

# CIVIL WAR IN MAYO - IRELAND

*Development of violence in the Civil War in  
Mayo in 1922-1923*

*Thesis MA Political Culture and National Identities.  
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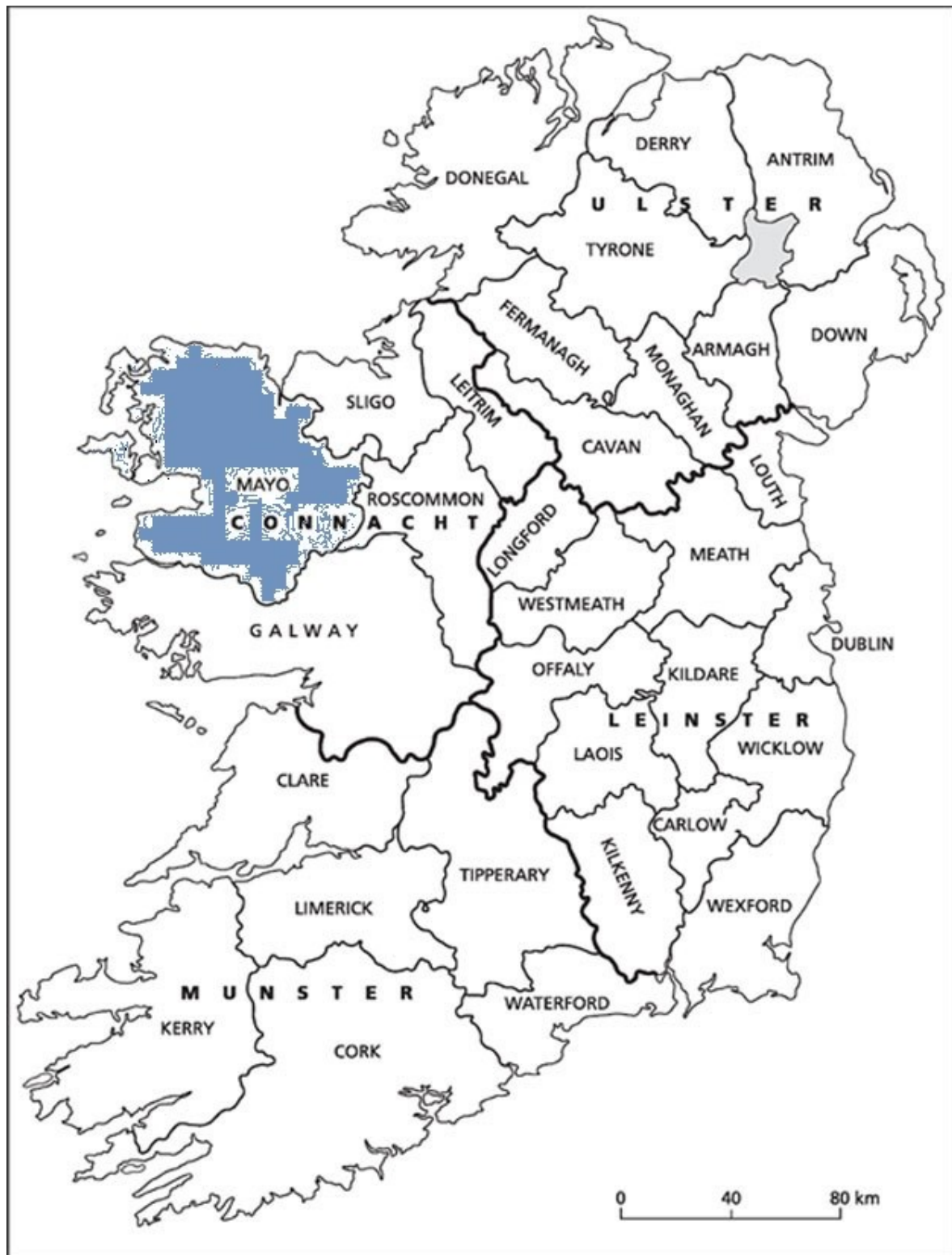
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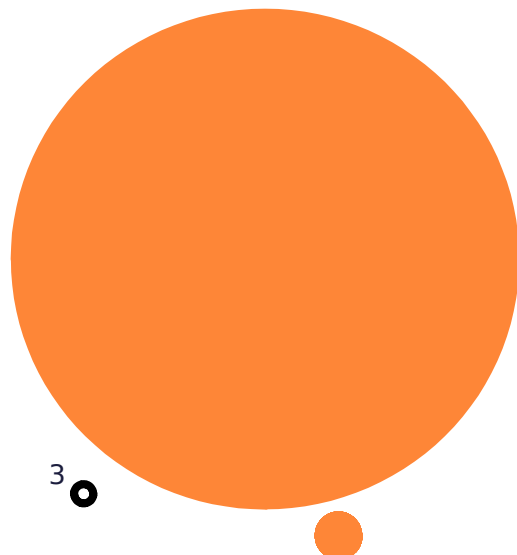


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## 1. INTRODUCTION

On December 6 1921 the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed by representatives of the British and the self-proclaimed Irish government. This Treaty would divide the republican movement and lead the new Free State of Ireland into a bloody civil war. The civil war would put brother against brother who had just fought in the War of Independence together against the Crown Forces. In the case of Tom and



Seán Hales, IRA officers from Cork, literally.<sup>1</sup> Men who fought side by side in the War of Independence now fought against each other. Since one of the first actions of the anti-Treaty side was the sabotage and destruction of railways and telegraph lines the civil war had a very local character.

This personal and local aspect of the Civil War leads to the question how the violence developed. Why did someone decide to take up arms against his own former comrades? The Civil War period is an unstudied area in Irish history. Probably because for long after the civil war people did not want to discuss the atrocities committed by both sides of the Civil War.<sup>2</sup> In his book *Green against Green* Hopkinson admits that most of Irish history is written from a 'high' politics point of view and focuses on events on Dublin city and the Munster area. Even his own book is lacking in the research on the activities in the localities.<sup>3</sup>

Irish history is fraught with violence and several studies have developed theories as to why a group turns to violence to obtain their goals. Different aspects are highlighted to indicate what the reason might be for an individual to take up arms. These aspects can be social, economic, political or personal. But mostly it is a combination of different reasons. During a class on political violence by Joost Augusteijn I was introduced to his work *From Public Defiance to Guerrilla Warfare*. In this book Augusteijn describes a theory on how violence developed differently in areas in Ireland during the War of Independence. He looks at different counties, including Mayo, during the War of Independence and describes what the causes are that some counties started to use violence sooner or later, and more or less. He has not looked at the Civil War period, but it would be interesting to know if his theory still holds up a year later in a different type of conflict in the same region. In this paper I would like to test this theory on the situation in county Mayo during the Civil War. Since I am using the theory of Augusteijn I will not outline the other theories that exist about the development of violence. Augusteijn's theory describes the situation in Mayo until just a year before the civil war, therefore I think that his theory will be the most effective in describing the developments in Mayo. Below I will describe the other sources I have used to conduct this research in the *Historiography* section.

In his study *From public defiance to guerrilla warfare*<sup>4</sup> Augusteijn gives reasons why groups turn to violence during the War of Independence and also why there wasn't much violence in county Mayo. According to Augusteijn there are several aspects that can account for a differentiated development of violence. These are:

- Presence of opposition
- Importance of a threshold of violence
- Ostracizing the 'enemy'

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1 Cottrell, P. *Essential histories. The Irish Civil War 1922-1923*. (Oxford 2008) 10.

2 Farry, M. *The aftermath of revolution. Sligo 1921-23*. (Dublin 2000) 1.

3 Hopkinson, M. *Green against green. The Irish civil war*. (Dublin 1988) xii.

4 Augusteijn, J. *From public defiance to guerrilla warfare. The radicalization of the Irish Republican Army – a comparative analysis, 1916-1921* (Amsterdam 1994).

- Outsiders in organisations
- Leaving familiar setting of work and community, and
- Role of General Head Quarters (GHQ)<sup>5</sup>

What does Augusteijn mean by these factors? Below I give a short summary of each factor and how it influences the differentiation in violence.

### 1.1. Presence of opposition

According to Augusteijn for violence to develop in an area it is important that there is an opposition. When everyone agrees to a certain course of action there is no need to fight against someone. When there is a majority of opposition you can see that violence quickly escalates as in the Ulster region. One of the reasons that Mayo was less violent at the start of the War of Independence was because there was as not much opposition available as in some of the more active counties.

### 1.2. Threshold of violence

Before one resorts to violence you need to cross a threshold. There are usually many factors that will hold you back from committing that first act of violence. Fear, conscience or pressure from the neighbourhood can hold someone back. But when the threshold has been breached the act to commit violence is less of a burden and becomes easier. This also means that the violence can increase in a region when that first threshold has been passed.

### 1.3. Ostracizing the 'enemy'

During the War of Independence the enemy were the RIC. Most of these police officers were locally known and were not viewed as an enemy. By ostracizing the RIC, keeping them apart from the rest of the community in barracks, it was easier to blame all RIC members for any action committed by one. Many RIC members were also taken out of their own counties to work in other counties to prevent corruption. So even though they were almost all Irishmen and some came from the same county, because of the ostracizing of them as a group they became legitimate targets.

### 1.4. Outsiders in organisations

A group of IRA men could become actively violent when someone from outside the local organisation came into the group. The local IRA group could become more active in trying to impress the outsider, or the outsider could incite violence by bringing new ideas, inspiration and motivation of activities to the local group.

### 1.5. Leaving familiar settings of work and community

When IRA members lived at homes with the parents or wives and children, they had them to restrain the IRA for participating in violent activities. They also had much to risk in participating in the attacks. Farms and businesses had to be kept running and the most of the time the War was a part-time occupation besides their fulltime one. When the IRA started to get hunted down they had to go on the run. By removing the social constraints the groups were free to conduct more violent activities, they were now also surrounded by men who were in the same situation which led to an increase in violence.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibidem. 315.

## 1.6. Role of General Headquarters (GHQ)

If there was no GHQ, the violent activities would be considered terrorist, local activities, but GHQ gave the violence a purpose and therefore a legitimacy to the IRA. GHQ gave legality to the attacks when ordering or endorsing attacks on Crown Forces.<sup>6</sup> They organised the army and made the local struggle part of the national fight for independence.

## 1.7. Local study of Mayo

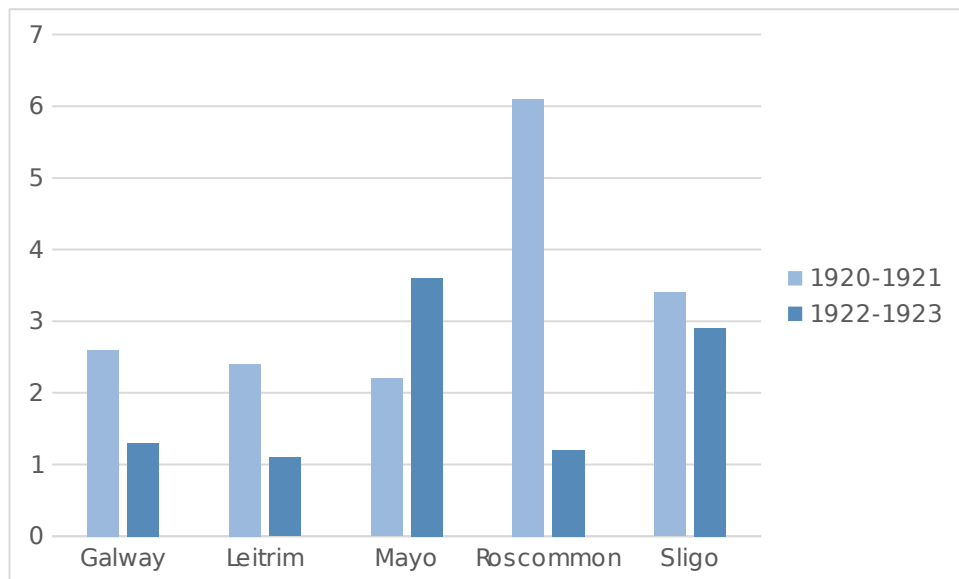
In this study, I will analyse how the violence developed in county Mayo from the moment of Truce until the end of the civil war of 1922-1923 in Ireland. This study can be viewed as a case study in the larger debate on political violence. County Mayo is an interesting case study for this debate since during the War of Independence the county was relatively calm. Compared to the other counties in Ireland there was not much violence, and of the counties in the province of Connaught, Mayo was the least violent during the War of Independence. It is therefore interesting to find out why county Mayo became so much more violent during the Civil War, only a year after the War of Independence. Mayo became the most violent county in the province of Connaught during the Civil War. The only county to come close in the province was Sligo, where also many republicans from Mayo participated in the fighting. See Table 1 for the numbers of violence given by Peter Hart. During the Civil War only the province of Munster and the counties Louth and Queen's had more casualties than county Mayo.<sup>7</sup>

	1917-1919	1920-1921 <i>War of Independence</i>	1921-1922	1922-1923 <i>Civil War</i>
<b>Connaught</b>				
Galway	0,2	2,6	0,8	1,3
Leitrim	0	2,4	0	1,1
Mayo	0,05	2,2	0,2	3,6
Roscommon	0,2	6,1	0,3	1,2
Sligo	0,1	3,4	0,4	2,9

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<sup>6</sup> Augusteijn, *From Public Defiance to Guerrilla warfare*. 147.

<sup>7</sup> Hart, P. *The I.R.A. at War 1916-1923*. (Oxford 2003) 36.



Graph 1. The differentiation of violence in province Connaught.

I will use the factors that were deduced by Augusteijn as leading to the development of violence in this research to understand how the violence developed in Mayo.

## 1.8. Outline of research

To give an analysis of the development of violence in county Mayo, I will start by first outlining the situation in Mayo before the Truce. In this first chapter I will focus on the events and developments in the Mayo IRA and their position when the Truce was announced. This gives a clear idea who the actors are and how their position was when I start the analysis of the period from the Truce onwards.

For the analysis I have chosen to divide my chapters chronologically. I will start by looking at the period from the Truce until the Treaty debates in the Dáil. To understand what happened after the Treaty was signed I will spend a short chapter on these debates and the role of the Mayo TD's in it. From these debates onwards it took six months before the outbreak of Civil War. This period of tension will be my next chapter to conclude with a chapter on the Civil War period. The chapters themselves have been subdivided in thematic parts. The developments during this period are very complex.<sup>8</sup> The conflict was highly confusing and chaotic which is why the content of the chapters is not chronological but thematic. I have decided to look at the political and military developments, both nationally and locally in Mayo. I have chosen for these parts because I think it will give the most relevant developments for the analysis of the development in violence in Mayo. The conflict was a political conflict on how the Irish State should be governed,<sup>9</sup> as part of the British Empire or continue fighting for a Republic. Many politicians were also military leaders and national events may or may not have had any influence on local developments. By looking at the

<sup>8</sup> Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. xi.

<sup>9</sup> Kissane, B. *Explaining the Intractability of the Irish Civil War*. *Civil Wars* 3:2 (2000) 65-88. 66.



national events and the role of GHQ it can be determined how much influence the national events had on local activities.

### 1.9. Historiography and sources

As mentioned before not much has been written about the Civil War in Ireland. The most comprehensive study on the subject is that of Michael Hopkinson *Green against Green*. His book mostly deals with events from a 'high' politics view and does not analyse the development of violence as such. He admitted that there is still a need for more local studies. Michael Farry has analysed the events from the War of Independence until the end of the Civil War in county Sligo.<sup>10</sup> He does not analyse the development of violence but describes the events as they happened in Sligo. Most secondary sources on this violent period in Irish history start by the Easter Rising in 1916 and end with the Truce or Treaty, like the work of Augusteijn *From public defiance to guerrilla warfare*. When books do also take into account the civil war period it is usually a last chapter. For example in the book of Charles Townshend *The Republic*, which has more than 517 pages, less than a hundred are spent discussing the civil war. To my knowledge there is only one book that deals with the events in county Mayo specifically, namely *The Flame and the Candle* of Dominic Price. He also includes the period from Truce to Civil War, but again it is only a small part of his book. His work is also not an analysis of events but a narrative with local stories and anecdotes. The only book that deals with the development of violence into the civil War is that of Peter Hart, *The I.R.A. at War 1916-1923*,<sup>11</sup> where he looks at the numbers of casualties in different regions and compares them to statistical data on social and economic conditions in the counties. By comparison he tries to give a conclusion which conditions led to the most violent regions. Since many men also fought across the borders of their county (Hart denies this fact and claims that the local IRA only operated in their own areas)<sup>12</sup> as I will show later in this chapter, the analysis of Hart is not conclusive. To my knowledge there is not yet a study on the development of violence in county Mayo after the War of Independence.

The secondary literature I used in this research had access to primary sources which I had not. I have used their analysis of these sources to draw my own conclusions on the development of violence in Mayo. In addition to using their research on primary source I have focused on newspaper articles to get a description on what happened locally during this period. The newspapers used are the local newspapers: *The Connaught Telegraph* and *The Connacht Tribune* and national newspapers *The Freemans Journal* and the *Irish Independent*. The newspapers I have researched all took to a greater or lesser extent the pro-Treaty side. The local newspapers have taken a more nuanced view of the events in the county, while the *Freemans Journal* quite clearly took a pro-Treaty side. After the outbreak of Civil War they were also censored by the Government. The sabotage of communication lines and isolation of areas due to the tearing up of rails made it impossible for the newspapers to get all the news from certain areas, including

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10 Farry, M. *The aftermath of revolution. Sligo 1921-23*. (Dublin 2000).

