

**THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH PODCAST
TRANSCRIPTS**

**EPISODE 192:
ENGLISH IN THE CELTIC WORLD**

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EPISODE 192: ENGLISH IN THE CELTIC WORLD

Welcome to the History of English Podcast – a podcast about the history of the English language. This is Episode 192: English in the Celtic World. This time, as we work our way through the story of English, we’re going to look at the period immediately following the English Civil War in the mid-1600s. While the war came to an end in England, there was still support for the monarchy in Scotland and Ireland. So the English army soon found itself at war again – this time with its Celtic neighbors. As we’ll see, those conflicts had consequences that are still with us today. One of those consequences was the expansion of standard English into those regions – which gradually replaced the existing manners of speech. And in Ireland, one of those existing manners of speech that was lost was an obscure dialect of English. So we’ll look at that long-lost dialect as well.

But before we begin, let me remind you that the website for the podcast is historyofenglishpodcast.com. And you can sign up to support the podcast and get bonus episodes at Patreon.com/historyofenglish.

And speaking of those bonus episodes at Patreon, let me make a quick note about how those episodes relate to the regular podcast. Over the past few years, I’ve settled into a regular schedule where I produce an episode every month – usually released at the end of the month. Every other month, I produce a regular episode like this one which traces the chronological history of English. And every month in between, I produce a bonus episode at Patreon. Those episodes are usually between a half hour to an hour in length, and they cover random topics in the history of English. So they’re not really related to the regular podcast series. But if you like to get access to an episode every month, the Patreon feature gives you that option. And I have two patron levels there. The limited patron level is only \$2 a month, and it gives you access to every new bonus episode when it comes out. The full patron level is \$5 a month, and that gives you access to the new bonus episodes, as well as the entire back catalogue, which is currently 116 bonus episodes plus the History of the Alphabet and Beowulf audiobooks that I did very early on in the series. So I hope all of that makes sense and gives you some options if you have caught up to the most recent episodes and want more content.

Also one other quick note. A few months back, I mentioned that I did an interview with Gideon Ben-Ami on his YouTube Channel called LetThemTalkTV. We talked about Middle English and that video is still available on YouTube if you want to check it out. Well, Gideon has recently published a book about English idioms called ‘Middlechester Chronicles and the Story of Idioms.’ So check that out if you want to read about English proverbs and idioms.

So with that, let’s turn to this episode about the period immediately following the English Civil War. We looked at the conclusion of that war in the last episode, and the war itself had far-reaching consequences. This time, I want to focus on what happened next in the British Isles, and next time, we’ll look at how the war affected England’s relationship with continental Europe. And then, after that, we’ll explore how the war affected the spread of English in North America and the Caribbean.

So let's begin with our look at the British Isles, and as it happens, I am releasing this episode at the end of October around the time of Halloween. And given that time of the year, I thought it might be interesting to note that the words *pumpkin* and *jack o'-lantern* appeared in English for the first time around the current point in our overall story of English in the mid-1600s.

Of course, pumpkins are native to North America, but by this point in history, English settlers had encountered them in the New World. The word *pumpkin* is first recorded in a pamphlet by an English minister named Nathaniel Ward who had migrated to Massachusetts. The pamphlet was called 'The Simple Cobler of Aggawam in America.' He had encountered pumpkins in the region, and he made reference to one in this particular pamphlet. Most traditional sources say the word *pumpkin* is a French loanword – *pompion* – referring to a type of edible gourd or melon. But another suggestion traces the word to a term used by the indigenous people who lived in the region of Massachusetts. That was the word *pôhpukun*, which referred to things that grow with a rounded shape. At any rate, the word made its way to English around this time.

As I noted, we also find the term *jack o'-lantern* around this time as well. But that term didn't have anything to do with pumpkins. In its earliest uses, it referred to certain lights that are sometimes seen at night hovering over marshy or swampy land. It is a naturally occurring phenomenon, but people at the time thought the lights were spirits that attracted people and led them astray. People coined names for those lights based on the idea that they were caused by a spirit carrying a light. At the time, the name *William* was a very common name, as were its abbreviated forms *Will* and *Bill* and *Billy*. Those names were sometimes used as a generic name for an unknown person. We still encounter the name *Billy* used that way in terms like *hillbilly* and *billy goat*. Well, in the 1500s, people started using the name *Will* to refer to that spirit who carried a light in swampy areas. It was said that this spirit named *Will* carried around a *wisp*, which referred to a bundle of straw that was lit on fire and used as a torch. So in the 1500s, we find the first reference to that type of mysterious light as '*Will with the wisp*' or '*Will o'the wisp*' for short.

But another variation of that same idea soon emerged. Just as the name *Will* was sometimes used as a generic name for an unknown person, so was the name *Jack*. Again, we still use the name that way today in a term like 'a jack of all trades.' So some people referred to the spirit as *Jack* instead of *Will*. And they said that he carried a lantern rather than a wisp. So '*Will with the wisp*' or '*Will o'the wisp*' became '*Jack with the lantern*' or '*Jack o'-lantern*' in its shortened form. That version of the name first appeared around the current point in our overall story of English in the mid-1600s.

So the term *jack o'-lantern* originally had an association with spooky lights and spirits. And it was apparently that association with spooky lights that led Americans to apply the term to a carved pumpkin – sometimes with a light inside to make it glow. That modern usage appeared in the 1800s, and of course, it was specifically associated with Halloween.

And speaking of Halloween, the modern version of that holiday is largely American, but it has its roots in the ancient world of the British Celts. It was originally an annual Celtic celebration held in the late autumn at the end of the harvest period. The pagan people of Europe lived off the land,

and they had several holidays based around the harvest season because their survival depended on the growing season, and they needed to save enough food by the time of the final harvest to get them through the cold dark winter months. So it was common to have a celebration at the end of harvest to mark that transition. The Germanic tribes had a celebration around that time of the year which they called *yule*, and when the Christian Church arrived, some of those pagan elements were incorporated into Christmas, which is why we sometimes refer to that season as *Yuletide* or *Yuletime*.

In the Celtic world, that end of harvest festival was called Samhain. Even though it was a festival, there was always a sense of foreboding in the air. The days were becoming shorter and colder, and people were entirely dependent on the food they had stored up for the winter. A long, cold winter always presented the possibility of starvation and death, so there was a morbid aspect to Samhain. And that might explain another aspect of the festival. It was believed that the separation between the world of the living and the world of the dead was at its thinnest during Samhain. The realm of the dead got closer and closer as the harvest season came to an end, so close in fact that the spirits of the dead could sometimes cross over to the living world around the time of Samhain.

