

Alice Milligan

AND THE
IRISH CULTURAL REVIVAL



**Creative
Centenaries**

The story of
Alice Milligan

Key Stage 3 Learning Resource



Creative Centenaries

The Story of Alice Milligan has been developed by the Nerve Centre's Creative Centenaries project which produces innovative resources around the Decade of Centenaries and important historical events in Ireland's history.

This is a Key Stage 3 curriculum linked resource that looks at literary figures from the turn of the 20th century and the impact they had, and continue to have, across the island of Ireland.

Further graphic novel resources, as well as animations and interactive iBooks are available to access from www.creativecentenaries.org/resources

With thanks to historical consultant Dr Catherine Morris.

Script written by Danny McLaughlin and artwork produced by Revolve Comics.



Department of
Culture, Arts
and Leisure
www.dcalni.gov.uk



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs
and Trade



AND THIS IS CALLED A 'TABLEAU VIVANT'. IT BEING PROJECTED IS VERY FITTING AND YOU'LL FIND OUT WHY - IF YOU DO YOUR RESEARCH!

IN THE LAST DECADES OF THE 19TH CENTURY, A MOVEMENT AROSE TO SAVE THE IRISH LANGUAGE WHICH WAS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE GAELIC LEAGUE, OR CONRADH NA GAELIGE, IN DUBLIN IN 1893 GAVE RISE TO A REVIVAL OF INTEREST IN HISTORY, CULTURE AND THE IRISH LANGUAGE.

NOVELS, POETRY AND PLAYS, BY WRITERS SUCH AS W.B. YEATS, INSPIRED A NEW GENERATION TO REDISCOVER THEIR IRISH HERITAGE AND TAKE PRIDE IN THEIR CULTURAL IDENTITY.

ARGUABLY ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT, YET LEAST WELL KNOWN FIGURES FROM THAT TIME IS A WOMAN CALLED ALICE MILLIGAN!

ALICE? THAT'S MY NAME!

IS THIS BECAUSE SHE WAS A WOMAN OR BECAUSE SHE WAS AN ULSTER PROTESTANT?

THAT'S WHAT I WANT YOU TO EXPLORE DURING YOUR CLASS ASSIGNMENT FOR THIS TERM.

LATER THAT NIGHT...

ALICE MILLIGAN... SHE MUST HAVE BEEN A VERY INTERESTING WOMAN... HOW DID AN ULSTER PROTESTANT WOMAN BECOME A LEADING FIGURE IN THE REVIVAL OF IRISH CULTURE?

HMM... I AM CURIOUS!

LET'S SEE WHAT I CAN FIND ONLINE ABOUT THIS ALICE MILLIGAN.

GOO
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK

ALICE MILLIGAN |
ALICE MILLIGAN
ALICE MILLIGAN Poems
ALICE MILLIGAN and the Irish cultural rev
ALICE MILLIGAN Catherine Morris *Historical*

UNTIL RECENTLY, LITTLE HAD BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT ALICE MILLIGAN IN COMPARISON TO MEN WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE CULTURAL REVIVAL. YET SHE MADE HER MARK ON IRISH CULTURAL HISTORY, AND WAS RESPECTED BY HER PEERS AS A CREATIVE PIONEER, WRITER, POET, THEATRE PRODUCER AND POLITICAL ACTIVIST.

ALICE TRAINED TO BE A TEACHER, TEACHING LATIN IN BELFAST AND IN DERRY. SHE BECAME INCREASINGLY INTRIGUED BY A REVIVAL IN IRISH CULTURE AND THE LANGUAGE.



ALICE LETITA MILLIGAN WAS BORN ON 14 SEPTEMBER 1866 INTO A MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILY IN GORTMORE, NEAR OMAGH, COUNTY TYRONE. ALICE WAS RAISED A METHODIST AND ATTENDED METHODIST COLLEGE, BELFAST, BEFORE STUDYING LITERATURE AND HISTORY AT KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON.



REPEAT AFTER ME...

REPEAT AFTER ME... DUM SPIRO SPERO... WHILE I BREATHE I HOPE

DUM SPIRO SPERO...

