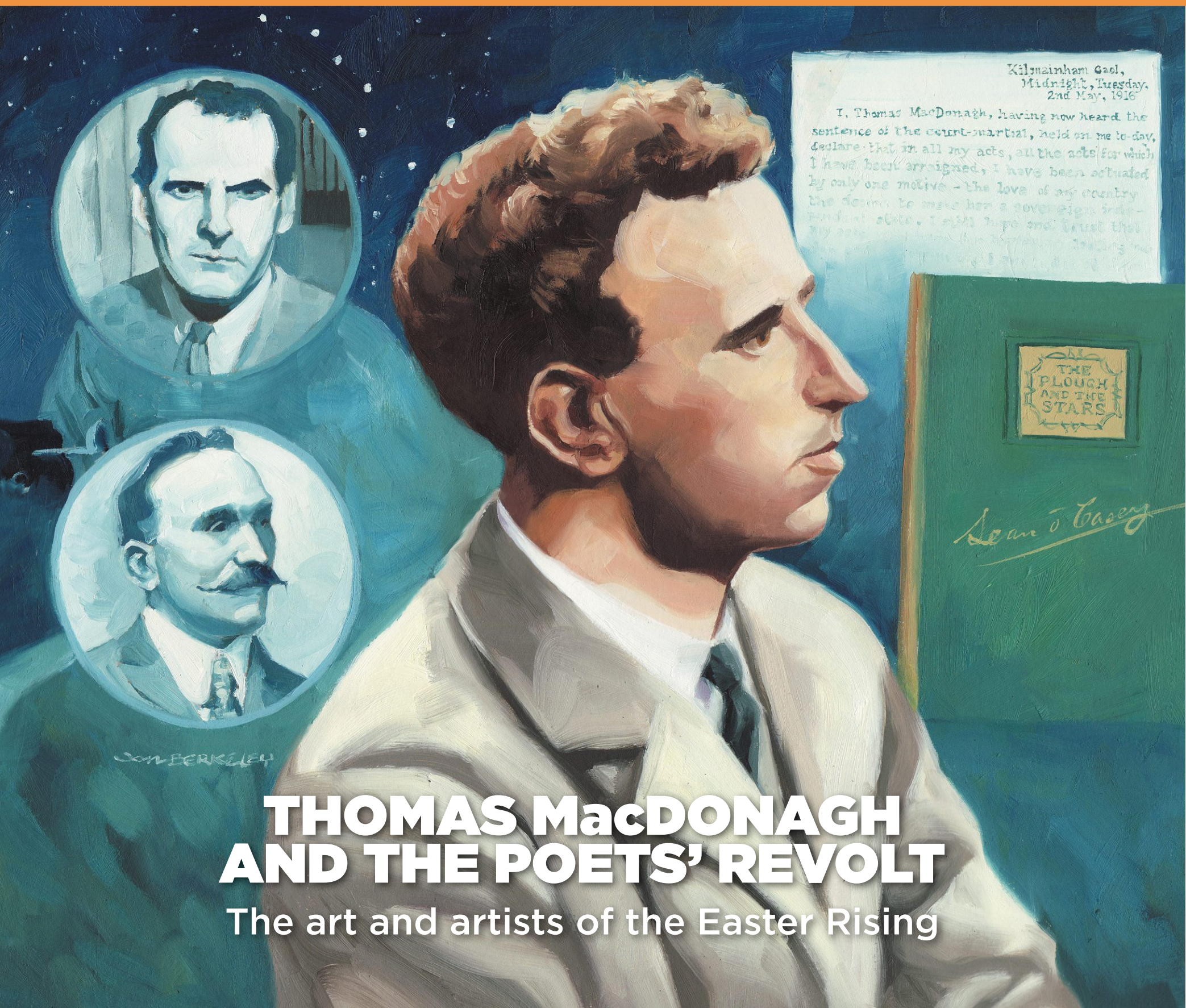
Irish Independent

1916 COLLECTION

PART SEVEN OF TEN
SPECIAL MAGAZINES

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
UCD DECADE of CENTENARIES
UCD DUBLIN
AND
1916 2016 Clár Comórtha Céad Bliain Centenary Programme

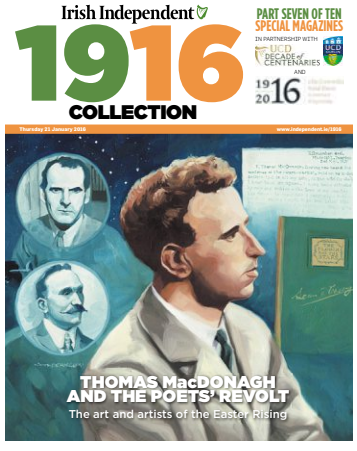
Thursday 21 January 2016 www.independent.ie/1916



THOMAS MacDONAGH AND THE POETS' REVOLT

The art and artists of the Easter Rising

Contents



Published by Independent Newspapers, 27–32 Talbot Street, Dublin 1, Ireland

Editor: Gerard Siggins
Editor1916@independent.ie
Design: Joe Coyle

For Irish Independent
Head of Features:
Fionnuala McCarthy
Education Editor:
Katherine Donnelly

For University College Dublin
Dr Conor Mulvagh, lecturer in Irish History with special responsibility for the Decade of Commemorations.

Eilis O'Brien, Director of Communication and Marketing

Niamh Boyle, Marketing Manager

Cover, by Jon Berkeley, shows Thomas MacDonagh, Seán O'Casey and Major John MacBride

An INM Publication

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
UCD DECADE of CENTENARIES
UCD DUBLIN
AND
1916 2016 Clár Comórtha Céad Bliain Centenary Programme

UCD explores what came 'After Empire'

UCD will host After Empire, a public discussion with former leaders of former British colonies who share Ireland's experience of transition to independence.

Leaders from South Africa, Tanzania, Canada and India are sharing a platform for the event, which takes place in UCD O'Reilly Hall on Thursday, February 4 at 6.30pm.

The speakers are:

* Thabo Mbeki, African National Congress, President of South Africa, 1999-2008 and Deputy President 1994-99;
* Benjamin Mkapa, Revolutionary State Party: President of Tanzania 1995-2005, Minister for Science, Technology and Higher Education 1992-95;
* Joe Clark, Progressive Conservative Party: Prime Minister of Canada 1979-80. Secretary of State for External Affairs, 1984-91;
* Salman Khurshid, Indian National Congress Party, Minister of External Affairs India 2012-14 and Minister of Law and Justice, 2011-12.

Despite taking different paths towards independence, and doing so in different eras and circumstances, these states share much common history which has shaped their place in the modern world.

UCD DECADE of CENTENARIES

A key element of commemorating Ireland's exit from empire is to integrate the Irish experience with that of other states that have encountered many similar issues but who have also done things differently.

Participation in international organisations from the British Commonwealth to the United Nations is just one way in which modern, post-imperial nations have taken different paths to achieving autonomy without isolation.

Bringing together politicians who were central to the later evolution of these policies this promises to be an enlightening and lively evening.

The event will be moderated by former President of UCD, Dr Art Cosgrove, with contribution by President of the Royal Irish Academy, Professor Mary Daly.

This is a ticketed event and prior booking is essential. Tickets are available from: www.ucd.ie/centenaries/event-calendar


MARCUS LAMB IN 'REBELLION'

FROM THE UCD ARCHIVES

'Poets of the Insurrection' provides literary insight

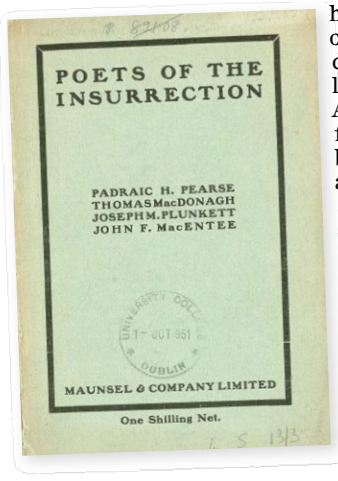
FOUNDED in 1905, the Maunsel Press, Dublin, became one of the most important publishers for Irish poets, with a list of writers including JM Synge, Augusta Gregory, *AE*, Douglas Hyde, Katharine Tynan, Padraic Colum and Eva Gore-Booth. Maunsel published nearly 600 titles before it was sold in 1926.

Poets of the Insurrection was part of Maunsel's 1917 catalogue. The book focused on four poets involved in the Rising: Patrick Pearse, Thomas MacDonagh, Joseph Plunkett and John Francis MacEntee.

Their work is accompanied by short analytical essays, which originally appeared in the journal *Studies*. Pearse's poems, wrote Cathaoir Ó Braonáin, "bring a new thing into Irish literature, and for this reason they must wait a little before they get their place. Modern Irish literature has as yet no terms in which to criticise them."

Professor George O'Neill, a friend of Thomas MacDonagh, wrote within weeks of his execution: "In others of MacDonagh's poems we find much which bears witness to another warfare of a more interior character".

In a longer essay, Arthur E Clery, a lawyer who defended Eoin MacNeill at his court martial, wrote an appreciation of Pearse, MacDonagh and Plunkett: "I have written only of the poet dead. There is a linked tragedy. A dead poet is a flower plucked by the roots, a still beauty, a withering sadness."


POETS OF THE INSURRECTION

PADRAIC H. PEARSE
THOMAS MacDONAGH
JOSEPH M. PLUNKETT
JOHN F. MacENTEE

MAUNSEL & COMPANY LIMITED
One Shilling Net.

Poets of the Insurrection is available from the UCD Archives at: https://digital.ucd.ie/view/ivrla:30905. **FC**

The many faces of Patrick Pearse on the big screen

MARCUS LAMB has won praise for his portrayal of Patrick Pearse in the RTÉ drama *Rebellion*. Lamb is the latest in a long line of at least a dozen men who have played Pearse on screen — and there are more to come.

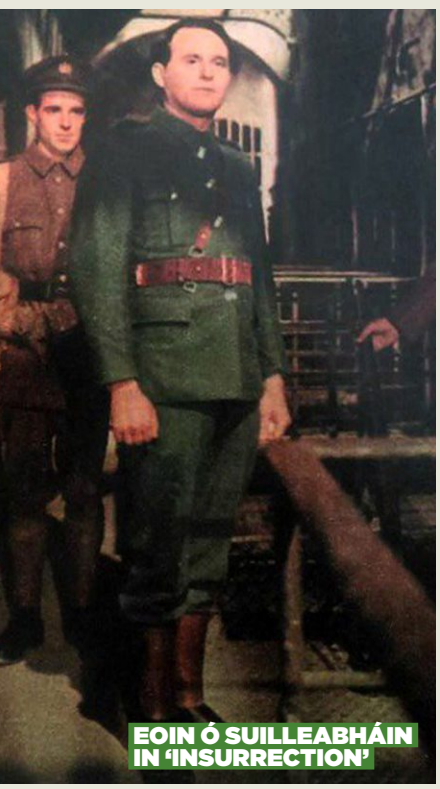
The first to do so was a 1916 veteran himself. Arthur Shields was a leading Abbey actor who fought in the Metropole Hotel and the GPO during the Rising. A brother of the Hollywood star Barry Fitzgerald, he played Pearse in John Ford's 1936 film adaptation of Seán O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars*.

RTÉ's contribution to the 50th anniversary celebration was a week-long series, *Insurrection*, which portrayed events as a contemporary news story in which Eoin Ó Suilleabháin played Pearse. Three years later a German production, *Der Irische Freiheitskampf* starred Paul Neuhaus as the rebel commander. John Fraser played the Irish leader in an ITV drama,*'Would You Look at Them Smashing all Those Lovely Windows?* (1970).

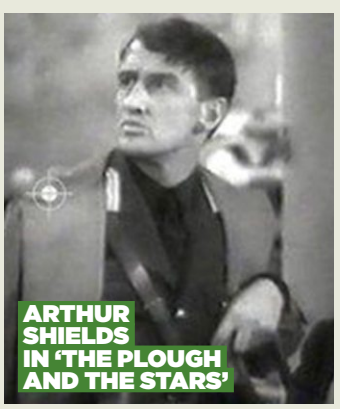
Others who played Pearse include *Glenroe* star Dave Herlihy (in a *Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* episode which was set in Ireland), John Kenny (in *Michael Collins*), John Shevlin (*Réabhlóid*), and Frank McCusker (*Rebel Heart*).

There have been two TG4 series about the men who were executed, in which Pearse was played by Tadhg Murphy (*Seachtar na Cásca*, 2010) and Ciaran Reilly (*Seachtar Dearmadta*, 2013).

And a film, *The Rising 1916*, has cast a large number of actors, including Jonathan Rhys-Meyers as Pearse. It plans to start shooting early in 2017. **LS**


EOIN Ó SUILLEABHÁIN IN 'INSURRECTION'


DAVE HERLIHY IN 'THE YOUNG INDIANA JONES CHRONICLE'


ARTHUR SHIELDS IN 'THE PLOUGH AND THE STARS'

Globalising the Rising

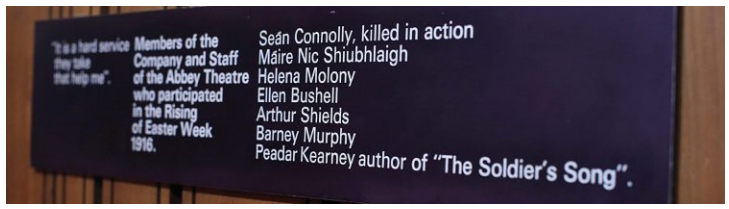
Leading Irish historians, political scientists and international experts wll come together for a two-day flagship conference, 'Globalising the Rising: 1916 in International Context', in UCD O'Reilly Hall, Belfield on February 5 and 6. It is open to the public and free to attend, with registration now open at: www.ucd.ie/centenaries/event-calendar.

