

An Interpretive Guide to
Patrick Brennan's Autograph Book

An Irish Rebel Autograph Book from Frongoch Internment Camp 1916

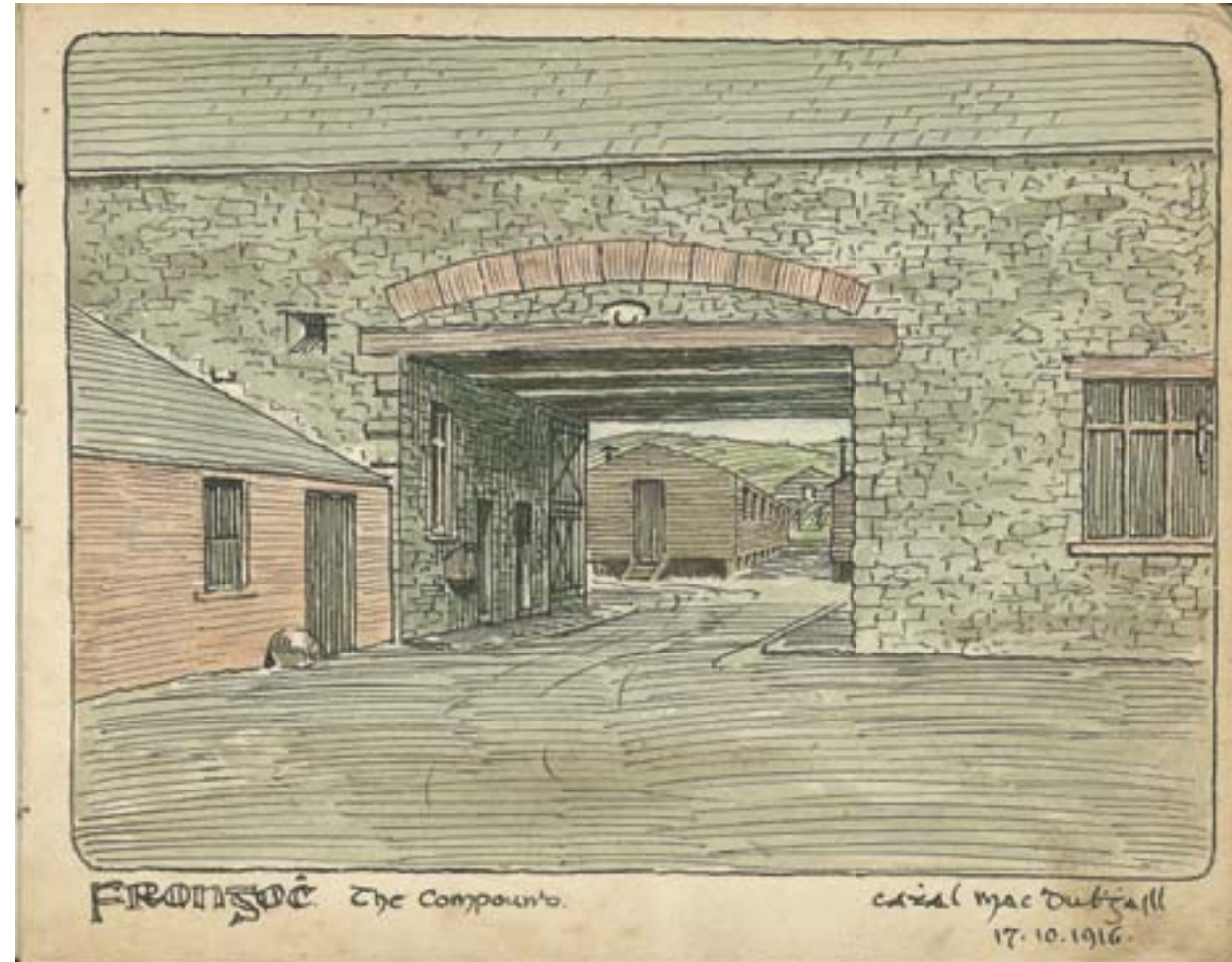
Dr Tomás Mac Conmara

This publication is an initiative of the Clare 1916 programme

With thanks to Helen Walsh and Frances O’Gorman at Clare Library
for their work in securing Patrick Brennan’s Autograph book
for the people of county Clare.

Contents

Foreword	7
A Guide for the Reader	8
Irish Names	8
Structure of the Book	9
To Guard Her Unconquered Soul’ - Setting the Scene	10
‘To Prepare the Stand’	11
Soldiers Death or Felon’s Doom	11
‘Rats In Uncountable Numbers’ - Reality of Life in Frongoch	13
‘Fifteen Forgetful Rebels ... Shouting Out the Battle Cry of Freedom’	16
‘University of Revolution’	18
‘A Glimpse of Freedom’s Light’	18
Image Sources	22
Autograph Book Contributors	23
Conclusion	159



“Men from all parts of Ireland had been sent to Frongoch. Sallow, tall, sombre men from Galway and the western seaboard; slow to converse as if suspicious of men of the ‘Pale’ but true as steel and implacable against their traditional enemy. Men from the Golden Vale, gay and reckless. Men from Cork, city or county; hard headed, fiery, touchy and aggressive, with a strong vein of realism. And Dubliners; good natured, improvident and unambitious cosmopolitans’.

Joe Good - Frongoch Internee



Frongoch Camp

Foreword

One of the obligations and challenges facing any museum in receipt of public funding is balancing provision of access to its collections with the responsibility for providing for its care. Patrick Brennan's autograph book typifies the difficulties books often present in this regard as it is delicate and susceptible to damage through handling. It is also difficult to display in a showcase as it only allows two pages to be shown at any time, severely restricting access to the information it contains. The purpose of this book is to overcome these obstacles and to provide a resource for both the local historian and the general visitor.

The autograph book was acquired by the museum in November 2014 and is the only item in the museum collection at this time with a tangible link between County Clare and the Easter Rising. Credit for this artefact coming to the Clare Museum goes to Councillor Cathal Crowe, an avid collector of political ephemera, who drew attention to its availability for purchase; to Clare County Council also, for providing the funding and to Helen Walsh, County Librarian for making the purchase at auction. Thanks should also go to Maureen Comber of Clare County Library for scanning the pages of the autograph book and to Karen Dunn, museum volunteer, who graciously gave her time and experience in designing both this book and the exhibition it accompanies. There is also a debt of gratitude to the Clare 1916 Centenary Fund for financial support which ensures Patrick Brennan's keepsake is the centre-piece of Clare Museum's commemoration of the centenary of the Easter Rising and is a contribution to the Clare County of Culture programme.

Finally, credit must go to Dr Tomás Mac Conmara for his extensive and enthusiastic research for this book. His work has made certain that the museum has achieved its commitment to provide information based on the highest standards of scholarship for its exhibitions.

John Rattigan

Curator

September 2016

A Guide for the reader

In the busy and intense confines of Frongoch internment camp in late 1916, the contributions to the autograph book explored in this here were written without the transcriber a century later in mind. However, every effort has been made to transcribe the contributions accurately and in full. Certain words are unintelligible and so are encased in [[double brackets]]. The Latin adverb ‘sic’ is used where a word has been identified which is either unclear to the author or seems incongruous in modern text. The use of ‘sic’ in these cases informs that this is the way that the piece of text has been written in the original contribution. Only on occasion, was it deemed necessary to provide a footnote to interpret or clarify the use of a term, which may have been in currency in the parlance of 1916, but has fallen out of use a century later. Irish language contributions have been translated in full by the author, who wishes to acknowledge Dr. Ciarán Ó Geallbháin of the Department of Folklore and Ethnology at University College Cork, for his help in clarifying the more nuanced contributions. The writing of Irish language enthusiasts in the early part of the twentieth century, is markedly different to that of writers a century later, who now use standard Roman lettering. For example, the *sean chló* (old script) remained in use in 1916, which meant that the forms of certain words were decidedly different. Lenition, the sound change that alters consonants, was marked in old Irish by a dot over the relevant letter. This was later replaced by the use of the letter ‘h’, which remains the practice in the early twenty-first century. In these cases, the author had no choice but to translate to the modern form of Irish, while in no way changing the meaning of the contribution.

Irish Names

Many of the contributors wrote their name in Irish for the purpose of the autograph books. In certain cases like that of Domhnall Ó Buachalla and Seamus Ó Maoileóin, the use of their Gaelic name continued throughout their life after Frongoch. For others, the use of the Irish version in 1916, reflected the heightened and intense cultural awareness within the republican movement. Where it can be established that the contributor continued to use the anglicised version of their names in their life after Frongoch, the author has translated accordingly. This is in no way to reduce the very real and sincere deference the men were paying to their Gaelic culture, but is instead in recognition of the men’s own use of their names subsequently and for the purpose of identification. In all cases, the way in which each contributor has written his name in Irish has also been retained.