Well, when the Christian Church arrived, it also tried to co-opt this ancient Celtic festival. The church had a holiday called All Saints Day, which was used to honor Christians who had died and become saints. So like Samhain, the holiday had an association with the dead. The Church linked the two holidays by moving All Saint's Day from May to November 1 immediately after Samhain, but Samhain lingered on.

Now early English speakers didn't use the Latin word *saint*. Instead, they translated the word *Saint* with the Old English word *hallow*, which meant 'a saint or very holy person.' In fact, *hallow* is really a variation of the word *holy*. The word *hallow* could also be used as a verb. So if a place was *hallowed*, it was made holy or consecrated. And of course, it could also be used as adjective as in 'hallowed grounds.'

All of this helps to explain why English-speakers transformed 'All Saints Day' into 'All Hallows Day.' But as I noted earlier, the Celtic Samhain celebration continued to linger on – on the day before All Hallows Day. So just as the day before Christmas Day was Christmas Eve, the day before All Hallows Day was All Hallows Eve. And over time, Samhain started to be known as 'All Hallows Eve.'

And if we drop the 'All' part at the beginning, that gets us very close to *Halloween*. But notice that we call it *Halloween*, not 'Halloweve.' So what happened there?

Well, the answer lies in Scots – that old Scottish form of speech that was derived from Old English. Since Samhain was a Celtic festival, it was celebrated in Scotland, and many of the early references to it come from Scotland. And in Scots, the word *eve* was rendered as *even*. That's essentially the Old English form of the word. We still have a form of that word in the word *evening*. In the standard English of England, the 'n' at the end *even* was dropped over time, giving use the word *eve*. But in Scots – spoken in Scotland – that 'n' was preserved at the end of

the word. So instead of *Hallow's Eve*, the day was referred to as *Hallows Even*. And over time, the word was slurred and reduced down to three syllables – from *Hallows Even* to *Halloween*. And that is how it was rendered in the first Scots documents to mention the holiday by name in the mid-1700s.

So we get the word *Halloween* from Scots. As I have discussed in prior episodes, Scots is closely related to English. Some people consider it a dialect of English, while others consider it to be a distinct language. I addressed that distinction back in Episode 157. It's really more of a social and political distinction than a linguistic distinction. Today, Scots is classified as a distinct language by the European Union [*SOURCE: Irish English, Raymond Hickey, p. 97*], so I'll just refer to it as a language here. But ultimately, it shares the same Anglo-Saxon roots as English.

So let me take a minute and briefly recap the history of Scots for those of you who haven't listened to the entire podcast series. First of all, Scots is not English with a Scottish accent. So it's not the form of Modern English that most people in Scotland speak today. Scots is more distinct than that. So in order to understand what Scots is, let's go back to the beginning.

As we know, Celtic languages were once spoken throughout the British Isles. When the Anglo-Saxons arrived in Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries, they introduced their Germanic language to the island, and of course, we refer to that original Germanic language as Old English. Over time, the Anglo-Saxons spread northward and westward carrying Old English with them. But the people continued to speak Celtic languages in the far west of Britain in Wales and Cornwall, and in the north of Britain in Scotland, and also across the Irish Sea in Ireland.

In Scotland, the Anglo-Saxons made it up to the southern lowlands before the border between Scotland and England became fixed. And after the border between the two countries was established, the Anglo-Saxons remained in southern Scotland. Originally, their form of speech was really just a northern dialect of Old English, but over time, it evolved in its own unique direction. And over the course of the Middle Ages, that Scottish dialect became more and more distinct, largely due to the relative isolation of those speakers.

Their speech retained a lot of Old English words that were gradually lost in the more standard form of English spoken around London. The Scots vocabulary also had a lot of Norse words that southern English didn't have. And Scots incorporated words and phrases from Gaelic – the native Celtic language of Scotland. Also, many of the vowel shifts and other sound changes that occurred in England didn't take place in Scotland. So by the 1500s, this manner of speech in Scotland was barely intelligible to speakers from London and other parts of southern England. It had acquired the name 'Scots,' and by that point, it was the language of the Scottish nobility having replaced Gaelic as the language of the king and his court. It had also continued to spread northward, and had it become the primary written language and spoken language outside of the Scottish highlands. During the Elizabethan period, Scots reached its apex in power and influence. People spoke the language, poets wrote in it, and laws and government records were preserved with it.

So let me pause here for a moment and give you an example of spoken Scots so you can get a sense of what it sounded like and what it sounds like today among the people in Scotland who still speak it. In early episodes of the podcast, I illustrated various older languages by giving you versions of the Lord's Prayer in those languages. And that's because the Lord Prayer was preserved in almost all of those languages. So let me do that same thing with Scots. And I want to thank Andy at the YouTube channel called 'I Love Languages' for allowing me to use this particular recording of the Lord's Prayer in Scots.

Of course, in Modern English, it reads:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Now here is the same passage in Scots:

Faither o us aa, Faa's hame in Heiven, We haud up your name.
Lat your Kingly Wark gyang forrit, An lat Your wye win throwe doon here amon
His The same as it daes Abeen.
Gie us this day the mait we need. Gin we hae deen wrang,
dicht aff the sclate agin's like we wid dee for een anither.
Keep's airted awa fae faar we're like tae tummle
An raxx us free o coorseness. Sae lat it be.

So during the 1500s, there were two forms of speech in Scotland. In the highlands, in the north and west, people still spoke Gaelic – the traditional Celtic language of the region. But in the lowlands, in the south and parts of the east, people spoke Scots. The standard English spoken in London and southern England didn't really exist in Scotland at the time.

But that started to change over the course of the 1500s in the written version of Scots. First, when Scotland became Protestant, there was a desire for the Bible in the local vernacular, rather than in Latin. But there was no version of the Bible in Scots. So Scottish Protestants used the Geneva Bible which was printed in English, and they later switched to the King James Version which was also composed in English. And prayer books and other religious literature were usually published in English.

English essentially became the language of the Scottish Church – or Kirk – because of the English Bible, which was widely available thanks to the dominance of English printers. The dominance of that industry in England meant that lots of English publications poured into Scotland. So writing led the way in the move from Scots to English, but spoken Scots was barely affected at first.

Events during the 1600s provided additional momentum away from Scots and toward the standard English of southern England. At the beginning of the century, King James of Scotland became the king of England. He and his court moved to the English capital, where the two courts were combined.

King James came to England speaking Scots, but his son Charles – who became king and fought with Parliament – grew up speaking standard English with a Scottish accent. As we saw last time, he was executed following the war. And that left his son, who was also named Charles. But the younger Charles didn't succeed his father as the King of England – at least not at this point.

