

Irish Independent 

1916

COLLECTION

**PART ONE OF TEN
SPECIAL MAGAZINES**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

 **UCD**
DECADE of
CENTENARIES



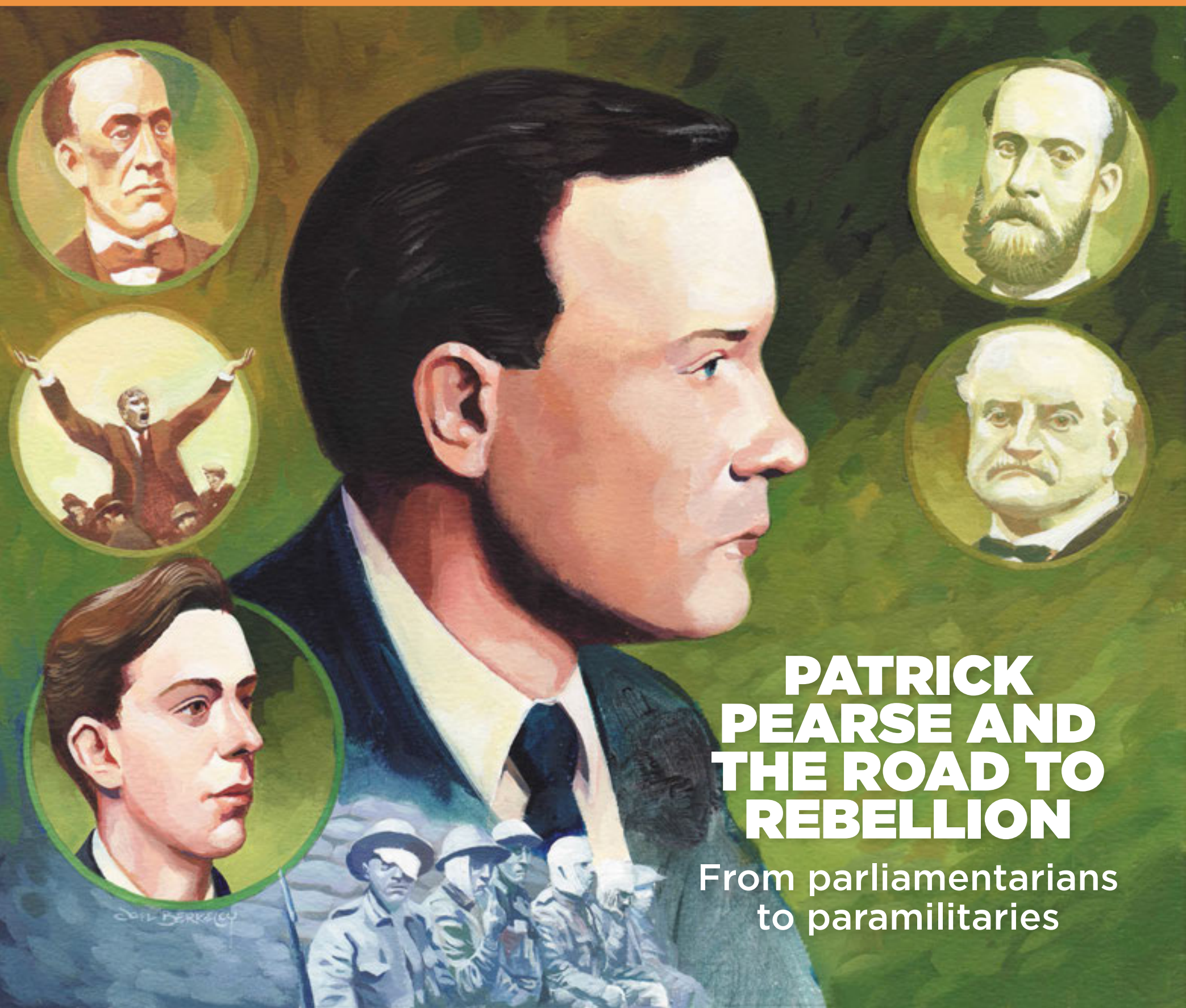
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Clár Comórtha
Céad Bliain
Centenary
Programme

Friday 16 October 2015

www.independent.ie/1916



PATRICK PEARSE AND THE ROAD TO REBELLION

From parliamentarians
to paramilitaries

FIONNÁN SHEAHAN
EDITOR,
IRISH
INDEPENDENT



Welcome to the Irish Independent 1916 Collection

"To know your future, you must know your past, each stepping stone that has been cast. Remember the good, as well as the bad, and feel the emotions of happy and sad."

ALBEIT entirely unrelated to the events of the Easter Rising in 1916, the words of the contemporary Canadian poet Margaret Jang strike a chord when seeking to appreciate the events of 100 years ago.

A seminal moment in the history of the nation, the Rising is a perennially evolving topic, interpreted in a myriad of ways.

The majority of public opinion regards it as an attempt to end British rule in Ireland, which was pivotal in the ultimate achievement of independence.

However, it is also a divisive debating point and there is still a school of thought that views it as a blood sacrifice which interfered with a peaceful path to this goal.

Approaching the centenary, such debates, conducted in a respectful and inclusive manner, have a role in heightening the understanding of 1916.

The purpose of the *Irish Independent* 1916 Collection is to tell the story of 1916 and lead to a greater appreciation of those momentous events of a century ago.

In partnership with UCD and Ireland 2016, the *Irish Independent* is marking those events with this unique collection of 10 special magazines.

Published between now and March, the *Irish Independent* 1916 Collection is a must-read for anyone with an interest in Ireland's birth as a nation.

The collection covers the personalities, events, themes and legacy of this historic period, providing the background to the 485 lives lost during the event as well as the countless others it touched.

Combining academic scholarship with journalism, this series aims to record and analyse the history and the politics, but also the social and political aspects of the rebellion.

Vitally, the *Irish Independent* 1916 Collection will be as accessible as possible, as relevant to history buffs as those with a passing interest whose consciences have been heightened by the anniversary.

Know your past and understand your future, with the *Irish Independent* 1916 Collection.

Fact and fiction to hit the screen

THE Easter Rising has been brought to television and cinema screens before, but the centenary will see more and bigger productions than ever seen before.

RTE will be showing a five-part serial drama called *Rebellion* which stars Charlie Murphy, Brian Gleeson and Sarah Greene. Other big names who appear include Ian McElhinney, Michelle Fairley and Ruth Bradley.

The serial, directed by acclaimed Finnish director Aku Louhimies, begins in 1914 and follows a group of characters as they become caught up in political events that culminated in the Easter Rising.

"It is a drama, not a history lesson, and our story is told from the perspectives of a group of fictional characters who live through the political events of 1916", explained RTE head of drama Jane Gogan. "Men, women and children from Belfast, Dublin and London — people whose lives were irrevocably changed by this extraordinary period," she added.

A three-part documentary will



To mark the 50th anniversary of the Rising, RTE (itself just four years old at the time), broadcast an eight-part drama, *Insurrection*, which showed the events of 1916 as if TV existed at the time and they were covering the news story of the Rising.

also be shown in the Spring which has been made mostly with funds from an American university, with 20 per cent of its budget coming from RTE and Section 481 funding.

The Irish Rebellion will be shown on American Public Television, RTE and the BBC, and is also expected to be shown in Australia, New Zealand, India, Canada, and parts of Europe.

The documentary team say it aims to "internationalise" the events of Easter Week and to place them in their "historical, political and cultural contexts, as the precursor to an independent Irish State and the disintegration of colonial empires".

The Irish Rebellion is designed by Annie Atkins, who won an Oscar for her work on the film *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. **LS**

IN MEMORIAM

First shots of Rising fired in Clonadadoran, Co Laois

ALMOST every town in Ireland pays some tribute to the rebels of 1916 in the name of a street, park or railway station. There are also many commemorative plaques and statues, detailed on irishwarmemorials.ie.

One of the most interesting is in a townland called Clonadadoran, which lies about 6km south of Portlaoise on the road to Abbeyleix. There, a granite pillar marks the spot in Colt Wood where the first shots were fired in the Rising.

On the eve of the taking of the GPO a group of Laois volunteers destroyed a section of the railway line to prevent the British sending

reinforcements by rail to Dublin.

As they lay in wait, they spotted a railway employee carrying a lamp as he walked the line, checking the track for damage. The rebels called out and a shot was fired at him.

The railway company later applied for £328 in compensation for "the alleged malicious destruction of 60 yards of the permanent way, twelve 30ft rails, 66 sleepers, 208 bolts, one locomotive engine and one bogey brake carriage."

In 1996 a memorial was erected telling the story and listing those involved with a plaque depicting the derailing. **GS**



IN THE PAPERS



Frontline news, provincial rugby and a 42-shilling suit

THE *Irish Independent* of Saturday 22 April, 1916, two days before the Rising, was full of news from the war, reporting on fierce fighting at Verdun in France, and successes against the Turks in what is now Iraq.

Meanwhile, a four-year-old heifer bought in Belfast was found to have in her intestines "a half-sovereign, a florin, a shilling and two pennies". All those coins came to 13 shillings and twopence — a week's wages for many people.

There was little sport during

wartime, but the paper previewed a charity match at Lansdowne Road between Leinster and Ulster, and reported on the Grocers annual sports day at Croke Park.

English soccer was confined to regional leagues, and in London, Chelsea beat Arsenal 9-0, while up in Lancashire it was Liverpool 5 Everton 2 and Man United 3 Stockport County 2.

In the adverts you could buy a suit from Hyam's of Dame Street for 42 shillings, or about €2.60 in modern money. **FC**

REBEL TALES

'I blew the lock with a pistol and... reported to Cmdt Pearse'

EAMON BULFIN was born in Argentina where his father William was a newspaper editor. Eamon was a student at Patrick Pearse's school, St Enda's and at UCD. At home in Rathfarnham on Easter Monday morning, he received orders to go into the city where he broke into the GPO from a window in North Princes Street.

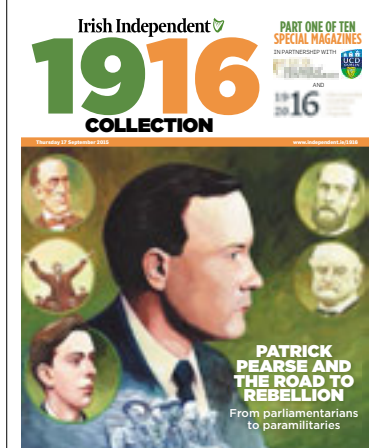
"There was a small window about four feet from the ground on the side of the Post Office. I broke the window with my rifle — and incidentally broke my rifle. Any chaps that were near me I called them out by name and 'hooched' them up the window."

"Jack Kiely was actually on his hands and knees on the windowsill, when he was hit by a bullet. We brought the wounded man into the Post Office. We got into the sorting room but there was no-one there and the door leading into the main hall was locked, I blew the lock with a pistol and... reported to Commandant Pearse."

Later that day he went to the roof with Willie Pearse and raised a white flag with the words 'Irish Republic' over the GPO. After the Rising he was sentenced to death but then deported to Argentina. He later returned and was active in local politics. He died in 1968 and a road in Inchicore, Dublin 8 is named after him. **GS**

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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
Patrick Pearse and, clockwise
from bottom left, Willie Pearse,
Jim Larkin, Edward Carson,
Charles Stuart Parnell,
John Redmond, and soldiers
in the trenches of Flanders.



THE LOST CHILDREN

Shot while he begged for his father's life

FORTY children died during the Easter Rising, about 9 per cent of the total fatalities. Some were active participants, others messengers for the rebels. But most had no connection with the fighting and were caught in crossfire or shot by snipers. Some were babies, shot in their prams or in their mother's arms.

The area behind the Four Courts saw some of the fiercest fighting of Easter Week, with over 40 British casualties.

On Friday it was decided to clear the area of rebels and the soldiers of the South Staffordshire Regiment were enraged at losing so many comrades.

Kate Kelly, who did housework for the Hickey family who owned a butchers at No. 168 North King Street, testified that a Mr Connolly had been trapped when the troops arrived and was forced to stay overnight.

"That night Mr Hickey and his son were lying on a mattress stretched on the floor. About 6am on Saturday morning I heard a noise of picking at the walls. I shouted to Mr Hickey: 'Somebody is breaking into the house'.

"He got up and soon after several soldiers slashed through a hole which they made in the wall from next door. They had broken into Mr Hughes's four doors away and made holes in the wall all the way up to us. Mr Hickey and Mr Connolly said they were not in the Volunteers at all. But it was no use.

"The bell was just ringing for 10 o'clock mass. We were then led in through the hole in the wall through the rooms of Mrs Carroll... and through another hole into the disused empty house next door, No. 170.

"Mr Hickey said to Mrs Carroll, 'Isn't it too bad... Very often the innocent suffer for the guilty'."

Kate Kelly went on: "I was left lying in the front room and the men were brought into the back. Both Ms Carroll and I heard poor Christy pleading for his poor father's life; 'Oh, don't kill father'. The shots then rang out..."

The three who died in 170 North King Street were the first casualties of the massacre which claimed 15 lives.

Christopher is buried in an unmarked grave in Deans Grange cemetery. **GS**



Brian Gleeson in RTÉ's five-part serial drama 'Rebellion', which also stars (above, l-r) Charlie Murphy, Ruth Bradley and Sarah Greene

UCD COLLECTION



Postcards from the edge of the Rising

SOME of the most vivid photographs of the centre of Dublin in the aftermath of the Rising were published on one side of inexpensive and widely-available postcards. They were on sale within days following the end of hostilities, and a stunning collection has recently been made available online by University College Dublin.

