



ÉIRE
IRELAND

19
2016



The 1916 Rising and County Wexford

An educational resource



The 1916 Rising and County Wexford pack is an introduction to County Wexford's contribution to the uprising of that year. It offers information on many aspects: causes and context, a timeline of events, the aftermath, profiles of some local leaders, the role of women, and arts and literature inspired by the Rising, among others.

Extracts from original documents of the period – letters, newspaper accounts, and witness statements are included. The selection provides a flavour of life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Ireland and in County Wexford. It is intended to encourage and enable students to embark on further study. The pack includes references for all sources quoted and offers guidance to sources and resources for further research.

The 1916 Rising and County Wexford pack cannot and does not attempt to tell the story of the Rising in its entirety. Rather, it introduces the reader to the wealth of information available in primary sources – an essential starting point for all reliable research – and in books, websites and other e-sources. The pack focuses in particular on local supports – the materials in the Wexford Studies Collections located on the top floor of the County Library in Mallin St., Wexford town, and in the Wexford County Archive collections in Ardavan, Wexford.

While every effort is made here to offer as current a resource as possible, you are directed also to the Council's website for the 2016 Commemorations, www.enniscorthy1916.ie which will be updated beyond the print date of this publication.

This information pack is intended for use in primary and secondary schools as both an introduction to local history sources on the Rising and as a tool for teachers and students who wish to pursue in-depth research on the period. It will be useful also for local historians, local history societies and community development groups, and the many individuals who appreciate the opportunity offered through the 2016 commemorations, to explore and discuss our heritage, and to value history's role in developing a sense of self, appreciation for diversity and a pride of place.

Acknowledgements

This pack is part of the County Wexford 2016 Centenary Programme which is co-ordinated by Mr Pádraig O'Gorman, District Manager, Enniscorthy Municipal District and under the Chairmanship of Mr Eddie Breen.

The 1916 Rising and County Wexford pack is an initiative of the Council's Public Library Service. Project management was begun by former County Librarian, Fionnuala Hanrahan and was completed by Senior Executive Librarian, Sinéad O'Gorman. Contributors include Gráinne Doran, Celestine Murphy, Kieran Costello, Karen O'Connor, Sinéad O'Gorman and Siobhán Ó Treasaigh. Wexford County Council acknowledges with thanks the many individuals who supported this project.



Tony Dempsey

Cathaoirleach
Wexford County Council



Tom Enright

Chief Executive
Wexford County Council

Tugann pacáiste *Éirí Amach 1916 i gContae Loch Garman* buneolas ar an bpáirt a ghlac Contae Loch Garman in *Éirí Amach* na bliana sin. Tugann sé eolas ar go leor gnéithe éagsúla, ina measc: cúiseanna agus comhthéacs, amlíne na n-imeachtaí agus a n-iarmhairt, próifíl de roinnt ceannairí áitiúla, ról na mban, agus na healaíona agus an litríocht a spreagadh ag an *Éirí Amach*.

Tá sleachta as doiciméid bhunaidh ón tréimhse sin – litreacha, cuntais nuachtáin agus ráitis finnéithe san áireamh. Tugann an rogha seo blas den saol sa naoú haois déag agus ag tús na fichiú haoise in Éirinn agus i gContae Loch Garman. Tá sé i gceist mic léinn a spreagadh agus cur ar a gcumas a thuilleadh staidéir a dhéanamh ar na hábhair seo. Tá tagairtí sa phacáiste do gach foinse a luaitear agus tugtar treoir i leith foinsí do thaighde breise.

Ní insíonn pacáiste *Éirí Amach 1916 agus Contae Loch Garman* scéal an *Éirí Amach* ina iomláine. In ionad sin, tugann sé léargas don taighdeoir ar an eolas saibhir atá ar fáil i bpríomhfhoinsí – bunphointe tosaigh do thaighde iontaofa – agus i leabhair, láithreáin ghréasáin agus foinsí leictreonacha eile. Díríonn an pacáiste ar thacaíochtaí áitiúla ach go háirithe – na hábhair i mBailiúcháin Staidéir Loch Garman, atá lonnaithe ar urlár uachtarach Leabharlann an Chontae i Sráid Uí Mhealláin, Baile Loch Garman, agus i mbailiúcháin Chartlann Chontae Loch Garman in Ard Chaomháin, soir ó thuaidh ó bhaile Loch Garman.

Cé go ndéantar gach iarracht acmhainn suas chun dáta a sholáthar, iarrtar ort cuairt a thabhairt ar láithreán gréasáin na Comhairle do Chomóradh 2016, www.enniscorthy1916.ie chomh maith, agus é le bheith á nuashonrú tar éis priontáil an fhoilseacháin seo.

Is do bhunscoileanna agus meánscoileanna araon an pacáiste eolais seo mar bhuneolas ar fhoinsí staire áitiúla maidir leis an *Éirí Amach* agus mar uirlis do mhúinteoirí agus do mhic léinn ar mian leo taighde níos doimhne a dhéanamh ar an tréimhse seo. Beidh sé úsáideach freisin do staraí áitiúla, cumainn staire áitiúla, grúpaí forbartha pobail agus raon leathan daoine aonair a thuigeann an deis a thugann Comóradh 2016 dúinn ár n-oidhreacht a phlé agus a iniúchadh, agus meas a léiriú ar ról na staire i bhforbairt féiniúlachta, tuiscint ar an éagsúlacht agus mórtas ceantair.

Buíochas

Seo clár de chuid Chlár Comórtha Céad Bliain 2016 Chontae Loch Garman, comhórdaithe ag an Uasal Pádraig O’Gorman, Bainisteoir Ceantair, Ceantar Bardasach Inis Córthaidh agus faoi chúram Chathaoirleacht an Uasail Eddie Breen.

Is tionscnamh de chuid Sheirbhís Leabharlainne Poiblí na Comhairle an pacáiste *Éirí Amach 1916 agus Contae Loch Garman*. Chuir iar-Leabharlannaí Contae, Fionnula Hanahan tús le bainistíocht an tionscadail agus é curtha i gcrích ag Leabharlannaí Sinsearach Feidhmiúcháin, Sinéad O’Gorman. I measc na rannpháirtithe bhí Gráinne Doran, Celestine Murphy, Kieran Costello, Karen O’Connor, Sinéad O’Gorman, Siobhán Ó Treasaigh agus Jenny Ní Mhaoileoin (Foras na Gaeilge). Faraor, ní féidir gach duine a chuidigh linn le comhairle nó saineolas a lua anseo. Tugann Comhairle Contae Loch Garman aitheantas agus buíochas do gach éinne a thug tacaíocht don tionscadal seo.



Tony Dempsey

Cathaoirleach



Tom Enright

Príomhfheidhmeannach

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Background

A combination of cultural and political developments in Ireland from the 1880s created the environment that inspired the 1916 Rising.

Culturally, Irish people began to think about 'Ireland' and 'Irishness' in terms of sports, literature, language, music, dance and even the clothes they wore. Irish people began to value and promote those characteristics that were considered 'Irish'. Many groups were formed to promote these ideals.

Political organisations were founded to achieve either full or partial independence from Great Britain. For some, this would be by negotiation in parliament, for others by military force.

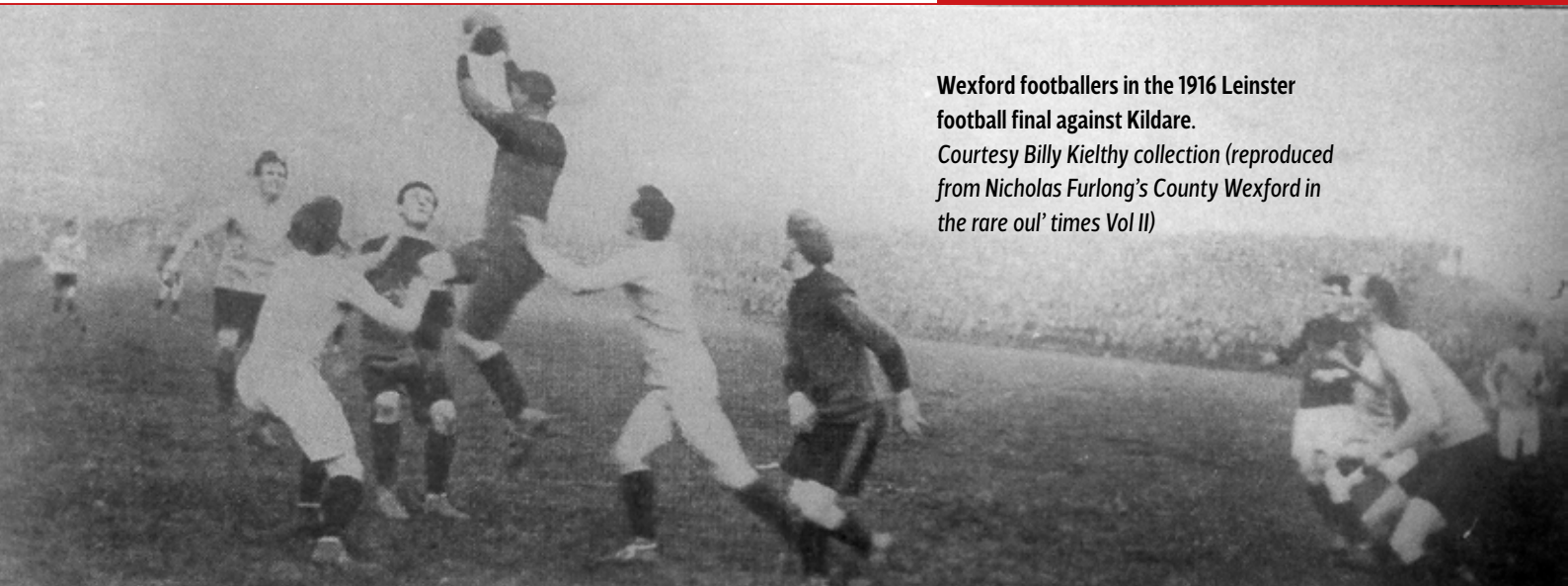
These groups, each concerned with its own social, cultural or political ideal, acted together to change the mindset of the Irish people.

All of this was happening against a backdrop of land reform, the growth of women's involvement in politics, the long-awaited passing of the Home Rule Bill and the outbreak of World War I.

The interaction of these forces with one another resulted in a climate of change in Ireland which led to the Rising of 1916.

The Death of Cuchulainn (1911-12)
by Oliver Sheppard (1865-1941).





Wexford footballers in the 1916 Leinster football final against Kildare.

Courtesy Billy Kielthy collection (reproduced from Nicholas Furlong's County Wexford in the rare ol' times Vol II)

Culture

The Gaelic Athletic Association (Cumann Lúthchleas Gael)

In 1884 the Gaelic Athletic Association was set up to promote Gaelic sports. This created standard rules for Gaelic football and hurling for the first time. At the beginning of the century, the GAA took a political stance and decided that those who played or promoted 'foreign games' such as cricket, hockey, soccer, rugby and tennis, could not participate in the GAA.

The Literary Revival

From the late 1800s, authors and poets began writing about Ireland and Irish topics in the English language in the form of novels, short stories and plays. The Abbey Theatre was founded as the National Theatre in 1904 by poet, W.B. Yeats and Lady Augusta Gregory. By performing and promoting the work of Irish writers such as J.M. Synge, Lady Gregory and W.B. Yeats, it reflected the growing nationalist sentiment of the time.

The Gaelic Revival

The Gaelic League (*Conradh na Gaeilge*) was founded in 1893 to encourage people to speak the Irish language and use it on a daily basis. It set up branches all over the country, where people would learn Irish and practise Irish dancing and traditional music.

Art McMurrough War Pipe Band, Enniscorthy.

Courtesy of Wexford County Archive



Kathleen Browne, Rathronan Castle, in traditional Irish costume.

Courtesy of Bernard Browne



The Echo newspaper

Founded in 1902, *The Echo* newspaper became one of the first local newspapers to support *Sinn Féin* and strongly supported the efforts of the Irish Volunteers. The managing director of the paper was C.J. Irwin of Kilcannon House, Enniscorthy. William Sears, a *Sinn Féin* man, was employed as editor.

A large number of the journalists who worked for *The Echo* were nationalists. Many of them were members of the IRB and the Irish Volunteers. Its reporters included Robert Brennan who covered Wexford town, Seán Etchingham for the Gorey area and Laurence de Lacy for Enniscorthy.

Following the surrender of the rebels in Enniscorthy on 1 May 1916, many of the staff in *The Echo* were arrested and interned in Frongoch, including Patrick Pierce, James Cullen, William Quirke and Seán Moran.

The Irish Volunteer

In January 1914, William Sears, editor of *The Echo* newspaper proposed the idea of publishing a weekly newspaper for the Irish Volunteers. This proposal was accepted by the Volunteers' committee. Laurence de Lacy, a journalist with the *The Echo* was appointed editor of the newspaper, called *The Irish Volunteer* (*Óglach na hÉireann*).

The newspaper published political and historical articles, features on military tactics and a wide range of advertisements that promoted Irish goods and Irish manufacturers. When the Volunteers split in September 1914, *The Echo* decided to cease publication of *The Irish Volunteer*. In December 1914 it was revived by Eoin MacNeill. The final issue of the paper appeared on 22 April 1916, the day before the Rising was scheduled to begin.

The Irish Volunteer, front page,
30 October 1915.

Courtesy of Wexford County Arch.



Politics

Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB)

The IRB was a small, secret, oath-bound, revolutionary body whose sole object was to establish and maintain a free and independent Republican government in Ireland.

It was founded by James Stephens in Dublin in 1858. It became known as the Fenian movement in the 1850s and 1860s, and was committed to the use of force to establish an independent Irish republic.

The organisation came into conflict with other nationalist organisations which were trying to achieve an independent Ireland through peaceful means. The IRB organised a small unsuccessful rising in March 1867. After that its leaders began to disagree about how they could achieve their aims and the organisation went into decline.

It was revived about 1907 under the leadership of Bulmer Hobson and Thomas Clarke with the aim of achieving independence for Ireland by force of arms. The establishment of the Irish Volunteers in 1913 gave the IRB an opportunity to train and equip its members as a military body.

The IRB was governed by a supreme council and there was also an additional military council. The seven signatories of the 1916 Proclamation constituted the entire military council at that time.

1798 Centenary commemoration

In 1898 nationalists of all types celebrated the centenary of the 1798 Rebellion. They wanted it remembered as a great movement by the people of Ireland to assert their independence from Britain.

Various organisations and committees were set up in the years immediately prior to the centenary. 'Ninety-eight Clubs' were formed throughout the country, often bearing names of leaders of the 1798 Rebellion. These were often infiltrated by members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

They educated their members in the history of the Rebellion. They also made a comparison between the political situation in 1798 and the political circumstances of their own time.



Laying the foundation stone for
the Bull Ring 1798 monument.
1 November 1898.

This effort at remembrance was not just for men. The Irishwomen's Centenary Union organised the decoration of neglected graves, not only of the 1798 heroes but of other patriots as well.

In County Wexford, nationalist politicians such as John Edward Redmond and his brother William, who were both elected MPs, gave fiery speeches. They harshly criticised British rule in Ireland and glorified the men of 1798 as heroes, willing to fight and die for Ireland.

Throughout the country, a rising tide of enthusiasm saw the erection of monuments to the patriots of '98. Dedication ceremonies for monuments or foundation stones drew huge crowds. The 1798 monuments in the towns of Enniscorthy, Wexford and New Ross date from around this time. It was obvious that the centenary had caught the imagination of the people.

Women and politics

For most of the 1800s, Irish women, like women in Britain, were not allowed to vote in parliamentary elections or to become MPs. An unmarried woman could own property but this passed to her husband when she married.

Access to education beyond primary school was very limited. In the 1870s a campaign to get better education for women began. By the beginning of the 1900s, there were several girls' secondary schools and colleges for those who could afford to attend. Some universities began to admit women.

Better education gave women the confidence to become involved in politics. In 1898 women were given the vote for local government elections and several women were elected to county and district councils.

However, despite their involvement in political issues, women could still not vote in parliamentary elections or, with the exception of *Sinn Féin*, become full members of political parties.

Copy of *Bean Na hÉireann*, a monthly magazine published in 1910 by *Inghínidhe na hÉireann*, the precursor of *Cumann na mBan*.

Defence Forces Ireland Military Archives



In 1908 Hannah Sheehy Skeffington and her husband Francis set up the Irish Women's Franchise League to campaign for votes for women. The Franchise League held public meetings and demonstrations, and heckled political leaders, such as John Redmond, who were determined that women should have no vote in elections for a Home Rule parliament.

