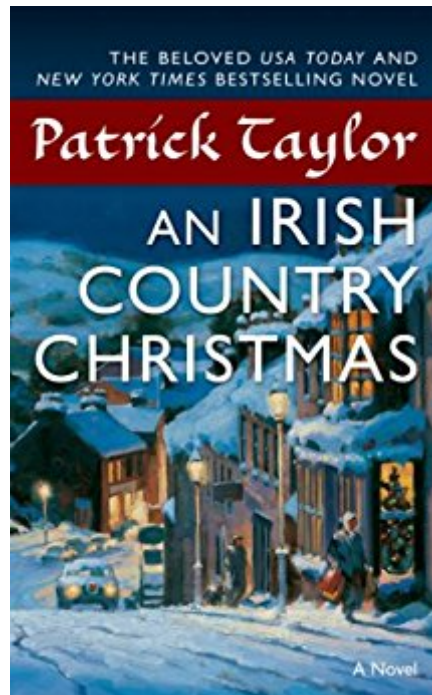


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An Irish Country Christmas: A Novel (Irish Country Books Book 3)



Synopsis

Barry Laverty, M.B., is looking forward to his first Christmas in the cozy village of Ballybucklebo, at least until he learns that his sweetheart, Patricia, might not be coming home for the holidays. That unhappy prospect dampens his spirits somewhat, but Barry has little time to dwell on his romantic disappointments. Christmas may be drawing nigh, but there is little peace to be found on earth, especially for a young doctor plying his trade in the emerald hills and glens of rural Ireland. Along with his senior partner, Doctor Fingal Flahertie O'Reilly, Barry has his hands full dealing with seasonal coughs and colds, as well as the occasional medical emergency. To add to the doctors' worries, competition arrives in the form of a patient-poaching new physician whose quackery threatens the health and well-being of the good people of Ballybucklebo. Can one territory support three hungry doctors? Barry has his doubts. But the wintry days and nights are not without a few tidings of comfort and joy. Between their hectic medical practice, Rugby Club parties, and the kiddies' Christmas Pageant, the two doctors still find time to play Santa Claus to a struggling single mother with a sick child and not enough money in the bank. Snow is rare in Ulster, and so are miracles, but that doesn't mean they never happen. . . . At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied.

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Customer Reviews

It is Christmastime in little Ballybucklebo and the doctors, Fingal Flahertie O' Reilly and his young assistant, Barry Laverty find themselves in the thick of things as usual. A former classmate of O'Reilly's has set up a practice in town and employing less than scientifically proven practices causing stress to both of our heroes--first for the possibly harmful but definitely non-helpful methods but also, in Barry's case, worry that the small town cannot support three full time doctors. There are the usual sniffles and coughs of the winter season with which to deal but also a home delivery of a breech birth and the discovery that the local dressmaker is less a heartless employer than she presents herself. Then, too, there is the burning of put away Christmas money of the widow Eileen who struggles to put something by for the three children she wishes Santa to visit. Other than the professional, we find our men in the throes of romantic quandaries as well. Barry's girl, Patricia, who has embarked on a three year course of study in far off Cambridge, England appears to be quite engrossed in her new studies, her new friends and the offerings of an academic town and its proximity to London, where even more cultural and social opportunities exist. She seems less than Barry would hope in keeping her promise to return to Ireland for Christmas. This worries Barry that there may be another man and he wonders if he should perhaps think about finding a new interest, such as the young teacher in town. He is heart-sore and anguished, believing Patricia is the one and she, perhaps, not feeling the same about him. Fingal, on the other hand, long a widower, who is still deeply in love with Dierdre, finds himself wondering if he should take up the pretty clear offer of a second chance with Caitlin O'Halloran, the love of his student days. He'd been dating when he met Dierdre and she, Kitty, had never married. Now, she is back in his life and he is enjoying her company. Should he commit more deeply? Is it time to move on? Lastly, there are all the community dos--the big pageant where the children reenact the Christmas story--I laughed out loud for several minutes as that rolled out before my mind's eye! O' Reilly plays Santa passing out gifts to each of Ballybucklebo's chisellers. (My Dad used that term for us kids and I never understood it. I couldn't figure out how we had chiselled anything. Through these stories I realize it is an Irish expression for kids! He must have gotten it from his Irish born mother, who died before I was born.) And the marvelous Kinky, Mrs Kinkaid, provides some of the food on the baquet tables. Not to be forgotten, there are the two more fancy gatherings--party at Ballybucklebo House, home of the local Marquis and the party at the Councillor's, Bertie and Flo Bishops. These on Christmas morning after roast

