

FROM COLONIAL STATE TO FREE STATE

What they said...

Our exhibition and thanks

This exhibition, curated by Galway County Council Archives (GCCA), is based primarily on images of items from its collections. Drawing almost exclusively on the local authority collections, such as the minutes of Galway County Council and Rural District Councils the exhibition aims to illustrate the attitudes and policies of Galway County Council, and its associated local authorities, between 1916 and 1923. It focuses primarily on the pivotal period after the 1916 Rising. The content and tone of the minutes show the political and social thinking at that time. It is hoped this perspective on the tumultuous

period in Ireland's past will be informative and a helpful resource to those interested in learning how County Galway and its representatives viewed and reacted to the events which led to Ireland's independence and shaped the birth of our nation.

The exhibition is supplemented by images from various other institutions and individuals. Their kind permission to re-produce images from their collections is gratefully acknowledged.

The exhibition was designed and produced by Vermillion Design and funded by Galway County Council.

*Men from the plains of Mayo to Loch Garman
Men from Loch Lein to the hills of Tyrone
Seed of the Gael and the Dane and the Norman
Join hands for Ireland, and Ireland alone!
Here in the land that is Liberty's altar
Here and here only the battle must be
Think of the prize and your hearts will not flatter,
Think of the future when Ireland's free.*

IRISH VOLUNTEER MOTTO, GCCA GS01/03

www.galway.ie/archives



ÉIRE
IRELAND

19
2016

Clár Comórtha
Cead Bliain
Comóráid
Programme



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

DUNASLOE No 1,
DISTRICT COUNCIL
MINUTE BOOK
No 17.

1899-1915

PRELUDE TO THE RISING

“...the manhood of Ireland are ready to do their part in defence of their homes and their liberties”

GCCA GC/1/2, p529.

When Galway County Council was established in April 1899 it, like other local authorities throughout the country, pledged its support for Home Rule. Between 1899 and 1916 it issued various resolutions reflecting its attitude to ongoing social and political changes. It issued resolutions supporting John Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP), land redistribution, the Irish language and the Irish Volunteers. It rejoiced in September 1914 when the Government of Ireland Act was passed by the British parliament, finally granting Home Rule to the people of Ireland. The outbreak of World War I in July 1914 however led to the postponement of the Act for twelve months. This postponement extended for the duration of the war.

Following the split in the Irish Volunteers Galway County Council supported Redmond's National Volunteers, and agreed to keep open the posts of any staff member who volunteered to serve with the British armed forces. One such member was its County Secretary, Walter Gordon Seymour, who served for the duration of the war. While he was away his post was filled by William G. Fogarty, who was also a member of the Irish National Volunteers.

That we the County Council of the County of Galway at this our first meeting do pledge ourselves to the principle of Home Rule and earnestly urge on Her Majesty's Government the necessity of granting legislative independence to Ireland in order to enable the Irish people to make their own laws and manage their own affairs in harmony with the wishes of the great majority of the population. That we enter our protest against the Government Act as an insult to justice to prepare our people for the larger and more comprehensive means of autonomy which is the only means that will ever satisfy the hopes and aspirations of our people and make us a happy, prosperous and contented nation.

Resolution passed by Galway County Council at its inaugural meeting, setting out its ultimate goals and aspirations.

22 April 1899, GCCA GC/1/1.



Photograph of Galway County Council taken on the steps of the Court House, Galway, on the occasion of its first meeting.

April 1899, GCCA GC/1/1.

Members of the Galway County Council, consider that the time has come when every effort should be made to organise the Irish Volunteer force in every parish in Ireland. We are convinced that such a force, wisely led by men in whom our indomitable leader Mr. John E. Redmond M.P. would have confidence, would prove to the world that the manhood of Ireland are ready to do their part in defence of their homes and their liberties, and if need be, to protect our fellow Nationalists in Ulster from insult and attack.

Galway County Council called for the establishment of an Irish Volunteer force in every parish in the country.

20 May 1914, GCCA GC/1/2, p529.

Right: Galway County Council rejoiced at the passing of the Home Rule Bill.

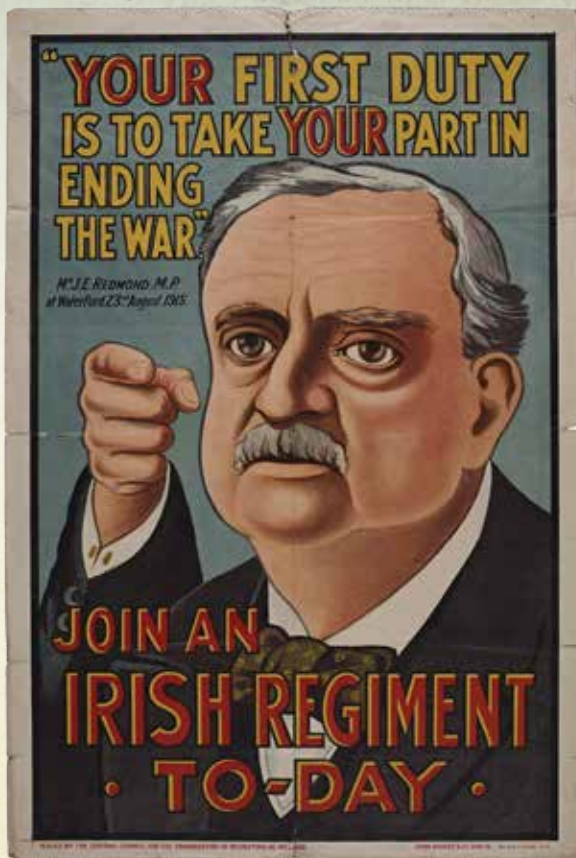
13 September 1914, GCCA GC/1/2, p576-77.

Councillor J. McDonnell proposed, Councillor J. Hogan seconded - That we rejoice in the final passage of the Home Rule Bill into Law and congratulate the Irish Party and its leaders on their achievement of their great task. That we heartily congratulate and endorse Mr. Redmond's appeal for the formation of a new Irish Brigade to support, if necessary, the Irish Regiments which have already given such splendid examples of their valour. That the County Council call upon all employers to assist in this patriotic work, by keeping open as far as possible the posts of men who volunteer for service in the Irish Brigade.

Below: Recruitment poster featuring an image of John Redmond, leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party, encouraging Irish men to join an Irish regiment to assist with the war effort.

23 August 1915, NLI EPH F113.

Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.



FROM COLONIAL STATE TO FREE STATE
What they said...

It is clear that this proposal to throw the country into turmoil and to destroy the chances of a Home Rule measure in the near future must have been forced upon Mr. Redmond. Already, ignoring the Irish Volunteers as a factor in the National position, Mr. Redmond had consented to a dismemberment of Ireland which could be made permanent by the same agencies that forced him to accept it as temporary. He was now prepared to risk another disruption and the wreck of the cause entrusted to him. The Provisional Committee, while recognising that the responsibility in that case would be altogether Mr. Redmond's, decided to risk the lesser evil and to admit his nominees, to sit and act on the Committee. The Committee made no representations as to the persons to be nominated, and when the nominations were received, the Committee raised no question as to how far Mr. Redmond had fulfilled his public undertaking to nominate "representative men from different parts of the country". Mr. Redmond's nominees were admitted purely and simply as his nominees and without co-optation.

Statement from the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers.

24 September 1914, GCCA GC/1/2.

1916

“We regret that many of our young countrymen were the dupes of German agents and of the enemies of the country...”

GCCA G01/8/10, p642-643.

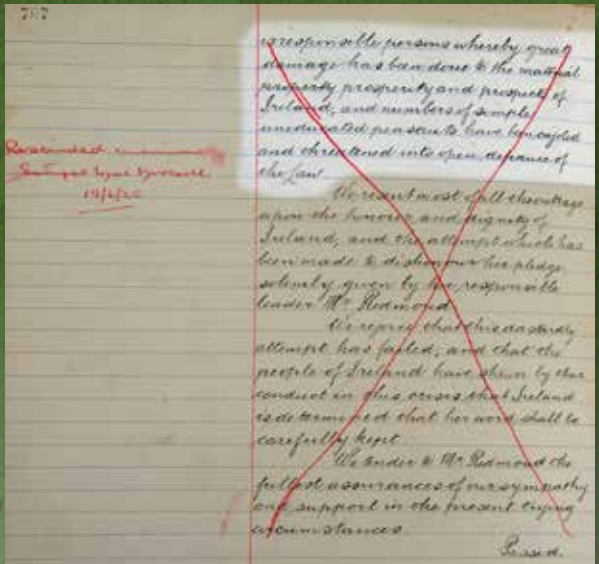
In early 1916 many of the local bodies of Galway town issued an address of welcome to Ivor Churchill Guest, 1st Viscount Wimborne, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, during his first visit to the West of Ireland, to attend a recruiting conference at the Town Hall. The visit was, according to a Connacht Tribune report of 5 January 1916, greeted with much fanfare and ceremony.