Key themes include the use of violence in 1916 in an international context and the impact of the Rising on European nationalism:

* Professor Sumantra Bose, London School of Economics' School of International and Comparative Politics, will chair a panel exploring the topic, "Why do national self-determination movements embrace armed struggle?". Professor Bose is a relative of Subhas Chandra Bose, a leading Indian nationalist figure who visited Ireland in the 1930s.
* The reaction to the 1916 Rising among political exiles in Europe, focusing on Switzerland as a hub for nationalist exiles, is explored by Dr Caoimhe Gallagher of TCD.
* Dr Graham Dominy, former National Archivist of South Africa, explores the controversial figure of Matthew Nathan, Under-Secretary of Ireland, who was forced to resign following the Rising.
* New research on British imperial intelligence and anti-colonial nationalism is presented by Professor Michael Silvestri of Clemson University, South Carolina.
* Mr Joe Duignan, retired surgeon at St Vincent's University Hospital and former Senior Lecturer in Surgery at UCD, will offer a view on the surgical realities of 1916.
* A new exhibition from UCD Library and UCD Archives, 'Reading 1916', will run in conjunction with the event. It will be launched by Dr Lucy Collins, UCD School of English, Drama and Film and gives an insight into the thoughts and opinions of those who lived through the turbulence of a century ago.

More information on UCD Decade of Centenaries events at: www.ucd.ie/centenaries/event-calendar

IN MEMORIAM



The plaque in the Abbey Theatre foyer.

Abbey to unveil new plaque with more Rising names

ON Easter Monday, Pearse and Connolly marched their troops from Liberty Hall past the Abbey Theatre on the way to the GPO. Quite a few of those men and women would have glanced across at the building, wondering if and when they would return to what was their regular place of work.

The first rebel to die that day, Seán Connolly, was an Abbey actor. Other Abbey actors who participated were Máire Ní Shiubhlaigh, Helena Molony and Arthur 'Boss' Shields. Ellen Bushell worked in the box office and was a member of the executive of Na Fianna, while prompter Barney Murphy and stagehand Peadar Kearney also saw action.

Kearney is better known for writing 'The Soldiers' Song', while Shields became a screen actor, starring in *The Quiet Man* and *How Green Was My Valley*, and dying in California in 1970.

On the 50th anniversary of the Rising, Taoiseach Seán Lemass unveiled a plaque in the foyer of the theatre, listing those above.

Research by the author Jimmy Wren found that some names were omitted, such as actor Edward Keegan, and the theatre has decided to mark the centenary by making amends.

Myra McAuliffe of the Abbey explains: "In March 2016, on the centenary of the 1916 Rising, we will unveil a new plaque, which will include the names of more staff and company members who were involved in the Easter Rising, who we have learned about more recently.

"In the interest of inclusion, the Abbey Theatre is interested in hearing from people whose relatives were members of the Abbey Theatre staff or acting company who performed in Abbey Theatre productions between 1904 and 1916, who were involved in the 1916 Rising."

The 1966 plaque includes a quote, 'It is a hard service they take that help me', taken from the play *Kathleen Ni Houlihan* by WB Yeats and Lady Gregory. **GS**

THE LOST CHILDREN

Schoolboy shot from 'Helga' ship

THE *Helga* was a British Navy gunship which played a role in suppressing the Rising. It was actually built in Dublin — in the Liffey Dockyard in 1908 — as a fishery protection vessel, but in April 1915 was commandeered by the Admiralty as part of the war effort. It was equipped with a 12-pounder gun which had a range of 11,000 metres and could fire 15 rounds a minute.

When the Rising broke out the *Helga* was called up and began firing at Boland's Mill. On the Wednesday of Easter Week it sailed up the Liffey to join the field guns stationed in Trinity College in shelling Liberty Hall.

Some historians maintain the *Helga*'s effect has been overplayed, and that it fired just 40 rounds during the rebellion. Lar Joye, of the National Museum, points out that two of the crew refused to fire the guns that week.

A schoolboy called Walter Scott from Irvine Crescent, North Dock, died in July 1916 from a gunshot wound to his head, believed to be fired from the *Helga* as he joined his mother on a trip to buy bread. He was eight years old.

Eight weeks before his father, who worked in the port as Dredging Master, had died of pneumonia after he fell into Dublin Bay.

In 1923 the *Helga* was handed over to the newly-formed Irish navy and saw service as the *Muirchu* for the next 25 years before being sold as scrap. On her last voyage back to Dublin she sank off Co Wexford. The wheel and portholes are now on display in a maritime heritage centre in Kehoe's Pub, Kilmore Quay. **LS**

1916 ONLINE

Watch more online at independent.ie/1916

AS part of the *Irish Independent*'s unrivalled coverage of the centenary of the Easter Rising, a dedicated website is now online. The site uses words, pictures and video to enhance understanding of a defining moment in our nation's history.

Read excerpts from important books, watch Ryan Tubridy talk about his grandfather, and marvel at the stunning photos of Dublin in 1916. The site also carries all the articles in our ongoing series 'My 1916'.

The independent.ie/1916 site will continue to build into a brilliant resource for students in years to come.

Maud Gonne (extreme right) in the lead role in a 1902 production of 'Cathleen Ni Houlihan'. Later it was customary to spell it Kathleen Ni Houlihan.
COURTESY OF THE ABBEY THEATRE ARCHIVE

A Poets' revolt

PJ Mathews on how culture heavily influenced the Rising and its leaders

ONE of the enduring ideas about the 1916 Rising is that it was a 'poets' revolt'. This may be partly to do with the fact the most famous statement about the event is, itself, a poem. Yeats's 'Easter 1916' gave us the unforgettable refrain *'A terrible beauty is born'*, but it also portrayed leaders like Pearse and MacDonagh as cultured men of letters as well as revolutionaries. There is no doubt that poetry and theatre played a huge role in the events that led to the Easter Rising but it is unlikely that any of the volunteers who saw action on Easter week signed up for combat solely because they read patriotic poems or attended nationalist plays.

It is true that many of the leading figures were deeply interested in culture: Patrick Pearse was a writer and an important figure in the Gaelic League; Thomas MacDonagh lectured in English literature at UCD and wrote poetry; and Máire Nic Shiubhlaigh was a central figure in the shaping of the Irish theatre movement. They came of age in a city where experimental art was being created, new theatres were being opened, and a new enthusiasm for the Irish language was finding expression. The pubs and tearooms bristled with energy as people debated the themes and controversies of the latest literary magazines.

The production of the revolutionary play, *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, by WB Yeats and Lady Gregory is often cited as a moment when ideas of romantic nationalism radicalised a generation of rebels who would end up in the GPO in 1916. There is no mistaking the political message behind this drama. The old woman, Cathleen (an allegorical figure who represents Mother Ireland), has lost her four green fields and appeals to a young man to help her get them back. The hero, Michael, is moved by this story and leaves his bride-to-be to help the old woman. As he leaves, Cathleen is transformed into a beautiful young woman 'with the walk of a queen'.

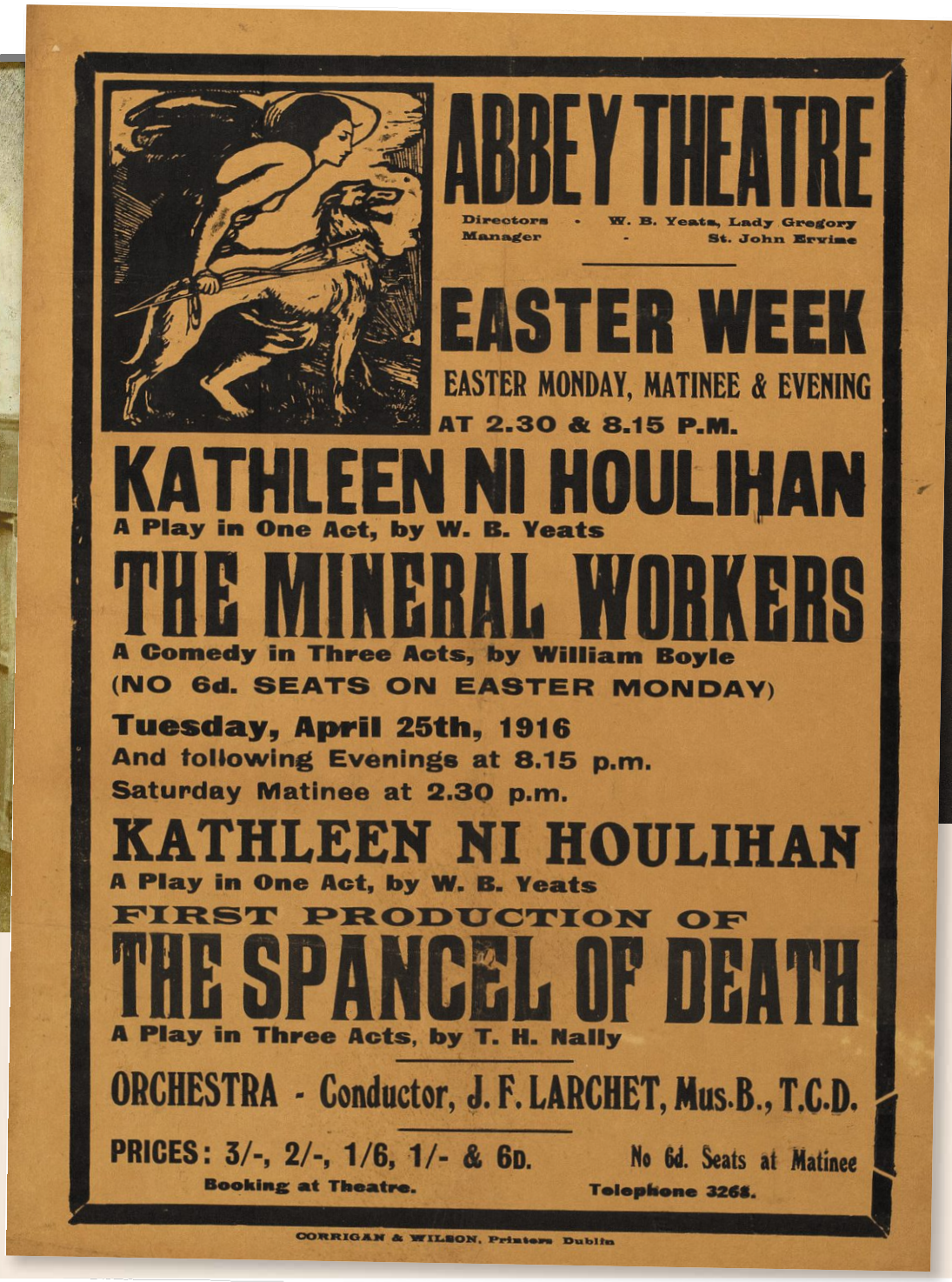
This influential play of the early Irish theatre movement was produced in St Teresa's Hall in Clarendon Street on 2 April 1902. It marked the beginning of a ground-breaking collaboration between a talented band of part-time actors under the direction of Frank and Willie Fay, and the playwrights of the Irish Literary Theatre. Starring Maud Gonne in the title role, it was a huge popular success and was revived many times in the years leading up to 1916. In fact the play was performed at the Abbey just weeks before the Rising.

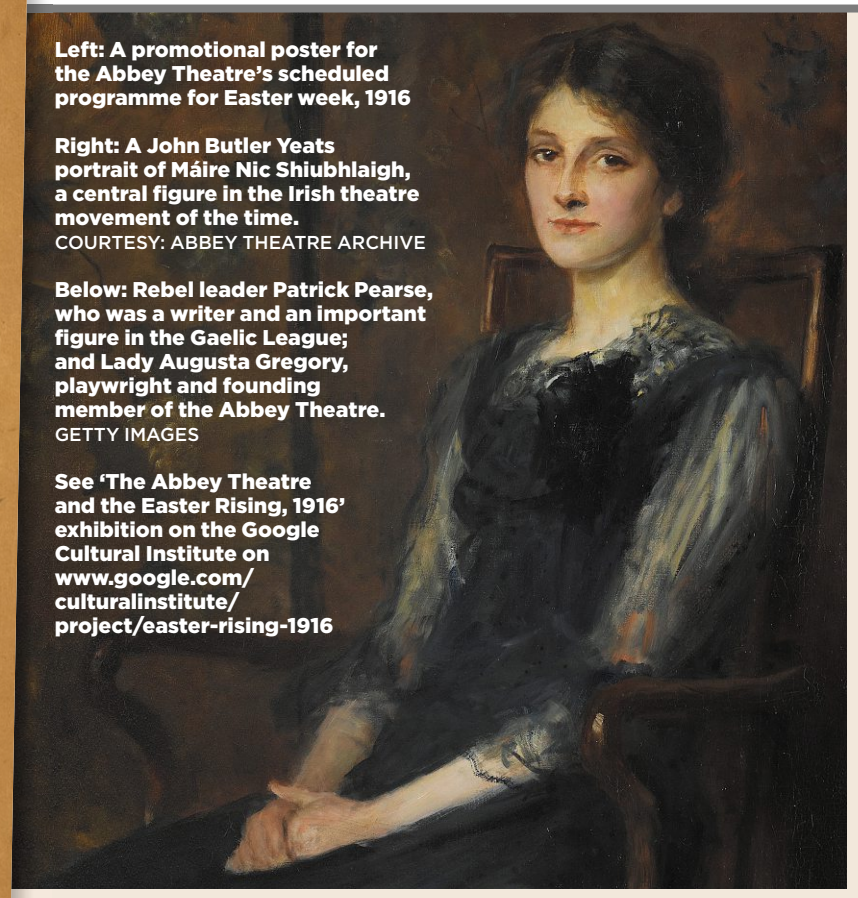
Set near Killala, Co Mayo, it recalls the United Irishmen rebellion of 1798 and blends ideas of Fenian revolution with Celtic other-worldliness. The play draws heavily on the Gaelic *aisling* tradition in which Ireland is personified as a woman. As is often pointed out, this is a rather disabling notion of female possibility. The only option open to the female character in this instance is to inspire male heroic action. There is something paradoxical, however, in the fact that the actress who played the lead role, Maud Gonne, was anything but a passive woman at this time. She was a leading advocate for women's rights, a defender of the poor and an important figure in artistic circles.

