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The Power of a Secret: Secret Societies and the Easter Rising

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THE POWER OF A SECRET:
SECRET SOCIETIES AND THE EASTER RISING

A senior thesis submitted to
the History Faculty of Dominican University of California
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Bachelor of Arts in History

by

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San Rafael, California
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ABSTRACT

The Irish Republican Brotherhood (I.R.B.) and the Irish Volunteer Force (I.V.F.) altered Irish Nationalist tactics from Parliamentary supported Home Rule to a republican movement for Irish Independence. The actions of these secret societies between 1900 and 1916, during the Irish Revolutionary period,¹ are the reason that Ireland gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1922. The change from political negotiations by the ineffective Irish Parliamentary Party to the republican movement would never have happened without the Easter Rising of 1916. The centennial anniversary of this Easter Rising makes *The Power of a Secret: Ireland's Secret Societies and the Easter Rising* pertinent to all those interested in Irish History.

Historians, such as Tim Pat Coogan, Richard English, and Keiron Curtis examined the individual personalities (Michael Collins, P.S. O'Hegarty, and Patrick Pearse) of Irish Nationalism, but never the involvement of the secret associations. This study of two main secret groups, I.R.B. and I.V.F., corrects this missing link of Irish Nationalism.

Sources used for research are the primary documents in Irish National Library, Irish National Archives, and University College Dublin, and secondary books about the Easter Rising and Irish Nationalism. The constitution of the I.R.B and I.V.F., as well as letters that were exchanged between members about the organization of their groups, was critical to the content of this paper. The power of a secret was never more vital than with the planning of the rebellion.

¹ The period in the 1910s and early 1920s when Irish nationalist opinion shifted from the Home Rule Movement – supporting the Irish Parliamentary Party to the republican Sinn Féin movement.

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List of Abbreviations

D.M.P.	= Dublin Metropolitan Police
G.A.A.	= Gaelic Athletic Association
G.L.	= Gaelic League
I.N.B.	= Irish National Brotherhood
I.P.P.	= Irish Parliamentary Party
I.R.A.	= Irish Republican Army
I.R.B.	= Irish Republican Brotherhood
I.V.F.	= Irish Volunteer Force
U.V.F.	= Ulster Volunteer Force

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1. Map of Ireland, 1916. (Charles Townshend. *Easter 1916: The Irish Rebellion*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2006, x.)

Historiographic Essay

With the centennial anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising¹ in April² 2016, there is a great deal of debate on what was the launching point of the Irish Nationalist Movement. Most academic scholarship on Irish Nationalism focus on the factors leading up to and continuing through the Easter Rising (1916) and the Irish Civil War (1923). The literature analyzes particular leaders, regions, or demographics and their role in each of these rebellions. Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, J. Kendle, Owen McGee, F. X. Martin, and A.C. Hepburn all offer different origins for the Irish Nationalism.

Historian Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon wrote *Turning Points of the Irish Revolution: The British Government, Intelligence, and the Cost of Indifference, 1912-1921*.³ Grob-Fitzgibbon explores the resources and information that the British had, but neglected to act on, prior to the outbreak of the Easter Rising. He ascertains that the British acted in a way that was inevitable to bring about a movement that could have been prevented from happening.⁴ The English have always seen the Irish as a thorn in their side.⁵ From this view, many of the previous laws the English had enacted in Ireland were doomed because of the discriminatory treatment of the Irish as a whole. He concludes

¹ Terminology is vital to understanding Irish history, especially surrounding Irish Nationalism. For this paper I will be using the term Easter Rising (1916), instead of rebellion. The English never had a right to rule in Ireland. Rebellion suggests that there was an uprising against a “legitimate incumbent government.” Rising implies that the Irish people were expelling the British from the country which the Irish rightfully owned and should rule. (Townshend, xvi)

² Ireland celebrated the centennial anniversary on Easter Week instead of the actual date; while the Irish in San Francisco commemorated the anniversary on April 24, 2016 at the Irish Cultural Center.

³ Benjamin John Grob-Fitzgibbon. *Turning Points of the Irish Revolution: The British Government, Intelligence, and the Cost of Indifference, 1912-1921*. Gordonsville, Virginia: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

⁴ Grob-Fitzgibbon, 25.

⁵ Ibid., 11.

that Ireland would have been more peaceful and no need for paramilitarism if the British government had acted more promptly on the intelligence they had.⁶ Grob-Fitzgibbon utilizes some of the British Military Records that were previously unreleased to the public. Combined with the British Government's political records he adds a base of evidence that is irrefutable in quality. His deduction that the British Government is the only one responsible for the actions during the Easter Rising blatantly overlooks the involvement of Ireland and their secret societies in the organization and execution of the event.

Professor of history J. Kendle in *Walter Long: Ireland and the Union, 1905-1920* develops the role of Walter Long who attempted to preserve the union during the early twentieth century and the role of English Unionists.⁷ It is true the Walter Long had some influence in the move towards Irish Nationalism since he was in the cabinet when they were drafting the "home rule legislation and acted as the liaison between the government in London and the Irish executives in Dublin."⁸ Kendle's use of parliamentary papers and government notes is an excellent source of evidence. Kendle exaggerates the role that Long played in the movement and neglects the role of more influential secret societies. Overall, Kendle presents a logical argument with a great deal of evidence to support his conclusion. However, his scope is too narrow to encompass the entirety of the movement.

The IRB: The Irish Republican Brotherhood from the Land League to Sinn Féin by historian and researcher Owen McGee develops the history of the I.R.B. from the

⁶ Ibid., 12.

⁷ J. Kendle. *Walter Long, Ireland and the Union, 1905-1920*. Montreal, Québec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992, x, xi.

⁸ Kendle, ix.

inside out.⁹ The majority of the publications about the I.R.B. focuses on the reaction of elites to the existence of the group.¹⁰ McGee approaches it in a different way by examining the interworking of the I.R.B. and their approaches to outside situations. McGee utilizes sources from National Archives of Ireland, National Library of Ireland, University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, Public Records Office (London), manuscripts in private possession, and a number of Irish newspapers for the basis of his book. In the back of the book he lists which primary source came from each institution, making it beneficial to future researchers. This book is necessary in order to understand the I.R.B.

Father F.X. Martin a renowned historian wrote *The Irish Volunteers 1913-1915 Recollections & Documents*, in which he explores the origins of the Irish Volunteer Force (I.V.F.).¹¹ Martin examines why they were formed and their purpose, by presenting a collection of newspaper articles that were published during this time period. All the published articles that appear in the book were written and published before the Easter Rising, making them vital to understanding the development and rise of the Irish Volunteers. The majority of the documents focused on the I.V.F.; however, he does delve into the organizations that had direct interactions with the Volunteers.¹² Also included are personal recollections from the leaders who were involved in the formation of the Irish

⁹ Owen McGee. *The IRB: The Irish Republican Brotherhood from the Land League to Sinn Féin*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005, 11.

¹⁰ McGee, 11.

¹¹ F.X. Martin, *The Irish Volunteers 1913-1915: Recollections and Documents*; Edited by F.X. Martin. Kildare: Irish Academic Press. 2013. Kindle edition.

¹² Particularly the I.R.B. and the Fianna hÉireann, otherwise known as the National Boy Scouts.