The outbreak of World War I changed everything. As the armies recruited ever-increasing numbers of men, women had to take up jobs outside the home and it was soon recognised that women's work was vital if victory was to be achieved.

Cumann na mBan (The Irishwomen's Council) was founded on 5 April 1914 as a support to the Irish Volunteers. Unlike the Citizen Army, which accepted both sexes into its ranks, *Cumann na mBan*'s role was secondary to that of the Volunteers. They were to act as nurses, cooks, messengers and fund-raisers but there was no question of their taking part in any fighting except in extreme circumstances.

Sinn Féin

Sinn Féin ('We Ourselves') was a radical nationalist movement that developed between 1905 and 1908 under the direction of Arthur Griffith and Bulmer Hobson. Its original concept of Irish independence was that of dual monarchy. Griffith hoped to win over Unionists by keeping the King of England as King of Ireland. This was very like the system that existed in Ireland before 1800. Griffith cited Grattan's Parliament (1782–1800), which he idealised as a model for how Ireland could be governed independently of the British Parliament.

Sinn Féin was the first Irish political party to admit women as full members. Prominent members included Seán Mac Diarmada, Countess Markievicz, and Seán T. O'Kelly. It attracted various small groups of nationalists, feminists, disillusioned Home Rulers, and members of Arthur Griffith's earlier organisation, *Cumann na nGaedheal* (Society of Gaels).

Sinn Féin was initially successful and by 1908 the party had 100 branches throughout the country. However, the revival of the IRB in 1907 made some of Griffith's younger followers impatient with his pacifism. After 1910, John Redmond's Irish Parliamentary Party was revitalised by the prospect that Home Rule would be achieved. Support for *Sinn Féin* began to decline.

By 1914, *Sinn Féin* had almost disappeared, with just one branch remaining. However, by then many nationalists had begun to describe themselves as 'Sinn Féiners' and the more nationalistic members of the Irish Volunteers called themselves 'Sinn Féin Volunteers'.



Éire-Ireland was an anti-British newspaper launched by Arthur Griffith, which was eventually suppressed.
Courtesy South Dublin County Libraries



Members of Na Fianna on signalling exercise

Source: Na Fianna Éireann website

Na Fianna Éireann

Na Fianna was nationalist boy scouts organisation. It was founded in Dublin in 1909 by Bulmer Hobson and Countess Markievicz, two Irish Protestant nationalists who sought to curb the influence in Ireland of the pro-British Boy Scouts' movement. *Na Fianna's* main aims were the promotion of sports and knowledge of Irish history among boys and younger men. Some senior members of *Na Fianna* became members of the Irish Volunteers when that organisation was established in Dublin in 1913. Liam Mellows, who had been brought up in north County Wexford, was one of *Na Fianna's* instructors. He travelled around the country establishing and organising branches. He founded a branch in Enniscorthy in 1914.

The Land Question

By the early 1900s there had been a huge change in the ownership of land in rural Ireland. The land war of the 1880s, with its demand for 'the land of Ireland for the people of Ireland,' had compelled the British government into a series of Land Acts. These Acts reformed ownership of land. They allowed tenant farmers to buy the land they were working with long term loans from the government.

One of the effects of the Land Acts was that landlords – many of whom did not live in Ireland – were replaced by small landowners and the power and political influence of the landlords was ended. The new landowners were mainly nationalist in their political views.

Although there was still much rural poverty, those who had been able to buy their holdings were now much better off. In larger towns, however, conditions were far from satisfactory.



RIC constables escorting
Pierce's Foundry strike-
breakers. King St. Wexford, 1911.
*Courtesy of Nicholas Furlong
(Alice White Collection)*

Workers' rights and the rise of the labour movement

In 1911, Dublin had one of the most underfed, worst-housed and badly paid populations in Europe. 21,000 families lived in single-room tenements. The death rate was higher than any city in Europe.

To improve the conditions of the working class, the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union was organised by two men, Jim Larkin and James Connolly. In August 1913, a confrontation began between Larkin and the employers' leader, William Martin Murphy.

Murphy organised some 400 employers and locked out the workers who had become members of Larkin's union. By the end of September 1913, 24,000 people were locked out. An eight-month bitter struggle began during which Dublin witnessed massive rallies and baton charges by police resulting in numerous injuries and several deaths. There were riots, arrests, imprisonments. Food-ships were organised by English sympathisers to support the workers.

In the end, neither side won but a spirit of militancy had been aroused in the workers which played a significant role in broadening the growing revolutionary climate.

Two years before the Dublin lockout, Wexford town's foundry workers were locked out by their employers for joining the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union.

The workers were supported by local GAA teams, especially the Wexford Wolfe Tones and the Castlebridge GAA Club. They organised games and parades during the six-month dispute to keep the workers' spirits up.

John Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party ignored requests to use their influence with the employers to find a settlement. For this reason they lost much support amongst workers in Wexford, a strongly Redmondite town at that time.

The dispute was finally settled with the help of James Connolly who was cheered by a crowd of over 5,000 at a victory celebration in the town in February 1912.

Irish Citizen Army

The Irish Citizen Army had been formed by James Larkin and James Connolly on 23 November 1913 to protect the Dublin strikers. After the strike ended the Army was taken over by Connolly. He re-organised it into an armed and uniformed force. Its aims were the ownership of the land of Ireland by the people of Ireland and the establishment of a workers' Republic.

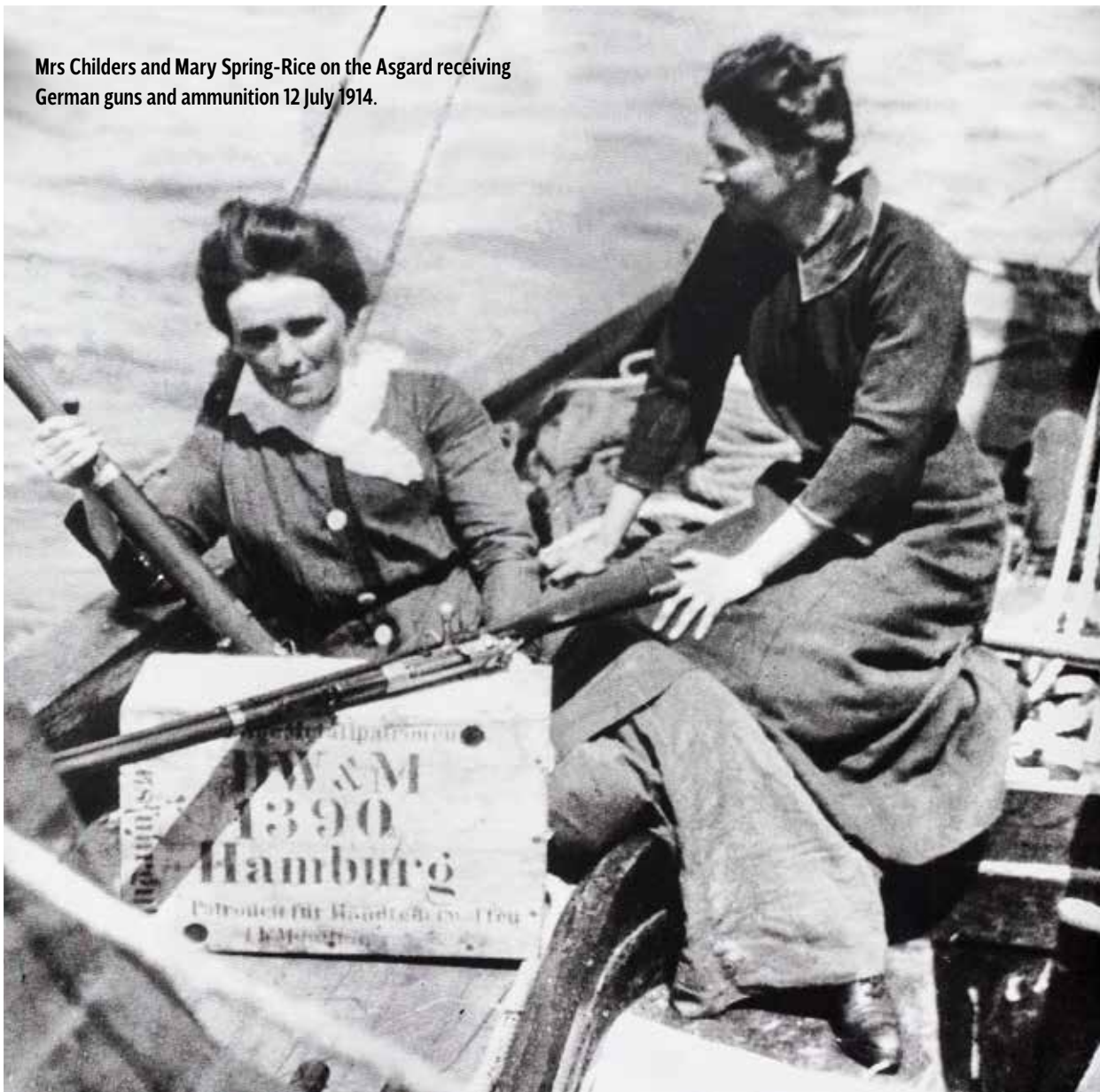
The Citizen Army armed itself with Mauser rifles bought from Germany by the Irish Volunteers and smuggled into Ireland at Howth in July 1914. The organisation offered equal membership to both men and women and trained them both in the use of weapons.

An armed organisation of the Irish working class is a phenomenon in Ireland. Hitherto the workers of Ireland have fought as parts of the armies led by their masters, never as a member of any army officered, trained and inspired by men of their own class. Now, with arms in their hands, they propose to steer their own course, to carve their own future.

James Connolly, Workers' Republic, 30 October 1915

On Monday, 24 April 1916, 220 members of the Citizen Army (including 28 women) took part in the Easter Rising.

Mrs Childers and Mary Spring-Rice on the Asgard receiving German guns and ammunition 12 July 1914.



Home Rule and the Ulster Question

Home Rule was the demand that Ireland should have its own domestic parliament instead of being governed from Westminster. The first and second Home Rule Bills, in 1886 and 1893, were defeated in Parliament. After the elections of 1910, the Irish Parliamentary Party, led by John Redmond, held the balance of power in the House of Commons. For this reason they were able to negotiate the introduction of a third Bill in exchange for supporting the Liberal Party in government.

The third Home Rule Bill was introduced on 11 April 1912. It passed the House of Commons by a small majority but the House of Lords overwhelmingly rejected it. This happened again in 1913.

The Home Rule Bill met fierce opposition from Edward Carson and the Irish Unionist Party. During 1912, over 500,000 people signed the Ulster Covenant against the passing of the Bill. Early in 1913 the Ulster Volunteer Force was formed to oppose Home Rule, by force if necessary.

In May 1914, after the Commons again passed the Bill, the government used the provisions of the Parliament Act of 1911 to override the Lords' opposition and sent it for Royal assent.

The third Home Rule Bill provided for the creation of a two-chamber Irish parliament, with a 164-member House of Commons and a 40-member senate. It also allowed Ireland to continue electing MPs to Westminster.

On 18 September 1914, the provisions of the Home Rule Bill became law, but at the same time another Act was passed to stop it coming into effect until after the war had ended.

The Irish Volunteers

The Irish Volunteers were founded in 1913 in direct response to the formation of the Ulster Volunteer Force in Ulster. The IRB encouraged nationalists to join the Volunteer force for Ireland's defence. As a secret, oath-bound society, the IRB could not publicly establish such a force themselves.

Irish Volunteers/Óglaigh na hÉireann recruitment poster.
Courtesy of Nicholas Furlong collection



John Redmond.

Photo courtesy of British Library Images



The inaugural meeting of the Irish Volunteers was held in Wynn's Hotel, Dublin, in November 1913. Its aims included the advance of the cause of Irish liberty and the provision of assistance in arming and equipping a body of Irishmen for the defence of Ireland.

The Irish Volunteers in Wexford

The Volunteers were founded in Enniscorthy in December 1913. The IRB dominated its membership from the start. Members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the recently established 'Irish Brigade' were also included in the organisation.

Thomas Doyle from Ross Road, Enniscorthy recalled the early weeks of training with the Enniscorthy branch.

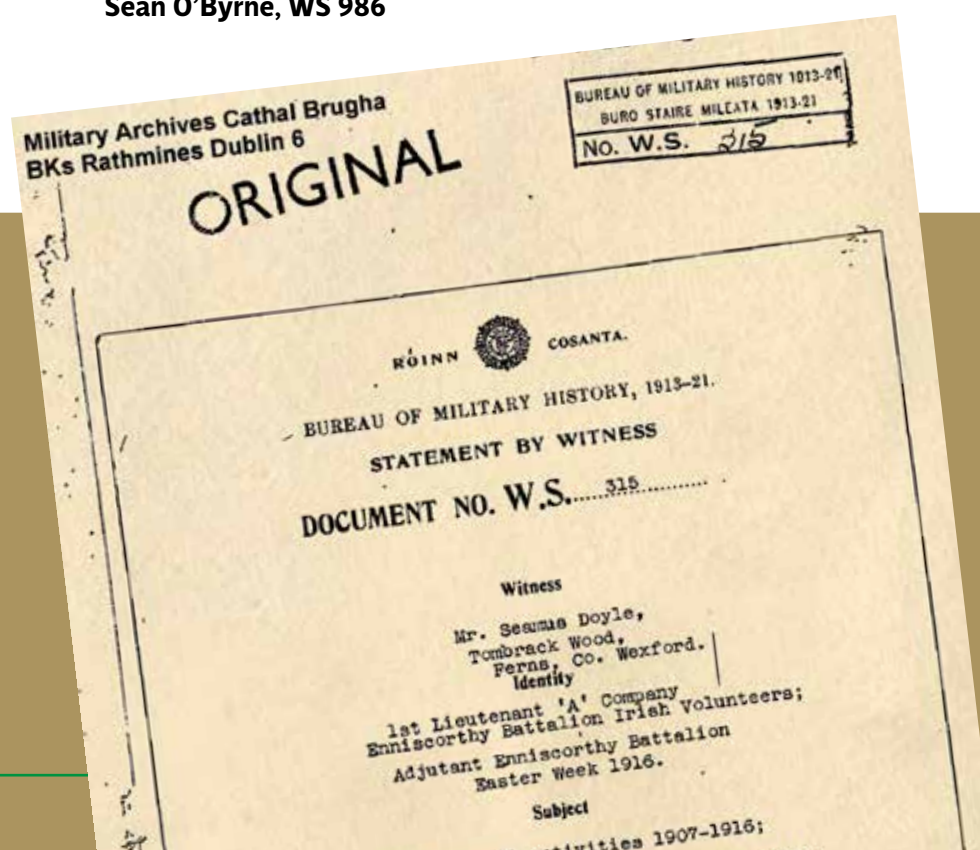
We started drilling in Bennett's ball-alley, Templeshannon on Sunday morning after 10 o'clock Mass. It was not long until we got a drill instructor, an ex-British recruiting sergeant named Darcy. He was delighted to be drilling us; he thought in his own mind he was preparing us for the British army; but we members of the IRB used him for our own use.

Thomas Doyle, WS 1041

Units were then formed in Ferns and Wexford town. Recruiting in the north of the county began in earnest when Pádraig Pearse addressed a meeting in Gorey Town Hall in January 1914. Seán O'Byrne, treasurer of the Gorey Company of Irish Volunteers recalled the establishment of the Gorey Company at this meeting.

The meeting was well organised. We had two bands and held a parade from the Ram's Arms Hotel, which was situated on the Enniscorthy side of Gorey, to the Town Hall which was on the Arklow side. The meeting was so big that large numbers could not obtain admission to the Hall; therefore it was necessary for Pearse and the other speakers to address the large crowd assembled outside from one of the window.

Seán O'Byrne, WS 986



Between 1947 and 1957, the State collected 1,773 witness statements and other material in order to gather primary source material for the revolutionary period in Ireland from 1913 to 1921.

Shannon Company of the Irish Volunteers, 1915. Fianna Éireann members seated at front.
 Alfred E Crane Collection (Copyright of Ibar Carty)



The Enniscorthy Battalion comprised three companies:

- ‘**A Company**’ under Seamus Rafter (for John Street area);
- ‘**B Company**’ known as the Shannon Company under Alex Doyle;
- ‘**C Company**’ from the Island Road/Irish Street area.

The Ferns branch was the strongest outside of Enniscorthy. There were also companies in Ballycullane, Ballymurn, Bunclody, Clohamon, Craanford, Crossabeg, Cushenstown, Davidstown, Gorey, Gusserane, Marshalstown, New Ross, Oylegate, Oulart, Rathgarogue, Rathnure, Rosslare, Sheilbaggan, and Wexford town.

