

Greystones Stories of 1916

Rosemary Raughter

WILLIAM CORRIGAN (VOLUNTEER)

William Corrigan a young law student, was a member of the South Dublin Union occupying force during Easter Week. Arrested and brought before a court martial, he was surprised to encounter the prosecuting counsel W E Wylie, who recognised him as a legal colleague and assured him that 'if you do not consider you are being fairly treated, you can call on me'. In the event, Wylie intervened in the hearing to remind a sergeant who wished to amend his evidence against Corrigan that he could not do so 'unless it is in favour of the prisoner'. Sentenced to a term of imprisonment, Corrigan was released within a few months, and returned to his legal career. He subsequently acquired a house in Greystones where his family spent summer holidays. His daughter, Joan O'Dea, is a member of the Greystones Archaeological & Historical Society.

EAMON DE VALERA (1882-1975) (COMMANDANT, BOLAND'S MILLS)

Shortly after his release from prison in July 1917, de Valera rented a house on Kinlen Road in Greystones. The de Valera family lived in the house, known during their occupancy as Craig Liath, for several years, during which the children attended St Brigid's School, and Sinead de Valera reportedly gave Irish lessons.

De Valera himself frequently travelled to and from Dublin by train. In May 1918 he was arrested at Greystones Station, and was taken from there to Lincoln Gaol, from which he later escaped to the United States, only rejoining his family in late 1920.

During Dev's absence, Michael Collins visited Greystones regularly to deliver money to Bean de Valera and check on the family's welfare, often staying at the Grand (later the La Touche) Hotel. Other republican visitors to the de Valera home during this period included Cathal Brugha and Robert Brennan.



Eamon and Sinead De Valera on their wedding day

GEORGE DUGGAN (BANK MANAGER)

George Duggan, manager of the Provincial Bank of Ireland's head office in College Street, spent Easter 1916 with his wife, Emilie, at their holiday home, Ferney (now Carrig Eden) in Greystones. Hearing of the rising on Easter Monday, George hurried back to Dublin, and remained for the rest of the week at the bank, from where he witnessed much of the fighting. At one point, the bank premises were raided by a party of soldiers searching for snipers, and George found himself threatened with summary execution. Only when he showed the officer in charge the photographs of his two sons, killed within a day of each other in the previous August at Gallipoli, was he released.

George Duggan died in 1926, and is buried in Old Redford Cemetery, Greystones. His headstone also commemorates the two sons, Jack and George, killed in 1915.

JOHN MURPHY (CIVILIAN AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR)

John Murphy of Vive Vale, Delgany, was a member of Wicklow County Council, chairman of Rathdown No 2 Rural Council, and the owner of a public house in Henry Street. On Easter Monday he travelled into the city centre by rail, and for the rest of the week remained on the premises to protect them from possible attack. On Friday, as the struggle between the army and the insurgents was reaching its height, John Murphy was shot in the street outside his public house. Described as 'kind, courteous and obliging' as well as 'a most enterprising business man', John Murphy was buried in Glasnevin cemetery. (See also:

<http://www.independent.ie/regionals/wicklowpeople/localnotes/1916-remembered-publican-lost-his-life-leaving-his-premises-34581189.html>.)

IVON PRICE (RIC OFFICER)

Ivon Price grew up with his ten siblings at Knockeevin on Church Road, Greystones. As a young man, he joined the RIC, and in 1914 was appointed intelligence officer to the army's Irish Command. On Easter Monday 1916 he was at a meeting in Dublin Castle when it was attacked by an Irish Citizen Army contingent under Sean Connolly, and confronted the insurgents in the Castle yard, revolver in hand. He was reputedly the only armed man in the Castle at that moment, as the sentries had not been provided with live ammunition.

Major Price received the DSO for his intelligence work, and returned to RIC duty in 1919. He died in 1931 in Farnborough, Hampshire.

JAMES (JIM) RYAN (1891-1970) (VOLUNTEER)

Born Tomcoole, Co Wexford, and studied medicine at UCD. A member of Sinn Fein, the IRB and the Irish Volunteers. Having been sent to Cork by Eoin MacNeill with news of the cancellation of the Rising, he returned to Dublin and reported to the GPO, where he was chief medical officer during Easter Week. Subsequently imprisoned at Stafford and Frongoch, and elected to parliament in 1918. Imprisoned during the War of Independence and interned during the

Civil War, when he went on hunger strike. Having given up medicine, he moved with his family to Kindlestown House, where he farmed for many years. A founder member of Fianna Fail and a TD for forty-seven years, he went on to serve as Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Health and Social Welfare and Minister for Finance. Retired from politics in 1969. Buried with his wife, Mairin, at Redford cemetery, Greystones.



James and Mairin Ryan

MAIRIN RYAN (NEE CREGAN) (1891-1975) (CUMANN NA MBAN)

Born in Killorglin, Co Kerry. As a young teacher in Dublin, became involved in nationalist circles and, at the request of Sean MacDiarmada, travelled to Tralee on Holy Thursday 1916 carrying weapons and a message for the local Volunteers. On Good Friday was involved in the rescue of the only survivor from the drownings at Ballykissane. Following the Rising, she worked for the Prisoners' Dependents' Fund and canvassed for Sinn Fein in the 1918

general election. Married James Ryan in July 1919. As a member of Cumann na mBan, took part in the War of Independence. Married James Ryan July 1919, and in the 1920s settled with him at Kindlestown House, Greystones. She was the author, under her maiden name, Mairin Cregan, of children's books, plays, radio scripts and newspaper articles.

FRANCIS WHITE KNOX (SOLDIER)

Francis White Knox was born c.1879 in Co Wicklow, and at the time of the 1901 census was living at Kindlestown Upper with his parents and four siblings. His father subsequently died, and the family moved to Albert Terrace in Bray, where Francis worked as a clerk. Following the outbreak of war, he enlisted as a private in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. He was injured in Dublin during Easter Week, when a shell he was firing exploded prematurely, and died at home on 27 April 1916. He is commemorated on the Wicklow WW1 memorial at Woodenbridge.