09/29

Dr. Otto Knowbetter!! Yay!

Biology, History, Climatology, and Culture are all connected.

St. Patrick’s Day?

Why corned beef and cabbage? Why green beer?

St. Patrick – Roman British born 387-460 AD

Capture and became a slave in Ireland at 16, escaped 6 years later and went back to Ireland

Problems with ethic: charging for baptisms, accepting “gifts” from women

Roman Practice of assimilation: 8th century AD 700 years after dying

Patron Saint of Ireland – no mention of snakes

Why do 37.5 million Americans have Irish ancestry?

Why are there pockets of Irish Ancestry?

 Boston, New york, Reno

Immigration! So why again?

 Geography, Climate, Biology, all that jazz

 Climate: there was a change. Global Maxima

 Farming explodes

 Lots of food 🡪 lots of kids 🡪 more labour 🡪 more food

 Lots of protein 🡪 food preservation

 Ice sheet retreats 🡪 fishing fleets

 Lengthens growing seasons 🡪 warm weather crops

 Then the little Ice Age hits and everything changes

 Growing seasons shorten

 Colder 🡪 wetter 🡪 snow in every month 🡪 shorter growing season

 Can’t grow warm weather crops

 Lots of people 🡪 food shortages 🡪 Wealthy & Holy are fine, but 🡪 Peasants are starving 🡪 Revolutions

 So you have to adapt! You have to grow crops that flourish in colder weather with a shorter season

 Preservation techniques change because food has to last longer

 Pickling, fermentation, Salting, Root cellars, sugaring (honey and mummies, so gross!)

 They start pickling everything!

 Cucumbers, onions, beets, cabbage, meats, eggs, fish (different way of pickling using water and common mold! Who knew!)

 Look up olives and lye.

 Harvesting and storage of grain

 Can’t do wheat (winter wheat not developed yet)

 Too short of a growing season, wheat can’t mature

 Rye has a shorter growing season

 Wet and cool wheat leads to growth of molds and fungi. The stuff you depend on for pickling is bad for your wheat

 Ergot-mold that grows in between the kernels of Rye

 Is a hallucinogen: Lysergic Acid

 St. Anthony’s Fire: 40,000-60,000 executed

 Hallucinations of fire coming from hands

 Now that you can’t grow grains…now what?

 COWS!!! …And pigs…

 That’s why there is a meat and potato diet

 Ireland: Perfect soil, perfect climate…for potatoes

 80% of their calories from potatoes

 US – 80% of calories comes from corn

 Perfect storm for disaster: Protista in the soil

 No harvest/ no calories (unless you were rich or a priest. Those bastards always eat)

 Ireland loses 25% of your population

 1 mil die of starvation, 1.5 immigrate