


# Unit 5:

## Mapping the 1916 Rising

### *Document Pack*

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**"YOUR FIRST DUTY  
IS TO TAKE YOUR PART IN  
ENDING  
THE WAR."**

*M<sup>R</sup>. J. E. REDMOND, M. P.  
at Waterford, 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 1915.*

**JOIN AN  
IRISH REGIMENT  
• TO-DAY •**



The only reason that could justify general active military measures — as distinct from military preparations — on the part of Irish Nationalists would be a reasonably calculated or estimated prospect of success, in the military sense.

Without that prospect, military action (not military preparation) would in the first place be morally wrong — and that consideration to my mind is final & decisive. To enter deliberately on a course of action which is morally wrong is to incur the guilt not only of that action itself but of all its direct consequences. For example, to kill any person in carrying out such a course of action is murder. The guilt of murder in that case falls on those who have planned and ordered the general course of action or the policy which makes such action inevitable.

The success which is calculated or estimated must be success in the operation itself, not merely some <sup>future</sup> moral or political advantage which may be hoped for as the result of non-success.

The motive of avoiding reproach or ignominy or misunderstanding, without regarding the rightness or wrongness of our conduct as judged by our own consciences at the time of decision, is a bad and cowardly motive, and should not be allowed the slightest weight in influencing our decisions. The same applies to the motive of acting in accordance with what might be, or might be supposed to be, the opinion of any other person or persons other than those responsible for adopting a decision and putting it in force. It has never been a condition or an understanding on our part that our line of action should be decided for us by any but ourselves.

In coming to a decision, as to any proposed or considered line of action, the decisive element must be our calculation or estimate of the military result. Unless this shows a tangible prospect of success, the



WOODTOWN PARK,

RATHFARNHAM,

CO. DUBLIN.

22 April 1916

Volunteers completely  
deceived. All orders  
for to-morrow Sunday  
are entirely cancelled.

Erin Macneil







2.30 a.m.

8/5/16

My Dearest wife Jane,  
 Not wife but widow before these  
 lines reach you. I am here without hope of this world  
 and without fear, calmly awaiting the end. I have had  
 Holy Communion and Fr Augustine has been with me and  
 will be back again. Dearest "silly little Fanny". My poor  
 little sweetheart of — how many — years ago. "Ever my  
 Comforter, God comfort you now. What can I say?" I  
 die a noble death, for Ireland's freedom. Men and women  
 will vie with one another to shake your dear hand. Be  
 proud of me as I am and ever was of you. My cold ex-  
 terior was but a mask. It has served me in these last days.  
 You have a duty to me and to Rónán, that is to live.  
 My dying wishes are that you shall remember your state of health,  
 work only as much as may be necessary and freely accept  
 the little attentions which in due time will be showered upon  
 you. You will be — you are, the wife of one of the Leaders of  
 the Revolution. Sweet, still you are my little child, my dearest  
 pet, my sweetheart of the hawthorn hedges and summer  
 eves. I remember all and I banish all that I may be  
 strong and die bravely. I have one hour to live, then God's  
 judgment and, through his infinite mercy, a place near your  
 poor Franmie and my mother and father and Jim and all  
 the fine old Irish Catholics who went through the scourge  
 of similar misfortune from this Vale of Tears into the Promised  
 Land. *bíod mairtí agas a scárpas mo éiríse. Tóis so ceann  
 agus bíod fionn agas go h-eiríse a céile agas, b'fiancé De-  
 ceas, mairtí agas Rónán beas boir.*

Adieu  
 Camour



The Mother.

I do not grudge them : Lord, I do not grudge  
my two strong sons that I have seen go out  
To break their strength and die, they and a few,  
In bloody protest for a glorious thing.

~~They~~ shall be spoken of among their people,

The generations shall remember them,  
And call them blessed;

~~And give their names to their~~

~~their names shall be~~

But I will speak their names to my own heart

In the long nights ;

The little names that were familiar once  
Round my dead ~~heart~~ <sup>grave</sup>.

