



Theobald Wolfe Tone (1763-98), A Life: The Definitive Short Biography of the Founding Father of Irish Republicanism (Gill's Irish Lives)

Henry Boylan

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The definitive short biography of Theobald Wolfe Tone (1763–98), the founding father of Irish republicanism

Originally published in 1981 as part of the groundbreaking *Gill's Irish Lives* series, *Theobald Wolfe Tone (1763–98), A Life* remains the most concise, accessible and authoritative introduction to one of Irish history's most seminal figures.

Theobald Wolfe Tone, founder of the United Irishmen, revolutionary philosopher, nationalist martyr and, above all, legend of Irish history. For generations of Irish nationalists, from Robert Emmet to Patrick Pearse, Theobald Wolfe Tone defined republicanism, advocating honour, armed insurrection and martyrdom. Charismatic, intelligent and romantic, Tone's radical politics, his leadership of the 1798 Revolution and his tragic suicide while on trial for treason have become iconic in Irish history.

Boylan's insightful and highly readable biography *Theobald Wolfe Tone (1763–98), A Life* introduces the man behind the legend, looking at his political ideas, his personal life and his public actions.

Beginning with his upbringing and early life among the Protestant elite, Boylan goes on to consider his formidable involvement in Irish radical politics. He looks at Tone as both an Irish and a European revolutionary in a time so tumultuous it has become known as the Age of Revolutions. He then considers his fated role in the 1798 Uprising, climaxing with his subsequent iconic suicide. Boylan acknowledges Tone's personal failings and shortcomings but argues that his gaiety, courage and lack of fanaticism are what has ensured the endurance of his political and cultural legacy to the present day.

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