Once formed, the men were trained in the use of rifles and other firearms. They went on manoeuvres and drills in rural areas, carried out marches and mock battles, and trained in signalling. Under the control of the IRB, they were trained by a large number of ex-British Army men.



Members of the
 Enniscorthy and Ferns
 Branches of the Irish
 Volunteers, in Market
 Square, Enniscorthy,
 September 1915.

Alfred E Crane
 Collection (Copyright
 Ibar Carty).

World War I - 'England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity'

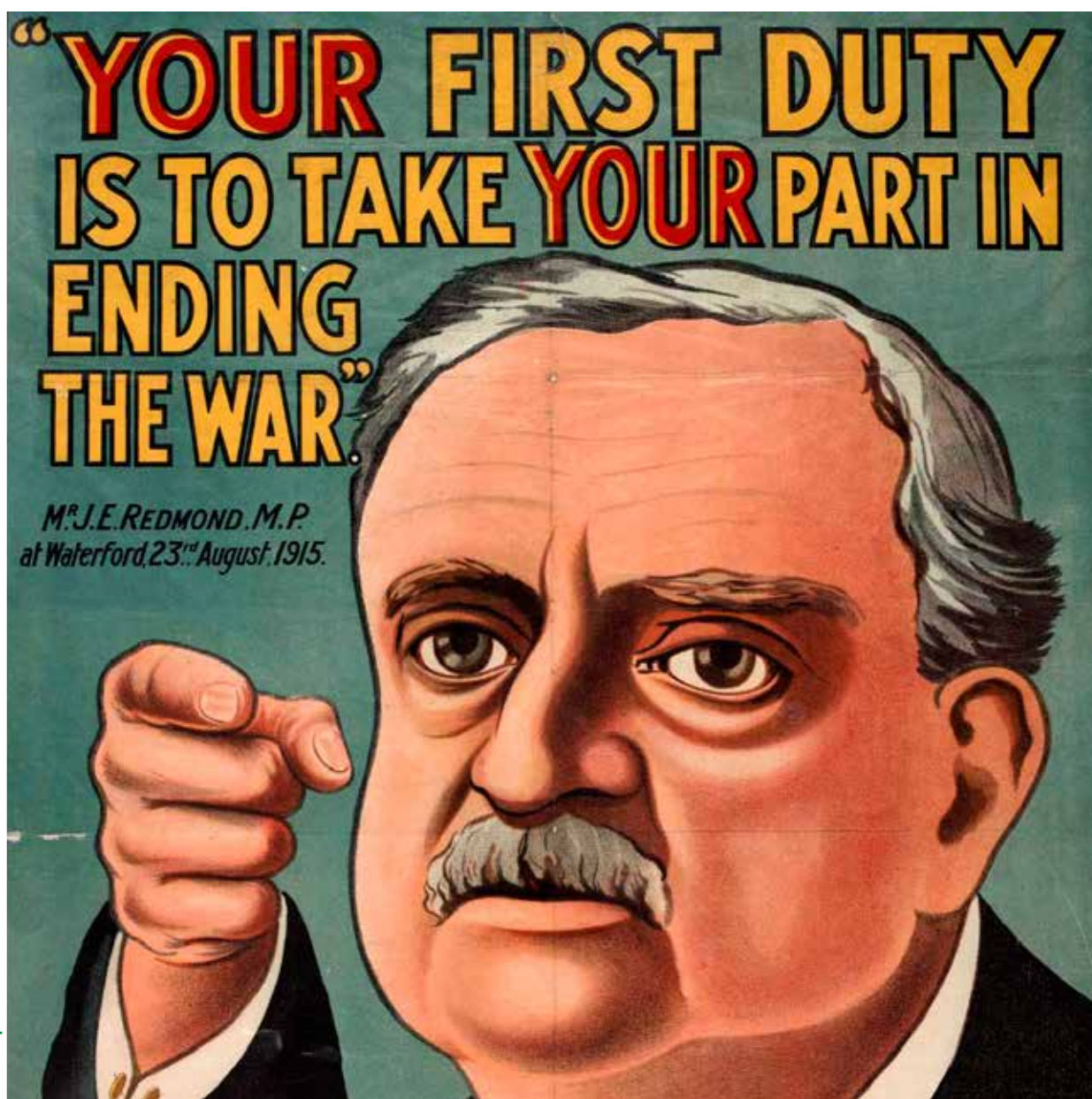
When the war with Germany began in August 1914, Redmond hoped that Irish participation in the war would lead to the full implementation of Home Rule when it ended. He also believed that if Irishmen, Unionist and Nationalist, fought on the same side in Europe, trust would be established between them and Unionist opposition to Home Rule would end. He immediately pledged the Volunteers to defend Ireland. Then in his speech at Woodenbridge, in September 1914, he encouraged the Volunteers to enlist in the British Army to fight for the rights of 'small nations.'

The duty of the manhood of Ireland is twofold. Its duty is, at all costs, to defend the shores of Ireland against foreign invasion...The interests of Ireland - of the whole of Ireland - are at stake in this war...It would be a disgrace for ever to our country...if Ireland confined their efforts to remaining at home to defend the shores of Ireland from an unlikely invasion, and to shrinking from the duty of proving on the field of battle that gallantry and courage which has so long distinguished our race all through its history.

John Redmond, speech at Woodenbridge, Co. Wicklow on 20 September 1914.¹

John Redmond on a recruitment poster, encouraging men to join the British Army.

National Library of Ireland.



This speech caused a split in the Volunteers. The majority supported Redmond and these Volunteers became known as the Redmondite or National Volunteers. In County Wexford they were dominant in Wexford town and New Ross. Those who opposed Redmond continued to call themselves the Irish Volunteers. These were dominant in Enniscorthy and Ferns. In Gorey, equal numbers supported both sides.

The Irish Volunteers and the IRB also saw the war as an opportunity to further their cause. They began to make contacts with Germany, seeking weapons and support for an armed uprising.

Even though Redmond's speech caused a split in the Volunteer movement, many men enlisted in the British army because of it. Many more joined up for economic reasons. By Easter 1916, 92,000 Irish men had joined the army. Women entered the workforce to support them.² Pierce's Foundry in Wexford town which made agricultural machinery before the war, now began to make artillery shells.



Studio photo featuring Charlie Valentine from Gorey and colleague in British uniform during World War 1.
Michael Fitzpatrick Collection

John Redmond addresses a body of Volunteers in Wexford on 4 October 1914.
National Library of Ireland



O'Donovan Rossa funeral

Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, originally from outside Rosscarbery, County Cork, was an Irish Fenian leader and prominent member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). He was jailed for life in 1865 for high treason after plotting a Fenian rising.

His release was secured by the IRB when he agreed to live in exile in New York, where he died on 29 June 1915 at the age of 83. His body was brought back to Ireland by the IRB for burial in Glasnevin cemetery, Dublin on 1 August 1915.

The funeral was attended by an estimated 5,000 people, including veterans from the Fenian movement, the Irish Volunteers, members of the Irish Citizen Army and *Na Fianna Éireann*. Pádraig Pearse delivered a eulogy at the graveside and the concluding remarks of his oration included the now famous statement:

*They have left us our Fenian dead,
and while Ireland holds these graves,
Ireland unfree shall never be at peace.*

Pearse's speech and the presence of armed members of the Irish Volunteers had a profound effect on public opinion and brought about an increase in recruitment to the Irish Volunteers, *Cumann na mBan*, and the Irish Citizen Army.

Pádraig Pearse delivering his oration at the graveside of O'Donovan Rossa in 1915.

Photo (Keogh Brothers, Dublin) in Wexford County Archive.



The Rising

As World War I progressed, members of the IRB prepared for an uprising. They planned to use the Irish Citizen Army and the Irish Volunteers to achieve their aim of national independence by means of armed revolt.

The rising was due to begin on Easter Sunday, 23 April 1916, using routine parades by the Volunteers as a cover. The timing of the planned rising was dependent on the successful landing of arms, ammunition and explosives from a ship – the *Aud* – supplied by Germany and arranged by a former British diplomat, Roger Casement.

The following timeline will show what happened from day to day in Dublin, County Wexford, and elsewhere in the country during the Easter 1916 period.

Thursday 20 April

The *Aud* arrives with arms. Orders and counter-orders are received in County Wexford

The German arms ship, the *Aud* arrived in Tralee bay, County Kerry, carrying a cargo of rifles and ammunition. As the local Volunteers did not expect the ship to arrive until Easter Sunday, the arms were not landed.

A *Cumann na mBan* member, Eily O’Hanrahan delivered an order from Dublin leader Pádraig Pearse to the Enniscorthy Volunteers, directing them to mobilise on Easter Sunday.³ An hour later, an order from headquarters in Dublin was received countermanding the original order.

News was received from the Volunteers in Kilkenny that they had also received orders not to go ahead with the planned rising on Easter Sunday.

Friday 21 April

The *Aud* is captured and Volunteers prepare to rise

The *Aud* was captured by the Royal Navy off the coast of Kerry, depriving the Irish Volunteers of much anticipated arms and ammunition.



The German ship, the SS Libau posing as the Norwegian ship, the *Aud*.
National Library of Ireland

Seamus Doyle, looked for clarification on the situation from Wexford Brigade Commandant, Seán Sinnott, and was then delegated to go to Dublin. In Dublin he met Sean McDermott and was shown an order stating that Dublin-based Captain J.J. (Ginger) O'Connell was to take charge of all Volunteers in counties Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow and Wexford. Doyle returned to Wexford and joined in the final preparations with the Enniscorthy Volunteers.⁴

Enniscorthy Volunteers believed that the Rising would take place on Sunday. The Volunteers in New Ross were ordered to mobilise on Easter Sunday night, and to make their way towards Clonroche that night where they were to join with the Templeudigan Company.⁵

Saturday 22 April

Enniscorthy Volunteer Peter Paul Galligan travels to Dublin

Peter Paul Galligan travelled to Dublin to find out what was happening. He had been appointed Commandant of the Enniscorthy Battalion.⁶

Sunday 23 April

Order published by Eoin MacNeill in the National newspapers, cancelling all parades. The rising is postponed.

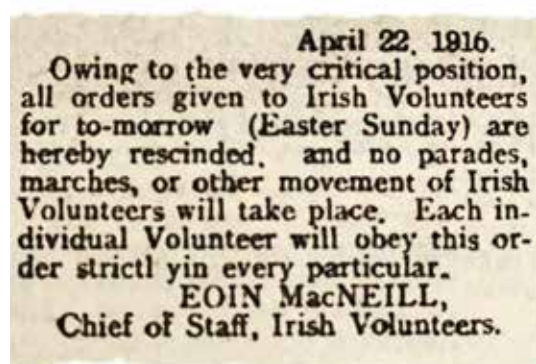
Enniscorthy Volunteers had assembled in 'Antwerp' and were joined by Captain O'Connell and Dr Dundon from Borris.

An order from Eoin MacNeill, leader of the Irish Volunteers, cancelling all parades, appeared in the national newspapers. The leaders in Dublin decided to postpone the Rising for twenty-four hours. This was followed by another order from Dublin to the Enniscorthy leaders, confirming the announcement in the national newspapers. It was then decided to disperse the Enniscorthy Volunteers.

Mobilisation of the Ferns Volunteers was cancelled that morning, while the New Ross/Templeudigan Volunteers discovered the news that evening.

Cumann na mBan members in Enniscorthy were told to stand by and to be ready to mobilise at a moment's notice.⁷

If the countermanding order had not been issued we would have had on Sunday the whole Wexford Brigade out. As it was the Wexford Town Battn., with the exception of a few individuals, did not and neither did the Forth and Bargy contingents, nor New Ross, Ballymurn and Gorey. For the final mobilisation in Enniscorthy there were only the Enniscorthy and Ferns men."
Robert Brennan, WS 125



Eoin MacNeill's order cancelling all parades, from *The Free Press*

Monday 24 April

Dublin rises and Pearse orders Enniscorthy Volunteers to mobilise.

Galligan reports to the G.P.O.

In Dublin the Irish Volunteers and Irish Citizen Army took over buildings around Dublin city centre. Shortly after noon on Easter Monday, Pádraig Pearse read the Proclamation of the Irish Republic from the steps of the G.P.O. on Sackville Street (now O'Connell Street). This marked the beginning of the Rising.

Elsewhere, Volunteers assembled in east Galway, led by Liam Mellows, who grew up in north County Wexford.

The Volunteers in Enniscorthy received an order from Pearse, stating that the rising was now to begin at noon on that day. In the afternoon word reached Wexford that the Rising had begun.⁸ In Dublin, Peter Paul Galligan heard of the beginning of the Rising and reported to rebel headquarters at the G.P.O.^w

Tuesday 25 April

Pádraig Pearse orders Galligan to return to Enniscorthy and mobilise Volunteers

Peter Paul Galligan, Commandant of the Enniscorthy Battalion was ordered by Pearse to return to Enniscorthy, to mobilise the Volunteers there. He was supplied with a good bicycle in the G.P.O. and instructed by James Connolly not to return to Enniscorthy through Wicklow as they feared Dublin was surrounded.¹⁰ Galligan cycled to Enniscorthy through counties Kildare and Carlow.

The Ferns Volunteers mobilised, and made their way towards Enniscorthy. Near Scarawalsh Bridge, they received a message from Enniscorthy not to proceed any further. They then made their way to Ballinahallen Wood until midnight, then returned home. Volunteers in New Ross attempted to contact a senior officer in Waterford, without success.

In Dublin, martial law was declared. British Army reinforcements began to arrive from around Ireland.

Elsewhere, Volunteers in east Galway attacked two police barracks without success.

Wednesday 26 April

Railway lines in County Wexford are sabotaged by the Volunteers and a decision is made to rise the following day

The Enniscorthy Volunteers heard that large numbers of British soldiers were arriving via Rosslare and it was decided to destroy railway lines to prevent the troops mobilising by train.¹¹ Volunteers in Ferns and New Ross maintained regular contact

Peter Paul Galligan, Commandant of the Enniscorthy Battalion.

Courtesy of Wexford County Archive.



with their comrades in Enniscorthy, awaiting orders to rise.¹² Galligan arrived from Dublin and the Volunteers decided to rise the next day.¹³ A *Cumann na mBan* member brought guns from Wexford to Enniscorthy.¹⁴

As word of the Rising spread around the country, public opinion turned against the Volunteers. In New Ross, where people were already hostile to the organisation, their reaction to events in Dublin was one of fury against the Volunteers.¹⁵

In Dublin, British Army reinforcements began to arrive. Enniscorthy man, Thomas Wafer was shot by a sniper and died while holding the Hibernian Bank on Sackville (O'Connell) Street in Dublin. In Swords and Donabate, the police barracks were attacked and arms were taken by the Volunteers.

Thursday 27 April

Enniscorthy rises. The Proclamation is posted on the Market House and the Tri-colour is raised over the Athenaeum

Early in the morning the order was given to take control of the town of Enniscorthy. At 4:00am, about 150 County Wexford Volunteers assembled outside the arms depot at Patrick Keegan's house at 10 Irish Street, Enniscorthy and proceeded to take over key locations around the town. These included Enniscorthy Castle, the Athenaeum, the Courthouse, and the train station.

The Athenaeum was taken over as official headquarters of the Volunteers. The Proclamation of the Irish Republic was read by Seamus Doyle and posted on the Market House. The tricolour was raised over the Athenaeum by Una Brennan, Marion Stokes and Gretta Comerford, and was saluted by a firing party.

