

Activity Book for Families

Symbols of Ireland



A symbol is something that represents another thing – for example, a shamrock stands for Ireland. If you see a shamrock in the exhibition, it will mean that the people who use the symbol want to show their attachment to Ireland. Such symbols help people to feel that they belong to a group or to a country.

My Name:



Be a History Detective

- Search the *Soldiers and Chiefs* galleries to discover how armies have used Irish symbols since the 17th century.
- Examine the evidence in the objects and pictures on display for examples of symbols used for different reasons.
- You will find symbols on uniforms and flags, but also in some unexpected places.

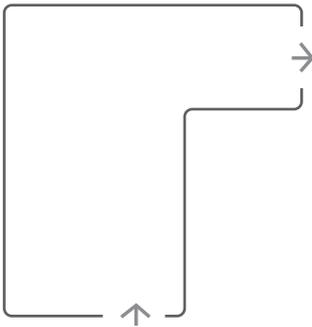
Soldiers and Chiefs Galleries

To find the symbols in the exhibits just follow the numbers shown on these plans of all the galleries. The numbers on the plans match the activity numbers. The title with each plan is the name of that gallery.

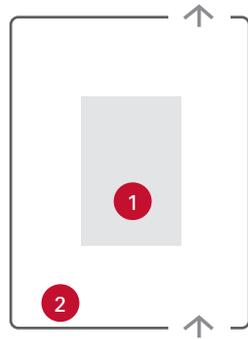
Note to Adults: Answers to the activities are on the back page.

