

# The Women of 1916 who were imprisoned in Ship Street Barracks



Helena Molony explains why women got involved in 1916 and the revolutionary movement

**' Irishwomen pledged to fight for the complete separation of Ireland from England, and the re-establishment of her ancient culture.'**

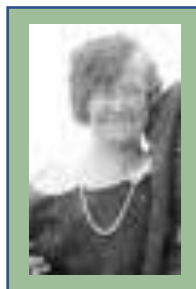
Helena Molony  
Republican,  
Feminist and  
Labour Activist

The Connolly and Norgrove families were examples of republican families where all the members were involved in the fighting



Katie Barrett  
nee Connolly  
Irish Citizen army

Katie fought along side her brothers Sean, Matthew, George and Eamonn. Sean died within hours of the start of the rising.



Annie Grange,  
nee Norgrove  
Irish citizen army

Annie fought alongside her sister Emily, while her father George and brother Fred fought in the GPO

## Word Search

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army  
barracks  
bullets  
captain  
casualty  
City Hall  
culture

Dublin Castle  
fight  
freedom  
gun  
Ireland  
liberty  
lieutenant

military  
organise  
rifle  
republic  
struggle  
women  
volunteers

# The morning of the 24<sup>th</sup> April 1916

Helena Molony describes the preparations as they leave Liberty Hall

Draw the men and women marching along Dame Street and arriving at City Hall

Connolly gave out revolvers to our girls, saying: "Don't use them except in the last resort". There were nine girls in our party, going to the Castle. We were instructed to go to Dublin Castle, under Captain Seán Connolly. We were to attack the Castle. It was a very wise move. It was expected that the psychological effect of attacking Dublin Castle, the citadel of foreign rule for seven hundred years, would be considerable when the news spread through the country.



# The first shot is fired, killing a policeman James O'Brien. The 1916 Rising has begun

12:15 pm

Helena Molony tells of the killing of a policeman James O'Brien

We went right up to the Castle Gate, up the narrow street. Just then, a police Sergeant came out and, seeing our determination, he thought it was a parade, and that it probably would be going up Ship Street. When Connolly went to go past him, the Sergeant put out his arm; and Connolly shot him dead. When the military guard saw that it was serious, he pulled the gates to.

The women of 1916 were soldiers and nurses. What would they have needed to bring on the day?

- bandages
- coat
- notepaper
- gun
- hat
- pen
- bullets
- apron
- jewellery
- boots
- saucepan
- teapot
- sandwiches
- bombs
- money
- stew

2:30 pm

Firing breaks out between snipers on both sides  
Dr Kathleen Lynn describes the death of the rebel Sean Connolly

It was a beautiful day, the sun was hot and we were not long there when we noticed Sean Connolly coming towards us, walking upright, although we had been advised to crouch and take cover as much as possible. We suddenly saw him fall mortally wounded by a sniper's bullet from the Castle. First aid was useless. He died almost immediately; that, I think, was in the early afternoon. Jinny Shanahan whispered an Act of Contrition in his ear.



The Clock tower in Dublin Castle over looks City Hall.  
It was from here that a sniper hit Sean Connolly

# Sean Connolly was dead. His sister Kathleen and brother Matthew fight on.

3:00 pm

Annie Norgrove continues the account of Easter Monday

After Sean was killed I was sent down to the Hall, one of the men was wounded, Tommy Coyle was his name, and I was left in the hall, with him until after the hall was attacked

6:00 pm

Jinny Shanahan describes the moment when Dublin Castle opened fire on City Hall

We were in it all day up to 6 o'clock and then the big attack opened on us and the troops came up and the attack lasted about two hours. They broke into the building and took us prisoners.


Helena Molony rushed to the GPO with a note to looking for help

Secret code

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
20	26	23	10	19	2	11	21	9	18	3	12	1	8	17	4	13	16	7	24	5	14	25	22	15	6

Using this secret code, what do you think the note said

25	19		20	16	19		5	8	10	19	16		2	9	16	19
7	19	8	10			1	17	16	19		24	16	17	17	4	7
5	16	11	19	8	24	12	15									



This is the view of the Justice statue at the castle gate that the rebels in City Hall would have seen.