Cumann na mBan established an emergency hospital, run by Miss M. White and a kitchen, under Miss Gretta Doyle, at the Athenaeum. Food was sourced from the homes of *Cumann na mBan* members and from donations by local businesses and families. Máire Moran worked as a dispatch rider carrying important messages from the Enniscorthy headquarters to other areas.¹⁶

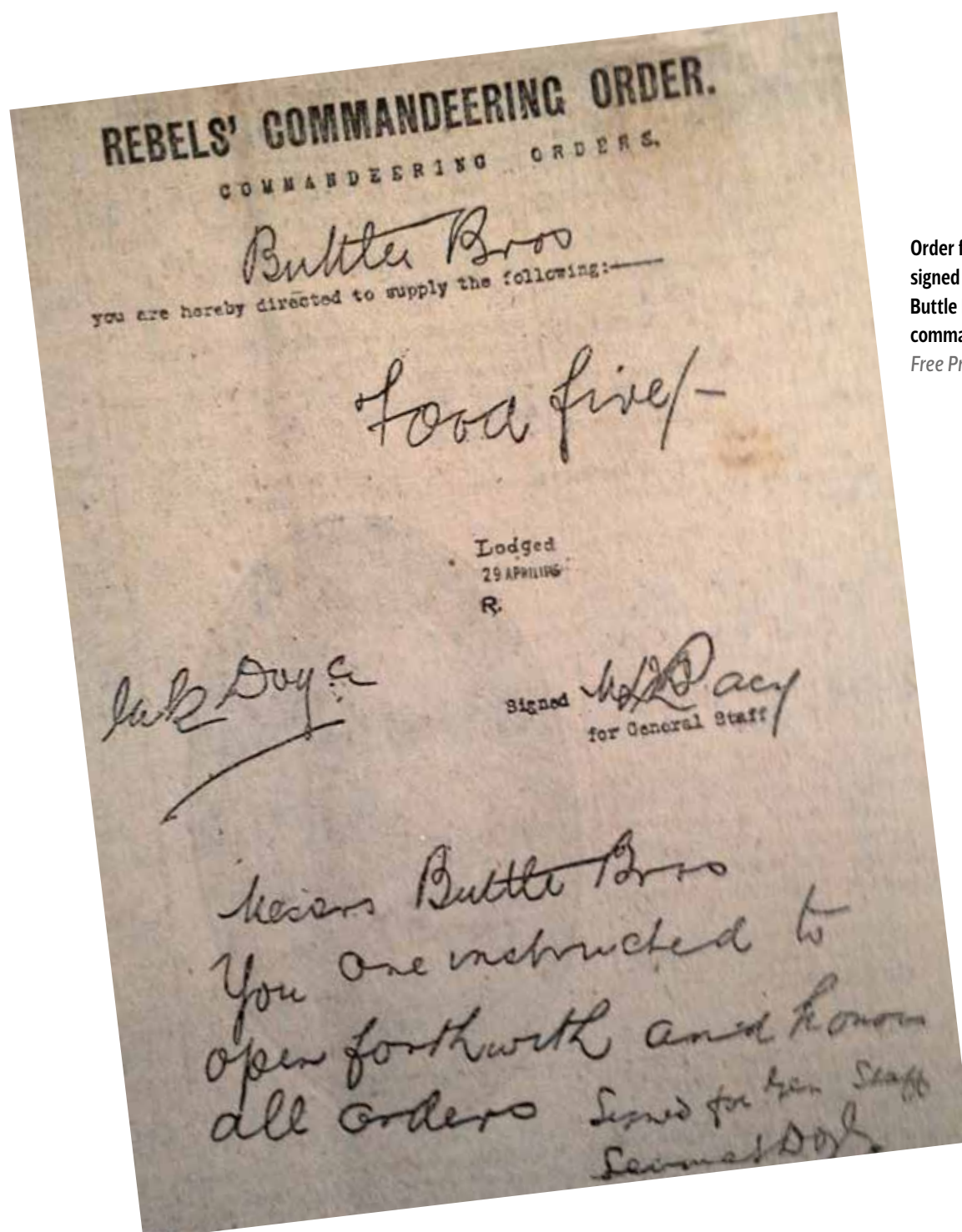
The Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) barracks was surrounded and a republican police force was established, led by William Moran and Patrick Stokes.¹⁷ Looting of shops and businesses was forbidden and all pubs in the town were closed. Alcohol could only be bought with a special permit.¹⁸

The civil administration of the town was conducted from the old RIC barracks on Court Street. Patrols were organised, and sentries placed on roads into Enniscorthy. Volunteers tried to block the road to Wexford, but they met an RIC patrol on John's Street. Both groups fired shots at each other, but no one was injured. The RIC men retreated and took refuge in their barracks in Abbey Square. The Volunteers began to attack the barracks. One man, Constable Grace, was injured, when a bullet fired by a Volunteer sniper on the Turret Rocks hit him in the leg. The rebels allowed Constable Grace to be taken to hospital.

Members of the Volunteers in Gorey were ordered to carry out intelligence work, to report on the activities of the RIC in the area and then inform headquarters in Enniscorthy of what they had found.¹⁹ Volunteers in Ferns damaged the railway line north of the village of Ferns, and made their way to Enniscorthy.²⁰ Their comrades in New Ross made preparations to sabotage the Barrow Bridge which carried the Waterford to New Ross railway.

The Volunteers needed more firearms and started collecting weapons from houses in the area. They also commandeered cars, bicycles and other modes of transport.

On a second attempt, the rebels destroyed part of the railway line between Wexford and Enniscorthy, and took control of the railway station.



Order from the Volunteers, signed by Seamus Doyle, to Buttles Brothers, Enniscorthy, commandeering food.

Free Press, 20 May 1916

According to an official witness statement given by Seán Whelan, a member of the Enniscorthy Volunteers, new recruits came in from all across the Enniscorthy district, and they were each given weapons such as shotguns and pikes. Men also came from Wexford, New Ross and Gorey, to join in the rebellion in the town.²¹

News arrived from Wexford town stating that British forces were gathering there, a force of around 2,000 men under the command of Colonel George A. French. They were heavily armed, including large field guns, and were making their way towards Enniscorthy.

Reaction to the Rising in local towns:

*Feeling in the town [Enniscorthy] was generally friendly towards us excepting the families of some British Army soldiers.*²²

Seamus Doyle, WS 315

*[Wexford town] was strongly Redmondite in its sympathies.*²³

Francis Carty, WS 1040

*All the loyalists turned out, which was nearly everyone in Wexford...We really only got one man from the Wexford Battalion. That was Wexford for you in Easter week!*²⁴

Thomas Doyle, WS 1041

*We could do nothing in [New] Ross as there was a lot of armed police and Redmond's Volunteers, also employees of certain firms done guard duty in town. The people in Ross were very hostile to us.*²⁵

Alexander Nowlan, WS 159

Leaders of the Rising in Enniscorthy before the surrender. Standing: Una Brennan, Michael de Lacy, Eileen Hegarty. Seated: Seamus Rafter, Robert Brennan, Seamus Doyle, Séan Etchingham.

Courtesy of Wexford County Archive



Friday 28 April

The rebels move towards Dublin and the Peace Committee is formed in Enniscorthy

The rebels planned to make their way towards Dublin, taking control of each town and village along the way. In County Wexford, police barracks were evacuated in Killanne, Clonroche, Galbally, and Bunclody. The rebels also took control of Ferns and occupied the police barracks and primary school there.

Eight prominent men from the town representing the business and religious communities – Patrick O'Neill, Rev. Robert Fitzhenry, Canon H. Cameron Lyster, Patrick Byrne, Henry J. Roche, Norman Davis, and Harry Buttle – formed the Peace Committee. They saw it as their duty to prevent destruction and bloodshed, and to represent the ordinary people caught between the two sides.

Fighting continued in Dublin on Sackville Street and other areas of the city centre. The Battle of Ashbourne in County Meath waged throughout the day, resulting in the eventual surrender of the RIC there. Two Volunteers were killed while seven RIC men died and another sixteen were wounded. One of the wounded later died from his injuries.

Saturday 29 April

The Volunteers advance in North Wexford and the Peace Committee negotiates

In Dublin, Pádraig Pearse ordered those under his command to surrender.

In County Wexford the Volunteers captured Camolin. The Volunteers now had control of northern Wexford, and were advancing towards the town of Gorey. In Enniscorthy the rebels commandeered supplies from local shops such as food, boots, and clothing.

Three members of the Peace Committee were given permits to leave the town by the rebel leaders, and they travelled to Wexford town to negotiate with Colonel French. After the meeting, the committee members returned to Enniscorthy and told the leaders that the fighting in Dublin had stopped and that the rebellion was over. They also told them that the British forces planned to attack Enniscorthy and were going to shell the town using a large field gun on Bree Hill. This would have caused serious damage and loss of life in Enniscorthy.



Members of the Peace Committee.
Standing: Patrick Byrne, H.J. Roche,
 Norman Davis, Harry Buttle.
Seated: Patrick O'Neill,
 Fr. Robert Fitzhenry, Canon Lyster.
Courtesy of Nick Fitzhenry

The rebel leaders did not believe that Colonel French would go ahead with this plan. After more talks with French, the Peace Committee members again returned to Enniscorthy, this time showing the leaders a copy of the surrender order given to all the rebel leaders. They pleaded with the Enniscorthy rebels to surrender.

The leaders refused to give up the town unless they were given a direct order from Pearse himself. Colonel French provided a car for Seán Etchingham and Seamus Doyle to visit Pearse, who was being held in Arbour Hill prison.

In Galway the Volunteers returned home.

Sunday 30 April

Pearse writes order to Enniscorthy Volunteers to surrender, from his prison cell

Doyle and Etchingham set out for Arbour Hill early that morning, accompanied by some British officers. When they reached the prison they were brought to Pearse's cell where he wrote an official order to surrender.

SR 4000000000
April 29th 1916
with regard to the Communication
said before the staff by the
Peace Committee we have to
state that in view of the
information contained therein
to prevent useless bloodshed
& destruction of property we
are prepared to obey Commandant
Pearce's orders to lay down
our arms if we can be assured
that that order has been issued.
This assurance we can only accept
from Com. Pearse himself & in order
to satisfy ourselves entirely on this
point we ask that a Pass thro
the English lines to Com. Doyle
be issued to Capt Seamus Doyle
who will if necessary travel
under military escort.

Capt Robt Brennan
Capt Seamus Doyle.
Lieut. Michael Delapour
Seamus Raftery Capt
Capt J. Etchingham.
Capt R. J. King.

Letter from Enniscorthy leaders to
Colonel French, requesting permission
to pass through army lines to meet with
Pádraig Pearse in Dublin.

Courtesy of Wexford County Archive

When they returned to Enniscorthy that evening, the leaders addressed the Volunteers in the Athenaeum and informed them of the surrender order. Some of the men wanted to continue fighting but they were told that they must all surrender.

The official surrender document was written and signed by Robert Brennan, Seamus Rafter, Seamus Doyle, Michael de Lacy and R. F. King. They said that they would surrender fully as long as all the other officers and Volunteers were allowed to go free.

Seán Etchingham addressed the people of Enniscorthy in Market Square. He told them that the rebellion in Dublin was over, and that the Enniscorthy Volunteers would be surrendering the next day.

In order to prevent the slaughter of unarmed people and in the hope of saving the lives of our followers, the members of the Provisional Gov. Government present at Headquarters agreed last night to an unconditional surrender, and Commandants ~~and~~ or commanding officers of districts will order their men to lay down arms or disband.

P. H. Pearse

30th April 1916

Order of surrender given to Seamus Doyle and Seán Etchingham by Pádraig Pearse.

Courtesy of the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks

Monday 1 May

Enniscorthy surrenders but first hides its weapons

All sentries, outposts and patrols were called into the town. Patrick Keegan arranged for all the guns and ammunition to be collected and safely hidden. The same guns were used during the War of Independence a few years later.

While the soldier was out of the cell. Pearse whispered to us 'Hide the arms, they will be wanted later'.

Seamus Doyle, WS 315

That afternoon, 2,000 British troops arrived in Enniscorthy, along with men from the Royal Engineers. They repaired the railway lines and telegraph wires that had been damaged by the rebels. Colonel French accepted the surrender.

Colonel French's troops entering Enniscorthy
on the day of surrender.

Courtesy of Wexford County Archive



The aftermath

Dublin and elsewhere

General John Maxwell arrived in Dublin on Friday 28 April and was granted sweeping military powers which made him military governor of Ireland. Between 2 and 9 May, General Maxwell tried the rebel leaders by court martial, a secretive trial without a defence lawyer or jury.

Maxwell also ordered a nationwide sweep of suspected supporters. 3,400 people were arrested of whom 183 were tried and 90 sentenced to death. Despite protests from the leader of the Irish Parliamentary party and Irish MP John Dillon, and a warning from Prime Minister Asquith, General Maxwell proceeded with the executions. Over the following nine days he ordered the execution by firing squad of fifteen prominent republicans.

3 May 1916

Pádraig Pearse
(Signatory of the Proclamation)
Thomas Clarke
(Signatory of the Proclamation)
Thomas MacDonagh
(Signatory of the Proclamation)

4 May 1916

Michael O'Hanrahan
William Pearse
Edward Daly
Joseph Mary Plunkett
(Signatory of the Proclamation)

5 May 1916

John McBride

8 May 1916

Michael Mallin
Seán Heuston
Con Colbert
Eamonn Ceannt
(Signatory of the Proclamation)

9 May 1916

Thomas Kent
(at Cork Barracks)

12 May 1916

Seán MacDiarmada
(Signatory of the Proclamation)
James Connolly
(Signatory of the Proclamation)

In London, Roger Casement was tried and found guilty of treason, and was hanged in Pentonville Prison in August 1916.

The executions angered the Irish public and opinion quickly changed from hostility to sympathy for the insurgents.

The Irish writer George Bernard Shaw in an open letter to the world on 10 May 1916, succinctly anticipated the impact of the executions on public opinion:

*The slaughter of a man in this position makes him a martyr and a hero. The shot Irishmen will now take their places beside Emmet and the Manchester martyrs in Ireland and beside the heroes of Belgium in Europe. Nothing in heaven or earth can prevent it.*²⁶

In Wexford: arrests and punishment

Immediately following the surrender of the Enniscorthy Volunteers, the six leaders were arrested and were then moved under armed guard from the RIC Barracks to the military barracks in Wexford and then to Waterford jail. Enniscorthy was placed under martial law. *The Echo* newspaper was suppressed and not permitted to re-open for a year.²⁷

On 2 May, the British forces began to arrest rebels across the county. According to an official RIC report, there were 375 people arrested in the county.²⁸

Ferns and Enniscorthy area: more than 150 people arrested.²⁹

New Ross area: more than 40 were arrested.³⁰

Gorey area: more than 30 people arrested.³¹

*Arrests went on, day and night, night and day, until every known Volunteer was behind prison bars.*³²

Seán Whelan, WS 1294

**Arrest of Enniscorthy leaders
outside of Athenaeum, after surrender.**
Alfred E Crane Collection (Copyright Ibar Carty)



After all the arrests were made, the police said: 'There can't be many more of them left, because the barracks is not able to hold all the letters they got from informers; Enniscorthy is full of them.'

Thomas Doyle, WS 1041

Reaction to the arrests

We were then marched to the railway station and, when going across town, you would pity our fathers, mothers and sisters watching us going off. They were all crying, and all the people who were in sympathy with us shouting: 'Keep your hearts up, boys.'

Thomas Doyle, WS 1041

On our way down the Quays, all the old British soldiers' wives in Dublin started shouting to the soldiers, 'That's the stuff to give them!'

Thomas Doyle, WS 1041

Prison life

Some of those arrested in County Wexford were released shortly afterwards, but the majority were sent to Richmond Barracks in Dublin. Another small group of prisoners was released in Dublin, but most were sent to various prisons in England and Scotland including Dartmoor, Maidstone, Stafford, Lewes, Wormwood Scrubs, Wandsworth, Glasgow, Woking, Perth, Pentonville, and Parkhurst.

Conditions in these jails were very bleak. The cells were bitterly cold and damp, and the little food that the prisoners were given was of poor quality.

Due to overcrowding in the prisons, the Irish rebels were moved to Frongoch internment camp in Wales. The conditions here were a little better, the men were allowed to receive parcels of food from home, and could spend more time outdoors, where they played football and went on marches. They could also go to lectures and organise their own concerts.



Police escort Tom Doyle and Richard Donohoe of Enniscorthy to Kilmainham Jail, May 1915.

*Courtesy of Nicholas Furlong
(Liz Moorhouse collection)*

THE SITUATION IN NEW ROSS

NEARLY 50 ARRESTS.

There was no outbreak in New Ross. About 46 arrests have been made, about forty being from the town and the other six from the country districts, that is, two from Ballywilliam, two from Ballinaboola district and one from Glenmore. A big number of those arrested in the town were engaged in the shops. A few business men are also amongst the prisoners. Four have been released and the others have been detained in the barracks in the town. Amongst those arrested were—Messrs. John Fanning, U.C.; Michael Sheehan, U.C., P.L.G.; Wm. Murphy, P.L.G.; Patrick Lynch, P.L.G.; John Murphy, ex-U.C.; John O'Kennedy, ex-P.L.G., captain of the Wexford All-Ireland Football Champions, and some other members of the G.A.A. and of the Gaelic League. They were taken to Dublin. The military arrived on Thursday and accompanied by District-inspector McLean and a number of police proceeded to the houses and made arrests, as also on Friday. Two of the prisoners who became ill on Friday night were removed to the infirmary. The police searched a number of houses in the town and seized some old guns and ammunition. Colonel Davis, Enniscorthy, and Colonel French, Commanding the Troops, inspected the National Volunteers, and thanked them for their services in assisting in preserving the peace and congratulated them on their appearance and turn out. On Monday evening the prisoners were conveyed by the mail train from New Ross to Wexford.

