



## Arthur Griffith

### Date

c. 1920

### Primary Maker

Lily Williams

### Medium

Oil on canvas

### Dimensions

76.2 x 63.5 cm

### Description

Arthur Griffith was born in Dublin in 1872. In 1899 he founded the weekly publication *United Irishman*, to which Irish writers such as George Russell (Æ) and William Butler Yeats contributed. In 1902 he founded a group (that later

became the nucleus of Sinn Féin) which initially advocated an autonomous Ireland under the British Crown. Despite not having taken part in the 1916 Easter Rising, Griffith was imprisoned as a Nationalist leader. Griffith was vehemently opposed to the trade unionist James Larkin, whom he saw as an agent of Anglicisation. He opposed the strike actions of the workers because he felt that their call for better wages and conditions would undermine the competitiveness of Irish industry by forcing up Irish wages. Of Unionist and Protestant stock, Lily Williams studied under May Manning and also at the Royal Hibernian Academy. Arthur Griffith was a family friend of Lily Williams and was a frequent visitor to her home. She and her sisters became firm supporters of Griffiths and the artist designed the first Sinn Féin postage stamp as a fundraising effort for the party's newspaper.