Volunteer Force. This publication's unique time line¹³ portrays the Volunteers' original purpose and separated them from their later association with the Irish Republican Army (I.R.A.)¹⁴ and the events during the Tan War (1919-1922).¹⁵ At the end of the book are a number of photos/plates from Kilmainham Gaol Museum, Mercier Press Archives, Glucksman Library,¹⁶ and James Langton Archives and Research Irish Volunteers Commemorative Organization that are not in most other books. This is an excellent source of information about the I.V.F. since it is made up entirely of primary documents. There is no distortion of evidence and no direct conclusions; it is instead a book of documents for researchers about the Irish Volunteers, and it covers all sides of those involved with the Volunteer movement. One of the most impressive documents is the final one, entitled "Rule Britannia!" This is an editorial in a school newspaper that is attached as an appendix to this paper.¹⁷ It is one of the best examples of British prejudice against the Irish, including one part in which the author states that

Ireland must not be allowed to increase her industries, for any increase in that direction must be at the expense of England, whose just domain it is. Pasture and a certain amount of tillage appear to be Ireland's special vocation.¹⁸

¹³ Ending before the Easter Rising.

¹⁴ The I.V.F. morphed into the Irish Republican Army (I.R.A.) after the Easter Rising. The I.R.A. is a extremist group that was known throughout the twentieth century for their guerilla tactics that mostly included bombings.

¹⁵ The War of Independence is now being referred to as the Tan War, for the involvement in the Black and Tans during this time. (Keynote speaker at Irish Cultural Center in San Francisco April 24, 2016)

¹⁶ University of Limerick.

¹⁷ See Appendix B.

¹⁸ "Rule Britannia!" *The National Student* VI no. 1 (December, 1915). Reprinted and edited by F. X. Martin. *The Irish Volunteers 1913-1915: Recollections and Documents*. Kildare: Irish Academic Press. 2013. Kindle edition, 349.

This as well as many of the other documents in Martin's book will be referenced several times in the rest of this paper. Martin's documents focus primarily on southern I.V.F. and more particularly Dublin; however, to understand the northern division of the I.V.F. we must look towards A. C. Hepburn.

A. C. Hepburn's *Catholic Belfast and Nationalist Ireland in the Era of Joe Devlin, 1871-1934*¹⁹ provides an insight into Northern Ireland's relation to Irish Nationalism. Hepburn focuses on the history of Catholic and nationalist Belfast from the late nineteenth century to the early years of partition and on the career of Nationalist leader Joseph Devlin.²⁰ Hepburn uses a number of resources including Public Record Office of Northern Ireland in Belfast, National Library of Ireland in Dublin, and British Library in London along with interviews of nationalist members and books. This book explains the partition of Ireland; while offering a great insight into the Nationalist movements of Northern Ireland. Hepburn states, "Violent revolution did lead to sovereign independence for three-quarter[s] of the country more rapidly than a continuation of constitutional nationalism would have done."²¹ This statement forms the basis of this paper, as well as an undeniable truth. The Catholic Church inadvertently created the violence by their alignment with extreme nationalists²² is significant to understanding the background of the troubles, but outside the scope of this paper. However, it is his exploration of the Irish Volunteers and Irish Republican Brotherhood in their early years that is useful to this paper.

¹⁹ A.C. Hepburn. *Catholic Belfast and Nationalist Ireland in the Era of Joe Devlin, 1871-1934*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. ProQuest ebrary.

²⁰ Hepburn, 3.

²¹ Ibid., 2.

²² Ibid., 3.

The majority of scholarly work on the Irish Revolution (and more specifically on the Irish Nationalist movement) focuses on well known people, regions, or demographics and their roles in the rebellions. Grob-Fitzgibbon, Kendle, McGee, Martin, and Hepburn all offer different origins for Irish Nationalism. Grob-Fitzgibbon concludes that the Irish Nationalist Movement would never have taken place if it had not been for the inaction or delayed response by the British Government. Kendle argues that it was the influence of Walter Long, a member of the House Committee that had an influential role in the beginnings of the movement with the legislation of the Home Rule Bill. McGee explains the rise of the Irish Republican Brotherhood during the Land League until Irish Independence and how that influenced the effectiveness of the Easter Rising. Martin explores the origin of the Irish Volunteer (I.V.F.) and provides a great background to the Easter Rising. To focus on an individual person is easier; however, no one person can take credit for the events of the Easter Rising (1916) and the movement that sprung from this initial “failure.” Most historians see the events of Easter week as a failure -- which is not a large stretch, since there was a surrender without their demands being met. Rather than a failure, the Easter Rising was a success, because without the Easter Rising there would have been no response to the British actions by the Irish people.

Background

The events of Easter week (1916) and the events that followed were a direct result of the preparation and planning by secret societies before the Rising. These secret groups have had a role in Ireland for centuries. Their purpose during the nineteenth century was agrarian agitation against British overseers and preserving the peasants' livelihoods. The early twentieth century was filled with secret societies whose purpose was to oust the British and to attain Irish Independence, whether that was by Home Rule or by physical force. Ireland's earlier associations had been plagued by spies embedded by British secret police. These spies were successful at getting information to the British who used the information to end insurrections quickly and destroy the group. The involvement of spies in groups associated with the Irish Republican Brotherhood (I.R.B.), specifically the Irish National Brotherhood (I.N.B.),²³ had a long history of being infiltrated by British spies. This secrecy created to hide Irish strategies from the British adds to the difficulty in constructing a complete history of these societies and their involvement in events leading up to the Easter Rising.

The rebels of the Easter Rising (1916) acted on the behalf of the Irish people to gain independence from an oppressive British regime. The Irish saw the actions of the British towards the leaders of the Easter Rising as extreme and unwarranted to their "crime." By trying the leaders in secret military court and deciding to execute the leaders the British outraged the Irish people. These sixteen leaders were unlike rebellions of the past; they were the elite and educated. The response by the British to shell the rebels into submission during Easter Week was the source of all the destruction of Dublin. The

²³ McGee, 179. A section of the Clan, which is short for Clan na Gael, an association in America that supported the I.R.B. both financially and politically.

actions by the British continued to deny the Irish people of any rights. This was not the first time that the British had alienated the Irish; however, it was the first time that their actions united Irishmen throughout the country. The British had been successful at dividing the Irish for years, if not centuries, by portraying leaders of rebellions as fanatics and saying that they were the reasons for the hardships or unpopular policies against the Irish. The British used all the resources at their disposal which included, but was not limited to, imprisoning leaders, altering Irish publications to pit one side against another, and using religion as a lever to divide the Irish.

These tactics were fairly successful until the Irish cultural revival by groups like Gaelic Athletic Association (G.A.A.) and the Gaelic League (G.L.) whose purpose was to promote Irish tradition. The Irish wanted to reintroduce their heritage that the British government had attempted to expunge from the island to replace with British culture. Language, history of their people, and native sports are not things that the British government can openly oppose for fear of being seen as oppressors. Revolutionaries such as Patrick Pearse, opened schools that were dedicated to educating the Irish youth about traditional Irish subjects, and make them into honorable Irishmen. This was the first step to unite the Irish without the English imposed Anglican religion, one of England's oldest tactics of repressing the Irish. England was Protestant and the majority of Ireland was Catholic. The British repeatedly used religion to cause a prejudice within Ireland of Catholics against the Protestants. Whenever the Irish would not go along with one of Great Britain's new laws or enforcements the British would portray any opposition as unpatriotic or repression of the Protestants rights. Any disruption in Ireland against the British was portrayed as crime and sedition.