Lord, Thou art

hard on mothers ;

~~But I do not forget~~

We suffer in their coming and their

going ;

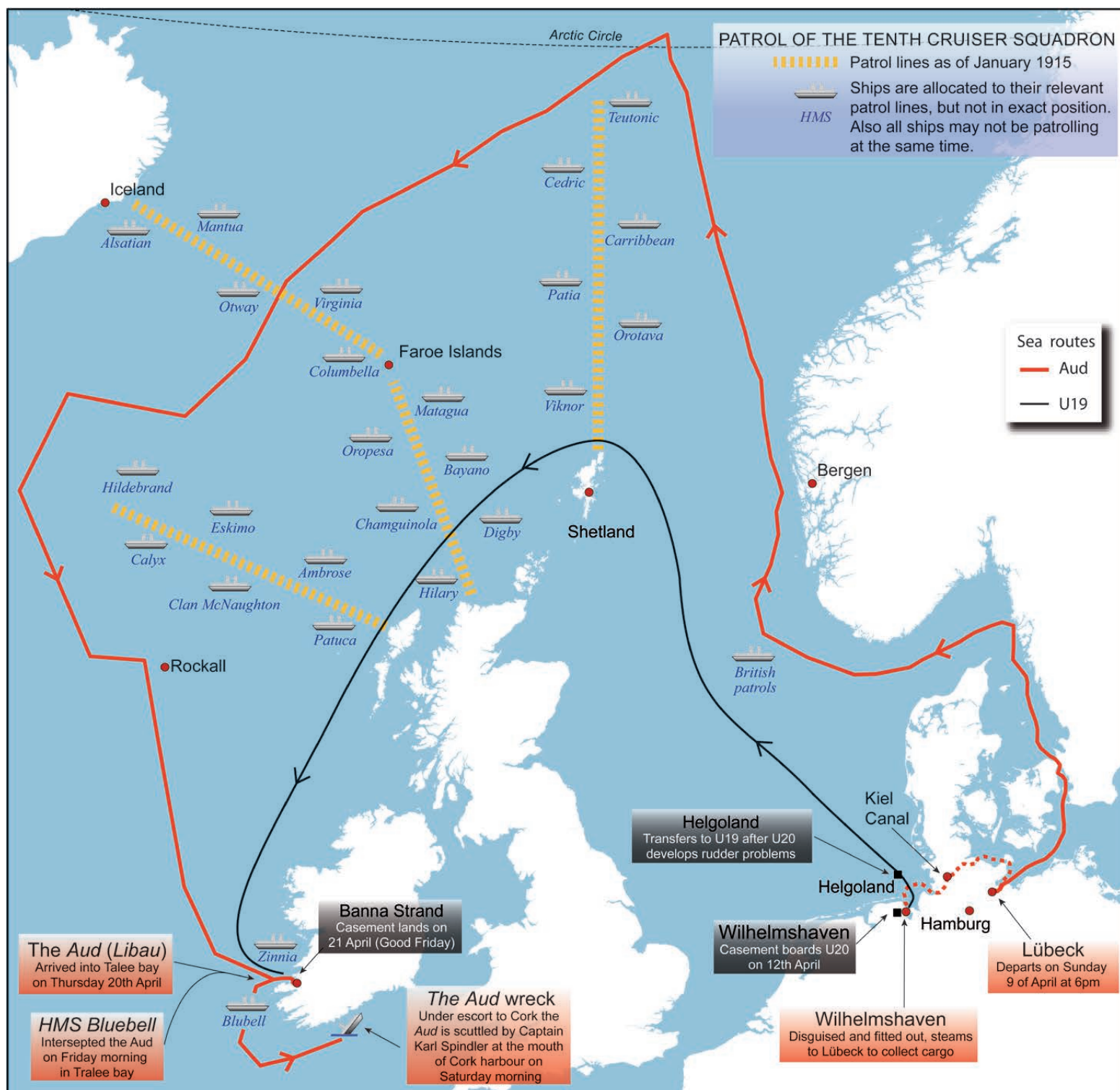
And, though I grudge them not, I weary,  
~~weary,~~

~~Of~~ sorrow. ~~And yet I have~~  
of the long ~~suffering,~~ ~~and yet I have~~

