

Bray 1919-1922 civil war

In the House of Commons on 20th October 1920 an outline of outrages carried out in Ireland between 1st January 1919 to 18th October 1920 were read into the record and included Courthouses destroyed 64, Royal Irish Constabulary 513, Raids on Mail cars 741, Raids on Coastguard stations and lighthouses 40, Policemen killed 117, Policemen wounded 185, Military killed 23, Military wounded 71, Civilians killed 32, Civilians Wounded 83, Private residence destroyed 148.

Many of these outrages were carried out in County Wicklow or had a connection with the county.

On **09/04/1920** Sergeant John Edward Brady died from gunshot wounds received when the Barracks at Rush County Dublin was attacked. John Brady was 50 years old and a native of Bray County Wicklow.

In April 1920 Blessington Courthouse was destroyed and the quarter sessions of the court was transferred to Bray. This caused hardship on persons from Blessington who were making an application before the court of excise licence, dog licence or civil actions. They had to make the journey to Bray Courthouse.

On the 16th December 1920 a Military Court of Inquiry was established in lieu of an inquest

There are two records held in the British National Archives at Kew in London with reference to Bray area.

On 26th November 1920 a Peter O'Rourke from Monastery, Enniskerry, Bray County Wicklow fell from a tree at Tinnehinch, Enniskerry and died, his inquest was held under the Court of Inquiry.

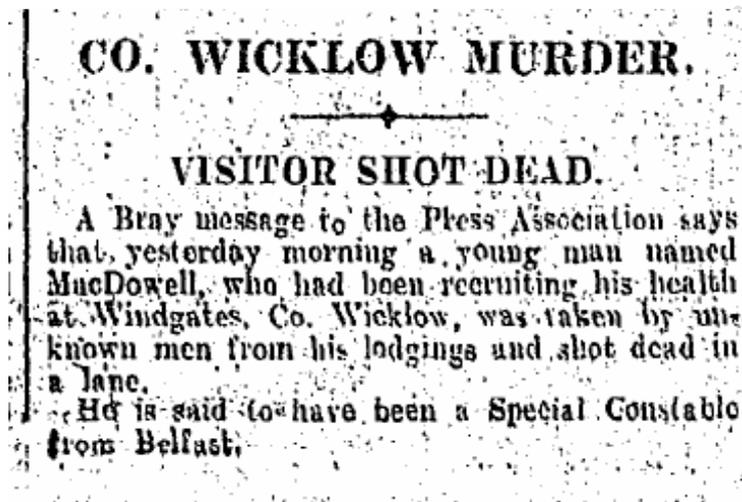
The second case was the possession of firearm without a licence on 9th May 1921, Matthew Farrell of Roundwood, Bray County Wicklow was prosecuted.

There are numerous records of searches carried out by the police in Bray on the 3rd December 1920. The police suspected that persons were storing guns and ammunition in Pawnbroker establishments. In the afternoon of the 3rd December the police visited 38 Main Street a pawnbrokers established by the late Christopher Murray. The manager Mr Leo McKeown and Messers John Hyland and Thomas Mooney both assistants were placed under arrest and taken to the local police barracks. The pawnbrokers of H.T. O'Carroll opposite the Police Barracks was also searched. Mr McNamara an assistant in the shop was searched. The police also visited his lodgings on the Florence Road. Messers James Hoey, Stanislaus McConty and James Tier were arrested in their homes on the previous evening in their homes. On the 3rd December the police transferred the men to a Dublin Jail.

Both the police and Sinn Feiners raided. Civilians took a gun from the house of Mr Rafferty of Rathmore Terrace, Bray. The houses of Mr James Cuddy a former commissioner of the peace was visited, and also Mr Talty's Hotel in Kilmacanogue, but no arms were found in either house. The military took a number of sporting guns from a party of gentlemen who have leased sporting rights from Lord Powerscourt. A report that civilians raided the home of Lord Powerscourt was denied by his estate agent Mr Chatterton. The Military took a gun from Lord Monck's butler.

The Military and police established a cordon at Bray Bridge on 18th November 1920 and searched all vehicles and pedestrians that crossed over the River Dargle.

. On the morning of the 22nd of June 1922 a young man named Robert MacDowell (McDowell) aged 25 who was staying with his wife at his parent's house in Bray County Wicklow was taken from the house by unknown men and shot dead. It was reported the MacDowell was a Special Constable from Belfast. He was also employed as a butler for a Mr. Watson at Beechpark House in Lurgan. MacDowell was born in Belfast and had served with the British Army during WW1. MacDowell's parents had lived in Bray for over 17 years.



Though he was not a local man, his name was nevertheless recorded on the War Memorial in Kilbride Church, Bray as a casualty. His name is also recorded on the memorial in Dollingstown, and on the Ulster Constabulary memorial in Staffordshire. "Dedicated to the memory of the Ulster Constabulary officers who lost their lives in the line of duty."



The inscription on the Dollingstown Memorial.

The death of another innocent man took place at Brighton Cottages just off the Main Street in Bray in May 1921. Laurence Brien from Glenealy in County Wicklow was a labourer in the town and was staying with his sister and brother-in-law. Troops arrived at the Town Hall just before 10pm on the 16th May 1921 and fired a volley of shots and announced curfew was starting. Laurence was standing at the front door of his house with his brother-in-law. Laurence fell to the ground suffering from a gunshot wound. Dr Raverty and Fr Colohan arrived within a few minutes. Laurence was conveyed to a Dublin Hospital where he died three days later. He was buried in his native Glenealy.

On the 9th May 1921 the Dublin to Wexford mail car was held up at Kilcrouney. The military arrived on the scene. They stopped and searched a number of men on the Dargle Road close to the Sinn Féin offices. They also searched men on Bray Main Street and in the grounds of the Holy Redeemer Church. Some men were leaving the church after mass on Saturday morning and when they saw the military approach, the men stayed in the porch of the church, but were searched. At 11am Mass on Sunday morning Fr Colohan the parish priest stated that the military had no right to enter the precincts of a church.

Compensation claims were submitted to the courts by a number of business and private individuals for the loss of property. Mrs Hodson of Hollybrook claimed for the loss of two motor vehicles. Thomas Miller for the loss of an ambulance and motor car, The National Bread Company claimed for cash stolen from a van driver on the Killarney Road, Bray. The loss of Draper, footwear and foodstuffs was claimed by numerous shops in the town. A claim was also submitted for the Court House in Bray that was destroyed by fire. The hall used Orange Order in Bray on the Dublin Road was destroyed in April 1922 and its secretary filed a claim for damages.