



The Modern History of Celtic Jewellery: 1840-1980

By Walker, Stephen; Breen, Aidan; Kelly, Tara; MacArthur, E. Mairi

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Summary: From the recovery after the Irish Potato Famine in the 1840s to the booming Celtic Tiger of the 1990s, a revival of the ancient traditions of Celtic jewelry have become a part of how the Irish, as well as the Scots, Welsh and other Celts have expressed their cultural identity. Usually the story of this tradition focuses on very old prototypes, the museum pieces turned up by archaeologists or the legend of the original Claddagh ring. In our imagination, we connect the popular Celtic jewelry of today with the distant past. But that link with the ancient style was very much influenced by what others had done in more recent history. The story of is told by four authors. Tara Kelly writes of the early Celtic Revival manufacture of facsimiles of medieval Irish metalwork in Victorian Dublin and how the success of that enterprise lead to historical Celtic jewellery to become iconic symbols of Irish identity. Mairi MacArthur tells the story of Alexander and Euphemia Ritchie who created the foundation for modern Scottish Celtic jewellery on the Isle of Iona in the early 20th century. Aidan Breen,...



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