11 Hart, P. *The I.R.A. at War 1916-1923*. (Oxford 2003)

12 Ibidem, 35.

Mayo. The IRA also published a newspaper. Unfortunately not all copies are available online or at all. Four national editions and one Scottish edition of this paper the *Poblacht na h-Eireann*<sup>13</sup> (Republic of Ireland) were available and I have used them to try to determine the accuracy of the national newspapers. I also used the transcribed interviews that Ernie O'Malley conducted with men who were active in the IRA in Mayo, like Michael Kilroy and Tom Maguire. The combination of newspapers, interviews and secondary sources provided me with enough details on events to understand the bias in the newspapers and look beyond this to complete my analysis.

## 1.10. Terms

In this research report I will try to be as consistent as possible with defining the different sides of the conflict. Since the War was fought over the Treaty there is an Anti-Treaty and pro-Treaty side. The Pro-Treaty side eventually became the Provisional Government. They had troops that were called the Provisional Government troops, but sometimes also the IRA. After the ratification of the Treaty and the installation of the third Dáil, the Provisional Government became the Free State of Ireland, and the army the Free State army or National Army. The Anti-Treaty side saw themselves as the true IRA and Republicans. To legitimize the pro-Treaty side, the government instructed the newspapers to refer to the Anti-Treaty side as Irregulars or “bands”. I have decided to use the terms Anti-Treaty and Pro-Treaty to describe the different sides of the discussion until the outbreak of Civil War. From that chapter onwards I will use Republicans for the Anti-Treaty side and the National Army and Government for the Pro-Treaty side. This way I hope to prevent any confusion about which side I am talking about.

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<sup>13</sup> *Poblacht na h-Eireann*. No 23 (25-7-1922), No. 32 (5-8-1922), No. 42 (18-8-1922) and No. 70 (29-9-1922). Scottish edition 30-9-1922.

## 2. THE SITUATION IN MAYO BEFORE THE TRUCE

To understand what happened in Mayo from the Truce period onwards in terms of development of violence, I first will give a short summary about the situation in the county before the Truce. Hopkinson reports that the War of Independence was largely a Munster and Dublin city affair.<sup>14</sup> Even though Mayo did start late with the War of Independence I think it is wrong to conclude it a Munster/Dublin city event. The War was also fought in the localities although in less intensity than in Munster.

### 2.1. National developments of the War of Independence

The War of Independence, also known as the Anglo-Irish War) is usually seen as beginning in 1919. In that year the republican Sinn Féin party won the national election, formed their own government, the Dáil Éireann, and proclaimed their independence from Great Britain. In response Great Britain banned the Dáil Éireann and Sinn Féin which intensified the conflict. The Volunteers, which were established in 1913 as a response to the organisation of the Ulster Volunteers, declared to “secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to the whole people of Ireland”.<sup>15</sup> With the establishment of the Dáil Éireann they were renamed the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

The War of Independence was fought between the IRA and the Crown Forces (to enforce British rule). On the political side you had the self-proclaimed Dáil Éireann which supported the IRA during the War of Independence. The Dáil Cabinet could not really function as a government during the War of Independence. But their existence united the republicans behind a common goal, being against the Crown Forces and fighting for a free Republican Ireland. Any divisions along personal and ideological lines was of subordinate value.<sup>16</sup> That all the republicans did not share the same values and ideological beliefs became clear when the threat of the Crown forces disappeared. The republican party split on the Treaty what can be seen as along ideological lines.

The structure of the IRA was laid down in the “Scheme of Organisation”. In this Scheme it was decided that each county would have a brigade consisting of the local IRA units. This brigade was divided into 3 to 6 battalions, which consisted of 4 to 7 companies. Each company was divided in four sections and each section in 2 squads. A section was to consist of nineteen to twenty-five men.

Battalion > Brigade > Company > Section > Squad

During the Convention a General Executive with a President was to be chosen.<sup>17</sup> This Scheme was not realistic as areas had more or less men in their units then

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<sup>14</sup> Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 10.

<sup>15</sup> Foy, M. & Barton, B. *The Easter Rising*. (Gloucestershire 2004) 7-8.

<sup>16</sup> Kissane, B. Voluntarist democratic theory and the origins of the Irish civil war. *Civil Wars* 2:3 (1999) 1-25. 22.

was needed to form the groups. The organisation changed continuously to allow workable formations in different areas.<sup>18</sup> The often harsh reactions of the Crown forces on the IRA violence got many people more involved in the IRA, which in 1920 led to an escalation violence and conflict.<sup>19</sup> In August 1920 the Restoration Order in Ireland Act was passed through the British House to quash the rebellion of the Irish. To help the RIC police force with restoring law and order, the British introduced new police forces who were mostly from Britain. These new forces were known as Auxiliaries and Black and Tans (referring to the colour of their clothing) and consisted mainly out of ex-soldiers from England.<sup>20</sup> As a result of this increase in suppression many IRA units were forced to go on the run, and formed “flying columns” in October 1920.<sup>21</sup> With the IRA men now on the run in a flying column the war became a fulltime occupation for them and the violence quickly escalated. With the mobile flying column units it was easier to attack and quickly withdraw in the countryside. This guerrilla warfare severed the ties the men had with their communities which led to an increase in violence as Augusteijn describes in his theory.

The IRA men faced opposition, the enemy was seen as from the outside and not considered a local member of the community, and now there were also forced to leave their surroundings and were therefore free to escalate in their violent actions. For the British troops it was very hard to hunt down the IRA, since they were now hiding in the countryside and were very mobile. The military activity peaked in May and June 1921. In May the British troops used reprisals to any action by the IRA, by attacking relatives of IRA members. The IRA replied by new actions. General Macready of the British Army cancelled the reprisal policy on 3 June 1921. In these months the British forces also had the highest losses of the War of Independence.<sup>22</sup>

## 2.2. War of Independence in Mayo

Mayo is a county in the west of Ireland which was predominantly rural. It was a poor county and had seen much agrarian violence before the War of Independence. Many people still could speak Gaelic and republican revolutionist ideas was widely supported.<sup>23</sup> Even though the area strongly supported republicanism there was not much violence during the War of Independence in

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17 Augusteijn, *Guerrilla warfare*. 83-84.

18 Ibidem. 89-90.

19 Ibidem, 316.

20 Augusteijn, *Guerrilla warfare*, 160.

21 Ibidem, 74.

22 Townshend, C. *The Republic. The fight for Irish independence*. (London 2013) 289-290.

23 Augusteijn, *Guerrilla warfare*. 321.

Mayo. Augusteijn explains the lack of violence in Mayo as a result of the there being hardly any opposition, which did not lead the IRA men to form flying columns and thus leave their surroundings. Police forces had retreated from undefensible barracks in outlying areas because of some successful attacks in other parts of the country. The Mayo IRA had not conducted a successful attack on the police barracks but still saw them leave the barracks, which allowed them to resume training and drilling without being watched.<sup>24</sup> It would take until April or May 1921 before a policeman was shot in Mayo, and Ned Moane of the West IRA admitted that no shot was fired in the whole War of Independence in Connemara. Tom Maguire, IRA leader in south Mayo, agreed that they had had several ambushes in which nothing happened.<sup>25</sup>

GHQ gave the order to establish a flying column in October 1920, seeing how successful they were. It took until March 1921 until flying columns were established in Mayo.<sup>26</sup> Because Mayo started fighting late in the War, the need to establish a flying column took longer, since the IRA men were not yet on the run. With the introduction of the Black and Tans opposition had arrived in Mayo. The flying columns ensured that the IRA men were free from their constraining surroundings and the violence would escalate in the final few months of the War of Independence. One of the main problems facing the IRA in Mayo was the lack of arms and ammunition.<sup>27</sup> Since they operated in small groups there were enough men to do the fighting. To obtain arms they had to send someone to GHQ in Dublin to purchase them. The West Mayo Brigade was most successful in negotiating purchases and became the best armed battalion in the county.<sup>28</sup>

One of the more successful ambushes in Mayo during the War of Independence happened on 3 May 1921 on Tourmakeady. But after the ambush the IRA was pursued by the British forces and Tom Maguire was badly injured. The column was able to escape because the West Mayo column happened to arrive by chance, according to Townshend.<sup>29</sup> But Michael Kilroy of the West Mayo column describes in his interview that he got word from Galway that Tom Maguire's men were in trouble which made him decide to go there.<sup>30</sup> Other successful ambushes were at Kilmeena and Carrowkennedy. These ambushes led to reprisals by the RIC, which intensified the fight even more. After the ambushes the British forces were increased in Mayo which made the position of the flying column hard to

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24 Ibidem, 144.

25 Hopkinson. *Green against Green*. 10.

26 Augusteijn, 117.

27 Cottrel, *Essential histories*. 21

28 Augusteijn, 145.

29 Townshend, *The Republic*. 293.

30 O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 42.

uphold. With the lengthening of days the flying column was too dangerous and any military successes too unlikely, which resulted in that in June there was no flying column in West or South Mayo.<sup>31</sup> On 11 July 1921 a truce was agreed upon between the Irish government and the British. The Mayo IRA was at this point short of weapons and ammunition, there was infighting between the officers of the East Mayo and North Galway Brigades and accusations of cowardice.<sup>32</sup> It seems as though the Brigades in Mayo were not in a strong position to continue to fight the War if there hadn't been a truce. On the other hand, they continuously had limited supplies of arms and ammunition, and infighting might have been because there was no attack to focus on. It is debatable that the position of the IRA in Mayo was stronger or weaker at the end of the War of Independence. They at least gained experience.

In the next chapter I will look at what happened in Mayo between the Truce coming into effect and the Treaty debates.

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31 Augusteijn, 171.

32 Price, *The flame and the candle*. 181.

### 3. TRUCE.

On 11<sup>th</sup> July 1921 the IRA and the British Government agreed to a truce. From spring 1921 onwards there existed a sort of stalemate between the IRA and the Crown Forces. Since the IRA conducted guerrilla warfare the British had great difficulty in capturing any members and the retribution actions against family members of the IRA only increased their support. During these months the Crown Forces also suffered the heaviest losses. For the IRA men the arms and ammunition was running low. With intensified presence of the Crown Forces successful attacks became increasingly harder. Negotiations between de Valera (President of the Dáil Éireann) and Lloyd George (prime minister of Britain) had been in progress behind closed doors. The decision to agree to a Truce was not easily made by the British. Lloyd George had assumed that the peace negotiations would continue without a formal truce.<sup>33</sup> But Churchill, now Colonial Secretary, stressed the importance of a truce. He warned the British government that the war in Ireland was effecting their relationship with the United States and would give the United Kingdom an extremely unpleasant reputation. Furthermore he argued that the IRA would have problems getting the men back into the fighting when they had experienced the truce. This would force the IRA to greater concessions during Treaty negotiations. Since he thought the military situation of the British in Ireland was improved, the truce would not be seen as a sign of weakness by the IRA and the Irish population that supported the British. Both the British military and police warned that the truce would have great advantages for the IRA, especially in intelligence.<sup>34</sup> Churchill's claim that the truce would not be seen as a sign of weakness by the IRA was to be proven faulty. Many men from the IRA saw themselves as victors of the War of Independence and saviours and leaders of the Irish people. According to Farry, who researched the Civil War period in Sligo, the republican military would belittle the republican "politicians" as they had not fought during the war.<sup>35</sup>

The terms of the truce were agreed on in the Dáil Cabinet on 1 July 1921.<sup>36</sup> The terms of the truce were agreed on verbally and a document was never signed. This led to some misunderstanding as to the terms agreed upon by the British and the Irish. In the British Parliamentary paper *Arrangements governing the cessation of active operations in Ireland*, Cmd 1534 General Macready reported he had agreed to five terms for the British:

- Cessation of raids and searches
- Restriction of military activity, they would only support the police in their normal duties
- Removing of curfew

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33 Townshend, *The Republic*. 307.

34 Ibidem, 283.

35 Farry, M. *The aftermath of revolution. Sligo 1921-23*. (Dublin 2000) 18.

36 Townshend, *The Republic*. 307.



- Suspension of reinforcements from England.
- Replacement of the RIC in Dublin by the Dublin Metropolitan Police for policing.

And that the Republicans had agreed to:

- Avoidance of 'provocative displays'
- Forbidding the use of arms
- Stop all military manoeuvres of any kind.

The *Irish Bulletin*, the daily newspaper of the Dáil, reported a slightly different version with terms that agreed amongst others that the British could not have secret agents describing movements or interfere with movements of Irish persons.<sup>37</sup> Even though both governments had slightly different ideas on what the terms of the truce were, they were agreed on a truce and this included a cessation of all hostilities. The truce lasted until the December 1921, when the Treaty was signed between the British and Irish government. The four months in between already would see the start of a division of the members of the republican movement.

### 3.1. National political developments

With the introduction of the Truce representatives of the Irish and British government started official negotiations to find agreement to a peace treaty. De Valera, the president of the Irish Government decided not to embark on the negotiations himself but rather send Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins to negotiate with the British. Griffith, as chairman and Minister of Foreign Affairs, represented the side of Sinn Féin that sought to compromise with the British, while Collins, Minister of Finance, represented the side that favoured military action.<sup>38</sup> Michael Collins had become somewhat of a military hero by his actions and leadership during the War of Independence. He was a member of the IRB and the IRA Executive. Erskine Childers acted as secretary general during the negotiations. He was a British soldier who turned Irish nationalist. As a journalist he wrote many articles about the Irish struggle for nationalism and helped with the obtaining of arms. By sending both sides of the Sinn Féin movement De Valera hoped that a settlement would be reached that all of Sinn Féin could support. The decision to start negotiations already created tensions between the political and military side of the Sinn Féin movement. The British government had made it clear that the conditions of joining the negotiations would be that there would be no question of recognizing the Irish Republic, that Ireland was a member of the Commonwealth with the Crown at its head. Furthermore the Republican leadership was made to acknowledge that the war had not been won, and could not be won.<sup>39</sup> This acknowledgement was no doubt a slap in the face for many Republicans. Men had laid down their lives since 1916 to fight for an independent Ireland, and now the Republican leadership admitted that it might have been a hopeless expedition from the start. Besides, as we will see later in

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<sup>37</sup> Townshend, *The Republic*, 309.

<sup>38</sup> Price, *The flame and the candle*. 174.

<sup>39</sup> Hopkinson, *Green against green*. 19.



this chapter, some IRA men were convinced that they did have what it takes to win the war for independence.

For the delegation it was unclear what they were able to demand or offer during the negotiations. They had pledged to refer back to the Dáil and de Valera for any document or agreement was signed, however, they had also received full plenipotentiary powers and were authorised to sign a Treaty for Ireland without consulting the Dáil in Dublin or de Valera first.<sup>40</sup> Talks between the representatives were difficult and reports about breaches of the truce gave both sides reasons to complain about the lack of sincerity or capability to control their men of the other side. One example of a breach in the Truce was the revival of the Republican courts. With the establishment of Dáil Éireann the Republicans had set up Republican courts where republicans could hold trials outside the courts in control of the British. During the War of Independence many courts had difficulties operating but with the Truce the courts were revived. The British demanded a joint statement on these courts with the Irish delegation condemning them. They agree on the following joint statement: 'no courts shall be held in Ireland otherwise than as before the Truce'.<sup>41</sup> For the British this meant that the courts were illegal before the Truce, while the Irish considered them not illegal before the Truce. If any courts continued after the statement it was held in such secrecy that the delegation did not know about it, since no new reports are made about it being a problem during negotiations in any Irish newspaper or secondary literature.

Beside the national negotiations going on in London the political situation changed somewhat in Ireland. Military men from the War of Independence climbed up in political importance. Military men had replaced many Sinn Féin politicians during the previous War of Independence when they supported the IRA. During the Truce, military activity would almost become a prerequisite for holding public office. Because of this development the Republican movement hardened into a kind of militarism.<sup>42</sup> Because the politicians were more often military leaders their opinion of the Treaty might be different from politician who are used to dealing with diplomatic relations and concessions. While in the military they were prepared to die for their ideals, where they politically might have to compromise. This turned the military conflict on the Treaty immediately into a national political one.

### 3.2. National military developments

With the truce in effect IRA members could come out in the open and return home. This meant that the social constraints of their surroundings were back in place and the outbreak of violence was less likely than when they were disconnected from their homes. The IRA gained many new members in the months of the Truce, and IRA members who were not active during the War could now safely claim allegiance.<sup>43</sup> The ranks of the IRA swelled immensely during the period of Truce. Townshend claims in his book *The Republic* that both sides

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40 Ibidem, 25.

41 Townshend, *The Republic*. 337-339.

42 Ibidem. 325.

wanted to prevent a breakdown in the negotiations and an end to the Truce<sup>44</sup>, but also that the belief that the truce would be short was widespread,<sup>45</sup> which led to the IRA preparing to a return to War with the British. These two contrasting statements indicate the first signs of a split in the Republican movement. National republican leaders as Richard Mulcahy, chief of staff of the IRA, and Michael Collins believed that by the time the Truce came into effect the IRA had done what it could. They had had no large successes and were not able to drive the British from any large barracks. A return to war would be considered a disaster for them, since they thought that the IRA was not equipped for this. On the other side in the newspapers you can find articles that show that for many IRA men in localities they were the victors of the War of Independence. In a speech Mayo TD, William Sears made at some horseracing he said: "*in the next fight at Tourmakeady it would not be twenty-four men Tom Maguire had under him; not twenty-four hundred, but twenty-four thousand.*" They thought they had driven the British to the negotiating table and were convinced with the new recruits and intensive training during the truce, they were ready to renew the war.<sup>46</sup> William Sears, the speaker at this event, would later turn pro-Treaty. Looking at this speech it looks like he turned pro-Treaty because he found it a good Treaty, not because they would not be able to fight the British off. In his speech during the Treaty Debates he mentioned that the men that were sent to discuss the terms were men of wisdom and it would be "folly" to not accept the leaving of the British army without firing a shot.<sup>47</sup> Not being able to fight the British was not a factor in his speech.