UCD's PJ Mathews photographed at Dublin's Abbey Theatre.
FRANK McGRATH

It is instructive, however to look at what else was happening at the time *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* was written. It is obvious that Yeats and Lady Gregory wrote it as a way of counteracting the appeal of the British monarchy in Ireland. The visits of kings and queens were often greeted with enthusiasm by a large proportion of the Irish people. Many welcomed the celebratory occasion and relished the opportunity to catch a glimpse of the king or queen. Yeats, however, was vocal in his objection to royal visits. He pointed out that in Ireland public displays of loyalty were often followed by protracted periods of revolutionary action against the Crown. Royal visits, it seems, could unmask the rigid hierarchies underpinning the ruling system.

It was largely to neutralise the mystique of the British monarch with an Irish





Left: A promotional poster for the Abbey Theatre's scheduled programme for Easter week, 1916

Right: A John Butler Yeats portrait of Máire Nic Shiubhlaigh, a central figure in the Irish theatre movement of the time.
COURTESY: ABBEY THEATRE ARCHIVE

Below: Rebel leader Patrick Pearse, who was a writer and an important figure in the Gaelic League; and Lady Augusta Gregory, playwright and founding member of the Abbey Theatre.
GETTY IMAGES

See 'The Abbey Theatre and the Easter Rising, 1916' exhibition on the Google Cultural Institute on www.google.com/culturalinstitute/project/easter-rising-1916

equivalent, that he and Lady Gregory exhumed the old Gaelic sovereignty goddess, Cathleen Ni Houlihan. This figure embodied the nation in the form of a woman (as Queen Victoria did in Britain) who could inspire the loyalty of the people, and the bravery of young men. When the ageing Victoria came to Dublin in 1900 her mission to recruit young Irishmen to fight in the Boer War was widely commented upon. *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* was performed on the Dublin stage shortly afterwards to remind Irishmen of their duty to reclaim the sovereign nation. Yeats had this play in mind when he later wrote the lines *'Did that play of mine send out / Certain men the English shot?'* It was much parodied by post-independence writers such as Seán O'Casey and Denis Johnston who regarded it as the apotheosis of a dangerous, unthinking nationalism.

The themes of stoic idealism and mystical sacrifice can also be found in the poetry of Patrick Pearse. His poem, 'Fornocht Do Chonac Thú' ('Naked I Saw Thee'), reiterates the idea of self-denial found in *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* and, eerily, anticipates Pearse's own death. Once again, the turning away from earthly delights is seen as a necessary precursor to heroic action. Joseph Mary Plunkett's most famous poem, 'I See His Blood Upon the Rose' is more overtly Christian in tone. It embraces the mystical idea of the incarnation of Jesus in the beauty of the natural world. In contrast to Pearse, the note of self-denial is not so pronounced. If anything, the poem endorses the idea of Christian fulfilment in this life as well as the next.

Plunkett's friend and fellow signatory of the Proclamation, Thomas MacDonagh, was more secular in his thought. His play, *Metempsychosis*, a comedy performed by the Theatre of Ireland in 1912 is very revealing in this regard. Significantly, in the light of MacDonagh's subsequent execution in 1916, the play stands as a firm critique of martyrdom to an abstract principle. In fact it pointedly satirises the wilful, conscious ending of a life for the sake of some intangible ideal or sense of a higher plan. Furthermore, it exposes to ridicule those who proffer such ideas to others but are unwilling to follow such deathly doctrines themselves.

> *People who had previouly gathered to discuss literary matters and political issues were now running guns and taking part in military manoeuvres. Others were volunteering to fight in the trenches*

The mystical strain in poetry and drama is a discernable tone in the literary soundscape of the period. However, it is hardly the dominant note. Critics of the Rising often zeroed in on this element after the fact to claim that the rebellion was spearheaded by a group of crazed religious fanatics with a militarist death wish. It also suited the agenda of an ascendant conservative elite who were eager to claim the Rising in the name of the Catholic faith.

In reality most of the leading figures were deeply committed civic activists rather than tortured romantic souls. Many, too, were important leaders in the re-emergence of enlightenment values of civic participation and citizenship that revolutionised Irish life in the decades prior to 1916. During this period people gathered in their thousands in meeting rooms and parish halls all over Ireland to create a new civic culture outside the scope of institutional religion, the colonial state and conventional politics.

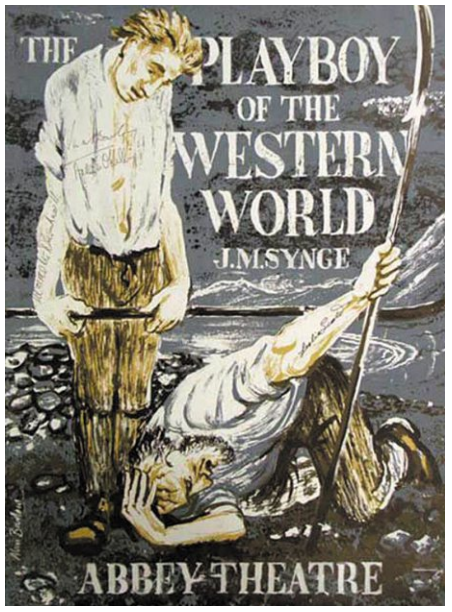
The 1916 generation led a whole range of clubs, leagues, and societies, dedicated to nationalism, fenianism, women's suffrage, socialism, republicanism, anti-conscriptionism, Irish language revivalism and trade unionism. Significantly, many of the leading figures also contributed to influential publications like the *Irish Review*, founded in 1911 by Mary Colum and others. This robust and energetic journal combined an interest in literary and cultural matters with social theory and critique. It was a melting pot of ideas on republicanism, female suffrage and the rights of children — many of which would find their way into the 1916 Proclamation.

What is most striking, however, is the speed with which cultural and intellectual energies and activities across the networks of activism transformed into military organisation in response to the Home Rule crisis of 1912 and in the context of a militarist zeitgeist sweeping Europe at the outbreak of the First World War. People who had previously gathered to discuss literary matters and political issues were now running guns and taking part in military manoeuvres. Others were volunteering to fight in the trenches.

There is no question that an interest in literature and theatre brought many like-minded people of radical intent together in the years preceding the Rising. It is doubtful, however, that abstract devotion to *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* was a major factor in the unfolding events.

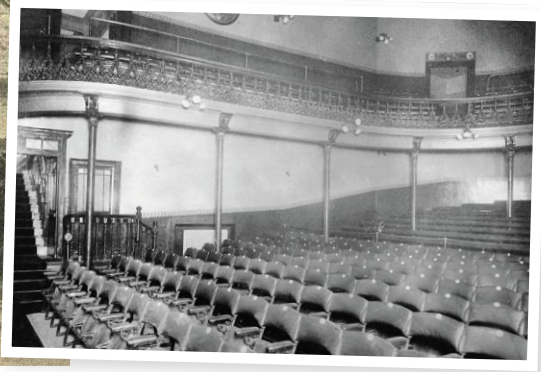
The actions of Easter 1916 were initiated by men and women who regarded themselves as equal citizens but who, paradoxically, lacked elected authority. These actions were justified in their minds by the fact that in Ireland no elected national authority was permitted to exist, or could come into being, without the use of force.

Dr PJ Mathews is a Senior Lecturer in the UCD School of English, Drama and Film. He is the co-editor (with Declan Kiberd) of Handbook of the Irish Revival, recently published by Abbey Theatre Press.



Above: an early poster for JM Synge's 'The Playboy Of The Western World' at the Abbey Theatre, seen left in 1913 and its auditorium below in 1904.

COURTESY: ABBEY THEATRE ARCHIVE



Laughter and tears

Theatre was the centre of entertainment and so varied — even anti-Irish at times — one hundred years ago, writes **PJ Mathews**

PLANS for an Irish national theatre were being made by WB Yeats, Lady Gregory and Edward Martyn in the late 1890s when popular interest in theatre was at its height. With the approach of the new century, new limits on the length of the working week led to a huge increase in the demand for entertainment and popular amusement across the United Kingdom.

Not surprisingly, this period witnessed a great expansion in theatre — the great popular form of amusement of the 19th century. Dublin was no different and theatre experienced something of a boom in the final decades of Victoria's reign. Venues such as the Queen's Theatre, the Gaiety Theatre and the Theatre Royal thrived and were commercially successful. It is worth noting, however, that the Victorian theatre experience was very different from what we might be used to in our own times. In general, the popular theatres were much more raucous places. Patrons expected a lively night out and were not shy about making their feelings known if they didn't like what they were seeing on stage.

This is an era that we associate with the 'music hall' format, which would offer a variety of entertainments in any one show. Songs, recitations, dancing, magic and comic routines might all be part of the programme — some acts being received more favourably than others. In fact, the hostile reception that JM Synge's *Playboy of the Western World* received when it was first produced on the Abbey stage in 1907 was, in many ways, a throwback to the boisterous conventions of music hall.

Audiences also loved the suspense and emotional intensity of melodrama. The plots tended to be simplistic and the characters generally virtuous 'goodies' or evil 'baddies'. The use of tricks and special effects was hugely appealing too. Theatrical farces also attracted huge houses, with knock-about characters and witty dialogue provoking much laughter.

It is hard to image now the impact that theatre had at this time before the existence of the internet, TV, radio and cinema. A casual flick through the newspapers of the period, however, reveals how important the theatre was in cultural life. Almost daily, readers could find reviews and articles about current and forthcoming productions, as well as interviews with leading playwrights and actors. Indeed the celebrity culture of the day, such as it existed, was dominated by figures from the world of theatre.

Towards the end of the 19th century, however, we begin to see a significant change of attitude amongst the intelligentsia in relation to theatre. The tide begins to turn against what is regarded as an unhealthy obsession with 'triviality'. Writers, artists and intellectuals all over Europe begin to recoil from what they see as the low standards and cheap laughter of popular culture. To those concerned with the erosion of 'high culture', the music halls had become the worst manifestation of a profit-driven, materialist and industrial age. This thinking led to fresh ideas about drama and its role in society, and opened up new possibilities for the theatre.

Henrik Ibsen revolutionised European drama with his 'theatre of ideas', which aimed to make the theatre more than just a place of amusement. He tried to shift the focus from commercial to artistic success. Under his influence new avant-garde theatres were founded in Paris, Berlin and London.

Ireland was not impervious to the influence of mass culture in the late 19th century. Especially in urban areas, English fashions, publications and popular entertainments flourished. And, as was happening all over Europe, Irish intellectuals began to voice their disapproval of popular entertainments. They were also alert to an added complication — not only were most popular entertainments (as they saw them) vulgar and materialistic, but many were imported and regarded as a threat to local forms of cultural expression.

Not surprisingly, the theatre would become a focus for this kind of critique. Many of the founders of the Abbey were disturbed by the fact that the drama performed on Dublin stages was provided almost exclusively by British touring companies for whom the city was merely another stop on the UK circuit. Indeed it wasn't unusual for visiting companies to mount plays featuring stage Irish characters for the 'amusement' of Irish audiences.

In 1904 the Abbey Theatre was set up to counteract these cultural tendencies. The idea was to provide a space that would encourage Irish playwrights to write plays for Irish audiences. This new venture would provide an alternative to the commercial theatres by aiming for artistic rather than financial success. Nonetheless, some of the greatest plays produced by the early Abbey Theatre (notably those of JM Synge, Lady Gregory and Seán O'Casey) were as influenced by the farce and knockabout of the popular theatres as by the high-minded manifesto of the new theatre.

Dr PJ Mathews is a Senior Lecturer in the UCD School of English, Drama and Film

Wonderful beauty of Ireland's rebel poems

The insurrection inspired a vibrant body of work, writes **Lucy Collins**

THE poetry of 1916 engages in fundamental ways with the ideals of independence and with the feelings and experiences that helped to shape the modern nation. Perceived as a 'poets' revolution', the Easter Rising is often linked to the Irish Revival that flourished at the turn of the century, suggesting a close relationship between artistic expression and political activism.

The Revivalist movement, which was well under way by the 1890s, sought to forge a distinctive Irish literature through the use of native materials and writing styles. These aims, expressed in journals such as the *Irish Review*, had a performance counterpart on the stage of the Abbey Theatre. However, though the artistic achievements of this time, both in performance and print, signalled an intense engagement with ideas of national identity, the political and cultural wings of the nationalist movement remained distinct.

So the poems of 1916 are drawn from a wide range of sources — some are written by the rebel leaders themselves and some by major Irish poets; others are widely circulated texts that catch the popular feeling of the years following the Rising.

Patrick Pearse joined the Gaelic League in 1896 and was, for a time, the editor of its newspaper *An Claidheamh Soluis*. Convinced of the significance of the Irish language, and keen both to modernise it and to expand its use, he wrote poetry in both Irish and English. Ideas of suffering and sacrifice lay at the heart of the work, which was strongly influenced by Christian imagery and idealism. 'Fornocht Do Chonac Thú (Naked I Saw Thee)' is perhaps the best known of his Irish language poems; its single-minded perspective underpins much of Pearse's verse in English too, reinforcing the visionary character of many poems of the Rising. In 'The Mother', Pearse chooses a female voice to bring the combined pride and suffering of the bereaved to life. Grief is assuaged here by an awareness of the heroism of the men's actions.

Yet in spite of Pearse's reputation as a fervent nationalist, his writings as a whole reveal the range of his political thought, and his capacity for reflection and change.

Christian iconography was an important feature of much of the work by rebel poets. Joseph Mary Plunkett shared Pearse's commitment to this symbolism but his work is the more mystical of the two. His poems grapple with the challenges of human imperfection: 'I See His Blood Upon the Rose' reads the presence of the divine in nature as a way of transcending this limitation.

Though they learned much from the Irish emphasis of Revivalist writing, these poets were also influenced by the English tradition, both in form and tone. Thomas MacDonagh, who taught with Pearse at St Enda's, and later lectured at University College Dublin, was a literary scholar and both his poetry and criticism reflect his familiarity with cultural histories beyond Ireland. The title of his first volume of poetry, *Songs of Myself*, testifies to the importance of self-reflection and personal relationships in his work, however. It is through direct experience that MacDonagh understands his aspirations as an Irishman.

