



The History of the Shamrock

An Ireland shamrock is a three-leafed clover that grows in the summer and is native to Ireland. It may bloom with white flowers around St. Patrick's Day. Sometimes, a fourth leaf will grow on a shamrock. This variation is called a four-leaf clover.

Because of its rarity, a shamrock with four leaves is said to bring good luck to the finder, a tradition that dates back to the Celtic people.

Shamrocks have been symbolic of many things over the years. According to legend, the shamrock was a sacred plant to the Druids of Ireland because its leaves formed a triad, and three was a mystical number in the Celtic religion. St. Patrick used the shamrock in the 5th century to illustrate the doctrine of the Holy Trinity as he introduced Christianity to Ireland.

In the 19th century it became a symbol of rebellion and it was forbidden by Queen Victoria to wear the shamrock. Anyone wearing it risked death by hanging. It was this period that spawned the phrase "the wearin' o' the green".

No longer a symbol of rebellion, the Irish shamrock and four-leaf clover are fun, happy symbols of Irish pride and good luck.

The shamrock has been registered as a trademark by the Government of Ireland. It is also informally used as an emblem for sports teams and state organisations within Ireland as well as the airline Aer Lingus whose air traffic control sign is 'SHAMROCK'

