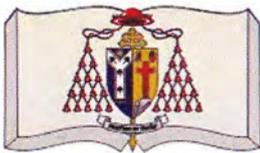
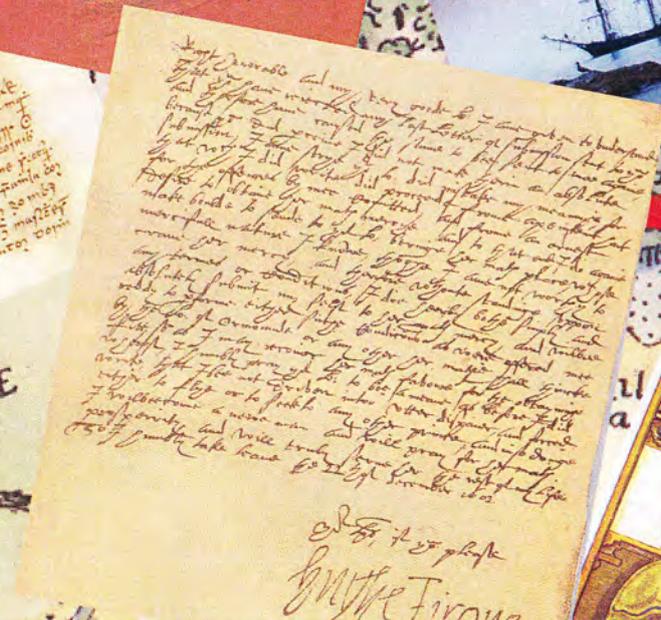
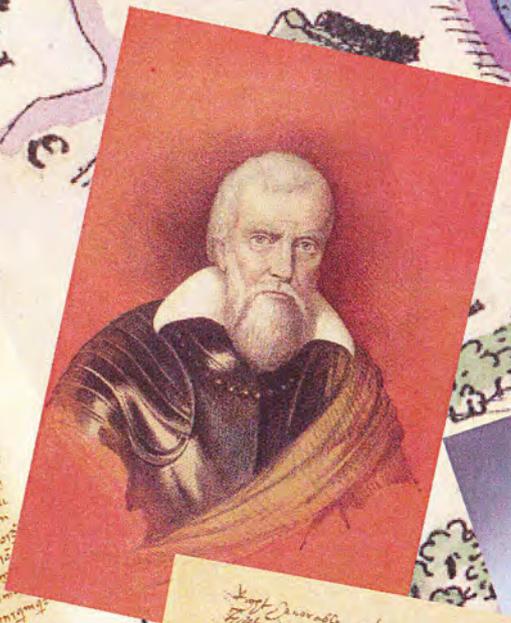


# THE FLIGHT OF THE EARLS KEY STAGE 2 WORK PACK

Compiled by  
**Roddy Hegarty**



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# The Flight of the Earls

On 14 September 1607 a ship left Rathmullan on Lough Swilly, Co. Donegal and set sail for the port of La Coruña in northern Spain. Onboard were the three most important Gaelic chieftains in Ulster and probably in the whole of Ireland. This event has been recorded in history as the Flight of the Earls or, as it is known in Irish, *Imeacht na nIarlaí* (the going away of the Earls).

There were about 100 people on the ship but only two of these were actually Earls. These were Hugh O'Neill, the Earl of Tyrone, and Ruairí O'Donnell, the Earl of Tyrconnell. The rest of the passengers and crew were made up of friends and family as well as servants and soldiers. The man who had brought the ship to Rathmullan was from Fermanagh. His name was Cuchonnacht Maguire. Like O'Neill and O'Donnell he too was an important Gaelic chieftain.

All three of these chieftains had been involved in a war with Queen Elizabeth I of England over who would rule Ireland. Although they were successful at first they eventually lost that war and had to surrender. The chieftains lost much of their power and when Elizabeth died they also had to get to know and work with her successor King James I.

James was a busy man who was also fighting a war with Spain. The Spanish king, Phillip II, had helped the Irish chieftains in their war with Elizabeth but he too had died and was replaced by his son Phillip III who was happy to make peace with England.

