

Feeding the Fire: How Public Perceptions During and After the Easter Rising Shaped the Irish Independence Movement

Honors Thesis

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Abstract:

The Easter Rising of 1916 was an event taking place in Ireland as a precursor to the Irish War for Independence. Previous research of the Rising was focused on the contributions of social groups to this movement, supported by a large quantity of secondary sources. The new topic that is being explored has less literature based on its inquiry. The argument of this paper is that the individuals that made up the social groups as well as those effected by the Rising were the most integral pieces of this event to understand. The individuals within these groups, as well as the people they were connected with, were fundamental in shifting the tide of public opinion in response to the consequences leadership faced following the Rising. This statement is informed by the primary sources that were considered. For this paper the research was conducted using primary source letters. By looking at personal correspondence between prisoners arrested for their acts during the Rising and their families, as well as letters between acquaintances, one is able to view what the society may have looked and felt like to the everyday people of Ireland. This paper uses these letters to guide readers with an understanding of the Rising in the greater context of the Irish War for Independence, granting greater insight into the change in public opinion from before the Rising to the differences displayed within the correspondence in the following months.

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The so-called rebels paced down the road to the jeers of the British loyalists. They would never understand this burning need to rebel against their oppression or fight for their faith and freedoms, but they, the men and women of the Easter Rising, did. In 1916, groups of Irish nationalists joined together and planned a rebel movement to attack British holdings in order to push them out of Ireland with the intention to establish their own independent republic. Their first step in this endeavor was the Easter Rising, a set of coordinated attacks on British governmental buildings set to take place in Dublin during Easter Week. This event still resonates with the people of Ireland and is a basis for independence movements against the larger colonial powers, and how rebellion groups are formed in the context of the modern era.

With the possibility of hard borders once again being placed in Northern Ireland, it is important to understand the political and social spheres through which they will bisect. Some would call the Irish War for Independence an unfinished revolution. Even after peace talks in the 1990's, the Troubles are still a relevant aspect in Irish culture, as are tensions between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. It is through the lens of a failed rebellion and the resulting revolution that we can fully comprehend the sociopolitical ramifications of Irish borders, a topic which finds itself once again on the world stage.

To look at the Irish War for Independence, you first have to understand the Easter Rising. It may be puzzling because this is widely considered a failed endeavor in the Irish rebellion, however, the Easter Rising created the context through which the War for Independence grew. It is through the failed endeavors of the Rising that the

Independence movement in Ireland garnered momentum with the public. The participating social groups created the context with which the Rising could occur, but this paper argues that the individuals that made up the social groups as well as those effected by the Rising were the most integral pieces of this event to understand. The individuals within these groups, as well as the people they were connected with, were fundamental in shifting the tide of public opinion in response to the consequences leadership faced following the Rising.

Leading up to the Rising, Ireland was experiencing turbulence and still recovering from the Great Famine. On top of the high death rates and drastic changes to the cultural landscape, legislature like Penal Laws further separated the Protestant and Catholic populations through the early 1800s. These laws limited land rights, and clergy rights, going so far as to have prohibited intermarriage between the two religions and limited governmental positions to being open to Protestants only. The Irish people, particularly the Catholic population had little to no political rights, no legislative representation, and no means of exercising national sovereignty until 1829.

Many of the Catholic people of Ireland remained with the Catholic Church. As time progressed, the tolerance for Catholicism diminished. The Penal Laws¹ were enacted between 1695 and 1703², with the purpose of separating the Catholic majority from the Protestant minority forcing conversion to the Anglican Church, which had been assigned in Ireland as the Church of Ireland by the English monarchy. British rule crushed Irish

¹ Joyce, P. W. (2005). *The Penal Code: Concise History of Ireland*. Retrieved October 05, 2018.

² Joseph Coohill. *Ireland: A Short History*. 4th ed. (London: Oneworld, 2014) page 51.

rights to land, clergy rights, and restrained foreign education³. British religious persecution only alienated the Catholic population further from the Protestant population, and moreover the British government..

The Act of Union, created in 1800, dissolved the Irish Parliament in Dublin and replaced it, giving Ireland 100 representatives in the English Parliament in Westminster. Protestants were the main religion represented and Catholics remained a minority within their government despite the fact that the Catholics had received emancipation in 1829⁴.

In response, Daniel O’Connell began a movement to repeal the Act of Union. The Young Ireland movement grew out of this campaign.