Shortly after his father was executed, the English Parliament outlawed the monarchy and also outlawed the House of Lords which was tied to the monarchy. England was now declared to be a 'Commonwealth and Free State.' Control of the country was nominally in the hand of the House of Commons. As I noted at the end of the last episode, the Parliament that remained after the English Civil War had been purged of most of its royalist supporters by the army, and the smaller group that remained is known to history as the 'Rump Parliament.' It was now the sole remaining assembly at the national level, and for all practical purposes, it governed with the consent of the New Model Army. [SOURCE: *Oliver Cromwell, Charles Firth, p. 146-7*]

While the English government intended to move forward without a king, that was not the plan in Scotland. King Charles and his father James had also been Scottish monarchs. As I noted last time, the execution of Charles wasn't popular with the general public in England, but it was even less popular in Scotland. So much so that a few weeks after Charles was executed, the Scottish Parliament recognized the younger Charles as the new King of the Scots. And that created a problem in England because there was still a lot of support for the monarchy there as well. In fact, most people supported the institution even if they didn't particularly support the king himself. And now, the king had been executed and turned into a martyr. So if his son took the throne in Scotland, the royalists in England would certainly rally around him and support his return to England. At this point, the younger Charles was in exile in the Netherlands – but it was clear that his return would likely lead to the war starting again.

Given these developments, many leaders within the English Parliament and the English army looked to Scotland with apprehension. And they looked west to Ireland with even more apprehension.

As we saw over the prior couple of episodes, the Irish had risen in rebellion against the English settlers there, and ultimately, they sided with King Charles against the Parliamentary forces. Even though the war in England had come to an end, the Irish continued their uprising against the English settlers in Ireland, and they continued to oppose the English Parliament and the Puritans who now ruled England. The Catholic powers of Continental Europe – like France and Spain – also opposed the execution of the king and new Commonwealth in England. So it became clear that Ireland could be used as a staging ground for an invasion of England. The new Commonwealth was likely doomed if Catholic forces supported by France or Spain invaded from Ireland – especially if such an invasion was coordinated with Scottish forces from the north in support of the younger Charles. [SOURCE: *Oliver Cromwell, Charles Firth, p. 160*]

The Irish concerns were heightened when the New Model Army learned that the younger Charles was making plans to go to Ireland to encourage the royalist cause there. So in March of 1649 – just a couple of months after the execution of King Charles – Oliver Cromwell was chosen to lead an expedition to Ireland to put down the uprising and to eliminate any support for the younger Charles. About two-thirds of Ireland was now controlled by the opposing Irish forces – and Cromwell’s job was to defeat them once and for all. [SOURCE: *Rebellion*, Peter Ackroyd, p. 313]

Now you probably know that Oliver Cromwell emerged as the leader of England during this Commonwealth period when the monarchy had been abolished, but at this point, he wasn’t the official leader of the country. Technically, he wasn’t even the leader of the New Model Army. He was the Lieutenant General serving under the official leader, Sir Thomas Fairfax. But despite those formal titles, everyone knew that Cromwell was the most effective general in the army and had rarely experienced defeat on the battlefield. Virtually no major decision was made without his input. He was also a Member of Parliament, and given the army’s control over the Rump Parliament at the time, he had emerged as the most prominent leader of the Commonwealth. So he was the obvious choice to lead the English army into Ireland.

Now the ramifications of what happened next in the story are still felt to this day. The name ‘Cromwell’ continues to be cursed in Ireland. But before we look at what happened, we need to consider the state of the English language in Ireland at this point in 1649. I’ve talked about the English presence in Ireland in prior episodes, but since those discussions are spread out among several different episodes, and many of you may not have listened to those episodes or remember what I talked about, let me recap the history of the English language in Ireland – like I did earlier with the history of English in Scotland.

Like Scotland, the native language of Ireland is a Celtic language – sometimes called *Gaelic* and sometimes called *Irish*. Now, you may have noticed that I called the native language of Ireland ‘*Gaelic*’ (/ge:-lik/), but I called the native language of Scotland ‘*Gaelic*’ (/gæ-lik/). It’s ultimately the same word, and in fact Scots Gaelic originated with Gaelic speakers from Ireland who migrated to Scotland in the fifth century. But the words are pronounced differently in Ireland and Scotland, and the forms of speech diverged a bit over the centuries so that they became distinct over time – as almost always happens when speakers are separated from each other for a long period of time.

For the record, I’m going to refer to the Irish version of the language as Gaelic in this episode. Many people today prefer the term ‘*Irish*,’ but the modern form of English that is spoken in Ireland is called ‘*Irish English*.’ So the terms ‘*Irish*’ and ‘*Irish English*’ refer to two completely different languages, and that can be a little confusing in a podcast. So to try to keep them distinct, I will refer to the native Celtic language as ‘*Gaelic*’ (/ge:-lik/). And as I noted, that was the native language of the entire island at one time.

The English language didn’t arrive in Ireland until the 1100s when English forces under Henry II invaded Ireland and took control of a large territory in the southeastern part of the country. I said those forces were ‘English,’ but they were really Anglo-Norman. So those English speakers who

arrived in Ireland spoke an early form of Middle English, and were accompanied by French speakers who were the governing elite at the time.

The center of English settlement was Dublin on the eastern coast of Ireland, but initially, the English claimed an expanded territory along the southeastern coast and parts of the interior as well. That region under English control was called the *pale*, and if you were English – or Anglo-Norman – it was wise to stay inside of the pale. You risked your personal safety and your life if you ventured beyond the pale. And that is believed to be the source of the modern phrase ‘beyond the pale’ meaning ‘beyond the accepted standards.’ If you do something ‘beyond the pale,’ you’ve gone too far and done something completely unacceptable.

Well, over time, the pale became smaller and smaller. Many of the English settlers in the interior of Ireland married into native Irish families, and adopted Irish dress, and Irish customs. And their children and grandchildren spoke Irish – also known as Gaelic. The English language and the English culture quickly disappeared in much of the region. The English ‘pale’ gradually became restricted to the region around Dublin and few other pockets along the southeastern coast of Ireland.

By the late 1400s, English apparently was limited to two distinct areas in the eastern part of Ireland. First of all, English continued to be spoken in and around Dublin, including the county of Fingal just north of Dublin. But relatively little is known about that dialect. The other pocket of English speakers was located further south along the southeastern coast of Ireland in the County of Wexford. This early form of English speech in Wexford is better documented, and is sometimes referred to as *Yola*. *Yola* was the word for ‘old’ in that dialect.

Most of what is known about this early form of Irish English comes from two historical baronies in County Wexford that were called Forth and Bargy. So this particular dialect is also known as the Forth and Bargy dialect. I didn’t really discuss this dialect in those earlier episodes, but I want to look at it here because it was still around in the 1600s during the time of the English Civil War. It would have been the oldest form of English spoken in Ireland at the time. And in fact, it apparently lingered on into the 1800s, though it did eventually disappear.

