

weakened Norse power that the Irish captured the fortress at Dublin in 902, and drove the Vikings across the sea with great slaughter.

The forty years' rest terminated abruptly in 913, when several fleets arrived at Waterford and proceeded to ravage all Munster and Leinster. In 916 Ragnall (O.N. Rögnvaldr), grandson of Ivarr, assumed command while his brother or cousin, Sihtric Gale (also nicknamed Caoch, 'the Blind') came with a fleet to Cenn Fuaid, in the east of Leinster, and built a fortification there.¹ Both chiefs united forces against the *ard-ri* Niall Glundubh, and having defeated him in battle Sihtric entered Dublin and became king (918). In the following year the Irish under Niall made a brave stand at Kilmashogue, near Dublin, but Sihtric won a decisive victory, and Niall and twelve other kings were among the slain.²

Scandinavian power in Ireland was now at its height. Large fleets occupied all the lakes in Ulster, so that no part of the surrounding territory was safe from their attacks.³ The Vikings also retained their grip of the coast towns, and successfully withstood the efforts made by the Irish leaders to dislodge them. Between the years 920 and 950 the importance of Dublin increased considerably through its connection with the Scandinavian Kingdom of Northumbria. ← Ragnall, grandson of Ivarr, captured York about 919⁴ and reigned there until his death in 921.⁵ He was succeeded

¹ *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 916.

² *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 918. *War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, p. 37. An entry in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (A.D. 921), referring to the result of this battle, runs:—"In this year King Sihtric slew his brother Niel." There is, however, no evidence in Irish sources that Sihtric and Niall were brothers, or even half-brothers.

³ *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 920, 921, 923, 925.

⁴ *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, A.D. 923.

⁵ *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 920.