A little while later the strength in numbers of both the Irish Volunteers and the National Volunteers was demonstrated when they paraded in uniform through the streets of the town for St Patrick's Day. However, one month later the Easter Rising appeared to take the authorities and whole country off guard. The counter-manding of orders to rise up led to the confusion which resulted in only a small number of insurgents taking up arms outside Dublin that week. The largest group to mobilise did so in Galway, when about 700 Volunteers, under the control of Liam Mellows, assembled throughout the south and east of the county. They attacked Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) stations, uprooted railway tracks and cut down telegraph wires. The Castlegar Company of Volunteers inflicted the first casualty outside the capital, fatally wounding RIC Constable Patrick Whelan at Carnmore Cross on 26th April.

Galway County Council condemned the actions of the insurgents, though did not make any mention of the military activity in the county.

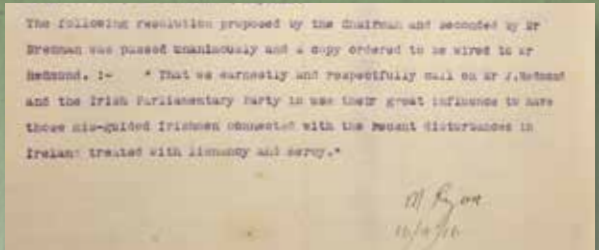


Liam Mellows (1892-1922) and Fr Henry Feeney (1889-1945). Fr Feeney was with the Irish Volunteers when they disbanded at Limepark, Easter Week, 1916. c. 1915. Courtesy of Shrule Parish Church.



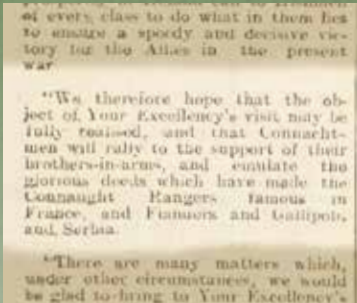
Galway County Council's resolution proposed by the Chairman, Councillor John McDonnell, and seconded by Councillor Martin McDonagh, condemning the 1916 Rising. It was rescinded on 19 June 1920.

3 May 1916, GCCA GC/1/A, p707.



Following the first of the executions Ballinasloe Urban District Council was quick to call on John Redmond to use his influence to plead for mercy for all others arrested.

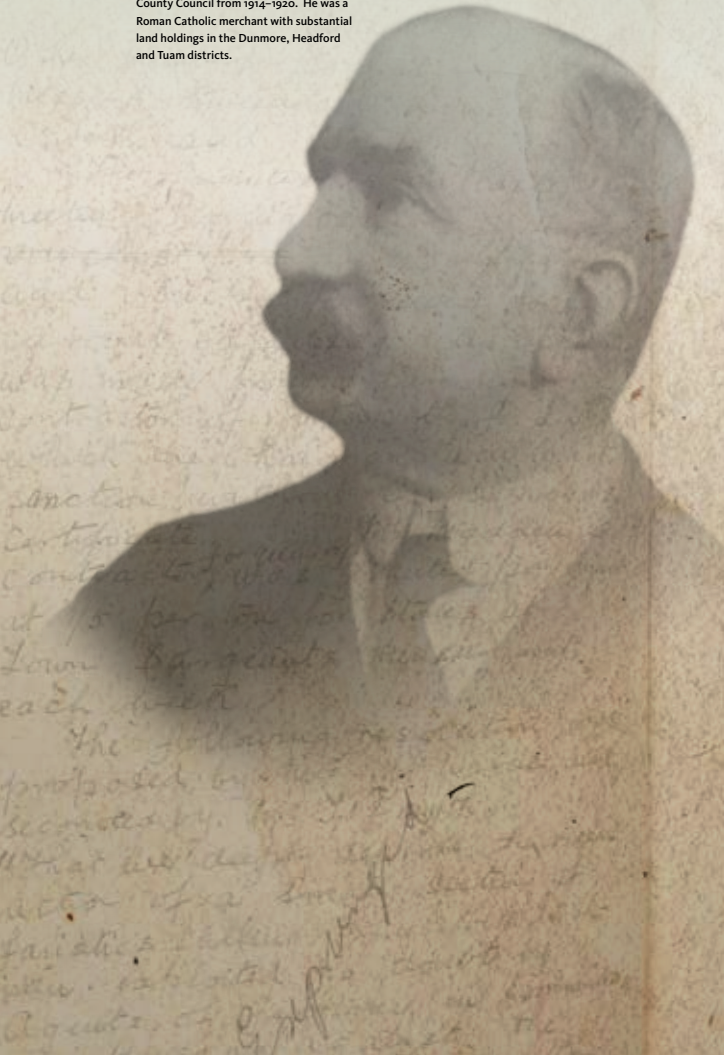
9 May 1916, GCCA BUC/1/10, p194.



Address of Welcome issued by Galway County Council to Ivor Churchill Guest, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, on the occasion of his visit to the West of Ireland in January 1916 to attend a recruiting conference at the Town Hall in Galway.

2 February 1916, GCCA GC/2, p694.

Below: John McDonnell, of Waterslade House, Tuam, was Chairman of Galway County Council from 1914-1920. He was a Roman Catholic merchant with substantial land holdings in the Dunmore, Headford and Tuam districts.



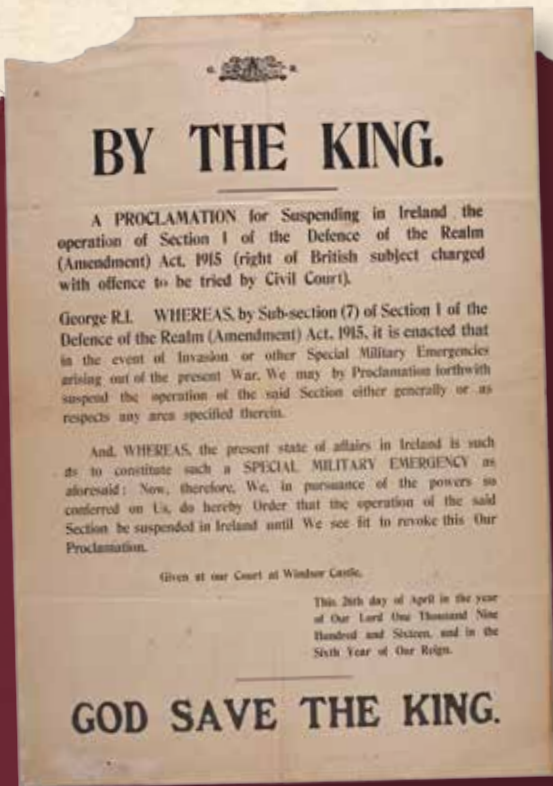
FROM COLONIAL STATE
TO FREE STATE
What they said...

Behind: The Longfins, from Commissioners issued a strongly worded condemnation of the Rising. It was expunged on 30 March 1920. 8 May 1916, GCCA DC/1/2.

1916

“...condemn them for depriving us of the youth and manhood of Ireland by deportation...”

GCCA G01/3/18, p60.



Defence of the Realm Act, introduced in 1914, enabled the British authorities to suppress any form of unrest under a state of emergency. It also permitted the Rising's leaders to be tried without jury by military court and sentenced to death.

NLI EPF F233, 1916, Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.



Left: Galway County Council Staff Attendance Register with Seamus Carter's signature (in Irish); his first entry in the Register following his arrest in April 1916.

24 November 1916, GCCA GC/7/10.



George Nicolls (1884–1942) being a well-known member of the Irish Volunteers Galway City Corps he was among the first arrested in Galway when hostilities broke out during Easter week 1916.

1911, NLI Ms 49530/25/3, Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

Below: Countess Constance Georgine Markievicz, (1874–1927), born Gore-Booth, M.P., T.D.

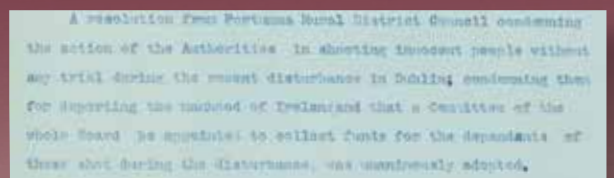
C. 1916, NLI EP MARK.CO (1) IV, Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.



