

Great Scots-Irish Americans



PUPIL WORKBOOK

In this unit you will have the opportunity to:

- Take part in a balloon debate
- Research using the Internet
- Work independently
- Complete a project
- Make an oral presentation



Can You Name?.....

Every country has leaders in all areas of public life. For a small country we have produced a range of famous people who have contributed to life not just within the British Isles but across the world. Famous writers like the poet Seamus Heaney, the Nobel Laureate and the dramatist Brian Friel both came from County Londonderry. The actors Kenneth Branagh and Stephen Rea are from Northern Ireland. We have produced sporting heroes too like George Best in football and Willie John McBride in rugby.

When you start to look at some of the great figures of America's past you find that quite a few of them came from an Ulster-Scots or Scots-Irish background.

Let's begin by seeing whether you know the names of some famous Americans. You could work on your own, with a partner or in a group to find the answers.

Give the name of any:

Famous American business man

Famous American film actor

Famous American adventurer

Famous figure from the days of the Wild West

Famous American singer.....

Famous American inventor

Famous American writer

Famous American politician

Below are 9 categories. You have also been given the names of some famous Scots-Irish. Some of them you will know or have heard of, some may be new to you. You may need to use a reference book or a search engine on the internet to find out who they were and what they did if you do not already know.

Match up the person to the category for which they are known.

CATEGORIES

Business	Acting	Inventor
Music	Religion	Education
Politics	Action Hero	Military

FAMOUS SCOTS-IRISH

Sam Houston

Crystal Gayle

William Clark

James Stewart

Davy Crockett

John Dunlap

Mark Twain

Randolph Hearst

John Wayne

Francis Makemie

Cyrus McCormick

George Hamilton IV

William Tennant

Charles Thomson

Stonewall Jackson

Practising Your Research Skills

On the following pages you will find a number of cloze passages about some famous Scots-Irish men.

You will need to do some research in order to fill in the missing information.

- Sam Houston
- William Clark
- Andrew Jackson
- Charles Thomson
- Woodrow Wilson
- Mark Twain
- Stephen Foster
- Francis Makemie



Sam Houston

Find out the following information about Sam Houston to fill in the blanks:

Sam Houston was born on
at
in the state of . His grandfather had emigrated from the
area of county

Sam worked as a teacher before moving into politics. His mentor
was another Ulster-Scot and future president
..... . Sam was elected to the United States
Congress in

In 1833 Sam moved to Texas which was trying to break away from
..... rule. Soon he was appointed
..... of the new revolutionary army. He led
this army against the forces of Santa Anna at the Battle of.....
..... When Texas gained its independence,
Sam became its first

Extension Activity

Look at a map of the United States and find the city named after Sam Houston. It is the fifth largest city in America. See what else you can find out about it and create a fact file on it.



William Clark

Find out the following information about William Clark to fill in the blanks:

William Clark was born in in Caroline County in the state of He had brothers and sisters.

In 1789 he joined the.....

and reached the rank of One of the junior

officers who served under him was Lewis.

In 1804 Clark and Lewis began an adventure together. At the request of

Presidentthey were going to map the

territory of the Purchase. The two led their

Corps offoryears right across America.

Clark also served as superintendent offor the Louisiana

Territory and as from 1813-1820.

Extension

Activity

Research the Lewis and Clark Expedition using the Internet.

Then either prepare either an illustrated talk for your class, a wall display or a fact file on their adventure.



Cyrus McCormick

Find out the following information about Cyrus McCormick to fill in the blanks:

Cyrus McCormick was born in He grew up on a farm in County near Lexington. His family originally came from in County Tyrone.

In Cyrus built his first Machine. He and his brothers worked for years to improve and develop it.

When his sales and business expanded Cyrus moved it to This was a convenient site because he could use the river to move the machines to the southern states and the to move machines eastwards.

By the 1850s, Cyrus was of the biggest harvesting company in the world.

Extension

Activity

Create a fact file or a PowerPoint presentation on Cyrus McCormick.

Here is a website to help you get started:

www.invent.org/hall_of_fame/101.html



Andrew Jackson

Find out the following information about Andrew Jackson to fill in the blanks:

Andrew Jackson was born 18 months after his parents left
..... near in County Antrim. He grew up
to become the President of the United States of America.

Andrew was born at the on
1767. His father died before he was born and his mother died when he was
only

In 1788 Andrew moved to in Tennessee and
opened a office. Here he met
who became his wife.

He first entered politics as a member of the Convention
of Tennessee and he went on to become the first congressman and then
senator for that state.