Photographs on postcards were permitted by the Post Office from September 1894, 24 years after the first blank postcards were sanctioned. Dispensing with

envelopes, these postcards were cheaper to buy and post and were very popular for short and speedy communications.

Stationers, such as Eason & Son and Hely's, produced picture postcards, competing with each other to be quickest to get cards on sale which commemorated special events, such as the Dublin International Exhibition in 1907 and the Rising.

Few of the Rising originals survive, but UCD's Digital Library contains a range of 1916 postcards collected by Constantine Peter

Curran. Curran graduated from UCD in 1902 along with his great friend, the novelist James Joyce.

The collection includes (clockwise from above left): a scene of devastation on Sackville (O'Connell) Street; photos taken under fire by a photographer from the *Daily Sketch* newspaper; a group of officers with a captured rebel flag; and the O'Connell Monument amid the ruins around the bridge across the Liffey.

The collection can be viewed at: <http://digital.ucd.ie/view/ucdlib:38376>. **FC**



Parliamentarians

Electoral politics and physical force were not ideologies in Ireland — they were tactics, writes **Conor Mulvagh**

IN this, the first of a special series of magazines leading up to the centenary of the 1916 Rising, we examine the transformations in thinking and the political landscape of Ireland, Britain, and Europe that predated the events of Easter 1916. Violence stands as one of the remaining contentious issues in interpreting the Rising. The 20th century was one of profound violence. It is difficult to look back upon the political violence experienced in Dublin in 1916 without taking cognisance of later phases in Irish political violence.

Indeed, both proponents and detractors of militant Irish nationalism perceive a lineage of political violence going right back to the rebellion of 1798 and up to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 in which the 1916 Rising is the pivotal midpoint. Despite the violence

and bloodshed of the western front and the Gallipoli campaign, the violence of the Rising was also something that shocked the citizenry of Dublin and even participants in the Rising themselves.

In the closing phase of the insurrection, the deaths of innocent civilians in the crossfire on Moore Street was a key factor in convincing the rebel leadership to negotiate a surrender. More than half of all those killed during the Rising were civilian bystanders.

An age of innocence ended with the 1916 Rising. Prior to that, both unionists and nationalists were able to parade with guns and shoot at targets without the burden of consequence. They felt their power but not, as yet, the grave and irreversible responsibility that came with taking lives. If the last vestiges of innocence were lost in the rebellion, a much more gradual

transformation had occurred prior to that point. This was the shift from debating to parading, from rhetoric to rallies, and the transition from holding opinions to holding guns to defend them. Elected representatives followed rather than led their flocks into paramilitary volunteer forces. Nonetheless, when the leaders of Nationalist and Unionist Ireland held control of their own private armies, they were very happy to use them as sources of legitimacy and power. Subsequently they realised their potential as a valuable bargaining chip after the British government realised its pressing need for recruits in the First World War.

Society had become militarised not only through the First World War, but through preceding events. Events prior to 1914 had shown that guns, violence, and even the mere threat of violence worked. It was not the case that those who believed in peaceful and constitutional means were suddenly swept aside by bellicose gunmen; rather there was a slow shift in attitudes. The public and parliamentarians alike began to see how effective arms and army-like organisations could be in overturning the decisions of parliaments and governments.

Ulster unionists had led the way in

Ireland. Drilling, parading, and arming had forced government to take seriously the demands of Unionist Ulster. Cautioning against the Nationalist tendency to mock Carson's army as merely toy soldiers, in the summer of 1913, Patrick Pearse, still a relatively unknown figure outside of education and Irish language circles, proclaimed that 'the Orangeman with a rifle is a much less ridiculous figure than the Nationalist without a rifle'.

In a similar vein, Eoin MacNeill, founder of the Irish Volunteers, proclaimed that 'they have rights who dare to maintain them'. Even before the breakdown of European diplomacy in 1914, this was the emerging spirit of the age. However, in Ireland, the resort to arms came on foot of apparent triumph for Nationalist Ireland in electoral terms.

At the end of 1910, after two general elections in one year, Irish Nationalist MPs held the balance of power at Westminster. They could make or break Herbert Henry Asquith's Liberal government. Within months, the veto of the House of Lords, which had scuppered the previous Home Rule Bill in 1893, was ended. Never had constitutional and peaceable means towards granting Home Rule for Ireland



Clockwise from left: Conor Mulvagh outside the GPO in O'Connell Street, Dublin; Irish National Volunteers practise with rifles in Dublin in 1914; an advertisement in the 'Irish Independent' for outfits for Volunteers from July 16, 1914

MARK CONDREN
AND GETTY IMAGES

to *paramilitaries*

seemed surer. However, within five years, in the wake of a violent rebellion in Dublin, Irish parliamentarianism was in crisis and violence was viewed as a surer path to freedom than votes. Why was this so?

Terminology is important here. Parliamentarians were those who participated or believed in parliamentary methods. Similarly, constitutionalists are those who limited themselves to the bounds of legality. Anything extra-constitutional entailed going beyond those boundaries. However, to be unconstitutional did not necessarily entail being violent. The sending of threatening letters was unconstitutional, as was boycott, intimidation, the holding of proclaimed meetings, membership of certain secret societies, and the distribution or publication of literature which was deemed to be seditious or, during wartime, contrary to the Defence of the Realm Acts.

None of the above had to include physical violence although actions such as boycott and intimidation frequently did. All of the above forms of political activity were common at various times in late 19th and early 20th century Ireland despite the fact that they contravened one or more laws.

Paramilitary activity, then more

commonly referred to as volunteering, was likewise not intrinsically violent, although it naturally carried with it the threat of violent action. The holding of armed demonstrations became a new feature of Irish political pageantry from 1913 onwards and training and drilling with arms became increasingly common features of Irish life. Again, while physical force was implied by the holding and parading of arms, it was not necessarily accompanied by violence. Frequently, armed reviews or the training of armed volunteers by either unionists or nationalists were displays of discipline and strength. Ordinarily, the weapons on display were not loaded, although vast quantities of ammunition were shipped to Ireland from the winter of 1913 onwards.

Contrast all the above to physical force. Physical force is the use of physical violence to achieve an end, in this case a political end. Physical force does not need a firearm. During the Irish land war and

the subsequent ranch war which ran in parts of the Irish midlands as late as 1909, physical force, including the maiming of animals, was a common part of agrarian agitation. Likewise, physical force was a common feature of Irish political meetings.

IN Belfast, paving stones and iron bolts stolen by the employees of the city's shipyards were a common weapon. In Dublin and in provincial towns countrywide, fists and cudgels were not unusual. Notably, in 1909, the former anti-Parnellite MP and then maverick Nationalist, William O'Brien, was beaten

out of the annual convention of the United Irish League, the electoral wing of the Home Rule movement which O'Brien himself had founded 11 years previously. Those doing the beating on this occasion were the Irish party faithful, allegedly members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians under the direction of

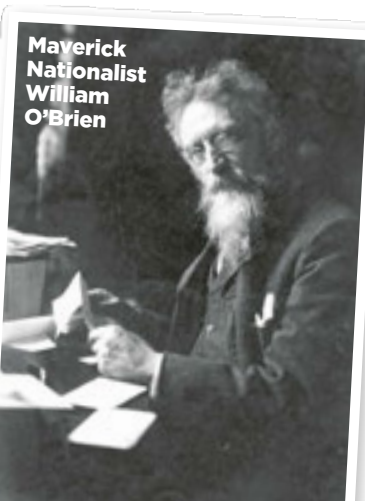
John Redmond's protégé, the MP for West Belfast, Joseph Devlin.

Even on the suffrage issue, it was impossible for women to rely on parliamentary methods as it was the very right to vote for which they were fighting. Instead, a range of extra-parliamentary, frequently illegal, and occasionally violent methods were employed. Among the tactics employed by suffragists in Ireland were the boycotting of the 1911 census, smashing window panes of public buildings, hunger strike, arson, and even the throwing of an axe at John Redmond and Prime Minister Asquith as their carriage crossed Dublin's O'Connell Bridge.

In contrast to these predominantly non-lethal forms of political violence, the physical force unleashed in 1916 was entirely different in scope and scale. It was linked to a revolutionary tradition going back — either notionally or actually depending on how one views it — to 1798. The Fenian uprising of 1867 was both the closest time and outlook to the events of 1916. Finally, to further muddy the waters here, physical force could also be both constitutional and parliamentary.

The clearest case here is the First World

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 >>>



Maverick Nationalist William O'Brien



Edward Carson
inspects a parade of
armed Ulster Volunteers

Parliamentarians to *paramilitaries*

>>> **CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5**

War. While admittedly on a different scale and operating in different circumstances, in understanding why the 1916 Rising happened, it should not be forgotten that violence and the assertion of rights in arms had been given tremendous new legitimacy by the outbreak of the First World War. Likewise, in justifying physical force among revolutionary, anti-Imperialist, and insurrectionary movements, legitimacy and inspiration had been derived from previous conflicts in the Balkans, South Africa, and in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05.

In a prophetic tone, the *Freeman's Journal* wrote on 3 August 1914, the day before Britain formally declared war on Germany, 'it has long been the happy fate of Ireland ... to be the detached spectator of foreign wars ... but no nation that ... hopes to be free ... can escape the fortunes of this conflict. All our fates are about to be decided.' Whether it was on the western front or the streets of Dublin, by the war's end, violent action spoke louder than words for the generation of 1914.

IN light of the above, while ideologies ranged from moderates to extremists, unionists and nationalists, Home Rulers, dual-monarchists, and separatists, all and any of these groups could transition between advocating constitutionalism, parliamentarianism, and physical force either of a lethal or non-lethal nature. There was no clear dividing line between the parliamentarians and the physical force sections of Irish society in these years. John Redmond had petitioned for the release of Tom Clarke from jail in the 1890s. Even into the 20th century, there were members of the Home Rule party who had been members of the IRB.

Put simply, parliamentarianism and physical-force were not ideologies, they were tactics. All sides either used or threatened the use of physical force at one time or another.

The same phenomenon can be found in reverse at the other end of Ireland's revolutionary decade where one sees how quickly and easily the leading figures of Ireland's independence struggle became peaceable politicians between 1922 and 1927. Likewise, there were both unionists and nationalists who favoured physical force and there were those who favoured the parliamentary route.

Even more importantly, the majority saw

the merit of both approaches. Celebrated parliamentarians could transition to the use of physical force when it suited them, the prime example being Edward Carson, an elected MP who presided over a private army and, along with other elected representatives, was involved in the Ulster Unionist Council, a body that actively planned for the establishment of an autonomous provisional government and for the military defence of Ulster by force of arms. The work of the Ulster Unionist Council was couched in terms directly replicated by the insurrectionary leaders of 1916.

Although Nationalist MPs were not as heavily involved in extra-parliamentary agitation to the extent that Unionists were, Irish party sentinels had been placed within the Irish Volunteers from its inception in November 1913. By June 1914, John Redmond had installed 25 nominees onto the provisional committee of the Irish Volunteers, gaining him majority control of the organisation that had previously acted in his name but outside his control.

It is ironic that, in 1913, ballots needed to be backed up by bullets but, following the Rising, bullets needed to find a retrospective mandate through the ballot box. The people, many of them voting for the first time, chose revolution and the promise of a republic over Home Rule and the Irish party in 1918.

Ireland's abandonment of constitutionalism in favour of armed struggle is just one of the important contexts which begins to add further depth to the story of the 1916 Rising.

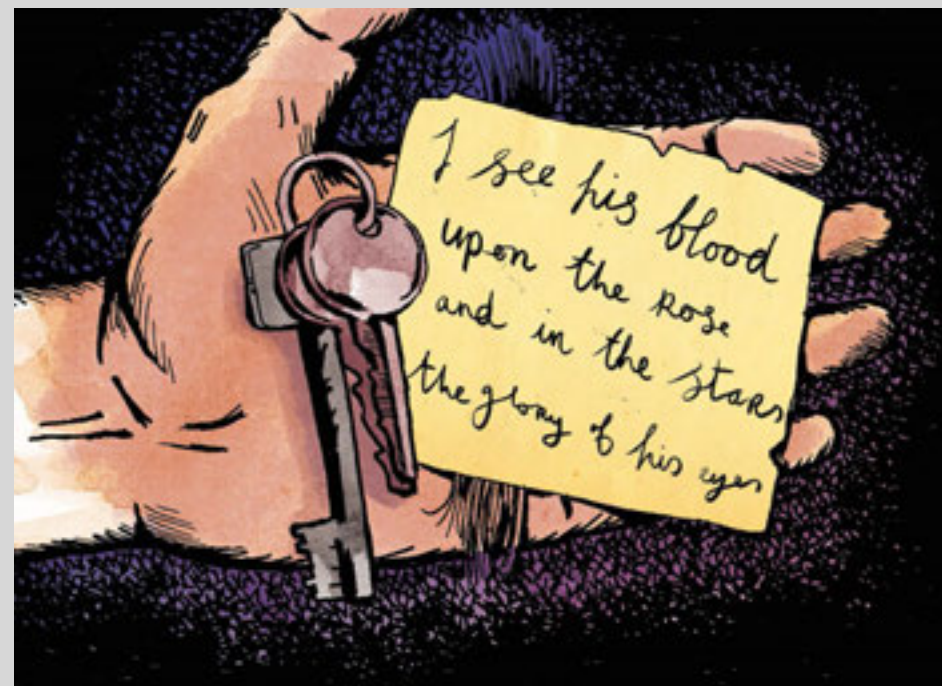
Returning to the figure of Patrick Pearse, just as John Redmond's commitment to constitutional methods has been questioned here in view of his use of a private nationalist army as a bargaining chip during 1914, one should also not fall into the trap of viewing Pearse as simply a blood-sacrificing revolutionist.

