**Art & Culture of Ireland**

**Wednesday, March 9 – Friday, March 18, 2011**

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Please remember Ireland is 6 hours ahead of Iowa. 4pm in Iowa is 10pm in Ireland.

**Tour Leaders:**
Professor Charles Barland, Music
Professor Phyllis Garfield, International Studies
Professor Alan Garfield, CGIM

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**Day 1  Wednesday, March 9: Dubuque-Chicago-Dublin.**

We meet at 1pm in the Dunlap Tech Center Hadley Auditorium for our 1:30pm departure via coach to Terminal 5 (the International Terminal) at O’Hare Airport. We’ll make a quick stop at a McDonald’s en route. (Last one you’ll see for a while? No, not really. A good example of globalization). Actually there is a McDonald’s at O’Hare and, as you will see, in Ireland as well. I love to see what ‘home’ is like when I’m away (funny, I never go to McDonald’s in the US, but I do in Ireland). We have e-tickets, so we’ll check in together, get our seat selection. Hopefully you all packed as I suggested with one small carry-on. If not, then you will check a bag here. No cost to check your bag. Now, after the obligatory group shot by the flags, then its off thru security to Gate M12 (usually). Before we get to security, though, on the right is a shop which has electric converters, if you still need one. There are some snacks on the other side of security, but no real food – so visit the food court before you go thru, allowing yourself plenty of time in case of lines. There are restrooms on the other side, of course. Plan to be back at the gate by 5:30pm for boarding. By the way, now is a lovely time to start writing in your journal. An entry a day, please.

EI 124. Depart Chicago 7:15pm. Arrive Dublin 9:00am the next day. 7 3/4 hrs. Airbus A330

I hope you enjoy your overnight flight. Once we are on our way, there will be free soft drinks, dinner, movies, and eventually a small continental breakfast. Your meal will probably be a hearty rubber chicken or tasteless pasta. You make the choice (but the desserts always great). Time to settle in, though, and get some sleep if you can. We are calling this night because, as you will see, once we hit the ground we just don’t stop. So, try to snooze a bit.

**Day 2  Thursday, March 10: Dublin, Walking City Tour, Book of Kells, Trinity College, National Museum of Ireland, Archeology.**
Good morning. We’ll be served breakfast just before we land. Local time is 9am when we land. That’s early; the time difference translates to 3am for your body, so if you feel kind of strange, that’s called jet lag and that is why. Enjoy it (I suppose). The best cure I have, simply said, is attitude. You’re now in Europe and the best part of Europe, Ireland. Let’s go exploring. We’ll sleep later tonight. After we gather all our stuff, we’ll change money here at one of the banks at the airport and freshen up. No rush.

We’ll meet our coach for the 30 minute ride (depending upon traffic) down to Dublin City Centre, because that’s where we’re living – right smack in the centre in an area called Temple Bar. The coach will let us off at Ashton Quay (pronounced – key) and we’ll all walk in to the common area while I sort our rooms out. Since it is early, they will not be ready, so we will check our bags (keeping your wallet and passport with you at all times). This is a very nice hostel, calling itself a hotel, but truly it is a hostel. Never experienced one? Here you go:

**Abigail’s Hotel, 7-9 Aston Quay, Temple Bar, Dublin 011. 353.1.677.9300**

But remember, if your folks need to contact you, please have them call my mobile number. Once recharged, I will have it with me at all times.

While we won’t check it at this point, we will have another chance to freshen up before we start our walking tour of Dublin. By the way, this is an example of the nicest hostel I have ever stayed in. Bathroom in the rooms. But let’s not waste time. Hopefully it is a dry day, but if not, that’s why you have a hat and gloves. Off we go.

Our walking tour of Dublin starts just outside the door, at the River Liffey which cuts Dublin in North and South. We live in the southern part. The Liffey is a tidal river, so you will see dramatic levels of water during the day. This is the ‘black pool’ that the Vikings sailed up around 900, which is how Dublin got its name; Dublin is an anglicisation of this Irish phrase, *dubh linn*. Take mental notes, if you will, as we walk around for
places you’d like to revisit during your free day in Dublin.

We’ll walk through a rather tame Temple Bar area (in the morning, of course). We’ll be back here tonight (and every night) because this is the trendy area with loads of musical pubs, restaurants and shops. But mostly, it’s a place to people watch (I think). If you go to Dublin, you always go to the Temple Bar area. It has an amazing history, older and contemporary, which is not readily apparent. Bring your cameras (and your journal – always your journal). After a bit, we’ll visit the oldest university in Ireland, formed for the rich Protestants in British controlled Ireland, Trinity College. Now officially UCD (University College Dublin), it lets in Catholics (since the 1960s) and even women. Imagine that. But our focus today here will be the amazing manuscript, The Book of Kells, housed in the Old Library.

The Book of Kells (Trinity College Dublin MS 58) is celebrated for its lavish decoration. The manuscript contains the four Gospels in Latin based on a Vulgate text, written on vellum (prepared calfskin), in a bold and expert version of the script known as insular majuscule.

The place of origin of the Book of Kells is generally attributed to the scriptorium of the monastery founded around 561 by St Columcille on Iona, an island off the west coast of Scotland. In 806, following a Viking raid on the island which left 68 of the community dead, the Columban monks took refuge in a new monastery at Kells, County Meath. It must have been close to the year 800 that the Book of Kells was written, although there is no way of knowing if the book was produced wholly at Iona or at Kells, or partially at each location.

It has been on display in the Old Library at Trinity College Dublin from the mid 19th century, and attracts over 500,000 visitors a year. Since 1953 it has been bound in four volumes. Two volumes are on public view, one opened to display a major decorated page, and one to show two pages of script. The volumes are changed every two weeks.

Currently, we will see:
Book of Kells, Decorated opening page of The Entombment of the body of Jesus (folio 285v): UNA/AUTEM SAB/BATI UALDE DELU[culo]. Also will be Folios 309v-310r Jesus’ discourse on the bread of life: “I am the living bread which comes down from heaven.” In addition there are lesser known but equally interesting manuscript
books: the Book of Mulling’s Chi-Rho page (folio 13v): Christi autem generation, The conception, and the Book of Dimma’s portrait of Mark and the opening words of his gospel, Initium euangelii... All in clear Latin script (well if you read Latin that is).

Outside we’ll continue with our walk past Trinity College, saying ‘hi’ to the sculpture of Molly Malone (the ‘tart with the cart’), around the corner is the main tourist office, up Grafton Street past Bewley’s, to the Gaity Theatre. Across to St. Stephen’s Green and the marvelous park. We exit the park to see the Royal College of Surgeons. Past the ‘smallest pub’ in Dublin (they say that only 8 people can get in).

We’ll stop for lunch. Me – I’ll eat at Nudes. Fun tee shirts and good sandwiches. Their young attitude is infectious: refuel your body with healthy food and fresh juices. But on Grafton Street (a walking, shopping mall) you can find Burger King, Subway, McDonalds, so at least you won’t starve. Be prepared to spend more for lunches than you usually do. This is part of your European education – to learn how we really do have a high standard of living with a low cost of living.

