

The Easter Rising

On Easter Monday, 1916, Irish republicans occupied Dublin's General Post Office and declared an Irish republic. Days later, British troops arrived and suppressed the rising. Read about the events that led up to the Easter Rising, and what happened in the aftermath



Children march in memory of the founders of the Easter Rising

Box | The Easter Rising and the First World War

Although apparently a local conflict, the Easter Rising has increasingly been seen by historians as an event shaped by the context of the international experience of world war.

The war was fundamental to the evolution of the Irish independence movement. The republicans looked to Germany as a prospective ally in their fight against the British, considering their ideological struggle for self-determination against an imperial power. The hard-line British repression of the rebellion was precisely because they feared the consequences of an alliance between Ireland and Germany.

Ireland was not the only small European nation to gain independence in the aftermath of the war. Its experiences should be viewed in the context of other states transformed by the war.

1914

1915

1916

4 August 1914
United Kingdom of Britain and Ireland declares war on Germany

18 September 1914
Government of Ireland Act, giving home rule to Ireland, is passed and formally suspended due to the First World War

May 1915
Pádraig Pearse, Joseph Plunkett and Éamonn Ceannt form a military committee within the IRB to plan the rising

January 1916
IRB meet with James Connolly, head of the Irish Citizen Army, who had threatened his own uprising. Agree to work together

23 April 1916 (Easter Sunday)
First shots of the rising fired at 1.15 p.m., although leaders had called for it to be suspended until the following day

25 April 1916
British government declares martial law

27 April 1916
British assault on North King Street behind Four Courts but advance only 140 metres at cost of 11 dead and 28 injured. Troops enter houses along street killing 15 male civilians accused of being rebel fighters

2 May 1916
Series of court martials begin, resulting in 90 death sentences. 1,480 men interned under Defence of the Realm Act

3 August 1916
Roger Casement hanged for high treason at Pentonville Prison

5 September 1914
Supreme Council of Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) meets and decides to stage a rising against the British government

April 1915
Joseph Plunkett and Roger Casement travel to Germany to try to secure German support. Their plan involves a German force landing on the west coast of Ireland with a rising in Dublin diverting British forces

21 April 1916 (Good Friday)
German arms shipment disguised as a Norwegian cargo vessel, *Aud-Norge*, intercepted by British navy. Roger Casement put ashore by German U-boat at Banna Strand, County Kerry. Discovered by British, arrested on charges of treason, sabotage and espionage, and sent to Tower of London

22 April 1916 (Easter Saturday)
Aud-Norge scuttled by captain and crew who are arrested and become prisoners of war

24 April 1916 (Easter Monday)
Reading of the Proclamation, *Poblacht na h-Eireann*, by Pádraig Pearse launches rising. 1,200 Irish Volunteers (later to become the IRA) and Citizen Army members take over several key buildings in Dublin city centre, including Liberty Hall, the Four Courts, the South Dublin Hospital and Jacobs Biscuit Factory. Headquarters established at the post office. British army taken unawares

26 April 1916
British troops arrive in Dublin from England. 240 soldiers killed or injured trying to cross canal at Mount Street. At Portobello Barracks six civilians summarily executed, including pacifist activist Francis Sheehy-Skeffington

29 April 1916
Fire at the post office causes HQ to be abandoned, leading to surrender. Approximately 300 civilian casualties

2-12 May 1916
Fifteen leaders executed at Kilmainham Gaol by firing squad

Further reading

Official 1916 centenary site: www.ireland.ie

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