While Pearse has been remembered as such in death, in his life he was an educationalist, he was a language activist, he was a pamphleteer and poet. A unidimensional portrayal of any of the figures of this period does a disservice to their memory and to history.

Dr Conor Mulvagh is a lecturer in Irish History at the School of History at University College Dublin (UCD) with special responsibility for the Decade of Commemorations

“There was no clear dividing line between the parliamentarians and the physical force sections of Irish society in these years... There were members of the Home Rule party who had been members of the IRB

'BLOOD UPON THE ROSE'



GRAPHIC NOVEL BRINGS THE 1916 RISING TO LIFE



‘If there were heroes, I let them come out of it. I certainly didn’t make them heroes’

BLOOD *Upon the Rose*, a graphic history of the 1916 Rising, is the best-known work of one of the most respected comic-book artists in Ireland. Gerry Hunt will be 80 next year, and is hopeful his vivid, pacey and beautifully drawn 2010 book will find an even larger set of readers as a result of the centenary.

His connection to the Rising is closer than most people’s: his father Patrick fought alongside De Valera in Boland’s Mills. It is, however, a somewhat broken connection.

“He never spoke about it,” says Hunt. “He died when I was ten. He never even spoke to my mother about it. All he would say was, ‘Look, it had to be done, and someone had to do it.’ My sister is involved with a group of relatives of those who fought in 1916, and one of them told my sister that, either by order of their superiors, or by pact, the lads involved in 1916 decided they would never talk about it. Pretty strange.”

And so, when it came to assembling material for *Blood Upon the Rose*, Gerry was wholly reliant on his own

research. In the course of it, his eyes were opened again to the courage and ingenuity of not just the leaders, but of volunteers spread across the various siege outposts. The book reinstates into the narrative events too often pushed away by the stand at the GPO.

“Take Seán Heuston,” says Hunt. “A lad of 25. He was told to take over the Mendicity Institute, to stop any approach along the quays from the west. His orders were to hold out for three hours. His men held out for two days before eventually they ran out of ammunition.”

One figure in particular stood out. “The more research I did, the more Joe Plunkett became one of my heroes. The man was dying from TB (tuberculosis). He left hospital to take part. I decided that I’d start off my story with

Plunkett’s wedding to Grace Gifford. I made him one of the foremost figures of the comic.”

Throughout, the volunteers are depicted as heroic and honourable. Gerry says that, notwithstanding his family’s republican background, he approached the book with an open mind. “I told it as I understood it. If there were heroes, I let them come out of it. I certainly didn’t make them heroes.”

The result is a history that brings the Rising to life. Too many accounts of the rebellion are austere and gloomy, and portray the key personalities as distant, ascetic figures. *Blood Upon the Rose* restores to the story its spirit of adventure, and a rounded humanity.

‘Blood Upon the Rose’, by Gerry Hunt, is published by The O’Brien Press



Gavin Corbett



MINI PROFILE

John Redmond

BY DONAL FALLON

JOHN EDWARD REDMOND was born on 1 September 1856 at Ballytrent House in Wexford. He was the son of William Archer Redmond, a Home Rule MP who would profess that Ireland possessed an “indefeasible right to be governed by an Irish Parliament”. Sharing his father’s belief, John was first elected a Member of Parliament in 1881 for New Ross, representing the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP). In a single evening, Redmond would make his maiden speech and be suspended and expelled from the House.

A committed Parnellite, he became an important figure in the minority of the IPP that remained loyal to its leader after his downfall, stating “it is because I believe that your maintenance is necessary to the success of our cause”. Following Parnell’s death, Redmond took over the leadership of the Irish National League, the Parnellite faction, but by 1900 political unity was restored.

His relationship with advanced nationalists was complex. While he opposed the use of physical force, he was a vocal supporter of the Amnesty Association in the 1890s. He championed the cause of Fenian prisoner Thomas Clarke, describing him as “a man of whom no words of praise could be too high”.

Under his leadership, the IPP once more became an important force in Westminster, holding the balance of power from 1910. He utilised this importance to push the Liberal Government of HH Asquith on the issue of Home Rule. The outbreak of the First World War saw the postponing of its implementation, and Redmond encouraged the Irish Volunteer movement to support the British war effort, insisting famously that “the interests of Ireland — of the whole of Ireland — are at stake in this war”.

It is this decision which has dominated much of the historical discourse and debate around his career.

Donal Fallon is an author and historian, currently researching republican commemoration and memory at UCD

Asquith’s flawed Irish compromise

The British prime minister’s delays and indecision ultimately condemned Ireland to partition, writes **Ronan Fanning**

WHEN Herbert Henry Asquith became Prime Minister on 8 April 1908 his Liberal Party was enjoying its last ever overall majority

in the House of Commons. That enabled the new Prime Minister to do what he most wanted to do about Ireland: nothing.

A barrister by profession, Asquith was not a wealthy man. He never forgot that the split over the first Home Rule Bill in 1886 had condemned the Liberal Party to almost 20 years in the wilderness of opposition. This explains why the guiding principle of his Irish policy from the moment he entered 10 Downing Street until the moment he left it in December 1916 was that Ireland should never again deny him power.

Things changed when the two general elections in 1910, caused by the constitutional crisis over the reduction of the powers of the House of Lords, once more reduced the Liberal Party to dependence on John Redmond’s Irish parliamentary party for its working majority in the House of Commons. The price for the Irish party’s support was a renewed commitment by Asquith’s government to introduce home rule once the obstacle of the inbuilt Unionist majority in the House of Lords had been dismantled.

This seemed to have been achieved by the Parliament Act of 1911. But although the act destroyed the House of Lords’ permanent veto on home rule, it sanctioned a two-year veto. A Home Rule bill could be and was introduced in 1912, but it could not be enacted before the summer of 1914. This created the perfect climate for Asquith’s preference for procrastination. The enforced delay gave concrete expression to his principle of ‘Wait and See’, the phrase he repeatedly used in the House of Commons when asked about his Irish policy.

This also explains what happened on 9 February 1912 when, after the most significant cabinet discussion of Irish policy since Gladstone’s conversion to home rule in 1886, Asquith’s government decided on the terms of the third Home Rule Bill. The pragmatists, the most powerful of whom were David Lloyd George and Winston Churchill, proposed the temporary exclusion of Unionist Ulster from the terms of the bill. But Asquith preferred procrastination because he feared that publicly grasping the nettle of partition



UCD Professor Ronan Fanning
MARK CONDREN

would so alienate John Redmond and his party that it would put at risk his majority in the House of Commons.

In the end, as the prime minister informed the king, the Cabinet ‘acquiesced’ — that most Asquithian of words — in three conclusions:

• Firstly, that the Home Rule Bill ‘as introduced should apply to the whole of Ireland’;

• Secondly, that the leaders of the Irish Parliamentary Party ‘should from the first be given clearly to understand that the Government held themselves free to make such changes in the Bill as fresh evidence of facts, or the pressure of British opinion, may render expedient’; and

• Thirdly, that ‘if, in the light of such evidence or indication of public opinion, it becomes clear as the Bill proceeds that some special treatment must be provided for the Ulster counties, the Government will be ready to recognise th[at] necessity’.

The cabinet’s conclusions amounted to a tacit invitation to revolution: the more seditious the Ulster Unionists became, the more persuasive would be the ‘fresh evidence’ and the more likely that ‘public opinion’ would indicate that they must receive ‘some special treatment’. A mass rally in Belfast, on 9 April 1912, when 100,000 Irish Unionists marched in military formation past Andrew Bonar Law (the leader of the Conservative Party) and Edward Carson was but the first of many instalments of such evidence.

Privately, Asquith, like Lloyd George and Churchill, favoured exclusion. Publicly, he was determined to postpone unveiling what he believed was an inevitable compromise until the last possible moment. ‘I have always thought (and said) that, in the end, we should probably have to make some sort of bargain about Ulster as the price of Home Rule,’ he reminded Churchill when the Irish crisis was coming to a head in September 1913. ‘But I have never doubted, that, as a matter of tactics and policy, we were right to launch our Bill on its present lines.’

Asquith, moreover, clearly understood the risks of such a strategy and he spelt them out in a memorandum for the King in the autumn of 1913. After acknowledging that the enactment of the Home Rule Bill in its original form entailed ‘the certainty of tumult and riot, and more than the possibility of bloodshed’ in Unionist Ulster, he went on to paint a much bleaker scenario if the bill were abandoned.

‘If the Bill is rejected or indefinitely postponed, or some inadequate and disappointing substitute put forward in its place, the prospect is, in my opinion, much more grave. The attainment of Home Rule has for more than 30 years been the political (as distinguished from the agrarian) ideal of the Irish people. Whatever happens in other parts of the United Kingdom, at successive general elections, the Irish representation in Parliament never varies...

‘It is the confident expectation of the vast bulk of the Irish people that it will become law next year. If the ship, after so many stormy voyages, were now to be wrecked in sight of port, it is difficult to overrate

MINI PROFILE

Edward Carson

BY DR RICHARD McELLIGOTT

EDWARD CARSON was born in Dublin in 1854. Having studied law at Trinity College he qualified as a barrister in 1877, rising quickly in the profession. Following his election as an MP for Dublin in 1892, his impressive performances in the House of Commons during the debates on the Second Home Rule Bill earned him celebrity status in Britain. In 1895 he achieved international fame as the prosecutor who secured the imprisonment of Oscar Wilde.

In 1910 Carson became chairman of the Irish Unionist Parliamentary Party. His new role placed him at the head of the Unionist campaign against the Third Home Rule Bill. Carson was determined to keep Ireland as an integral part of the United Kingdom. He believed that without the industrial and economic power of Ulster, a Home Rule State in Ireland could not function.

Therefore his strategy was to make Home Rule unworkable by co-ordinating a massive campaign of Unionist opposition in the province. He presided over a demonstration in September 1912 when 471,414 people signed the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant or, in the case of women, the Declaration.

Carson is often seen as the man who militarised modern Irish politics, by sanctioning the formation of the paramilitary UVF in January 1913 to resist Home Rule, by armed force if necessary. With the outbreak of the First World War, Carson pledged Unionist support for the British war effort. Unlike John Redmond, he accepted an invitation to enter Asquith's wartime coalition Cabinet formed in May 1915.

He was appointed Attorney-General of England and, when Lloyd George took over the premiership, First Lord of the Admiralty. Carson grew increasingly disillusioned over the Government's attempts to find a political settlement to satisfy Nationalist and Unionist aspirations during the Anglo-Irish War.

He was a vehement critic of the Anglo-Irish Treaty and passed over the offer to lead the newly created state of Northern Ireland to his lieutenant, James Craig. He retired to the House of Lords and died in 1935.

Dr Richard McElligott lectures in Modern Irish History at UCD and is the author of several works on the Irish Revolutionary period



Above: Asquith photographed in Ireland with friends and family in July 1912. **Left:** An Asquith cartoon from *Vanity Fair* in 1904.

GETTY IMAGES

the shock, or its consequences. They would extend into every department of political, social, agrarian and domestic life. It is not too much to say that Ireland would become ungovernable – unless by the application of forces and methods which would offend the conscience of Great Britain, and arouse the deepest resentment in all the self-governing Dominions of the Crown.'

Asquith's analysis was chillingly prophetic. Within six years nationalist Ireland had taken precisely this path and become ungovernable except by the forces and methods applied in 1920-21 by the Black and Tans and the Auxiliaries.

The Ulster unionists' threat of violence bore fruit on 9 March 1914 when Asquith told the House of Commons that his government would exclude Unionist Ulster from the terms of the Home Rule Bill for six years. Edward Carson's contemptuous dismissal of the change of policy Asquith had imposed upon the hapless John Redmond – 'we do not want a sentence of death with a stay of execution for six years' – disguised his acknowledgement of its larger significance. The partition of Ireland had probably been unavoidable since the cabinet meeting of 6 February 1912; on 9 March 1914 it became inevitable.

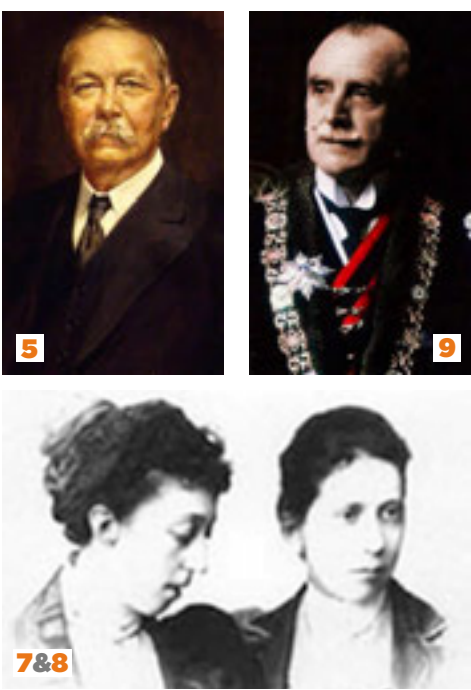
THE compromise that put the Irish problem on ice for the duration of the Great War merely disguised this inevitability. The core of the compromise was Redmond's proposal that if the government would postpone the introduction of the amending bill providing for Ulster's exclusion, he would agree to the suspension of the coming into effect of the Home Rule Bill (despite its being immediately put upon the Statute Book) until the amending bill became law.