IN CASTLEBRIDGE.

Despite all the excitement of the Sinn Féin rising, the residents in Castlebridge have remained quite calm. The people are to be congratulated on the peaceful manner in which they conducted themselves during their absence. Very few, if any, villages in the country or in Ireland could boast of such peaceful law-abiding residents. Their beloved pastor, Canon Quigley, must feel proud of being the spiritual director of people who carry out his

Newspaper extract, In Castlebridge, from Enniscorthy Guardian, 6 May 1916.

GOOD FEELING.

The utmost good feeling prevails between soldiers and civilians. At the urban council stables and yard, where the soldiers are quartered in Patrick-street and Ross-road, the soldiers and civilians danced and sang together on Monday night, all thoroughly enjoying themselves.

Newspaper extract, Good feeling, from Enniscorthy Guardian, 13 May 1916.

Newspaper extract, The situation in New Ross, from Enniscorthy Guardian, 13 May 1916.

An article in the *Manchester Guardian* on Friday 1 December 1916 stated:

*South Camp (Frongoch): The floors of the granary had been made into huge dormitories, which were described by the prisoners as damp, ill-ventilated, and infested with rats.*³³

Wexford prisoner W. J. Brennan-Whitmore wrote about his arrival in Frongoch;

*We were taken down to the dining hall and given some tea. It was brewed by our own cooks, and though it was far below our home standard, after the concoction given us in prison, it tasted like nectar of the gods.*³⁴

Trial and release

Most of the Wexford men were released between May and December of 1916. The Wexford rebel leaders, Seamus Rafter, Seamus Doyle, Seán Etchingham, Robert Brennan, Richard King, and P.P. Galligan, were all tried by court martial on 10 May and sentenced to death. The sentences were later reduced to five years penal servitude, but they were released from Pentonville prison on 17 June 1917.

The released New Ross prisoners from Wakefield got a great welcome home. On each occasion large cheering crowds met the prisoners on their arrival at the railway station and they were greeted like heroes. A great change had come over the people....

Joseph McCarthy, WS 1497

We arrived in Dún Laoghaire on Monday morning. At Westland Row we got a tumultuous reception. There was a big change in the outlook of the people now. Their sympathy was with us now completely.

Seamus Doyle, WS 315

Local government response to the Rising

Wexford County Council and each of the urban councils in the county met in early May to discuss what had happened. Businessmen dominated these councils, the majority of whom were loyal to Redmond. Each authority condemned the Rising, using strong language to describe the events and the conduct of those involved.

New Ross Town Commissioners condemned what they termed the ‘outrageous, disgraceful and blackguardly conduct’ carried out in Dublin and elsewhere, and they vowed to

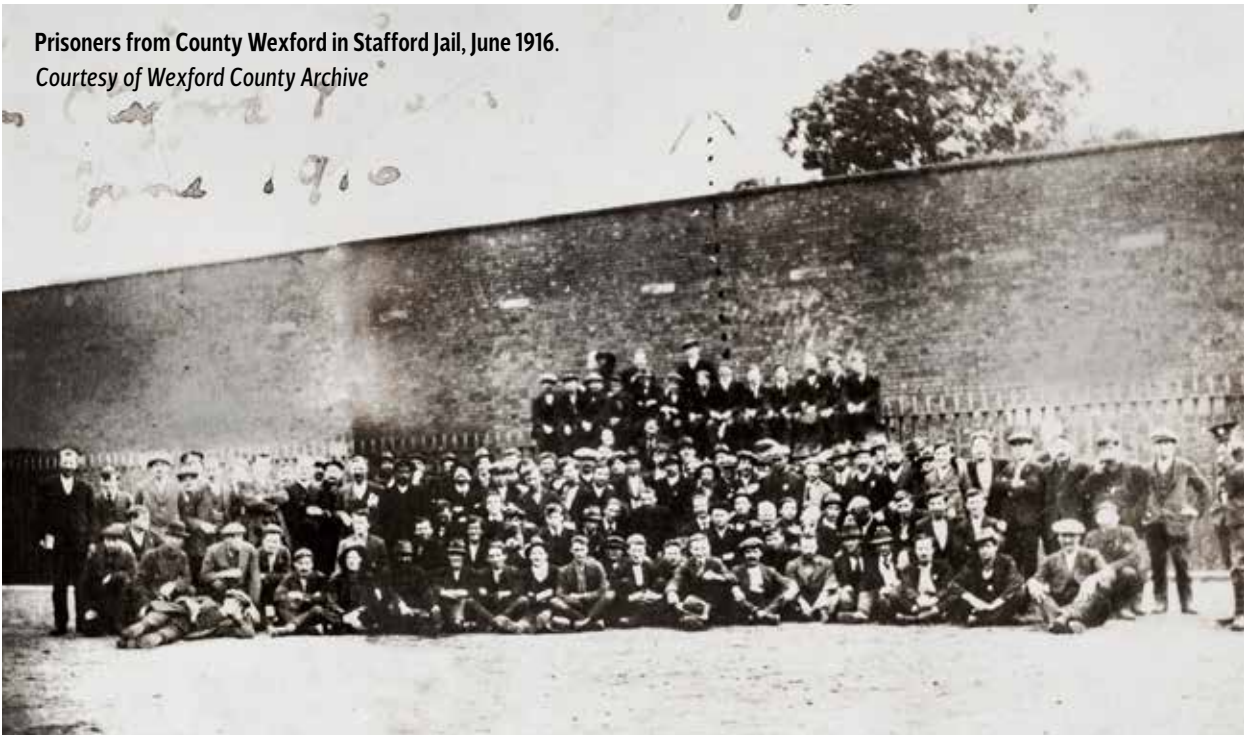
Postcard image of South Camp, Frongoch.
Courtesy of Wexford County Archive



dissociate themselves from ‘such disgraceful and unworthy scenes even more so at a time when our Empire and our allies are involved in one of the greatest struggles for freedom the world has ever known’. (Minutes of New Ross Town Commissioners, 9 May 1916).

‘We, the Mayor and Municipal Council of Wexford, in Special Meeting assembled, as representing the sensible and Loyal inhabitants of the town, emphatically repudiate the action of these misguided Irishmen who have allowed themselves to be led into Rebellion through the persuasion of paid foreign emissaries, and we take this the earliest opportunity to re-iterate our allegiance to the Throne and Government, in accordance with the settled and consistent policy of the distinguished Leader of the Irish people, Mr. John E. Redmond, M.P. and his trustworthy followers in Parliament’.
(Minutes of Wexford Corporation, 10 May 1916).

Prisoners from County Wexford in Stafford Jail, June 1916.
Courtesy of Wexford County Archive



**AMNESTY OF IRISH
PRISONERS.**
UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE GRANTED

Extract from *Free Press*, 23 June 1917,
announcing the amnesty for Irish prisoners.

Enniscorthy Urban District Council in its minutes of 10 May 1916 recorded its appreciation of 'the invaluable service rendered by the Revd. Robert Fitzhenry Adm., Mr. Henry J. Buttle and Mr. Patrick O'Neill J.P., Chairman of the Council, as delegates from the Peace Committee of Enniscorthy, to the Commandant of the Military Forces at Wexford, whereby serious disaster to our town was averted'.

The Council's condemnation of the Rising was cut out from the minutes of 10 May by unanimous resolution on 4 February 1920.

At its meeting held on 17 May 1916, Wexford County Council unanimously adopted the following resolution –

...that we deplore the lamentable rising in many parts of Ireland, which occurred during Easter week. Particularly in the City of Dublin, when the loss of life and property has been appalling.....That we believe many young men that took part in the outrage had no idea of the foolishness of their action and were intimidated to join in such criminal folly. We therefore call on Mr Redmond and our Representatives in Parliament to use their influence with the Government to deal mercifully with such young men who are now prisoners.

These resolutions were reversed in early 1920, by which time the mood had changed in favour of the efforts of the insurgents. In the General Election of 1918, two *Sinn Féin* candidates in County Wexford were elected – James Ryan from Tomcoole, Taghmon representing Wexford South, and Roger Sweetman representing Wexford North.

The Rising affected many people who did not support either side. These included shopkeepers who had had their goods taken by the rebels, and car owners whose vehicles had been taken. The government paid these people compensation.

Although little fighting occurred in County Wexford compared to Dublin and Ashbourne, and there were no fatalities, some people were injured. In Enniscorthy, RIC Constable Patrick Grace received a serious gunshot injury to his leg. As a result, he could no longer work as a policeman. A young girl, the daughter of Myles Foley from John Street in the town, was also wounded.

The majority of *Cumann na mBan* members avoided imprisonment. However, two prominent members from County Wexford were arrested and detained. Kathleen Browne from Rathronan Castle and Nell Ryan from Tomcoole, Taghmon were imprisoned in Waterford Jail and later in Richmond Barracks, Kilmainham Jail and Mountjoy prison. Kathleen was released in early June 1916 while Nell was deported to Lewes Prison in June. She wasn't released until early October 1916.

Minutes of a meeting of New Ross Town
Commissioners, at which they condemned the Rising,
9 May 1916. Resolution rescinded 10 February 1920.
Wexford County Archive

The following resolution in reference to the recent outbreak was -
Proposed by Mr Hand and
Seconded by Mr Dunne Resolved

That we the New-Ross Urban Council
hereby in the strongest possible manner condemn the action of
the Sinn Féin organization and Citizen's Army in their outrag-
eously disgraceful and blackguardly conduct at present carried
on both in the rising and looting in Dublin and elsewhere,
and as a National Board entirely disassociate ourselves
from such disgraceful and unworthy scenes even more so at
this time when our Empire and our Allies are involved in one of
the greatest struggles for freedom the world has ever known,
and we regard the present conduct as an insult to our brave
and gallant Irishmen who have sealed the common bond
between England and Ireland by shedding their blood on the
battlefields of Flanders and other scenes of action.

That we pass this resolution to show that the respon-
sible parties for the present crisis in Ireland are of the "Irresponsible
class" and so that the action of the loyal subjects cannot be misin-
terpreted by our Allies or our Empire.

It is also resolved that we place implicit faith and
trust in our able and trust worthy leader Mr John B. Redmond
and his party, and we unreservedly place ourselves in his hands
as our leader knowing full well that with the assistance of the
Irish Party he will carefully and consistently watch the
interest of the Irish people so that by reason of the acts of these - worse
than Hun parties - the whole Irish race will not be disgraced and

Minutes of a meeting of Wexford County Council, at
which the Rising was similarly condemned, 17 May 1916.
Resolution rescinded 18 June 1920.
Wexford County Archive

The Recent Disturbances.

On the motion of Mr Kehoe, seconded by Sir Thomas Esmonde, the Standing Orders of the Council were suspended to enable the Chairman to move a resolution.

The Chairman then moved the following resolution:-

"That we deplore the lamentable rising in many parts of Ireland, which occurred during Easter week. Particularly in the City of Dublin, when the loss of life and property has been appalling.

We firmly believe that this Criminal rebellion has been encouraged by Germany to promote her own selfish ends.

That we believe many young men that took part in the outrage had no idea of the foolishness of their action and were intimidated to join in such criminal folly.

We therefore call on Mr Redmond and our Representatives in Parliament to use their influence with the Government to deal mercifully with such young men who are now prisoners.

That we hereby renew our entire confidence in Mr John Redmond, and the Irish Party, and assure them of our unswerving loyalty."

Mr Kinsella seconded the resolution, which was supported by Sir T. Esmonde, and Mr Kehoe.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

Letter from Nicholas Byrne, Mayor of Wexford to Colonel French, acknowledging the Colonel's praise of the attitude of the residents of Wexford town during the Rising.
Wexford County Archive



XIII 3
18th May, 1916.

Dear Colonel French,

Needless to say I was very gratified to receive your letter of today's date, intimating your pleasure at the attitude of the Citizens of Wexford during the recent deplorable disturbances.

I have taken the liberty to send your letter to the local Press, as I am aware that the townspeople will very much appreciate your allusions to their action during the crisis, now happily at an end.

I am sure that it is unnecessary for me to add that you may always rely on Wexfordmen doing their utmost to uphold the good name of the town in every way possible, and that the vast majority of them will ever be found on the side of law and order.

May I add a word of praise as to the manner in which the Troops under your Command carried out their various duties during the critical times of the past few weeks.

Colonel G. A. French,
Commanding Troops,
Co. Wexford.

Yours very truly,

Nicholas Byrne
Mayor of Wexford.

Women in the Rising



Cumann na mBan collar badge worn by Máire Fitzpatrick (nee Moran), St John's Villas, Enniscorthy.

Members of *Cumann na mBan* did not take part in fighting in County Wexford but they played a very important support role to the Irish Volunteers.

In the lead up to the Rising, their main activities included the organisation of first aid lectures and drill instruction. They also made first aid outfits and bandages, gathered and stored arms for the Volunteers, carried dispatches, and raised funds.

On Monday and Tuesday of Easter Week, 1916, a member was doing despatch work from Enniscorthy to Wexford, and on Wednesday she brought guns and ammunition from Wexford to Enniscorthy.

Witness statement of Máire Bean Mac Giolla Pádraigh (Máire Moran) WS 1345.

Some *Cumann na mBan* members carried dispatches around the country for the various Volunteer battalions as it was believed that the RIC and the British army would be reluctant to search women.

Michael O'Hanrahan's sister Eily arrived in Enniscorthy on 20 April with a written order from Pearse to Seamus Doyle containing instructions and a call to arms. Another dispatch from Pearse was brought to Seamus Doyle by Jenny Wyse Power on Easter Monday stating that the Rising was to happen.

Máire Deegan from Brideswell, near Askamore was a member of the central branch of *Cumann na mBan*. On Easter Monday, she cycled to Dublin from Brideswell with a dispatch which she had hidden in her hair.

The Irish flag was raised over the Athenaeum in Enniscorthy on Thursday, 27 April 1916 by three members of *Cumann na mBan* – Una Brennan, Marion Stokes and Gretta Comerford. Enniscorthy was the only place outside of Dublin to raise the Irish flag during the Rising. On that day, *Cumann na mBan* members set up a hospital and kitchen in the Athenaeum under the command of Mary White and Una Brennan.

During Easter Week, one member also worked as a clerk in the headquarters' office. Others carried messages. Ten members set up a hospital and kitchen in Ferns. Members were also active in commandeering food and supplies from local businesses. Some of the food preparation was undertaken in the private houses of some *Cumann na mBan* members. Sighle Moran's house was used as a rest centre and Mrs de Lacy's house was used as an outpost and food depot.

The Cumann na mBan had given great assistance in cooking and looking after the welfare of the men in general. Miss White was in charge and all were so good that I would not care to mention any individuals. Seamus Doyle, WS 315

'Cumann na mBan] were a great help in providing funds, learning First Aid and acquiring First Aid equipment. They worked quietly, never appeared in public parade and were a source of worry to the RIC. Joseph McCarthy, WS 1497

In her witness statement, Máire Fitzpatrick (née Moran) from St John's Villas, Enniscorthy, mentions the involvement of her entire family in the struggle for national independence. These included her three sisters, Sighle, Biddy and Kathleen, who were active *Cumann na mBan* members. Other family contributions included Ellen and Teresa Keegan from Irish Street, Enniscorthy, and Min, Kate, Nell and Phyllis Ryan from Tomcoole, Taghmon.

The *Cumann na mBan* organisation disbanded for a time after the Easter Rising but started to harness support and membership grew towards the end of 1917. Members participated in propagandist activities in helping to raise funds for prisoners' dependants and were also involved in collecting and hiding arms and ammunition.

Members of *Cumann na mBan* and the Red Cross at first-aid training in Enniscorthy.