First floor

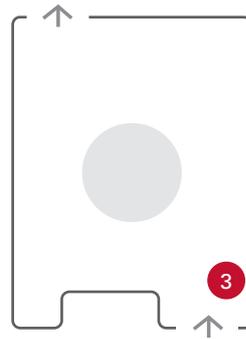
Introduction



The British Garrison in Ireland



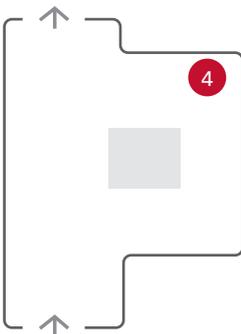
Warfare in Ireland



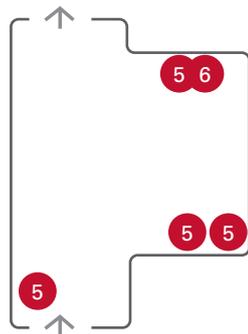
Irish Soldiers in Foreign Armies



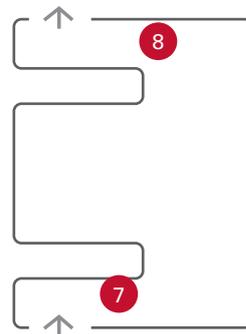
The Wild Geese



Irish in the American Civil War

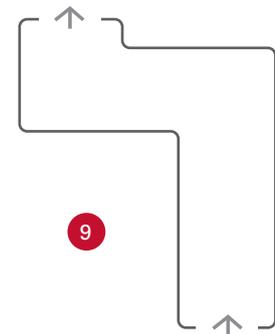


Irish in the British Service



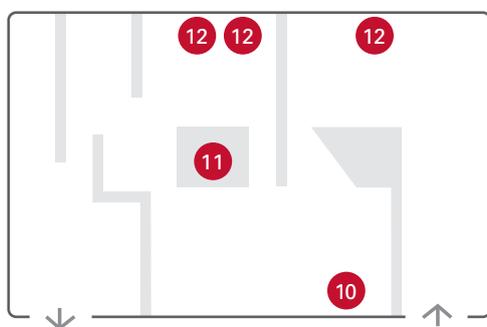
Balcony

Taking Flight



The Irish Wars

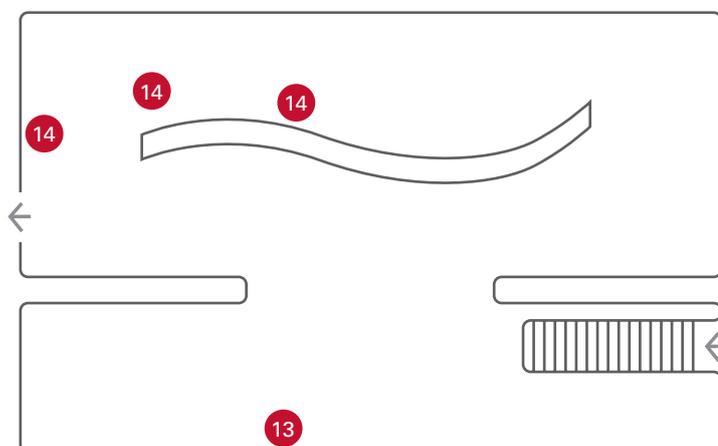
The First World War



1916 – The Easter Rising

Ground floor

Claiming the Future
The Emergency: The Second World War
Defending the Peace



You can find explanations of military terms in the booklet, **'Military Speak'**, a glossary to accompany these Activity Books, which is available at the start of the exhibition or at Museum reception.

Symbols in 'The British Garrison in Ireland'

1 Searching the Stokes Tapestry

Find and draw these different symbols of Ireland.



Wolfhound

Shamrock

Irish tricolour

Harp

Hibernia*

* 'Ireland' represented as a woman holding a flag and shield

Have you seen any of these used today as symbols of Ireland?

Guess what the colours of the tricolour flag symbolise?



Green

White

Orange

Some symbols on the tapestry show Ireland joined with Britain.



Draw one example that shows this idea.

These combined symbols are not used today because Ireland became a separate country in 1922.

2 Local Police

Find the plaque of the Royal Irish Constabulary from the Merville Barracks.

Which two of the three objects shown on the plaque are Irish and which one is British?

Irish Objects



British Object

Why do you think the Irish and British symbols are shown together?

Symbols in 'Warfare in Ireland'

3 Smashed to Pieces

Look closely at the full-size model of the Tullyhogue chair after it had been smashed.

Into how many pieces was it broken?



Find the chair in the picture of the landscape to see how it looked before the English conquerors of Gaelic Ireland smashed it.

Read the label to find out:

Who used this chair as a throne?

Why did the English break the chair?

Symbols in 'The Wild Geese'

4 Horn and Harp

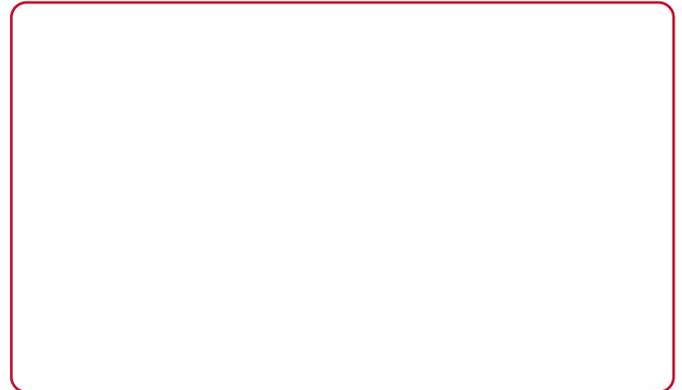
Find the metal object decorated with a horn and harp.
The harp was used as a symbol of the Irish Legion in Napoleon's French army.



Read the label to find out: who could wear a gorget? _____



Find and draw the symbol on the belt plate (in front of the gorget).



Be a History Detective

Look for the words written in French on both metal objects. The words are '*Legion Irlandaise Empire Française*', which means the Irish Legion, French Empire.



Symbols in 'The Irish in the American Civil War'

5 Flags from Irish Regiments

Regimental flags or standards told the soldiers the location of their commander. Find pictures of four different flags carried by different Irish regiments in American Armies.

Look for Irish symbols on the flags. When you find a symbol, put a tick in the box under that symbol.

	Shamrock	Harp	Sun	Green colour
Irish Brigade				
10th Tennessee Irish Regiment				
17th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment				
37th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment				

Which symbol is used most often?

Which symbol is used least often?



Be a History Detective

During the Battle of Fredericksburg, the Irish Brigade was temporarily without its flags. Instead, they used another symbol. Their commander ordered them to wear a sprig of boxwood (a plant with small green leaves) to show that they belonged to the Irish Brigade.