A sad event occurred on 22nd December 1828 when
..... just before Andrew became
president. He served terms as president and lived another 25
years, dying on 8th June 1845 at the age of

Extension Activity

Research the life of one of the other
Ulster-Scots Presidents.





Charles Thomson

Find out the following information about Charles Thomson to fill in the blanks:

Charles Thomson was born in County
near the town of on
..... . When he was only years
old, his family emigrated to America. Charles' had already
died and his died on the ship so Charles arrived in
America as an orphan.

When he grew up he became a and then a
..... but he is best remembered for his work as
..... to the Continental
..... . He and John Hancock were the only
two to sign the original

Charles also designed the
.....

He died on in



Woodrow Wilson

Find out the following information about Woodrow Wilson to fill in the blanks:

Woodrow Wilson was the grandson of..... Wilson who emigrated from in county

Woodrow was born on in, Virginia. He was the son of a minister.

Woodrow studied at University and then worked as a in, Georgia.

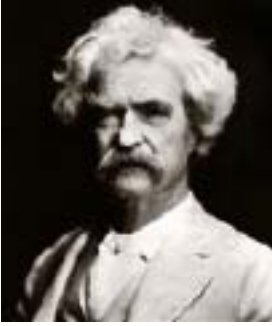
After studying for a PhD at University, he became president of University in 1902.

His first role in politics was as of New Jersey.

Within years he was the President of the USA.

Extension Activity

Take a virtual tour of Woodrow Wilson's birthplace at <http://www.woodrowwilson.org/index.cfm?action=a26&id=44,2176>



Mark Twain

Find out the following information about Mark Twain to fill in the blanks:

Mark Twain's real name was

His ancestors came to America from.....in County Antrim.

Mark was born on in

His parents had..... children. They had a slave girl name

..... who looked after the children. She was a

gifted storyteller and Mark always remembered her stories.

Mark worked as a before taking a job as a

pilot on the River steamboats.

His first published story was

His most famous book was called

Mark died on aged



Stephen Foster

Find out the following information about Stephen Foster to fill in the blanks:

Stephen Foster was born on

in, Pennsylvania. He had older brothers and sisters.

He always loved music and had his first song published when he was only

His first big hit was a song called

Foster studied many different types of music but he is mostly associated with black-face music.

Although he wrote many popular songs, he never made a lot of money.

He died almost penniless on

He was only years old.

*Extension
Activity*

Either:

- Research the Christy Minstrels

Or:

- Take one of Stephen Foster's songs, perform or record it and illustrate it with the use of images



Francis Makemie

Find out the following information about Francis Makemie to fill in the blanks:

Francis Makemie was born in

County in

He had to go to to study because

..... could not attend university in Ireland.

In 1680 he received an invitation from Colonel

to come to America. There he both preached and worked as a

..... . He married his partner, William

Anderson's daughter. Her name was

The very first official Presbyterian meeting in Virginia took place

in Francis' home on

In the first presbytery in America was formed and

Francis served as the first

He died in



Famous Scots-Irish

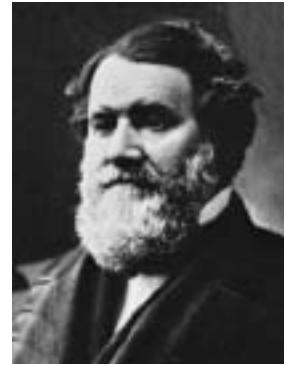
On the following pages you can read about some of the men who have played a role in the development of the United States of America. Their ancestors came from Ulster and they were proud to be known as Ulster-Scots or Scots-Irish. Some served as soldiers; others were politicians; some built up businesses or were inventors; some pushed the frontiers of the New World charting unmapped territory while others wrote or composed songs. All were part of the American Connection between Ulster and the United States of America.



Read about:

SAM HOUSTON

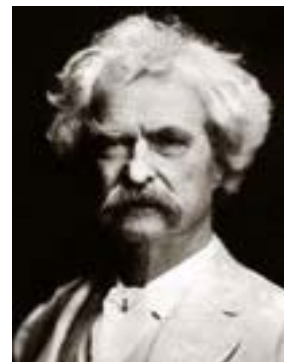
WILLIAM CLARK



CYRUS McCORMACK

ANDREW JACKSON

CHARLES THOMSON



WOODROW WILSON

MARK TWAIN

STEPHEN FOSTER

FRANCIS MAKEMIE



Sam Houston



Sam Houston was born in Timber Ridge, Rockbridge County, Virginia on 2nd March 1793. His grandfather, John Huston, (the spelling of their surname was changed when they arrived in America) emigrated from the Larne area of County Antrim around 1740. They first landed in Pennsylvania but then made their way to Virginia where they settled. John Houston was a founder of Providence Presbyterian Church in Rockbridge County in 1746 and the church's first elder. The minister was Rev. John Brown from Londonderry.