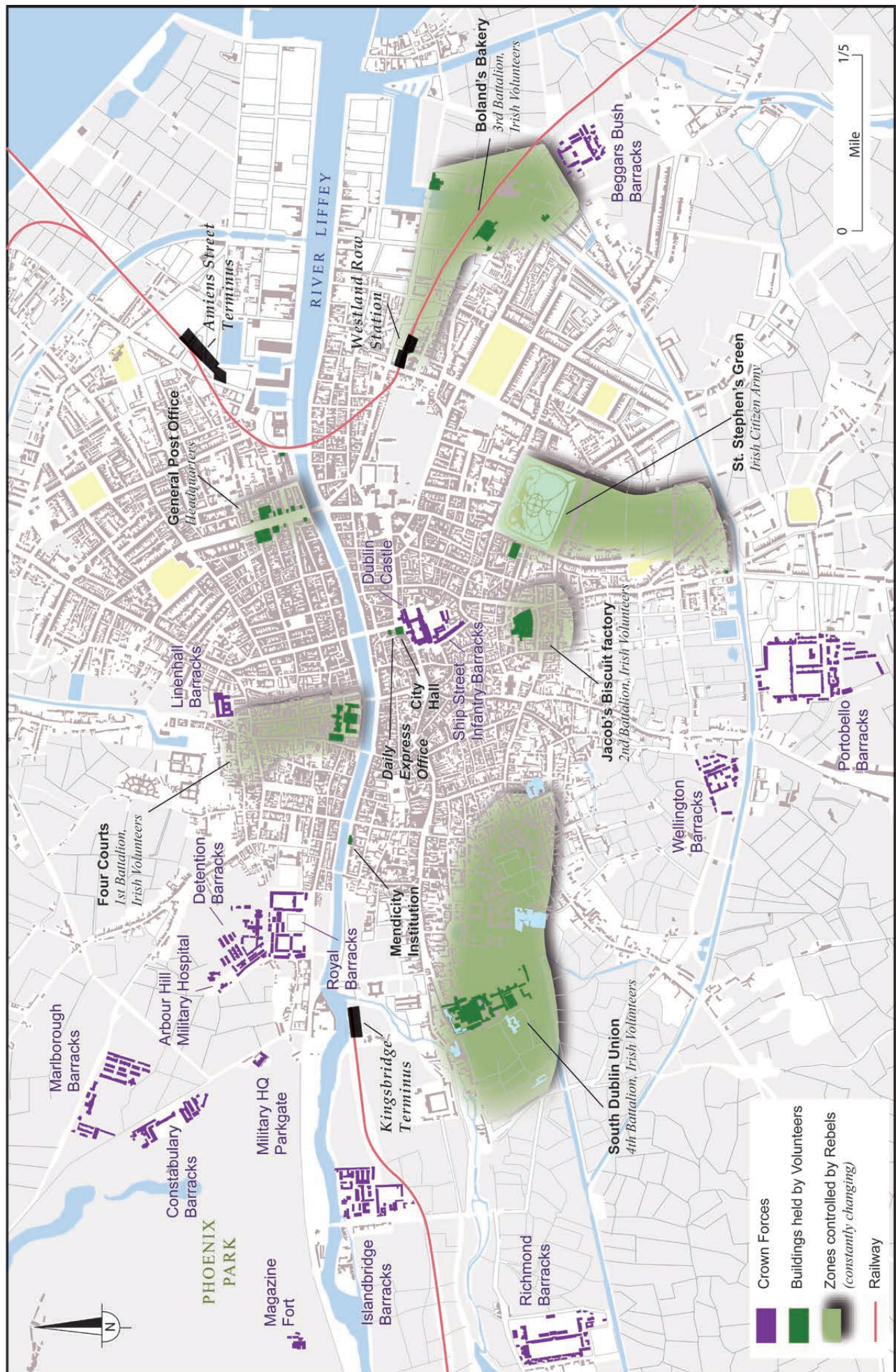
my joy :

My sons were faithful, and they fought.