Wexford County Archive



Uniforms, Guns, Equipment, Flags and Medals

There were four different organisations centrally involved in the Rising in County Wexford:

Irish Volunteers

Cumann na mBan

Royal Irish Constabulary

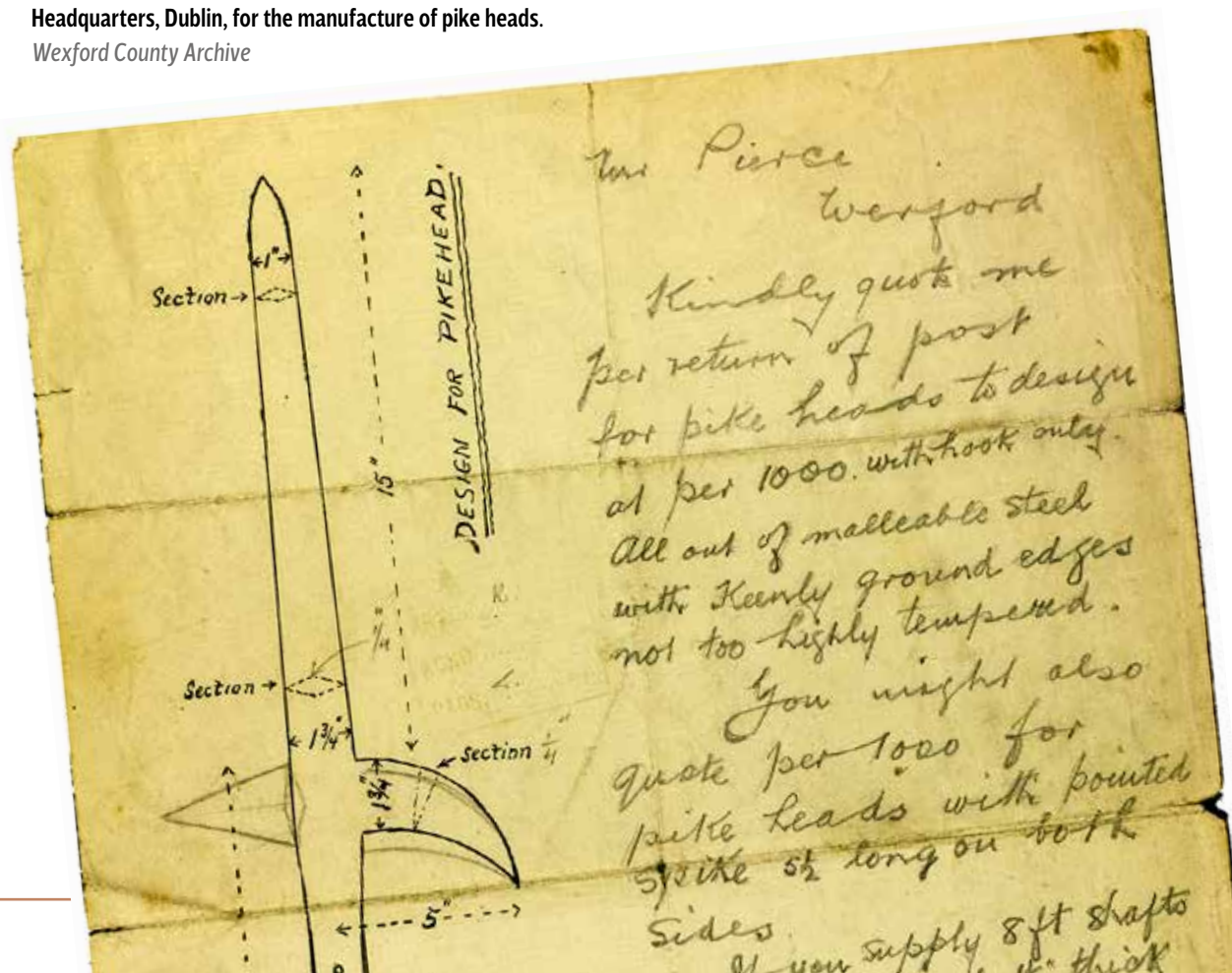
British Army

A fifth – the **National Volunteers** – played only a very small role.

The following information provides details about the rank structure, weaponry used, uniforms worn and equipment carried by each of the above organisations.

Order made to Pierce's Foundry, Wexford from Volunteer Headquarters, Dublin, for the manufacture of pike heads.

Wexford County Archive



Irish Volunteers

The Irish Volunteers were an infantry force. Some were armed with Lee–Enfield rifles, while others had Mauser rifles from Germany. Volunteers were also armed with revolvers, shotguns and pikes.

The Irish Volunteer uniform included a green tunic, green trousers and puttees, which were bandages wrapped around the lower part of the legs for extra protection and support. A green peaked cap with a badge showing the Volunteer's symbol was also worn. The uniform hat was called a slouch 'Cronje' hat. A bandolier or pocketed belt for holding ammunition was slung sash-style over the shoulder.



Group of uniformed Volunteers before surrender in Enniscorthy. Patrick Keegan's rank of commandant is indicated by the markings on the cuffs of his tunic. Standing left to right: Michael O'Connor, Sean Gallagher. Seated, left to right, Thomas Francis Meagher, Patrick Keegan, Michael Davis
Wexford County Archive



Group of Enniscorthy Volunteers wearing bandoliers across their shoulders, and holding "Cronje" uniform hats. Seated, left to right Sean Whelan, James Whelan. Standing left to right: Liam Moran, Ned Nolan, Tom Tobin.
Wexford County Archive



Webley and Scott Mark VI revolver used by the Volunteers.
Enniscorthy Castle Museum

Not all Volunteers had their own uniform. Those who could not afford it wore their own clothes with a brown leather belt with the words 'Irish Volunteers' or *Óglaigh na hÉireann* inscribed on the buckle.

Cumann na mBan

Members wore a green uniform comprising a tunic, skirt, slouch hat and a collar badge featuring a rifle and the initials 'CnamB' of the organisation intertwined.

Royal Irish Constabulary

The Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) was the armed police force in Ireland from the early nineteenth-century until 1922. There were smaller police forces in Dublin, Belfast and Derry.

The RIC in Enniscorthy were commanded by District Inspector Richard Heggart. They were armed with Lee-Enfield rifles and Webley revolvers.

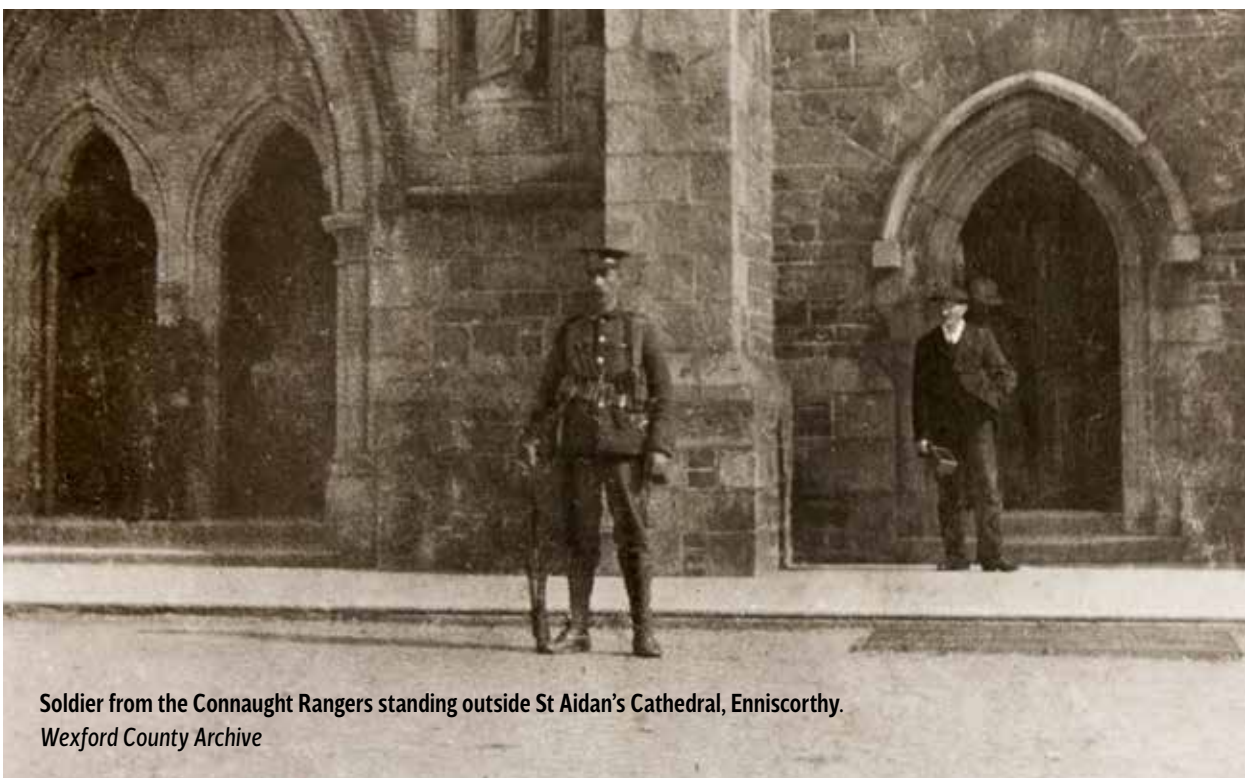
British Army

Colonel G. A. French was Commander of the British troops in County Wexford.

He used cavalymen (soldiers on horseback) ahead of his infantry (soldiers on foot) to see what the land ahead was like, and to test the defences of the Irish Volunteers. Cavalymen were also used to send messages quickly. The South Irish Horse was the cavalry unit under Colonel French's command.

Cavalymen were armed with short-barrelled rifles called carbines, in addition to swords and revolvers. They used spurs to help control their horse.

The Connaught Rangers was an infantry regiment in the British Army. They recruited many soldiers from the west of Ireland, but there was also a number of Wexford men among them.



Soldier from the Connaught Rangers standing outside St Aidan's Cathedral, Enniscorthy.
Wexford County Archive

In addition to infantry and cavalry units, Colonel French also had engineers and artillerymen making up a force of over 600 men known as Mobile Column Number 1. All the soldiers under his command were dressed in the same uniform, with some small differences in equipment. The uniforms were khaki in colour, which is a dull yellow-brown.

National Volunteers

The uniform of the National Volunteers was similar to that of the Irish Volunteers but of a yellowish-green hue compared to the dark green of their counterparts.

Flags

National Flag, the Tricolour

Enniscorthy has the distinction of being the only location outside of Dublin in which the tricolour was flown in the 1916 Rising. The town has had a long connection with the national flag which extends back to 1848.

In 1848, Young Irelanders, Thomas Francis Meagher and William Smith O'Brien brought the tricolour from Paris where they had been studying the revolutionary events of that year. They attended a reception given by the citizens of Dublin on 15 April 1848, at which they presented the chairman with the flag. However, the tricolour was displayed in Enniscorthy the previous month and was flown in a parade in the town on 7 March 1848.

The local press gave extensive coverage to the event.

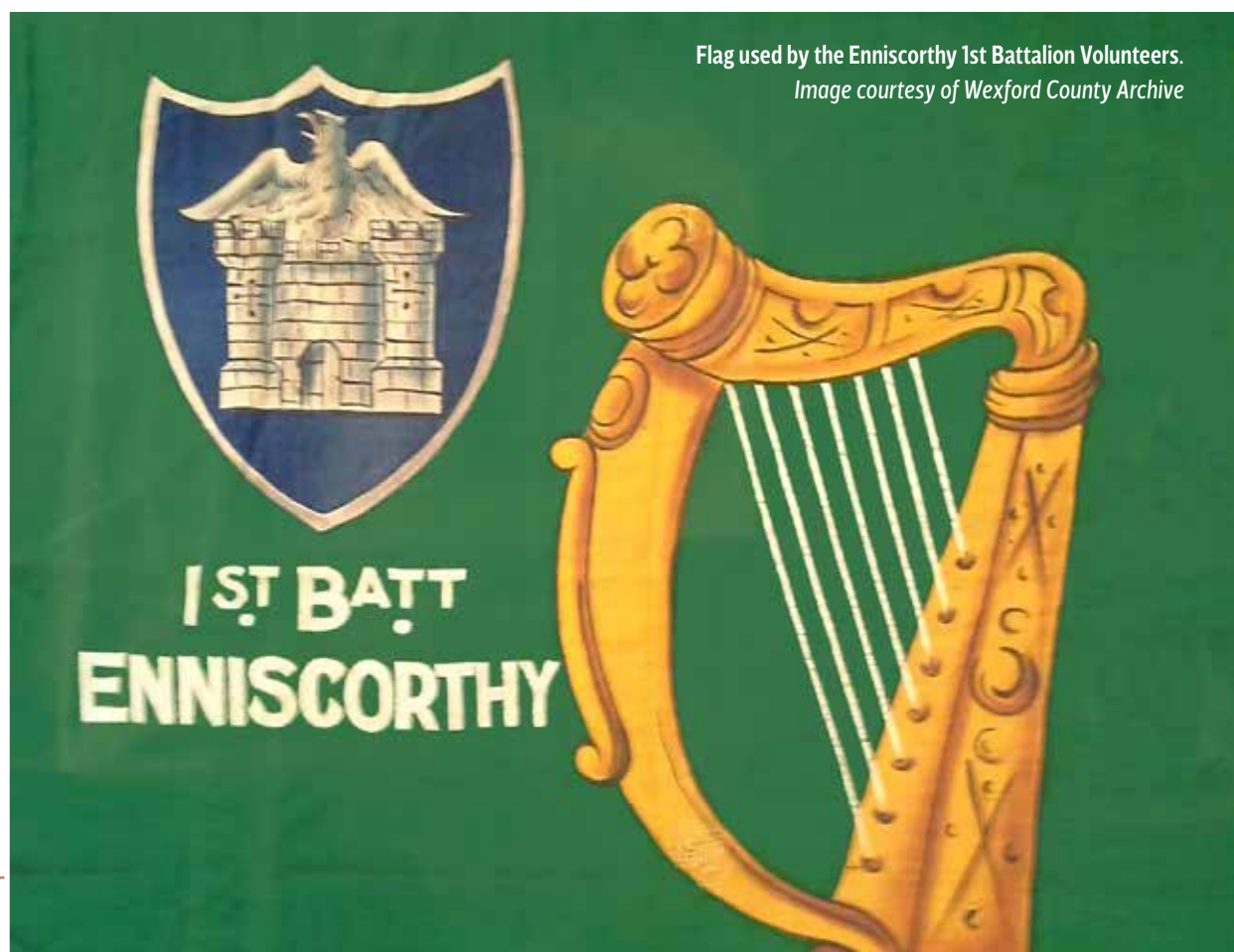
Our town was also lighted by bonfires in the Market Square and other quarters and enlivened by the temperance bands which played through the streets attended by an immense crowd at the head of whom was carried a tricolour flag (the colours green, orange and white) which was frequently saluted by loud and rapturous acclamation
(*The Wexford Guardian*, 11 March 1848).

The flag was displayed in the Athenaeum for the 150th anniversary of the 1798 rebellion in June 1948, and was unfurled in the hall by Rev. Pat Murphy, P.P. Glynn, honorary secretary of the '98 Commemoration Association who had been chaplain to the Irish Volunteers in 1916 (*The Echo*, 26 June 1948).

The flag was presented to St Aidan's Cathedral, Enniscorthy in April 1961 by the Enniscorthy townspeople. It was blessed and placed on a pillar in the cathedral. A plaque underneath the flag read: 'These colours were presented by the people of the parish to St Aidan's Cathedral on 2 April, 1961. The Tricolour was carried by the Insurgents into Arklow, 9 June 1798; borne in a popular procession through Enniscorthy, 7 March 1848, and unfurled and flown above the town during Easter Week 1916' (*The Enniscorthy Guardian*, 8 April 1961).

Enniscorthy Battalion Flag

The Enniscorthy Battalion was the strongest unit in County Wexford in the lead-up to and during the 1916 Rising. It comprised three companies of Irish Volunteers – A, B and C. The battalion had its own flag – made from wool dyed green. It depicted a seven-stringed harp in gold with the Enniscorthy coat of arms set in a blue shield in the top left-hand corner. The legend '1st Batt. Enniscorthy' was painted in white lettering below the shield.



Pensions and commemorative medals

Following independence, the Free State government rewarded many of those who had participated in the struggle for freedom between 1916 and 1921. Participants were invited to apply for a pension. Any person was active in the Irish Volunteers or similar organisation during Easter Week was eligible to be awarded a military service pension under the Military Service Pensions Act, 1924.

However, because of divisions brought about by the Civil War (June 1922–May 1923), many of the participants who were entitled to a pension did not receive them. This was later addressed in a second pension scheme in June 1934.

Commemorative medals were awarded to those involved on both sides of the armed struggle during Easter Week 1916.

In 1941, the 25th anniversary of the Rising, the 1916 Medal was given to all participants who had been active during Easter Week 1916. For those who had died since 1916, the medal was awarded to their family.

With the 50th anniversary of the Rising in 1966, those participants who were still alive were awarded a second medal, called the 1916 Survivors Medal.

To mark the 75th anniversary of the Rising in 1991, a certificate was given to the families of those who had been involved.

In addition, in the 1930s until 1941, an armband was awarded to those who had taken part in the Easter Rising.

Constabulary Medal (Ireland)

The RIC in County Wexford were awarded the Constabulary Medal (Ireland) for their role in the Rising.