Structure of Book

The introduction lays out in detail the historical context of the internment of Irish rebels in Frongoch in the aftermath of the Easter Rising. It also addresses the key dimensions of life within the camp and explains how the insurgents became increasingly aware of the potential of their incarceration. The escalating tension between the rebels and camp authorities is attended to, as is the political backdrop of their internment at home in Ireland. The composition and profile of the contributors to the autograph book is reflected on, before the book opens up a detailed exploration of the fifty-four contributors. Each contribution is carefully transcribed and translated where necessary. A biography of each contributor is provided, as is an analysis of their offering of poetry, prose, sentiment etc. The author has attempted throughout, to illuminate the connections between the rebels, which had already occurred prior to their internment, in addition to their future intersections, as many of the rebels engaged once more in revolution across the country.

Tomás Mac Conmara

September 2016

'To Guard Her Unconquered Soul' - Setting the Scene

Thomas Pugh from Charlville Mall in Dublin, the son of a Glass Commission Agent from Scotland, was 32 years old when he arrived at Frongoch in North Wales in June 1916.¹ He looked on at the seemingly vast and bleak camp which would house himself and his republican comrades for an, as yet, undetermined period of time. Pugh had heard that the site was very recently occupied by German prisoners, captured by British forces during World War One (WWI), then raging throughout Europe. Only one German soldier remained, too weak to join his compatriots, who were being moved to prisons in other parts of Britain. The Irish rebels observed the lonely German, isolated by geography and language, a few curse words in English, his only recourse to communicate with his British captors. One of the Irish rebels, a German speaker, was able to converse briefly with the soldier.² The young German was dying of consumption and soon gave way to his illness. Pugh, a republican socialist, offered a prayer for the soldier whose war was now over. For Pugh and his comrades, then assembling in Frongoch from all parts of Ireland, their war was only beginning.³

For the following seven months, Pugh and his fellow insurgents would reside within the fences of Frongoch in an isolated part of north Wales. The 1,863 prisoners transferred to Frongoch had been served with internment orders under Regulation 14(b) of the Defence of the Realms Act (DORA) of 1914. They were among over 3,200 arrested in total in the

¹The name Frongoch means 'Red Breast' and relates to the topography of the area. It had been misinterpreted as 'Red Nose' by the Irish rebels.

²This may have been one of two contributors to the Paddy Brennan autograph book. John P. Faller was the son of a German watchmaker and Liam Ó Briain had spent time in Germany prior to the Easter Rising.

³National Archive of Ireland, Bureau of Military History Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 8.

weeks after the Easter Rising of 1916, almost half of whom were released soon after. Although secluded in the mountains of Meirionnydd, smuggled communications would inform the men that back in Ireland, change was in the air. In that seven months the nature of the relationship between Britain and her nearest neighbour hardened to unprecedented levels. Outwardly, the sentiment of the Irish public was taking on an increasingly republican and separatist tone, the Irish Parliamentary Party was moribund and Sinn Féin, the party associated with the rebellion, was seemingly on the rise.

While all this was happening, the numbers in Frongoch decreased to approximately 600 rebels by mid-October. The released men would attempt to build on the apparent momentum at home. However, it was only when the prisoners who had been forced to remain in north Wales, were liberated in December of that year, that the emotional solidarity stimulated by the Easter Rising would truly be channelled into a sustainable campaign for independence. Seen as the part of the hardcore element of the republican movement, 569 prisoners were now left at the internment camp in late 1916, including the fifty-four explored here. Collectively, they would face down the British establishment then manifest in the camp authorities, suitable preparation for the years of struggle which would follow their release. When approached by Clare republican Patrick Brennan on 15 October 1916 to contribute to the autograph book, Thomas Pugh retreated to a place of relative quietness and reflected. The Dublin republican then chose a poem, written recently by Dora Maria Sigerson Shorter, an Irish Poet and sculptor. The poem, entitled 'Sixteen Dead Men' would be appropriate to convey the sense of deference to the recent past, as well as hopes for the future he now felt deeply for his country, sitting in a British jail ready to 'guard her unconquered soul'.

'To Prepare the Stand'

Increasingly aware of the significance of the movement to which the rebels were attached and the time in which they lived, the men sought to capture for posterity the reflections and emotions they now felt while imprisoned in a British jail. Autograph books were circulated throughout the camp, in which thoughtful men reflected, angry men expressed and philosophical men pondered. In quiet moments, stolen from the relentless planning of revolution, the sentiments bequeathed to the reader in this autograph book were etched for eternity, capturing in their form a moment in Irish history, in the liminal period between the rebellion of 1916 and the War of Independence which was to follow.

Belonging to Clare republican Patrick Brennan from Meelick, the autograph book explored in this publication was one of many circulated within Frongoch and other prisons in mid to late 1916. Those who contributed to this autograph book, also emblazoned the pages of other books circulated throughout places of internment like Frongoch, Reading Jail and Wormswood Scrubs. Containing fifty-four individual contributions as well as four detailed colour illustrations by Cathal Mac Dubhghaill, the book encloses poetry, quotations, reflections, patriotic declarations and original compositions. The contributions were made by the men who, in the Easter Rising of 1916, had made a robust challenge to a previously unchallenged colonial ideology and shook it to its core. When considered through an analytical lens, it provides fascinating biographical information about many of the men who were destined to dominate the Irish political and military arenas, both during the revolutionary period and in the decades that followed.

In their reflective contributions, the men offer brief but powerful insights into the mindset of the republican movement in the wake of the Easter Rising. Collectively, they represent the minority of Irish Volunteers who rejected the limitations of Home Rule and whose impulse for the freedom of their country had robbed them of their own personal liberty. The contributions to the autograph book leave little doubt that this resilience and determination remained unshaken. Compiled largely between July and December 1916, the pages of the book were filled in a period of unprecedented change in Ireland. Gradually, the prisoners were hearing reports that the mood in Ireland was changing, offering hope to the camp population, who when they were forcibly removed from the land they had tried to free just months previously, had little to be outwardly hopeful about.

'Soldiers Death or Felon's Doom'

'This is Frongoch, an internment camp. There is only one thing to do when the situation is as it is, make what I can of it'.

- Michael Collins, Frongoch internee

The first internees began to arrive in Frongoch on 09 June 1916.⁴ The journey had been a challenging one for the prisoners. Following the rebellion, the men had spent a period of time in Richmond Barracks in Dublin, before being transported to jails in England from where they would be moved to Frongoch. Desolated after a seeming failure in the Easter rebellion, the insults and jeers of many Dubliners still rang in their

⁴Seán McConnville, *Irish Political Prisoners, 1848-1922: Theatres of War*, (London, 2003), p. 466.

ears, a chorus echoed by English observers they met on their way towards north Wales. Seán O'Mahony in *Frongoch, University of Revolution*, outlined how many of the disconsolate prisoners were transported in the section of the steamship *Shieve Bloom*, reserved for cattle.

After an arduous journey, where the threat of attacks from German U-Boats lingered, the prisoners were transported thirty miles inland from Colwyn Bay and introduced to their new homes for an as yet undetermined period. By June, 1,000 Irish rebels were interned in South Camp while 850 were held in North Camp. The two camps that made up the compound, quickly dubbed 'Purgatory' and 'Sibera' by the insurgents, were separated by a road and were surrounded by 12ft barbed wire fences and manned by 400 guards.

Frongoch internment camp was located two miles to the west of Bala in Gwynedd in Merionethshire, a Welsh-speaking, nationalist stronghold of north Wales. The camp was based at the site of a former whiskey distillery founded by R. Lloyd Price in 1897, which although benefiting from the purity of the water in the nearby river, had gone bankrupt by the early 1900s. In 1915, it was reopened in order to hold German prisoners, captured during WWI. McConville explained that the logic in choosing Frongoch was based on the lack of prison staff, due to the numbers who had enlisted to fight in WWI, making it financially unviable to maintain a conventional prison.⁵ For example, Arthur Shields an Abbey actor from Dublin, Ellet Elmes a member of the Citizen Army, Sam Ruttle, a baker from Tralee and Alf Cotton of Belfast, were all Protestant republicans interned in Frongoch.

To accommodate the Irish insurgents, the abandoned granary building was converted into five large dormitories that housed 150 to 250 beds. The North Camp was located higher up in the compound and consisted of a

⁵ Ibid, p. 466

collection of thirty-five wooden huts, sixty feet long and sixteen feet wide, housing thirty internees each. The camp commandant, whose belligerence would later result in a significant showdown with the rebels, was Colonel F. A. Heygate-Lambert, nicknamed 'Buckshot' by the internees, due to

his constant implication that the guards had buckshot and would use it. The camp has been subject to increasing attention in recent years, with an important contribution by the Welsh journalist, broadcaster and historian Lyn Ebenezer offering an valuable account from a Welsh perspective. Ebenezer outlined how the barren, mountainous countryside surrounding the camp was reminiscent of rural Ireland. He also explained how the similarity of landscape was matched by parallels in the experience of the local population, who had suffered from evictions and enforced emigration at the hands of greedy landlords.⁶

Soon after arriving, the prisoners were informed of the camp regulations, which involved a roll call at 5.30am and then breakfast, with lunch consisting of frozen Australian or New Zealand bully-beef. The men would have 7.40am mass with the day largely filled with activities arranged by the rebels themselves. At 9.30pm, the bugler played the last post.⁷ According to Paul O'Leary, smoking was permitted but spitting was prohibited, as was running except in the case of fire. Singing was not allowed and conversations could be stopped at the sound of a whistle.⁸ Predictably, the Irish rebel prisoners immediately flouted all of the rules to the severe frustration of the camp authorities.

