

# 1922 ~ 2022

## Celebrating 100 Years Since the Foundation of the State

### Dear Resident



Of all the periods in Ireland's history, the early 1920's was a time of profound significance. Great progress was made but not without struggle and division, pain and sacrifice.

I have a personal link to the struggles of that era. A relative of mine, Jeremiah J. Creed from Macroom, was the election agent of Cork Lord Mayor Terence McSwiney who died on hunger strike in Brixton Prison, London, in October 1920.

Here in Cork North West, memories of the War of Independence and the Civil War live on in the many landmarks we pass on our journeys around the constituency – Béalnabláth, for example, and the sites of ambushes at Kilmichael, Crossbarry and Clonbanin to mention but a few.

Many of the Fine Gael/Cumann na nGaedheal party founders played key roles in the events that took place between 1912 and 1923. I'm delighted that Fine Gael in government initiated the Decade of Centenaries Programme to ensure that this complex part of our history is remembered appropriately and respectfully.

I hope you find this special commemorative leaflet interesting. This summer you might get a chance to visit some of the places that feature in it. You'll get a great overview at the Independence Museum in Kilmurry, which is definitely worth a visit.

Michael



Macroom solicitor Jeremiah J. Creed, Election Agent of Terence McSwiney in the December 1918 election for Westminster

### Towards the End of 1921: Putting it in Context

As the War of Independence raged on between the Irish Republican Army and British forces, both sides recorded heavy losses in response to the events of Bloody Sunday (**November 1920**) and due to the escalating violence around Munster – including the burning of Cork City in **December 1920**.

Martial law was imposed in some counties across Ireland as British forces struggled to counteract Ireland's military strategy, spearheaded by Michael Collins.

Following the occupation and subsequent burning of the Custom House in **May 1921**, which saw heavy losses for Irish forces, it became clear to



Collins and other Irish leaders that weapons and ammunition were in very short supply. Nevertheless, the fighting continued.

On **11th July 1921**, the War of Independence came to an end with both Irish and British forces agreeing to a truce.

In **October 1921**, a group of Irish delegates, led by Arthur Griffith, travelled to London to negotiate the terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. The President of the Irish Republic, Éamon de Valera did not attend.

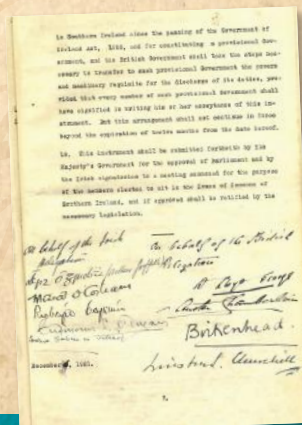
At 2AM on **6th December 1921**, the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed in 10 Downing Street.

## The Anglo-Irish Treaty 1921

Some of the main provisions of the Anglo-Irish Treaty included:

- the establishment of an Irish Free State;
- that Ireland would be a self-governing dominion within the British Empire;
- a clause which would permit Northern Ireland to opt-out of the new Free State if it so wished;
- the establishment of a Boundary Commission to examine the adjustment of the Northern Irish border; and
- an Oath of Allegiance to be pledged to the Constitution of the Irish Free State by Members of the Oireachtas.

The Cabinet of the Irish Republic were split on the Treaty's contents – however, by a vote of 4 to 3, the Treaty was presented to Dáil Éireann on **14th December 1921** for debate. This would lay the foundations of one of the most tragic periods in our history: The Irish Civil War.



Michael  
**CREED**TD

Cork North West Constituency

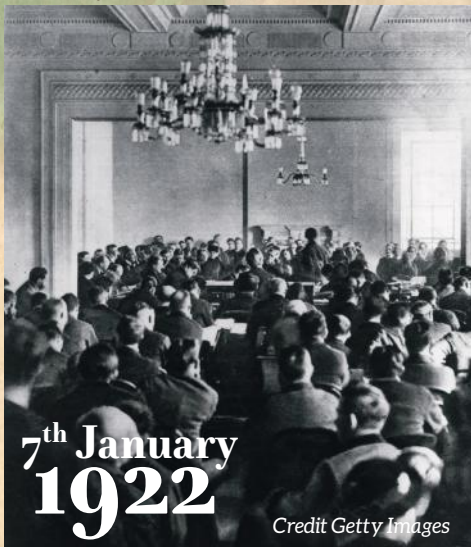
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FINE GAEL



## 14<sup>th</sup> December 1921 - 7<sup>th</sup> January 1922:

Dáil Éireann debates the Anglo-Irish Treaty at Earlsfort Terrace. These are more commonly known as 'The Treaty Debates.'



