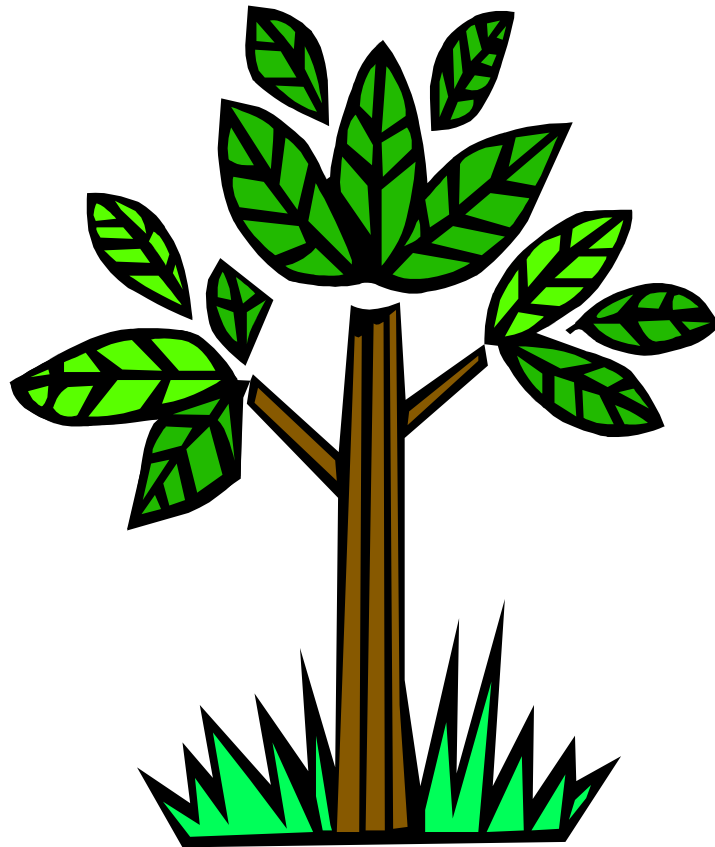


**Teachers Booklet 5**



**Climb the Liberty Tree:**

**An Exploration of the  
Ulster-Scots' Role in  
the United Irishmen's  
Rebellion of 1798**

# Fifth Branch



Swing:

Executions and Aftermath

## **Climb the Liberty Tree: Fifth Branch – Swing: Executions and Aftermath**

This unit of work allows pupils opportunities to:

- Learn about the fates of several Ulster-Scots who had leading roles in the 1798 Rebellion
- Take part in a “Four Corners” classroom debate
- Complete a listening comprehension exercise
- Take part in a role-play
- Write a speech
- Design and create a poster using Publisher
- Research using the Internet and asking people for personal opinions.
- Research punishment systems, including the practice of capital punishment, in the contemporary world and prepare a report on these

### **KEY STAGE 3 CURRICULUM**

The activities in this unit would fit into work on Citizenship and also into aspects of the General Learning Areas of The Arts, including Art and Design ; English including Media Education and Drama; Environment and Society, particularly History.

The unit provides opportunities to teach, practise and assess some of the following skills and capabilities:

- Critical and Creative Thinking Skills—creativity; managing information; problem solving/decision making
- Personal and Interpersonal Skills—self management, working with others
- Communication
- ICT

### **Lady Nugent's Diary:**

**Having witnessed all the horrors of a civil war, during which my dear husband had the command in the North; so that he was not only obliged to meet the poor, infatuated, misguided people in the open field, but, after defeating them there, had also the distressing task of holding courts martial, and signing the death warrants of very many, which was indeed heart-breaking to us both.....**

This passage is worth exploring in classroom discussion.

The language expresses great grief and regret. Pupils should be encouraged to notice phrasing and vocabulary such as “horrors”, “distressing”, “heart-breaking to us both”.

Lady Nugent implies her husband's unwillingness to be brutal when she says he was “obliged to meet” the rebels “in the open field”.