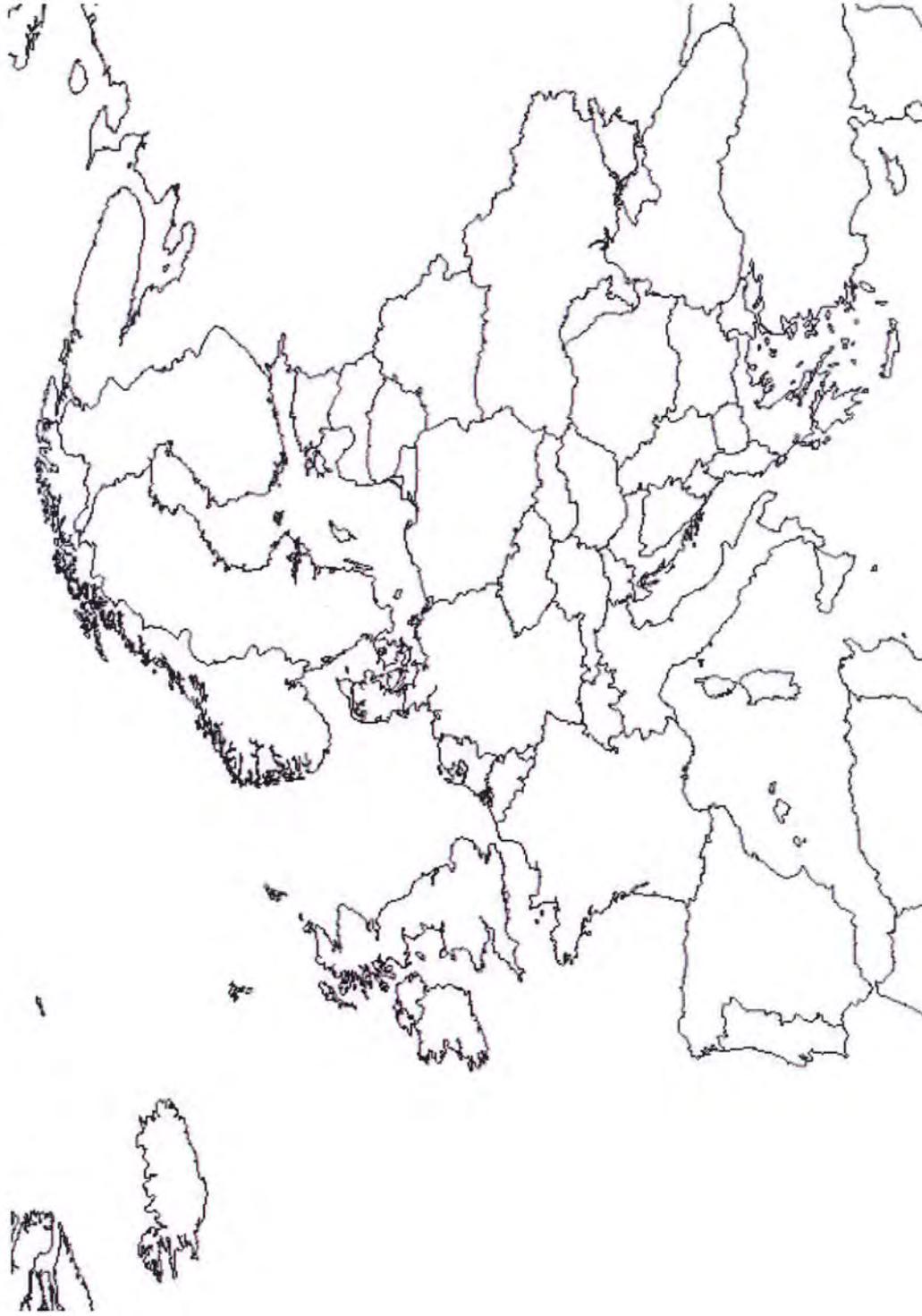
When the Earls left Ireland in 1607 they wanted to go to Spain to get Phillip III to help them to fight another war, this time against James, to reclaim the power that they had lost. The new Spanish king was less interested in Ireland than his father. However, he was still happy to give some help to the chieftains as they had helped his father and Spain in the past.

The Earls had been tricked by some of James' men in Ireland into plotting against the King. This made life there very dangerous. So as they left they thought that they would be captured and taken to London where they might be executed for treason. They had to leave Ireland in a hurry and some of them even left members of the own families behind.

Alongside the Earls were a number of other important people. One of these was a man called Tadhg Ó Cianáin. He was a sort of historian and kept a diary of the journey that the Earls made. Another was a poet called Eoghan Rua Mac an Bhaird. He wrote a poem about the Flight of the Earls after his Chieftain, Ruairí O'Donnell, died in Rome in July 1608.