Before long, a meeting was held in the communal building renamed 'Tara Hall' where a General Council of 54 members from among the rebels was elected and set about the organisation and co-ordination of educational

⁶ Lyn Ebenezer, *From-Goch and the Birth of the IRA*, (Wales, 2006), p. 50.

⁷ 'Fingal fighters were held in Welsh prison camp', *Irish Independent*, 12 April 2006

⁸ Paul O'Leary, *Irish Migrants in Modern Wales*, (Liverpool, 2004), p. 142

and cultural activities, including commemorations, Irish classes and general education.⁹ Activities at Frongoch included open air concerts, fancy dress parades, craft making, cross country walks or route marches and sporting events.¹⁰ A typical example was the athletics day held 08 August 1916, when Michael Collins reportedly won the 100 yards in 10.8 seconds, a feat which Ebenezer noted was 'quoted in the House of Commons to refute the charge that the prisoners were under-nourished'.¹¹

Given the cultural influence within the republican movement, it was no surprise that the use of the Irish language was foregrounded in camp activities and culture, a dimension reflected in the strong use of the Irish language in the autograph book. A branch of the Gaelic League was formed in Frongoch called Craobh na Sróine Deirge.¹² The prisoners were refused the right to erect Irish language signs but despite attempts to prohibit the use of the language, prisoners took to it with intensity. In fact, language became a central issue in Frongoch and with several teachers interned there, a number of languages were taught including Irish, Spanish, French and even Latin. Strikingly, the Irish prisoners soon came to appreciate the intensity of cultural engagement among the Welsh population and soon, the Welsh language was added alongside military tactics and guerrilla warfare on the camp curriculum. There were also classes in bookkeeping, mathematics and shorthand.¹³

⁹ The General Council included Tomás Mac Curtain, Terence MacSwiney, WJ Brennan Whitmore and Richard Mulcahy.

¹⁰ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 8

¹¹ Lyn Ebenzyer, Quoted in Joseph E. Connell, 'Countdown to 2016: Sport in Frongoch' in *History Ireland*, Issue 4, July/August 2012

¹² Caoimhghin Ó Croidheáin, *Language from Below: The Irish Language, Ideology and Power in 20th-century Ireland*, (Switzerland, 2006), p. 156. The name resulted from the misinterpretation of Frongoch as meaning red nose or Sróin Deirge.

¹³ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Patrick Treacy, WS, 1425, p. 1

Fearing the camp authorities would be attacked, hurleys were deemed too dangerous and hurling as an activity was prohibited. However, Gaelic football was played and with many GAA members among the prison population, competition was at a high level at the makeshift pitch quickly named 'Croke Park'. Posters advertising the matches indicated that 'admission was to be 5 shillings, and wives and sweethearts should be left at home'. As the historian Joe O'Connell identified, Dick Fitzgerald of Killarney, who captained Kerry to two all-Ireland victories, was one of the chief organisers.¹⁴ One of the contributors to the autograph book, Westmeath's Séamus Ó Maeoleóin commented: 'There was never half as much spirit, fun and energy seen in the all-Ireland finals as that which was displayed at Frongoch'.¹⁵

'Rats In Uncountable Numbers' - Reality Of Life In Frongoch

On 14 December 1916, a body was discovered floating in the Tryweryn river close to the Frongoch internment camp. The body was that of a forty-seven year old local medical doctor. His watch had stopped at 10.00am. The suicide of a relatively young, successful doctor was discussed in the British House of Commons. It was later revealed that the doctor had become enveloped in a bitter struggle between Irish republican prisoners in Frongoch and the camp authorities.¹⁶ The pressure examined later, became too much for the civilian doctor to bear, leading him to take his own life. The tragic death of Dr. David Peters serves to illustrate the harsh and charged reality of internment, when the political struggle which had divided the

¹⁴ Joseph E. Connell, 'Countdown to 2016: Sport in Frongoch' in *History Ireland*, Issue 4, July/August 2012,

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ 'Frongoch Camp', *British House of Commons Debate*, 31 December 1916

nations of Ireland and England for centuries, was condensed and distilled within the enclosure of an internment camp in the mountains of north Wales. For all of the humour and irreverence of the rebel prisoners, their experience had beneath it a serious and dangerous quality, which should always be kept in mind in any assessment of the Frongoch story.

The distribution of republican prisoners across jails in Britain after the rebellion, resulted in varying experiences of internment. Some prisoners like Countess Markievicz were able to comfort themselves by contrasting their experience with those who came before them. A letter written by Markievicz to her sister from Mountjoy Prison on the 16 May 1916 reassured:

‘Now darling, don’t worry about me for I’m not too bad at all, and it’s only a mean spirit that grudges paying a price. Everybody is quite kind, and though this is not exactly a bed of roses, still many rebels have had much worse to bear ... when I think of what the Fenians suffered ... I realize that I am extremely lucky’.¹⁷

Initially, the conditions in the north Wales camp were appreciably better according to Joe Good, than the rebels had experienced at Knutsford and other areas.¹⁸ However, over time, the situation changed discernibly with the gradually more belligerent attitude of the camp authorities. In Frongoch, the undeniably harsh conditions were in part mitigated by the increasingly defiant spirit of the rebel prisoners, as well as the routine of activities organised by the rebels themselves.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the period of internment brought with it

much privations for the prison rebel population. Conditions at Frongoch were severe with the camp bitterly cold at night and uncomfortably hot during the day. Each night, the bedclothes would absorb the damp which blew into the open huts from the surrounding mountains.²⁰ One Frongoch internee recalled vividly that ‘Conditions became unpleasant owing to frequent rain and snow and the ground in the north camp was a sea of mud’.²¹

The camp was also severely infested with rats who had been drawn to the site in their thousands as a consequence of the presence of grain used previously in the distillery. Recalling the vermin in ‘uncountable numbers’, internee Patrick Treacy described that ‘Rats were all over the camp when we arrived and all the efforts of the prisoners failed completely to eliminate them’.²² Another prisoner, Joseph McCarthy, remembered waking in the dead of night in the Frongoch camp and witnessing ‘hundreds of them running and playing along the floor and over the sleeping men.’²³ On one occasion, a contributor to the autograph book, Domhnall Ó Buachalla, was bitten under the eye which led to a severe infection.²⁴ The irony of being bitten by a rat in a place called Frongoch was not lost on Ó Buachalla or the other Irish prisoners, who noted that the Welsh name Frongoch was pronounced the same as the Gaelic ‘Francach’ meaning rat. In addition to the physical deprivations of the camp, the psychological cost was sometimes felt most severely by some. The republican poet Brian O’Higgins, later to serve as Sinn Féin TD for West Clare from 1918-1925, bemoaned the irony of camp freedom.

17 Richard English, *Irish Freedom, This History of Nationalism in Ireland*, (London, 2006), p. 53

18 Joe Good, *Enchanted by Dreams*, (Kerry, 1996) pp. 87-90.

19 The conditions in Frongoch are treated to a detailed analysis by Seán McConnville, See McConnville, *Irish Political Prisoners, 1848-1922: Theatres of War*, (London, 2003), pp. 466 - 481.

20 Leon Ó’Broin, *Michael Collins*, (Dublin, 1991), pp. 22-23.

21 NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Patrick Treacy, WS, 1425, p. 1

22 Ibid.

23 NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Joseph McCarthy, WS, 1497, p. 1

24 Ibid.



Arrival at Frongoch

‘There is no more deadly, more cruel punishment than the ‘freedom’ of a prison camp. There is absolutely no privacy. A man cannot say to himself that he will go off and be alone for five minutes. Nerves become frayed, tempers out of control and all the little meanness of man come to the surface. The mind becomes dull, the body enervated, the heart hopeless and hardened.’²⁵

The unacceptable conditions in the camp led to the prisoners and camp authorities clashing on a number of occasions, resulting in several serious confrontations and at least two hunger strikes. The latter, a weapon which would grow in significance in Irish political culture, was used to pressurise the British authorities and to draw attention across the world and in particular in America, to their treatment of republican prisoners in British jails. The principal source of the tension in the camp would seem to have been the camp commandant Colonel Heygate-Lambert. Brennan Whitmore, writing in 1917, characterised the commandant as;

‘A type of Englishman who should never be placed in charge of Irishmen. Possessing an egregious idea of his own dignity and importance, utterly devoid of a sense of humour, he was totally incapable of treating us except as prisoners. That we might be intelligent, reasoning and sentient human beings seemed altogether beyond his power of comprehension’.²⁶

A significant confrontation ultimately led to the British Home Secretary granting better conditions to the rebels in Frongoch on 09 October 1916, a victory which led to spontaneous celebrations within the north Wales camp.

²⁵ Ebenezer, *Fron-goch*, pp. 104-105.

²⁶ W.J. Brennan-Whitmore, *With the Irish in Frongoch*, (Cork, 2016), p. 13.

