

## IRELAND: FIGHT FOR FREEDOM PART 2

by Richie Mullaney

<http://naukabezgranic.pl/podcasty/ireland/>

Welcome back! At the end of part 1, I was talking about the Irish over in America, Ireland had its own little Parliament and the year we're talking about is about 1870. This is when we had a guy called Charles Stewart Parnell and he was over in the British House of Commons and he was fighting for something called Home Rule. Home Rule would basically give a lot more power and a lot more control in the country allowing us to grow as population and to enrich our culture once more with our Gaelic, ancient culture.

However, up in the north of Ireland the Home Rule bill would have threatened many people who were loyal to the Crown; they believed that Home Rule was a betrayal, and they were willing to fight for King and Country, to ensure the Home Rule wouldn't be passed in the North of Ireland, they opposed any idea of an Irish Republic.

Over in America, in Manhattan, the Fenian Brotherhood had started. The Fenian Brotherhood was a group of free rebels, inspired by the American's way of thinking and they wanted to see Ireland become what America was at the time, the land of the free, a land where you could fulfil your dreams, where you who not oppressed.

Over in Dublin a similar group of people set up the IRB, the Irish Republic Brotherhood, and they wanted to see much more than a Home Rule bill, they wanted to see an Irish Republic. The leaders of the IRB would become the leaders of the 1916 rising. Now the first man I'll talk about is John Devoy, he was over in America and the leader of the Fenian Brotherhood, and he got the ball of revolution rolling. In the 1880s there was the dynamite campaign, a form of sabotage where Irish men would sneak to Britain and place dynamite in strategic positions. This was the first time the British Empire had been attacked on its own soil in hundreds of years, and where landmarks had suffered significant damage. This quite successful and John Devoy was one of the bombers and planners, later on. He captured and placed into a penal jail in Britain, however he escaped quite quickly and back to Ireland and then to America. There was also Thomas Clarke, another one of these bombers and he was also arrested, but served 15

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years in penal jail. So the Fenian Brotherhood had essentially kicked off and got a little violent with Guerrilla warfare, acting from afar.

Back in Ireland, the Home Rule bill now passed the southern section of Ireland, not the north, were trying to instigate an Irish Parliament so politically it was quite exciting. Up in the North, they were secretly arming themselves in case they needed to defend the border of north against Irish that were trying to enforce the Home Rule bill. Moving into the 1885-1895, what was happening; there was definitely seas of change going on. People's mentality was changing, a more socialist way of thinking. People were starting to question whether the British Empire was right.

Over in Congo, Africa there was Sir Roger Casement who became quite famous because he abolished slavery in Congo under the reign of King Leopold. Now Casement came back to Ireland in 1904 and later on played an essential role in the 1916 rising. His popularity, his good name and his kind heart proved essential in the recruitment process for the IRB. But while men like Casement, Devoy and Thomas Clarke would prove essential in Ireland's fight for freedom, the energy from a younger generation of men and women would also be required.

One of the most essential roles was a woman called Constance Markievicz, who was Irish born and married to a Pole, Casimir Markievicz who was a Polish artist, and later on a playwright. Now Constance would have been in the upper classes on Dublin and would have been a socialite but once she saw the poverty, that was all over Dublin, the slums, the tenement housing her response is both heart breaking and heart warning;

*"The affections I saw in 1885, changed the course of my life. Transforming me from a carefree society gal to a woman of said purpose. I was determined to do my share to free Ireland from the British Empire"*

*A letter from Constance Markievicz*

Ref. RTÉ 1916 Rising Documentary 2016

There are some beautiful witness of Constance Markievicz selling her jewellery and house to give help to poor and needy. She went on to join the IRB, she went on to be a leader in the 1916 Rising but before she did that she was hugely involved with the artistic side and cultural revolution that was happening around Dublin. W.B Yeats, Constance Markievicz, Padraig Pearse and Thomas MacDonagh; these were people who opened the

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National Theatre of Ireland, the Abbey Theatre in 1904 and they were the young energy of men and women that were needed to band together and unite to fight for that freedom, for that Republic and that started in 1905. These actors, actresses and playwrights felt that the Irish People needed to have an ideal that they could fight for. So, this cultural revolution of the Abbey Theatre, and Constance Markievicz and Padraig Pearse producing plays of ancient and old, of heroes and stories which all Irish people, would know through their families gave the people that ideal to fight for, reminding them that they are Irish, not British, part of a rich ancient culture!  
Moving into 1907, John Devoy sends Thomas Clarke back to Ireland with a mission - to prepare the ground for a Revolution.

Note: This is spoken English and spoken grammar, the script reflects the story telling style.