So, just what is it with Dublin? How did Temple Bar grow? Here is a quick history, the present you’ll figure out as you walk all around Temple Bar. It is hard to believe, but the picturesque charms of Temple Bar could well have been buried under the ugly concrete of a huge bus depot instead. It is a testament to the undefeatable spirit of Dublin folks that the area was rejuvenated, saved from demolition and eventually turned into Ireland’s premier cultural quarter. The Vikings settled here starting in 795. Remains of their settlement’s fortifications can still be seen at Dublin Castle. Some 800 years later, the English diplomat and provost of Trinity College, Sir William Temple, had his residence and gardens here in the early 17th century. By the end of the 17th century the area had acquired the name it still goes by today, Temple Bar. The arrival of a new customs house in 1707 - on the site where U2’s Clarence Hotel stands today - brought money and a flurry of activity into the once pastoral area. Warehouses shot up at every corner and taverns, theatres
and brothels followed suit. The boom lasted barely a century. When customs officials moved into new, larger premises on the Northside of the Liffey in 1791, the bubble burst and Temple Bar fell into disrepair.

A run-down inner city slum by the mid-20th century, Temple Bar was long written off when state transport company CIE started buying up property here in the 1980's with the view to building a huge bus depot. While waiting for planning permission by the city, CIE decided to let out the empty premises at cheap rates. Attracted by the bargain rents, artists, fringe boutiques and alternative eateries started to shoot up all over Temple Bar. The lively, buzzing quarter was received well by Dubliners and resistance against CIE plans to raze Temple Bar grew. Finally, the Irish state got involved in 1991 and set up a non-profit company to oversee the future development of Temple Bar. So instead of buses being washed and serviced on the Southbank of the Liffey, you can still enjoy the unique bohemian atmosphere in Temple Bar's cobbled lanes.

After lunch, we’re off to the National Museum of Ireland, Archaeology. The archaeological collection is the primary repository of ancient Irish artifacts and an indispensable source for researchers into the development of Irish civilization from prehistoric times until the end of the Middle Ages and beyond. The period covered by the exhibitions extends from the Mesolithic through to the end of the medieval period, and includes internationally known treasures such as the Ardagh Chalice, ‘Tara’ Brooch and Derrynaflan Hoard.

Based on core collections assembled in the late 18th and 19th Centuries by the Royal Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy, the archaeological collections have been added to considerably over the last 100 years and now number in excess of two million objects. The collection is significant in extent, diversity and quality and three areas are of acknowledged international standing. These are the prehistoric gold collections; ecclesiastical metalwork and personal ornaments of the early medieval period; and the Viking Dublin assemblage. Legislation provides an operational framework for the work of the Irish Antiquities division and is also a statement of public policy in relation to it. Archaeological objects found in Ireland are State property and the core collection continues to grow rapidly, mainly as a result of large-scale archaeological excavation.

All archaeological objects found that have no known owner are State property and finders are obliged to report their discoveries to the National Museum of Ireland (or to a Designated County Museum). FYI, finder’s rewards are paid in respect of discoveries. Searching for archaeological objects with metal detectors, or excavating them, is
regulated by license. Archaeological excavation and fieldwork is undertaken regularly by the Museum’s archaeologists to obtain contextual information about new discoveries reported by the general public.

The National Museum of Ireland’s collection of prehistoric goldwork, ranging in date between 2200 BC and 500 BC, is one of the largest and most important in western Europe. Most are pieces of jewellery but the precise function of some is unknown. During the Early Bronze Age the principal products were made from sheet gold, and include sundiscs and the crescentic gold collars called lunulae. Around 1200 BC new gold working techniques were developed. During this time a great variety of torcs were made by twisting bars or strips of gold. Styles changed again around 900 BC and the goldwork of this period can be divided into two main types. Solid objects such as bracelets and dress-fasteners contrast dramatically with large sheet gold collars and delicate ear-spools.

By this time, I am sure you are dragging a bit. So off we go to Abigail’s Hotel to check in and freshen up. I’ll give you some down time before we’re off to our first group meal in Ireland – a delicious 3 course meal (hosted by Mrs. Dunlap) at a hotel about ten minutes from our hotel. We leave at 5:30pm for O’Sheas Hotel at 19 Talbot Street, a great walk across O’Connell Bridge (and the Liffey) past the GPO. Dinner is at 6pm. We’ll be done and back to Abigail’s by 8pm. Anyone care to join me for a trad session at Oliver St. John Gogarty’s? Whew. What a first full day in Dublin. Evening in Dublin.

**Day 3  Friday, March 11: National Gallery of Art, Chester Beatty Museum, Dublin Castle, Abbey Theatre.**

It’s going to be quite the day of the arts, today. We’ll have breakfast in the common room from 8-9am. At 9:30am, we’ll leave for our 8 block walk to the National Gallery. On the way to the National Gallery (Merrion Square), we’ll walk by the famous “doors of Dublin”, those cheery facades of restored Georgian buildings which you see on posters and post cards. Get your journals out. Here is where you get a lecture about “What is Irish about Irish Art”. And we’ll quickly view the other major European works in the collection. We’ll be at the National Gallery from 10am-1 pm, a good amount of time (though we could always spend much more, of course). But then, there is always Sunday afternoon for that (a partial free day). Note the new wing (kinda wild). First, a bit about the NG.

Every country has their version of a national gallery. And, it usually is called the National Art Gallery. We have one, in Washington, the British have one in London, the French (well, they’re the French and it’s the Louvre). You get my direction here. So, today we visit the National Gallery of Ireland to see, among other things, what was particularly Irish about Irish art. We’ll enter via the traditional (older) entrance. The NG was built in the mid-1800’s in honor of businessman and philanthropist William Dargan. That’s his statue on the lawn.
A committee was formed in the 1850s to commemorate in some permanent way the generosity of William Dargan. He was the outstanding inaugurator of many Irish railway companies and almost single handedly financed the Great Exhibition of 1853 which included the country’s greatest art collection up to then. Agreeing that an Irish National Gallery would be a fitting testimonial for Dargan the committee donated £5,000 to the Irish Institution, an organisation set up to acquire paintings and open just such a gallery. Built as a copy of the neighboring Natural History Museum, the Gallery opened in 1864, on the same day that Dargan’s statue on the front lawn, sculpted by Thomas Farrell, was unveiled. In 1903 the Gallery was enlarged and a further extension, the North Wing, was opened in 1968. The new Millennium Wing, the largest extension to date, was opened in 2001.

George Bernard Shaw (author of Pygmalion – you know, My Fair Lady, among other plays) spent many a youthful day appreciating the treasures and his bequests to the Gallery. His will ensured a source of perpetual revenue, principally the royalties from those plays (Pygmalion and My Fair Lady). Those funds have helped to further enrich the collection and make the National Gallery one of the finest for its size in the world. The National Gallery of Ireland is a most welcoming institution and offers many facilities including touch-screen computers, lectures, family and open days, drawing studies, school programs and guided tours. We have a good part of the morning here.