Put simply, Redmond agreed to the suspension of Home Rule, and Asquith agreed to the suspension of partition. But the announcement of the deal was accompanied by an explicitly partitionist and public assurance from Asquith that 'the employment of force, any kind of force, for... the coercion of Ulster, is an absolutely unthinkable thing... a thing which we would never countenance.'

The apocalyptic violence of the Great War changed everything in nationalist Ireland. But although the revolutionary nationalists of Sinn Féin swept aside the constitutional nationalists of the Irish Parliamentary party at the 1918 election, one thing had not changed: Éamon de Valera was as impotent as John Redmond to resist the partitionist solution to the Irish problem to which Asquith irrevocably committed the British government.

Ronan Fanning is Professor Emeritus of Modern History at UCD and this article is based on his book 'Fatal Path: British Government and Irish Revolution 1910-1922' (London, 2013). His new book 'Éamon de Valera: A Will to Power' was published in October.

NINE LIVES



The celebrities of the era were writers, soldiers, singers and the stars of the new movie industry. Some are still very well-known in the 21st century, writes **Gerard Siggins**

1 JOHN McCORMACK was the most famous Irishman of his day as a world-renowned tenor. Born in Athlone, he sang in church choirs and was discovered by music teacher Vincent O'Brien at the Féis Ceoil in 1903.

He travelled to Italy and became a star there and was soon touring the US, Australia and Europe. Recording was in its infancy but songs such as 'The Minstrel Boy' and 'The Last Rose of Summer' became very popular.

During the First World War his songs 'A Long Way to Tipperary' and 'Keep the Home Fires Burning' were sung in the trenches while 'The Wearing of the Green' was popular with Irish nationalists.

2 The most famous British Army recruiting poster of the First World War features the slogan 'Your Country Needs You' surmounted by a picture of a man from Co Kerry. **Horatio Kitchener** didn't spend long in Ballylongford but grew up to be one of Britain's most celebrated soldiers in wars in Sudan, Egypt, South Africa and India.

In 1914 Earl Kitchener was appointed to the cabinet as Secretary of State for War and marshalled the biggest volunteer

army the world had ever seen to that point. Kitchener was one of 600 people who died in June 1916 when HMS Hampshire hit a German mine in the North Sea.

3 Dick Fitzgerald won five All-Ireland medals and was captain of the Kerry footballers who won in 1913 and 1914. He retired in 1915 when they lost to Wexford. He also wrote *How to Play Gaelic Football*, one of the first coaching books about the game. As an active republican he was interned in Frongoch Camp in Wales after the Easter Rising.

He later became a GAA administrator and after his death in 1930, aged just 48, Fitzgerald Stadium in Killarney was named in his honour.

4 WB Yeats was a strong supporter of the Indian poet **Rabindranath Tagore** and in 1912 helped him find an audience in the west for his poetry. The following year Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, essentially on the basis of one work, *Gitanjali: Song Offerings*.

Yeats saw much of rural Connacht in Tagore's Bengal and promoted staging the world

premiere of his first play at the Abbey in 1913. This was staged as a double bill alongside Patrick Pearse's *An Rí* and was ironically called *The Post Office*.

A bust to Tagore was unveiled in St Stephen's Green in 2011 to mark the 150th anniversary of his birth.

5 One of the prominent figures of that time was Sir **Arthur Conan Doyle**, creator of *Sherlock Holmes*. He was born in Edinburgh to Irish parents. Although best known for his great detective, Doyle was also active in many spheres including spiritualism, politics and sport. In 1885 he married, bringing his wife on honeymoon to Dublin where he was on a cricket tour.

His opposition to the regime in the Belgian Congo meant he became friends with Roger Casement, whose execution in August 1916 he tried to prevent and spoke out against. Some critics say Casement is the model for a character in one of Doyle's best-known novels, *The Lost World*.

6 Charlie Chaplin's first film was released in 1914 but by the end of the First World War he was a huge star. The Londoner had developed the character of a tramp whose slapstick antics were hilarious to audiences in those silent movie days.

He refused to make "talkies" when they arrived in the late '20s but in 1940 he made his first, a controversial film satirising Adolf Hitler ('Adenoid Hynkel') called *The Great Dictator*. Chaplin holidayed in Co Kerry every year through the 1960s and a statue was erected in Waterville after his death in 1976.

7 and 8 Edith Somerville and Violet Florence Martin were a pair of writers who collaborated on a series of highly popular comic novels about an Irish resident magistrate. The three *Irish RM* books, which were made into a TV series in the 1980s,

were credited to Edith Somerville and 'Martin Ross'. Their other books include *The Real Charlotte* (1894) which is acknowledged as one of the finest Irish novels.

The women were second cousins, and after Violet was disabled in a hunting accident in 1898 they lived thereafter in Castletownsend, Co Cork.

Even after Violet died in 1915, Edith continued to publish stories under both names, as she claimed that she was still in contact with her dead friend.

9 Alfie Byrne was an independent politician who was first elected to Dublin Corporation in 1914 and the following year became a Westminster MP after winning the Dublin Harbour by-election.

He was elected to the Dáil as a pro-Treaty independent and began to develop a brilliant electoral machine in the city, handing out lollipops to children and getting the nickname 'The Shaking Hand of Dublin'. Several times he won the most votes in the country and was elected Lord Mayor of Dublin ten times.

Shortly before Byrne's death in 1956 Trinity College awarded him an honorary degree, hailing him as a "champion of the poor and needy, and a friend of all men".

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A boy in the shadow of his brother

Loyal to the very end, William 'Willie' Pearse's contribution to the Rising was humble but shouldn't be forgotten, writes **Leanne Blaney**

FEW understood the concept of 'blood sacrifice' better than Willie Pearse. Though his name was not among the seven signatories of the 1916 Proclamation, he made numerous sacrifices during his 34 year existence for his 'blood', namely his brother Patrick. His dedication earned him imprisonment, a court-martial and eventually an execution in the stonebreakers yard of Kilmainham Gaol on 4 May 1916.

Born on 15 November 1881 in the family home at 27 Great Brunswick Street (later to be renamed Pearse Street), William James Pearse ('Willie') was the second son born to Englishman James and his second wife, Margaret (née Brady). From early childhood he was devoted to his elder brother Patrick Henry and hours were spent playing the role of altar boy to Patrick's priest while their two sisters Margaret and Mary Brigid acted as members of the congregation.

The close ties between the brothers were reinforced in 1891 when they were enrolled in the Christian Brothers School on nearby Westland Row. Willie, with his artistic temperament and limited academic ability, was frequently ill-favoured by his teachers and Patrick became his protector. As adults the two would remain exceptionally close, holidaying together in the west of Ireland and conversing in a private language which, to close friends,

resembled baby-talk. Their tendency to dress flamboyantly (Willie often wore kilts) set them apart and served to both endear and alienate them from their peers.

Earmarked to succeed his father as a monumental sculptor, Willie had spent his childhood visiting and working in the workshops of the family business. However as William Murphy noted in his Dictionary of Irish Biography profile of Willie Pearse, following the unexpected death of his father in 1900 he continued his studies abroad and left Patrick in charge of the business.

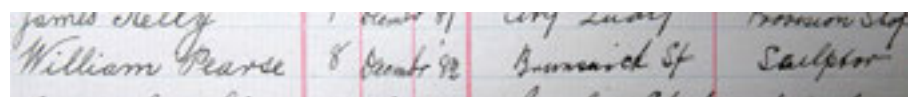
Willie assumed control when he returned to Dublin and quickly developed a reputation as an able sculptor with work showcased in Royal Hibernian Academy and Oireachtas exhibitions. Examples of his work, including Éire Óg, for which his favourite subject, a young girl called Mabel Gorman modelled, still exist. However, plans for a sculpture to commemorate Wolfe Tone — drawn up when he served on the executive committee of the Wolfe Tone and United Irishmen Memorial Committee in 1898, alongside Bulmer Hobson, Séan MacDermott and Tom Clarke — were never realised.

The family business closed in 1910 owing to a downturn in trade and the need to raise capital to invest in Patrick's new school for boys, St Enda's. Having unsuccessfully applied for a job at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art, Ruth Dudley Edwards observed in her work



Clockwise from top left: Willie Pearse; one of his drawings; Willie and his siblings; a roll book from CBS Westland Row in 1891 showing his name; Leanne Blaney outside Pearse & Sons monumental sculptors on Pearse street, Dublin.

ARTHUR CARRON



Patrick Pearse: *The Triumph of Failure* that Willie gave up his ambitions to be a sculptor and instead dedicated himself to assisting Patrick and Thomas MacDonagh with their new school.

As an art teacher and a keen dramatist (he and Mary Brigid formed a small theatre company, the Leinster Stage Society), he was responsible for encouraging his pupils to express their Irish identity creatively. From 1913 onwards, Willie acted as assistant headmaster, freeing Patrick to devote his time and efforts towards the nationalist cause.

When Patrick became involved in the IRB Military Council and plans began to be drawn up for the Rising, Willie — known as Captain WJ Pearse to members of the Irish Volunteers and the IRB — was drafted in to assist his brother. In spite of

MacNeill's countermand it was Willie who issued many of the orders that the Rising would continue to Irish Volunteer leaders, including Captain Séan T O'Kelly.

Wholly unsuited for the battlefield, Willie would remain by Patrick's side throughout the Rising. Having cycled with him to the GPO on Easter Monday, he acted as Patrick's aide-de-camp among the 400 Volunteers present in the GPO. His sympathetic nature also led a number of others, including James Connolly, to confide in him.

According to the mythology that emerged in the aftermath of the Rising, when the decision to surrender was eventually made, only Willie and MacDermott refused to cry. Such stoicism, Dudley Edwards argues, reappeared when he was the only one of those court-martialed to plead guilty.

In prison, the brothers were denied the opportunity of a proper goodbye due to ill-timing. Instead Patrick acknowledged Willie's devotion, with the ode 'To My Brother' and in one of his final letters when he wrote: 'No one could ever have had so true a brother as you'.

Leanne Blaney is a social and transport historian who recently completed her PhD in the School of History (UCD). Her research focuses on 20th century Irish and Northern Irish history with a particular focus on cross-border relations during the early 20th century

SNAPSHOT

WILLIAM 'WILLIE' PEARSE

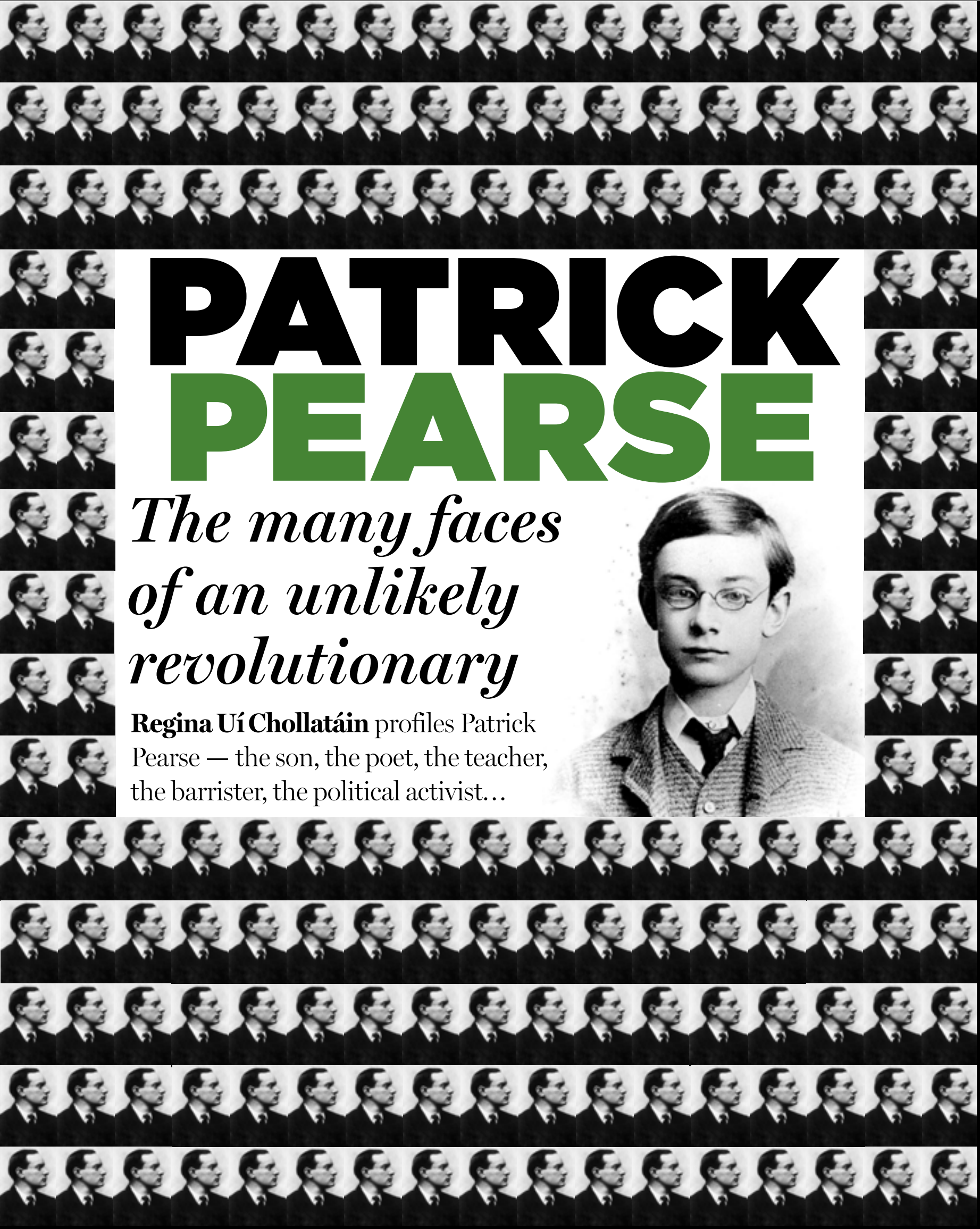
Born: Dublin, 15 Nov 1881

Educated: Westland Row CBS; Dublin Metropolitan School of Art; Kensington School of Art

Affiliation: Irish Volunteers

Career: sculptor and stonemason, teacher, St Enda's (from 1908)

Died: Kilmainham, 4 May 1916



PATRICK PEARSE

*The many faces
of an unlikely
revolutionary*

Regina Uí Chollatáin profiles Patrick
Pearse — the son, the poet, the teacher,
the barrister, the political activist...



