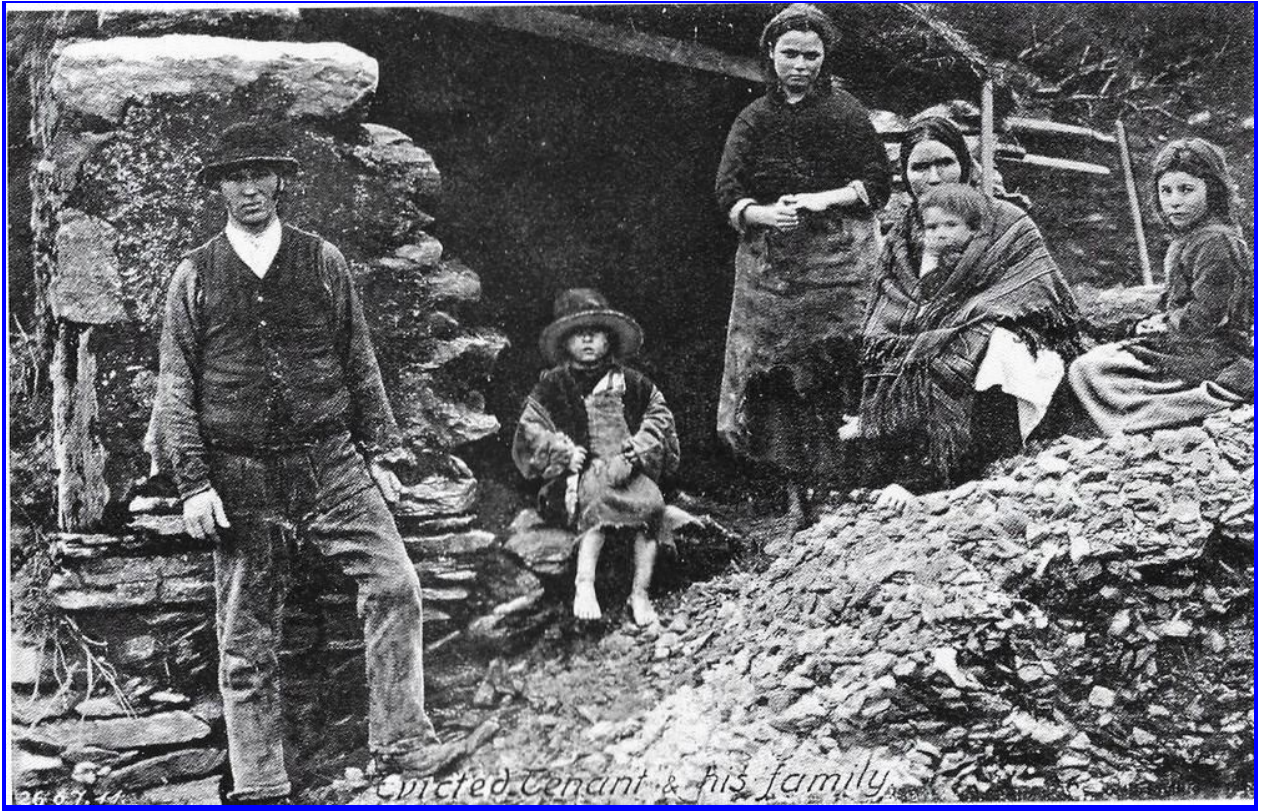


The Great Famine



The Great Famine 1845-1849.

It started because of Blight which is a plant disease.

By mid-August 1845 It had reached much of northern and central Europe, Belgium, The Netherlands, Northern France and southern England.