THESE ANCIENT STORIES OF IRELAND ARE SIMPLY WONDERFUL!

IT SEEMS ALICE BEGAN TO LEARN AND IMMERSE HERSELF IN EVERYTHING IRISH - INCLUDING LITERATURE, FOLKLORE AND HISTORY...



THESE STORIES SPARKED HER IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY AS SHE STARTED TO WRITE HER OWN POETRY

ALICE ALSO BEGAN TO TEACH HERSELF WRITTEN IRISH BUT ENCOUNTERED A LACK OF THE SPOKEN LANGUAGE. ENGLISH WAS THE DOMINANT LANGUAGE ON THE ISLAND, WITH A LIMITED NUMBER OF RURAL AREAS HOLDING ON TO IRISH.

I WENT TO...A NEAT LITTLE TOBACCONIST'S SHOP KEPT BY A DONEGAL MAN. HE OFFERED...WITHOUT ANY FEE TO GIVE ME AS MUCH IRISH AS I WANTED, IF I COULD COME ON SUNDAY AFTERNOONS TO THE SITTING ROOM OF HIS HOUSE, WHERE THEY HAD A WEEKLY ASSEMBLY OF IRISH SPEAKERS, SINGING AND TALK...THEY HAD NO BOOKS AND HE COULD NOT READ A LINE OF IRISH.



JEE-AH DITCH. IS MISH-A ALICE..

I THINK THAT IS HOW IT IS PRONOUNCED!

SHE SOUGHT HELP AND WHILST IN DERRY FOUND AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN WITH OTHERS, NOTING:



Oró, sé do bheatha 'bhaile' Anís an-theacht ah tsamhraidh.

THE LACK OF SPOKEN IRISH MAY HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE REASONS SHE SET UP CO-OPERATIVE COMMUNITIES TO PRESERVE THE DYING TONGUE. THIS BROUGHT HER IN CONTACT WITH OTHER IRISH SOCIETIES AND THE INNER WORKINGS OF THE IRISH REVIVAL.



THERE'S ONLY SO MUCH I CAN FIND OUT ABOUT ALICE ONLINE...

MAYBE I CAN FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HER EARLY LIFE HERE...

THE ULSTER MUSEUM, BELFAST.



IN THE POEM, 'WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL', ALICE RECALLED HER METHODIST UPBRINGINGS...

When I was a little girl
In a garden playing
A thing was often said
To chide us delaying.

When after sunny hours,
At twilight's falling,
Down through the garden walks
Came our old nurse calling

"Come in! for it's growing late,
And the grass will wet ye!
Come in! or when it's dark
The Fenians will get ye."



DUBLIN...

AH...
BAILE ATHA
CLIATH!

ALICE FELL IN LOVE WITH IRISH CULTURE AND BEGAN TO REJECT MANY OF THE VALUES OF HER UPBRINGING. SHE DECIDED TO MOVE TO DUBLIN IN 1890...



FROM THEN ON ALICE BEGAN TO ASSOCIATE WITH KEY FIGURES OF THE IRISH REVIVAL.

ALICE MILLIGAN, MAUD GONNE AND W.B. YEATS WALKED TOGETHER AT CAVE HILL IN BELFAST - A PLACE OF RICH SYMBOLIC ASSOCIATION WITH IRISH REVOLUTIONARY FIGURE WOLFE TONE.