Arguably, the most famous representation of the Easter Rising was not by a rebel poet but by WB Yeats. 'Easter, 1916' remains one of the 20th century's iconic poems but its popular reception in the decades that followed the Rising somewhat obscures the complexity of the feelings it expresses. The changing perspective on the rebels here, from casual dismissal to formal memorialisation, suggests both the poet's ambivalence towards the events and his growing sense of their significance. In another poem, 'Sixteen Dead Men', Yeats reflects on how the execution of the rebel leaders has altered the sympathies of the Irish people.

Already an established poet by the time of the Rising, Yeats's involvement in the Irish Revival, and his close relationship with Maud Gonne, brought him into the revolutionaries' orbit, though he never espoused the use of violence for political ends. Yeats was once a friend of rebel leader Constance Markievicz and of her sister — the poet, Eva Gore-Booth.

Both women gave up lives of privilege for political and social activism and, though ideologically at odds with one another, they retained a strong emotional bond as Gore-Booth's poem 'Comrades' indicates. As a pacifist, Gore-Booth opposed all forms of violence, and was sensitive to the involvement of Irish soldiers in the First World War, as well as in revolution at home.

The tension between these positions can be traced in the poetry of the time: Tom Kettle and Francis Ledwidge both enlisted in the British Army but Ledwidge's most famous poem would be an elegy for his executed friend Thomas MacDonagh. Poems about the revolutionaries, whether they were reflective lyrics or popular ballads, became an important part of the memorialisation of 1916. 'The Foggy Dew', by Canon Charles O'Neill, uses the Irish song tradition to appeal to popular consciousness, while Liam MacGabhann's 'Connolly' — one of a number of poems on the labour leader — emphasises the recognition of this figure within his own lifetime.

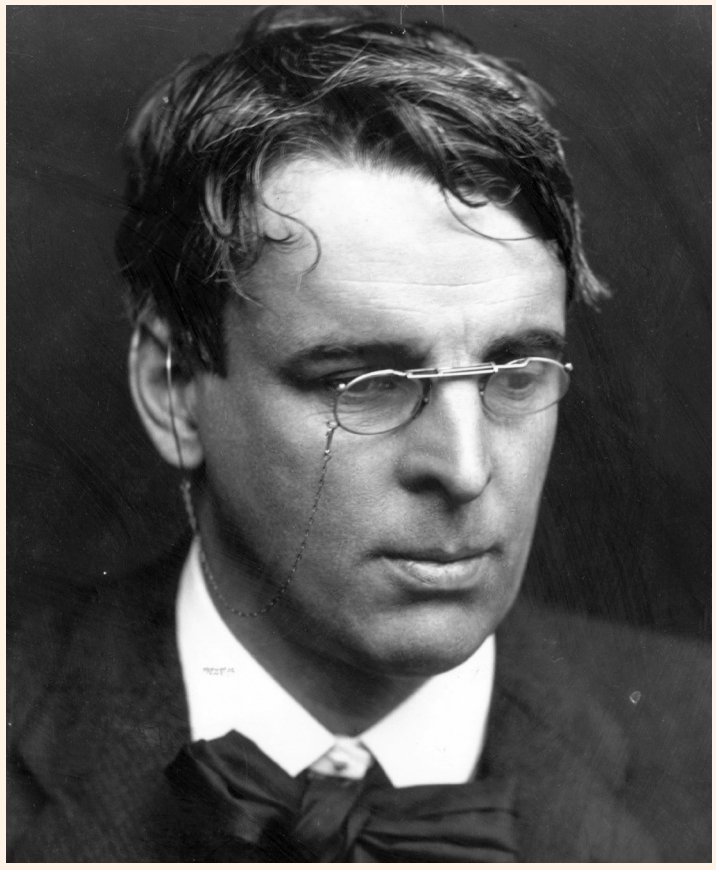
Irish poets continue to engage imaginatively with the Easter Rising, often in ways that offer new or challenging perspectives on previous views. Vona Groarke's 'Imperial Measure' offers a perspective on the role of women in the GPO, which subtly addresses the neglect of female participants in the received narratives of the period.

Other poets such as Paul Durcan and Paula Meehan use witty and provocative observations to challenge the act of commemoration itself. The enduring importance of the 1916 Rising as an inspiration for poetry reveals its power to address our shared understanding of the past, as well as our individual responses to this moment in history.

UCD's Lucy Collins in Dublin's Garden of Remembrance.

Dr Lucy Collins is a lecturer in English at University College Dublin (UCD). She is the curator of 'Reading 1916', a forthcoming exhibition at UCD Special Collections

Vote for your favourite poem at www.independent.ie/risingpoems

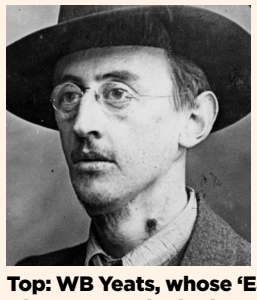


SOME magnificent poetry has emerged from the Easter Rising, from participants, onlookers and others writing over the century since 1916. In this Irish Independent magazine series Dr Lucy Collins of University College Dublin writes about ten key poems.

You can now vote for your favourite poem about the Rising in an independent.ie online poll on our dedicated 1916 section: www.independent.ie/risingpoems

Read the commentary by Dr Collins and choose your favourite from these:

* 'The Mother', by Patrick Pearse
* 'I See His Blood Upon the Rose', by Joseph Plunkett
* 'The Foggy Dew', by Canon Charles O'Neill
* 'The Wayfarer', by Patrick Pearse
* 'Easter 1916', by WB Yeats
* 'Connolly', by Liam Mac Gabhann
* 'Wishes for my Son', by Thomas MacDonagh
* 'Comrades', by Eva Gore-Booth
* 'Sixteen Dead Men', by WB Yeats
* 'Imperial Measure', by Vona Groarke



Top: WB Yeats, whose 'Easter 1916' remains one of the 20th century's most iconic poems. Above: Joseph Plunkett ('I See His Blood Upon The Rose'); Canon Charles O'Neill ('The Foggy Dew'); Eva Gore-Booth ('Comrades') with her sister Costance Markievicz; and Vona Groarke ('Imperial Measure').

‘Wishes For My Son, Born On St Cecilia’s Day, 1912’

By Thomas MacDonagh

NOW, my son, is life for you,
And I wish you joy of it,—
Joy of power in all you do,
Deeper passion, better wit
Than I had who had enough,
Quicker life and length thereof,
More of every gift but love.

Love I have beyond all men,
Love that now you share with me—
What have I to wish you then
But that you be good and free,
And that God to you may give
Grace in stronger days to live?

For I wish you more than I
Ever knew of glorious deed,
Though no rapture passed me by
That an eager heart could heed,
Though I followed heights and sought
Things the sequel never brought.

Wild and perilous holy things
Flaming with a martyr’s blood,
And the joy that laughs and sings
Where a foe must be withstood,
Joy of headlong happy chance
Leading on the battle dance.

But I found no enemy,
No man in a world of wrong,
That Christ’s word of charity
Did not render clean and strong—
Who was I to judge my kind,
Blindest groper of the blind?

God to you may give the sight
And the clear, undoubting strength
Wars to knit for single right,
Freedom’s war to knit at length,
And to win through wrath and strife,
To the sequel of my life.

But for you, so small and young,
Born on Saint Cecilia’s Day,
I in more harmonious song
Now for nearer joys should pray—
Simpler joys: the natural growth
Of your childhood and your youth,
Courage, innocence, and truth:

These for you, so small and young,
In your hand and heart and tongue.

AN ASSESSMENT
DR LUCY COLLINS

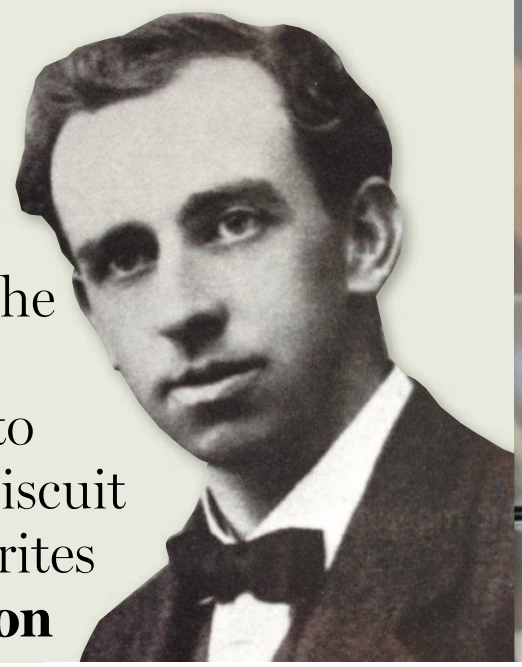
TO the rebels of 1916, the future of Ireland was closely linked to the next generation of Irish men and women, who would keep revolutionary ideals alive. In this poem, Thomas MacDonagh commemorates the birth of his son by meditating on his own hopes for the future. This vision is dominated by love, which both binds father and child together and shapes how human meaning is created here.

MacDonagh wishes that his son be ‘good and free’, linking morality with personal liberty. Here, as elsewhere in his work, he reveals the tension between individual and collective viewpoints — a tension which fundamentally shapes how freedom itself can be understood. Idealism lies at the heart of this poem, but it is a different kind of idealism to that contemplated by Pearse or Plunkett.

Though MacDonagh invokes the ‘martyr’s blood’, he recognises that violent enmity is at odds with religious feeling. He chooses instead to highlight the role of redemption; the long and patient quest for lasting freedom. The poem moves from larger, abstract aims, to the simplest of wishes for the child: that he will grow naturally in ‘courage, innocence and truth’.

THOMAS MacDONAGH

Charm *offensive*



Thomas MacDonagh’s intense political nationalism was the backdrop to him leading 150 men to seize the Jacob’s biscuit factory in 1916, writes **Catherine Wilsdon**

“I know this is a lousy job, but you’re doing your duty — I do not hold this against you.”

THESE are the words of the poet-patriot Thomas MacDonagh standing before the nervous firing squad tasked with his execution. During that tense moment, the 12 young Sherwood Foresters may well have reminded him of his own students at St Enda’s or UCD. In a final display of characteristic generosity, the revolutionary leader offered them his cigarettes. These last moments lay testament not only to the strength of character recalled by those who knew him, but also to his great ability to connect with people as a friend, leader, teacher, poet or playwright. But how had this gentle, personable scholar ended up handcuffed and blindfolded in the stonebreakers’ yard at Kilmainham Gaol?

Born in Cloughjordan, Co Tipperary, MacDonagh was educated at Rockwell College where he briefly entertained the idea of becoming a missionary priest before deciding upon a career in education. A teaching position at St Kieran’s College brought him to Kilkenny where he joined the Gaelic League and his passion for the Irish language and culture was kindled.

While teaching English, French, and History at the college, he published two volumes of poetry and became increasingly active in the League’s social and cultural activities. It was during this time that MacDonagh became fluent in the Irish language and grew dissatisfied with the absence of the subject on the St Kieran’s curriculum. This prompted him to take up a position at St Colman’s College, Fermoy, where he taught for five years before joining Patrick Pearse at his experimental Irish-language school in Dublin, St Enda’s.

MacDonagh held the position of assistant headmaster at Pearse’s school during which time he studied for a BA in French, English, and Irish at University College Dublin. Following the completion of an MA in English Literature he began lecturing at the university. In 1912 he married Muriel Gifford with whom he had two children. He continued to write poetry, plays and literary criticism during this time and, with his friends Mary and Padraic Colum, Joseph Mary Plunkett, James Stephens, and David Houston, he edited the *Irish Review* — a magazine of literature, art and science. A supporter of rights for women and workers, he was a member of the Irish Women’s Franchise League, the Industrial Peace Committee, and a founding member of the teachers’ union, ASTI.

Primarily engaged in nationalist endeavours of a cultural kind, the events of the Dublin Lockout contributed to the intensification of MacDonagh’s political nationalism and in December 1913 he joined the Irish Volunteers. Elected to company captain in July of the following year, his talkative and charming personality was put to use as he travelled the country with the aim of recruiting volunteers. At the same time the editorial of the *Irish Review* indicated a transition from ideals into action as the magazine published more outwardly political pieces such as the “Manifesto of the Irish Volunteers”.

In July 1914, alongside Bulmer Hobson and Darrell Figgis, MacDonagh played an important role in the Howth gun-running during which rifles and ammunition were smuggled in from Germany. Making their way back from Howth, the Volunteers were apprehended at Fairview by the British Army and the Dublin Metropolitan Police. Though a brief scuffle broke out, the leaders managed to prevent the standoff from escalating. While Figgis and the ever-talkative MacDonagh engaged the assistant commissioner of the DMP — William Vesey Harrell — in a prolonged argument, Hobson dispersed the volunteers.

March 1915 saw MacDonagh sworn into the Irish Republican Brotherhood and appointed Commandant of the 2nd Battalion, Dublin Brigade. However, it wasn’t until April 1916 that he became the seventh member of the Military Council, which had been established the previous year and included Pearse, Plunkett, Éamonn Ceannt, Seán MacDiarmada, Thomas Clarke and James Connolly. MacDonagh was Director of Equipment but was not informed about the plans for the rising until just before Easter week.

