

Murals in Northern Ireland 3 - republican

'Ireland in Schools'

			
<p>01 Rossville St, Derry, 1994 Boy with gas mask and petrol bomb during Battle of Bogside, 1969.</p>	<p>02 Crossmaglen, South Armagh, 1993 'When I grow up I want to be a barrack buster.' 2nd Battalion, Irish Republican Army.</p>	<p>03 Off Springfield Park, Co. Tyrone, 1993 'Tíocfaidh ár lá' (Our day will come) in form of Armalite rifle.</p>	<p>04 Rossville St, Derry, 1981</p>
			
<p>05 Beechmount Ave, Belfast, 1990 'Free Ireland', with manacled hand, Easter lily, shields of four provinces of Ireland, and burning General Post Office, Caisc (Easter) 1916.</p>	<p>06 Springhill Ave, Belfast, 1992 Armed republicans. '800 years of resistance.'</p>	<p>07 Dunville St, Belfast, 1994 Burnt-out house, British soldiers and women with bin lids during early days of 'the troubles'.</p>	<p>08 Derry, 1994 Commemorating the 25th anniversary of Battle of Bogside, with Red Hand and phoenix flame.</p>
			
<p>09 Derry, picture taken in 1984 'There can be no British solution in Ireland'; British soldiers push a rock uphill past Stormont rule, internment and Bloody Sunday; at H Blocks rock rolls back to crush them, leaving Irish tricolour and Starry plough to wave freely.</p>	<p>10 Rossville St, Derry, 1918 'Get the Brits out'; Britain, with face of Margaret Thatcher, abuses Ireland.</p>	<p>11 Rossville St, Derry, 1995 Time to go for British soldiers, police, judges and capitalists.</p>	<p>12 Belfast, 1999 Armed volunteer kneeling, with, in the background, the Starry Plough flag, first used by the Irish Citizen Army, and the Sunburst flag of the IRA's youth wing. 'Oghlaigh na hÉireann' is the Irish name of the IRA.</p>
			
<p>13 Derry, 1969 Erected following the Battle of the Bogside in 1969, symbolising the area's no go status for British troops.</p>	<p>14 Derry, nd Erected following the Battle of the Bogside in 1969, symbolising the area's no go status for British troops, with the 'Green Ribbon' of Saoirse, a republican organisation campaigning on behalf of republican paramilitary prisoners.</p>	<p>15 Fahan St, Derry, 1992 Portrait of 14 victims of British Army paratroop regiment, Bloody Sunday, 1972.</p>	<p>16 Sevastopol St, Belfast, 1990 'The spirit of freedom'; bust of Bobby Sands, quotation from his writing and lark - a favourite bird of Sands.</p>



17 Derry, 1981
Patsy O'Hara, OC of the Irish National Liberation Army from Derry, the fourth hunger striker to die.



18 Rockmount St, Belfast, 1981
'Blessed are those who hunger for justice'; dying hunger striker with rosary beads, H of H Block and Blessed Virgin Mary.



19 Racecourse Rd, Shantallow, Derry, 1995
Royal Ulster Constabulary member, victim of plastic bullet, and lark in barbed wire. 'Peace means an end to all killing. Demilitarise now.'



20 Crossmaglen, South Armagh, 1995
Prisoners, male and female. 'Saoirse' (freedom). 'Release political prisoners now.'



21 Rossville St, Derry, 1982
Portrait of Stephen McConomy, 11 years old, killed by a plastic bullet: 'They call the killing of Stephen McConomy civil order'.



22 Lecky Rd, Derry, 1995
Armed Royal Ulster Constabulary member wearing sash of the Orange Order, with demand 'Disband the RUC'. Left: 'Free the Derry 3'; right: 'Someday, very soon, there will be the brightest ever, shining new star in space. It will be the planet earth. For Ireland shall be finally free.'



23 Beechmount Ave, Belfast, 1990
Union Jack and head and skull of loyalist assassin.



24 Ardoyne Ave, Belfast, 1997
Highlighting the issue of Orange Order marches, this mural shows the nationalist population being trampled down by the Royal Ulster Constabulary, who hold up their riot shields to allow Orange marchers to proceed.



