

Stories collected by Shauna O'Discoll,
from her granduncle Teddy O'Regan.

Stories of the Revolution, 1916-1923.

The Rising was to have taken place all over Ireland and drilling and preparation had been taking place for some time before.

Roger Casement had organised a shipment of arms and ammunition to be landed at Banna Strand near Tralee. Roger Casement himself was landed off of a German U. Boat at Banna Strand but communication went wrong and he was captured by the R.I.C

The ship of arms from Germany was sunk at sea to avoid it getting into the hands of the British who at that time were engaged in World War one with Germany.

For this reason the rising as planned was called off but a relatively small number of leaders in Dublin decided to ignore this order and went ahead with the uprising. They occupied the G.P.O, Bolands Mill, Jacobs Sactory, the Four courts & other places and commenced shooting.

The British retaliated by bringing warships up the River Liffey and shelling the occupied buildings and others. Further troops were also brought into the city.

Opinions in the country including the city of Dublin were divided on wheather the rising should have gone ahead. The majority were against it at that stage. People felt that things in Ireland were improving. Britain were involved in the 1st World War and prices of Agriculture produce were good. Pension

had been introduced.

The Rising led to huge destruction of parts of Dublin and lots lots of life, including people going about their Ordinary lives. It is estimated that about 500 including soldiers, R.I.C, civilians and about 38 children were killed.

The British reacted by executing 14 of the leaders in Kilmainham jail and one in Cork. Thomas Kent. A further 3000 men and around 100 women were arrested and jailed. Many of these were taken to jails in England and Wales.

As the prisoners were being marched to the boat in the Docklands of Dublin Port they were jeered at and spat upon by many Dubliners on account of the havoc wreaked on the city.

However in a short while the executions and further jailings were seen as being a gross over reaction by the British Authorities.

All the prisoners were released before years end and arrived home to a heroes welcome. Sentiment had changed utterly in that period of time.

Equally while in Jail many of the prisoners built up strong friendships and resolved that they would plan better for the next rising.

In the election to Parliament of 1918 Sinn Féin/ Nationalist Party swept the boards and instead of taking up their seats in the English house of Commons

they decided to set up an Irish Parliament or Dail in Dublin

This led to the war of Independence.

At least 3 West Cork men were involved in Dublin in the Easter Rising. They were Michael Collins from Woodfield, Clonakilty, Gearoid O' Sullivan from Coolnagrove, Skibbereen and Sean Hurley from Moulageaw, Drinagh.

Sean Hurley

Sean Hurley was killed in the fighting in Easter Week, from a bullet wound to his head. He was the only West Cork man to be killed in the Rising. He was 28 years old.

Gearoid O' Sullivan

Gearoid O' Sullivan raised the Tricolour over the G.P.O on Easter Monday on the orders of Padraig Pearse. He survived the rising and lived til 1948.

Michael Collins

Michael Collins went on to become the master tactician in the war of Independence. He helped to achieve the Truce and was one of the negotiators and signatures to the treaty. He was killed in an ambush at Beal na MBlaith on August 22 1922 in the Civil War. He was 31 years of age. Today his grave in Dublin's Glasnevin Cemetery is the most visited.

During the war of Independence there were many engagements between the British forces and the I.R.A. Many Irish people bravely gave their lives for the cause, some people also had their lives taken without a lot of cause. Nearly all of these things have been recorded over the years in publications like Tom Barry's "Guerilla days in Ireland." As well as in the Annual Historical Journals which have been produced by the various Historical Societies in the area over the years.

Lieutenant Michael John McLean

During the war of Independence a young man, 18 years of age from Lowertown in Schull took part in the Kilmichael ambush. 18 British auxiliaries were killed and at least three Irish volunteers lost their lives. They then went on a long march to take part in another ambush at Gaggin in Bandon which failed and McLean was captured by British soldiers, tortured and shot on December 8th 1920.

He would have particular relevance to Aughadown as his father John McLean and his mother Katie Sexton originally came from Fokerla, Aughadown.

A service medal was awarded to him posthumously and is in the possession of his cousins the Looney family of Coolbawn and Church Cross.

A cross was erected in his memory at Gaggin Bandon. A statue of our lady is at his birthplace in Lowertown and a window in Lowertown Catholic Church is dedicated to his memory.