

Celtic Life & Heritage Foundation

presents

Historic Overview of Ireland

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Ancient Times

Thousands of years ago, the earth looked different than it does today. After the last Ice Age, the oceans were lower exposing more land. Ireland was not an island but connected to the rest of the continent, enabling people and animals to walk across.



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Ancient Times

As the oceans continued to rise, Ireland became detached from the rest of the continent.

England followed, creating the islands in modern times.



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Geography / Early Irish



Humans were in Ireland over 12,000 years ago, when Ireland was mostly covered with trees.



Ireland has a diverse landscape ranging from sheer cliffs, to limestone rock, to forests.

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Early Irish ~ Stone Age



Poulnabrone was a portal tomb in Ireland. It marks the entrance to a tomb that was used for over 600 years from 3800 BC ~ 3200 BC.

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Early Irish ~ Stone Age

People created architectural marvels like this tomb in Newgrange c. 3200 BC. Intricate carving on the foundation stones and the artistic rock placement has lasted through the ages.



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Early Irish ~ Stone Age



This above burial grave, Knowth Tumulus, was built c. 3000 BC.

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Early Irish ~ Bronze Age



Farmers lived in small huts similar to this one reconstructed at the National Heritage Park, County, Wexford.

Some communities built larger buildings with stone bases and used wood and thatch to make the roofs. Cnoc Raithnighe was built c. 1500 BC.



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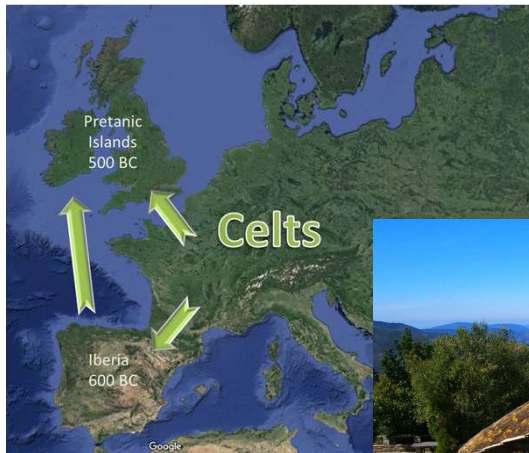
Early Irish: 1,000 BC - 1,000 AD

Dun Aengus is a magnificent example of an ancient ring fort. Built c. 800 BC, Dun Aengus uses the security of a 330' drop on one side of the fort and walls and rock formations as defense on the other.



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Celtic Ireland - 500 BC - 400 AD



In the Iron Age, the Celts settled Ireland around 500 BC. Ireland is one of the few countries today where the Celtic culture has survived.



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The Celts Arrive



The Celts brought with them a new building style of round huts.

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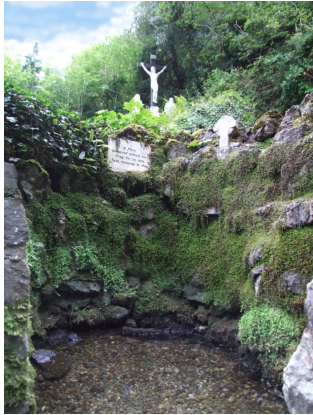
Celts Art & Metalwork



The Celts also brought intricate metal work and art that still influences Irish art today.

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Christianity Arrives: 400AD

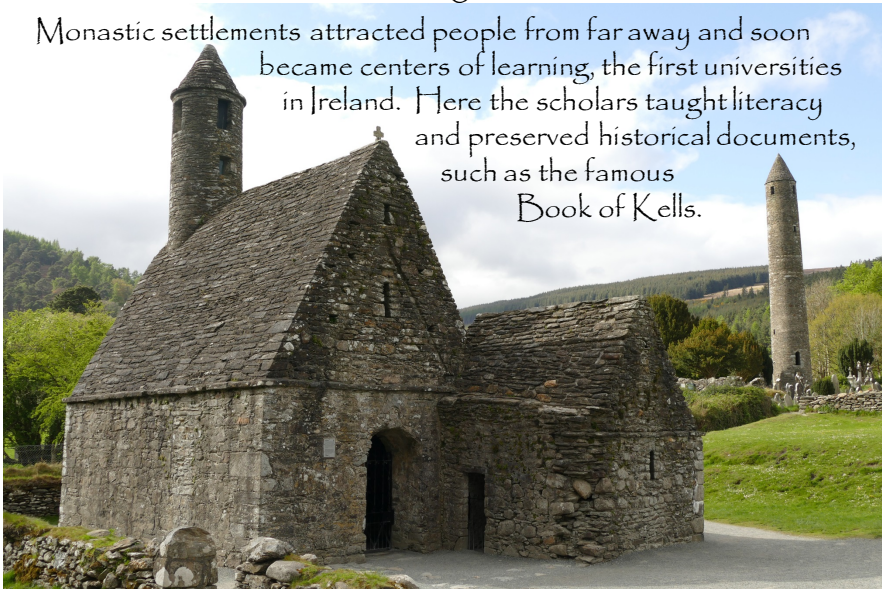


Christianity was successful at converting the pagan Irish without bloodshed because the leaders blended pagan beliefs into Christianity, keeping the new religion familiar.