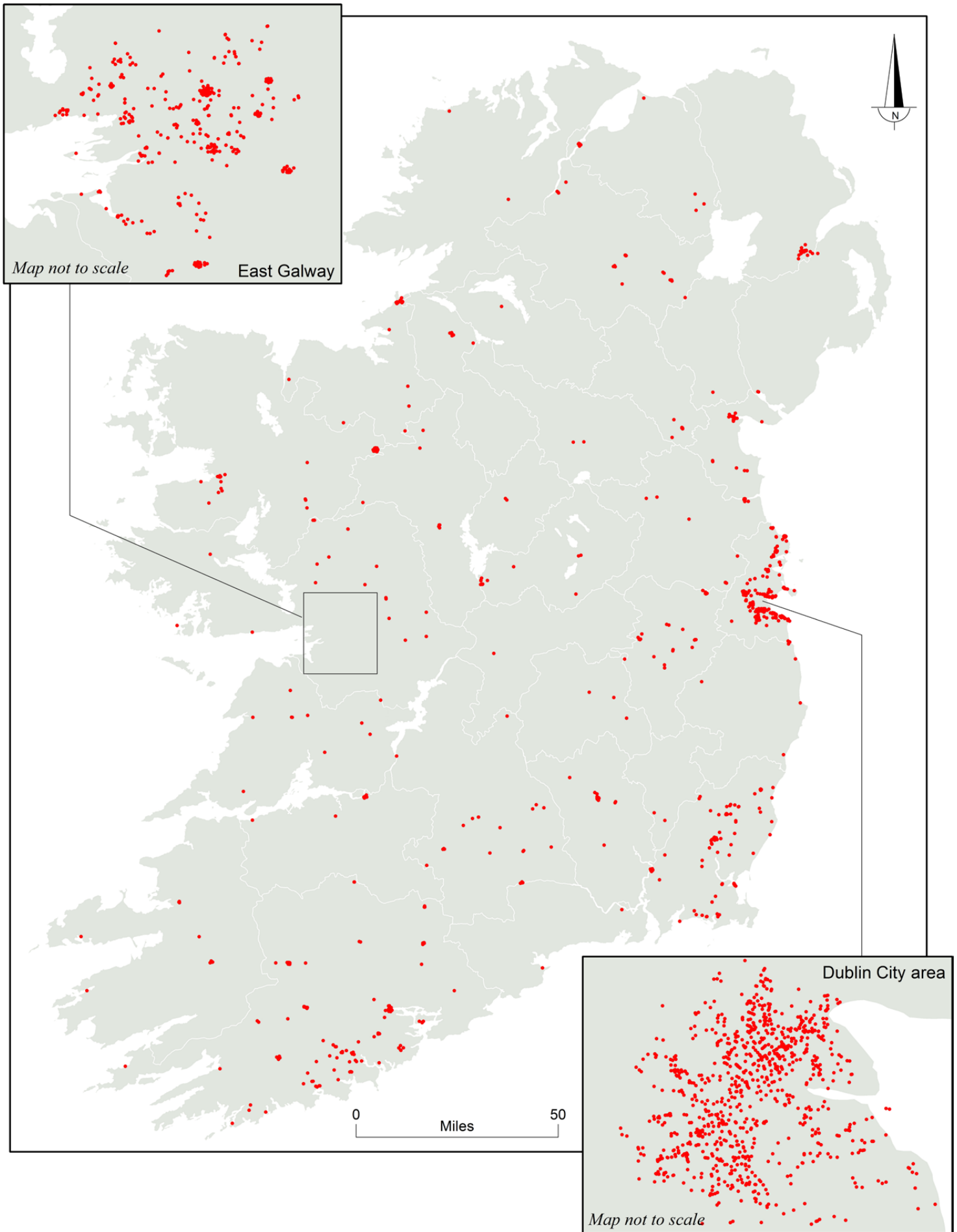


















## *Context and Background*

**Source 1.      PHOTOGRAPH: Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa's funeral in Glasnevin Cemetery on 1 August 1916**

O'Donovan Rossa's funeral in Glasnevin cemetery on 1 August 1915 proved a rallying point for republican activists across Ireland, Britain and the United States. Many figures who would become prominent in the revolution are identifiable in the photograph. To Patrick Pearse's right is Fr Michael O'Flanagan, who became Sinn Féin vice-president in 1917. John MacBride, executed after the 1916 rising, is behind Pearse's left shoulder, and to Pearse's left is the IRB's Sean McGarry. Next to McGarry, with the beard, is Darrell Figgis, who became a prominent Sinn Féiner, and next to him, in profile, is the Fenian and 1916 leader Tom Clarke. Also visible in the crowd are Cathal Brugha, Piaras Beaslai, Sean T. O'Kelly and Arthur Griffith. [Photo: National Library of Ireland, KE 234]

**Sources      PHOTOGRAPH:**  
**2, 7 & 8.      Eoin MacNeill (1867-1945) Chief-of-staff of the Irish Volunteers**

**DOCUMENT:**  
**Memorandum written by Eoin MacNeill in which he considers the moral justification for an insurrection**

