



Topical Tidbits

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Ireland

Greetings!

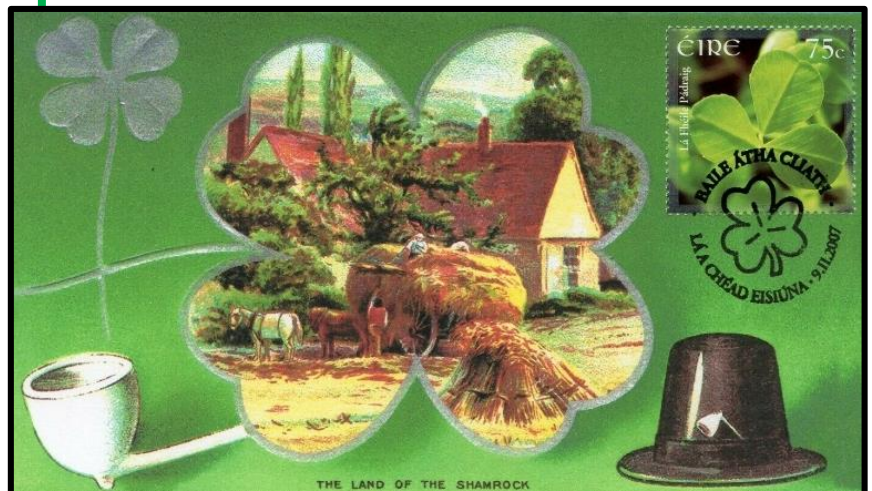
The lush, green island of Ireland lies to the west of Great Britain. Eighty percent of the island is known as the Republic of Ireland. The northern-most section of the island is part of the United Kingdom and is called Northern Ireland. Have fun learning all about the Emerald Isle in this issue of *Topical Tidbits*.



Eire, the Irish word for Ireland, appears on all their stamps, like the one above. The cover at the right shows some symbols that represent the country.

Interesting Facts:

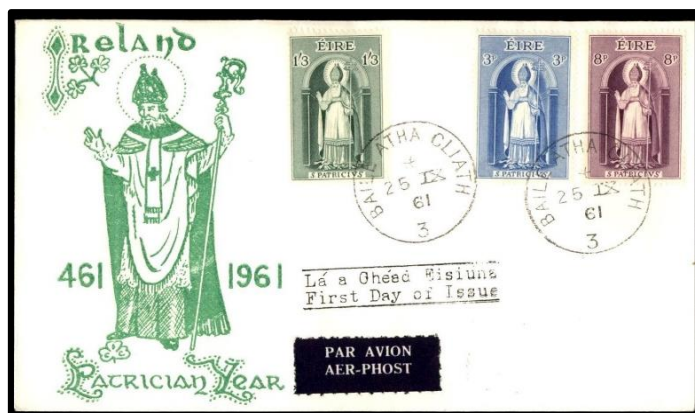
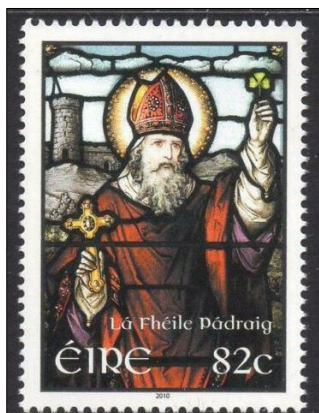
- The first people to settle Ireland arrived around 6,000 B.C.
- Around 700 B.C. the Celts arrived and brought with them many innovations.
- In the 9th century the Vikings arrived. This led to fighting with the Celts which lasted for over 200 years.
- In 1170, the island became a British territory.
- Religious clashes that had gone on for hundreds of years finally ended in 1948 when six mostly Protestant counties stayed with England and the rest of the counties became the independent country of Ireland.
- The harp is the national symbol of Ireland.
- The longest place name in Ireland is *Muckanaghederdauhaulia* which means “pig-marsh between two salt waters.”



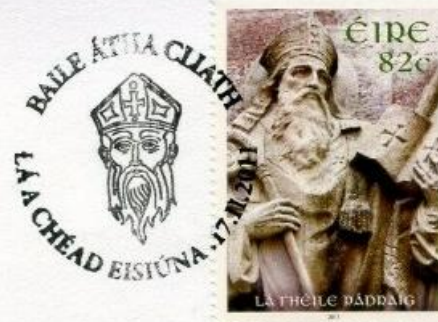
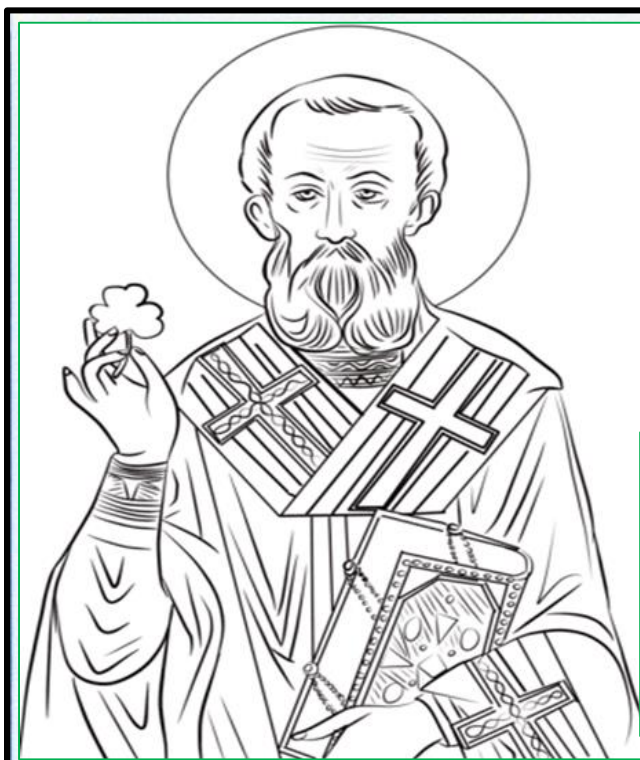
THE LAND OF THE SHAMROCK

St. Patrick

St. Patrick was a 5th century Christian missionary and bishop in Ireland. Known as the *Apostle of Ireland*, he is Ireland's patron saint. He was born in Britain to a wealthy Roman family. When Patrick was about 16 years old, he was captured by Irish pirates from his home and taken to Ireland to tend sheep. During this time, his faith in God grew and helped him endure his ordeal. After being held captive for six years, he finally escaped and returned to his family. Patrick later became a bishop and returned to Ireland to spread Christianity. According to legend, he drove all the snakes out of Ireland. He is often pictured holding a shamrock because he used it to illustrate the Holy Trinity- three persons in one God (the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost).



