

**Irish
Previous To The Ninth
Century**



1889

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Century

With Accounts

By

Scandinavians

And

Germans

Of

Ireland It Mikla

And

Vinland Dat Gode

1889

Discovery Of America By The Irish



ALTHOUGH the title of this work indicates that Irish people discovered America previous to the ninth century, I will not attempt to show at what particular time that event took place. In such works as have come under my notice, relating to the early discoveries of America, I find no positive evidence that the Irish people ever discovered America in the sense in which the term is used, as applied to newly found lands.

I believe, however, that a perusal of the following pages will leave little doubt in peoples' minds that a Celtic race once inhabited almost the entire Western Hemisphere, and that a large part of the North American Continent was known to the Northmen by the name of Great Ireland. Whether these Celts originally came from Ireland, or the people of Ireland from America, no one can say with absolute certainty.

Some historians inform us that little was known of Ireland by the ancients, and that no definite accounts of that island were obtained until the time of the invasion of Britain by the Romans. It is probable that Ireland knew far more of the ancients than they knew of Ireland. According to the map of Ptolemy, the central portion of Ireland was inhabited in his day by the Scoti in the north by the Robogdii; the east by the Dania, Eblanii, Cauci Menapii and Coriundi: the south by the Brigantes, Vodii and Ibernii; the west by the Luceni, Velaborii, Cangani, Autcri, Magnatæ and Haudinii,

For many centuries Ireland was known by the name of Ierne. The name of Ogygia, "most ancient land," was applied to it by Plutarch. Ireland, styled Iernis, is mentioned in a Greek poem five centuries before Christ, and by the names of Hibernia, Juvcrna and Iris, in various foreign pagan writers Herodotus, four centuries before the Christian era, places the Celts beyond the Pillars of Hercules, and upon the burden of the most westerly region in Europe, and Cæsar in the first century finds them in

Britain and Gaul. Polybius, in the second century before Christ, alludes to the Britannic Islands beyond the Pillars of Hercules, and to the working of the mines by the inhabitants.

A Greek poet, writing under the name of Orpheus, mentions these remote (British) islands under the name of the Ietaian.

A comparatively late writer, Festus Rufus Avienus, in his poetical "*Description of the World*" written from the account of Hamilcar, mentions the plains of the Britons and the distant Thule, and talks of the sacred isle peopled by the nation of the Hiberni and the adjacent island of the Albiones.

The ancients tell of a large island which was sunk in the Atlantic Ocean many centuries ago. In Solon's relation to the Egyptian Priests, we find the following words:--

There existed an ancient and celebrated people in Greece, the wisdom of whose laws, and fame of whose valour are renowned in the sacred writings and ancient annals of Egypt. This heroic race were as highly celebrated for their exploits by sea as by land, as was evident in their arduous contests with the mighty nation who formerly inhabited the vast island Atlantis, now buried in the ocean which bears its name.

This island was situated near the straits of Gades, and it exceeded in magnitude Europe and Asia joined together. It was so called from Atlas, the son of Neptune, whose descendants reigned there in an hereditary line, during a period of nine thousand years, and extended their sway over all the adjoining regions, for there was an easy passage from this island to the neighbouring islands and continents, and their armies passing over into Europa and Africa subdued all Lybia, to the borders of Egypt, and all Europa to Asia Minor; in succeeding ages owing to prodigious earthquakes and inundations in the space of one day and night, all that day of Greece which your ancestors inhabited was desolated and submerged, and the Atlantic island itself, being suddenly absorbed into the bosom of the ocean, entirely disappeared, and for many ages afterwards that sea

could not be navigated, owing to the numerous rocks and shelves with which it abounded."

Mr. Davis, in his "*American Antiquities*," says:

"The appearance of the globe in that part in which the catastrophe is said to have happened, has been asserted by some learned man to bear marks of such an event having taken place; and that the Canaries, Azores, and Tenerife, are nothing else than the tops of mountains belonging to land sunk in the Atlantic Ocean. "Buffon says "this tradition of the Island Atlantis is not devoid of probability, and that the land swallowed up by the waters was perhaps that which united Ireland to the Azores, and the Azores to the continent of America,"

Mr. Whitehurst observes (see Whitehurst's works) that he is almost persuaded that Ireland was originally a part of the island Atlantis.

