

### Chapter 1 : The Irish Horse Culture - Images | Sydney Photographer James Horan's archive

*Ever since its domestication, the horse has played a central role in the history of mankind. This multifunctional animal was responsible for revolutionizing transportation and fighting techniques, which led ultimately to significant social, economic and cultural changes. Horses in Celtic Culture.*

**Horse Symbolism** Horse At one point in time, there were wild horses on every single continent on the planet. Now, we have domesticated most of them. Some of the earliest horses were as small as dogs. Because of the domestication of horses, civilization was allowed to spread over vast areas. Ted Andrews even says that no animal has contributed more to the spread of civilization as the horse. Although the horse was present in many different cultures, they represent the same concepts of freedom and power. In some cultures, white horses stand for the balance of wisdom and power. In others, like Christianity, the white horse is a symbol of death. The horse is a universal symbol of freedom without restraint, because riding a horse made people feel they could free themselves from their own bindings. Also linked with riding horses, they are symbols of travel, movement, and desire. The horse also represents power in Native American tribes. Native American tribes that possessed horses often won more battles than those who did not. They also had more territory. The number of horses a tribe possessed was telling of how wealthy they were. Within these cultures and others, the horse is often an emblem of war. In mythology, the horse is ever present. The Romans linked horses with Mars, the god of the fury of war. Horses were also seen pulling the chariot of Helios, the sun god. In the Celtic mythology, horses were good luck and were harbingers of good fortune. The white horse, as aforementioned, was sacred to the Celts, and strongly associated with Rhiannon and Epona, who occasionally took the form of a white horse. In folk wisdom, if several horses are seen standing together, that means a storm is coming. However, this is not merely superstition, because horses often do group together to protect themselves from oncoming storms. An important thing to remember about horses is that they are representative of the spirit, similar to freedom. The horse serves man, but can never be fully tamed by him.

## Chapter 2 : The Horse in Celtic Culture: Medieval Welsh Perspectives by Sioned Davies

*The place of the horse in Celtic culture remains strong. In historical Celtic literature, mythology and art the horse is a potent symbol which takes on supernatural dimensions. The ancient legends continue to be told and new stories written.*

Consider what kind of spiritual gifts Horse has appeared to bestow on you and how you are meant to work with its energies. For it is only Horse who has the strength and stamina to ride up from the darkness of Middle Earth, traverse all the lands of our world and ascend to the heavens and beyond; racing with grace and sovereignty between the 5 Elements: Horse is an amazing spirit guide representing your personal goals, ambitions, desires and overall liberation. When Horse comes into play there is more than enough motivation to carry you through anything. Horse symbolism, however, changes depending on whether the Horse is wild or tethered. Once tamed, the Horse represents those parts of our personality that we restrict and confine, particularly sexual urges. The tamed Horse also symbolizes service and trusting relationships. In wild form the Horse bears vitality and freedom on its hooves, not just physically but mentally and spiritually. There is no constraining the Horse when it runs with the wind, but Horse also enjoys the company of family and friends. Jung felt that the Horse symbolizes personal power – things that we master in our lives, and our natural gifts. Horse is a creature of success and self-actualization. When you know what drives you and put that awareness to work, you can get much further and faster than you ever thought. It may also speak of low energy levels and the need to pay attention to how you use your physical resources. Horse can only carry so many bags before it gets weary from the burden. Figure out what you need to put down so you can lighten the load in your soul. White Horses figure heavily into global mythology, typically being connected to a solar Deity or heroes. Horse If Horse keeps popping up in your awareness in physical form or in movies, songs, TV, etc. As your spirit animal, Horse is showing itself to you as an omen that the call for freedom is galloping into your world. The spirit of this trusty steed can carry you down the right path to breaking free of whatever bonds are holding you back. Horse is a very helpful spirit animal that helps facilitate spiritual awakening and growth by teaching you how to create symmetry between your desire for independence and your current responsibilities. There is a time to rest and a time to run and a lot of living in between. Enjoy the sweet apple that drops from the tree before taking on that next challenge. Horse spirit loves to work with the winds. No matter where she takes you, you will always have a sense of balance – of how to ride and not fall or fail in your duty. Remember that Horse is a messenger to and from the angelic realm. If you have a specific prayer, whisper to Horse and let him carry that safely to a guardian helper. Horse If you have chosen to invoke Horse spirit as your totem animal, be very sure you are ready for the spiritual growth and lessons you may encounter. Just remember, transmutation can be extremely positive or negative so use the lessons of Horse wisely. Look to Horse totems when you really need to express yourself freely. It is an animal of adventure, power, friendship and family. When you face a hurdle, horse knows exactly how and when to jump and overcome that obstacle. Horse totems are all about going in a new direction. Is it time to move on? Should you get a new home or travel to places unknown? Carry a Horse totem when you seek answers to those kinds of questions. Horse Because we are all connected on a cellular level, you have the power to reach inside yourself and tap into those parts of you that house the instincts, characteristics and abilities of Horse. Internalize and utilize Horse characteristics when you want to achieve goals. Reach inside and grasp the inherent instincts and abilities you have to harmonize your energy-pattern with the characteristics of a horse. In Shamanism the horse power animal safely carries the medicine person between the worlds. As such, a horse power animal helps you connect with spiritual energies and abilities in a very personal way. Horse helps you see things differently and opens the path to Visionary gifts and a renewed connection with the Earth. Horse power animals teach us the amazing lesson of being true to self no matter our bridle. This spiritual guide reminds us to live presently and attentively with gratitude in our heart toward those with whom we share our lives. As mystics and shamans, the Celtic people viewed all life as intertwined, connected at the source as seen in the art of Celtic knotwork. In Celtic lore, Horses have strong associations with the Gods, particularly Epona and Macha both of which manifest as horses who protect the Earth, show us the future and guide humankind with

