



Clover English

PODCAST PDF GUIDE

WHY DID AMERICANS HATE
THE IRISH?

SOCIAL JUSTICE VOCAB
USED TO AND WOULD
(SPEAKING ABOUT THE PAST)

TRANSCRIPT



Hi everyone and welcome to this week's Clover English podcast. The podcast dedicated to helping you improve your English while learning about Irish culture. I'd like to start off by thanking you all for your messages of support and encouragement they mean so much to me and help me a lot, so really, thank you for that.

If you aren't already I suggest you follow me on instagram: you can find me by searching for Clover English Podcast (@cloverenglishpodcast). I post regular expressions, idioms, phrasal verbs etc and I've even just finished my first instagram competition! So congrats to Vugar who was the winner of a free speaking class. Another tiny announcement is that I'm currently working on a free pronunciation course for everyone! I hope to have it finished by the end of November (before my daughter is born). So I'm very busy at the minute but excited, lots of new stuff coming!

As always don't forget to download the accompanying PDF guide available from my website at www.cloverenglish.org (I've linked it in the description). It comes with the transcript, vocabulary explanation, extra vocabulary and grammar explanations (this week we'll be looking at grammar for speaking about past events). Okay some advanced usages and things like that. Now, on with today's show. Why did Americans hate the Irish?

So between 32-35 million Americans today claim to have Irish ancestry and St Patrick's day celebrations in New York and Boston actually **outdo** those of Dublin or Belfast. Many Americans today are extremely proud of their Irish heritage and they come to Ireland in droves to rediscover their roots. "In droves" by the way, simply means a lot. So, by saying they come to Ireland "in droves" I mean a lot of them go there.

Notes:

Outdo: surpass/ be better than

However, this great relationship between the Irish and Americans wasn't always so smooth. When the Irish first arrived on the Eastern shores of the USA during the biggest wave of immigration of the 19th century, we were dirty, poor, disease-ridden and above all, hungry. In the 19-sorry-the 18! 1840s Ireland suffered what became known as the Potato Famine. A famine is when there is a severe shortage of food and as a result the population becomes extremely ill and die[s]. I won't go into too much detail about the Famine itself right now as I plan on doing a separate episode related to it. But, I will give you a summary.

The potatoes of Ireland were struck by a disease known as potato blight. This basically destroyed the potato crops and made the potatoes rot or spoil. Ireland wasn't the only nation to suffer this, many European countries at the time saw their potato crops die. However, the Irish were almost completely dependent on the potato as their main food source so when they could no longer eat it, they began to **starve**.

Not only were they dying **en masse** from starvation but due to the lack of sanitary conditions deadly diseases like typhus, dysentery and tuberculosis spread throughout the country. For many, the only option for survival was to leave the country and try to **make it** in the new world. Approximately one million died and two million left the island which is an absolutely staggering number.

Notes:

Starve: die from hunger

En masse: French loan word meaning in large groups

Make it: be successful

TRANSCRIPT



Many people also died on the ships that took them to America due to disgusting living conditions and lack of proper nutrition. Those who did survive were **as good as dead** when they finally did arrive to the USA after a four week journey across the Atlantic. This was a brutal, brutal journey and really, if you survived it...I mean that was pretty incredible.

Many of the travellers were so malnourished, exhausted and sick from the journey that they **couldn't bring themselves** to leave the docks where the boats had arrived. So they kind of congregated on the docks they were just so weak, they just lay there, there was just so many people there on the docks it was really quite overwhelming.

Horrified Americans were soon voicing their concern about the huge influx of these Irish immigrants who were poor, unskilled workers, taking over neighbourhoods of New York and, worse still, they were catholic.

So why did it matter so much that they were catholic? Well, the original immigrants to the United States were **ardent** protestants and often spoke about the dangers of Catholicism and raised their children to hate and fear catholics. Some protestants even feared that the Pope and his army would land in the USA, **overthrow** the government and establish a new Vatican in Cincinnati! So...I mean... yeah it's pretty incredible.

Notes:

As good as: very nearly

Can't bring oneself [to do something]: be incapable of doing something.

Example: "I can't bring myself to speak to Paul, it's too uncomfortable since we had our big argument"

Ardent: passionate

Overthrow: to put an end to something, normally a political institution or leader, by force.

Anti-Irish feeling grew as the Irish began to **take over** certain neighbourhoods in New York and Boston, they also provided cheap labour which meant that the native population now had new competition in the job market.

The Irish were also accused of bringing more disease to the USA and were seen as a threat to public health. This last point was particularly **prevalent** in the southern states of the USA where many Irish people died of yellow fever from mosquito bites and the natives often believed that it was the Irish who were bringing yellow fever with them from Ireland rather than contracting it there in the USA.

So while the men took up jobs as unskilled labourers, young Irish women began to work as maids in middle-class American households. This was the best option for the vast majority of these women because it meant that they lived in some of the best houses, they didn't have to pay rent and they had a constant supply of food. So it was a really good deal for them, which is why many of them married quite late in relation to their peers. However, many of them had to be specially trained to take on these jobs: bear in mind that many Irish immigrants still spoke Irish at the time and had to learn English. They also had to learn how to use things like kitchen utensils and what was expected of them in relation to manners and etiquette.