Artists represented include world-class artists and Irish artists. A short list is impressive: Rembrandt, Fra Angelico, Velázquez, Vermeer, Murillo, Hogarth, Reynolds, Turner, Gainsborough, Titian, Caravaggio, Brueghel, Van Dyck, El Greco, Picasso and Irish artists Osborne, O’Conor, Maclise, Hone, Orpen, and Jack B Yeats. So much art, so little time.

Some gems...

**James Barry (1741-1806)**

**Self-Portrait as Timanthes, c. 1780-1803**

This half-length portrait is based on a description by Pliny the Elder of a lost painting by the ancient Greek artist Timanthes. It was begun around 1780; Barry initially used it for his representation of Timanthes in a painting for the Great Room at the Society of Arts in London. Later, in 1804, he was requested by the Society to provide a self-portrait, to be reproduced in engraved form for a published volume of the Society’s transactions for that year. He represents himself wearing a red coat with a yellow waistcoat and white shirt underneath. His neck is adorned with a black ribbon. He holds aloft a painting of a Cyclops, the one-eyed giant who, according to Homer, devoured human flesh. In the background, satyrs gaze in fear at the giant. The windswept tree and active volcano silhouetted against the sky add to the sense of drama. Behind the artist is the base of the famous Hellenistic statue the *Lacōn*, a cast of which stood in Barry’s studio. The artist’s deliberate placement of himself between the statue and the painting was intended to reflect his ability to survive adversity.
Caravaggio (1571-1610)
*The Taking of Christ, 1602*

Throughout history, very few artists have caused as radical a change in pictorial perceptions as Caravaggio. From the moment his talent was discovered, he swiftly became the most famous painter of his time in Italy, as well as a source of inspiration for hundreds of followers throughout Europe.

*The Taking of Christ* was painted by Caravaggio for the Roman Marquis Ciriaco Mattei at the end of 1602, when he was at the height of his fame. Breaking with the past, the artist offered a new visual rendering of the narrative of the Gospels, reducing the space around the three-quarter-length figures and avoiding any description of the setting. All emphasis is directed on the action perpetrated by Judas and the Temple guards on an overwhelmed Jesus, who offers no resistance to his destiny. The fleeing disciple in disarray on the left is St John the Evangelist. Only the moon lights the scene: although the man at the far side is holding a lantern, it is in reality an ineffective source. In that man's features Caravaggio portrayed himself, at the age of thirty one, as a passive spectator of the divine tragedy. Note here: this is the single most famous work of the NG and it was not on display (on loan) the last time I was at the gallery. So...here’s hoping.

Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669)
*Landscape with the Rest on the Flight into Egypt, 1647*

The Bible mentions how King Herod, having been notified that a new 'King of the Jews' had been born, ordered the slaying of all male children in Bethlehem under the age of two. In order to save the Christ Child, an angel came to Joseph in a dream and told him to flee with his family to Egypt (Matthew 2:13-14).

This moving subject, popular in the arts since the Middle Ages, occupies only a small place in Rembrandt's painting. The artist put more emphasis on the mesmerising atmosphere of a hilly landscape at night lit by multiple light sources. Therefore, the painting is usually grouped among Rembrandt's nine painted landscapes. Of this small group, *The Rest on the Flight into Egypt* is Rembrandt's only nightscape.
Regarded as the most gifted Dutch artist, Rembrandt was also one of the most versatile, as he excelled in painting, drawing and the art of etching. He represented mostly subjects from the Bible and classical mythology and portrayed many burghers from Amsterdam.

Lavinia Fontana (1552-1614)
The Visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, 1600.

The Queen of Sheba heard of Solomon’s wisdom. She came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with difficult questions. She came with camels loaded with gold and spices and precious stones. The Queen of Sheba and Solomon conversed and Solomon answered to all the challenges of the Queen. The Queen was breathless at the buildings of Solomon, at his retinue, his organisation of Israel and at his wisdom. She said the reports she had received of Solomon’s wisdom were all true. She concluded that Solomon surpassed in prosperity and wisdom all she had heard. She found Israel fortunate to be ruled by such a king and blessed was Yahweh to have set Solomon on the throne of Israel. The Queen of Sheba presented to the king the gold and spices and stones and no such wealth was again brought to the court after her. Then Solomon traded with the Queen and Solomon’s fleet brought back great cargoes of timber and precious stones from the land of the Queen of Sheba. Solomon used the wood for his buildings but also for the music instruments of the royal palace, for the harps and lyres. These were also of timber as no one had seen before. King Solomon gave the Queen of Sheba everything she wished. Then she left and went home to her own country. Well, that’s the story. Now here are some issues about the artist and the picture.

It is interesting that there was a tradition in Bologna of well-educated female artists. The University of Bologna was not only the first one of its kind founded in Europe, it was also open to women. A bit about Fontana. She was born in Bologna in 1552 and among all the cities of Western Europe, Bologna remained the most sympathetic and tolerant to lady painters. The first teacher of Lavinia was her father, Prospero Fontana, who was a well appreciated and established artist in Bologna. Prospero Fontana had many students, among whom also Ludovico Carracci, who would later found with other painters of his own family the Classicist tendency in Italian Baroque art. Lavinia Fontana’s fame was well established in the late 1570’s but for instance she would not have been allowed in the Academy of the Carracci painters of Bologna because that academy emphasised painting from the nude. Lavinia’s first known work dates from 1576 and it was already a religious painting, a Christ with angels G103. In 1577 she married another Bolognese painter whose name was Gian Paolo Zappi and who had also been a student in her father’s workshop. Zappi remained almost anonymous in art history. At best he might have worked as an assistant in his wife’s workshop. But Lavinia Fontana seems to have
Lavinia Fontana’s *The Visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon* was made during her last years in Bologna, around 1600. She was already around fifty years old then, but like male painters of her age she had not lost her inspiration or her skills in art. The picture is probably also portraiture. Solomon might be the Duke of Mantua, Vincent I Gonzaga, and the Queen of Sheba the Duke’s wife Leonora de Medici. In 1600 the Duke and Duchess attended to the marriage of Maria de Medici in Florence. They may have travelled over Bologna and commissioned the work. The influence of Leonora de Medici on her husband may have helped in convincing her husband to have a picture painted by Lavinia Fontana, though Lavinia’s eminence was established enough. The Duke of Mantua was a ruling aristocrat and that he had ordered a work to a woman painter tells much about Lavinia Fontana’s fame.

In the picture, Solomon wears the usual symbols of his kingdom: the sceptre and the crown. His armor-bearer is near, holding his imposing sword. All the honor goes however to the lady that has come to his court, the Queen of Sheba. The Queen of Sheba wears a sumptuous robe lined with expensive lace. And she is followed by a rich court of other noble women, her ladies-in-waiting. The Queen brought a jester with her and Lavinia Fontana painted a hunting dog to add a touch of genre intimacy, whereas a Black servant brings golden and silver presents to Solomon. Fontana painted in the background a nice landscape, either in a window or as a painting of such a landscape that hangs in the ceremonial hall (hard to tell for me – what do you think?).