One example of the British prejudice against the Irish is displayed in *The National Student*,²⁴ a newspaper for Dublin College. To choose just one section of this article, “Rule Britannia!” would not do the topic justice, which is why it is included as an appendix (See Appendix B). The author, unnamed, blatantly threatens the students, the intended audience, stating, “Young men are very apt to lose their heads and throw themselves into revolutionary movements without calculating the consequences.”²⁵ This warning to the students is more like a poorly veiled threat. However, British animosity does not stop there, with a notable quote referring to the Irish suitability for the trenches. It said:

Those who complain of the imaginary slackness of recruiting in England forget or ignore the fact that England is a manufacturing country, and cannot afford to dislocate her industries and interfere with the manufacture of munitions by sending too many men into the firing line. That honourable [*sic*] post must be filled by Irishmen, who have few industries, and those few of such unimportance that they could easily be closed, and who by reason of the ordinary hardship of their lives, are better fitted to endure the privations of the trenches. Moreover Ireland can better stand the drain of blood than England, who will soon need every man to work her growing trade and industry, while loss of men will be rather an economic gain to Ireland, as it will leave more land vacant for grazing.²⁶

Not only does this quote state that it is the duty of Ireland to fight in war, but it takes it a step further concluding that fewer Irishmen is a good thing because it entails more land for grazing. Further denying the Irish people their rights, the British insisted that the men fight in a war that was supposedly being fought for a small country’s rights to self-government. Great Britain saw self-government as a necessity to defend in Europe, but continued to oppress in Ireland. The loathing that the English demonstrated towards the

²⁴ “Rule Britannia!”

²⁵ Ibid., 350.

²⁶ Ibid., 350.

Irish, saying that Ireland needs a good blood letting²⁷ was repugnant to the Irish. Earlier in the article it refers to the great famine:

So satisfactory has been the increase in pasturage that the decrease in tillage has enabled more and more people to emigrate to the colonies and so insure a further increase of pasturage by geometrical progression. The sun shines down every year on a greener land, and soon tourists will be able to understand why it is called the Emerald Isle.²⁸

This is not an overt statement that famine is a good thing, but the results from the famine are seen to enhance the country. The emigration only happened because tillage (a.k.a. farming) decreased because of the potato famine from 1845 through 1849. Apparently this author believes fewer Irish is a good thing for Ireland, a belief that was held by many in Great Britain. Forced emigration because of famine is an excellent igniter for Irish dissatisfaction with the British. The actions of the British during the famine, which included exporting products, maintaining rent price, and neglecting to provide adequate relief were all actions that separated the British from the Irish. The Irish were able to see that the British were using Ireland to bring prosperity to Great Britain.

The British actions during the great famine created a hatred for the British and their agents, landlords and police. This neglect of British humanity produced the necessity for Irish to look for support from within themselves, which is where secret societies found a calling. The tactics of early secret societies including the Whiteboys and Ribbonmen directly helped the peasant tenant and harassed the English landlords. My own family has a history of involvement in the Whiteboys in County Cork,²⁹ a group that went out at night and put recently evicted tenants back into their houses. These groups

²⁷ A theme that was felt by Patrick Pearse in his belief that Ireland needed to have a blood letting, aka revolution, in order to succeed in establishing an Irish Republic.

²⁸ Ibid., 349.

²⁹ Located specifically between New Market and Kanturk.

were formed for short term relief and focused on fixing the problems from within. They did not have grand ideals based in politics; rather, they were agrarian, rural societies which helped out their neighbors. None wanted to take on the British government; instead, they focused on the people they could see as enemies in Ireland, specifically the British, their agents, landlords and police.

This paper argues that the Easter Rising of 1916 and the Independence that followed would have never come to fruition if secret societies in Ireland had not organized and staged the Easter Rising.

Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB)

The Irish Republican Brotherhood, otherwise known as the I.R.B., Fenian Brotherhood, The Organisation [*sic*],³⁰ Irish Revolutionary Organization, or Bráithreachas Phoblacht na hÉireann (Gaelic) was a secret society founded in 1858³¹ by James Stephens.³² The purpose of the I.R.B. was to establish an independent Irish Republic that was free of British rule or tampering. Though this group was originally organized in Dublin, there was a strong connection with America and the Fenian Brotherhood in New York.

The early years for the I.R.B. were filled with “action”³³ but very little organization. The I.R.B. recognized that unless they were able to radicalize the majority of Irishmen, their policies would not matter. A lot of their early problems were due to the actions by the British in alienating the Catholic hierarchy from the I.R.B. The British frightened Catholics enough for the clergy in all the counties of Ireland to announce that it was the parishioners’ religious duty to inform the British authorities of any members of secret societies; and reinforcing that good Catholics would not associate with these societies.³⁴ This hostility from the clergy made a majority of the I.R.B. leadership anti-clerical. The I.R.B. was also frustrated with clerical policies of promoting the British imperialism. The Catholics believed that they would eventually be rewarded for their

³⁰ Bolmer Hobson. “Foundation and Growth of the Irish Volunteers, 1913-14: The I.R.B. and the Fianna.” reprinted in “Part I no. 2.” *The Irish Volunteers 1913-1915: Recollections and Documents*; Edited by F.X. Martin. Kildare: Irish Academic Press. 2013. Kindle edition.

³¹ McGee, 15.

³² Ibid., 20.

³³ Ibid., 29. They did a lot of things, like debates, protests, and gaining more members.

³⁴ Ibid., 28. n. 59.

obedience to the crown and given independence due to this loyalty. I.R.B. members knew that this belief was encouraged by the British to keep Ireland a divided colony. Any movement towards a republic was seen as a threat to British rule and was portrayed as being an advance against Catholic teachings.

The secret nature of the I.R.B. combined with a huge lack of records, make membership numbers difficult to ascertain. However, “In 1911 the I.R.B. had, probably, not more than 2,000 members in Ireland and in a few of the English cities, but they were picked men, and most of them were active workers in other public organizations.”³⁵ The most interesting point is about “picked men;” the I.R.B. was not in the habit of allowing anyone to join and in most cases selected those whom they thought would make excellent members. Similar to the Freemasons, no one asked to join rather they were asked to join. I.R.B. members were involved in many organizations like the Gaelic League (G.L.) and the Gaelic Athletic Association (G.A.A.), which became recruiting grounds for the I.R.B.³⁶

In order to maintain their secrecy, the I.R.B. constructed a specific policy in their constitution. The most important is the oath of allegiance:

In the presence of God. I _____ do solemnly swear that I will do my utmost to establish the national independence of Ireland, and that I will bear true allegiance to the Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and Government of the Irish Republic and implicitly obey the Constitution of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and all my superior officers and that I will preserve inviolable the secrets of the organization.³⁷

³⁵ Hobson, Part I no. 2.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ “Those that set the stage: Republicans and those who Would Resort to Physical Force: Bulmer Hobson and Denis McCullough.” *The 1916 Rising Personalities and Perspectives*. National Library of Ireland. Curated by Noel Kissane with Historian Michael Laffan. <http://www.nli.ie/1916/exhibition/en/content/stagesetters/force/hobson-mccullough/img/0379.jpg> Accessed August 20, 2015.