As a young man Sam Houston was both a teacher and a militiaman. Eventually he moved into politics where his mentor was Andrew Jackson, another Ulster-Scot. He was elected to the United States Congress in 1823. In 1827 he was elected Governor of Tennessee.

In 1833 Sam sought another challenge. He moved to Texas where a revolution was in the planning to overthrow the Mexicans who ruled that area at the time. He attended the convention at San Felipe de Austin which began the breakaway from Mexico and was appointed commander-in-chief of the new revolutionary army. It was as commander-in-chief that he took part in one of the most famous episodes of the history of the American West - the Alamo.

The Mission Station at the Alamo which was the scene of a heroic battle between the Americans whose leader was Sam Houston and the overwhelming Mexican forces led by President Santa Anna.



Six weeks after the Alamo, Houston led the Texas Militia at the battle of San Jacinto where they routed the Mexicans. After the Battles of the Alamo and San Jacinto Texas gained its independence from the control of Mexico and Sam Houston became the state's first president.

Houston was a forceful and courageous personality on the American frontier in the 19th century. His name is remembered through the city of Houston, Texas, the fifth largest city in the U.S.A.

Remember the Alamo

A hundred and eighty were challenged by Travers to die,
By a line that he drew with his sword as the battle drew nigh.
A man that crossed over the line was for glory,
And he that was left better fly,
And over the line crossed a hundred and seventy nine.

Hey, Up, Santa Anna, they're killing your soldiers below,
So the rest of Texas will know, and remember the Alamo.

Jim Bowie lay dying, his blood and his powder were dry,
But his knife at the ready to take him a few in reply.
Young Davy Crockett lay laughing and dying,
The blood and the sweat in his eyes,
For Texas and freedom a man was more willing to die.

Hey, Up, Santa Anna, they're killing your soldiers below,
So the rest of Texas will know and remember the Alamo.

A courier came to battle, once bloody and loud.
And found only skin and bones where he once left a crowd.
Fear not, little darling, of dying, if the world is sovereign and free,
For, we'll fight to the last for as long as liberty be.

Hey, up, Santa Anna, they're killing your soldiers below,
So the rest of Texas will know, and remember the Alamo.
And remember the Alamo.

*This song can be played on the guitar using only 5 chords—
G, D, C, Bmin and G7*



William Clark

William Clark 1 August 1770-1 September 1836

William Clark was a soldier and explorer. He was born in Caroline County in Virginia in 1770, the sixth son and ninth child of a Scots-Irish family. He joined the Kentucky Militia in 1789 and then, along with his famous brother George Rogers Clark, served in the regular army. He reached the rank of captain.

In 1796 he left the army and moved back to his family home to run the estate. Perhaps that is all we would ever have heard about him if it were not that he was chosen to share command of one of the most ambitious and exciting expeditions of discovery ever undertaken. One of the men who had served under him in the army, Meriwether Lewis, was given the task by President Jefferson of mapping the huge tract of land known as the Louisiana Purchase. He asked his old friend William Clark to join him.

From 1804-1806 Clark and Meriwether Lewis led a band of men across America. The co-captains led their Corps of Discovery across land never charted before. Clark's special contributions to the expedition were his fine maps and his illustrations of the animals they encountered.

When he returned from their adventure he served as brigadier general of militia and superintendent of Indian affairs for the Louisiana Territory (1807-1813) and governor of that territory from 1813-1820. He established Fort Shelby, the first U.S. post in Wisconsin and negotiated treaties with various Indian tribes. He was also surveyor general for Illinois, Missouri and Arkansas. He was greatly admired by the native Americans and they continued to bring him new information so that he could update his maps. These maps reflect the fast-changing face of the nation which now stretched from coast to coast.





BEFORE ARMSTRONG,
ALDRIN AND COLLINS,
THERE WERE
TWO GUYS NAMED
LEWIS & CLARK.



Two hundred years ago, Montana was uncharted and unspoiled—an explorer's dream. And it still is. Lewis & Clark spent most of their journey exploring Montana. Was it the beauty or the sheer magnitude? You be the judge. Discover the trail of legends, the trail of Lewis & Clark in Montana. Call 1-800-VISIT-MT (847-4868), ext. 337, or log on to visitmt.com.