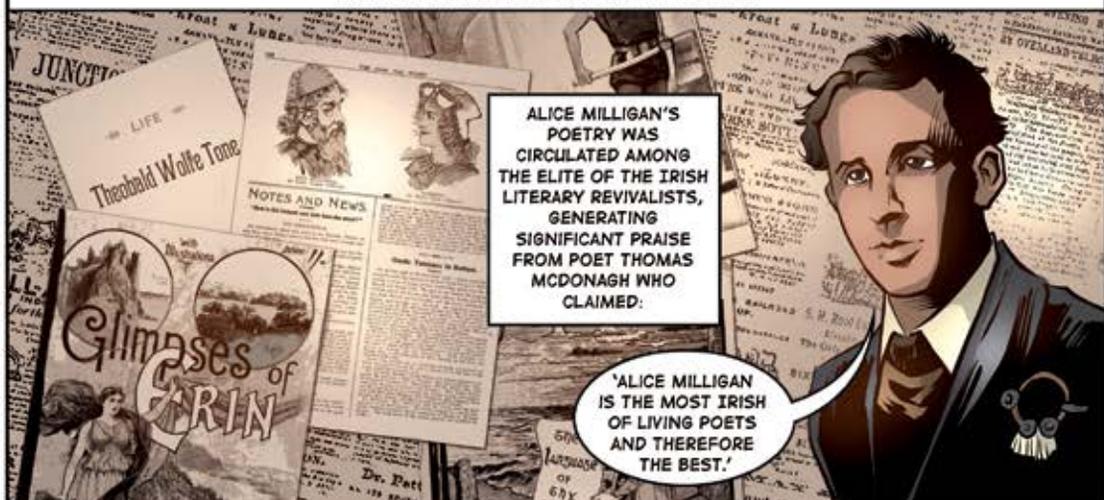
ALICE USED INNOVATIVE WAYS TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE PUBLIC ABOUT LITERARY ARTS, THEATRE, CULTURE AND NATIONAL IDENTITY FOR THE GAELIC LEAGUE. SHE FAMOUSLY DELIVERED LECTURES USING NEW TECHNOLOGIES OF THE TIME, SUCH AS 'MAGIC LANTERNS'.



THE OSSIANIC CYCLE IS AN EXAMPLE OF EARLY IRISH DRAMA AND POETRY...

...AND ALSO A ROMANTIC LITERATURE THAT PARALLELS IRELAND'S STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL IDENTITY.

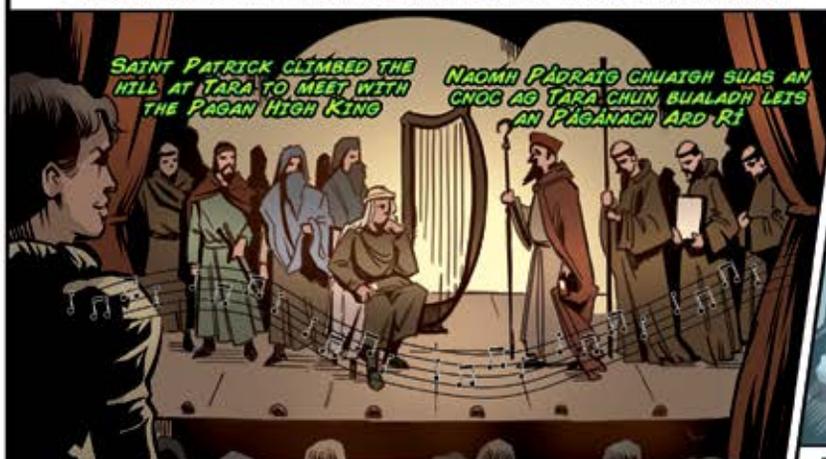
AS WELL AS HER MAGIC LANTERN SHOWS, ALICE ALSO BEGAN A SIGNIFICANT WRITING CAREER, CONTRIBUTING ARTICLES AND LETTERS TO NEWSPAPERS BEFORE CO-AUTHORING A BOOK, *GLIMPSES OF ERIN*, WITH HER FATHER IN 1888. HER POETRY ALSO BEGAN TO TAKE OFF AT THIS TIME.



ALICE MILLIGAN'S POETRY WAS CIRCULATED AMONG THE ELITE OF THE IRISH LITERARY REVIVALISTS, GENERATING SIGNIFICANT PRAISE FROM POET THOMAS MCDONAGH WHO CLAIMED:

'ALICE MILLIGAN IS THE MOST IRISH OF LIVING POETS AND THEREFORE THE BEST.'

ALICE ALSO BECAME RENOWNED FOR HER WORK IN THEATRE. SHE WROTE MANY PLAYS AND SPEARHEADED THE USE OF TABLEAUX VIVANTS (LIVING PICTURES). INSPIRED BY CHARLES PARNELL AND HIS NOTION OF 'SELF-RELIANCE', ALICE TOURED PRODUCTIONS TO TOWNS AND CITIES ACROSS IRELAND, ENCOURAGING LOCALS TO PRODUCE AND TAKE PART.