‘Fifteen Forgetful Rebels ... Shouting Out The Battle Cry of Freedom’²⁷

Despite the earlier victory, in early November 1916, while this autograph book was being circulated, a major confrontation between the republican prisoners and camp authorities was again developing. The latter had sought to implement an order from the British Government to identify and conscript some sixty Frongoch internees who had lived in Britain before the Easter Rising. Their residence in England made them eligible for conscription into the British Army, placing the authorities in the unusual position of attempting to force Irish rebels, who had months previously fought against the Empire, to now fight for her. A tense campaign followed with the internees, led by their Camp Commandant Michael Staines from Mayo, refusing to respond to calls to identify the eligible men.²⁸ For refusing to answer to the camp authorities or to identify the relevant men, the internees were punished. Before long the republicans responded by engaging in a hunger strike, a dangerous move considering the meagre diet which the men had lived on since entering the camp.

Dr. Peters, the Medical Officer at Frongoch mentioned earlier, quickly advised that the men could not sustain a hunger strike more than a number of days. Heygate-Lambert ordered that the Medical Officer refuse to treat

²⁷ Words from a song written by Joe Stanelly to mark the occasion which rebel prisoners defied the camp authorities by refusing to identify men who they wished to conscript to the British army.

²⁸ Such was the intensity of the confrontation that a Dublin internee known as ‘The Blackguard Daly’, a former British soldier, refused to reveal his own name even when his wife died back in Dublin and his five children were left without a parent, See Good, *Enchanted by Dreams*, p. 91.



Patrick Brennan (Front Row - second from left) in October 1917

the men who would not give their name.²⁹ Consequently, in what became a bitter and explosive atmosphere within the camp, Dr. Peters was placed in the challenging position of balancing pressure from his superior officers and remaining true to the Hippocratic Oath, which he had taken upon becoming a medical doctor. While employed by the camp authorities, Dr. Peters was neither a republican or an advocate of British repression. A writer and a poet, he was described as ‘a quiet, unassuming man who kept to himself and loved contemplation and solitude’.³⁰ In a revelation of how politically charged experiences can impact most heavily on those with no investment in either cause, the pressure on Peters evidently became too much and in December 1916, as mentioned, his body was found in the Tryweryn river, close to the internment camp. Sir Charles Cameron, an Irish physician, chemist and writer was appointed to lead an inquiry into both the conditions of the prisoners and the incident with Dr. Peters. Revealingly, the findings of Cameron were never published.

Against the backdrop of such a volatile situation in Frongoch, Larry Ginnell, a former Irish Parliamentary Party MP and future Sinn Féin TD, was among those who continually raised questions in the British Parliament regarding the treatment of the men in Frongoch.³¹ John Redmond now sought to capitalise on the changing mood by calling on the men to be released. Redmond’s position was treated with derision by the rebel prisoners who were acutely aware that the Irish Parliamentary Party leader had in May supported the execution of their leaders. As McConville affirmed regarding Redmond, he was then ‘too late to grasp the nettle’.³²

29 ‘So what did you do in the war Grandpa?’, *Irish Echo*, 12-18 March, 1997, p. 51.

30 Ebenezer, *Fron-goch*, p. 154.

31 Ginnell also visited the prisoners on a number of occasions and would smuggle letters out in ‘The GPO’ which was code word for the back pocket of his coat.

32 McConville, *Irish Political Prisoners*, pp. 471.

Nevertheless, such increased pressure led to the Liberal government, now led by Lloyd George, to announce on 21 December 1916 that the internees in Frongoch would be released within days.

‘University of Revolution’

It has long since been recognised that by placing a previously diffuse organisation into a concentrated location, described by Paul O’Leary as ‘the greatest concentration of Irish revolutionaries in modern times’, was a monumental mistake on the part of the British authorities.³³ In full sight, and under the harshest of conditions imposed by His Majesty’s Government, the blueprint for the downfall of British rule in Ireland was created. Beyond that sight, the more covert movements of the IRB were also discernable within the camp, as they capitalised on the opportunity to reorganise. Ollscoil na Réabhlóide or the University of Revolution, was an education paid for and facilitated by the British Empire. Only in December 1916, when Asquith was replaced by David Lloyd George, himself a Welsh man, was the camp emptied and the students sent home to apply the lessons they had learnt in Frongoch.

‘A Glimpse of Freedom’s Light’

The Easter Rising has adopted an undeniably mystical quality in the consciousness of the Irish people and endures as a temporal landmark for the nation. For many, the leaders of the rising were men of the finest character whose nobility has only grown over time. For those who fought under them, the imprint of their personality remained embedded many decades later. What was a chaotic and violent week, was later distilled into a series of moments, which when evoked in isolation, perhaps negated the need

33 O’Leary, *Irish Migrants in Modern Wales*, p. 144

to recall the other more traumatic memories. Perhaps, such was the force of those moments that they overshadowed or forced other recollections to linger in silence.

Taken individually, the lives of the contributors to the autograph book explored here, place them at various moments in history, both before and after their time in Frongoch. For example, in August 1915 at Glasnevin Cemetery, at the edge of O’Donovan Rossa’s grave, Pádraig Pearse took a deep and satisfied intake of breath after uttering the profoundly enduring words, ‘Ireland unfree will never be at peace’. Further back in the graveyard, Eamon Morkan was one of the select few who then pulled the triggers on their rifles, providing a gun salute, an appropriate echo to the words of Pearse.

Others by proximity, bore testimony to some of the most significant moments in Irish history. In their individual experiences, three of the contributors surround pivotal moments in the final months of James Connolly’s life. In January 1916 one contributor, Limerick volunteer Eamon T. Dore, was ready to forcibly capture Connolly, who at that point had frustrated the IRB through his independent stance with the Irish Citizen Army. Dore, under the direction of his cousin, the leader Ned Daly, (later executed) stood ready to arrest the socialist leader who in the end willingly attended a three day meeting with the Supreme Council of the IRB, within which the plans for the Easter Rebellion were solidified. In the midst of that rebellion, Connolly stood for a brief moment as he watched the fast moving figure of Seán McLoughlin, ‘The Boy Commandant’, move from his position at the GPO. Connolly had dispatched McLoughlin to take over the offices of Independent Newspapers. Taking a brief moment to watch the increasingly impressive McLoughlin, a sniper’s bullet shattered the leg of James Connolly.³⁴ The latter incident led to two iconic images

34 Charlie McGuire, ‘Seán McLoughlin – the boy commandant of 1916’, in *History Ireland*, Issue 2, March/April 2006

of Connolly which have come to characterise the bravery of the rising. The first is that of Connolly on a stretcher inside the GPO, still managing to give orders to his men. The second image is that of the revolutionary sitting on a chair, waiting for British bullets to end his revolutionary life. The moments between those images, when the severely wounded Connolly was carried by his comrades from the GPO to British hands, draws the third contributor into the story. Joe Tallon, the son of a newspaper publisher from Dublin, recalled late in life that he was one of six volunteers selected to carry Connolly on his stretcher. Over time the significance of that task would grow in the recollection of Tallon. Additionally, Eamon Bulfin, the Argentine born rebel, was selected by Connolly to erect the tricolour on top of the GPO, an act loaded with symbolism.

The presence and weight of history places a firm hand on the shoulders of the contributors. The quotations of nineteenth century nationalists like Thomas Davis and John Mitchel, illustrate the continuity at the heart of the Fenian tradition and the way in which the republican movement is a house built on its own history. So too did the awareness and deference to other national figures. For example, Eamon Price was born on 10 October 1891, which he noted in his contribution to the Bureau of Military History, was on the same day that Charles Stewart Parnell was buried in Glasnevin Cemetery. However, the sources of literary inspiration went deeper than the previous century in the Irish historical experience, with quotes from such varied sources as John of the Gospel, the Roman poet Horace, Wendell Holmes, the American author and the English social critic Lionel Johnson. Female figures also offered literary guidance with the satirist Susan Mitchell, Mrs. De Rossa (Mary Jane Irwin), and poets Dora Maria Sigerson Shorter and Maeve Cavanagh quoted throughout.

Researching the names of the contributors reveals a diversity of backgrounds and experiences. While twenty of the contributors were from Dublin,

counties Clare, Limerick, Kerry, Waterford, Tipperary, Carlow, Wexford, Mayo, Westmeath and Longford are also represented. Three men from Belfast are included, while a further three had been living in England before the rebellion. Three of the men, Joe Good, Eamon Bulfin and Jack Kilgallon were not born in Ireland, hailing from England, Argentina and America respectively.