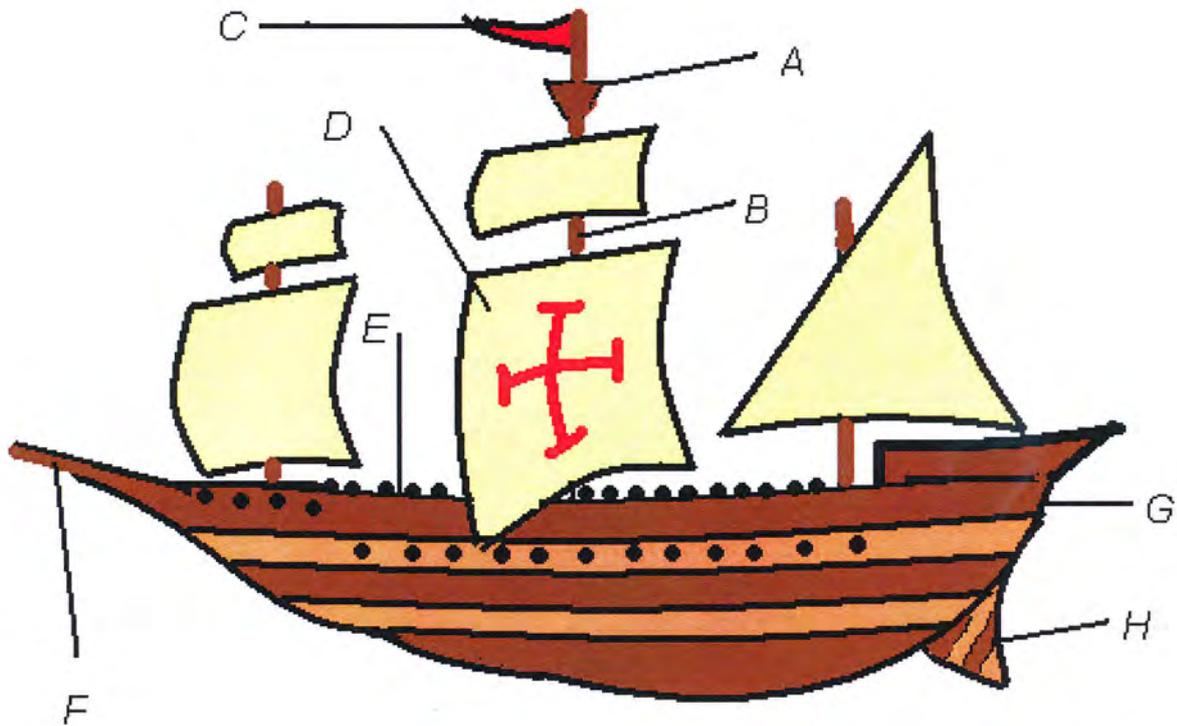
Some children also made this trip and one of these was Hugh O'Neill's seven year old son Seán. He travelled with his father and mother to Louvain in Flanders where he later grew up. He became an important member of the King of Spain's government and was a valuable soldier, leading a regiment of Irishmen in the Spanish army. He always wanted to return to Ireland to finish the war that his father had fought but was never able to get the Spanish to help him. He died in a battle near Barcelona in 1641. He had become the Earl of Tyrone after his father died in Rome in 1616.

**Can you name any of these countries? Have you been to any of these countries?**



**Think of the places that you have been, for example, on holiday or to visit family members. Can you identify any of the countries in this map? Colour or shade those that you have been to and discuss with the class what it was like. What was different about that country? How did you travel? Did you need a passport or did you need a different type of money? Do you remember what the food was like? What do you think it would be like to live there all of the time?**

Can you identify and label the following parts of the ship?



- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_
- D. \_\_\_\_\_
- E. \_\_\_\_\_
- F. \_\_\_\_\_
- G. \_\_\_\_\_
- H. \_\_\_\_\_

1. How does this ship differ from a modern vessel?
2. Find out how fast it would have travelled and what it was made from.
3. Find out how a ship's crew would have navigated 400 years ago.

## Look closely at this coat of arms



1. What do the different parts of this coat of arms tell us about the person for whom it was drawn?
2. In what language is the motto written?
3. Find out what it says.
4. What other symbols, flags or coats of arms have the same or similar parts?

**O'Neill is one of the oldest surnames in Europe dating back about one thousand years.**

**Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone was given his title by Elizabeth I. However, he valued his Irish title 'The O'Neill' much more and used this to show that he was both powerful in Ulster and Ireland and that he was a descendant of Niall the once great High King. He was regarded by King Phillip of Spain as the third best soldier in Europe following his crushing defeat of the English at the Battle of the Yellow Ford in 1598.**

An extract from Tadhg Ó Cianáin's account of the Flight of the Earls, 1609



In the name of God. Here are some of the adventures and proceedings of O'Neill from the time that he left Ireland. First, he was with the Lord Justice of Ireland, Sir Arthur Chichester, at Slane. He received a letter from John Bath on Thursday the seventh of September, the year of the Lord at that time being one thousand six hundred and seven. It was stated in the letter that Maguire, Donnachadh O'Briain, Mathew Tullie and John Rath came with a French ship for O'Neill and the Earl of Tyrconnell to Lough Swilly opposite Rathmullan in Fanad.