Cyrus McCormick

Cyrus McCormick 1809-1884

You have probably never heard of Cyrus McCormick and yet his invention was crucial in the development of American farming. In the early 1830s when the plains of the midwest were being opened up for agriculture, farmers could only harvest 2 or 3 acres of land in a day by hand but with McCormick's new reaping machine they could manage 10 acres a day.

Cyrus McCormick was born in 1809 and grew up on a farm in Rockbridge County close to Lexington. His family originally came from Ballygawley in County Tyrone.

In 1831 McCormick built his first reaping machine and tested it out on his father's farm. For 10 years he worked improving and developing it with the help of his brothers. Soon his reaping machines were not only being sold in Virginia but throughout the agricultural land in the eastern states.

McCormick's business expanded and he moved its base to Chicago. From there he could transport his machines to the east by way of the Great Lakes or to the south using the Mississippi river for transportation. By the 1850s, Cyrus McCormick was president of a harvesting company whose farm implement factory was the largest in the world.

This is a picture of farmers using the McCormick Harvester and Binder of 1876. This was the first ever self-binder to be built and people travelled miles to watch one man cutting and binding grain. Over 50,000 of these machines were sold between 1877 and 1885.



McCormick's Reaper Revolutionized Farming



With a sickle or reaping hook one man could cut from one-half to one full acre in a day. This was hard, back-breaking work.

The cradle was the most efficient way of cutting grain before McCormick's invention. It was a broad scythe. Using this tool a man could cut two acres in a day.



This is the McCormick Reaper of 1831. It took two men to operate it - one to ride the horse which pulled it and one to rake the cut grain from the platform - but it could cut as much in one day as 4 or 5 men could with cradles or 12-16 men with reaping hooks.



Andrew Jackson

Andrew Jackson, the 7th President of the United States of America, was born just 18 months after his parents left the townland of Boney before outside Carrickfergus in County Antrim. His father and mother sailed out of Larne harbour in 1765 and Andrew was born at the Waxhaws on 15 March 1767, a few weeks after the death of his father.

He was described as having “piercing blue eyes, face as long as a Lurgan spade, high shock of red hair, and lonely resolution.” His mother died while attending the American prisoners of war in the prison ship at Charleston leaving Andrew an orphan by the age of 14. His two brothers were both casualties of the war against the British.

In 1788 Andrew moved to Tennessee trekking along the Wilderness Road over the Allegheny Mountains. When he arrived in Nashville he opened a law office. It was in Nashville that he met his wife, Rachel Donelson, the daughter of one of the men who had founded the first settlement at Nashville.

Rachel had already been married and, as far as she knew, was now divorced. Her first husband, a man named Lewis Robards, had begun divorce proceedings but then had withdrawn them without telling her. Technically then Rachel committed bigamy when she married Andrew Jackson but the situation was settled when Robards completed the divorce and Rachel and Andrew then married again. This event however was one which was to haunt them and would be brought up again and used against them when Jackson ran for the White House.

Jackson’s political career began when he entered the Constitutional Convention of Tennessee in the 1790s. He went on to become the first Congressman to represent that state and eventually to become Senator for Tennessee.

In 1802 another very important aspect of Jackson’s life began. He was appointed major-General of the Tennessee Militia. The army was to be his life for the next twenty years. The most famous battle he took part in was New Orleans on 8th January 1815 when his troops routed the British. In just 30 minutes 2000 British troops were killed or injured while only 13 Americans died. He became a national hero as a result of this.

Andrew Jackson

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Andrew Jackson is said to be the founder of the Democratic Party. He developed his doctrine of Jacksonian democracy which said that the United States government should give no privilege to one class over another and should protect the weak and poor against the rich and powerful.

LAST DAYS

Rachel Jackson died on 22nd December 1828 just a few weeks before her husband took up residence in the White House for his first term as President. She had been badly affected by a public scandal during the presidential campaign surrounding her first marriage and divorce and also the death of her adopted Indian son, Lyncoya. She was buried at The Hermitage.

Jackson lived for another 25 years and served two terms in the White House. He eventually died from chronic tuberculosis on 8th June 1845 aged 78.



Andrew Jackson was the first president not to come from an aristocratic rich background. He was a self-made man. He bought 425 acres of frontier land to build a log cabin and set up home. His brick-built replacement house, The Hermitage, in Nashville, Tennessee, is now a museum.



