

# Liberty

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## Historic green flag comes home

■ By Frank Connolly

**The Green Flag of Ireland which was raised above Liberty Hall on Palm Sunday 1916 is coming home for the first time in one hundred years.**

In an unexpected beneficial effect of the growing cross border co-operation between institutions on the island the Inniskillings Museum, Enniskillen, has given the original Green Flag of Ireland raised over Liberty Hall on loan to SIPTU.

The flag has been in the possession of the British Army since it was retrieved from the burnt out Liberty Hall by a Royal Inniskilling Fusilier, 21 year old Acting Corporal John McAlonen on 26th April, 1916. It was presented to the Inniskillings Museum in 1935 by McAlonen's commanding officer, Colonel John McClintock.

Informed of the flag's existence, the union initiated contacts with Inniskillings Museum curator-manager, Neil Armstrong, and chairman of its trustees, Mark Scott, earlier this year. This led to an agreement that the flag would be given on loan to SIPTU in time for the 100th anniversary of the Easter Rising.

The flag, with a gold harp on a green background, was raised on Palm Sunday, 16th April, 1916, by a teenage member of the Irish Citizen Army, Molly O'Reilly. Mary Shannon, a machinist at the Liberty Hall shirt-making co-operative, made the flag which resembled ones flown outside British Army recruitment offices, with one major difference - there was no crown above the harp.

Earlier that month, James Connolly, had written in *The Workers Republic* of the need to hoist the Green Flag of Ireland in Dublin "as a rallying point of our forces and embodiment of all our hopes".

He added: "Where better could that flag fly than over the unconquered citadel of the Irish working class, Liberty Hall, the fortress of the militant working class of Ireland."

The flag was restored by conservator, Rachel Phelan, and was presented to President Michael D Higgins on Tuesday, 22nd March, in *Áras an Uachtaráin*. The Green Flag of Ireland will be on display in Liberty Hall during the 1916 commemorative events.



The Green Flag of Ireland. Photo: Peter Moloney, PM Photography



Volunteers in Irish Citizen Army uniforms at Liberty Hall on Sunday 20th March. Photo: William Hederman



# Highlights

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## Them Ducks Died for Ireland

*"6 of our waterfowl were killed or shot, 7 of the garden seats broken and about 300 shrubs destroyed."*

– Park Superintendent in his report on the damage to St. Stephen's Green during the Easter Rising, 1916

Time slides slowly down the sash window  
puddling in light on oaken boards. The Green  
is a great lung, exhaling like breath on the pane  
the seasons' turn, sunset and moonset, the ebb and flow

of stars. And once made mirror to smoke and fire,  
a Republic's destiny in a Countess' stride,  
the bloodprice both summons and antidote to pride.  
When we've licked the wounds of history, wounds of war,

we'll salute the stretcher bearer, the nurse in white,  
the ones who pick up the pieces, who endure,  
who live at the edge, and die there and are known

by this archival footnote read by fading light;  
fragile as a breathmark on the windowpane or the gesture  
of commemorating heroes in bronze and stone.

**Paula Meehan, Dublin, 2004**



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Connolly's Harp flag, seized as war trophy in 1916, returns to Liberty Hall

# Back where it belongs

■ By Scott Millar

**WHEN the young Irish Citizen Army member, Molly O'Reilly, raised the green flag of Ireland over Liberty Hall on Palm Sunday, 1916, the political message was clear – the writ of the British Crown was neither respected nor would it be accepted by the ITGWU.**

As Ireland's foremost progressive historian, Irish Citizen Army (ICA) commanding officer and ITGWU acting general secretary, James Connolly, knew the symbolism of the harp banner well. Its use first entered Irish recorded history during the rebellion of Owen Roe O'Neill in the 1640s but its provenance is likely to stretch much further into the Gaelic past.

Only two weeks earlier, Connolly had written of the plans to raise the flag at Liberty Hall in The Workers Republic. He stated: "The Council of the Irish Citizen Army has resolved after grave and earnest deliberation, to hoist the green flag of Ireland over Liberty Hall, as over a fortress held for Ireland by the arms of Irishmen."

The flag of green tabby weave wool measuring approximately three feet by four feet with a central uncrowned harp in yellow wool and string made from cream braid was the work of shirt maker Margaret Shannon.

On Wednesday 26th April, 1916 three days into the Rising, the flag still flew proudly from Liberty Hall. Although the building was central to the planning of the Rising, Liberty Hall was left vacant throughout Easter Week, a fact unknown to the British authorities who chose it as the first to be shelled by the gunboat Helga as it made its way up the Liffey.

After several hours of shelling, the flag was seized from the ruins of Liberty Hall by a Royal Inniskillings Fusilier, 21-year-old Acting Corporal John McAlonen. Captured as a trophy of war, it was eventually presented to the Inniskillings Museum in 1935.

In 2012, a flag was found in a box in the museum that had been unopened for many decades. The museum label read 'Citizen Army flag captured Easter Rising 1916'.

After months of analysis and research, all evidence would appear to confirm that this is the flag that James Connolly placed over Liberty Hall as a symbol of 'Ireland free'.

Textile conservator Rachel Phelan, who has restored the flag, said: "Having conserved many important Irish flags over the years, this is one of the most exciting discoveries to come to light. In construction and design the flag is clearly comparable to other surviving 1916 flags.

"As it has never been exposed to the light, the strength of the colours are as strong as 100 years ago and the flag would have been clearly visible along the quays".

I hand you  
this flag as  
the sacred  
emblem of  
Ireland's  
unconquered  
soul

James Connolly to ICA  
member Molly O'Reilly

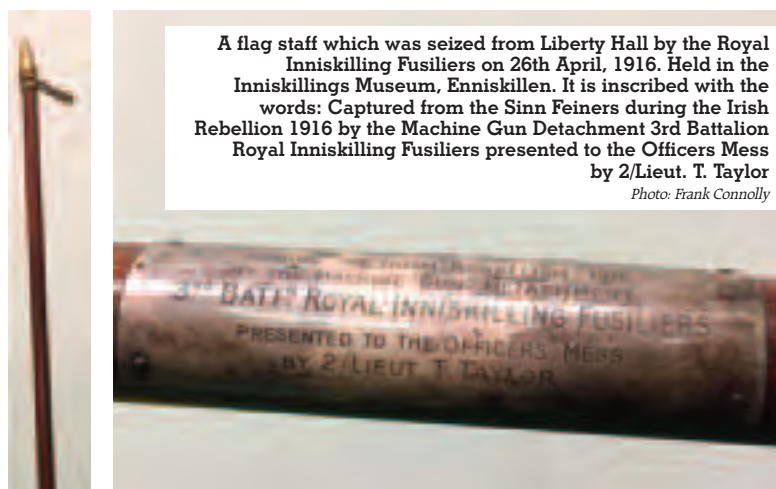
News of the discovery reached Liberty Hall and the SIPTU Head of Communications, Frank Connolly. Contact was made with the curator of the Inniskillings Museum, Neil Armstrong. After discussions the trustees of the Inniskillings Museum agreed that there was demonstrable public benefit in placing the flag on loan to SIPTU.

After many weeks of meticulous conservation work, the flag was officially presented to the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins in Áras an Uachtaráin on Tuesday 22nd March 2016 before going on public display in Liberty Hall for Easter.

The Chairman of Trustees for the Inniskillings Museum, Mark Scott, said: "It is right and fitting that this historic object should be made available to SIPTU, the direct successors to the ITGWU, for their commemoration of the part played



First photo of the original flag as recently restored by conservator, Rachel Phelan. Photo: Peter Moloney, PM Photography



Top of drum major's mace, Irish Citizen Army, which was seized from Liberty Hall during the Easter Rising. Held in the Inniskillings Museum, Enniskillen. Photo: Frank Connolly

by the union in 1916.

SIPTU General President, Jack O'Connor, said: "We were delighted to learn earlier this year that the Green Flag of Ireland had been discovered by the Inniskillings Museum among the collection of items seized from Liberty Hall during the Easter Rising in 1916.

"The return of the iconic flag on loan from the museum is particularly welcome in this centenary

year as SIPTU members across the country commemorate the role our predecessors in the ITGWU, including James Connolly and the men and women of the Irish Citizen Army, played in the Rising and the revolutionary period.

"It is a matter of immense pride for the union that the flag will be displayed in Liberty Hall where the events of Easter 1916 were planned and where the Proclamation was printed."

## Plaque to honour ICA dead

**ON Tuesday 29th March, President Michael D. Higgins, will unveil a plaque at Liberty Hall in memory of the 14 members of the Irish Citizen Army (ICA) who were killed in action or executed in 1916.**

Four of them, Louis Byrne, Sean Connolly, George Geoghegan and Sean O'Reilly, were part of the City Hall Garrison, while John Adams, Philip Clarke, James Corcoran, James Fox and Fred Ryan fought with the St. Stephen's Green/College of Surgeons Garrison.

James McCormack, Thomas O'Reilly and Arthur Wicks (alias John Neal) were Citizen Army members of the GPO Garrison.

ICA Chief of Staff Michael Mallin, and James Connolly, Commandant General of the ICA and Commander of Republican Forces in Dublin, were executed by firing squad at Kilmainham Jail – Mallin on 8th May and Connolly on 12th May 1916.

Also commemorated on the plaque are ICA Lt. Constance Markievicz, the only woman insurgent to be sentenced to death (sentence commuted to penal servitude for life), and Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, former member of the ICA Provisional Army Council and anti-war campaigner, who was summarily executed by the British Army during Easter Week 1916.

A Roll of Honour to all those enlisted in the ICA at April 1916 will also be unveiled as part of this state commemoration of the role played by the Citizen Army during the revolutionary period.

The ceremonies will include the rendering of full military honours by the state at the Connolly statue in Beresford Place and the hoisting of the Starry Plough flag under an honour guard of the Dublin Fire Brigade and their band and local community re-enactors in period uniform.

There will also be music by traditional musicians Sean McKeon and Liam O'Connor, readings by the families of James Connolly and Francis Sheehy-Skeffington and a solemn candle-lighting ceremony by pupils from St Vincent's National School.

The commemoration will conclude with addresses by SIPTU General President, Jack O'Connor and President Higgins followed by the choir of St Louis High School, Rathmines.

See pages 32-33



# SIPTU plaques commemorate Irish Citizen Army members

■ By Scott Millar

**TWELVE** plaques commemorating the Irish Citizen Army (ICA) will be unveiled in communities across Dublin over the coming months by the SIPTU Dublin District Committee.

A separate plaque containing a 'Roll of Honour' that lists the names of all the people registered as members of the Irish Citizen Army in April 1916 as well as one recording those who died will also be unveiled in Liberty Hall (see page 3).

The first SIPTU Dublin District Committee ICA plaque was unveiled outside Marino College of Further Education, North Strand on Friday, 11th March.

Speakers at the unveiling ceremony included playwright Peter Sheridan and SIPTU Dublin District Council member Alison Regan, while SIPTU Dublin District Council joint secretary Kevin Glackin read out a roll call of members of the ICA from the local area.

Addressing the crowd of more than 100 people, SIPTU Dublin District Council joint secretary John Dunne said: "During 2016 the SIPTU Dublin District Council in conjunction with local community groups and Dublin City Council are unveiling a series of plaques to commemorate the working-class men, women and young people who served in the



'The story of these ICA members can provide a valuable opportunity for communities to rediscover their history and the values that motivated people to risk all for a new future'

ICA in the areas where they lived.

"The story of these ICA members can provide a valuable opportunity for communities to rediscover their history and the values that moti-



Robert Norgrove (centre) with members of the Prison Officers' Association at the unveiling of an ICA plaque at Marino College of Further Education, North Strand on 11th March.

vated people to risk all for a new future."

The plaque was officially unveiled by Robert Norgrove, representing the Norgrove family, several of whom served with the North Strand section of the ICA.

The event was followed by a seminar on the life and politics of ICA leader James Connolly, and was chaired by Michael Halpenny and addressed by historians including Brian Hanley, Donal Fallon, Theresa Moriarty and Nell Regan.

For more information on the dates of future plaque unveilings, visit the Facebook page, 'Irish Citizen Army community commemorations'.

# Women in window mystery half solved

■ By Padraig Yeates

**ONE OF** the women photographed watching the Irish Citizen Army parade from a window in Liberty Hall has been identified.

She is Mary Hyland and is the figure on the right immediately above the first 'S' on the banner "We Serve Neither King Nor Kaiser". She helped make the banner and has been identified by her nephew Brendan Hyland, a member of the People's College Choir.

Although a Women's Section of the Irish Citizen Army was not formed until 1915, a number of women activists such as Mary had been involved from the start and had been in the Irish Women Workers' Union through the 1913 Lockout.

Mary served in the food kitchen at Liberty Hall alongside figures such as Delia Larkin, Rosie Hackett, Jinny Shanahan and Constance Markievicz.



Members of the Irish Citizen Army outside Liberty Hall in 1915

According to Frank Robbins of the ICA, Mary was "a bit of an actor" and performed with the Liberty Players in Sunday entertainments at Liberty Hall, which her brother Jim attended.

They both joined the ICA while an-

other brother, Thomas, joined the Irish Volunteers. In 1916 Mary and Jim served as part of the Stephen's Green garrison, while Thomas was in the Four Courts.

During the Rising Mary held up a milkman and requisitioned his sup-

During the Rising Mary held up a milkman and requisitioned his supplies in the name of the Irish Republic

plies in the name of the Irish Republic. She ran a makeshift kitchen in the Royal College of Surgeons to feed the Stephen's Green garrison and bartered her milk for biscuits with the Jacob's garrison nearby – an army marched on its stomach.

Her brothers were later interned in Frongoch but Mary escaped capture because Michael Mallin, the commander of the Stephen's Green

garrison, sent her with a letter to his wife Agnes before the surrender. Agnes was expecting the couple's fifth child at the time.

Mary later married another ICA member, Lt Michael Kelly, and they were caretakers of Liberty Hall in the 1920s and 1930s, living there until 1937.

Michael was promoted to Lieutenant on April 24th, 1916, when he was given command of 16 men guarding the approaches to the city from Rathmines and Portobello (now Cathal Brugha) Barracks. This detachment was deployed in Charlemont Street and Davy's pub commanding the canal crossing. He later saw action at the top of Grafton Street.

Brendan believes the other woman visible in the window may be Helena Molony. If any of our readers have any information on this they might let us know. Email: padraigyeates@gmail.com



# How the 1916 Rising changed the world



English artist Walter Paget's impression of the scene inside the GPO shortly before its evacuation in Easter week 1916.

It would do us no harm at all to consider the international context and consequences of the Rising, and to ask ourselves where we place ourselves now in the ongoing contests between great powers and sovereign peoples

Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, saying on 30th March 1921: "If we lose Ireland we have lost the Empire."

And, Sir Edward Carson: "If you tell your Empire in India, in Egypt, and all over the world that you have not got the men, the money, the pluck, the inclination and the backing to restore order in a country within 20 miles of your own shore, you may as well begin to abandon the attempt to make British rule prevail throughout the Empire at all."

The fact is the Rising signaled, perhaps even began, the process of disintegration in the British empire – but this has not always been acknowledged in Ireland, and in certain sectors, I suspect, remains an unwelcome thought. There has always been a double pulse in Irish political life.

On the one hand we find a servile tendency on the part of political elites to seek the approval and patronage of larger powers, exemplified in the spineless acceptance of direction from the ECB, for example, or the unwillingness to assert our sovereignty in the matter of US troop movements, and renditions, through Shannon.

On the other hand, there is a generous willingness on the part of non-State formations to identify with and support liberation movements, social and political, throughout the post-colonial world.

It would do us no harm at all to consider the international context and consequences of the Rising, and to ask ourselves where we place ourselves now in the ongoing contests between great powers and sovereign peoples.

*Theo Dorgan is a poet and writer.*

■ By Theo Dorgan

**J**OHN Redmond, rallying Irish men to the British war effort, was thinking only in terms of the impact on Irish-British politics of such recruitment. He seems to have been entirely unaware that the first World War was a contest between empires for the control of resources, for the extension of imperial powers, and that he was recruiting Irish men to support and bolster imperial ambitions and greed.

Or perhaps he knew but didn't think it important. A similar charge, however, can be laid at the door of the IRB and the Irish Volunteers – they failed entirely to consider (and potentially profit from) the international context of the insurrection. Only James Connolly fully understood that Ireland's struggle against Britain was a struggle against empire.

In the Workers' Republic, on 8th April 1916, 16 days before the Rising, Connolly wrote:

*The power which holds in subjection more of the world's popula-*

*tion than any other power on the globe, and holds them in subjection as slaves without any guarantee of freedom or power of self-government, this power that sets Catholic against Protestant, the Hindu against the Mohammedan, the yellow man*

*made the history of our race read like the records of a shambles, as she plans for the annihilation of another race appeals to our manhood to fight for her because of our sympathy for the suffering, and of our hatred of oppression.*

Only Connolly fully understood that Ireland's struggle against Britain was a struggle against empire... Across the world, the Irish Rising and War of Independence had a galvanising and morale-building influence on contemporary and subsequent independence movements

*against the brown, and keeps them quarrelling with each other whilst she robs and murders them all – this power appeals to Ireland to send her sons to fight under England's banner for the cause of the oppressed. The power whose rule in Ireland has made of Ireland a desert, and*

Connolly's point here was that Ireland was neither alone nor unique in suffering under empire, and by and large, until very recently, Irish commentators have failed to place Ireland's struggle in this international context.

Paradoxically, all across the world, the Irish Rising, and subsequent War

of Independence, had a galvanising and morale-building influence on contemporary and subsequent independence movements.

In an excellent article on this very subject ([tinyurl.com/z932npt](http://tinyurl.com/z932npt)) Liam Ó Ruairc argues that: "The 1916 Easter Rising had a very signif-



icant impact and influence on anti-imperialist movements worldwide, at the time particularly on those in India and Egypt."

The British were well aware of the consequences of losing Ireland, consequences that were not always clear to most of those Irish fighting for independence. Ó Ruairc quotes



■ By John Callow

**W**HEN heckled on a street corner about how he knew so much about revolution, James Connolly did not hesitate to respond that: "My business is revolution!"

This insight offers the thread by which to understand the nature, and essential continuity, of Connolly's career, binding the Red to the Green. As a trade union leader he fought for a social and economic revolution; as a socialist he fought for a political revolution. It was a struggle that led him from the Edinburgh slums to Dublin, to New York, to Belfast and – finally – to the flames of the GPO.

He was a man of big ideas and high ideals, who as his old friend and comrade, Cathal O'Shannon, put it, aimed through his every word, thought and deed to secure "the advancement of the working class to power." Few Labour leaders had such a sense of purpose. Few Labour leaders had seen and learned so much.

He had experienced, first-hand, the poverty and vast disparities of wealth that underscored both the industrial revolution and Fordist production; he had organised among new immigrant communities on the Dublin docksides and in the sweatshops of Manhattan; and he left behind him – through the paragraphs he contributed to the Proclamation of the Irish Republic – a legacy enshrined at the heart of the modern Irish state, that emphasises economic equality, the rights of women and civil liberties.

Yet, it is his role in the 1916 Rising and the heroism of his death, tethered, wounded and reviled, in the courtyard of Kilmainham Jail, that continues to define him a century on. Because of the Rising, Connolly and Pearse can be sidelined, re-imagined, excoriated or sanitised: but they cannot be ignored.

Furthermore, because of the continuing inequities and inequalities at the heart of our society, Connolly's message continues to have a potency and an immediacy that the other voices of Easter Week may have lost due to marked changes in Irish culture and society.

He remains a hope to the poor and the marginalised; and a waking nightmare to the acquisitive and to the exploitative super-rich. That is why, amid the politics of commemoration, Connolly the natural rebel remains a difficult and uncomfortable figure.