The most striking effect of this painting on the viewer is one of refined court manners, of reverence for ladies, as indeed would have been the case in the courts of the late Renaissance Italian cities. The following of the Queen of Sheba is represented as the normal court of a visiting monarch, but it consists entirely of women. Lavinia Fontana painted with delicate skill the lace collars and lace sleeve linings of the ladies and with time these white lines stood out much against the other colours of the painting. She cared for her work, detailed much all the figures of the picture and even the background to an elegant whole. The main impression of the viewer is one of elegant courting, relations of respect between noble women and men. This is a theme that a woman would be sensitive to, would represent, and that would probably less come to the mind of male painters.

The composition is simple, and based on a division of three to five in length, which is the golden proportion. One scene is Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, the longer scene is the Queen’s following. Portraiture was the main aim of the picture, so Lavinia used a simple horizontal representation of the figures. The picture has all the characteristics of a solemn Renaissance picture, even though Baroque and powerful realism had started in Rome with Caravaggio.

Fontana painted a detailed, aristocratic scene, as seen in the way she painted the robe of the Queen of Sheba and the dresses of the other ladies. Every face of the ladies-in-waiting is different, every poise is different, but
all express the solemn dignity of the arrival at court. The group of ladies isolates itself from Solomon and the Queen. Every lady looks away from the two main figures. They ladies look either at the viewer, either at the incoming presents. They follow with their eyes the gesture of the dwarf. Thus isolated, the encounter of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba become more intimate, and Lavinia Fontana obtained the nice effect as if the ladies diverted their looks from the couple to give it a few moments of intimacy in which the tender feelings are exchanged that the court does not need to witness. Lavinia Fontana brought another such delicate touch in her representation in the fact that Solomon wears crown and sceptre, but the Queen of Sheba wears no crown. The lady just behind the Queen brings her crown. This is probably a delicate recognition of the supremacy of Solomon, and of the supremacy in the marriage of the Duke of Mantua over the Duchess, or can be so interpreted.

Lavinia Fontana leads the viewer over the picture. The viewer will normally start at the figure of the story, King Solomon. Solomon leans towards the Queen of Sheba and his arms open to her. When the viewer looks at the Queen, the Queen’s arms direct the eyes to the lower right side, where the dwarf with the red shirt is situated. The dwarf points to the Black servant entering with a plate full of golden and silver presents. And then the viewer’s gaze is led back over the various faces of the ladies-in-waiting, back to the left scene and to the Queen. The Queen of Sheba here is with her wealthy, brocaded robe the true main figure of the scene.

The *Visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon* is a large canvas and one of the most ambitious scenes of Lavinia Fontana. With such paintings she proved not to be the lesser artist of her male counterparts. Her composition, clarity of depiction and of message marks her still as a painter of the Renaissance, but with the sumptuous presentation of the court figures she introduces the more decorative period of Baroque.

**Johannes Vermeer (1632-1675)**

*Woman Writing a Letter, with her Maid*, c.1670

Considered one of the principal Dutch painters, Johannes Vermeer specialized in genre scenes, particular those depicting women in domestic settings. Vermeer’s work displays an unprecedented level of artistic mastery in its illusion of reality. His figures are often quiet and inactive, which contributes to the solemn and mysterious atmosphere of his paintings. Vermeer’s oeuvre is unusually small. Probably as few as thirty-four pictures have survived.

*A Lady Writing a Letter* is one of Vermeer’s most outstanding compositions, and his most ambitious depiction of the theme of letter writing. While a maidservant is staring out of the window, her mistress is writing an epistle. In the foreground on the floor lie a red seal, a stick of sealing wax and an object which is either a letter with a crumpled wrapper or a letter-writing manual, a standard aid
for personal correspondence at the time. In either case, the objects seem to have been thrown down by the lady in some agitation.

During his lifetime, Vermeer did not sell *A Lady Writing a Letter*. After his death, his widow gave it and another painting to a local baker to cover her costs for bread.

![Paul Henry (1876-1958)](image1)

*Launching the Curragh, 1910-1911*

The picture portrays a common feature of life in the west of Ireland. Five men push their boat into the sea. The curragh is a small boat of wickerwork and hide, materials used in this region because of the shortage of wood. The vessel is a versatile one: it is light enough to be carried by one man, and able to negotiate both shallow waters and rough seas.

Henry's record of the activity of fishermen on the island of Achill, off the coast of Co. Mayo, is an excellent example of his ability to convey the essence of life in this part of Ireland. The artist and his wife, Grace, also a painter, spent a month on the island in 1910; two years later they returned, and remained there on an off for the next seven years. Henry was attracted by the stark beauty of the place and the rugged existence of its inhabitants. His early paintings portray the activities of the islanders, but he soon realised that the residents were not altogether eager to be included in his sketching scenes. They felt that by drawing or painting their likeness, Henry was removing part of their souls. This painting, therefore, is likely to have been painted from memory or done furtively. Later Achill paintings concentrate on the landscape itself with its distinctive thatched cottages, mountains, bogs, lakes and cloud-filled skies. It is Henry's images that, above all, have come to represent the quintessential essence of Ireland as seen on postcards and in various type of travel literature. Henry had initially trained in Belfast before going to Paris in 1898.

![William Orpen (1878-1931)](image2)

*The Holy Well, 1916*

From 1813 to 1916 William Orpen painted several pictures which relate to the Celtic Revival. From the last decades of the nineteenth century, artists, writers and political ideologues had come to regard the west of the country as the 'real' Ireland, and those who lived there as the
embodiment of a 'pure' Irish race. Orpen, however, did not wholeheartedly embrace this construct of national identity. The large canvas depicts Ireland's Celtic heritage with sardonic eye and is anti-romantic comment on the fanciful idealisation of western peasant culture.

He bases his scene on the old practice when, on 'pattern days', people would gather to pray at a holy site associated with a local saint. The location is an island off the west shore of Ireland, and the typically barren stony landscape of that region provides a backdrop for those gathering at the well. They are in varying states of undress. A monk stands to one side of the well and blesses the naked figures. Above him stands an amused figure dressed in peasant costume, observing the scene below. It was not customary for people to undress as part of the ritual, especially in Ireland, a country noted for its sexual inhibitions. Thus Orpen is poking fun at the superstitious nature of these religious practices. Rather than symbolizing the nobility of the Irish he suggests instead that the Irish peasant is foolish and gullible. Rather controversial artist and painting, to say the least.