The introduction of martial law led to the arrest and internment of many involved or simply suspected of involvement in the rebellion. Many of the county's local authorities condemned the actions of the British Government for executing the leaders of the Rising and the widespread arrests, without trial, of thousands of Irishmen and women, including about 320 from county Galway, and their deportation to various prisons in Britain – such as at Knutsford, Lewes, Wandsworth, Wakefield, Stafford, Glasgow and Perth. Later, about 1,800 were transferred to an internment camp at Frongoch in Wales. The majority of these were released in August, the remainder in December. The convicted prisoners were freed in June 1917. Frongoch Camp was referred to by its inmates as “the university”, as it gave like-minded individuals, who were forcibly assembled together for a long period of time the opportunity to share and exchange views and ideas, and plan the next phase of the fight for Irish freedom.

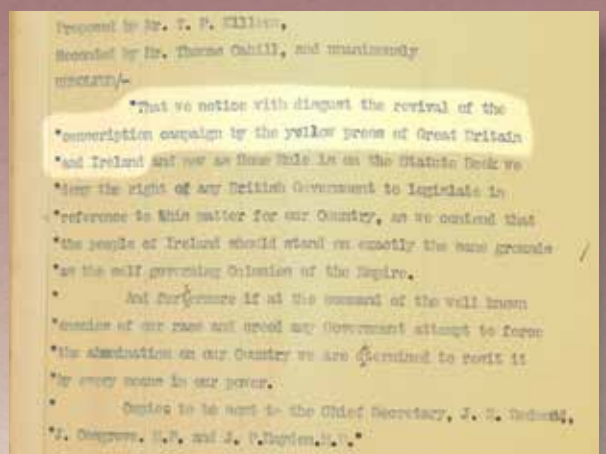
Among those arrested in Galway was Seamus Carter, a Clerk working with Galway County Council and member of the Irish Volunteers. Also arrested was George Nicolls, a solicitor and the County Coroner. He had strong links with Arthur Griffith, founder of Sinn Féin, and was President of the Galway Irish Volunteers and Head Centre of Galway's Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). Nicolls was later Chairman of Galway County Council and an elected representative for Galway.

The widespread arrests led to severe economic hardship for many people at home, as they were left without their primary wage earners. The lack of manpower led to difficulties in harvesting crops and subsequent food shortages.



Ballinasloe Rural District Council passed the resolution of the Portumna Rural District Council condemning the British Government for the executions 'without trial' and also for internment and deportations.

24 June 1916, GCCA G00/6/15, p555.



Right: Ballinasloe Poor Law Union protest against the threat of the introduction of conscription to Ireland.

14 October 1916, GCCA G00/5/56, p183.

FROM COLONIAL STATE TO FREE STATE

What they said...

We also call upon the Government to at once attend to the question of a relaxation of the punishment inflicted on the Countess Marchmont

Relief of Distress (Galway Union)
Read letter from Mr R. J. Mulvey, Clerk of the Union, Galway.
Heard Mr. Mullery.
The Chairman proposed.
Councillor Conroy seconded:-

That the County Council being satisfied that exceptional distress exists in the electoral Divisions of Kilcummin, Selerna, Killanin, Spiddal and Furbough, hereby apply

Behind: Galway County Council resolution calling on the British authorities to release or treat as prisoners of war all those detained without trial following the Rising
24 June 1916, GCCA G07/6, p83-84

1917 & 1918

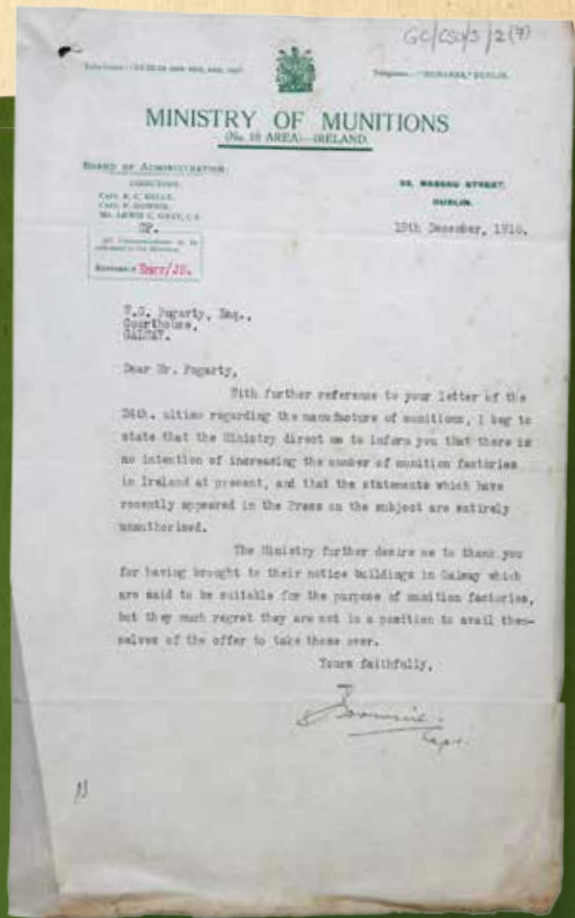
“Up the Rebels. Conscription, not damn likely”

GCCA GC/7/11

The issue of conscription dominated much political attention between 1917 and 1918. Huge losses sustained by the British army prompted the Government to extend conscription to Ireland in April 1918. This met with widespread national opposition and protest from many sections of society, including trade unions, the Catholic Church, the Irish Parliamentary Party and Sinn Féin. Numerous anti-conscription protests galvanised support for Sinn Féin and its ultimate objective; an independent Irish Republic. As a result the government re-introduced internment and imprisoned most of the Sinn Féin leaders in England.

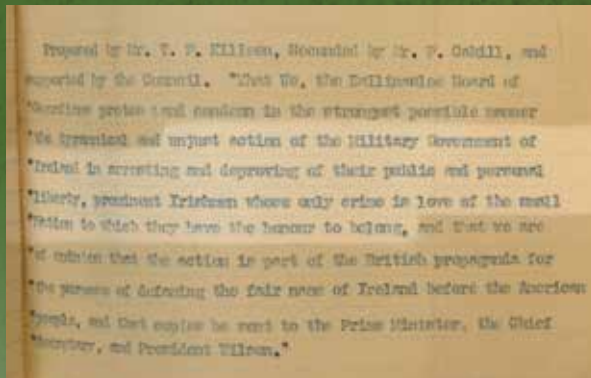
Several of Galway's councils, such as Galway Rural District Council, called on the British Government to release the prisoners or at the very least to recognise them as prisoners of war. Most councils, like the Tuam Town Commissioners, also called for public meetings to demonstrate against conscription and to unite to resist it.

Also during this period Galway County Council actively petitioned the Government to open a munitions factory in Galway, to assist with the ongoing war effort, and provide much needed employment in the county.

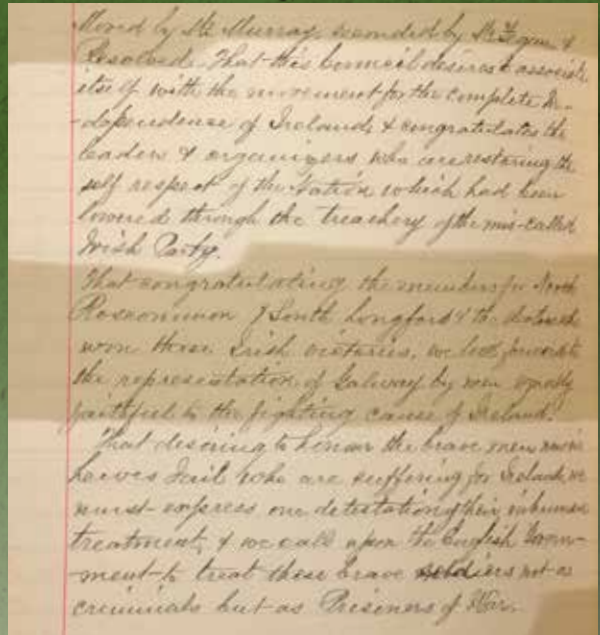


Extract from a Munitions File, with details of a proposed Galway National Shell Factory and later correspondence relating to uses for the factory "when it ceases to be engaged in munitions work".

GCCA GC/CSO/32



Ballinasloe Rural District Council protests against widespread arrests. 25 May 1918, GCCA GC06/18, p249



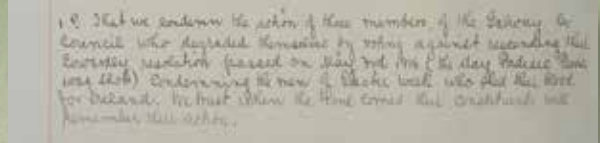
Galway Rural District Council associates itself with the movement for the 'complete independence of Ireland'. 26 May 1917, GCCA GC06/18, p249

26 May 1917, GCCA GC06/18, p249



Entry at the back of a Galway County Council Staff Attendance Register reflecting one staff member's negative feelings towards the threat of the introduction of conscription to Ireland. GCCA GC/7/11

GCCA GC/7/11



Though the Tuam Town Commissioners did not issue a resolution condemning the 1916 Rising they did pass several political resolutions thereafter, including one in 1917 condemning Galway County Council for not rescinding its condemnation of the Rising. 7 August 1917, GCCA TTC/15, p173

7 August 1917, GCCA TTC/15, p173

FROM COLONIAL STATE TO FREE STATE

Solemn League and Covenant

A National Pledge

Denying the right of the BRITISH Government to enforce compulsory service in this country, we pledge ourselves solemnly to one another to resist Conscription by the most effective means at our disposal.

