

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

MAEWYN SUCCAT: KIDNAPPING VICTIM



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, <u>online via the BBC</u>, 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 <u>father was a deacon</u>, 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 <u>Country Antrim</u>, among the fields surrounding an ancient volcano named <u>Mount Slemish</u>. 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.

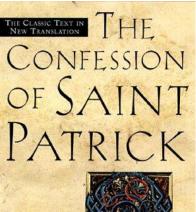
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Media Stream





TRANSLATED BY JOHN SKINNER Foreword by John O'Donohue



Confession of St. Patrick

Image online, courtesy the <u>amazon.com</u> website. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Confession-of-St.-Patrick</u>

Map of Ireland and the United Kingdom

Map online, courtesy FreeWorldMaps.net. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Map-of-Ireland-and-the-United-Kingdom



<u>Mount Slemish - County Antrim</u> Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Mount-Slemish-County-Antrim</u>



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