After the National Gallery, it’s lunch time. Let’s try something different. Lunch will be at Hanley’s Cornish Pasties on Dawson Street. One result of the Irish economic plummet was that various small food outlets cropped up that probably wouldn’t have in the more glorious times. This hole-in-the-wall is a prime example. Hanley’s Cornish Pasties sell a dozen or so varieties of Cornish pasties and not much else (just a few hot and cold drinks, in fact—it’s €5 for any pastie and a drink). And the pasties really are Cornish, too. So, what is it? First of all, it’s great value for money. Second, it really will fill you up (if not land “plop” in the bottom of your stomach). Another new cultural experience coming at you. Think of it as Irish stew in a pastry shell (thus the name, pasties). They are over-seasoned and overcooked. Glutinous swede and turnip are layered with long-cooked hunks of beef and ensconced in pastry with the unmistakeable flakiness that comes from suet or dripping or whatever other euphemism we now use for rendered animal fat as a legitimate ingredient. We’ll line up, get a pastie and a drink, and off we go walking. Probably walking but maybe (if it’s nice), St. Stehen’s Green. In any case, down the shopping/walking mall known as Grafton Street, we meet up with Dame street (Trinity College again) and go past Dublin Castle to the Chester Beatty Library and Museum. Now, this is not the kind of castle that we will see Ireland in a few days, it’s more of a state residence than a castle. This well-preserved 13th-century castle once served as the seat of the Irish monarchy. We really won’t go in it (it emulates a British royal tour and therefore is more pomp than really Irish, I think). But in the Dublin Castle complex is a gem of a museum – the Chester Beatty Library and Museum.
Described by the Lonely Planet guide as not just the best museum in Ireland, but one of the best in Europe, the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin is an art museum and library which houses the great collection of manuscripts, miniature paintings, prints, drawings, rare books and some decorative arts assembled by Chester Beatty (1875-1968). (He was a miner who made millions internationally and as an Irish-American who gave the entire priceless collection to the state. We won’t spend a lot of time here, but the original scrolls and manuscripts of Jewish and early Christian bibles are outstanding.

The Museum’s exhibitions open a window on the artistic treasures of the great cultures and religions of the world. Its rich collection from countries across Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and Europe offers visitors a visual feast. Chester Beatty Library was named Irish Museum of the year in 2000 and was awarded the title European Museum of the Year in 2002. The collection consists of Egyptian papyrus texts, beautifully illuminated copies of the Qur'an, rare and early versions of the Bible, European medieval and renaissance manuscripts. In its diversity the museum focuses much of the richness of human creative expression from about 2700 BC to the present day.

Since dinner is on our own tonight, and we don’t really have time for much, I would suggest an early ‘snack’ rather than a meal. There is a great restaurant on the walk back to our hotel so maybe we’ll all stop there. If not, break up into groups for a meal. In any case, remember that tonight we go to the play at the Abbey Theatre, the most important theatre in Ireland. And we will leave from Abigail’s at 6:45pm, so please be there ready to leave on time.

The play we will see is a world premiere: The Passing by Paul Mercier. It starts at 7:30pm, so we need to be seated by 7:15pm. We are most grateful to Mrs. Dunlap for helping us secure these tickets. Here is what they say about the play.

“Catherine couldn’t wait to leave home. But when the time comes for home to leave Catherine, well they say that's a different story. When her parents’ house goes up for sale, Catherine revisits her relationship with it, and with the rest of her family. Empty rooms fill with memories and long buried emotions re-surface in The Passing, Paul Mercier’s tender and reflective new play.”

This should be some play. At 10pm when it’s over, we’ll walk back to our hotel and maybe catch some more Irish music at a local. Evening in Dublin.
Day 4  Saturday, March 12: Dublin Writers Museum or Free Morning, Guinness Brewery Tour, Evening free. Breakfast between 8-9am. You have a choice for this morning’s activities. **Plan 1**: go to the Dublin Writers Museum and have 2 hours to shop/eat lunch before we leave from our hotel at 2pm for a tour of the Guinness Brewery. **Plan 2**: have an open morning to shop/eat lunch before we leave from our hotel at 2pm for a tour of the Guinness Brewery. In essence, if you want to see the Dublin Writers Museum, shop for 1 ½ hours and grab a quick snack, choose Plan 1. If you want to shop for 3 ½ hours and grab a quick snack, choose Plan 2. It’s up to you and I need to know Friday morning. Remember our rule, though, no one goes off by themselves ever. So, you need to have a ‘buddy’.

Why go to the Dublin Writers Museum? It’s simple really. We can’t even begin to imagine the shape of the English language without the contributions to poetry, short stories, plays, novels and the theatre that Dublin writers have made. You may not know them by heart, but here is an introduction in a beautiful Georgian building. Simply put, the Dublin Writers Museum is an essential visit for anyone who wants to discover, explore, or simply enjoy Dublin’s immense literary heritage. It’s here that Dublin’s literary celebrities from the past three hundred years are brought to life through their books, letters, portraits and personal items. Whatever you think you know about Irish literature, you’re sure to find something new. Aside from the serious stuff, there are important artifacts of various sorts that belonged to James Joyce, W.B. Yeats, Jonathan Swift, Patrick Kavanagh, John Sheridan, George Bernard Shaw, Frank O’Connor, Samuel Beckett, Brendan Behan, Lady Gregory, Austin Clarke, Samuel Beckett, Mary Lavin, Oliver St. John Gogarty, Brendan Behan and Oscar Wilde (to name the ones I remember). Not surprisingly, there is a great bookshop and café here. They go hand-in-hand. And the building itself is an artwork. It is a restored Georgian mansion (on Parnell Square) and a treasure in itself. The sumptuous plasterwork in the first floor Gallery of Writers is worth a visit alone. Obviously, I encourage you greatly to go to the Dublin Writers Museum.

In any case, we meet at 2pm in the commons area on the ground level of Abigail’s for our walk to Guinness for the tour. Something about Guinness as a cultural emblem. You might have associated the name with the beer, but it is much, much more than that. Exactly what you’ll find out this afternoon by visiting the Number 1 tourist attraction of Ireland ever since data collection was started. Impressive. Pictures ARE allowed here. And the older videos and marketing are a hoot. We’ll spend the afternoon here.
A little history (you’ll hear all this while at the Storehouse). Arthur Guinness started brewing ales from 1759 at the St. James's Gate Brewery in Dublin. On December 31, 1759 he signed a 9,000 year lease at £45 per annum for the unused brewery, a wise investment and agreement, indeed. Ten years later on 19 May 1769 Guinness exported his ale for the first time, when six and a half barrels were shipped to England. The company merged with Grand Metropolitan in 1997 to form Diageo plc, capitalised in 2006 at about 40 billion euro. Although not officially fully taking over, the Guinness family still owns 51% of the brewery.

The Guinness Storehouse, the "Home of Guinness", is Dublin's most popular tourist attraction. A converted brewing factory, it is now a Guinness museum, incorporating elements from the old brewing factory to explain the history of its production. Some of the old brewing equipment is on show, as well as stout ingredients, brewing techniques, advertising methods and storage devices. Amazingly, the exhibition takes place over 7 floors, in the shape of a 14 million pint glass of Guinness. The final floor is the Gravity Bar, which has an almost 360° panorama over the city, where visitors can claim a free pint of "the black stuff" or a soft drink. FYI, unlike the Anheuser-Busch Brewery tour, Guinness Storehouse visitors do not get to see the beer being brewed in front of them. But from various vantage points in the building you may see parts of the brew house, vats, grain silos and the keg yard.