Now even though this is considered to be an English dialect, I should note that it seems to be a mixture of Middle English, French, and Gaelic, with some Welsh and Flemish thrown in because a lot of the soldiers who came over during those first few generations were from Wales and Flanders. But ultimately, the manner of speech is rooted in early English.

So let me give you an example of the Lord’s Prayer in this dialect. Again, we happen to have a version of this prayer in the surviving records of this region, and again, for comparison, here is the version in Modern English:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Now here is the same prayer in the Forth and Bargy dialect of Ireland in the late Middle Ages:

Oure vaader fho ba ing Heaaven, maade holly ba yer naame.
Yer kingdom huck, Yer woull ba doone, an ee erth as 'tis ing Heaaven.
Gues dhicke dei, oore daaily breed, an vorgee ouse oore treshpasses,
az wough vorgee foulk fho treshpass ayenst ouse.
An do no feigh ouse ta ee deem av mizluck,
mot brocke ouse vrem ee neckares av villentie. Amain,

Once again, thanks to the YouTube Channel called 'ILoveLanguages!' for that audio clip. The channel also has a reading from a folk song in the Forth and Bargy dialect called 'The Maiden of Rosslare.' So let me take you through that as well. As we go through these lyrics, I'm going to first read the passage in Modern English, and then I'm going to play you the original passage in the Forth and Bargy dialect. By the way, the lyrics use the word 'faythe' in several places. That word referred to a 'fair' or 'an open green.' So here are the lyrics:

I'm going to tell you a tale that is true
there is in Rosslare a maid good and true
she wears in her hat a ribbon that is blue
and she goes to the faythe every day too

'Cham góeen to tell thee óa taale at is drúe
Aar is ing Rosslarè óa mýdhe geoudè an drúe
Shoo wearth ing her haté óa ribbonè at is blúe
An shoo goeth to ee faaythè earchee deie too

I myself am in the faythe every day so
that I see this maid who is good and true
and I go to meet the maid, the maid that is true
and who comes to the faythe with ribbons blue

Ich meezil bee ing ee faaythè éarchee deie zoo
At ich zee dhicka mýdhe fhó is geoudè an drúe
An ich bee to ishólthè ee mýdhe, ee mýdhe at is drúe
An fhó coome to ee faaythè wi' ribbonè blue

I myself will go to Rosslare every day too
to see there the maid with her ribbons blue
And I will meet her for her ribbons blue
the maid that is enlightened and good looking and true

'Chull meezil góe to Rosslaré earche deie too
to zie thaar ee mydhe wee her ribbonè blúe
An 'chull her estólté vor her ribbonè blúe
ee mýdhe at is lyghtzóm, an well wytheen an drúe

I love the maid with the ribbons blue
that comes to the faythe every morning too
when I'm in the faythe every morning too
to meet the maid with the ribbons blue

Ich loove ee mýdhe wee ee ribbonè blúe
At coome to ee faaythè éarchee arichè too
Fan 'cham ing ee faaythè éarchee arichè too
To estóthè mýdhe wee ee ribbons blúe

Again, thanks to Andy at the 'IloveLanguages!' YouTube Channel for that clip.

Now let me give you one more example of this Middle English dialect that was spoken in Ireland. This is an excerpt from another folk song. This one is sometimes called the Yola Hurling Song. It's a song about a hurling match, which is an ancient Irish team sport which I would describe as sort of blend of rugby and lacrosse. This song may date from the 1600s, and if so, it would represent the general state of this dialect around the current point in our overall story of English in the mid-1600s. This version was featured in a documentary by the Irish broadcasting company RTE called "Come West Along the Road." And the song was sung by an Irish singer named Paddy Berry. Again, I'll read the lyrics first in Modern English, and then I'll play you part of the performance by Paddy Berry:

Yesterday we had a goal just in our hand.
Their gentry were quaking, themselves could not stand.
If Good-for-little had been buried, it had been my Tommy,
Who by misluck was placed to drive in.

Throngs and crowds from each quarter were at the Lough;
Such vapouring and glittering when stript in their shirts!
Such bawling and shouting, when the ball was thrown!
I saw their intent was to give us ne'er a stroke.

Now here's the solo performance of the song by Paddy Berry:

Yerstey w'had a baree, gist ing oor hoane,
Aar gentrize ware bibbern, aamzil cou no stoane.
Yith Muzleare had ba hole, t'was mee Tommeen,
At by mizluck was ee-pit t'drive in.

Joud an moud vrem earchee ete was ee Lough.
Zitch vaperreen, an shimmereen, fan ee-daff ee aar scoth!
Zitch blakeen, an blayeen, fan ee ball was ee-drowe!
Chote well aar aim was t'yie ouz n'eer a blowe.

Again, that's the Yola Hurling Song in the Forth and Bargy dialect of English spoken in County Wexford in southeastern Ireland in the early modern period. By the way, I will include links to all of these clips under this episode at the main website of the podcast - historyofenglishpodcast.com.

Now before move on, let me make a few comments about some of the specific features of that dialect. First, it appears to be derived from the speech of the West Country of England, which would make sense because County Wexford is just across the Irish sea from western England. The most obvious connection between those dialects is a common sound change found in both dialects. Specifically, in both dialects, the 's' sound is often pronounced as a 'z' or 'zed' sound, and the 'f' sound is often pronounced as a 'v' sound. I discussed those features which are still found in parts of western England in earlier episodes. And again, we find those features in the Forth and Bargy dialect as well. So in the passages I just presented, the word *see* is rendered as *zie*, the word *such* is rendered as *zitch*, the word *from* is rendered as *vrem*, and the word *forgive* is rendered as *vorgee*. Again, this is common throughout the surviving examples of this dialect.

Also, the long vowel sounds in the Forth and Bargy dialect are the older, original vowel sounds that English had before the Great Vowel Shift. And of course, that's because the dialect appeared in Ireland before the Great Vowel Shift got underway in England, and the dialect never experienced most of those vowel changes. So even in the 1600s and 1700s, it would have sounded more like Middle English – and more like Scots – than the English of London where the vowels had changed. [SOURCE: *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, Vol. V, Robert Burchfield, Ed., p. 168-9]

The Forth and Bargy dialect also has several features that appear to have been influenced by Gaelic. And that would have happened because the sounds of Gaelic were not always the same as English. Gaelic had certain sounds that English didn't have, and vice versa. And it also dealt with sound sequences differently than English. So for example, in many Gaelic words, the letter [s] is sometimes pronounced as /sh/ – the 'sh' sound. That pronunciation is determined by the vowel sounds around it. Well, we see a similar feature in the Forth and Bargy dialect where the normal 's' sound in a word is sometimes spelled with 'sh' in the surviving documents. So in the Lord's Prayer example that I played for you, the word *trespass* was rendered as *treshpass*. In other texts, we find the word *grass* rendered as *grasshe*, and the word *has* rendered as *hasshe*. Again, that feature appears to be a Gaelic language feature than filtered into this dialect.