Whether John ‘The Yank’ Kilgallon, an American member of ‘Pearse’s Own’ Battalion, JJ Layng from Galway, the son of an RIC Sergeant or John P. Faller whose father was a German watchmaker, the backgrounds of many of the contributors do not subscribe to the expected characterisations of Irish rebels. More notable still is the revelation that the brother and father of Protestant republican Harry Nicholls, were both committed British imperialists, while four years before writing about pledging his sword to Irish freedom in Frongoch, Robert Haskins was a member of the Orange Order. The involvement and experience of men like Nicholls and Haskins in the Irish republican movement, absent any known sectarian occurrences, is an important rebuttal to the characterisation of the Easter Rising and the republican movement generally, as inherently Catholic or sectarian.³⁵ In fact, the participation of Nicholls as well as other republican Protestants underlined the non-sectarian nature of the revolutionary movement. Their experience was mirrored elsewhere. For example, when Henry Corr from Belfast joined B Company of the Irish Volunteers in 1915, he did so under Seamus Snoddy and his first captain was Robert Haskins.³⁶ None of the latter three were Catholic. Nevertheless among the contributors to the autograph book, the religious profile while understandably Catholic in the main, shows three Protestant republicans and one man who had earlier characterised his religion as ‘agnostic’.

³⁵ Nicholl’s was also the only Trinity College Graduate who participated in the Easter Rising

³⁶ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Henry Corr, WS, 227, p. 1.

Jimmie Mulkerns became ‘the Rajah of Frongoch’, entertaining the prisoners with his flamboyant productions in a makeshift stage in the camp. Seán McLoughlin became a Communist and for his commitment to equality, was forgotten and faded from the story of Ireland’s liberation, when the hand that wrote her story was guided by increasingly conservative minds. While relatively young men, the background of many of the contributors is steeped in radical politics. For veteran republican Domhnall Ó Buachalla, his resistance to British rule was manifest in 1905, when he refused to remove his name in Gaelic from his horse cart in Maynooth, County Kildare. When charged, Ó Buachalla was defended by Pádraig Pearse whose words adorn his page of the autograph book. JK O’Reilly, who like Ó Buachalla was one of the senior men in the camp, had earlier written the iconic Irish ballad, *Wrap the Green Flag around me*.

Five of the contributors at different stages held the highest rank in the military forces, from McLoughlin who commanded in the final days of the Easter Rising, to Richard Mulcahy who took over from Michael Collins when the latter was killed in the Civil War. In fact, of the thirteen members who constituted the Irish Republican Army General Headquarters Staff of 1920, eight had been interned at Frongoch. In total, 30 of the internees at Frongoch went on to become Teachtaí Dála (TDs) and one, Seán T. Ó’Ceallagh, became President of Ireland.

The intersections of experience prior to the Easter Rising brought many Frongoch internees together in some of the most significant moments in Irish history. Eamon Morkan’s role at the funeral of O’Donovan Rossa has already been acknowledged. Morkan was also one of many contributors to Brennan’s book, who had in 1915 travelled to Limerick to participate in an Irish Volunteer parade. There they marched with many of the men who would a year later become iconic names in the pantheon of republican history, including Tom Clarke, Pádraig Pearse and Seán Mac Diarmada. Famously

many of the rebels were attacked by Limerick people, who through family involvement had connections to the British Army and WWI.

Many of the contributors hailed from the province of Munster. During the Easter Rising, while the city of Dublin burned, having spent a week full of frustration and anxiety, they were now interned with their comrades, united in their incarceration. The failure of Munster to rise has been the subject of debate for many decades and was undoubtedly discussed within the confines of Frongoch. Evidently, it was of sufficient interest to the republican movement that in early 1917 an enquiry was held under the cover of a Gaelic League Dance in An Grianán, Queen Street (now Father Matthew Street) in Cork. The enquiry was to investigate ‘the action of Cork, Kerry and Limerick during the Easter Rising’. Con Collins, Diarmuid Lynch and Cathal Brugha were in charge of the enquiry and found that no blame could be attached to the leaders of these counties. Instead, they attributed the failure to rise to the ‘sinking the arms ship and subsequent conflicting orders’.³⁷

The ‘sinking of the arms’ relates to the Roger Casement episode in Kerry and its consequence draws together the experience of many of the rebels who signed the autograph book. For example, Paddy Brennan himself was infuriated when he was informed in west Clare of the countermand order and of the failure of the Casement arsenal to arrive. Across Munster and Galway, the potential for mobilised volunteers to revolt was made impossible through the failure of arms to successfully land. In Clonmel, County Tipperary, Jeremiah Purcell was among a company of men who received word that three young volunteers, Con Keating, Donal Sheehan and Charlie Monaghan, were drowned when their car plunged off the pier at Ballykissane in Kerry. As Purcell made his contribution to the autograph book on 14 October 1916, the body of Charlie Monaghan remained
³⁷ J Anthony Gaughan, *Austin Stack, Portrait of a Separatist*, (Kerry, 1977), p. 274.

beneath the water in Kerry and was only discovered two weeks later on 30 October. Monaghan, Keating and Sheehan had been on route to establish communications with Roger Casement, unaware that the ship he was on did not have a communication system. The driver of the car, Tommy McNerney from Limerick was also interned in Frongoch. In Tralee, while the car plunged into the water, McNerney’s fellow Limerick volunteer Con Collins was with Austin Stack in Tralee. There, he became aware of Casement’s arrival and spent Good Friday attempting to reach the isolated rebel leader. Diarmuid Ó Corchadha marched from Daingean to Tralee, only to realise that the attempt of Collins and Stack had failed, Casement had been arrested and the anticipated arms were now resting on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, off Banna Strand. Tim Ring on Valentia Island, sent messages out across that ocean to the housekeeper of John Devoy in America, that the rising was going ahead irrespective of the Casement episode. Michael F. Lynch mobilised with men in Tracton while across west Cork, James Walsh marched with his Lyre Company towards Inchigeela. Both men were deflated by Tomás Mac Curtain and Tereance McSwiney, who informed them of the countermand and the failure of weapons to arrive.

Perhaps the human dimensions are those which make the most powerful impact in historical accounts. For two of the internees at Frongoch, Joe Stanley and a contributor to the autograph book Eamon Morkan, the birth of their first children, two sons, occurred while they were in the north Wales camp. Con Colbert Stanely and Ned Daly Morkan were both born in late 1916. As they breathed life for the first time, the pages of Pádraig Brennan’s autograph book was gradually being emblazoned by the thoughts and names of their fathers and their comrades, ‘to the scroll of Ireland’s fame’.

Photo Credits

- 6 <http://i4.dailypost.co.uk/incoming/article8503651.ece/ALTERNATES/s1227b/JS54953748.jpg>
- 15 Introduction to 1916 <http://www.hiraeth.wales/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/FGC.jpg>
- 17 Clare County Archives
- 25 <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~bwickham/corkbatt/brennan.jpg>
- 31 <http://www.museum.ie/getmedia/d0d94b15-c26b-4226-b209-ed024ac6089b/NationalMuseumIreland.jpg>
- 40 <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~bwickham/frongoch.htm>
- 41 Clare County Archives
- 47 Image courtesy of Ailbhe Rogers irishcentenarytravel.wordpress.com
- 48 Tomás Mac Conmara
- 61 Tomás Mac Conmara
- 63 Image Courtesy of Charlie McGuire
- 72 <http://athenrylocalhistory.blogspot.ie/2014/03/athenry-and-easter-rising-1916-revised.html>
- 73 Tomás Mac Conmara
- 88 (top image) Tomás Mac Conmara , (bottom image) <http://www.rte.ie/radio1/the-history-show/programmes/2014/0413/606520-the-history-show-sunday-13-april-2014/?clipid=1525038>
- 97 Tomás Mac Conmara
- 99 https://pbs.twimg.com/media/CW6WX14WQAAH_mc.jpg102
- 102 Tomás Mac Conmara
- 105 Tomás Mac Conmara
- 117 Tomás Mac Conmara
- 118 Courtesy of Adhamhnán Ó Súilleabháin
- 124 <http://www.heritageweek.ie/eventregistration/tmp/ab14612c08867cd5570889132be21321.jpg>
- 125 <http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/itma.dl.printmaterial/nationalsongs/16922sm1.jpg>
- 128 (Photo courtesy of Terence Varian, Republican Sinn Féin)
- 140 http://www.irishtimes.com/polopoly_fs/1.2327247.1440444641!/image/image.jpg_gen/derivatives/box_620_330/image.jpg
- 142 http://ichef-1.bbci.co.uk/news/624/cpsprodpb/5E0A/production/_89947042_michael_collins_releasedfromfrongoch_getty.jpg
- 149 Tomás Mac Conmara
- 150 http://www.bjp-online.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/05_PressImage-1-Easter-Rising-Countess-Markievicz.jpg
- 152 Tomás Mac Conmara

Autograph Book Contributors

Parick Brennan (Pádraig Brennan)
Críostóir Ó'Cairbre (Christy Carberry)
Cathal Mac Dubhghaill
Diarmuid S. Ó Laoighaoire (Jeremiah Joseph O'Leary)
Eamon Praidheas (Bob Price)
Gearóid O'Sullivan
H H Cahill
James Layng
Jack Killgallon
Eoin Ó Pluinchéid (John 'Jack' Plunkett)
Liam Rahilly
J B O'Driscoll
James Haverty
John P Faller
John J Murphy
Sean McLoughlin
Thomas Pugh
Peadar O'Bryan
Stephen Jordan
Robert Haskin
Sean McMahan
Francis Scullin
Seosamh Ó Tallamháin (Joe Tallon)

