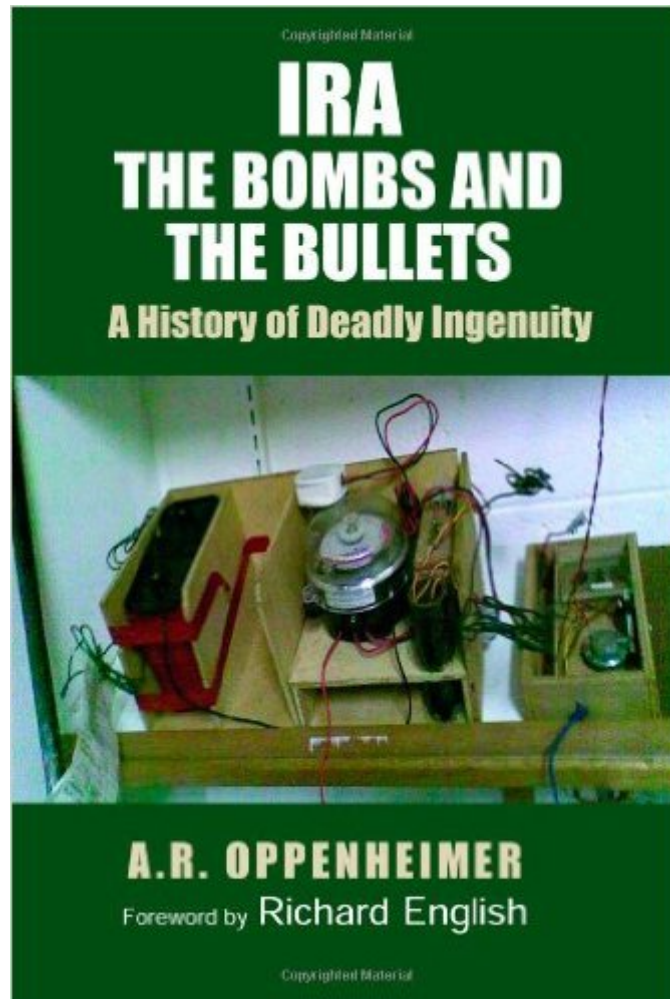


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# IRA: The Bombs And The Bullets: A History Of Deadly Ingenuity



## Synopsis

As a leading expert on non-conventional weapons and explosives, the author focuses on the bombs and explosives and shows how the IRA became the most adept and experienced insurgency group the world has ever seen through their bombing expertise and how - after generations of conflict - it all came to an end. The book is a comprehensive account of more than 150 years of Irish republican strategic, tactical, and operational details and analysis covering the IRA's mission, doctrine, targeting, and acquisition of weapons and explosives. Oppenheimer also colourfully presents the story behind the bombs; those who built and deployed them, those who had to deal with and dismantle them, and those who suffered or died from them. He analyses where, how, and why the IRA's bombs were built, targeted and deployed and explores what the IRA was hoping to accomplish in its unrivalled campaign of violence and insurgency through covert acquisition, training, intelligence and counter-intelligence. The book focuses entirely on the IRA's bombing campaign - beginning with the Fenian 'Dynamiters' in the 19th century up to the decommissioning of an arsenal big enough to arm several battalions - which included an entire home-crafted missile system, an unsurpassed range of improvised explosive devices, and enough explosives to blow up several urban centres. The author scrutinises the level of improvisation in what became the hallmark of the Provisional IRA in its pioneering IED timing, delay and disguise technologies. He follows the arms race it carried on with the British Army and security services in a Long War of Mutual Assured Disruption. Oppenheimer fully describes and assesses the impact of the pre-1970s bombing campaigns in Northern Ireland and England to the evolution of strategies and tactics. He also provides an insight into the bombing equipment and guns from the IRA inventory held at Irish Police HQ in Dublin.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Review by David Hambling 'IRA: The Bombs and the Bullets' by A. R. Oppenheimer, is a history of the long war fought by Irish insurgent groups; it has some vital lessons for the current conflicts. In particular, it describes the bombing campaigns, from the first gunpowder blast at Clerkenwell in London in 1867 to the immense "city destroyers" of the 1990's. Subtitled "a history of deadly ingenuity," it gives and detailed insight into how the improvised explosive device was developed by the world's most proficient insurgent group. And it examines the deadly, technological game between the bomb-makers and the authorities who sought to stop them across the course of some 19,000 bombings. Oppenheimer really did his homework for this book, interviewing not only former bomb disposal officers but also individuals associated with the Irish Republican Army. He visits the headquarters of the Irish police in Dublin to see their unique museum of IRA weapons. As well as mortars, AR-15 Armalites (the IRA's favorite), booby-traps and letter-bombs there is even a partially-completed torpedo, intended for use against patrol boats. Oppenheimer repeatedly shows how the Irish were highly adept at picking up the latest technology. Within two years of the invention of dynamite, Clan na Gael were starting to use it, and the subsequent campaign against the British was known as the "dynamite war." The new explosive was powerful, portable and stable, making it ideal for terrorist bombings. Gelignite was also adopted as soon as it became available. But the IRA also excelled at home-made explosives. They pioneered fertilizer bombs using ammonium nitrate and developed several recipes of their own such as 'Donegal Mix' or ANNIE - ammonium nitrate, nitrobenzene and diesel.

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