7<sup>th</sup> January  
1922

Credit Getty Images

Dáil Éireann votes in favour of the Anglo-Irish Treaty by 64-57. This causes a major split in the Sinn Féin party.



9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> January  
1922

Eamon de Valera resigns as President of the Irish Republic and replaced by Arthur Griffith.

## 16<sup>th</sup> January 1922:

Dublin Castle is officially handed over to the Provisional Irish Government, led by Michael Collins.

## 16<sup>th</sup> June 1922:

A General Election is held in the midst of the fallout of the Treaty. Pro-Treaty parties receive over 75% of the votes.

28<sup>th</sup> June  
1922

The Irish Civil War officially begins following the Irish National Army's bombardment of the Four Courts, which was occupied by Anti-Treaty forces.



## 12<sup>th</sup> August 1922:

Arthur Griffith, President of Dáil Éireann, dies suddenly.



22<sup>nd</sup> August  
1922

Michael Collins, Chairman of the Provisional Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Irish National Army is killed in an ambush at Beal na Blath.

## 9<sup>th</sup> September 1922:

W.T Cosgrave is elected the new President of Dáil Éireann and Chairman of the Provisional Government.

## 25<sup>th</sup> October 1922:

The Constitution of the Irish Free State is adopted by Dáil Éireann

The current Sinn Féin Party as we now know it was formed in 1970. Despite their claims, its roots remain vastly different to the original Sinn Féin Party of Collins, Griffith and Cosgrave. For more information, read *'A guide to the many groups who've used the Sinn Féin name'* (Séan Ó Duibhir), RTE, 2020.

## Arthur Griffith (1871-1922):

Arthur Griffith was one of the earliest Irish political heavyweights of the 20th century – even though he passed away shortly before the Irish Free State came into existence. A founder of the Sinn Féin Party, he became a high-profile figure throughout the First and Second Dáil. Griffith led the Irish Delegation during the Treaty Negotiations and was elected as President of Dáil Éireann following De Valera's resignation after the Dáil's ratification of the Treaty. He died suddenly on 12th August 1922 – ten days before the assassination of Michael Collins.





## 5<sup>th</sup> December 1922:

The British Parliament formally adopts the Irish Free State Constitution Act 1922.

## 6<sup>th</sup> December 1922:

The Irish Free State officially comes into existence.



## 8<sup>th</sup> December 1922:

Northern Ireland opts out of the Irish Free State.

*The Representation of the People Act 1918 afforded some women over the age of 30 (university graduates and home/landowners) the right to vote. It wasn't until the publication of the Irish Free State Constitution in 1922 that all women were finally given the right to vote.*

**“On behalf of Ireland, one of the oldest and yet one of the youngest nations, and speaking for the Irish Government and the Irish Delegation, I thank this Assembly of the League of Nations for the unanimous courtesy and readiness with which our application to be admitted to membership of the League has been received and approved.”**

W.T. Cosgrave, 10th September 1923 at the Assembly of the League of Nations.

## Independence Museum Kilmurphy

Overlooking the Lee Valley from a height in Kilmurphy village, Independence Museum Kilmurphy is home to a diverse and fascinating collection reflecting the activity around Kilmurphy during the War of Independence and Civil War. And there was a lot of activity. The surrounding region includes Beal na Bláth, Lissarda, Kilmichael and Crossbarry – all key locations in Ireland's Decade of Centenaries.

The stories of the historic events are told through the museum's artefacts and archival material. Some of the artefacts on permanent display include the wheel from the Crossley Tender used in the Kilmichael Ambush, a man-trap used to catch poachers, Tom Barry's suitcase, artefacts relating to Terence McSwiney, sports paraphernalia and many other objects relating to military events.



The courtyard of the museum features a striking mural by Cork artist Peter Martin. Entitled *'The Beauty of the World is the Heritage of All'*, the mural was completed in 2021 and features the rolling landscape of the beautiful Lee Valley. It was inspired by the River Lee and by the embroidered pattern used on an early 20th century dress in the museum's collection. The title is taken from the writings of Terence McSwiney. It's part of a quote that reflects the principles of unity, universality and solidarity underpinning his vision of independence.