Look at the picture of the Irish Brigade to see the boxwood in their caps.

6 A Riddle

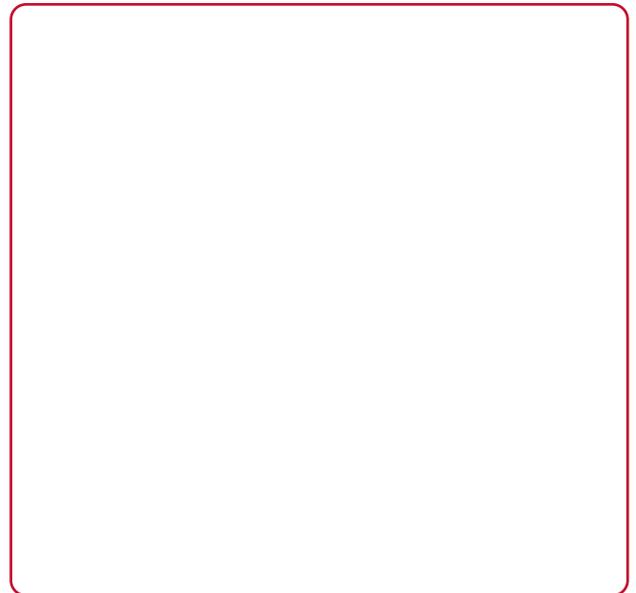


What animal is 'Gentle When Stroked' and 'Fierce When Provoked'?

Find and draw a picture of the answer.

Why are those words a good motto for the 69th New York Regiment?





Symbols in 'Irish in the British Service'

7 Marching to Irish Tunes – Listen to some tunes on the computer.

Music can be a symbol too: these Irish tunes were symbols of some Irish regiments. Put a tick beside one or two of the tunes after you listen to them.

- Fare Ye Well Inniskilling
- Garryowen
- The Sprig of Shillelagh
- St. Patrick's Day



Be a History Detective

- Touch the screen to begin.
- When asked to choose between 'Find the regiment that's right for you' and 'Explore the regiments', choose 'Explore the regiments'.
- To find the far right of the picture, keep your finger on the arrow at the top as you scroll to the right.
- Touch the fourth standing figure from the right in the picture. This is a Royal Irish Regiment soldier.
- You will see a screen with information about the regiment; touch **and hold down** the bugle symbol to hear the regimental march, **Garryowen**.
- To hear other regimental marches with other soldier figures, just look for the bugle symbol.

8 The Imperial Irish

All the badges shown on this panel belonged to 'Irish' Regiments formed outside Ireland.



Draw a symbol of Canada from one of these badges.



Examine the uniform worn by the Irish Regiment of Canada (on the left) and make a list of as many Irish symbols as you can find.



Symbols in 'Taking Flight'

9 Soaring Symbols



Find and draw the symbol of Ireland on the Irish Air Corps de Havilland Vampire jet trainer aircraft.



Symbols in 'The First World War'

10 Uniformity

This grey-green uniform is basically a German Army outfit with a few Irish symbols added on. Where on the uniform do you see some Irish symbols?

- Front buttons of jacket
- Cap badge
- Collar badge
- Arm cuff buttons



Be a History Detective

The Germans did not give an all-Irish uniform to the members of the Irish Brigade because in the First World War soldiers did not see their enemy close-up. Wearing the same uniform as the rest of the army meant that, at a distance, they were not mistaken for the enemy.

How close did YOU get before you could see the Irish Symbols?

Symbols in '1916 – The Easter Rising'

11 A New Flag

Look at the words on the flag and read the label to answer these questions.

Why is this flag an important symbol for Irish people?



Why are the British officers in the photograph holding the flag upside down?

When did the British return this flag to Ireland?

12 Three Irish Divisions - Please return to 'The First World War' for this activity.

Read the two background briefings (pull-out panels) and the wall panel to find these symbols.

Draw a line to connect the name of each Irish Division to its symbol.

10th Irish Division

16th Irish Division

36th Ulster Division



Symbols in 'Claiming the Future'

13 Symbolic Words

Language can be a symbol too. The new Irish Defence Forces used the Irish language for drills even though most of the soldiers did not speak it.