These stamps and covers from Ireland honor St. Patrick. You can color the cachet on the cover below.



Irish Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back;
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
The rains fall soft upon your fields,
and until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.





Irish Fame



Read the clues and find the matching stamps at the bottom.

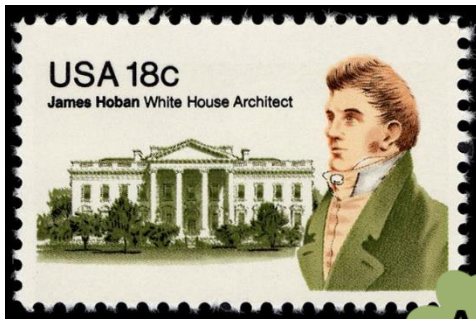
_____ 1. It took 14,000 men three years to build this famous ship in Belfast.

_____ 2. Bram Stoker, who is from Dublin, wrote this famous novel which is said to have been inspired by an Irish legend.

_____ 3. This famous house, where the president of the United States lives, was designed by Irishman James Hoban.

_____ 4. John Philip Holland designed and built the first underwater vessel accepted by the U.S. Navy.

_____ 5. This medical device was invented in 1844 by Francis Rynd, a Dublin doctor.



A



B



C



D



E

Answers: 1-C, 2-E, 3-A, 4-D, 5-B

Irish Matching Game

These stamps feature Irish wildflowers and wildlife. You can use them to make a matching game. Directions for assembling and playing are at the bottom of the next page.



Irish Matching Game, cont.

This is the second page of stamps for the matching game. Directions for assembling and playing are at the bottom of the page.



Making the Game:

Print two copies of this page and the page before it. (Card stock is recommended.) Cut carefully along the solid lines to make the cards.

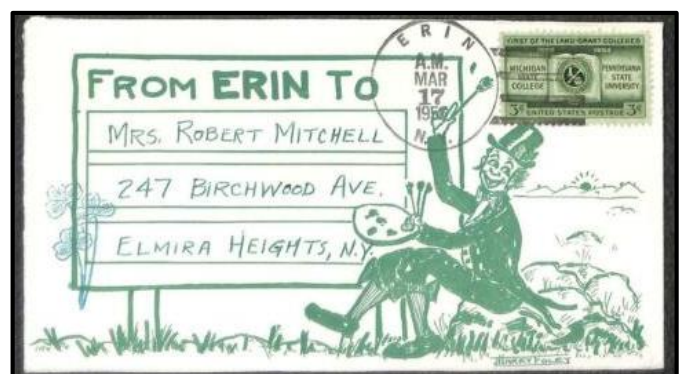
Playing the Game:

Mix the cards up and lay them face-down in rows. Take turns flipping over two cards. If they match, collect them and go again. If they don't, turn them back over and it's the next player's turn. The person with the most matches is the winner.

Leprechauns

A leprechaun is a small supernatural being from Irish folklore who often wears a green suit and hat. Sightings of these mischievous creatures date back to the 13th century. Unscramble the words in each sentence to learn more about these little fellows.

1. Leprechauns are a type of **yiraf** _____.
2. They hide their pot of gold at the end of the **wobairn** _____.
3. There are no **lirg** _____ leprechauns.
4. The little men have a reputation for being very **kaynes** _____ which makes them hard to trick.
5. Leprechauns are the bankers and **shremkasoe** _____ of the fairy world.
6. If caught, a leprechaun will grant three **shewis** _____ if you agree to let him go.
7. The leprechaun is a **tascom** _____ for sports teams like the Boston Celtics and the University of Notre Dame.



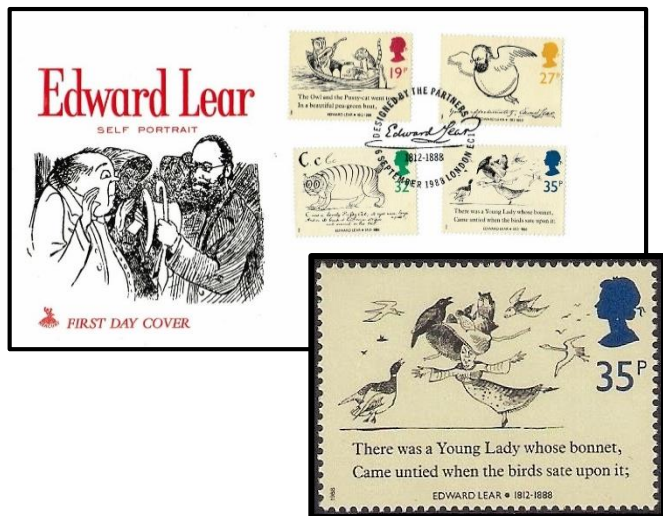
Limericks

Limerick is the third largest city in Ireland and was founded by the Vikings in 812. You may have heard of the short rhyming poems called “limericks.” No one is actually sure of the origin of these humorous verses, but some think they may come from the chorus of an 18th-century Irish soldiers’ song called, “Will You Come Up to Limerick?” Regardless of where they came from, all limericks follow the same rules. First, they are all five lines long. And second, they follow an *aabba* rhyme scheme. This means that lines one, two, and five all rhyme and should contain seven to ten syllables. Lines three and four rhyme with each other and should have five to seven syllables. Look at this example by the famous British poet Edward Lear:

There was an Old Man with a beard
 Who said, "It is just as I feared!
 Two Owls and a Hen,
 Four Larks and a Wren,
 Have all built their nests in my beard!"

And here’s another by Lear:

There was an old person of Shields,
 Who frequented the valleys and fields;
 All the mice and the cats,
 And the snakes and the rats,
 Followed after that person of Shields.



The cover (above) has a self-portrait of Lear and four stamps that were issued by Great Britain to honor his work for children. The stamps show illustrations that he drew for his books. The 35p stamp features part of a limerick.

Now try writing some limericks of your own. Use the notes in red to help you.

Line 1: 7-10 syllables _____ **A**

Line 2: 7-10 syllables _____ **A**

Line 3: 5-7 syllables _____ **B**

Line 4: 5-7 syllables _____ **B**

Line 5: 7-10 syllables _____ **A**

Line 1: 7-10 syllables _____ **A**

Line 2: 7-10 syllables _____ **A**

Line 3: 5-7 syllables _____ **B**

Line 4: 5-7 syllables _____ **B**

Line 5: 7-10 syllables _____ **A**



Green



Scavenger Hunt

Directions: Use a stamp catalog to find the items below. Using a Scott catalog or USPS catalog, write the Scott number on the line.

