

# The Dublin Castle Records 1798-1926



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### The Dublin Castle Records 1798-1926

The Dublin Castle administration in Ireland was the government of Ireland under English and later British rule, from the twelfth century until 1922, based at Dublin Castle. *Dublin Castle Records, 1798-1926* contains records of the British administration in Ireland prior to 1922, a crucial period which saw the rise of Parnell and the Land War in 1880 through to the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1921. This collection comprises materials from Series CO 904, The National Archives, Kew, UK.

**Date Range: 1798-1926**

**Content: 119,866 images**

**Source Library: The National Archives, Kew, UK**

### Description

Ireland, and its rule, is the subject of immense international controversy, as it has been for several centuries. The Royal Irish Constabulary records, in documenting the fraught relationship between the two countries, vividly recreate British Government policy, with the monthly reports illustrating the response to attempts at social, economic and political reform. The papers also illustrate the methods and motives of Dublin Castle's police system and offer insights into the legal and political inhibitions which, so often restrained the government from interfering with the various private armies. There is much of importance for the student of agrarian unrest and of nationalism, including statistical breakdowns of crime, reports of the economic conditions of tenants and owner-occupiers, tension between farmers and ranchers in the west of Ireland, reports from spies on secret society activity and government monitoring of political organisations.

Most of these papers relate directly or indirectly to the methods adopted by the authorities, using civil and military forces, to combat the efforts of the Nationalist organizations to secure Irish independence. The series contains lengthy memoranda on the various Nationalist movements, including Ribbonism, United Irish League, Sinn Fein, and at the other end of the political spectrum, Ulster Unionists. Many minor societies and organisations are also recorded together with details of leading opposition members. Also included are accounts of judicial proceedings, censorship and the seizure of seditious literature, reports by both police and military, papers relating to the establishment of the Lord Lieutenant's Household, Dublin Metropolitan Police, Public Trustee Office, etc.

A few papers relate to routine civil administration; and there are also files containing information about personalities who figured prominently in the struggle, including Eamon De Valera, Roger Casement, Maud Gonne and Countess Markievicz.



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The series was formed from several superceded series (CO 572, CO 697, CO 698, CO 699); with some additional papers of Brigadier General Sir Ormonde Winter, presented by his widow, and some files discovered in the Commonwealth Relations Office.

The Chief Secretary's Office in Dublin Castle was the central office of the Irish administration serving both the lord lieutenant and the chief secretary. From 1777 to 1819 the office was divided into military and civil branches, each under an under secretary. In 1819 the office of military under secretary lapsed, and in 1832 the three branches were merged. The office was later organised in Administrative and Finance Divisions. From 1904 there was a Land and Works Division which was discontinued in 1911 and its work transferred to the Finance Division.

The office exercised close supervision over certain other Irish departments and conducted the bulk of correspondence with English departments. It was responsible for law and order, had oversight of the Royal Irish Constabulary and the Dublin Metropolitan Police, magistrates, prisoners and convicts, and transmitted the orders of the Irish attorney general (acting as director of public prosecutions) to the police and crown solicitors.

## Among the contents of this archive are:

- Police Reports. Divisional Commissioners' and County Inspectors' monthly confidential reports from January 1892 to December 1897.
- Inspector General's and County Inspectors' monthly confidential reports from January 1898 to December 1913 and January 1914 to September 1921 respectively.
- Files recording outrages against the police and reports from individual counties on criminal offences.
- Public Control and Administration from 1884-1921 including the seizure and censorship of various publications and journals.
- Judicial Proceedings
- Enquiries and Miscellaneous Records from 1872-1926
- Information on various petitions, court appeals and compensation claims
- Royal Irish Constabulary Prime Special Branch files on over 440 individual Sinn Fein and Republican suspects from 1899-1921, including Eamon de Valera and Sir Roger Casement. Each file contains information on an individual suspect, these are presented in alphabetical order

## Features:

- Intuitive searches that deliver organised results
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- Flexible and accessible for the 24-hour researcher
- Subject-specific collections support multidisciplinary research in history, political science, hard science, ethnic studies and more
- Active publishing schedule, with multiple collections added annually
- Highly targeted at 5,000 to 200,000 pages per collection