That is also why he, of all the signatories of the Proclamation, has recently been singled-out for the most savage and unremitting criticism for his decision to leave Liberty Hall, one last time, and to put himself at the head of the Irish Cit-

# My business is - revolution



William Martin Murphy lobbied hard for Connolly's execution

Thus, when we think of ruthlessness in 1916, let us not think of it solely in terms of the exchange of fire between enemy combatants, brave young men and women committed to their respective causes: but of its cold-blooded variety, conducted not upon the battlefield but in the boardroom, the gentleman's club and the debating chamber

izen Army in the battle for Dublin.

If we can dismiss him as no more than a murderous fanatic, we can dismiss his words and denigrate his dreams of a world made better for all.

Yet, this is to overlook what actually took place in Easter 1916. Connolly and Pearse were perfectly clear in their own minds that the Rising was an insurrection conducted by the conventional forces of an Irish Republic, that they themselves had called into being as an expression of the

Because of the continuing inequities and inequalities at the heart of our society, Connolly's message continues to have a potency and an immediacy that the other voices of Easter Week may have lost due to marked changes in Irish culture and society.

popular will.

Both men were scrupulous in their adherence to the rules and conventions of war, and did their level best to ensure that British Army prisoners were not abused



A painting of James Connolly believed to be by the artist Harry Kernoff. Photo: William Hederman.

or ill-treated by the insurgents. Indeed, it was the failure of the British government to accord the same status to the rebels, and the extra-judicial executions in the wake of the Rising, that turned

public opinion decisively in favour of the insurgents and made possible the eventual realisation of the Republic in the South.

Throughout Easter Week, Connolly had fought a soldier's battle.

He was everything and everywhere: Commandant and front-line combatant; heartening his men, raising barricades, leading sorties and directing volleys. Moreover, the Irish Citizen Army under his command, comprising the most loyal and committed of his adherents in the trade unions, had distinguished itself in the fighting to an extent that transcended mere numbers. The Rising had validated Connolly's decision "to fight the way I want, not the way the enemy wants," and the sense that this – far from being a gesture or a ritual sacrifice – was a blow in an ongoing war against capitalism and imperialism. His injunction to his men to "hold on to your rifles" until economic as well as political liberty had been won – reveals his view of freedoms that had not only to be achieved but constantly defended, and daily improved upon.

Certainly, as he lay wounded in his hospital bed, Connolly's foes still felt him to be a threat. William Martin Murphy, Dublin millionaire, strike-breaker and slum landlord, could not – and would not – forget his part in the Dublin Lock-out, or that the Starry Plough of the Citizen Army had flown, in triumph and defiance, from his own hotel building during the Rising, while his businesses and tenements burned.

Thus, each day, Murphy's newspapers demanded the harshest of sentences for the captured rebels and, even as the public mood swung against the executions of their leaders, continued to press for Connolly's death lest "the worst of the ringleaders" should live to fight another day. Murphy crossed the Irish Sea and lobbied hard at Westminster in order to ensure that Connolly, in particular, would not be spared.

Thus, when we think of ruthlessness in 1916, let us not think of it solely in terms of the exchange of fire between enemy combatants, brave young men and women committed to their respective causes: but of its cold-blooded variety, conducted not upon the battlefield but in the boardroom, the gentleman's club and the debating chamber.

It was concern for moderation that led Arthur Henderson, on behalf of the British Labour Party, to do nothing to oppose Murphy's calls for vengeance. Perhaps, when seeking to commemorate the 1916 Easter Rising we should remember Connolly's own clarion call on behalf of the entire Labour movement – both national and international – then as now, let us "Be moderate, we only want the earth!"

John Callow is the author of *James Connolly and the Re-conquest of Ireland*, published by the RMT and GMB. The book is available from Connolly Books in Dublin.



# Site of Rising surrender saved for future generations



Relatives of participants in the 1916 Easter Rising including James Connolly Heron (right of picture) and their supporters celebrate the High Court victory in Moore Street on Friday, 18th March.

**The site of the last stand of the rebel leadership of the 1916 Easter Rising on Moore Street, central Dublin, was saved from destruction by a High Court order on Friday, 18th March.**

The ruling by Justice Max Barrett that much of Moore Street is a national monument follows years of campaigning by the 1916 Relatives Group, representing families of the Rising leadership, and other political activists against a plan to turn the area into a shopping mall.

Among the organisations which voiced its support for the rela-

tives' campaign was the SIPTU Construction Division.

In a 399-page judgment, the judge stated that the whole battle site of Moore Street and adjacent areas was worthy of being a national monument. He said that the site had been the location of "the hardest of battles, fought by the toughest of people for the greatest of ends" during the Easter Rising.

Caretaker Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys, had attempted to argue that only one terrace of buildings at Nos 14 to 17 Moore Street should be protected as a national monument.

However, the ruling states that the national monument should include much of Moore Street, Moore Lane, Henry Place and O'Rahilly Parade.

Welcoming the High Court ruling, James Connolly Heron, a great-grandson of James Connolly, said that it amounted to "a vindication of our 14-year long campaign to save this national monument.

"The judgment endorses the National Museum's position that the Moore Street battlefield site is the most important national monument in Ireland from the modern period of Irish history."

## SIPTU to commemorate the Battle of Ashbourne

**The SIPTU Meath District Council will commemorate the Battle of Ashbourne, 1916, with a series of events in Ashbourne town centre on Saturday, 30th April.**

SIPTU Meath District Council President, Anton McCabe, said: "The Battle of Ashbourne was the largest encounter between rebels and crown forces outside of Dublin during the 1916 Rising. Those involved in the battle on the rebel side were members of the 5th Battalion of the National

Volunteers and were in the main working men. It is fitting that our union, which is the direct successor of the ITGWU whose members were at the very centre of the planning and conduct of the Easter Rising, should commemorate these men."

SIPTU Meath District Council Coordinator, John Regan, said: "The rebels who took part in the historic battle that happened in Ashbourne, County Meath, on 28th April, 1916, deserve to be commemorated in a permanent way during this centenary year."



Thomas Ashe, leader of the rebel force at the Battle of Ashbourne

## TIMELINE

### Lead-up, Rising & aftermath

#### MAY-SEPTEMBER 1915

Military Council of the IRB is formed, consisting of Pádraig Pearse, Joseph Plunkett, Sean MacDiarmada, Eamon Ceannt and Tom Clarke. These men commit to plotting a Rising to take place in the spring of 1916

#### AUGUST 1915

**1st** Pearse gives graveside oration at the funeral of veteran Fenian leader, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, warning Britain: "Ireland unfree shall never be at peace". Members of the Irish Volunteers and Irish Citizen Army (ICA) form the funeral guard of honour.

#### JANUARY 1916

**2nd** British government says Ireland will not be exempt from conscription.

**16th** Special mobilisation of ICA, during which members are asked are they prepared to fight alone in the coming revolution.

**19th** James Connolly holds secret meeting with IRB for three days and is co-opted onto Military Council.

**21st** Connolly agrees to plan joint rising with IRB against British Empire.

**29th** *Workers Republic* asks its readers will they be ready for the "Day of Days".

#### FEBRUARY 1916

**6th** The ICA publishes guide on 'First Aid in the Battlefield'.

**26th** *Workers Republic* attacks employers supporting British Army recruitment as the same who supported the Lockout.

#### MARCH 1916

**15th** Order issued for mobilisation of ICA and Ambulance Corps to parade on St. Patrick's Day.

**22nd** ICA bomb and munitions factory in full swing on the first floor of Liberty Hall.

**24th** Military and police raid on Liberty Hall to seize banned newspapers is repelled. ICA is mobilised to defend Liberty Hall.

**26th** Premiere in Liberty Hall of James Connolly play *Under Which Flag* starring ICA captain, Seán Connolly.

#### APRIL 1916

**3rd** Pádraig Pearse, as Director of Operations, issues orders for national mobilisation of Irish Volunteers on Easter Sunday

**9th** German arms ship *Aud* sails for Ireland with 20,000 rifles and million rounds of ammunition.

**16th** ICA parades in Beresford Place, and Green Flag of Ireland is hoisted over Liberty Hall by Molly O'Reilly.

**17th** Military Council of the IRB meets in home of Cumann na mBan president to approve draft of the Proclamation

and to ratify the Provisional Government of seven signatories.

**19th** Irish Volunteer commanders told of plans for Rising on Easter Sunday, 23rd April, at 6.30am.

**20th** German arms ship, the *Aud*, intercepted by Royal Navy patrol in Tralee bay. Captain Karl Spindler scuttles vessel at Queenstown (Cobh). Countermanding order by Eoin MacNeill, Chief of Staff of the Irish Volunteers effectively cancelling the Rising planned for Sunday.

**23rd** Connolly and fellow signatories of Proclamation meet in Liberty Hall and decide to press ahead with Rising. Proclamation is printed in Liberty Hall behind ITGWU shop on Eden Quay.

**23rd - 27th** Attempts made by volunteers in the rest of the country to mobilise. Some success in Louth, Meath, Wexford and Galway.

**24th** Main body of Volunteers and ICA assembles at Liberty Hall to seize strong points in city, including GPO. Capt Seán Connolly, commander of ICA garrison at City Hall, is first rebel killed.

**25th** Heavy fighting in St Stephen's Green. ICA contingent under Michael Mallin forced to fall back on Royal College of Surgeons.

**26th** Frances Sheehy-Skeffington, socialist and feminist and onetime member of ICA, executed in Portobello barracks. British capture City Hall where ICA member Dr. Kathleen Lynn is senior surviving officer.

**27th** James Connolly, Comdt General of rebel forces, seriously wounded by sniper fire. RAMC prisoner and volunteer medical student tends his wounds as he directs operations from stretcher in GPO.

**28th** GPO garrison forced to retreat into Moore Street by British artillery fire. Fingal volunteers under Thomas Ashe defeat larger RIC force at Ashbourne, Co. Meath.

**29th** Pádraig Pearse orders surrender of rebel forces to prevent further slaughter of civilians. Connolly endorses surrender for forces under his command, including Stephen's Green garrison.

**30th** Most rebel prisoners marched to Richmond barracks, where those suspected of being leaders are singled out for court-martial. James Connolly is taken to St. George's military hospital.

#### MAY 1916

**1st** Rebel prisoners deported to jails in England and Scotland.

**2nd** Some shops reopen in central Dublin. Irish Parliamentary Party leader, John Redmond, describes Rising as "wicked and insane". GPO staff transferred to Rotunda Rink to resume postal services to public.



# Shot strapped to a stretcher

■ By Martin Fitzpatrick

**THE familiar imagery of the execution in Kilmainham Gaol of the 1916 leader James Connolly may not be as accurate as most of the history books show.**

The accepted story – and the one being told repeatedly in the run-up to the Easter commemorations – portrays the leader of the Irish Citizen Army strapped to a chair to allow the British Army firing squad to execute him.

But one of the very small handful of eye-witnesses to the event suggests that the execution took a somewhat different turn.

In a booklet written some 72 years ago to mark an anniversary associated with the Church of St. James, James's Street, the recollections of the curate who attended the executions suggest that Connolly was too ill even to be left in the chair brought for that purpose and that the stretcher which bore him to the prison was used to hold him upright while the firing squad pursued its grisly task.

Being the parish church closest to Kilmainham Jail, the curate in James's Street church, Fr. Eugene McCarthy was officially designated to attend the executions so that 'last rites' could be administered after the firing squads had finished.

The church sacristan Hubert O'Keeffe was obliged to accompany the priests on their jail visits and the account of Connolly's execution comes from a conversation between the sacristan and Fr. McCarthy and written down by Mr. O'Keeffe in 1944. He writes: "In giving a description of James Connolly's execution, Father McCarthy told me that the prisoner, who was in a bad condition, elected to stand like the rest but failed.



Traditional accounts of James Connolly tied to a chair during his execution at Kilmainham, right, may be mistaken  
Photo: Irish Labour Party



From Revolution 1916 exhibition, Ambassador Theatre, Dublin.  
Photo: Liadh Connolly

He was then tied to a chair but slumped so much he overbalanced

"He was then tied to a chair but slumped so much he overbalanced. Finally, he was strapped to a stretcher and placed in a reclining position against the wall. In this manner he passed into the role of Ireland's honoured martyrs."

The account also suggests the strapping had unfortunate consequences. It says: "The sight left an indelible impression on Fr. McCarthy. Describing the scene to me afterwards he said, 'The blood spurted in the form of a fountain from the body, several streams shooting high into the air. The possible explanation of this may have been the tightening of the straps

Blood spurted in the form of a fountain from the body, several streams shooting high into the air...

around the body.' Most of the texts which deal with Connolly's execution, including the exhaustive 2005 biography by Donal Nevin, persist with the widely-held story that Connolly was strapped to the chair when he was shot. But it may well be that the imagery will have to be reassessed.

Hubert O'Keeffe's account was re-produced more recently in a booklet, *The Place, the Parish and the People – Celebrating 150 Years 1844-1994*.

This was published in 1994 to mark the 150th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of St. James's parish church by Daniel O'Connell.

## Home to celebrate great-aunt Molly O'Reilly

**AMONG the many thousands of Irish people living abroad who are traveling home to commemorate the Easter Rising are Marianne and Rachel Murphy from Canada, relatives of Molly O'Reilly who raised the Green Flag at Liberty Hall.**

Marianne told Liberty: "Molly is my grandmother's sister, which would make her my great-aunty and Rachel's great-great-aunty. I

am very proud to be related to someone who played a vital part in an historic event like 1916. Look at what those involved in 1916 achieved with so little. A small group of brave men and women who wanted to make Ireland a better place for everyone to live free from imperialism.

"From a very young age, my mam and dad told us the stories of Molly and 1916. Molly was determined, strong, and courageous.



Marianne and Rachel Murphy from Canada

From a very young age she was appalled by the poverty she saw in Dublin and wanted to help; she actually helped organise a soup kitchen in Liberty Hall at the age of 13. Of course I pass on these stories to my children here in Canada."

She added: "It means so much for me to be home for this historic event. To see these wonderful people honoured. It's even more special to me because my daughter

Rachel is here with me. My daughter is so proud of her heritage and culture.

"We have a Government invitation to the Easter Sunday Commemoration; we are really looking forward to that.

"I am also excited to see the Revolution 1916 exhibit at the Ambassador Theatre. Part of the exhibition is centred around Molly's story, I am sure it is going to be amazing."



■ By Mary McAuliffe

**D**URING the 1913 Lock-out, many radical, politicised women offered their services to assist the striking workers and their families.

In Liberty Hall, they engaged in activities in support of the strikers including running soup kitchens.

The women involved read like a roll call of the well-known names of Dublin feminist and nationalist activists. Many already had a long history of service in feminist politics, through groups such as the Irish Women's Franchise League, the separatist nationalists of Inghinidhe na hÉireann and trade unionists through the Irish Women's Workers Union (IWWU).

The Lockout may have ended in defeat for the workers but the experience had radicalised further a new generation of female activists, many of whom were now more aware and engaged with socialist politics.

By 1914, the driving force and leader of the Irish Citizen Army was socialist, union organiser and self-proclaimed feminist James Connolly. Connolly was convinced that the oppression of women and the oppression of the worker by "a social and political order based upon the private ownership of property" were inseparable, and recognised the double burden of the working woman: "The worker," he wrote, "is the slave of capitalist society, the female worker is the slave of that slave."

Influenced by Connolly, many of these women joined the IWWU and used it as a platform to fight for their feminist, socialist, and nationalist goals. Because of him, and their involvement in union politics, women were drawn into involvement in the Irish Citizen Army with many socialist women preferring to join it rather than other militant nationalist organisations.

There is a debate as to whether the Irish Citizen Army accepted women on an equal basis to men. There was a women's section within the organisation. However, the women themselves felt that there was an egalitarian nature to the Citizen Army. Member, Madeline French-Mullen told her friend Rosamund Jacob that "there was absolutely no difference between men and women in the Citizen Army".

Despite this view, the nature of what members did within the Citizen Army was demarcated in many ways by gender.

In theory, women were full members, but much of their work before and during the Rising was in first aid and food provision. Indeed, all members were trained in first aid by the Chief Medical Officer, Dr Kathleen Lynn.

On the other hand we do know that some of the women had train-



In May 1917, four IWWU members barricaded themselves inside Liberty Hall and hung out this banner in memory of James Connolly

Photo:UCD Library Special Collections

## Citizen Army: of arms and the women..



Wounded in action: Margaret Skinnider  
Photos: 1916 Relatives Association



ICA officer: Dr Kathleen Lynn

ing with guns, some aided in making bombs, and participated in drill training and route marches.

It has also to be noted that the Irish Citizen Army provided the only two female officers who took part in the Rising – Kathleen Lynn

who was stationed at City Hall and Constance Markievicz who was second-in-command to Michael Mallin at the Royal College of Surgeons/St Stephen's Green.

When the Rising broke out on Easter Monday 1916 more than 30



IWWU members on the steps of Liberty Hall in 1914

Citizen Army women joined their male comrades as they received their orders in Liberty Hall and marched off to their designated outposts.

As they left Liberty Hall, Helena Molony recorded that Connolly gave the women revolvers. During the Rising, ICA women served many functions; first aid helpers, food providers, couriers, dispatch carriers and frontline combatants. Indeed one, Margaret Skinnider, was wounded leading a military action in St Stephen's Green. After the surrender, 29 Citizen Army women were arrested, marched to Richmond Barracks, and imprisoned in Kilmainham Jail.

The experience of violent rebellion and imprisonment did not, however, dent their activist fervour. After their release all continued their political work for the cause of Ireland, the cause of women and the cause of the

worker. As many of the men were interned in prison camps they began the re-organisation of the ICA and the IWWU.

In May 1917, four female members, Helena Molony, Rosie Hackett, Brigid Davis and Jinny Shanahan, barricaded themselves into Liberty Hall and hung a large banner out the top window in commemoration of the execution of James Connolly. It read 'James Connolly Murdered May 12th 1916' and it took the Dublin police many hours to break into Liberty Hall and bring down the banner.

They were also at the forefront of the anti-conscription campaign in 1918 and many of the women who fought in 1916 would see further action during the War of Independence.

Mary McAuliffe is the editor, with Liz Gillis of 'Richmond Barracks', 1916: 'We Were There': 77 Women of the Easter Rising', published by Dublin City Public Libraries.



# Piercing the heart of a giant

■ By Brian Hanley

**IN MARCH 1916, just a few weeks before the Easter Rising, the police raided Liberty Hall. In response, the Irish Citizen Army was mobilised across Dublin.**

James O'Shea remembered how "all jobs stopped (with) men running out of foundries, fitting shops, forges and building jobs. Carters left horses in the street and ran for their rifles and equipment...it was a glorious sight to see men in all conditions of clothes, some with whips hanging to their belts, others in smocks all full of grease, mud, coal or cement..."

Though no further confrontation ensued on the day, the mobilisation illustrated how the Citizen Army drew its membership from among Dublin's working class, especially members of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union.

A few weeks later, more than 250 members of the ICA would take part in the Rising. Early in Easter Week the ICA's Starry Plough flag was hoisted over the Imperial Hotel in O'Connell Street. As the hotel was owned by William Martin Murphy this act carried special meaning as a reminder that the roots of the Citizen Army lay in the Lockout.

The ICA was formed in the winter of 1913 in response to police violence against workers. Initially trained by former British officer Captain Jack White, it numbered over 1,000 men by early 1914, armed only with sticks and hurleys. Nevertheless, it succeeded in ensuring the police attacks on strikers became rarer as the Lockout wore on.

In the aftermath of the workers' defeat, however, the numbers involved declined. Now led by James Larkin, the ICA was a smaller, though a more professionalised and uniformed militia.