sure-footedness. She is very similar in form and function to the Welsh Rhiannon who rides a Pale Horse and governs fertility. Thus the Celtic Horse became symbolic of the ability to bridge the gap between people and Spirits, both great and small. Native American Animal Symbols: Horse Like the Celts, Native Americans observe, understand and respect nature and all its indigenous creatures. As Native American animal totems go, especially to medicine men or witch doctors as they are called in some tribes , Horse Medicine is, incredibly powerful and to be treated with the utmost humility and respect. The name alone illustrates the reverence these people held for this creature. The team of a rider and a horse shows trust and respect from which we could learn much. Additionally Horses figured heavily into battle symbolism as a token of Power, authority and success. Shamans of the tribe are illustrated on the back of Flying Horses to reach Spirit realms safely. As such they may also represent the ability to overcome a difficult situation.

### Chapter 3 : Horse Symbolism & Meaning | Spirit, Totem, & Power Animal

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It is used by Government Departments and Offices. It also appears on all Irish coins. The harp is engraved on the seal of office of the President and it is also on the flag of the President of Ireland. For more information on the flag, constitution, anthem and symbol of Ireland go to [www](http://www). Back to Top The national holiday and the shamrock March 17 is St. Patrick is credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland and March 17 is the date that St. Patrick is said to have died. It is an unofficial but perhaps more recognised symbol of Ireland. It is said that St. Patrick used the three leaves of the shamrock to explain the Christian concept of the Trinity. Back to Top Popular Culture Popular culture in Ireland is very similar to many other Western countries in terms of TV, cinema and popular music and literature. However, one aspect of popular culture in Ireland that makes it somewhat different to other cultures is pub culture. While there is a recognised issue of over-consumption of alcohol in Ireland, pub culture is about more than just drinking. Typically pubs are important meeting places, where people can gather and meet their neighbours and friends in a relaxed atmosphere. The character of pubs varies widely according to the customers they serve, and the area they are in. Since it is illegal to smoke in an enclosed place of work in Ireland, including pubs. Back to Top Geography Many Irish people view themselves and others in terms of what part of Ireland they are from. Ireland is divided into 32 counties. This is most evident during inter-county GAA Gaelic Athletic Association matches, where fans dress in the specific colours of their county. The Republic of Ireland consists of 26 counties, and Northern Ireland of six. It is also traditionally divided into the four provinces of Connaught, Leinster, Munster and Ulster. Ulster contains 9 counties, 6 of which are in Northern Ireland and 3 of which are in the Republic of Ireland. For hundreds of years more Irish people left Ireland than immigrated to Ireland. The most notable periods of emigration were following the famine in and more recently in the s and s when large numbers of Irish emigrated to look for a better life. This has changed since the late s when the economy of Ireland improved dramatically. Since then many people have immigrated to Ireland. The Census in estimated that 1 in 10 people in Ireland were not Irish citizens; this figure included a significant proportion of UK citizens. Although emigration has been a constant feature of Irish society, the late s also saw a trend of Irish emigrants returning home to live in Ireland. For many generations most Irish people have had family that live in other countries, something that is now also characteristic of immigrants to Ireland.