Also, in the Forth and Bargy dialect, words with the 'th' sound are often rendered with a simple 't' sound or a 'd' sound. We see some evidence of that in the passages I played earlier, specifically the word *throw* which is rendered as *drowe*. This feature is also found in many modern English dialects in Ireland, especially in the south. And that's because the Gaelic

language didn't have the 'th' sound, so as Gaelic speakers learned English, they often substituted a different sound for the 'th' sound.

It also appears that Gaelic speakers struggled with certain consonant clusters in Middle English. A consonant cluster occurs when two or more consonant sounds appear next to each other, and the Forth and Bargy dialect has lots of examples where consonant clusters were reduced or eliminated. Sometimes, speakers would simply drop one of the consonant sounds. So for example, the word *land* has an 'n' sound followed by a 'd' sound. In this dialect, it is sometimes rendered as *lone* without the 'd' sound at the end. The word *harvest* – with an 'r' sound followed by a 'v' sound – is rendered as *harrest*, without the 'v' sound. And the word *forget* – with an 'r' followed by a 'g' – is rendered in writing as *varret* without the 'g'.

In other situations, the Forth and Bargy speakers would simply insert a vowel in between the two consonants. The vowel was usually the unstressed schwa sound (/ə/) that I discussed a few episodes back. So a word like *else* (e-l-s-e) appears as *elles*. The word *calf* for a baby cow is spelled with an [l] today because the [l] was once pronounced before the [f]. So it was more like /cal-f/. But speakers apparently struggled with that [l] next to an [f]. In standard English, the 'l' sound was dropped altogether. But in the Forth and Bargy dialect, speakers inserted a schwa sound between the [l] and the [f], thereby changing the pronunciation from /cal-f/ to *callef*. Now I mention this tendency to insert a schwa sound between two consonants because it is still a feature of some modern English dialects in Ireland. You might hear speakers pronounce the word *arm* as /ar-um/, and the word *harm* as /har-um/, and the word *form* as /forum/. Again, this same type of thing happens in the native Gaelic language where a slight vowel is often inserted between an 'l,' 'n' or 'r' sound on one side and another consonant on the other side.

One of the best known examples of this pronunciation in modern Irish English is the word *film*, which many people in Ireland pronounce as /filum/. Now, that example is a little more complicated because there is evidence that people in England also sometimes said /filum/ instead of *film*. Shakespeare even has an example of that pronunciation in *Romeo and Juliet*. So it's possible that both pronunciations were once common, but the two-syllable pronunciation as /filum/ survived in Ireland because it fit this pronunciation pattern that speakers were accustomed to.

Now again, to the extent that these features can still be found in the English spoken in Ireland, they don't really come from the Forth and Bargy dialect. They're actually features that have recurred over the centuries due to the interaction of Gaelic and English. And that's part of the reason why I wanted to explore those details here. I wanted to illustrate how English was modified as it spread around the world. As people who spoke other languages adopted English, they modified English to make it fit their own native language patterns. And we'll see this process occur over and over in future episodes as we trace the spread of English around the world.

Now so far in this episode, we have explored the Scots language in Scotland and the Forth and Bargy dialect in Ireland. Those two dialects or languages represent the earliest forms of English

to take root outside of England. Both originated in the Middle Ages, and both were still being spoken in the early modern period.

But in Ireland, the English of the original settlers has mostly disappeared by the 1500s. English had retreated to those areas along the eastern coast of Ireland like Dublin and the baronies of Forth and Bargo. But then English speakers returned in the mid-1500s and 1600s, and they brought with them a newer form of English, specifically Elizabethan English. So they brought with them a more modern form of English.

This process began in the mid-1500s with the advent of the English plantation system in Ireland. I discussed this development back in Episode 158. As you might recall from that episode, the English seized lands from the Irish and redistributed that land to English settlers or ‘planters’ as they were called at the time. This was an early form of colonialism, and it was strongly opposed by the native Irish. The English were able to establish colonial settlements in Munster in the south of Ireland and, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, they established settlements in the north in Ulster. But again, history largely repeated itself. Over time, the descendants of those early settlers once again started to marry the native Irish and adopt Irish customs. And the Elizabethan English of those settlers gradually declined as Gaelic recovered much of the ground it had lost. [SOURCE: *Irish English*, Raymond Hickey, p. 36]

Most of the English settlements in the south in Munster ultimately failed, while those in the north in Ulster faced open rebellion. The English put down that rebellion in the north in the early 1600s and many of the Irish nobles there fled the country. The English then confiscated their lands and began a renewed effort to colonize Ulster during the reign of King James. I discussed this development back in Episode 180. And this time, the English had their first long-term success at creating Protestant settlements in Ireland. Again, those were concentrated in the north of Ireland in the province of Ulster. But what made the Ulster settlement unique is that most of the people who migrated there from Britain were from Scotland and northern England. So once again, Elizabethan English was introduced to Ireland, in this case northern dialects of Elizabethan English, but Scots was also introduced. [SOURCE: *Irish English*, Raymond Hickey, p. 87]

Over the course of the 1600s, more and more settlers poured into Ulster in the north of the country. By the middle of the century, around the time of the English Civil War, the settlers from Scotland and northern England were about 40% of the population in some of the counties of Ulster – less in other counties. But by the end of the century, the Scottish and English settlers were the vast majority of the population of Ulster, and the vast majority of those were from Scotland. According to some estimates, there were about six times more settlers from Scotland than from England. So that created a strong linguistic connection between Scotland and Northern Ireland. And the Irish version of Scots became known as Ulster Scots – and it is still spoken today in parts of northern Ireland. [SOURCES: *Green English*, Loreto Todd, p. 48; and *Irish English*, Raymond Hickey, p. 91]

So Ireland in the mid-1600s had several languages and dialects related to English, but the total number of those speakers was still very small and they were limited to a few isolated places –

and for the most part, their form of speech was very different from the standard English of London.

And that was the linguistic situation in Ireland when Oliver Cromwell arrived there in August of 1649. I began this discussion about Ireland with the immediate aftermath of the English Civil War and the continued uprisings and rebellions against the English settlers in Ireland. As I noted, the Irish had supported the king against the English Parliament in part for religious reasons. Parliament was dominated by Puritans who strongly opposed Catholicism. And after Parliament defeated the king, they feared that Ireland would rally around King Charles's son and provide a base for his supporters to attack the new Commonwealth.