Hint: It might help to use the index at the back of the USPS catalog. The Scott catalog has a subject index that would help. Good luck!

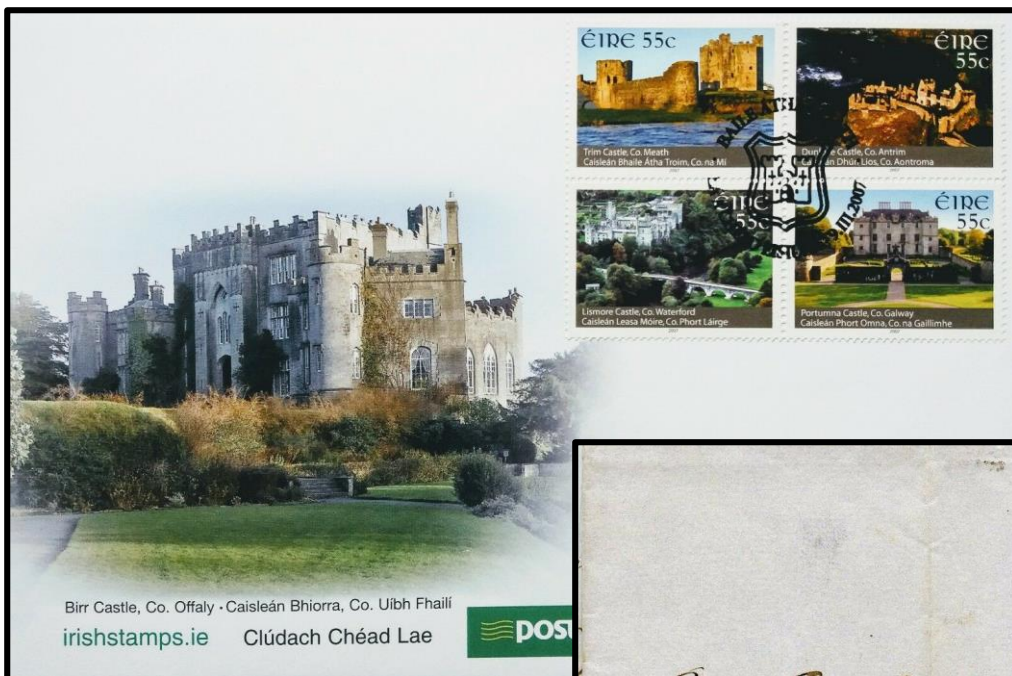
1. _____ *The Green Lantern*
2. _____ Frog
3. _____ Peter Pan
4. _____ 4-leaf clover
5. _____ *Green Mayflower*
6. _____ Green Statue of Liberty
7. _____ Christmas wreath
8. _____ *The Green Arrow*
9. _____ Kiwi fruit
10. _____ Green-throated carib (bird)
11. _____ Green Bay Packers
12. _____ Christmas tree
13. _____ Katydid (insect)
14. _____ The Very Hungry Caterpillar
15. _____ Green peppers

Irish Castles

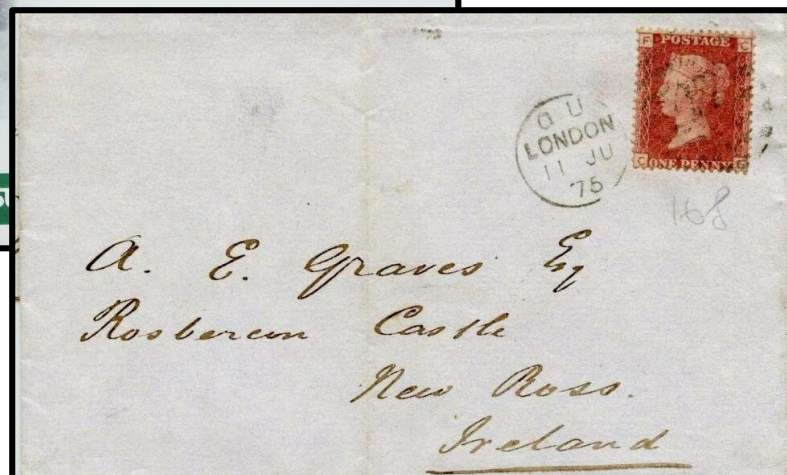
Ireland is famous for its many beautiful castles. These castles were built by clan chiefs and Anglo-Norman settlers and were used as fortified homes. Most date between the 11th and 15th centuries. Today, many castles are open for tourists to view.

The next five pages have covers featuring castles. These were designed by Ludwig W. Staehle, a German immigrant to the United States. His series of twenty Irish castle covers that are featured here, are often postmarked on St. Patrick's Day and were issued between 1952 and 1971. Most have Irish stamps attached, although some have American commemorative stamps.

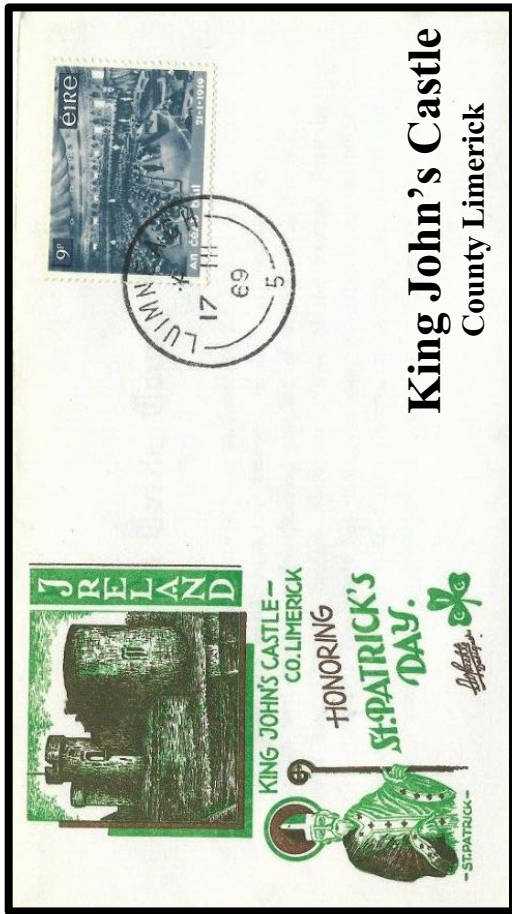
These covers can be printed on stock paper and used for a variety of activities. They can be sorted alphabetically by the castle name, which has been added to the bottom right. The map page can be used to identify the county where each castle is located. The county name can be found in the bottom right corner of each cover. Another way to use this would be to print two sets of the pages for a matching game. Maybe you can think of some other ways to use these covers!