This oath not only acknowledges the fact the I.R.B. is a secret society but it also acknowledges that a Supreme Council rules over the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The Supreme Council kept their identity secret from the rest of the I.R.B. and set up their organization like the military. At the top was a colonel who appointed nine captains, these captains appointed nine sergeants who in turn appointed nine rank and file members.³⁸ This structure allowed members to be acquainted with only those who had appointed them. Only once was there a breach of procedure with the appointment of Joseph Biggar to the Supreme Council in 1868. Biggar had never been a member of the I.R.B. and had no interest in their objectives.³⁹ This misstep caused conflict within the I.R.B. and provoked the leaders to work at cross-purposes.⁴⁰

This structure proved essential during the 1880s when the British infiltrated the I.R.B. affiliated Clan na Gael⁴¹ of New York and attempted to direct operations of the I.R.B. Michael Boland, the leader of the Clan, had a working relationship with F.F. Millen, a British agent, and ignored many senior members directive that Millen should not be entrusted with anything of value in the organization. The two of them worked together to start the dynamite war of 1883-1885.⁴² The dynamite war is the launching point for British infiltration and repression of the I.R.B.; by using covert spies to monitor members' every move and obtain enrollment in their organizations. The British agents initiated plans that would cause resentment against the I.R.B. from both the English and

³⁸ Hobson, Part I no. 2.

³⁹ McGee 54.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Also known simply as Clan was the biggest group in America and represented many of the smaller groups that supported the Irish Independence movement.

⁴² McGee, 105

Irish populace. These plans included bombings and assassinations which allowed Great Britain to increase monitoring of extremist organizations by implementing a new task force whose purpose was to hunt down all republicans that had “attacked” Great Britain. The success of the British spies in the 1880s killed a lot of the popular support of the I.R.B. Their membership and ideals were diminished. The following years were plagued with politicians who failed to obtain independence or at least self-government. From these failures sprung a new type of nationalism that was no longer dependent on politicians or political ways in order to achieve what they demanded.

The centennial of the 1798 rising in 1898 launched a renewed interest in the movement of the Volunteers and physical force that was not dependent on the politics. The politicians had continued to fail the Irish through the 1800s and were futile at obtaining anything except more laws against the Irish and a stronger presence of the British police. The Irish were not safe from British harassment and some of their most respected citizens were being arrested and tried under false charges. Yet the politicians continued on their course saying that eventually they might achieve something similar to Home Rule, but nothing close to independence. The anniversary of 1798 Rising created a feeling of nostalgia for the Irish that renewed their interest in all things Irish. They had survived the great famine and were on the side of prosperity, yet were unable to see any of the rewards with the British tight grip on the wheel. These interesting factors were to the utmost advantage to the I.R.B. There were more clubs that were starting to connect with the Irish heritage of language and sports. The majority of the population who was knowledgeable in the Irish ways, specifically language, immigrated to America during the famine leaving a majority of people in Ireland with a lack of knowledge about the

Irish culture. This need was filled by people like Patrick Pearse who started schools to teach Gaelic and Irish history to the youth of Ireland. Groups like the Gaelic League and Gaelic Athletic Association also promoted Irish culture. This cultural revitalization was strongly supported and funded by the I.R.B. and their members.

Irish Volunteer Force

Irish history is plagued with the difficulty of seeing where one group ends and another begins, or in the case of the Volunteers, which group of Volunteers. Four distinct groups of Volunteers are: 1) the Volunteers of 1798, 2) Ulster Volunteer Force (U.V.F.), 3) The Irish Volunteer Force (I.V.F.), and 4) the National Volunteers. The first group was successful at gaining political reform by threat of armed force.⁴³ Once they achieved their goal they disbanded -- a mistake they paid for in the 1800s when the British passed the Act of the Union in 1801 which ended Irish Parliament, a measure they had just achieved from the British during the American Revolution. Because they disbanded, they could no longer threaten with physical force; they were unable to sway the British into conceding to their demands.⁴⁴ For this reason the Irish Volunteers of 1913 put into their constitution that they would continue to exist as a police force after their demands were met. The second group, U.V.F., was founded in 1912 in Northern Ireland in order to fight the implementation of Home Rule.⁴⁵ Started by Protestant Irishmen⁴⁶ who declared they were loyal to the British Crown and would not be ruled by a Catholic Government based in Dublin. The last two groups were originally one group until the split in 1914 which divided the group based on those who agreed with serving in World War I (National Volunteers) and those who opposed Irish conscription (Irish Volunteer Force).

⁴³ Great Britain was involved in the American Revolution and lacked the troops to combat a physical force movement like the Volunteers of 1798. The Volunteers were able to get England to concede legislative independence for Ireland. The Volunteers of 1798 were actually formed much earlier; however, they staged their rebellion in 1798, which is the date that is most often used as their foundation.

⁴⁴ The British were no longer fighting in the American Revolution so they had troops that they could use to quell any threat of violence. That point was moot since the Volunteers had disbanded.

⁴⁵ Frank P. Jones, 54. Since the U.V.F. feared the implementation of the Home Rule Act would marginalize the Protestants in Ulster and be ignored by a Catholic dominated government in Dublin.

⁴⁶ Technically they were a combination of English - Irish breeding.

The Irish Volunteer Force (I.V.F.), also known as the Volunteers, the Irish Volunteers, or Óglaigh na hÉireann (in Gaelic) formed in 1913⁴⁷ in response to the formation of the Ulster Volunteer Force. The I.V.F. was not a strict oppositional response to the Ulster Volunteers, instead in their constitution they chose to honor the U.V.F. and their efforts to arm themselves; hoping that the two groups would merge together to represent a united Ireland.⁴⁸ The I.V.F. saw the success of U.V.F. combined with no enforcement from the British as a signal that they should also set up a military force.

The founders of the I.V.F. were highly intelligent men who saw the need for a physical force “to secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to the whole people of Ireland.”⁴⁹ The I.V.F. was careful not only in their constitution, but especially in the selection of representatives for the provisional committee.⁵⁰ Their constitution declares they represent all people of Ireland,⁵¹ making it necessary to have people from all nationalist organizations in Ireland represented in the foundation. The provisional committee was a selection of people who were also involved in groups like United Irish League, Irish Parliamentary Party (I.P.P.), Ancient Order of Hibernias, and I.R.B.⁵² The

⁴⁷ “Ireland’s Hour of Destiny–The Dublin I.R.B. Decision, July, 1913–Eoin MacNeill and The O’Rahilly–The Provisional Committee–Public Meeting at the Rotunda, 25 November, 1913–I.R.B. Participation.” “Part I no. 3.” reprinted and edited by F.X. Martin. *The Irish Volunteers 1913-1915: Recollections and Documents*; Kildare: Irish Academic Press. 2013. Kindle edition.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ “Constitution of the Irish Volunteers.” 1914. “Those who Set the Stage: Republicans and those who Would Resort to Physical Force: Eoin MacNeill and the Irish Volunteers.” *The 1916 Rising Personalities and Perspectives*. National Library of Ireland. Curated by Noel Kissane with Historian Michael Laffan. Accessed August 20, 2015. <http://www.nli.ie/1916/exhibition/en/content/stagesetters/for ce/eoinmacneill/> “Constitution of the Irish Volunteers.” 1914. Point 1.

