

One of the most scenic sites in County Louth is the Cooley Peninsula with its wild boggy, mountainous and forested countryside, which was the setting for the Celtic legend The Cattle Raid of Cooley.

Queen Maeve sent her messenger to Ulster requesting that she rent the Brown Bull of Cooley for one year. This messenger asked the owner, an old man, if Queen Maeve could have the bull for one year. The messenger said "If you don't give the bull to her she will take it by force anyway". So the old man said "I'm not going to give you the bull". Queen Maeve was raging and set off to Ulster with her army to get the brown bull. She cursed all the men of Ulster and had them put under a spell, this spell made them as weak as women with labour pains. At that time The Red Branch Knights were under a spell but Cúchulainn was not under the spell because his father was a member of the fairylike Tuatha De Danann another reason why he may not have fell under the spell is because he was seventeen and not yet a man. One by one Maeve's army went out to fight Cúchulainn and one by one Cúchulainn killed them. In the end there was one man left and that was Cúchulainn's friend Ferdia. They fought for 3 days and at the end of each day they hugged each other and wept. In the end Cúchulainn killed Ferdia. Cúchulainn was so sad at killing his best friend. He went back to The Red Branch Knights with a broken heart. Cúchulainn was so heart broken that day that Queen Maeve stole the brown bull of Cooley even though she had been defeated. She went back to her home and she was delighted. When she went home the bulls had a huge fearsome fight when they saw each other. Queen Maeve thought the noise of their bellowing and pounding was thunder coming towards her castle. In the end the brown bull won and headed home for Ulster. When it got half way home it died. Queen Maeve and King Ailill said that they were even now at last.