Nationally the IRA underwent some organisational changes. On 15 September 1921 the Dáil Cabinet agreed to reorganize the army. The IRA would become the New Army and fall under the control of the Government. In an attempt to weed out the less active officers and place formations under experienced IRA men, Cathal Brugha, Minister of Defence, notified GHQ in November 1921 about the formation of the New Army and that all officers would receive new commissions to be a part of the Army under the Government. All other ranks would receive an offer to re-enlist. Since many officers were afraid of being demoted (which would probably have been the case) there was much disagreement in the ranks. The reorganisation eventually failed to achieve its goal, since all officers were commissioned for the same positions.<sup>48</sup> With the Army being under control of the Government Brugha wondered if the Government could fund the running of the army, and the Volunteer subscriptions and levies could be cancelled.<sup>49</sup> The costs were too high, so even though the Government would be given the orders to the

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43 Farry, *The aftermath*. 17.

44 Townshend, *The Republic*. 309.

45 Ibidem, 315.

46 Connaught Telegraph, 1-10-1921 p4.

47 Irish Independent, 5-1-1922 p7.

48 Townshend, *The Republic*. 228-230.

new Army, the costs would still be paid by the IRA instruments already in place. This explains why after the Treaty debates it was easy for the Anti-Treaty IRA to deny that they were under orders of the Government. They were not dependent on finances from that government.

GHQ did not consult with the local IRA before agreeing to a Truce.<sup>50</sup> According to Hopkinson the reason for this was that GHQ did not expect the Truce to last very long. As mentioned before, there were differences of opinion on the necessity of a truce and a peace agreement. Mulcahy admitted during the Treaty debates that he thought that the IRA had reached its limit before the Truce.<sup>51</sup> I think it is therefore unlikely that the localities were not consulted because the truce was not expected to last very long, since this comment from Mulcahy makes it clear that he did not expect a return to war, but that there might be a different reason. One reason could be that GHQ considered the position of all IRA forces to be too precarious to continue the struggle, and since many communication lines and roads were torn up during the War of Independence it was difficult for GHQ to have a meeting to discuss this. For IRA men in the provinces there was not much to do during the Truce. GHQ encouraged the local IRA to start drilling and training. Training camps appeared everywhere, and the troops started drilling and cleaning weapons. Shooting practice was impossible, since this would have alarmed the British troops.<sup>52</sup> We can see that parts of the IRA is preparing a return to war, even though GHQ thinks that war would be disastrous. Army reorganisation plans can be seen as an attempt to have a standing national army when a peace with Britain was concluded and Ireland could function as an independent nation.

Next I will look into how the politics and military developed in county Mayo. In the previous chapter I have given an outline of the situation in Mayo at the start of the Truce. Now I will analyse how the Truce effected the developments in Mayo.

### 3.3. Political developments in Mayo

With the truce in effect the local government could start trying to rebuild the county. The County Council of Mayo could meet regularly and develop policies. Plans were developed for fixing the roads and bridges which were torn or blown up during the War of Independence. Under the truce restrictions on fairs and markets were removed.<sup>53</sup> In County Mayo many fairs and markets were organized, and dances for Sinn Féin clubs. There were also Gaelic Games organized. Life was returning to normal. This meant that a return to war conditions would mean losing again this freedom of movement, and might have created a new threshold to prevent going back to violence.

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49 Ibidem, 232.

50 Hopkinson, *Green against green*. 16.

51 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 9.

52 Townshend, *The Republic*. 313.

53 Freemans Journal 12-7-1921 p6

Newspaper articles describe the many attempts the Council made to deal with the Workhouses and the status of the Amalgamation Scheme.<sup>54</sup> The workhouses were established in the 19th century for poor relief. Poor families would move into a work house and work for food. During the Great Famine in the nineteenth century there were many Irish families depended on the workhouses. However, as the Great Famine ended the workhouses transformed over time to house the people that were unwanted by society, such as unmarried mothers, old people, abandoned children etc. Many workhouses remained empty or had not many patients. The costs for maintaining the work houses was high. In October 1921 the Mayo Council agreed to the closing of the workhouses. There would be one central workhouse in Castlebar where the patients could be transferred to. The old buildings of the closed workhouses were to become factories or barracks for the IRA.<sup>55</sup>

The ongoing negotiations in London about a settlement between Ireland and Great Britain also was an issue in the meetings of the Council in Mayo. At a horserace in Balla, which was allowed again since the truce, the Mayo TD members Tom Maguire and William Sears gave speeches about the hopeful outcome of the truce. In their speeches it is clear that the men saw themselves as victors of the War of Independence. Tom Maguire and William Sears attended the race escorted by Volunteers. Tom Maguire was in full uniform when he gave his speech. Both men mentioned that the truce was in effect because the British were scared of the Irishmen: *'When Lloyd George called back the lorries and declared a truce it was not because he was ashamed, but because young Irishmen had got rifles, and because they knew how to use them.'* William Sears said he did not know how the negotiations would end but he was sure that the de Valera and the men he fought with would come with a good solution. He urged the public to support the republican cause by using the republican courts instead of the British and join Sinn Féin clubs. The joined statement from the British and Irish representatives on the Republican courts had not yet been published at this point, and came a couple of weeks later. Tom Maguire introduced his speech in Irish, before continuing in English. He mentioned that if he continued in Irish many people would probably not understand him. He urged the young boys and girls to learn the language so that one day that language could again be used as the national language. He knew that *'they wanted Ireland free – they wanted free independence for their beloved country'* He lamented on the heroism and loyalty of the men he served with, when Maguire was wounded his next in command, Michael O'Brien took charge. *'He never flinched, he fought bravely against heavy odds, and when called upon to surrender and put up his hands, he put up his rifle instead, and fell forward dead facing the foe, his young life-blood dyeing the heather on a mountainside in his beloved Mayo'*. He asked the people to support the Volunteers and said that they were ready to fight again if they were called upon. According to the article in the *Connaught Telegraph* the audience cheered and applauded every word.<sup>56</sup> The *Connaught Telegraph* was a

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54 Connaught Telegraph 30-7-1921 p2, Irish Independent 16-8-1921 p4, Freemans Journal 29-8-1921 p8, Irish Independent 1-9-1921 p4.

55 Connaught Telegraph 15-10-1922 p2.

56 Connaught Telegraph 1-10-1921 p2.

paper on the side of the Republicans, but we know that there was widespread support for the republican cause in Connaught. It can therefore be assumed that this report about the reaction of the public is correct. It may be overstated, but I conclude that the speeches were received positively. There also no negative reports in any newspapers about this event.

The newspapers reported extensively on the plight of many prisoners. Released prisoners and escapees describe dreadful conditions in the jails and the call for release of prisoners continues throughout the truce period.<sup>57</sup> In October 1921, the Mayo Council held a special meeting to a resolution that the peace talks should not continue unless all prisoners were released. This resolution was sent to De Valera and Giffith. Of the Mayo Council six members were still interned during the truce.<sup>58</sup> At a meeting in Ballinrobe, both William Sears and Tom Maguire (in uniform) addressed the prisoner situation. Interestingly William Sears, who would later turn pro-Treaty mentioned: *'Mr. Lloyd George, revolver in hand, says, "If you don't accept my offer I will blow your brains out, massacre your people, and destroy their property." There could be no greater obstacle to peace than such a threat.'* Both called for the release of prisoners before the peace negotiations continue.<sup>59</sup> While William Sears called the threat of holding prisoners the greatest obstacle to peace, he did decide to accept the Treaty which was signed under the threat of renewed war with the British. Why he would accept a compromise under the threat of war and call the holding of prisoners during negotiations the greatest obstacle to peace is unclear. In his speech during the Treaty debates it looks like he genuinely believes that the terms in the Treaty are the best thing for Ireland at that moment. At the end of October several counties adopted resolutions to call on de Valera to withdraw the plenipotentiaries until the prisoners were released.<sup>60</sup> After the Treaty was signed most prisoners were released. At Christmas 1921 more than 50 prisoners returned to Mayo, some other were released in early January.<sup>61</sup>

### 3.4. Military developments in Mayo

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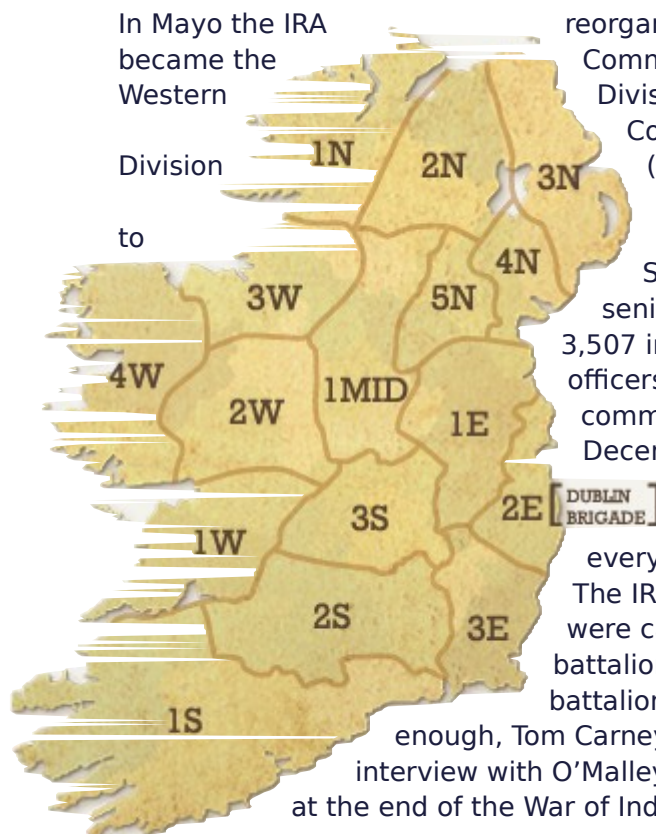
57 Freemans Journal 14-10-1921 p6.

58 Connaught Telegraph 22-10-1921 p3.

59 Connaught Telegraph 8-11-1921 p3.

60 Irish Independent 21-10-1921 p5.

61 Price, *The flame and the candle*. 197.



Ill. 1. Map of IRA divisional areas in Ireland.

reorganized into divisional areas. Tom Maguire Commandant General in command of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division (2W), and Michael Kilroy was Commandant General of the 4<sup>th</sup> Western (4W) (see illustration 1 on the left for the location of these divisions).<sup>62</sup> According Price, based on the IRA Mayo Brigade Strength Report of Mulcahy, Kilroy had 24 senior officers, and went from 2,420 men to 3,507 in December 1921. Maguire had 22 senior officers, and the number of the men under his command went from 2,288 till 3,721 by December 1921.<sup>63</sup> Johnny Grealy from the East Mayo Brigade indicates in his interview with Ernie O'Malley that after the Truce everyone was accepted in the Sinn Féin clubs. The IRA gained many new members which were called "Trucers". Grealy said that his battalion only gained four "Trucers" but in other battalions many more joined.<sup>64</sup> Interestingly enough, Tom Carney, also from East Mayo, indicated in his interview with O'Malley that they had 400 men in the Brigade at the end of the War of Independence, but 1700 at the end of the truce.<sup>65</sup> During the truce the IRA quickly expanded as we can see in the numbers above. These new recruits

had not seen violent action yet, and created hadn't crossed the threshold to commit violence yet. This new composition of new recruits and experienced fighters created a different IRA than at the end of the War of Independence. Even though during the Truce there was time to buy or make weapons and train the army, due to the rapid expansion munition and skills were still in short supply.<sup>66</sup> With the Truce lasting longer the army discipline and cohesiveness suffered.<sup>67</sup> Since there was no action for the new recruits they might get tired of the drilling and training. Gatherings became more social events than training exercises.

<sup>62</sup>

<http://www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/military-service-pensions-collection/search-the-collection/organisation-and-membership/ira-membership-series>.

<sup>63</sup> Price, *The Flame and the Candle*. 175-176.

<sup>64</sup> O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 290.

<sup>65</sup> Ibidem, 317.

<sup>66</sup> Townshend, *The Republic*. 317.

<sup>67</sup> Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 15.



To ensure that the Truce was observed an IRA liaison officer was installed. From the newspaper articles we learn that on 13 July 1921 Michael Staines, T.D. for Dublin City arrived in Galway with orders from GHQ and Dublin Castle to work as a liaison officer to make sure the truce was observed in Galway East, West Ridings and Mayo. Michael Staines was an IRA veteran who participated in the Easter Rising and had been interned after 1916 and again in 1920. During his internment, according to the *Connacht Tribune* he was beloved by the internees.<sup>68</sup> He would have the respect of the IRA members and was therefore chosen to ensure that there were no breaches of the truce. His first call was to a house brawl where a farmer was shot by an English RIC member. Upon arriving the issue was already dealt with by the county inspector of Mayo. The RIC member was arrested and returned for trial.<sup>69</sup> This incident was not a breach of the truce and the liaison officer was called in to verify that. In November the liaison officer position to represent the counties and divisions. For county Mayo Commandant Joe Ring was assigned as liaison officer. He was native to county Mayo and according to the *Connacht Tribune* known to be a capable, courteous and efficient officer.<sup>70</sup> Broddie Malone from the West Mayo Brigade called Joe Ring a 'good type, but a vain type' in his interview with O'Malley.<sup>71</sup> This might have had something to do with the fact that Joe Ring decided to go pro-Treaty as one of the only senior officers in Mayo. In December Commandant Ring was transferred to county Galway and a Captain Hughes became the liaison officer in Mayo.<sup>72</sup> About Hughes there are no newspaper articles or interview mentions. Since he was only appointed in December, and the Treaty debates started around this time, the chances are likely that he wouldn't have much to do before the Treaty was approved and liaison officers lost their purpose.

Newspapers report that small infractions of the Truce did occur in Mayo, but they were mainly the acts of individuals and not intended as an attempt to break the truce.<sup>73</sup> One of the major breaches was when Rosturk Castle was seized and occupied by the IRA. News of this breach was first reported in an Ulster newspaper and it took some time before the news could be confirmed. When it was confirmed, though, The Irish Government intervened and the castle was vacated.<sup>74</sup> This incident did not lead to any more large breaching of the Truce. There were other small incidents which were dealt with locally. After the first week of the truce being in effect a party travelling through Ballina displayed Sinn

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68 *Connacht Tribune* 16-7-1921 p5.

69 *Connacht Tribune* 16-7-1921 p5.

70 *Connacht Tribune* 12-10-1921 p8.

71 O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 193.

72 *Connacht Tribune* 10-12-1921 p2.

73 *Connaught Telegraph* 16-7-1921 p2.

74 *Irish Independent* 2-11-1921 p6.

Féin flags. Crown forces saw this as a breach of the Truce which led the local volunteers make the party remove their flags.<sup>75</sup> In October there was an incident when a prominent Volunteer who was on the run was shot on his way home. Volunteers investigated the incident. Newspapers did not follow up on this incident. Relations between Crown Forces and the Volunteers remained cordial.<sup>76</sup> In December the RIC seized a rifle and air gun from a man when the RIC went to his home to collect a fine. Since this was a breach of the truce the weapons were returned.<sup>77</sup> In December a member of the RIC threw a bomb at a junction in Ballina. It is unclear what the reasons behind this action were. The Volunteers arrested the constable and handed him over to the RIC barracks. They also arrested a civilian that participated who remained in custody of the Volunteers.<sup>78</sup>

Small infractions were handled and some were even cause for some light-hearted fun. In July 1921 Staines was called to a road obstruction, which would be in breach of the truce, only to find out that the storm of the previous night had blown a tree over the road. When the Crown Forces showed up, the liaison officer indicated that this was not a breach of the truce, but 'an act of God'.<sup>79</sup>

What these small breaches of the Truce show that the relationship between the IRA and the "enemy" was cordial. They worked together to solve problems when someone broke the truce agreement.

A major breach of the Truce was the weapons factory that Michael Kilroy had in Castlebar. In his interview with O'Malley he claimed that they made 'hundreds of mines during the Truce' and '200 grenades every second day'.<sup>80</sup> The accuracy and exact time of this manufacturing is unclear. Kilroy boasts a bit about his involvement in the struggle, which made O'Malley write a side note that he thought that Kilroy talked as if they had been fighting in Mayo all along, when in April or May he thought the first constable was shot.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, the period after the Treaty debates is still called the period of Truce. So it could be possible that the weapons were only made in this period. There are no reports during the Truce or after the Treaty about a weapons factory in Castlebar, so it seems as though this remained a secret.

### 3.5. Conclusion

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75 Freemans Journal 19-7-1921 p5

76 Irish Independent 7-10-1921 p5

77 Freemans Journal 5-12-1921 p5

78 Connaught Telegraph 12-12-1921 p3

79 Connacht Tribune 16-7-1921 p5.

80 O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 65.

81 Ibidem, 37.



In this chapter I have shown that the period from Truce until Treaty was one where hardly any violence occurred in Mayo, and definitely no organised violence. While at the end of the previous chapter the IRA in Mayo had crossed the threshold of violence, had an enemy present to focus on, had ostracized the RIC so they became legal targets, had left their surroundings to join flying columns and where influenced by GHQ on their policy, this was not the case after the Truce. With almost none of the elements present that Augusteijn describe as influential in the development of violence, we see that no violence is taking place. Therefore the theory on the causes of violence holds up in the period from Truce to Treaty. Below I will look in detail at the different factors described by Augusteijn.