This opinion of Whitehurst's is highly strengthened by the following remarkable tradition of the old Irish given by an author of the highest reputation, who's entire work I regret I have never been able to see. The gentlemen alluded to is General Vallancey, who says the old Irish relate, that "a great part of Ireland was swallowed up by the sea; and that the sunken part of tan rises, and is frequently seen on the horizon from the northern coast, In the north-west they call a city of this enchanted island Tir Hud, or the city of Hud, believing one stands there which once possessed all the riches of world. This is a general tradition with them. This island is called O'Braesii, or O'Brazil, which signifies Royal Island."

General Vallancey says, "It is evidently the lost city of Arabian story, visited by their prophet Houd, the city and paradise of Irem." The following extracts, also, are taken from Mr. Davis' work:—

"The antiquities of America stretch from the great lakes of the north and west to the southern parts of Peru; from the Alleghany Mountains on the east, to the Rocky Mountains on the west; and even from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean."

The monumental history of Central America tells us that this is not a new world. And we awake with astonishment that there was once the seat of a great empire before David reigned over the twelve tribes of Israel, or Octavius waved his sceptre over the civilized world.

But alas! The foundation of cities as magnificent as those that adorned the banks of the Nile, have vanished like the generations before the flood.

The stone hatchets used by the Mexicans, we have the authority of the *Archaeologia, Vol. IX.* p. 97, to assert, were the same as those frequently found in Great Britain and which go by the name of Celts. Transmigration of souls was taught by the Druids of Great Britain. And it appears the natives of Otheite, Mexico, believed in it also.

When the Spaniards arrived in South America they found stones cut into the figured of the cross, which were much revered by the Mexicans.

General Valiancey says, "The symbol of knowledge among the ancient Irish was the cross."

There are forts in Mexico the general principle of the work of which is undoubtedly of very great antiquity, There is one of these ancient forts in Ireland (see Trans, Irish Aceol, Vol. II) nomad Norseleap, which is almost precisely similar to some found on the Muskingum. Mounds similar to those in Mexico, are common in Great Britain (See *Archaeologia, Vol. XVI.* p. 268.

It is still the custom there with the natives in passing such a place, to cast thereon a stone to increase the monumental pile. The ceremonies observed with the Irish are individually the same with the Mexicans.

Mr, Bryant says, "that wherever these monuments occur, we may esteem them of the highest antiquity." Such works are generally referred to the Celts and Druids.

Mr. Henry K. Schoolcraft, in an address before the New York Historical Society in 1846, said, "an inscription found in 1838, on opening the

gigantic pile of earth or tumulus, heretofore referred to, on the alluvia] plains of Grave Creek in Western Virginia, was in one of the types of this ancient character, This type of the alphabet may be called Aonie, term derived from the aboriginal vocabulary. I visited the locality in 1843, carefully examined the facts, and having satisfied myself of the authenticity of the discovery, took duplicate copies of the inscription in wax and transmitted them to Europe. The inscription consists of twenty-three letters, together with a pictorial device, apparently a man's head on a pike. Professor Charles Rafn, of Copenhagen, deems the characters Celtiberic. Thirteen of the characters correspond with the Druidical, or old British, as it existed before the invasion of Julius Cæsar. The latter are, however, almost identical as far as comparison goes, with the Celtiberic.

Clavigaro, in his history of Mexico, relates that the Mexicans describe the giants, who were ruined at the time of the great earthquakes.

In Moores *History of Ireland*, it appears that the Attacots, or giant race, existed in Ireland, A. D. 126.

According to ancient Irish writers, Ireland was visited by a wonderful phenomenon of lightning about that time, which destroyed nearly every temple on the whole island, and caused the death by lightning stroke of nearly 2,000 persons. It was, they say, such a phenomena as had never been seen since the beginning of the world, and never will be again until the judgment day.