After our time at Guinness, we’ll walk back to the hotel. Tonight you will break into groups to choose where to eat. Now that we’ve walked around (it would seem all-of-Dublin), pick out a place and the evening is yours. Remember, make wise decisions and always stay with the group. An additional option: since Abigail’s is an hostel, you can go next door to SuperValue (a grocery store) and buy food to prepare in the kitchen. Inexpensive and kinda fun, to tell you the truth. Up to you. Evening in Dublin.

**Day 5  Sunday, March 13: St. Patrick's Cathedral, Free afternoon, Dinner and Irish Dancing.**

Breakfast is at the regular time, 8-9am, but we will be leaving the hotel at 10am for our walk over to St. Patrick’s Cathedral and the 11.15am Sung Eucharist and Matins service.

You may be in Catholic Ireland and St. Patrick may be the patron saint of Catholic Ireland, but St. Patrick’s Cathedral is an Anglican Church. Remember, the British ruled Ireland until 1916. Saint Patrick’s Cathedral stands adjacent to the famous well
where tradition has it Saint Patrick baptized converts on his visit to Dublin. A bit of quick history...

The parish church of Saint Patrick on this site was granted collegiate status in 1191 and raised to cathedral status in 1224. The present building dates from 1220. The Cathedral is today the National Cathedral of the Church of Ireland (a church of the Anglican communion). To commemorate St. Patrick, a small wooden church was built in the 7th century. References to the well exist in many documents until the late sixteenth-century, but the site was eventually built upon. In 1901 the well was rediscovered and this ancient granite stone (marked with a Celtic cross) which covered the well was moved into the Cathedral. The parish church on this site was one of the four Celtic churches in Dublin and was known as Saint Patrick’s in Insula (on the island) as it was built on an island between two branches of the River Poddle (which still flows under the cathedral).

Perhaps the most famous resident of St. Patrick’s was the Dean, Jonathan Swift. Swift, born in Dublin in 1667, was ordained into the ministry of the Church of Ireland in 1694. He was appointed dean of Saint Patrick’s Cathedral, a position which he held from 1713—1745. His epitaph can be seen in the cathedral: “Here is laid the body of Jonathan Swift, Doctor of Divinity, Dean of this Cathedral Church, where fierce indignation can no longer rend the heart. Go, traveller, and imitate if you can this earnest and dedicated champion of liberty. He died on the 19th day of October 1745 AD. Aged 78 years.”

Of course, the most famous of his works, somewhat known to you, is the biting commentary Gulliver’s Travels. Although now thought by many to be a book for children, it is in fact a political satire and it was an immediate success. In 1729 he published A Modest Proposal, a vivid picture of his increasing impatience with the English government’s attitude to Ireland. Its full title is A Modest Proposal for preventing the children of Poor People from being a Burden to their Parents or Country and for making them Beneficial to the Public. It offers the following solution to a growing problem of the poor in Ireland: “I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee.”
After the church service (Protestant remember), we’ll head back to Abigail’s and split into groups for a free afternoon. Lunch and shopping would be on my list. Also, you might want to take some time to get caught up on your journal (remember that, the journal??).

We have a treat tonight: a fancy dinner (3 course meal) with Irish dancing. We leave Abigail’s for our walk to the restaurant Legends at 6:45pm. Come hungry and bring your cameras.

The cost of the dinner and show, incidentally, is being assisted by Mrs. Dunlap. A huge thank you, once again, to our global angel. This is our last night in Dublin, but don’t make it too late. We leave early and on time tomorrow morning for Donegal. Evening in Dublin.

Day 6  Monday, March 14: Dublin to Donegal (Glassagh) via Monasterboice and Northern Ireland.
Breakfast will be at the regular time (8-9am) but by 9:15am we must plan to be out of the hotel. Say goodbye to Abigail’s and follow me with your luggage as we wait for Feda O’Donnell’s coach and Michael, my friend and our coach driver. It will be busy so after checking to make sure you have your passport on your body, put your bag in the hold and pop into the coach. Then it’s off we go.

Our first stop will be at the medieval round tower and the ancient celtic crosses (all original) at Monasterboice. Round towers are the most impressive early Christian Irish buildings in Ireland, and for obvious reasons, they’re rare and not in museums. These are tall, slender towers of five or more stories, with a door placed high above the ground, and a conical roof. The old Irish word for them was Cloigtheach, meaning bell house, which may give some clue about their original use. They may have served the same function as a Muslim minaret (let’s mix religions), to call the monks to prayer. However the fact that the door was always placed well above ground level, also suggests they were designed to act as places of refuge, which must have been a major consideration at a time when monasteries with their wealth were targets. But was the danger from Sven and his Viking raiders? Or was it homegrown – bands of cattle rustlers and minor chieftains? Tower building in general
is believed to have begun around 900, and continued until the 1100s. Hopefully, it will be dry.

About 1 ½ hours after we leave Monasterboice, we’ll stop for lunch in Monaghan, just before we cross over and through Northern Ireland. Monaghan is the main town for County Monaghan. We’ll split up for lunch into groups, depending upon preferences. I’m going right for the coffee latte at McDonalds. You can find sandwiches at the Tesco grocery store a bit further down in the Monaghan Shopping Centre. Back on the bus - try to stay awake during this coach ride; it will be beautiful. But then again, you’ll be beat. So a nap is understandable. We’ll get back into the Republic (in County Donegal) in Lifford and then go through the fastest growing town in Ireland, Letterkenny. Then off across the mountains. These views are fabulous, so now let’s try to stay awake. I’ll be talking about the area to wake you up. We’ll be chasing the sun by going due west, not to say that you’ll see much sun. Rain and blue sky. Rain and blue sky. And beautiful clouds. Welcome to the effects of living on an island in the Atlantic.

We’ll pass Mt. Errigal, the highest mountain in Donegal. The range is called the Derryveagh Mountains. (If it was warm and dry, we might climb it, but believe me, it won’t be – at least during this time of the year). A little further on the left is Dun Lewey and the Poison Glen (there’s a story about the name). My guess is by the time we’re off the mountain you’ll notice that sweet smell of turf. At the top of the next hill (across from the windmills) in Gweedore is Leo’s/Enya’s home. We’ll make a right by the river and go down to Gweedore and the coastal road. Teac Jack’s is a large hotel and restaurant with a car park. Note, if the flags are flying, there is always an EU flag there. There is a story behind that. We’ll arrive around 3:30pm, check in and freshen up just a bit. Then let’s walk down to the Atlantic (yes the ocean) to really stimulate our appetite. Depending on the weather, we’ll go there today (if dry) or a bit later. In any case, here is your home for the next four nights.
There is, by the way, a little shop 3 minutes down the road if you want snacks.