goose and Midnight Mass the night before. All culminates with Christmas dinner at One Main, where Kinky presents a roast turkey, a roast ham and all the fixings. No wonder Fingal needed his Santa pants let out and Kinky tried, to no avail to put him on a diet before all the holiday feast began. And so, the year of 1964 is coming to an end for our friends. The Canadians have a new flag--the maple leaf--I remember when that happened. Catholic Masses would soon be said in the vernacular--a decision I always hated--loving the elegance of the Latin Mass. What will 1965 bring for them? I cannot wait to see in the next installment of Patrick Taylor's wonderful series.

I have read everything in the Irish Country series a few times over, I know some people think it moves too slow? That's why I love it. Fingal takes you to a place where life is entirely different than living in the states. I have read them all and I love them all.....when I re-read a book its like going home, a place that is warm and welcoming. So get yourself a Jamison's and put up your feet, and go home to Ireland! You will always be welcome.

This is a delightful series warm and well written. I am reading it as part of the series and feel I know the people as friends. The author is a great Storyteller and he tells us of people who are real and fun to be around even if we cannot really touch them.

Just a lovely story; so well written by author, Patrick Taylor who has a gift for painting an inviting picture, which draws in the reader as part of the story; you could be sitting right at their table, enjoying the company, delicious food and listening to the events of their day.

The Country Doctor novels are entertaining and engaging. This has become my "go-to" series when I need an escape and an easy reading experience. Drs. Lafferty and O'Reilly are great characters who evolve and expand with each book, and their little Irish village of Ballybucklebo has a diverse group of characters who also pop up in the series. The stories have enough of a plot to keep it interesting, a smattering of Irish customs to charm and puzzle over, a variety of medical situations that are explained in detail (the author is a doctor), many descriptions of Irish food (with recipes at the end of the book), and romance or two, all of which keep me intrigued. I will probably keep reading them all the way to the last book and enjoy myself all the way.

This is the third in Patrick Taylor's "Irish Country Series" and I enjoyed following his characters through their latest experiences. However, I decided not to continue with the series --- at least not

for now. The best side of Taylor's writing is his command of many Irish dialects. This alone is a great reason to read him. Second best is his assemblage of village characters which he treats with consistency and charm. I do have two complaints about his writing, though. First of all, it is a little like watching CSI or some ER program on TV. We are constantly subjected to one medical emergency after another and, sometimes, these go way too far in technical detail. It is fine to write books about two doctors but why should the principal action be their medical practice? Second worse is Taylor's constantly repetitive style. Basically, he needs a good editor who can reduce the size of the books by 30%, removing the constantly repeating reminders about what the characters have done or felt in the past. I enjoyed reading the three first books, but I am enjoying my flight to another Irish author --- Colm Toibin --- even more.

Part of one of my favorite book series. You care about (most-of) the people and you wish you could visit the town of Balleybucklebo!

Equally charming as the previous two books in this series but a little bit slower. Extra bonus: has the glossary of Irish terms at the end! Thanks for that! I just learned that *beann* can mean more than just "wee" *beannín* can mean more than just "little" *beannín* (does it?). And I found out that I got the meaning of at least a half of other words about right (except for food descriptions, it still sometimes puzzles me what do they eat and WHY do they like it :)). I enjoyed very much author's note at the end. OK, life is not a fairy tale but it is nice to think that it may be.

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