1916 Survivors' Medal. In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Rising of Easter Week, 1916.

Enniscorthy Castle Museum

People involved

People involved in the Rising in County Wexford:

Seamus Rafter:

Seamus Rafter was born in Monalee, Ballindaggin, Co. Wexford, on 24 January 1873. He was a key figure in setting up the Enniscorthy branch of the Gaelic League. He became the commander of the IRB brigade in Wexford, and was Captain of 'A Company' in the Enniscorthy Battalion, becoming one of the most important leaders of the Rising in Wexford. He was sentenced to death for his involvement. However, the charge was commuted to five years in prison. He was held in Dartmoor prison in England for one year, and was released with several other Irish rebels. He died on 2 September 1918 as a result of an accidental explosion. He is buried in Ballindaggin Cemetery. There is a granite statue of Rafter in Abbey Square, Enniscorthy, and one of the town's main bridges is named after him.



Seamus Doyle

Seamus Doyle was from Ferns. According to his witness statement, Fr Philip Roche of 1798 fame was his great-great uncle. He joined the Gaelic League in 1900 and was sworn into the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Gorey in 1907. He joined the Irish Volunteers in 1913 and became secretary to the board that oversaw the Volunteers in County Wexford. At the outbreak of the Rising he was Adjutant of the Enniscorthy Battalion. With Seán Etchingham, he travelled to Dublin under military escort to get confirmation from Pearse that Dublin had surrendered. He was interned after the Rising and served time in Dartmoor, Lewes, Maidstone and Pentonville prisons in England.



Seán Etchingham:

Etchingham was born at Ballintray, close to Courtown Harbour in 1870. Prior to the Rising, he became a journalist with *The Echo* newspaper. He was an active member of the GAA and was Chairman of Wexford county board on two occasions, 1902–1904 and 1919–1922. He was heavily involved with the Rising in Enniscorthy. He joined the 3rd Battalion of the North Wexford Brigade, and became a captain. He was one of two Enniscorthy officers that were escorted to Dublin to receive the official surrender order from Pearse. He was court-martialled in Kilmainham jail, where he was sentenced to death. This was later changed to a sentence of penal servitude. He was imprisoned in both Dartmoor and Lewes prisons and released in 1917. He was re-imprisoned in 1918 for his role in what was called the 'German Plot', which aimed to get German support for the rebels in Ireland, and attempting to import weapons. He was imprisoned in Lincoln jail



in England, along with future president of Ireland, Éamonn de Valera, who looked after Etchingham when he became ill in prison. Etchingham was elected as a *Sinn Féin* M.P. in the 1918 General Election and as a Teachta Dála (T.D.) for Wicklow East and Wexford during the years of 1918 to 1922. He became the first Director for Fisheries in 1919 until 1921, then Secretary for Fisheries from 1921 to 1922. He supported the anti-Treaty side during the Civil War, and was arrested and put in prison in 1923. He died due to ill health on 23 April 1923, at Courtown Harbour, and was buried at Ardamine Cemetery.

Peter Paul Galligan:

Peter Paul Galligan was born in Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim, on 20 June 1888. He was a member of the IRB in Dublin. He was sent by Thomas McDonagh to take over the training of the Volunteer battalion in Enniscorthy, where he became its Commandant, and was one of the most important figures involved in the Rising in Wexford. He was sentenced to death for his involvement but this was changed to five years penal servitude. Initially he was imprisoned in Dartmoor Prison, and later in Lewes and Parkhurst Prisons, England, between May 1916 and June 1917 when he was released with 64 other Irish prisoners. He died on 15 December 1966, and is buried at Deansgrange Cemetery, Dublin.



Robert Brennan:

Brennan was born in John's Gate Street, Wexford town in 1881. He joined the Irish Volunteers, and the IRB, and was responsible for helping to organise branches of the Gaelic League and *Sinn Féin* in Enniscorthy. He was a journalist for *The Echo* newspaper prior to the Rising. During the Rising he was one of the Commandants of the Volunteers in Enniscorthy. He was imprisoned for his involvement, and was sentenced to death. However, this was reduced to a sentence of penal servitude. He was released in 1917, but was imprisoned on a number of other occasions because of his activity in Republican politics. He was made director of elections for the *Sinn Féin* party in 1918. During his time in the Dáil between 1921 and 1922, he was under-secretary for foreign affairs. He supported the anti-Treaty side in the Irish Civil War. He was one of the founders, and a director, of *The Irish Press* newspaper. He also served as a high-ranking diplomat in the US between 1938 and 1947. He died in Dublin in 1964.



T.D. Sinnott:

T. D. Sinnott was born in Davidstown in 1893. He was active in the Gaelic League and also became involved with the Irish Volunteers in Enniscorthy. He was arrested for his involvement in the Rising and was transported to England, and held in prison there until December 1916. He took part in the War of Independence. He later took up a career with Wexford local government, and became Wexford's first County Manager in 1942, a post which he held until his retirement in 1953. He died in 1965.



Richard F. King

One of the leaders of the 1916 Easter Rising in Enniscorthy, Richard Francis King was born in 1890 in Wandsworth, London. The 1911 census recorded him as a 20-year old clerk living at Brownswood, Enniscorthy. He was a founder member of the 'Irish Brigade' in the town in 1913 and joined the Enniscorthy Company of the Irish Volunteers in late 1913. Robert Brennan referred to him as a staff officer during Easter Week 1916 (WS 125).



King was one of the six signatories of the letter to Colonel G. A. French, in which the Volunteers sought permission for two of the rebel officers to visit Pearse in Dublin. Following the surrender, he served time in Dartmoor prison along with Harry Boland and de Valera, and in Lewes and Maidstone prisons. He served for a number of years as a Fishery Inspector, and died at his home in Tinnahask, Arklow on 21 June 1938.

Patrick (Pat) Keegan

Pat Keegan was born in Enniscorthy in 1893, and lived with his family at their home at 10 Irish Street. This house was used as a small factory for making ammunition for the rebels. It was also used to store ammunition, such as rifles, hand guns, pikes, and explosives. Keegan was very active during the rebellion, holding the rank of captain, and was made quartermaster of the Volunteer's headquarters at the Athenaeum. He was arrested after the surrender of the Volunteers, and was imprisoned at Frongoch and Wormwood Scrubs. He was released at Christmas in 1917. After the death of Seamus Rafter in 1918, Keegan was promoted to Commandant, and became the Quartermaster of the North Wexford Brigade of the Irish Republican Army. During the War of Independence, Keegan was sent to the USA in order to collect arms and ammunition for the IRA. After the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty, he supported the anti-Treaty side, and was imprisoned at Hare Park Camp in the Curragh. He returned to America for some time, and eventually moved back to Enniscorthy, where he became Urban District Councillor for the Labour Party. He also served with the Irish Defence Forces during 'the Emergency' (World War II and after, 1939–1946). He died in 1953.

**Seán Sinnott**

Seán (John Joseph) Sinnott was born in Wexford town about 1883, the son of Stephen Sinnott and Ellen Brady. Described by a contemporary as 'a nice quiet sort of fellow' (WS 399: Min Ryan Mulcahy), Sinnott was a carpenter by trade and lived in Grogan's Road, Wexford. He was an enthusiastic member of the Gaelic League as was his mother, Ellen who filled in their 1911 census form as *Gaeilge*. Robert Brennan and Sinnott were friends and were sworn into the Irish Republican Brotherhood together by a future President of Ireland, Seán T. Ó Ceallaigh.



On the eve of the Rising, Sinnott was Commandant of the Wexford town battalion of the Volunteers and Vice Commandant of the South Wexford Brigade. On Thursday, 20 April 1916, he received a coded message from Patrick Pearse, informing him that the Rising would take place on Easter Sunday, beginning at 6pm. He began to mobilise the Volunteers

under his command. However, late on Sunday evening a dispatch was delivered to Sinnott from Pearse postponing the mobilisation.

When news of the Rising in Dublin reached Wexford, Sinnott again ordered a mobilisation and he and Robert Brennan began to commandeer vehicles and supplies. Again, an order came, this time from the Chief of Inspection JJ O'Connell, cancelling the mobilisation.

After the Rising, Sinnott was arrested and, for a while, was imprisoned with Robert Brennan and the other Enniscorthy leaders in Wexford Barracks. Eventually, he was interned in Frongoch and was released in June 1917.

Michael de Lacy

Michael de Lacy was born in the parish of Oulart about 1876. He was one of the leaders of the Enniscorthy Rising along with Robert Brennan, Seamus Doyle, Seamus Rafter, J.R. Etchingham and R. F. King. Etchingham described him as 'Lieutenant M de Lacy who joined us and worked like half a dozen men as Civil Minister.' (WS 1216: Canon Patrick Murphy, quoting Etchingham).



He was sentenced to death for his part in the Rising. This sentence was later reduced to penal servitude and he was imprisoned in Dartmoor and other English prisons until a general amnesty was declared in June 1917.

De Lacy took an active part in the War of Independence in Limerick, commanding the Mid-Limerick Brigade of the Volunteers. He also served as principal in Limerick Technical School. After the establishment of the State, he entered the civil service and played a major part in organising the Local Government department. He died in February 1950 in Dublin.

Colonel French

Colonel George Arthur French (1864-1950) was born in Kingston, Canada, the son of Roscommon-born Major General George French, an officer in the Royal Artillery. He joined the Royal Marines in 1881 aged seventeen and was the youngest serving officer at that time. In 1890 he received the Royal Albert Medal for saving the life of a sailor who had fallen overboard in shark infested waters off the west coast of Africa. He transferred to the Army Service Corps in the 1890s and saw action during the Boer War and other engagements.



In 1899, French married Annie Jefferies of Newbay House, Co. Wexford. He retired from active service in 1912 but was recalled in 1914 at the outbreak of World War I. However, ill health forced him to retire the following year and he returned to live at Newbay. At the outbreak of the Easter Rising he was ordered to take command of a British Army force in County Wexford and to suppress the Enniscorthy uprising. He treated the Enniscorthy insurgents with courtesy, addressing the leaders by their military titles, but demanded they surrender without conditions. When they refused to believe that the Dublin insurgents had surrendered, French arranged safe passage to Dublin for their representatives so that they could receive the order to surrender directly from Patrick Pearse. The following day, 1 May 1916, French formally received their unconditional surrender in Enniscorthy.

Una Brennan

Una Brennan was born Anastasia Bolger in 1888, the eldest of six children of John Bolger and Johanna Whitty. The family lived at Coolnaboy in the parish of Oylegate. Una was a nationalist and feminist. In 1908 she persuaded William Sears, editor of *The Echo*, to give her a monthly column in the newspaper. This was a huge step for a woman at that time. Women's rights in the home and in public life were her main concern. She became a member of *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* (Daughters of Ireland), a radical nationalist women's organisation and became its Secretary. It merged with *Cumann na mBan* in 1914. She was also among the first female members of the IRB. Una, in *Cumann na mBan* uniform, joined her husband, Robert Brennan in the Athenaeum and was on duty throughout the Rising. She was one of three women who raised the Tricolour on the building.



Máire Moran

Máire Moran was born in Church Street, Enniscorthy, the fourth of a family of six. Her entire family was actively involved in the republican movement. Her father, and two brothers Seán and Liam were active members of the Irish Volunteers, and her sisters Sighle and two younger sisters Biddy and Kathleen joined *Cumann na mBan*. Máire's father had a tailor's business in Church Street, which was regularly used as a meeting place and as a message drop centre by the Volunteers, while the basement doubled as a storage depot for guns and ammunition. Máire was one of the founding members of the Enniscorthy branch of *Cumann na mBan* in 1914 and regularly gave lectures and held first aid classes in the lead-up to 1916. During the Rising in Enniscorthy, she worked as a dispatch carrier, while her two younger sisters worked in the emergency hospital in the Athenaeum. Sighle's house was used as a rest centre.



County Wexford people involved in the Rising elsewhere:

Michael O'Hanrahan

O'Hanrahan was born in New Ross on 17 March 1877. He was educated by the Christian Brothers in Carlow, and later at Carlow College Academy. He became an active member of the Gaelic League, and founded the first Carlow branch in 1899 and became the secretary. He wrote many articles for republican newspapers, and published two novels, one entitled 'A Swordsman of the Brigade', and 'When the Norman Came'. He was a member of the IRB, and joined the Irish Volunteers in 1913, where he became quartermaster general at headquarters, and went on to become second in command of the 2nd Dublin battalion under Commandant Thomas McDonagh. He fought at Jacob's Biscuit factory in Dublin. He was captured by British forces, and was executed by firing squad at Kilmainham jail on 4 May 1916. The railway station in Wexford town is named after O'Hanrahan, as well as the main bridge, and local GAA club in the town of New Ross.



Thomas Wafer

Thomas Wafer was from the Shannon area of Enniscorthy. He was apprenticed to cabinet makers, Kearney's of Main Street, Enniscorthy, before moving to McDonagh's in Galway. He set up his own business on the North Circular Road in Dublin, following his marriage. He was captain of E Company, 2nd Battalion Irish Volunteers and was the officer in charge of the detachment that escorted the lorry of arms from Fairview Park to the GPO on Easter Monday. He died from a sniper's bullet while holding the Hibernian Bank in Sackville Street on 26th April. His brother Patrick fought in the GPO and escaped with the O'Rahilly.³⁵



W. J. Brennan-Whitmore

William J. Brennan Whitmore was born in County Wexford in 1886. Both his parents died when he was a child and he was raised by his uncle, John Brennan, a farmer at Clonee, Ferns. As a young man he joined the British Army and served with the Education Corps in India. He left the service in 1907 and returned to Wexford to help on his uncle's farm. He became a journalist and was active in organising the Irish Volunteers in North Wexford. Because of his military knowledge, he was co-opted to the Volunteers general staff in Dublin.



When the Rising began, he was given ten men and ordered to establish a new military post from Noblett's Corner, Great Earl Street to the Imperial Hotel in Sackville Place. The area came under heavy fire from British artillery. He and his small group fought until they were burned out and then tried to retreat. They were captured and interned in Frongoch in Wales.

While interned he helped to turn the detention camp into an unofficial military college, continuing the military training of those who had been involved in the Rising. Secret lectures on guerrilla warfare were given to selected officers. Because of this, the camp later became known as *ollscoil na réabhlóide*, the 'University of Revolution'. Brennan Whitmore's book, *With the Irish in Frongoch*, detailing the harsh life and conditions in the camp, was published shortly after his release in 1917.

In 1966, he published *Dublin Burning. The Easter Rising from behind the barricades*, an important eye-witness account of events in Dublin. He died in December 1977 aged 91, the last surviving commandant of the Rising.

Liam Mellows

Liam (William Joseph) Mellows was born in Lancashire, England in 1892, the son of British army officer, William Mellows. His mother, Sarah Jordan, was from near Castletown, County Wexford and Liam spent most of his childhood there with his grandfather, Patrick Jordan.

Mellows became a nationalist and socialist at an early age, joining both Fianna Éireann and the Irish Republican Brotherhood. He was one of the founding members of the Irish Volunteers. During the 1916 Rising, he led a



Volunteer unit in Galway in a series of unsuccessful attacks on Royal Irish Constabulary. After the insurrection failed, Mellows escaped to the United States, where he was arrested and detained on a charge of attempting to aid the German side in the First World War. He was released in 1918.

During the Civil War, Liam Mellows and three other anti-Treaty prisoners were executed in Mountjoy in December 1922 as a reprisal for the assassination of Sean Hales, TD. Mellows is buried in Castletown cemetery, County Wexford where a commemoration takes place annually at his graveside.

Min and Mary-Kate Ryan

The Ryan sisters were from Tomcoole, near Taghmon in Co. Wexford. Min (Mary Josephine) was born on 29 December 1884, and Mary-Kate was born on 28 February 1895. Both sisters attended Loreto Abbey in Gorey. Min also attended Loreto Abbey in Dublin, and later the Royal University of Ireland. Mary Kate attended U.C.D. Min was an active member of *Cumann na mBan*, and became the honorary secretary of its executive committee. She acted as a dispatch rider in Enniscorthy in the days leading up to the Rising, then went to serve at the G.P.O and Jacob's factory in Dublin. She was engaged to Seán Mac Diarmada who was executed for his role in the Rising. She married General Richard Mulcahy, who went on to become commander-in-chief of the Irish Army. Mary Kate was also involved in Dublin during the Rising, serving in the G.P.O. She went on to marry Sean T. Ó Ceallaigh, who was a founding member of the Volunteers and later became President of Ireland.