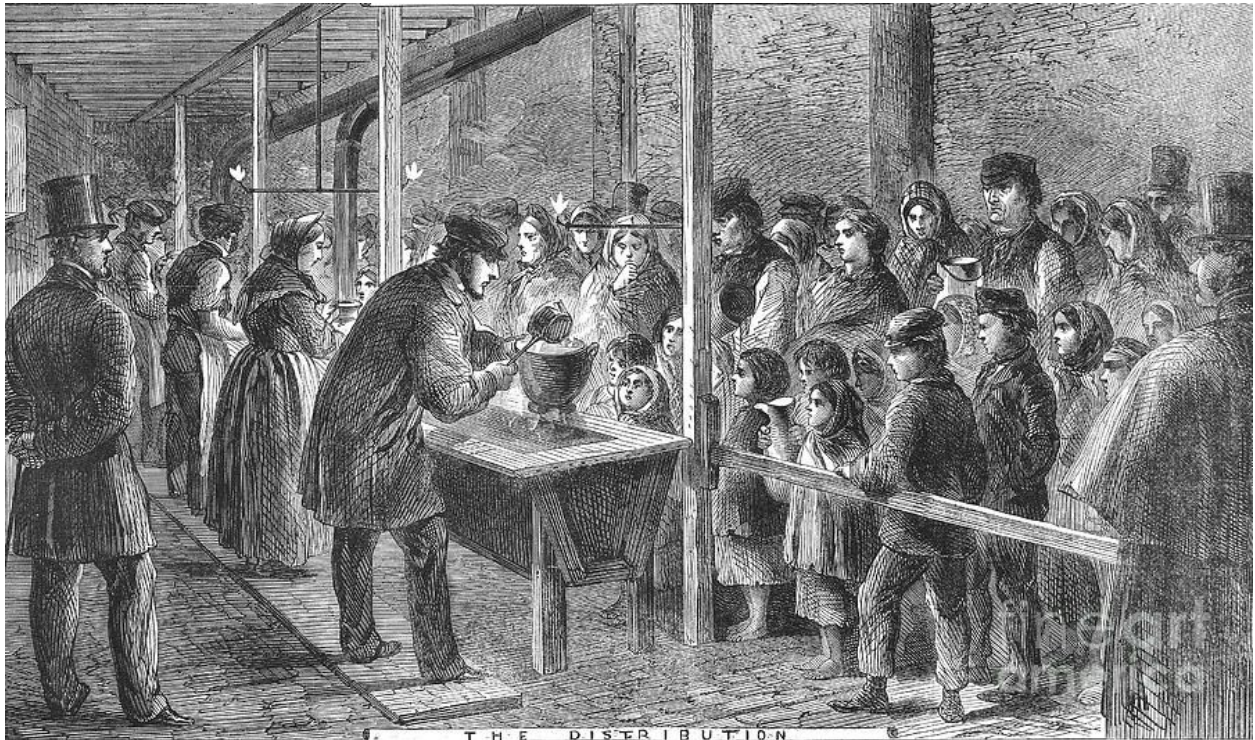


Potatoes were the most popular food in Ireland and the above picture is what a potato looks like with blight.



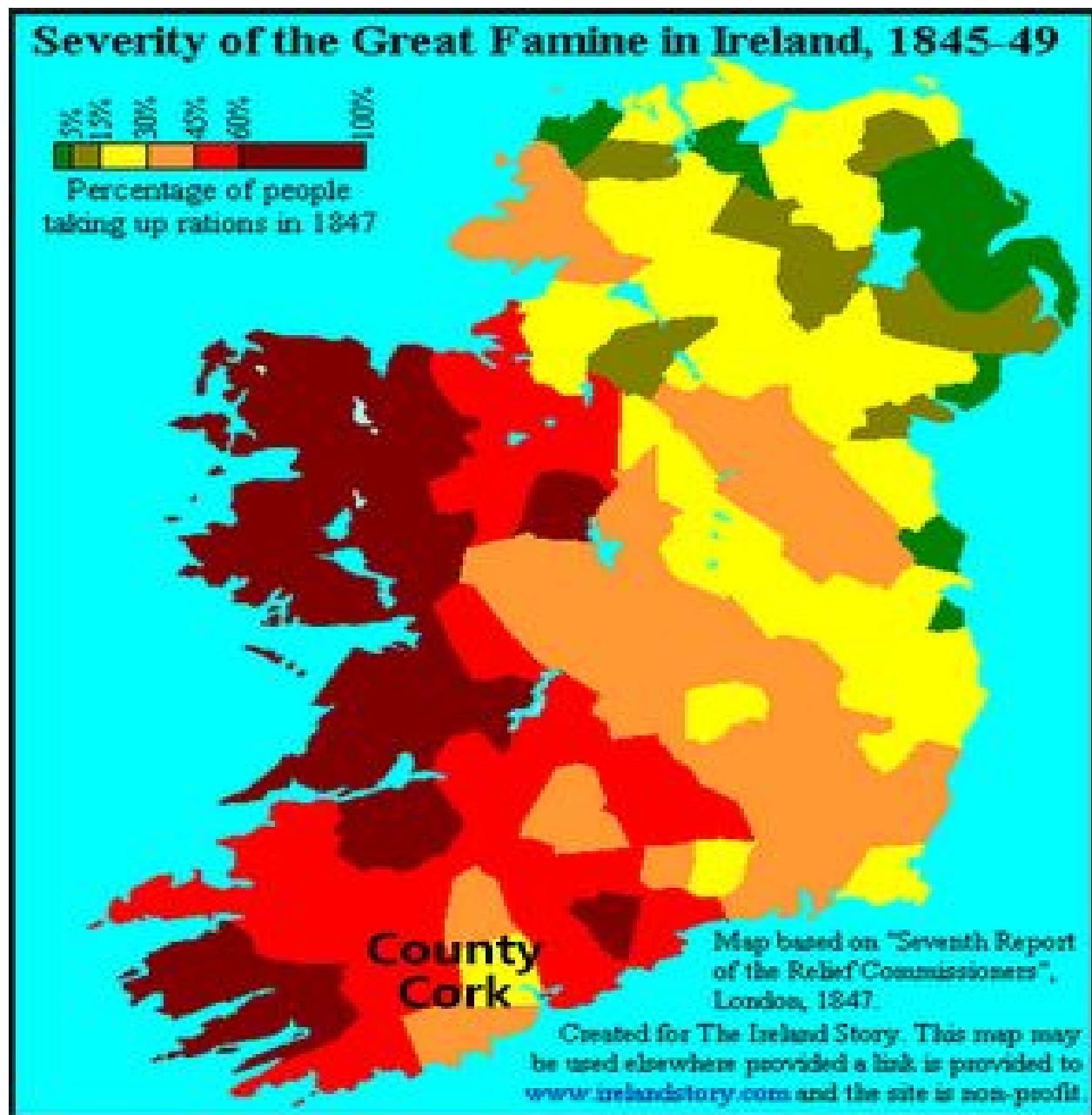
Although potatoes were destroyed by blight and many people died of hunger, this did not have to be the case because Ireland was under English rule from 1169-1949 and the English could have supplied us with food, instead they shipped food out of the country.

However soup kitchens were set by the government and Quakers and fed millions of people and in 1847 the English shut down the soup kitchens as they believed that the famine was over, but then it started again in 1847 - 1849.



Before the famine the population of Ireland was 8.4 million in 1844 to 6.6 million by 1851. About 1 million people died and perhaps 2 million more eventually emigrated from the country, a lot of them went to America.

The west of Ireland was most affected by the famine.
Below is a picture which shows the parts of the country most affected.



By 1852 the famine had largely come to an end other than in a few isolated areas.

This was not due to any massive relief effort, it was partly because the potato crop recovered but mainly it was because a huge proportion of the population had by then either died or left the county.