# Read those 7 Great Works of Literature to understand Irish History

By Baptiste Pasquier

Out of all the cultures and histories out there, Ireland stands out. Unfortunately, the history of Ireland is not something that is popular among cultures. It’s quite important to learn about Irish history. For those who historic books bore them out, we have got a list of 7 Irish Great Works. You will enjoy the plots while learning about Ireland’s past.

## *The Wild Irish Girl* by Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan

Perhaps one of the most Irish novels of all time, Sydney Owenson’s The Wild Irish Girl (1806) is “[a passionately nationalistic novel](https://www.amazon.com/Wild-Irish-Girl-National-Classics/dp/0199552495/ref=asc_df_0199552495/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=312009759033&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrand=16433285211660882192&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9002146&hvtargid=pla-618018259087&psc=1?tag=litertrave0b-20) and a founding text in the discourse of Irish nationalism.” Banished to his English father’s estate in Connaught for accumulating large debts and neglecting his studies in London, Horatio looks for adventure in this new setting. [Horatio soon learns](https://www.amazon.com/Wild-Irish-Girl-National-Classics/dp/0199552495/ref=asc_df_0199552495/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=312009759033&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrand=16433285211660882192&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9002146&hvtargid=pla-618018259087&psc=1?tag=litertrave0b-20) the rich history, culture, and language of a country he once despised, while falling in love with the beautiful daughter of a King, Glorivina. Yet Horatio is concealing a dark past: his own ancestors were responsible for the ruin of Glorvina’s family. Told through an epistolary form, this novel gives readers a deep look into the landscape and culture of 19th century Ireland.

## *Dubliners* by James Joyce

[“Dubliners](https://www.amazon.com/Dubliners-James-Joyce/dp/0140186476/ref=asc_df_0140186476/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=312132076929&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrand=178394349337546561&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9002146&hvtargid=pla-433064006522&psc=1?tag=litertrave0b-20) is Joyce at his most accessible and most profound.” In this definitive edition of his collection of fifteen stories, including “Araby” and “The Dead”, Joyce gives readers a realistic, inside look into the diverse lives of Dubliners at the turn of the 20th century, which is why this collection makes it onto this list of 7 great works of literature set in Ireland.

## *Ulysses* by James Joyce

[Constructed](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ulysses-novel-by-Joyce) as a modern parallel to Homer’s [Odyssey](https://www.amazon.com/Odyssey-Homer/dp/0140268863/ref=asc_df_0140268863/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=312014159271&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrand=13997264005355648539&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9002161&hvtargid=pla-434692293322&psc=1?tag=litertrave0b-20), Joyce’s 1922 novel is regarded as a masterpiece and has garnered significant critical attention. The entirety of this novel takes place on a single day: June 16th, 1904, in Dublin. With a unique stream-of-consciousness technique and full of rich, rounded characters, Joyce [said](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2000/nov/05/bookerprize2000.thebookerprize) he had “put in so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries arguing over what I meant, and that’s the only way of ensuring one’s immortality.”

## *At Swim Two Birds* by Flann O’Brien

Written by Brian O’Nolan under the pseudonym Flann O’Brien, this 1939 novel tells the [comic story](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/97333.At_Swim_Two_Birds) of a lazy and frequently drunk college student who lives in Dublin with his uncle. These metafictional novel challenges what can and cannot be done in fiction; the main character writes a book about a man who is writing a book

## *Brooklyn* by Colm Toibin

Unable to find work in her home country, 1950s Ireland, Eilis travels to Brooklyn in search of employment opportunities. She misses her family back home in Ireland, but soon grows accustomed to life in the United States. She meets an Italian plumber named Tony, and they soon fall in love. But after travelling back to Ireland following a death in the family, Eilis finds herself questioning if she should even return. This novel was adapted into a [film](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2381111/) starring Irish American actress Saoirse Ronan.

## *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S Lewis

Though this series takes place in the fictional land of Narnia, Irish writer C.S. Lewis was [inspired](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zkdnvk7/articles/zccf6yc) by his childhood in Northern Ireland when he created this mythical land. In Belfast, a [unique display of public art](https://www.irelandbeforeyoudie.com/5-places-to-experience-narnia-in-northern-ireland-birthplace-of-c-s-lewis/) called C.S. Lewis Square features seven bronze sculptures from *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, including Aslan, the lion who represents Christ in this largely biblical allegory. This magical story–that was adapted into the widely successful [films](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0363771/)–is one for readers of all ages.

## *How Many Miles to Babylon?* By Jennifer Johnston

Johnston’s tragic novel about love and war. First published in 1974, this novel tells the story of the friendship–or perhaps something more– between two boys in Ireland leading up to, and during, World War I. This unique novel has a complex, lyrical style, with small abstracts from songs and poems; the title is based on the traditional nursery rhyme of the same name. Philip Womack of *The Guardian* [writes](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2011/oct/02/miles-babylon-jennifer-johnston-review) of this novel: “In its oblique speech, knotty lyricism and careful description, Johnston’s novel conveys both the insanity of war and the poignancy of unspoken tenderness.”