

Why should we remember Thomas Francis Meagher?

Class Level: Middle/Senior Primary

Subject: History

Strand: Story; Politics, Conflict and Society

Strand Unit: Stories from the lives of people in the past; Revolution and change in America, France and Ireland.

Objectives:

- that children will appreciate the role Thomas Francis Meagher played in bringing the flag to the Irish people
- that the children will recognise that the late 18th and early 19th century was a period of change and that events and ideas in one country influenced another
- that the children will develop their skills in using visual evidence
- the children will identify and locate on a world map countries connected with Thomas Francis Meagher

Prior Knowledge: A basic understanding of the situation in Ireland at this time.

Activity

Inform the children that today we are going to talk about the man that introduced us to the Tricolour and his hopes for Ireland.

Show the children an image of Thomas Francis Meagher.

<http://www.askaboutireland.ie/reading-room/arts-literature/the-virtual-museum/waterford-museum-of-treas/paintings/thomas-francis-meagher/>

Discuss the image with the children? Is this a recent or an old image? Why? What words would you use to describe this man? Is he a man of low status or high status? This is a painting? Why do you think the painting was made? What did the painter want the viewer to think?

Explain at this point that the image was used on a postcard that Thomas Francis Meagher had sent to friends or supporters after the 1848 rebellion. (Please see [/www.scoilnet.ie/irishflag/post-primary/timeline/#card-3](http://www.scoilnet.ie/irishflag/post-primary/timeline/#card-3)) for lesson ideas on exploring the 1848 rebellion, particularly the material on the Stokes Tapestry. Discuss why he might have chosen this image for the postcard? What did he want his supporters to think or feel? How might others have thought of him, particularly the Government and Forces of the Crown?

Key Words: Dignified, Statesman, Confident, Proud, Peaceful, Wealthy, Integrity

Treacherous, Rebellious. Disloyal, Violent, Criminal

In sequence read out the cards below- discuss, and ask a child to place the card on a large map of the world.

Alternatively, print and cut out a number of sets of cards to meet the needs of your class. Each group of 4-6 children could receive a set of cards and place these or the number of the card on a world map.

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Newfoundland, Canada	Waterford City, Ireland
Thomas Francis Meagher's father Thomas Meagher Snr. was born in St. John's, Newfoundland: A large Canadian island that is said to be "the most Irish place outside of Ireland". In 1836 over half the	Thomas Francis Meagher (August 3, 1823 - July 1, 1867) was born in what is now The Granville Hotel on the Quay in Waterford city, and from the age of two lived at Number 19,

<p>population of Newfoundland was Irish. Meagher Snr. Made a large fortune in Canada before returning to Ireland.</p>	<p>The Mall, a short distance away.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lancashire, United Kingdom</p> <p>Thomas Francis Meagher Completed his secondary schooling at Stonyhurst College, Lancashire, England.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ballingarry, Co. Limerick, Ireland</p> <p>Thomas Francis Meagher was a member of the Young Irelanders which were involved in an armed revolt in Ballingarry, Co Tipperary. The revolt was suppressed. Meagher was arrested and sentenced to death. The sentence was later commuted to transportation for life, and, in July 1849, Meagher was exiled to Van Diemen's Land, now known as Tasmania.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Paris France</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tazmania</p>

In 1848 Thomas Francis Meagher visited Paris , where he congratulated ministers for their successful revolution. He returned with the tricolour to Ireland. It is not definite whether Thomas Meagher had the flag made but it is said that the flag was presented by small group of French women sympathetic to the Irish cause.

In July 1849, Meagher was exiled to Van Diemen's Land, now known as Tasmania.

After 2 years in exile, he escaped and made his way to America.

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New York, USA.

Meagher was given a hero's welcome when he arrived in New York after 2 years in exile. Here he studied law, worked as a journalist, and travelled to present lectures on the Irish cause.

During the American Civil War Meagher formed Company K of the New York 69th Infantry regiment. Meagher's "Irish Brigade" fought with distinction

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Montana, USA

After the war Meagher became the governor of Montana and developed the first constitution of Montana.

He died here on 1st of July 1867 when he fell from a barge into the Missouri River at Fort Benton.

<p>throughout the course of the war.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Waterford City</p> <p>He unveiled the Irish Tricolour for the first time in March of 1848 from the Wolfe Tone Club in Waterford City.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dublin City</p> <p>He presented a fabulous version of the Tricolour made from the finest French silk to the citizens of Dublin at a banquet on 15th April 1848. From then on it was flown at meetings all over the country, side by side with the French tricolour, to celebrate the revolution that had just taken place in France.</p>

Refer to the list of questions created on the board- how many of them have been answered?