The above was signed by me

at _____ on _____ day of _____ 1918.

Name _____ Address _____

FROM COLONIAL STATE TO FREE STATE

What they said...

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Name _____ Address _____

An anti-conscription protest form illustrated with portraits of prominent men who opposed conscription, issued following a declaration of the Munition House Conference. April 1918, NLI/10/14/18/5. Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

1919

‘...Galway County Council hereby enter our emphatic protest against the treatment of political prisoners in Galway Jail’

GCCA GC/1/3, p147.

The general election of 14th December 1918, the first British general election in eight years and the first in which women could vote, resulted in an overwhelming defeat of the nationalist Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) and a landslide victory for Sinn Féin. In January 1919 the Sinn Féin elected members refused to take their seats at Westminster and instead formed the first Dáil in the Mansion House, Dublin, and declared independence from Great Britain. Although Sinn Féin intended that this Dáil would be open to the IPP and Unionist MPs as well, they refused to recognise the action and maintained their Westminster presence.

The four Galway Sinn Féin MPs elected in December 1918 were Pádraic Ó Máille (1878–1946), elected for the Galway Connemara constituency, unopposed; Liam Mellows (1895–1922), elected unopposed for the Galway East constituency; Dr Bryan Cusack (1882–1973), elected for the Galway North constituency. He was in prison at the time of the Dáil meeting. Frank Fahy (1880–1953) was the fourth Galway MP, elected for Galway South. Ó Máille later endorsed the Treaty, but Mellows, Cusack and Fahy opposed it.

The first shots of the War of Independence were fired in Tipperary in late January 1919 when two members of the RIC were shot dead. Guerrilla warfare developed sporadically thereafter, being most intense in Dublin and Munster. In September the British government outlawed the Dáil and Sinn Féin, and the conflict intensified.

Local elections due to be held in 1919 were postponed until June 1920.



Seated group photograph of guests at the wedding of Pádraic Ó Máille, T.D., and his bride Eileen Acton, Vaughan's Hotel, Parnell Square, Dublin, includes Most Rev. Dr Browne, Right Rev. Monsignor Fahy, Chancellor Corcoran and Fr O'Malley.

September 1921, NLI NPA OMA.
Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

MASTER'S REPORT.

"I beg to report that on Tuesday the 20th. instant I received possession of the Workhouse from Mr. McCarthy, Local Government Inspector who simultaneously received possession from the Military through the Representative of the Royal Engineers.

"That in conjunction with the Foreman of the Royal Engineers, **Athlone I have taken particulars of the repairs which are necessary as a consequence of Military Occupation.** In the event of the Military not executing these repairs with their own men. I would recommend the Board to enter into a contract for same and also recommend that this contract include the clearing up of the premises.

"That the services of Temporary Attendant Michael Fitzgerald were dispensed with on the 23rd. instant.

M. M. WHYMS,
Master.

"24th. May, 1919."

The Ballinasloe Workhouse Master, Martin Whyms, reports on taking re-possession of the Workhouse following its military occupation.

24 May 1919, GCCA G005/61, p205.



Photograph taken outside the Mansion House, Dublin of 27 of the Dáil's newly elected deputies.

January 1919, E/MA/CP/A0862.
Courtesy of the Military Archives.

Prisoners at Connemara, 2. Names proposed Galway Jail Council 7. Fahy seconded that we the Galway County Council hereby enter our emphatic protest against the treatment of political prisoners in Galway Jail. Some information in hand in our view that these boys

were deprived of their clothes and bed boards and manacled and kicked in their cells by the Prison Officers. They have since been transferred to Terry Jail. We are also aware that Mr. Walsh

Galway County Council protests against the treatment of prisoners in Galway Jail.

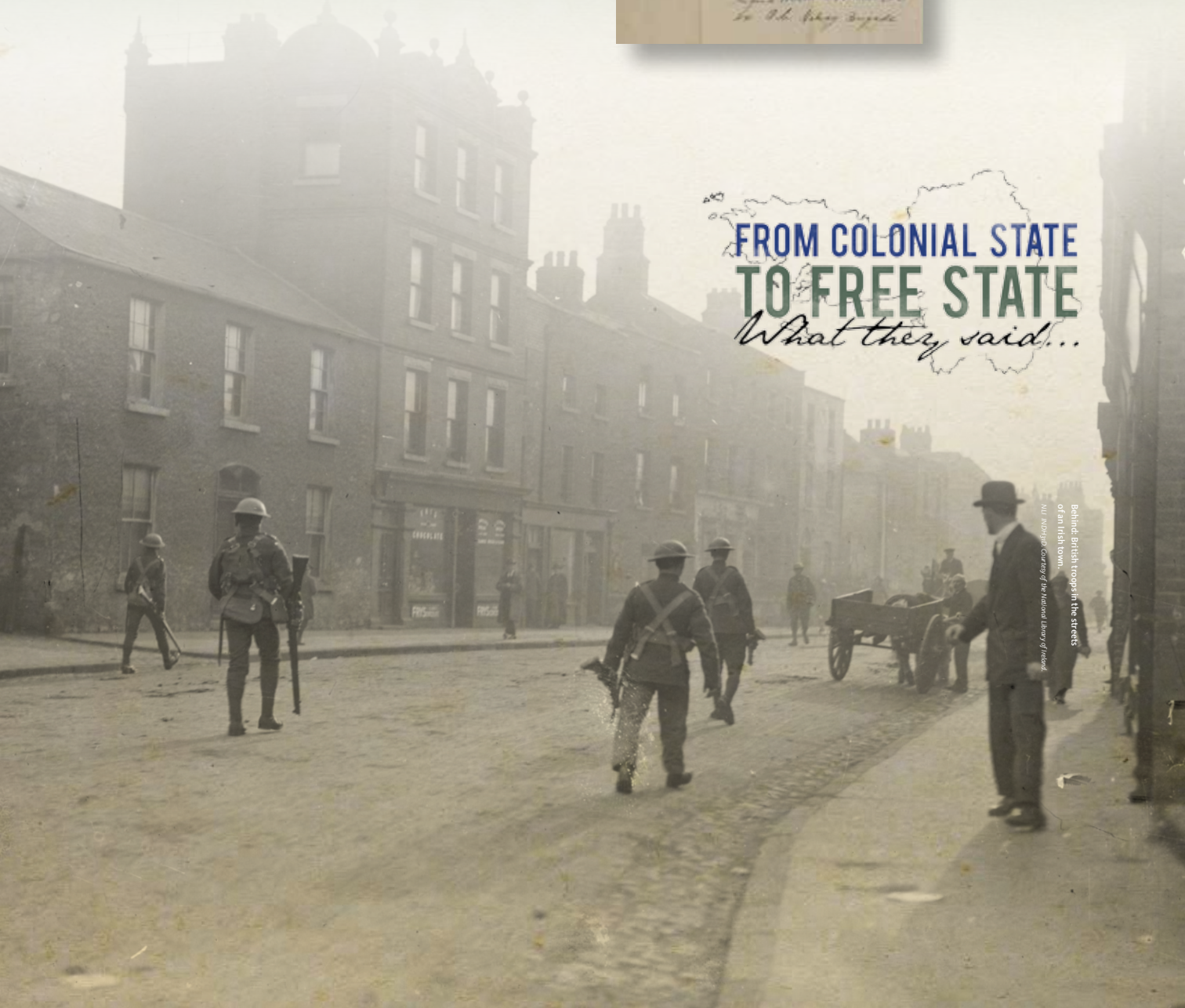
14 June 1919, GCCA GC/1/3, pp147-8.

I hereby certify that I have taken possession of the following names of members of the Galway County Council who took a prominent part in the Galway Jail case.

*Michael Newell
Patrick Donnelly
Liam Michael Newell Col
To the Galway Council*

A letter signed by Michael Newell, former Officer in Charge of the Galway Brigade of the IRA (Irish Republican Army), inserted into a Staff Attendance Register verifying that several members of Galway County Council's staff participated in the Anglo-Irish War.

