



International Headquarters
PO Box 1716 • Morristown, NJ 07962
Tel: 973-605-1991
www.iaci-usa.org

Welcome to the latest edition of the IACI e-news.

Founded in 1962, the IACI is the leading Irish American cultural organization. The IACI is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) not-for-profit national organization devoted to promoting an intelligent appreciation of Ireland and the role and contributions of the Irish in America.

Guest contributors are always welcome! Please note, the IACI is an apolitical, non-sectarian organization and requests that contributors consider that when submitting articles. The IACI reserves the right to refuse or edit submissions. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are solely those of the original authors and other contributors. These views and opinions do not necessarily represent those of the IACI or any/all contributors to this site. Please submit articles for consideration to cbuck@iaci-usa.org.

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The Irish Volunteers

In 1782, the Irish Volunteers, ostensibly formed to resist a French invasion, the American War for Independence still not concluded, and France an ally of the US, coerced the English to allow the re-establishment of an Irish Parliament.

On Easter Monday, 1916 - like those who stood and fought in defense of American Liberty on Lexington Green and at Concord Bridge on the **19th of April in 1775**, leading to the ***Declaration of Independence*** in Philadelphia on the **4th of July 1776** - brave Irish men and women took up arms to rid Ireland of the domination of a foreign, occupying power. "Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, ... and, **supported by her exiled children in America** ... [Ireland] strikes in full confidence of victory." This was announced in the ***Proclamation of the Irish Republic***, read by Pádraic Pearse on the steps of the General Post Office in Dublin that fateful Easter Monday morning in 1916. Not unlike the principles enunciated in the American Declaration of Independence, the Proclamation of the Irish Republic guaranteed "religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past."

Those who went out on that Easter Monday in 1916, the **Irish Volunteers** (supported by Na Fianna Éireann), and those who joined in their effort - the Irish Citizen Army, the Irish National Foresters, the Hibernian Rifles and the ladies of Cumann na mBan, without regard to their own personal safety, went into the gap of danger, made the sacrifice, set the example.

But, just as the American Revolution / War of Independence, didn't just happen on the 19th of April 1775, or on the 4th of July 1776, **neither did the Rising just happen on Easter Monday, 1916.** While the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), “Fenians,” analogous to the Sons of Liberty in colonial America, may have been secretly seeking an Irish Republic since Saint Patrick's Day 1858, and been willing to use physical force to get it, they alone could not bring about revolution. In the language of Thomas Jefferson, "Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; ... But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute **Despotism**, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security." The injuries and usurpations which caused the Sons of Liberty to organize, and the First Continental Congress to petition the king for a redress of grievances, really began in earnest only after the end of the "French and Indian War" in 1763; Ireland's suffering under perfidious English rule (including cultural, and, at times, physical, genocide) went back over seven centuries, and included *An Gorta Mór*, the Great Hunger of mid-19th century Ireland, which saw the population of Ireland reduced by half during 1845-1854, with “**Black ‘47**” being the worst year. This so-called "Famine" period had the same psychological significance for the Irish of the 19th and 20th centuries, as the Nazi period would later have for the Jews of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Since the subversion of the Irish Parliament in 1800 (five years after London recognized its right to exist in perpetuity), and its incorporation (like the Scottish Parliament in 1707 – about which Robert Burns would write in 1791, “We're bought and sold for English gold- Such a parcel of rogues in a nation!”), in permanent minority status, into the Westminster Parliament in London, throughout the 19th and into the 20th century, broad-based, mainstream Irish political opinion sought the restoration of the

(limited) legislative independence of Ireland - "**Home Rule.**" Finally in 1912, the British House of Commons passed Home Rule for Ireland, but, its implementation was delayed by the House of Lords until 1914. In the interim, allegedly "Loyal" Unionists, mostly in Ireland's northern Province of Ulster (supported by many English Tories), began to organize (1912) and arm - creating the Ulster Volunteers (January 1913), for the purpose of frustrating the implementation of an act of the Parliament and government to which they professed "loyalty." In part as a reaction to this threat, many mainstream Irish nationalists in turn, in 1913, began to organize and arm to support the implementation of Home Rule for Ireland. As their model they took the **Irish Volunteers** of 1780s Ireland, which brought about the re-establishment of an Irish Parliament in 1782. While the IRB secretly initiated, quietly supported and assisted this effort, they did not control it, any more than the Sons of Liberty controlled the Continental Congress.

Under the leadership of Ireland's premier scholar, **Eoin MacNeill**, the **Irish Volunteers** were launched, in Dublin, on the **25th of November 1913**. Thousands of Irish Volunteers were enrolled at the first meeting. The manifesto of the Irish Volunteers, approved at the 25th November meeting, stated the organization's objectives were "to secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to the whole people of Ireland." MacNeill offered his opinion in the article "*The North Began*" that the Tory policy in Ulster was deliberately adopted to make the display of military force with the threat of armed violence the decisive factor in relations between Ireland and Great Britain. If Irishmen accepted this new policy he said they would be surrendering their rights as men and citizens. If they did not attempt to defeat this policy "we become politically the most degraded population in Europe and no longer worthy of the name of Nation ..." In this situation he said guarding our own rights is our first duty. They have rights who dare maintain them, but rights in the last resort, could only be maintained by arms. The Irish Volunteers organization soon spread throughout the country.

