angry that he shot both birds with a single cast from his sling. Buide was killed immediately, causing Estiu to die of grief.

The wounded Luan did not die until he reached the ford on the Shannon.

DID YOU KNOW:

There are at least two other stories explaining the origin of the name Athlone.

According to the "Táin" (1st century AD), the brown bull of Cooley having killed the white bull of Aileall at Croghan, drove for Ulster with parts of the white bull's body still on its horns. On reaching the ford at Athlone, the brown bull stopped to drink some water and part of the white bull's high bone fell into the Shannon. That place became known as the Ford of the high bone or Loin- Áth Luain.

The most recent story dates back to 900AD and it's a story of a man called Luain, who used to guide people across the treacherous waters of the River Shannon (it was before the first bridges were built). Luain established an Inn on the banks of the river, and provided refreshments and a resting place for the travellers. That place became known as Luain's ford- Áth Luain.

Use this space to draw Luan during his escape from Nár