SAINT PATRICK CLIMBED THE HILL AT TARA TO MEET WITH THE PAGAN HIGH KING

NAOMH PÁDRAIG CHUAIGH SUAS AN CNOG AG TARA CHUN BUALADH LEIS AN PÁGANACH ARD-RI

ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS AND LASTING IMAGES FROM HER TABLEAUX VIVANTS IS THE DEPICTION OF QUEEN MAEVE.



NARRATION WAS DELIVERED IN BOTH ENGLISH AND IRISH SO EVERYONE COULD UNDERSTAND. IN 1899, SHE TOURED A TABLEAUX VIVANT PRODUCTION TO ST COLUMB'S HALL IN DERRY.

IT WAS STAGED IN BELFAST IN 1898 AND CAME TO SYMBOLISE IRISH CULTURE AND FEMINISM, AMONGST OTHER THINGS.

ALICE WAS A KEY CULTURAL ACTIVIST AS WELL AS BEING HEAVILY INVOLVED IN THE NATIONALIST CAUSE.

IN 1898 SHE WAS ONE OF THE MAIN ORGANISERS OF THE CENTENARY COMMEMORATION CEREMONY OF THE 1798 REBELLION OF THE UNITED IRISHMEN LED BY THEOBALD WOLFE TONE.

LINEN HALL LIBRARY, BELFAST CITY CENTRE.

LINEN HALL LIBRARY

I WANT TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ALICE...

MAYBE THE LIBRARY WILL INSPIRE ME!

ALICE ALSO HELPED TO FORGE THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT, PREDOMINANTLY IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND, WHEN SHE CO-FOUNDED THE IRISH WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION IN BELFAST, A COMMUNITY FOR WOMEN REGARDLESS OF RELIGIOUS OR POLITICAL BACKGROUNDS.

MAY THIS PROVE TO BE A PUBLIC SPACE FOR ALL WOMEN, ASSIST SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPROVE THE STANDARD OF LIFE IN IRELAND.

SHE EXPANDED HER PROFILE DURING HER TIME IN BELFAST AND WORKED WITH A JOURNALIST FRIEND, BELFAST-BORN CATHOLIC ETHNA CARBERY, TO LAUNCH A NUMBER OF NATIONALIST PUBLICATIONS IN THE 1890S.

TOGETHER THEY ESTABLISHED *THE NORTHERN PATRIOT* AND LATER THE MONTHLY LITERARY MAGAZINE, *SHAN VAN VOCHT*, PUBLISHED BETWEEN 1896 AND 1899. THE TITLE IS A PHONETIC RENDERING OF THE IRISH PHRASE AN TSEANBHEAN BHOCHT, 'THE POOR OLD WOMAN', A NAME TRADITIONALLY USED TO REFER TO IRELAND).

SHAN VAN VOCHT WAS WELL RECEIVED AS A PROMINENT IRISH NATIONALIST MAGAZINE IN IRELAND BUT ALSO BY THE IRISH DIASPORA AROUND THE WORLD...

THE FIRST WORDS OF THE PROCLAMATION OF THE REPUBLIC, READ BY PATRICK PEARSE OUTSIDE THE GPO IN APRIL 1916 TO BEGIN THE EASTER RISING, WERE:

"TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND... IN THE NAME OF GOD AND OF THE DEAD GENERATIONS FROM WHICH SHE RECEIVES THE OLD TRADITION OF NATIONHOOD, IRELAND, THROUGH US, SUMMONS HER CHILDREN TO HER FLAG, AND STRIKES FOR HER FREEDOM."

BUT THE RISING WAS SUPPRESSED AND ITS LEADERS ROUNDED UP BY THE BRITISH.

ALICE WAS CALLED TO LOOK AFTER HER AGEING PARENTS DURING THE RISING, BUT HER WORDS WERE YET TO STILL PLAY THEIR PART...