Ask the children if there is anything else they would like to know about Thomas Francis Meagher? (family life, did he ever go back to Ireland etc)

Revise the story and assess children's learning by plotting the route between the places on the map in the sequence in which they occurred.

The Story of Thomas Francis Meagher:

Thomas Francis Meagher (August 3, 1823 - July 1, 1867) was born in what is now The Granville Hotel on the Quay in Waterford city, and from the age of two lived at Number 19, The Mall, a short distance away.

His father, Thomas Meagher(1796-1874),was born in St John's, Newfoundland. He was a wealthy merchant who had retired and entered into politics. He was twice elected Mayor of Waterford City, which he also represented in Parliament from 1847 to 1857.

Meagher went to primary school at Mount Sion, the birthplace of the Christian Brothers, founded by Edmund Rice in 1802. He attended Jesuit's College of Clongowes-Wood and at 15, he was the youngest medallist at the Debating Society. When he was 16, he wrote a history of

the debating society which was presented to O'Connell during a visit. O'Connell commented upon reading the work: "A genius that could produce such a work is not destined to remain long in obscurity."

Meagher continued his education at Stonyhurst in England, and when he returned home and became involved with the Young Ireland nationalist movement.

Thomas Meagher and the IRB were hugely influenced by the revolutionary events in France. In 1948 Thomas Francis Meagher visited Paris , where he congratulated ministers for their successful revolution. He returned with the tricolour to Ireland. It is not definite whether Thomas Meagher had the flag made but it is said that the flag was a presented by small group of French women sympathetic to the Irish cause.

He ran as a candidate in the 1848 Waterford by election where in his election speech he outlined how he reached out his hands to the Orange Order and said "What strength have I to beat my way towards that bold headland upon which I have sworn to plant the flag I have rescued from the wreck' .

He unveiled the Irish Tricolour for the first time in March of 1848 from the Wolfe Tone Club in Waterford City and presented a fabulous version of the Tricolour made from the finest French silk to the citizens of Dublin at a banquet

on 15th April 1848. From then on it was flown at meetings all over the country, side by side with the French tricolour, to celebrate the revolution that had just taken place in France.

The symbolism behind each colour is explained as being that of green representing the Gaelic tradition of Ireland, orange representing the followers of William of Orange in Ireland, and white representing the aspiration for peace between them.

In this flag Meagher captured his dream for freedom and unity in Ireland. The meaning of the white was well expressed by Meagher when he introduced the flag. 'The white in the centre', he said, 'signifies a lasting truce between the 'Orange' and the 'Green' and I trust that beneath its folds the hands of the Irish Protestant and the Irish Catholic may be clasped in heroic brotherhood.'

Thomas Francis Meagher was a member of the Young Irelanders which were involved in an armed revolt in Ballinacorney, Co Tipperary. The revolt was suppressed. Meagher was arrested, tried for high treason together with a number of Young Ireland leaders, and sentenced to death.

The sentence was later commuted to transportation for life following representations by his influential family, and, in July 1849, Meagher was exiled to Van Diemen's Land, now known as Tasmania.

After 2 years in exile, he escaped and made his way to America where he was given a hero's welcome in New York. There Meagher studied law, worked as a journalist, and travelled to present lectures on the Irish cause and married for a second time (he had married before in Tasmania).

By the time the civil war began in April 1861 Meagher was an American citizen, an acknowledged Irish-American leader and one of the most famous Irishmen of his time in the US. True to his ideals and belief in freedom for all he rose to the union cause and he eventually became a Brigadier-General in the US Army during the American Civil War.

After the war Meagher became acting governor of Montana and develop the first constitution of Montana a major step towards statehood.

1st of July 1867 Meagher drowned in the Missouri River after falling accidentally from a steamboat at Fort Benton.

Assessment:

Sequence these 6 events from the life of Thomas Francis Meagher.

Children are given six sentences from the life of Thomas Francis Meagher. They are asked to sequence the story. Can be done as pair/group work.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Born in Waterford City in 1923.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joined the Young Ireland Movement striving for Irish National Liberation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrested and Exiled to Tasmania for taking part in a failed Irish rebellion.• Presented the flag to the Irish people in Dublin outlining his hopes for peace and unity of the peoples of Ireland
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joined the Union forces during the American Civil War.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Became acting governor of Montana and develop the first constitution of Montana a major step towards statehood.

Differentiation:

Reduce/increase the number of sentences to be sequenced,
give extra time, give extra support, depending on ability.

Use mixed ability groups.