“Young Ireland grew out of the weekly *Nation*, a brilliant repeal propagandist journal, established in 1842 by Charles Gavan Duffy (1816- 1903), an experienced young Catholic journalist, and Thomas Davis (1814-45), a Protestant graduate of Trinity College, Dublin. Davis converted O’Connell’s nebulous utilitarian and patriotic rhetoric into an integrated linguistic, cultural, historical and non-denominational nationalism.”⁵

Young Ireland rebelled in 1848. Inspired by the French revolution, they sent a delegation to France. Though they were unable to garner support in France, they brought back the ideology of revolution, becoming more openly oppositional to British rule and promoting violent response. In July 1848, as a reaction to the repeal of habeas corpus and the warrants issued for O’Brien and other leaders, Young Ireland revolted. The movement ultimately failed, and the leaders of the movement were originally sentenced to death, but were eventually transported to different locations for their penal sentence instead.

³ Joyce, P. W. (2005). *The Penal Code: Concise History of Ireland*. Retrieved October 05, 2018, from <https://www.libraryireland.com/JoyceHistory/Penal.php>

³ Christine Kinealy. *A Death-dealing Famine: The Great Hunger in Ireland*. (London: Pluto Press, 1997). Pages 35-47

⁵ Davis, Richard. “Young Ireland.” *Young Ireland*, (University of Ohio, 2004), www.ohio.edu/chastain/rz/youngire.htm.

“Though O'Brien and other Young Irelanders later admitted that their rising in July 1848 had been a mistake, several of the participants, though not O'Brien himself, later joined the new Fenian movement. 1848 has thus been incorporated into an Irish patriotic tradition of revolt leading to the Anglo-Irish War of 1919-21.”⁶

Young Ireland left a lasting effect on the cultural landscape with their nationalist writings which eventually inspired the volunteer movements and IRA.

The failure of Their objective of three repeated attempts to obtain Home Rule, an Irish governing body for Ireland, coupled with the remaining trauma from The Great Famine gradually built up to an extreme level of dissatisfaction in Irish subjects. This tension led to their formation of multiple civilian-led volunteer groups that developed with the goal of overthrowing British control in Ireland. As a replacement for the governance of the British, they wished to form an Irish republic, where they could represent themselves and create their own legislature to fit their needs. The people formed groups like the Irish Volunteers and Sinn Fein, (both of which emerged out of the Irish Republican Brotherhood as well as cultural-identity groups such as Cumann na mban, and the Gaelic League) which later morphed into the IRA or Irish Republican Army. Some groups were all female, others all male, and some were mixed, but they all were seeking to gain an Irish run Ireland.

In 1916 individual members of many different Irish nationalist groups joined together and formulated a plan to rid themselves of the British. Groups like Sinn Fein, the Volunteers, the Gaelic League, Cumann na mban and the Irish Republican Army all had representation amongst the leaders who planned and orchestrated a coup against the British holdings in Ireland.

⁶ Davis, Richard. “Young Ireland.” *Young Ireland*, (University of Ohio, 2004), www.ohio.edu/chastain/rz/youngire.htm.

They planned to target the governmental buildings in Dublin City as well as other cities, in a coordinated attack and use force to push the British out to make them negotiate to free Ireland. The leaders of the Irish Citizen Army, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, The Volunteers, Sinn Fein, and the women of Cumann na mban were all supposed to be a part of this united effort against the British. Roger Casement and John Devoy arranged for rifles and ammunition to be provided by Germany through a deal with Johann Bernstoff, the American German Ambassador, delivered by boat that would give the weapons to waiting Volunteer members. The shipment of weapons came earlier than the movement had anticipated and was intercepted by British troops, the result being that the volunteers never received their weapons. Eamon Ceannt, Connolly, Tom Clarke and Sean MacDermott were in charge of the planning and strategy of the Rising. However, their plans did not come to fruition as they had hoped. Eoin MacNeill, the Volunteer's chief of staff, vocally opposed the Rising, as did some members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The opposition within the ranks can be attributed to differences in opinion. While the opposition to the Rising within the ranks of the rebellion were not against the principle of the rebel movement, they were opposed to the planned timing of the event, having desired for it to be much later than 1916.

Due to lack of a sufficient arsenal, combined with the opposition of MacNeill and other like-minded individuals, an order was sent out to cancel the Easter Rising. This cancellation of the original plan caused confusion among the ranks, as there was no supplemental information provided to the Volunteers, directing them on whether the

Rising was postponed or cancelled indefinitely. Because of a lack of communication, the nationalists were scattered and unsure of the timing of their plan.