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Christianity Arrives

Monastic settlements attracted people from far away and soon became centers of learning, the first universities in Ireland. Here the scholars taught literacy and preserved historical documents, such as the famous Book of Kells.



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Christianity - Book of Kells



The Book of Kells is a famous illuminated manuscript which survived the Middle Ages. Illuminated manuscripts combine text and artwork on the same page.

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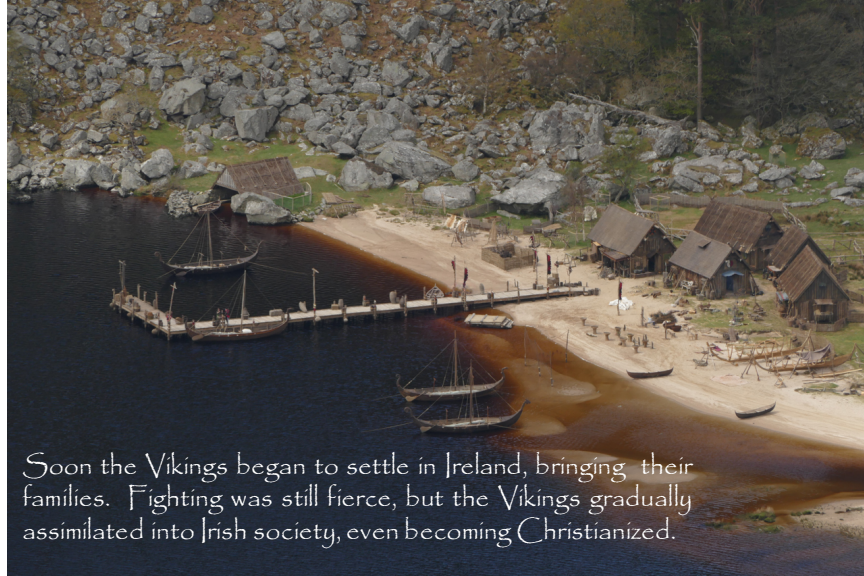
The Vikings

The Vikings discovered the bounty of Ireland and began raiding the people in the late 8th century AD. The Vikings began to winter in Ireland in-between attacks c. 840 AD.



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The Vikings



Soon the Vikings began to settle in Ireland, bringing their families. Fighting was still fierce, but the Vikings gradually assimilated into Irish society, even becoming Christianized.

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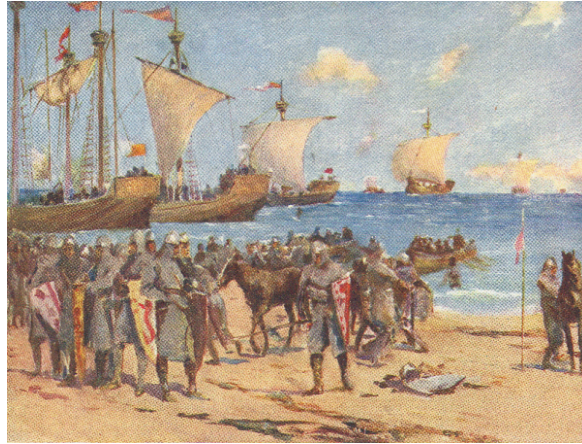
Viking Contributions

Ireland owes its first cities to the Vikings as well as the first minted coins to be made in Ireland. With the Vikings also came increased trade outside of Ireland.



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The Normans



In 1170 a Norman Lord, Strongbow, was asked by an Irish King to help him defeat his enemies. The result was so successful the king of England became concerned and visited Ireland to ensure loyalty from his Lord. Thus started the Norman invasion of Ireland.

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The Normans



Because of pushback from the Irish, the Normans built castle fortresses in troubled areas. This brought a new type of architecture to Ireland.

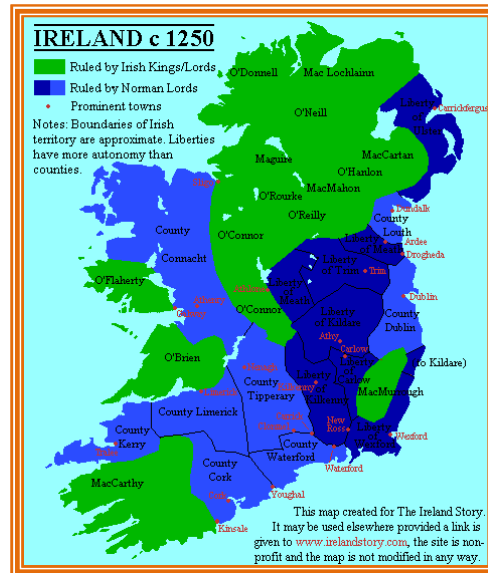


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The Normans

Although a truce was signed between the high King of Ireland and the King of England in 1175, the Normans would continue to take over Irish land with and without the King of England's permission.