In Brownell's "*Discoveries, Pioneers and Settlers of North and South America*," we find the following;—

When Iceland was first settled by the Northmen, a small colony of Christians, who are supposed to have come from Ireland, were found there," This was in the year 861.

Haverty, in his "*History of Ireland, Ancient and Modern*," says: "Irishmen when the first Christians, and, perhaps the first inhabitants of Iceland, which they called Thule, or Tyle."

Mr. Brownell says:—

"There are several ancient Norse records, all treating of persons historically known to have existed in America, whither formerly vessels came from Ireland,"

Mr. Davis says:—

“From a letter preserved by the son of Columbus, it appears he visited Iceland, It was thought by the Icelanders that he there obtained a knowledge of the discovery of America, and that as he was rather artful, he concealed the knowledge from mankind.”

A work entitled, "*Discovery of America by the Northmen,*" was published in London, England, in the year 1841, by North Ludlow Beamish, Fellow of the Royal Society and member of the Royal Danish Society of Northern Antiquities, author of the "*History of the German Legion,*" etc, Mr. Beamish was associated with Charles Christian Rafn, Knight of the Royal Danish Order of Dannebrog, of the Royal Swedish Order of the North Star, Counsellor of State to His Majesty, the King of Denmark, Professor of Northern Literature, Fellow of the Royal Antiquarian Society of London, and Secretary of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquarian Society of London. From Mr, Beamish's work, the following extracts are derived:

"Amongst the various valuable and important publications of the Royal Danish Society of Northern Antiquities, that which has created the greatest general interest in the literary world, is the able and elaborate work of Prof. Rafn, which came out at Copenhagen in the year 1837, under the title of "*Antiquitates Americane, sive Scriptores Septentrionales rerum Anti-Columbianorum in America*". This interesting publication, the fruit of great literary labour and extensive research, clearly shows that the eastern coast of North America was discovered and colonized by the North men, more than five hundred years before the reputed discovery of Columbus.

These facts rest upon the authority of ancient Icelandic manuscripts preserve in the Royal and University Libraries of Copenhagen, and which have now been for the first time translated and made public. Facsimiles of the most important of these documents are given in Prof. Rafn's work, together with maps and delineations of ancient monuments illustrative of the subject. A Danish and Latin translation follows the Icelandic text, and the whole is accompanied by introductory observations, philological and historical remarks, as well as archaeological and geographical disquisitions of high interest and value."

"The incidental allusions to the voyages and settlements of the Irish, which are contained in them minor narratives, are more likely to excite than satisfy enquiry. Much still remains to be unravelled on this interesting subject, and it is to be regretted that no competent hands have yet been applied to this neglected portion of Irish history. It has been too much the practice to decry as fabulous, all statements claiming for the earlier inhabitants of Ireland, a comparatively high degree of advancement and civilization, and notwithstanding the many valuable publications connected with the history and antiquities of that country which have from time to time come forth, and the more recent candid, learned and eloquent production of Mr. Moore, there are not wanting (even among her sons) those who with the anti-Irish feeling of the bigoted Cambrensis, would sink Ireland in the scale of national distinction, and deny her claims to that early eminence in religion, learning and the arts, which unquestionable records so fully testify. And yet, a very little unprejudiced enquiry would be sufficient to satisfy the candid mind that Erin had good claims to be called the "School of the West," and her sons. *"Inclyta, gens hominum, Malite, Pace, Fide."*

This much at least, will the following pages show: That sixty-five years previous to the discovery of Iceland by the Northmen in the ninth century, Irish emigrants had visited and inhabited that island; that about the year 725, Irish ecclesiastics had sought seclusion upon the Faroe Islands; that in the tenth century, voyages between Iceland and Ireland were of ordinary occurrence; and that in the eleventh century, a country west from Ireland, and south of that part of the American Continent which was

discovered by the adventurous Northmen in the preceding age, was known to them under the name of White Man's Land, or Great Ireland.