O'Neill took his leave of the Lord Justice on the following Saturday. He went that night to Mellfont, where Sir Garret Moore was. On the following day he went to Dundalk. He proceeded on Monday from there by the high road of the Fewes to Silverbridge across Slieve Fuaid to Armagh, over the Blackwater to Dungannon and on to Crieve, one of his island habitations. He made a stop and rested at Crieve on Tuesday. He proceeded in the name of God from Crieve on Wednesday over Slieve Sios. He was that night in Muinter Luinigh in the vicinity of Lough Beighfine. On the following day he reached Burn Dennet. He rested from midday until nightfall. After that he passed over the great shallow on Lough Foyle and straight forward to Ballindrait. The son of O'Donnell was awaiting them at that time.

They went to Rathmelton, with the daylight shining on them. They proceeded to Rathmullan where the ship we have mentioned was at anchor. They found Ruairí O'Donnell, Earl of Tyrconnell, with the earlier mentioned men, together with many of the tribe and followers of the Earl, putting stores of food and drink into the ship.

**WHO WAS TADHG Ó CIANÁIN?**

Ó Cianain was one of ninety-nine people who had sailed from Rathmullan as part of the Flight of the Earls. He kept a journal of O'Neill's journey across the northern part of Ireland from Slane, via Dundalk, Armagh and Dungannon and on to Donegal. He also detailed the voyage to France and the journey from there to Louvain in Belgium and on to Rome. His account was probably written in Rome whilst he was living there in the household of Hugh O'Neill (Earl of Tyrone).



## Ó Ciannáin's description of the voyage from Ireland to France

They went on board ship about mid day on Friday. Then they hoisted their sails. They moved close to the harbour side. They sent two boats' crews to get water and to search for fire wood. The son of Mac Sweeny of Fanad and a party of people from the district came upon them and pursued them. They fought with one another. With difficulty the party from the boats brought water and fire wood with them. About the middle of the same night they hoisted their sails a second time. They went out a great distance into the sea.

The night was bright, quiet and calm, with a breeze from the south-west. They proposed putting in to Aranmore because they needed to get food and drink. An exceedingly strong storm and bad weather arose against them, together with fog and rain so that they were driven away from shore. They crossed the sea far and wide. The storm lasted until the middle of the following night.

After they left Donegal, they set a course straight past Sligo and straight ahead until they could see Croagh Patrick in Connacht. They feared that the king's fleet at Galway might intercept them they turned and sailed further out to sea to make directly towards Spain. When they had been at sea for thirteen days, in strong storms and dangerously bad weather, they decided to place relics in the sea, trailing them behind the ship. These included a gold cross belonging to O'Neill which contained part of the cross of the crucifixion. This, they thought brought them great relief from the storms.

Since they found it impossible to make it to Spain, as the wind came straight against them, on Sunday the thirteenth of September they decide to head for the port of Criosc in Brittany. It was the Earls, because of the shortage of food and water and because of the sickness onboard, who advised that they should try to land in France. They travelled for two days and two nights under full sail. They reached no land at all in that time. They did not even know what coast they might be close to.

At about mid-day on the Tuesday they saw three very large ships approaching as if from the direction of Spain. At first they thought that these might belong to the king of England. But so desperate were they that they decided to risk their own safety and attempted to approach the other ships. They found it impossible for some time to get close enough to communicate with the other vessels because of the weather but eventually learnt that they were Scandinavians on their way back from Spain and that they were at that time in the Flemish Sea close to the coast with England.

They had no pilot who knew this part of the sea so followed the other ships until they lost track of them in the darkness. A Frenchman on board told them not to fear that he could direct them to land in Normandy before the next day. They had originally intended to travel to La Coruña in Spain but because of the hardships they had suffered and their weariness they were glad to land in France.

### What does Ó Cianain's story tell us about the following?

- The country the Earls were leaving behind.
- The preparations for their journey.
- The journey and the weather.
- The emotions that the passengers might have experienced .

**Discuss with your class how travel has changed since 1607.  
How might we make this journey today?**

Can you find out what these words are in ... ?

