

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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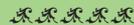
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# INTRODUCTION

Independent Ireland was born in the Easter Rising and the 1916 Proclamation is its birth certificate. The Rising set in motion the series of events that resulted in the creation of the Irish Free State in 1922 and the declaration of an Irish Republic in 1949. The story of this great national drama has often been told elsewhere. The story of the major role that Limerick played in 1916 is told in these pages.



Limerick had a much more important role in the Rising than is often realised. The original plans envisaged the city and county playing a central role in both the fighting and the distribution of the German arms shipment. Limerick had a

vibrant republican tradition represented by the veteran Fenian John Daly and his large, warm but formidable family of eight nieces and one nephew. Before 1916, the Dalys played a major part in promoting and funding republicanism, without which the Rising might never have been possible. Of the six major rebel strongholds in Dublin, one was commanded by a Limerick city man, Ned Daly and another by Eamon de Valera, who grew up in County Limerick. Another County Limerick man, Con Colbert from Athea commanded one of the lesser rebel strongholds. Many other Limerick people fought in the Rising and their contribution is highlighted in this book. Two

of the fifteen leaders executed in the aftermath were Limerick men; Ned Daly and Con Colbert.



Irish nationalism was part of an international movement that swept all of Europe, affecting numerous nations such as the Finns, Poles, Czechs, Croats and Ukrainians. Although situated on the Western edge of Europe, Limerick was very much swept up in this great revival of the continent's submerged peoples.



This book paints a portrait of Limerick in 1916, a dynamic place, situated in a fast-chang-

ing world. Modern inventions such as the motor car, electric light, radio, the aeroplane, cinema, plastic, even the zip-fastener had only recently appeared. Education had spread to all sections of society. The local newspapers were full of the First World War, and everyone knew someone fighting. While some sections of the community were prospering, the poor were suffering from wartime high prices and shortages. Even women's clothes were taking on their modern form.

W B Yeats wrote of the Rising leaders that:

## **'THEY DREAMED AND ARE DEAD'**

Many others also dreamed and a lot died at this time in the nation's history: the Irish Volunteers who fought the British Empire on the streets of Dublin; the thousands of Irish who fought in the armed forces of Britain and other allied armies in the Great War; the RIC constables who found themselves transformed from everyday policemen to hate figures; those who manned the home front in the factory, the farm, the schoolroom and the workshop.

All of them are remembered in this book, as in remembering them we commemorate them.

1.  
Diary of Events in West Limerick  
1913 - 1922

By Ex Commandant J.V.

Charles Wall

Dunmoolough a small town on the Limerick-Cork border, has the distinction of for being the second place outside of Dublin, to organize a Volunteer Corps. Athlone was the first. In November 1913 Lt J. Wall cc. who was then the local Curate, called the young men of the town and parish to a meeting where the aims and ideals of the Volunteers were explained. A story which was owned by a local merchant, Gabriel Brennan was related. That same story was the scene of the terrible cinema tragedy of 1926. An ex British soldier, Maurice Kelly ~~the~~ was appointed drill instructor and about 40 men were enrolled and about 4 nights a week the volunteers learned the usual parade ground foot and

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