From what cause could the name of Great Ireland have arisen, but from the fact of the country having been colonized by the Irish? Prof. Rafn is of opinion that White Man's Land, or Great Ireland of the Northmen was the country situated to the south of Chesapeake Bay, including North and South Carolina, Georgia and East Florida. Shawanese Indians used to say that Florida was once inhabited by white men, who used iron instruments.

Lionel Wafer, who resided for several months amongst the inhabitants of the Isthmus of America, says:

“My knowledge of the Highland language made me the more capable of learning the Darien Indians' language, when I was among them, for there is sonic affinity, for many of the words bear a marked similarity to those of the Celtic.”

It is remarkable also what an Indian King said to a Spaniard, viz., "That in foregoing ages a strange people arrived there by sea."

it is certain that when the Spaniards first conquered Mexico, they were surprised to hear the inhabitants discourse of a strange people, that formerly came thither in corraughs, who taught them the knowledge of God, and of immortality, instructed them also in virtue and morality, and prescribed holy rites and ceremonies of religion.

It may be here remarked, that the word "corraugh" is an Irish name of a large boat.

The British language is so prevalent here, that the towns, bridges, beasts, birds, rivers, hills, etc., are called by British names.

**PART II,
MINOR NARRATIVES**



THE FOLLOWING SELECTIONS are made from that division of the *Antiquitates Americanæ*, entitled "*Breviores Relations*," being extracts and short narratives taken from various Icelandic manuscripts now extant in the Royal and University Libraries of Copenhagen. They will be found to contain some later interesting particulars of the traces of Irish settlers found in Iceland previous to the occupation of that island by the Norwegians in the ninth century, as well as authentic accounts of voyages performed by the Northman in the year 999 and 1029, to that part of the Western Hemisphere known to them under the name of White Man's Land, or Great Ireland. (*Hvitramanna land eder Ireland it Mikla*).

A—From the “History of King Olaf According to the Second Vellum Codex, No. 61, Fol.

Thus says the holy priest, Bede, in the chronicles which he wrote concerning the regions of the earth "That the island which is called Thule in the books, lies so far in the north part of the world, that there came no day in the winter, when the night is longest, and no night in summer, when the day is longest.

Therefore think learned men, that it is Iceland which is called Thule, for there are many places in that land, where the sun sets not at night, when the day is longest, and in the same manner, where the sun cannot be seen by day, when the night is longest. But the holy priest, Bede, died DC-CXXXV years after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, more than hundred and twenty years before Iceland was inhabited by the Northman. But before Iceland was colonized from Norway, men had been there whom the Northman called Papas! They were Christians, for after them were found Irish books bells, and croziers, and many other things from whence it could be seen that they were Christian men, and had come from the

west over the sea. English books also show that, in that time, there was intercourse between the two countries."

B.—From the Schedule of Ari Frode, No. 54, Fol.

At that time was Iceland covered with woods, between the mountains and the shore. Then were here Christian people, whom the Northmen called Papas, but they went afterwards away, because they would not be here amongst heathens; and left after them Irish books, and bells, and crosiers, from which could be seen that they were Irishmen. But then began people to travel much here out from Norway, until King Harold forbade it because it appeared to him that the land had begun to be thinned of inhabitants

**Voyage of Gudleif Gudlangson
To Great Ireland, A. D. 1029.**

Gudleif Hight a man, during the reign of King Olaf the Saint, undertook a trading voyage to Dublin, but was driven far to the west, in the sea, where no land was to be seen. After many days it came to pass that they saw land, It was a great land, but they know not what land it was. When they had been a short time On shore, came people to them. They knew none of the people, but it rather appeared' to them that they spoke Irish. Soon came to them so great a number that made up many hundreds. Their Chief, who understood the Northern tongue, made many inquiries about his people in Ireland, and he gave them a gold ring to take to a lady in Dublin. Then they were allowed to depart.

**Description of Great Ireland.
(From an "Ancient Norse Record")**

"To the south of habitable Greenland there are uninhabitable and wild tracts, and enormous iceberg. The country of the Skroelligs lies beyond these; Markland beyond this, and Vinland the Good (New England) beyond the last. Next to this, and something; beyond it, lies Albania, that is Hvitrannaland, whither formerly vessels came from Ireland. There several Irishmen and Icelanders saw and recognized Ari, the son of Mar and Kothlu of Reykianess,, concerning whom nothing had been heard for

a long time, and who had been made their chief by the inhabitants of the land."

