



# Unlawful Drilling Act 1819

1819 CHAPTER 1 60 Geo 3 and 1 Geo 4

An Act to prevent the training of Persons to the Use of Arms, and to the Practice of Military Evolutions and Exercise. [11th December 1819]

Whereas in some parts of the United Kingdom men clandestinely and unlawfully assembled have practised military training and exercise, to the great terror and alarm of his Majesty's peaceable and loyal subjects, and the imminent danger of the public peace:

#### Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1 Short title given by [Short Titles Act 1896 \(c. 14\)](#)
- C2 Powers of Lieutenant and two justices of the peace of a county under this Act now exercisable by a Secretary of State or any officer deputed by him for the purpose: [Firearms Act 1920 \(c. 43\), s. 16](#)
- C3 This Act is not necessarily in the form in which it has effect in Northern Ireland
- C4 Act excluded by [S.I. 1981/155 \(N.I. 2\), art. 54\(4\)](#)
- C5 Act saved (N.I.) (temp.) (27.8.1991) by [Northern Ireland \(Emergency Provisions\) Act 1991 \(c. 24, SIF 39:1\), ss. 32\(4\), 69](#)
- C6 Act excluded (N.I.) (1.2.2005) by [The Firearms \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2004 \(S.I. 2004/702\), arts. 1\(3\), 49\(4\) \(with art. 81\); S.R. 2005/4, art. 3 \(with arts. 4-7\)](#)

#### Commencement Information

- II Act wholly in force at Royal Assent

## [1.] Meetings and assemblies of persons for the purpose of being trained, or of practising military exercise, prohibited. Punishment **E+W+S**

All meetings and assemblies of persons for the purpose of training or drilling themselves, or of being trained or drilled to the use of arms, or for the purpose of practising military exercise, movements, or evolutions, without any lawful authority from his Majesty, or [<sup>F1</sup>a Secretary of State, or any officer deputed by him for the purpose], by commission or otherwise, for so doing, shall be and the same are hereby prohibited as dangerous to the peace and security of his Majesty's liege subjects and of his government; and every person who shall be present at or attend any such meeting or assembly for the purpose of training and drilling any other person or persons to

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the use of arms or the practise of military exercise, movements, or evolutions, or who shall train or drill any other person or persons to the use of arms, or the practise of military exercise, movements, or evolutions, or who shall aid or assist therein, being legally convicted thereof, shall be liable to [<sup>F2</sup>imprisonment] for any term not exceeding seven years, <sup>F3</sup>. . . ; and every person who shall attend or be present at any such meeting or assembly as aforesaid, for the purpose of being, or who shall at any such meeting or assembly be trained or drilled to the use of arms, or the practice of military exercise, movements, or evolutions, being legally convicted thereof, shall be liable to be punished by fine and imprisonment not exceeding two years, at the discretion of the court in which such conviction shall be had.

#### Extent Information

- E1** This version of this provision extends to England and Wales and Scotland only; a separate version has been created for Northern Ireland only

#### Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 1 substituted (E.W.S.) (8.11.1995) by 1995 c. 44, s. 1(2), **Sch. 2 para. 1(a)**  
**F2** Words in s. 1 substituted (8.11.1995) by 1995 c. 44, s. 1(2), **Sch. 2 para. 1(e)**  
**F3** Words in s. 1 repealed (8.11.1995) by 1995 c. 44, s. 1(1), **Sch. 1 Pt. VI** Group 1

### [1.] Meetings and assemblies of persons for the purpose of being trained, or of practising military exercise, prohibited. Punishment **N.I.**

All meetings and assemblies of persons for the purpose of training or drilling themselves, or of being trained or drilled to the use of arms, or for the purpose of practising military exercise, movements, or evolutions, without any lawful authority from his Majesty, or [<sup>F11</sup>a Secretary of State], by commission or otherwise, for so doing, shall be and the same are hereby prohibited as dangerous to the peace and security of his Majesty's liege subjects and of his government; and every person who shall be present at or attend any such meeting or assembly for the purpose of training and drilling any other person or persons to the use of arms or the practise of military exercise, movements, or evolutions, or who shall train or drill any other person or persons to the use of arms, or the practise of military exercise, movements, or evolutions, or who shall aid or assist therein, being legally convicted thereof, shall be liable to [<sup>F12</sup>imprisonment] for any term not exceeding seven years, <sup>F13</sup>. . . ; and every person who shall attend or be present at any such meeting or assembly as aforesaid, for the purpose of being, or who shall at any such meeting or assembly be trained or drilled to the use of arms, or the practice of military exercise, movements, or evolutions, being legally convicted thereof, shall be liable to be punished by fine and imprisonment not exceeding two years, at the discretion of the court in which such conviction shall be had.