ENGLISH	IRISH	SPANISH	FRENCH
Ship		Buque	
Earl	Éireannach		Irlandais
	cailín		Le comte
	seirbhíseach	criado	La jeune fille
		alimento	La nourriture
boy		chico	
	foschadh		L'abri
water	uisce		
king			

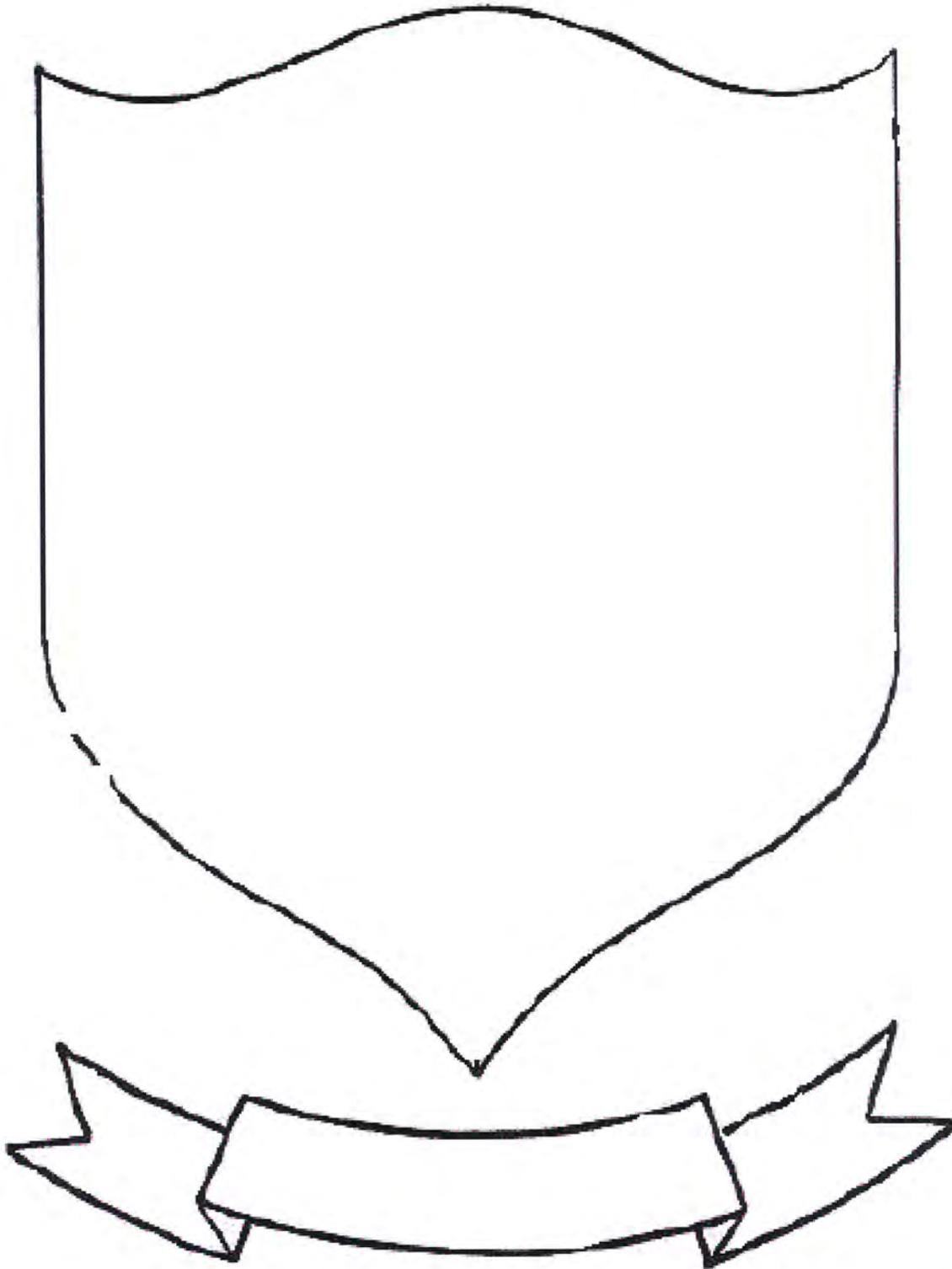
**What resources did you use?**

**Would these have been available to Seán O'Neill 400 years ago?**

**Can you discover with your classmates what these words are in any other languages?**

**What other words might we need today if we had to make a journey like the one Sean made in 1607?**

**Research and design your own coat of arms.**



**Why not design a coat of arms that tells us something about you, your class, your school or club. You will need to think of things that can tell us about who you are and what you do best. But remember that the coat of arms does this mainly by using pictures and colours.**

**Don't forget to add a crest, at the top, and a motto in the banner underneath.**

**From *A Lament for the Princes of Tyrone and Tyrconnel***

By James Clarence Mangan

And who can marvel o'er thy grief,  
Or who can blame thy flowing tears,  
Who knows their source?  
O'Donnell, Dunnasava's chief,  
Cut off amid his vernal years,  
Lies here a corse  
Beside his brother Cathbar, whom  
Tyrconnell of the Helmets mourns  
In deep despair:  
For valour, truth, and comely bloom,  
For all that greatens and adorns,  
A peerless pair.

