

# The Market Stone & The United Irishmen

The Society of United Irishmen was founded on the 14th of October 1791 in Peggy's Barclay's Tavern in Crown Entry, Belfast.

The founding members were Theobald Wolfe Tone, James Napper Tandy, Thomas Russell, William Sinclair, Samuel Wilson, William Tennent, Robert Simms and William Simms

## ORIGINAL DECLARATION OF THE UNITED IRISHMEN

**WE HAVE RESOLVED** - That the weight of English influence on the Government of this country is so great as to require a cordial union among all the people of Ireland, to maintain that balance which is essential to the preservation of our liberties and the promotion of our commerce

That the sole constitutional mode by which this influence can be opposed is by a complete and radical reform of the representation of the people in Parliament.

That no reform is practicable, efficacious or just, which shall not include Irishmen of every religious persuasion.

**Wolfe Tone said:**

To break the connection with England.....and to assert the independence of my country - these were my objects. To...substitute the common name of Briton in the denominations of Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter - these were my means.

From the United Irishmen "catechism"

What have you got in your hand? A green bough

Where did it grow? In America

Where did it bud? In France

Where are you going to plant it? In the crown of Great Britain

In the period leading up to the 1798 Rebellion the United Irishmen and Defenders of Forkhill and Mullaghbane often met at this large boulder in the townland of Shanroe. (The sub-townland is known as Quilly) where a linen market took place. There is a rough yard measure or yelle on the side of the stone and local people brought woven linen from their homes to pretend that a sale was taking place. This site was less than a mile from the military barracks.

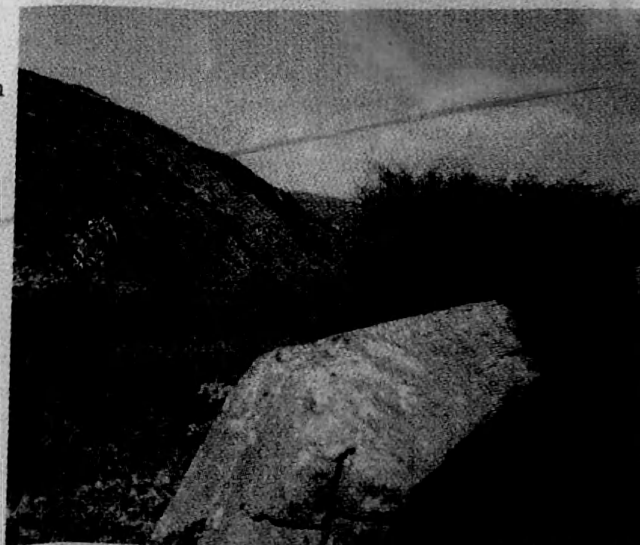
Local tradition asserts that Jemmy Hope came to meetings at the stone to administer the United Oath and to instruct the Defenders in the ideals of the society.

## THE MARKET STONE

I stood beside the market stone  
The year was ninety-eight  
To meet a man from Sheelagh  
Whose word would carry weight.  
For we got news from Saintfield  
That the time was drawing near,  
When the bright pikes would glisten  
For the cause we held so dear.

We had eyes up in Slieve Gullion;  
We had hide-outs in Slieve Mor,  
Slieve Brack and Carricknagavna  
As in forty-one before  
Though the Scotch Horse were in at  
Belmont,  
And Roder Riders Too,  
We forged good steel in Quilly  
Beside the old Crag-Dhu.

While over in Carna Gishen  
All in the year before  
The ashen shafts we fashioned  
Till a finished look it bore.



But no man came from Sheelagh  
Though we got word from Down  
Brought by a linen-weaver  
From Carrickfergus town.

And the news he brought, I think you,  
It left us feeling low,  
For traitors they were busy,  
As in the long ago.  
That Ballynahinch saw blossoming grass,  
Downpatrick jail was full,  
Carrickfergus had a gibet,  
Underneath a gaping skull,

So we lost good years in waiting  
For that order never came,  
But I heard in long years after  
A Duffy was to blame.  
So still at Carna Gishen  
The ashen handles lie,  
And from the forge at Quilly  
No more bright sparks will fly.

McSherry's own he never will bear  
The tramp of marching men  
We might have done a little  
Had we got the...