Dinner is being hosted tonight by Mrs. Dunlap. I’ve asked for Irish Stew (well you are in Ireland after all). Dinner will be at 6pm and the evening is free. Time spent downstairs, I should imagine, talking with the locals and getting caught up on your journals. Evening in Glassagh, Co. Donegal.

Day 7  Tuesday, March 15: Glassagh, Gweedore, Bunbeg, the Bloody Forelands and Glenveagh Castle.
Breakfast will be between 8 and 9am and it will be great. If you leave hungry, it’s your own fault. Michael will be here with the coach for our tour of raw, rough and wild rural NW Co. Donegal. Bring your gloves, hats and coats. We’ll actually start at Maire Ned’s. She has the neatest shop with jewelry, sweaters, hats etc. All really authentic and I recommend this place for souvenir shopping for quality goods. Also, if you’re cold, you will find a fabulous sweater to keep the cold off you. Next, if you need to change some more money, we’ll stop at the AIB in Gweedore (there is an ATM there as well). Banks are a bit strange in Ireland, which you will see if you come in with me. OK. Now we “invade” a friend of mine (Pamela Bloe) and her rather small photography studio. This should be fun.

All over this area we’ll see indented coastline and scenery that is varied and stunning – bays, beaches, cliffs, peninsulas, mountains, lakes and boglands. We’ll drive along the coast road to the little fishing port of Bunbeg. We’ll stop to see a Martello Tower (built by the British in fears of a Napoleonic invasion). Then we’ll walk (weather permitting) down to Bunbeg Harbor. Talk about quaint and a photo moment.

Then it’s off following the coast road to our lunch stop: soup and sandwiches at a little shop, affectionately called Stephen Ann’s. (His last name is O’Donnell. So are about 2000 others. So, his is identified by his Mom, Annie. So, we call him Stephen Ann. His son is Stephen Og – Jr). After lunch, we’ll coach over the mountain road to Glenveagh National Park, which is where Glenveagh Castle is. Dress for a bit of wind, as in gale force wind. You get a great introduction to the environmental issues of this area here and then we’ll go down and tour the castle. Mind you, this is a gentleman’s castle; it was built in the 1870’s by John George Adair, a British land speculator, who drove the Irish off these 40K acres. Amazingly cruel story, which you’ll learn about. The castle is small, so I will divide you up into two groups.
Day 8  Wednesday, March 16: Doe Castle and Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland.

Breakfast will be between 8 and 9am. We leave on the coach at 9:30am. Yesterday we saw a gentleman’s castle from the late 19th century. Today we start at the ancestral castle of the Sweeneys – Doe Castle. The earliest part of this structure dates from the 1500s. Great photo op.

Doe Castle is a fairly well preserved ruin. This impressive fortified castle has a central tower, battlements and a defensive wall enclosing a courtyard. The central tower is reminiscent of a Scottish tower house, and is 50 feet high, with a large room on each of the four levels. The tower walls are about 8 feet thick. There is a dungeon on the third level with a single narrow window in the stone wall, and a single 4 foot high doorway with a pointed arch. The dungeon doorway opens into a winding stairway inside the castle wall to the fourth floor above.

The great hall is about 35 feet long by 18 feet wide. There is a well shaft in the south west of the castle courtyard that has dried up. It was built in the 1500s and was a stronghold of Clan Suibhne (MacSweeney). Owen Roe O’Neill led the Irish Confederates from Doe Castle in 1642 in the Wars of the Three Kingdoms. During the 17th century, the castle changed hands a number of times and was captured by the English. General George Vaughan Harte repaired the castle at the end of the 18th century and made his home there until 1864. The generals initials can still be seen over the door. The last occupant was a Church of Ireland minister, and after his departure the castle fell into disrepair. In 1922, Stewart-bam of Ards, sold the castle to the Irish Land Commission. The castle is now a National Monument.

After our visit, we’ll drive thru Letterkenny and cross into Northern Ireland. British pounds, known as sterling, is the currency here because Northern Ireland is a principality of England. Nonetheless, you will see that euros are accepted as well. We’ll go to the city centre and visit the famous walls of Derry. Actually, we’ll start our tour and discussion of the Troubles at the Tower Museum. While there I will try to engage one of the guards into a political discussion. Chime in if you wish but in any case, listen. You will learn much from those who have lived through things you have only read about (if in fact you have even read about the Troubles).

We’ll stop for lunch before walking around the walls of Derry. And lunch will be at Wetherspoons at the Diamond. I am hoping that our student, Jasmyn Steele, will meet us there. She knows which table I like, so I’ve asked her to get out of classes today for us.
After lunch, we will have time to walk the walls of Derry and then go into the main church, St. Columb’s Cathedral. It is still under serious reconstruction, but enough is extant to be meaningful for us.

A short bit of history. Catholics were discriminated against under Unionist government in Northern Ireland, both politically and economically. In the late 1960s the city became the flashpoint of disputes about institutional gerrymandering.

A civil rights demonstration in 1968 led by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association was banned by the Government and blocked using force by the Royal Ulster Constabulary. The events that followed the August 1969 Apprentice Boys parade resulted in the Battle of the Bogside, when Catholic rioters fought the police, leading to widespread civil disorder in Northern Ireland and is often dated as the starting point of the Troubles.

On Sunday January 30, 1972, 13 unarmed civilians were shot dead by British paratroopers during a civil rights march in the Bogside area. Another 13 were wounded and one further man later died of his wounds. This event came to be known as Bloody Sunday.

Violence eased towards the end of the Troubles in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Irish journalist Ed Maloney claims in "The
Secret History of the IRA” that republican leaders there negotiated a de facto ceasefire in the city as early as 1991. Whether this is true or not, the city did see less bloodshed by this time than Belfast or other localities.

A strange bit of lore...the city was visited by a killer whale in November 1977 at the height of the Troubles; it was dubbed Dopey Dick by the thousands who came from miles around to see him.

We’ll have about 45 minutes for shopping before boarding the coach for our trip back to Ireland and then Glassagh. Dinner can be rather inventive tonight. You could stop at one of the shops in Derry and buy sandwiches for later, or you could order another fine entree from Teac Jack’s when we return. Evening in Glassagh, Co. Donegal.

Day 9    Thursday, March 17: St. Patrick’s Day Parade, Leo’s Pub, and Teac Garfield.
Breakfast will be between 8 and 9am. We will board Michael’s coach for the St. Patrick’s Day Mass, probably in Anagry and probably around 11am (we would leave Teac Jack’s then at 10am). This is a religious holiday, you might remember. So we will experience church with the Irish first. Then we will march in the St. Patrick’s Day Parade in Gweedore.

Now a bit about St. Patrick.

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated on March 17, his religious feast day and the anniversary of his death in the fifth century. The Irish have observed this day as a religious holiday for over a thousand years.

