

Online Irish History Course

History of County Galway/ *Contae na Gaillimhe*

Thursdays 6:00 – 7:30 pm / Sept. 9, 16, 23 & 30, 2021



The major Gaelic families of the county were O'Halloran, O'Daly, O'Kelly, O'Flaherty, O'Malley, O'Madden, O'Fallon, O'Naughton, O'Mullaly and O'Hynes.



A charter for Galway city was granted in 1396. This gave governing powers to 14 merchant families, known locally as the 14 tribes of Galway. They were the families of Athy, Blake, Bodkin, Browne, D'Arcy, Deane, Font, French, Joyce, Kirwan, Lynch, Martyn, Morris and Skerritt. Galway city is known as the "City of the Tribes".

St Nicholas of Myra has been the patron saint of Galway since the 14th century. He is considered the patron saint of children and is thought to be the inspiration for Santa Claus.

In 1477 Christopher Columbus visited Galway and this was noted in the margin of his copy of *Imago Mundi*.

Nearly 20% of the population of County Galway live in the Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking districts)- the largest Gaeltacht region in Ireland. There are over 48,000 people living there.

The first inhabitants in the Galway area arrived over 7000 years ago. Shell middens indicate the existence of people as early as 5000 BC. The county originally comprised several kingdoms and territories which predate the formation of the county in 1568 AD. These kingdoms included Aidhne, Uí Maine, Maigh Seóla, and Máenmaige. The region known as Connemara retains a distinct identity within the county. From early times, the town of Galway was a prominent trading port. It was destroyed on several occasions by local raids, fire, and by the Vikings. Following the Norman invasion in 1169 the entire Kingdom of Connacht, including Galway, was granted to the Norman noble Richard de Burgo. The de Burgos fortified the town of Galway and established it as a major center trading with Spain and Portugal. Cromwell arrived in 1651. His policies destroyed the city, and the region entered a long period of decline lasting over 200 years. The Battle of Aughrim was fought in 1691 and involved the armies of King William of Orange and King James II. The result of the battle changed the history of Ireland. Victory for "King Billy" ushered in the "Protestant Ascendancy" and a new set of Penal Laws against Catholics and Dissenters. The Wolfe Tone bridge in Galway city commemorates the leader of the 1798 United Irishmen Rebellion. Galway county was one of the most affected areas in the country during the Great Hunger/Famine of the 1840's. On orders from Padraig Pearse, Liam Mellows led the Irish Volunteers in a Rising in east Co. Galway, which lasted from Easter Tuesday 25 to Saturday 29 April 1916.

Course fee is \$80. To enroll, email seanmurphy630@gmail.com