It adopted a constitution which stated that "the first and last principle of the Irish Citizen Army is the avowal that the ownership of Ireland moral and material, is vested of right in the people of Ireland" and that "the ICA shall stand for the absolute unity of Irish nationhood and shall support the rights and liberties of the democracies of all nations." It also asserted that "the Citizen Army shall be open to all who accept the principle of equal rights and opportunities for the Irish people". (See page 26)



'Glorious sight': Easter Rising veteran James O'Shea in full Citizen Army uniform

In the run up to Easter Week, one ICA member recounted how Liberty Hall 'resembled a military barracks in all but name'

Unlike the much larger Irish Volunteers, the ICA allowed women to become active within it, with Constance Markievicz the most high-profile female recruit. But other women, including Dr. Kathleen Lynn, Helena Molony and Nellie Gifford were also active, along with young workers such as Rose Hackett.

The majority of the members were ITGWU activists, though a

few, such as Michael Mallin and WP Partridge, had been in other unions.

The diversity of the city's working class was also reflected, with a significant number of Protestant ICA members, including Fred Nor-

The diversity of the city's working class was also reflected, with a significant number of Protestant ICA members, including Fred Norgrove, Seamus McGowan and Sean O'Casey.

grove, Seamus McGowan and Sean O'Casey.

In August 1914, war broke out in Europe and large numbers of Dublin's workers (including some ICA members) were called up by the British Army. Larkin soon departed for America and James Connolly succeeded him not only as head of the ITGWU but also of the ICA.

Connolly was outraged that the European socialist movement had not done more to stop the war and determined that the ICA would fight any attempts to deepen Ireland's involvement. He lamented that "we are helpless! What then becomes of all our protests of fraternisation; all our threats of general strikes... were they all as sound and fury, signifying nothing?"

But Connolly also suggested that "Ireland may yet set the torch to a European conflagration that will not burn out until the last throne and the last capitalist (are) shriveled on the funeral pyre of the last war lord."

Under Connolly, the ICA became







Irish Citizen Army members pictured on the roof of Liberty Hall (Image Camera Press Ireland)



Sean O'Casey sketch of 'Captain Brennan Irish Citizen Army' made for a production of *The Plough and the Stars* (Marsh's Library)

a proficient military force. A key decision was appointing Mallin, a former British soldier, (one of several in the ICA) as Chief of Staff. Training as well as arms procurement was stepped up during 1915. There were also weekly route marches, public parades and concerts.

James O'Shea recalled that "we... had something that was worth more than anything else before or since – a peculiar comradeship with no limits. It meant you stood by your mates against all comers, friend or foe. We were like a big family when you got the swing of it. Home or nothing else mattered. I stress this as I have felt it and sensed it amongst the ICA in this period. It made for a carelessness in danger and a happy-go-lucky, devil-may-care comradeship that I had never experienced before."

Uniformed ICA members took part in drill competitions with the Irish Volunteers and formed part of the guard of honour at the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa in August 1915.

The ICA was also mobilised during two strikes on Dublin docks during that year. Despite complaints from the employers, the Citizen Army paraded with arms on the quayside and Connolly asserted that "They should always remember the way in which they were followed and buffeted by the police... two years ago, but such a thing was impossible today. The rise of the Citizen Army had made that a thing the authorities would not try on."

In fact, Connolly may have hoped that the dock strikes would spark off a wider working class revolt. He was now stressing that an armed rebellion was necessary at

all costs. Despite the numerical weakness of his forces, he hoped that "a pin in the hands of a child (could) pierce the heart of a giant."

During late 1915, Connolly met ICA members individually and asked them were they prepared to fight on their own or co-operate with the Irish Volunteers, if necessary. In early 1916, Connolly, convinced that the Irish Republican Brotherhood were serious about a rising, entered into an alliance with them.

In the run up to Easter Week, an

ICA member recounted how Liberty Hall "resembled a military barracks in everything but name" as Citizen Army men "some in dark green uniform, some in their ordinary working clothes, some in their Sunday best" took over the building.

On the first floor "improvised hand grenades were being manufactured. Cartridges were being altered, to fit rifles and guns for which they were never meant. Bayonets, of an old French type, were being heated over a blow-lamp and

bent or reshaped to fit an old German Mauser rifle... [it was] common to see... [a] man sitting over the fire; brewing a can of tea on one side of it, while melting a pot of lead on the other side; two or three men at a bench making repairs to a rifle, while at the same time, two or three others were stretched on the bare floor, snoring, fast asleep."

Despite their relatively small number, the ICA played a leading role in the Rising. ICA members fought at the GPO, City Hall and the College of Surgeons and at

least 14 of its contingent died as a result of the rebellion.

James Connolly commanded the Republican forces in the GPO and both he and Michael Mallin were executed in the Rising's aftermath. (Countess Markievicz narrowly escaped the firing squad). Nearly 100 members of the ICA were interned in the Rising's aftermath.

The Citizen Army's place in history was assured by Easter Week but their birthplace was the Lock-out, the ITGWU and the Dublin working class.



Irish Citizen Army members pictured outside Liberty Hall in 1917



■ By Francis Devine

**F**ROM January 1916, Liberty Hall operated at "two levels", the normal work of the union and preparations for insurrection. An armed guard from the Irish Citizen Army (ICA) was placed, but tensions emerged, especially after James Connolly – then acting General Secretary of the ITGWU in Larkin's absence in the United States – flew a 'Challenge Flag' from the building on 16th April.

This was a green flag that Connolly hoped would rouse people in Ireland. After some objections within Dublin No 1 Branch Committee, the Union agreed that the flag could be flown on the understanding that the ICA would, in the future, vacate the hall. They did, but not until Easter Monday.

Liberty Hall was seen by the *Irish Times* as the "centre of social anarchy, the brain of every riot and disturbance", and Rosie Hackett was to regard the Hall "historically" as the "most important building we have in the city".

She continued: "Yet, it is not thought of at all by most people. More things happened there, in connection with the Rising, than in any other place. It really started from there."

The men who printed the Proclamation – the printer or pressman Christopher Brady, and compositors Liam O'Brien and Michael Molloy – were ITGWU employees producing *The Workers' Republic* and workaday union print jobs.

All were members of the Dublin Typographical Provident Society (DTPS), later the Irish Graphical Society/Irish Print Union, now the SIPTU Irish Print Group.

In early 1915 Connolly acquired the Double Crown Wharfedale printing press. So dilapidated was it – and short of type, despite Andy 'Dazzler' Mulligan fetching some from West's printers – the Proclamation could be printed only one half at a time, and several typefaces had to be used.

Connolly gave them the option of not being involved as they worked overnight on Easter Sunday, under ICA guard commanded by Lt William Partridge, an ITGWU organiser.

They chose to carry out the task, fully aware of its historic significance. When printed, the Proclamation was "parcelled up and delivered to Miss Helena Molony", ICA member and Secretary of the Irish Women Workers' Union, then effectively part of the ITGWU.

The three printers went on to fight in Easter Week: Brady with the ICA in City Hall; Molloy and O'Brien with the Volunteers in Jacob's and St Stephen's Green. In 1934, ICA veteran Nellie Gifford recalled:



Michael Molloy, Christopher Brady and Liam O'Brien: all were members of the Dublin Typographical Provident Society (DTPS), later the Irish Graphical Society/Irish Print Union, now the SIPTU Irish Print Group.

# The men who printed the Proclamation

*How faithfully those three men had fulfilled their trust. They took the risk of setting up and printing what others who only posted up paid for with their lives. Having done the task assigned them, they returned to the quiet, unspectacular work of earning their living. Their courage and their patriotism is, however, now part of our history, for they had a special part in ushering in the Irish Republic.*

It is hoped that when every school student learns of the Proclamation, they will hear the names Brady, Molloy and O'Brien – even Joe Newman who assisted them and Dazzler Mulligan – and of course Liberty Hall and the ITGWU.

Brady went on to work for the Bank of Ireland, Molloy in the Freeman's Journal and O'Brien in O'Reilly's. The DTPS, on a motion of the *Irish Independent Chapel*, honoured them with a presentation dinner in the Ormond Hotel on 8th December, 1916.

At Easter 1916, the men who printed the Proclamation should be recalled as workers – no Proclamation would have been possible without their ingenuity and inventive skill; as courageous soldiers, for they acted effectively as such both



during the printing and in the weeks and years that followed; and as employees of the union.

For Brady certainly, the Ireland he fought for was the workers' republic, and that is evident in those elements of the Proclamation that vested Ireland in the hands of its people and spoke of equality – concepts and phrases expressed in the Constitution and in the ambition of Connolly and the ICA.

When the Proclamation is draped from Liberty Hall as part of the 1916 tapestry, it should be remembered it was first printed by union members employed by the ITGWU.

Having done the task assigned them, they returned to the quiet, unspectacular work of earning their living. Their courage and their patriotism is, however, now part of our history, for they had a special part in ushering in the Irish Republic



■ By Michael Halpenny

### Louth and Meath

Dundalk and Louth Volunteers mobilised on Easter Sunday as planned and, alone among all the volunteers nationally, stayed in the field in defiance of Eoin MacNeill's "countermanding order".

Under the leadership of Commandant Donal Hannigan, their orders were to proceed to Slane and then to Tara to link up with volunteers from Meath, Down and Monaghan and hold a line north of Dublin to stop or delay British reinforcements reaching the city.

A detachment was also to proceed to the internment camp at Oldcastle and free a number of German POWs who had indicated their willingness to fight with the rebels. In the event, the confusion engendered by MacNeill's countermanding order stymied the plans to link up with the Meath Volunteers.

Nevertheless, there was an engagement at Castlebellinham, arms were also captured and a small force occupied Tyrellstown House at Mulhuddert for the remainder of Easter Week.

Once the Meath Volunteers under Sean Boylan had established that the Rising was on, they made valiant efforts to implement the original plan. However, as elsewhere, MacNeill's order had a significant effect and while arguably the most successful military operation of Easter Week took place in County Meath, the Battle of Ashbourne, it was the 5th Dublin (Fingal) Battalion under Thomas Ashe that was the decisive ingredient.

### Laois & the Midlands

It can be said that the first shot of the Rising was in Laois as local volunteers commenced operations to sabotage railway lines in advance of the Rising due for Sunday 23rd April, the original date.

Part of their orders were almost a mirror of those for the Louth and Meath volunteers - to link up with other Midland volunteers, particularly Carlow, to hold a line, this time south of Dublin. Yet again, the "countermanding order" had its effect.

Similarly the plans for Kilkenny envisaged linking up across country with the County Wexford volunteers. Those plans met a similar end.

### Wexford

On Thursday of Easter Week local volunteers declared the Republic in Wexford and seized the town of Enniscorthy, holding it even beyond the general surrender. Surrounded by overwhelming Crown forces, the Wexford rebels only surrendered after one of their number, under safe passage, was allowed travel to Dublin to confer with the rebel leadership.

It was rightly regarded as one of the most successful actions outside Dublin, referred to even by the authorities as the "The Enniscorthy Rising".



Pupils from Fenit National School examine one of the restored anchors from the gun-running ship *the Aud*, which was scuttled in 1916. Two of the anchors were raised from the seabed in 2012

PICTURE: Gavin O'Connor

# The Rising outside the city of Dublin...

### Cork

In accordance with the original plans, hundreds in the Cork companies of the Irish Volunteers mobilised on the Easter Sunday. When MacNeill's countermanding order arrived it was distributed by brigade staff to the volunteers, some of whom were already heading for their allotted positions in the field.

According to some reports they were still in the process of communicating this order on the Monday when a courier (Maria Perolz of the ICA Women's Section) arrived by motorbike with an order from Pearse stating, "We go into action at noon today".

There followed what appeared to be a flurry of attempts to establish what was happening but with the passage of time so also was the opportunity for a successful re-mobilisation. As well as that, the Volunteers leadership appeared to be under intense pressure locally and, ultimately, through little fault of the local volunteers, the moment passed. In the end the fighting men were probably more forgiving than those who hurled on the ditch then or now and when Terence MacSwiney entered Frongoch internment camp as a prisoner, he was accepted by the others on equal terms, even by some who had been critical of his perceived lack of leadership.



Liam Mellows

ceived lack of leadership.

Of course, the quality of his and of Thomas MacCurtain's leadership was put to test in the years that followed, tragically to a hero's death in both cases.

Finally the only shots fired were those by the Kent brothers at their farm near Fermoy in a follow-up operation by the armed RIC in which a head constable and one of the Kent brothers was killed. Thomas Kent was captured, tried and executed in Cork, becoming the 15th man executed in the Rising. Roger Casement was to be the 16th and last of the 1916 men to face execution.

### Clare

There were more than 400 volunteers in Clare under the leadership of Michael Brennan. It was envisaged they would meet at the Shannon to collect and distribute arms which were being shipped on the German arms ship, *the Aud*. Despite what might appear to be a relatively small number for a fair sized county, one historian of the period, Charles Townsend, reports the assessment of the RIC County Inspector for Clare that if a rising had taken place, many more would have joined the rebel colours. The same observation no doubt was made by more than one of his colleagues elsewhere.

In the end the arms ship, shadowed by the Royal Navy, was not able to land its cargo of rifles, machine-guns and ammunition and *the Aud* was taken under destroyer escort but finally scuttled by its captain rather than allow its cargo to fall into the hands of the British. It was this, and other factors, which was then ostensibly key to MacNeill's order, which in turn put paid to any successful mobilisation outside Dublin.

### Limerick & Kerry

With much of their fate tied into the distribution of the arms from *the Aud* and in the case of Kerry, linking eastwards with Cork and in the case of Limerick interfacing with Clare, its capture and subsequent sinking put

paid to the central role of Limerick as the main conduit for arms distribution.

There was in any event a sketchy plan about "holding the line of the Shannon". One slightly bemused Volunteer commander noted that based on the average company strength in Limerick of 200, this would mean one man for every 300 yards.

### Galway

Outside of Dublin, Galway saw the greatest numerical mobilisation of volunteers under the leadership of Liam Mellows. The original plan was to arm with rifles from *the Aud*, and, again, hold the line of the Shannon.

On the day, it is estimated that perhaps up to 1,000 mobilised across the whole county. Unfortunately, as we know, the expected arms from *the Aud* did not materialise. Nevertheless, several hundred came out around Galway city later linking up at Oranmore with several hundred from Athenry.

An RIC man was shot dead at Carnmore, a destroyer was reported to have fired shells in the general direction of where they thought the rebels were and later in the week a party of Royal Marines was landed.

Following a clash between armed RIC elements and some volunteers, the main body of around 600 held large swathes of east Galway throughout Easter Week, from their base at Moyode Castle. However, by Friday, the writing was on the wall even for them.

It is a testament to the Galway Volunteers that the largest number of men interned in Frongoch prison camp after Dublin (926), certainly were those from Galway (322), followed by Wexford (150). If others didn't understand the potential threat, the authorities did.

### Mayo

Once news spread out that the Rising was on in Dublin, there was a reported attempt led by Volunteers leader Darrel Figgis to mobilise on Achill and cross to the mainland to join up with units from Castlebar, Westport and Newport. The plan was to take the police barracks in those locations. However, it seems that clerical opposition to the plans may have succeeded where the effect of the "countermanding order" was beginning to wear off and so nothing seems to have come of it.

### Tyrone/Belfast

It had been decided early on that there would be no Rising in the North for fear of a sectarian backlash. Instead it was planned that volunteers from Belfast and Tyrone would assemble in the Dungannon area, march westwards to the Shannon and link up with the forces under Commandant Liam Mellows, centred on Galway.

In the event, volunteers did assemble in Coalisland but yet again the "countermanding order" effectively put paid to any prospect of implementing the admittedly sketchy plans to join up with Mellows' forces in the west.



# Answering Connolly's call

■ By Philip O'Connor

**THE Citizen Army in Baldoyle, then a small and remote farming village in North Co Dublin, had a stormy history. Formed of farm workers in the heat of a tough dispute with their employers, it was the only ICA unit to endure in the county area, with members taking part in the 1916 Rising and the struggle for independence that followed.**

Conditions had been improving for farm workers, with the building of labourers' cottages, the introduction of modest social welfare and direct employment by rural councils. In June 1913, the ITGWU began organising farm workers in the county. Baldoyle – where Larkin's contact was local socialist, Michael Nolan – was at the centre of the campaign, with 1,200 in the North County soon joining the union and Larkin negotiating major improvements in wages and conditions.

But in September 1913 the farmers joined the city employers' anti-ITGWU lockout and reneged on the agreement. Following a bitter struggle involving RIC baton charges, attacks on "blacklegs" and the burning of hay ricks, the workers were finally beaten, returning to work in January 1914.

Nolan and his fellow union colleagues, Jim McCormack and Joseph McDonagh, formed a Baldoyle section of the Citizen Army in 1914. The other members were James and Lar Rooney, John and Charles Blake, Pat Doherty, Joseph, Pat and Philip Roche, James Gough, William Kennedy and Pat Fox. Unusually for ICA units, there were no women involved.

All of these men were farm labourers, and while the leaders were older, with large families, most were young workers. They were a close-knit group, several being related, some sharing lodgings and all living close by in the council cottages on Station Road, Burrowfield, Moyne and Saxe Lane in Sutton.

At a big ITGWU/Citizen Army sports event in September 1915 – much heralded in Connolly's *Workers' Republic* – a dispute erupted when the Baldoyle men accused the Kinsealy tug-of-war team of having been "scabs" during the Lockout. Most of the Baldoyle group left the union and ICA in protest, including Lar Rooney, who had served a month's hard labour for union militancy in 1913. The



ITGWU (and later WUI) Baldoyle Branch Secretary Mick Nolan



James McDonagh, ICA fighter from 1916 to 1923



James McCormack, killed by a sniper's bullet in Moore's Lane on Easter Wednesday. Below, the 1916 veteran's medal later presented to his family and the officer's whistle taken from McCormack's jacket pocket after he was shot, and still in the possession of his descendants



James Gough, who fought with the ICA in 1916 and with the IRA in 1919-21



Pat Connolly, who resigned from ICA in 1915 but later fought with Baldoyle IRA



Davy's Pub at Portobello Bridge, where Gough's small group held off a vastly stronger force of British troops in 1916



Baldoyle ICA was dissolved but the core group – Nolan, McCormack, McDonagh and Gough – remained, "attached to the Army in the city," as the police noted.

On Easter Monday morning,

1916, McDonagh was alerted to events by Dick Mulcahy, an Irish Volunteer officer living in Sutton, and walked the eight miles to join his comrades in the city. Both he and McCormack, who had been on guard duty at Liberty Hall, were dispatched with the main group to occupy the GPO. Nolan was attached to the force under Mallin at Stephen's Green.

McDonagh was one of the nine men under Joe Doyle who occupied Davy's Pub at Portobello Bridge with orders to hold it until the garrison at Stephen's Green had fortified their position. In this they succeeded, fighting off large British forces for four hours before withdrawing over roofs and lanes to join the fight at Stephen's Green.

On Wednesday, James McCormack was tragically killed by a sniper's bullet while on patrol





An ICA veterans' parade in the 1930s – holding the flag is Joseph McDonagh of the Baldoye Section

from the GPO in Moore's Lane. Joseph McDonagh also led sorties from the GPO, charged with building street barricades. He was later wounded by British artillery fire on the GPO. In Stephen's Green, Nolan too was wounded.

At the general surrender, all three surviving Baldoye ICA men were arrested and deported first to Stafford Jail and then Frongoch Camp. McCormack, who had been killed in action, was buried at Glasnevin in a common grave with 12 other Republican dead, now marked by a memorial.

On their release, Nolan and McDonagh sought to rebuild the Baldoye ICA but many opted instead for the national movement, Sinn Féin. Nolan, appointed Baldoye ITGWU branch secretary, was elected a Sinn Féin councillor in Howth in 1920 while Gough, together with his brother, Peter, a Great War veteran, fought with the Baldoye company of the IRA's famous 2nd Dublin Battalion.

McDonagh remained with the small Baldoye ICA group. Several men who had resigned in 1915 now also joined the IRA, including Pat Doherty and Pat Roche.