**DOCUMENT:**  
**MacNeill's countermanding order cancelling manoeuvres planned for Easter Sunday, 1916**

Gaelic scholar and nationalist Eoin MacNeill was the sixth of eight children born to merchant, Archibald MacNeill in Glenarm, Co. Antrim on 15 May 1867. MacNeill was deeply influenced by his upbringing in the Glens of Antrim with its Irish language traditions. The MacNeill family also attached considerable importance to education and in 1885 he secured a scholarship to study Modern Languages. He began work as a civil servant in Dublin in 1887 and in the same year he began studying the Irish language in earnest. In 1893, together with Douglas Hyde, MacNeill founded the Gaelic League - an organisation devoted to the preservation of the Irish language - and edited its paper *An Claidheamh Soluis* from 1899 to 1901. A brilliant linguist and historian, MacNeill was appointed Professor of Early Irish History at University College Dublin (UCD) in 1909.

'The North Began', MacNeill's article in the 1 November 1913 issue of *An Claidheamh Soluis*, welcomed the formation of the Ulster Volunteer Force as a positive development and urged nationalists to follow suit. This prompted the IRB to invite him to head up the Irish Volunteers, formed twelve days later. Following the Volunteer split in September, he became chief-of-staff of the IRB-dominated Irish Volunteers in December 1914. He disagreed with the IRB plans for an armed rising involving the Volunteers, seeing the latter as a defensive organisation. As his memorandum of March 1916 (**Source 7**) shows, MacNeill believed that



military action without a clear prospect of success was 'morally wrong' and that only an attempt by the British to disarm the Volunteers, forcibly impose conscription or completely abandon Home Rule would justify armed action.

On Wednesday 15 April 1916 the IRB conspirators presented MacNeill with a forged document (the 'Castle Document'), which suggested that the British intended to arrest the main Volunteer leaders. They also told him about the German arms bound for Ireland on board the *Aud*. Believing that there was an immediate threat to the Volunteers, and that a rising would have a good chance of success, MacNeill agreed to a general mobilisation on Easter Sunday.

When MacNeill discovered that he had been deceived and learning that the *Aud* had been lost on Easter Saturday he issued a countermanding order cancelling the mobilisation. **(Source 8)** As a result, the 1916 Rising was postponed until Easter Monday, and almost entirely confined to Dublin. Even there, numbers were only about a quarter of what they might otherwise have been.

Despite not having taken part in the Rising, MacNeill was court-martialled and sentenced to life imprisonment. He was released in the 1917 amnesty and stood successfully for Sinn Féin in the December 1918 general election. He was elected to the Second Dáil in 1921 and took a strong pro-Treaty position.

### **Source 3.      PHOTOGRAPH: Seán MacDiarmada (1883-1916)**

Seán MacDiarmada (1883-1916) was a signatory of the Proclamation and arguably the key figure in orchestrating the 1916 Rising. From a small farm family background in Co. Leitrim, John Joseph MacDermott was intent from a young age on becoming a schoolteacher. However his ambitions were frustrated by his limitations in Maths and his failure to obtain a King's Scholarship, which prevented him from training for a career in teaching. He left school at nineteen and spent a short time working as a gardener in Edinburgh before returning to Ireland in 1904. In early life MacDermott was a moderate nationalist but in 1905 his politics changed dramatically. He moved to Belfast where he found work as a tram operator, joined the Gaelic League and was sworn into the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

Handsome and charismatic, Seán MacDiarmada was a superb organiser with a huge appetite for work. He rose to national prominence as a paid organiser for the new Sinn Féin League in 1907. While building the up the party's structure, he also secretly served as the IRB's national organiser, targeting the Gaelic League and the Gaelic Athletic Association as key recruiting grounds for the IRB. In 1908 MacDiarmada moved to Dublin where he met IRB veteran Thomas Clarke, newly returned from the United States. Together with Clarke, Bulmer Hobson and Dennis McCullough, Sean MacDiarmada played a very important role in revitalising the IRB. MacDiarmada experienced a personal setback in 1911 when he was struck by polio and for the rest of his life used a walking stick. In 1912 he was appointed the manager of the republican newspaper, *Irish Freedom*.