SNAPSHOT

PATRICK HENRY PEARSE

Born: Dublin, 10 Nov 1879

Educated: Westland Row CBS, UCD, King's Inns

Career: lawyer (from 1901), headmaster, St Enda's (from 1908)

Affiliation: Irish Volunteers, IRB

Died: Kilmainham, 3 May 1916

I HAVE just done one of the hardest tasks I have ever had to do. I have had to condemn to death one of the finest characters I have ever come across. There must be something very wrong in the state of things that makes a man like that a Rebel.' Major-General Charles Blackader, President of the Courts-Martial gave this account of Patrick Pearse while dining with Elizabeth, Countess of Fingall, in 1916.

Pearse's poems 'To My Mother', 'To My Brother', 'A Mother Speaks' and 'The Wayfarer' written from his cell in Arbour Hill and Kilmainham were to be given to his family along with his final letter to his mother penned just before his execution on 3 May.

Signing the letter simply 'Your son, Pat', he stated that the rebels would be judged harshly but that they would be praised in time. Patrick Pearse's signature is well recognised in the context of the 1916 Proclamation and his lifelong tendency to sign with his academic qualifications BA BL. The simplicity of this signature to his mother is a statement in itself on Pearse the man or, as he was fondly referred to in the West of Ireland, 'Fear Bhaile Átha Cliath' [the Dublin man].

While he is remembered for political writings and events, Pearse, the man, is more difficult to categorise; he was Irish and English, Victorian and modernist, respectable and revolutionary; in practical terms he was also a son, a brother, a poet, an Irish language enthusiast, a barrister, an educationalist, and a political activist.

Born on 10 November 1879, turning 21 at the turn of the 20th century, he bore the classic traits of middle-class Victorian life. Strength of character prevailed alongside an often reckless pursuit of traditional values and sometimes over-zealous ambition to free Ireland. Growing up in working-class surroundings of Great Brunswick Street [now Pearse Street], his mixed parentage was more a source of confusion than comfort as demonstrated in the letter to himself on 11 May 1912 in his journal *An Barr Buadh*.

His father James Pearse was a stonemason with English ancestry spanning 400 years. His mother Margaret Brady, hailed from a traditional Catholic farming background with roots in Meath and Cavan. Patrick was the second of four children, and his final words in his final letter indicate a loving, close-knit family, "Wow-Wow, Willie, Mary Brigid and Mother, goodbye. I have not words to tell of my love of you... I will call to you in my heart at the last moment."

His Gaelic nationalist sentiment was evident from a young age and his interest in Irish language developed at school. Accounts from his peers in school allude to an aloof and unapproachable young boy. JA Duffy, who sat beside him for four years in Westland Row, said that he knew nothing of him. Others refer to his choice to be alone reading rather than joining in games.

How then did this young misfit play a significant role in the formation of 20th century Ireland? His stamp on education at many levels, his role in creating a modern Irish literature embracing European literature, and his endeavour to reinstate



The young Patrick Pearse as teacher and barrister (above); and UCD's Regina Uí Chollatáin (left) at the Pearse Museum in St Enda's Park, Dublin (below)

STEVE HUMPHREYS



the Irish language are all commendable achievements in their own right.

In his statement to the Court Martial on 2 May 1916 he stated: "When I was a child of ten I went down on my bare knees by my bedside one night and promised God that I should devote my life to an effort to free my country."

Whether this can be judged as the last testament of a man condemned to death for a cause he was prepared to die for, or the honest ramblings of an Irish patriot, the ideal of pursuing cultural and political nationalism was evidently deep rooted from an early age.

When Pearse finished post-primary exams in 1896 he was appointed an assistant teacher. With his classmate Eamon O'Neill he founded the New Ireland Literary Society and became involved with the Gaelic League, joining the Executive committee from 1898. As editor of its newspaper *An Claidheamh Soluis* from 1903-09 he left his mark on the language movement's campaigns.

He was steadfast in promoting a national education system using examples from the US, Denmark, Germany, Wales and Hungary. In 1906 he published a series of articles entitled 'Belgium and its

Schools' and he wrote more than

70 book reviews. Séamas Ó Buachalla credits Pearse with moulding public opinion and educating League members in a national philosophy in education. His strength of character in the debate on the provision of fees for the teaching of Irish is noteworthy but his main victory was the role he played in the campaign for essential Irish in 1908-09 for matriculation in the new National University.

At a time when the education system was examination-focused and basically colonial in approach, Pearse set up his own project, St Enda's school, which he guided from 1908-16. He was the driving force, too, for St Ita's school for girls.

His confidence in the approach to Irish language, culture and history was quoted in the *Gaelic American* in 1914, stating that "the whole experiment of Irishising education in Ireland must stand or fall with St Enda's".

HE presented his own theories on education in 1916 in the *Murder Machine* series and this vision of vernacular education and its relation to literacy compares with the child-centred models of contemporaries Maria Montessori and Rudolf Steiner. Using Eoin MacNeill's comparison of the English education system in Ireland to the systems of slave education, the *Murder Machine* generated stark theories providing controversial argument for a national education. In 1939 Desmond Ryan credited Pearse with being "the educationalist of the movement... since he was by nature, a born teacher".

In a literary context Pearse was criticised for attempting to impose the European short story model on modern Irish language literature. He published ten short stories in Irish, the first, 'An Sagart' [The Priest], in *An Claidheamh Soluis*, February 1905. The theme of a later story, 'Na Bóithre' [The Roads] challenges the restraints experienced by a girl in a rural environment expected to stay at home while her parents and brother go out to a party. Through these he pioneered the use of new literary styles and forms in Irish.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 >>>

On the revolutionary road

I am glad that the Orangemen have armed, for it is a goodly thing to see arms in Irish hands. I should like to see the A. O. H. armed. I should like to see the Transport Workers armed. I should like to see any and every body of Irish citizens armed. We must accustom ourselves to the thought of arms, to the sight of arms, to the use of arms. We may make mistakes in the beginning and shoot the wrong people; but bloodshed is a cleansing and a sanctifying thing, and the nation which regards it as the final horror has lost its manhood. There are many things more horrible than bloodshed; and slavery is one of them.

Patrick Pearse, 'The Coming Revolution', November 1913

The many faces of an unlikely revolutionary

>>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

Pearse is credited with a complete overhaul of Irish language publications and his four editorials in *An Claidheamh Soluis* in May-June 1906 focus on the need to use the European model in literary themes, style and form to progress from the folktale. These essays are among the first and most insightful treatises on literary criticism in modern Irish language literature. In short the first decade of the 20th century was a period of vigorous campaign and industry for Pearse, be it in an educational, literary or journalistic capacity.

BY 1912 Pearse's leaning towards political nationalism took precedence over cultural promotion. 'The Coming Revolution' (November 1913) and 'The Psychology of a Volunteer' (January 1914) in *An Claidheamh Soluis* are examples of this mindset. His political involvement in the Irish Volunteers was now to the fore and his graveside eulogy at O'Donovan Rossa's funeral in August 1915 was hailed as one of his most powerful public orations, not least because of the links it summoned in the minds of those present between O'Donovan Rossa's death and the graves of dead Fenians before him. The funeral provided the platform



Ireland unarmed will attain just as much freedom as it is convenient for England to give her; Ireland armed will attain ultimately just as much freedom as she wants

for a public statement for the rebels, which was published in full in *The Freeman's Journal*. Its impact was widely felt by those who agreed that Ireland was ready for a revolution and by those who didn't.

His educational and political writings at this time indicate a definite drive to promote Gaelicism and nationalism in all aspects of Irish life. The four pamphlets penned by Pearse at the end of 1915 sealed the nationalist ideal proclaiming, among other arguments, that the ghosts of the 'four evangelists', Lalor, Mitchel, Tone and Davis needed to be laid to rest. He termed the pamphlets *Ghosts*, *The Separatist Idea*, *The Spiritual Nation*, and *The Sovereign People* as "the four gospels of the new testament of Irish nationality".

Pearse's role in the Rising from initiation to surrender was fearless and determined. Desmond Fitzgerald recounts his time with Pearse in the GPO saying that the natural gravity in Pearse's face conveyed a sense of great tragedy and accounts of the Rising attest that Pearse was aware of the sacrifice involved. In a period of high nationalism Pearse was one of its most articulate exponents. His reputation became bound to the fortunes of republicanism and nationalism in 20th century Ireland but his was the life that was most documented in the articles in the organ of the Gaelic League, *An Claidheamh Soluis*. In this forum he was acknowledged for his role in the language movement and society, as opposed to his role in the Revolution alone.

Patrick Pearse was not a one-dimensional figure. The multi-dimensional legacy he left may well be the best way now to lay his own ghost to rest.

Dr Regina Uí Chollatáin is a senior lecturer in Modern Irish and Head of School of the UCD School of Irish, Celtic Studies and Folklore



PEARSE AND THE MARTYRDOM COMPLEX RICHARD McELLIGOTT

More of an orator than a military leader

PATRICK PEARSE was an unlikely revolutionary leader. However the emergence of the Ulster Volunteers and its implications for nationalist politics began to awaken his zeal. Pearse described his satisfaction that the "Orangemen had armed, because it is a goodly thing to see arms in Irish hands."

The outbreak of the First World War turned him down the road of revolutionary nationalism. Like many of his generation across Europe, Pearse began to glorify the ideal of a blood sacrifice in pursuit of a nobler cause, most notably when he wrote "the old heart of the earth needed to be warmed by the red wine of the battlefields".

Having joined the Irish Volunteers, Pearse was sworn into the IRB in December 1913. Following the larger split in the Volunteers, he began to develop plans for a series of resistance activities which the Irish Volunteers should engage in if circumstances dictated.

These efforts secured him the key position of Director of Military Organisation for the Volunteers in December 1914. The following May Pearse was one of three men appointed to the IRB's newly created Military Council, which was tasked with planning a rebellion against British rule using the Irish Volunteers.

Working in secret throughout the



autumn of 1915, the Military Council perfected its plans for revolt. Pearse's adulation of Robert Emmet's failed uprising in 1803 had a significant influence on the planners who, like Emmet, saw Dublin as the focal point for a new rebellion. By now Pearse had truly developed a martyrdom complex and was convinced that Irish nationalism needed a sacrificial gesture in order to prompt it into a full scale war of independence against British rule.

With the addition of James Connolly in January 1916, the Military Council now consisted of all seven signatures of the Proclamation.

That document was mainly Pearse's composition, and its reference to "the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood" echoed his conviction that each generation

needed to justify itself in arms.

Events had doomed the rebellion to certain failure but Pearse still led a detachment of Irish Volunteers into the GPO on Easter Monday. Though the figurehead of the rebellion, he was no military leader and his talents lay in oration. While the fighting raged it was Connolly who physically directed the battle. Within the walls of the GPO, Pearse confined himself to discussion about the justification for the Rising with his co-conspirators and morale boosting speeches to keep the beleaguered rebels fighting.

Forced to evacuate their position on Friday afternoon, Pearse and his command made a chaotic retreat to Moore Street. By Saturday, with British forces bearing down, the situation was hopeless. There are reports that after witnessing three elderly men being cut down by the crossfire, Pearse notified his men of his intention to surrender. At approximately 3.45pm, he drafted a general to "lay down arms" so as "to prevent the further slaughter of Dublin citizens, and in the hope of saving the lives of our followers".

Dr Richard McElligott lectures in Modern Irish History at University College Dublin (UCD) and is the author of several works on the Irish Revolutionary period

Patrick Pearse's mother Margaret carries a wreath to lay at her son's grave in June 1922

GETTY IMAGES

'The Mother'

By Patrick Pearse

*I do not grudge them: Lord, I do not grudge
My two strong sons that I have seen go out
To break their strength and die, they and a few,
In bloody protest for a glorious thing,
They shall be spoken of among their people,
The generations shall remember them,
And call them blessed;
But I will speak their names to my own heart
In the long nights;
The little names that were familiar once
Round my dead hearth.
Lord, thou art hard on mothers:
We suffer in their coming and their going;
And tho' I grudge them not, I weary, weary
Of the long sorrow — And yet I have my joy:
My sons were faithful, and they fought.*

PEARSE THE POET DR LUCY COLLINS

The voice in this poem is both personal and universal – it is the voice of Pearse's own mother yet it speaks too for all those torn between grief and exultation. The poem interweaves opposites: strength and brokenness; failure and triumph; sorrow and joy. In simple language it indicates the complex emotions aroused by the Rising and evokes the shared experiences that bind nation and family together.