This cover (above) features Birr Castle and was issued in 2007. The stamps depict famous Irish castles. The cover to the right is from 1875 and is addressed to A. E. Graves at Rosbercon Castle.



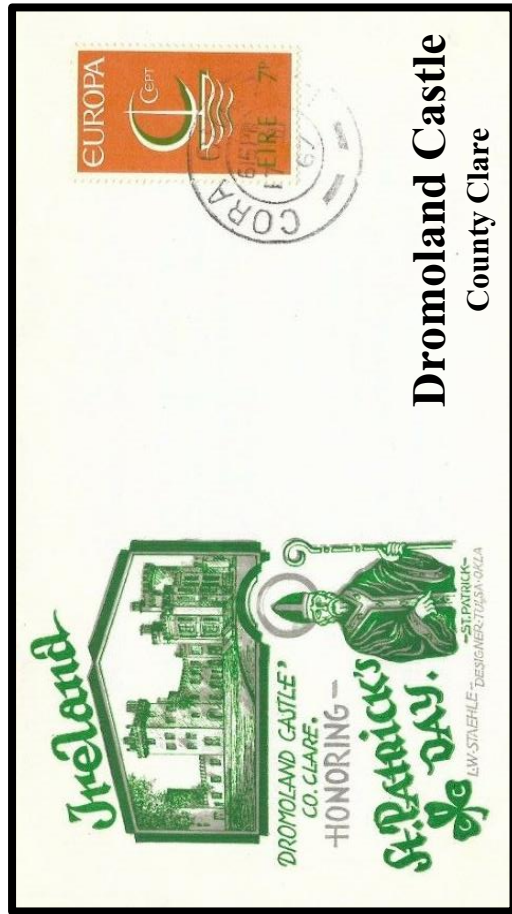
Irish Castles, cont.



King John's Castle
County Limerick



Lismore Castle
County Waterford

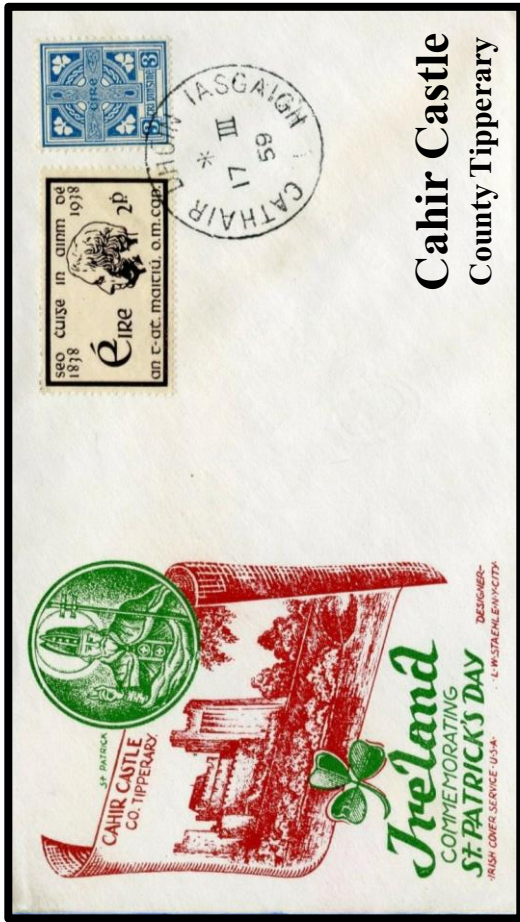


Dromoland Castle
County Clare

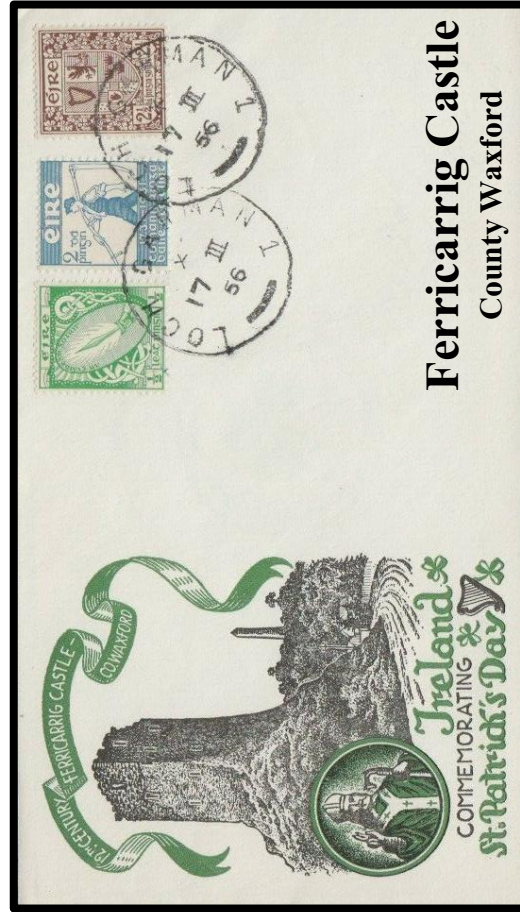


Rathmacknee Castle
County Wexford

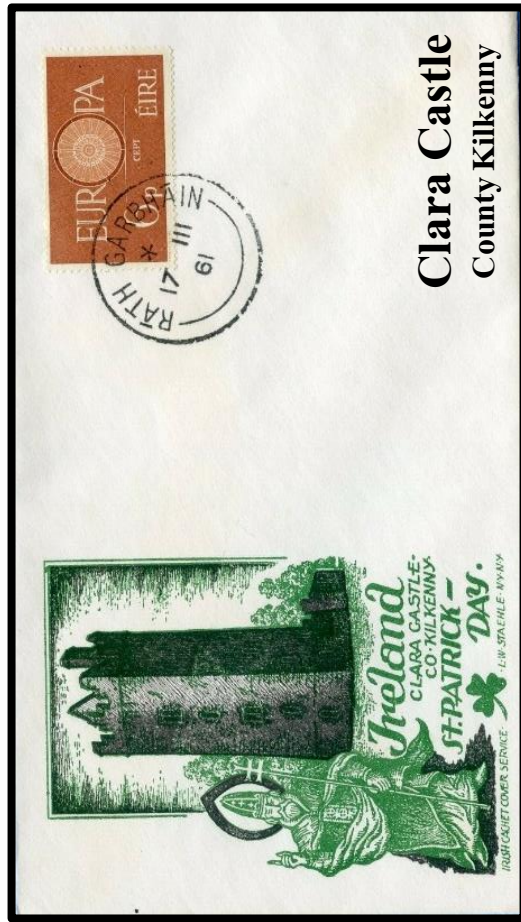
Irish Castles, cont.



