

Hundreds of thousands of Irish immigrants arrived in Scotland in the mid 1800s. They didn't always receive a warm welcome...

"A moral and social plague." !

They "cling to their rags, their faith and their filth." !

"They have deprived thousands of the working people of Scotland of work." !

The new arrivals these commentators were concerned about hadn't had much choice but to leave Ireland....

The potato famine, or 'Great Hunger', resulted in over a million Irish people starving or dying from disease. Another million headed overseas.

They were mostly Catholics who spoke Irish Gaelic.

Heading to Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, they took unskilled labouring work wherever they could find it - working in mines, iron works, and as navvies, digging canals and laying railway track.

By the 1850s, the Gorbals in Glasgow had become an Irish ghetto, as it was the only place that most could afford. It was overcrowded, unsanitary and rife with disease.

Tensions between the Irish and Scottish mounted - starting with religious prejudice, and heightened by fear of disease, with the Scots calling typhus 'the Irish fever', and cholera 'the Irish disease'. Irish families were often seen as 'spongers' supported by local taxpayers.

And the 1870s saw further tensions, when Irish Protestants began crossing the water...

Better educated and skilled, Protestant workers were actively recruited by the Scottish weaving, shipbuilding and iron industries - which paid them better wages than they could find in Ireland.

Catholics were excluded from better paying jobs, and sometimes subject to violence... Hate and suspicion built up on both sides of the sectarian divide.

Catholics depended heavily on the Church for community and practical help, such as letter writing or job applications.

Church community funds were used to feed the children of immigrants and to set up football clubs, such as Celtic.

Irish Protestants set up Orange Order lodges, and became loyal to rival football club Rangers.

But tensions gradually eased, as Irish communities became established in Scots society. In the years that followed, new waves of immigrants arrived – Italian, Jewish, and Lithuanian – often facing the same challenges as the Irish who'd come before them.