AS THE LEADERS OF THE EASTER RISING WERE HELD IN KILMAINHAM GAOL, *SEÁN MACDERMOTT* RECITED THE POEM '*BRIAN OF BANBA*' BY ALICE MILLIGAN TO KEEP UP THE SPIRITS OF FELLOW PRISONERS AWAITING EXECUTION.

...Brian smiled: 'You will need them all as award of bardic measure;
I want no cattle from out your herds, no share of your shining treasure:
But grant me now'— and he turned to look on the listening warriors' faces—
'A hundred more of the clan Dal Cas, to follow me over plain and pass:
To die, as fitteth the brave Dal Cas, at war with the Outland races.'

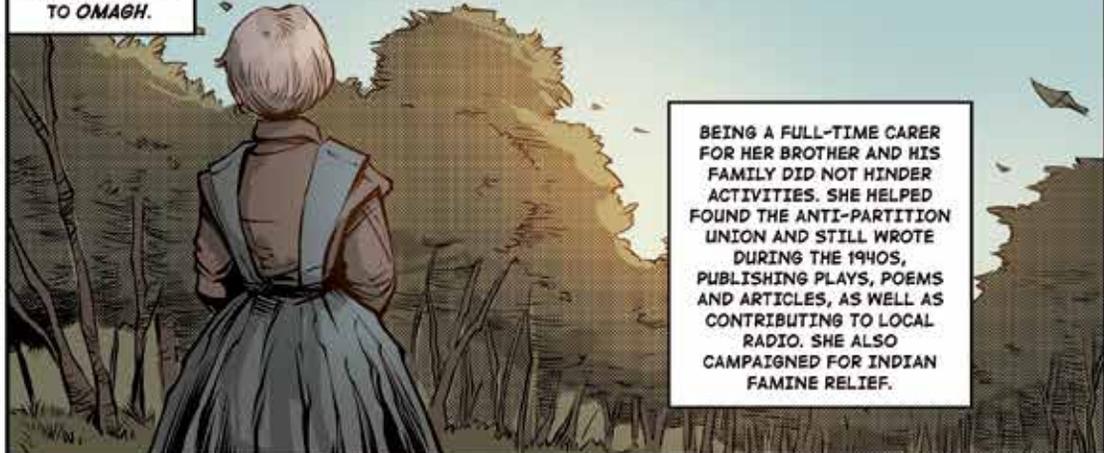
ALICE VISITED MANY OF THE VOLUNTEERS IN PRISON AND EVEN TRAVELLED TO LONDON FOR THE TRIAL OF HER FRIEND SIR ROGER CASEMENT, WHO WAS SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR HIS ROLE IN GUN-RUNNING AHEAD OF THE UPRISING.

SOME OF ALICE'S WORK REVOLVED AROUND THE OSSIANIC CYCLES, WHERE A HERO'S MYTHOLOGICAL JOURNEY TOOK HIM THROUGH AN UNRECOGNISABLE HOMETOWN IN SEARCH FOR LOST COMRADES. THE THEME RESONATED WITH ALICE AND PEOPLE IN IRELAND, MANY OF WHOM HAD FAMILY OR LOVED ONES FIGHTING OVERSEAS DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR.

IN 1921, WITH IRELAND ON THE BRINK OF PARTITION, ALICE WAS FORCED TO FLEE DUBLIN DUE TO DEATH THREATS TOWARDS HER BROTHER BECAUSE OF HIS TIME SERVED IN THE BRITISH ARMY.



ALICE MOVED BACK HOME TO WHERE SHE WAS BORN - TO OMAGH.