In the Civil War, Roche, McDonagh and Nolan fought on the Republican side, being arrested in August 1922 by Free State in swoops on Raheny and Baldoye.

In the 1920s, some former members of the old Baldoye ICA left

McDonagh was one of the nine men under Joe Doyle who occupied Davy's Pub at Portobello Bridge with orders to hold it until the garrison at Stephen's Green had fortified their position. In this they succeeded, fighting off large British forces for four hours before withdrawing

the area for work elsewhere. Those that remained were active locally. Mick Nolan joined Larkin in founding the Workers Union of Ireland and was also involved in the Irish Workers League, the tenants' movement and other social struggles.

He signed Larkin's nomination

papers for the Dáil election shortly before his own tragic death in 1927. Roche, Doherty and Gough were to be prominent in community activism locally over the following decades.

This article is a tribute to the men of the Baldoye ICA who, when it mattered, were prepared to put their lives on the line for the liberation of their class and of their country.

*Philip O'Connor is a member of the Howth-Sutton-Baldoye 1916 Commemoration Committee. All photos courtesy of the families.*



James McDonagh's Stafford prison cell button tag

## TIMELINE (continued from page 7)

**3rd** Execution of Padraig Pearse, Tomás McDonagh and Tom Clarke. Joseph Plunkett and Grace Gifford marry in Kilmainham jail.

**4th** Execution of Joseph Plunkett, Edward Daly, Michael O'Hanrahan and Willie Pearse.

**5th** Execution of Sean McBride.

**6th** Countess Markievicz (ICA) sentenced to be executed but commuted to life imprisonment.

**8th** Execution of Michael Mallin (ICA), Con Colbert, Eamon Ceannt and Seán Heuston.

**9th** Execution in Cork of Thomas Kent.

**10th** Irish Independent calls for execution of remaining leaders, including James Connolly.

**12th** Execution of James Connolly (ICA) and Seán MacDiarmada.

**14th** In all, 160 rebel prisoners convicted by court martial receive sentences ranging from two years to life.

**18th** Government Inquiry into Rising opens. William Martin Murphy in his submission says it stemmed from 1913 Lockout. The formation of ICA was "the most amazing thing outside Mexico", Murphy states.

**20th** 287 rebel prisoners deported to Glasgow, Perth, Lewes and Woking prisons.

**21st** Grave-diggers at Glasnevin Cemetery complain they cannot cope with funerals. Only one mourner permitted per coffin to reduce traffic jams. 485 casualties of Rising buried.

**22nd** Dublin Chamber of Commerce votes for extension of martial law in the "interests of public safety" and condemns "wild criticisms" of soldiers.

**28th** Two committees set up for dependents of rebel prisoners: the Irish Volunteer Dependents Fund by widows of executed leaders, and Irish National Aid Association by veteran Fenian, Fred Allen.

**29th** Former DMP Commissioner Sir John Ross tells Inquiry into Rising that ICA was first body to openly defy government's authority in 1913 Lockout and encourage disaffection.

### JUNE 1916

**3rd** Total number of rebels detained in English prisons reaches 2,555.

**6th** Court-martial of Captain Bowen-Colthurst for murder of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington and journalists Thomas Dickson and Patrick MacIntyre on 26th April.

**8th** ITUC&LP (Irish Trades Union Congress and Labour Party) calls for release or speedy trial of men arrested after Rising. 200 suspects released.

**10th** British military begins converting German prisoner-of-war camp at Frongoch in Wales to internment camp for Irish rebels. First batch of prisoners begin to arrive.

**24th** First batch of Irish prisoners arrive at Frongoch internment camp. The camp would soon hold over 1,800. Among those interned there are ITUC&LP Secretary, PT Daly, William O'Brien, Secretary of Dublin Trades Council and Thomas Foran, President of the ITGWU.

**26th** Trial of Sir Roger Casement for High Treason begins at the Royal Courts of Justice in London. Defence argument that accused committed no treasonous act on British soil rejected.

**27th** Hardinge Commission publishes its findings on Easter Rising. It blames the Irish Executive for tolerating lawlessness to avoid a "collision with any faction of Irish people".

**29th** Casement sentenced to death. He refuses to recognise the court and says the treason committed by Unionists leads to the Woolsack (House of Lords) but his actions lead to the gallows.

### JULY 1916

**1st** The 36th Ulster Division suffers 5,550 casualties on first day of the Battle of the Somme, of whom over 2,000 are killed. The 16th Irish Division also suffers heavy casualties.

**11th** By now 1,862 rebel prisoners transferred to and interned in Frongoch Camp. Five women (mainly ICA) rebel prisoners interned separately.

**14th** Over 100 released internees from Frongoch are greeted in Dublin and Cork by large crowds and cries of "Up the rebels!"

**22nd** Letter by George Bernard Shaw in *Manchester Guardian* asks that Sir Roger Casement be treated as a prisoner-of-war.

**28th** Casement's conviction upheld in Court of Criminal Appeal, London.

### AUGUST 1916

**3rd** Execution of Roger Casement.

**18th** Numbers held at Frongoch fall to 600 as Sankey Committee continues interviewing and releasing internees.

### NOVEMBER 1916

**25th** 15 hut leaders in Frongoch court-martialled after 200 internees refuse to answer roll call for fear it will be used to identify former British residents liable for military service.

### DECEMBER 1916

**22nd-23rd** General Release of Frongoch prisoners.



SIPTU 1916 PROGRAMME OF EVENTS MARCH - APRIL

**Glórtha 1916**  
The Rising Centenary Concert

**Easter Saturday, 26th March 2016**  
Liberty Hall • 8.00 p.m. - 11.00 p.m.

Christy Moore  
Damo  
Paula Meehan  
Matt Molloy  
Louise Mulcahy and Conor McKeon  
Stephen Murphy  
Mick Blake  
Robert Ballagh

Special guests: President Michael D Higgins and Sabina Higgins

Tickets: €30 • Tel: 01 8588217  
Email: info@siptu.ie

SIPTU Communications Department

**Easter Saturday 26th March**

The Rising Centenary Concert  
Featuring: Christy Moore; Damo; Paula Meehan; Matt Molloy; Louise Mulcahy and Conor McKeon; Stephen Murphy; Mick Blake, Robert Ballagh.  
President Michael D Higgins will attend  
8.00 p.m. - 11.00 p.m.  
Liberty Hall  
Tickets: €30.  
Tel: 01 858 8217 Email: info@siptu.ie

**Easter Monday 28th March**

Liberty Hall and the Rising  
SIPTU - RTE Co-Production. MC: Pdraig Murray, featuring Frances Black, Francis Devine, Nell Regan, Rachel Phelan, Mick Halpenny, Joe Duffy.  
2.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.  
Liberty Hall  
Free public event. Tickets available from Liberty Hall and from RTÉ website: www.rte.ie.

**Easter Tuesday 29th March**

State Commemoration of Irish Citizen Army  
President Michael D Higgins will lay a wreath at the statue of James Connolly at Liberty Hall and unveil a plaque to the members of the Irish Citizen Army who died during the Easter Rising. Relatives of those members of the ICA who lost their lives during the Easter Rising and of survivors will attend. A public viewing area will be erected for the wreath laying ceremony.  
11.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.  
Liberty Hall

LYRIC  
Theater

**Pull Down a Horseman**  
by Eugene McCabe

The secret meeting that agreed the date for the Easter 1916 Rising

The play depicts a private discussion between Pearse and Connolly during the three days of the meeting with the IRB in January 1916.

Liberty Hall, Dublin  
Wed 30, Thu 31 March & Fri 1 April 2016  
at 1pm in the Connolly Room  
(book online or buy at the show)

www.dublinlyric.ie

**Wednesday 30th March**

Connolly Was There - songs of Labour, Connolly and the Irish Citizen Army  
Clé Club centenary session, featuring: Tommy Sands; Liam O'Connor; Bread and Roses; Síle Denvir  
8.00 p.m. - 10.30 p.m.  
Clé Club, Liberty Hall  
Tickets €5 at door.

SIPTU EQUALITY EXHIBITION 2016

**100 years of Women@Work**

Photographic Exhibition and debate on where women are 100 years after the 1916 Easter Proclamation.

**THURSDAY 31st MARCH**  
Liberty Hall Theatre  
Doors open at 6.00 p.m. for the exhibition  
Debate commences 7.00 p.m. and includes a short dramatic piece "Neither Male nor Mad", debate, music and song.  
Followed by social event at 9.00 p.m.

ADMISSION FREE  
For tickets contact: 01 8588217 or communications@siptu.ie

SIPTU

Glórtha 1916

**Freedom doesn't fall from the sky**  
Friday 1st April  
8.00 p.m. • Liberty Hall Theatre

Theo Dorgan  
Lynched  
Liam Ó Maonlaí  
Declan O'Rourke  
Niall and Caoimhin Vallely  
Karan Casey  
Aoife Ní Bhriain  
Kate Ellis  
Cora Venus Lunny  
Lisa Dowdall  
Louis de Paor  
Mick O'Brien  
Aoife Scott

Tickets: €20 from www.cth.ie or Tel: 01 858 8217 Email: info@siptu.ie

**SUMMON HER CHILDREN**

The generations shall remember them, and call them blessed.

Produced by Stone Productions

**Saturday 2nd April**

5.00 p.m. - 8.00 p.m.  
Connolly Room  
Liberty Hall,  
Admission: €5 at door  
Followed by reception in Cois Life Bar

**Sunday 24th April**  
March re-enactment

Re-enactment of the march by the Irish Citizen Army, Irish Volunteers and Cumann na mBan from Liberty Hall to the GPO on Easter Monday 1916.  
11.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.  
Liberty Hall





# LibertyView

By President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins

**T**HIS issue of *Liberty* is published as we reach the crescendo of a wave of events marking the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising.

As a nation, it is important that we celebrate and honour a moment, now 100 years ago, that a small group of people had the courage and vision to strike against Empire for a free republic.

Maurice Walsh in his recent 'Bitter Freedom' tells us that "nationalist movements across the world were taking advantage of the immense pressure on the empires that controlled them." Why should Ireland be any different? According to the Czech leader Tomáš Masaryk, the war had turned Europe into "a laboratory atop a vast graveyard."

As we commemorate the Easter Rising, we recognise that it must be seen as the product of combination of the forces of Irish nationalism and various revolutionary, social, cultural and language movements. We appreciate now also that the Rising took place in a context of urban and rural poverty, industrial unrest, political upheaval and a global war that

**It is particularly important that we recognise the central role played in the Rising by the movement for labour rights which had taken on new momentum in the early 20th century, illustrated so dramatically in the 1911 Wexford Lockout and the 1913 Great Dublin Lockout.**

would rob Europe of a generation of young people.

It is particularly important that we recognise the central role played in the Rising by the movement for labour rights which had taken on new momentum in the early 20th century, illustrated so dramatically in the 1911 Wexford Lockout and the 1913 Great Dublin Lockout.

It was the Lockout that brought Pearse closer to Connolly. It is reflected in their joint influence on the Proclamation; the loss of both explains much of the diminished emphasis on equality in what followed.

The remarkable attempts to realise greater rights for workers were the closest Ireland ever came to a socialist revolution – and they were met with violence on the part of the authorities and with great condemnation from the Church.

The violence experienced by those who were involved in the trade union movement in turn prompted the creation of the Irish Citizen Army, turning the loosely organised groups of union rally stewards into a highly disciplined security force. And although its initial aim was to protect striking workers, by 1914 it had evolved – under the leadership of men like James Connolly – into a force engaged in armed insurrection against British rule in Ireland.

The vision of those who formed or joined the Irish



The Liberty Hall wrap which features images from the 1916 Rising Tapestry and will be in place throughout the centenary commemorations Photo: Paddy Cole

Citizen Army was not confined to replacing an alien landlord class with a native one. It was not about supplanting one form of conservative nationalism by another; it was about challenging power relations and tackling the social and cultural, as well as political, hierarchies of the Ireland of the turn of the 20th century.

As such, the emancipation of women was an integral part of the social transformation called for by the leaders of the Irish Citizen Army, such as Francis Sheehy Skeffington and James Connolly. The atmosphere of equality that prevailed between men and women in the ranks of the ICA reflected the vision held by many Irish and international socialists of the

time, for whom women's emancipation was a precondition for any just society.

And we understand that the Rising was about more than military or political actions – it was also an act of imagination. The leaders were inspired by the idea of creating a very different Ireland and they believed in a social as well as a national revolution in which every facet of Irish life could be improved.

It was this vision for a different Ireland – a better Ireland – that turned the movement for workers' rights into an essential element of the broader movement for Irish independence. Yet it is precisely because theirs was not only a struggle limited to political independence but a struggle for equality and social justice that the aspirations of those who joined the Irish Citizen Army remain such a well-spring of inspiration for us nowadays.

It is a history that continues to inspire us, because the ambition of the men and women of the Irish Citizen Army was transformational – geared towards the creation of such a Real Republic as would be operated on the principle of full and equal participation of all its citizens – and because it was from the tenements and the ranks of the excluded that so many of its members came.

For us, living a century later, their ambition and perseverance are a source of inspiration. As we mark the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising, we can pause and reflect on what motivated the insurgents and we can take stock of their achievements, and on how the ideals formulated a century ago might apply today, in very different global settings, in a world that has yet to bear the imprint of peace, freedom from

**The atmosphere of equality that prevailed between men and women in the ranks of the ICA reflected the vision held by many Irish and international socialists of the time, for whom women's emancipation was a precondition for any just society.**

hunger, sustainability or solidarity placed upon it.

The moment of commemoration prompts us to reflect on what it is to be an active and responsible citizen, in a free and independent Ireland and a highly globalised and inter-connected global society.

We must now ask ourselves how we might best use the freedom which was handed down to us by previous generations. And we must undertake the work of making Ireland the Real Republic of which our founders dreamed; of sharing responsibility for a different global order, free of war; of celebrating our inter-dependence with genuine solidarity as we face challenges such as eliminating global poverty, achieving gender equality and protecting our vulnerable planet from the effects of climate change.



# The SIPTU 1916 Rising tapestry

To mark the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising, SIPTU commissioned seven tapestry panels. Based on drawings by the artist Robert Ballagh and sewn by groups of volunteers, the panels depict images associated with the Rising. The panels will be displayed in Liberty Hall during the centenary events, along with the 30 tapestry panels produced to commemorate the Great Dublin Lockout of 1913.



## Birthplace of the Republic

Robert Ballagh's reinterpretation of English artist Walter Paget's painting, *Birth of the Irish Republic* is the inspiration for this panel depicting of a wounded James Connolly in the GPO, which is under British shell fire, continuing to direct rebel troops. Also depicted are Pádraig Pearse, Tom Clarke, Seán Mac Diarmada and Elizabeth O'Farrell.

**Production:** Blanchardstown Irish Countrywomen's Association: Sheryl Cullen, Dymna Judge, Angela Archbold, Margaret O'Rourke, Margaret Keating, Helen Ward, Ann Kehoe, Triona Donohue, Ann Conlan, Sandra Keating and Sue Mulvihill.



## Frongoch – 'The university of revolution'

This depicts prisoners' huts in the Frongoch Internment Camp in North Wales and is based on a postcard from the private collection of Vincent Byrne, who later served with E Company 2nd Battalion IRA during the War of Independence. Frongoch was used to intern over 1,800 Irish prisoners from June to December 1916, many of them rebel prisoners who had fought in the Rising, along with others rounded up by British forces in the following weeks. Notable prisoners included Michael Collins, Sinn Féin leader Arthur Griffith and ITGWU acting general secretary William O'Brien. The camp effectively brought together republicans to discuss revolutionary tactics, and many internees went on to play an important role in the War of Independence. For this reason it would later become known as "ollscoil na réabhlóide", the "University of Revolution".

**Production:** Sew Busy Group: Maria Bolton, Deirdre Anglim, Linda O'Leary, Alice Whyte, Sahar Boran, Phyllis Murphy, Moira Lyne, Patty Murphy, Gina Buckley and Carole Mortcock.



## Heros of Easter (left to right)

**1) Winifred Carney:** Born in Co Down, Carney was a suffragette and trade unionist. Held the rank of adjutant in the Irish Citizen Army (ICA) during the Rising.

**2) Kathleen Lynn:** Born in Co Mayo, the daughter of a Church of Ireland rector, Lynn was a suffragette and trade unionist, and served as the rebel forces chief medical officer during the Rising.

**3) Madeleine ffrench-Mullen:** Born in Malta, ffrench-Mullen was a radical feminist and suffragette. She commanded the ICA medical station in St Stephen's Green during the Rising.

**4) Margaret Skinnider:** A Scottish Cumann na mBan member, suffragette, trade unionist and teacher, Skinnider joined the ICA after arriving in Dublin the week before the Rising. She played an active military role in the Rising and was wounded.

**5) Helena Molony:** Born in Dublin, Molony was active in feminist politics. She was an actor and secretary of the Irish Women Workers' Union before serving with the ICA in the Rising, during which she took part in the attack on Dublin Castle.

**6) Elizabeth O'Farrell:** Born into a working-class Dublin family, O'Farrell was active in the Cumann na mBan before being assigned to serve with the ICA during the Rising, during which she cared for the wounded James Connolly in the GPO.

**7) Countess Constance Markievicz:** A leading figure in the ICA, she had played a key role supporting workers during the 1913 Lockout. She was part of the command staff of the St Stephen's Green garrison during the Rising and played an active role in the battle.

**Production:** Former NCAD graduates: Sally Hewston, Audrey Barrett, Karen Tierney, Paula Byrne, Ann O'Mahoney, Michaela Wilson and Kathleen Firth. Binding: Mary O'Reilly and Tess Flynn.





### Irish Citizen Army outside Liberty Hall

This panel depicts members of the Irish Citizen Army drilling outside the ITWGU headquarters in Liberty Hall prior to the Easter Rising. The banner, 'We serve neither King nor Kaiser', was raised when James Connolly became acting general secretary of the ITWGU following James Larkin's departure for America in October 1914.

**Production:** Patchwork Guild Group: Mary Hunter, Marie Byrne, Mary Maguire, Aileen Hennegan, Dearbhla O'Reilly and Marilyn Roantree.



### James Connolly faces the firing squad

On 12th May 1916 badly wounded ICA leader James Connolly was taken from the Royal Hospital Kilmainham to Kilmainham Gaol to be executed. With a shattered ankle and gangrenous foot, Connolly was brought into the yard of the prison on a stretcher. The image depicts him tied to a chair facing a firing squad of British soldiers, although there is speculation that he may have been shot while strapped to an upright stretcher. His absolution and last rites were administered by a Capuchin priest. Asked to pray for the soldiers about to shoot him, he said: "I will say a prayer for all men who do their duty according to their lights."

**Production:** Abbey Theatre Group: Eimer Murphy, Aisling Mooney, Mairéad Delaney, Patricia Malpas, Saileog O'Halloran, Helen Fahy, Eileen Collins, Mary O'Reilly, Annette Quigley, Mark Palmer.



### Proclamation of the Irish Republic

The Proclamation of the Irish Republic was printed in Liberty Hall by ITWGU employees Christopher Brady (ICA), Liam O'Brien (Irish Volunteers) and Michael Molloy (Irish Volunteers) on Easter Sunday 1916. Laying out the bold principles of equality and national sovereignty to which the Rising leadership had committed themselves, the document is seen as the basis of the Republic it was hoped the rebellion would give birth to. It was issued in the name of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic, which was how the men of the Military Council of the IRB styled themselves once the Rising had commenced.

**Production:** Blanchardstown Irish Country-women's Association: Therese Brennan, Maureen Caffrey, Marie O'Neill, Dorothy Sheridan, Joan Greene, Pat O'Looney and Teresa Hill.