Oh, had these twain, and he, the third,  
The Lord of Mourne, O'Niall's son  
(Their mate in death),  
A prince in look, in deed, and word,  
Had these three heroes yielded on  
The field their breath,  
Oh, had they fallen on Criffan's plain,  
There would not be a town or clan  
From shore to sea,  
But would with shrieks bewail the slain,  
Or chant aloud the exulting rann  
Of jubilee!

When high the shout of battle rose,  
On fields where Freedom's torch still burned  
Through Erin's gloom,  
If one, if barely one of those  
Were slain, all Ulster would have mourned  
The hero's doom!  
If at Athboy, where hosts of brave  
Ulidian horsemen sank beneath  
The shock of spears,  
Young Hugh O'Neill had found a grave,  
Long must the North have wept his death  
With heart-wrung tears!

**This poem was translated into English by Mangan. It had originally been written in Irish by O'Donnell's bard Eoghan Rua Mac an Bhaird following the Earl's death in Rome. The opening line of the poem depicts O'Donnell's sister Nuala as a women in mourning who has been left abandoned by the death of her protector. This has been seen as a metaphor for the Gaelic Irish who were also left without their leaders following the flight of the Earls in 1607. What else doe the poem tell us about how the Gaelic Irish may have felt?**

## Where does your name come from?

Here are some the surnames of those who left as part of the Flight of the Earls. Not all of these names are Irish. Can you pick out those which originally came from somewhere else? What does this tell us about Ireland 400 years ago?

### **O'Neill.**

Descendant of Niall of the nine hostages, a once famous high king of Ireland. The name is mainly from Tyrone and surrounding counties. This is one of the oldest surnames in Europe.

### **O'Donnell.**

Descendant of Conaill, one of the sons of Niall of the Nine Hostages. The Family were rulers of Tír Chonaill or Donegal.

### **Maguire.**

Son of the brown haired man. The family were chieftains in Fermanagh and had a castle at Enniskillen.

### **Ó Cianain, Keenan.**

This Co. Fermanagh family were noted historians to the Maguire family.

### **Crawford.**

This name comes from Lanarkshire in Scotland. It originally meant rock and probably described a landmark.

### **Hovenden.**

This is a Dutch or English name. Henry Hovenden was O'Neill's secretary. The Hovenden family lived at Elagh castle in Inisowen at the time of the Spanish Armada.

### **Quinn.**

Part of the greater O'Neill dynasty Quinn is the most common name in Co. Tyrone.

### **Mac an Bhaird, Ward.**

Meaning son of the Bard or poet it comes from near Glenties in south Donegal.

### **Bath.**

This is an Anglo-Norman name from the south west of England. It has probably been in Ireland since the twelfth century.

### **O'Hagan.**

Meaning descendant of the Young one the name comes from Tyrone. An important family within O'Neill's dynasty.

Someone in your class may have a surname that comes from another part of the world. Why not explore where these names have come from and see what this can tell us about our community, school or local area.

Discuss with your classmates why you think people have different names.

# Teacher's Notes

This work pack has been created to assist the Key Stage 2 teacher in the delivery of various aspects of the curriculum primarily in years 6 and 7 . However it may find uses elsewhere in a modified form. It is intended that it be used as part of a day long presentation and in conjunction with an accompanying *Powerpoint* programme.

The pack was initially assembled by the Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich Library and Archive to highlight the story of the Flight of the Earls in 1607. A series of presentations were delivered as part of an outreach programme over a period of two years and implemented in more than twenty primary schools. The worksheets are intended to encourage discussion on themes of history, geography, technological change, art, maths and language. The nature of the topic, relocation and its impact on the individual and family circle, will also present opportunities to develop discussion on contemporary issues including migration, identity and citizenship.

The introductory section provides a concise account of the story surrounding the events of 1607 and what has become known as the Flight of the Earls. No presumed knowledge of the events or characters involved has been made in developing this resource. The story of the Flight can therefore be introduced either as a piece of reading or as a stand alone history topic beyond the Key stage 2 syllabus. As the story mentions place names that may be familiar to some pupils the package might also be employed to introduce a local studies dimension to classroom activities. Whilst the underlying aim of the pack is to inform the pupil about the events of 1607 and the Flight of the Earls in particular, the worksheets have been designed to address the needs of the revised curriculum in as far as they deal not simply with the headline topic but also a variety of thematic approaches to storytelling.