### 3.5.1.Presence of opposition

During this episode of Irish history the opposition is still considered to be the Crown Forces, the RIC, Black and Tans and Auxiliaries. They did not disappear when the Truce was agreed, but they did stop being present as opposition. Both sides had cordial relations with each other. Small breaches of the Truce did not lead to renewed violence, because both sides accepted that even though they were on different sides of the conflict, there was a Truce in place and for the moment they were not enemies. I can therefore conclude that the opposition was not present as meant by the theory of Augusteijn. Since according to Augusteijn a presence of opposition is required to have violence break out, the lack of violence and lack of presence of opposition concur with his theory.

### 3.5.2.Importance of a threshold of violence

During the War of Independence the threshold to start a violent action was crossed. With the implementation of the Truce, however a new threshold was established. The IRA stopped their violent activities and received many new recruits who had not yet participated in the War. The consequences of crossing this imaginary boundary had different consequences this time, since with the truce the conflict had changed. There was no longer a state of war, which meant that any violent actions would have serious consequences. The new recruits had not yet seen any violence as part of the IRA and had not crossed this threshold yet. The step to cross the threshold in this new situation with the new recruits is comparable to the threshold in place before the outbreak of violence in the War of Independence. With a threshold of violence in place, according to Augusteijn violence does not break out. The troops need to cross that threshold to actively participate in violent activities. In this respect the theory of Augusteijn fits to the situation. There is no violence and there is a threshold to violence in place in this period of time in Mayo.

### 3.5.3.Ostracizing the 'enemy'

Even though the RIC were still present in their barracks, they were for the moment not really the enemy anymore. They worked together with the IRA to uphold the Truce. When there were breaches both sides communicated with each other to either arrest someone, investigate an occurrence or deal with the breach of Truce. Even though the RIC was still considered outside their own community, it cannot be said that the "enemy" at this point is still ostracized. They are working together with the IRA, which means that there is communication between the parties and the factor of ostracizing the enemy is not in existence. According to Augusteijn we should see therefore no violence, which is the case in Mayo in this period.

### 3.5.4. Outsiders in organisations

Liaison officers of the IRA were appointed to divisional areas to maintain the peace. Michael Staines, who was not from Mayo, came into the local IRA organisation to ensure that the Truce was observed. If there was any influence from the outsider in the IRA organisation it was contrary to inciting violence.

### 3.5.5. Leaving familiar setting of work and community

With the implementation of the truce, IRA members were able to return to their homes. The men were once again bound by their responsibilities to their homes and businesses. Families and obligations were in a position to constraint the IRA men in committing violence.

### 3.5.6. Role of GHQ

GHQ did not play a large role in the lives of local IRA men during the period of truce. They encouraged to train the men, but had no intention to restart the war during this timeframe. With the appointment of liaison officers they were actively trying to maintain the truce.

Concluding I can see that all the factors that Augusteijn describes as being of importance in the development of violence are not present during this period in Mayo. We also see no development of violence in Mayo, which leads me to conclude that with the absence of the factors that develop violence according to Augusteijn, no violence takes place. Before looking at what happens when these factors are reintroduced in Mayo, I will shortly explain what happened during the Treaty debates and what the role and position of the Mayo TD's was in these debates.

## 4. TREATY

The Truce was introduced so that representatives of the Irish and British governments could come to a Treaty that would end the hostilities. Republican organizations pledged their support to the negotiations and had confidence in the outcome, such as the South Mayo Comhairle Ceanntair (area council of Sinn Féin).<sup>82</sup>

When the negotiations threatened to collapse, Lloyd George announced that he would return to full-scale war with Ireland if the Irish delegation did not sign the Treaty on December 5<sup>th</sup> 1921.<sup>83</sup> He did not give them a chance to negotiate the terms with de Valera or Dáil Éireann. This Treaty included Dominion status for Ireland, a pledge to the crown, and also partition of Ireland into a South and North and ports where British military would remain. Therefore the Treaty had symbolic and real elements which gave many republicans reason to oppose it.<sup>84</sup> The manner in which the delegation was forced to sign the Treaty without

<sup>82</sup> Irish Independent 24-8-1921 p5.

<sup>83</sup> Townshend, *The Republic*. 349.

<sup>84</sup> Foster, G. *Res Publican a hÉireann?: Republican Liverty and the Irish Civil War*. *New Hibernia Review* 16:3 (2012) 20-42. 37.

referring back to Dublin made it illegitimate to many republicans.<sup>85</sup> These issues would frame the Treaty debates in the Dáil.

#### 4.1. The Split

The Treaty was signed on December 6<sup>th</sup> 1921 at 2 a.m. in the morning. It immediately divided republican opinion.<sup>86</sup> While King George V was so happy with the news of the Treaty that he immediately issued the release of 5,000 Irish prisoners, the news was harder to swallow in Ireland. The republican movement consisted of different nationalistic factions that joined together in getting the British out. But now that there was a Treaty old divisions between ideologies came to the front again within the movement.<sup>87</sup> Although individuals gave many reasons for deciding one side over the other on the Treaty, the republican movement split over the question whether dominion status right now would be enough independence to accept or keep fighting for complete independence with an uncertain outcome.<sup>88</sup>

The Dáil Cabinet was the first organization to split because of the Treaty. Three members opposed the Treaty, while four supported it.<sup>89</sup> Debate on the Treaty in the Dáil started on December 19<sup>th</sup> 1921 and concluded with a vote on the Treaty on January 7<sup>nd</sup> 1922. The Pro-Treaty side used the time between the signing and the start of the debate to influence other TD's. The press was used to positively endorse the Treaty. The Church Hierarchy met on 13<sup>th</sup> of December and voted in favour of the Treaty, and the IRB who followed Collins, was in favour of the Treaty. The Anti-Treaty side did not use their influence to convince the republican organizations or public opinion.<sup>90</sup> The IRA GHQ was convinced that a return to war would not lead to a victory. The reports made by commanders throughout the country on the fighting strength were discouraging.<sup>91</sup>

Tom Maguire, a Mayo TD, reported how he was put under pressure by the IRB and the church to vote pro-Treaty during the debates.<sup>92</sup> During the Treaty debates he was sick and he didn't leave Dublin for the Christmas break. In his hotel he was

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<sup>85</sup> Ibidem, 26.

<sup>86</sup> Price, *The Flame*. 189.

<sup>87</sup> Cottrel, *Essential histories*. 20.

<sup>88</sup> Augusteijn, J. Political violence and democracy: an analysis of the tensions within Irish republican strategy, 1914-2002 *Irish Political studies* 18:1 (2003) 1-26. 3.

<sup>89</sup> Kissane, Voluntarist democratic theory. 2.

<sup>90</sup> Townshend, *The Republic*. 358.

<sup>91</sup> Ibidem, 351.

<sup>92</sup> O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 219.

met by his IRB superior in the hallway and was told that the senior officers supported the Treaty. Maguire considered himself a free agent and replied he had pledged allegiance to the established republic. During the Christmas break in the Treaty Debates he received a letter from a parish priest in Mayo to abstain from voting if he could not support the Treaty. The bishop then sent Dean Macken of Claremorris to convince Tom Maguire to vote in favour of the Treaty.<sup>93</sup> It is clear that the clergy used all their influence in trying to convince the TD's to vote for the Treaty. Maguire mentioned in his interview that without the priests the Treaty would never have been approved.<sup>94</sup>

## 4.2. Treaty Debates

The Treaty debates started on December 14<sup>th</sup> 1921 until the Christmas break on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. The debate continued early January. Many have seen the conflict between the two sides as a conflict between realism and idealism. For many pro-Treatyites the Volunteers had reached their military limit in 1921 and a return to war with the British would have been disastrous.<sup>95</sup> They saw the Treaty as a starting off point. The Free State would have the opportunity to develop a national state.<sup>96</sup> For republicans the oath of allegiance to the British crown, the establishment of a governor-general, the British military in several ports and the recognition of partition were unacceptable.<sup>97</sup> They did not fight a war for this result. If the Dáil would have voted before the Christmas break, the Treaty would most likely be defeated. But the Christmas break gave the pro-Treatyites the opportunity to mobilize support.<sup>98</sup> The anti-Treaty side did not take advantage of the break to rally support.

On January 7 1922 the vote was taken on the Treaty. 64 voted for the Treaty while 57 voted against. The Treaty was accepted, but by a small majority. Following the result a debate ensued about the constitutional position of the Dáil. In a new vote on the presidency De Valera lost by two votes.<sup>99</sup> The Anti-Treaty side then walked out of the Dáil which split the Dáil.

The Mayo TD's made some contributions to the Treaty Debate. They voted as follows:<sup>100</sup>

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93 Ibidem, 218-219.

94 Ibidem, 221.

95 1 Townshend, *The Republic*. 352-353.

96 Foster, *Res Publican*. 32.

97 Ibidem, 33.

98 Price, *The flame*. 190.

99 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 39.

100 Freemans Journal 9-1-1922 p6

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>
Joseph MacBride <i>Mayo North &amp; West</i>	John Crowley <i>Mayo North &amp; West</i>
William Sears <i>Mayo South/Roscommon South</i>	Thomas Derrig <i>Mayo North &amp; West</i>
	P.J. Rutledge <i>Mayo North &amp; West</i>
	Tom Maguire <i>Mayo South/Roscommon South</i>
	Francis Ferran <i>Sligo/Mayo East</i>

In the newspapers only two speeches from Mayo TD's are published. William Sears addressed the anti-Treaty side in the Dáil and said that they did not have the people behind them. This Treaty would give them the opportunity to build their nation. To vote against it would be "madness, sheer madness".<sup>101</sup> But Dr. Crowley said that if the people were given a free choice they would vote republican.<sup>102</sup> He, like many other Ant-Treatyites did not see the signing of a Treaty under the threat of war a free choice. About the Treaty debates Maguire said that the Treaty position was pressed but there was no real bitterness during the Treaty debates.<sup>103</sup>

The Mayo County Council had held a meeting on December 30 1921 to address the political situation. The councillors unanimously agreed that no action should be taken until the Dáil had made a decision and issued a statement that they hoped for unity in that decision.<sup>104</sup>

The signing and ratification of the Treaty would eventually lead to civil war, but even though the different sides were made clear in January, civil war would not break out for several months. In the next chapter I will analyse the development of violence from the Treaty debates onwards until the start of the Civil War.

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101 Connacht Tribune 7-1-1922 p5.

102 Freemans Journal 5-1-1922 p7.

103 O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 218.

104 Irish independent 31-12-1921 p6.

## 5. TREATY TO CIVIL WAR

After the approval of the Treaty in the Dáil on January 7 1922 the lines were drawn for the civil war. It is curious that it took six months before the civil war broke out between the anti-Treaty and pro-Treaty sides. In this chapter I will analyse why the civil war did not start on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

### 5.1. National political developments

#### 5.1.1. The election

With the approval of the Treaty in the Dáil it had to be ratified before it could go into effect. Only a new parliament could ratify the Treaty, since the Treaty removed six counties in Northern Ireland from the influence of the Dáil Éireann. Therefore elections needed to be held to create a new Dáil that would represent Ireland without the six northern counties. Until a general election was held the Republic still existed. A Provisional Government was set up on January 14 with Collins as chairman.<sup>105</sup> A general election was to be held as soon as possible, but both the British government and the Republicans wanted the constitution published before the election so that the intentions of the Provisional Government were clear.<sup>106</sup> When Sinn Féin Ard-Fheis met at the end of February they decided to postpone the election until the constitution could be drafted. The elections would be on June 16, 1922.<sup>107</sup>

Before the general election could take place the tensions between pro- and anti-Treatyites grew. In the previous election Sinn Féin had been unopposed in every constituency, now they had to deal with other parties and individuals. Since Sinn Féin was divided over the Treaty, they could expect a big loss. To make sure that a united Sinn Féin would win the elections and an attempt to maintain peace between both sides, Collins and de Valera agreed to an election pact. Within this pact Collins and de Valera agreed to put forward a united group of candidates for the general election.<sup>108</sup> The 64-57 division over the Treaty would be represented proportionally in the seats Sinn Féin won.<sup>109</sup> The two factions would form a coalition government after the elections. This way they also wanted to avoid a *de facto* vote for or against the Treaty. Members of either faction would not oppose members of the other faction in the election. This way it was not possible to vote for or against the Treaty. The pact was announced on May 20<sup>th</sup> but soon broke down. When P.J. Rutledge, Mayo TD, went to Tipperary for a campaign meeting he saw that both sides observed the pact.<sup>110</sup> But at another meeting Pro-Treaty candidates urged the voters to vote for Pro-Treaty or at least

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105 Townshend, *The republic*. 384-385.

106 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 105.

107 Ibidem, 56.

108 Kissane Explaining the intractability. 5.

109 Townshend, *The republic*. 398.

independents, but not anti-Treaty candidates.<sup>111</sup> In the week before the elections Collins also urged to vote for who you wanted and not according to the pact.

With the pact broken down, hope was now that the new constitution would be able to bring the sides back together. But since the British government had to approve the document and they would reject a republican constitution, this was unlikely. Collins first draft of the constitution did not mention the Treaty, the oath of allegiance to the crown or the office of governor-general and could have been acceptable to the republicans. But the British changed it and indicated that if the constitution contradicted the Treaty in any way it would be 'void and inoperative'.<sup>112</sup> The constitution was published on election day – June 16<sup>th</sup>.<sup>113</sup> This did not give many people time to study the document before voting. Republican objection was unavoidable.

Election meetings became opportunities for both sides to show their strength.<sup>114</sup> Even though the majority of the public was in favour of the Treaty, it was not the 95% Griffith talked about in the Dáil. Nor was the support enthusiastic, the alternative of a return to war with the British was considered worse.<sup>115</sup> Pro-Treaty Sinn Féin won the elections with 58 out of 128 seats. Anti-Treatyites got 36 seats. This was a loss of 22 seats compared to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dáil voting results on the Treaty.<sup>116</sup> The Provisional Government saw the results as a mandate to implement the Treaty. They had the majority of the public behind them. Republicans on the other hand maintained that the Treaty had not been an election issue, but also that the election was not a free election if the alternative was war. Republicans therefore did not recognize the 3<sup>rd</sup> Dáil and maintained that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dáil was the true representation of the will of the people. The vote on the Treaty could not be accepted since it was not a free choice.

The pact was only one way both sides tried to maintain the peace. In the six months between the signing of the Treaty and the outbreak of Civil War, many attempts at unifying both sides had been attempted.<sup>117</sup> The basis for all the peace attempts was that the Dáil, and its government should remain in

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110 O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 267.

111 Hopkinson, *Green against Green* 110.

112 Kissane Explaining the intractability. 7-8.

113 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 109.

114 Ibidem, 75.

115 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 35.

116 Kissane, Voluntarist democratic theory. 8.

117 Kissane, Explaining the intractability. 66.



existence.<sup>118</sup> Even though De Valera said in a speech on March 17, 1922 that to achieve freedom the Volunteers had to 'wade through Irish blood, the blood of the soldiers of the Irish Government, and perhaps, the blood of some of the members of the Government',<sup>119</sup> both sides were reluctant to start the fight.

### 5.1.2. Law and Order

With the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dáil representing the whole of Ireland, a Provisional Government had to be established to govern the new Irish area until new elections could result in the third Dáil. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Dáil did not lift themselves a system of dual government existed. With strong political divisions and dual government in place, most discussions in the Dáil were a repeat of the Treaty Debates. The weak provisional government could not prevent that law and order broke down throughout the country. Before the War of Independence, land-grabbing and cattle running were used to fight over land disputes. Large landowners were obligated to sell the pieces of land on which the Irish worked to them, but this process had not been completed before the War of Independence. This earlier practice of land grabbing and cattle running returned after the Treaty debates and in several areas martial law was declared. In an effort to set up a new police force to stop the lawlessness the government set up the Civil Guard. This new police force was to be unarmed and replace the RIC. Rumours began to spread that the civil guard consisted of former black-and-tans members and RIC. The Freemans journal addressed these concerns by investigating the barracks where the new civic guards were trained. They said that the civil guard consisted of former IRA men, from the flying columns. Former RIC-men who joined the RIC when Ireland was at war, even with great recommendation, were not accepted. Of the 400 recruits that had signed up, only 30 were former RIC men, who had all resigned and fought in the war on the side of the IRA.<sup>120</sup> The accuracy of this article is hard to analyse. If there were black-and-tans in the new civic guard, then a newspaper that is pro-Treaty and most probably censored will not write about it. Since the rumours about black-and-tans were spreading it was important for the government to stop this, since the new police force had to be trusted by the Irish people. They did not want the new police force to be ostracized like the RIC. Therefore the Civic Guard were to remain unarmed and it was important to stop the rumours about Black-and-Tans and former RIC joining the ranks. However, the new civic guard was not ready to work with only 400 recruits and the land disturbances continued until in the civil war.<sup>121</sup>

## 5.2. National military developments

### 5.2.1. The Convention

Immediately after the vote on the Treaty, officers of the IRA held meetings to discuss their position. The Volunteers had agreed to come under the control of the Dáil and the Ministry of Defence in the War of Independence. This would

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118 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 55.

119 Townshend, *The Republic*. 361.

120 Freemans Journal 25-3-1922 p6.

121 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 90.



mean that they would now have to fight for a government which had accepted the Treaty. For many this was unacceptable. During these meetings the officers – 4 members of GHQ staff, 6 divisional commanders and 2 Dublin Brigadiers – agreed that even though they had agreed to come under the Ministry of Defence, the Volunteers were never formally called together to agree. Therefore they decided that the Volunteer force should return to its original status under the control of an Executive. This Executive would have to be elected by a Convention, so a convention was organised for the 26 March 1922.<sup>122</sup> The Provisional Government banned the meeting but did not take any action against it when it was going on. Mulcahy warned that those participating in the meeting would receive no more support from the Provisional Governments' IRA GHQ.<sup>123</sup> The meeting went ahead as scheduled and about 2/3 of the IRA brigades was represented. They elected an Executive and agreed that they would no longer be under the authority of the Dáil Éireann or the Minister of Defence.<sup>124</sup>

On April 9 1922 the Executive came together in a meeting. No general anti-Treaty policy was discussed and no alternative government was set up. The only action coming from the meeting was an attack on the *freeman's journal* presses and the occupation of buildings in Dublin, of which the Four Courts was the biggest and most symbolic.<sup>125</sup> So even though no alternative of the Dáil Éireann was set up, no plan of action was decided upon, they still prepared for a violent confrontation.