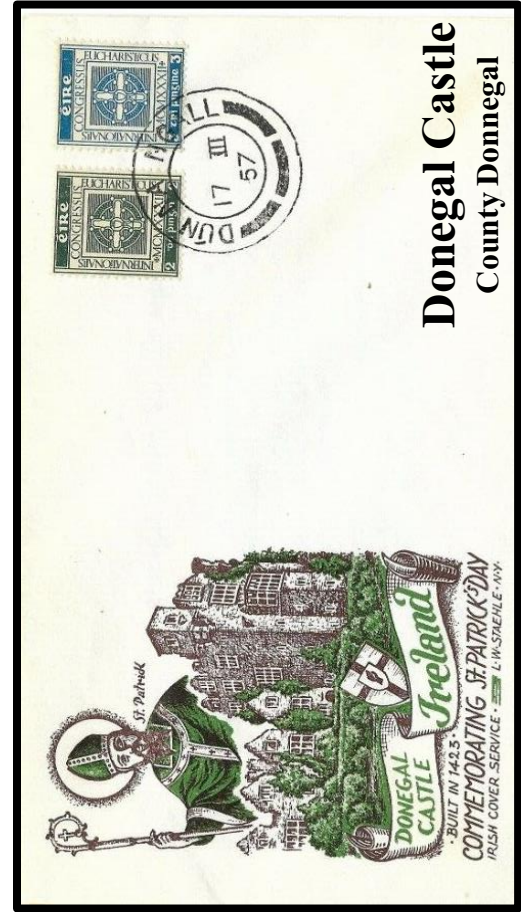
Cahir Castle
County Tipperary



Ferricarrig Castle
County Wexford

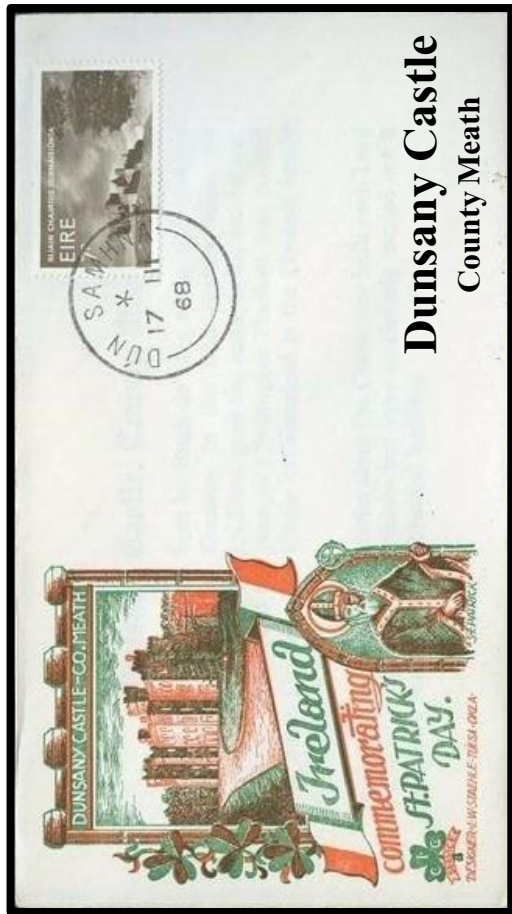


Clara Castle
County Kilkenny

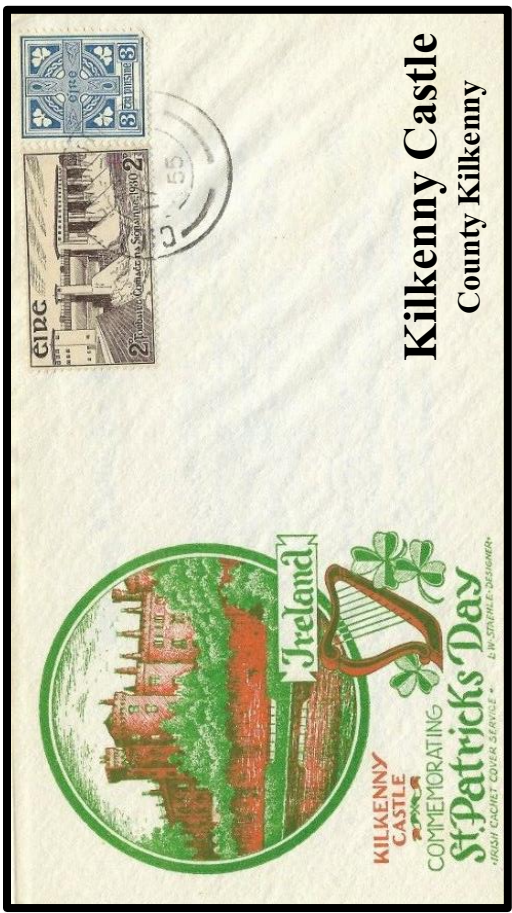


Donegal Castle
County Donegal

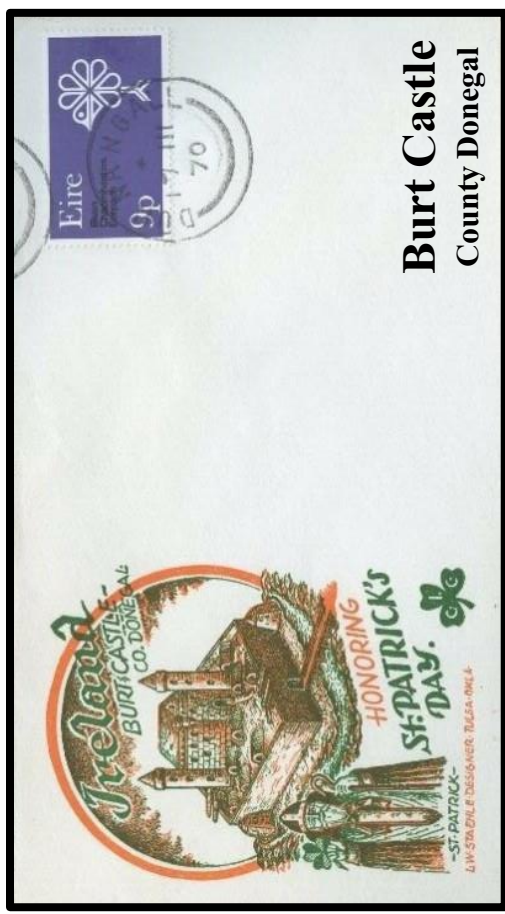
Irish Castles, cont.