This led to a series of unfortunate events for the nationalists. During the week of Easter 1916, the nationalists made multiple, small attempts to take British buildings, but because of the aforementioned lack of communication, they were left without the support that they had anticipated. Many of the original Volunteers and rebels did not take part in the Easter Rising because they were not given direct orders on the new strategy, so there were less people to secure the buildings and not enough firearms to make them an extreme threat to British soldiers. Thus, many of the people participating were arrested by the British, jailed, transported to trial, or unfortunately for a select few, executed for their crimes of treason against England.

The social groups are best understood by their contributions played within the planning and execution of the Rising. The women of Cumann na mban were charged with the majority of the espionage aspects of the Rising. As an all-female group they were given less responsibility in the battle itself, but were tasked with carrying letters and guns, oftentimes hidden in their skirts as they traveled. Sinn Fein was more intrinsically tied to politics, they were a political party as well as a rebel group and they worked more fiercely on the legal front, pursuing changes to legislature. The Volunteers and other groups had larger parts in the Rising as soldiers, these were the people tasked with going out and taking hold of buildings, defending them from British soldiers, and causing enough disruption to force British government to begin negotiations. The next step in the process of examining the public opinion aspect of the Rising is to look at the ways that

membership fluctuated after many of the most influential leaders of the Rising were executed. Through military documents and interviews with members of the IRA and other participating groups it is concluded that after groups like the Volunteers began to disband, the members did not simply stop their participation in creating a new government for Ireland. Instead, they began to merge with the IRA, causing the rising numbers of IRA members between 1916 and 1918.

Much of the research in the field of the Easter Rising is dedicated to the understanding of the roles of social groups necessary to the organization of the Rising, however, it is also necessary to look at the individuals within the ranks of these groups. I argue in this paper that the diverse constituents represented by these groups were reflective of the broader society. These members, and their loved ones became central to the change in public opinion concerning Irish Independence when those in their groups, architects and leaders of the Rising were punished. The questions that can be asked in this process is; how did the Easter Rising impact everyday life for these citizens/ how did they react? By looking at personal correspondence between prisoners arrested for their acts during the Rising and their families, as well as letters between acquaintances, one is able to view what the society may have looked and felt like to the everyday people of Ireland. Before 1916, much of the public, while restricted by British policy, was unprepared to begin a revolution.

Much of the correspondence considered is openly hostile towards the rebellion movement in the month following the Rising. It was so hostile that Kate English wrote her son Patrick while he was in prison to inform him that they were forced to move

because of his involvement. She wrote that they would not be home when he got out of prison, and gave him information on where to look for them once he was free. A letter to Gertrude Bannister expressed regret as it informed her not to come back to work because she was a cousin to Casement and the school wished to cut all ties with supporters of the Rising. These letters describe an open hostile environment for rebellion, deeming it as a dishonorable and detrimental movement that was a disruption and inconvenience to the lives of the people in and around Dublin. Some men who were fighting for the British in World War I, like Gerald O'Driscoll were verbally berating the act of rebellion and spent their letters belittling the rebels for placing Ireland in what they considered to be a shameful light to the British.

“...But I will not waste time in dogmatizing on such madness; we and our fellow countrymen at the front felt it all the more keenly. It would seem as if the temple of glory built by our brave Irish regiments, had been pulled down by their own kindred”⁷.

The tone taken in these letters is one of anger and disappointment. The men pushed back against the notion that the rebels had justification for their actions. They instead viewed the Rising as an event that would paint the Irish people in a disgraceful or dishonorable light and that this would reflect on the military men who fought in World War I. It is only later that the tides of public opinion begin to change in a noticeable way, and it starts out very subtly.

At first much of the correspondence between the families and prisoners had to do with family matters of economic nature, but some letters also included descriptions of the disruption in Dublin. Letter writers talked about the destruction of

⁷ Letter from Gerald O'Driscoll to his father Denis, 24 May 1916;
<http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/item/5916>

buildings, of fires that have raged in the city. They mentioned the checkpoints they have to go through to get home, the snipers in the streets and the men with rifles at the corners of the streets. In the weeks following the Rising the people are complaining and blaming the rebels for the disruption to their lives.

