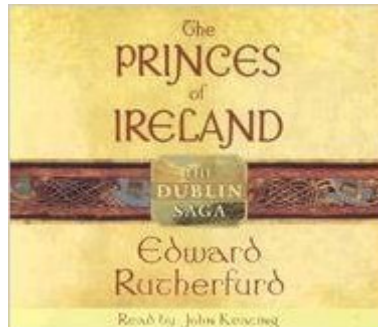




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# **The Princes Of Ireland: The Dublin Saga**



## Synopsis

From the internationally bestselling author of *London* and *Sarum* -- a magnificent epic about love and war, family life and political intrigue in Ireland over the course of seventeen centuries. Like the novels of James Michener, *The Princes of Ireland* brilliantly interweaves engrossing fiction and well-researched fact to capture the essence of a place. Edward Rutherfurd has introduced millions of readers to the human dramas that are the lifeblood of history. From his first bestseller, *Sarum*, to the #1 bestseller *London*, he has captivated audiences with gripping narratives that follow the fortunes of several fictional families down through the ages. *The Princes of Ireland*, a sweeping panorama steeped in the tragedy and glory that is Ireland, epitomizes the power and richness of Rutherfurd's storytelling magic. The saga begins in pre-Christian Ireland with a clever refashioning of the legend of Cuchulainn, and culminates in the dramatic founding of the Free Irish State in 1922. Through the interlocking stories of a wonderfully imagined cast of characters -- monks and noblemen, soldiers and rebels, craftswomen and writers -- Rutherfurd vividly conveys the personal passions and shared dreams that shaped the character of the country. He takes readers inside all the major events in Irish history: the reign of the fierce and mighty kings of Tara; the mission of Saint Patrick; the Viking invasion and the founding of Dublin; the trickery of Henry II, which gave England its foothold on the island in 1167; the plantations of the Tudors and the savagery of Cromwell; the flight of the "Wild Geese"; the failed rebellion of 1798; the Great Famine and the Easter Rebellion. With Rutherfurd's well-crafted storytelling, readers witness the rise of the Fenians in the late nineteenth century, the splendours of the Irish cultural renaissance, and the bloody battles for Irish independence, as though experiencing their momentous impact firsthand. Tens of millions of North Americans claim Irish descent. Generations of people have been enchanted by Irish literature, and visitors flock to Dublin and its environs year after year. *The Princes of Ireland* will appeal to all of them -- and to anyone who relishes epic entertainment spun by a master. From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Distinctly evocative of James Michener's all-encompassing recapitulations of history, this lackluster saga by the author of bestselling *London* and, most recently, *The Forest* (2000), is the first of a projected two-volume series billed as the Dublin Saga. Rutherford begins his tale of the Emerald Isle in pre-Christian Ireland in A.D. 430 with a tragic romance between a maiden, Dierdre, and a Celtic warrior, Conall, hearkening to the legend of the mythic first-century Celtic hero, Cuchulainn. After Conall is offered up as a sacrifice to the Druid gods, the narrative jumps ahead 20 years to Pat Rick's (St. Patrick's) arrival in Ireland in A.D. 450 and his establishment of a small Christian toehold at Dubh Linn. Five centuries later, the Vikings make their mark, and Rutherford skips ahead with chronicles of the monastery at Glendalough, the Book of Kells and the death of Brian Boru (founder of the O'Brians) with his Pyrrhic victory over the high king of Tara in 1014. A retelling of King Henry II's arrival in Ireland in 1171 is followed by a cursory account of the reformation of the Irish Church at the Council of Cashel and the story of an obscure 1370 skirmish at Carrickmines Castle (a minor landmark presently doomed to make room for a highway). Rutherford sets the last of his ill-connected and artificial sketches in 1537, with Henry VIII hanging Silken Thomas, and Dublin poised at the dawn of the Renaissance. Readers who persevere will glean plenty of historical detail from these pages, but Rutherford's uninspiring storytelling makes the journey a slog. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Mass Market Paperback edition.