Oliver Cromwell was directed to go to Ireland to put down the rebellions there and bring order to the island. He finally arrived there in August of 1649 about six months after the execution of King Charles. He landed at the traditional English base of Dublin. Once he had secured his position there, he headed north about 30 miles to the city of Drogheda. The governor of the city was a royalist, so when Cromwell and his forces arrived, he demanded its surrender. The governor refused, and the following day, Cromwell laid siege to the city. His forces flooded the city and started killing indiscriminately. They were ordered to strike down anyone who carried a weapon. About 3000 people were killed in Drogheda, including about a thousand civilians. Priests and friars were included among the dead. [*SOURCES: Rebellion, Peter Ackroyd, p. 316; and Regicide and the Republic: England 1603-1660, Graham E. Seel, p. 125*]

After Drogheda, Cromwell's forces headed south to the city of Wexford about 70 miles south of Dublin. That was the same region where the Forth and Bargo dialect that we look at earlier was spoken. There the events of Drogheda were essentially repeated. The governor refused to surrender, and Cromwell's forces were unleashed on the city. About 2000 people were killed there – including about 200 women. [*SOURCES: A History of Ireland, Peter and Fiona Somerset Fry, p. 155; Rebellion, Peter Ackroyd, p. 316-7*]

Now Cromwell's defenders note that such actions were permitted under the rules of war at the time when a city refused to surrender. And most of the cities and fortifications that surrendered were largely spared. Of course, in Ireland, these events are viewed as human atrocities committed by an invading army. And it's why Cromwell's name is still cursed by many in Ireland to this day.

After Wexford, Cromwell headed down the coast through the region of the Forth and Bargo speakers to the city of Waterford, but at that point, his forces stalled. It was November, and the cold wet weather prevented Cromwell from moving some of his heavy equipment. His troops also had to deal with food shortages and an outbreak of sickness. Ultimately, he was forced to lift his siege of the city and withdraw. But it was only a temporary setback. His forces returned the following summer and captured the city.

Now I mention this siege at Waterford because Cromwell wrote a letter during the early stages of that siege, and the letter contains the first known reference to a new rating system used for the ships of the navy. And that rating system is still used in everyday speech today. In his letter,

Cromwell wrote, “The Garland, one of your third-rate ships, coming happily into Waterford Bay.” That reference to a ‘third-rate’ ship didn’t mean it was of poor quality. It was actually a specific reference to the rating system for ships that had recently been implemented in England.

The old system of ranking ships into different classes used a variety of different terms like *galleys*, *pinnaces*, *royal ships*, *great ships*, and so on. But during the reign of the recently executed King Charles, the terminology was changed from specific names to numerals. Initially, four ranks were designated based on the number of men stationed on the ship. The four ranks were soon expanded to six. The ‘*first rate*’ ships were the largest and carried the most men. The ‘*second rate*’ ships were the second largest, and so on. Of course, that terminology was soon extended to things other than ships. Today, we still describe something that is very good as being ‘*first rate*.’ In fact, that use of the term ‘*first rate*’ also appeared around this same time in the mid-1600s. Over time, the term ‘*second rate*’ came to refer to something inferior. Again, we still refer to things of lesser quality as being ‘*second rate*.’ And in the past couple of centuries, we have even adopted the term ‘*third rate*’ to refer to something of very poor quality. So a ‘*third rate*’ army is one that never wins a battle. Again, Oliver Cromwell’s letter from this expedition in Ireland contains the first known reference to that term ‘*third rate*.’

Despite the setback at Waterford, Cromwell’s forces continued to advance elsewhere, and over the following couple of months, they had secured much of the coast of Ireland. They then turned their focus to the interior parts of the country.

This Irish expedition – or legends surrounding this expedition – also gave us another common phrase in English. And that’s the phrase ‘keep your powder dry’ meaning ‘to be on alert or to act prudently and cautiously.’ In the mid-1800s, several accounts attributed the phrase to Cromwell during his campaigns in Ireland. Some sources attribute it to him at an earlier point during English Civil War, but most of the original accounts suggest that it was said during this expedition in Ireland. At any rate, the phrase was supposedly said at a point when Cromwell was leading his troops across a river. River crossings were perilous for many reasons, but one of the dangers was that a soldier’s gunpowder might get wet, making it unusable. So supposedly, Cromwell instructed his troops to “Put your trust in God and keep your powder dry.” Now there is no actual evidence that he ever said that, but it was memorialized in a poem called Oliver’s Advice by an Irish colonel and writer named William Blacker. That poem was published in the 1830s nearly two centuries later. Again, there is no contemporary evidence that Cromwell gave those instructions to his troops. But regardless, the phrase ‘keep your powder dry’ is derived from later accounts of this expedition.

By April of 1650, Cromwell’s forces had captured most of southern Ireland. But then, the leaders of the Commonwealth back in England became concerned the situation in Scotland. It was rumored that the younger Charles was headed there to lead a royalist revolt. So Cromwell was recalled to England to prepare for a campaign in Scotland. He left his lieutenants behind in Ireland to complete the conquest of the island, which they did over the following couple of years. During that period, the war – combined with food disruptions, starvation and plague – killed hundreds of thousands of people across Ireland. Some estimates suggest that about a third of the

population was lost. [SOURCE: *Oliver Cromwell, Charles Firth, p. 165*] By the end of 1652, the English forces controlled the island.

I'll address the long-term consequences of this conquest, including the linguistic consequences, at the end of this episode, but for now, let's follow the time line of events after Cromwell returned to England.

Around the time that Cromwell returned, the Rump Parliament repealed a law that compelled people to attend church on Sundays. That was part of a larger set of reforms to permit Protestant denominations to worship as they pleased. The existing Episcopal Church was abolished, and no other specific Church was imposed in its place. England actually allowed some degree of freedom of worship – but only for Protestants, not Catholics. So at this point, the English Church was really just a collection of separate denominations and individual congregations. [SOURCES: *Oliver Cromwell, Charles Firth, p. 190; and Rebellion, Peter Ackroyd, p. 335*]

This approach – and the new rules – allowed individual denominations to flourish. And one of those new groups was led by a man named George Fox. He had some unconventional views which led to conflicts with other denominations. For example, he felt that everyone had a personal relationship with God, and that trained priests were unnecessary as intermediaries. Anyone could preach the word of God if called to do so. That challenged the basic idea of the established Church. Some of his views were deemed to be blasphemous by local authorities, and he was accused of heresy on several occasions. In the autumn of 1650, he was brought before local authorities in Derby to answer the accusations against him. While testifying, Fox told the magistrate hearing the matter that he should 'tremble at the word of the Lord.' In response to the demand that he 'tremble,' the magistrate mocked Fox and his followers by calling them '*Quakers*.' The name stuck and was supposedly reinforced by the fact that many of members of the group became so enthralled and excited during worship that they physically trembled and shook. Though the group eventually embraced the nickname *Quakers*, they were formally known as the Society of Friends.

