

## **The Mallow Burning – 21st June 1920**

In 1920, Mallow was a prosperous and relatively wealthy town. Despite this, there are many people who are unhappy at it being under the rule of Britain. There were a lot of organisations in Mallow, which formulated their own plans for a way to get rid of British Rule.

One such organisation was the IRA Volunteers, who were very prominent in Cork at the time. They were, however, a relatively small group and did not have enough arms to realise any of their plans. They planned to raid a barracks to arm themselves, and chose Mallow as the target. They watched the barracks for weeks and noted that most of the soldiers used to take their horses on walks in the morning. They chose this time for their raid.

On The 20th of June 1920, the IRA Volunteers raided the Mallow barracks. The raid went according to their plans, with only a few soldiers guarding the barracks at the time. One fatality occurred on the British side after a sergeant stationed at the barracks refused to go to the cells.

However, this act of rebellion was not ignored. On the next night the British forces entered the town. Their plan was to get revenge for the raid and the death of Sergeant Gibbs. They began smashing windows and looting shops in the town. Then they went to the Town Hall and set fire to it. This fire spread throughout the town and numerous buildings caught fire. The watching soldiers shot at any locals who attempted to put out the fire, and the fire blazed through the night. The blaze wasn't quenched until the morning, by which time most of the buildings on the northside of Mallow were in ruins.

**Article by Kevin Conlon**