18 April 1935, GCCA GC/1/36.



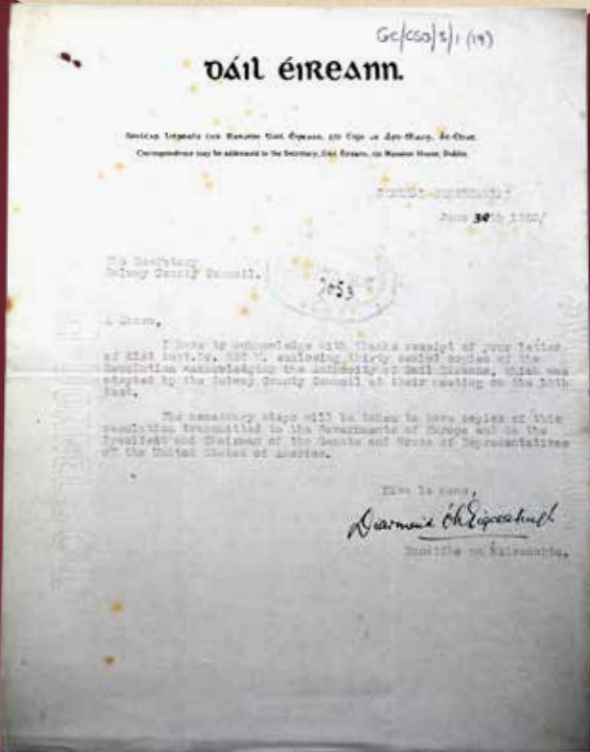
FROM COLONIAL STATE TO FREE STATE
What they said...

behind British troops in the streets of an Irish town.
All photographs courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

1920

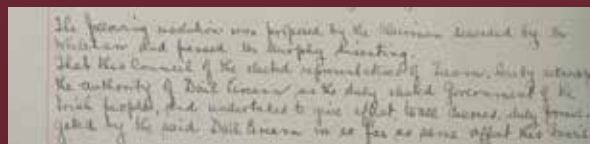
“...hereby acknowledge the authority of Dáil Éireann as the duly elected Government of the Irish people”

GCCA GC/3, p231.



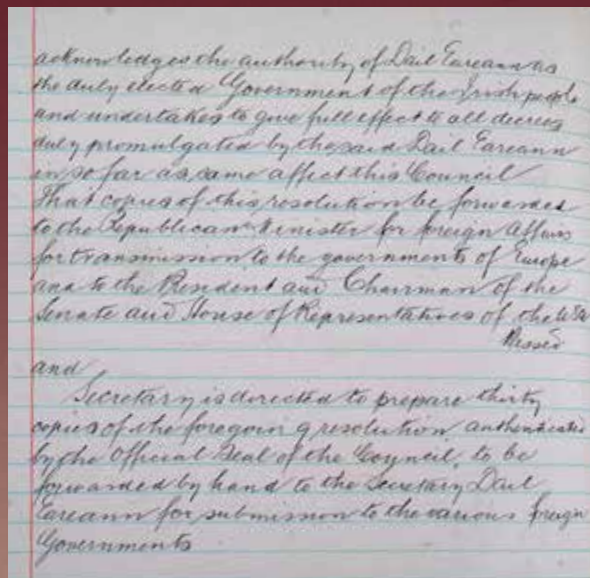
Letter of acknowledgement from Dáil Éireann to Galway County Council regarding its resolution recognising the authority of the Dáil.

30 June 1920, GCCA GC/CSO/3/1.



Tuam Town Commissioners recognise the authority of Dáil Éireann. Galway County Council did likewise at its meeting of 18 June 1920.

4 May 1920, GCCA TTC/1/5, p263.



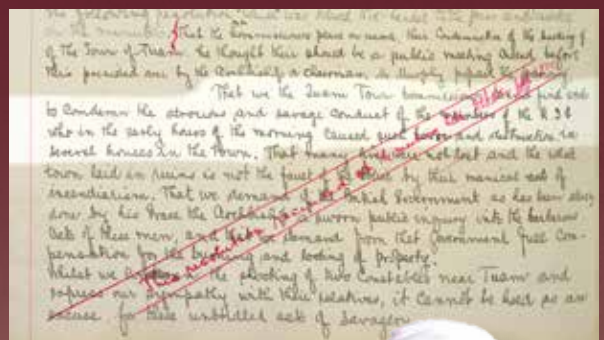
Galway County Council recognise the authority of Dáil Éireann.

18 June 1920, GCCA GC/3, p231.

The local elections of June 1920 again resulted in a landslide victory for Sinn Féin. It took control of 338 out of 393 local government bodies, county councils, boards of guardians and rural district councils across the whole island, including those in county Galway.

The newly elected members of Galway County Council were quick to record their allegiance to Dáil Éireann. The Council first rescinded the 1916 condemnation of the Rising and then declared its recognition of the authority of the underground Dáil, as the legitimate government of the Irish Republic.

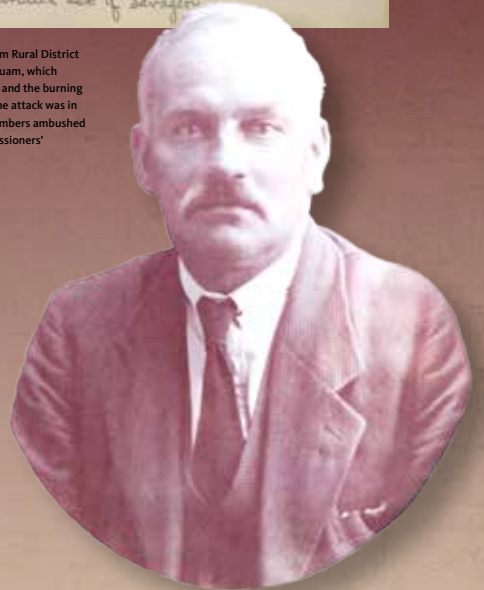
The Irish Republican Army (IRA) guerrilla warfare intensified throughout 1920, with ambushes on RIC barracks and convoys. British reprisals also intensified. The burning of Tuam being one such ferocious incident, when it was attacked by the police as a reprisal for the killing of two of its members, who were ambushed about three miles outside the town. There were also incidents of terror such as in September when Séan Mulvoy and Séamus Quirke, IRA members, were killed by the Black and Tans in Galway, and in November Patrick and Harry Loughnane, brothers from Shanaglish, were killed whilst in the custody of the RIC. Clifden also suffered extensive damage in March 1921 in reprisal for the deaths of several RIC members.



Tuam Town Commissioners and the Tuam Rural District Council condemn the police attack on Tuam, which resulted in terrorising the townspeople and the burning of the Town Hall and other buildings. The attack was in retaliation for the killing of two RIC members ambushed by the IRA two days earlier. The Commissioners' condemnation was rescinded several months later, on 5 October 1920.

3 August 1920, GCCA TTC/1/5, p271.

Right: George Nicolls, (1884–1942), Chairman, Galway County Council 1920–1925, though he was in jail for much of his first year as Chairman.



FROM COLONIAL STATE
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What they said...



Behind: Irish Republican Army (IRA) firing column, Co. Galway. Niall Ó Murchadha. Courtesy of the Military Archives.

1920

‘...under the altered circumstances which now obtain the accounts of the Council should be submitted to the Local Government Board for audit’

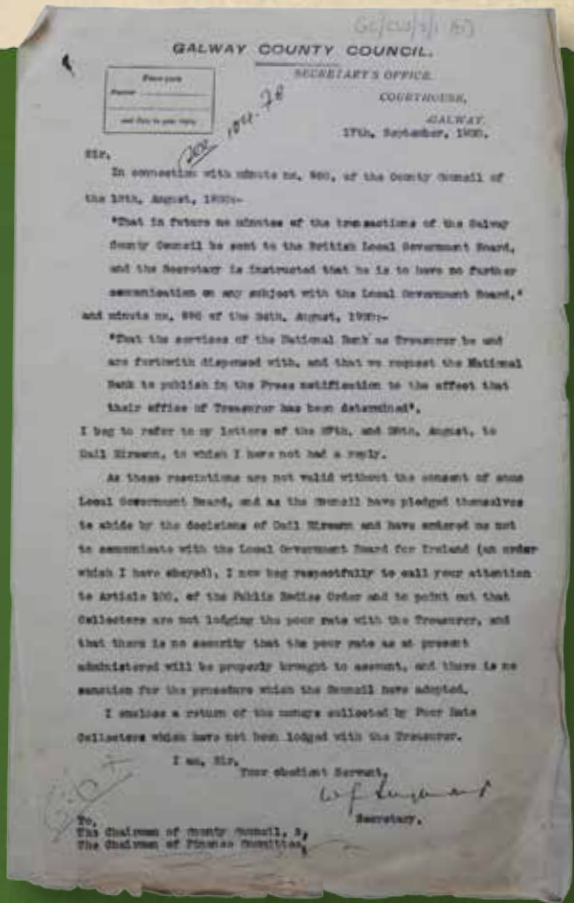
GCCA GC/3/1, p200.

