

The Pale



Map 1

The Irish Pale was a region in Ireland on the eastern coast, completely under the control of the English. The term comes from the Latin word “palus,” which means “stake,” as in the stake one would find in a fence or boundary.

Due to the socio-political environment of Ireland in the 12th century when the Anglo-Normans arrived, as well as the geography of the island, this small region and a few others were all the English could control with certainty. An Englishman traveling beyond the Pale would often need to travel with protection and even pay the Irish lords for safe passage. Much of Ireland was considered uncivilized or savage, simply meaning beyond English control. The western portion of Ireland embodied the wilds of the country.

Note in Map 2 the region of Connaught. Within this region to the west lies the town of Galway and the Aran Islands. All three of these places are mentioned in *The Dead*. Notice that Dublin is situated comfortably to the east, closest to England, within The Pale.