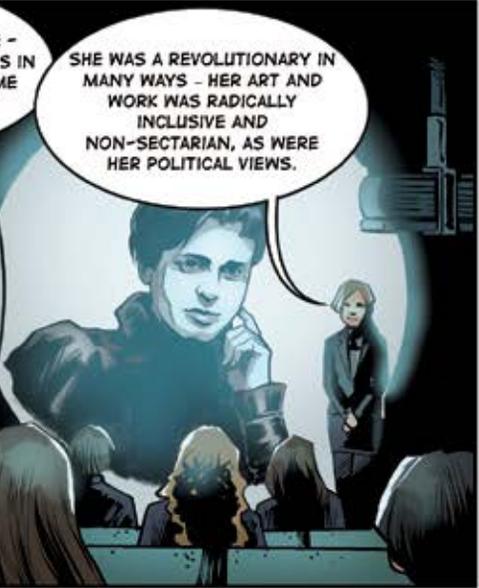
ALICE MILLIGAN REMAINED ACTIVE INTO HER EIGHTIES AND LIVED HUMBLY, ACCORDING TO HER IDEALS, LEAVING MANY WORKS AND A RICH LEGACY BEHIND.



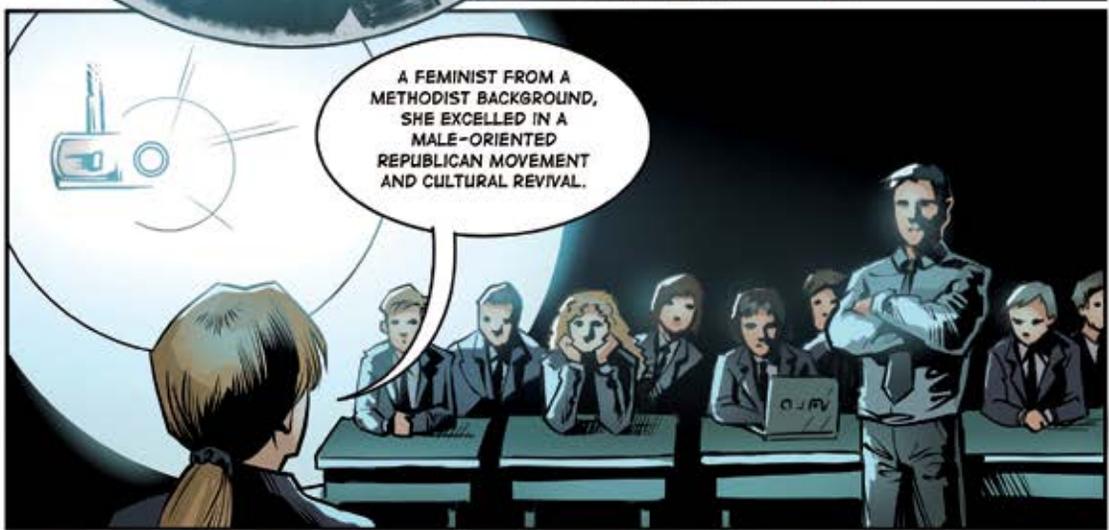


ALICE MILLIGAN WAS AN INSPIRATION TO MANY IRISH NATIONALISTS, FEMINISTS, WRITERS, POETS AND PLAYWRIGHTS - AND TO ME, PROVING HER VALUES AND IDEAS STILL MATTER TODAY.

ALICE MILLIGAN WAS AHEAD OF HER TIME - SHE USED MAGIC LANTERNS IN DISPLAYS, RATHER LIKE ME NOW!



SHE WAS A REVOLUTIONARY IN MANY WAYS - HER ART AND WORK WAS RADICALLY INCLUSIVE AND NON-SECTARIAN, AS WERE HER POLITICAL VIEWS.

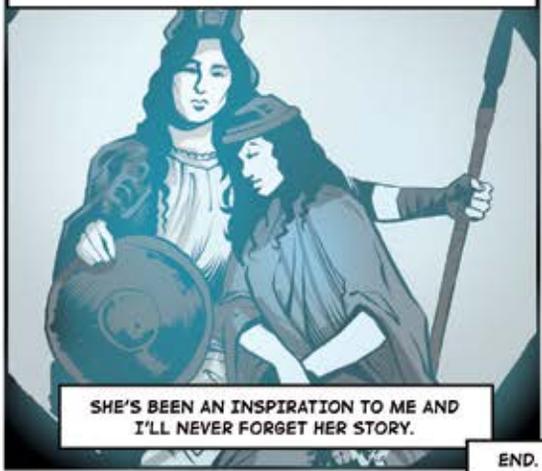


A FEMINIST FROM A METHODIST BACKGROUND, SHE EXCELLED IN A MALE-ORIENTED REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT AND CULTURAL REVIVAL.