### The Starry Plough and republican martyrs

The Starry Plough flag of the Irish Citizen Army is depicted on this panel alongside the republican leaders Liam Mellows (beside Starry Plough), Thomas Kent (below Mellows) and Thomas Ashe. These three men all took part in armed actions outside Dublin during the week of the Easter Rising. Mellows, who would later be executed by the Free State during the Civil War, led republican forces in a number of abortive attacks in Co Galway during Easter week. Kent was executed by the British following his involvement in a gun battle with police who went to arrest him and his brothers in Cork. Ashe commanded rebel forces in north Co Dublin during Easter week. His force was involved in a major engagement with police in Ashbourne, Co Meath. Imprisoned for his republican activities in 1917, he died after being force-fed during a hunger strike.

**Production:** Liam Mellows and Starry Plough: Cherry Orchard Group - Joe Dixon (supervisor), Ellen Maher, Marian Dunne and Joan Duggan. Ashe and Kent: Liberty Hall Group - Mary Enright, Anne Fitzpatrick, Sylvia Yates, Sue O Brolchain and Ciara O'Sullivan-Brennan.





# ITGWU leader recalls events of 1916

By David Connolly

**W**ILLIAM O'Brien was General Secretary of the ITGWU for 20 years – a union he helped to build after 1916. He was one of the most influential figures in the Irish labour movement and was a delegate to the ICTU for 30 years and president of Congress four times. O'Brien was also a comrade and close friend of James Connolly and was mainly responsible for Connolly's return to Ireland, and later for the preservation and publication of his writings. In later years, O'Brien provided a 145-page witness statement to the Bureau of Military History, upon which this short account is based.

"APRIL 24th 1916: The last words said to me by James Connolly just before he left Liberty Hall were: 'Go home now and stay there; you can be of no use now but may be of great service later on.' In accordance with this instruction I went to my home."

This comment referred to the fact that, while O'Brien had been fully aware of the military arrangements for Easter week, Connolly had informed him that it was intended to form a Civil Provisional Government comprised of O'Brien, Arthur Griffith, Sean T. O'Kelly, Alderman Tom Kelly and Hanna Sheehy Skeffington. After the confusion caused by MacNeill's countermanding order, Winifred Carney and Markievicz stayed with O'Brien on Easter Sunday. O'Brien arrived at Liberty Hall at 10.00 a.m. next morning to find large numbers of Volunteers and Citizen Army men continually passing in and out loading quantities of ammunition and bombs into cars and trucks.

After he shook hands with Connolly, O'Brien recounts: "As I cycled across Abbey Street, I saw the Irish Republican troops breaking the windows of 'Kelly for Bikes' and dragging bicycles and motorcycles across the street to form a barricade... The fight was on."

On Tuesday morning at 10.00 a.m. he went to Sackville Street (now O'Connell Street) to investigate the situation. He met with Connolly at the corner of Henry Street who informed him that the Citizen Army had done badly in Stephen's Green, with a large number of them killed by a machine gun mounted on the roof of the Shelbourne Hotel. Connolly



William O'Brien, left and inset right, stands next to Cathal Brugha, who fought in the Rising and later died in the Civil War. On the far right is Major John MacBride who was executed by the British. O'Brien first heard about MacBride's execution while placed under detention by British troops

Photo: National Library of Ireland

He met with Connolly who informed him the Citizen Army had done badly in Stephen's Green, a large number killed by machine gun mounted on the roof of the Shelbourne Hotel

made no comment on the general situation but to O'Brien he seemed rather depressed.

At noon, he met Francis Sheehy Skeffington, who was concerned about looting, which O'Brien witnessed on the Tuesday evening. Skeffington told him that a cruiser and two gun-boats were landing British troops in Kingston and O'Brien agreed to pass on the information to the GPO, where he informed Diarmuid Lynch of the position.

On Wednesday morning, two men came to O'Brien's house at Belvedere Place accompanied by 15-year-old Roddy Connolly who had been in the GPO since Mon-

day.

Young Connolly stayed with the O'Briens for the remainder of the week until Sunday morning 30th April when O'Brien, together with Connolly, decided to check for damage from the bombardment of Liberty Hall.

When they were crossing Beresford Place they were detained by a British soldier, after a policeman identified O'Brien as an 'enemy'. They were held in the Custom House for two days before being marched up to Richmond Barracks as part of a contingent of 150 prisoners.

O'Brien was detained in the gymnasium alongside uniformed Volunteers including McDonagh, Ceannt, MacBride, Plunkett, O'Hanrahan, Cosgrave, De Valera etc.

On June 1st, 200 prisoners were deported to Knutsford, Wandsworth and Wakefield prisons.

During the week prisoners were selected and moved out. On Saturday morning one of the guards was reading a Dublin newspaper and O'Brien was able to read the headline "Another rebel executed. Major McBride pays the penalty." This was the first knowledge they had that anyone had been executed. On 6th June, O'Brien was removed with about 40 other prisoners to Knutsford prison.

He met with Connolly who informed him the Citizen Army had done badly in Stephen's Green, a large number killed by a machine gun mounted on the roof of the Shelbourne Hotel



about noon I met Francis Sheehy Skeffington who spoke to me about looting and was very concerned to adopt measures to prevent same. He showed me a notice which he had written calling a meeting for Westmoreland Chambers, Westmoreland Street - rooms occupied by the Irish Women's Franchise League. The meeting was for some time in the afternoon - 4 o'clock, I think. I made no comment on this because prior to Easter week I had mentioned to James Connolly that as soon as the insurrection started I thought there would be widespread looting and his reply was merely "That will be one more problem for the British". Skeffington told me that a cruiser and two gun-boats were landing British troops in Kingston and I agreed to pass that information into the G.P.O. I went to the first window of the G.P.O. in Henry Street and asked there for an officer. Diarmuid Lynch, with whom I was acquainted, came and I gave him the information. /Skeffington

Extract from William O'Brien's statement to Bureau of Military History

Photo right: William O'Brien and Francis Sheehy-Skeffington on steps of Liberty Hall, September 1913.





# Unfurling the Starry Plough

By Scott Millar

**DURING Easter week, the standard of the Irish Citizen Army (ICA), the Starry Plough, flew over the Imperial Hotel on O'Connell Street.**

The hotel was owned by William Martin Murphy of 1913 Lockout infamy. That the standard of the workers' militia that grew out of that bitter industrial conflict now flew over Murphy's building was a clear indication of the social revolution that some hoped the rebellion would herald.

The exact provenance of the design of the Starry Plough, with its unique combining of agricultural implement, sword and stars arranged in the constellation of Ursa Major, the Great Bear or Plough, remains a source of historical debate.

Officially unveiled in Liberty Hall on the 4th April 1914 at an event addressed by Countess Constance Markievicz, the banner, along with their recently obtained uniforms and continued drilling, was part of the ICA's wider move towards professionalism.

The newspaper of the ITGWU, the *Irish Worker*, stated that the flag was the work of Belfast man William Megahy, a teacher at the Metropolitan School of Arts in Dublin. However, the evidence would point to Megahy not being the originator of the design.

In his *The Story of the Irish Citizen Army*, published in 1919, Sean O'Casey, writes that the idea for the banner was "was given by a sympathiser, and executed by Mr. McGahey (Megahy)." Some accounts state that the sympathiser was the writer George William Russell, although there appears to be little evidence to confirm this, and O'Casey dismissed it.

Trade union banner maker Jer O'Leary, who researched and re-popularised the original Starry Plough design in the early 1970s, believes that the main inspiration for the flag was most likely Jim Larkin, who was a leader of both the ITGWU and the ICA during most of 1914. "The historian RM Fox, who was a contemporary of Larkin, places the inspiration for the design with him. The idea that it captures the concept of the Irish working class, free from the

plough to the stars also speaks of the epic scope Larkin so often displayed in his thinking."

The image of the sword being attached to the plough would also seem to draw upon the biblical reference – "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," (Isaiah 2:3-4).

Larkin's oratory was often strewn with similar Old Testament references. This might be expected of a trade unionist who was first introduced to socialism in industrial England, where the left tradition was deeply underpinned by the radical Protestantism of preceding generations, and whose wife, Elizabeth, was herself the daughter of a Baptist lay-preacher.

The design of the flag also echoes that of the Southern Cross banner which flew over the Eureka Stockade in Australia during a rebellion by gold miners in 1852.



President Higgins at the unveiling of a newly-conserved National Museum of Ireland exhibit – the original Starry Plough flag as flown in the 1916 Rising  
Photo: RollingNews.ie

This design, which remained prominent within the revolutionary wing of Australian trade unionism, may have had an influence.

The original Starry Plough standard was thought to have been destroyed in the fire that consumed the Imperial Hotel during the Rising. In fact, it had been captured by the British Army and returned to Ireland in 1956 when it was purchased by the National Museum of Ireland.

During the period the Starry



Beresford Place statue of James Connolly framed by Starry Plough



The original ICA Starry Plough flag

Plough was out of the country, it was O'Casey who did much to maintain its imagery within the consciousness of the workers' movement in Ireland. The banner lending its name to his 1926 play *The Starry Plough*, in which one protagonist, declares: "It's a flag that should only be used when we're building the barricades to fight for a Workers Republic!"

When the Republican Congress attempted to re-assemble the ICA in the early 1930s, it sought to also

resurrect the organisation's banner. According to O'Leary, it was during this period that the version of the Starry Plough as seven white stars on a blue field first came into use.

"Memory is fickle and in 1934 they had the meeting about reconstituting the ICA as the paramilitary wing of the Republican Congress. Veterans of the ICA at

this meeting were asked what they believed the original flag looked like. It would seem that most thought it was blue, which was backed up by an early design of the flag that O'Casey had in his possession. The version of the Starry Plough that emerged during this period remained the one in use by most left-wing organisations until at least the 1970s."





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# The civilian dead and killings by the military

By John Dorney

**WE STILL do not know, and may never know, exactly how many people died in the Easter Rising of 1916.**

The *Irish Times* reported on May 13th that there had been 217 burials in Glasnevin Cemetery of victims of gunshot wounds. The total number interred in the cemetery was 417 and it seems reasonable that some of the remainder died violently from such causes as explosives, shrapnel or collapsed buildings.

More than 30 further civilians killed in the Rising were buried in Dean's Grange Cemetery and 22 more at the Protestant Mount Jerome cemetery in Harold's Cross.

The most comprehensive count done to date lists the fatal casualties at 482 dead, which we know included some 130 British soldiers and police as well as 63 Volunteers and Citizen Army fighters – of whom 16 were later executed.

This would mean that in the region of 280-290 civilians were killed in the week's fighting and that is probably a conservative estimate. The *Irish Independent* reported that at least 50 of the Rising's casualties were unidentified and buried, coffin-less in pits. There were also at least 2,500 civilians injured.

Fearghal McGarry, in a chapter entitled *Violence and the Easter Rising*, in the 2012 book *Terror in Ireland 1916-1923*, argued that those who had planned the Rising bore much of the blame. It was entirely foreseeable, he pointed out that taking the decision to fight in a densely populated city centre would put the lives of civilians at risk.

Volunteers also sometimes deliberately killed civilians who tried to tear down their barricades on the first day of the Rising. On the other



President Michael D. Higgins with his wife Sabina along with broadcaster Joe Duffy are joined by schoolchildren from St Patrick's National School holding the names of young victims of the Rising. It followed a service of remembrance and reclamation in St Patrick's Parish Church, Ringsend, Dublin, in May last year.

PICTURE: RollingNews.ie



1916 Rising medal

I pitied him from my heart though I had to shoot him. He had made tea for me

Four Courts, where there was fierce house-to-house fighting. British troops took 16 men and boys who were hiding in cellars out and killed them in cold blood.

Rosanna Knowles, a 23 year old who lived on North King Street spoke to a soldier who had shot a barman named Paddy Bealen: "I pitied him from my heart though I had to shoot him. He had made tea for me."

Among the dead were father and son Thomas and Christopher Hickey, and a lodger Peter Connolly who had all been bayoneted and four men who worked at the Louth Dairy at number 27 North King Street. Most of the bodies were buried by the troops in gardens and cellars.

This was not a spontaneous act of revenge by soldiers who had lost comrades to rebel bullets. But in fact the killings seem to have been the



PM Herbert Asquith was briefed on summary executions carried out by British troops

PICTURE: Bain Collection, Library of Congress; no known copyright

result of orders from General Lowe that the rebels, "had placed themselves outside the law and that they were not to be made prisoners."

In a private brief prepared for the Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, senior civil servant Edward Troupe judged that the troops assumed

"they could shoot anyone they suspected of being an active rebel."

Troupe thought that if the case had occurred in England, the soldiers would have been prosecuted. In Ireland though, "There are many points that could be used for hostile propaganda... nothing but harm could come from this."

One acquaintance of the dead recalled: "This brutal atrocity filled me with a sort of personal loss and aroused in me a fierce hate for English soldiery."

When we consider why the public mood later turned in favour of the Rising, the actions of the British Army in Easter Week, along with the standard explanation of the executions of the Rising's leaders, must be borne in mind.

## Wounded 12 times but still defiant...

By Joe Mooney

**ON Tuesday 25th April 1916, Michael O'Doherty of the Irish Citizen Army was eating a sandwich on the roof of the Royal College of Surgeons when he was hit by a burst of British machine gun fire which raked his upper body.**

He was wounded 12 times (in his right eye and cheek, left jaw as well as the side of his head and in both arms). Madeline French-Mullen described him as

being in "a mangled condition".

Despite his catastrophic injuries he survived, and after three months in hospital was transferred to Frongoch. Back in Dublin, Dr Kathleen Lynn assisted him, but just over three years later he died.

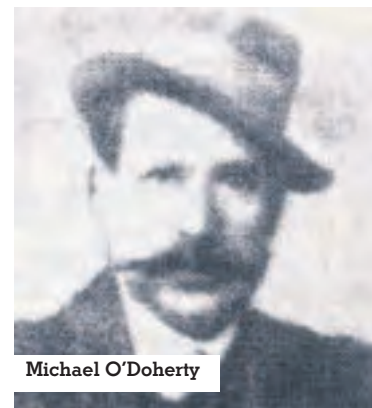
The O'Doherty family had a proud radical pedigree – in the 1890s his father received a six-month jail sentence during a fierce dock strike.

Michael, a warehouseman and carter, was an early member of the

ITGWU. He led a sympathy strike of 300 workers during the Lockout (which cost him his job), and when the ICA was formed, he joined up to "defend the workers from the batons of the police."

At Frongoch he had declared: "While I have one eye and one hand to fight with, no one will ever stop me fighting for Ireland."

However, he dropped out of activities in 1918, and as Markievicz recalled, he was "dying slowly from the



Michael O'Doherty

effects of his treatment at the enemy's hands".

He died in December 1919, the passage of time shamefully allowing the military pensions assessor to refuse to recognise his death as Rising related despite the fact that his headstone in Glasnevin, erected by the National Graves Association, records his death as "from wounds received in action 1916".

Joe Mooney is involved with the East Wall for All history project. He is a SIPTU shop steward and community activist.



■ Nell Regan

**Helena Molony 1883-1967**

**H**ELENA Molony was an important and intriguing figure in Irish public life between 1903 and 1941. Among her many roles was that of a leading trade unionist. She was second General Secretary of the Irish Women Workers' Union and a central figure in that organisation until her retirement in 1941.

She was an executive member of, and prolific speaker at, Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congresses. From 1929 she was on the executive of the Dublin Labour and Trades Union Council and was elected President of the Irish Trades Union Congress in 1936, in recognition of her leading role (only the second woman to become President, the first being Louie Bennett, who had succeeded Molony as IWWU General Secretary.)

Molony was also a prominent left republican in the Free State and as a founding member of Saor Éire, the Friends of Soviet Russia and a regular speaker with the Women's Prisoners' Defence League, she was a central target of the "Red Scare" of the early 1930s.

Throughout these years and until her death in 1967 she consistently used the 1916 Proclamation and James Connolly's teachings to inspire radical and fundamental



Helena Molony: among her many roles was that of a leading trade unionist. She was second General Secretary of the Irish Women Workers' Union and a central figure in that organisation until her retirement in 1941.



As Secretary of the *Inghinidhe* and editor of feminist paper *Bean na hÉireann*, Molony was responsible for involving many other prominent women, including Constance Markievicz and Kathleen Lynn

Molony was a member of the Abbey Company, with whom she appeared on the stage of London's Royal Court. But for her the developing political situation provided a greater draw. In 1915 she accepted Connolly's invitation to lead the Irish Women Workers' Union

# Life imitates art

change in Irish society.

She had developed this radical outlook in the years from 1903 when she joined *Inghinidhe na hÉireann*, Maud Gonne's organisation for nationalist women, and became immersed in the vibrant cultural, political, social and artistic world of "the movement" in Dublin.

As Secretary of the *Inghinidhe* and editor of *Bean na hÉireann*, their feminist and separatist newspaper, Molony was responsible for involving many other prominent women, including Constance Markievicz and Kathleen Lynn.

Her socialist outlook developed

and in 1911 she worked closely with James Connolly and others to oppose the royal visit of that year. She became the first female political prisoner of her generation on the occasion of that visit.

Her career as an actor also developed, and in 1912 she was a member of the Abbey Company and was rapidly promoted to the First Company, with whom she appeared on the stage of the Royal Court in London.

However, for her, the developing political situation provided a greater draw. In 1915 she accepted James Connolly's invitation to become second General Secretary of the Irish Women Workers' Union,

as well as Secretary of a clothing co-op and organiser of the Women's Section of the Irish Citizen Army.

Her last role in the Abbey in 1916 was in a production of Lennox Robinson's *The Dreamers*, the cast of which also featured Seán Connolly, another member of the ICA. They had acted opposite each other for many years, including in *The Memory of the Dead* by Casmir Markievicz, in which Molony played the 1798 rebel girl who saved a rebel leader played by Connolly.

Life would imitate art on Easter Monday 1916, when Molony was at the head of a small contingent

of ICA women who mobilised and marched to Dublin Castle under the command of Seán Connolly.

Her account of what happened next makes for extraordinary reading and is available online from the Bureau of Military History. Molony was interned as an "extremist of some importance" until Christmas 1916.

On her return she picked up the threads of her life as IWWU General Secretary, actor, agitator and was also co-opted onto the newly-formed Sinn Féin executive.

*Nell Regan is the author of Helena Molony: A Radical Life, 1883 – 1967 to be published by Arlen House with the support of SIPTU.*



# The victors write the history, the defeated write the songs

■ By Michael Mac Donncha

**IT HAS been said many times that 1916 was a poets' Rising. It could equally be called a rising of ballad-makers and singers.**

The late Dublin singer Frank Harte said that the victors write the history but the defeated write the songs. This was very true of Ireland before the Rising. Our songs recorded our story of resistance to oppression and the songs themselves became a weapon in that resistance.

There are many sad songs of Irish rebellion but there also many that are uplifting, defiant and, at times, humorous. It seems to me that it is the latter spirit in song that characterised the pre-1916 period among the revolutionary men and women who marched out on Easter Monday.

It was the same type of high-spirited defiance that gave rise to the song *The Peeler and the Goat* in the middle of the 19th century. Lampooning England's paramilitary police force, the Royal Irish Constabulary, the song earned prosecution for many. To even whistle it in the presence of a Peeler was risky.

To the same air and in the same spirit, Séamus O'Farrell in 1915 wrote *The Recruiting Sergeant*. It reflected the struggle against recruiting to the British Army between September 1914 and early 1916, the prelude to the Rising.

**But hail or rain or frost or snow  
We won't be going to Flanders, O,  
While there's fighting to be done  
at home,**

**Let your captains and commanders go.**

**Let Englishmen for England fight,**

**It's nearly time they started, O,  
Then I bade the sergeant a nice  
good night**

**And there and then we parted, O.**

In September 1914, Irish Party leader John Redmond joined British Prime Minister H. H. Asquith on the platform of a British Army recruiting meeting in the Mansion House.