MacDiarmada was arrested in 1915 for making several speeches discouraging Irish men from enlisting in the British Army. He served four months in Mountjoy prison. In May 1915 the Supreme Council of the IRB organised the formation of a secret military council to plan a rising while British was distracted by the war. On his release from prison MacDiarmada became a key strategist within the Military Council and was largely responsible for recruiting the remaining members. He served in the GPO during the fighting, and was executed on 12 May in Kilmainham Gaol.

**Source 4.      PHOTOGRAPH: The Irish Citizen Army (ICA) in formation outside the ITGWU headquarters, Liberty Hall, Dublin in late 1914.**

The Irish Citizen Army (ICA) in formation outside the ITGWU headquarters, Liberty Hall, Dublin in late 1914. Following Jim Larkin's departure to the US in October 1914, James Connolly took over as head of the ICA, acting general secretary of the ITGWU and editor of the *Irish Worker*.

James Connolly was born in June 1886 in one of the slum areas of Edinburgh in Scotland. His parents, originally from County Monaghan, raised their family in extreme poverty. James attended school until he was ten years old, after which secured work at a newspaper office, cleaning the printers of dried ink. At fourteen, he lied about his age to join the British Army and served in Ireland for seven years, mostly around Cork. At twenty-one, Connolly left the army, married Lillie Reynolds, and moved back to Scotland. While working as a labourer and a carter, he developed an interest in socialism and joined the Scottish Socialist Federation. In 1896, after the failure of his cobbler's shop in Edinburgh, Connolly moved his young family to Dublin. In May, he founded the Irish Socialist Republican Party (ISRP) and established the organisation's newspaper, the *Worker's Republic*. Connolly opposed Home Rule because he thought that it was unlikely to improve the situation of the working class. By 1902 the ISRP had failed and Connolly took his family to live in America where he was very active in Irish nationalist and socialist circles.

The family returned to Dublin in 1910 and in the following year Connolly was appointed the Belfast organiser for James Larkin's Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU). In 1912 he founded the Irish Labour Party with James Larkin and was his second-in-command during the 1913 Strike and Lockout. Dublin tram workers who were members of the ITGWU went on strike and the Dublin employers responded by locking out their workers. The strike, which led to terrible suffering among the strikers, remained deadlocked until 1914. During this period Connolly helped to form the Irish Citizen Army to protect the striking workers against the police.

On 12 October 1914 the short-lived Irish Neutrality League (INL), with Connolly as President and involving a number of leading republican and labour figures, had held its first public meeting; it aimed to campaign against recruitment to the British Army and assert Ireland's 'neutrality'. The banner with the legend 'WE SERVE NEITHER KING NOR KAISER. BUT IRELAND!' reflected the INL approach, and was displayed at Liberty Hall from late October 1914. It emphasised rejection of Britain's war, but also rejection of the accusation that in so doing, they were supporting Germany. *The Irish Worker* was suppressed under the Defence



of the Realm Act on 4 December 1914, and on 19 December the authorities removed the famous banner from Liberty Hall.

**Source 6.      DOCUMENT: A poster produced by the Central Council for the Organisation of Recruiting in Ireland, September 1915.**

The steady decline in enlistments in Ireland during 1915 and 1916 matched a similar downturn across Britain, as young men became more reluctant to voluntarily join the carnage of industrial warfare. Faced with inadequate recruits, the British government intensified its recruitment campaign during 1915. This poster is modelled on the famous 1914 British poster featuring Lord Kitchener pointing his finger at 'Britons' and encouraging them to 'Join Your Country's Army!', which was later, adapted in the US, featuring 'Uncle Sam'. The poster appears in Sinn Féin's 1917 anti-war poster hovering over the skeletal remains of Irish recruits

**Source 10.      DOCUMENT: A letter written by Éamonn Ceannt to his wife shortly before his execution on 8 May 1916.**

The son of RIC constable, Éamonn Ceannt was raised in County Louth and educated by the Christian Brothers in Dublin. He was attracted to the Gaelic League in his late teens and devoted himself to the Irish language and music. He met Frances (Fanny) O'Brennan through Gaelic League circles and they married in 1905. Their son Rónán was born in the following year. Like many others who joined the Gaelic League, Frances adopted an Irish name, Áine, in 1909.