***'Reflect on the common origin of the human race, on the beauty of the world that is the heritage of all, our common hopes and fears, and, in the greatest sense, the mutual interests of the peoples of the earth.'***

**The Independence Museum is open from Thursday to Sunday (afternoons only), and from 2-5pm on bank holidays.**



Artist Peter Martin at work on the Mural



## Michael Collins (1890-1922):

There is no denying the fact that Michael Collins was one of the greatest leading lights throughout Ireland's struggle for Independence. A cunning strategist, he masterminded an intelligence network and republican military campaign that sought to undermine British rule in Ireland. He soon became the most-wanted man in the British Empire. Notwithstanding this status, Collins travelled to 10 Downing Street as one of five plenipotentiaries to negotiate the Anglo-Irish Treaty. Following the passage of the Treaty, he became Chairman of the Provisional Government of the Irish Free State. He served as Commander in Chief of the (Irish Free State) National Army at the outbreak of Civil War in 1922. The National Army proved to be successful against the Anti-Treaty Forces, however, Collins would ultimately never see the conclusion of the war. He was assassinated, aged 31, at Beal na Blath on 22nd August 1922 – a week after the sudden death of Arthur Griffith and a few short months before the Irish Free State came into existence.



Be sure to check out Cork Co Council's ongoing and upcoming commemoration events and exhibitions!

## 1922 – 1924: Establishment of Institutions of the Irish Free State

### An Garda Síochána:

The Anglo-Irish Treaty led to the disbanding of the Royal Irish Constabulary. In 1922, Michael Collins ordered the recruitment of a new police force called the Civic Guard. On August 8th 1923, the Civic Guard was renamed An Garda Síochána – the very same force that continues to keep the peace on our streets today.



### Óglaigh na hÉireann:

The Defence Forces (Temporary Provisions) Act 1923 was enacted 'to raise and maintain an armed force to be called Óglaigh na hÉireann.' This new force was established in 1924 and is still the only legitimate armed force in Ireland, despite what certain other parties may argue.



### The Courts:

A new legal system was introduced through the Courts of Justice Act 1924 by Kevin O'Higgins that was based largely on the British system. This comprised of a District Court, Circuit Court, High Court, Court of Criminal Appeal and the Supreme Court. Any Supreme Court decision could be appealed to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council – a right that was ultimately abolished in 1933.



In August 2018 I had the honour of giving the oration at the annual Michael Collins Commemoration Ceremony in Bealnabláth.

*While the Irish Civil Service was not established by law, it was regulated by the Civil Service Regulation Act 1924.*

## Key Events in Cork North West

### Kilmichael Ambush

28 November 1920

An IRA flying column ambushed a patrol of 18 Auxiliaries at Kilmichael, killing 17 of them. It is the greatest number of casualties inflicted on the Crown forces from a single engagement anywhere in the country. Three IRA men were killed.

### Dripsey Ambush and Subsequent Executions

28 January 1921

British troops were tipped off by Mrs Lindsay, a local Protestant, about an impending IRA ambush at Dripsey to which she had somehow become privy. She first told the local Catholic priest who tried unsuccessfully to dissuade the IRA from the ambush. It went ahead on 28 January 1921 and 10 IRA members were captured. Five of them were executed on 28 February 1921 and another man died a month later

from wounds he suffered at the ambush. In reprisal, the IRA executed Mrs Lindsay and her chauffeur and burned down her home, Leemount House.

### Clonbanin (Boherbue) Ambush

5 March 1921

Four members of the Crown forces were killed in an ambush a few miles west of Kanturk at Clonbanin, County Cork. The dead included General Hanway Robert Warren Cummings, the most senior British Officer killed in Cork and his death was used as a major propaganda victory by the IRA.

### Nadd House Raid

10 March 1921

British forces carried out a large-scale sweep at Nadd. They surrounded a house where six members of the Mallow IRA column were sleeping. Two managed to escape but the other four volunteers were shot dead.

### Crossbarry Ambush

19 March 1921

This was one of the largest engagements of the War of Independence. About a hundred IRA volunteers, commanded by Tom Barry, escaped an attempt by about 1,200 British troops to encircle them. During the hour-long battle, ten British troops and three IRA volunteers were killed.

### Rathcoole Ambush

16 June 1921

Two RIC cadets died and 11 were wounded when the IRA laid an ambush for four lorries of Auxiliaries passing by Rathcoole Wood near Millstreet. IRA columns from Millstreet, Charleville, Kanturk, and Mallow assembled in the wood during the night. Early on the morning of June 16th, 1921, six mines were laid in the road along the frontage of the wood. The ambush took place at about 7.30pm. No IRA casualties were reported but two members were later executed in reprisal.

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