⁵⁰ The term that was chosen to explain those who set up the Volunteers.

⁵¹ “Constitution of the Irish Volunteers.” Point 3 in their purpose To unite in the service of Ireland, Irishmen of every creed and of every party and class.

⁵² “Ireland’s Hour of Destiny.” Part I no. 3. There were also people that did not belong to a group.

I.V.F. was very conscientious of the importance of hiding extreme nationalism, or those who were seen as extremist in their persona⁵³ to be less in the visible organization.

Although the formation of the I.V.F. was inspired by I.R.B. members such as Bolmer Hobson, he could not take an active role in the foundation publicly because of the fear that his known alliance with the I.R.B. would deter people from joining. It is the group as a whole rather than its leader that is important to the volunteers. However, if there were to be a leader most associated with the I.V.F., it would be Eoin MacNeill.

Eoin MacNeill was not the founder of the I.V.F.; he was chosen by others to represent their ideas. Eoin MacNeill, a professor at Dublin College, had written an article “The North Began”⁵⁴ in 1913 that was what the Irish Volunteers were meant to accomplish. The article was about the Ulster Volunteer movement and the British refusal to suppress them. MacNeill asserts that the rest of Ireland should form militaristic groups and begin drilling. When I.R.B. members read this article in November 1913, they instantly met with the professor to discuss his leadership in establishing a Volunteer movement in Dublin. Through this action, MacNeill can obviously be considered a leader of the Irish Volunteers. He was the public face of the movement. Actually, the Volunteers were run by a Provisional Committee who had people from different organizations representing the interests of the Volunteers.

There is a mistaken belief that John Redmond was the leader of the Irish Volunteers; this is a falsehood written into history without vetting all the facts. He was, in fact, directly opposed to the Irish Volunteer Force until popular interest by his

⁵³ Specifically the I.R.B.

⁵⁴ Eoin MacNeill. “The North Began.” *An Claidheamh Soluis* (1st November, 1913 p. 6). “Part II no. 1.” Reprinted and edited by F. X. Martin. *The Irish Volunteers 1913-1915: Recollections and Documents*. Kildare: Irish Academic Press. 2013. Kindle edition.

constituents forced him to seek a relationship with the group. Bolmer Hobson points out the hostility from Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party (I.P.P.) centered on the physical force negotiations favored by the I.V.F. to achieve Irish Independence.⁵⁵ With concern from British Parliament about the Irish Volunteers, Redmond saw the need to get involved in order to control them. There are different versions on how the I.V.F. approached the I.P.P. about joining the Volunteers, but everyone⁵⁶ agrees on the way the I.P.P. demanded involvement in June 1914. The I.P.P. published an article demanding that the Volunteers acquiesce to their demands⁵⁷ or the IPP would break up the group. Many Volunteers supported the I.P.P., and more specifically John Redmond,⁵⁸ making their publication unnecessary. The Volunteers were formed in November 1913, and John Redmond did not become officially involved until June 1914. The involvement of Redmond and the I.P.P. only lasted until September 1914, when Redmond announced that the Volunteers would support England and fight in the war outside of Ireland. This speech in County Wicklow showed his disillusion with what the volunteers actually stood for and signaled the end of his influence with the group. The Volunteers had originally allowed Redmond's involvement because they feared that he would break up the group. Redmond had declared on August 3, 1914 that Ireland would support the war by defending Ireland, a stance with which the I.V.F. agreed. When he countered that on September 24 stating that the Volunteer would serve outside Ireland, he showed that he

⁵⁵ At this time, before 1914, Irish Independence was not absolute independence, rather a type of Irish self government with little British oversight.

⁵⁶ Those on the provisional committee for the Irish Volunteers.

⁵⁷ The main demand was that the Irish Parliamentary Party was allowed to choose twenty-five of the representatives for the I.V.F. committee. These men were meant to represent all of Ireland but were plants by the I.P.P. to gain control of the group.

⁵⁸ Redmond was a popular politician during the time and most of Ireland supported his stances.

was out of touch with the Volunteers.⁵⁹ After the split with Redmond, the Volunteers revised their Constitution in 1914 to state more directly what their purpose was and avoid any confusion in the future. The new objectives were essentially the same as the original ones however the I.V.F. added in elements that acknowledged there were people other than the British that were considered an enemy. They asserted their goals:

1. To maintain the right and duty of the Irish Nation henceforward to provide for its own defence [*sic*] by means of a permanent armed and trained Volunteer Force.
2. To unite the people of Ireland on the basis of Irish nationality and a common national interest; to maintain the integrity of the nation and to resist with all our strength any measure tending to bring about or perpetuate disunion or the partition of our country.
3. To resist any attempt to force the men of Ireland into military service under any Government until a free National Government is empowered by the Irish people themselves to deal with it.
4. To secure the abolition of the system of governing Ireland through Dublin Castle and the British military powers, and the establishment of a National Government in its place.

This clarification leaves little wiggle room for the policies that Redmond tried to introduce into the Volunteers. The National Volunteers, those who continued to follow Redmond, agreed that it was their duty to fight for England. The other group, consisting of the original founding members of the Volunteers became known as the Irish Volunteer Force or more informally Volunteers (with or without the Irish as a prefix). At the time of the split there were 168,000 Volunteers; 156,000 of those Volunteers followed Redmond into the National Volunteers,⁶⁰ leaving twelve thousand with the I.V.F. Even though their numbers had decreased dramatically, this purging left members who were willing to use physical force to achieve an Irish Republic -- free of English meddling.

⁵⁹ "Constitution of the Irish Volunteers." <http://www.nli.ie/1916/exhibition/en/content/stagesetters/force/eoinmacneill/img/0237.jpg>

⁶⁰ GrobFitzgibbon, 182.

The I.V.F. strengthened their dedication to training and drilling and required their members to go on weekly marches. There also was an increased desire to gain more arms. When the I.P.P. was involved with the I.V.F. they had continually tried to gain control of the treasury. A measure was passed that insured that the members that had been inserted by Redmond were denied any and all access to the funds of the I.V.F. Another issue that had lasting effects from the time with Redmond was the distribution of arms. Redmond and his agents insisted that the Volunteers in Northern Ireland, specifically Ulster, be given arms first in order to combat any attacks from the U.V.F. Most of these weapons were going into the hands of those people who broke off and joined the National Volunteers; ultimately leaving the I.V.F. without the arms that their members had paid for. Included in these arms were the ones that were successfully landed in Howth in July 1914. There were a number of failed attempts at bringing in arms after the separation from Redmond. These failures were directly related to the increase in monitoring by Dublin Castle and their agents directly following the separation from Redmond. The new I.V.F. was seen to be more extreme and capable of drastic measures that were a threat to British rule.