**Chapter 4 : Ireland and the Celtic Culture - In Search of Ancient Ireland**

*Focusing upon the horse in Celtic culture, this text should be of general interest as well as of importance within the wider context of horsemanship and military tactics in Medieval Britain and Europe.*

In the presence of all the people of this land in one place, a white mare is brought into their midst. Thereupon he who is to be elevated, not to a prince but to a beast, not to a king but to an outlaw, steps forward in beastly fashion and exhibits his bestiality. He gets into the bath and eats of the flesh that is brought to him, with his people standing around and sharing it with him. He also imbibes the broth in which he is bathed, not from any vessel, nor with his hand, but only with his mouth. In fact, Gerald of Wales was known for his dislike of the Irish, and for his habit of wandering into the realms of fantasy, at times. For example, he also claimed that he had never seen so many blind or deformed people as he saw in Ireland, and that it was their depravity and heathen ways which had manifested in physical deformity as punishment by God. Judging by the aggressive language he displays in the above excerpt, his feelings towards the pagan Irish are quite clear. It seems to me that this piece can only be taken as nothing more than Christian propaganda. But where, then, could the idea of mating with a white mare and then eating it have come from? No smoke without fire, right? Well, the similarity between Irish myth and Vedic teachings has been commented on by many. It is from this common ancient source that our cultures are believed to derive. Portions of the sacrifice would then be distributed amongst the deities. Archaeology has frequently unearthed horse burials accompanying the remains of humans all around the world, from early prehistoric times through to the late Iron Age. Sometimes, these were accompanied by the burial of chariots, too. Clearly, this indicates the importance ancient people placed on their horses. In Ireland, it was common practice during late Medieval times to bury horse skulls under the floor of new buildings to bring the occupants good luck. You can read about these discoveries on Irish Archaeology. Sadly, the reasoning behind such superstitious acts has long been lost. In Irish mythology, the Tarbfeis is often mentioned as a Kingship ritual, in which a bull is slaughtered, and a Druid wrapped in the skin while he makes a prophesy regarding the selection of the future King. Marry may be a bit of a loose term here; relationships between men and women prior to Christian times were quite fluid, with both parties moving between marriage, divorce, and lovers without guilt or shame. Perhaps in this light, intercourse would be a more accurate word. Similarly, the relationship with the Goddess of Sovereignty is of interest. Who was she, exactly? Many names are put forward: Another suggestion is Macha. However, there is another Macha from Ulster who was forced to race against horses during her late pregnancy, and who died in childbirth shortly after winning. The sacred marriage between the King and the sovereignty Goddess existed in many ancient cultures. I might also add at this point, that perhaps the coupling between the King and the horse represented something else. Perhaps it was more spiritual than physical. In shamanism, a white horse will often guide the shaman on his journey into the Otherworld. The white horse, seen as a symbol of purity and spirituality by the Celts, could have been a totem animal, and the coupling a misinterpretation of the bonding or union between them. In Irish mythology, the white horse is mentioned often. The well known story of Oisín and Niamh of the Golden Hair tells how she arrives from the Otherworld carried by a white horse, declares her love for Oisín, and asks him to return there with her. After some deliberation, Oisín agrees, leaps up onto the back of the horse with her, and they gallop off together. He was said to have been able to travel across water as if it were solid ground. I will protect you. Besides, I would receive no welcome from your mortal kin. I must go back to the lands over the sea, to Tír Tairngire, the Land of Promise, my home. No mortal may follow me there. The roar of the ocean became the pounding of hooves, the mournful cry of seabirds traded for a wild equine whinny, and out of the foaming surf thundered ghostly Aonbhar, a giant among horses. His eyes were azure blue, his hooves gleamed gold, and his proud white tail swept the sand like a pennant. He dropped back to earth with a snort and waited, his nostrils flaring pink. She gazed down at him. Will I see you again? It may be sometime before we can be together again. Clíodhna clung to his back, her golden hair streaming behind her. She never looked back. It only took moments for Aonbhar to carry her from his view.

**Chapter 5 : The Horse in Celtic Culture: Medieval Welsh Perspectives, Davies, Jones**

*It is hard to find information about the horse in Celtic culture unless you are willing to read tomes and extract pertinent portions. Excellent collection of articles written by experts in their fields.*