### 5.2.2. Barracks

With the anti-Treaty IRA preparing for violence, the Provisional Government also set up an army. Beggars Bush Barracks was the base where the Provisional Government troops would be trained.<sup>126</sup> Most of the IRA had either gone anti-Treaty or retired from the army. This left the Provisional Government with an army of new recruits where almost none were from Munster or the west.<sup>127</sup> The IRA now consisted of two groups. The Anti-Treaty IRA had the Four Courts in Dublin as its headquarters with Rory O'Connor and Liam Mellows as leaders. They both fought during the Easter Rising and were active in the War of Independence for the Dublin IRA. Rory O'Connor led 200 men to take over the Four Courts buildings. The Provisional Government operated from Beggars Bush barracks in Dublin and was led by amongst others Michael Collins and Richard Mulcahy.<sup>128</sup>

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122 Townshend, *The Republic*. 390-392.

123 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 67.

124 Kissane, Voluntarist Democratic theory. 4.

125 Townshend, *The Republic*. 397.

126 Townshend, *The Republic*. 394.

127 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 61.

128 Price, *The Flame*. 196.

With the Treaty signed the British army quickly evacuated their barracks, which made who took them over very important for the military strength of Anti-Treaty and Pro-Treaty forces in an area. Local IRA groups took over the Barracks, and since the Provisional Government didn't have an army in the whole country yet, this meant that large areas of the country were already out of their control.<sup>129</sup> In Limerick the transfer of barracks almost led to violence, what would probably have been the outbreak of civil war. When the British left their barracks, Provisional Government troops were getting ready to move into Limerick. Ernie O'Malley, in command of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Southern Division realized the strategic importance of Limerick in any eventual fighting and brought as many anti-Treaty men as he could gather to occupy the city, this included men from the Mayo IRA.<sup>130</sup> In the interviews with O'Malley Tommy Heavey from West Mayo and Tom Carney from East Mayo indicate that they were with O'Malley in Limerick at this time with their men. Heavey claims they were with at least fifty men.<sup>131</sup> Eventually Mulcahy called the Provisional Governmental troops back, since he deemed them not yet ready, either militarily or physically for this fight.<sup>132</sup> The situation in Limerick showed that a civil war had actually already started, but both sides were not yet ready to fire their first shot. The presence of opposition is essential in delaying the outbreak of violence in this period. Even though the Provisional Government was building their own army, there were no clashes between the two armies. The Provisional Government's army was not ready to fight and the anti-Treaty IRA had not posed any real disruption, besides disagreement with the Treaty.

However, the withholding of financial resources to the anti-Treaty IRA and time for the Provisional Government to organize their military and be supplied by British arms changed this situation.<sup>133</sup> To find financial resources to be able to provide for the Anti-Treaty IRA army, they decided the Anti-Treaty IRA GHQ gave the order to visit the Bank of Ireland (the national bank of the Provisional Government) and withdraw funds. In other words, rob them. Collins and Liam Lynch, chief of staff of the IRA, tried to unite the two sides of the army, but could not overcome their fundamental differences on their position on the Treaty. By the time of their last meeting the more fundamental Republicans had taken over the Four Courts building.<sup>134</sup> Which made any unifying moves impossible.

### 5.3. Political development in Mayo

Even though nationally there was no violence yet between the two sides, locally tensions were running high and here and there clashes occurred. These did not

129 Kissane, Voluntarist Democratic theory. 3.

130 Freemans Journal 11-3-1922 p5.

131 O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 196 & 316.

132 Townshend, *The Republic*. 394-396.

133 Kissane, Voluntarist democratic theory. 19.

134 Townshend, 369.

immediately lead to the outbreak of civil war. What was holding this development in violence back?

### 5.3.1. The election in Mayo

From March onwards there were election campaign events from both sides in Mayo. The Republican Anti-Treaty campaign started on 10 March 1922 in Crossmolina. The meeting was orderly, but the pro-Treaty newspaper mentioned a notable lack of enthusiasm.<sup>135</sup> This lack of enthusiasm report cannot be taken too seriously. Other newspapers reporting on anti-Treaty meetings make no mention of the lack of enthusiasm. At the anti-Treaty meetings speakers are local anti-Treaty leaders as Tom Maguire, Michael Kilroy and P.J. Rutledge. At a campaign meeting in Glenamaddy early April Tom Maguire tells the people that they are ready to fight the British. The threat of war should not be a reason to vote for the Treaty. The men and women did not lay down their lives for a free state under the British Crown.<sup>136</sup> In this speech the enemy or opposition Maguire refers to are still the British. He indicated that great men have made mistakes before in history and he sees that the majority vote to approve the Treaty in the Dáil was such a mistake. 99% of the Volunteers were against the Treaty, according to Mr. Boland. The meeting ended with singing 'the soldiers song' and cheers for the Republic. This meeting is clearly not lacking in enthusiasm, while the *Connacht Tribune* also took a more pro-Treaty stance. The same kind of articles about large crowds at anti-Treaty meetings can be found in the *Connaught Telegraph*.<sup>137</sup> Therefore I can deduce that anti-Treaty meetings had a large attending and were received enthusiastically. By comparing this reaction with the reaction the pro-Treaty meeting received in Castlebar you get an idea of the public opinion in county Mayo.

On Sunday 2 April 1922 a pro-Treaty rally was held in Castlebar. One of the speakers was Michael Collins.<sup>138</sup> The meeting is announced in the newspapers and the *Connaught Telegraph* reports that province Connacht will be the province which has most to gain from the Treaty and the meeting will draw large crowds to show their support for the Treaty.<sup>139</sup> Only the opposite happened. The large meeting was also a great occasion for the anti-Treaty side to show their strength. Before the meeting roads were blocked and railway lines were lifted, so it was very hard to get to the meeting in the first place. Groups that did show up were turned away by armed men.<sup>140</sup> At the meeting itself, where people did managed to attend, the speech of Michael Collins was chaotic. While he was speaking on the back of a lorry, he was continuously interrupted. An anti-Treaty solicitor,

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135 Freemans Journal 11-3-1922 p5.

136 Connacht Tribune 8-4-1922 p6.

137 Connaught Telegraph 6-5-1922 p3.

138 Price, *The Flame*. 207.

139 Connaught Telegraph 25-3-1922 p2.

140 Connacht Tribune 8-4-1922 p6.

Thomas Campbell drove up to the platform on a motorcar and demanded some answers. The crowd was clearly divided. Some booing Campbell and cheering on Michael Collins and some the opposite. Michael Collins tried to continue his speech but at some point an anti-Treaty men tried to drive away the lorry which Michael Collins used as a platform. A pro-Treaty group tried to defend the lorry and guns on both sides were drawn. Priests and women tried to maintain the peace.<sup>141</sup> At one point a man ran through the crowd being chased by armed officers in uniform and shots were fired. One woman received a bullet wound and others screamed and fainted. An anti-Treaty officer declared the meeting to be at an end 'in the interest of peace' and someone drove the lorry away. The meeting ended in total disarray and chaos. When Michael Collins and his colleagues retired at a hotel an Anti-Treaty officer announced that they were not allowed to leave until they surrendered their arms. The divisional commandant, Michael Kilroy, was called to deal with the situation and he rescinded the order.<sup>142</sup> According to Tommy Healy this was not exactly how the conflict happened. He claimed that a member of Collins group drew a gun, because the IRA were making too much noise. Which resulted in twenty guns being trained on the lorry on which Collins speeches. The man who drew the gun gave the gun to someone else who ran. He was then followed by the IRA men and shots were fired. When Collins tried to retire at the hotel, Kilroy supposedly tackled him and asked if Collins had his hands on their money, which Collins found most insulting.<sup>143</sup> What can be seen in this situation that as soon as opposition is available the tensions rise so high that violence is almost inevitable. But again it is clear that both sides still try to maintain the peace. Michael Collins and his men did constrain themselves in not attacking the anti-Treaty protestors, and Michael Kilroy rescinded the order that would definitely have brought a conflict. There is clear animosity between the two sides, but the threshold of violence is not yet crossed. Shots were fired, but to arrest someone, not to incite more violence from the crowd.

To apply for opposition against the Sinn Féin members in the election. also caused problems in Mayo. Independent candidates were threatened and harassed to withdraw.<sup>144</sup> And when that didn't work, as was the case with Mr Egan of the Farmers Party, the man delivering his nomination was kidnapped.<sup>145</sup> A Treaty Election Committee secretary of North Mayo was arrested by the IRA, but no reason was given.<sup>146</sup>

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141 Connaught Telegraph 8-4-1922 p2-3 & Irish Independent 4-4-1922 p5.

142 Ryle Dwyer, T. *Michael Collins and the civil war*. (Cork 2012) 117.

143 O'Malley *The men will talk to me*. 141.

144 Connacht Tribune 24-6-1922 p5.

145 Freemans Journal 7-6-1922 p4.

146 Freemans Journal 28-4-1922 p5.

After the voting, it was clear that in Mayo there was an Anti-Treaty majority. For Mayo North and West, only Joseph MacBride was elected for the pro-Treaty side. On the anti-Treaty side there were three representatives; P.J. Rutledge, T. Derrig and J. Crowley. In Mayo South/Roscommon South it was more evenly distributed: Pro-Treaty William Sears and D. O'Rourke were elected and anti-Treaty Tom Maguire and H. Boland.<sup>147</sup>

### 5.3.2. County Council Mayo

The division between the anti-Treaty and pro-Treaty side was also visible in the County Council of Mayo. Pro-Treaty representatives tried to block anti-Treaty plans and meetings became increasingly hostile.<sup>148</sup> With the IRA being anti-Treaty in Mayo they were cut off from funds of GHQ and had financial problems. Leaders of the Mayo IRA were also delegates in the Mayo Council. At the end of April 1922 the man who interfered at the meeting in Castlebar where Michael Collins was present, Thomas Campbell, proposed a motion to have a levy of six pence in the pound to pay for the IRA's debts.<sup>149</sup> The chairman ruled the motion out of order since the Provisional Government had agreed to pay all legitimate debts of the IRA. But since the IRA in Mayo had gone to the Convention and were thus exempt from receiving finances from the Provisional Government this was not a solution. When the chairman ended the meeting, and he and other members had left, the secretary was held back by the Anti-Treaty side. With the secretary and the Anti-Treaty members in attendance the motion was passed unanimously.<sup>150</sup> The *Freemans Journal* reported that a gun had been drawn in forcing the secretary to remain,<sup>151</sup> but the secretary later denied this fact.<sup>152</sup> The situation in the Mayo Council indicates that the conflict was escalating and the lines between politics and military were beginning to fade. As with the meeting in Castlebar, we see that as soon as there is opposition the violence quickly escalates, but the threshold of violence is not yet passed. There was still a will to somehow get through this conflict without violence. In May the Anti-Treaty side in the Mayo Council withdrew the extra levy for the IRA.<sup>153</sup> This could have been done because according to the *Irish Independent* the council was penalized by the Provisional Government for giving the unofficial IRA tax money and if continued then grants would be withheld, like the 12,000 pounds for unemployment.<sup>154</sup> But

147 Irish independent 7-6-1922 p5.

148 Price, *The Flame*. 210.

149 Connaught Telegraph 29-4-1922 p6.

150 Ryle Dwyer, *Michael Collins*. 157.

151 Freemans Journal 26-4-1922.

152 Connaught Telegraph 29-4-1923 p2 & Freemans Journal 28-4-1922 p5.

153 Freemans Journal 25-5-1922 p2.

154 Irish Independent 26-1-1923 p5.

it could also be because it was clear that the conflict was spiralling out of control and they tried to reign it back in.<sup>155</sup> When the anti-Treaty side had a majority in the council after the general elections, they quickly replaced the pro-Treaty chairman with P.J. Rutledge who was anti-Treaty on 24 June 1922.<sup>156</sup> The anti-Treaty majority was unable to govern, however, since soon most of them were fighting with the IRA against the government forces.

### 5.3.3. Law and order

When the British left Mayo there were no real celebrations in Mayo. People were worried about the future.<sup>157</sup> Law and order soon broke down again in Mayo. Competitions were cancelled, like the Railway Cup between Mayo and Sligo in April 1922.<sup>158</sup> Martial law was introduced in some areas due to the agrarian unrest.<sup>159</sup> While during the War of Independence the IRA worked locally to ensure the peace, now they were participating in the agrarian unrest. When men from the Provisional Government arrested two men for cattle driving the Republicans arrested 6 men from the Provisional Government.<sup>160</sup> These retaliatory arrests were made several times, which indicates that some of the men responsible for the agrarian unrest and cattle driving were Republicans.<sup>161</sup> On the other hand the Republicans did also try to investigate what was happening. When in Castlebar the house of Mr. Egan from the Farmers Party was attacked for a second time, the West Mayo Brigade issued a statement to the *Freemans Journal* that they were investigating the incident.<sup>162</sup> The lack of effective government and therefore the delay in the distribution of land combined with the breaking down of law and order made it possible for the agrarian unrest to start again. So even though this kind of violence is not directly linked to the civil war violence, it is a consequence of the tension between the two sides. In this same period malnutrition became a big problem in Mayo. The death rate was rising in the areas because of malnutrition.<sup>163</sup> There was a high degree of poverty. A term that is often used in theories on violence is relative depravity. I will not go into too much detail here,

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<sup>155</sup> Price, *The Flame*. 213.

<sup>156</sup> Ibidem, 215.

<sup>157</sup> Ibidem, 199.

<sup>158</sup> Connacht Tribune 15-4-1922 p4.

<sup>159</sup> Irish Independent 22-5-1922 p2 & Freemans Journal 13-2-1922 p5 & Connaught Telegraph 27-5-1922 p2.

<sup>160</sup> Irish Independent 15-6-1922 p6.

<sup>161</sup> Connaught Telegraph 17-6-1922 p3.

<sup>162</sup> Freemans Journal 14-6-1922 p5.

<sup>163</sup> Connacht Tribune 27-5-1922 p4.

since it is not part of the theory I am testing. According to Augusteijn when there is a higher standard of living, of hope hereon, it reduces the willingness to engage in violence, since the risks on losing what you have, or could have were too high.<sup>164</sup> The situation in Mayo at the beginning of 1922 indicates that there was not a hope on higher standards of living and the willingness to engage in violence was therefore not dampened by this factor. It can be linked somewhat to the factor of leaving familiar surroundings. With the increase in poverty, the surroundings of the people in Mayo changed. Obligations might decrease when there was no more or increase to find any food available.

## 5.4. Military developments in Mayo

The IRA in Mayo went almost completely Anti-Treaty. The notable exceptions were Joe Ring, who had a small unit in Westport and Thomas Ruane in Kiltimagh.<sup>165</sup> Newspapers describe how Joe Ring was arrested in April by the Republicans for recruiting for the Civic Guard. Since he did not recognize the unofficial IRA who arrested him, he immediately went on hunger strike.<sup>166</sup> He was released shortly thereafter based on medical grounds.<sup>167</sup>

### 5.4.1. Barracks

As in the rest of the country with the leaving of the British the question was who would take over the barracks. Since almost all the IRA in Mayo went to the Anti-Treaty side, most barracks were in their hands.<sup>168</sup> Soon after the vote on the Treaty,, when the RIC had not yet left, the barracks in Charlestown were raided for arms and ammunition. Two RIC officers were slightly wounded, but no one was kidnapped. All were released when the arms and ammunition were taken.<sup>169</sup> This makes it clear that the vote on the Treaty immediately signalled to the Anti-Treaty side that they should prepare for violence, either against the British or against the Pro-Treaty side.<sup>170</sup> The Provisional Government forces who took over some barracks were initially left alone. In June we can see that the contest for the barracks is beginning. In Charlestown the troops of the Provisional Government took over the town hall from the Republican forces. Soon thereafter the Republican forces took the Workhouse back and arrested several officers while the Government troops were at mass.<sup>171</sup> No one was injured during these transitions.

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164 Augusteijn, *Public defiance*. 320.

