

# The Characters of Tide of Hope

By Ed Schroeter

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**KINGSTON:** Lord (George) Kingston of Mitchelstown was the third Earl Kingston. Born in Ireland he was Anglo-Irish whose family had settled in Ireland. He received an annual income of £50,000 (English pounds) generated by his holdings of 100,000 acres. At the time of the play, he was rebuilding his 50-year-old home into a gothic structure resembling Windsor Castle, making his kitchen the finest in Ireland in anticipation of his boyhood chum, King George IV, and building an expensive new hunting lodge in the Galtee Mountains for King George IV's visit. While he was going bankrupt, people on his estates were going hungry.

**NAGLE:** David Nagle of Mitchelstown is a historic figure about whom some documentation surveys. A passenger aboard the 1825 Robinson immigration ship, the John Barry, Nagle is mentioned in the log of Surgeon William Burnie, in whose care was entrusted the passengers of this ship. According to Burnie's record, Nagle had provoked Whiteboy vengeance while serving as a land agent to Lord Kingston. Burnie wrote that Nagle was the victim of "repeated threats and injuries sustained to his property." Unlike many of the other passenger settlers, there is no record in the ship's passenger lists of where Nagle settled.

**MARY:** Mary Nagle is another historic figure, the wife of David Nagle. Little is known about her – not even her first name – save that she was Nagle's young bride. She appears in the John Barry passenger lists as such. In the play, Mary has been fictionalized as the as-yet unmarried Mary Shea, a servant of Lord George's and a victim of Whiteboy justice in her own right.

**RYAN:** Another historic personage, Patrick Ryan was a passenger aboard the John Barry with his large family. Apparently, he was a schoolteacher. His sons John and Tim are cited as trouble-makers in a written account by Surgeon William Burnie, who was in charge of the immigrants who traveled aboard the John Barry. In the play, Ryan is a 32-year-old Irish tenant grazier and schoolmaster who fought as a redcoat in the Napoleonic wars and therefore has a limp or some other war injury.

**ELIZABETH:** Also a historic figure, Elizabeth Ryan is documented as a passenger aboard the John Barry and the 21-year-old daughter of Patrick Ryan. In the play, she is interested in the affections of David Nagle and displays strong enmity toward Mary.

**ROBINSON:** Peter Robinson was born in New Brunswick in 1785 of United Empire Loyalist stock, the son of Christopher Robinson. His brother was Sir John Beverly Robinson, the Attorney General of Upper Canada in 1823. In that year, 1823, Peter Robinson recruited, organized, transported, and settled 182 Irish families in the Ottawa Valley of Upper Canada. In 1825 he did the same for approximately 2,000 immigrants whom he settled in the Valley of the Trent, now Peterborough County.

**LLOYD:** Sergeant Lloyd is a historic figure. He was a Cork Country Magistrate whose written records tell us that in the early months of 1823, within a week of Peter Robinson's arrival, five houses were burned in "the Blackwater baronies" of County Cork. His documentation also informs us that in nearby County Limerick, (terrorist) William Gorman killed 12 people when he burned the home of a rack renter, Edward Shea. In the play, his character has been fictionalized into a man with the secret alias of Captain Midnight.