After the arrival of the Fir Bolg we start to get names such as Eochaidh, which is one of those names with each horse in it. And so it was that the economy and the territory-holding capabilities of the Celts were based on horses and ironworking. Peadar Livingstone says that a Saint Eachaidh had a church in the townland of Drumard near Clones in county Monaghan and that: Celtic Male Names of Scotland translates Achaius as "friend of horses. Maceachern is also said to come from Eachthighearna: Achyne mac Nele attested the bounds of the Grange of Kirewynni and the lands of Culwen, Holm Cultram, page 88 , and Aychyn Carlichoun witnessed an obligation by Alexander of the Isles, Cawdor, page Echdoun Mac Gille eoin is witness to a contract and mutual bond in HP. Echluath is listed in Irish Names by Kate Monk now removed from the internet as an old Irish byname meaning "fast-horse. The name of Eremon Irish Kings 1 , the first Milesian king of Ireland, has been interpreted as meaning "of the Horses. Some sources also use "Eochaidh" to describe this king. Ghearrain means the month of the horse. It is remarkable that Kaighan is confined to the north of the Island [i. Septs of Clan MacLean: For a good discussion and several references, see: My mother was born Fox, which was Englished from Sionnach, and is believed to originate only as late as in the 12th century; but the family name could actually come from earlier Celtic days - as Seaneach, meaning old horse Marrec - Mahr-ek is a Breton name from the Old Breton word for horseman or knight. Celtic Male Names of Brittany. Marrek Mahr-ek is the Cornish word for "horseman. The G of Govern thus comes from the last letter of the prefix Mag, which is used before vowels and aspirates instead of the usual Mac. The eponymous ancestor was Samhradhan, who lived circa at the time surnames came into being. This man was descended from Eocgadh fl. There is a village called Ballymagauran in that area. Ballymagauran in Tullyhaw was burned by Maguire in for an allegedly dishonourable act by the Magauran of the day. Though the form Magauran is still used to some extent, MacGovern is much more numerous nowadays. It is chiefly found in its original habitat, north Cavan, and the adjacent counties of Leitrim and Fermanagh. The particular centres of their power were Bawnaboy, Lissanover, and Ballymagauran. From Cavan, the name has now spread throughout Connacht and Ulster, and is particularly numerous in the adjoining counties of Fermanagh and Leitrim. See my page on Scots Kings 7, page See page 31 of The McGoverns. This site contains an English translation of The Book of Magauran. See also Geography of Magh Slecht. According to the website Traditional Irish Names: Or were they Gaelic mounted knights, equites or caballeros? However, each case where the word is used in a place name must be judged on its own merits as to meaning, for it would not be quite correct to imply that the word Each has the same significance in all instances for it is governed by its prefix or suffix. Eachain in itself is in reality a tribal designation, which is derived from the middle Gaelic name Eachuinn and anciently Ego-donno-s, meaning the Horse Lord, or more properly translated, the Lord or Chief of the Horse Tribe; the horse, in Gaelic Each, being the totem of their tribe. In this case, the name is an anglicized form of the Gaelic name "MacEach-thighearna" denoting a "son of Each-tighearna". The literal meaning of this Gaelic personal name is "horse-lord". The name goes back to Old Irish, where it appears as "Ech-tigern". This custom of naming appears to have commenced in the Middle Ages when it became the practice for the son to take their surnames from the Christian names of their fathers. Eachthiarna was a relatively common personal name in Gaelic society, borne by, for instance a brother of Brian Boru. The surname originated, in fact, in the sept or tribe of Brian, the Dal gCais, and has always been strongly associated with their homeland in Co Clare. The family territory was in the southeast of the county, around Sixmilebridge, up to the end of the Middle Ages, when they migrated south and east, to counties Cork, Limerick and Waterford. To this day, Ahernes are most numerous in counties Cork and Waterford. It stems from the Gaelic MacEachmharcaigh or MacEacmarcais, each, meaning a steed or horse, and marcach, meaning a rider. MacCafferty means son of the horse rider. It is a surname of Co. The name is also found in Co. Mayo, but often under the anglicized form of MacCaffry. The local pronunciation is sometimes O Ceararcais. Here is part of an email of July 12, , from Ed Steed of St.

