Tom Neill: A Republican Prisoner on Spike Island in 1921

Tom Neill was born in Belfast in 1899. He joined the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in 1919 and took part in the Irish War of Independence. In 1921, he was arrested and sentenced to death for his role in an IRA attack on a British army barracks. His sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment and he was sent to Spike Island prison in Cork Harbour.

Spike Island's Republican Prisoners, 1921 by Tom O'Neill

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language	: English
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Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
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Spike Island was a notorious prison, known for its harsh conditions and its brutal treatment of prisoners. Neill was subjected to hard labour and solitary confinement. He was also beaten and tortured by the prison guards. Despite the hardships he endured, Neill remained defiant and refused to give up his republican beliefs.

In 1923, Neill was released from prison as part of a general amnesty for Irish political prisoners. He returned to Belfast and became involved in

politics. He was elected to the Northern Ireland Parliament in 1925 and served as a member of the IRA's executive committee. Neill was arrested again in 1938 and sentenced to six months in prison for his involvement in an IRA bombing campaign. He was released from prison in 1939.

Neill remained active in politics until his death in 1982. He was a tireless campaigner for Irish unity and for the rights of Irish republicans. His story is a reminder of the sacrifices that were made by those who fought for Irish freedom.

Spike Island

Spike Island is a small island in Cork Harbour. It has been used as a prison since the 16th century. The prison was notorious for its harsh conditions and its brutal treatment of prisoners. Spike Island was closed as a prison in 2004 and is now a museum.

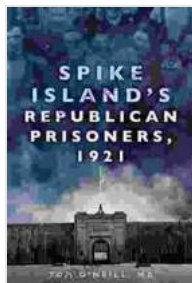## The Irish War of Independence

The Irish War of Independence was fought between the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the British government from 1919 to 1921. The war was a result of the Irish people's desire for independence from British rule. The war ended with the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921. The treaty established the Irish Free State, which was a self-governing dominion within the British Empire.

The Republican Prisoners

The Republican prisoners were those who were imprisoned by the British government for their involvement in the Irish War of Independence. The prisoners were subjected to harsh conditions and brutal treatment. Many of them died in prison. The Republican prisoners were eventually released as part of a general amnesty in 1923.

Tom Neill's Legacy

Tom Neill was a Republican prisoner who endured great hardship for his beliefs. He was a tireless campaigner for Irish unity and for the rights of Irish republicans. His story is a reminder of the sacrifices that were made by those who fought for Irish freedom.

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