SHE LIVED HER LIFE TO THE FULL AND IN THE CLOSING YEARS, LIKE THE EMBLEM SHE ASPIRED TO, SHAN VAN VOCHT, THE POOR IRISH WOMAN.

AFTER HER DEATH, SHE WAS FORGOTTEN AND HAD BECOME A FOOTNOTE IN HISTORY, UNTIL MODERN RESEARCHERS REDISCOVERED HER EXTRAORDINARY LIFE. HER WORK HAS INSPIRED A NEW GENERATION OF WRITERS, ARTISTS, POLITICIANS, AND WOMEN FROM ACROSS IRELAND AND BEYOND.



SHE'S BEEN AN INSPIRATION TO ME AND I'LL NEVER FORGET HER STORY.

END.

Search online:

www.historyireland.com

features an extensive article on the life of Alice Milligan

www.poetryexplorer.net

website containing poems and work of Alice Milligan

www.aboutcatherinemorris.wordpress.com/

information about a National

Library of Ireland exhibition

[www.abbeytheatre.ie/introducing-](http://www.abbeytheatre.ie/introducing-handbook-of-the-irish-revival/)

[handbook-of-the-irish-revival/](http://www.abbeytheatre.ie/introducing-handbook-of-the-irish-revival/)

handbook of the Irish Revival

Read some more:

Alice Milligan and the Irish Cultural Revival, Catherine Morris, 2012

Search YouTube:

'Alice Milligan – Protestant, Patriot and Poet'

'Alice Milligan and the Cultural Revival'

'El Lissitzky: The Artist and the State' – IMMA exhibition featuring work based on Alice Milligan by artist Sarah Pierce

Alice Milligan

AND THE IRISH CULTURAL REVIVAL

The story of Omagh-born Alice Milligan and her literary and cultural career continues to captivate many people today. Described by her friend and leader of the Easter Rising, Thomas MacDonagh, as one of the best living poets of his generation, her story went largely unknown for decades. Research conducted in the last few years, however, has revealed a captivating story of one of Ireland's most prolific writers.

Born into a Methodist and Unionist family at Gortmore outside Omagh in 1866, Milligan trained in Dublin as a teacher. During this time she encountered and became involved with the politics of Charles Parnell, an Irish Protestant and nationalist politician who served as an MP in the House of Commons during the 1880s and who campaigned for land reform. Alice began a process of re-education and began to immerse herself in the folklore and customs of ancient Ireland, leaving behind many of the cultural values from her upbringing.

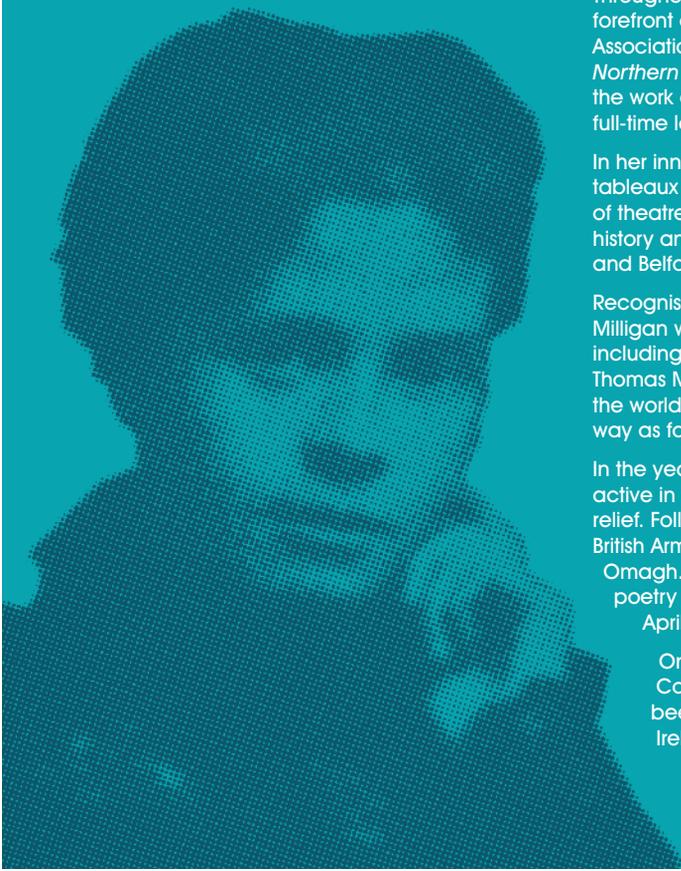
Throughout her life Alice Milligan placed herself at the forefront of a cultural revival. She established the Irish Women's Association in Belfast, founded the *Shan Van Vocht* and *The Northern Patriot* publications, and was involved in disseminating the work of the Gaelic League to rural areas across Ulster as a full-time lecturer.