The decision to recognise Dáil Éireann caused some difficulty for the administration of the local authorities in the county, as they were concerned about their ability to source funding to meet their financial obligations. The British Government had instructed the Local Government Board that no loans or grants from public funds were to be made by it to bodies which did not submit their accounts for audit, and did not conform to the rules and order of the Board.

This gave rise to several members of Galway County Council, in December 1920, issuing what is often now referred to as the infamous “peace resolution” repudiating the authority of Dáil Éireann and calling for a truce with the British. This was more than six months before the Dáil agreed to one. Galway County Council was effectively suing for peace. The resolution was widely reported in the British and other foreign newspapers and caused great embarrassment to the Council, most of whose members were in jail or on the run at the time, and to the Dáil, as it appeared to highlight for the British authorities the divisions in the Irish camp and the weakness of its armed forces.

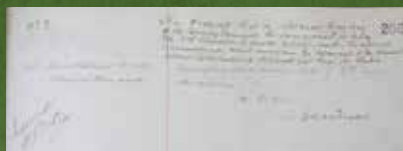
With Chairman Nicolls in jail it was left to Galway County Council’s Vice Chairman, Ms Alice Cashel, to investigate and rectify the matter. Cashel established that the resolution was invalid as there was no quorum at the meeting when the resolution was issued.

The reported resolution is not recorded in Galway County Council’s minutes.



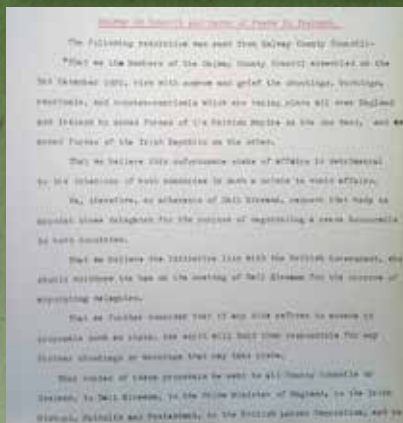
Letter from Walter G. Seymour, County Secretary, outlining various practical and legal difficulties encountered as a result of Galway County Council's recognition of the Dáil.

September 1920, GCCA GC/3/1.



Galway County Council, Finance Committee minute calling for a special meeting to discuss if it should submit its accounts for audit to the British Local Government Board.

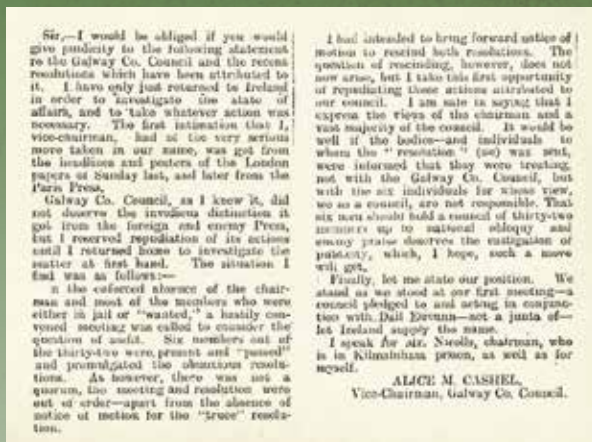
27 November 1920, GCCA GC/3/1, p200.



Wexford County Council minutes with a copy of the resolution passed by Galway County Council on 3rd December 'suing for peace'. This resolution was later deemed invalid as no quorum was present at the meeting.

7 December 1920, WACC/1/8, pp172-173.

Courtesy of Wexford County Archives.

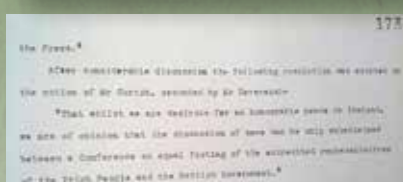


Open letter issued by Ms Alice Cashel, Vice Chairman, Galway County Council, repudiating an 'obnoxious' resolution passed by six members of the Council who called for a truce. As this number did not form a quorum the resolution was deemed illegal.

Courtesy of Dr Humphrys.

Below: Alice Cashel (1878–1958), born in Birr, Co. Offaly, was appointed a full-time organiser of Cumann na mBan in February 1918. Based in Cashel, County Galway, she was Vice Chairman of Galway County Council between 1920 and 1921. She was arrested in mid-1921 and jailed for possession of seditious documents, headed Dáil Éireann and issued to all public bodies. She opposed the Treaty.

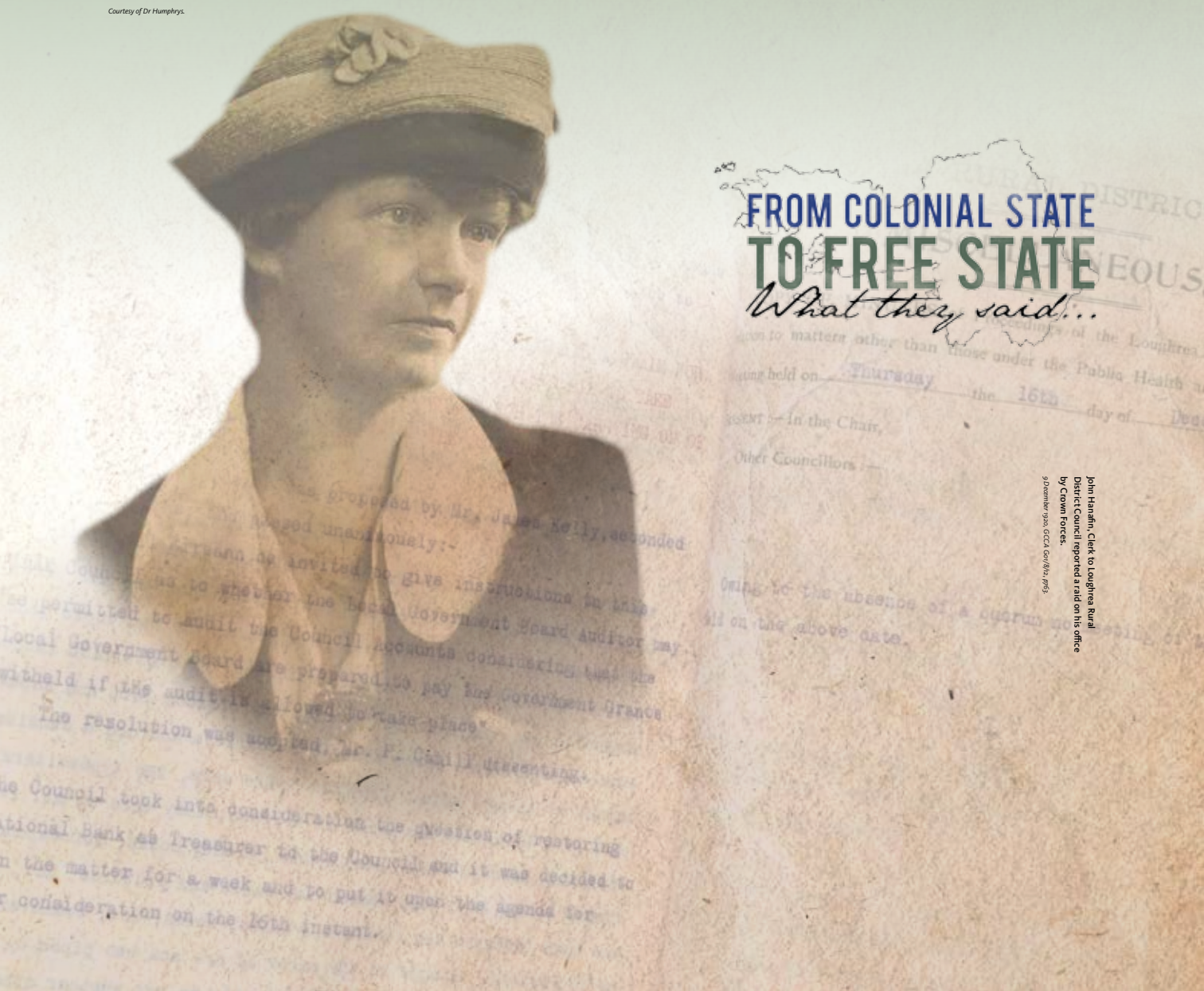
Courtesy of Dr Humphrys.



Wexford County Council minutes with a copy of the resolution passed by Galway County Council on 3rd December 'suing for peace'. This resolution was later deemed invalid as no quorum was present at the meeting.