2. Irish Volunteers Importing arms at Howth 1914. The ammunition was transported in the car by the Finnan Eirnnan. ("Those who Set the Stage: Republicans and those who Would Resort to Physical Force: Eoin MacNeill and the Irish Volunteers." *The 1916 Rising Personalities and Perspectives*. National Library of Ireland. Curated by Noel Kissane with Historian Michael Laffan. <http://www.nli.ie/1916/exhibition/en/content/stagesetters/force/eoinmacneill/index.pdf> Accessed August 20, 2015.)



3. Irish Volunteers marching weapons back from Howth 1914. ("Those who Set the Stage: Republicans and those who Would Resort to Physical Force: Eoin MacNeill and the Irish Volunteers." *The 1916 Rising Personalities and Perspectives*. National Library of Ireland. Curated by Noel Kissane with Historian Michael Laffan. <http://www.nli.ie/1916/exhibition/en/content/stagesetters/force/eoinmacneill/index.pdf> Accessed August 20, 2015.)

Easter Rising

The 1916 Easter Rising was the culmination of all the efforts by the secret societies in organizing and planning. Even though the Easter Rising was a resounding failure in achieving its goals, an Irish Republic, independent of British interference it did achieve an unexpected bonus. Bolmer Hobson stated that the Volunteers should not use physical force, more specifically a rebellion (rising), unless the Irish populace was behind the movement.⁶¹ Acknowledging without the support of the public, no amount of physical force would achieve their goals.⁶² However, what the Easter Rising failed to achieve in the week long battle was achieved in the months following, due to the British execution of the leaders of the rising, combined with the imposed military occupation of Dublin.

Preparation for the rising had been happening years before the week of April 24. The Dublin Metropolitan Police (DMP) has been regularly reporting on the activities of those associated with extremist movements. The Volunteers' drilling⁶³ was especially monitored, since the end of the alliance between Redmond and the I.V.F. It is this watchfulness by the British that the Volunteers and I.R.B. used to their advantage. Volunteers marched every week, at the minimum. The first couple of times that they went out for marches, the DMP followed them the entire time. After a few weeks of this, the British followed them less and less, resulting in a report of when they left and what direction and when they came back. The instructors did not inform the Volunteers where they were going or what they were doing either. This lack of information is the exact

⁶¹ "Those that set the stage: Republicans and those who Would Resort to Physical Force: Bulmer Hobson and Denis McCullough."

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ "Movements of Extremists," *Dublin Metropolitan Police Records*. National Archives of Ireland. 1915. <http://www.nationalarchives.ie/>

reason why the Volunteers were so successful at importing arms at Howth July 26, 1914. The Volunteers thought that it was just another routine march and were not informed until they were already on their way. The success on Easter Monday was no different than the before. Communication about the plans for the Rising was a problem because of the countermanded orders by Eoin MacNeill the full force of the Volunteers did not assist in the Rising. By Easter Monday, the Volunteers in Northern Ireland learned about the Rising, but it was too late for them to get involved. Northern Volunteers were not able to get the men and their arms down to Dublin in time to be part of the Rising; since their form of transportation was limited to bicycles and a very rare motorcar. Also the British would not have allowed for a mass of Volunteers to travel by train, or any other form of transportation, the hundred miles from Belfast to Dublin. There was no way for the Volunteers of the North to be involved in the Rising which decreased the number estimated by the I.R.B. to be involved in the Rising.

The British were unprepared for the events of the Easter Rising 1916 and were caught off guard. This surprise enabled the rebels to take control of the buildings in Dublin and the surrounding areas; however, the initial success on Easter Monday only lasted until Wednesday, when the British sent in reinforcements. The rebels were armed with antique rifles that were unwanted by the Germans, but they had the advantage of position. However, when the British sent in their reinforcements, over six thousand heavily armed troops, gun boats in the river Liffey, and armored cars,⁶⁴ they shelled the rebels into submission. The rebels were out gunned and outmanned against the well-equipped army that had no consideration for the lives of any Irishman, whether that was a rebel or a civilian in the area.

⁶⁴ See Photos on page 20.

The original response to the events of Easter Week 1916 was against the rebels, who were seen to have “provoked the British response.”⁶⁵ The civilians of Dublin spit on the rebels who were led away by the British. The antagonism turned to sympathy with the execution of the leaders. Not only were the leaders of the Easter Rising tried in secret military courts by the British,⁶⁶ but they were executed by firing squad. General Maxwell, the Brit in charge of handling the aftermath of the Rising, chose this extreme response because of the connection to the Germans.⁶⁷ Maxwell claimed the loss of life and destruction of property necessitated his actions “to discouraging such a course of action in the future.”⁶⁸ As avowed in the National Library of Ireland, “Maxwell was a soldier concerned only with the practicalities of the moment and had little regard for the political repercussions of his methods.”⁶⁹ Maxwell’s arrest of over three thousand people who had an active role in the nationalist movement, whether or not they participated in the Rising, was devastating to British portrayal in Ireland. The actions toward the Irish following the Rising were so bad that it required an investigation into General Maxwell’s actions. The British forbade more executions until the conclusion of the investigation, except in cases of emergency. Nevertheless, Maxwell executed two more leaders of the Rising.⁷⁰ There were disturbing reports, including the treatment of James Connolly whose shattered ankle

⁶⁵ “Aftermath.” *The 1916 Rising Personalities and Perspectives*. National Library of Ireland. Curated by Noel Kissane with Historian Michael Laffan. <http://www.nli.ie/1916/exhibition/en/content/aftermath/> Accessed August 20, 2015

⁶⁶ With the one exception being Robert Casement, who was given a public trial.

⁶⁷ The guns were from the Germans.

⁶⁸ “The Executed.” *The 1916 Rising Personalities and Perspectives*. National Library of Ireland. Curated by Noel Kissane with Historian Michael Laffan. <http://www.nli.ie/1916/exhibition/en/content/executed/index.pdf> Accessed August 20, 2015

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ James Connolly and Seán MacDiarmada.

required him to be strapped to a chair before being executed by a firing squad. Of the sixteen men executed two were not present during the rising: Roger Casement⁷¹ and Thomas Kent. Another was not a leader but a devoted brother of a prominent leader, William Pearse. These are stunning examples of British mishandlings, which drove a wedge even further between themselves and the Irish people. The resulting brutal punishments convinced even the most moderate Irish nationalist that physical force should be the method of choice. The British punishment of those who staged the Easter Rising cost them their rule in Ireland. This punishment leads to the Irish discovering that they would never achieve a freedom under British rule and necessitated a new type of nationalist movement.

The imprisonment of the people involved in the Easter Rising was an unexpected benefit for the Irish people, because their internment became a crash course in how to achieve Irish Nationalism. The Irish realized that neither political maneuvers nor physical force tactics alone would achieve the Irish freedom that they desired. But the blending of these methods in a united fashion would give them the power to oppose any British counter. These secret societies were able to combine the best political strategy and the military of the I.V.F. in order to form the Sinn Féin movement. Many of the methods that the British used to counter the Irish actually increased the Irish nationalist movement, specifically the installment of the Black and Tans. There are many historical resources on the Black and Tans, but one that explains the role of the Black and Tans against the

⁷¹ Roger Casement was already in jail for his involvement in gun-running. He was arrested Good Friday in a last ditch effort to obtain more weapons from Germany for those involved in the Rising. He was the only one who received a public trial.

