

Online History Tour of Ireland

County Down / *Contae an Dúin*

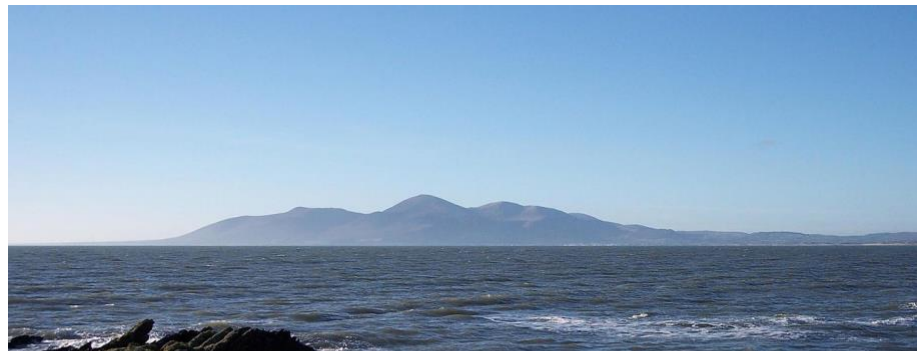
The Mourne County

Thursdays 6:00 – 7:30 pm / March 3, 10, 24 & 31, 2022

What county
are you from?



Famous people from Down include, Jamie Dornan, Betsy Gray, Bulmer Hobson, Greer Garson, John Butler Yeats, Marie Drumm, Winifred Carney, the Brontë family, Samuel Nielson, Brian Faulkner, Rory McIlroy.



St. Patrick's grave in Downpatrick

Down is also home to an area called the Brontë Homeland, where Patrick Brontë (orig. Brunty), father of Anne, Charlotte, Emily, and Branwell Brontë, was born and raised. As the great Irish entertainer Percy French wrote, "The mountains of Mourne sweep down to the sea."

Down's county town, Downpatrick is one of the most ancient towns on the island of Ireland, with archaeological evidence of Neolithic and Bronze Age settlements. By 130 AD, it was included in Ptolemy's list of towns in Ireland, though at that time it was called Dunum. Saint Patrick is believed to have been buried in Downpatrick in the year 461. Ireland's patron saint said his first Eucharist on Irish soil in the town of Saul in county Down.

From the seventh century, Down was the center of the lands held by the Dál Fiatach. The Normans arrived in 1177 when John de Courcy received a grant of all of Ulster from King Henry II.

The Battle of Down, which took place in 1260, pitted Brian O'Neill, King of Tyrone, against the Normans in a bid for Irish independence. The Normans were victorious but by 1333 the Irish, aided by the Scots, had retaken Ulster. Down was planted privately by Scottish adventurers in 1606 and was not part of King James's 1609 official Plantation of Ulster.

Down is one of only two counties of Ireland to presently have a majority of the population from a Protestant background. (Antrim is the other.) St. Patrick's Church of Ireland, built in Newry in 1578, is thought to be the first Protestant church in Ireland.

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