17 December 1920, WACC/1/8, pp172-173.

Courtesy of Wexford County Archives.



FROM COLONIAL STATE TO FREE STATE

What they said...

John Hanfin, Clerk of Loupines Rural District Council reported a raid on his office by Crown forces.

9 December 1920, GCCA GC/8/1, p75.

1921

“...the terms of the Peace Treaty...do not satisfy the aspirations of the Irish People, we are of opinion that it is the best our Plenipotentiaries could have got under the circumstances”

GCCA, GC/1/3, p328.

As the War of Independence waged on, the local authorities continued to operate and function as best possible, though they encountered difficulties at various stages, with equipment and premises, in particular some workhouse buildings, being taken over by the British military forces. Galway County Council's own books and records were removed from its offices in February 1921, by the IRA, with the assistance of its Clerk, Seamus Carter.

The 1921 general election took place as a result of the Government of Ireland Act passed by the British Parliament the previous year. The Act allowed for Ireland to be partitioned into two political entities, north and south, each with their own Parliament to handle internal affairs. Practically every seat in the election was uncontested, with Sinn Féin winning almost unanimous support amongst the population of the south. The MPs rejected the Act and established themselves as the second Dáil Éireann, and so the War continued until a Truce was called in July that year.

Treaty negotiations began in October in London between representatives of both Governments. They resulted in the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty on 6th December 1921. As Michael Collins, one of the Dáil's plenipotentiaries and signatories of the Treaty, said it gave Ireland 'not the ultimate Freedom that all nations desire...but the freedom to achieve it'.

Following the London talks, a special meeting of Galway County Council was called to express the views of the Council on a motion for the ratification of the Treaty. The majority of Galway County Council's elected members felt it was their duty to support the Treaty. Nicolls, the former Head Centre of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) in Galway, accepted the Treaty, but Cashel dissented from voting though she was opposed to it on the grounds that it brought the country under the dominion of the British Empire and explicitly ruled out a Republic.

Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Mr. R. Higgins, and unanimously Resolved - That as a mark of respect to our late colleague, Mr. John Geoghegan, who was taken from his bed during the past week, and shot outside his own door, we adjourn this meeting without transacting any further business, and we beg to convey to his afflicted mother, brothers and sisters, our sincerest sympathy in bereavement.

J. Gallagher,
Deputy Clerk

Galway Rural District Council adjourns its meeting as a mark of respect following the death of one of its Councillors, John Geoghegan of Moycullen (IRA Quartermaster, East Connemara Brigade, who was taken from his bed and shot by the Black and Tans).

26 February 1921, GCCA GC/1/3, p415.

All local Bodies were directed to send a memorial to the English local Government Board. In that it appears that the English Councils have been guilty during these intervening months of unreasonable and ill-considered communication, and as late as the 11th inst. took they gave directions for submission of their books to suitable English officials - The promoters consider the Council's request for permission to this payment is audacious and the Council must act on this matter on their own responsibility and to the serious consequences which may follow as a result of this action etc etc

M. J. O'Sullivan

Clifden Rural District Council minute recording contents of a letter from Dáil Éireann warning the Council that as it had not yet severed all communication with the Local Government Board it was guilty of 'treasonable and illegal communication'.

28 September 1921, GCCA GC/1/3, p442.

Councillor J. Walsh proposed, Councillor J. J. Cleary seconded

That although the terms of the Peace Treaty between England and Ireland do not satisfy the aspirations of the Irish People, we are of opinion that it is the best that our Plenipotentiaries could give under the circumstances. On that account, and on that account only, we, on behalf of the People of Galway, approve of it, and we call on our Plenipotentiaries in the Dáil to vote for its ratification.

Donegal

Galway County Council vote in favour of the Treaty.

30 December 1921, GCCA GC/1/3, p328.

Below: Éamon de Valera (1882–1975).

[between 1914-1923], NLI KE 32. Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

By Section 10 of the Statute of Westminster 1927, and the Statute of Westminster 1931, the British Government shall have the right to request to be admitted to any political territory the people of which are not subject to the Government of the United Kingdom, and to make arrangements for the admission of the people of such territory to the citizenship of the United Kingdom, and to make arrangements for the admission of the people of such territory to the citizenship of the United Kingdom, and to make arrangements for the admission of the people of such territory to the citizenship of the United Kingdom.

1. The Government shall be empowered to do so.

2. The Government shall be empowered to do so.

3. The Government shall be empowered to do so.

4. The Government shall be empowered to do so.

5. The Government shall be empowered to do so.

6. The Government shall be empowered to do so.

7. The Government shall be empowered to do so.

8. The Government shall be empowered to do so.

9. The Government shall be empowered to do so.

10. The Government shall be empowered to do so.

Articles of Agreement for a Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland, signed on 6 December 1921.

NAI DE/2/504/1/5

Courtesy of the National Archives of Ireland.



FROM COLONIAL STATE
TO FREE STATE

What they said...

Issued to de Valera, recognised President of the Republic, on the occasion of his visit to Galway.

6 December 1921, GCCA TR/2/3, p39

1922

'...£1,439 is required to restore damaged bridges and causeways in the Western Division'

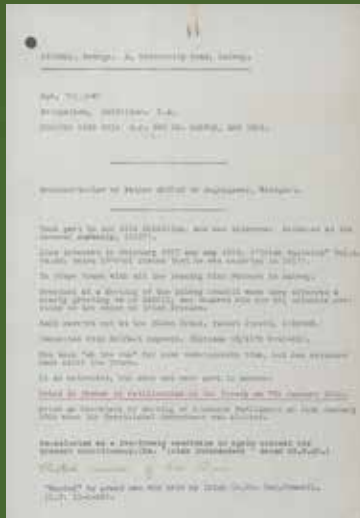
GC/1/3, p347.

The Treaty signed in London in December 1921 was ratified by the Dáil on 7th January 1922. The vote was 64 in favour, 57 against, splitting Sinn Féin in the process, which led to the Irish Civil War from June 1922 to May 1923. The Constitution of the Irish Free State (Saorstát Éireann) Act, 1922, brought the Treaty into effect later in 1922.

By the end of May 1922 British troops together with the Black and Tans evacuated most of the barracks throughout the country, and the RIC was disbanded. After a ten-month transitional period overseen by the Provisional Government, led by Arthur Griffith, the Irish Free State was created as a self-governing State with Dominion status on 6th December 1922.

Immediately following the Treaty Galway County Council passed resolutions instructing its Surveyors to prepare estimates of the cost to repair roads and other public works which had been damaged during the War of Independence. It anticipated that re-construction costs might be covered under the settlement between the British and Irish Governments.

Also, though Galway County Council had ratified the Treaty, some of its staff members were opposed to it, and were actively involved in the Civil War. Alice Cashel also proposed at the April meeting that only correspondence from Dáil Éireann be considered by the Council, but the Council resolved that correspondence from the Provisional Government would be dealt with.



Extracts from a Dublin Castle file on George Nicolls, including a newspaper clipping quoting Nicolls indicating he had no intention of dying for the Republic but intend to 'live for the Republic'. The file also noted that he was an extremist and did not take part in murder.

WO 35/207, Courtesy of The National Archives, UK.



Galway County Council agreed to pay the salary of Assistant County Surveyor, Mr Michael Martyn, for the period 1st October 1920 to 12th December 1921 when he had been interned or in prison. Martyn was subsequently arrested in October 1922, while on active service with the anti-Treaty forces.

18 February 1922, GCCA GC/1/3, p347.

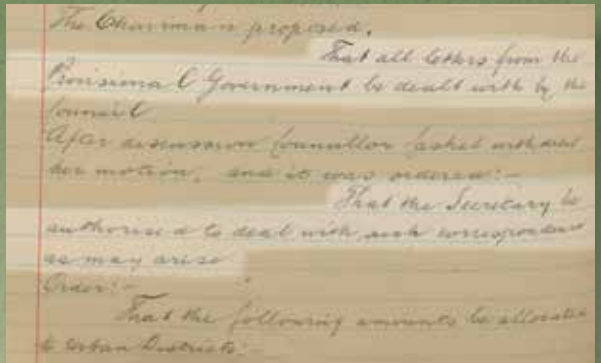


Although Galway County Council had ratified the Treaty it would appear that some of its staff members were opposed to it, as they were reported to 'destroy at night what they are paid by Co. Council to repair by day'.

7 October 1922, GCCA GC/1/3, p25.

Below: Group of 58 republican members of the 2nd Dáil Éireann.

January 1922, E/MA/CP/A0863, Courtesy of the Military Archives.



Galway County Council commits to deal with correspondence from the Provisional Government.