I.V.F., now being known as the Irish Republican Army (I.R.A.) is in a YouTube video.⁷²

The video discusses the orders by Colonel Smyth, the leader of the Black and Tans, on

June 19, 1920 for the soldiers to:

When civilians approach, shout hands up! Should the order not be obeyed, shoot and shoot with effect. If any persons approaching you carry their hands in their pockets or are in any way suspicious looking, shoot them down. You may make mistakes occasionally and innocent persons may be shot. But you are bound to get the right person some times. The more you shoot, the better I will like you. And I assure you that no policeman will get in trouble for shooting any man. And I guarantee that your names will not be given at the inquest.⁷³

The Volunteers found out about Colonel Smyth's policy and one month gave this speech

he was assassinated in a café in Dublin by a six man group of Volunteers. Before they

shot him they told him, "Your orders were to shoot on sight. Now you're in our sight.

Prepare to die."⁷⁴ The Irish Volunteer Force responded to the British in a more aggressive

way than had previously happened. However, this aggression would not have been

necessary if the British had handled Ireland differently following the Easter Rising. These

leaders of the Rising in 1916 were not mercenaries; they were professors and poets who

used physical force because it was the only action that was left to them, since all

diplomatic actions had been shut down or postponed.⁷⁵ The public responded in a way

that was in favor of these rebels. A rising that was initiated by secret societies was able to

gain a following because of the secret trials of those visionaries. The power of a secret is

the driving force behind Irish Nationalism.

⁷² "I.R.A execution of Colonel Smyth (1920)" *Saoirse Éireann*. https://youtu.be/CPKPlwR7_6k

⁷³ "I.R.A execution of Colonel Smyth (1920)" https://youtu.be/CPKPlwR7_6k

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ The Home Rule Bill of 1914.



4. British Armored car used during the Easter Rising 1916. (*P-16-001.jpg* Bureau of Military History, Dublin 1916. Photograph. http://photogallery.bureauofmilitaryhistory.ie/displayimage.php?album=19&pid=33#top_display_media)



5. Destruction on Sackville St after the Easter Rising 1916. (“Rising, the: The Rising Day by Day.” *The 1916 Rising Personalities and Perspectives*. National Library of Ireland. Curated by Noel Kissane with Historian Michael Laffan. <http://www.nli.ie/1916/exhibition/en/content/rising/daybyday.pdf> Accessed August 20, 2015.)

Appendix A: Timeline

1778		Foundation of Volunteer movement in Ulster
1782	15 Feb.	Dungannon Convention of Volunteers called for legislative Independence
1783	17 Apr.	Renunciation Act passed by British Parliament which gave Ireland legislative independence (an Irish Parliament).
1793	Feb.-Mar.	Legislation restricting movement of arms and suppressing Volunteering.
1796	24 Mar.	Insurrection Act: established curfews, arms searches, and the death penalty for oath-taking.
1798	30 Mar. 23-24 May 6-13 June	Martial law imposed. Rebellion begins in Leinster. Rebellion in Ulster.
1800	21 May 2 Aug.	Bill of Union introduced in Irish Parliament, uniting Ireland and England as one country and dismissing Irish Parliament. Last meeting of the Irish Parliament.
1801	1 Jan.	Act of Union takes effect.
1810	20 June	Unlawful Oaths Act extends powers against secret societies (reinforced 1823, 1839).
1814	25 July	Peace Preservation Act, policing disturbed areas by local taxes.
1825	18 Mar.	Catholic Association dissolved because of Unlawful Societies Act (9 Mar.).
1845	9 Sept.	Potato blight first reported in Ireland. The Potato Famine lasted from 1845 to 1849.
1846	28 July	O'Connell and Young Irelanders split over the use of physical force.
1858	17 Mar.	Foundation of the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Dublin
1859	Apr.	Foundation of the Fenian Brotherhood in the New York.
1867	5 Mar. 20 June 13 Dec.	Fenian Rising: lasted three hours. Clan na Gael founded in New York. Fenian bomb at Clerkenwell Gaol, London: 12 killed. Planted by American Fenian group Irish National Brotherhood, extremist group of the Clan (Clan na Gael)

1874	30 July	Obstruction campaign by Irish representatives begins in Parliament.
1876	20 Aug.	I.R.B. Supreme Council withdraw support from the Home Rule movement.
1882	6 May	Phoenix Park murders of Lord Frederick Cavaendish and T.H. Burke by the Invisibles, an extremist sect of the I.R.B.
	12 July	Crime Prevention Act.
1884	1 Nov.	Foundation of Gaelic Athletic Association.
1886	8 Apr.	Introduction of Home Rule Bill #1 – Government of Ireland Bill 1886. (Defeated 8 June)
1893	13 Feb.	Introduction of Home Rule Bill #2 – Government of Ireland Bill 1893 (rejected by Lords 9 Sept.).
	31 July	Formation of the Gaelic League.
1900	30 Sept.	Foundation of Cumann na nGaedheal by Arthur Griffith.
1905	8 Mar.	Formation of the Dungannon Clubs (Belfast).
1911	18 Aug.	Parliamentary Act (abolishes absolute veto of the Lords).
1912	11 Apr.	Introduction of Home Rule Bill #3 – Government of Ireland Bill 1912.
1913	31 Jan.	Formation of Ulster Volunteer Force (U.V.F.)
	25 Nov.	Foundation of the Irish Volunteer Force (I.V.F.)
1914	2 Apr.	Foundation of Cumann na mBan – women's volunteer force.
	24-25 Apr.	Larne gun-running. (U.V.F.)
	23 June	Home Rule Bill #4 – Government of Ireland (Amendment) Bill 1914 amended to exclude Ulster in the Home Rule.
	26 July	Howth gun-running (I.V.F.): four killed at Bachelor's Walk, Dublin, in confrontation between the army and protestors, nothing to do with the I.V.F. or their guns directly.
	3 Aug.	Redmond pledges the support of the Irish Volunteers for the defense of Ireland when war breaks out between Germany and France.
	18 Sept.	Home Rule enacted but suspended until after the war.
	20 Sept.	Redmond commits the Irish Volunteers to serving outside Ireland during a speech in County Wicklow.
	24 Sept.	Volunteer splinter and form new group is formed called the National Volunteers that support Redmond's decision to fight in the war. The other group opposes conscription and Redmond – they are the Irish Volunteer Force.

1915	May	Foundation of the Military Council of the I.R.B. Supreme Council.
1916	19-22 Jan.	I.R.B. Military Council decides to stage a rising no later than Easter.
	22 Apr.	Eoin MacNeill countermands the order for maneuvers on Easter Sunday.
	23 Apr.	MacNeill's countermanding order published in the <i>Independent</i> . Military Council of the I.R.B. agrees to proceed with its plan for rebellion.
	24 Apr.	Easter Rising begins with rebels seizing key government buildings that represent British Rule.
	26 Apr.	Martial Law declared in Ireland. British reinforcements arrive, which includes gunboats and armored vehicles.
	29 Apr.	Unconditional surrender by the Rebels.
1922	6 Dec.	Irish Free State formally established.