Wesley Hanna kept a detailed account of the events following the Rising, expecting that the Rising would be an important event in Irish history. His account paints the Rising in a negative light. He incorrectly labeled it as an “S.F. Rebellion” or a Sinn Fein rebellion, as they were one of the most vocal, politically motivated groups with the goal of Home Rule. He calls the rebels “poor deluded fools” and a number of other derogatory terms in his account. He also takes note of the increasingly strict protocols being forced in the public. He mentions being stopped multiple times on his way home, of how he had to pass by snipers located at corners and rooftops. He also mentions an increased presence of military in the area. Hanna creates an image of a burning city and rubble standing in the wake of the rebels capture.

“On top of the shooting, looting had started and Sackville Street was badly handled Nobletts, Manfields and Lawrences had been completely cleared out and Lawrences was burning fiercely. It was eventually burned to the ground”.⁸

Hanna’s account of the Rising is extremely telling of what the public was experiencing in the moments just after the Rising. There was confusion; he was incorrectly believing that the Rising was an act of Sinn Fein. He also wrote of how he heard that Roger Casement had been shot and executed, when in fact he was not executed until August and it was a death by hanging. There was also fear; he describes walking a

⁸ Letter from Wesley Hanna to his family, 2 July 1916;
<http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/item/5940>

female friend home because she was nervous with all of the check points and men roaming the streets with firearms.

Part of what makes this topic so interesting and complex is that the immediate reaction to the Rising, is not what most people remember. In Higgins book, *Transforming 1916; Meaning, Memory, and the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Easter Rising* she highlights the collective memory looking back on the Easter Rising⁹. When people in the twenty first century look back on the Rising and the Irish War for Independence, they often feel a sense of nationalism, of pride and a celebration of freedoms. This, however, is not necessarily the case in the days following the Easter Rising. The lasting memory and the realistic reactions form a sort of duality. On one side it is a nationalistic event paving the way for the War for Independence, and in many cases it is still celebrated today. On the other hand people immediately following the Rising were angry and confused. They were not supporting a revolutionary movement and the common citizen often wished to remain neutral and isolated from the violence or implication of involvement.

It is only as the weeks pass into June and July that the people of Dublin and the surrounding areas begin to consider that some of this, namely the snipers and checkpoints are due to the British. They mention the unfairness of some people returning home while their relatives remain in captivity, unable to return home or to visit with their family for more than 15 minutes twice a month. There were restrictions on news and letters, “Eoghan O'Brien is in Stafford and his brother Peadar is in Knutsford. Their mother died

⁹ Higgins, Roisín, *Transforming 1916; Meaning, Memory, and the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Easter Rising*. Cork, Cork University Press, 2012.

last week (RIP) and they never knew a word about it”¹⁰. Family and the connections between individuals in a community is where the change of public opinion began to shift.

Often rebellion is thought of as an underground movement that is distinctly separate from the whole of a society, but that is not the case in Ireland. The people who were involved were members of their community. The people in the city knew them, they had ties to family and friends. The rebellion was formed of people that were known and in many cases, respected by their community before the Rising. The reason that public opinion began to be swayed has to do with the nature of life in Ireland. The connections that people created before the Rising lead into the change of public opinion, when rebels were jailed or on trial, they were not unknown to the people of the city.

There was a greater outcry by the public when Roger Casement, one of the most influential leaders in the Irish rebellion, is sentenced to be executed. When news of his impending death reaches the public, the correspondence reflect a sense of sorrow, and letters from Casement’s wife and supporters make their way to British Parliament. Jane Unwin writes to Herbert Henry Asquith, the Liberal Prime Minister of Britain:

“Now, after these many years, I bring myself to your remembrance to entreat you to use your great influence to obtain at this eleventh hour the reprieve of Roger Casement - will it not be an evil beginning for the new regime in Ireland if it should start under the shadow of his scaffold? His death will in no way help forward the Irish Cause, an act of clemency in sparing his life may —“¹¹

But Asquith responds to her letter:

¹⁰ Letter from Gus to Eamonn O'Modhráin, 13 June 1916;
<http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/item/5946>

¹¹ Letter from Jane Cobden Unwin to Herbert Henry Asquith, 2 August 1916;
<http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/item/5482>

“Dear Madam, It is with sincere pain (& only in compliance with your request) that I inform you that, after my full consideration, the Cabinet today came to the conclusion that there were no sufficient grounds for a reprieve. I need not assure you that I wish it had been possible for them to arrive at a different decision.”¹²

In response to the Easter Rising, the British government would execute 17 men, all of whom were leaders who took part in the planning and execution of the Easter Rising.

