



0. MAEWYN SUCCAT: KIDNAPPING VICTIM - Story Preface

1. BIRTHPLACE OF ST. PATRICK

2. MAEWYN SUCCAT: KIDNAPPING VICTIM

3. A SHEPHERD IN IRELAND

4. ESCAPE!

5. A DREAM COME TRUE

6. THE APOSTLE OF IRELAND

7. FACTS vs LEGENDS

8. ST. PATRICK'S DAY - YOU'LL REMEMBER ME

After arriving in Ireland, destination not-exactly known, Maewyn Succat (who would later be called Patrick) became a slave. His main responsibility was to tend sheep for his "master." This graphic, [online via the BBC](#), gives an artist's impression of how the teenager may have looked at the time.

As a lad, likely living in Britain with wealthy parents, Patrick was not yet known by the name which has made him famous for thousands of years.

Before he became *Patricius* (meaning "Father of the Citizens"), which later evolved into Patrick, the boy went by his birth name - Maewyn Succat. (That, at least, is what many historians believe.)

When he was sixteen, a group of Irish raiders captured him during an attack on his family's estate. In his [Confession](#), written later in life, Patrick tells us what happened. His father (whose name was Calpurnius):

...had a small villa nearby where I was taken captive. I was at that time about sixteen years of age.
([Confession](#), [point 1](#).)

Although his [father was a deacon](#), and his grandfather had been a priest (or, presbyter, depending on the translation), the future saint was not a child of faith when he was kidnapped:

I did not, indeed, know the true God; and I was taken into captivity in Ireland with many thousands of people. ([Confession](#), [point 1](#).)

Maewyn Succat, however, was not just a captive. After he arrived [in Ireland](#), he would become a slave, forced to work as a shepherd. It was a time in his life before he really knew what mattered:

A young man, almost a beardless boy, I was taken captive before I knew what I should desire and what I should shun. (*The Confession of St. Patrick*, point 10, available for online viewing at [Readings in Church History](#), edited by Jonathan Marshall, [at page 154](#).)

His forced sojourn in Ireland lasted six years. Some historians believe much of that time was spent in today's [Country Antrim](#), among the fields surrounding an ancient volcano named [Mount Slemish](#). Other scholars think he spent his captive years in the western part of the area.

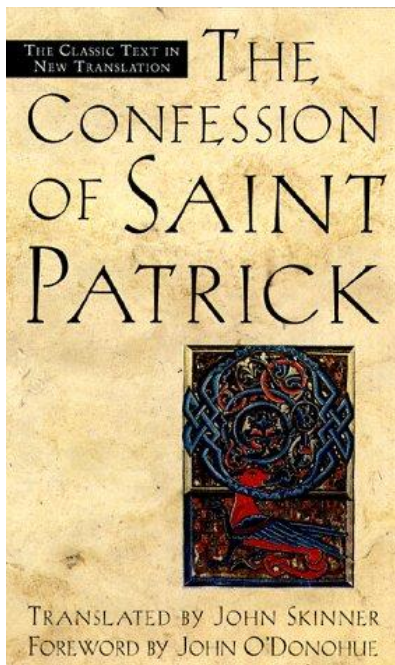
Wherever he was, the young man had plenty of time to think - and pray. As he himself tells us, during these years of isolation from his family, he found God.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<https://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/MAEWYN-SUCCAT-KIDNAPPING-VICTIM-St.-Patrick-of-St.-Patrick-s-Day>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

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Confession of St. Patrick

Image online, courtesy the [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) website.

View this asset at:

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Map of Ireland and the United Kingdom

Map online, courtesy FreeWorldMaps.net.

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Mount Slemish - County Antrim

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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