Did You Know?

**17 Presidents of the United States of America
have ancestors from Ulster.**

ANDREW JACKSON

JAMES KNOX POLK

JAMES BUCHANAN

ANDREW JOHNSON

ULYSSES SIMPSON GRANT

CHESTER ALAN ARTHUR

GROVER CLEVELAND

BENJAMIN HARRISON

WILLIAM McKINLEY

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

WOODROW WILSON

HARRY TRUMAN

RICHARD NIXON

JAMES EARL CARTER Jnr

GEORGE BUSH SENIOR

BILL CLINTON

GEORGE W. BUSH



Charles Thomson

You have probably never heard of Charles Thomson and yet at one time he was one of the most influential men in America. He was one of only two men to sign the original Declaration of Independence and he designed the original Great Seal of the United States of America.

Charles Thomson was born at Gortead, Upperlands near Maghera in County Londonderry on 29th November 1729. His family belonged to the local Presbyterian church and you can see a plaque to his memory on the outside of the church. After the death of his mother, the young Charles (he was only 10), his three brothers (one had already gone on ahead) and sister and his father emigrated to America. Tragically his father never lived to see the new land but died on board ship just as it was entering Delaware Bay. So Charles and his brothers and sister arrived in America as orphans.

For a time the boy was apprenticed as a blacksmith but eventually, with help from a kindly wealthy lady, he studied to become a teacher. Later he became a merchant and finally a politician.

Charles is chiefly remembered in America for his role as secretary to the Continental Congress, a position which he held from 1774 until 1789 when the federal government took over the running of the country. He then served as Secretary of the United States in Congress from 1781 to 1789. He was one of only two original signatories of the Declaration of Independence, the other being another Ulster-Scot, John Hancock, who was President of the Continental Congress. Five hundred copies of this document were printed and distributed but the original was lost.

Among Thomson's other contributions to the new nation was the design of the symbol of America—the Great Seal of the United States. With only minor changes Thomson's seal remains in use today.

Thomson was also a scholar. In 1808 he provided the first American translation from Greek of the Old Testament. He also translated the new testament.

Thomson died in Lower Merion, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania on 16th August 1824.

The Great Seal of the United States of America



On the front of the Great Seal you can see a bald eagle holding a ribbon in its beak. On the ribbon is written the motto of the United States:

“E PLURIBUS UNUM”.

This means “Out of many, one”.

CONSIDER

Why is this a suitable motto for the United States of America in the 18th and 19th centuries?

The eagle is holding an olive branch in one foot and 13 arrows in the other. In front of the eagle is a shield with 13 red and white stripes. Above the eagle are a circle of clouds and 13 stars.

CONSIDER

Why does the number 13 feature in the Seal so much—13 arrows; 13 stars; 13 stripes?

The Great Seal of the United States of America



This is the reverse side of the Great Seal. It is sometimes called the spiritual side. It features a 13-step pyramid (13 again!). At the base of the pyramid is the year 1776 written in Roman numerals.

At the top of the pyramid is the Eye of Providence. Above all this is a motto in Latin: “**ANNUIT COEPTIS**”. This motto means: “It [the Eye of Providence] is favourable to our undertakings” or “He favours our undertakings”.

Below the pyramid there is a scroll. Again there is Latin writing: “**NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM**” which means “New Order of the Ages”.

Question:

Where can you see a Great Seal today in general use?

Answer

On the back of a one-dollar bill



Woodrow Wilson

Woodrow Wilson was the 28th President of the United States. He was the grandson of James Wilson who emigrated from Strabane in County Tyrone and married another Ulster-Scots emigrant, Annie Adams.

Woodrow was born on 28th December 1856 in Staunton, Virginia and grew up in Georgia and South Carolina. His father was a Presbyterian minister. In 1879 Woodrow entered Princeton University, graduating four years later. He worked as a lawyer in Atlanta, Georgia but went back to study for a PHD in Politics at John Hopkins University before becoming president of Princeton in 1902.

He had built a high reputation in academic circles before he was approached by the Democrats in New Jersey and asked to run for governor in 1910. He was so successful that just 3 years later he was in the White House!

He is generally considered to be one of America's greatest presidents. It was during his presidency that the Federal Reserve Act was passed which established the system for regulating banks and money supply still in use today. He was also president during the First World War and led the American delegation to the Peace Conference, making him the first American president ever to visit Europe while in office. He was the originator of the idea of a League of Nations (the forerunner of the United Nations).