Justice has her back to the people.

Why?



# "Surrender in the name of the King"

The occupation of City hall lasted about 12 hours. After midnight, British soldiers broke a window and entered City Hall.

## Dr Kathleen Lynn describes what happened

I was suddenly told by a voice in the dark to put up my hands, which I did. I was asked by an officer who was there. I said some women and a wounded man. I found out afterwards that men were there too, but I did not know it at the time. When I told him I was a doctor, he thought I had just come in to attend to the wounded. I informed him that I belonged to the Citizen Army which surprised him very much.

## Helena Molony remembered Annie Norgrove's words

At this point I felt a pluck on my arm, and our youngest girl, Annie Norgrove - there are three or four sisters of them - said to me: "Miss Molony, Miss Molony, we are not going to give in? Mr. Connolly said we were not to surrender". She was terrified, but there was no surrender about her.

## Jinny Shanahan's story

Apparently, as Jinny and the other girls told me, the troops poured up the stairs and came in to where the girls were. It would never occur to them, of course, that they were women soldiers. Actually, the women in the Citizen Army were not first-aiders, but did military work, except where it suited them to be first-aiders. Even before the Russian Army had women soldiers, the Citizen Army had them. The British officers thought these girls had been taken prisoner by the rebels. They asked them: "Did they do anything to you? Were they kind to you? How many are up here?" Jinny Shanahan - quick enough - answered: "No, they did not do anything to us. There are hundreds upstairs - big guns and everything". She invented such a story that they thought there was a garrison up on the roof - with the result that they did delay, and took precautions.

Why do the women not want to surrender?

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# The women were marched to Ship Street Barracks at the back of Dublin Castle



Dr Kathleen Lynn remembers ships biscuits and oranges

We were the best part of a week in Ship Street.

The first day, we had quite a good dinner. After that, the food got slacker and slacker until, in the end, we were getting ship's biscuits and water. That was our diet for several days. I think we were about eight days there. The old military sergeant advised us that, if we moistened a cloth with water and rolled the biscuits in it, it would be easier to eat them, and we did that. He was really a kind old boy. When the military were able to go around a bit, some of them broke into one of the houses nearby; and the sergeant came in one evening with his pockets full of oranges which he gave us. We thought we had never tasted anything so delicious as these oranges.

We slept on what they called biscuits. They were not biscuits. They were like little mattresses in sections, about three of which would be long enough to lie on. We had dusty grey blankets which were all crawling with lice. I never slept during the time I was there. I could not. The scratching was not so bad in the daytime but in the night-time it was perfectly awful.

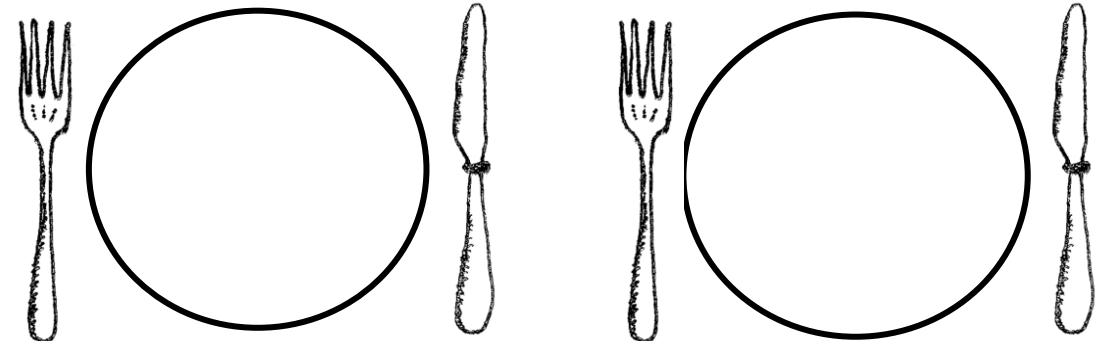
Listen to the voice of Emily Norgrove talking about their time in Ship Street Barracks:

