

Activity Book for Schools 1

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 have an attachment to Ireland. Such symbols help people to feel that they belong to a group or to a country.

My Name:



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.



Enter the first room after the introduction space.

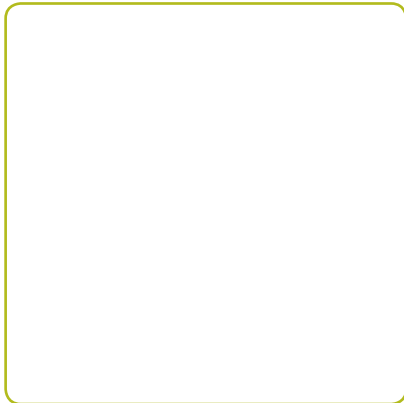
Symbols in 'The British Garrison in Ireland'

1 Searching the Stokes Tapestry - Stop at the large display in the middle of the room.

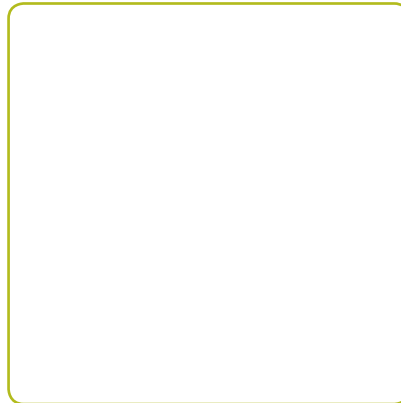
Find and draw these different symbols of Ireland.



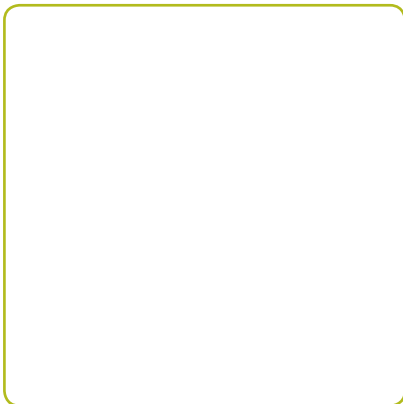
Wolfhound



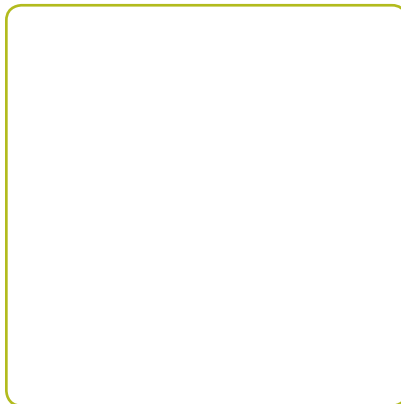
Shamrock



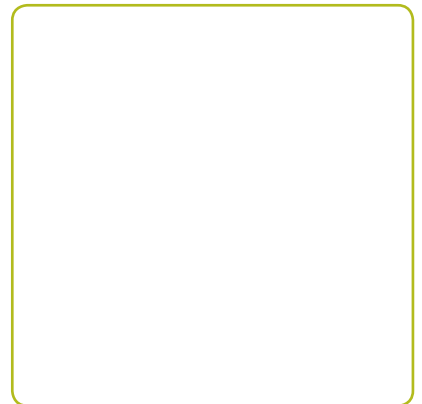
Irish tricolour



Harp



Hibernia*



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

Guess what the colours of the tricolour flag symbolise?



Green

White

Orange



Enter the next room.

Symbols in 'Warfare in Ireland'

2 Smashed to Pieces - Stop at the first display on the wall after 'Warfare in Ireland' at the doorway.

Look closely at the full-sized model of the Tullynogue 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 it was smashed.

Read the label to find out:

Who used this chair as a throne?

Why did the English break the chair?



Leave through the doorway, walk past the row of helmets and enter the next room.

Symbols in 'The Wild Geese'

3 Horn and Harp - Cross the room to the opposite corner, behind the model of a battlefield.

Find the metal object decorated with a horn and harp. Two hundred years ago the harp was used as a symbol of the Irish Legion, Irish soldiers who fought 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.



Go to the end of this room.

Symbols in 'The Irish in the American Civil War'

4

Flags from Irish Regiments - Before you enter the next room, stop at the panel to the left of the doorway.

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	Green colour
Irish Brigade – on the panel at the left of the doorway			
10th Tennessee Irish Regiment – in a display case to the right of the doorway			
17th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment – on a panel on the opposite side of the room			
37th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment – on a panel on the opposite side of the room			

Which symbol is used most often?

5

A Riddle - Stay at the panel about the New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment.



What animal is 'Gentle When Stroked' and 'Fierce When Provoked'?
Find and draw a picture of the answer.



Be a History Detective

'Gentle When Stroked, Fierce When Provoked' was a good motto for the 69th New York Regiment because these soldiers fought fiercely in many wars, over many years.

What animal would you pick to represent an Irish regiment?



Enter the next doorway and stop at the computer screen beside the big painting.

Symbols in 'Irish in the British Service'

6 Marching to Irish Tunes - Listen to some tunes on the computer.

Music can be a symbol too.



How to Listen

- Touch the screen to begin.
- Choose the option '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.

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



Walk through the room, then leave it and walk to the far end of the bridge.

Symbols in 'Taking Flight'

7

Soaring Symbols - Stop at the panel that describes the jet aeroplane.



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



Enter the next room.

Symbols in '1916 – The Easter Rising'

8

A New Flag - Turn left after the large gun on wheels, walk beside the displays along the wall and stop at the green flag to your right.

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?

9 **Three Irish Divisions** - Cross the room to the opposite side (The First World War) for this activity and stop at the displays on and near the wall.

There were Irishmen serving in the British Army in the First World War. Read the two background briefings (pull-out panels) and the panel on the wall in the middle of the room 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



Leave this room and go down the stairs.

Symbols in 'Claiming the Future'

10 Symbolic Words

- Turn left at the bottom of the stairs and stop at the display in the middle of the wall.

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



Soldiers in the new Irish Defence Forces had gone to school when Britain ruled Ireland and the schools could not teach Irish. National Schools began to teach Irish when Ireland became independent in 1922.

Symbols in 'Defending the Peace'

11 Subtle Symbols - Walk past the stairs and enter the large open area. Turn left and stop near the end of the curved wall.

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 (in front of white vehicle)					
Woman soldier in the Lebanon (in display case)					
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)

2 Smashed to Pieces

Eight 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.

3 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.

4 Flags from Irish Regiments

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

5 A Riddle

The Irish wolfhound

7 Soaring Symbols

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

8 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.

9 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

10 Symbolic Words

Right, left

The words for sit down are *sui síos*

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

11 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.

Tel: 01 648 6453 Fax: 01 679 1025 email: bookings@museum.ie

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Cover image: Badge, 16th Irish Division, British Army, First World War, National Museum of Ireland