25 Springhill Ave. Belfast, 1987
Memorial to eight members of Irish Republican Army killed by Special Air Services Unit of British Army in Loughgall, with Celtic cross and shields and shields of four provinces of Ireland.



26 Short Strand, Belfast, 1995
Busts of local republicans killed by loyalists, Éire (the mythological queen), Proclamation of the Republic (1916), and words of poem by Bobby Sands. 'I measc laochra na nGael go raibh a nainmeacha' (Their names are among the heroes of the Gaels).



27 Lenadoon Ave, Belfast, 1996
The dying warrior Cuchulainn is the central figure in the mural commemorating Irish Republican Army members from the local area who have been killed, with the four shields representing the four provinces of Ulster. See also note at end.



28 St James Rd, Belfast, 1984
'I nDil Cuimne' (in loving memory); mythological warrior Cuchulainn dying upright with shield and sword, with plaque containing the names of local Irish Republican Army members killed in action.



29 Armagh, 1991
Cuchulainn, four provinces of Ireland and 'Mise Éire mór mo glaoir' (I am Ireland, great is my glory).



30 Chamberlain St, Derry, 1985
Celtic warrior and symbols, with words of poem by Patrick Pearse, 'Mise Éire' (I am Ireland) and sunburst. See note at end for text of poem.



31 Belfast, 1972
Early republican graffiti, celebrating the republican tradition.



32 Derry, 1991
Saluting 75th anniversary of Easter Rising, with armed Irish Republican Army Volunteer, and phoenix flame.



33 New Lodge Rd, Belfast, 1993
Memorial to dead members of Irish Republican Army with Celtic cross, armed republican, Cuchulainn, Easter lily, and sunburst.



34 Iveagh Drive, Belfast, 1982
'From the graves of patriot men and women spring living nations'; portrait of Patrick Pearse.



35 Monagh Rd, Belfast, 1988
Commemoration of Easter Rising, 1916, with (centre) Cuchulainn, mythical Celtic warrior, dying upright, portraits of the seven signatories of the Proclamation of Independence (1916), and words of poem 'Mise Éire' (I am Ireland) by Patrick Pearse - see note at end.



36 Whiterock Rd, Belfast, 1991
'Éirí amach na casca 1916-1991' (Easter Rising); 75th anniversary of Easter Rising, with portraits of signatories of Proclamation of Independence, phoenix rising from the flames and sunburst.



37 Ardoyne Ave, Belfast, 1997
Commemorating 150th anniversary of 'An Gorta Mór', the Great Hunger. Horse and cart carrying away the dead, with starving children. 'They buried us without shroud or coffin' (Seamus Heaney, 'Requiem for the Croppies').



38 New Lodge Rd, Belfast, 1995
Commemorating 150th anniversary of the An Gorta Mór, the Great Hunger.



39 New Lodge Rd, Belfast, 1995
Commemorating 150th anniversary of the Great Famine with Grosse Ile, the Canadian immigrant depot where many migrants died, and poem by Speranza 'Weary people what reap ye?'



40 Beechmount Ave, Belfast, 1995
Commemorating 150th anniversary of the Great Famine - the Great Hunger.



41 Rosnareen Ave, Belfast, 1995
Mural commemorating 150th anniversary of the Great Famine. 'When the potato crop failed causing "the Great Hunger" people watched in despair as shiploads of food were escorted away by British troops ...'



42 Falls Rd, Belfast, 1995
Mural commemorating 150th anniversary of the An Gorta Mór, the Great Hunger, the Great Famine.



43 Falls Rd, Belfast, 1982
'We must grow tough but without ever losing our tenderness'; mural in honour of republican women activists.