James Connolly led a counter-demonstration of thousands headed by the Irish Citizen Army. At College Green, Citizen Army volunteer Seán Connolly, a noted singer and Abbey actor, sang rebel songs to the crowd. Less than two years later he was killed not far from College Green, at City Hall,



Sean Connolly

There are many sad songs of Irish rebellion but there are also many that are uplifting, defiant, and, at times, humorous



Sean O'Casey, a founder member of the Irish Citizen Army, playwright and occasional ballad writer

on the first day of the Rising.

Seán O'Casey was Secretary of the Irish Citizen Army for a time and he wrote the satirical *Grand Oul' Dame Britannia* in 1915. It was published in James Connolly's *Workers' Republic* newspaper:

**Och, Ireland sure I'm proud of you, says the Grand Oul' Dame Britannia**

**To poor little Belgium tried and true, says the Grand Oul' Dame Britannia**

**Close your ears to the Sinn Féin lies**

**For every Gael that for England dies**

**Will enjoy Home Rule in the clear blue skies, says the Grand Oul' Dame Britannia.**

A similar satirically humorous song is Peadar Kearney's *Whack fol the diddle* (surely an anthem for today's historical 'revisionists'):

**Oh Irishmen forget the past  
Whack for the diddle fol the di do day**

**And think of the time that is coming fast**

**Whack for the diddle fol the di do day**

**When we shall all be civilised  
Neat and clean and well advised**

**Oh won't Mother England be surprised**

**Whack for the diddle fol the di do day.**

Peadar Kearney (Jacobs Factory garrison, 1916) wrote *The Soldier's Song*, with its 'cheering, rousing chorus', later translated as *Amhrán na bhFiann* and adopted as the National Anthem, replacing *God Save Ireland* and *A Nation Once Again*.

*The Soldier's Song* was widely sung from about 1912. Liam Ó Briain recalled that it was sung by hundreds of Volunteers on a night march before Easter 1916 and it was heard widely during Easter Week.

All the above songs were popular before and during the Rising. Of course the aftermath saw countless songs written, some enduring, some not so, right up to our own time. None can surpass Rev. P O'Neill's *The Foggy Dew*.

But of the myriad verses written by others, space only allows one, and what better than Patrick Galvin's *James Connolly*:

**Who carries high that burning flag?**

**Who carries high that burning flag?**

**'Tis our James Connolly all pale and wounded**

**Who carries high our burning flag.**



# Sóisialaí Gaelach 1916

By Aindrias Ó Cathasaigh

## Pheadar Ó Maicín 1878-1916

IS BEAG eolas atá ar Pheadar Ó Maicín, a maraíodh go truaimeach in éirí amach na Cásca. Ba spéisiúil an duine é, áfach, a thug le chéile ina chuid oibre cúis na Gaeilge, cúis an neamhspleáchais, agus cúis na n-oibríthe.

Rugadh Peadar Ó Maicín i lár Bhaile Átha Cliath in 1878. Péintéara tí ab ea a athair, agus lean Peadar den cheird chéanna. D'oibrigh sé ar fud na cathrach agus na tíre, agus bhí sé gníomhach i gceardchumann na bpéintéaraí ar feadh a shaoil. Bhí sé i mBráithreachas na Poblachta faoi 1899, tráth a raibh borradh ag teacht faoin náisiúnachas radacach.

Chuir sé dúil sa nGaeilge go luath, dúil nár fhág ariamh é. Ba ghearr thar éis dó a ghabháil isteach i gConradh na Gaeilge go raibh craobh nua curtha ar bun aige. Ba mhinic é ag obair i gceantracha Gaeltachta, ag cur snas ar a chuid Gaeilge agus péint ar thithe solais. Scríobh sé i ngach iris Gaeilge dá raibh ann, agus é in ann fód na conspóide a sheasamh in aghaidh na scoláirí acadúla.

### Peter Macken

Born in Dublin, Peter Macken was an ardent Gaelic revivalist, as well as a socialist and labour leader.

He founded the St. Patrick's Branch of the Gaelic League, and as a student of Irish he held many distinctions.

He was an effective public speaker, and wrote forcibly.

He was elected on the Labour ticket to Dublin Corporation as Alderman for the North Dock Ward, and was accidentally shot in the fighting at Boland's Mills during the Easter Rising.

He is buried in Glasnevin Cemetery.

Sheas sé mar iarrthóir lucht oibre do Bhardas Átha Cliath i 1906, agus níor chruthaigh sé go dona. Nuair a cuireadh cruth ar shóisialaithe na cathrach, ba é Ó Maicín a mhol Cumannacht na hÉireann mar ainm Gaeilge dóibh. Bhí sé sáite san obair, agus thapaigh sé gach deis le cur ar shon an tsóisialachais i nGaeilge.

Níor leor neamhspleáchas a bhaint amach d'Éirinn, dar leis, mara n-athrófaí dála na n-oibríthe ó bhonn: "Éire agus rialtas ar leith aici; Éireannaigh saibhre díomhaoine falsa a' tarraingt fiú an deor dheireanach d'fhuil na nÉireannach bocht a chaithfeas a bheith ag obair dóibh; saighdiúirí an Rial-



Pheadar Ó Maicín

tais Ghaelaigh ag scuabadh den tsráid, le grán is púdar, na hÉireannaigh a dhiúltódh d'oibriú ach ar chothrom páighe. An é siúd an cruth a bheidh ar Éirinn le linn a saortha di — nó an ceart a insint do na daoine roimh ré gurb é atá fúinn

na Stát a chur ar bun in Éirinn a mbeidh cothrom na Féinne dá thabhairt do gach aoinne ann?"

Ar an gcaoi chéanna, bheadh ar lucht na Gaeilge freagra a thabhairt ar cheisteanna dá leithéid: "Ní

haon mhaitheas dúinn an chéad leabhar de shliocht Uí Ghramhna a thaispeáint do dhuine atá ar easpa béile nó do dhuine nárbh fheasach dó cá bhfaigheadh sé lóistín na hoíche. ...go dtí go mbeidh slí mhaith bheatha ag gach aoinne anso in Éirinn ní bheidh teanga na hÉireann saor ó bhaol báis. Ní féidir slí bheatha a thabhairt do gach aoinne fé réim seo na sealbhaíochta príobháideach atá ar bun anois."

Toghadh ar an mBardas é i 1912, agus an bhliain chéanna bhí sé páirteach leis an bPiarsach i gCumann na Saoirse agus An Barr Bua. Nuair a bunaíodh Oglagh na hÉireann an bhliain dár gcionn, bhí Ó Maicín ar an ardchoiste, é ina cheangal tábhachtach le gluaiseacht an lucht oibre. Rinneadh leasuchtarán ar chomhairle ceardchumann Bhaile Átha Cliath de i 1915.

Throid sé i gceantar Mhuilte Uí Bheoláin i 1916. Bhí sé i gceannas ar bhúion Óglach Déardaoin 27 Aibreán, agus déine na troda ag luí go trom ar chuid acu. Chaill duine amháin guaim air féin, agus d'iarr Ó Maicín srian a chur leis. Scaoil an fear urchar leis an Maicíneach a mharaigh é.

Sráid Uí Mhaicín a thugtar ar an áit sin anois, ach is beag cuimhne eile atá air. Céad bliain i ndiaidh a bháis, b'fhiú suim a chur aríst ann, duine díobh siúd a d'oibrigh go dílis le snáthanna éagsúla na saoirse a thabhairt le chéile.

# The Irish Citizen Army Constitution

The Irish Citizen Army was born as a workers' self-defence force in the 1913 Dublin Lockout but it was 22nd March 1914 that marked its political rite of passage into the world of realpolitik. On that day, it began to forge its way into the stormy centre of Irish politics. It was a large gathering that met in Liberty Hall under the chairmanship of Jim Larkin, General Secretary of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (now SIPTU).

Those present, scarred by the experience of the Lockout, adopted a constitution, elected an Army Council and agreed the rules and regulations that would transform their aspirations into a programme of action. This Constitution was drafted by Seán O'Casey but the last point was added at the suggestion of Larkin. It was formally proposed by Countess Markievicz, the only female member. The 1916 Proclamation, which was printed in Liberty Hall, was strongly influenced by the principles contained in the Constitution of the Irish Citizen Army.

## The Irish Citizen Army Constitution

1. That the first and last principle of the Irish Citizen Army is the avowal that the ownership of Ireland, moral and material, is vested of right in the people of Ireland.
2. That the Irish Citizen Army shall stand for the absolute unity of Irish nationhood, and shall support the rights and liberties of the democracies of all nations.
3. That one of its objects shall be to sink all differences of birth, property and creed under the common name of Irish people.
4. That the Irish Citizen Army shall be open to all who accept the principle of equal rights and opportunities for the Irish people.
5. Before being enrolled, every applicant must, if eligible, be a member of his trade union, such union to be recognised by the Irish Trade Union Congress.

## Bunreacht Arm Cathartha na hÉireann

1. Gurb é tús deiridh prionsabail an Airm Chathartha an gealltanas go bhfuil úinéireacht na hÉireann, idir úinéireacht mhorálta agus ábhartha, dílsithe de cheart i muintir na hÉireann.
2. Go seasfaidh Arm Cathartha na hÉireann d'aontacht absalóideach náisúntacht na hÉireann, agus go dtacóidh sé le cearta agus saoirsí daonlathas gach náisiún.
3. Go mbeidh sé ar a chuspóirí neamhshuim a dhéanamh de gach éagsúlacht cine, maoine agus creidimh faoin ainm coitianta Muintir na hÉireann.
4. Go mbeidh Arm Cathartha na hÉireann ar oscailt do gach duine a ghlacann le cearta agus deiseanna comhionann do mhuintir na hÉireann mar phrionsabail.
5. Sula ndéanfar iarrthóir a chlárú, ní mór don iarrthóir sin, más incháilithe dó nó di, bheith ina bhall nó ina ball de cheardchumann, agus ní mór go mbeidh an ceardchumann sin aitheanta ag Comhdháil Cheardchumann na hÉireann.



# A movement not a moment



By  
Alice-Mary  
Higgins

THE women who played active roles in 1916 were not just part of a moment they were part of a movement. Indeed in many cases they were part of multiple movements, driven by intersecting ideals of socialism, nationalism, feminism, anti-imperialism and internationalism.

In her book *At Home in the Revolution*, Lucy McDiarmid describes how "one of the most extraordinary sights of Easter 1916 must have been the 16-handed reel, danced by the women prisoners in Kilmainham".

This intricate dance, on a morning when the women had been awoken by gunshots, is perhaps a perfect metaphor for the agility and fearlessness with which so many weaved between the suffrage movement, the Cultural Revival, Irish Citizen Army, Cumann na mBan and of course trade unionism.

Many had become engaged and radicalised by the events of 1913. Members of the Irish Women Workers' Union (IWWU), such as Helena



Members of the Irish Women Workers' Union at Liberty Hall circa 1914. Their board reads: 'Freedom's Martyrs: Members of the Irish Women Workers' Union who suffered terms of imprisonment in the cause of Labour'

Molony, were active throughout the Lockout and the Rising, and crucially, with Louie Bennett and others, continued to grow that union in the years that followed.

It was women that kept the movements and the revolutionary momentum alive following the rising, scaling Liberty Hall in 1917 to hang banners marking the first anniversary of Connolly's execution with a

renewed call to action.

Women such as Rosie Hackett were part of the printing of the Proclamation, and it was women such as Jinny Shanahan who reprinted that Proclamation a year later to keep its vision alive.

Through the War of Independence and beyond, to the battles over the 1937 Constitution, opposed by many for betraying so much of the

Women may have suffrage but we are still battling for equal representation in every aspect of national life. There is a growing demand to protect women's health and wellbeing by removing the shadow of the Eighth Amendment

seeking and winning election.

I believe that the same determination to seek equality on every front is still to be found in the intersecting strands of the women's movements today.

Women are at the frontline of low pay and precarious work but they are also at the frontline of the fight-back against that casualisation. Women may have suffrage but we are still battling for equal representation in every aspect of national life. There is a growing demand to protect women's health and wellbeing by removing the shadow of the Eighth Amendment.

Our artists are still leading the way in shining a light on history, including the dark legacy of institutional violence against women. The call for international solidarity with women across the world has never been more immediate than in the current refugee crisis.

That same spirit of determination and agility shown by the women in Kilmainham Gaol 100 years ago, must surely inspire and guide our movements today.

*Alice-Mary Higgins is a SIPTU member and an Independent candidate for the Seanad (NUI panel)*

equality hoped for, these women continued to strive for emancipation through every channel of national life from the cultural movement.

Helena Molony, through the IWWU which won two weeks' holiday for the first time, Kathleen Lynn through her work in health and welfare, Constance Markievicz and Jenny Wyse Power through

## Threads of history

■ By Audrey Barnett

**COUNTESS Markievicz, with her determined profile, Dr Kathleen Lynn with her perceptive, intuitive gaze, Winnifred Carney with her modest, efficient demeanour and Madeline French-Mullen with her empathetic expression.**

These diverse women – intelligent, able, determined – focused their considerable energy and intellect to create a new reality for the ordinary citizens of early 20th century Ireland.

To stitch these women, to participate in this project designed by Robert Ballagh and supported by SIPTU, has been a great honour and a truly creative experience. Our respect for these women is huge and we enjoyed recreating them in stitch and thread, colour and shading.

Our group came together after we completed the Embroidery module as part of the CEAD programme in the National College of Art and Design.

Under the inspired and expert guidance of our tutor, Rosemary Cullen, we honed our needlework skills. We continued to meet once



Photo from left to right: Audrey Barrett, Paula Byrne, Kathleen Frith, Sally Hewetson, Ann O Mahony, Karen Tierney and Michaela Wilson. Photo: Anne Ebeling



The finished tapestry panel. Photo: Anne Ebeling



Profile in courage: Countess Markievicz, revolver drawn, in Citizen Army uniform  
Photo: National Library of Ireland

the course was finished, supporting each other as we worked on individual projects. We were delighted to get an opportunity to participate in this commemorative event, and to join other stitchers to create this

exhibition.

**Audrey Barrett, Paula Byrne, Kathleen Frith, Sally Hewetson, Ann O Mahony, Karen Tierney and Michaela Wilson.**



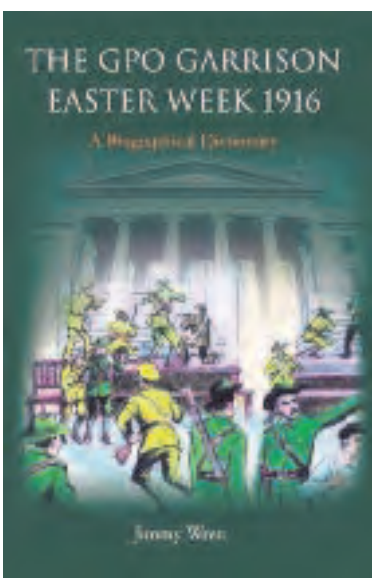
The Dublin Bread Company buildings on Lower Sackville Street in ruins following the house to house fighting

Photo: National Library of Ireland



# Essential handbooks on Easter 1916

■ Reviews by Michael Halpenny



**The GPO Garrison Easter Week 1916 – A Biographical Dictionary** by Jimmy Wren (Geography Publications 2015)

**O**VER the years there have been numerous caustic remarks passed about the elasticity of the walls of the General Post Office, such were the number of those who claimed to have fought for the freedom of this small nation there during Easter Week 1916.

Indeed, in his introduction, artist Robert Ballagh reminds us of Brendan Behan's quip that the British would have had no need to shell the building in the first place because the walls would have collapsed of their own accord, due to the internal pressure caused by all those who said they were present!

Now, perhaps for the first time, we can get a good idea of what the answer might be.

This is largely due to the recent

publication of Jimmy Wren's rich compilation of biographies on every single person who served there, no matter for how long a period of time, during that seminal week.

This invaluable work by Wren – whose father, James, fought in the GPO – is the culmination of years of painstaking research to gather together in one volume not only the acknowledgement of each person's involvement, but also a short biography, accompanied by sources and, in many cases, finished with portraits in pen and ink by the author.

Within its pages you meet not only well-known leaders such as James Connolly, Tom Clarke, Pádraig Pearse, Sean MacDiarmada and Joseph Plunkett but also the rank and file of the Irish Volunteers, Cumann na mBan, Citizen Army and Hibernian Rifles, as well as those who were classed as 'unattached'.

Jimmy Wren's work brings to life the story of the GPO and those who fought there

These were the activists who worked in factory and shop – the carpenters and labourers, hairdressers and laundry workers as well as boys and girls barely out of school – and at least one who wasn't – young Citizen Army Boy Scout, Frank (Fred) Norgrove who was all of 13 years of age when he saw service in the GPO.

At the other end of the age scale was a man described by Sean O'Casey as "a fine old skin and a brave honest man," 64-year-old Quartermaster Matt Stafford of B Company, 2nd Battalion, Dublin Brigade, Irish Volunteers, who was detailed to sniping duties.

Citizen Army women who

served included Winifred Carney, who assisted James Connolly "with a typewriter in one hand and a revolver in the other". Molly O'Reilly, who had hoisted the Green Flag of Ireland over Liberty Hall the previous week, was active in the GPO as was Maeve Cavanagh, Citizen Army member and writer in the ITGWU weekly, *The Workers' Republic*, the woman who Connolly called "the poetess to the Revolution".

There were others there from 'across the water', such as Irish-born Liam Parr (Power) from Stockport who was in the Manchester Company of the Irish Volunteers. There were even those who were



'unattached', such as 18-year-old May Gibney who was engaged in cooking duties and the delivery of despatches, and a Finnish seaman, Antil Makapalatis, who, with his Swedish friend and interpreter, decided to fight for the freedom of small nations with the rebel forces.

His lack of English was no impediment to his involvement and it was later said of him elsewhere by another GPO fighter: "The Finn could not speak English and he was no Catholic, but by the end of the week he could say the Rosary in Irish!"

Jimmy Wren's work brings to life the story of the GPO and those who fought there and he allows us to see them as people and not merely shadows on the wall of history – the more to marvel at their bravery.

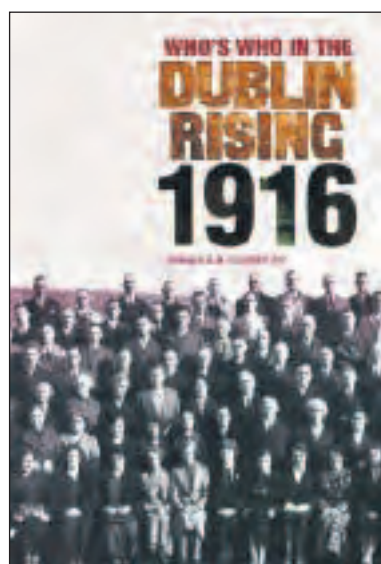
He provides carefully compiled notes, tables and appendices for the interested reader and the "citizen historian", detailing places of origin, education, occupation, political, cultural, sporting and trade union affiliations (11 of them were later officials in ITGWU and the WUI).

Above all he shows us a more complex and therefore much more interesting picture of an event which, albeit a source of enormous pride, is often reduced to cliché.

This is clearly not only a labour of love but a work of great mastery in accessing a fuller understanding of 1916 for us all.

And the numbers in the GPO and all its various outposts? As the author notes, having carefully examined all previous estimates and with the advantage of newly released records "... a figure of 572 emerges as the credible total number of insurgents that served at various times."

So thanks to Jimmy Wren, we now have a better measure of the GPO's elasticity – and much more besides.