## **Worksheet 1**

This seeks to familiarise the pupil with the various countries across the European continent both within the European Union and without. One suggested exercise is to detail the journey taken by a member of the class on a trip to or from one of these countries. This should detail to time taken and the various modes of transport employed. Other issues such as passports, food , language, money, navigation and clothing can be drawn into the discussion and these can be compared with the journey made by the earls and their entourage four centuries ago.

## **Worksheet 2**

Learning and labelling parts of a ship. As most of the pupils will probably never have travelled by ship this presents the opportunity to investigate this method of transport. To discuss the advantages and disadvantages of sailing and wind power as well as the terminology applied to the different parts of the vessel. Pupils can learn about port and starboard and the fact that a vessel of this nature 400 years ago might have been expected to travel 160-180 km per day in favourable conditions. This can also act as a link to Famine migration as part of their Key Stage 2 history study.

## **Worksheet 3**

This is primarily a language exercise dealing with adjectives. The coat of arms is comprised of three elements. At the top, the crest—representing what is the best characteristic of the individual for whom it has been drawn. What does this crest say about O'Neill?

In the centre, the shield—the symbols represent the nature of the person. Questions might include naming five adjectives that describe a lion and what does this say about O'Neill?

Finally at the bottom is the Motto. This can be seen as representing ambition. The class could be asked to discuss and define this word. And to offer some of their own ambitions. The origins of the Red Hand motif can be explained and the class could be asked to state where else or when the symbols is used.

#### **Worksheet 4**

Reading from the diary extract by Tadhg Ó Cianáin the class might discuss other famous diarists that they have heard about. They might also ask how many of them keep a diary and what are the reasons behind doing so. A useful exercise may also be to keep a diary or log of either a week in their life, a journey such as a school trip or holiday or simply a record of the weather for a week.

#### **Worksheet 5**

Using the diary entry on worksheet 4 along with the maps and illustration on this worksheet the class should explore how transport has changed in this country over the last four hundred years. How would they make the journey to Rathmullan today? How does a modern map of Ulster or Ireland differ from that from 400 years ago? Why do they think O'Neill took the route that he did?

#### **Worksheet 6**

Having listened to the account of the voyage the class should be asked to discuss the emotions that the crew and passengers may have been experiencing as they left, as they made the journey and as they landed in France. They could also explore how the weather had an impact on the journey and on navigation

#### **Worksheet 7**

Using a dictionary the class working individually or in pairs should find out what the equivalent word is in each language and fill in the gaps. This also provides the opportunity to discuss what languages are spoken by people in the class. What languages are spoken by their family or friends. Have they ever had to learn a different language?

An alternative version of this worksheet is appended to allow work to include Polish and Portuguese.

#### **Worksheet 8**

Each pupil should review worksheet 3 and create a coat of arms for them selves. This should consist of a crest demonstrating what they as best at doing or most proud of.. It should also have a shield which symbolises who they are, where they are from and consist of symbols that tell the viewer something without using words. Finally they should be encouraged to think of an appropriate ambition that might be represented in the motto ribbon at the bottom.