George Fox obviously had strong religious convictions, and those convictions shaped his view of language. For example, he believed that the word *church* has a very specific and limited meaning. It referred to 'the people of God,' and in his opinion, it should never be used to refer to a building or a physical structure. Instead, he referred to a place of worship as a *steeplehouse*.

But his views about English pronouns are more well-known and enduring. As we know from earlier episodes, when referring to another person, English traditionally used the pronouns *thou* and *thee*. When referring to a group of people, English used the pronoun *you*. So *thou* and *thee* were singular pronouns, and *you* was the plural form. But during the prior centuries, the plural pronoun *you* had started to be used to refer to individuals, specifically to one's social superiors. But *thou* and *thee* continued to be used to refer to one's social equals or to those socially inferior. By the mid-1600s, *thou* and *thee* had largely fallen out of use. The old social distinctions between *thou* and *thee* on the one hand and *you* on the other hand had largely disappeared, and *you* had emerged as a generic second person pronoun used in all situations. But apparently there were still people in prominent positions like judges, and church leaders, and government officials

who still used *thou* and *thee* when referring to people who they felt were inferior to them. Fox strongly believed that all people were equal in the eyes of God, so he insisted that there be no social distinction when addressing people. Of course, he could have adopted the contemporary trend and simply used *you* to refer to everybody, but apparently, he resented that some people in positions of authority continued to make the distinction and continued to refer to some people with *thou* and *thee*, while expecting them to use the pronoun *you* in return. So he insisted on referring to all individuals with *thou* and *thee*. When hauled before magistrates or church leaders, he refused to remove his hat, and he refused to refer to those authorities with the pronoun *you*. He used *thou* and *thee*, which often angered those authorities. He recounted several situations where he did that in a journal he composed in 1651. [SOURCES: *From Old English to Standard English, Third Ed.*, Dennis Freeborn, p. 352-3; *A History of English*, Misa Hejna and George Walkden, p.139-40.]

This approach became a fundamental tenet of the Quaker society. And the Quakers – or Friends as they are often known – continued to use those old pronoun forms into the modern era. It was really the only English sub-culture that continued to use those old pronouns.

Now as we've seen, George Fox didn't mind offending the authorities, and he may have even taken a bit of pleasure in doing it. He and his followers repeatedly found themselves hauled before magistrates and judges to answer for their views. The conflicts were furthered by the fact that the Quaker movement didn't believe in swearing an oath in front of a judge or court. This was based on Biblical commands against oath swearing.

Well, oath swearing was very important to the law, and in fact, it was around this time that a book was published that compiled most of the common oaths used in English courts. It was called the Book of Oaths. And among the oaths included in the text are this one: "The Evidence which you shall give to the grand Inquest . . . upon this Bill shall be the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth. So help you God." This important collection of oaths was adopted by courts throughout the country and throughout the expanding world of English-speakers. And it is largely thanks to this book that that common refrain 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth' entered the general lexicon of English. [SOURCE: *The Language of the Law*, David Mellinkoff, p. 172.]

By the way, note how rhythmic that line is. And also note the use of alliteration, specifically the repeating 'th' and 'tr' sounds in the phrase – again, 'the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth.' That use of alliteration, repetition and poetic rhythm reflects the way legal oaths once worked in the English language. Those features were common in Old English oaths, and those oaths used that poetic structure for a reason. So let me give you an example.

During the Anglo-Saxon period, if you accused someone of stealing from you, you would be required to do that in the form of an oath before the judges who were hearing the matter. One common form of the oath required you to assert that you were making the accusation 'not for hatred, not for envy, and not for unlawful lust of gain,' or in the original Old English, "ne for hete ne for hole ne for unrihtre feoh-gyrnesse." So you can hear that same type of repetitive rhythm there. The reason why old oaths used that type of rhythm is because most people couldn't

read or write, so they basically had to listen to someone read it or say it out loud, and then the witness had to repeat it back. And as I discussed in the early episodes of the podcast, it is easier to remember a long passage if it is structured as poetry. That's how poets were able to recite hundreds – and even thousands – of lines of epic poetry. So if the oath contained Old English alliteration, and repetition, and a poetic meter, it was easier for people to hear it and repeat it. And here's the other reason why that was important. During the Anglo-Saxon period, if you recited the oath correctly and smoothly without making any mistakes, that was considered to be a sign that you were telling the truth. But if you stuttered, or stammered, or forgot the oath, or otherwise made a mistake while repeating it, that was considered to be a sign that you were lying. It was literally a sign from God that you were not being truthful. So it was important to recite the oath smoothly and correctly. And again, the poetic rhythm made that easier.

So when we hear someone today swear that they will tell 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth,' that poetic structure and rhythm harkens back to those original Old English oaths.

And one other quick note about legal proceedings. At the current point in our overall story of English in the autumn of 1650, the English Parliament passed an act that required all legal proceedings to be conducted in English and all legal documents to also be composed in English. [SOURCE: *Oliver Cromwell*, Charles Firth, p. 189-90] Now similar laws had been passed in earlier centuries, specifically the Statute of Pleading in the 1300s which I discussed in an earlier episode. That law had required all proceedings to be conducted in English, but written records to be preserved in Latin. Even as late as the mid-1600s, many legal records were still being recorded in Latin. So this new law tried to ensure that those records were written down in English going forward. This was part of a larger series of legal reforms that Parliament considered at the time.

Now in the midst of its many religious and legal reforms, Parliament was keeping a close eye on developments in Scotland. As I noted at the beginning of the episode, the Scottish Parliament had already declared its support for the son of King Charles, and they had indicated their intention to crown the younger Charles as the new king. That raised alarm bells in the English Commonwealth because there was still a lot of support for the monarchy in England as well, and those royalists would certainly rally around the younger Charles if he was crowned in Scotland. That concern was further heightened when the younger Charles returned from exile and arrived in Scotland in June of 1650.

Oliver Cromwell had been recalled from Ireland to deal with potential threat in Scotland. As I noted, Cromwell technically served under the formal head of the New Model Army, Sir Thomas Fairfax. But Fairfax refused to participate in a war against Scotland, which had been an ally of Parliament during the first part of the English Civil War, and Fairfax wasn't really happy with the direction that the country had taken since Parliament's victory. So when Fairfax stepped down, Cromwell officially became the head of the Army. He was named the Commander-in-Chief of all the forces of the Commonwealth, and in June he led his English forces to Scotland around the same time that the younger Charles arrived there from exile. So that set the stage for a showdown between England's de facto leader Oliver Cromwell and the young man who would be king.