Michael F Lynch
Liam O'Briain
Seosamh Mac Maillfinn (Joseph McLinn)
Eamon Ó Morcháin (Eamon Morkan)
Joe Good
Padraic Breathnac (Patrick Walsh)
Eamon Waldron
Jimmie Mulkerns
William J Brennan Whitmore
John J Scollan
William Sears
Domhnall Ua Buachalla
Eamon T Dore
John Kevin O'Reilly
Séamus Ó Maoileóin
Seamus Mac Domhnall (James McDonnell)
Tim Ring
D De Puirseálaigh (Jeremiah Purcell)
Michael Collins
James J Hunter
R Ua O'Maolchathaig (Richard Mulcahy)
Con Collins
Sean McGarry
Seamus Breathnach (James Walsh)
Micheál Ó Murchada (Michael Murphy)
Seosámh Ó [Chochlaim]



Illustration by Cathal Mac Dubhghaill

Pádraig Brennan

Pádraig Brennan, whose autograph book is explored in this publication, was one of three brothers from Meelick in south-east Clare, who would go on to become leading figures in the IRA's East Clare Brigade. His younger brother Micheál became one of the country's best known guerrilla fighters and later was appointed Chief of Staff of the Irish Army. With their other brother Austin, the three men would lead the volunteers in that part of Clare both before and after the Easter Rising of 1916. Brennan, who is also commonly referred to as Patrick or Paddy, had spent a number of years in England prior to the Easter Rising and had been a committed member of the IRB since approximately 1909.



By 1916, Pádraig Brennan was recognised as one of the leading figures of the Irish Volunteers in Clare and Limerick. On the eve of the Easter Rising, he was staying in Molly Behan's Hotel, The Burton Arms in Carrigaholt. From there, he hoped to receive arms from Kerry on the ill fated *Aud*, and was ready to arrange their movement into Clare and Galway. West Clare IRA Volunteer Eamon Fenell recorded in his contribution to the Bureau of Military History that;

'During the week following this convention, Paddy Brennan (Meelick) came to me in Carrigaholt and told me that he had been sent down from Brigade Headquarters in Limerick to take charge of the Carrigaholt Battalion and that I was to place myself under his orders. Of course, I was aware that he was one of the big noises of the Irish

Volunteer movement and had met him previously - not later than the previous Sunday in Limerick.¹

In a potent example of the frustration felt by many republicans in Clare following the countermand order of Eoin McNeill, Fennell recalled that after travelling to the Burton Arms in Carrigaholt to inform Patrick Brennan, the latter 'became furious and cursed and swore like a trooper.'² On his release shortly before Christmas 1916, Brennan became leader of the volunteer campaign in Clare which ultimately led to the Mountjoy Hunger Strike of September 1917, the martyrdom of Tomás Ashe and the consolidation of republican sentiment across the country. On the 19th of October, just over a year to the day after he signed his own autograph book in Frongoch, Brennan was again signing a republican autograph book inside a British prison. On this occasion he was in Mountjoy jail and was at that time the 'Commandant of the Clare Brigade, IRA.'³ Although Brennan remained active throughout the Irish War of Independence, following a dispute with GHQ, he was replaced by his younger brother Micheál. The tragic death of his young wife in the midst of the War also had a profound impact on Pádraig, who had to dress as a priest in order to attend her funeral.⁴ Brennan took part in the Cratloe Ambush of January 1921 and some other military actions but became more important as a political figure from the Anglo-Irish Truce of the 11th of July, 1921. Pádraig was later elected TD (pro-treaty) for East Clare and was central in the development of the Civic Guard (later An Garda Síochána).

¹ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Eamon Fenell, WS. 1.252, pp. 3-5.

² Ibid.

³ Clare Museum, 1917 Autograph Book, CM2005.185.9

⁴ Mick McCarthy, quoted in Celia O'Donoghue (Pine Valley Studios), 'Paddy Brennan's Book', Radio Documentary, (Clare 2016).



Clare - 'A Disturbed District'

Although no confrontation occurred in the county, there were several mobilisations of volunteers across Clare on Easter Sunday and Monday 1916. When the Rising finally broke out in Dublin, groups of Irish Volunteers mobilised in Crusheen, Bunratty, Corofin, Feakle, Darragh, Cloona, Kilfenora, Carrigaholt and Garraunboy.⁵ In Kilrush, Art O'Donnell made a public stance in solidarity with the men and women in Dublin and in Carron in north Clare, the veteran Fenian Tomás O'Loughlen made his support clear.⁶ Hotel owner Molly Behan in west Clare, sheltered Pádraig Brennan and other volunteers in her hotel The Burton Arms in Carrigaholt, who were hoping to receive arms from the landing of a German vessel posing as the Norwegian *Aud*.⁷ Brennan was one of at least 23 Claremen imprisoned following the Easter Rising

List of Claremen in Frongoch

- Joseph Malone, Feakle
- Denis Healy, Bodyke
- Tomás O'Loughlin, Carron
- Timothy Kelly, Feakle
- Patrick O'Connor, Killaloe
- Michael Brennan, Meelick
- Patrick Brennan, Meelick
- Mick Dynan, O'Callaghan's Mills
- Daniel Canny, Tulla
- Con O'Halloran, Tulla
- Art O'Donnell, Tullycrine

⁵ For a detailed account of the Easter Rising in Clare see Tomás Mac Conmara, 'An intense longing for Irish Freedom', *Clare Champion*, 01 April 2016, p. 1.

⁶ McCarthy, *Ireland's Banner County*, p. 117-122, Ó Ruairc, *Blood on the Banner*, p. 50

⁷ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Eamon Fennell, WS. 1,252, pp. 3-5, Browne, K.J. Eamon de Valera and the Banner County, p.17

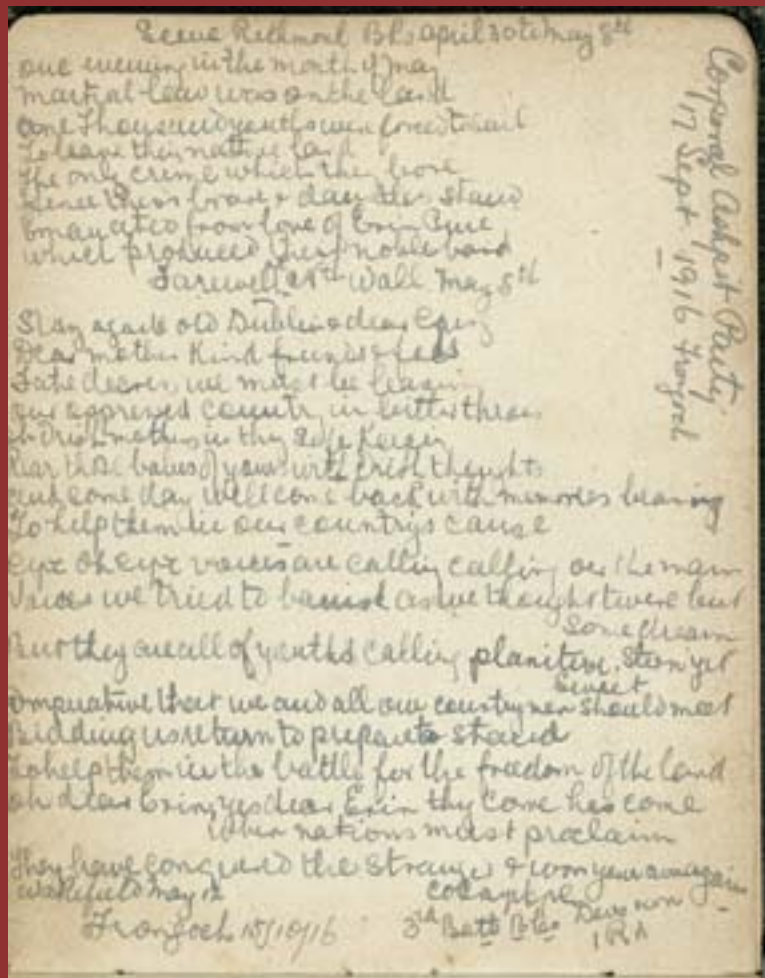
- Eamon Waldron, Ennistymon
- Peadar Clancy, Cranny
- PJ Hogan, Miltown Malbay

Claremen imprisoned elsewhere included

- Martin Lynch, Coolmeen
- Bertie Hunt, Corofin
- William Hunt, Cororin
- Jimmy Slattery, Feakle
- Joseph Canny, Tulla
- Joe Kierse, Corofin
- Martin Crowe, Corofin
- Austin Rynne - Ennistymon
- Murt Tubridy - Ballykett

Transcription

No. 476 - Pádraig Brennan
Prisoner of War Camp,
Frongoch, Bala,
North Wales,
14/10/16
Meelick Cross, (Co. Clare)
Limerick



Críostóir Ó'Cairbre (Christy Carberry)

Críostóir Ó'Cairbre or Christy Carberry was born at 3 Myrtle Terrace, Church Road in Dublin in 1882. A member of the Irish Volunteers from 1914, Carberry fought in Boland's Mills and Bakery as well as Grand Canal Street in Dublin. His commanding officer during Easter Week, Seán McMahan, was also interned in Frongoch and contributed to the autograph book.