With the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914, nearly on the eve of the scheduled re-birth of Irish legislative independence, **the government in London suspended the implementation of Home Rule for Ireland for the duration.** Many Volunteers, believing that it would be a short war, went off to fight for "the freedom of small nations" in Europe. Others of the Irish Volunteers, and others throughout Ireland, saw the shelving of Home Rule as but another instance of bad faith; but, for many, this was the last straw. The reorganized **Irish Volunteers**, now with more significant IRB participation, began to prepare to defend Ireland against Conscription, repudiation of Home Rule, or dismemberment. In December 1914, a headquarters staff was appointed, consisting of **Eoin MacNeill** as Chief of Staff, **The O'Rahilly** as Director of Arms, **Tomás MacDonagh** as Director of Training, **Pádraic Pearse** as Director of Military Organization, **Bulmer Hobson** as Quartermaster, and **Joseph Mary Plunkett** as Director of Military Operations. The following year they were joined by **Éamonn Ceannt** as Director of Communications and J.J. "Ginger" O'Connell (formerly of the famous 69th Regiment of New York - "***The Fighting 69th***") as Chief of Inspection. At the same time, ***the conspiratorial élite of the IRB*** - within the Irish Volunteers, now all acting in their capacities as Irish Volunteers (but with key policy decisions being first made at secret IRB meetings), began to plan to **turn England's difficulty into Ireland's opportunity** to strike for Freedom.

Is iad a do an tine beo - It is they who lit the everlasting fire.

For the poet William Butler Yeats, ***Easter 1916*** transformed Ireland from a place where "motley was worn," ...

"all changed, changed utterly, ***a terrible beauty is born.***"†



Liam Ó Murchadha agus Deasún Mac Giolla Amhlaidh, do scrí

ON THIS DAY IN IRISH HISTORY - NOVEMBER

1st

1883 - Mater Infirmorm Hospital in Belfast takes in its first patients.

1920 - 18-year-old Kevin Barry executed for killing a British soldier.

3rd 1841 - Foundation stone is laid for St. Malachy's Church in Belfast.

4th

1957 - Éamon de Valera attends the coronation of Pope John Paul XXIII.

2001 - Police Service of Northern Ireland established.

5th 1992 - The Irish government loses a vote of confidence and the Dáil is dissolved.

7th

1924 - Amnesty declared for politically motivated crimes committed during the Civil War.

1940 - Éamon de Valera lets it be known that Irish ports will not be handed over to the British.

1990 - Mary Robinson is elected seventh President of Ireland.

8th

1949 - Street names in any language other than English are banned in Northern Ireland.

1960 - Nine Irish soldiers serving with the United Nations are killed in the Congo.

1987 - The IRA kill eleven people at a Remembrance Service in Enniskillen.

9th

1907 - The Irish International Exhibition ends after six months.

1919 - Labour leader James Larkin arrested in New York for attempting to overthrow a government.

10th 1966 - Jack Lynch receives his seal of office as the new Taoiseach.

11th 1997 - Mary McAleese inaugurated as the eighth President of Ireland.

12th 1957 - Brendan Behan's Borstal Boy is banned by censors.

13th 1991 - Defence Secretary Jim McDaid resigns following criticism of his attending an IRA funeral.

14th

1866 - St Peter's Cathedral in Belfast is dedicated.

1923 - William Butler Yeats is awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

15th 1985 - Taoiseach Charles Haughey and British PM Margaret Thatcher sign the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

16th 1994 - The Fianna Fáil-Labour coalition collapses.

17th

1890 - Captain Willie O'Shea divorces Kitty O'Shea, naming Charles Stewart Parnell as co-respondent.

1926 - Following the killing of two gardaí, President W.T. Cosgrave introduces the Public Safety (Emergency Powers) Bill.

1948 - The Republic of Ireland Act 1948, aimed at repealing the External Relations Act of 1936, is introduced in Dáil Éireann.

19th

1913 - Irish Citizen Army founded by James Connolly to protect workers in the general lockout.

1971 - An Taoiseach Jack Lynch holds talks with British Prime Minister Harold Wilson.

20th 1936 - General Eoin O'Duffy leads 600 men to fight for Franco in Spain.

21st

1920 - Bloody Sunday. Following the assassinations of 14 undercover British agents by Michael Collins' men, British forces kill 12 people at a GAA football match at Croke Park.

2001 - GAA abolishes 'Rule 21' so that members of the security forces and British army can play.

22nd 1932 - Prince of Wales opens the new parliament building in Belfast.

23rd 1867 - William O'Mera Allen, Michael Larkin and William O'Brien are executed at Manchester.

24th

1922 - Erskine Childers is executed for the possession of a gun which Michael Collins had given him as a Christmas present.

1995 - A referendum in the Republic narrowly passes in favour of allowing divorce.

25th

1890 - Charles Stewart Parnell re-elected leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party.

1892 - Douglas Hyde delivers a lecture to the Irish National Literary Society on 'the necessity of de-anglicising the Irish people'.

1913 - Irish Volunteers founded.

1948 - The Republic of Ireland Act is passed in Dáil Éireann.

26th 1998 - Tony Blair becomes the first British Prime Minister to address the Oireachtas.

28th

1863 - First edition of The Irish People.

1905 - Sinn Féin founded.

1913 - Andrew Bonar Law addresses a huge Unionist rally in the Theatre Royal in Dublin, encouraging Ulster to resist Home Rule.

1920 - Flying column led by Tom Barry kills 16 Auxiliaries at Kilmichael in County Cork.

29th

1955 - Bord na gCon set up under the Greyhound Racing Bill.

1979 - Taoiseach Jack Lynch greets EEC heads of government in Dublin.

1999 - Ten designated ministers appointed to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

30th

1947 - A sixty day transport strike ends in Dublin.

1956 - Petrol rationing is introduced in response to the Suez Crisis.