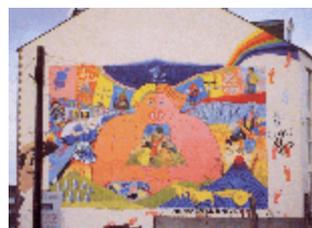
44 Fall Rd, Belfast, 1983
'Solidarity between women in armed struggle'; women militants (from right to left) Palestine Liberation Organisation, Cumanna na mBan (women's section of Irish Republican Army) and Southwest African People's organisation (Namibia), contained within women's symbol.



45 Unit Flats, Belfast, 1989
'Only our river runs free'; Irish dancer with women of various nationalities; almost quoting song favoured by republicans, 'Only our rivers run free'.



46 Falls Rd, Belfast, 1988
Mural to celebrate birthday of Nelson Mandela, 'father of freedom'.



47 Butcher St, Derry, 1991
Doire (Derry)-Managu mural.



48 Beechmount Ave, Belfast, 1983
'For a new Ireland', Sinn Fein election mural demanding 'youth, culture, houses, Brits out, jobs, education for all'.

			
<p>49 Rossville St, Derry, 1993 Sinn Féin election mural. 'Give them that screamin' feeling!'</p>	<p>50 Flax St, Belfast, 1994 Gaelic games - hurling, camogie and football. 'Is treise dúchas 'ná oiliuint' (It is part of our cultural heritage).</p>	<p>51 Flax St, Belfast, 1994 Uileann piper on slopes of Cave Hill. Based on 'The Blind Piper' by Joseph Hegarty.</p>	<p>52 Flax St, Belfast, 1994 'Eire (or Ériu), mythological queen slain in 1698 BC. 'Meon an phobail a thógail tríd an chultúr' (The people's spirit is raised through culture).</p>

Additional notes

Mural 27 - the political and symbolic significance of Cuchulainn

Cuchulainn, the supreme youthful hero of a series of stories that make up the Ulster Cycle of Irish myths, is claimed by both communities in Northern Ireland.

The Ulster Cycle recounts the wars between Ulster and Connaught. The best known stories in this cycle belong to a group known as the 'Cattle Raid of Cooley'. The title may be humdrum but it is very important. It reflects the value put on cattle as spoils of war by the Celtic warrior-aristocracy. Moreover, the bulls in this story are no ordinary bulls.

Cuchulainn becomes a hero because he is the only warrior in Ulster capable of resisting the ambitions of Queen Maeve of Connaught. He died upright, nobly defending Ulster against overwhelming odds. He becomes admired and a symbol because of his self-sacrifice.

The Ulster connection explains why Cuchulainn should become a patron of Ulster Protestant paramilitaries. They see themselves as defending Ulster (or rather Northern Ireland) against the claims of the rest of Ireland (including Connaught).

It is, however, the idea of heroic self-sacrifice that explains why Cuchulainn has become a symbol for Irish nationalists. A famous sculpture was commissioned to commemorate the 1916 Easter Rising - the symbol of sacrifice. The statue depicts the legendary hero of ancient Ireland bravely meeting his death, having tied himself to a stone pillar to fight his foes to the last. It stands in the GPO in Dublin, symbolising the sacrifices made during the Easter rising, when the GPO served as the rebel headquarters. In this best known and most artistic of all 1916 monuments, Christian ideas, legend and revolutionary nationalism come together.

Some veterans of 1916 questioned the suitability of the subject, observing that there was a certain ambiguity in choosing the legendary defender of Ulster as a symbol of nationalist ideology. However, it was deemed to be the most suitable symbol of the event, partly because Patrick Pearse perceived the Cuchulainn legend as embodying 'a true type of Gaelic nationality, full as it is of youthful life and vigour and hope'. The religious feeling invoked by its similarity to the Pieta theme in the pose of the figure also coincided with Pearse's own ideology which fused Christian ideals with revolutionary nationalism.

Murals 30 & 36 - text of Pearse's poem 'Mise Eire'

I am Ireland,
I am older than the Old Woman of Bearra,
Great is my glory,
I who gave birth to Cuchulainn the brave,

Great is my shame,
My own family
Have sold their mother.
I am Ireland, I am lonelier than the Old Woman of Bearra.

Sources & acknowledgements

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