



The History of Halloween

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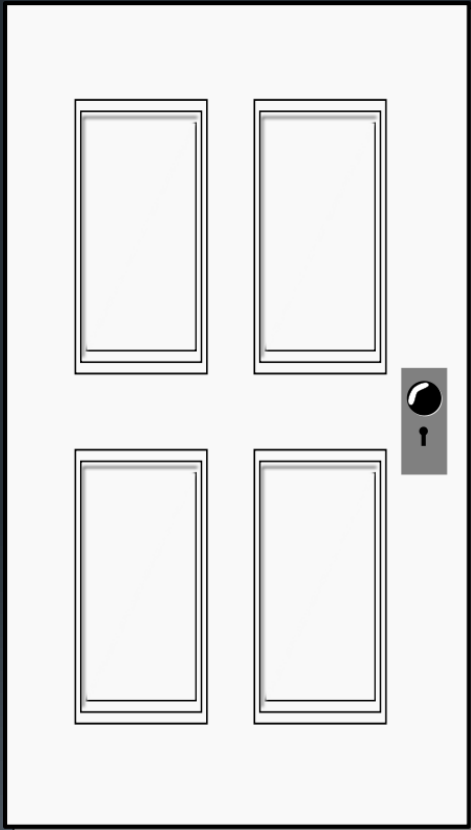
The Celts

(ancient people of Scotland, Wales, and Ireland)

- Around 800 BC, the Festival of Samhain celebrated the end of the lighter half of the year and the beginning of the darker half of the year.
- This was the day when the dead could return to earth.
- People lit bonfires and wore costumes to ward off harmful spirits.
- People believed the dead would play “tricks” on them.



Catholics in Europe



- All Hallows Day (All Saints' Day) was celebrated to honor all souls in heaven.
- Trick or treating may have come from the practice of knocking on doors during All Hallows Day and asking for "soul cakes" that would help them pray for the dead.

Romans in Europe

- The Romans celebrated what was called the Feast of Pomona—the Roman goddess of fruit and trees (her symbol is the apple). The apple was a fruit that has been associated with Halloween.
- The Festival of Feralia was also celebrated to give rest to the dead.



United States of America



- Due to the Irish potato famine of 1840s, immigrants left Ireland for better land.
- The Irish brought a blending of Celtic, Roman, and Catholic beliefs that transformed into the modern day Halloween.

- They used to carve out turnips in Ireland and place an ember inside.
- This was derived from a traditional story about Jack and how he was denied entrance into heaven or hell and was left with the ember for a light.



- The Irish then used pumpkins when they came to America.
- This was due to size, availability, and ease of carving compared to the turnip.

Europeans

The Europeans evolved the day into a children's holiday from a blending of cultures and beliefs (Celtic, Roman, Catholic) and from the American traditions in the late 19th Century.





The Modern Halloween



- Trick or treating
- Wearing costumes (witches, vampires, ghosts, etc.)
- Haunted Houses (evil spirits)
- Decorations (spider webs, tombstones, lights...)
- During the fall season
- Jack o' lanterns lit on porches





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