Who was St. Patrick? While much of St. Patrick's life is clouded by legend, there are some generally agreed-upon facts. Most historians agree that he was born in Scotland or Wales around 370 A.D. and that his given name was Maewyn Succat. His parents, Calpurnius and Conchessa, were Romans living in Britain. As a teenager, Maewyn was kidnapped and sold into slavery in Ireland, where he worked as a shepherd. It was during that time he began to have religious visions and dreams. In one dream, he was shown a way to escape from Ireland — by going to the coast and getting on a ship. After a perilous journey of hundreds of miles, he arrived at the coast and discovered a ship bound to Britain. Back in Britain, Maewyn's dreams continued. In his spiritual autobiography, the Confessio, he told of a dream about a man named Victoricus, who came to him with letters from Ireland. In this vision, Maewyn writes:

'...as I read the beginning of the letter I thought that at the same moment I heard their voice...and this did they cry out as with one mouth: 'We ask thee, boy, come and walk among us once more.'

Although these visions moved him, Maewyn didn't feel himself worthy of returning to Ireland in his non-believer state. So, he journeyed to France where he entered a monastery and began studying for the priesthood. At this time he changed his name to Patrick (meaning "father of his people" in Latin). It was only after finding his true spiritual self that Patrick felt he could answer the call to return to Ireland to "care and labour for the salvation of others." He returned as a bishop around 432 A.D., traveled throughout Ireland spreading the word of God, and built churches and schools.

Patrick's humility, engaging personality, and knowledge of the social structure in Ireland helped his mission succeed. Eventually he made his headquarters at Armagh (in present-day Northern Ireland). By the time of his
On St. Patrick's Day, which falls during the Christian season of Lent, Irish families would traditionally attend church in the morning and celebrate in the afternoon. Lenten prohibitions against the consumption of meat were waived and people would dance, drink and feast with the traditional meal of Irish bacon and cabbage.

The first St. Patrick's Day parade took place not in Ireland but in the United States. Irish soldiers serving in the English military marched through New York City on March 17, 1762. Along with their music, the parade helped the soldiers reconnect with their Irish roots, as well as fellow Irishmen serving in the English army.

Over the next 35 years, Irish patriotism among American immigrants flourished, prompting the rise of so-called "Irish Aid" societies like the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick and the Hibernian Society. Each group would hold annual parades featuring bagpipes (which actually first became popular in the Scottish and British armies) and drums. In 1848, several New York Irish Aid societies decided to unite their parades to form one New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade. Today, that parade is the world's oldest civilian parade and the largest in the United States, with over 150,000 participants.

Each year, nearly three million people line the 1.5-mile parade route to watch the procession, which takes more than five hours. Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia and Savannah also celebrate the day with parades involving between 10,000 and 20,000 participants. The one we will participate in, in Gweedore this afternoon, is quite a bit smaller.

In modern-day Ireland, St. Patrick's Day has traditionally been a religious occasion. In fact, up until the 1970s, Irish laws mandated that pubs be closed on March 17. Beginning in 1995, however, the Irish government began a national campaign to use St. Patrick’s Day as an opportunity to drive tourism and showcase Ireland to the rest of the world. Last year, close to one million people took part in Ireland’s St. Patrick’s Festival in Dublin, a multi-day celebration featuring parades, concerts, outdoor theater productions and fireworks shows.

So here is how we’ll handle the day. After church, we will go back to Teac Jack’s for lunch/snack/whatever you order. 2pm is the scheduled parade. I assume it will be over by 4pm. At that time, Michael with the coach will pick up the group and drop us off in Meenaleck, by Leo’s Pub. This is where we will be eating tonight. But between when we arrive and dinner, why don’t you come down the lane to Teac Garfield for a spot of tea and a nice warm fire. Not all at once, mind you, but in dribs and drabs.

The house is a white traditional bungalow with a 2 foot wall with green on the coping. Wee rocks in the drive and a shed (one has to keep one’s turf somewhere, right?).
While we’ll have dinner around 6pm at Leo’s, why not come down the lane to our house. Phyllis will make you a traditional cup of tea (with yummie biscuits), as you sit around a warm turf fire. If it’s dry, you can get the wellies on (kinda like farmer’s boots) and walk up the mountain in my backyard. I have a number of pairs (we have kids of all sizes), so one is sure to fit you. Check them out in the shed. Of course, we have a computer, loads of poetry books and fun stuff to read (our kiddie books since the kids grew up here). Relax and meet my neighbors as well. Mark knows them and will introduce Hugh, Liz and Scottie to you...or Mary and Taig Diver with their 8 children. Michael and Helen (with little Shannon) live just up the hill from me. Comfortable and very picturesque community, I think. In case you need to call us there, here is the number:

>> The Garfields. 011.353.74.954.8808. (Our land line). Meenaleck, Co. Donegal <<

After our group meal (this one we pay for), Michael will bring us back to Teac Jack’s for a night of music. You should plan on making this an early night, since we leave before light in the morning. Pack all your things so that you can get ready easily and quickly in the morning. Last night in Ireland (for this trip, at least). Evening in Glassagh, Co. Donegal.

Day 10 Friday, March 18: Donegal-Dublin-Chicago-Dubuque.

Today is the travel day and we need to wake up by 4:45am and be on the coach by 5:30am. This is why you packed all up the night before. We will check in at the automated Aer Lingus green consoles. This will be a tough day for all, so please exercise restraint. After everyone’s checked in, we’ll go through security and that’s where we’ll have time to have breakfast and go duty free shopping. Oh yes, duty free. Duty free simply means that goods bought as you are leaving the EU will not contain a tax. And in the EU, tax can be anywhere from 0 to 21%, depending on the goods. So, depending upon your shopping list, this could be a considerable savings. Jewelry, Guinness boxer shorts (and more), CDs, perfumes, and Bewley’s teas. You can purchase these items and more, obviously, and bring them back to the states. I will show you where we need to be at 10:45am and then you can go shopping. But mind the time. DO NOT BE LATE. The plane will take off with us and, hopefully, you.

Here is the flight:

Aer Lingus - EI 125. Depart Dublin 12:00. Arrive Chicago 3:30pm. 9 1/2 hrs. Airbus A330

(Daylight Saving Time in US March 13. In EU it is March 27.)

We fly into the wind on the way back, so it usually takes an hour longer. Our Stratton coach will meet us at Terminal 5, O’Hare Airport, at about 4pm. We usually make one quick stop (at the Belvidere Oasis about an hour away from Chicago). That should put everyone back at UD on Friday around 8pm. Whew. You’ll have Saturday and Sunday to unwind (and wash your clothes) before school begins again on Monday, March 21st. Do drop in to see us on Monday, though, so we know you’re OK. Our next class will be
March 30, with the movie “In the Name of the Father”. Since this is part of the class, you are required to attend the movie and discussion. Also, this is the day you will hand in your journals and your two digital images. We will print them (for the show at Sylvia’s), so all you need to do is bring your camera so we can have a digital copy. The final class meeting (party and journals handed back) will be on April 6. Also, this is when we plan to produce the souvenir picture books.