The lasting significance of the rebellion is claimed in religious terms, reflecting Pearse's vision of blood sacrifice as essential to renewal. Yet the feelings expressed here are also private ones: recollecting the men in childhood, the speaker hints at their purity and idealism.

Like the actions of the revolutionaries themselves, the poem links the new and the ancient. It speaks of the immediate impact of the rebels' actions, yet it also expresses the suffering that is at the heart of the human condition.

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



IRELAND IN 1916

Before recordings, music was still a large part of life



Fergus Cassidy on an era before the arrival of the gramophone, when music, comedy and variety acts were all about performance

IN James Plunkett's novel *Strumpet City*, Rashers Tierney and Hennessy are minding a barrel organ, and a monkey, for the Italian owner who collapsed on the street. Had their luck changed for the better?

"It's very tempting," Hennessy admitted. "We'll be set up for life," Rashers urged. "Yes — until the police catch up with us."

In the years leading up to 1916, recorded music had not arrived in Ireland. Music was performed. Sung, played, in private, in public. On the streets in towns and cities it was characters like Rashers playing his tin whistle, and the odd barrel-organ grinder sifting for donations. A Dublin witness mentioned the "singing and whistling of music hall favourites and excerpts from operas by messenger boys on their rounds". Makeshift stages were built with beer kegs and wooden planks, and songs from come-all-ye sessions spilled from public houses and shebeens.

Music halls were popular, with programmes of songs, comedy, speciality and variety acts. In the early 1900s Dublin had two big music halls — The Empire Palace (now the Olympia) and the Tivoli Theatre of Varieties. The Theatre Royal opened in 1897 and was noted for opera and musical comedy. In 1906 Charlie Chaplin, aged 17, performed there as part of an act called The Eight Lancashire Lads. The Gaiety hosted a Christmas panto every year since 1874 and also staged opera.

The Dublin Orchestral Society, founded 1898, was a professional co-operative orchestra. By 1913 it had given over 200 performances, including new work such as *Harty's Irish Symphony*. In 1914 the Dublin United Tramway Company engaged bands to play in the Phoenix Park Hollow on summer evenings. From 1910-1913 concerts were also given by the Dublin Amateur Orchestral Society on Sunday evenings on the esplanade in Bray, Co Wicklow.

In Cork City Hall in 1913 a Grand Home Rule concert took place. On 26 December 1915 a production of *The Fairy Queen* took place in the Carnegie Hall, Killorglin, Co Kerry. Aged 19, tenor John McCormack joined the Palestrina Choir founded in Dublin's Pro-cathedral in 1903.

There were many bandstands, such as St Stephen's Green, Dublin, Green Park, Youghal, and the People's Park, Waterford, and no shortage of bands to play in them. In 1902 there were more than 20 Fife and Drum bands in Dublin with a similar number in the rest of the country. In 1912 the Fintan Lalor Pipe Band was founded and the O'Connell Fife and Drum Band were All-Ireland champions. The St James's Band and the Emmet Choir played in the Rotunda rink at the formation of the Irish Volunteers in 1913.

The Gaelic League set up the Féis Ceoil Association in 1897 and held competitions for song composition, unaccompanied and accompanied solo and choral singing, solo and group dancing and instrumental music. The *Church of Ireland Gazette* praised the Féis Ceoil "...for giving better examples of Irish music than the popular music



A promotional poster for Dublin's Theatre Royal (left) and renowned Irish tenor, John McCormack (above)

GETTY IMAGES

hall ballads which delight in portraying the average Irishman as a maudlin drunkard". At the first Féis Ceoil in May 1897 the competition for performance on the Irish harp received no entries. John McCormack was a gold medal winner as a tenor in the 1903 Féis Ceoil and the writer James Joyce won bronze the following year.

Traditional, or folk music, was rooted in the passing of songs and tunes from one generation to the next. The vocal tradition had become weak after the Famine but

the instrumental side continued to grow. The mains instruments played were: fiddle, uilleann pipes, tin whistle, flute, melodeon, concertina and accordion.

In 1904 the Irish Folk Song Society was founded. From 1900 to 1912 at least nine piper's bands were started and Piobairí na hÉireann began in 1912. The music was preserved, however, by collectors like Francis O'Neill, who published *O'Neill's Music of Ireland* (1903) and *The Dance Music of Ireland* (1907). He has been referred to as "the greatest individual influence on Irish traditional dance music in the 20th century". Abroad, especially in the United States, songs like *Macushla* (1910) sung by John McCormack were hugely popular.

By October 1915 the mood of that time was reflected in a letter to the papers. The writer admonished the Cork School of Music committee for its unsympathetic attitude toward traditional music: "Our rights are: Our native music first and above all other music in the School". In November of the same year the St James's Band played a "stirring selection of National airs" at half-time during the All-Ireland football final between Kerry and Wexford. Four months earlier the band played at the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa.

Five months after the Rising, the *Limerick Leader* carried an advertisement for P McCarthy & Sons announcing: "It is now within the power of everyone to have Music in their homes.... You can make this coming Winter the happiest you ever spent by having a Gramophone. Don't hesitate. Get one".

Rashers would have turned in his grave.

THE 'HITS' OF 1916

"O Sole Mio" by Enrico Caruso

"Somewhere a Voice is Calling" by John McCormack

"Where Did Robinson Crusoe Go With Friday On Saturday Night?" by Al Jolson (inset)

"I Love A Piano" by Billy Murray

"I'm Gonna Make Hay While the Sun Shines in Virginia" by Marion Harris (left)

"Keep the Home Fires Burning ('Till the Boys Comes Home)" by James F. Harrison

"Ireland Must Be Heaven, For My Mother Came From There" by Charles Harrison





**PROFESSOR
ANDREW DEEKS**
PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE DUBLIN



UCD informing national debate with an objective scholarly voice

ONE hundred years ago, as the steps towards independence gathered momentum, many staff, students and graduates of University College Dublin played a pivotal role in the actions that took place.

Among the staff of UCD who played a role in the events were Thomas MacDonagh, Assistant Professor of English, signatory of the Proclamation and commandant of the Dublin Brigade; Eoin MacNeill, Professor of Early and Medieval Irish History, and Irish Volunteers Chief of Staff; Mary Hayden, Professor of Modern Irish History and founder of the Irish Catholic Women's Suffrage Society; and Agnes O'Farrelly, Lecturer in Modern Irish and founder of Cumann na mBan.

Students and graduates too numbered among the activists who fought for social justice, women's rights and, of course, independence. Well-known names included Louise Gavan Duffy, Francis and Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, Patrick Pearse, Jack & Geraldine Plunkett (siblings of Joseph Mary), James Ryan, Kevin Barry, Kevin O'Higgins, Ernie O'Malley and Richard Mulcahy.

The University is proud that its staff, students and graduates had such a significant involvement in, what was to become, one of the defining periods in Irish history. Today, UCD continues to value the ethos of justice and equality, alongside a sense of cultural identity that shapes our thinking and prompts our debate.

UCD and the *Irish Independent* have collaborated to produce this insightful and informative series of supplements. These supplements allow UCD to share a wealth of knowledge via our expert academics and archival materials.

As a major holder of archives of national and international significance relating to the Decade of Centenaries (1912-1923), the university's vision is to inform national debate and understanding with an objective scholarly voice, in a manner that brings education and new perspectives to the fore.



University's central

UCD's professors, lecturers, graduates and students to fore during

UCD was no mere witness to the events of a century ago. Both the Irish Volunteers and Cumann na mBan were founded by UCD academics. Although

Eoin MacNeill — the founder of the Irish Volunteers — is well-remembered in Irish history, Agnes O'Farrelly — founder of Cumann na mBan who later became UCD's first professor of Irish — was largely forgotten. O'Farrelly was forgotten not because of her gender but rather because she sided with John Redmond, leading a majority faction of Cumann na mBan to support the war effort in 1914. Like Redmond's national volunteers, the Redmondite wing of Cumann na mBan was largely defunct within a year. However, the rump factions of the Irish Volunteers and Cumann na mBan, small in number, had a profound impact of the course of events. In the history of the revolutionary decade, minorities matter.

Just as he was essential to the making of the Irish Volunteers, Eoin MacNeill bears the responsibility for the near undoing of the 1916 Easter Rising. On Holy Saturday 1916, MacNeill realised he had been duped by those planning the rebellion and he countermanded his mobilisation order for Sunday; putting the final nail in the coffin of a nationwide rebellion. However, a smaller, less prepared insurrection went ahead on Easter Monday in spite of MacNeill's objections.

The Rising of Easter Monday 1916 had as its commander-in-chief a graduate of UCD in Patrick Pearse. Two of the four Dublin battalions occupying the city during Easter week were led by

graduates: the 2nd and 3rd battalions, led by Thomas MacDonagh and Eamon de Valera respectively.

Younger students like Ernie O'Malley left vivid accounts of their experiences of Easter week. O'Malley recalls how his first inclination was to defend Trinity College but this idea was abandoned in favour of taking pot-shots at British positions with a student friend's father's rifle.

An active volunteer during his days studying law and agriculture but a boy of 14 at the time of the Rising, the execution of Seán MacBride's father by firing squad on 5 May was arguably the formative event in his own later student radicalisation.

UCD was home to many extraordinary individuals in this period. However, it was also an institution that got on with the business of teaching, learning, and research. The fascinating diary of Celia Shaw, a student at the University during the War of Independence and Civil War periods, shows how life did, and did not, carry on as normal in extraordinary times. On one page she is studying for an exam or recounting a day in the library, the next she jots down her impressions of how the student body were reacting to the 1921 truce.

Back in the dark days of November 1920, on the day after medical student Kevin Barry's execution, UCD students were thrown into commotion with the news that Auxiliaries were en route to raid the University. John Mowbray, a first-year medical student at the time, recalled seeing fellow students, "whom I regarded as harmless callow youths, produce massive revolvers and sheafs of papers and hand them to even less guileful waitresses, who were, of course,



members of the College Cumann na mBan".

From the Rising to the Civil War and beyond into the foundation of independent Ireland, UCD played a pivotal role. The treaty debates were hosted by the University in Earlsfort Terrace. The first cabinets, from 1919 right through to 1922 contained UCD staff, graduates, and even the occasional dropout. One of these was Richard Mulcahy.





role in 1916

birth of our nation, writes **Conor Mulvagh**



Top: UCD was based in Earlsfort Terrace in 1916 (now home to National Concert Hall).

Above: The formal reception of Éamon de Valera (front row, centre) as Chancellor of the National University of Ireland.

UCD ARCHIVES, COURTESY OF UCD — ORDER OF FRIARS MINOR PARTNERSHIP

Agnes O'Farrelly, founder of Cumann na mBan who later became UCD's first professor of Irish.

Above left: Eoin MacNeill, Professor of Early and Medieval Irish History at UCD and Irish Volunteers Chief of Staff.

Left: Thomas MacDonagh, UCD's Assistant Professor of English, signatory of the Proclamation and commandant of the Dublin Brigade.

While still a medical student of the university in 1918, Mulcahy directed the operations of the Irish Volunteers from an office left at his disposal in the chemistry corridor.

Ultimately, it was the post-rebellion prison camps like Frongoch that became the 'universities of the revolution'. However, UCD certainly played its part in Ireland's

independence struggle. So too did the revolution have a role in shaping UCD into what it became in these years.

Dr Conor Mulvagh is a lecturer in Irish History at the School of History at University College Dublin (UCD) with special responsibility for the Decade of Commemorations.



1915-16

1st August 1915

🇮🇪 NATIONAL EVENT

O'DONOVAN-ROSSA'S FUNERAL

The funeral of Jeremiah O'Donovan-Rossa is held in Dublin. The occasion is used by republicans for propaganda purposes, most notably through Patrick Pearse's graveside oration at Glasnevin cemetery, written at the instigation of Thomas Clarke. At the end of his oration, Pearse declares: "They think that they have foreseen everything, think that they have provided against everything; but the fools, the fools, the fools! — they have left us our Fenian dead, and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace."



Patrick Pearse



Jeremiah O'Donovan-Rossa

26th October 1915

🇮🇪 NATIONAL EVENT

ROBERT MONTEITH ARRIVES AT ZOSSEN POW CAMP

Captain Robert Monteith, a drill-instructor with the Irish Volunteers in Limerick, is brought by Roger Casement to Zossen POW camp, 20 miles south of Berlin, where he assumes his role as commanding officer of the Irish Brigade. Casement had failed to recruit an officer from amongst the POWs to lead the brigade, which numbers only 56 men.



Captain Robert Monteith

November 1915

🏛️ UCD EVENT

MARY HAYDEN CO-FOUNDS THE IRISH CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY

Mary Hayden, the first professor of Modern Irish History in UCD, co-founds, along with Mary Louise Gwynn, the Irish Catholic Women's Suffrage Society. Hayden had been an ardent campaigner for women's university education and was also involved in the formation of the Irish Women's Suffrage and Local Government Association, as well as chairing the first meeting of the Irish Women Workers' Union.



Mary Hayden, whose portrait hangs in the UCD School of History.

