

## Grace O'Malley The Pirate Queen

Grace O'Malley – Granuaile, Pirate, chieftain, gambler, noblewoman, traitor and mercenary was born in 1530 in Co. Mayo. She was twice married, first to Donal O'Flaherty, heir to the O'Flaherty clan with whom she had three children. During this time Grace was marshalling three ships and commanding 200 men. After Donal's death, she married Richard an-Iarainn Burke, in 1566. Again this was a marriage intended to improve her position of great wealth, however, as was often the case in Brehon Law, it would only last one year. Over her lifetime, she earned a reputation as a fearless pirate raiding English and Spanish ships, attacking Irish castles off the Mayo coast. Grace slaughtered hundreds of Spaniards on the ship of Don Pedro de Mendoza near the castle on Clare Island, where she maintained a base. In her 70 years of life, despite English rule spreading throughout Ireland, her strength and leadership saw that her clan was mostly unaffected by it.

She died in 1603.