In the week leading up to the Rising, MacDonagh played an important role as intermediary between the Council and his colleague at UCD, Eoin MacNeill, who was opposed to the Volunteers engaging in offensive force. Once MacNeill was made aware of the plans for a rising, MacDonagh was tasked with persuading him to pledge his support. Believing that a British attack was imminent and that a German ship would soon deliver arms in Kerry, MacNeill briefly backed the insurrection. However, the interception of the ship by the British Navy prompted him to issue a countermanding order on the eve of Easter Sunday. That same day the leaders convened and planned a Monday rising instead. In an effort to divert attention from the revised plan, MacDonagh visited MacNeill at home to deliver Pearse’s

SNAPSHOT
THOMAS MacDONAGH

Born: 1 February 1878, Cloughjordan, Co Tipperary

Educated: Rockwell College

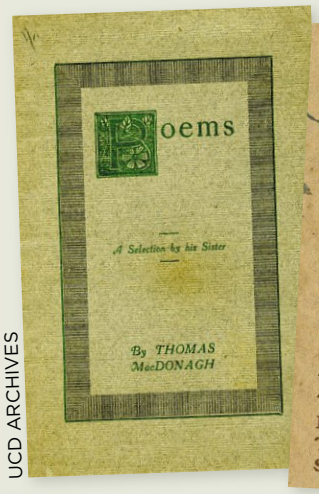
Affiliation: Irish Volunteers, IRB

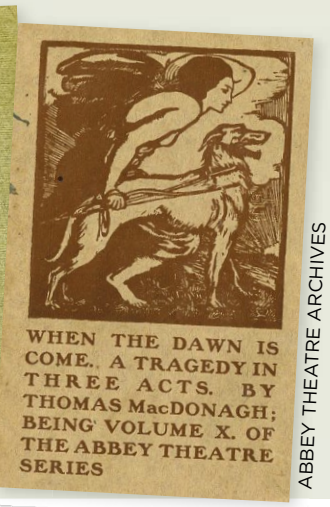
Career: Teacher, St Enda’s; lecturer, UCD

Died: 3 May 1916, Kilmainham Jail

COLIN O'RIORDAN

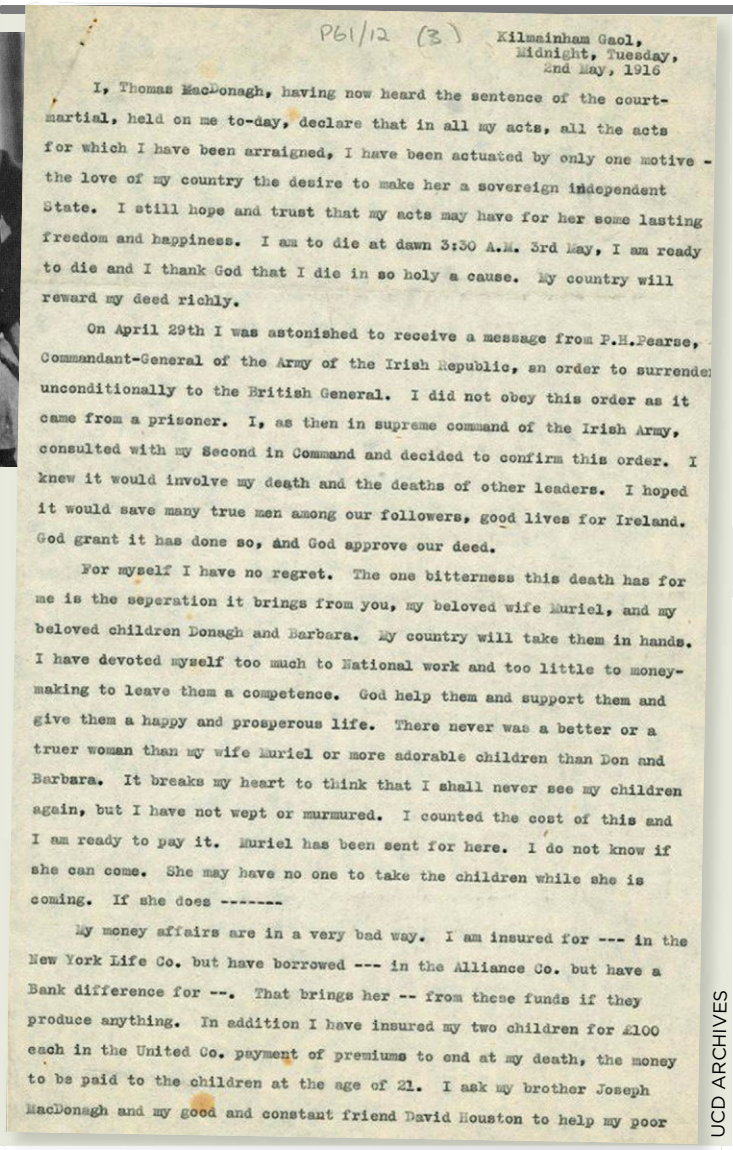
UCD ARCHIVES





ABBEY THEATRE ARCHIVES

Clockwise from left: Catherine Wilsdon; Thomas MacDonagh with his wife Muriel and their firstborn Donagh; a transcript of MacDonagh's last letter to Muriel; the covers of McDonagh's 'When the Dawn is Come' which played at the Abbey Theatre in 1908, and 'Poems By Thomas MacDonagh', as chosen by his sister. Inset below: MacDonagh, by Dublin artist Brian O'Neill.



P61/12 (3) Kilmainham Gaol,
Midnight, Tuesday,
2nd May, 1916

I, Thomas MacDonagh, having now heard the sentence of the court-martial, held on me to-day, declare that in all my acts, all the acts for which I have been arraigned, I have been actuated by only one motive - the love of my country the desire to make her a sovereign independent State. I still hope and trust that my acts may have for her some lasting freedom and happiness. I am to die at dawn 3:30 A.M. 3rd May, I am ready to die and I thank God that I die in so holy a cause. My country will reward my deed richly.

On April 29th I was astonished to receive a message from P.H.Pearse, Commandant-General of the Army of the Irish Republic, an order to surrender unconditionally to the British General. I did not obey this order as it came from a prisoner. I, as then in supreme command of the Irish Army, consulted with my Second in Command and decided to confirm this order. I knew it would involve my death and the deaths of other leaders. I hoped it would save many true men among our followers, good lives for Ireland. God grant it has done so, and God approve our deed.

For myself I have no regret. The one bitterness this death has for me is the seperation it brings from you, my beloved wife Muriel, and my beloved children Donagh and Barbara. My country will take them in hands. I have devoted myself too much to National work and too little to money-making to leave them a competence. God help them and support them and give them a happy and prosperous life. There never was a better or a truer woman than my wife Muriel or more adorable children than Don and Barbara. It breaks my heart to think that I shall never see my children again, but I have not wept or murmured. I counted the cost of this and I am ready to pay it. Muriel has been sent for here. I do not know if she can come. She may have no one to take the children while she is coming. If she does -------

My money affairs are in a very bad way. I am insured for --- in the New York Life Co. but have borrowed --- in the Alliance Co. but have a Bank difference for --. That brings her -- from these funds if they produce anything. In addition I have insured my two children for £100 each in the United Co. payment of premiums to end at my death, the money to be paid to the children at the age of 21. I ask my brother Joseph MacDonagh and my good and constant friend David Houston to help my poor

UCD ARCHIVES

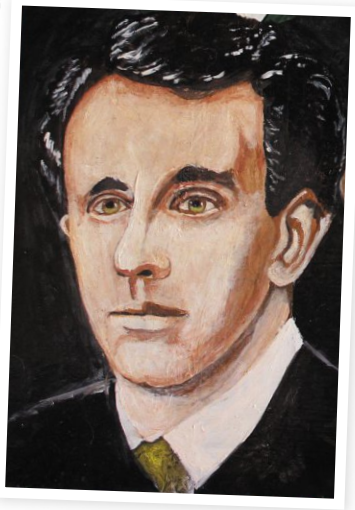
confirmation of the countermand. That would be the last time MacNeill would see his friend.

At noon on Easter Monday the 2nd Battalion of the Dublin Brigade convened at St Stephen's Green Park where they were joined by members of Cumann na mBan and Na Fianna Éireann. The last minute arrival of Major John MacBride meant that Michael O'Hanrahan was replaced as second-in-command owing to MacBride's superior military experience.

MacDonagh found that he had 150 men at his disposal, fewer than half of what he could have expected had the Rising taken place the previous day as planned. This meant that he would have to forgo plans to take Trinity College and concentrate efforts on seizing Jacob's Factory and establishing outposts in the area. The strategic importance of the factory lay in its proximity to Dublin Castle and to Richmond and Portobello Barracks. The position allowed the volunteers to hinder British access to the city from the South.

Relative to the fighting that took place at the GPO and the Four Courts, however, they saw little action. Heavily fortified, with snipers positioned in the towers relentlessly harassing the British forces, and surrounded by a warren of small streets, Jacob's Factory was a difficult target for an all-out attack. The disruption brought angry civilian mobs to the gates of the garrison prompting MacDonagh to order rebels to fire blanks to disperse the crowd. As a leader he was reported to have been indecisive and confusing in his orders and therefore MacBride assumed a leading role. Nevertheless, his sense of humour and good nature helped to reassure the volunteers as they waited in anticipation of British attack. During the week the brigade ambushed 30 British soldiers, a plain-clothes DMP officer reporting on activities at the factory was shot, and six others captured. At Davy's pub an opportunity to attack a troop of British soldiers was lost, precipitating the fall of the outpost.

Initially, MacDonagh opposed Pearse's order to surrender until he confirmed the legitimacy of the order with Ceannt. On April 30 he accepted surrender and ordered his brigade to stand down. The first of the leaders to be tried and executed, the British officer-in-command remarked: "They all died nobly, but MacDonagh died like a prince".



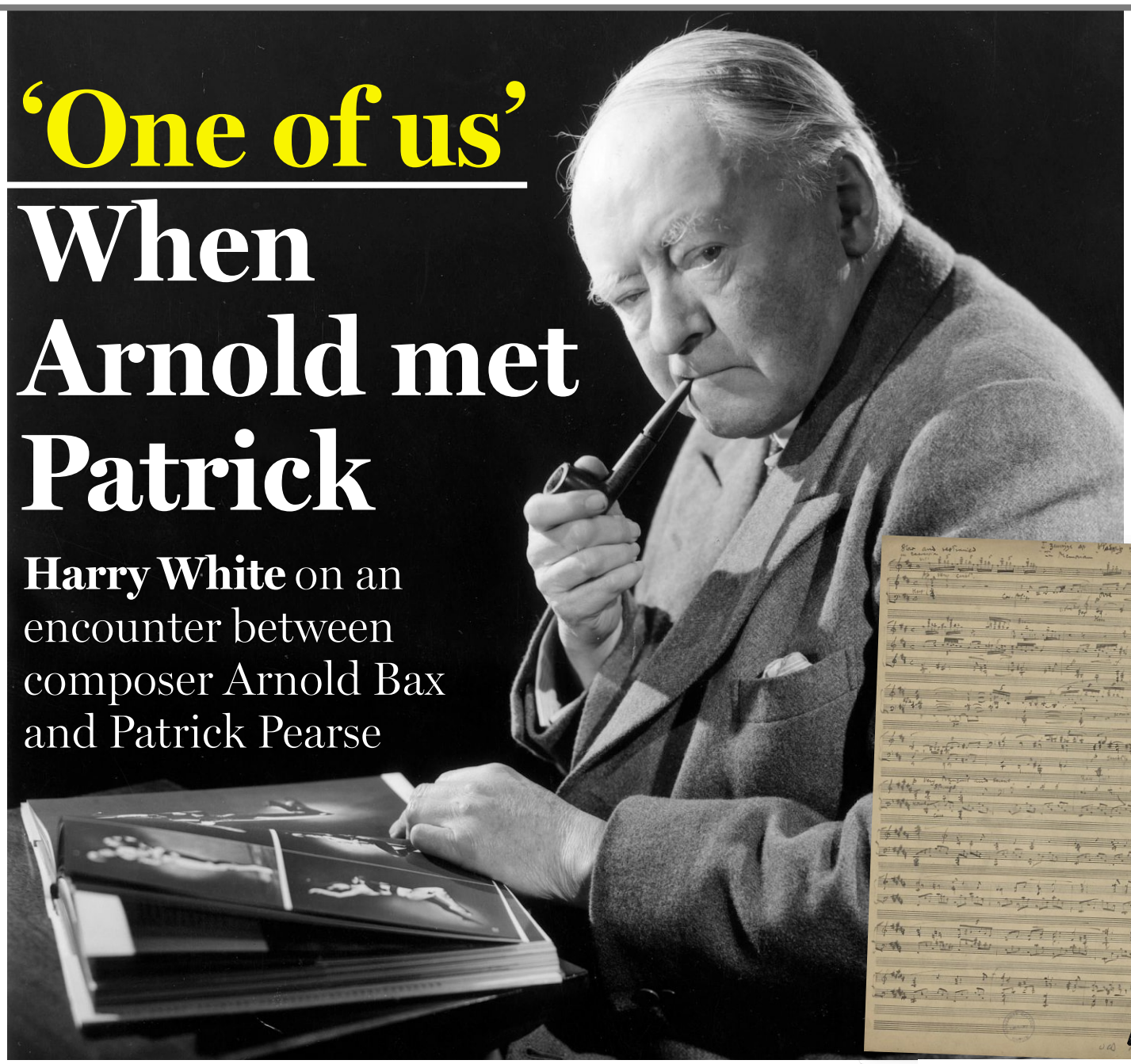
In the week leading up to the Rising, MacDonagh played an important role as intermediary between the Council and his colleague at UCD, Eoin MacNeill, who was opposed to the Volunteers engaging in physical force

Catherine Wilsdon is a Research Associate at UCD Humanities Institute and co-director of the Irish Revival Network. She recently completed a PhD on JM Synge at UCD School of English, Drama & Film

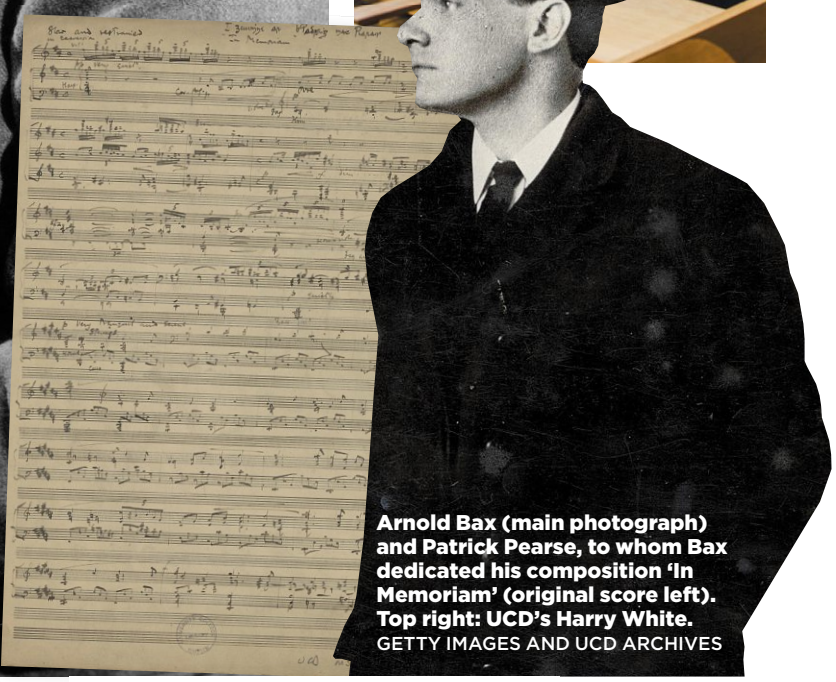
‘One of us’

When Arnold met Patrick

Harry White on an encounter between composer Arnold Bax and Patrick Pearse



COLIN O'RIORDAN



Arnold Bax (main photograph) and Patrick Pearse, to whom Bax dedicated his composition ‘In Memoriam’ (original score left). Top right: UCD’s Harry White. GETTY IMAGES AND UCD ARCHIVES

‘IN my Dublin days’, the English composer Arnold Bax wrote in 1952, ‘there was no talk of music whatever’. By then, less than a year before his death in Cork (where he lies in St Finbarre’s cemetery), Bax had long become an eminence of British music. Knighted in 1937, he later became Master of the King’s Music. But Bax’s love-affair with Ireland abided to the grave.