165 Price, *The Flame*. 196.

166 Irish Independent 6-4-1922 p6 & Connaught Telegraph 8-4-1922 p2.

167 Irish Independent 8-4-1922 p7.

168 Freemans Journal 16-2-1922 p8 & Irish Independent 14-2-1922 p5.

169 Freemans Journal 16-1-1922 p3, Freemans Journal 19-1-1922 p3, Irish Independent 18-1-1922 p5.

170 Price, *The Flame*. 201.



After the IRA Convention of 26 March there was still no policy or plan of action for the Anti-Treaty IRA. Tom Maguire of the Western Division in Mayo later commented: 'We were undecided ... because the last thing we wanted to do was to start to shoot. We would have done anything to avoid that.'<sup>172</sup> With the Provisional Government withholding funds from the Anti-Treaty IRA, they were soon in financial problems. The Republican Four Courts Executive ordered the anti-Treaty IRA to 'visit' the Bank of Ireland, which the Provisional Government used, and demand their money owed. The bank managers were handed receipts for the money taken.<sup>173</sup> Even though Kilroy said he was against taking money from the banks, since this would lose them popular support<sup>174</sup> he did indicate that his brigade took 22,000 from the bank in his area.<sup>175</sup>

Besides this ordered and organised bank robbery there was not much raiding going on in Mayo. In February a bank was robbed and a post office was raided.<sup>176</sup> Other reports about businesses being raided come in April. Three IRA officers and a civilian are arrested and charged with robbing 19 houses, including 2 post offices. Even though IRA officers were involved, they claimed they did it in a drunken stupor.<sup>177</sup> It was not on orders from the Republicans. Other reports were a raid on a tobacco factory and the stealing of motor cars and motor bicycle in May and April respectively.<sup>178</sup> It is clear that right after the vote on the Treaty the republican IRA made sure they were prepared for an eventual fight, by raiding barracks and making sure they had enough arms and ammunition. When time went on, no fight broke out. The financial problems were solved by withdrawing money from the bank on orders of GHQ. The Republican IRA had control over the barracks and did not face opposition yet. Both sides did not want to take the first shot. This is again demonstrated in a situation where tensions ran high and both sides decided not to pursue the issue further. On 14 May 1922 Commander Symons of the Provisional government troops was visiting a priest in Mayo. While he was a guest at the parochial house the house was surrounded by Republican forces who demanded the arrest of the Commander.<sup>179</sup> When the priest asked Tom Maguire to call back the men he would not interfere as long as the Commander was a guest of the priest. Eventually the siege on the house was

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171 Irish Independent 3-6-1922 p6, Irish Independent 5-6-1922 p6 & Freemans Journal 5-6-1922 p6.

172 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 68.

173 Price, *The Flame*. 211-212.

174 O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 71

175 Ibidem, 63.

176 Irish Independent 3-2-1922 p5 & Freemans Journal 25-2-1922 p5.

177 Connaught Telegraph 22-4-1922 p3 & Irish Independent 22-4-1922 p5.

178 Connaught Telegraph 12-5-1922 p4 & Irish Independent 13-4-1922 p6.



lifted by Government troops, who then proceeded to go to the barracks of the troops of Tom Maguire, demanding the release of six prisoners. When Tom Maguire refused the Government troops gave him 48 hours to hand over the prisoners. Afterwards troops from all over the country went to assist in defending the barracks.<sup>180</sup> Curiously there is no follow-up from this event in any newspaper. Tom Maguire said in his interview with O'Malley that he received an order from Liam Lynch to release the prisoners.<sup>181</sup> This indicates that the conflict was peacefully resolved.

## 5.5. Conclusion on the development of violence from 7 January 1922 till 27 June 1922

In this chapter it is indicated that after the political division in the Dáil over the Treaty other parts of the Republican movement split as well. It became very important which side of the conflict took over the barracks that were being vacated by the British since that would lead immediately to a military advantage. Even though the anti-Treaty side were militarily stronger during this period, since the Provisional Government hadn't raised a substantial army yet, no military action was taken. The role of General Headquarters of the Republican IRA is very important.

### 5.5.1. Presence of opposition

The most important factors in why the civil war did not break out on January 8 is that there was no real opponent yet. The army of the Provisional Government is not yet in a position to become an active opponent to the IRA troops. Almost all barracks in Mayo were occupied by the IRA, so no governmental troops were in the neighbourhood to provide the opposition. Since it is important according to Augusteijns' theory that an opposition is available for violence to develop, this point is proven when no opposition means no violence in Mayo during this period.

### 5.5.2. Threshold of violence

The threshold for starting violence was very high. Maguire mentions that they did not want to start shooting their old comrades. Both sides tried very hard to prevent an outbreak of violence, since it was probably clear that once the threshold was passed, civil war would ensue. In the six months between the signing of the Treaty and the outbreak of Civil War, there are times when civil war seemed imminent, like the barrack occupation in Limerick, and the occupation of the Four Courts in Dublin, but both sides refrained from turning to violence. Even though for many men the threshold of violence was crossed when they fought in the War of Independence, this conflict was completely different and the period in between has created a new threshold as I have demonstrated in the previous chapter.

### 5.5.3. Ostracizing the 'enemy'

The enemy was clear. There were two clear sides to the conflict, the pro-Treaty and the anti-Treaty side. Since they knew each other and fought with each other

179 Irish Independent 16-5-1922 p8 & Freemans Journal 16-5-1922 p5.

180 Connacht Tribune 14-5-1922 p5.

181 O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 224.

the previous year, there is not much demonizing going on. For the Anti-Treaty Republicans it was very hard to ostracize their enemy, since the newspapers had gone pro-Treaty and were censored. During campaign speeches the pro-Treaty side was verbally attacked but not completely put down. This can be seen in the speech by Tom Maguire where he mentions that even great men make mistakes. The pro-Treaty side is more active in trying to convince the communities that the Anti-Treaty side does not have the best intentions for the country. By not having an enemy that is a legitimate target, it is harder to cross the threshold of violence, which explains why there was no violence in this period.

#### 5.5.4. Outsiders in the organisation

There were no outsiders in the IRA organisation. Its presence therefore does not affect any development in violence during this period.

#### 5.5.5. Leaving familiar settings of work and community

With rising hunger and death rates familiar social settings may have changed. But not in the way meant by Augusteijn. The IRA members were still connected to the community and families. They had not decided to go on the run but still stayed in their towns. This increased again the threshold to start the violence, which explains why it took so long before the first move was made by either side.

#### 5.5.6. Role of General Headquarters (GHQ)

The role of GHQ is important in delaying the start of the conflict. They did not order to fight, they did not create a policy or plan on how to win this conflict. The Provisional Government Head Quarters also plays a role in delaying the conflict. They avoided confrontation and did not act when the Republican IRA robbed banks all over the country. Liam Lynch ordered Maguire to hand over the prisoners and thus prevented a conflict from escalating in Mayo. The existence of the Republican IRA headquarters did legitimize the republican IRA movement as a national movement, and not as local opposition.

So while on the pro-Treaty side the threshold that prevented the civil war was the lack of an army, for the anti-Treaty side it was the unwillingness to start the conflict. This meant that every time the conflict heated up to a point where violence would break out, both sides stepped down.

This changed when one side did take the first move.

## 6. CIVIL WAR

After months of trying to come to an agreed peace between the both sides the differences were still not resolved.<sup>182</sup> With the publication of the Constitution any hope for a resolution between the two sides had disappeared. With the assassination of Sir Henry Wilson in London by two IRA men, the Provisional Government now had to face the pressure of the British in dealing with the republican IRA.<sup>183</sup> While the newspapers claim that two Republican IRA men assassinated Sir Henry Wilson, afterwards it has become clear that Michael Collins actually gave the order for his execution before the Treaty was signed. The two men responsible for the killing were one pro-Treaty and one anti-Treaty IRA man. The British, who were alarmed from the moment the Republican IRA took over the Four Courts, almost did not wait for the Provisional Government to take action. The British Cabinet gave General MacCready, instruction on preparing a full-scale assault on the Four Courts. The attack was prepared and it was decided that the attack should take place on 15 June.<sup>184</sup> Any attack by the British would have surely backfired and reunited the Irish against their common enemy. But on the day of the planned attack the order was withdrawn.<sup>185</sup> They could have realized the consequences of their attack or decided to have faith in the Provisional Government, but the reason is not known.

On 27 June the Provisional Government arrested a prominent anti-treaty IRA commander in Dublin while carrying out a raid. In retaliation the Four Courts IRA arrested an even more prominent Pro-Treatyite. The British pressured the Provisional Government to no longer tolerate the resistance to the government at the Four Courts. This pressure increased after the assassination of Sir Henry Wilson. With pressure from the British Government, two 18-pounder field guns and two more expected to arrive later that day, the Provisional Government gave the Four Courts IRA an ultimatum.<sup>186</sup> If they did not vacate the premises and released the prominent Pro-Treatyite military action would be taken. At the end of June the military situation for the Provisional Government had changed drastically. They were supplied with British arms, had months of training and recruiting and were ready to deal with the anti-Treaty side. Furthermore the preceding months of fruitless peace negotiations had made it clear that no peaceful solution was going to come.<sup>187</sup> The attack on the Four Courts on 28 June 1922 signifies the first move taken. The threshold of violence was broken by the Pro-Treaty side. Since the Anti-Treaty side now had opposition and did not fire the

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182 Kissane, Explaining the intractability. 83.

183 Connaught Telegraph 1-7-1922 p2.

184 Townshend, *The Republic*. 404-405.

185 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 115-116.

186 Ibidem, 118.

187 Kissane, Voluntarist democratic theory. 9.

first shot they were ready to fight back. The conflict now had two clear sides; the Republic versus the Free State.<sup>188</sup> The Republican IRA were now forced to think about how to proceed with their opposition to the government.<sup>189</sup> Even though recent research have shown that the Civil War was not as violent as previously assumed, by the time of the order to dump arms in June 1923, 927 people were dead, including 77 people who had been executed and 12,000 were taken prisoner.<sup>190</sup> With the start of the Civil War I can analyse how the violence developed during the year. As we have seen the theory of Augusteijn has explained why there wasn't any violence in the period between the Truce and the outbreak of Civil War. I now want to see if his theory still holds up in this new conflict, with people who already have a history of violence.

## 6.1. National political developments

On 5 September 1922 the government felt it was secure enough for the Third Dáil to meet.<sup>191</sup> With this first meeting the authority of the Third Dáil was established and the Second Dáil ceased to exist according to the government. For the Republicans the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dáil has never officially disbanded and a government only based on part of the Ireland of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dáil could not disband the government of the whole of Ireland. The first order of business was the passage of the new constitution.<sup>192</sup> With the Third Dáil in existence the Republican TD's had to decide if they would attend the Dáil. Before the civil war started Liam Lynch had been opposed to any form of policy or alternative government. Now with the realisation that the opposition side did have a government he agreed to an Army Executive on 16-17 October. During this meeting the Executive concluded that an alternative Republican government should be formed. De Valera was to act as President of the Republic and Chief Executive of the State. The Republican TD's decided on a meeting on 25 October 1922 to form a cabinet.<sup>193</sup> Even though the alternative government could not function it could provide a focus for Republican unity.

On 27 September 1922 the Public Safety Bill was introduced in the Dáil. Under this bill the army had emergency powers. By setting up military courts they now had the power to execute people for all kinds of offences, such as carrying a weapon and aiding and abetting attacks on National Army forces.<sup>194</sup> The general

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188 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 119.

189 Townshend, *The Republic*. 408.

190 Connelly, S.J. (ed) *Oxford Companion to Irish history*. (Oxford 2002) 277.

191 Connaught Telegraph 9-9-1922 p4.

192 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 180.

193 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 187-188.

194 Ibidem, 181.

public were notified of these powers on 10 October 1922.<sup>195</sup> The newspaper of the republican *Poblacht na h-Éireann* called this bill the Murder Bill. In article in the issue of 29 September 1922, only two days after the bill was introduced in the Dáil, it is claimed that the bill is to legalize the killing of prisoners that governmental forces already do. The paper calls the new governmental forces British Tommies, who know only how to kill prisoners.<sup>196</sup> This policy of executions meant that the new Free State of Ireland would forever be associated with the execution of Republican heroes and former comrades in arms.<sup>197</sup> The first executions took place on 17 November 1922. Five unknown men were executed for carrying arms in Dublin. Soon thereafter Erskine Childers, secretary of the negotiation delegates and well known republican.<sup>198</sup> The Labour party in the Dáil was shocked at these executions, but did not stop them. The rate of executions actually increased when the war progressed. In January 34 prisoners were executed when the government decided that men from all counties that were still fighting in the opposition were to be executed.<sup>199</sup> Even when Republican activity slowed down the government held up the executions, with 20 more executions in the months that followed. With the outrage over the executions it would become more problematic to find a peaceful resolution and reconciliation between the two sides.<sup>200</sup>

#### 6.1.1. Negotiating peace

Before starting with the policy of executions the government offered amnesty to those who handed in their weapons and accepted the authority of the government.<sup>201</sup> But the Republicans did not want to think about surrender. With the establishment of the Republican alternative government de Valera was the spokesperson to negotiate an agreement to peace. De Valera indicated that peace would be acceptable if the Republican TD's were given a constitutional position in the Dáil.<sup>202</sup> But Cosgrave, head of the Free State of Ireland, had made a public declaration he would not negotiate with the republicans. There was no sign that the Free State government was willing to negotiate terms. In early 1923 when the Republican actions had dwindled down the Neutral IRA wanted to discuss a truce with De Valera. With the costs of the war and the rate of executions rising even those supporting the government were ready for an end

195 Price, *The Flame*. 231.

196 *Poblacht na h-Éireann*, 29-9-1922 p1.

197 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 192.

198 Townshend, *The Republic*. 441.

199 Ibidem, 443.

200 Kissane, *Explaining the intractability*. 75.

201 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 181.

202 Kissane, *Explaining the intractability*. 79.

to hostilities. However a truce at this time would be seen by both sides as an opportunity to regroup and prepare to resume the hostilities. Both sides had not come any closer in any agreement that could be made, that would allow a side to lay down arms.

## 6.2. National military developments

Nationally the Irish Civil War has three phases. The first phase is from the outbreak of civil war until September and is characterized by open warfare of the Republicans. The second phase consists of the guerrilla warfare the Republicans refer to.<sup>203</sup> And the third phase is the final phase with the executions and round-up of many Republicans and the decline in Republican activity. The military situation was chaotic throughout the civil war and there were great differences in the development in violence on a local level. The civil war was predominantly fought locally and there were no clear battle lines between the National and Republican forces.<sup>204</sup> There was no direction since communications were almost made impossible during the war.<sup>205</sup> This meant that local leaders determined the policy on how the conflict would be fought.

One of the central policies that was ordered by GHQ and was taken up by all the republican forces was the destruction of the railways. The National army relied on transport by train to move their forces. Many areas were also depended on the train network to acquire services. By sabotaging the rail network the Republicans could attack the National Army forces and the effectiveness of governance. In August 1922 there were no train services to the south and west possible. The railway to the west continued to be sabotaged throughout the war which left the West almost completely cut off from the rest of the country.<sup>206</sup> Almost a fifth of all Republican actions was meant to sabotage the railway system.<sup>207</sup> To protect the railways the Railroad Protection and Maintenance Corps was formed in October 1922. At first they would have armoured cars on top of the carriages to protect them, later they would have machine gunners on swivel turrets that could fire in all directions on them. They definitely had some success in reopening the railways.<sup>208</sup> But they could not prevent the tearing up of rails and the blowing up of bridges.

In the first phase of the war the Republicans looked to have a clear advantage. They occupied most of the barracks throughout the country, while the National army was concentrated in Dublin.<sup>209</sup> They were well armed and they also had early successes, like the attack on Ballinee, which will be discussed later in this

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203 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 173.

204 Price, *The Flame*. 221.

205 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 128.

206 Irish Independent 7-7-1922 p14.

207 Townshend, *The Republic*. 430.

208 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 199.

chapter. However, these successes were not followed up and many other attacks resulted in failure. Hopkinson explains this lack of early success by giving several factors that weakened the republican effort. One of these is the unwillingness to shoot at their former comrades. This threshold of violence and lack of ostracizing of the enemy clearly had an impact in the development of violence. Another factor was that while the IRA enjoyed large-scale support during the Anglo-Irish War, this was not the case during the Civil War. Many people did not want to return to a state of war and the economic effects of the looting to sustain the army made them very unpopular.<sup>210</sup> There was no national plan of attack, which meant that the war was mostly fought by local ambushes and raids.

### 6.2.1. Republican General Headquarters

Since the Civil War was fought locally and the ways of communication were obstructed the role of General Headquarters was minimal. Liam Lynch, who was dismissed as chief of staff of the IRA when he opposed the occupation of the Four Courts, but was reinstated when the Four Courts fell, has been criticised for not developing a policy to direct the republican campaign.<sup>211</sup> After the Four Courts fell he ordered the men back to their own units. Some officers were still in Dublin, such as Tom Maguire, after their last Convention meeting on 12 June 1922.<sup>212</sup> He was convinced that the fight in the west would bring victory to the republican cause and therefore he was not willing to discuss terms of peace or surrender. P.J. Ruttledge tells O'Malley in his interview that Lynch was determined to keep on the fight and depended on success in the west.<sup>213</sup> On 10 February 1923 he instructed that the Republicans were not to enter into any peace negotiations but merely accept a written statement of any suggestion for peace.<sup>214</sup> One of the few orders that came from GHQ was in response to the executions of republicans in jail by the Free State government. Liam Lynch ordered that government TDs and senators were to be shot on sight.<sup>215</sup> Locally, however, there was still a reluctance to shoot at former comrades and the order was only acted upon once by the Dublin No.1 Brigade. They killed TD Seán Hailes. The Free State government retaliated immediately by executing the leaders of the Four Courts occupation, including Rory O'Connor. These men were explicitly executed as a reprisal as ordered by a cabinet meeting. They were untried and non-convicted men which led to a shockwave of outrage through the country and had a strong negative

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209 Ibidem, 127.