The execution orders that had the Rising’s leaders either hanged or placed before a firing squad transformed this small and dysfunctional event of Easter 1916 and made it into an event that would resonate with the Irish people in every aspect of their society. Before their execution, the arrests of the participants were met with disregard, in some cases even understanding and a sense of justice. However, as the order came down and the men were put to death for their involvement, it transformed them from simple rebels into martyrs. H.G. McAllister said in a letter to John F. Sweetman “As to execution of ‘Roger Casement’, if carried out will create disaffection and bitterness in the minds of our Irish People, it would be prudent of our statesmen to pardon him”.¹³ It is at this point that the letters begin to morph from a view centered on the faults and misgivings of the rebellion, to support and acceptance. Letters are now being written describing condolences, well wishes, and memories of the deceased. A letter to Nancy O’Rahilly¹⁴ expresses gratitude to her husband’s sacrifice and tells her that her sons should be proud of who their father was. Another letter describes the moment they heard the news of

¹² Letter from Herbert Henry Asquith, 2 August 1916; <http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/item/5481>

¹³ Letter from H.G. McAllister, 27 July 1916; <http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/item/337>

¹⁴ Letter to Nancy O’Rahilly, 18 May 1916.;<http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/item/5886>

Casement's death and the way that the cries of sorrow overpowered the sounds of triumph in London¹⁵.

After the executions and with the death of loved ones still fresh, tides of public opinion swayed against British rule. More people are expressing emotions of regret and even a swell of nationalism. Letters are referring to the rebels as "patriots", and more correspondence is regarding condolences for the dead. Maud Gunne MacBride wrote to Hanna Sheehy Skeffington,

"How can I tell you how much I think of you, Feel with you in your terrible loss—I am over whelmed with grief at the whole ghastly tragedy. This year I have lost almost all my Dearest friends& Comrades...I know that this sacrifice will not be in vain for Ireland but for we who remain the loss is very bitter. Even amid the black horror of military impiety in Dublin the murder of your husband stands out with such tragic distinction that it must bring justice and his brave Spirit will rejoice that his death serves the Cause".¹⁶

A letter from Isabella Harvey and Anne Harvey Shackleton said

"Pray we ask you to accept the deep sympathy which we feel for you in the irreparable loss which has befallen you, -- and Ireland. We are unspeakably shocked and grieved, and most indignant at this last lawless and aimless tragedy"¹⁷

A letter to Nancy O'Rahilly from Julia Evans stated

"I trust you will excuse the liberty I take of writing to you in your bereavement I am sincerely sorry for your loss His geniality won for him the affection and respect of all who came in touch with him may he R. I. P.my Husband thank God was released on 26th of May. He got home here on Saturday morning in a deplorable condition."¹⁸

Many people were corresponding expressing their condolences, and using strong wording to demonstrate their sorrow and anger at the recent events and loss of Irish life. In other cultural aspects people were also writing and demonstrating their frustration with British

¹⁵ Letter from Fr. E.F. Murnane to Sidney Parry, 30 September 1916; <http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/item/5453>

¹⁶ Letter from Maud Gunne MacBride, 30 April 1916; <http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/item/3776>

¹⁷ Letter from Isabella Harvey and Anne Harvey Shackleton, 11 May 1916; <http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/item/3682>

¹⁸ Letter from Julia Evans, 31 May 1916; <http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/item/1527>

governance. Trinity College petitioned against the housing of soldiers on their campus as a financial burden. Sinn Fein gained more public backing and began making waves in the political sphere. People were writing to complain about soldiers and new policies.

The public began to take on a revolution and began to give more support to the groups which had at first been a controversial topic in their society. Newspapers were now changing their stories and titles. Before they had been about the rebels and justice, but around July and into August the headlines were changing to support. There were fliers, songs, poems, and articles about the rebels and their goals. It propelled the issues the Rising was trying to take on further into the public eye. There were even articles in American newspapers that were defending the rebellion, calling for mercy and the release of prisoners¹⁹. One Irish flier stated

“Your prayers are earnestly requested for the repose of the souls of the following Irishmen who were executed by military law, May, 1916....Also for the repose of the souls of the following men who were KILLED WHILST FIGHTING FOR IRELAND during Easter Week, 1916.”²⁰