This was a passion originally inspired by Yeats: having read ‘The Wanderings of Oisin’, Bax visited Ireland in 1902, and felt an immediate affinity and sense of belonging which lasted throughout his life. It was Yeats — the great enemy of music, whose poetry confirmed an ascendancy of word over tone in Ireland that prevails even today — who nevertheless flooded the young composer’s imagination with images which were formative in the development of his musical voice. On the western seaboard of Ireland, the Celt in Bax stood ‘fully revealed’. In the shadow of Yeats’s poetry, the temple of his own art was raised.

Bax lived in Dublin from 1911 until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, but he had already become a regular visitor to Ireland before then, and his early cycle of orchestral tone poems (‘Into the Twilight’, ‘The Faery Hills’ and ‘Roscatha’), written between 1908 and 1910, affirms the burgeoning influence of Irish themes in his work. Even earlier, it was ‘Cathaleen Ni Houlihan’ (1905), an orchestral poem inspired by Yeats’s play of (nearly) the same name *Cathleen ni Houlihan* (1902), which attested the decisive impact of Ireland in the development of Bax’s musical expressivity.

Bax’s volume of memoirs, *Farewell, My Youth* (1943) closes with an affectionate recollection of his ‘Dublin days’ and his friendship with a host of Irish writers and friends (notably Padraic and Mary Colum, Darrell Figgis, Ernest Boyd and George Russell [AE]) whom he regularly entertained at his home in Bushy Park Road, Rathgar.

Two features in particular dominate these idyllic Irish recollections: one is the cosmopolitan vigour and charm of those soirées which Bax and his wife either organised or attended in the Dublin suburbs (which he contrasts with romantic summer visits to Donegal and Connemara); the other is a complete dearth of music.

> *Bax never did see that ‘death-aspiring dreamer’ again, but he records that on Easter Tuesday 1916, when he read first reports of the Rising by the shores of Lake Windemere, he said to himself, ‘I know that Pearse is in this!’*

Later in life, Bax would acknowledge how impoverished musical culture in Dublin seemed to him in those years (notwithstanding exceptions such as the ‘tiny pit orchestra’ conducted by John F Larchet — Professor of Music at UCD from 1921 until 1958 — at the Abbey Theatre). From 1909 until 1912, Bax wrote poetry, short stories and plays under the pseudonym ‘Dermot O’Byrne’ (mentioned as a figure of promise in the first edition of Boyd’s influential *Ireland’s Literary Renaissance* [1913]), so that he materially reinvented himself as a writer in order to pass muster in Dublin’s artistic circles. This was simply because Dublin offered little or no outlet for his primary impulses as a composer. ‘No talk of music whatever’ does not, in these circumstances, seem to have been an exaggeration.

Farewell, My Youth contains one especially striking episode: somewhere between autumn 1912 and the early summer of 1913, Molly Colum persuaded Patrick Pearse to visit Bax in his Rathgar home. Molly emphasised to Bax what a rare and unlikely occurrence this would be (‘he’s a very difficult fish to land’, she told him), but come he did. ‘His expression was gentle and even almost womanish’, Bax recalled, ‘but his eyes were lit with the unwavering flame of the fanatic’. Pearse and Bax talked that evening of Connemara, and the composer’s intimate knowledge of the West clearly impressed his guest. ‘My goodness, Mr Pearse’, Molly Colum said, ‘would you ever have supposed that this fella was an Englishman?’. ‘Well,’ replied Pearse quietly, with the ghost of an ironic smile, ‘I’m half-English myself!’

Bax concludes his short account of that evening with a memorable recollection: ‘As he was leaving that night he [Pearse] said to Molly, ‘I think your friend Arnold Bax may be one of us. I should like to see more of him’. Bax never did see that ‘death-aspiring dreamer’ again, but he records that on Easter Tuesday 1916, when he read first reports of the Rising by the shores of Lake Windemere, he said to himself, ‘I know that Pearse is in this!’

Bax, as it were, said goodbye to Ireland and his youth at one and the same time. But he never forgot his imaginative debt to this country, even if Ireland all but forgot him. Not long after Pearse’s execution, Bax wrote a work for orchestra entitled *In Memoriam*, on the autograph score of which he wrote (in Irish), ‘In memory of Padraig Pearse’.

The work lay unperformed for almost a century until Vernon Handley recovered the score and recorded it with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra in 1998. (It will receive its first ever Irish performance with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra in February of this year).

Bax used part of this composition in his film music for David Lean’s *Oliver Twist* (1948) — sure evidence that the original work meant much to him, to say nothing of the man who inspired it. A century after *In Memoriam* was written, it may at last be time to make good on Pearse’s perceptive aside to Mary Colum all those years ago. If *In Memoriam* isn’t Irish music, it is hard to know what is.

Harry White is Professor of Music at University College Dublin and a Fellow of the Royal Irish Academy of Music. He has written extensively on the cultural history of music in Ireland and is General Editor (with Barra Boydell) of ‘The Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland (2013)’.

IRELAND IN 1916

How Irish agriculture boomed in 1916

Commercial farming came to the market in early 20th century, says **Fergus Cassidy**

IRISH agriculture in 1916 reflected the history of land. What was cultivated on it, and who owned it. From 1851, when over 3m people were dependent on potatoes, the amount of acreage of that crop had almost halved by 1916. The development of agriculture had moved away from green and corn crop growing to animal farming, and the people working and living on the land started to become its owners. The outbreak of war in 1914 also provided further stimulus to the increasing commercialisation of Irish farming.

The decline in tillage farming began after the Great Famine. Ploughed land decreased from 4.4m acres in 1849 to 2.4m in 1916. Growing of cereal crops, mainly wheat, oats and barley, went from 3m acres to 1.3m acres, with the greatest decline of wheat growing in Leinster and Munster. Acreage under grain was halved, while at the same time, land in pasture doubled, alongside the growing numbers of horses, mules and asses.

However, those numbers dwarfed the amount of cattle on the land. Land use shifted from crops to livestock. By 1916, 79pc of the average income for farmers came directly from livestock and only 20pc from crops. Cattle numbers rose from 2.7m in 1848 to 5m in 1914, and the livestock sector accounted for 75pc of total agricultural output in that same year.

Between 1910 and 1914 cattle numbers rose by 20pc, facilitating the growth of creameries to over a 1,000 throughout the island. Dairy co-ops also grew with around 350 operating in 1914.

Sheep numbers increased from 2m in 1848 to 3.6m in 1914. Pig-rearing was an essential additional income especially for small farms, and the animals were known as the "gentleman who pays the rent". Poultry-keeping, with hens the dominant bird, became a national industry which women guarded as an important source of independent income (*see panel*).

In 1900, under the Irish Agriculture and Technical Instruction Act, an Irish Department of Agriculture was set up. Essentially a ministry, reporting directly to the cabinet in London, the department stressed the role of education, established training colleges and appointed agricultural instructors throughout the country.

A number of Land Acts passed between 1881 and 1909 effectively ended landlord control of the land. The tenant farmers of 1850 were replaced with owner farmers by 1914. The Wyndham Land (Purchase) Act of 1903 — Wyndham was chief secretary for Ireland — was the result of a negotiated agreement between representatives of landlords and tenants.

The 1916 figures for the size of land holdings provide an insight into how the land was divided up. The total number of holdings was 572,045, of which 480,883 were under 50 acres, 89,137 were between 50 to 500 acres, and 2,025 over 50 acres. By 1919, 60pc of all holdings had been, or were in the process of, being bought out. A few years later the majority of farmers owned their land.

Agriculture in Ireland was also influenced by increasing commercialisation. Changes in transport, rail, shipping etc, technological advances in machinery such as milk/cream separators, and the growing use of statistical information for rationalisation and policy initiatives, moved farming toward an industrial enterprise.

Increasing urbanisation also stimulated a more market-led approach. Between 1845 and 1914 the proportion of the population living in towns of 1,500 or more doubled. Production and prices became embedded with supply and demand, and Irish agriculture also competed on international markets with countries such as the United States, Denmark and the Netherlands.

In 1916, two years into the First World War, Irish agriculture experienced a boom. With a largely industrialised economy, agriculture was a minor part of the overall British economy which meant it was a major importer of food. The war brought heightened British government regulation such as compulsory tillage orders and guaranteed prices. Those prices rose sharply from 1914, with cattle and butter up 50pc and the doubling of barley prices.

A woman sets off with her pipe, her husband and a basket full of eggs to the market in Galway in the early twentieth century. GETTY IMAGES

CHICKEN AND EGGS

THE start of the First World War was a boon for Irish agricultural products, with eggs in particular doubling in price from 1914 to 1916, and Ireland the largest egg exporter to Britain. It was suggested that "... in many cases, the receipts from eggs have been sufficient to pay the rent and also provide the household with groceries". On many small farms, egg sales could account for up to a quarter of total income, illustrated by the popularity of this 1914 rhyme:

Cackle here and cackle there,
Lay your eggs just anywhere;
Every time you lay an egg,
down the mortgage goes a peg.

Cackle, cackle all the day,
who can find a better way
For to get ahead again
Than to cultivate a hen?

In the ten years from 1906 to 1916 poultry numbers went from 19m to 26m, accounting for around 9pc of agricultural output. A Royal Commission Report in 1907 found that poultry-rearing was predominantly a women's industry which it found "impossible to induce Irish men to adopt".

To improve production and distribution, egg societies were established, which led to tension with the producers. A 1911 conference on poultry noted that women "have considered it their perquisite and resented the introduction of the societies, whose members are usually men..."

From actors and poets to Indiana Jones

Joe O'Shea rounds up the novels, films, plays and other art inspired by the events of 1916

WB Yeats may be the literary figure who towers over the Rising, still asking as late as 1938 "*Did that play of mine send out / Certain men the English shot?*" But the great poet was hardly alone when it came to artists and writers caught up in, or inspired by, the events. The rebel ranks were full of men and women whose minds were on higher matters than mere military manoeuvres.

Educationalist and poet Patrick Pearse was just 17 when he founded the New Ireland Literary Society. Influential novelist Erskine Childers landed the Howth Mausers later used in Dublin and the journalist, poet and pioneering human rights activist Roger Casement was captured after landing from a German submarine in Kerry, just three days before the rebellion.

Casement's extraordinary life would later inspire the Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa to write *The Dream of the Celt* (2010) — his first novel after winning the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Amongst the seven signatories of the Proclamation, four (Pearse, McDonagh, Plunkett and Connolly) had published poetry. James Connolly even wrote a patriotic play, titled *Under Which Flag*. The actor who became the first man to both kill and be killed on the first day of the Rising, Citizen's Army officer Seán Connolly, had played the lead role in the play at Liberty Hall just one week before he fell to a sniper's bullet at Dublin Castle. There is a story that the tricolour he was trying to raise when he was shot was the same flag that had been used in the play.

Stagehand Peadar Kearney actually jumped ship from an Abbey Theatre tour to England to take part in the Rising and fought at Jacob's biscuit factory, making his escape as the rebel contingent there was taken into custody.

Some who took part later put down the gun only to take up the pen. These included Ernie O'Malley, the young Dublin medical student who impulsively joined the fighting and later wrote the classic *On Another Man's Wound*. The Oxford professor of Irish history, Roy Foster, has said of O'Malley's memoir of rebellious youth; "Tom Barry's *Guerrilla Days* in Ireland and Dan Breen's *My Fight for Irish Freedom* have their charms, but there was no Herzen or Trotsky capable of distilling the Irish revolutionary mentality and experience into a classic memoir: except for Ernie O'Malley".

If romantic nationalism, inspired by the art, music and literature of the Celtic Revival, played a significant part in "sending out" the men and women of 1916, the events of 100 years ago have continued to echo in high and popular culture, sometimes in the strangest of ways.

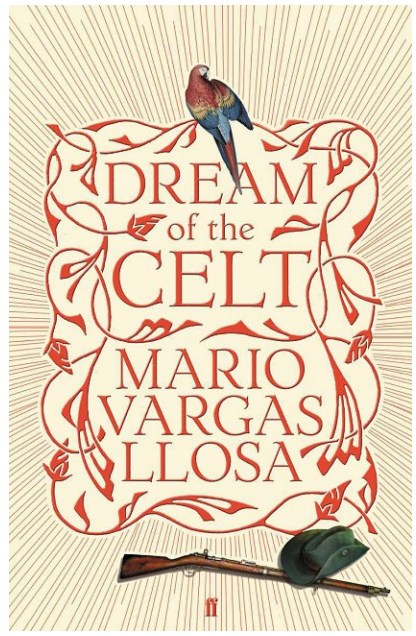
From giants of Irish literature to South American Nobel laureates and hack Hollywood scriptwriters, 1916 has inspired art that ranges from the brilliant and baffling to just banal. There are the greats, the likes of Yeats and O'Casey who were there at the time. O'Casey's Dublin Trilogy starts (in the order of events, at least) with *The Plough and the Stars*, set around 1916 and ends with *Juno and The Paycock* and the Civil War.