In 1919, while still in the White House, he suffered a massive stroke and was an invalid for the last seventeen months of his presidency. He conducted all his business and decisions at that time through his wife, Edith. He died in Washington D.C. on 3rd January 1923 aged 67.

Interesting Fact



When Wilson returned to the U.S. after the Peace talks in Paris he was met at the docks by this car - a Pierce Arrow. He liked it so much that when he left office he asked to buy it. He used it until his death in 1924 . It was restored and donated to the Wilson Birthplace trust by his widow, Edith.



Presidential Bingo

RULES OF THE GAME

- Choose an Ulster-Scots president for each square. Write his name on the square. You may use the same president on up to 3 squares.
- The teacher (or person 'calling') will ask questions. If your president's name is the answer to the question you may mark that name out. You may only mark out 1 name for 1 answer (not every time you have used that president's name).
- The winner is the person who has completed all the names on his /her card first.

TO HELP YOU HERE ARE THE NAMES OF THE ULSTER-SCOTS PRESIDENTS

ANDREW JACKSON

JAMES KNOX POLK

JAMES BUCHANAN

ANDREW JOHNSON

U. S. GRANT

CHESTER ARTHUR

GROVER CLEVELAND

BENJAMIN HARRISON

WILLIAM McKINLEY

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

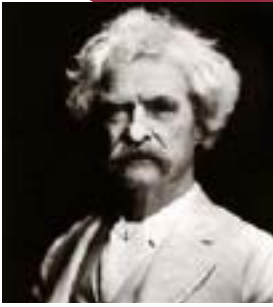
WOODROW WILSON

HARRY TRUMAN

RICHARD NIXON

JIMMY CARTER

GEORGE BUSH Snr



Mark Twain

‘Samuel Langhorne Clemens was a Scots-Irish writer, famous the world over. He is much better known as Mark Twain, author of the famous children’s book “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer”’.

Mark Twain’s family originally hailed from Ballyclare in County Antrim. If you were to visit Ballynure cemetery on the outskirts of Ballyclare you could find the grave of his ancestor Elenor Clemens who died in 1628. The Clemens lived in an area which is known as Clements Hill to this day. They were a well known local family and some of them held important positions in Carrickfergus local government.

Mark Twain was born in Florida—not the state but the town in the state of Missouri on 30th November 1835. He was one of six children. His childhood memories included the wonderful stories told to the children by their slave, Jenny.

When Mark grew up he became a journalist. His work took him to New York, Philadelphia and Cincinnati. Because he had a secret dream to visit the Amazon, he took a job as a pilot on a Mississippi steamboat to get experience. Here he came across characters and events which he would later write into his stories.

In 1862 he moved to Carson City and then on to San Francisco. It was at this time that his first short story, “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” was published. “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer” followed. Among his other writings are “The Prince and the Pauper”, “The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn” and “A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court”.

Mark Twain married and he and his wife travelled to Europe living in France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy at different times. He eventually settled back to life in New York before making his final home in Redding, Connecticut. Mark Twain died on 21st April 1910, aged 74.



Amazing Fact

Halley’s Comet was in view in November 1835 when Mark Twain was born and it was round again in April 1910 when he died. During his life he had always said he would “go out with the comet” and he was right!

Did You Know?

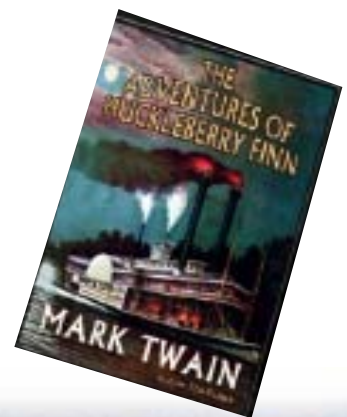
I wonder have you ever thought how a writer chooses a pen name or pseudonym for him or herself? Perhaps they might look through a telephone directory or choose a first name from one person they admire and a surname from another.

Here's how Samuel Langhorne Clemens became Mark Twain.....

Mark Twain had a dream; an ambition—he wanted to visit South America and travel down the Amazon. In 1857, when he was 21, he tried to get a berth on a ship going to South America but instead he made friends with a man called Horace Bixby who was a steamboat pilot. Bixby took the young man on as his apprentice to train as a river pilot. Mark spent two years training and eventually got his license in 1859.



On the river it was the practice to have a young boy constantly checking that the boat was not in too shallow water. His job was to drop a line over the side marked in fathoms and to call out the depths as a warning so the boat would not founder on any sandbanks. At a depth of two fathoms the boy would call “MARK TWAIN” and so the writer got his name!