1916

21st February - 18th December 1916

🌐 INTERNATIONAL EVENT

BATTLE OF VERDUN

Under General Erich von Falkenhayn, the German army attacks a key fortified area on the banks of the River Meuse in the North-East of France. General Henri Pétain takes command of the French defence, which manages to repel the German offensive in what becomes the longest battle of the War, and one of the costliest, with roughly 1 million casualties.



Members of the French 87th Regiment at the Battle of Verdun



1916

Spring 1916

UCD EVENT

THE RISING IS FIXED FOR EASTER

Unbeknownst to Eoin MacNeill, the IRB fix Easter Sunday as the date for their planned insurrection. MacNeill's colleague Thomas MacDonagh takes an increasingly prominent role in proceedings, and is the last person appointed to the Military Council. Austin Clarke, a student of MacDonagh's at the time, later described how "abstracted and worried" he looked in the spring of 1916, recalling how "one day, during a lecture on the Young Ireland Poets, he took a large revolver from his pocket and laid it on the desk, 'Ireland can only win freedom by force' he remarked, as if to himself."



A Mark VI Webley, one kind of revolver used by the Irish Volunteers

1916

23rd April 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

MILITARY COUNCIL DECIDE TO MOVE FORWARD WITH REBELLION

Despite the appearance of MacNeill's countermand in the Sunday Independent, the IRB Military Council meets at Liberty Hall on Easter Sunday and decides to go ahead with the Rising, postponing it until the following day.



Six of the seven members of the IRB Military Council (UCD Archives)



James Connolly, who joined the Military Council in January 1916 (UCD Archives)

20th - 21st April 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

AUD, CASEMENT AND GERMAN GUNS CAPTURED

The Aud, a disguised German ship carrying arms to be used in the rebellion, mistimes its rendezvous with Roger Casement in Kerry and is captured by the British Navy before being scuttled outside Queenstown by its captain Karl Spindler. When Casement arrives in Kerry, he is captured and arrested by the RIC. Captain Robert Monteith and Daniel Bailey, who had accompanied Casement, evade capture.



Roger Casement (from the Library of Congress, Washington)

24th April 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

FIRST DAY OF RISING

Approximately 1,250 members of the Irish Volunteers, the Irish Citizen Army and Cumann na mBan mobilise throughout the city. Many are unaware of what is to happen and are only informed of the impending insurrection upon their assembly. Key buildings are seized throughout Dublin, including the Four Courts, Boland's Mill, the Mendicity Institution and the GPO, which acts as the rebels' headquarters. Rebels make a brief attempt to seize Dublin Castle, but revert instead to the Evening Mail offices on the opposite side of the street. At the GPO, a flag emblazoned with the words "Irish Republic" is hoisted alongside a tricolour, beneath which Patrick Pearse reads the Proclamation of the Irish Republic.



Sackville Street in 1916 (UCD Archives)

FIND OUT MORE:

- HISTORY HUB**
Professor Michael Laffan, The Irish Revolution, lecture 4, The Easter Rising:
<http://historyhub.ie/the-easter-rising-the-irish-revolution-lecture-4>

21st April 1916

UCD EVENT

MACNEILL CONFRONTS PEARSE

Having learned of the impending Rising, Eoin MacNeill confronts Patrick Pearse at 2am on Good Friday. Following his graduation with a BL in 1910, Pearse had lectured intermittently at UCD, on one occasion running a course on the Irish language in parallel with one of MacNeill's Irish history courses. Pearse, along with MacNeill's colleague Thomas MacDonagh, convince MacNeill not to obstruct the Rising. However, following the failure to land arms in Kerry, MacNeill has a change of heart; UCD staff members Michael Hayes and Liam Ó Briain are amongst those he recruits to send despatches to Volunteer units around the country in an attempt to prevent the planned rebellion.



Eoin MacNeill (UCD Archives)



Patrick Pearse

24th April 1916

UCD EVENT

FIRST DAY OF RISING

Rebel units gather throughout the city, including the "C" Company of the 3rd Battalion of the Irish Volunteers, which assembles on the grounds of UCD. Key buildings in the city centre are seized. Thomas MacDonagh, leading a depleted 2nd Battalion, takes control of Jacob's factory on Bishop Street. After hearing from a friend about the insurrection, Louise Gavan Duffy, another UCD staff member, approaches the GPO and takes up a post in the kitchen. Also in the GPO is Joseph Sweeney, an engineering student, and medical student James Ryan, who is appointed Medical Officer for the garrison. Ernie O'Malley, another medical student at UCD, considers helping some friends to defend Trinity College before deciding to join the rebels. Meanwhile, Liam Ó Briain, an assistant in the French department in UCD, joins the garrison at St Stephen's Green.



Thomas MacDonagh in his Irish Volunteers uniform

22nd April 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

EOIN MACNEILL COUNTERMANDS EASTER MANOEUVRES

Eoin MacNeill learns of the planned insurrection earlier in the week and, after much persuasion from MacDonagh and other leading IRB figures, reluctantly agrees not to interfere. After the failure to land arms in Kerry, however, he changes his mind and issues a countermanding order calling off Easter manoeuvres.



Eoin MacNeill (National Library of Ireland)

25th April 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

SECOND DAY OF RISING:

Martial law is declared as British Military forces take up positions throughout the city, including City Hall and the Shelbourne Hotel. At St Stephen's Green, the ICA comes under heavy attack, while skirmishes continue at other positions, including the South Dublin Union. Shops on Sackville St are looted and burned.



Images of the British Army and their vehicles taken in the aftermath of the Rising (UCD Archives)



St Stephen's Green, with the Shelbourne Hotel in the background (UCD Archives)



1916

25th April 1916

UCD EVENT

SECOND DAY OF RISING

Liam Ó Briain and the other rebels under the command of Michael Mallin and Countess Markievicz at St Stephen's Green are forced to relocate to the Royal College of Surgeons after coming under heavy attack. At Portobello, Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, UCD alumnus and former auditor of the L&H Society, is arrested, detained and ultimately shot by British soldiers, under the instruction of Captain JC Bowen-Colthurst. Sheehy-Skeffington had taken no part in the Rising and had been organising a group of people to prevent shops and businesses from being looted.



Francis Sheehy Skeffington and his wife Mary during their graduation.

1916

27th April 1916

UCD EVENT

FOURTH DAY OF RISING

Louise Gavan Duffy and the other women in the GPO are instructed by Pearse to evacuate the building, but they refuse, returning to their duties. Meanwhile, James Ryan, who had been completing his fifth year of medicine at UCD, treats a severely wounded James Connolly.



A copy of Birth of Irish Republic by Walter Paget

26th April 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

THIRD DAY OF RISING

Fighting intensifies as British forces bring in heavy artillery. Liberty Hall, although unoccupied, is shelled by the battleship Helga. Volunteers attack Linen Hall barracks in the north of the city, while British soldiers marching from Dun Laoghaire come under attack from detachments of Eamon de Valera's Boland's Mill garrison at Mount Street.



Liberty Hall in ruins (UCD Archives)

28th April 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

FIFTH DAY OF RISING

General Sir John Maxwell arrives in Dublin to take control of the British military. Shelling intensifies and the GPO, now severely damaged by flames, is evacuated by the rebels, who establish a new headquarters in Moore Street. Michael (The) O'Rahilly, a prominent nationalist and volunteer, is killed during the evacuation.



General Maxwell and Major-General Sandbach (UCD Archives)



Michael (The) O'Rahilly in his Volunteer uniform (UCD Archives).

26th April 1916

UCD EVENT

THIRD DAY OF RISING

Michael Hayes, an assistant lecturer in French at UCD, who initially sided with Eoin MacNeill upon the outbreak of the Rising and declined to participate, undergoes a change of heart and decides to join his friend and colleague Thomas MacDonagh in Jacob's factory. Although there is little in the way of out-and-out combat, sniping occurs around the factory during the night.



Some important buildings of the Easter Rising (clockwise, from top right): The Four Courts, Jacob's Biscuit Factory, Trinity College and the Royal College of Surgeons. All were occupied by rebels except for Trinity, which was defended by British soldiers and students (UCD Archives)

28th April 1916

UCD EVENT

FIFTH DAY OF RISING

Under increasingly heavy fire, the GPO is evacuated. Louise Gavan Duffy and James Ryan help to escort the wounded out of the building.



Dr James Ryan in the 1930s



Louise Gavan Duffy

27th April 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

FOURTH DAY OF RISING

Heavy shelling on Sackville Street, causing fires and destruction. The South Dublin Union comes under attack from the Sherwood Foresters. Artillery is deployed in Sackville Street, while sniping occurs throughout the city. At the GPO, James Connolly is wounded in the arm and the leg. Fires and looting become more widespread.



A memorial postcard featuring a portrait of James Connolly (UCD Archives)

29th April 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

SIXTH DAY OF RISING:

Shortly after noon, Pearse and the other leaders in Moore St. decide to surrender. After meeting with General William Lowe, Pearse is taken to the British Army headquarters where he signs an unconditional surrender. The garrison at the Four Courts, led by Ned Daly, also surrenders. The prisoners are taken to the green outside the Rotunda Hospital, where they are held until the following morning



Commandant Ned Daly and the Four Courts (UCD Archives)



People walk by a gutted GPO (UCD Archives)


1916

29th April 1916

UCD EVENT

SIXTH DAY OF RISING

While dressing Connolly’s wounds, Ryan “saw a sight I shall never forget. Lying dead on the opposite footpath of Moore Street were three elderly men...” Soon afterwards, Seán MacDermott tells Connolly and Ryan that it is the sight of these three men that convinces Pearse to surrender, in order to “save the lives of the citizens.” In Jacob’s factory, MacDonagh receives the order to surrender, but refuses to believe that it is genuine.



British soldiers take position amongst the ruins of a building (UCD Archives)


1916

3rd - 12th May 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

EXECUTION OF RISING LEADERS

Having been selected for trial, the seven signatories of the Proclamation and other rebels deemed to have played a significant role in the Rising are court-martialed and sentenced to death. 14 rebels are executed at Kilmainham Gaol and subsequently buried at Arbour Hill. The other prisoners are deported to internment camps. Thomas Kent was executed in Cork. Following detention in the Tower of London, Roger Casement is tried and sentenced and ultimately executed (see 3 August below). The executions evoke a mass of sympathy from the Irish public, turning many towards the cause of the rebels.



A postcard from the 1920s commemorating those who died during the Easter Rising (UCD Archives)

30th April 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

SEVENTH DAY OF RISING

The remaining garrisons at the South Dublin Union, Boland’s Mill and Jacob’s factory surrender and the rebels are taken prisoner. Over the course of the week, 466 lives have been lost, including 254 civilians.



Eamon de Valera’s Third Dublin Battalion following their surrender (UCD Archives, courtesy of UCD - Order of Friars Minor Partnership)




Photograph depicting the aftermath of the Rising in Dublin (UCD Archives)

3rd May 1916


NATIONAL EVENT

EXECUTION OF RISING LEADERS


Patrick Pearse, signatory of the Proclamation, Thomas MacDonagh, signatory of the Proclamation and commander of the Second Battalion of Volunteers, in charge of Jacob’s biscuit factory and Thomas J. Clarke, signatory of the Proclamation and served at the GPO, are executed.



Patrick Pearse (UCD Archives)



Thomas MacDonagh (UCD Archives)




Thomas J. Clarke (UCD Archives)

30th April 1916

UCD EVENT

SEVENTH DAY OF RISING

The garrisons at the Royal College of Surgeons and Jacob’s factory surrender. Michael Hayes recalled that MacDonagh “was quite calm and spoke in simple serious language. I remember that he seemed to be quite a different man...”



A portrait of Michael Hayes in his later years (UCD Archives)

4th May 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

EXECUTION OF RISING LEADERS

Joseph Plunkett, signatory of the Proclamation, served at the GPO, William Pearse, served at the GPO, Edward Daly, led the First Battalion of the Irish Volunteers in the Four Courts and Michael O’Hanrahan, joint second in command at Jacob’s biscuit factory, are executed.



Joseph Plunkett (UCD Archives)



William Pearse



Edward Daly (UCD Archives)



Michael O’Hanrahan (UCD Archives)

3rd May 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

RESIGNATION OF AUGUSTINE BIRRELL, CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND

On tendering his resignation to the House of Commons, Augustine Birrell, Chief Secretary for Ireland says “This is no Irish rebellion. I hope that, although put down, as it is being put down, as it must be put down, it will be so put down, with such success and with such courage, and yet at the same time humanity, displayed towards the dupes, the rank and file, led astray by their leaders, that this insurrection in Ireland will never, even in the minds and memories of that people, be associated with their past rebellions, or become an historical landmark in their history.”



Augustine Birrell, Chief Secretary for Ireland

5th May 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

EXECUTION OF RISING LEADERS

John MacBride, joint second-in-command at Jacob’s biscuit factory, is executed.



John MacBride (UCD Archives)

**1916**

8th May 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

EXECUTION OF RISING LEADERS

Eamonn Ceannt, signatory of the Proclamation and commander of the Fourth Battalion of Irish Volunteers, in charge of the South Dublin Union, Michael Mallin, Chief of Staff of the Irish Citizen Army, in charge of St. Stephen's Green and the Royal College of Surgeons, Sean Heuston, leader of a section of the First Battalion of the Volunteers that occupied the Mendicity Institute, and Con Colbert, captain of F Company of the Fourth Battalion of the Irish Volunteers and in command at the Marrowbone Lane distillery, are executed.