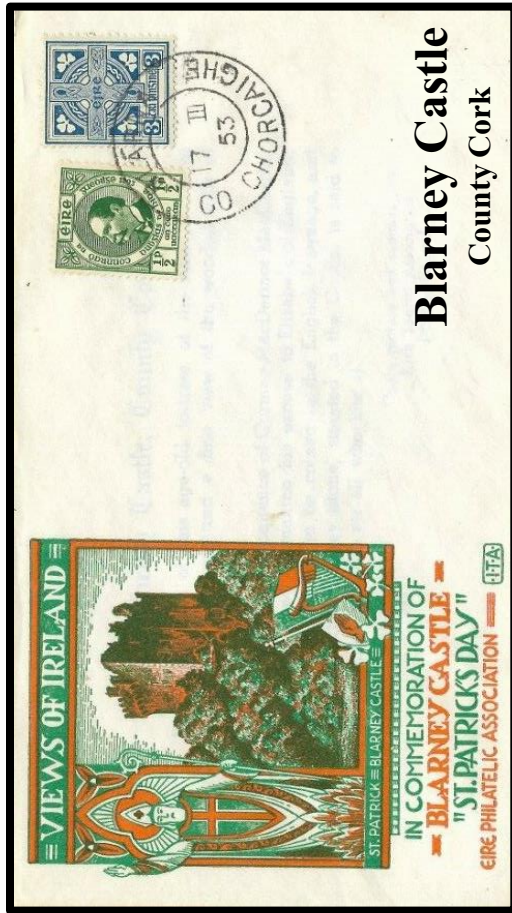
Dunsany Castle
County Meath



Kilkenny Castle
County Kilkenny

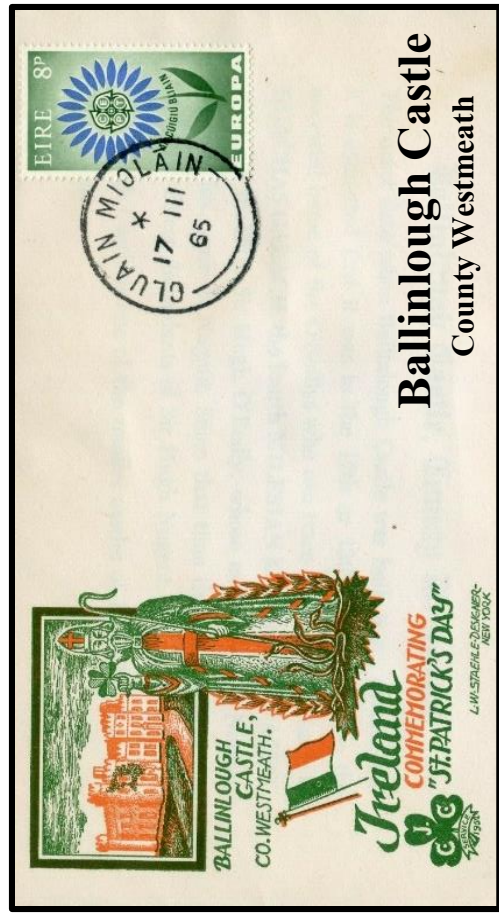
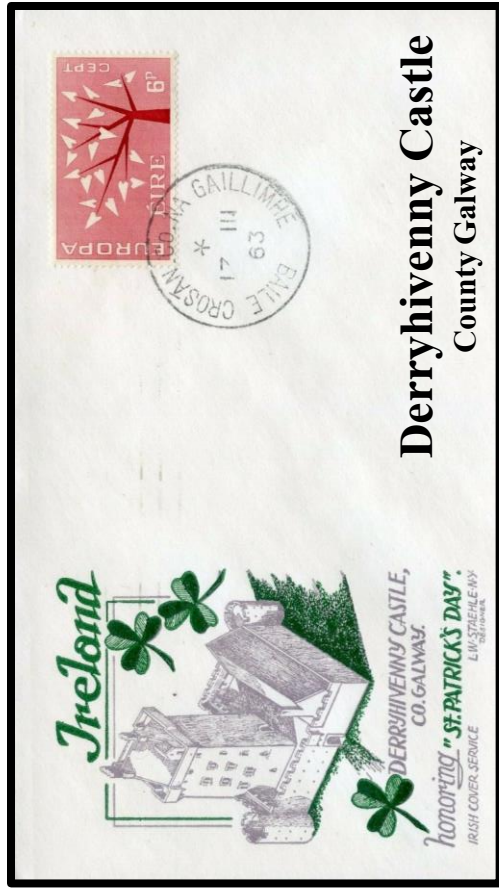
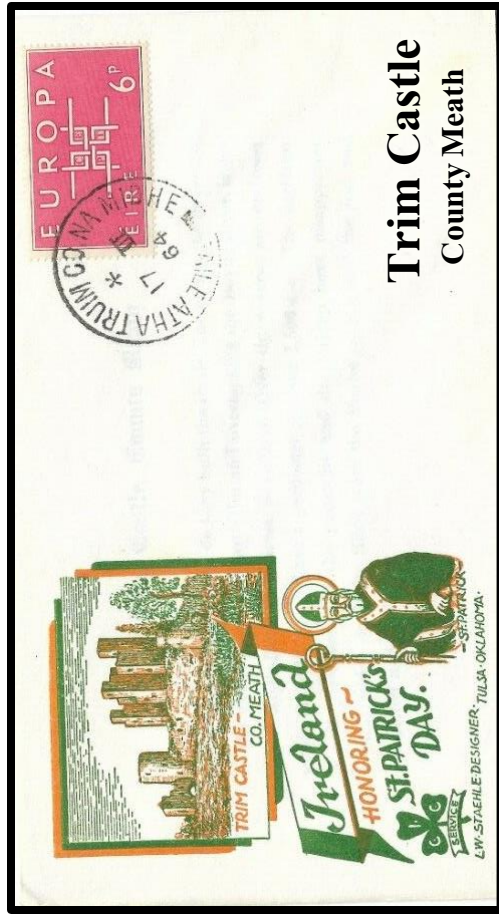
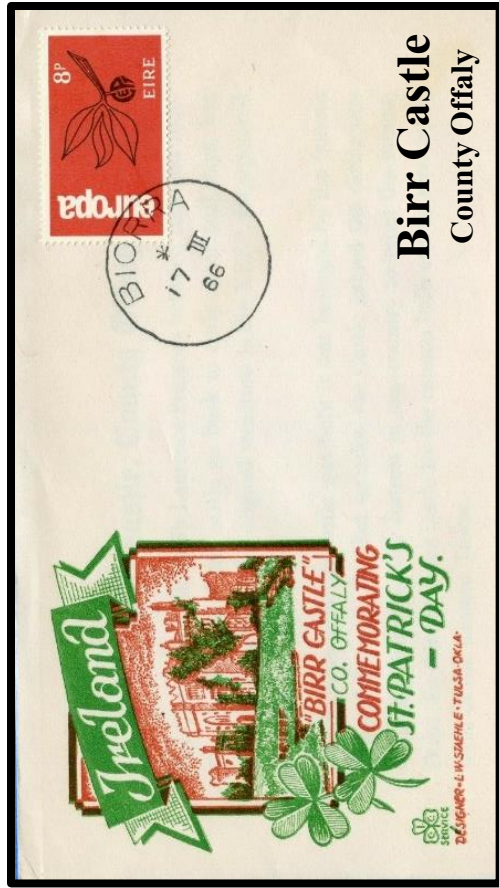


