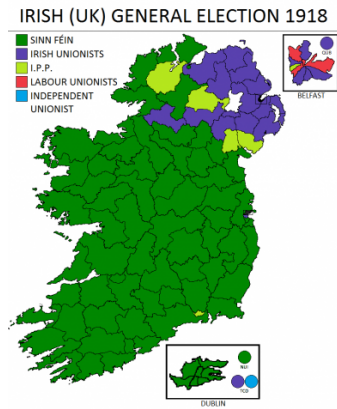


0. THE BLACK and TANS - Story Preface

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The 1918 national election, in Ireland, caused leaders of Sinn Féin to declare (during January of 1919) that the newly elected Members of Parliament should serve their term not in Westminster (in the British Parliament) but in Ireland's own Parliament (called *Dail Eireann*). This image depicts the results of that election.

In January of 1917, a group of Irish nationalists known as Sinn Féin (meaning "Ourselves Alone" in Gaeilge) were quickly gaining ground over the more moderate Irish Parliamentary Party. Later that year, Sinn Féin's leader - Eamon de Valera - began to push for Ireland to become what the Easter Rising leaders had declared the year before: an independent republic.

Forming an Irish Parliament - called the *Dail Eireann* in Gaeilge - Sinn Féin leaders met at Dublin's Mansion House beginning in January of 1919. Unilaterally declaring Ireland a Republic, the Dail Eireann elected De Valera as its president. In September of that year, the British government declared the new Irish Parliament illegal.

The Irish Volunteers, at about this time, changed their name to the Irish Republican Army (IRA). They were not afraid to use violence and kill, or wound, numerous Irish police officers.

Amidst growing sectarian pressures inside Ireland, the Royal Irish Constabulary needed help. Recruits from Britain arrived without normal uniforms. Because they often wore khaki-colored clothes, these men were called the "Black and Tans." They were not friendly to republican-leaning Irishmen.

The government perceived it needed even more help, so it created a special auxiliary force of Irishmen who had served as officers in World War One. They, together with the Black and Tans, fought the IRA in a seemingly endless cycle of attacks and cruel reprisals.

As Sinn Féin increased its elected power base, sectarian violence continued to escalate. Once nationalists like Michael Fitzgerald and Terence McSwiney, the Lord Mayor of Cork, died of hunger strikes in prison, Sinn Féin had martyrs.

The "Government of Ireland Act" was passed on the 23rd of December, 1920 and took effect on May 3, 1921. It partitioned the country, creating two separate Irish parliaments - one in Belfast (for six principally Protestant Ulster counties with ties to Britain) and the other in Dublin (for the remaining principally Catholic twenty-six counties). The Emerald Isle would thus have an Anglo government in the north and an Irish government in the south.

An Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed on December 6, 1921. Irish nationalists who approved the agreement fervently believed it was the best deal they could put together at the time. Not everyone on their side agreed.

The treaty called for the twenty-six counties to be an independent Irish Free State. The six northern counties - Derry, Antrim, Down, Armagh, Tyrone and Fermanagh - would be part of the United Kingdom. After intense debates, the Dail Eireann accepted the treaty by a close vote: 64 to 57.

Some nationalists who wanted Ireland to remain one country were beside themselves. They accused treaty supporters of treachery.

Previous insurgent violence paled in comparison to attacks after the treaty. A “Special Powers Act” allowed the government to set up special courts which could detain suspects indefinitely - and without trial. The courts could also impose stiff jail terms or the death penalty.

Civil war was in the making. It would not just be a fight between north and south or Protestant against Catholic. In a shocking turn of events, the treaty formed the backdrop of Irish Catholics killing Irish Catholics.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-BLACK-and-TANS-Wind-that-Shakes-the-Barley>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-BLACK-and-TANS-Wind-that-Shakes-the-Barley>

Media Stream



Irish Nationalist - Michael Fitzgerald

Image online, courtesy [The Forgotten Hunger Strikes website](#).

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TERENCE MACSWINEY
(Late Lord Mayor of Cork)

Irish Nationalist - Terence McSwiney

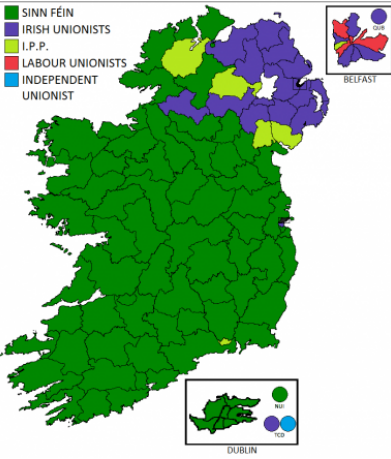
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IRISH (UK) GENERAL ELECTION 1918



THE BLACK and TANS

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