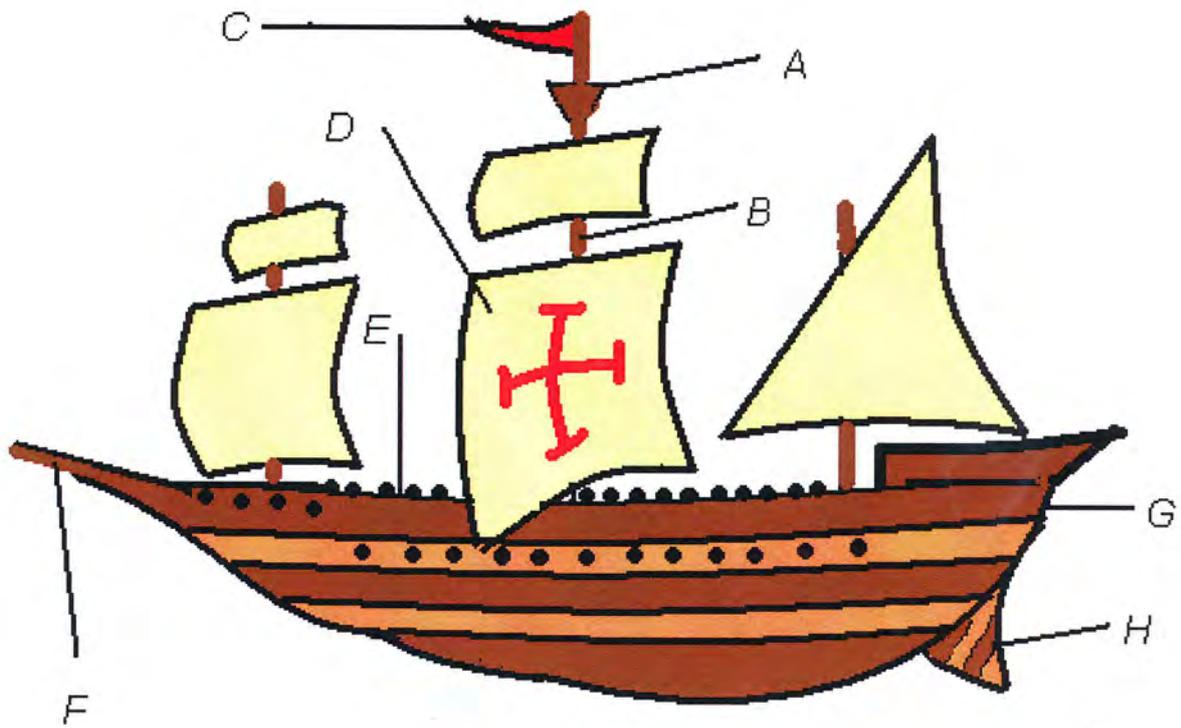
#### **Worksheet 9**

This sheet may be of value to those children who are strong readers and for whom many of the other tasks do not represent a challenge. The poetry tells of great loss and of emotion and unfulfilled ambition. Perhaps they could write a piece of poetry to reflect their own sense of achievement or loss. Or to remember someone important who has died or achieved some distinction.

#### **Worksheet 10**

Surnames are important markers of personality and identity. Where a surname comes from or what its meaning is can often tell us something about our ancestors. The variety of surnames in our classroom, home environment or street reflects the diversity of our society. The children should be encouraged to explore their own names via books and the internet. They can also explore why Family history is so important for some people.. How does society here differ from four hundred years ago and how its it similar?

Can you identify and label the following parts of the ship?



A. Crow's Nest

B. Mast

C. Flag

D. Sail

E. Deck

F. Bow

G. Stern

H. Rudder

1. How does this ship differ from a modern vessel?
2. Find out how fast it would have travelled and what it was made from.
3. Find out how a ship's crew would have navigated 400 years ago.

Can you find out what these words are in ... ?

ENGLISH	IRISH	SPANISH	FRENCH
Ship	long	burque	Le navire
Irish	Éireannach	Irlandés	Irlandais
Earl	iarla	conde	Le comte
girl	cailín	chica	La jeune fille
servant	seirbhíseach	criado	Le serviteur
food	bia	alimento	La nourriture
boy	gasúr	chico	Le garçon
shelter	foscadh	abrigo	L'abri
water	uisce	agua	L'eau
king	rí	rey	Le roi

What resources did you use?

Would these have been available to Seán O'Neill 400 years ago?

Can you discover with your classmates what these words are in any other languages?

What other words might we need today if we had to make a journey like the one Sean made in 1607?

Can you find out what these words are in ... ?

ENGLISH	IRISH	POTUGUESE	POLSKI
Ship		Navio	
Earl	Éireannach		Irlandczycy
	cailín		hrabia
	seirbhíseach	criado	dziewczyna
boy		alimento	pokarm
	foshadh	Criança	
water	uisce		schronisko
king			

**What resources did you use?**

**Would these have been available to Seán O Neill 400 years ago?**

**Can you discover with your classmates what these words are in any other languages?**

**What other words might we need today if we had to make a journey like the one Sean made in 1607?**

Can you find out what these words are in ... ?

ENGLISH	IRISH	PORTUGUESE	POLSKI
Ship	long	navio	statek
Irish	Éireannach	Irlandês	Irlandczycy
Earl	iarla	conde	hrabia
girl	cailín	garota	dziewczyna
servant	seirbhíseach	criado	slużący
food	bia	alimento	pokarm
boy	gasúr	chico	chłopak
shelter	foscadh	refúgio	schronisko
water	uisce	água	woda
king	rí	rei	król

What resources did you use?

Would these have been available to Seán O Neill 400 years ago?

Can you discover with your classmates what these words are in any other languages?

What other words might we need today if we had to make a journey like the one Sean made in 1607?