

The first known law in Ireland protecting non-combatants in war came into effect in which year ?

- a) 1968
- b) 1947
- c) 1870
- d) 697



The answer to this question is that it is the last and earliest option listed, i.e. 697 CE/AD. In this year Adamnan, Abbot of Iona, organised a church synod which was held at Birr (Co Offaly), leading to the Law of the Innocents or Adamnan's Law. This offered protection to women, children and other non-combatants in war and stipulated penalties for those who broke the law. Adamnan was responding to a promise he had made to his mother, Ronnat, years earlier when they had stumbled across the aftermath of a battle.