It must have been so strange for these Americans to look at the Irish who arrived wearing clothes that hadn't been fashionable in America for decades, they were speaking either Irish or a brand of English that they barely understood. You know they were quite a bizarre group to the Americans. I've included some images from popular newspapers at the time in the PDF guide which show illustrations of the Irish as violent, simian creatures (simian means monkey or gorilla like). They are really interesting to look at just to show how **xenophobic** the press were at the time towards Irish people.

Notes:

Take over: take control of/dominate

Prevalent: evident/widespread/everywhere

Xenophobic[[adj]: describes a person who hates or fears foreigners

TRANSCRIPT



So, within a few years anti-catholic and anti-immigrant groups in America merged into the American Party whose members were known as the “know-nothings” because when they were asked about their politics they claimed to “know-nothing”.

This party was particularly sinister and actually shared a lot in common with the Klu Klux Klan. Party members promised to only elect native-born citizens (as long as they weren't catholic) and at their core they believed that Protestantism defined American society and that any other religion was a threat. So they burned the homes of immigrants, they exercised violence on election days and burned Roman catholic churches. Abraham Lincoln was among many who were concerned by this movement and he explained in a letter in 1855; “As a nation, we began by declaring that ‘all men are created equal’... When the ‘Know-nothings’ get control it will read ‘all men are created equal, except negroes, foreigners and catholics.’”

Thankfully, the American Party didn't last for too long, especially as the country broke into civil war which distracted the nation from the Irish question. This American Civil War was actually where the Irish proved themselves to their new nation. They gained a reputation for being fierce soldiers, willing to die and kill for their new nation.

The Irish soon spread across the whole of the United States and were instrumental in the building of a new, industrialized America. They were railroad workers, they worked in coal mines, they were very much involved in the industrialization of America. They were also highly politicised and voted in higher numbers than most other ethnic groups.

Notes:

Merge: when two or more things join together

As long as: under the condition that. For example; “You can play computer games as long as you've finished your homework”

Soon the Irish or Irish-Americans were in political office like William R Grace, who was the first Irish-catholic mayor of New York city. Advancements like these helped **move the Irish up the social ladder** but, unfortunately, they were not kind to other, new immigrants who later arrived in the USA, such as those from East Asia. For example, one Irish born political leader closed his speeches to American labourers with: “whatever happens, the Chinese must go!” So yeah, they definitely developed their own type of racism and anti-immigration feeling later on.

They were also severe tensions between black slaves and the Irish which I explain in more detail in the PDF guide. I’ve written a little short article in relation to this, it’s quite interesting also.

Interestingly, it was in America that these Irish immigrants first began to define themselves as a collective group known as “The Irish”. Before that they identified themselves by their villages, their towns and **parishes** and didn’t really consider themselves as a collective whole. The Irish soon blended into American society and changed it forever. They went from being America’s first refugee population, rejected and despised, to a prosperous and much beloved asset to the American way of life.

Well, that’s all for today. I wish I could be here long because it’s a really interesting topic but I can’t be here for five hours. Make sure to download the PDF guide from my website, these are free for a limited time only so take advantage while you can! Also be sure to follow me on instagram (just search Clover English podcast) and also if you’re listening on iTunes I’d really appreciate it if you left a review and subscribed because that’s how the podcast gets to other people. If a podcast has lots of good reviews it becomes suggested to other users, so it’s really important so if you are listening on apple podcast please do that and I will be very very grateful. See you all next week.

Notes:

Move up the social ladder: becomes more economically and socially prosperous

Paris: a local church

SOCIAL JUSTICE VOCAB



Today's podcast dealt with the issue of xenophobia which, as we saw, means the hatred or prejudice against foreigners. There are all types of different groups who have been discriminated against both in modern times and historically. For example, religious and ethnic minorities, disabled people and women to name but a few.

Activists are people who fight against things like discrimination and injustice. One activist who is making headlines all over the world is the young Greta Thunberg, who is a young environmental activist.

Charities/NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and activists organize things like popular demonstrations and protests to raise awareness of certain issues (like racism, climate change, sexism etc). Another way to enact social change is by the use of petitions in which citizens sign their names in favour of or against certain policies.

Many governments throughout the world oppress popular protests and use brute force to squash any opposition to their regimes. These regimes are known as dictatorships. In a democracy, citizens have the right to organize and take part in peaceful protests with the aim of inspiring some type of social change.

For example, school children all over the world recently took part in protests to demand that their political leaders tackle the issue of climate change.

Some incredible things have been achieved by peaceful protests and social action. Just look at what Martin Luther King inspired with his dedication to overcoming racism in the United States by peaceful means.

**“INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT
TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE.”**

- MARTIN LUTHER KING

HOW THE IRISH WERE PORTRAYED



Above: Irishman sitting on top of barrel of rum

Below: Irishman represented as having pointed ears and even a tail



IRISH VS BLACK SLAVES



Whilst the Irish may have suffered a great deal upon arriving to the USA, no other group suffered like black slaves or those slaves recently freed and the Irish actually made their lives harder.