*Eamonn Ceannt (UCD Archives)**Michael Mallin**Sean Heuston (UCD Archives)**Con Colbert, captain of F Company of the Fourth Battalion of the Irish Volunteers and in command at the Marrowbone Lane distillery (UCD Archives)***1916**

4th June 1916

INTERNATIONAL EVENT

THE BRUSILOV OFFENSIVE

The offensive by Russian forces leads to significant territorial advances, but paradoxically it also weakens the Russian army, which loses many of its best troops and suffers from extended supply lines. The failure of the Habsburg army to repel the initial offensives compels Germany to come to its aid, though at a price— the effective subjugation of the Habsburg military to German commanders.

*Russian general Aleksei Brusilov*

9th May 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

EXECUTION OF RISING LEADERS

Thomas Kent is executed. Kent did not participate in the Rising, but during the insurrection his house in Cork was raided by British forces. After a gunfight, he was captured, court-martialled and executed.

*Thomas Kent*

8th June 1916

UCD EVENT

AFTERMATH OF THE RISING

In the aftermath of the rebellion, Augustine Birrell, the Chief Secretary of Ireland, chastises the "young fools from the National University" that were amongst the "instigators and inspirers of this mad revolt". On 8th June, UCD student Madge Calnan reports in a letter to James Ryan that "there are not half a dozen people in the College who are not Sinn Féiners."

*Nelson's Pillar, as seen through the ruins of the GPO (UCD Archives)*

12th May 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

EXECUTION OF RISING LEADERS

James Connolly, signatory of the Proclamation and Commandant-General of the Dublin Division in the GPO and Sean MacDiarmada, signatory of the Proclamation, who served at the GPO, are executed.

*James Connolly (UCD Archives)**Sean MacDiarmada (UCD Archives)*

1st July - 18th November 1916

INTERNATIONAL EVENT

BATTLE OF THE SOMME

An Allied offensive fails to dislodge heavily entrenched German positions on the banks of the Somme. After a week of aerial bombardment, Allied soldiers are mown down by German machine guns when they attempt to cross no-man's-land- on the first day, the 36th Ulster Division suffer 5,000 casualties, including 2,069 fatalities. What follows is a long, drawn out battle of attrition which costs over 1 million lives.

*Royal Irish Rifles, possibly the 1st Battalion, in a trench at the Battle of the Somme*

31st May - 1st June 1916

INTERNATIONAL EVENT

BATTLE OF JUTLAND

The major naval battle of the War occurs between the British and German navies off the coast of Denmark. The British fleet suffers more losses than its German counterpart, though not enough to undermine its authority in the seas.

*HMS Warspite and HMS Malaya during the battle of Jutland*

3rd August 1916

NATIONAL EVENT

EXECUTION OF ROGER CASEMENT

After a highly publicised trial, Roger Casement is found guilty of treason, and is hanged at Pentonville Prison.

*Roger Casement*



1916-17

9th September 1916

UCD EVENT

TOM KETTLE'S DEATH

Tom Kettle dies at the Somme, after leading his company during an assault on German positions at Ginchy. He had made several attempts to be permitted for front line duty before the Army authorities finally relented. He leaves behind him his wife Mary and daughter Elisabeth. A few days before his death, he writes a sonnet for his daughter, telling her that he and others "Died not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor/But for a dream, born in a herdsman's shed/and for the secret Scripture of the poor." Oliver St John Gogarty recalled that there were "many eyes wet with tears in Dublin when they heard of Tom's death".



Kettle in his younger years (UCD Library Special Collections, Curran Collection)



British soldiers climb out of their trench during the Battle of Ginchy

FIND OUT MORE:

• CENTURY IRELAND: Life and Death of Tom Kettle
<http://www.rte.ie/centuryireland/watch/the-life-and-death-of-tom-kettle>

1917

25th July 1917

NATIONAL EVENT

FIRST MEETING OF THE IRISH CONVENTION

The first conference of the Irish Convention meets at Regents House in Trinity College, chaired by Sir Horace Plunkett. The Convention is called for by David Lloyd George as an attempt to find solutions the problems surrounding Irish self-determination. The Convention is dominated by the Irish Parliamentary party after Sinn Féin refuse to participate.



Trinity College, with Regent House, where the Convention was held, in the central background

1917

5th February 1917

NATIONAL EVENT

COUNT PLUNKETT WINS BY-ELECTION

George Noble Plunkett, who entered politics following the execution of his son Joseph in the aftermath of the Easter Rising, wins a seat in the Roscommon North by-election. Plunkett receives 3,022 votes, as against 1,708 for the Irish Parliamentary Party candidate and 687 for Jasper Tully, an independent. In May, Joseph McGuinness wins another seat for the party at the Longford South by-election.



George Noble Plunkett, with his wife Mary, in Dublin

25th - 27th October 1917

NATIONAL EVENT

ÉAMON DE VALERA ELECTED PRESIDENT OF SINN FÉIN AND THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS

At a convention in Dublin, Sinn Féin undergoes a radical reinvention as it comes under the control of the republican movement. Éamon de Valera is elected President of the party, ahead of Arthur Griffith, who does not contest the election. On 27th October, de Valera is also elected President of the Irish Volunteers, while Cathal Brugha and Michael Collins are elected onto the national executive.



Éamon de Valera

6th April 1917

INTERNATIONAL EVENT

US DECLARES WAR ON GERMANY

Following an attempt by Germany to form an alliance with Mexico, and in the aftermath of strong public anger at the sinking of the Lusitania, Woodrow Wilson declares war on Germany.



President Woodrow Wilson asks Congress to declare war on Germany, 2 April 1917

25th - 26th October 1917

UCD EVENT

MACNEILL - DE VALERA ALLIANCE

Although he took no part in the Rising, Eoin MacNeill was arrested and imprisoned along with those who rebelled. During his time in Lewes prison, he taught classes on Irish language and history. He also formed a friendship with Eamon de Valera, with whom he had discussions on "scientific matters". Upon his release from prison, and awaiting reappointment at UCD, MacNeill campaigned for de Valera during the East Clare by-election. The alliance formed over these months helps to avoid a split amongst their respective followers, and ensures that de Valera takes control of Sinn Féin ahead of George Noble Plunkett at the party's convention in October 1917.



A photograph of recently released prisoners of the Easter Rising, June 1917 (UCD Archives)



Detail of photograph reveals MacNeill and de Valera sitting side by side

10th July 1917

NATIONAL EVENT

ÉAMON DE VALERA WINS BY-ELECTION

Following the death of MP Willie Redmond, brother of the Irish Parliamentary Party Chairman, John Redmond, at the Battle of Messines Ridge in Belgium, a by election is held in East Clare. Eamon de Valera, running for Sinn Féin, defeats Patrick Lynch of the Irish Parliamentary Party by a majority of 2,975 votes.



Éamon de Valera

7th November 1917

INTERNATIONAL EVENT

RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Bolshevik revolutionaries, led by Vladimir Illich Lenin, seize Government buildings in Petrograd. Over the coming weeks, months and years, the Bolsheviks install a socialist government in Russia to create the Soviet state.



The Red Guards, under Bolshevik influence, outside a Vulkan factory in 1917



1918

March 1918

UCD EVENT

MULCAHY APPOINTED IRA CHIEF OF STAFF

Richard Mulcahy, second-year medical student at UCD, is appointed Chief of Staff of the IRA. The increased responsibilities that came with the position force him to abandon his studies later in the year. However, he continues to hold an office in the Chemistry corridor of the Physiology Department in Earlsfort Terrace, from which he conducts his duties as Chief of Staff.



Richard Mulcahy in uniform (UCD Archives)

1918

11th November 1918

UCD EVENT

ARMISTICE

In his report for 1917/18, UCD President Denis Coffey commemorates those fallen in the War, "I hope that a place may be found in our new buildings for those who, as we knew them, had the promise of high careers and included not a few of exceptional distinction. They are all gallant, good, true-hearted Irishmen."



Denis Coffey, UCD President, 1908-1940



A depiction of injured soldiers returning from battle (National Library of Ireland)

21st March - 18th July 1918

INTERNATIONAL EVENT

THE SPRING OFFENSIVE

This was German military leaders' last gamble to win the war before the Allies, reinforced by American troops, became too strong. Despite making major gains, the German army fails to pierce the Allies' line. Weakened by the loss of their best troops and hampered by over-extended supply lines, the German army falls vulnerable to Allied counter-offensives. In mid-July, 1918, French and American forces start an offensive, followed by the British army's offensive in August 1918. This marks the military turning point of the war.



A German tank passes through the French town of Roie on the first day of the Offensive

14th December 1918

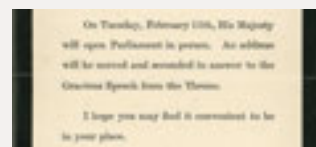
NATIONAL EVENT

SINN FÉIN WIN LANDSLIDE IN GENERAL ELECTION

After the victories in the 1917 by-elections, Éamon de Valera leads his party to victory in the first general election following the end of the First World War. The party wins 73 seats, leaving 26 seats for the Unionist Party and 6 seats for the Irish Parliamentary Party. The defeat spells the end for the Irish Parliamentary Party, and reflects the role of the Easter Rising in provoking a radical upsurge in the nationalist ambitions of the Irish Public. The election is also notable for the election of Constance Markievicz, the first woman to be elected to the British House of Commons. Markievicz does not take her seat in Westminster, however, as Sinn Féin choose to follow a policy of abstention.

Vote for Sinn Féin
AND SHOW THE WORLD THAT IRELAND
IS NOT A PART OF ENGLAND
CHILLING PROVERBS: SINN FÉIN, 1918

Detail of Sinn Féin election poster in 1918, quoting D. D. Sheehan MP



The invitation extended to Dr James Ryan to attend the state opening of the British Parliament, following his election in 1918 (UCD Archives)

FIND OUT MORE:

• HISTORY HUB
Professor Michael Laffan, The Irish Revolution, lecture 6, The 1918 General Election:
<http://historyhub.ie/the-1918-general-election-the-irish-revolution-lecture-6>

21st April 1918

NATIONAL EVENT

ANTI-CONSCRIPTION PLEDGE SIGNED BY NATIONALISTS

In response to the passing of the Military Service Bill by the House of Commons, which empowers the British Government to enforce conscription on all Irish men of military age, an anti-conscription pledge is signed throughout the country. The pledge is brought about by Irish Anti-Conscription Committee, an alliance of leading Irish nationalists, including Eamon de Valera, John Dillon and Arthur Griffith. The move, which is supported by the Catholic Church in Ireland, reflects the mood amongst the Irish public towards what has become an increasingly unpopular war. Although the Irish Parliamentary Party spearheads opposition to the Military Service Bill at Westminster, Sinn Féin are the most vocal proponent of the anti-conscription movement and claim a large degree of support throughout the country.



John Dillon addressing an anti-conscription rally in Ballaghadreen, Co. Roscommon

FIND OUT MORE:

• HISTORY HUB
Professor Michael Laffan, The Irish Revolution, lecture 5, Aftermath of the 1916 Rising and 1917 By-Elections:
<http://historyhub.ie/aftermath-of-the-rising-and-1917-by-elections-the-irish-revolution-lecture-5>

1918-19

14th December 1918

UCD EVENT

1918 ELECTIONS

A number of UCD staff and graduates are elected on the Sinn Féin ticket, including Kevin O'Higgins, James Ryan and Pat McCartan. In the election for the NUI's parliamentary seat, Eoin MacNeill defeats the Irish Parliamentary Party's candidate Arthur Conway by 1,644 to 813 votes.



The invitation extended to Dr James Ryan to attend the state opening of the British Parliament, following his election in 1918 (UCD Archives)



A permit given by Dr James Ryan to a friend to be present at the meeting of the First Dáil (UCD Archives)

11th November 1918

INTERNATIONAL EVENT

ARMISTICE

As the threat posed by the Allied forces becomes insurmountable, the German command make moves towards ending the War. The armistice is formally signed in General Ferdinand Foch's railway carriage in the forest of Compiègne. Since the beginning of the War, over 16 million have died, including an estimated 7 million civilians.



French, German and British representatives outside the carriage of General Foch's train in the Forest of Compiègne, where the Armistice was signed. "Armistice train" in F.ex. Jan Dąbrowski, Wielka wojna 1914-1918, Warsaw 1937

1919

21st January 1919

NATIONAL EVENT

WAR OF INDEPENDENCE BEGINS

At the Mansion House in Dublin, Sinn Féin's elected representatives convene to form the First Dáil. In a session conducted through Irish, the Dáil ratifies its own Constitution and passes a Democratic Programme. In the absence of Eamon de Valera, who is under imprisonment, Cathal Brugha is elected as temporary President of the Dáil. On the same day, members of the Third Tipperary Brigade of the Irish Volunteers carry out an ambush on two RIC constables in Soloheadbeg, Co Tipperary. The attack is seen as the formal initiation of hostilities in the Irish War of Independence; two days later, the British government declare South Tipperary a Special Military Area and place it under the Defence of the Realm Act.



A photograph of the First Dáil taken on 10th April, 1919



An invitation extended to Desmond Fitzgerald by George Noble Plunkett to attend the First Dáil (UCD Archives)

FIND OUT MORE:

• HISTORY HUB
Professor Michael Laffan, The Irish Revolution, lecture 7, The War of Independence/Anglo-Irish War:
<http://historyhub.ie/the-war-of-independence-the-irish-revolution-lecture-7>