Stephen Foster

You may never have heard of Stephen Foster before but the chances are you may have song one of the songs he composed.

Stephen Collins Foster, was born on 4th July 1826 in Lawrenceville, Pennsylvania. He was the 'baby' of this Scots- Irish family with seven older brothers and sisters. He was educated by private tutors and at private academies but always his passion was music. He had his first song published by a Philadelphia music publisher when he was only 18.

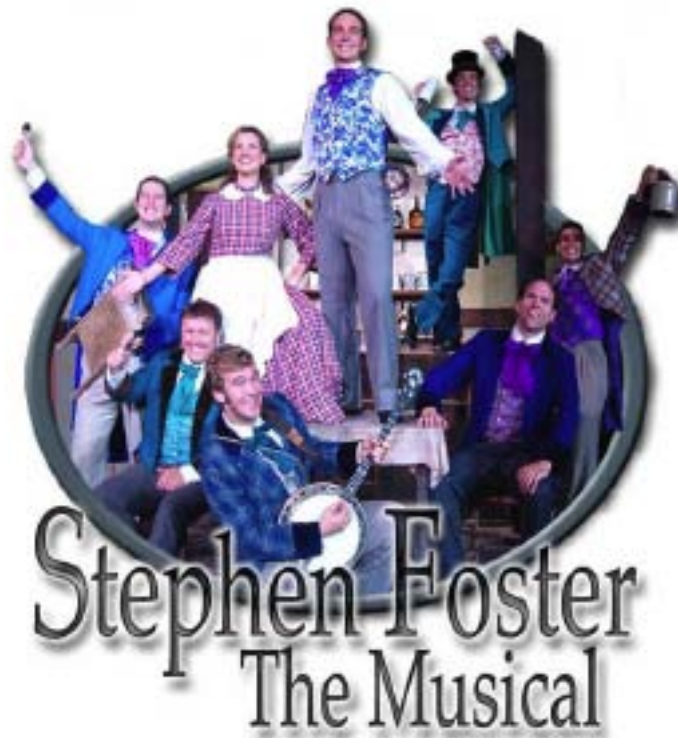
He had his first big hit with "Oh! Susanna!", a song still sung today, and then he launched himself as a professional songwriter.

Foster studied the different musical styles of the immigrants of the new United States. He wanted to write people's music which everyone could identify with. Some people think of him as writing sentimental songs for the old South of slave days. However he wanted to convey a sense that all people no matter who they are or where they come from share the same longings and needs for family and home. In particular he is associated with black -face minstrel music which was the most powerful force in American popular culture at that time.

Stephen Foster's life was one of sadness. Although married with a daughter, he and his wife spilt up. He lived alone in hotel rooms in New York. If he was alive today he would be a millionaire from his successful songwriting but instead he died almost penniless. Foster died on 13th January 1864 at the age of 37. He had been ill with fever and collapsed hitting his head on a washbasin. It is said he had just 38 cents in his pockets when he died.

The idea of white singers blackening their faces and singing may seem very strange if not wrong nowadays but in 19th century America it was a very popular form of entertainment. In fact minstrel shows were popular world-wide and 'The Black and White Minstrel Show' appeared on the BBC in the 1960s. Probably the most famous group was the Christy Minstrels who had a hit with Foster's "Oh! Susanna" in 1848.

Stephen Foster



**Stephen Foster's life story has been made into a stage show—
"Stephen Foster The Musical" celebrating his great song-writing skills.**



The songs of Stephen Foster

Oh Susanna

I came from Alabama wid my banjo on my knee,
I'm g'wan to Louisiana my true love for to see,
It rain'd all night the day I left, the weather it was dry,
The sun so hot I frose to death; Susanna, dont you cry.

Chorus:

*Oh! Susanna, Oh! dont you cry for me,
I've come from Alabama, wid my banjo on my knee.*

I jumped aboard de telegraph, and trabbelled down de ribber,
De Lectrie fluid magnified, and killed five hundred Nigger
De bullgine bust, de horse run off, I realy thought I'd die;
I shut my eyes to hold my breath, Susanna, dont you cry.

Chorus:

*Oh! Susanna, Oh! dont you cry for me,
I've come from Alabama, wid my banjo on my knee.*

I had a dream de odder night when ebery ting was still;
I thought I saw Susanna, a coming down de hill.
The buckwheat cake war in her mouth, the tear was in her eye,
Says I'm coming from de South, Susanna, dont you cry.