210 Ibidem, 131.

211 Townshend, *The Republic* 412.

212 O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 268.

213 Ibidem, 275.

214 Kissane, *Explaining the intractability*. 76.

215 Price, *The Flame*. 235.



effect on the Republican morale.<sup>216</sup> The beginning of 1923 saw a demoralized republican effort. Not only were they beaten back militarily, the government also issued a policy that they would hold executions of Republicans from that locality if the violence there ended.<sup>217</sup> This put enormous strain on the fighting Republicans and the men in jail. But it did not lead to the end of violence. Furthermore the arrest of Liam Deasy and his consequent request for immediate surrender of all arms and men as required by General Mulcahy to the republican officers made many question if it would make sense to keep on fighting. Amnesty was offered to those who surrendered, but no reply came.<sup>218</sup>

The early months of 1923 saw a demoralized republican force and any actions that were undertaken were defensive.<sup>219</sup> On 23 March 1923 the Executive held a meeting to discuss their situation and peace efforts. They agreed to reconvene in three weeks when the reports of the situation in the localities would be received. Before the second meeting could take place Liam Lynch was killed by National Army forces on 11 April 1923.<sup>220</sup> The main opponent of any peace effort had died. He was replaced by Frank Aiken who instructed de Valera to negotiate with the Free State Government on the basis that: 1. The Sovereignty of the Irish Nationality and the integrity of its territory are inalienable; and 2. That any instrument purporting to the contrary is null and void. In return the republicans would accept majority rule.<sup>221</sup> The *Connaught Telegraph* assessed the republican situation and declared that peace was in sight on 21 April 1923.<sup>222</sup> The Free State government rejected the peace proposals by which the republican government and the army decided to issue an order to cease fire and dump arms. The Neutral IRA called on the government to stop the executions now that a cease fire was declared.<sup>223</sup> The order was published on 24 May 1923 and hereby bringing the Civil War officially to an end. This did not mean that the National Army believed this immediately. In the month following the cease fire, the republicans did not engage in any military activities but were arrested under the Emergency Powers Bill. In a trial concerning opposing one of these arrests, the Attorney General indicates that the state of war is not yet at an end, and the court should therefore not interfere with military business. He believed that the republicans were merely using this break to reorganize and prepare for a continuation of

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216 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 190-191.

217 Ibidem, 228.

218 Townshend, *The Republic*. 444.

219 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 228.

220 Price, *The Flame*. 255.

221 Kissane, *Explaining the intractability* 80.

222 Connaught Telegraph 21-4-1923 p2.

223 Freeman's Journal 9-5-1923 p5.

hostilities. In the meantime he would continue arresting people who broke martial law.<sup>224</sup> At the end of the June an article is published that a soldier from the National Army has died when two different troops started firing on each other, both thinking the other was a group of republicans.<sup>225</sup> From July onwards there are no more reports in the newspapers of arrests or actions of Irregulars, this would indicate that the peace has been accepted by both sides.

### 6.3. Political developments in Mayo

With the start of the Civil War the Mayo County Council was back in the hands of the pro-Treaty majority, since the anti-Treaty Republican delegates had left to join the Republican flying columns.<sup>226</sup> By researching the newspapers I have found what occupied them politically in the period of Civil War. In August the council discussed a report on the destruction of roads and bridges.<sup>227</sup> A few weeks later people in Mayo spontaneously started to repair the bridges.<sup>228</sup> By this action it is clear that the local population was tired of the consequences of the civil war and can be seen as evidence that there was not much local support for the Republican cause. In early 1923 I have found that the Council failed to function because it did not have a quorum to pass any legislation.<sup>229</sup> With not enough delegates present to pass legislation the politics in Mayo were at a standstill.

In February the Civic Guards arrived in Mayo to restore the law and order.<sup>230</sup> They were in general enthusiastically received<sup>231</sup> but in a newspaper article I found that they also encountered violent opposition.<sup>232</sup> The republicans left the Civic Guard alone. They were not considered the enemy, they were unarmed and tried to uphold law and order without terrorizing the community.

The Connaught Telegraph reports that the 4<sup>th</sup> Western Division had send a communication to the Council requesting that they condemn the executions, but only two councillors showed up at the special meeting.<sup>233</sup> Either the council had completely lost its ability to function or the Republican effort was disliked so

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224 Irish Independent 22-6-1923 p10.

225 Irish Independent 30-6-1923 p7.

226 Price, *The Flame*. 223.

227 Connaught Telegraph 19-8-1923 p5.

228 Connacht Tribune 9-9-1922 p5.

229 Connaught Telegraph 27-1-1923 p3.

230 Price, *The Flame*. 269.

231 Freemans Journal 27-6-1923 p7.

232 Freemans Journal 20-4-1923 p5.

much that the council was not willing to meet to discuss their request for a condemnation of the executions.

So even though just when the war started there was an effort in local politics to govern the county, soon not enough councillors showed up to make governance possible. The people of Mayo held a large meeting and chose a representative that would be sent to the republicans to discuss peace terms.<sup>234</sup> The local efforts of the people of Mayo gives a clear indication that they wanted the civil war to end. Even though by reading these reports that the population of Mayo was against the civil war, this conclusion doesn't hold up when you look at the election results of the 1923 general election. The vote was equally divided between the new political party, Cumann na Ngaedheal who represented the pro-Treaty candidates, and the Anti-Treaty party of de Valera.<sup>235</sup> No other parties received seats. This means that republican feelings were still strong in Mayo even though the civil war had ended with the anti-Treaty side losing the struggle. It also means that the Civil War has increased the support for the government. Before the Civil War there was a majority in Mayo who voted anti-Treaty, this majority was lost and both parties now scored equal amounts of voters.

#### 6.4. Military developments in Mayo

Newspapers in Mayo had gone Pro-Treaty, which made it difficult for the Republicans to spread their news and messages.<sup>236</sup> Newspapers were instructed to call the Republicans "bands" or "Irregulars" and refer to the Provisional Government and Free State as the "Government".<sup>237</sup> The newspapers were also censored. Proof of this can be found in a peculiar article published in December 1922 in the *Western People* "Owing to circumstances over which we have no control we are unable to publish a letter we have received, signed "Jack Leonard", denying the accuracy of our report of the battle of Newport".<sup>238</sup> For this research it creates the difficulty that it is uncertain what is accurate in reports on the conflict in Mayo. By looking at different newspapers and using secondary sources, who also use interviews and military reports I am confident that a general timeline of events can be established.

Because the communication lines were destroyed Mayo was cut off from the rest of the country. Tom Maguire and Johnny Grealy were in Dublin when the attack on the Four Courts occurred. While Grealy tells O'Malley that he received word from the Four Courts that he was to return to his own area to start the fight at once,<sup>239</sup> Tom Maguire indicated that he received a letter that said 'offence is the best

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233 Connaught Telegraph 7-4-1923 p2.

234 Connacht Tribune 14-4-1923 p11.

235 Irish Independent 1-9-1923 p8.

236 Price, *The Flame*. 193.

237 Kissane, *Explaining the intractability*. 66.

238 Price, *The Flame*. 238.

defence'.<sup>240</sup> Because there was no way they could communicate with GHQ the local Mayo IRA had to design their own policy.<sup>241</sup> The events in Mayo are in that respect isolated from the ones in Dublin or other counties. The leadership of the IRA in the west held a meeting after the attack on the Four Courts to decide on a strategy. They decided to group their strength together to be able to have an offensive strategy in Sligo. Many men from north and West Mayo joined the brigades of Carty in Sligo to fight the Governmental Forces. One of the main captures was the armoured car the *Ballinee*. They came back to Mayo when Carty decided to evacuate the towns in the middle of July.<sup>242</sup> According to Tom Carney, East Mayo, Kilroy and Maguire decided to immediately oppose the National Army in Connaught.<sup>243</sup>

#### 6.4.1. Summer 1922.

Before the Civil War officially broke out, with the bombing of the Four Courts Building, the first deadly victim had already fallen in Mayo. A discussion between two neighbours about the Treaty and the political division got so intense then one pulled a gun and fired. The wife of the other neighbour was shot in the head and died. On Sunday 28 May 1922 the first victim of the Civil war was a fact in Mayo.<sup>244</sup>

In Mayo the main actors were Tom Maguire, the O/C of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Western Division who led the troops in East Mayo, and Michael Kilroy who had troops in the North and West Mayo. About Michael Kilroy it is being said that he was an inspirational leader and attracted many men to join his column. Reports of over 700 men under Kilroy cannot be confirmed but it is clear that he was a popular commander.<sup>245</sup> Tommey Heavey also called him an amazing shot.<sup>246</sup> Macardle writes in 1937 in *The Irish Republic. A documented chronicle of the Anglo-Irish conflict and the partitioning of Ireland, with a detailed account of the period 1916-1923*. That thousands wanted to join the ranks but that there were not enough arms.<sup>247</sup> This seems a bit of an exaggeration, but the Republican cause was popular in Mayo. Even though they had taken over barracks and arms and munitions, with the new additions to the troops, they were still under armed. Kilroy had a munitions factory and he was building armoured cars, trench

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239 O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 293.

240 Ibidem, 223.

241 Connacht Tribune 1-7-1922 p9.

242 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 159.

243 O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 320-321.

244 Freemans Journal 30-5-1922 p5 & Irish independent 3-6-1922 p5.

245 Price, *The Flame*. 219.

246 O'Malley, 141.

mortars and bombs. According to a Pro-Treaty report of October – November 1922 Kilroy had built three armoured cars, using boilers and steel plates from the barracks. He was also aware of the importance of local support and was against the raiding and looting of businesses and banks.<sup>248</sup> The National Army had distributed the country in several Command Areas. The Western Command Area, controlled from Athlone, included county Mayo and was led by Seán Mac Eoin. His second in command was Tony Lawlor, who was the leader of the troops in Mayo. The National Army had the ports blocked in Mayo and the Republicans had destroyed the railways and mined the roads. Mayo was therefore completely cut off from the rest of the country. It is interesting to see how the different newspapers reported on this period. While the *Connaught Telegraph* mentions that Mayo is cut off it indicates that there is no violence or terror<sup>249</sup>, while the *Irish Independent* reports that old age pensioners are on the verge of starvation and business is at a standstill.<sup>250</sup> Even though the *Connaught Telegraph* was not Anti-Treaty, they did not report only pro-Treaty news. On 15 July 1922 they reported that the National Army was behaving worse than the Black and Tans ever did and reports that the Republicans were beaten out of Mayo were not true.<sup>251</sup> By looking at these different articles on the situation in Mayo at the beginning of the civil war, I can conclude that Mayo was cut off from the rest of the country. This led to a business standstill and problems with receiving enough supplies. It is therefore not unlikely that there were people that were hungry. The towns were at this moment still in the hands of the Republicans, since no reports are being made on concurred towns. At this moment there was no wide distribution of violence yet in the county. The port town Ballina became an important link to the outside world when the blockade was beaten. On 17 July 1922 the Republicans chartered a boat and were able to deliver mail, parcels and supplies to Mayo.<sup>252</sup>

In the second half of July the National Army started to make progress in Mayo. Lawlor led his National Army on a march through the cities Castlerea, Ballinrobe, Ballyhaunis, Claremorris and Ballaghaderreen. On 24 July 1922 a National Army force landed on the coast in Westport. They marched onwards to Castlebar and Ballina. All these towns were taken over by the National Army without fighting the Republicans.<sup>253</sup> The troops that landed in Westport were under the command of Joe Ring, one of the only Mayo Republicans to go pro-Treaty.<sup>254</sup> The Republican forces left the towns before the National Army arrived and often burned their

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247 Macardle, D. *The Irish Republic. A documented chronicle of the Anglo-Irish conflict and the partitioning of Ireland, with a detailed account of the period 1916-1923.* (London 1937) 790.

248 Hopkinson, *Green against Green.* 213.

249 Connaught Telegraph 15-7-1922 p2.

250 Irish Independent 21-7-1922 p6.

251 Connaught Telegraph 15-7-1922 p3.

252 Price, *The Flame.* 219.

barracks behind them.<sup>255</sup> As a Pro-Treaty newspaper it is not curious that they would report on this apparent victory of the National Army. On the 22 July they report that the entire county is in hand of the Republicans,<sup>256</sup> only a few days later South Mayo is “freed” from the Republicans<sup>257</sup> and mutiny is abundant under the Republicans.<sup>258</sup> They report that people rejoiced all night when liberated from the Republicans and that they were amazed at their defeat. Since also the Connacht Tribune reports about a mutiny under the Republicans and the consequently execution of one of its leaders,<sup>259</sup> there was highly likely a mutiny. However, there were definitely not many mutinies if any at all besides that one. No other articles or secondary sources mention any. Not one of the interviewees mentions a mutiny in the interviews with O’Malley. There is only one criticism about this period from Tommy Heavey who mentioned that they had talked about the landing and taking over the stores in the towns, but that Kilroy was too preoccupied with his bomb factory.<sup>260</sup> The comment from the Irish Independent that mutiny was rife can therefore be disregarded as a fable. Even though the Republicans did not have a hold over any town at the end of July, the post office gave notice that it would not deliver packages to the county.<sup>261</sup> This is probably because outside the towns it was not safe to travel. The Republicans had thus referred back to their old way of guerrilla fighting. I had hoped that the interviews with O’Malley would give me an indication why the Republicans decided not to fight the National Army after the landed in Westport, but left all the towns to them. However, the interviewees hardly describe any events in the civil war. Some ambushes are discussed, and even then mostly only when they were captured. The focus in the Civil War period is on how they were captured, treated as prisoner and escaped. Unfortunately no one talks about not fighting the National Army. Only Maguire mentions that “*in the beginning our fellows would not kill the Staters*”.<sup>262</sup>

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253 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 160.

254 Price, *The Flame*. 220.

255 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 129.

256 Irish Independent 22-7-1922 p6.

257 Irish Independent 25-7-1922 p5.

258 Irish Independent 26-7-1922 p5.

259 Connacht Tribune 29-7-1922 p5.

260 O’Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 142.

261 Irish Independent 29-7-1922 p6.

262 O’Malley, 223.

In August the Republican strategy consisted mainly of tearing up rails,<sup>263</sup> and ambushes.<sup>264</sup> This lack of activity in Mayo is probably caused by the reinforcement of the Republican troops in Clifden, county Galway. The *Connacht Tribune* and the *Connaught Telegraph* report that garrisons in Clifden are reinforced with a hundred till five hundred troops from Mayo.<sup>265</sup> The increased presence of National Army troops could have led to the concentration of Mayo troops in Galway. At the end of August the National Troops take over Clifden and the Mayo troops return to their own county.<sup>266</sup> The reason that August was saw relatively little republican action because of their involvement in Clifden is supported when in September republican activity increases in Mayo.

#### 6.4.2. Fall 1922

In September and October 1922 the Republican forces combined ambushes and sabotaging of communication with attacks on towns. They never stayed in a town after they had taken over, but immediately retreated to the hills and distributed the resources captured in the towns. In the two months according to the newspapers there were at least 6 ambushes in which a total of 17 Republicans died and 9 soldiers of the National Army, including Joe Ring.<sup>267</sup> National Troops in Castlebar were attacked on 1 September, but the National Troops were able to drive the Republicans away using machineguns.<sup>268</sup> More successfully, the Republicans were able to recapture Ballina on 12 September. The Republicans used the moment that most of the National troops were unarmed in the Cathedral to attack, using rifles and the armoured car.<sup>269</sup> The *Irish Independent* reports that the Republican force was several hundred strong.<sup>270</sup> Secondary sources report that the force was 55 strong. Since this particular secondary source also mentioned thousands wanted to join the Republican ranks, we have two conflicting reports that come from both sides of the political division. The truth will probably be somewhere in the middle, since Kilroy, the leader of this expedition did have several hundred men under him. Other towns were also attacked by Republicans during October but none successfully. On 10 October

263 *Connaught Telegraph* 5-8-1922 p3.

264 *Irish Independent* 4-8-1922 p5 & *Connacht Tribune* 5-8-1922 p5 & *Connaught Telegraph* 19-8-1922 p4.

265 *Connacht Tribune* 5-8-1922 p8 & *Connaught Telegraph* 12-8-1922 p3.

266 *Connaught Telegraph* 26-8-1922 p3.

267 *Connaught Telegraph* 2-9-1922 p3, *Irish Independent* 7-9-1922 p5, *Connacht Tribune* 9-9-1922 p5, *Irish Independent* 19-9-1922 p4, *Connacht Tribune*, 23-9-1922 p2.

268 *Irish Independent* 4-9-1922 p6.

269 Macardle, *The Irish Republic*. 832.

270 *Irish Independent* 14-9-1922 p5.



Lawlor wanted to strike back at the Republicans for defeating him at Ballina and he marched with a group and their own armoured car to North Mayo. Republicans were aware of his arrival and they prepared the road with mines and obstacles. During the firefight which ensued between both sides, Joe Ring was fatally injured.<sup>271</sup> Soon after the loss of Joe Ring on the National Army side, the Republicans lost one of their prominent leaders. Tom Maguire was captured on 18 October 1922. Maguire was replaced as leader by Christie Macken, but he also was soon seriously wounded after an attack on Clifden.<sup>272</sup> On 28 October Clifden was again attacked by Republican forces, including forces from Mayo. According to the *Irish Independent* the motive for the attack was the supplies and ammunitions from the barracks. Since the barracks were blown up during the attack and the ammunition used, the attack had no positive outcome for the Republicans.<sup>273</sup> Two days later the town was attacked again by Republicans in search of supplies.<sup>274</sup>

The Republicans were dealt a serious blow when during an attack on Newport Michael Kilroy was captured. Even though the attack on Newport, which had the National Army surrounding the Republicans, but almost all Republicans managed to get away, was a failure for the National Army, the big prize was the capture of Kilroy.<sup>275</sup> In December no major attacks on towns were performed. The fighting between the National Army and the Republicans now took place in the hills of Mayo when the National Army tried to round up the Republicans.<sup>276</sup> The sabotage of railways and trains was done by blowing up a railway bridge in Ballybay<sup>277</sup> and setting a mail train on fire.<sup>278</sup>

The National Army in Mayo was heavily criticised. The roundup of the Republicans was too slow, which resulted in roads being impossible to travel, trains not running and business that was at a standstill.<sup>279</sup> Lawlor came from county Dublin and had received British officer training at college.<sup>280</sup> His style of trying to capture the Republicans by long marches and garrisoning the towns was

271 Price, *The Flame*. 227-228.

272 Price, *The Flame*., 232.

273 Irish Independent 1-11-1922 p5.

274 Connacht Tribune 31-10-1922 p9.

275 Irish Independent 25-11-1922 p7.

276 Irish Independent 6-12-1922 p8, Connaught Telegraph 9-12-1922 p3, Connaught Telegraph 23-12-1922 p2.

277 Connacht Tribune 15-12-1922 p4.

278 Connaught Telegraph 15-12-1922 p3.

279 Townshend, *The Republic*. 429.

ineffective. Many officers in his troops were also not from Mayo and they were seen as outsiders by the people from Mayo.<sup>281</sup> In the O'Malley interviews the men also criticise Lawlor. Several mention how he shot a prisoner and left him to die, and bragged about this to his mother in a letter when describing how great a shot he was.<sup>282</sup>

### 6.4.3. The new year 1923

At the end of 1922 Lawlor was replaced by Hogan. Michael Hogan came from Galway and had experience with the guerrilla warfare style. He knew the hills of the west and brought with him many new officers with local knowledge.<sup>283</sup> Hogan increased the National troops in the west and hunted the Republicans down with an aggressive "shoot first, ask questions later" approach. His approach worked better than that of Lawlor and soon hundreds of Republicans were captured.<sup>284</sup>

The Republicans continued with ambushes and destroying bridges. Matt Kilcawley, North Mayo, one of the only interviewees by O'Malley who was not arrested at this point, describes that there were able to move around in the county, since the National Army forces stayed in the towns. It was hard to make contact with them, which led in a decrease in the intensity of violence.<sup>285</sup> He is also the only one who describes the mood in the column after Liam Deasy made his appeal to a surrender to the IRA officers. According to Kilcawley this was the first time they heard about any surrender, and it created suspense and uncertainty.<sup>286</sup> When looking at his account of the situation in Mayo in the new year, violent activity has decreased. The opposition is harder to find and leaders who are calling for surrender confuse the column.