15 April 1922, GCCA GC/1/3, p355.



FROM COLONIAL STATE
TO FREE STATE
What they said...

In June 1922 Benmore Barracks, Galway was handed over to the IRA and passed for the first time into British control.
Courtesy of Andrew Donohoe of the IRA.

1923

‘...that owing to the occupation of Offices and Committee Rooms by the Military.... it is impossible to carry on the fiscal business of the County satisfactorily’

GCCA GC/1/3, p449.

Copy of Resolution from Anti-Treaty Commissioners
22/1/1923

Resolved - That in view of the Government's refusal to appoint those members of the present Council to hold in conjunction with the former those members and that those members' treatment (exceptable to those in opposition to the Government) to show the best means possible to bring about a cessation of hostilities and finally to establish a peace on firm grounds.

Tuam Town Commissioners call on the government to instigate and enter peace talks with the anti-treaty forces.

January 1923, GCCA TTC/1/5, p456.

1714. Damaged Bridges. Order.—County Surveyors to repair any Bridge that they can repair with safety.

1715. Town Hall, Galway.—Town Hall taken over by the Military. Submitted file. Heard Mr. Hardiman. Order.—(1) Claim rent from Military as from the 6th April, at £140 per annum. (2) That Mr. Hardiman be allowed £3 per week while deprived of his quarters, and claim this expense from the Military.

Galway County Council, Finance Committee minute regarding the protection of repaired bridges.

10 March 1923, GCCA GC/1/3, p459.

1714. Damaged Bridges.—Submitted file. Order.—County Surveyors to repair any Bridge that they can repair with safety.

1715. Town Hall, Galway.—Town Hall taken over by the Military. Submitted file. Heard Mr. Hardiman. Order.—(1) Claim rent from Military as from the 6th April, at £140 per annum. (2) That Mr. Hardiman be allowed £3 per week while deprived of his quarters, and claim this expense from the Military.

Galway County Council minute regarding the military occupation of the Town Hall in Galway.

5 May 1923, GCCA GC/1/3, p477.

1801. Galway Courthouse — Office Accommodation.—Councillor T. Walsh proposed, the Chairman seconded:—“That the attention of the Local Government Department be called to the fact that owing to the occupation of Offices and Committee Rooms by the Military and other State Officials, it is impossible to carry on the fiscal business of the County satisfactorily. Owing to the enormous increase of work thrown on the County Council, largely increased office accommodation is required.” Passed.

Galway County Council report to the Government its difficulty in carrying out business due to the military occupation of many of its offices.

23 June 1923, GCCA GC/1/3, p449.



Dublin Road, Tuam

Between ca. 1900–1939, EAS-2208, Courtesy of the National Library

The Irish Civil War raged between June 1922 and May 1923. The bitter conflict resulted in many former comrades who had fought side by side for independence now being on opposing sides. The Free State Government took a hard line against the anti-Treaty or Republican forces, ordering the execution of many, including Liam Mellows in December 1922. Just before a ceasefire was declared at the end of April six anti-Treaty men were executed by firing squad at the Tuam Workhouse.

With the ceasefire the war was effectively won by the Free State forces, which were heavily armed with weapons provided by the British Government. The anti-Treaty supporters dumped their arms, and many were subsequently arrested.

A General Election in the summer of 1923 resulted in victory for the pro-Treaty Cumann na nGaedheal party.

The economic cost of the war was high. Republicans burned many of the administrative buildings and businesses that they had been occupying, and their guerrilla campaign caused much destruction. The ongoing economic cost to and concerns of Galway County Council is evident in its Finance Committee minutes, which contain many references to the cost of repairs to roads, bridges and various buildings throughout the county.

Letter from Sinn Féin, 31, Suffolk Street Dublin submitting a resolution for the Council's adoption protesting against the reported exhumation and removal to unknown destinations of the remains of Republican Soldiers.

THE COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED THE RESOLUTION.

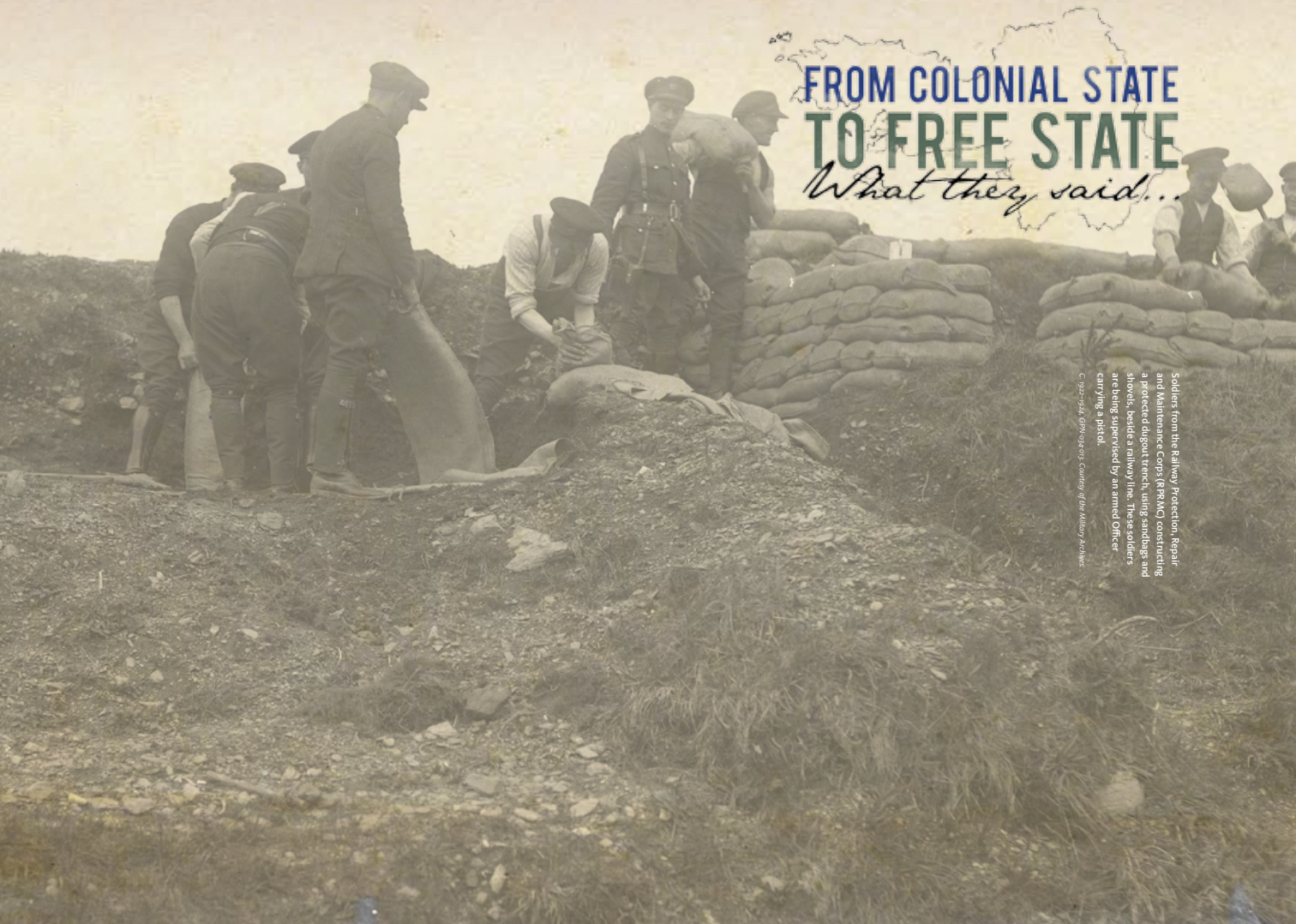
The Ballinasloe Rural District Council protest at the exhumation of the bodies of those executed in Tuam towards the end of the war, and their removal to 'unknown destinations'.

4 October 1924, GCCA G00/6/20, p63.

1893. Political Prisoners.—Submitted file. Councillor A. Cashel proposed, Councillor S. Jordan seconded:—“That we, the members of the Galway County Council demand the unconditional release of all Political Prisoners including those now in the Six Counties and in England.” Councillor M. Finnerty proposed:—“That we, the Galway County Council, the majority of whom are supporters of the present Government, in view of the fact that the de-

Galway County Council proposed resolutions calling for the release of political prisoners following the end of the Civil War.

3 November 1923, GCCA GC/1/3, pp488-489.



Soldiers from the Railway Protection, Repair and Maintenance Corps (RPMRC) constructing a protected dugout trench, using sandbags and shovels, beside a railway line. The soldiers are being supervised by an armed Officer carrying a pistol.

© 1923-1924, Government, Courtesy of the Military Archives.