Carberry operated primarily in intelligence after his release and was attached to Q Company in the Third Battalion of the Dublin IRA Brigade under Liam Tobin, Peadar Clancy and Oscar Traynor. The increased pressure of British Military Intelligence led to the birth of the Irish Military Intelligence unit, the architect of which was Michael Collins. Eamonn Duggan, a solicitor, was its first Director and ran the Department with one member of staff from his office in Dame Street, Christy Carberry. Andrew McDonnell, the O/C of the Dublin No 2 Brigade recalled in relation to the reorganisation of the IRA that 'Chris Carberry, an old warrior of Boland's Garrison, gave lectures on small arms, while Comdt. Joe O'Connor and Seán McMahan kept a close eye on discipline'.⁸ McCarthy later claimed that Carberry was a member of the Irish Citizen Army but there is no reference to this in the latter's claim for a military pension.⁹ Carberry was arrested in February 1921 and interned in Mountjoy Prison until August of that year. In his application for a military pension, he claimed that he was hospitalised after his release, due to his ill treatment by the British while in custody. Yet another of Collins's Frongoch circle, he took the Free State side in the Civil War and was active in fighting against anti-treaty republicans

⁸ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Andrew McDonnell, WS 1768, p. 36

⁹ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Joseph McCarthy, WS 1497, p. 72.

in Dublin. He served in the National Army until March 1928, when he retired to the Defence Forces Reserve of Officers. However, he returned to the army during the 1939-1946 Emergency with the rank of Commandant.¹⁰ Carberry died on 15 June 1962.

Transcription

'Scene Richmond Bks. April 30 to May 8th One evening in the month of May

*Martial Law was on the land
One thousands youths were forced to sail
To leave their native land
The only crime which they bore
Hence their brave and dauntless stand
Emanated from love of Erin pure
Which produced this noble band*

Farewell at nrth Wall 5th May

*Slán abhaile old Dublin's dear city
Dear mother, kind friends and foes
Father dear, we must be leaving
Our oppressed country in bitter times,
Oh Irish mothers in their safe keeping
Rear those babies of yours with Irish thoughts
And someday we'll come back with memories beaming
To help them in our countries cause.*

Eire o Eire, voices are calling, calling oer the [[foam]]

¹⁰ Military Archives of Ireland, Christopher Carberry, <http://mspsearch.militaryarchives.ie/detail.aspx?parentprirref=> (accessed 20 February 2016)

*Voices we tried to banish as we thought t'were but some dream
 But they are all of youth's calling [[planitia]] stern, yet sweet
 Imperative that we and all our countrymen should meet
 Bidding us return to prepare the stand
 To keep them in the battle for the freedom of the land
 Oh dear Erin, yes dear Erin the come (sic)* has come,
 When nations must proclaim
 They have conquered the stranger and won you once again*

Wakefield May 12
 Frongoch 15/10/16

C O Cairbre
 3rd Batt Dev's Own IRA

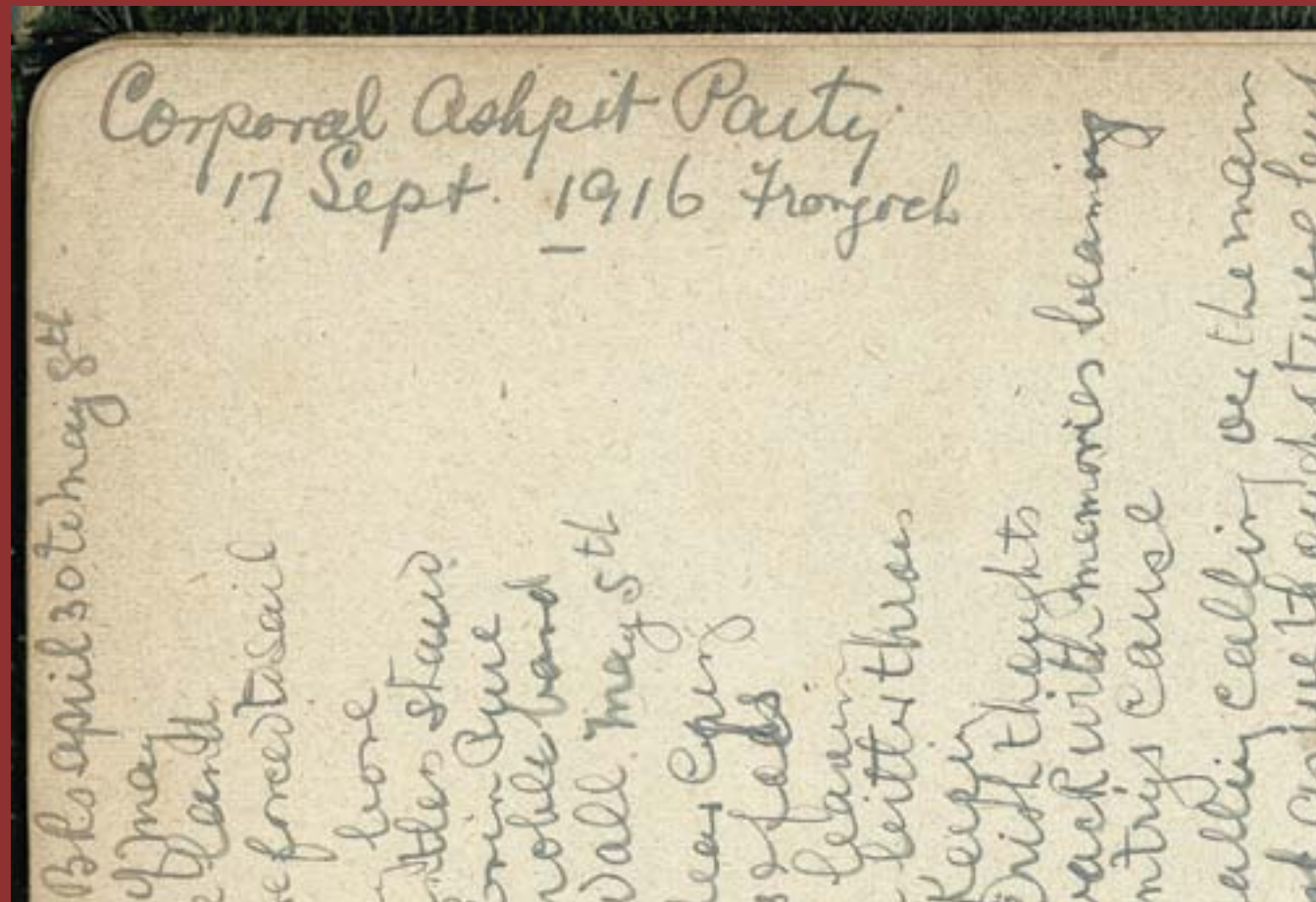
[ON SIDE] - 'Corporal Ashpit Party - 17 Sept 1916 Frongoch'

*The word 'come' is transcribed directly from Carberry's contribution.
 However, it is likely that he meant to write the word 'time' in its place.

Composition

Carberry's contribution is an original composition which reflects on the Easter Rising experience and inscribes a hope that the freedom which he and his comrades had fought for, would materialise. His reference to 'Corporal Ashpit' relates to a confrontation between the rebel prisoners and the camp authorities who had attempted to force Carberry and other prisoners to clean out the ash pits of the guards. The prisoners refused and following an intense standoff, won out against the prison authorities.¹¹

¹¹ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Eamon Morkan, WS, 411



Christy Carberry

Cathal Mac Dubhghaill - Autograph book illustrator

Born Cecil Grange McDowell into a Protestant family in Carlow, Cathal Mac Dubhghaill as he later became known, contributed four detailed colour illustrations to the autograph book, but did not make an individual written contribution to the book. Mac Dubhghaill was an engineer in the Dublin Corporation prior to the Easter Rising and had been active in republican circles for many years. He was also an accomplished musician and composer and was responsible for the musical arrangement of Peadar Kearney's 'A Soldier's Song', now the National Anthem of the Republic of Ireland. He also specialised in architectural art and his pictures of Clonfert Cathedral and Cormac's Chapel in Cashel became standard works.¹² As an artist, he illustrated many of the autograph books which circulated Frongoch camp in the months after the Easter Rising. Inevitably while working on illustrations, Mac Dubhghaill read many of the poems, contributions and quotations gradually being inscribed for posterity by his fellow republican prisoners. While many were composed from original thought, others evoked the words of poets and thinkers from the classical to the contemporary. Among the wide variety of poets whose words were borrowed to embolden the books were those of the nationalist poet Maeve Cavanagh.

Cavanagh had been an increasingly well-known writer in the years before the Easter Rising and was proclaimed the 'poetess of the revolution' by James Connolly. She had drawn attention from the British authorities for her poem 'Ireland to Germany' which they considered as evidence of conspiracy and during the Easter Rising involved herself directly, carrying rebel messages from Dublin to Waterford.¹³ Cavanagh's brother Ernest was

¹² NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Mrs. MacDowell, Maeve Cavanagh, WS. 258, p. 1.