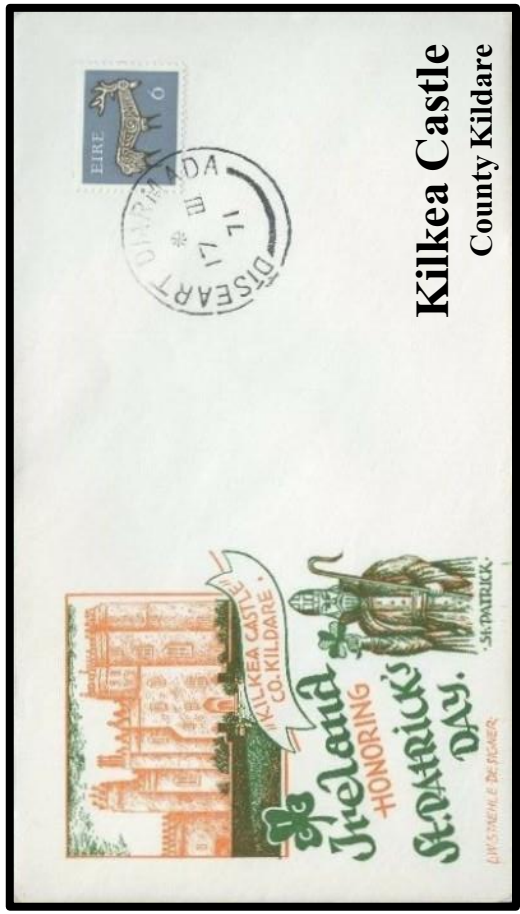
Burt Castle
County Donegal



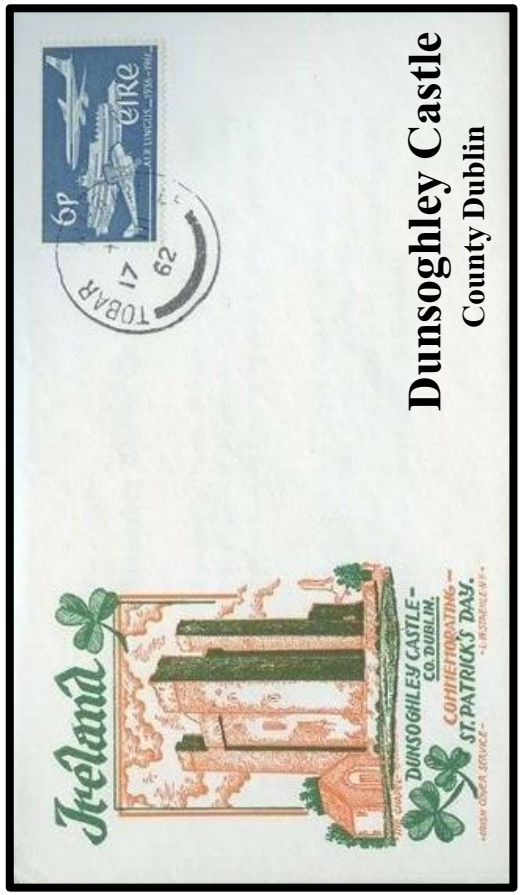
Blarney Castle
County Cork

Irish Castles, cont.