Because my own surname is English for horse, I always assumed that at some point in history our Irish ancestors actually went from England or Scotland. Colmans RC Church in Belclare in and emigrated the following year. That is as far back as I got. I later found that Each dhub was a black horse ridden by the mythical Dullaghan, sort of a grim reaper and that many early families identified with various legends having to do with horses. This raised my hopes that my Steed ancestors were really Irish and not beneficiaries of the Plantation. Although the dullahan has no head upon its shoulders, he carries it with him, either on the saddle-brow of his horse or upraised in his right hand. The head is the colour and texture of stale dough or mouldy cheese, and quite smooth. A hideous, idiotic grin splits the face from ear to ear, and the eyes, which are small and black, dart about like malignant flies. The entire head glows with the phosphorescence of decaying matter and the creature may use it as a lantern to guide its way along the darkened laneways of the Irish countryside. Wherever the dullahan stops, a mortal dies. He uses a human spine as a whip. The horse sends out sparks and flames from its nostrils as it charges forth. This is drawn by six black horses, and travels so fast that the friction created by its movement often sets on fire the bushes along the sides of the road. All gates fly open to let rider and coach through, no matter how firmly they are locked, so no one is truly safe from the attentions of this fairy. Irish First Names of the 21st Century. As such, it is not evidence for the use of Ean as a given name in either Scots or Gaelic, since Scots bynames are derived from phonetic renderings of Gaelic patronymic bynames, which use genitive forms that can differ significantly in spelling and pronunciation from nominative forms. The Annals of the Four Masters, vol. Since The Annals of the Four Masters were written in , much of their orthography dates from that time period. Given this information and since the form an Eich Ghil seems to follow post orthography rules, this form of the byname is appropriate for his desired time period. In post orthography, the nominative form of this name became Cionaodh and the genitive spelling became Cionaodha or Cionaioith. Eoghanach is a word based on "eoch," a horse. Joyce gives the traditional interpretation of Aghnamullen as "field of the mills. We have several Irish words for a horse, the most common of which are each and capall. Each [agh] is found in several families of languages; the old Irish form is ech; and it is the same word as the Sansc. Each is very often found in the beginning of names, contrary to the usual Irish order, and in this case it generally takes the modern form of augh. Aughinish and Aughnish are the names of several places in different parts of the country, and are anglicized from Each-inis Four Mast. Some Irish place names are based on another Gaelic work for horse, capall. For example, the origin of the name of Drummanagapple, a townland in Fermanagh, is "Dromainn na gCapall," or "little ridge of the horses. I have made no effort to collect place names based on capall, but for a few more examples, see the section below on Other Gaelic Words for Horse. They gave their name to the townland of Ballymageogh. Apparently they brought their horses with them. On the eastern edge of the narrow waist of the hour-glass-shape townland of Ballymageogh is Aughrim Hill, which means the ridge of the horse or horse-ridge. Aughrim Hill is in the townland of Aughrim in county Down. The -dh- is omitted in modern Irish orthography and it is now silent. Ardagh is in the parish of Kilcoo, county Down. Irish local names explained. Each Druim is the name by which Aughrim in Galway is located on maps of Ireland in the middle ages: Celtic religious foundation, also manor or village. Equestrian Irish Place Names. The Airthir were part of the Mughdhorna. Swift dates the map "West by southwest of the "Armaghe Metropolis" city of Armagh is a territory marked Toaghi. The northwest boundary of Toaghi is the "Blackwater stream," and the map shows a tributary of the Blackwater flowing north out of the center part of Toaghi and entering the Blackwater. This must be the Tynan River that flows into the Blackwater just south of the town of Caledon, which is across the river in county Tyrone. The Blackwater River forms the boundary between the counties of Armagh to the east and Tyrone to the west. The southeastern boundary of Toaghi on the old map is the "Kalan stream," modernly called the Callan river. Lough Muckno and the Owenagh are to the south. The scale of the map is one inch to 7 miles, and Lough Muckno is about an inch south by south east. The territory called the Owenagh is a little over an inch to the south by southwest.

## Chapter 6 : Horse Symbolism

*Along with the hound, cattle and boar, the horse is probably the animal most strongly associated with the Celtic culture. Certainly horses were vital to the lives of all Indo-European cultures. Certainly horses were vital to the lives of all Indo-European cultures.*

