



## THE DSPCA IN 1916

### DID YOU KNOW?

Here are some examples of pet names from the DSPCA's 1916 Reports:

- Balla
- Wee Wee
- Topsy
- Nell
- Dinah
- Blue Skye
- Gispsy
- Puppy



*The DSPCA (Dublin Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) was founded in 1840. During the 1916 Rising the DSPCA was still rescuing sick, injured and cruelly treated animals. We went through the DSPCA Archives and found among our records, Annual reports and documents relating to the 1916 times.*

The 1916 Annual Report for the DSPCA states: "The Home was taken possession of by the Insurgents during the Rebellion, the animals being liberated, but no material damage to the structure was done."

As the DSPCA Dogs and Cats Home was on Grand Canal Quay, next to Boland's Bakery and Mill it was one of the premises taken over by Eamon De Valera and his "C" Company. The Bakery and Mill are reported to have been taken over by the rebels at 12.30 on Monday 24th April 1916 and the DSPCA would have been taken shortly afterwards because of its location beside the railway bridge.

There are many references to De Valera and his interest in the welfare of animals. It is said that he arranged the care of the Boland Mill horses until the food ran out and then turned them loose in the streets rather than see them starve. It is also recorded that he released the dogs and cats from the DSPCA as he feared they would starve or suffer as a result of fire or gun shots.

The DSPCA Annual Report for 1916 states that the "Caretaker and his wife suffered considerable inconvenience" as a result.

### Did you know that firing stopped around St Stephen's Green to allow the park's ducks to be fed?

One of the first acts by the Irish Citizen Army in the Rising was to occupy St Stephen's Green. However, with so many large buildings overlooking the Green (including the Shelbourne Hotel) and not enough men to occupy a useful number of them, the rebels' position rapidly become untenable. British forces, particularly from the Shelbourne, swept the Green with gunfire, and the rebels were forced to withdraw to the College of Surgeons.

Nevertheless, things weren't so bad for the park's feathered inhabitants. The Times History of the War recorded that St Stephen's Green "was well stocked with waterfowl, and the keeper, who remained inside all the time, reported that his charges were well looked after and fed by him, and were very little perturbed by the bullets flying over their heads".

The park-keeper's name was James Kearney – every day he would enter the Green to feed the ducks, and every day the opposing sides would cease firing to allow him to do so. (*Mick O'Farrell, 50 Things You Didn't Know About 1916*).



In the 1916 Annual Report is recorded that the DSPCA awarded Mr. James Kearney a parchment Certificate for bravely feeding the water fowl under fire. This award was presented by the Commissioners of Public Works.



# DSPCA

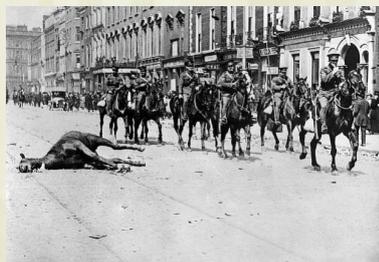
The Dublin Society for Prevention  
of Cruelty to Animals



The 1916 DSPCA Annual Report demonstrates 'the special work' undertaken by named individuals of that society, who regardless of the circumstances showed acts of courage and selflessness in their contribution toward the welfare of animals in Dublin during the Rising.

*'The committee had the pleasure of awarding their parchment certificate to Mr. Wm J. O'Hara, T.C., for bravely feeding military horses during the Rebellion, which was presented by their chairman, Major Arthur Whewell.'*

There are many accounts in the State records of horses being shot and many working horses were left abandoned in sheds and stables when people fled to safety. Many of these horses were either turned out into the streets, starved to death or died in fires.



## CITY AND DISTRICT

**Donkey Competition.**—The Donkey Competition under the auspices of the Dublin Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was held at Parnell street yesterday. Entries numbered 58, and there was a great improvement in the care bestowed on the animals. The results were:—Jacks—1, J. Norman, 1 Upper Erne street; 2, T. Carroll, 19 South Cumberland street; 3, J. Doyle, 5 Camden place. Mares—1, M. O'Neill, 19 Carnew street; 2, John Darmon, 7 Meath place. Consolation prizes were given to the other competitors. Mrs. Elliott distributed the prizes.

*Freemans Journal July 04 1916*

## ANIMAL CRUELTY IN 1916

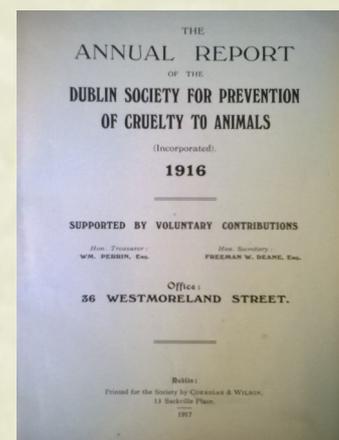
In the years leading up to and preceding the 1916 Rising, the DSPCA's Annual General Meeting took place in April. However, in 1916, as a result of the Rebellion, the Annual General Meeting was not held until June of that year owing to "the Easter Rebellion". This is a prime example of how the rising had its own effects not just on the DSPCA, but everyday life of Irish society.

There was a decrease in the number of cases of cruelty reported by the inspectors of the society during the year with a total of 652 cases investigated compared to 781 in 1915 and 453 in 1917.

The following is the convictions recorded in 1916:

- 147 horses were found working in an unfit state.
- 41 Mules and donkeys, also, were found working in an unfit state.
- 19 cows were over stocked and subsequently lame.
- 35 sheep were compelled to walk in an unfit state.
- 1 case involved a pig being beaten with a stick and also was kicked.
- 1 cat who was found to be beaten with a stick.

In addition, 263 cases were cautioned by Notice from the Committee, 40 were cautioned by the Magistrates, 5 cases were dismissed by the Magistrates and 100 cases were abandoned for "various reasons".



The DSPCA offer FREE Talks and workshops in schools and Tours of their Centre in Rathfarnham, Dublin 16 for classes of all ages from Pre-School to 3rd level students.

To find out more or to book contact Gillian at [gillian.bird@dspca.ie](mailto:gillian.bird@dspca.ie) or check out the Education section on our website [www.dspca.ie](http://www.dspca.ie).