**Who's Who  
In The Dublin Rising 1916  
by Joseph E. A. O'Connell Jr  
(Wordwell 2015)**



The great survivor...  
Eamon deValera  
pictured at a political  
rally in the year after  
the Easter Rising  
Photo: National Library of  
Ireland

**A bird never flew on one wing (no pun intended) and a close companion to Jimmy Wren's book on the GPO Garrison is Joseph O'Connell's Who's Who in the Dublin Rising 1916 which deals not only with the GPO, but with all six other city garrisons, as well as the Dublin 5th (Fingal) Battalion at Ashbourne, County Meath, where – under the leadership of Thomas Ashe – they delivered one of the few military successes of Easter Week, convincingly defeating a large force of armed Royal Irish Constabulary.**

Wider in sweep than Wren's work and accompanied by detailed maps and diagrams, he leads the reader through each battle site. Before doing so he explains the geographic areas from which the various Irish Volunteer Battalions came: 1st Battalion – North city west of Sackville Street (O'Connell Street); 2nd – North city and west of there; 3rd – South of the Liffey; 4th Rathmines etc.; 5th – Engineers and north county Dublin.

He notes that the Irish Citizen Army (ICA) was organised in 11 sections throughout the north and south city between the canals. It also had a section in Baldoyle and, unlike the Volunteers, it had a women's section.

There is a helpful breakdown of participation in and fatalities for each garrison area and their outposts, and the author reckons the overall number of insurgents at 2,171, a figure which includes 247 women. Finally, he provides a list

of those killed in action by garrison/battalion.

His treatment of each garrison area follows a clear pattern, commencing with a brief description of the action there, more extensive pen portraits of the leading figures and then allowing the story to emerge as he marks off each of

two north city garrisons.

In contrast to Mount Street Bridge over the canal, where the British suffered their greatest number of casualties, de Valera's 3rd Battalion area centred on Boland's Mill, was probably the quietest of all. It also had a total absence of women participants

Sean Connolly.

The author notes that his ultimate successor Kathleen Lynn, poignantly wrapped him in the green flag from James Connolly's play, *Under Which Flag*, in which he had starred a short while previously. Alone among the rebel forces, the ICA produced two fe-

Joseph O'Connell's Who's Who in the Dublin Rising 1916 which deals not only with the GPO, but with all six other city garrisons, as well as the Dublin 5th (Fingal) Battalion at Ashbourne, County Meath

those serving.

At the GPO he notes that the "Kimmage Garrison" of volunteers who came mainly from England was the first detachment to occupy the rebel headquarters and that women, notably Winifred Carney (ICA), Julia Grennan (ICA) and Elizabeth O'Farrell (ICA & Cumann na mBan) were among the last to leave.

The 1st Battalion area of operations was around the Four Courts which saw some of the fiercest fighting, while the 2nd Battalion at Jacobs biscuit factory in Aungier Street had a relatively 'quieter' time as the British forces decided to concentrate their efforts on tightening the noose around the

because for reasons that are not clear, de Valera refused to have them.

The 4th Battalion under Eamon Ceannt had a more torrid time dug in around the South Dublin Union, the site of present day St James, and some of the most intense fighting was experienced here, with second-in-command, Cathal Brugha, wounded 25 times, yet still rallying his men.

James Connolly's Irish Citizen Army had responsibility for the City Hall and St Stephen's Green strong points and the first fatality of the week was the commander at City Hall, Captain

male commanders – Lynn at City Hall and Constance Markievicz as second in charge at St Stephen's Green/ College of Surgeons.

This is an accompaniment to Jimmy Wren's work which has only one point of dissonance – the figure he gives for those in the GPO. Joseph O'Connell estimates that at 617 as opposed to Jimmy Wren's 572 – a difference of 45.

But, to be honest, the debate about numbers stands well in the shadow of the flesh and blood stories of those who stood for the Republic. Add this one to your list as well.





A photo taken inside the GPO during the Easter Rising, showing members of both the Irish Citizen Army and Irish Volunteers.



Aftermath of the Rising: Liberty Hall is on the left, and next to it, the Brooks Thomas building, almost destroyed by shelling from the British gunboat, HMS Helga.

# Find the bullet holes

## 1916: The Rising Handbook by Lorcan Collins

**J**UST when you thought all the Rising handbooks had been covered, along comes another one. This time it's a pocket-sized edition by 1916 expert Lorcan Collins who, if he doesn't know every inch of 1916 Dublin, knows a fair few yards of it.

One of the defining characteristics of the 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising in 1966 was the fact that quite a few of the participants were still alive or had only recently died. So knowledge of their activities was well-known, albeit mainly to their family and community.

On the other hand, one of the defining features of this centenary is the much wider availability of information, not just to the academic historian, but to the citizen at large.

This is partly due to the wealth of historical scholarship in the intervening years, but much more down to global access to digitised public records. And it is this crucial feature that makes such handbooks and guides possible.

If other works' attributes are that they are rich in detail and dense in texture, then the attraction of Lorcan Collins' book is that it provides a readily accessible "toolbox" of essential information, interesting facts and indispensable lists to the wider public.

The 240 pages of this publication should not only lighten the historical step of anyone anxious

to move beyond the basics of the Rising, but also to settle many an argument in the process.

Preceded by a chronology which provides historical context, *1916 – The Rising Handbook* devotes another 10 sections to such subjects as 'Documents and Newspapers', 'Weapons and Barracks', 'The Sea and the Rising' and 'Organisations, Flags and Banners'.

In dealing with the Proclamation, the author points out that its essence was to replace royalty or kingship with the sovereignty of the people, placing democracy at the core of the Republic and substituting the "subject" with the "citizen".

He extends this observation to

Collins' book provides a readily accessible toolbox of essential information, interesting facts and indispensable lists which should not only lighten the historical step of anyone anxious to move beyond the basics of the Rising, but also to settle many an argument in the process

the way in which the Irish for kingship – "ríocht" – was altered by extracting the "rí" part of the word and replacing it with the root of the Irish word for people – "pobal" – thereby creating a new word "Poblacht" to encapsulate in word and deed the new dispensation brought to life in the GPO.

His section on weapons covers the wide range of firearms and guns in play during Easter Week, in the process acknowledging the absence of two weapons in particular that could have weighed in on the side of the rebels – the captured Russian Mosin-Nagant rifles and the Maxim machine guns on board the German arms ship, the *Aud* which was sunk off Cork.

His chapter on naval aspects of the Rising covers not only the *Aud*, but also the equally well-known British gunboat, HMS *Helga* (later the Free State's LE *Muirchu*) and noted for its shelling of the empty Liberty Hall.

What is less well-chronicled was the use of its 18-pound guns to

array of flags of Easter Week, including the 'Starry Plough', the flag of the 'Irish Republic' and so on, and notes that the tricolour flew over both Irish Citizen Army (ICA) garrisons at City Hall and the College of Surgeons at St Stephen's Green.

The author also records that the original ICA uniforms of dark green were made by Arnott's.

On the action of the Rising itself, the writer summarises the main garrisons across the north and south cities and gives a brief description of the often forgotten Rising outside Dublin.

Supporting this and his treatment of the aftermath are an impressive array of lists. These cover combatants per garrison, casualties including enemy forces, civilians and children, as well as insurgents who died later of their wounds.

However, here yet again the curse of the dreaded list raises its confusing head. For example, for the GPO Garrison he gives a different figure again to the ones already arrived at or estimated by Jimmy Wren and Joseph O'Connell in their work (see reviews in this edition).

However, to be fair, there is a "health warning", and the author states his pragmatic objective of ensuring that in the various (and sometimes competing) rolls of honour, prisoner and medal lists of those who did participate in the Rising are mentioned at least once.

Despite the absence of maps or any treatment of the 'University of Revolution' – Frongoch Prison Camp in Wales where 1,865 rebels

He points out that the essence of the Proclamation was to replace royalty or kingship with the sovereignty of the people, placing democracy at the core of the Republic and substituting the 'subject' with the 'citizen'

were sent – or Aylesbury where a handful of women insurgents were imprisoned, this is nevertheless a book to be recommended.

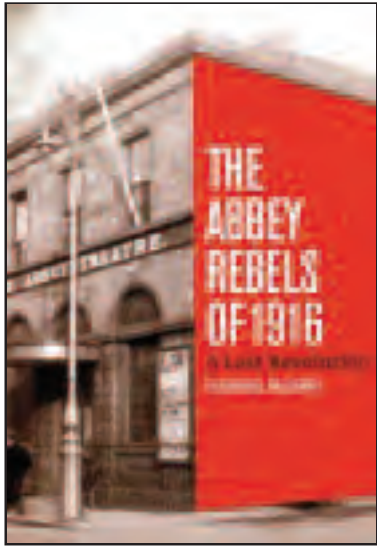
It does what it says on the tin and more, so that you can not only rest confident that you will be "armed" with a grasp as good as any of the detail of the Rising. You can also point out where the bullet holes are.

For starters try the College of Surgeons and then "Traitor's Arch", (or as he more kindly terms it, 'Fusiliers Arch') at St Stephens Green.

Then buy the book.



# Actors play their part



**The Abbey Rebels of 1916 - A Lost Revolution**  
by Fearghal McGarry  
(Gill & Macmillan 2015)

**W**HEN the Abbey Theatre unveiled its 50th anniversary memorial plaque in 1966 to those of its company and staff who had participated in the Rising, it contained the following words:

"It is hard service they take that help me."

Little could have been more apt than this excerpt from Yeats' "Kathleen ni Houlihan", the play which the author of this book, Fearghal McGarry, notes as the one most identified with the cultural revival's revolutionary impact. Nothing either could have been more poignant in the case of actor and Citizen Army Captain Sean Connolly who was billed to appear in the Abbey's Easter Monday production of that play along with another Abbey rebel and GPO veteran, Arthur Shields - later Hollywood star and brother of Barry

Fitzgerald. Connolly was to be killed shortly after leading his small ICA detachment to take over the City Hall stronghold on Easter Monday.

Situated a stone's throw from the Liberty Hall muster point for the rebellion, and near which the insurgents would have wheeled their handcart of revolution on the way to take over the General Post Office in Sackville Street (now O'Connell Street), it stood also at the centre of the cultural revival which preceded the Rising. Such was the perceived influence of that revival, the role of the Abbey and 'Kathleen Ni Houlihan' in particular, that in his later 1938 poem, "The Man and the Echo", Yeats was moved to ask, 'Did that play of mine send out/Certain men the English shot?'

While much can be made of literature in what, for propaganda purposes was usefully described as 'the poet's rebellion', because of the involvement of those such as

Joseph Plunkett and Thomas MacDonagh, McGarry's book paints a wider canvass, acknowledging there were many who had other strings to their bow, even in an artistic milieu such as the Abbey.

Therefore cheek by jowl with Abbey star, Maire Nic Shiubhlaigh (Cumann na mBan - Jacobs Garrison) stands Ellen Bushel (GPO Garrison) who was an usher in the theatre and was imprisoned after the Rising. Later she carried on her activities to the point that Peadar Kearney once remarked that she stored enough explosives in the theatre's library to 'blow the Abbey sky high'.

A theatrical all-rounder who could turn his hand to anything, Peadar Kearney (2nd Battalion - Jacobs Garrison) excelled at song writing, most famously and significantly in the case of the 'Soldiers Song', later to become the new anthem of the Free State. Beside him stands Barney Murphy (1st Battal-

ion - Four Courts Garrison) Abbey stage hand and prompter, piper, O'Toole's GAA player and rebel.

McGarry's book also covers well known actress and 1913 Lockout veteran Helena Molony (ICA - City Hall Garrison), one of whose magazines, 'Bean na hEireann', the author notes, 'featured an appealing mix of guns and chiffon'!

This is a feast of a book - the literary/historical equivalent of 'death by chocolate' for the interested. It is full of anecdotes, illustrations and memorabilia as well as honest pen portraits of the subjects who the author follows through to the post-Rising period, and in some cases, disillusion.

Most of all, it remembers not just the contribution of the rank and file insurgents and workers, but also their remarkable personal gifts in the whole constellation of their lives.

## Rail workers fought and died on both sides during Rising

By Peter Rigney

**T**HE IMPACT of the Easter Rising on railway workers is revealed in documents kept by the Irish Railway Record Society from the period, copies of which will be displayed on Platform 1 of Heuston Station, Dublin, from late March.

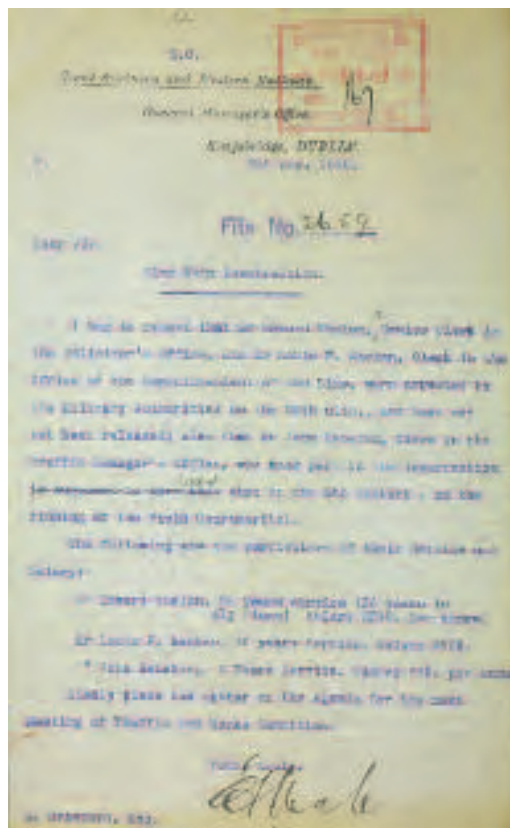
The documents include details of the sabotage of railway lines by rebel forces, British troop movements and the building of armoured trains at some railway works. It is recorded that the attempts to sabotage the Midland Great Western Railway (MGWR) at Dublin had mixed results.

An unsuccessful attempt was made to blow up the bridge at Fassauga Avenue. However, a special train conveying pigs was derailed near Ashtown, which blocked the main line to the west for a period.

In addition, a locomotive was seized at Broadstone and sent up the line where it derailed at Liffey Junction - now Broombridge.

Railway staff who were killed during the Rising and its aftermath are recorded. These include rebel leader Sean Heuston who was executed on 8th May 1916. He had worked as a clerk in the Goods office at Kingsbridge Station.

Also logged is the death of Mr. Moore, the District Auditor, Limerick, who was killed in



crossfire as was that of Albert Warmington who was killed while fighting with the Royal Irish Regiment in the South Dublin Union.

Warmington was recruited to the Great Southern Western Railway (GSWR) as a strikebreaker in 1911 and subsequently worked in Maryborough (Portlaoise) before joining the British Army.

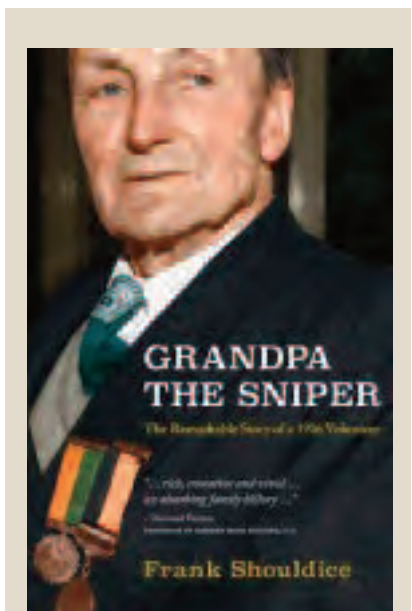
Irish Volunteers in Portlaoise claimed to have fired the first shots of the Rising when they fired on a railway inspector as they sabotaged the line in an attempt to block troop movements to Dublin from the south two days before the Rising.

The rail companies went to great lengths to find out if members of staff who had been absent during the Rising had been involved with the rebels.

Documents show that employees who kept the rail system operating during the Rising were paid a bonus.

A memo from 29 employees of the GSWR at the company's Inchicore works, who had been interned for six months following the Rising, shows them requesting their jobs back.

The men state that they were "wrongfully detained" and highlight that others in a similar situation working in government departments had been reinstated to their jobs and paid for the time they had been absent.



**Grandpa the Sniper: The Remarkable Story of a 1916 Volunteer**  
by Frank Shouldice  
(The Liffey Press)

Drawing on prison letters, personal diaries and secret military and police files, Grandpa the Sniper retraces a remarkable journey by a reluctant hero. Part biography, part memoir, it offers readers a rare insight into one of the quiet men who gave their all for Irish freedom.



# The Citizen Army dead

■ By Michael Halpenny

**A FEW weeks before the Rising, Bugler William Oman of the Irish Citizen Army (ICA), who was all of 16 years of age, was told that he needed an appendix operation.**

Aware of the possibility of something happening in the near future, he approached the Commandant General of the ICA, James Connolly, and, in view of his impending hospitalisation, enquired whether there was any chance of postponing the Rising?

Connolly kindly assured him that there wasn't, but that he'd be back in time.

He was, and around noon on Monday, 24th April 1916, he sounded the 'Fall-in' at the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union (ITGWU) Head Office, Liberty Hall, before heading off to his garrison at City Hall.

He was a member of the Boy Scouts' section of the ICA and the

army overall had approximately 360 on its pre-1916 muster roll. It was organised in 11 sections around Dublin city between the canals and one in Baldoyle. Unlike the Irish Volunteers, it also had a Women's Section.

This mainly ITGWU workers army was originally raised by James Connolly and Jim Larkin

graphic structure, with a small officer corps headed by Connolly as Commandant General and Michael Mallin as second-in-command.

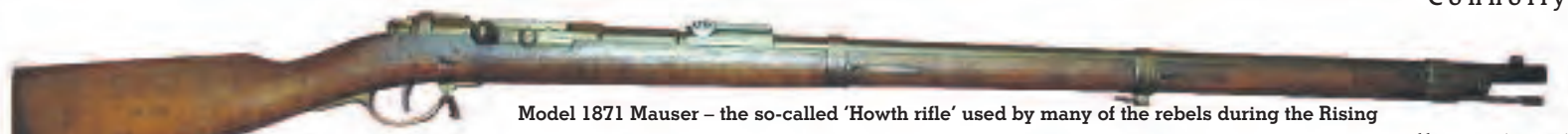
They had a distinctive dark green uniform with slouch hat, one side often pinned up with the ITGWU Red Hand badge. They had an equally distinctive flag, the

Republican Brotherhood (IRB), the planners of the Rising, he worked assiduously with them to make it a reality.

He used the columns of the ITGWU weekly the *Workers Republic* to instruct and encourage all aspects of the army. He organised regular route marches, including night marches to famil-

sponsibility for two of the seven main strongpoints to be seized, garrisoned and held – City Hall and St Stephen's Green/College of Surgeons. The army also had a significant number of members detailed to the GPO Headquarters Garrison.

In the course of the conflict, 12 members were killed in action and two, Michael Mallin and James Connolly,



Model 1871 Mauser – the so-called 'Howth rifle' used by many of the rebels during the Rising

PICTURE: Older Firearms (CC BY 2.0)

early on in the 1913 Lockout to protect strikers and their families from attacks by the police and 'scabs'.

Its constitution, written by Sean O'Casey avowed the "ownership of Ireland, moral and material", as vested as "of right in the people of Ireland". After the Lockout it was reorganised into its pre-Rising geo-

'Starry Plough'. Although independent of the Irish Volunteers, Connolly was nevertheless, like them, committed to a rising against the British colonial government before the end of their war against Germany which had started in August 1914.

Nevertheless, he was quite prepared to go it alone if necessary, and organised the ICA to do so. However, after his co-option on to the Military Council of the Irish

republicanise the ICA with its intended garrisons and role in the coming Rising. Members armed themselves with guns from a variety of sources including "Howth rifles" as well as stolen or purchased British army weapons. In the run up to Easter Week, a bomb factory was set up in Liberty Hall, which by then was becoming an armed fortress.

When the Rising eventually came, the Citizen Army had re-

were executed. This was the highest proportionate casualty rate among the rebel forces. Others were wounded, some to die later of those wounds and many were deported to prison, mainly Frongoch Camp in North Wales, with a small number of prominent women ICA to Aylesbury in England.

These are the stories of those who lost their lives...