The Myth, the Magic, the Mystery Among the most familiar sights in Irish art are the Celtic animal symbols. Calling forth the unfathomable powers of these natural beasts, the people of ancient Ireland used the symbolism of animals to make sense of the otherwise incomprehensible natural cycles of the Earth. The Irish Celts looked to the beasts of the earth, sky, and sea to find teachers, friends, and healers. Along with this fascination and almost worship of animal symbols, the Irish Celts revered Nature itself, be it in the form of plants, animals, or elements. They believed the animals were there to teach us how to live in harmony with Nature itself. Through animal symbols, the Irish Celts sought to commune with both the seen and the Unseen. Celtic animal designs took a myriad of forms and meaning. The graceful curves of the crane. The stalwart might of the bull. The slow, coiled menace of the snake. The early Celts believed the animals arose from the fantastic Otherworld whence come the elves and fairies. With their feats of flying, swimming, phenomenal speed, keen sight and smell, and great strength, these messengers of the gods seemed beyond the power of man. We can see this tie to Nature not only in early Celtic crafts, but also in later Irish art. In the greatest example of medieval illuminated manuscripts, the Book of Kells, the four Evangelists were frequently depicted as Celtic animal symbols: Matthew the man, Mark the lion, Luke the calf, and John as the eagle. Elite Irish families used animal symbolism on their Coats of Arms. Pubs often took their names from animals renowned for their strength. Today, Irish coins are minted with animal symbols such as peacocks, salmon, and stags on their faces. Groundhog Day first arose from Imbolc -- the ancient Celtic celebration of the world awakening from its winter slumber. Representing the process of creation, rebirth, fertility, and healing. Serpents also represented the connection between the rivers and seas as well as the Heavens and Earth. Ouroboros, the Earth Serpent represented the coiled energy within the Earth and, with her tail in her mouth, infinity. Thanks to the annual shedding of its skin, the snake was the Celtic animal symbolizing the cyclical nature of life. Celtic Horses Courtesy of Aon-Celtic. These companions of the gods were known for their beauty, speed, vitality, and fertility. Celtic horses were animals symbolizing development, healing, rejuvenation, and life in motion. The man who could take the reins of this representative of the goddesses Epona and Macha was a man who held power in his hands. Celtic horses were linked to the night, mystery, and magic. Indeed, the term nightmare is taken from the word "mare", meaning female horse. The Celts believed that nightmares were brought to the dreamer by a visiting horse from either Epona or Mare. Horses were frequently sacrificed, yet highly adored by the Celts for their intimate relationship with the land. Some of the most enduring examples of Celtic art are the huge carvings of horses found in cliff sides around Europe. The stag was particularly associated with Cernunnos, the horned god of nature and hunting. The doe was the totem of most woodland goddesses, such as Saba and Flidais. This Celtic animal symbol was used to represent fertility, abundance, and renewal. The antlers were often associated with trees and the sowing and harvesting of grain. In Celtic poetry, sagas, and lore, white stags arose from the Otherworld and often appeared before a profound change in the lives of the characters. Celtic Hounds Hounds were sacred to the faeries of Ireland and Scotland and thus were held in very high regard in both Celtic lands. These faithful protectors were the Celtic animal symbols of loyalty, devotion, and unwavering faith and love. The wolf symbolized even more. With the wide variety of birds that can be seen, the meaning is often wrapped up in the particular type of bird. To understand the birds as Celtic animal symbols, one must understand the characteristics of each particular bird. The crow was associated with death. The raven also called forth the idea of death, but was also used by the Druids in augury, and flew over Celtic battlefields as a god incarnate. The fearsome, glowering eagle was associated with both nobility and death. The peacock was a symbol of purity. Thanks to several myths of heroic figures or deities being turned into cranes, these birds came to represent an apparent, but not real change and are often called for as signs of punishment for deception. The heron, because it mated for life, was

often used on Celtic wedding bands. The ouzel was known for being a small but tenacious protector of itself and its flock. The salmon was the symbol of all knowledge. These creatures that swam the rivers and oceans were also linked to sacred ancient mysteries and deep emotion. Celtic animal symbolism arises from an abundant body of lore, tale, and song and draw upon a mythology as old as that of Greece or Rome. Indeed, Celtic animals symbols are not insignificant slices of distant history, but a living link extending from the ancient Celts to the Irish people of today. When one admires Celtic animal symbols, one must remember that they are exactly what they say they are: They are not inserted for mere adornment; they are there to represent those aspects of each animal that the Celts honored. To understand Celtic animal symbolism is to understand the art and what the artist was attempting to bring across in his work. By seeking to understand Celtic animal symbols, we seek to understand the Celtic relationship to Nature and the Divine. Where the gods tread Where the Unseen is tangible Where Man and Nature speak unutterable thoughts to each other Where the Emerald Isle glistened amidst the blue wash of sea Celtic animal symbols were, are, and will always be the link between the ancients and all generations to come. *Animal Patterns* Aidan Meehan provides an historical overview of Celtic animal symbols as well as basic instruction for the beginning Celtic artist on how to create designs which pay tribute to their original inspirations. Few Celtic art scholars give these important Celtic symbols much attention. Actually the online store for Joseph Keane, an artist who designs Celtic jewelry and gifts, but he has a great section on his site offering information about Celtic animal symbolism. *Celtic Animals Graphics* Credits: Cari Buziak - Aon-Celtic. Her designs are much richer than most found on the web.