"This Ari Marson is elsewhere described as having been driven in a tempest (983) to the region called Hvitramannaland (White Man's Land) or Ireland it Makla (Ireland the Great) which lay far to the West of Ireland, and may perhaps have been the southern or middle states of America."

In an account of a voyage to "Vinland dat Gode" (New England), an incident is related of a German sailor who had strayed away from the camp of the Northmen. They becoming alarmed at his absence went in search of him. They found him in a pleasant little valley, apparently in high glee. In answer to their enquiries he said that he had found grapes, and had eaten his fill of the luscious fruit, which seemed to be the same as grew along the banks of his native Rhine.

We have it on good authority that the antiquities of America cover a period of six thousand years. Palenqua, an ancient city of Central America, is estimated to have been sixty miles in circumference, and to have had nearly three million inhabitants. Ruins of building's which are classed among the most magnificent in the world, and works of art, of the rarest kind, have been found in Mexico and Central America.

One great difficulty with American antiquarians has been, that they had not an understanding of the Irish language. If they had, they would have readily recognised the many Irish names in Mexico, Central America and South America. The section of territory around Mexico was called Anahuac; if we suppose the original pronunciation to have been Anahuig. instead or Anahuac, we have the compound Irish word, signifying Great Fifth. Ireland was in ancient times divided into fifths, called "Cuigs," which, when compounded with, and preceded by another word, is pronounced "huig."

We are informed by American writers that another great section of territory of the ancient Americans was called Nehuedafallan. I am inclined to think that they have slightly mispronounced the name, as in the

case of Anahuac. If we suppose the name to have been Nehuigafalian, or Unhuigafallan we have the compound Irish word signifying "The fifth of the Wall," which would indicate a territory bounded by a wall, or chain of hills.

One of their great cities was named Tulla. There is to this day a town in Ireland by the name of Tulla. Another of their cities was called Tulloom. There is in Ireland a town named Tullamore and, I believe, one also named Tulloom, There was the Mexican city of Tehautepec. Irish speaking persons will recognize the word tehaun, as signifying house in their language. If we say Tehaunthapig, instead of Tehautepec we have the compound Irish word, "housequick," which would signify, quickly erected house. In Mexico, also, was the statue of Gubernadore, which in Irish, signifies work of art.

The question may be asked, how shall we account for the American Indian, or Red Man? If we accept the version that the Irish, the Atlantes and the American Celts all formed, at one time, one race, and perhaps one nation, then, perhaps, he may be accounted for on the theory that the Atlantes took prisoner, whom they carried off as slaves, and whose descendants gradually escaped into the wild regions, and in time spread themselves overall the hemisphere.

Would it be impossible for such a race to spring from a mixture of the swarthy races in Southern Europe, Turkey and Egypt? The Romans used to allude to the Carthaginians as 'neither white nor black' The American Celtic race has passed away, from what causes is not known. Perhaps they were exterminated by war, pestilence and famine. Central America, where the most traces of their existence remain is a very unhealthy country. Perhaps it was not so, until the forests which stood between it and the guano beds along the north coast of South America, were cut down, when the deadly vapours arising from those guano deposits were borne directly to it, breeding yellow fever and other diseases among its inhabitants.

The stream of water which flows through the body of the earth and comes to the surface at the Gulf of Mexico, thence forming the Gulf Stream, may

also conduce to its unhealthfulness. Earthquakes are mentioned. It is likely that great earthquakes will occur again. The steam of water just referred to, is doing its work slowly but surely, in the interior of the earth. In time, large excavations are probably formed, wherein the earth suddenly settles, and continents are submerged,

Perhaps in a remote future age, when places in here now dry land is, will be covered with water, Atlantis will again rise to the surface, and the ruins of Tir Hud be exposed to an astonished world.



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