Many Irish and foreign writers have used the events of 100 years ago as a backdrop to their stories, often sweeping epics. Roddy Doyle's *A Star Called Henry* (1999) follows the early life of Henry Smart, from childhood in the slums of Dublin to his involvement in the Rising and later on, the Tan War.

Sebastian Barry's *A Long Long Way* evokes both the horror of the greater war in Europe as well as the confusion and conflicted loyalties of events in Ireland, while Iris Murdoch's *The Red and the Green* focuses on an Anglo-Irish family on the sombre, rain-soaked streets of Dublin. Others who found inspiration in the Rising include Liam O'Flaherty (*Insurrection*) and Jamie O'Neill (*At Swim, Two Boys*).

In the visual arts, perhaps the most popular and re-produced painting to follow in the aftermath of the fighting was Walter Paget's dramatic *The Birth of The Irish Republic*. The English artist had actually been pencilled in to illustrate the first Sherlock Holmes mysteries, to be published by *The Strand* magazine. But due to a secretarial mix-up, that job instead went to his brother Sidney who went on to create the classic illustrations for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's stories. In yet another connection to the Rising, Conan Doyle led the campaign to have the death sentence on his friend Roger Casement commuted.

Paget's vivid depiction of the GPO at the height of the fighting — with flames everywhere and James Connolly on a stretcher as Pearse and Clarke direct the defences — became a very popular print in 1918.



Clockwise from above: Roddy Doyle's 'A Star Called Henry' is set in Rising-era Dublin; Walter Paget's 'The Birth Of The Irish Republic'; an episode of 'The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles' was set in 1916; Mario Vargas Llosa's novel 'Dream of the Celt' was inspired by Roger Casement.

How books can teach our children about the Rising

THE history of Easter Week 1916 is well known — but what was it like to be a child or young adult as Dublin city went up in flames? Was it exciting? Frightening? Horrifying? How did friends and neighbours react when some families had sons fighting for Britain in the Great War, while others had sons fighting for the rebels against the British?

As the key moment in Irish history, the Easter Rising has featured in books, plays and poems. And much of the storytelling has been from the viewpoint of the men who fought bravely on both side. Now, however, attention has been given to the women and children who were also participants, spectators — and sometimes tragic victims of the Rising.

For many years their stories went unheard, but today Irish children can read gripping fiction that explores life during that turbulent period. These stories have been told by writers like Gerard Whelan (*The Guns of Easter*), Siobhan Parkinson (*No Peace for Amelia*), Morgan Llewellyn (*1916*), Gerard Siggins (*Rugby Rebel*), and more recently by Brian Gallagher (*Friend or Foe*) and Patricia Murphy (*Molly's Diary*). There's even been a graphic novel about the Rising by Gerry Hunt (*Blood upon the Rose*).

With such a diverse selection of exciting books now available, young Irish readers can journey back in time and imagine what life was like for their great-grandparents. And while history gives us the facts, stories tell us more than mere facts, and allow us to experience how people felt.

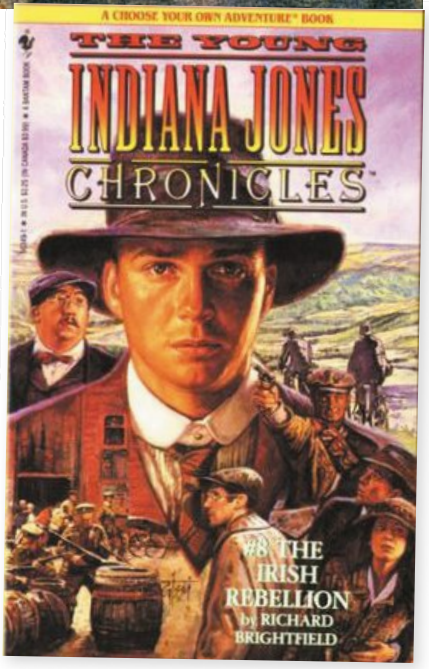
Looking at the statistics today, it's shocking to find that the losses of British soldiers, Dublin Metropolitan Police, Irish Volunteers and Citizen Army members — even when combined — were fewer than the number of civilians killed. These circumstances make for highly dramatic storytelling, and young readers can learn a great deal about the past while being entertained by gripping, yet thought-provoking writing.

Against the backdrop of the Rising a wide range of topics is covered by Irish fiction. Siobhan Parkinson has a Quaker friend of Amelia, her main character, becoming a soldier, despite religious reservations, Morgan Llewellyn has her youthful characters being educated by Padraig Pearse in St Enda's, and getting drawn into the conflict in spite of their age, while in both *Friend or Foe* and *The Guns of Easter* characters have to grapple with divided loyalties.

In *Molly's Diary*, Molly finds herself in the unusual situation of tending to the wounded on both sides, while *One Good Turn*, the forthcoming Irish entry in World Book Day, tackles the Rising and its aftermath from the unusual viewpoint of a young looter.

Dublin today is a far cry from the war-torn city that was part of the British Empire back in 1916. But today's young readers can travel back in time and see exactly how their counterparts lived. All they have to do is pick up a book, open their minds and let the magical journey begin.

Brian Gallagher



Estella Solomons: A portrait of the artist as a Republican

Painter concealed ammunition in her studio, writes **Róisín Kennedy**

The Irish artist Robert Ballagh returned to Paget's epic image in 2012, reinterpreting it for a limited edition print that was sold to fund the refurbishment of a graveyard plot for volunteers who died in the Rising.

The Anglo-Irish artist Kathleen Fox was actually in Dublin that Easter and, like many, went in to the city-centre to see what all the fuss was about. She recognised a woman being arrested outside the Royal College of Surgeons and made a quick sketch of the scene. Fox later worked the sketch, of Countess Markievicz, into a painting titled *The Arrest* which is now in the Niland Collection in Sligo. It is virtually unique, being an eye-witness image of the events. Fox was so moved by the scene, she included herself in the painting as an onlooker.

In more recent, popular culture, the US TV series *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* devoted an entire episode to our youthful hero landing in Dublin on the eve of the Rising. He meets up with Seán Lemass and hangs out with a struggling young playwright called O'Casey. The dialogue is pretty hilarious, featuring gems along the lines of; "Hey Shaun! Why don't you call it after that flag? The Ploughy, starry one over there!"

ESTELLA SOLOMONS came from a prominent Jewish Dublin family. Her father, Maurice, was a well-known optician and his practice on Nassau Street is mentioned in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Solomons trained at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art where Willie Pearse had also been a student. Her contemporary at the school, Beatrice Elvery remembered that 'it was difficult not to be swept away in a flood of patriotism'.

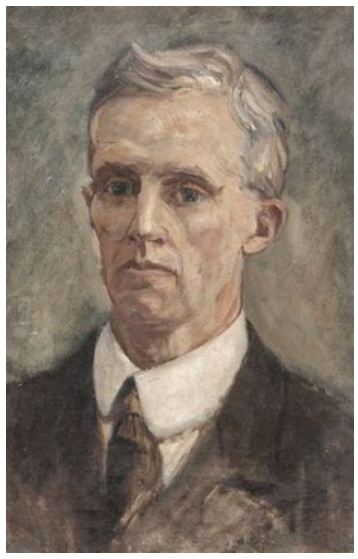
Solomons continued her studies at the Chelsea School of Art in London and at Colorossi's Studio in Paris where she was accompanied by Elvery and Cissie Beckett, aunt of the future writer Samuel Beckett. A visit to a major exhibition of the work of Rembrandt in Amsterdam in 1906 had a decisive impact on her art practice. Not only did his approach influence Solomons' style of portraiture but the Dutch master's etchings inspired her to take up printmaking.

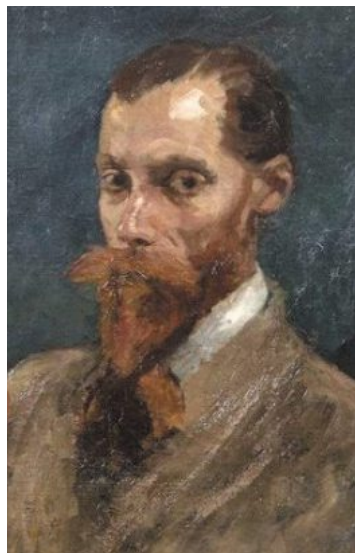
In 1915 Solomons joined the Rathmines branch of Cumann na mBan. Phyllis Ryan, future wife of Seán T O'Kelly, drilled the unit. The women studied signalling and first aid and Solomons was taught how to fire a revolver by a Sinn Féin agent, known as 'the Butterman' because his official job was a milkman. She actively assisted the Republican cause by distributing and concealing arms and ammunition, sometimes in her studio. She apparently also hid weapons in the vegetable patch of her parents' garden in Waterloo Road, surprising them by her sudden interest in gardening.

In 1910 Solomons had taken a studio at the top of 17 Great Brunswick Street, now Pearse Street, where she installed an etching press. Portraits of the leading literary patriots of the day including Alice Milligan, Joseph Campbell and Padraig de Brún were painted here. James Stephens, the novelist, who lived in the flat immediately below her studio, was another sitter.

Séamus O'Sullivan later recalled the studio, where many War of Independence revolutionaries hid out: 'With its pleasantly-arranged throne and curtains, was not only a centre of artistic activity and goodly conversation, but it was also a centre of quiet, of calm; a place of refuge for many whose political and national activities had brought them a very undesirable amount of notice in "the bad times".'

Sometimes Solomons painted their portraits, destroying them as security measures required. Surviving portraits include one of Seán Milroy, a frequent visitor, and Frank Gallagher, who she painted in 1920 after she moved her studio to No 26 Great Brunswick Street. She also painted Frank Aiken, IRA Chief of Staff, in 1923. During the Civil War the studio was often raided by Free State troops as Solomons supported the anti-treaty side. She resigned her job as an art teacher rather than take the Oath of Allegiance.





Estella Solomons' portraits of Erskine Childers and Sinn Féin activist Darrell Figgis, and a self-portrait.

IRA commander Ernie O'Malley knew Solomons well. He corresponded with her when he was recovering from hunger strike in Kilmainham in 1923.

One of his letters refers to a uniform and belt she had given to him years before. While on manoeuvres in Limerick in the War of Independence, the house he was staying in came under attack from the Black and Tans. In the resulting shoot-out the belt was lost in a muddy field. It was quite distinctive as O'Malley had had it adjusted by a local cobbler. Six months later, having escaped from an earlier sojourn in Kilmainham Jail, O'Malley, back in Limerick, discovered that a fellow volunteer was using his belt. He had taken it from a Black and Tan who had been shot at the Drumkeen ambush weeks before. O'Malley clearly regarded the belt as a kind of talisman and kept it until his final capture in Dublin during the Civil War.

Dr Róisín Kennedy of the UCD School of Art History and Cultural Policy. FRANK McGRATH

Many of Solomons' prints depict the alleyways, byways and parks of contemporary Dublin. She illustrated DL Kelleher's *The Glamour of Dublin* in 1928. Originally published after the devastation of the 1916 Rising, the later edition features eight views of familiar locations in the city centre including Merchant's Arch and King's Inns. Her etching of A Georgian Doorway was included in Katherine MacCormack's *Leabhar Ultáin* in 1920. This publication featured illustrations by several prominent Irish artists and was sold in aid of the new children's hospital in Charlemont Street, Dublin that had been founded by two prominent members of Cumann na mBan, Kathleen Lynn and Madeleine ffrench-Mullen.

Having withdrawn from her political activities after the Civil War, Solomons was elected an associate member of the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1925. In 1926 she married the poet James Starkey, also known as Séamus O'Sullivan. The couple, then in their forties, had delayed their wedding until after the death of her parents as they would not have approved of their daughter's marriage to a gentile.

Solomons and O'Sullivan's collaborated on the *Dublin Magazine*, a new literary journal he had founded in 1923. Solomons provided vital financial support particularly in sourcing advertising, an extremely difficult task in the tough economic climate of the new Free State. She was helped in this endeavour by Kathleen Goodfellow, a lifelong friend who had joined Cumann na mBan at the same time.

The Sunday afternoon salons held by the O'Sullivans at their home at Grange in Rathfarnham were frequented by the Dublin literary circle including the artist and critic, George Russell (AE). Solomons accompanied him on his annual painting trips to Donegal. Her two solo exhibitions, the first held in her Pearse Street studio in 1926, and the second at the Dublin Painters Gallery in 1931, were dominated by landscapes. In 1938 the O'Sullivans relocated to Morehampton Road in Donnybrook bringing their 10,000 books with them. After the death of her husband in 1958, Solomons continued to live there in relative tranquillity until she died ten years later.

Like many artists of her generation, Solomons was devoted to the cause of Irish nationalism. Her willingness to get directly involved in military activity and to assist fellow republicans was courageous. But ultimately in the aftermath of the Civil War she pursued a more conciliatory path by focusing on the promotion of artistic and literary culture. Given the conservative climate of the new state this was regarded by artists such as Solomons as an essential goal, without which an independent Ireland would have had little to offer its citizens.

Dr Róisín Kennedy is Lecturer in the UCD School of Art History and Cultural Policy. She is a contributor to 'Making 1916: The Material and Visual Culture of the Easter Rising', Liverpool University Press and to the forthcoming 'Atlas of the Revolution', Cork University Press.

JOHN MacBRIDE AND MICHAEL O'HANRAHAN

The Jacob's Factory in 1916. GETTY IMAGES

The Jacob's boys

Frank Bouchier-Hayes profiles John MacBride, while **Catherine Wilsdon** considers the life of Michael O'Hanrahan, both of whom were executed after supporting Thomas MacDonagh in the Jacob's biscuit factory in 1916

AFTER briefly studying medicine, John MacBride worked as a draper's assistant in Castlerea, Co Roscommon before moving to Dublin where he worked as a clerk.