Historical fiction fans can settle in for a long, cozy read as Rutherford conducts a spellbinding tour of ancient Ireland. Employing the chatty style he perfected in his best-selling novels *Sarum* (1987) and *London* (1997), he covers 17 centuries of Irish history, beginning in pre-Christian Ireland and culminating in the mid-sixteenth century. From the passionate tale of Conall and Deirdre--a reworking of the celebrated Cuchulainn legend--to the desecration of Irish Catholic churches and shrines during the reign of Henry VIII, the history of this island nation is viewed through a kaleidoscope of interwoven historical and fictional characters caught up in all the pageantry and drama of their

particular time and place in history. The real focal point of this sprawling saga is, however, the city of Dublin itself. The first installment in a two-part series on the origins and evolution of one of the world's most venerable urban centers, the narrative is distinguished by the panoramic portrait it paints of Dublin through the ages. Like James Michener and Leon Uris, Rutherford does a magnificent job of packaging a crackling good yarn within a digestible overview of complex historical circumstances and events. After devouring this initial volume, readers will eagerly anticipate the publication of the conclusion of the page-turning Dublin Saga. Margaret Flanagan Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Mass Market Paperback edition.

This book, volume 1 of a duet, has a good story line from the days of early Ireland up to the early Tudor times, incorporating lots of history. Mr. Rutherford does a fine job of interpreting history, inventing characters, and incorporating them into what he and scholars believe to be accurate. This works well until the early Tudor times, when, for me, the fictional parts of the story become less probable. The book does make clear the complex interplay of native Irish, old English settlers, clans, the Church, and changing politics and religious practices blowing in from England and Rome. All in all, I liked Rutherford's 2 volumes better than most other authors' series on Irish history up to WWI. For the early 20th century troubles and the establishment of the Irish free state, I like Llywelyn's "1916" and narrative histories. In the 20th century, Irish literature is a treat and very informative, from Joyce's "Ulysses" to the novels of Roddy Doyle and the poems of Seamus Heaney. I also recommend Llywelyn's novel "Bard" for its illumination of old Irish myths.

Really this book is a series of novellas with major characters being descended from characters in prior stories; an authorial device which charmed me. I read this book chiefly because I wanted to get a better feel for early Irish history and I was not disappointed. Some of the other reviewers seemed to feel that the story was not enough of a page-turner and for me that was just fine. I enjoyed the fact that the author was giving historical context. I also enjoyed fact that the author was describing peoples' lives as having both good and bad things happen. Another author might have wanted to stress the horrific aspects in an effort to create "suspense". The story didn't need that and neither did I.

While I liked learning a bit about the early history of Ireland, I thought the book a bit overlong - quite a few battles and chasing around after each other - but, all good fun

I had read three books by Edward Rutherfund and they had all been excellent, New York, Paris and London. It appeared I had found another writer whom I could automatically buy and know that what I had bought was a good read. Ken Follet, Dan Brown, Clive Cusler are these types of writers, Rutherfund's recent book drops him from this list. This is the order I read the books and I might be harsh in rating an early book but if this had been the first book I read I probably wouldn't have read the others.

Rutherford is one of my all-time favorite authors. The amount of research he must do seems prodigious! I read this before and during a trip to Ireland, and I passed locations and met people with the same names he uses in the book. THAT was cool! A fun, compelling read.

Good transaction. Can't wait to read it, found the 2nd book first at a thrift store/then realized there was a book 1. Now I can start, Thanks!!

As with all of Edward Rutherford's books this one takes the reader through history with various families through 100's of years timespan. Not only do you learn about history that you never knew, the story engages you and helps you focus. I am a great admirer of Mr. Rutherford's style of writing and his immense talent. No matter which book you choose that he has written you feel like you are on that journey through time. I have read all of his books except the Rebels of Ireland....and that's up next.

I liked the history without it seeming like a textbook. The author blended the fact with the fiction well and kept the theme of the generations of Irish "princes" woven into the story up to the very end.

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