The first major battle was fought at Dunbar in Scotland, where Cromwell emerged victorious – even though he was outnumbered two to one. [SOURCE: *Regicide and the Republic: England 1603-1660*, Graham E. Seel, p. 125] It was one of his greatest victories. And as a result, his forces came to control a large part of southern Scotland.

A few weeks later in January of 1651, the younger Charles was formally crowned as the new king of Scotland.

A stalemate settled in for the next few months until August when Charles saw an opportunity to lead the Scottish forces into northern England, but Cromwell countered the move and won a decisive victory. The Scots surrendered, and half the nobility of Scotland were taken as prisoners. Charles himself managed to escape, and spent the next few weeks traveling down to the southern coast of England in disguise, and according to legend, at one point, he even hid in a tree to avoid detection. But the people he encountered never revealed his identity or turned him over to the English authorities. It was proof that the people of England still mostly supported the monarchy. Charles finally managed to find a ship to take him to France where he returned to exile.

Though Charles survived to live another day, Scotland itself was left to deal with the consequences. Scotland was now completely under the control of Oliver Cromwell's forces. [SOURCE: *Oliver Cromwell, Charles Firth*, p. 182-3] And over the next few months, Cromwell's lieutenants who had been left behind in Ireland completed the conquest of Ireland as well. Three years after the execution of King Charles I, Oliver Cromwell was now the master of the entirety of the British Isles. England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland were all now under the control of his army, and since the English Parliament still answered to the army, it meant the Cromwell was the effective ruler of all of the British Isles. Few leaders in history had as much power over the British Isles as Cromwell did in the 1650s.

Though Cromwell's army had conquered Scotland and Ireland, the two countries were not treated the same. In Scotland, the Parliament was abolished and the nobles who had been involved in the conflict were punished. But otherwise, Scotland was pretty much left to itself. There was no widespread attempt to confiscate lands there or to interfere with the Scottish Church. [SOURCE: *Oliver Cromwell, Charles Firth*, p. 184]

But the English Commonwealth had very different plans for Ireland. And those plans changed Ireland forever.

In Ireland, the scheme was very simple. Anyone who had taken part in the rebellion over the prior decade was to have their lands taken from them and given to new English landowners. The amount of land that was confiscated depended on the degree of the person's involvement in the uprising. The leaders lost everything, whereas those who were involved to a lesser extent lost a smaller portion of their property. But the overall amount of land taken from Irish landowners was massive. And those who had their lands taken were then relocated to the poorest province of Connaught in the western part of Ireland. This led to a common Irish phrase, 'To Hell or Connaught.'

Some estimates suggest that about two-thirds (2/3) of the land of Ireland was confiscated and given to new owners through this process. [SOURCE: *Oliver Cromwell, Charles Firth, p. 166*] Another survey estimated that Catholics held about 60 percent (60%) of the land in Ireland before the reallocation, so they held a large majority of the land. Afterwards, they held less than 10 percent (10%) of the land. [SOURCE: *Modern Ireland 1600-1972, R.F. Foster, p. 115*] About 44,000 people were forced to relocate to Connaught in the western part of the country. [SOURCE: *A History of Ireland, Peter and Fiona Somerset Fry, p. 157*] Some estimates suggest the number was much higher than that. [SOURCE: *Irish English, Raymond Hickey, p. 39*]

Early on, I described what happened in Ulster in northern Ireland when the lands of the major landholders were confiscated and redistributed to settlers from Scotland and northern England. Well, now, essentially the same process was underway in much of the rest of the country. And just like in Ulster, many of the Irish commoners remained in place and served as tenants and laborers for the new English owners. [SOURCE: *Modern Ireland 1600-1972, R.F. Foster, p. 112*]

Now to be fair, English farmers, and laborers and craftsmen didn't exactly flock to Ireland to claim the land that was now available to them. So there wasn't a massive wave of settlers like happened in Ulster in the north. Instead, a new class of English landholders acquired estates which were maintained by Irish tenants. It was a situation similar to the Norman Conquest of England where Norman French overlords held the land that was worked and maintained by English-speaking peasants. Now much of Ireland faced a similar situation with an English upperclass served by an Irish working class. [SOURCE: *A History of Ireland, Peter and Fiona Somerset Fry, p. 158*]

We know that the Norman Conquest had major linguistic ramifications in England, and of course, this Irish conquest also had similar consequences in Ireland. It brought a significant number of English speakers from southern and central England to Ireland, so a more 'standard' form of English came to be spoken around much of Ireland. English speakers were still a small minority compared to the vast majority of people who spoke Gaelic, but they now occupied positions of power throughout the country. So over time, more and more native Irish men and women learned to speak English due to the social advantages associated with the language. And that was really the beginning of the very long and gradual process by which Ireland became anglicized – and by which speakers adopted the more standard English of southern England. [SOURCE: *Irish English, Raymond Hickey, p. 38-9*]

Of course, this form of English was the English of the 1600s, so it was basically Elizabethan English in most respects. And it gradually replaced the pockets of older English that lingered along the eastern coast like the old Forth and Bargo dialect.

As a result, the linguistic situation in Ireland became even more complicated than it was before. The dominant language continued to be Gaelic. The standard English of southern England now started to establish a foothold in many parts of the country, but it wouldn't replace Gaelic as the majority language until the 1800s. Meanwhile, Scots retained its foothold in the north of Ireland and continues to be spoken there by some people to this day.

Of course, all of these developments are important for the history of Ireland, but they also impact other parts of the world. As we'll see in an upcoming episode, there was significant Irish migration to Barbados in the Caribbean in the later part of the 1600s. In the 1700s, there was a massive migration of people from Ulster to North America, especially to Appalachia. Most of those people spoke some form of Scots and came to be known as Scots-Irish. And of course, in the 1800s during the Irish famine, over a million people migrated from Ireland to the northern cities of North America, especially cities like Boston and New York. All of those migrations carried various forms of English from Ireland to other parts of the world. So Ireland is important in itself, but it is also important as an intermediary that helped to spread its unique forms of English around the world.

So with that, I'm going to conclude this look at English in the Celtic World in the 1600s. Next time, we'll continue to look at the aftermath of the English Civil War. Specifically, we'll look at the relationship between England and Continental Europe during the Commonwealth period. And after that, we'll examine how the Civil War and its aftermath shaped the development of North America and the Caribbean. And of course, along the way, we'll also explore how all of those events shaped the English language during this period.

So until next time, thanks for listening to the History of English Podcast.