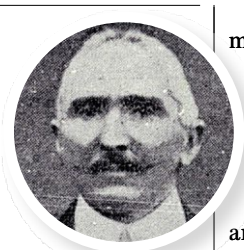
He became involved in the GAA and as a teenager was sworn into the IRB, an oath-bound secret society dedicated to overthrowing British rule in Ireland, by his brother Anthony. In his mid-twenties he was re-sworn into the organisation in London by Dr Mark Ryan.

MacBride left Ireland in 1896 to travel to South Africa and persuaded Arthur Griffith to join him there. As well as working in goldmines, the two men and others organised a 1798 centenary commemoration in Johannesburg that rivalled the event held in Dublin. When the Second Boer War broke out in 1899, MacBride established an 'Irish Brigade' to fight with the Boers against the British. While nominating John Blake, a former US cavalry officer, as commander, MacBride became second-in-command with the rank of Major.

He became a citizen of the ill-fated Transvaal Republic and, after the brigade commander deserted, MacBride took over from June 1900 until its disbandment that September. He then travelled to Paris where he associated with a group of Irish nationalist expatriates led by Maud Gonne. Following a suggestion made by Arthur Griffith, he embarked on an American lecture tour that also involved Maud Gonne. Despite advice from family and friends, MacBride married Gonne in Paris in 1903. Although a son, Seán, was born in 1904, their marriage was not a success and a French court finally granted a separation in 1906.

SNAPSHOT

JOHN MacBRIDE



Born: 7 May 1868, Westport, Co Mayo

Educated: CBS Westport; St Malachy's, Belfast

Affiliation: IRB, Irish Volunteers

Career: Clerk, shop assistant, soldier

Died: 5 May 1916, Kilmainham Jail

MacBride returned to Ireland where he was greeted with a mixture of admiration for his war effort and disdain due to the break-up of his marriage. Advanced nationalists treated him warily due to his alcoholism. Indeed, WB Yeats would later describe him as "a drunken, vainglorious lout" in his poem 'Easter 1916'.

MacBride spoke at a number of nationalist gatherings. In a speech at Bodenstown in 1905, MacBride argued that had the money wasted on parliamentary reform been spent on guns, then they would now be "in a position to add another Republic to the Republics of the world".

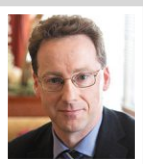
On Easter Monday while waiting to lunch with his brother, Anthony, two days prior to his elder sibling's wedding where he was to act as best man, MacBride saw a group of Irish Volunteers at St Stephen's Green. Dressed in a blue suit and spats, and carrying a Malacca cane, he immediately offered his services to Thomas MacDonagh who appointed him his second-in-command.

Unsurprisingly, given his previous military experience, MacBride is said to have shown more initiative and decisiveness than MacDonagh that week. When a shotgun blast went through a ceiling where he was helping others to seize the Jacob's factory, MacBride calmly attended to his unexpectedly powdered moustache and "casually warned the boys to be more careful". He also confessed his sins to a Capuchin priest during the occupation of the factory building. Later while a prisoner at Richmond Barracks, he emptied his pockets and asked another Capuchin to donate the money to the poor and that his rosary be given to his mother.

When the surrender order came through on Sunday April 30, MacBride encouraged the men to escape that they might live to fight another day but to never again allow themselves to be trapped in a building. He himself made no effort to escape.

Following the court-martial at which he was sentenced to death, General Blackader confided to WE Wylie, chief prosecution counsel, that while he had despised MacBride for his activities during the Boer War, "damn it! I'll never think of him now without taking my hat off to a brave man".

The condemned prisoner unsuccessfully requested not to be blindfolded or have his hands bound prior to being shot by firing squad at 3.47am on May 5, 1916.



Frank Bouchier-Hayes is a librarian at UCD and has written for History Ireland and many other national publications.

SNAPSHOT

MICHAEL O'HANRAHAN

Born: 17 March 1877, New Ross, Co Wexford

Educated: CBS Carlow, Carlow College Academy

Affiliation: Irish Volunteers, IRB

Career: Proof reader, journalist, novelist

Died: 4 May 1916, Kilmainham Jail

MICHAEL O'HANRAHAN'S role in the Rising can be easily overlooked given the fact that he was not engaged in any actual fighting. However, he did play a crucial role in preparing for the insurrection. A member of the IRB and founding member of the Irish Volunteers, he was secretary of the Second Battalion of the Dublin Brigade commanded by his close friend Thomas MacDonagh. Like MacDonagh, O'Hanrahan was a writer and an Irish language enthusiast. He also contributed to a number of nationalist publications under the pseudonyms 'Art' and 'Irish Reader'.

His keen eye for detail and trustworthy character made O'Hanrahan an invaluable member of the clerical staff at the Volunteer headquarters at No 2, Dawson Street. He was responsible for managing the receipt of large amounts of money and gold from the US and for setting up an insurance fund to assist those who lost their jobs due to their involvement with the Volunteers. Assisted by Michael Staines, he was in charge of the supply and distribution of weapons and provisions in the months before the Rising. Volunteers from across the country visited his home at 67 Connaught Street to procure weapons and during the insurrection his sister Eily aided the distribution of equipment.

O'Hanrahan was second-in-command of the 2nd Battalion under MacDonagh until Major John MacBride joined at Stephen's Green on the first morning of the revolt. The more experienced MacBride assumed a leading role as they occupied Jacob's Factory and strategic outposts over the week. While searching the building for provisions, O'Hanrahan fell down a stairway and, suffering from concussion, was unable to fight. To avoid being sent to hospital, he neglected to inform MacDonagh or MacBride about the incident.

Upon MacDonagh's order to surrender, Michael calmly reasoned with those who protested that continued fighting would only serve to hasten the destruction of the factory including surrounding civilian residences. For his part in the rebellion, O'Hanrahan was tried and sentenced to death. Before his execution, O'Hanrahan expressed his conviction that the Rising would lead to freedom telling his brother: "We may go under and have to suffer the penalty, but in my opinion Ireland is saved."

Catherine Wilsdon is a Research Associate at UCD Humanities Institute and co-director of the Irish Revival Network. She recently completed a PhD on JM Synge at UCD School of English, Drama & Film.









NINE LIVES

Grainne Coyne on the era's film stars, explorers and illusionists

1 JACK JOHNSON was the most famous boxer of his day, and overcame great prejudice and disadvantage to become the first black heavyweight world champion. Born in 1878 to two former slaves in Texas, he had five years schooling before starting work as a docker. At 16 he moved to New York. One of Johnson's early opponents was the Lisdoonvarna-born George Gardiner who was light-heavywright world champion. Johnson eventually won the world title in 1908 and defended it in the 'fight of the century' against James Jefferies in 1910. He continued to box until he was 60 and died in a car crash in 1946.

* * *

2 Considered one of the great originals of orchestral music, **Gustav Holst** is mostly known for *The Planets*. Born in Cheltenham in 1874 of Swedish, Latvian and German ancestry, he took piano lessons but intermittent neuritis in his right arm soon ruled out a virtuoso career. Holst began to create his own orchestral pieces and was appointed Musical Director at St Paul's Girls' School. *The Planets* turned Holst into a celebrity after its first complete public performance in 1920. He continued to compose up to his death in London in 1934.

* * *

3 Pope Benedict XV began his papacy shortly after the outbreak of the First World War and immediately declared the Vatican as neutral. Born Giacomo Paolo Giovanni Battista della Chiesa, he also spoke out against class and racial division. Despite the Vatican's low bank balance he continued to spend money on relief work. Benedict also encouraged Catholic missionaries worldwide but also highlighted the importance of fostering local traditions and lifestyle as opposed to importing European culture. He died in 1922.

* * *

4 Beatrice Hill-Lowe was the first Irishwoman to win an Olympic medal. She won bronze in an Archery event in 1908, when the games were held in London. Many Irish athletes competed for Britain and the US, and the medal haul of 21, including nine golds, is unlikely to be matched again. Archery was the only sport women could compete in as they could do so fully-clothed. Hill-Lowe was born in Ardee House, Co Louth, on 1 January 1868. She was 40 at the Olympics and died in England in 1951, aged 83. Her Olympic medal is now on display in Ardee Castle.

* * *

5 Born Theodosia Burr Goodman circa 1885 in Ohio, **Theda Bara** was a sex symbol of the silent screen. She studied at the University of Cincinnati from 1903-05, where she mainly worked in theatre productions. In 1908 she moved to New York and after a stage career began in movies. '*A Fool There Was*' (1915) was her first important picture and the intense publicity campaign that came with the film made her an overnight success. She was billed as the daughter of an Eastern potentate and named Theda Bara (an anagram for 'Arab Death'). Bara made more than 40 pictures within three years including *Romeo and Juliet* (1916), *Cleopatra* (1917), *Salome* (1918), and *Kathleen Mavourneen* (1919). She died in 1955 in Los Angeles.

* * *

6 'Typhoid Mary' Mallon was blamed as the cause of several typhoid outbreaks in New York City in the 1900s. Born in 1869 in Cookstown, Co Tyrone, Mallon emigrated to America around age 15. She became a cook in well-to-do households, but in 1906 typhoid hit one family two weeks after Mallon's arrival. It was concluded she was probably an asymptomatic carrier of the deadly disease and she was transferred without trial to an isolated clinic until 1910. She was freed on condition she never work as a cook again but by 1915 she was working under a pseudonym in Sloane Maternity Hospital in Manhattan. After typhoid broke out there she was returned to isolation where she remained until her death in 1938.

* * *

7 Grand illusions and spectacular escape acts made **Harry Houdini** one of the most famous magicians of all time. Born Erich Weisz in 1874 in Budapest, Hungary, his family emigrated to Wisconsin. He soon moved to New York City and in 1893 married his future onstage partner, Wilhelmina Rahner. In 1894, he renamed himself and became a professional magician. His popularity boomed and he toured the US and Europe. His most famous act was the Chinese Water Torture Cell. He continued performing escape acts until his death after being punched unexpectedly in 1926, aged 52.

* * *

8 Marie Curie was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize and the only woman to win the award in two different fields. Born Maria Sklodowska in Warsaw, Poland in 1867, she enrolled at the Sorbonne, Paris in 1891. On graduation, she was commissioned to study different types of steel and their magnetic properties, where she met Pierre Curie. Through their studies they discovered elements polonium and radium and where Curie herself coined the word radioactivity. In 1903 the Curies and Henri Becquerel won the Nobel Prize in physics for their work on radioactivity. In 1911, she won a second Nobel Prize, in chemistry. Her work in radioactivity eventually took its toll on her health and she died in 1934.

* * *

9 Born in 1877 in Annascaul, Co Kerry, **Tom Crean** is remembered for his heroic actions during Antarctic expeditions. While in the Royal Navy he assisted Robert Falcon Scott on the *Discovery* expedition in 1901, and Scott's final expedition, the *Terra Nova*, from 1910-13. It was there Crean was hailed for his heroic actions, most prominently where he trekked 56km alone across ice to save Lieutenant Edward Evans. A year later Tom Crean returned to Antarctica with Sir Ernest Shackleton on the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition and on that occasion rowed 1,500km in an open boat to seek help when *Endurance* became trapped in ice. Crean returned to Annascaul and opened The South Pole Inn. He died in 1938 aged 61.

LEARN MORE

READ...

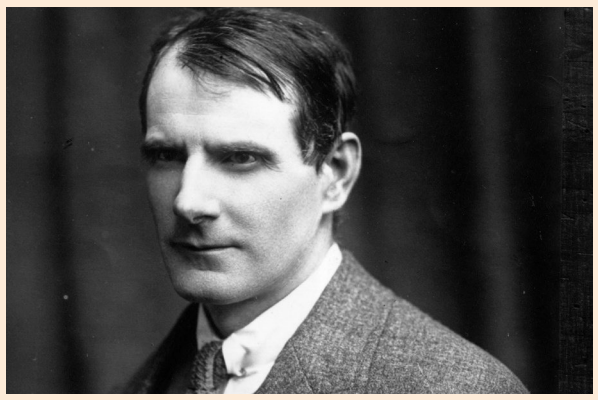
* *The Abbey Rebels of 1916: A Lost Revolution*, by Fearghal McGarry (Gill & MacMillan, 2015)
* *A Handbook of the Irish Revival,* by PJ Mathews and Declan Kiberd (Abbey Theatre Press, 2015)
* *Thomas MacDonagh*, by Shane Kenna (O'Brien Press 16 Lives, 2014)
* *Boer War to Easter Rising: The Writings of John MacBride*, by Anthony J Jordan (Westport Books, 2012)
* *Michael O'Hanrahan*, by Conor Kostick (O'Brien Press, 2015)
* *A Terrible Beauty*, by Mairead Ashe Fitzgerald (O'Brien Press, 2015)

WATCH...

* Thomas MacDonagh is the subject of this TG4 documentary in the *1916 Seachtar na Casca* series, http://bit.ly/1Q8Xqmy

LISTEN TO...

* A podcast of Michael Laffan on The Easter Rising (The Irish Revolution, Lecture 4) on historyhub.ie http://historyhub.ie/the-easter-rising-the-irish-revolution-lecture-4
* *Tomorrow We'll Gather the Rushes*, an RTÉ documentary on Padraic Colum, including an interview recorded just before his death aged 90 http://bit.ly/1Ol25j0



* *The Tale of Seán and Mick*, an RTÉ documentary on the life and work of Seán O'Casey (*pictured*) http://bit.ly/1NskYTA

VISIT...

* The Abbey Theatre in Abbey Street, where several rebels worked. The theatre will stage Seán O'Casey's *The Plough And The Stars* from March 9 to April 23.

485 LIVES ✦ ONE PLACE TO READ ABOUT THEM

From the assembling of the armies to the trials and executions, the momentous events of the 1916 Rising remain part of our lives, a century later.

Now, in an exclusive 10-part collection we commemorate the individuals whose actions changed our history forever — the revolutionaries, the politicians, the women and the unsung heroes.

A unique collection of supplements dedicated to recalling the legacy of the events of 1916. Continue your collection, fortnightly on Thursdays, free only in the Irish Independent.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH UCD AND IRELAND 2016

Irish Independent 1916 COLLECTION

In partnership with UCD DECADE of CENTENARIES

UCD DUBLIN

1916 2016 Clár Comórtha Céad Bliain Centenary Programme