Chorus:

*Oh! Susanna, Oh! dont you cry for me,
I've come from Alabama, wid my banjo on my knee.*

I scon will be in New Orleans, and den I'll look all round,
And when I find Susanna, I' fall upon the ground.
But if I do not find her, dis darkie 'I surely die,
And when I'm dead and buried, Susanna, dont you cry.

Chorus:

*Oh! Susanna, Oh! dont you cry for me,
I've come from Alabama, wid my banjo on my knee.*



Francis Makemie

THE FATHER OF AMERICAN PRESBYTERIANISM

The Presbyterian Church of America owes its beginnings to an Ulster-Scot from County Donegal. His name was Francis Makemie. Francis was born in Ramelton in 1658. Like all Presbyterians at that time he was prevented from attending university in Ireland, so, when he was old enough, he went to study at Glasgow University. He was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Laggan (in Donegal) and was ordained as a missionary to America travelling on a mission to Barbados.

In 1680, at the request of a Colonel William Stevens of Rehobeth, Maryland Francis travelled across the Atlantic. He settled in Worcester County. For several years he worked as a merchant in the shipping trade marrying Naomi the daughter of his partner William Anderson and preaching in his spare time. The first officially sanctioned Presbyterian meeting in the Virginia colony took place in Francis Makemie's house on the Eastern Shore of Virginia on October 6th, 1699.

Even in America, just like back in Ireland, Francis faced opposition from the authorities. He was sent to prison by Edward Hyde, the governor of New York for being a "strolling preacher". At his trial he spoke so eloquently from the dock that he was acquitted, and a short time later Hyde was recalled to London.

In 1707 the first presbytery in America was formed and under Francis' influence Presbyterianism spread into Virginia and the Carolinas. He served as the first Moderator of the General Assembly.

Francis Makemie died at his home in Accomack County, Virginia in 1708. He was buried in the family cemetery and today you can visit his statue or even, if you are a young Presbyterian in the USA, spend the summer at Makemie Woods Camp.



*Naomi Makemie
Presbyterian Church,
Onancock, Virginia.*

Visit its website at :
<http://www.nmpreschurch.org/>

Extension Activity

Have you ever been on a school trip, an activity holiday or camping with friends? You know what fun it can be. In Northern Ireland perhaps you have visited the Share Centre in Fermanagh or an outdoor centre like Ganaway or the Tea Lane houses at the Ulster Folk Museum.

Now is your chance to find out what it would be like to visit Makemie Woods Camp in America.

Go to the website: <http://www.makwoods.org/>

Task

Imagine you were asked to give a talk/presentation to your class trying to encourage others to go on a school trip to stay at Makemie Woods Camp.

*School trip to
stay at Makemie
Woods Camp*



Plan and prepare the talk.



Famous Scots-Irish

Below is a list of some of the famous Scots-Irish or Ulster-Scots who have made significant contributions to life in America—some as soldiers, some in business, the Arts, politics and many other fields of activity.

PROJECT WORK

Select someone from the list or you may choose any other famous Scots-Irish person you have heard of and research their life.

Use the Project Help Sheet to help you know what you need to include in your project and how to organise your work.

SAM HOUSTON

GEORGE HAMILTON IV

MARK TWAIN

CRYSTAL GAYLE

DAVY CROCKETT

THE EVERLY BROTHERS

THE MELLON FAMILY

LORETTA LYNN

WILLIAM CLARK

CHARLES THOMSON

CYRUS McCORMICK

JOHN DUNLAP

JAMES STEWART

GENERAL STONEWALL JACKSON

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST

FRANCIS MAKEMIE

WILLIAM TENNANT

JOHN WAYNE

And of course, 17 PRESIDENTS!



The American Trail



Famous Scots-Irish Balloon Debate



Now that you have found out a little about some of these famous Scots-Irish, we are going to have a 'Balloon Debate'.

SCENARIO

A hot air balloon is travelling over the Himalayas when it runs into difficulties. The whole balloon will crash with everyone on board being killed unless you can gain height by losing some weight. You decide the best way to do this is to throw one person overboard to save the rest! Now each person in the balloon must justify being kept in and try to convince the others they should be allowed to stay.

- Divide into groups
- Each group chooses a famous Scots-Irish person
- Find out all you can about them and their contribution to America and/or the world
- You need to think of as many ways as you can to justify being saved
- Prepare a 2 minute speech putting forward your arguments
- Although only 1 person in the group will give the speech everyone should help in the research, preparation and practice of the speech