Appendix B: Rule Britannia!⁷⁶

In *The National Student*, Vol. VI, No.1 (December, 1915), Editorial.
(Anonymous)

WHILE THIS United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland is in the midst of perhaps the greatest crisis in its history, insidious attempts are being made to disrupt its unity from within. The attempts without exception have their origin in that part of the Kingdom which is known as Ireland. Although all these plots aim at the disintegration of the Kingdom, yet the supporters of each are at variance with one another. The principal actions are the Separatists, who want to see up a Republic by force of arms; the Sinn Féiners, who want to get the Union repealed by means of passive resistance; and the Constitutionalists, who want to win Home Rule by speechifying. There are also some people who want to set up Home Rule by force of arms, but they are not worth considering, for they haven't any arms. With the Separatists and Sinn Féiners it is no use arguing; they ought to be shot. But it might be possible to convince the Constitutionalist, who have shown a modicum of British patriotism, that they are following wrong courses. We would like to show them how undesirable it is to tamper with the constitution of that United Kingdom which they love so well.

In the first place we would like to point out to them that the fundamental basis on which their whole argument stands is utterly wrong. They hold that Ireland is a nation. This cannot be. Ireland is only a part of the great British nation. Members of the Constitutionalist party themselves have lately, in connection with the recruitment campaign, referred to the United Kingdom as "the nation" and "the country." Surely Messrs. T.P. O'Connor, John Dillon, and the Lord Mayor of Dublin, to whom I refer, could not for a moment maintain that the part is equal to the whole; that a part of a nation is a nation. We may then take it from their own mouths that Ireland is not a nation, and thus the principal argument in favour [*sic*] of Home Rule drops to the ground. We are sure that, having disposed of this point, we have convinced the majority of the students of the undesirability of Home Rule, since their attachment to it was mainly on grounds of sentiment, there are however some who supported the movement on more solid grounds, and we shall now turn to deal with them.

Some hold the opinion that Home Rule would alter economic conditions for the better. It is expected that a local Parliament in Ireland would cause an increase of industry and commerce. This of course could never happen, for the Imperial Parliament-the Mother Parliament, if one may employ a metaphor- would be bound to see to it that the possession of special privileges should not give any of her children an unfair advantage over the others. Ireland must not be allowed to increase her industries, for any increase in that direction must be at the expense of England, whose just domain it is. Pasture and a certain amount of tillage appear to be Ireland's special vocation, and these have been encouraged to great effect by the Imperial mother. So satisfactory has been the increase in pasturage that the decrease in tillage has enabled more and more people to emigrate to

⁷⁶ "Rule Britannia!". *The National Student* VI no. 1 December 1915. reprinted in Martin, F. X. "Part X No.6". *The Irish Volunteers 1913-1915: Recollections and Documents*. Kildare: Irish Academic Press. 2013. Kindle edition, 349–350.

the colonies and so insure a further increase of pasturage by geometrical progression. The sun shines down every year on a greener land, and soon tourists will be able to understand why it is called the Emerald Isle.

This picture of contentment and prosperity must convince all waverers [*sic*] of the iniquity of the Home Rule experiment. We have said enough on this subject and having disposed of one item in the Party's programme [*sic*], we wish to pay a tribute to the excellence of the remainder. They have identified themselves honourably [*sic*] with the campaign of recruitment for the British army. Unlike the Sinn Féiners and Separatists they have strongly urged their faction to come forward to fight for the Empire. It is true that the wording of their appeal has often been at fault. For instance, they have appealed to the young men to fight for Ireland, frequently omitting all reference to the Empire, but this is probably due to a desire to propitiate the sentiment of their followers, who have not yet assimilated as much education as their leaders. Unfortunately their appeal has not been answered as satisfactorily as might be expected. Odious comparisons have been made between this and other portions of the Kingdom. There seems to be a general impression, based on a wrong understanding of the conditions, that Ireland is doing more than her fair share. Those who complain of the imaginary slackness of recruiting in England forget or ignore the fact that England is a manufacturing country, and cannot afford to dislocate her industries and interfere with the manufacture of munitions by sending too many men into the firing line. That honourable [*sic*] post must be filled by Irishmen, who have few industries, and those few of such unimportance that they could easily be closed, and who, by reason of the ordinary hardship of their lives, are better fitted to endure the privations of the trenches. Moreover Ireland can better stand the drain of blood than England, who will soon need every man to work her growing trade and industry, while loss of men will be rather an economic gain to Ireland, as it will leave more land vacant for grazing.

These arguments, convincing as they are to the educated, have little effect on the mass of the people, who, regardless of the war, continue their daily round unmoved, or, inflamed by Sinn Féin and Separatist orators, actively interfere with recruitment for his Majesty's forces. This disloyal spirit is, if anything, on the increase of late, and the praiseworthy efforts of the Constitutionalist party—who have denounced the disturbers in no measured terms, by name and in general—have had little effect. There is but one remedy for this state of things. The British Government cannot go on for ever begging Britons to do their duty. The shirkers must be compelled to do their share. Conscription must be enforced at any rate in this portion of the Kingdom. Those other portions which are doing their duty might still remain exempt from the disgrace of having to be forced to fight. But Conscription is a necessity in Ireland, not only to ensure victory in the great war, but to check the growing spirit of disloyalty. This disloyalty has been allowed to show itself publicly without any opposition from the authorities. The number of seditious meetings that have been held lately in Ireland would come as a revelation to Englishmen. In Dublin, Belfast, Cork, and Tralee enormous meetings were held lately to commemorate the hanging of three felons in Manchester fifty years ago. In Dublin alone the material for eight battalions marched in procession, but all the efforts of the recruiting sergeants failed to obtain one man willing to serve the Empire in its hour of need. These men who dare to march armed through a British city must be made to feel the omnipotence of the British Empire. They must be shown that treason is a crime, not a

virtue. In Athenry recently a huge crowd, including, I regret to say, several clergymen of the Roman Catholic persuasion, turned out to welcome a traitor who had just served a term of imprisonment under the Defence [*sic*] of the Realm Act. These mistaken notions of liberty must be eradicated by forcing those who hold them to fight for true liberty on the Continent. Let those who prate of nationality be forced to act up their words and defend the liberties of the oppressed small nationalities of Europe.

Perhaps what we have said may be considered by some to be a violation of the party true imposed by the great war. Perhaps we have been a little too violent in the wording of our case. But when the Empire is in danger we think that party feelings should be set aside and that we should be actuated solely by our sense of duty. We feel that it is a duty for any loyal son of the Empire to speak his mind when he feels that the Empire is threatened, whatever may be the consequences to himself. Having acquitted ourselves of this task we now beg to give a special warning to students of the College. Young men are very apt to lose their heads and throw themselves into revolutionary movements without calculating the consequences. It is therefore extremely likely that some of our students may be ensnared by an organisation [*sic*] calling itself "The Irish Volunteers," which is under the presidency of a professor of this College. The object of this body is to disrupt the United Kingdom by armed force, and its members are busy arming and drilling themselves with an enthusiasm and perseverance which would be admirable in any good cause. We warn students to have nothing to do with this disloyal organisation [*sic*], whose headquarters are at 2 Dawson Street.

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