## Chapter 7 : Living in Ireland | Culture & Society

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Linguist Patrizia De Bernardo Stempel falls in the latter group, and suggests the meaning "the tall ones". Galli called themselves Celts, [21] which suggests that even if the name Keltoi was bestowed by the Greeks, it had been adopted to some extent as a collective name by the tribes of Gaul. The geographer Strabo, writing about Gaul towards the end of the first century BC, refers to the "race which is now called both Gallic and Galatic," though he also uses the term Celtica as a synonym for Gaul, which is separated from Iberia by the Pyrenees. Yet he reports Celtic peoples in Iberia, and also uses the ethnic names Celtiberi and Celtici for peoples there, as distinct from Lusitani and Iberi. Galli might stem from a Celtic ethnic or tribal name originally, perhaps one borrowed into Latin during the Celtic expansions into Italy during the early fifth century BC. Celtic refers to a family of languages and, more generally, means "of the Celts" or "in the style of the Celts". Several archaeological cultures are considered Celtic in nature, based on unique sets of artefacts. The link between language and artefact is aided by the presence of inscriptions. Celtic cultures seem to have been widely diverse, with the use of a Celtic language being the main thing they had in common. These are the regions where four Celtic languages are still spoken to some extent as mother tongues. Celtic regions of Continental Europe are those whose residents claim a Celtic heritage, but where no Celtic language has survived; these areas include the western Iberian Peninsula, i. The Celts of Brittany derive their language from migrating insular Celts, mainly from Wales and Cornwall, and so are grouped accordingly. By the time speakers of Celtic languages entered history around BC, they were already split into several language groups, and spread over much of Western continental Europe, the Iberian Peninsula, Ireland and Britain. The Greek historian Ephorus of Cyme in Asia Minor, writing in the 4th century BC, believed that the Celts came from the islands off the mouth of the Rhine and were "driven from their homes by the frequency of wars and the violent rising of the sea". Hallstatt culture Some scholars think that the Urnfield culture of western Middle Europe represents an origin for the Celts as a distinct cultural branch of the Indo-European family. The Urnfield period saw a dramatic increase in population in the region, probably due to innovations in technology and agriculture. The spread of iron-working led to the development of the Hallstatt culture directly from the Urnfield c. Proto-Celtic, the latest common ancestor of all known Celtic languages, is considered by this school of thought to have been spoken at the time of the late Urnfield or early Hallstatt cultures, in the early 1st millennium BC. The spread of the Celtic languages to Iberia, Ireland and Britain would have occurred during the first half of the 1st millennium BC, the earliest chariot burials in Britain dating to c. Other scholars see Celtic languages as covering Britain and Ireland, and parts of the Continent, long before any evidence of "Celtic" culture is found in archaeology. Over the centuries the language s developed into the separate Celtiberian, Goidelic and Brittonic languages. Early Irish literature casts light on the flavour and tradition of the heroic warrior elites who dominated Celtic societies. Celtic river-names are found in great numbers around the upper reaches of the Danube and Rhine, which led many Celtic scholars to place the ethnogenesis of the Celts in this area. Diodorus Siculus and Strabo both suggest that the heartland of the people they called Celts was in southern France. The former says that the Gauls were to the north of the Celts, but that the Romans referred to both as Gauls in linguistic terms the Gauls were certainly Celts. Atlantic seaboard theory Myles Dillon and Nora Kershaw Chadwick accepted that "the Celtic settlement of the British Isles" might have to be dated to the Bell Beaker culture concluding that "There is no reason why so early a date for the coming of the Celts should be impossible". Using a multidisciplinary approach, Alberto J. Stephen Oppenheimer [42] points out that the only written evidence that locates the Keltoi near the source of the Danube i. However, Oppenheimer shows that Herodotus seemed to believe the Danube rose near the Pyrenees, which would place the Ancient Celts in a region which is more in agreement with later classical writers and historians i. Linguistic evidence Further information: Celtiberian inscriptions, using their own Iberian script, appear later,

after about BC. Besides epigraphical evidence, an important source of information on early Celtic is toponymy. At the beginning of the 20th century the belief that these "Culture Groups" could be thought of in racial or ethnic terms was strongly held by Gordon Childe whose theory was influenced by the writings of Gustaf Kossinna. It is considered equally difficult to maintain that the origin of the Peninsular Celts can be linked to the preceding Urnfield culture. It developed out of the Hallstatt culture without any definite cultural break, under the impetus of considerable Mediterranean influence from Greek, and later Etruscan civilisations. A shift of settlement centres took place in the 4th century. Frey notes that in the 5th century, "burial customs in the Celtic world were not uniform; rather, localised groups had their own beliefs, which, in consequence, also gave rise to distinct artistic expressions". Borders of the region known as Celtica at time of the Roman conquest c. Historical evidence Polybius published a history of Rome about BC in which he describes the Gauls of Italy and their conflict with Rome. Pausanias in the 2nd century AD says that the Gauls "originally called Celts", "live on the remotest region of Europe on the coast of an enormous tidal sea". Posidonius described the southern Gauls about BC. Though his original work is lost it was used by later writers such as Strabo. Caesar wrote extensively about his Gallic Wars in 58â€”51 BC. Diodorus Siculus wrote about the Celts of Gaul and Britain in his 1st-century history.