In the years that followed Éamonn Ceannt gravitated to physical force republicanism, first with the Irish Republican Brotherhood and later as a leading member of the Irish Volunteer Executive. Aine and her sister, Lily O'Brennan, joined Cumann na mBan when it was formed in 1914. Éamonn was elected to the IRB Supreme Council in 1915 and was thereafter brought onto its Military Council. With fellow signatory of the Proclamation, Joseph Plunkett, he developed the plan for the Rising. During Easter Week 1916, Ceannt and his battalion skillfully defended the South Dublin Union in fierce, close-quartered combat. He stood out as one of the outstanding military leaders of the insurrection. He was executed in Kilmainham Jail on 8 May 1916.

**Source 12.      MAP: The route of the *Aud* in 1916**

At the outbreak of the war, the IRB Military Council and the German government agreed to land promised arms anytime between 20 and 23 April 1916 (Thursday to Sunday). The IRB planners subsequently feared an early arms landing would spoil the uprising, and belatedly requested a delay until Easter Sunday. However, by the time that message arrived in Germany, the arms ship had already departed from the Baltic port of Lubeck.

Captained by Lt. Karl Spindler, the German cargo steamer *SMS Libau*, (originally a British vessel called *SS Castro*), carried 20,000 rifles intended for an Irish rebellion. Disguised as the Norwegian freighter *Aud*, the vessel evaded the Royal Navy's blockade off the German

coast by moving far to the north above Iceland before darting south around and through assorted British picket ships. The *Aud* arrived off the southwest coast of Ireland on Thursday 20 April 1916 where the Royal Navy intercepted it on Good Friday.

**Source 13.      MAP: 1916 Garrisons**

The IRB Military Council had planned for a nationwide rebellion, but the loss of the *Aud* and the devastating effects of Eoin MacNeill's countermanding order meant that the Rising was largely confined to Dublin. On 24 April 1916, some twelve hundred separatists occupied strategic buildings across the capital and proclaimed an Irish Republic. Faced by over 20,000 British troops, they had no chance of military success, but the six-day Rising transformed Ireland and swept away the possibility of a peaceful home rule settlement.

The republican military plan ringed the city centre with interconnected strongholds, which could reinforce each other. Positions were selected to contain the numerous British Army barracks in the Dublin suburbs, and control major road and rail approaches into the city centre to be used by military reinforcements. Irish Volunteers and members of the Irish Citizen Army (ICA) carried food, water, and picks to burrow between buildings. Street barricades would slow advancing troops, and subject them to republican fire from hidden positions in nearby buildings.

The Irish Volunteer 3rd Battalion held the area around Boland's Bakery, threatening Beggar's Bush Barracks and an advance from Kingstown (Dún Laoghaire), the probable source of troop reinforcements arriving by ship from Britain. The ICA at Stephen's Green stood astride a major crossroads into the heart of the city, which included a likely approach from Portobello Barracks. Another ICA unit would attack Dublin Castle and divert British troops to that locale, rather than allowing them to concentrate against rebel positions still being fortified. The 2nd Battalion headquartered in Jacob's Factory could repel British advances from Wellington and Portobello Barracks, and target other reinforcements dispatched to Dublin Castle. The 4th Battalion in the South Dublin Union and surrounding areas covered Richmond and Islandbridge Barracks, as well as Kingsbridge Railway Station, a likely arrival point for military reinforcements.

Across the river, 1st Battalion units in the Four Courts and King Street could frustrate approaches from the Royal and Marlborough Barracks; they could also provide the rebels with a possible line of retreat from the city, should the countryside rise up. A garrison with the Provisional Government group occupied the GPO and other strong buildings along Sackville Street. During the fighting, this basic plan allowed the rebels to seize Dublin, despite a low turnout of Volunteers and the presence of thousands of British troops within the wider area. Significant success was achieved in places like North King Street, South Dublin Union and Mount Street Bridge, where the rebels conducted hit-and-run attacks on advancing British troops, or lured them into hidden pre-planned fields of fire. However, after a few days of fighting the weight of the British forces ultimately constricted the rebels, and pinned them into isolated positions that were then blasted by vastly superior British firepower. Considering the odds that were stacked against them, their five-day stand was about as much success as the rebel planners could have reasonably hoped for.



