



Image courtesy of NLI

# Éamon de Valera

## Revolutionary, Politician and President of Ireland

Éamon de Valera was born in New York in 1882.

- His mother sent him back to her home in Ireland to be raised by his grandmother in Limerick. He later worked as a mathematics teacher in various colleges in Dublin.
- He joined the Irish Volunteer Force in 1913 and commanded the garrison at Boland's Mills during the Easter Rising.
- After the surrender, de Valera was sentenced to death, but this was later commuted to life imprisonment. He was released in the general amnesty of June 1917.
- Elected Sinn Féin MP for East Clare in 1917 and 1918, de Valera later spent time in America during the War of Independence, raising money and support for the Republican cause.
- The Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed in 1921 and in 1922, following its acceptance by Dáil Éireann, de Valera resigned as president of the Dáil.
- The Civil War ended in May 1923 and he was subsequently imprisoned for one year.
- De Valera established Fianna Fáil in 1926.
- He served three terms as Taoiseach and fourteen years as President of Ireland (1959-1973).
- Éamon de Valera died in 1975, at the age of 92.

### JC LINKS

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

**2.8** describe the impact of war on the lives of Irish people, referring to either World War One or World War Two.

**1.10** demonstrate chronological awareness by creating and maintaining timelines to locate personalities, issues and events in their appropriate historical eras.

### LC LINKS

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

### LC HISTORY

How did Anglo-Irish relations develop during the period 1923-1949?

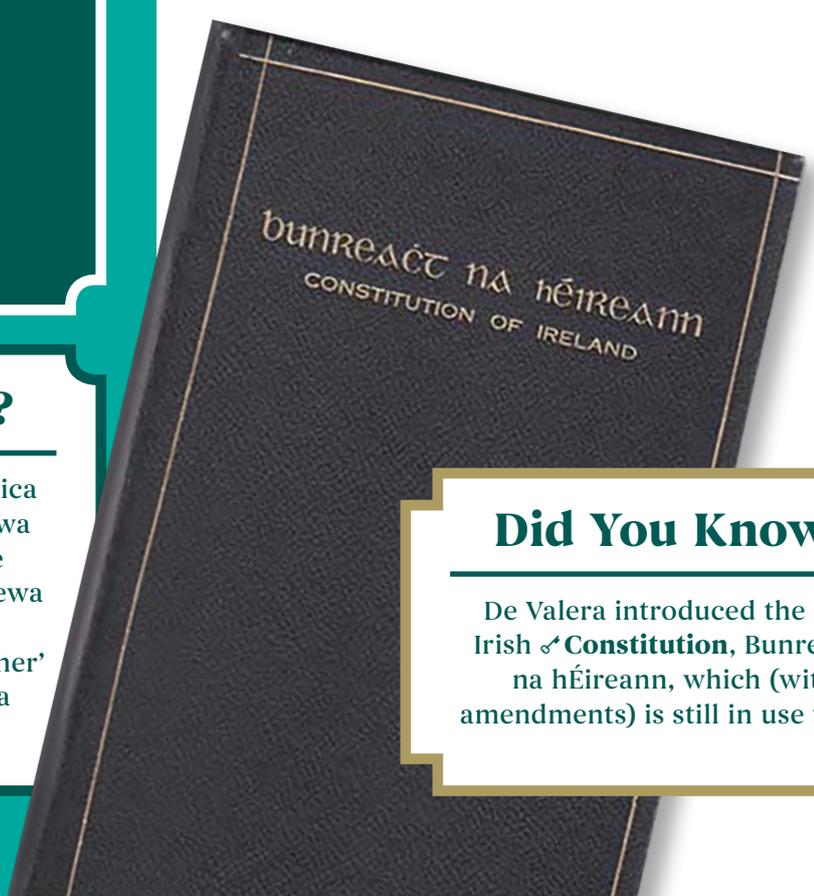
(L.C. H.L. History 2012)

### Did You Know?

When de Valera was in America in 1919 he visited the Chippewa Reservation and was made an honorary chief of a Chippewa tribe of Native Americans. He was named 'Dressing Feather' or Nay Nay Ong Abe, after a famous chief of that tribe.

### Did You Know?

De Valera introduced the 1937 Irish **Constitution**, Bunreacht na hÉireann, which (with amendments) is still in use today.





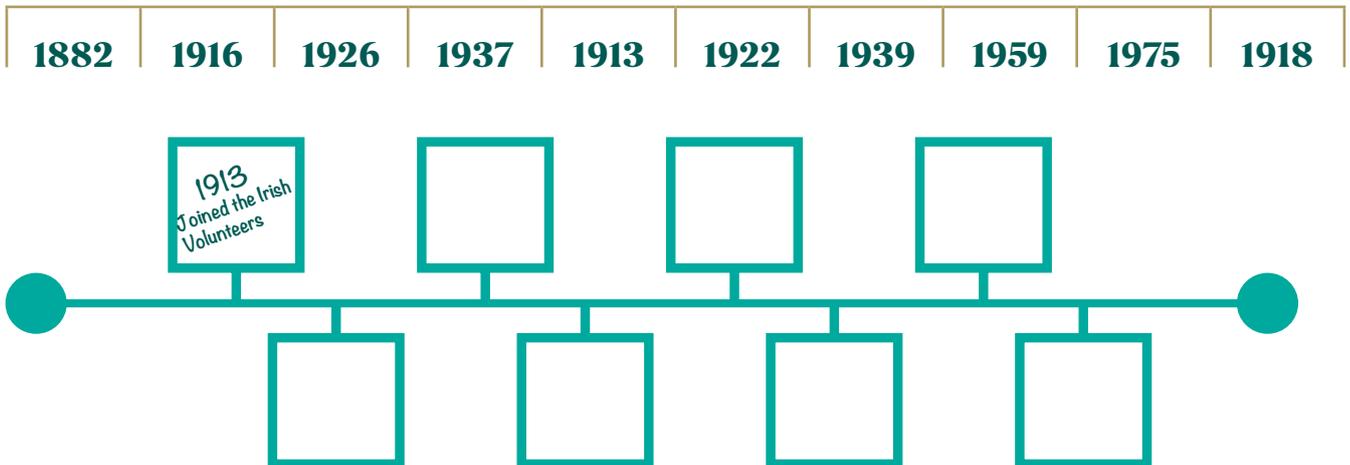
## Éamon de Valera delivering an oration in Glasnevin Cemetery at the grave of Margaret Pearse 1932.

Image courtesy of NLI



Firstly place these years in chronological order on the timeline starting with the earliest date. Using the information in this section, link the year to an event in the life of Éamon de Valera. E.g. 1913 - Joined the Irish Volunteers.

## Timeline



## Learn More

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, de Valera (Taoiseach at the time) declared that Ireland would remain **neutral**. This time was known as the 'Emergency' in Ireland as a law called the Emergency Powers Act was passed.

In a speech at the end of the War, the Prime Minister of Britain, Winston Churchill criticised Ireland's neutrality. De Valera's response is considered to be the finest speech he ever made.

**You can listen to it here:**

<http://www.rte.ie/archives/exhibitions/681-history-of-rte/684-rte-1940s/289798-eamon-de-valeras-response-to-winston-churchill/>