### Chapter 8 : Horses in Celtic Mythology | Transceltic - Home of the Celtic nations

*Ireland and the Celtic Culture* Of all the words now associated with Ireland and the Irish, the most familiar and hackneyed is probably the word "Celtic." Pick up any catalogue selling Irish goods and the word is splashed across every page: Celtic music, Celtic spirituality, Celtic crosses-there are even "Celtic" mouse pads.

Ciaran McGowan explains why in first of a series on great Irish love affair with horses. There is an old Irish saying: Sell cow, buy sheep, but never be without a horse. It pretty much sums up how Irish feel about their horses. No surprise then that we have among best in world. In fact Irish bloodstock is so highly valued that everyone from Aga Khan to Queen of England wants a share of it. If physical geography of country can be overcome, what kind of test can a race track present? Horses are an integral part of Irish history and culture dating as far back as BC. Horsemanship was an essential skill of Irish warrior and bestowed status on clan chiefs and wealthy. Brehon law even prescribed that Kings should dedicate Fridays entirely to horse racing. Over years, growth and development of race tracks, stud farms and trainers reflected huge national interest in sport. And it was only a matter of time before we began to take on English at what they saw as their own game. In , Orby became first Irish trained horse to win English Derby. The son of an emigrant family that had fled Famine in , Croker returned to Ireland and established a stud in Sandyford, County Dublin. His racing manager was famously approached by a Dublin woman who cried: Together, they formed Coolmore stud which would become one of greatest stud farms in world, a position it still retains today. We are third largest breeder of thoroughbreds in world and account for 40 per cent of European thoroughbreds and 11 per cent of total worldwide. Not bad for a tiny little island. The Cheltenham festival held in March every year usually coinciding with St. While both National Hunt and Flat racing take place all year round, broadly important time for National Hunt is in winter when ground is softer. A fast horse is a product of gifted parents. Irrespective of your preference " by way, mine is jump racing there is no greater spectacle than sight of a horse you backed clearing last " a day at races in Ireland is like no other. With backdrops of spectacular scenery, for atmosphere, excitement and pure craic, you cannot beat an Irish race meeting any time of year.

### Chapter 9 : Writing- Horses and the Celts - Irish Culture With Eleanor

*In Celtic Astrology, the Black Horse is the Celtic Animal Sign for people born November 25 - December It is also the animal symbol for the Celtic Elder Tree Sign. The White Horse and Black Horse are closely connect in Celtic astrology, where they symbolize the planets Jupiter and Saturn respectively.*

Feb 22, dragonhelmuk rated it really liked it This is a set of essays on the horse, written by some VERY influential scholars. The elegant, attenuated figure was varved high up on the escarpment just beneath the iron Age hill-fort of Uffington Castle in Oxfordshire. The animal is highly schematic, with a long body, disjointed legs and a curious beaked head. It has been difficult to posit an accurate chronology for the horse, but it pre-dates the twelfth century since it is mentioned in references going back to Stylistically, the horse appears to belong to the later Iron Age, bearing close resemblances to Celtic horse images on coins and to a bronze horse model from Silchester, not far from Uffington. Whilst the traditional view is that it was perhaps carved by the Atrebates in about 50BC as a tribal emblem designed to protect the tribe and its terrioty Woolner, ; Petrie, , Grinsell, , , pl. Viii, Palmer ; Green a ; it should be noted that the latest research on the uffington Horse Miles and Palmer, suggests that the image may have been carved as early as the Late Bronze Age c. Exmoors and Shetlands, which look very different from each other in most respects, do indeed have thick winter coats, which could certainly be described as shaggy. They look sleeker in the summer, but they always have fetlocks which neither the Inverurie horse nor any of the later Pictish horses have. Shetland ponies have particularly thick manes and forelocks â€” another characteristic not shared by any of the sculptured horses or ponies. There have always been far more effiecient ways of bringing down game. Hunting on horseback, however, provided opportunities to display martial qualities â€” boldness and daring, good horsemanship, expertise with the spear and bow â€”without as many risks as a real military encounrter. It allowed men to display their good horses, decorated harness and personal finery, again without the risk of losing them all. The organiser of the hunt could strengthen the bonds of kinship through inviting others to join in and through hospitality before and after. At each house there is a competitive interchange of sung verses between those outside and those inside. The outsiders are initially caught in a liminal state. As transitional beings they often exhibit specific behaviours or are marked by special suymbols. Crossing the boundary is marked by celebration, the entrance of the Mari Lwyd is followed by feasting, drinking and clowning. This paradoxically reaffirms the integrity of the boundary and the safety of the group shielded by it. The hors appears to be the agent which can cross the interstice.