There were charity balls and bazaars in New York City, NY being held to raise money for widows and family, to gather money for bails and other expenses for the rebels. A letter from John O’Leary expressed

“We respectfully beg to call your attention to the IRISH RELIEF FUND BAZAAR, which is to be held at Madison Square Garden, New York City, October 14th to 22nd. The entire proceeds of that Bazaar, without the deduction of a single dollar for expenses, will be devoted to the immediate relief of the destitute dependents of the men executed,

¹⁹ "[Irish Rebellion Broken; Leaders Are Seized; Capital City of Dublin in Ruins; Rations Issued](#)," *Seattle Star* (Seattle, WA), May 1, 1916, Page 1, Image 1, col. 1.

²⁰ Irish National Aid and Volunteer Dependents' Fund. "*Flier Listing Those Who Died during the Easter Rising, 1916.*" 1916. MS, Ceannt and O'Brennan Papers, 1851-1953, National Library of Ireland Catalogue, Dublin. May 08, 2014. Accessed December 06, 2018. <http://catalogue.nli.ie/Record/vtls000608957>

imprisoned or deported since the Easter week rebellion of the Irish people. The necessity of such relief appears clearly from the excerpts from the report of John J. Murphy, Commissioner of the American Relief Committee, who has just returned from Ireland, and which we beg to enclose. We feel that the American people, who have never yet turned a deaf ear to an appeal in behalf of the unfortunate, will not fail to heed this urgent call. May we, therefore, ask you to aid this Bazaar by a contribution, as you prefer, in money or goods, which can be disposed of at the Bazaar."²¹

The goal was to raise funds and awareness in America for the aid of families facing difficulties due to the Rising. The media was reaching for change to the society as a whole. Every citizen did not change their views, but a growing number of people were beginning to support the push against Britain.

It can be noted that members of the IRA were well known in their communities as being a part of the organization. During the early twentieth century, it was a common opinion in Ireland that the only way to end British rule over Ireland was to use violence and force, as their political might was minimal and all previous attempts at Home Rule were thwarted or ignored. During the early twentieth century in Ireland, as the movements of the IRA garnered more support amongst the Irish society, their status was not considered terroristic in nature by the majority of Irish people. In many cases, the Irish Republican Army acted as a peace keeper within cities. For Catholic people, the IRA was the force that they would turn to for domestic violence or misdemeanors and minor crimes, as the police force, due to their Protestantism and British loyalism, was seen to be other and less reliable. It was only later in the twentieth century in which their role transformed from protector to aggressor in many cases²².

²¹ Letter from John O'Leary, 03 October 1916; <http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/item/5928>

²² Hart, Peter. "The Social Structure of the Irish Republican Army, 1916-1923." *The Historical Journal* 42, no. 1 (1999): 207-31. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3020901> .

Public opinion was the most important factor in the aftermath of the Easter Rising. As people began to process and understand the stance of the rebellion groups, the movement for Independence grew exponentially²³. Through correspondence, media archives, and military records it is shown that as public support for Independence grew, so did the numbers of people joining social rebellion groups, driving their cause and morphing this from an isolated incident into a mass movement.

The Easter Rising, in many ways, was a remarkable failure. Its objective to capture and hold British government buildings in Dublin and other major cities was unsuccessful. The other objective, forcing the British to negotiate with the Volunteer movement, was also a failure. The Volunteers were unable to hold the buildings long enough to negotiate for an independent republic in Ireland. The Volunteers also took major losses to their ranks as their leaders were executed for their involvement²⁴. While none of the goals or objectives of the Easter Rising were successful in the traditional sense, they did accomplish a great deal for the rebel movement in Ireland. With the executed acting as martyrs for their vision of a freed Ireland, and with the movement gaining popularity and spotlight because of the following arrests, this disaster furthered the main goals of the movement as a whole. It led to changing strategies, a more guerilla warfare type of battle against the British, it also put forth more ideas and demands for the legislature. Sinn Fein became more intertwined with the political sphere and fighting

²³ DHÁIBHÉID, Caoimhe Nic. "The Irish National Aid Association and the Radicalization of Public Opinion in Ireland, 1916—1918." *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 3 (2012): 705-29. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23263270> .

²⁴ McGarry, Fearghal, *The Rising; Ireland: Easter 1916*. New York, Oxford University Press Inc., 2010.

from a judicial standpoint. The Easter Rising truly fed the fire of public opinion and revolt which led to the Irish War for Independence.

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