**Source 14.     MAP: The GPO and Sackville Street Garrisons:**

Numerous rebel outposts commanded the approaches into Lower Sackville Street, which were connected by a series of tunnels dug through neighbouring buildings. For the first three days of fighting the GPO escaped direct attack and was only subjected to British sniper fire and an ill-conceived British cavalry charge on Monday, 24 April. Some of the fiercest fighting occurred on the east side of Lower Sackville Street, as small garrisons tried to hold back British troops surging from Marlborough Street and Lower Abbey Street. Kelly's Corner and Hopkin's Corner were also subjected to fierce fusillades from British forces operating out of Trinity College across the River Liffey.

A turning point occurred on Thursday, 27 April when British field artillery pieces (18 pounders) positioned on Sackville Street and Butt Bridge shelled rebel positions, setting many buildings ablaze. By nightfall, the rebels had been burned out of the east side of Sackville Street, with those fighters either captured or forced to retreat to the GPO. On early Friday, artillery shells fell on the GPO and set it alight. As the building began to disintegrate on Friday evening, the garrison retreated under fire across Henry Street, and burrowed into small shops and tenements on Moore Street and Moore Lane. Michael O'Rahilly ('The O'Rahilly') led a breakout attempt towards Great Britain (Parnell) Street, but his force was cut down on Moore Street by heavy British fire. The rebels found themselves trapped in a small area, surrounded by British troops and facing renewed shelling. Fearing the destruction of his force and the infliction of heavy casualties on the adjacent civilian population, Patrick Pearse ordered a surrender late on Saturday morning, 29 April. The rebellion was over.

**Source 15.     MAP: Addresses of the 2,486 persons listed as detained and deported during May and June 1916**

In the weeks following the 1916 Rising thousands of people were arrested, imprisoned and interned with almost 2,500 deported to various detention centres in Britain. The military authorities released lists showing the names and addresses of those deported, the date deported, and the place detained. These lists were included in *the Sinn Féin Rebellion Handbook, Easter 1916* published by the *Weekly Irish Times*. In all, twenty lists were issued by the military authorities, covering the period 1 May to 16 June 1916. This map was created by plotting the addresses of the 2,486 persons listed as detained and deported during May and June 1916.

On some dates multiple groups were deported, for example, on 20 May four different groups were sent to Perth, Glasgow, Woking and Lewis. The map highlights in particular the impact of the Rising outside of Dublin, for example in counties such as Galway and Wexford.

**Source 16.     MAP: Revolutionary Life: Roger Casement (1864-1916)**

Roger Casement was born in Sandycove, Co. Dublin in 1846. His family moved to County Antrim following his mother's death in 1873. In his teens Casement spent much time with his cousins in Liverpool and in 1881 began work with a shipping company in the city. In 1884 he left for the Congo region of central Africa, then controlled by King Leopold II of Belgium, and worked in a variety of roles related to the exploration of the area (trade and transport), as well as lay missionary work. In 1892 he was recruited to the British colonial service and served in various parts of Africa over the

next decade. Casement's damning 1904 report on human rights abuses in the Congo Free State led to Leopold relinquishing his personal holdings in Africa.

In 1906 Roger Casement was posted to Brazil and in 1911 was knighted for his work in exposing the abuse and exploitation of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon region by rubber companies. He was increasingly a committed Irish nationalist, who connected Ireland's cause with the international struggle against imperialism and exploitation. By the time he resigned from the British consular service in 1913, he had established far-flung networks of support for the Irish freedom struggle.

Casement soon became an organiser for the Irish Volunteers. He spoke at numerous Volunteer gatherings in late 1913-early 1914, especially in Ulster, and in July 1914 travelled to the US to raise money for the organisation. He helped organise the landing of German guns at Howth on 26 July 1914 and travelled to Germany in October 1914, where he would remain until April 1916. He made a failed attempt to raise an Irish Brigade of prisoners of war in Germany in late 1915 and early 1916, and subsequently concentrated on producing propaganda against Britain.

He organised the German arms shipment on the *Aud* for the rebellion of 1916, despite regarding the planned rising as a doomed enterprise. He returned to Ireland aboard a German U-boat and was to rendezvous with the *Aud* in Tralee Bay. The *Aud* mission was aborted and Casement was arrested on Banna Strand on Good Friday 1916. He was tried for high treason in London and found guilty. Before his trial and failed appeal, the British had circulated diaries that revealed Casement's homosexuality in an effort to blacken his name. On 3 August 1916 he was hanged at Pentonville Prison and buried in the grounds. His remains were returned to Ireland in 1965 for burial at Glasnevin cemetery, following a state funeral.