## ICA CITY HALL GARRISON

### Bullets fell like rain...

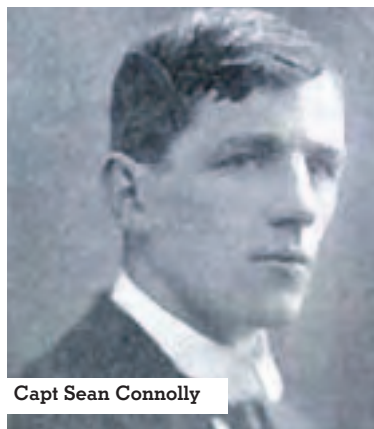
**THE City Hall Garrison party, led by Captain Sean Connolly, numbered about 40 when it left Liberty Hall to see the earliest and some of the fiercest fighting and where, in the words of Dr Kathleen Lynn, ICA Medical Officer, "the bullets fell like rain".**

**Louis Byrne (ICA number 217)**

Louis Byrne lived at Corporation Buildings in the north inner city and was a member of the Gloucester Street Section of the ICA. He was part of the Citizen Army initially sent to the GPO Headquarters in a detachment which included his son Louis (junior) of the Boy Scouts Section. He was then detailed to the City Hall Garrison beside Dublin Castle where he was killed on the first day of the Rising on 24th April.

**Captain Sean Connolly (ICA number 54)**

Sean Connolly (no relation to James Connolly) from Phillipsburg Avenue was the 33-year-old cap-



Capt Sean Connolly

tain of the small ICA detachment whose job it was to seize and hold City Hall. They marched from Liberty Hall after the 'Fall-in' sounded by young Bugler Oman. With him were his three brothers Eamon, George and Mathew (Mattie) and as they passed Tara Street Fire Station on their way they met their other brother Joe on his way to mobilise at the ITGWU Head Office before himself heading in the direction of St Stephen's Green.

Also in the detachment was his sister Katie who wrote for the union newspaper, *The Workers' Republic* and had appeared with him only a short time previously in the play written by James Connolly *Under Which Flag*. A promising actor, in fact he was billed to appear with another soon-to-be rebel, fellow actor Arthur Shields (later Hollywood star and brother

of Barry Fitzgerald) in an Abbey Theatre production of WB Yeats' play *Kathleen ni Houlihan* on Easter Monday evening. It was also said he was the basis of the character Captain Clitheroe in Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars*.

Shortly after leading the initial assault on Dublin Castle in which Constable O'Brien of the DMP was killed, he withdrew his small force to the body of City Hall. A couple of hours later at around 3.15 p.m. he was himself mortally wounded on the roof of the building becoming the first rebel casualty of the Rising. He was attended by Dr Kathleen Lynn, Medical Officer of the ICA who herself would later take charge of the ultimate surrender to Crown Forces. It is reported that she wrapped his body in the green flag from Connolly's play *Under Which Flag*, as she recalled his final words in that production: "Under this flag only I will serve. Under this flag only I will die."

**Charlie D'Arcy**

Lieutenant Charles D'Arcy was a 15-year-old leader in the ICA Boy Scouts' Section. When the call to action came he is reported to have said: "I'm ready lads, where do you need me?" Part of the small City Hall Garrison, he was sent to help man one of the outposts of the garrison at the nearby Henry & James store in Parliament Street opposite City Hall. It was while in action on

the roof of that rebel outpost that he was killed by enemy fire on Tuesday 25th April on the second day of the Rising.

**George Geoghegan (ICA number 323)**

George Geoghegan was a 36-year-old railway worker who was employed at Inchicore Works. Originally from Kildare, he lived with his wife and children in Upper Dominick Street in Dublin's north inner city. He was a member of the Capel Street Section of the ICA and was a member of the City Hall Garrison. According to a subsequent report to the National Graves Association, he was killed in the fighting at City Hall and then initially buried in Dublin Castle Yard on Wednesday 26th April.

**Lt. Sean O'Reilly**

After the death of Captain Sean Connolly, the City Hall Garrison was led by 30-year-old Lieutenant Sean O'Reilly. However, his command was brief as he himself was killed by enemy fire a few hours later on Monday 24th April. Like George Geoghegan, he was initially buried in Dublin Castle Yard. (He is not to be confused with John O'Reilly who also served with the Citizen Army but who was not a casualty).

## ICA GPO GARRISON

### At the side of Connolly

**James McCormack (ICA number 89)**

Originally from County Meath, he lived at Sutton Cottages in Baldoyle with his wife and four children. He was enrolled in the Baldoyle Section of the Citizen Army and was attached to the GPO Garrison during Easter Week, though some reports say he was detailed to the College of Surgeons. There is equally some debate as to where he met his death. However, local research believes he was killed while on patrol in Moore Lane. The National Graves Association records him as having been killed in action on Friday 28th April.

**Thomas O'Reilly (ICA 240)**

Thomas O'Reilly from Geraldine Street was a member of the Dorset Street Section of the ICA. He was an electrician and also member of the St James' Brass and Reed Band and the Emerald's GFC. His brother John was part of the ICA City Hall Garrison while another brother, Patrick, also a member of the



## ICA ST STEPHEN'S GREEN GARRISON

## Trench warfare...

**T**HE St Stephen's Green/College of Surgeons Garrison was led by Commandant Michael Mallin and numbered about 150 men and women, including Lt Constance Markievicz and was supplemented by Irish Volunteers from the nearby Jacobs Garrison.

**John Adams**  
(ICA number 97)

38-year-old John Adams from Cork Street was part of the ICA occupying the west side of St Stephen's Green opposite the present day shopping centre. In the early phase of the operation the ICA dug into slit trenches which provided little cover when enemy fire opened up, particularly from early Tuesday morning when machine gun fire from the roof of the Shelbourne Hotel began raking the park. John Adams was mortally wounded by enemy fire at his exposed position opposite South King Street and died on Tuesday 25th April.



Slit trench next to railings in St Stephen's Green used by rebels for cover  
Photo: eastwallforall.ie

**Philip Clarke**  
(ICA number 21)

Philip Clarke was a man estimated to be in his late thirties. He was from Slane, County Meath, and lived with his wife and eight children at Cork Street. He was a member of the High Street Section of the Citizen Army and was detailed to the St Stephen's Green Garrison. He was on duty early on the morning of Tuesday 25th April, building a barricade in front of the Shelbourne Hotel, when a British machine gun which had been mounted on the roof overnight opened up and he was cut down.



James Corcoran

**James Corcoran**

33-year-old James Corcoran was originally from Gorey, County Wexford. Like John Adams, he was reported to have been manning an exposed position in a slit trench,

in his case on the east side of the Green facing Hume Street, when he was fatally injured by enemy fire on Tuesday 25th April.

**James Fox (ICA number 62)**

James (Jimmy) Fox was only 16 when he was posted as part of the St Stephen's Green Garrison. His family was originally from Meath; however, he lived in nearby Peter Street beside Jacobs biscuit factory, itself another rebel garrison, and a short walk from St Stephen's Green. He was a member of the Aungier Street Section of the ICA and was shot on Tuesday 25th April when escaping from a trench on the north side of the Green opposite the United Services Club held by British troops.

**Fred Ryan (ICA number 80)**

Fred Ryan was a 17-year-old member of the Citizen Army from High Street. Said to have been originally a Volunteer, he joined the High Street Section of the ICA. Part of the St Stephen's Green Garrison, he was in the attacking party on the Russell Hotel along with Margaret Skinnider when he was killed in action at Harcourt Street on Thursday 27th April. Margaret Skinnider was seriously wounded in the action but survived.

## EXECUTIONS

## Retribution

Following the Rising, 14 insurgents were executed in Kilmmainham Jail after a summary Field General Court Martial. Among them were Michael Mallin and James Connolly. Others such as Eamon deValera and Constance Markievicz received the death sentence but had their sentences commuted. Thomas Kent was executed in Cork Jail while Roger Casement, having been tried in the Old Bailey in London for High Treason, was hanged in Pentonville Prison.

**Michael Mallin** –  
executed 8th May

Michael Mallin was aged 42 and a British Army veteran. He was ICA Chief of Staff under James Connolly and Commandant of the St Stephen's Green/College of Surgeons Garrison. He was executed on 8th May along with three others, Eamonn Ceannt, Con Colbert and Sean Heuston. He left a widow and family, the youngest child being only two – now Father Joseph Mallin, who is still alive.

**James Connolly** –  
executed 12th May

James Connolly as Commandant General of the Citizen Army and of the rebel forces in Dublin was the last to be executed. He led by example in the GPO Headquarters and was wounded twice on the Thursday of Easter Week.

It was the second wound to his ankle which was the more serious and which confined him initially to a stretcher for the final stand in Moore Street and then to his hospital bed in Dublin Castle.

Despite his being seriously ill as gangrene infection set in, the authorities led by General Maxwell were determined to proceed with his court martial. They were equally determined to press ahead with his execution along with that of the disabled Sean MacDiarmada.

Both were shot in Kilmmainham Jail on 12th May. Connolly was so ill that in a final ghastly act the British authorities had him strapped to a stretcher for the firing squad. He was the last of the 1916 leaders to be executed there.



Life returns to the streets of Dublin after the Rising. In the distance stands the gutted remains of the GPO  
Photo: National Library of Ireland

Dorset Street Section of the ICA, was a member of the St Stephen's Green Garrison. Thomas was detailed to the GPO Headquarters Garrison where he fought until badly wounded on Thursday the 27th April. He was taken to the nearby Jervis Street Hospital but died of his wounds later that day.

**Arthur Wicks**  
[alias John Neal]

Arthur Wicks (sometimes referred to as Weekes) was originally from Norwich in England. He was a life-long trade union activist said to have been associated with the IWW ('Wobblies') and was imprisoned in 1913 for his role in a hotel



James McCormack

strike in London.

Because of victimisation for his union activities he came to Dublin in 1915 and worked in the hotel trade under the alias John Neal. He was also reported to have been involved in gun running for the ICA.

Though not known to be attached to any ICA section, he was detailed to Ballybough and assisted in the blowing up of the GNR railway line at the Fairview viaduct.

On the Tuesday of Easter Week he was posted to the GPO Garrison and then sent to the nearby Metropole Hotel post where he was in action for the rest of the week. One report says that on the Friday, in an effort to boost morale, he dressed up in a chef's uniform and cooked up a meal for his comrades before returning to the GPO.

It was while waiting there for the order to evacuate that he suffered serious multiple injuries when an ammunition pouch exploded beside him. He was eventually stretchered out to Moore Street where the last stand of the rebel forces was made and then, after the surrender, was taken to Dublin Castle where he died.

He was listed by the authorities as a civilian casualty under his alias of John Neal but is recognised by the National Graves Association as a rebel casualty under his real name.

Ann Mathews – "The Irish Citizen Army" [Mercier 2014]

Joseph A.E. Connell – "Who's Who in the Dublin Rising 1916" [Wordwell 2015]

Jimmy Wren – "The GPO Garrison Easter Week 1916" [Geography Publications 2015]



# The Wolfe Tone games – Frongoch 1916

■ By Michael Halpenny

**F**RONGOCH Prison Camp in North Wales, was opened up for over 1,800 Irish rebel prisoners in June 1916. Up to then it had been used as a camp for German POW's captured in the European War from the start of hostilities in August 1914.

The rebel prisoners were from every county in Ireland, many of them fit young men, more than a few practiced in their chosen sport, particularly Gaelic games. In previous places of detention such as Stafford and Knutsford jails and in Frongoch they regularly played Gaelic football, often naming teams after the heroes of Easter Week, although one of the most successful was one called "The Leprechauns" because of the stature of the players.

Following arrival in Frongoch a Camp Council was established to organise prisoner affairs. One of the bodies set up under this command structure was the Games Committee. Their first major challenge was the organisation of the 1916 "Wolfe Tone Commemoration Games" to coincide with the anniversary of Wolfe Tone normally celebrated at Bodenstown, Kildare at the end of June."

The committee secretary was Drogheda man, Joseph Stanley, often called "The Printer to the Revolution". He is so called because it was he who published the daily "Irish War News" and bulletins each day of the Easter Rising from commandeered premises in Halston Street, Dublin.

His committee minutes show an impressive programme of athletics for the Wolfe Tone Commemoration Games, including the following events:

- 100yards
- 220 yards
- 440 yards
- Half Mile
- One Mile
- Relay
- Long Jump
- 'Hop, Step and Jump' (modern Triple Jump)



The Ragballers' Gaelic football team in Stafford Jail  
Photo source: "My Grandpa the Sniper Frank Shouldice" (Liffey Press 2015)

'Standing Jump'  
High Jump  
Shot  
16lb Hammer  
Tossing the Caber (Surprisingly!)  
Overall Games Champion  
The 'pièce de résistance' was the Wolfe Tone Gaelic Football Final between Louth and Kerry in Frongoch's very own "Croke Park" - a

Their first major challenge was the organisation of the 1916 "Wolfe Tone Commemoration Games"

part of the camp which had been turned into a playing field.

When the games were held, records reveal an impressive showing by athletes such as a certain Michael Collins and Dublin footballer, Frank Shouldice, who had fought with the 1st Battalion at Church Street as part of the Jacobs Garrison and who is the subject of a recent book called "My Grandpa the Sniper".

Collins posted a very respectable 10 4/5 seconds for the 100 yards, a time which occasioned some sarcastic comment in the House of Commons about the standard of food provided in the camp, if a prisoner could produce such a performance. Collins was rightly enraged. He also excelled at the long jump while Martin Costelloe from Galway won the mile. A prisoner from Cork called John (Sean) Hales won the Hammer. Five years or so later it was his killing of Anti –

The 'pièce de résistance' was the Wolfe Tone Gaelic Football Final between Louth and Kerry

Treaty forces that was the reason given by the Free State authorities for the summary execution of Liam Mellows, Rory O'Connor and two others.

Frank Shouldice pressed Collins hard on the 'Hop, Step & Jump' and actually beat him in the Standing Jump, adding athletic achievement

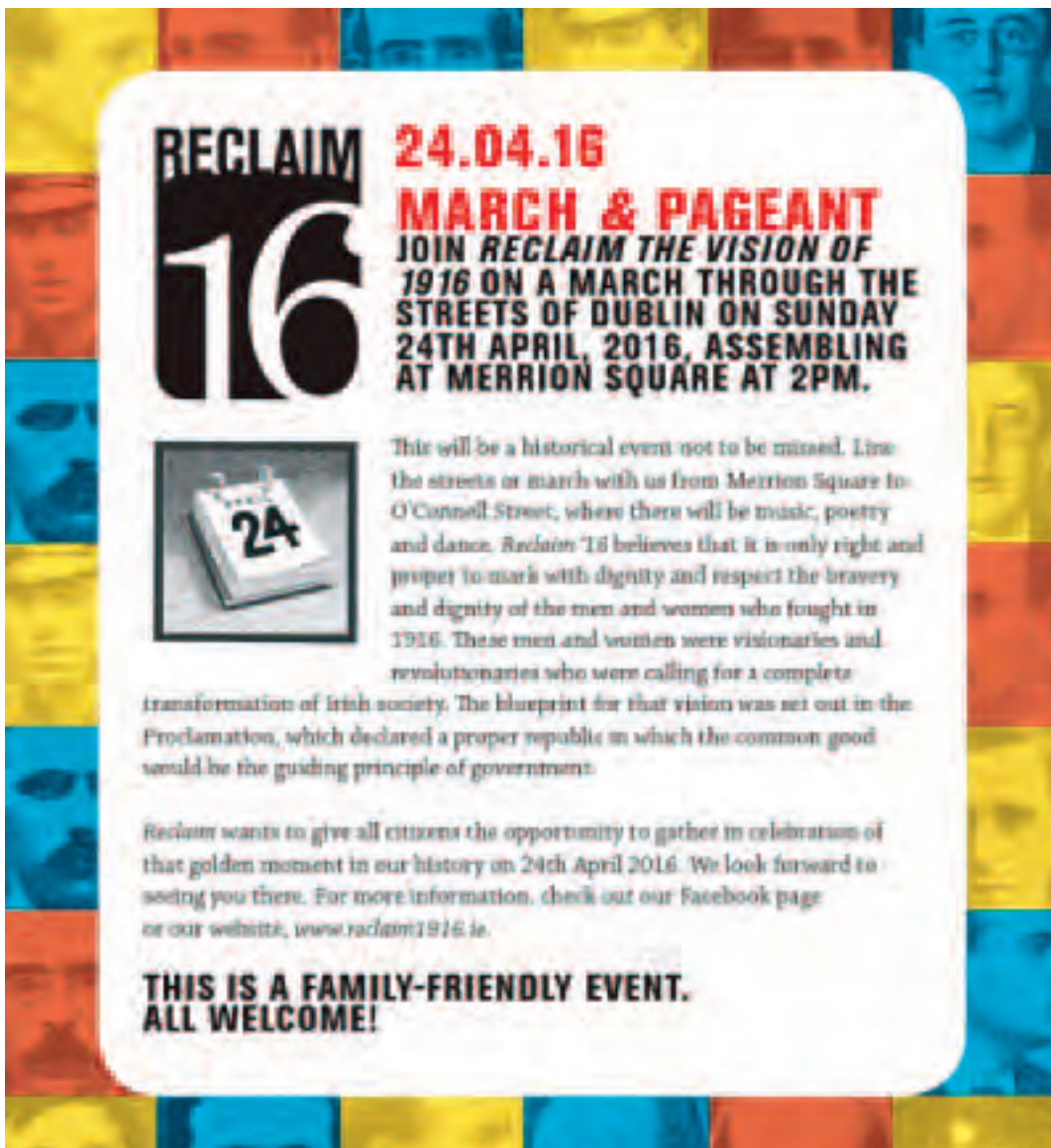
to his undoubted prowess as a sniper.

However, the event which drew the most attention was the football match between Louth and Kerry. Louth had experienced glory days in the early years of the century while Kerry was – well, even then, simply Kerry.


Their team was captained by the famous Dick Fitzgerald (after whom the modern Kerry stadium is named) and was populated by names which even nowadays evoke immediate recognition, such as O'Shea, Spillane, Sullivan and McEllistrim. However, the "Wee County" gave Kerry more than a run for their money and only lost by a point!

Sport, allied to the other daily activities and struggles of the prisoners in the camp played a vital role in maintaining the morale of the rebels in what became known as "The University of Revolution".





**RECLAIM 16** **24.04.16**  
**MARCH & PAGEANT**  
 JOIN RECLAIM THE VISION OF 1916 ON A MARCH THROUGH THE STREETS OF DUBLIN ON SUNDAY 24TH APRIL, 2016, ASSEMBLING AT MERRION SQUARE AT 2PM.

 This will be a historical event not to be missed. Line the streets or march with us from Merrion Square to O'Connell Street, where there will be music, poetry and dance. Reclaim 16 believes that it is only right and proper to mark with dignity and respect the bravery and dignity of the men and women who fought in 1916. These men and women were visionaries and revolutionaries who were calling for a complete transformation of Irish society. The blueprint for that vision was set out in the Proclamation, which declared a proper republic in which the common good would be the guiding principle of government.

Reclaim wants to give all citizens the opportunity to gather in celebration of that golden moment in our history on 24th April 2016. We look forward to seeing you there. For more information, check out our Facebook page or our website, [www.reclaim1916.ie](http://www.reclaim1916.ie).

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**LBS MEN'S SHED**  
**1916 RISING**



Volunteers Costello, Byrne, Cunningham & Keely killed in action during Easter Week 1916. Buried in Dean's Grange Cemetery

100th Anniversary Commemorative Mural Unveiling

Saturday 9th April at 2pm  
 125A Cedar Court  
 Loughlinstown

Mural will be unveiled by renegade Irish artist Robert Ballagh. Speakers Jamie Moran & Jason Walsh McLean.

Followed by music, poetry & drama (featuring The Flaming Harmonies) in The Lough Inn




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