James Ryan

James Ryan, born on 6 December 1892 at Tomcoole, Taghmon, was a final year medical student at University College Dublin in 1916. He was a co-founder of the Irish Volunteers in 1913 and joined the IRB the following year. During the 1916 Rising in Dublin, he was the medical officer in the General Post Office (GPO) and was one of the last of the insurgents to leave the building when the evacuation took place. Following the surrender of the Volunteers, he was deported to Stafford jail and subsequently detained at Frongoch. On his release from Frongoch in August 1916, he completed his final medical exams and set up practice in Wexford town. In June 1917, he was appointed Commandant of the Wexford Battalion of the Irish Volunteers. His political career began when he was elected as a *Sinn Féin* candidate for the Wexford South constituency in the 1918 General Election. During the War of Independence, he was promoted to Brigade Commandant of South Wexford and was elected vice-chairman to Wexford County Council on 18 June 1920. His political career was impressive and he subsequently served as a minister in many Irish governments including as Minister for Agriculture in 1932, Minister for Health and Social Welfare in 1947 and Minister for Finance in 1957. He retired as a TD at the 1965 general election and was elected to *Seanad Éireann* shortly afterwards where he served until 1969 before retiring to his farm near Delgany, County Wicklow. He died on 25 September 1970.



Máire Comerford

Máire Comerford was born in Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow in 1893. Her father James owned Comerford's flour mill in Rathdrum. When she was 16, her father died, and she was sent by her mother to London to train as a secretary. She returned to Ireland to live with her mother in her uncle T. L. Esmonde's home in Courtown until her mother rented a house around 1915 in Courtown Harbour and set up a private school in which Máire taught.



At the outbreak of the Rising, Máire was on a visit to Dublin and volunteered to assist Countess Markievicz in the College of Surgeons garrison at St Stephen's Green, but was turned down. She subsequently carried dispatches for the GPO garrison. She took part in the 1918 General Election which saw *Sinn Féin* win a landslide victory, and carried dispatches for Frank Aiken who was Commander of the IRA's Fourth Northern Division during the War of Independence.

Máire took the republican side in the Civil War and was imprisoned in Mountjoy prison by the Free State authorities. She escaped, was recaptured and went on hunger strike. Following the Civil War, she returned to County Wexford and lived in Mount St Benedict outside Gorey. She worked as a journalist with the *Irish Press* newspaper from 1935 until her retirement in 1964. A prolific letter writer to newspapers, she published her book *The First Dáil* in 1969.

She died in December 1982 at the age of 92 after a lifetime dedicated to the cause of Irish independence, and is buried in a private cemetery at Mount St Benedict.

Literary and artistic legacy of the Rising

The 1916 Rising provided inspiration to many poets and writers. Perhaps the most famous poem was written in 1916 by William Butler Yeats, entitled 'Easter, 1916'.

Easter, 1916 (last verse)

By William Butler Yeats

*Too long a sacrifice
Can make a stone of the heart.
O when may it suffice?
That is Heaven's part, our part
To murmur name upon name,
As a mother names her child
When sleep at last has come
On limbs that had run wild.
What is it but nightfall?
No, no, not night but death;
Was it needless death after all?
For England may keep faith
For all that is done and said.
We know their dream; enough
To know they dreamed and are dead;
And what if excess of love
Bewildered them till they died?
I write it out in a verse—
MacDonagh and MacBride
And Connolly and Pearse
Now and in time to be,
Wherever green is worn,
Are changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.*

During their internment, many of the Irish Volunteers wrote poems and songs. Seán Etchingham, a journalist with *The Echo* wrote many poems from the period:

*The boys have left the camp,
There is joy in Ireland tonight,
For comrades had met again,
The first time since the fight,
God bless the Enniscorthy boys
Who nobly acted thus
And in their first hour of freedom
They have not forgotten us.*

The following poem about Pádraig Pearse was written by William Sears, editor of *The Echo* newspaper during his internment in Frongoch.

The Master

In loving memory of P. H. Pearse

*Schoolmaster of all Ireland may God give
Eternal rest to your noblest soul;
You have more pupils now upon your Roll
Than ever at St. Enda's; and the new outdo
The old in prouder love of you.
Learning with kindred hearts your lesson high
Who taught your boys how Irish boys should live
And your countrymen how Irishmen should die.*



Birth of the Irish Republic by Walter Paget.

Artists were to the forefront in their visual interpretations of the 1916 Rising and in commemorating the heroism of those actively involved in the armed struggle. John Lavery, Seán Keating, Walter Paget and Kathleen Fox were among artists who gave visual expression to Irish nationalism.

As a pastime during their long days of imprisonment, a number of rebels used their creative skills to manufacture intricate craftwork. Items included bone carvings of elaborate detail and textile craftwork such as macramé, a form of textile making which employs knotting rather than weaving.



Macramé bag made by a prisoner in Frongoch.

Image courtesy of Wexford County Archive

Commemoration

The 1916 Rising has been remembered and commemorated in various ways over the last 100 years, and Enniscorthy has been to the forefront in leading such commemorations.

A service was held outside the Athenaeum, Enniscorthy in 1941 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Rising.

Some of those who had actively participated in the Rising in County Wexford were interviewed during the period 1947–57 and their personal testimonies preserved in the Bureau of Military History. These witness statements are now available to the public.

The limestone statue of Seamus Rafter on a granite plinth at Abbey Square, Enniscorthy. Sculpted by Arthur J. Breen, 1958.

Courtesy of Donald MacDonald



In September 1958, a limestone statue of Seamus Rafter on a granite plinth was unveiled at Abbey Square, Enniscorthy. The piece was sculpted by Arthur J. Breen, Dublin.

The 50th anniversary of the 1916 Rising took place in 1966. Many of the men and women who had taken part in the Rising were still alive, and were able to describe their experiences to a new generation. A huge parade took place through Enniscorthy. The President of Ireland, Éamon de Valera (who had fought in the Rising in Dublin) was also present.

In the early 1960s, a dedicated space in Wexford County Museum (which had opened to the public in early 1962 in Enniscorthy Castle) was given over to an exhibition of documents and artefacts from the 1916 Rising in County Wexford. Colum Breen, a local artist from Enniscorthy, painted a number of portraits of the leaders of the Rising in Dublin and of some of the key local figures for the display. He also painted a mural to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Rising.

In 1984 a plaque was placed on the front of the Athenaeum. This was to remind people that the building had been the headquarters for the Volunteers in the Rising. It also recognised the role of *Na Fianna Éireann* and *Cumann na mBan* organisations.

In 1991 the 75th anniversary of the Rising was commemorated. Once again a parade through the town took place. Mass was celebrated in the Cathedral in Enniscorthy, and the then Taoiseach, Charles J. Haughey, visited.

On Easter Monday each year, a parade is held in Enniscorthy and in other towns and cities around Ireland. The ceremony includes the laying of a laurel wreath and a reading of the Proclamation of Independence.

Naming of streets and public buildings

Many of the 1916 leaders have been commemorated across the country by the naming of streets, public buildings and bridges in their honour. In Dublin, for example, there is Pearse Street and Pearse Station and Connolly Station. In County Wexford, we have, among others, the Seamus Rafter monument, Seamus Rafter Bridge and Rafter Street in Enniscorthy; Weafer Street, Enniscorthy; O'Hanrahan Station and Liam Mellows Park in Wexford town; O'Hanrahan Bridge in New Ross; Rafter Street, Pearse Street and McDermott Street in Gorey.

- 1 Richard Aldous. *Great Irish speeches* (London, 2009), pp64-65.
- 2 J.J. Lee. *Ireland 1912-1985, politics and society* (Cambridge, 1989).
- 3 Witness statement of Seamus Doyle, WS 315, p7, BMH, NAI.
- 4 Witness statement of Seamus Doyle, WS 315, pp7-8, BMH, NAI.
- 5 Witness statement of Joseph McCarthy, WS 1497, p36, BMH NAI.
- 6 Witness statement of Peter Paul Galligan, WS 170, p7, BMH, NAI.
- 7 Witness statement of Máire Bean Mac Giolla Phádraigh (Máire Moran) WS 1345, p1 BMH, NAI.
- 8 Witness statement of Robert Brennan, WS 779, pp86-92, BMH, NAI.
- 9 Witness statement of Peter Paul Galligan, WS 170, p7, BMH, NAI.
- 10 Witness statement of Peter Paul Galligan, WS 170, p8, BMH, NAI.
- 11 Witness statement of Robert Brennan, WS 125, p5, BMH, NAI.
- 12 Witness statement of Joseph McCarthy, WS 1497, pp39-40, BMH, NAI., Witness statement of Patrick Ronan, WS 299, p3, BMH, NAI.
- 13 Witness statement of Robert Brennan, WS 125, p5, BMH, NAI.
- 14 Witness statement of Máire Bean Mac Giolla Phádraigh (Máire Moran) WS 1345, p1, BMH, NAI.
- 15 Witness statement of Joseph McCarthy, WS 1497, pp39-40, BMH, NAI.
- 16 Witness statement of Máire Bean Mac Giolla Phádraigh (Máire Moran) WS 1345, p2, BMH, NAI.
- 17 Henry Goff. *Wexford has risen, a short account of the 1916 Easter week rebellion in Wexford* (County Wexford 1916 Trust Ltd. 2007), p19.
- 18 Witness statement of Canon Patrick Murphy PP, WS 1216, p3, BMH, NAI.
- 19 Witness statement of James Gleeson, WS 1012, pp2-3, BMH, NAI.
- 20 Witness statement of Martin Dunbar, WS 988, p7, BMH, NAI.
- 21 Witness statement of Séan Whelan, WS 1294, BMH, NAI.
- 22 Witness Statement of Seamus Doyle, WS 315 p12, BMH, NAI.
- 23 Witness statement of Francis Carty, WS 1040, p3. BMH, NAI.
- 24 Witness Statement of Thomas Doyle, WS 1041, p19, BMH, NAI.
- 25 Witness statement of Alexander Nowlan, WS 159, p4, BMH, NAI.
- 26 George Bernard Shaw, 'The Easter week executions', letter to the *Daily News*, 10 May, 1916, quoted in David Pierse (ed.), *Irish writing in the twentieth century: a reader* (Cork University Press, 2000), p238.
- 27 Henry Goff. *Wexford has risen...* p31.
- 28 RIC report on the *Sinn Féin* or Irish Volunteer rebellion in HO 45/10810/312350, Royal Commission on the Rebellion in Ireland (1916).
- 29 'Arrests in Enniscorthy,' *County Wexford Free Press*, 13 May 1916, p4.
- 30 Witness statement of Joseph McCarthy, WS 1497, p9, BMH, NAI.
- 31 'No disturbances in Gorey,' *County Wexford Free Press*, 13 May 1916, p5.
- 32 Witness statement of Seán Whelan, WS 1294, p41, BMH, NAI.
- 33 *Manchester Guardian*, 1 December, 1916.
- 34 W.J. Brennan-Whitmore, *With the Irish in Frongoch* (Dublin, 2013), p31.
- 35 Henry Goff. *Wexford has risen...* p44.



Did you know that...

The Irish language

...people could be arrested by the police for giving their names in Irish.

...members of *Conradh na Gaeilge* in Wexford campaigned for the banks in the county (the National Bank and the Munster & Leinster Bank) to accept cheques if signed in Irish.

Irish Volunteers badge

...the cap badge of the Irish Volunteers is still used today by the Irish Defence Forces, *Oglaigh na hÉireann*.

The Irish Flag

...after it was flown by Thomas Francis Meagher in 1848, the tricolour was rarely used again until the 1916 Rising.

...a green flag with gold harp was the most frequently used flag among nationalists before the Rising.

...the tricolour is twice as wide as it is high.

...the three colours are of equal size and the green goes next to the flagstaff.

...the green represents the older Gaelic tradition while the orange represents the supporters of William of Orange. The white in the centre signifies a lasting truce between the 'Orange' and the 'Green'.

Cycling

...on Easter Monday 1916, Maire Deegan, a member of *Cumann na mBan*, cycled from her home in Brideswell near Askamore to Dublin with a dispatch message hidden in her hair.

...when Peter Paul Galligan cycled from the GPO in Dublin to Enniscorthy with an instruction from Pádraig Pearse to mobilise the Enniscorthy Volunteers, he went via Mulhuddart, in west Dublin, Maynooth, County Kildare, and County Carlow to avoid detection by British forces. He left on Tuesday 25 April and arrived in Enniscorthy the following day.

Pierce's Foundry

...Pierce's Foundry in Wexford town, which made agricultural machinery, was commissioned by Volunteer Headquarters in Dublin to manufacture pike heads for use during the rising.

Deaths due to the Rising

...more than 500 people lost their lives during or as a result of the Rising.

...there were no deaths during the rising in County Galway.

...two Volunteers and eight RIC men died in County Meath. Five Volunteers and fifteen RIC men were wounded. One civilian was also mortally wounded.

...in County Wexford there were no deaths during the rising. In Enniscorthy, an RIC man, Constable Grace was wounded in the leg by a bullet. A young girl, the daughter of Myles Foley from John Street, Enniscorthy, was also wounded.

...in Dublin, 485 men, women and children died. Of these, 126 were from the British Army, and 19 were from the RIC and Dublin Metropolitan Police.

...78 rebels and 262 civilians, including children, died in Dublin.

...40 children aged sixteen and under were killed in Dublin.

...two of the children who died – a boy and a baby – were never identified.

Select sources and resources

There are many ways to learn more about the Easter Rising and the period leading up to it. Your local library is a good starting point in your investigation. Staff can offer advice on print sources, and guide you to online resources. There is a vast amount of print and on-line source and resource material on the complex subject of the 1916 Rising and the events that preceded it. The following list offers a small selection of what is available.

General

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'Entertaining the Military', *Enniscorthy Guardian*, 13 May 1916.

'No disturbances in Gorey', *County Wexford Free Press*, 13 May 1916.

‘The situation in New Ross’, *Enniscorthy Guardian*, 13 May 1916.

‘Amnesty of Irish Prisoners: Unconditional release granted’, *County Wexford Free Press*, 23 June 1917.

Witness Statements

Witness statements are available on the Bureau of Military History website (See Online resources) or can be accessed at your local library. The following are the relevant witness statements relating to County Wexford.

Robert Brennan, WS 125; 779 . Francis Carty, WS 1040 . James Cullen, WS 1343 . Michael de Lacy, WS 319 . Patrick Doyle, WS 1298 . Seamus Doyle, WS 315 . Thomas Doyle, WS 1041 . Thomas Dwyer, WS 1198 . Martin Dunbar, WS 988 . Patrick Fitzpatrick, WS 1274 . Joseph Furlong, WS 335 . Peter Paul Galligan, WS 170 . James Gleeson, WS 1012 . Robert Kinsella, WS 1346 . Joseph McCarthy, WS 1497 . Thomas Francis Meagher, WS 1156 . Máire Bean Mac Giolla Pádraigh (Máire Moran), WS 1344, 1345 . Michael Murphy, WS 1277 . Canon Patrick Murphy, WS 1216 . Alexander Nowlan, WS 159 . Eily O’Hanrahan, WS 270 . Sean O’Byrne, WS 986 . Sean T O’Kelly, WS 1765 . Liam O’Leary, WS 1276 . John J O’Reilly, WS 1031 . Laurence Redmond, WS 1010 . Patrick Ronan, WS 299 . James Ryan, WS 70 . Mrs Richard Mulcahy (Min Ryan), WS 399 . Sean Whelan, WS 1294.

Online resources

Ireland 2016 – the official site of the 2016 commemorations <http://www.ireland.ie/>

Department of the Taoiseach website. http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/eng/Historical_Information/1916_Commemorations/

County Wexford 1916 Centenary Commemorative Programme: <http://enniscorthy1916.ie/>

The National Library of Ireland, <http://www.nli.ie/1916/> has an online exhibition.

Century Ireland 1913–1923 is an online historical newspaper that tells the story of the events of Irish life a century ago. Hosted by RTÉ. <http://www.rte.ie/centuryireland/>

The Bureau of Military History, a joint initiative of the Military Archives and the National Archives, has documents, images, witness statements and audio from the period 1913–1921: <http://www.bureauofmilitaryhistory.ie/>

The Learning Zone of the Ask About Ireland site <http://www.askaboutireland.ie/learning-zone/> is a rich source of information on 1916 and the events that preceded it for schools.

Easter 1916, Griffith College project <http://www.easter1916.ie/> has a section for schools.

The Glasnevin Cemetery site <http://www.glasnevintrust.ie> has video of the reenactment of Pearse’s oration at O’Donovan Rossa’s funeral.

The National Archives, London has some newsreel of Dublin taken in the immediate aftermath of the 1916 Rising <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/focuson/film/videos/1900-1945/ireland/easter-rising.mpg>

The Multitext Project at UCC has essays analysing the period up to and including the Rising http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Movements_for_Political__Social_Reform_1870--1914

The Irish War, <http://theirishwar.com/> has useful images and information on Irish medals, militaria and uniforms of the 1916 Easter Rising. **Please note: this is a commercial website.**



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