She suggests sympathy when she calls the people “poor, infatuated” and “misguided”. Perceptive pupils may also detect an assumption on Lady Nugent's part that the authorities know what's best for the people.

## **Listening Comprehension: Mary Ann's account of the execution of her brother, Henry Joy McCracken**

During the early part of the day Harry and I had conversed with tranquillity on the subject of his death. We had been brought up in a firm conviction of an all-wise and overruling Providence, and of the duty of entire resignation to the Divine will. I remarked that his death was as much a dispensation of Providence as if it happened in the common course of nature, to which he assented. He told me that there had been much perjury on his trial, but that the truth would have answered the same purpose. After the clergymen were gone, I asked for a pair of scissors, that I might take off some of his hair. A young officer who was on guard (his name was George) went out of the room and brought a pair of scissors, but hesitated to trust them into my hand, when I asked him indignantly if he thought I meant to hurt my brother. He then gave them to me, and I cut off some of Harry's hair which curled round his neck, and folded it up in paper, and put it into my bosom. Fox at that moment entered the room, and desired me to give it to him, as 'too much use,' he said, 'had already been made of such things'. I refused, saying I would only part with it in death; when my dear brother said, 'Oh, Mary, give it to him; of what value is it?' I felt that its possession would be a mere gratification to me, and, not wishing to discompose him by the contest, I gave it up.

The time allowed him was now expired: he had hoped for a few days, that he might give his friends an account of all the late events in which he had taken a part. About 5pm he was ordered to the place of execution, the old market-house, the ground of which had been given to the town by his great grandfather. I took his arm, and we walked together to the place of execution, where I was told it was the General's orders I should leave him, which I peremptorily refused. Harry begged I would go. Claspng my hands around him (I did not weep till then), I said I could bear anything but leaving him. Three times he kissed me, and entreated I would go; and, looking round to recognise some friend to put me in charge of, he beckoned to a Mr Boyd, and said, 'He will take charge of you'. Mr Boyd stepped forward and, fearing any further refusal would disturb the last moments of my dearest brother, I suffered myself to be led away. Mr Boyd endeavoured to give me comfort, and I felt there was still comfort in the hope he gave me, that we should meet in heaven. A Mr Armstrong, a friend of our family, came forward and took me from Mr Boyd, and conducted me home. I immediately sent a message to Dr M'Donnell and Mr M'Cluney, our apothecary, to come directly to the house. The latter came, and Dr M'Donnell sent his brother Alexander, a skilful surgeon. The body was given up to his family unmuti- lated; so far our entreaties and those of our friends prevailed.

Fill in the table below with the names overleaf in the correct columns.

Executed	Emigrated	Murdered	Survived
Henry Munro	David Baillie Warden	Betsy Gray	Steel Dickson
James Porter			Jemmy Hope
William Orr			Mary Ann McCracken
Henry Joy McCracken			
Archibald Warwick			

## Answers to Listening Comprehension on the Execution of Henry Joy McCracken

1. Why did Mary Ann ask for a pair of scissors?

*She wanted to cut off a lock of her brother's hair. (2)*

2. What did Henry tell Mary Ann to do when the officer said she must give him the lock of hair?

*He told her to give it to him.. (2)*

3. Why did Henry wish he might have been allowed a few more days of life?

*He would like to have had time to tell his friends the full details of all the events he had taken part in. (4)*

4. At what time did he have to go to his execution?

*At 5.00 pm. (2)*

5. When did Mary Ann first begin to express her grief by weeping? What other details does she give which bring out the sadness of the parting?

*She began to cry when Henry asked her to leave. (2)*

6. What details of Henry's behaviour does Mary Ann give that suggest he acted unselfishly before his death?

*He asked her to go as he did not want her to have to watch the execution. He was thoughtful enough to look around for a friend to lead her away. (4)*

7. Why did Mary Ann finally agree to go away from the execution scene?

*She did not want to upset her brother even more during the last moments of his life. (2)*

8. What comfort was Mr Boyd able to give Mary Ann.

*He said she would meet Henry again in heaven. (2)*