Even though articles in newspapers report that the Republican activity in the west is the strongest<sup>287</sup> there are hardly any reports on ambushes or attacks by the Republicans. Articles in this period until the cease fire in Mayo deal with the capture and arrest of Republicans. There are only three attacks described in the newspapers. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 1923 Moore Hall was burned down to the ground.<sup>288</sup> This mansion was an ancestral home for the Moore family who were an Irish aristocratic family who were prominent in the history of Ireland. Another

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280 Price, *The Flame*. 218.

281 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 243.

282 O'Malley, *The men will talk to me*. 147-148.

283 Price, *The Flame*. 241-241.

284 Ibidem, 244.

285 O'Malley, 260.

286 Ibidem, 261.

287 Freemans Journal 15-2-1923 p5.

ambush is described haven taken place on 23 February 1923. When National troops captured 8 Republicans they were ambushed on their way back to town. The fight took six hours and killed one National Army soldier.<sup>289</sup> Another ambush took place at the end of April.<sup>290</sup> In one article it is suggested that the Republicans did try at least once to organise a large scale attack. In Charlestown in Mayo, Republicans started shooting at buildings in the hope of drawing National troops from Swinford. Other Republican troops were lying in wait for their arrival. Reinforcements came from Claremorris which meant that it took longer than expected. Most of the troops lying in ambush had by then already left.<sup>291</sup> A Free State army report noted on 31 March 1923 that the North and West Mayo command was 'perhaps the only one' where Republicans could still carry out operations on a large scale. An increase in troops in this area was advised to deal with the problem. However, the cease fire order came before this advice was followed.<sup>292</sup> Price writes in his book on Mayo during the troubles, that even after the cease fire, the violence on both sides continued.<sup>293</sup> In the two months following the cease fire I have looked at newspaper articles concerning Mayo and was not able to find anything that looked like what Price describes as "score-settling and mindless violence". After the cease fire articles address that Republicans continue to be arrested. One Mayo leader was shot dead at the beginning of June.<sup>294</sup> On 2 June 1923 the order from Aiken to dumb arms was found on a Republican taken prisoner and reported in the newspaper, the cease fire was therefore know at least from June onwards.<sup>295</sup> Although I have concluded earlier that the Government was not yet convinced of the sincerity.

Kilroy and Maguire both escaped prison before any execution orders could be carried out. At the end of August they were able to campaign for the General Election without being arrested. As noted in the previous section, the result of the General Election showed that in Mayo Republican sympathies were still present after the Civil War.

## 6.5. Conclusion Civil War

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288 Freemans Journal 20-2-1923 p5.

289 Freemans Journal 24-2-1923 p5.

290 Irish Independent 27-4-1923 p5.

291 Irish Independent 15-3-1923 p5.

292 Hopkinson, *Green against Green*. 242.

293 Price, *The Flame*. 256.

294 Irish Independent 7-6-1923 p4.

295 Connaught Telegraph 2-6-1923 p2.

With the outbreak of Civil War the violence is back in county Mayo, since the War of Independence. In this year we see that the factors Augusteijn mentions reappear and therefore also the violence.

#### 6.5.1.Presence of opposition

With the arrival of the National Army troops in Mayo the opposition is present and engaging the Republicans in violent activities. With an opposition present in Mayo we should see an increase in violence according to Augusteijn and this is exactly the case in Mayo. Before the National Army arrived, even when the Civil War officially had started there was no violence in Mayo. The men who wanted to fight crossed the county borders to fight where opposition was present, as in Collooney.

#### 6.5.2.Importance of a threshold of violence

The threshold to start the violence is high, and it takes some time before this threshold is crossed. In first instance this is done in defence. The Republican forces move out of the way when the National Army arrives in the towns without putting up a fight. It is only later that they start to fight back. Only Maguire admits that his troops at first did not want to shoot the opposition. Other IRA men who were interviewed did not discuss the period that they decided not to fight back, it is therefore hard to determine the reason why they decided to leave the towns instead of defending them.

#### 6.5.3.Ostracizing the 'enemy'

With the troops of the National Army occupying the towns they are not clearly ostracized from the community. More importantly is that they are viewed as outsiders and therefore never part of the community. The National Army occupy the barracks and reports on the bad behaviour of the troops does circle round. But real ostracizing is not in effect. This defiance from the theory of Augusteijn is easily explained. During the War of Independence, the enemies were also local people, who grew up in the community. Before they could see that person as an enemy ostracizing was necessary. Joe Ring was from the community and on the side of the opposition. Since he was part of the force of outsiders he did not need to be ostracized. He already belonged to the group that didn't belong.

#### 6.5.4.Outsiders in organisations

On the Republican side there are no outsiders in the organisation. The IRA consists of local units and they are not visited by members from other IRA forces that might lead them to prove what they can do. The lack of this factor can have contributed to the decline in violent activity in 1923. With no outside force urging the local IRA on, and rumours about surrender circulating, the energy disappears from the intensity of violent activities.

#### 6.5.5.Leaving familiar setting of work and community.

The IRA start to operate in flying columns when the National troops arrive in Mayo. This way they are once again separated from the familiar settings and constraints. They operate together in a group that all conduct acts of violence, so there are no moral constraints placed on them. Augusteijn explained that this leads to increased violence, which we can also see in Mayo. With the start of the phase of guerrilla warfare in Mayo there are more intense attacks on the National Army.

#### 6.5.6.Role of GHQ

In the Civil War the communication between Mayo and GHQ is non-existent. GHQ does give the order to start hostilities as can be seen in the interviews of Maguire and Grealy. Even though the Civil War has started, it takes some time before hostilities start in Mayo. The order does give any future attacks legitimacy as part of the national struggle. The order to dump arms is also followed up in Mayo. So even though GHQ did not play a role in the development of the Civil War conflict they were instrumental in the start and finish of it. Local leaders, such as Kilroy and Maguire take over the role of GHQ by determining the strategies. When they are captured the intensity in violence decreases.

With the outbreak of civil war some of the different factors described by Augusteijn as essential for the development of violence are present, but not all. The ostracizing of the enemy and the role of outsiders in organisations is not of importance here in the development of violence. These factors can therefore be specific for the War of Independence conflict. The role of local leadership is very important in the Civil War. With no contact from GHQ the men have to trust the local leadership. They have to take on the role of getting the men over the threshold and continue to fight. When local popular leaders are captured there is a decrease in violence. Even though I cannot prove a factual link between the two events, I think I have shown that some correlation is plausible.

## 7. CONCLUSION.

I started this research with the theory of Augusteijn that development of violence within a community is dependent on certain factors:

- Presence of opposition
- Importance of a threshold of violence
- Ostracizing the 'enemy'
- Outsiders in organisations
- Leaving familiar setting of work and community, and
- Role of General Headquarters.

This theory was created after investigating several counties and their development of violence during the War of Independence. In this study I have looked at the development of violence in Mayo after the War of Independence. When looking at these factors in the period from the Truce until the end of the Civil War the following development in violence is observed.

### 7.1. Presence of opposition

When the Truce was realized in July 1921 the opposition to the Republicans were still the Crown Forces. They were still present during the period of truce, but did not pose any opposition. The relations between the Republicans and the Crown Forces was cordial and they worked together in finding solutions to small breaches of the truce. With no active opposition and a common objective of observing the truce, it can be said that the opposition did not function as opposition as meant in the theory of Augusteijn. Even though the anti-Treaty side still considered the Crown Forces the enemy after signing the Treaty, they were no longer available to pose opposition. The Pro-Treaty forces had taken over their place. After the Treaty and before the outbreak of Civil War the two opposing sides existed but did not engage each other. In Mayo the pro-Treaty forces were not yet present and therefore in this period there was no presence of opposition. When the two sides did encounter, like during the Castlebar election campaign meeting, tensions rose quickly and could have escalated into violence if not for both sides trying to maintain the peace. Before the outbreak of civil war the Pro-Treaty forces did not engage the Anti-Treaty forces and they lived as peaceful as possible side by side when this was necessary. But in Mayo no opposition was present at the time. This changed in June when the Pro-Treaty forces had had enough time to develop an army which was complemented with British arms and ammunition. In Mayo the arrival of the Pro-Treaty troops, and thus the presence of opposition, first did not lead to violence, since the Republicans decided to avoid encountering them. When the threshold of violence was crossed, however, they did engage, which meant that opposition was present after this time. The violence continued to until the dump arms order of Aiken in May 1923. During the civil war period there is no continued escalation of violence. As soon as the threshold has been crossed, the Republicans attacked many towns and ambushed the National Army. What we can see, however is that violence developed in intensity when the Republicans left their familiar surroundings. But more on that later.

During the period from Truce to the end of the Civil War the presence of opposition is a prerequisite for the development of violence. This is conform Augusteijn's theory.

## 7.2. Importance of a threshold of violence

To describe the development of violence in Mayo from Truce till the end of the Civil War, the most important aspect is the threshold of violence in holding back the development of violence. With the Truce in place the threshold of violence was also put back in place. Even though the men in the IRA had already crossed the threshold in fighting in the War of Independence, the new conflict was very different. With life returning back to normal and IRA men moving back into their communities it was not an easy decision to take up arms again. Many new recruits in the IRA had not participated in the War of Independence and had never crossed the threshold before. After the signing of the Treaty the threshold was also back in place for the previously active IRA men. The enemy was not who they fought against before, but was now those who they fought with before. Maguire indicated that in the beginning his men did not want to shoot the National Army. This meant that after the Treaty was signed and the sides were determined, the politicians and armies tried for six months to find some sort of solution to the division, even though the issues that they disagreed on were irreconcilable. The pro-Treaty side decided to take the first step across this threshold, largely under pressure from the British Government. For the Anti-Treaty side this meant that they would start to fight back, but in the first few weeks the Republicans in Mayo did not use their superior position with respect to the National Army. My research indicates that the threshold of violence is a factor in determining the development of violence. The first step to start violent activities took some time after the Four Courts attack. There is a clear reluctance to engage the National Army. It is also clear that as soon as this threshold is crossed it does not come back again during the conflict. By crossing that boundary the intensity of violence increases since it is now easier for them to engage in violent activities. This corresponds to Augusteijns' theory.

## 7.3. Ostracizing the 'enemy'

After the truce comes into effect, the RIC are no longer considered as an enemy as such. They were already ostracized and there is no need in this period to continue to keep them away from the community and a legitimate target. After the Treaty is signed the "enemy" became the pro-Treaty forces. With newspapers censored and on the side of the Government, Churches and the parochial hierarchy on the side of the government and communication lines sabotaged, it was hard, if not impossible for the Anti-Treaty side to get their message to the people. During the campaign before the General Election of 1922, both sides explained to the crowd why their choice was the right one. In the speech of Tom Maguire we can see that he still doesn't completely quash the pro-Treaty side. Comparing speeches he gave before the Treaty about the British enemy with the speeches during the campaign trail on the Pro-Treaty side, it is clear that the Pro-Treaty side is not yet an 'enemy' but merely someone who is wrong. With almost all of Mayo in the hands of anti-Treaty IRA there is no need to ostracize the pro-Treaty troops, since they are not a part of the community.

During the Civil War, reports on bad behaviour from National troops is sporadically seen in newspapers, but real ostracizing of the pro-Treaty side, by the Republicans is not addressed. The pro-Treaty side, in contrast, does use the media and speeches to ostracize the anti-Treaty side. In speeches the position of the Anti-Treaty side is called "madness, complete madness". The church excommunicates the Anti-Treaty fighters so that they are cut off from their catholic community. In Mayo however, the National Army is not part of the



community. They consist from people who are not local, with the exception of Joe Ring. It is therefore not necessary to exclude them from the community.

The important of this factor differs from the theory of Augusteijn and is therefore specific to the War of Independence. Even though the Civil War is fought between groups that know each other, in Mayo the National Army is considered an outsider and not part of the community. The election results also indicate that many people in Mayo had Republican ideals and would therefore never consider the National Army a part of their community.

#### 7.4. Outsiders in organisations

When the Truce came into effect, an outsider Michael Staines came to observe the truce. In this period the role of the outsider is contrary to the role Augusteijn gives the outsider in the War of Independence. Instead of inciting violence, here the outsider is making sure that the truce is observed and no violence is taking place. This is the only time when an outsider comes into the local Mayo organisation and could have influenced the development of violence. After the signing of the Treaty and during the outbreak of Civil War, the IRA consisted out of local men. There were no visiting outsiders that could make the IRA try to prove their activity or encourage them to start violent activities. This is also clearly a deviation from the theory of Augusteijn. During the War of Independence regions had different levels in violence and an outsider could encourage the local IRA to increase activity. In the situation of the time period in my research, however the only outsider was a restraining factor on violence, and after the Treaty no outsiders played a role. This factor is therefore also specific to the situation in Ireland during the War of Independence.

#### 7.5. Leaving familiar setting of work and community

With the Truce it was possible for IRA members to return to their familiar surroundings. By seeing life returning to normal, there is a greater constraint in starting violent activities. When the Treaty is signed, many IRA men live in the barracks abandoned by the British and RIC forces. Even though the IRA are more removed from their surroundings they still are part of the community in the town. During this period the IRA is trying to maintain the peace and it can be said that since they did not leave their surroundings no violence developed. With the arrival of the National Army the IRA columns decide to leave their surroundings and live in the countryside. While they did not engage in violent activities in the towns, now as flying columns the constraints of their surroundings are removed and the threshold of violence is crossed. I concur with Augusteijn that the factor of leaving the familiar surroundings helps in the development of violence, since it took the occurrence of this factor before the threshold was crossed.

#### 7.6. Role of GHQ

During the War of Independence there was some contact between the local IRA and the GHQ. After the Truce there was almost no communication between the local IRA and GHQ. GHQ encouraged the local IRA to start drilling and training again, which they did. With the signing of the Treaty and the occupation of the Four Courts, there was no general policy or communication between the localities and GHQ. After the attack on the Four Courts GHQ did order the local IRA to start the offensive in their own localities. Because they gave this order any violence after that had a legitimacy of being part of the national struggle. The order to dump arms which resulted in the end of the civil war also came from GHQ and

was followed by the local IRA. Without the legitimacy of the support of GHQ they did not continue to fight. GHQ therefore played a role in the start and the end of the development of violence. During the hostilities however there was no contact between the localities and GHQ. The role that GHQ would have played is taken over by local leadership. Policy is created by meetings between local division leaders, and in some cases brigades take action together, like in Sligo before the National Army arrived in Mayo, and with the large attacks on Clifden in county Galway. GHQ did play a role in legitimizing the conflict and giving it a start and an ending. The development during the conflict itself when hostilities have commenced are not influenced by GHQ. This factor is partly of influence on the development of violence in Mayo.

### 7.7. So...

The main factor of importance in the development of violence in Mayo, Ireland is the threshold of violence. A civil war is a fight between neighbours and the Republicans were clearly unwilling to cross that threshold and shoot their former comrades in arms. To cross that threshold it is essential that opposition was present. The Republicans would not go towards a fight, but waited until the fight was inevitable. By using guerrilla warfare techniques the Republicans were leaving their familiar surroundings, which released them from the constraints of family and obligation. When the IRA did not leave their surroundings they did not start the violence. Even though the relation between the two cannot be proven it is likely that this factor played a role in the ability to cross the threshold of violence.

Ostracizing of the enemy and the presence of outsiders in the organisation were in the development of violence in Mayo not an issue. These factors are specific to the development of violence in the War of Independence.

With the lack of contact from GHQ, the local leaders became more important in motivating the troops to fight. When popular or effective leaders, such as Kilroy and Maguire, were arrested a dip in activities is noticeable, but since the threshold of violence had already been crossed, it did not mean that the violence stopped.

The role of GHQ is essential in the start and finish of the conflict. Even though the fight in Mayo was isolated, they did listen to the order and stopped fighting.

The theory of Augusteijn applies partially to the conflict after the War of Independence.

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