

CIVIL WAR – “THE TROUBLES” – IN SLIGO TOWN 1921-1923

A conference between Ireland and Great Britain was called for October 1921 to agree on the future administration of Ireland. A treaty was agreed and signed on the 6th of December 1921, but the proposed system of government was to cause Irishman to fight Irishman in a civil war. Sligo Corporation passed a resolution in favour of the treaty by 14 votes to 5 on 29th December 1921. A provisional government was formed on the ratification of the treaty in 1st January 1922 by a narrow margin of 64 to 57 by the Dail. Eamon DeValera the national leader of the Anti-treaty voices was supported locally by Liam Pilkington, Frank Carty and Seamus Devins.

A photographic record of events in Sligo town.



Prominent Anti-treaty activists including Mayor M. Nevin 1922-24



Prominent Pro-treaty activists including Mayor T. Fitzpatrick 1925-26

16th June 1923

Eamon DeValera visited Sligo on 16th of June 1923 to hold a major public meeting and also visited the Ursuline Convent. He was accompanied by the three republican candidates elected in the Sligo-East Mayo elections in May, Ferran, Carty and Devins.



DeValera at front door of Ursuline Convent



Nuns placing flowers on DeValera's car

1st July 1923



The No. 1 Police Barracks burned by Anti-treaty forces before evacuation.

6th July 1923



Wine Street Barracks attacked by Pro-treaty forces, using *The Ballinalee* Armoured Car to clear the barracks of Anti-treaty forces. *The Ballinalee* can be seen outside the Harp and Shamrock Hotel at the strategic junction of Stephens St., The Mall and Bridge St.

13th July 1922

The Armoured Car, *The Ballinalee* was ambushed and taken by Anti-treaty forces at Dooney Rock. Four Pro-treaty soldiers killed, and above shows *The Ballinalee* under Anti-treaty forces' control with driver C. McLynn. The Rolls-Royce Armoured Car was also renamed *The Lough Gill* by placing on it the brass name plate of a Sligo, Leitrim and Northern Counties Railway locomotive.



Commandant Sean Adair, Pro-Treaty, killed in 1922 at Dooney Rock



The Ballinalee Armoured Car

14th July 1922

The armoured car was used by Anti-treaty forces to take control of a number of major sights in town. The Harp and Shamrock Hotel (HQ), Ramseys Hotel, Ulster Bank, and properties in High St. and Market St. The Vickers gun of the armoured car was used to great advantage. The Court House and barracks were held by Pro-treaty forces. Bishop Coyne stayed in the court house to prevent more fighting. Two local men were shot at the Green Fort and the Customs House was burnt down during curfew that night.



Bishop Coyne in negotiations with Com. Scanlon



Bishop Coyne reading terms offered by the Anti-treaty side to Pro-treaty side.

On the 18th of September 1922 a major offensive by General Mc Keon of the Pro-treaty forces lead to a serious fight on Benbulbin. Six Anti-treaty fighters were killed, Devins, Benson, McNeill, Langan, Banks and Carroll to be later called "Sligo's Noble Six".

The photos of the funerals of Devins, Carroll and Banks show the numbers attending. McNeill was not buried in Sligo, while the bodies of Benson and Langan were not found for another two weeks and then buried in Sligo.

22nd September 1922



Funeral of Devins, Carroll and Banks on Lower Pearse Road



The funeral progressing up to the cemetery at the junction of Pearse and Mail Coach Roads



The Cortège reaching the top of Pearse Road (The Line), just turning for Sligo Cemetery. Please note that there are no houses on either side of the Line.

11th January 1923



A group of 50 men, mine and sprinkle the building with petrol. The explosion rocked the town and lead to the complete destruction of Sligo's Rail Head. Seven steam locomotives were coupled together and then sent down the line to the goods store and their destruction.



DISTRIBUTION OF SLIGO RAILWAY STATION AND BUILDING STOCK BY INCENDIARY.

18th September 1923



A major parade to commemorate Sligo's Noble Six

