

FRANCE versus BRITAIN in IRELAND

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This image depicting the Irish patriot, Wolfe Tone, is extracted from page 262 of a book entitled *Ireland in '98* [1798]: Sketches of the Principal Men of the Time, Based upon the Published Volumes and Some Unpublished MSS. of the Late Dr. R. R. Madden ... Edited by J. B. Daly., by MADDEN, Richard Robert. An original of this work is maintained at the British Library and is online via both the BL and Wikimedia Commons.

France tried one more time to invade Ireland (on September 6, 1798). This time Tone was aboard a different ship with the French General Jean Hardy.

When he sailed for Ireland, Tone knew Britain would not consider him a prisoner of war if he were captured. Even though he was now an officer in the French military, Britain would treat him like a traitor. It was a risk Tone was willing to take.

Tone's ship reached the <u>northern part</u> of Ireland, but the French—here <u>and elsewhere</u>—fought a losing battle with the Royal Navy near <u>Lough Swilly</u>. On September 6th, Tone was taken prisoner with the rest of his French colleagues. The British did not-yet know that they had captured a prize.

For nearly a month, Tone's true identity went undetected. But when he stepped off the prisoner boat at <u>Buncrana</u>—in County Donegal—he was recognized. Another barrister, who had opposed Tone in legal cases, spotted him. It was November 3, 1798.

Tone's worst fears were realized. The British military set up a British court martial to try him. That Tone had never served a day in the British military was of no consequence. Officers in charge were taking orders from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. His name? Lord Cornwallis, of American revolutionary-war fame.

Forced to <u>surrender his troops</u> to George Washington at Yorktown, thereby ending the conflict with Britain's colonies in America, Cornwallis had once been <u>humiliated by rebels</u>. It would not happen again. He wanted Wolfe Tone, the Irish rebel, executed.

As Tone's trial started in Dublin, on November 10th, crowds of people tried to witness a proceeding which Tone, himself, considered an outrage. As <u>a barrister</u>, Wolfe Tone knew that he had been denied all aspects of due process.

Had he been properly tried in a court of law—and not in a British court martial—Tone may still have been convicted. He would probably have received a death sentence. But legal process would have allowed him to at least defend himself. A real trial would have given him time between sentence and execution. He would have been able to personally say good-bye to his family.

With Cornwallis insisting on a quick trial, Tone knew that he was doomed. His greatest fear was to hang like a traitor. The Irishman had reason to fear. This was the charge against him:

...to try whether he had or had not acted traitorously and hostility (sic) against his Majesty, to whom, as a natural born subject, he owed all allegiance, from the very fact of his birth in that Kingdom.



WILLIAM THEOBALD WOLFE TONE.

Tone, and many other Irishmen, did not consider themselves "natural born subjects" of the British king. They did not consider Ireland a part of the British monarch's "Kingdom."

Tone—who was denied legal counsel—was asked to plead guilty or not guilty. His book—*Life of Theobald Wolfe Tone…Written by Himself and Continued by His Son* (<u>excerpts are available online</u>)—provides a record of what actually happened as the defendant verbalized what many Irishmen thought then—and later.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/FRANCE-versus-BRITAIN-in-IRELAND-Wind-that-Shake</u> s-the-Barley

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/FRANCE-versus-BRITAIN-in-IRELAND-Wind-that-Shakes-the-Barley

Media Stream



French Expedition in Ireland - Victory at Castlebar

Image of a Fraser Fencible fighting against the French in the Irish town of Castlebar - on August 27, 1798 - by George Cruikshank (1792-1878). The engraving is included in William Maxwell's <u>History of the Irish Rebellion in 1798</u>.

This picture - entitled "Heroic Conduct of the Highland Sentinel" - illustrates the following passage from Maxwell's text:

The French approached the new gaol [jail] to break it open. It was guarded by a highland Fraser sentinel, whom his friends had desired to retreat with them; but he heroically refused to quit his post, which was elevated, with some steps leading to it. He charged and fired five times successively, and killed a Frenchman at every shot, but before he could charge the sixth time, they rushed on him, beat out his brains, and threw him down the steps, with the sentrybox on his body. (See Maxwell at page 236.)

The drawing appears <u>next to page 236</u> in the fourth edition (published in 1854).

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http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/French-Expedition-in-Ireland-Victory-at-Castlebar

French Route from Connaught - 1798 Irish Rebellion

Map image, depicted above, from Chapter VII of *The French Invasion of Ireland in '98* (by Valerian Gribayedoff), published in 1890. Image online, courtesy Library Ireland. PD

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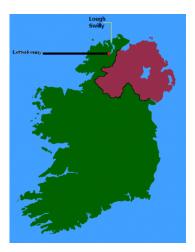


Map Depicting Ireland circa 1798

Image online, courtesy Library Ireland. PD

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Map Depicting Lough Swilly

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Map Depicting Buncrana

Map image online, courtesy ErinMeansIreland. PD

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Lord Cornwallis - 1795 Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Lord-Cornwallis-1795</u>



<u>Cornwallis Surrenders His Troops at Yorktown</u> Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. PD View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Cornwallis-Surrenders-His-Troops-at-Yorktown



<u>Illustration of a Barrister</u> Image, described above, online courtesy Wikimedia Commons. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Illustration-of-a-Barrister</u>