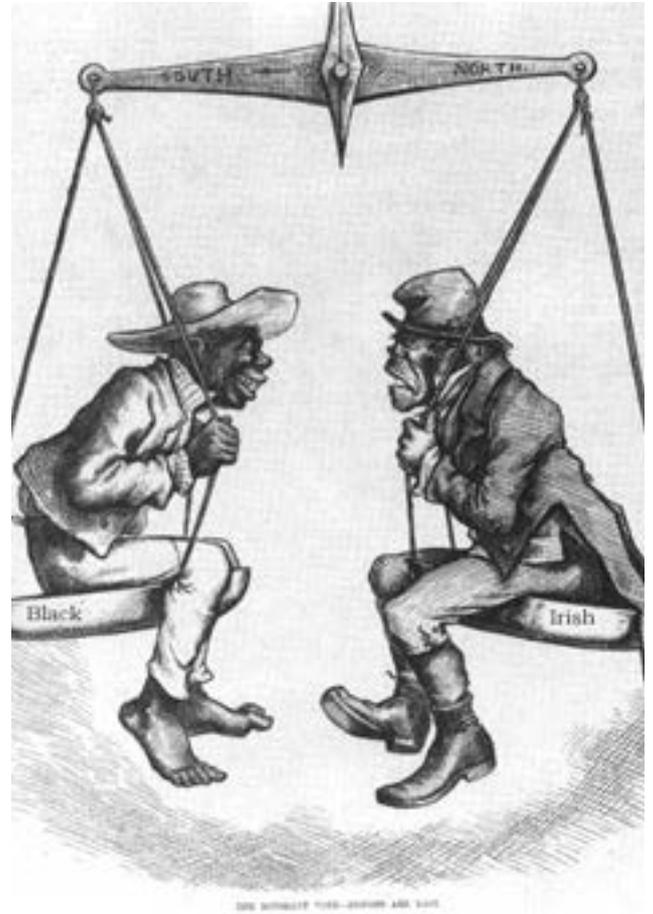
Many Irish immigrants arrived in the southern states of the USA, mainly Louisiana, where they found themselves competing with black slaves and labourers for jobs.

Many land owners preferred hiring Irish workers to do the most dangerous jobs because they feared losing their slaves to death or serious injury.

If an Irish worker was killed he was easily replaced, but if a slave was killed in an accident, the land owner would suffer a much higher economic cost to replace him and lose a much bigger initial investment.

As many freed slaves were competing with the Irish for low-paid, unskilled work many Irish gangs actually attacked groups of black workers in an attempt to beat the competition.

Whilst many Americans saw the Irish and black people as equals (see image above), the Irish were still at an advantage simply because they were, after all, white.



Black & Irish man being compared.

GRAMMAR: USED TO & WOULD



There are lots of ways to speak about the past, but today I'd like to focus on "used to" and "would".

Used to + infinitive

Used to + infinitive is used to talk about past habits or states which are now finished.

"I used to smoke" (but I don't anymore)

As it only refers to habits or states which are finished there is no present form of this construction.

"She uses to smoke" (Either she smokes or she used to smoke)



Be careful with questions and negatives!

"Did you use to smoke?" (we don't say; "Did you used to smoke?")

"I didn't use to smoke" (we don't say; "I didn't used to smoke")

However, some natives actually make this mistake!

We wouldn't use this structure to simply say what happened at a particular time in the past (unless it refers to a longer period of time for example "the 1960s etc), how long an action took or how many times it happened.

Consider the difference between;

"I worked hard last month" = (simple, completed action)

"I used to work very hard at university" = (suggests a change of circumstance. In this case that the speaker either doesn't work hard in university anymore or they no longer go to university.)

GRAMMAR: USED TO & WOULD



Be careful not to confuse this with “BE used to + gerund”

Many students confuse these two structures. Be used to + gerund has the same meaning as “be accustomed to.” Compare

“I’m used to doing lots of exercise” = (I do exercise regularly now and I’m accustomed to doing it)

“I used to do a lot of exercise” = (In the past I regularly did exercise, but now I don’t)



“Would” can be used in a similar way to “used to” to describe repeated actions or events in the past

“When we were kids we used to play in the park”

“When we were kids we would play in the park”

With “would” we can only talk about past actions/events/habits we can’t use it to speak about past states

So we can say;

“I used to be a singer” (now I’m not)

But we cannot say

“I would be a singer” (because this refers to a past state)

Note also that we cannot use “used to” or “would” to describe a past action that only happened once.

GRAMMAR: USED TO & WOULD



Compare:

“He was sent home from school because he was sick” (action happened once so past simple)

“She would/used to be sent home from school for being sick” (here it sounds as if she was regularly sent home from school, like it was a habit or repeated action in the past).

So if it only happened once we can't use “would” or “used to”



And that's it for today! Don't forget to subscribe to the podcast on your preferred podcast streaming service and give me a rating on iTunes if you're happy with my show.

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