By c. 1250 Normans controlled more area in Ireland than the Irish Kings did.



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Flight of the Earls



Irish Earls fought the English at the Battle of Kinsale in 1601. When the Irish lost, the last Gaelic chieftains left Ireland paving the way for English take over.

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English Invasion



Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of England, is infamous in Ireland because of his ruthless containment of Irish rebellion and the creation of the Act of Settlement in 1653 which forced the Irish off their land. The English conquered Ireland and were now in charge.

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Famine

Healthy Potato



Blight Potato



Most Irish relied almost solely on potatoes as their food, although they farmed many grains for English exports. The potato crop failed from blight in the mid 1800's. Millions of people died or emigrated, scattering the Irish across the globe.

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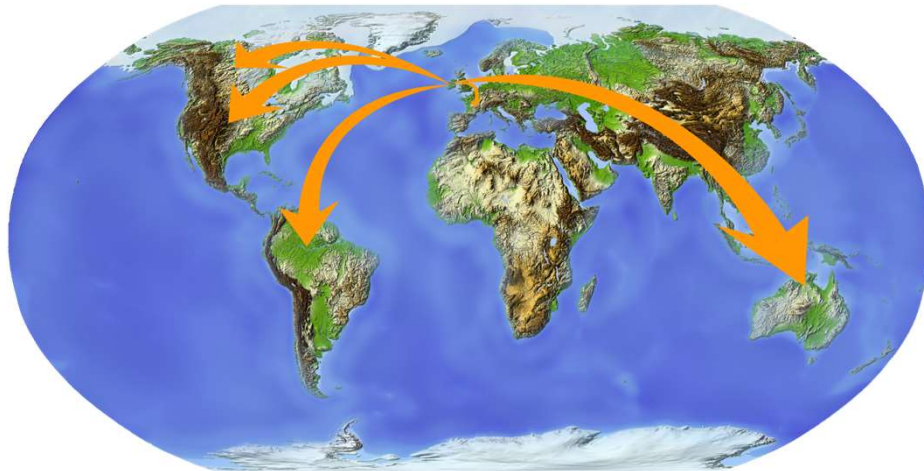
Famine



Half the Irish who left the island came to America aboard ships so crowded many people died. These ships were nicknamed coffin ships.

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Irish World Impact



The Irish also emigrated to Great Britain, Australia, Canada, parts of Europe, and Latin America.

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Easter Rising



The Irish fought for independence from England for hundreds of years. On Easter 1916, a group of Irish Nationalists staged a rebellion in Dublin. The Irish were defeated within a week.

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Easter Rising



Buildings were destroyed and over 2000 people were dead or injured.



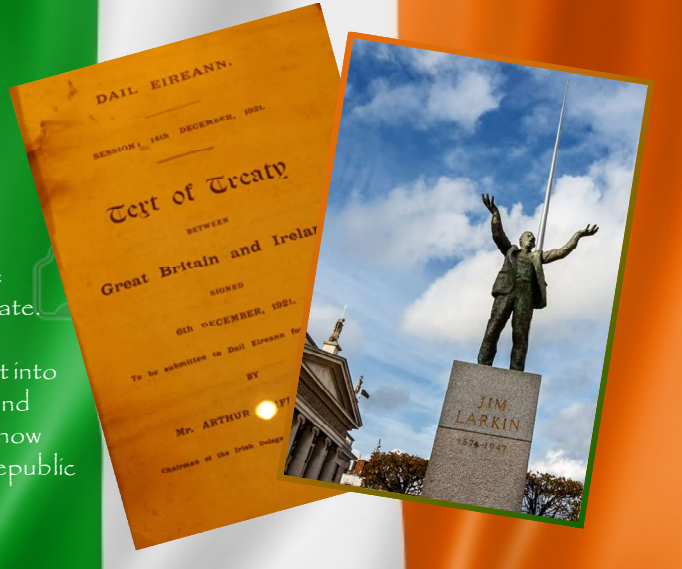
The English executed the rebellion leaders for treason making them martyrs, paving the way for Irish Independence.

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Independence

A treaty was signed between Britain and Ireland in December of 1921 to declare Ireland a free state.

The treaty went into effect in 1922 and created what is now known as the Republic of Ireland.



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The End

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