Listen to the instructions for the soldiers' foot drill. **What do you think the words mean?**

Right, left

Sit down



Now look at the words shown on the panel for this display - with Irish on the left and English on the right. Did you notice in the displays upstairs that English was on the left and Irish on the right? This change in the placement of words is a symbol to show when Ireland became an independent country.

Symbols in 'Defending the Peace'

14 Subtle Symbols

Irish symbols are less obvious on modern uniforms. **Tick off the Irish and United Nations (UN) symbols that you can find on the uniforms of these soldiers.**

Hint: Look at their shoulders, caps and vests.



	Irish shamrock	Irish green bar	Irish tricolour	UN world symbol	UN blue colour
Soldier using a mine detector					
Woman soldier in the Lebanon					
Soldier in 'The Future' display case					

Now that you have found many symbols of Ireland used in the past, can you think of any modern Irish symbols? Remember, like symbols from the past, modern symbols can be words, pictures, or music.



Describe or draw your favourite symbols of Ireland used in advertising, sports, or music.

Now that you have finished your search for symbols, check your answers here.

1 Searching the Stokes Tapestry

Wolfhounds (3) – at Hibernia’s foot, on her shield, and in the panel above her

Shamrocks – centre panel and bottom left, around the Irish harp

Irish tricolour – in the middle of the bottom panel

Hibernia – bottom left

Irish tricolour: peace (white) between the Catholic (green) and Protestant (orange)

Ireland linked to Britain:

Shamrocks interwoven with roses and thistles

The British royal crown over the Irish harp

A flag with the Union Jack and harp

The figure of Hibernia, with a British flag

2 Local Police

Irish objects – harp and shamrocks

British object – royal crown

Ireland was part of Great Britain until 1922.

3 Smashed to Pieces

8 pieces

This chair was the throne of the O’Neills, Lords of Tyrone

The breaking was a symbol of the destruction of Gaelic Ireland and of the long-established Gaelic culture.

4 Horn and Harp

An officer: the gorget, worn around the neck, is the symbol of an officer.

The Irish harp is on the belt plate.

5 Flags from Irish Regiments

The Irish harp is used most often - it is on all of the flags.

The sun emerging from behind a cloud, and behind the harp, is only on one flag. It may be a symbol of renewed strength of the Irish.

6 A Riddle

The Irish wolfhound

This Irish regiment fought fiercely in many wars (earning 52 battle honours).

8 The Imperial Irish

Badge symbol: maple leaf (of the Western Irish of Canada, also known as the Irish Fusiliers of Canada).

Symbols on the uniform:

Green Irish hat (caubeen)

Shamrock cap badge

Harps on lapel badges and buttons

Harp and shamrocks on belt

‘Irish kilt’ of the Irish Regiment of Canada

9 Soaring Symbols

The roundel (an identifying disc on the wings) has the colours from the Irish flag.

10 Uniformity

Two badges on the cap (a shamrock and harp)

a harp on the two collar badges

11 A New Flag

It is the Irish Republic Flag, which was flown over the General Post Office building during the Easter Rising in 1916.

Holding a flag upside down is a symbol of disrespect. After they captured the Irish rebels, the British kept this flag as a trophy.

In 1966, on the 50th anniversary of the Rising – the return was a symbol of improved relationships between England and Ireland.

12 Three Irish Divisions

10th Division – green bar – the colour associated with Ireland

16th Division – shamrock – a symbol of Ireland

36th Division – red hand – the symbol of the province of Ulster

13 Symbolic Words

Right, left

The words for sit down are *sui síos*

The foot drill is: right, left, right, left, turn left.

14 Subtle Symbols

Soldier using a mine detector – green bar and Irish tricolour, UN blue colour, UN world symbol

Woman soldier in the Lebanon – Irish tricolour and shamrock, UN blue colour

Soldier in ‘The Future’ display case – UN blue colour and world symbol



ANSWERS

Want to know more?

For more information on exhibitions and education programmes, contact the Education and Outreach Department of the National Museum of Ireland.

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email: bookings@museum.ie

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Cover image: *Erin Go Bragh*, a detail of the Stokes Tapestry, National Museum of Ireland