In her innovative teaching practice, Alice incorporated tableaux vivants (living pictures), magic lantern slides and forms of theatre. Her tableaux vivants depicted iconic scenes from history and toured to venues across Ireland, including Derry and Belfast in Ulster.

Recognised as a leading figure in literary and cultural circles, Milligan was on first name terms with other leading intellectuals including Bulmer Hobson, W.B. Yeats, Roger Casement and Thomas MacDonagh. Her work and impact was admired across the world as publications such as *Shan Van Vocht* made their way as far as South America.

In the years following the 1916 Easter Rising, Alice remained active in campaigns for political prisoners and for humanitarian relief. Following threats to her brother in 1921 for his links to the British Army, she was forced to flee Dublin and settle again near Omagh. From here she continued to be an active writer of poetry and articles throughout the 1940s until her death in April 1953.

Only through the work of modern historians, such as Catherine Morris, have the life and work of Alice Milligan been truly embraced and remembered as a vital part of Ireland's cultural history.





Stage your own Tableaux Vivant

Students will research the work of Alice Milligan and her use of the Tableaux Vivant to tell a story. As a class, students will work together to recreate a short drama piece using the same method. Students will research the art form and how it was used in theatre at the time before recreating a piece of Alice Milligan's work. Students should work together to assign roles and write a script for the piece, reflecting on themes close to Milligan. You could choose to film the piece and add a voiceover to tell a complete story.

Key Stage 3 Curriculum Links

Key Elements	Personal Understanding; Mutual Understanding; Moral Character; Citizenship; Cultural Understanding; Media Awareness
Cross Curricular Skills	Communication
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	Managing Information; Being Creative; Working With Others
Areas of Learning	The Arts; English (with Media Education)



Examine the poetry of Alice Milligan

Students will study the poetry and writings of Alice Milligan and other notable poets and writers involved in the Irish Cultural Revival, including W.B. Yeats and Thomas MacDonagh. Students should compare and contrast the various writings in order to gain an understanding of the types of imagery being evoked by writers and the messages they were trying to achieve. Students will then complete their own piece of creative writing concerning the Irish Cultural Revival, imagining their participation at the time.

Key Stage 3 Curriculum Links

Key Elements	Personal Understanding; Mutual Understanding; Moral Character; Spiritual Awareness; Citizenship; Cultural Understanding; Ethical Awareness
Cross Curricular Skills	Communication; Using ICT
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	Managing Information; Being Creative; Self Management
Areas of Learning	The Arts; English (with Media Education); Environment & Society



Record a radio interview with Alice Milligan

Students will imagine a scene where Alice Milligan is interviewed by a radio journalist at her home outside Omagh after being forced to leave Dublin. In groups, students will take on the role of Alice Milligan and a journalist, imagining the types of questions that may have been asked and the responses Milligan may have given. Students should examine Milligan's connections and interpretations of the Irish Cultural Revival and the events in Ireland at the time that led to her leaving Dublin.

Key Stage 3 Curriculum Links

Key Elements	Personal Understanding; Mutual Understanding; Moral Character; Citizenship; Cultural Understanding; Media Awareness; Ethical Awareness
Cross Curricular Skills	Communication; Using ICT
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	Managing Information; Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision Making; Being Creative; Working With Others
Areas of Learning	The Arts; English (with Media Education); Environment & Society