



Image courtesy of NLI

# Countess Markievicz

## Revolutionary, Suffragette and Politician

Constance Gore-Booth was born into a prominent Anglo-Irish family in 1868.

- In Paris, while studying to become a painter, she met a Polish count Casimir Dunin-Markievicz. They married in London and later settled in Dublin, where Constance became interested in nationalist politics.
- In 1909 she co-founded Na Fianna Éireann, a republican scouting organization for boys and during the 1913 Lockout she ran a soup kitchen in Liberty Hall.
- As a member of the Irish Citizen Army, Markievicz served at St. Stephen's Green and the Royal College of Surgeons during the Easter Rising. She was condemned to death, but her sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life. She was released in the ✨**amnesty** of June 1917.
- In the 1918 general election, she became the first woman ever elected to the British parliament. However, in accordance with Sinn Féin policy, she ✨**abstained** from her seat.
- She was Minister for Labour in the first Dáil and opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921. She joined Fianna Fáil when it was founded by Éamon de Valera in 1926.
- Countess Markievicz died in Dublin on 15 July 1927 after some years of bad health.

## Link to the Classroom

Approximately 300 women were involved in the Easter Rising. Many of them were members of:

- Inghinidhe na hÉireann
- Cumann na mBan
- Irish Citizen's Army

**Class Activity:** Carry out your own research on one or more of these organisations. Create a profile like the example provided. Why not divide the class into groups of three? Each group member can research one of the organisations and report back to the rest of their group.

1. When and where was this organisation set up?
2. Who founded the organisation?
3. Why was it set up?
4. What activities did it carry out?
5. Provide detail on any well known members.

## JC LINKS

**2.4** examine the rise and impact of nationalism and unionism in Ireland, including key events between 1911 and 1923.

**2.9** explain how the experience of women in Irish society changed during the twentieth century.

## LC LINKS

**Modern Ireland Topic 3:** The pursuit of sovereignty and the impact of partition, 1912-1949.

## LC HISTORY

What were the main events in Dublin during the 1916 Rising, and was Ireland, in Yeats' phrase, 'changed utterly as a result?' (L.C. H.L. History 2016)

## Did You Know?

Women in Britain (over the age of 30 and who met property conditions) were given the right to vote in 1918. This extended the franchise (right to vote) to many women in Ireland. What woman was elected to the British parliament in 1918?