<https://1916.rte.ie/women-in-the-rising/dr-lynn-kicked-up-murder/>

Recorded in RTE in 1966

Draw their first meal in Ship Street Barracks

Draw their last meal in Ship Street Barracks



# Imprisoned for the cause of Irish Freedom

All the women who fought in City Hall and were imprisoned in Ship Street Barracks were soldiers of the Irish Citizen Army. They were never charged with any offences and had no trials.



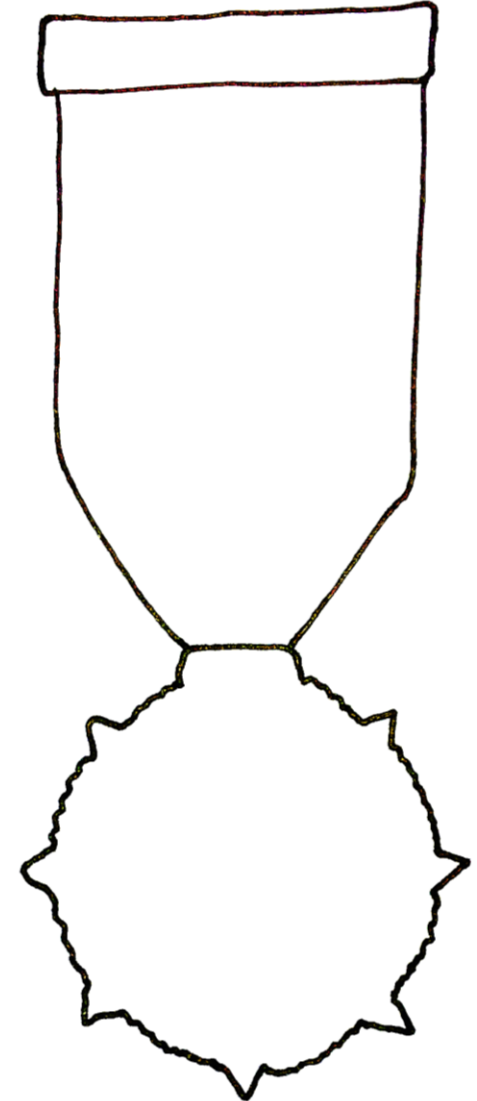
The women spent a week in Ship Street Barracks. They were marched to Richmond Barracks and later to Kilmainham Gaol. While imprisoned in an old disused wing of Kilmainham Gaol they heard the executions of the 1916 leaders, gun shots that must have chilled them to the bone.

Elizabeth 'Bessie', Annie, Katie, Brigid Davis, Brigid Brady, Emily and Jinny were released from prison between the 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> May 1916.

Dr Kathleen Lynn was deported to England. Unlike many of the leaders of the rebellion, she was not imprisoned, but worked with a doctor near Bath in England.

Helena Molony was transferred to Mountjoy prison and then removed to the England. She spent time in Lewes and Aylesbury jails before being released on Christmas Eve 1916.

Design a Medal  
for the women who fought in 1916



# What happened to the Ship Street women after the 1916 Rising



Dr Kathleen Lynn

Kathleen was 42 years old in 1916. She was a life long suffragette, socialist and republican. After her release from service in England, she continued her republican activities and was active in the War of Independence. She was elected as Sinn Fein TD in 1923, but abstained from taking her seat in accordance with the party policy. She left the Sinn Fein party in 1927 in frustration at their refusal to adopt policies of social reform. In 1919, she founded St Ultans Hospital for Infants. She died in 1955 and was buried with full military honours in recognition of her role in the revolutionary movement.