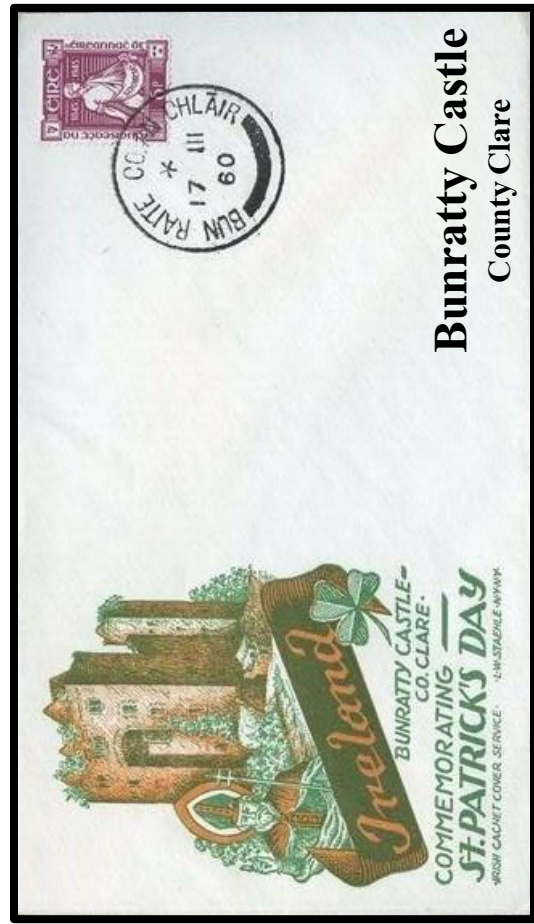




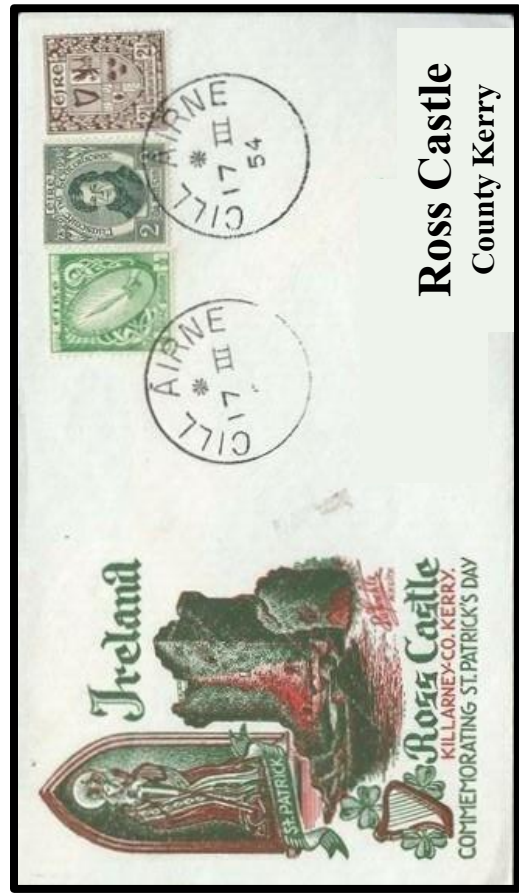
Kilkea Castle
County Kildare



Dunsoghley Castle
County Dublin

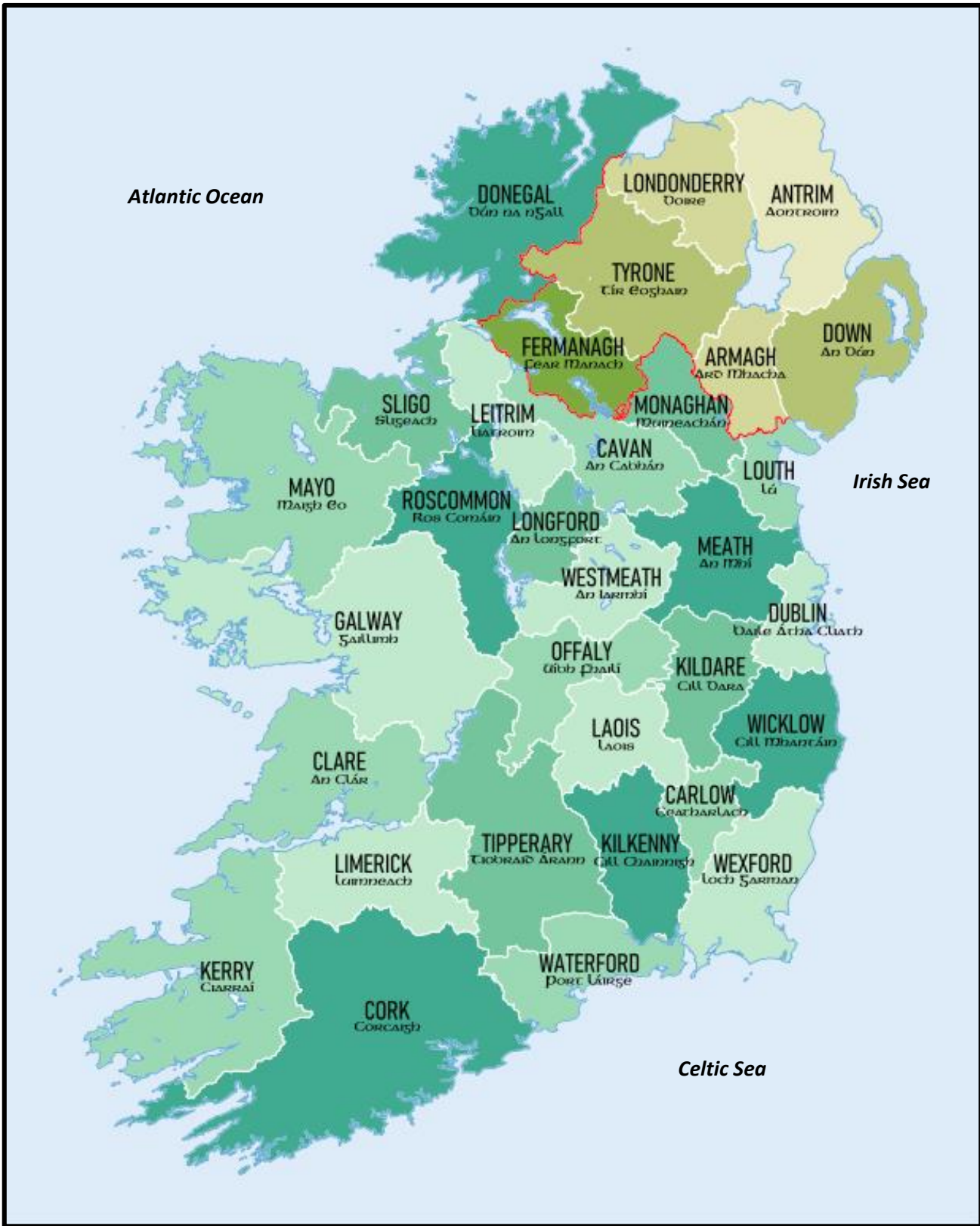


Bunratty Castle
County Clare



Ross Castle
County Kerry

Irish Castles, cont.



Fun and Games



St. Paddy's Day Parade

Use this souvenir sheet to decide if the following statements below are TRUE or FALSE.

- ___ 1. Mickey Mouse is the drum majorette.
- ___ 2. Goofy is holding a flag in his left hand.
- ___ 3. There are seven shamrocks pictured.
- ___ 4. There are three people waving flags.
- ___ 5. This parade is taking place in the city.

Joint Issue

In 1999, the United States and Ireland issued a joint issue stamp honoring Irish immigration (moving INTO a population) and emigration (moving OUT of a population). Millions of Irish left for America after the Great Famine of 1847. Study the stamps at the right. Circle all the things that are different.



- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Lucky Day

Congratulations! You've just caught a leprechaun! What three wishes would you make? Write them on the cover to the right.

Ireland