#### Extent Information

- E2** This version of this provision extends to Northern Ireland only; a separate version has been created for England and Wales and Scotland only

#### Textual Amendments

- F11** Words in s. 1 substituted (N.I.) (8.11.1995) by 1995 c. 44, s. 1(2), **Sch. 2 para. 1(b)**  
**F12** Words in s. 1 substituted (8.11.1995) by 1995 c. 44, s. 1(2), **Sch. 2 para. 1(e)**

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**F13** Words in s. 1 repealed (8.11.1995) by 1995 c. 44, s. 1(1), **Sch. 1 Pt. VI** Group 1

**2 Persons so assembled may be detained and required to give bail, and prosecuted.**

[<sup>F4</sup>It shall be lawful for any justice of the peace or for any constable or peace officer [<sup>F5</sup>, or for any other person acting in their aid or assistance,] to disperse any such unlawful meeting or assembly as aforesaid, and to arrest and detain any person present at or aiding, assisting, or abetting any such assembly or meeting as aforesaid; <sup>F6</sup> . . . ]

**Textual Amendments**

- F4** S. 2 ceased to have effect (E.W.) (1.1.2006) by virtue of [Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 \(c. 15\)](#), s. 178(8), **Sch. 7 para. 38**; S.I. 2005/3495, art. 2(1)(m)
- F5** Words in s. 2 repealed (E.W.) (1.1.2006) by [Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 \(c. 15\)](#), s. 178(8)(8), Sch. 7 para. 1, Sch. 17 Pt. 2; S.I. 2005/3495, art. 2(1)(m)(u); (N.I.) (1.3.2007) by [The Police and Criminal Evidence \(Amendment\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2007 \(S.I. 2007/288\)](#), art. 1(2), Sch. 1 para. 1, 2
- F6** Words repealed by [Courts Act 1971 \(c. 23\)](#), **Sch. 11 Pt. IV**, and are expressed to be repealed (N.I.) by [Statute Law Revision \(Northern Ireland\) Act 1980 \(c. 59\)](#), **Sch. Pt. IV**

**3 Sheriffs depute, &c. in Scotland to have the same powers as magistrates in England.**

The [<sup>F7</sup>sheriffs principal] and their substitutes, justices of the peace, magistrates of royal burghs, and all other inferior judges and magistrates, and also all high and petty constables, or other peace officers, of any county, city or town within Scotland, shall have such and the same powers and authorities for putting this present Act in execution within Scotland, as the justices of the peace and other magistrates and peace officers and constables aforesaid respectively have, by virtue of this Act, within and for other parts of the United Kingdom.

**Textual Amendments**

- F7** Words substituted by virtue of [Sheriff Courts \(Scotland\) Act 1971 \(c. 58\)](#), s. 4

**Modifications etc. (not altering text)**

- C7** Functions of Burgh magistrates now exercisable by justice of the peace: [District Courts \(Scotland\) Act 1975 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 1(2)

**4 Offenders may be indicted, if not prosecuted under this Act.**

..... <sup>F8</sup>

**Textual Amendments**

- F8** S. 4 repealed by [Statute Law \(Repeals\) Act 1989 \(c. 43\)](#), s. 1(1), **Sch. 1**

**5, 6.** ..... <sup>F9</sup>

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**Textual Amendments**

**F9** Ss. 5, 6 repealed by [Public Authorities Protection Act 1893 \(c. 61\)](#), [Sch.](#)

**7 Prosecutions to be commenced within six months after offences.**

Provided always, that no person shall be prosecuted by virtue of this Act for any thing done or committed contrary to the provisions herein-before contained, unless such prosecution shall be commenced within six calendar months after the offence committed.

**8** ..... **F10**

**Textual Amendments**

**F10** S. 8 repealed by [Statute Law Revision Act 1873 \(c. 91\)](#)

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