Helena Molony

Helena was 33 years old in 1916. She was a life long republican and labour activist. After her release from prison she continued her republican activities. In 1917 she took part in the 1916 anniversary demonstrations and protested on the roof of Liberty Hall. In 1919, she became a district Justice in the Republican Courts. Throughout the War of Independence she carried arms, took part in intelligence work and publicity. She took the anti-treaty side in the Civil War and was active in procuring and concealing arms and harbouring republican soldiers.



Jinny Shanahan

Jinny was 19 years old in 1916. Following her release from Kilmainham gaol, she continued her republican activities. In 1917 as part of the 1916 anniversary demonstrations, she hoisted tri-colour flags in positions that had been held in 1916 and protested on the roof of Liberty Hall. During the War of Independence her home was used to shelter soldiers, arms and confidential papers. She took the anti-treaty side in the civil war.



Annie Norgrove

Annie was 27 years old in 1916. Following her release from prison, she continued her republican activities in the War of Independence by carrying arms and ammunition across Dublin to her father's house. Like her family, she took the anti-treaty side in the Civil War.



Emily Norgrove

Emily Norgrove was 18 years old in 1916. After her release from Kilmainham Gaol, she returned to her parents home. She continued her involvement in the ICA in 1918 and during the early part of the War of Independence. She carried guns, performed First Aid and collected funds to support the rebellion. She retired from the ICA in March 1920 and married fellow republican John Hanratty. He continued the republican struggle and took the anti-treaty side in the Civil war





Katie Barrett, nee Connolly

Kathleen was 29 years old in 1916. After her release from Kilmainham Gaol, she resumed her republican activities. She distributed National Aid funds to republican prisoner's dependents. She was also mobilised for all republican funerals. In 1918 she was involved in election work and the campaign against conscription. In 1920, she was on duty outside Mountjoy jail for the families of executed prisoners and hunger strikers. She also carried arms for the republicans, acted as a courier and posted bills supporting the cause. In 1922-23, she was on the anti-treaty side and acted as a courier between London and Dublin. She was arrested and interned in Mountjoy Jail from the March until July 1923.



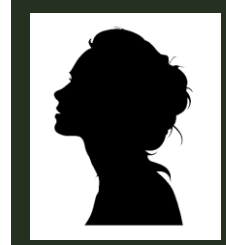
Brigid O'Duffy,  
nee Davis

Brigid was 25 years old in 1916. After her release from prison, she continued to work with Dr Lynn. In 1917, she took part in the Connolly Anniversary Demonstration by protesting on the roof of Liberty Hall with Helena Malony, and Jinny Shanahan. They were forcibly removed but not arrested. From 1919, she continued to work with Dr Lynn until 1921. She is remembered by Helena Malony as cool and courageous under fire.



Brigid Brady

Brigid was 20 years old in 1916. She had been involved in making bandages, first aid kits and bombs. After her release from prison she returned to work in Jacob's biscuit factory. After 1916, Brigid's final connection to the republican movement seems to have been attendance at Thomas Ashe's funeral in 1917.



Elizabeth 'Bessie'  
Kelly, nee Lynch

Elizabeth was 20 years old in 1916. After her release from Kilmainham Gaol, she continued her republican activities in 1917. She was arrested for hoisting a tri-colour flag at her home in 1917. By the end of 1917, she had ceased her republican activities and moved to Glasgow.

Do you want to find out more

This story has been reconstructed from witness statements and pension applications in the military archives.

If you want to find out about the 1916 Rising, check out:

Military Archives  
[www.militaryarchives.ie](http://www.militaryarchives.ie)

National Museum at Collins Barracks 1916 exhibition  
[www.museum.ie](http://www.museum.ie)

Richmond Barracks  
[www.richmondbarracks.ie](http://www.richmondbarracks.ie)

Kilmainham Gaol  
[www.kilmainhamgaolmuseum.ie](http://www.kilmainhamgaolmuseum.ie)

RTE  
Listen to the voices of the women of 1916  
<https://1916.rte.ie/women-in-the-rising/>