¹³ Cavanagh also had an interest in historic literature and was responsible for recovering the lost manuscript of Catherine Parnell, 'The Tale of a Great Sham'.

shot dead on the steps of Liberty Hall on the 25th of April 1916 at the outset of the rebellion. Ernest was himself a cartoonist who contributed to political publications, focused on working class struggles. Among the newspapers he contributed to were Jim Larkin's *the Irish Worker*, the *Irish Citizen* and *Irish Freedom*. During the 1913 Lock Out, Ernest Cavanagh's cartoons savagely attacked William Martin Murphy and the Dublin Metropolitan Police. He later focused his polemical attention on John Redmond, challenging his encouragement of Irishmen to join the British Army.

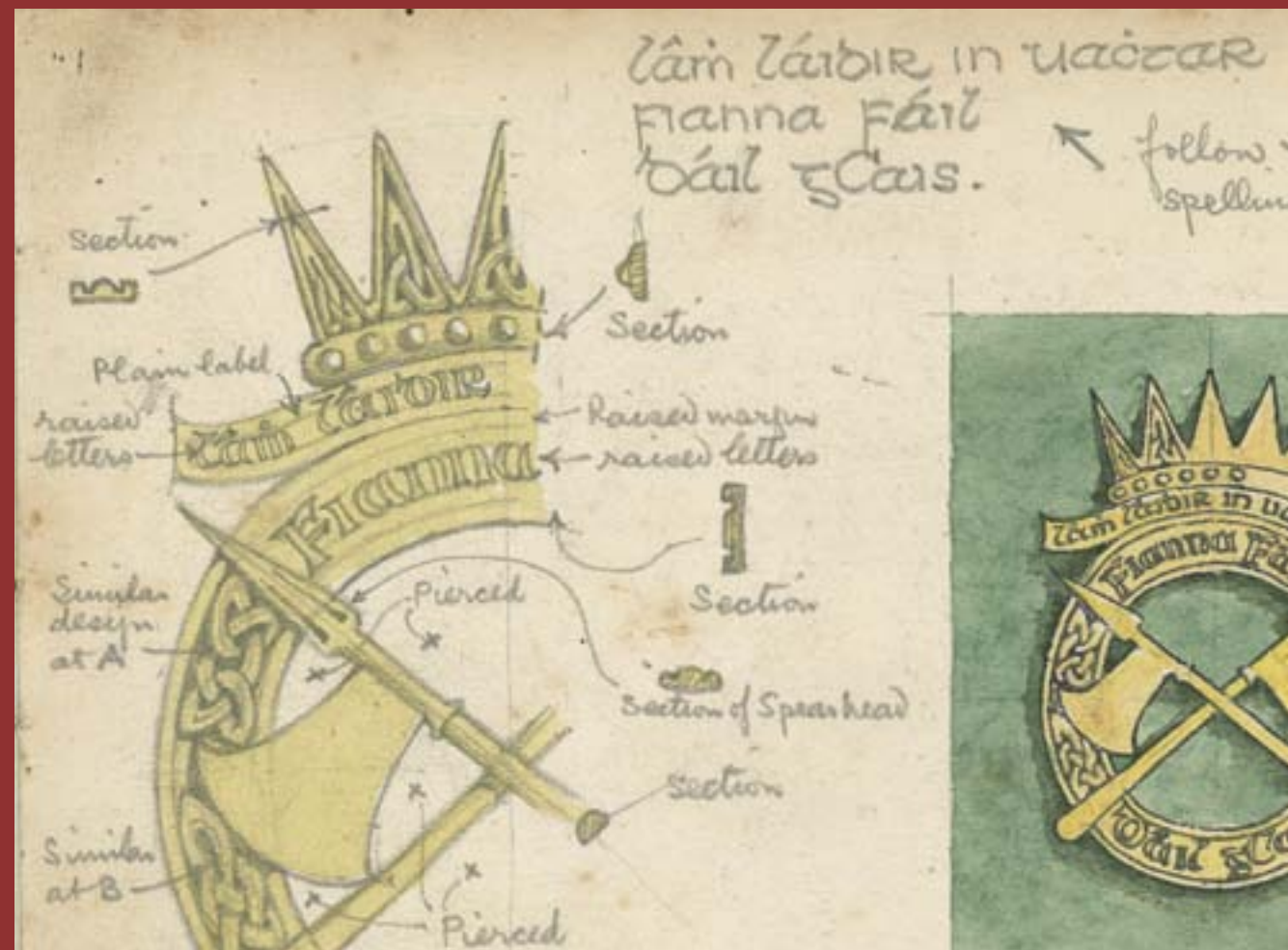
Writing in June 1949, Maeve Cavanagh explained that while Mac Dubhghaill was in gaol in Richmond and Frongoch, he 'heard the other prisoners reading out my poems and he asked for an introduction when he came out.'¹⁴ After being granted his introduction, Mac Dubhghaill and Cavanagh formed a relationship and married in 1921. The artistic couple later collaborated on a number of compositions including 'Conscription, The Prayer of Ireland.' Mac Dubhghaill died in Nice in 1926. Cavanagh later made a statement to the Bureau of Military History which outlined some of her husband's activities including the revelation that he had converted to Catholicism during the Easter Rising, being 'baptised on the occasion of the fight under de Valera at Boland's Mills'¹⁵ she explained.

'While they were being bombarded from Beggar's Bush, Father O'Reilly from Westland Row went to hear the Confessions of the boys who were fighting, and one of them sent the priest up to Cathal, who told him he wanted to go to Confession. The priest, finding out he was not a Catholic, said he would try to get one of his own clergymen for him. Cathal said he would rather not have one as he might give them away. He laid down his Howth rifle beside him and the priest baptised him.'¹⁶

¹⁴ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Mrs. MacDowell, Maeve Cavanagh, WS. 258, p. 1.

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 1.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 1.



Diarmuid S Ó Laoighaoire (Jeremiah Joseph O'Leary)



Prisoners Huts At Frongoch

This entry was made by one of the many republicans who became politicised in London prior to the Easter Rising. Jeremiah Joseph O'Leary was born on the 4th of September 1889, in Colchester, England. His father was a native of Enniscorthy in County Wexford. When Jeremiah was young, his family moved to London and there he joined the Gaelic League in 1905 at the Clapham Branch.¹⁷ Like his fellow English born republican Sam McGuire, O'Leary was sworn into the IRB in London by Richard Connolly who was Centre of his local Circle. P. S. O'Hegarty and Michael Collins were other prominent men in London's IRB at this time. O'Leary became increasingly politicised while hearing reports about the 1913 Lock Out and with Eamonn O'Tierney, organised a committee amongst the Irish Associations in London to relieve distress in Dublin. Prior to the Easter Rising, O'Leary was also in contact with Roger Casement, in an attempt to arrange the movement of arms into Ireland.

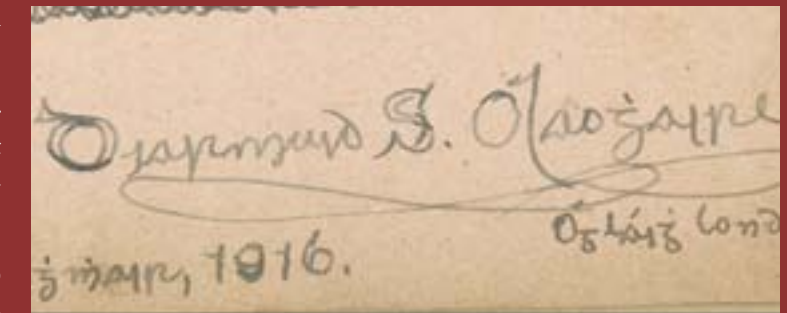
In August 1918, O'Leary married Philomena Plunkett, the eldest daughter of Count Plunkett and sister of the executed leader Joseph Mary Plunkett and moved to Marlborough Road, Donnybrook. He was later appointed Director of Elections for the Pembroke Constituency for which Desmond-Fitzgerad was returned for Sinn Féin. O'Leary worked for the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union from 1919 to 1927 and then took up a position as Industrial Inspector in the Department of Industry and Commerce. As a result of a schoolyard accident, O'Leary was severely lame and so could not participate in the fighting during the War of Independence. He had joined E Company of the 2nd Battalion, Dublin IRA Brigade. However, despite O'Leary's willingness, the captain of that company Tom

¹⁷ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Jeremiah Joseph O'Leary, WS 1108

Ennis, would not allow him to participate in any movements, due to his disability. However, his house in Donnybrook was a base of operations for the IRA who were sheltered there frequently.

A document proudly submitted to the Bureau of Military History in March 1955 reads;

'Jos. O'Leary, Address 11, Tremadoc Road, Clapham ... Notice is hereby given to the above-named that an Order has been made by the Secretary of State under Regulation 14B of the Defence of the Realm Regulations directing that he shall be interned at the Place of Internment at Frongoch. The Order is made on the ground that he is of hostile associations and is reasonably suspected of having favoured, promoted or assisted an armed insurrection against His Majesty.'¹⁸



¹⁸ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Jeremiah Joseph O'Leary, WS 1108

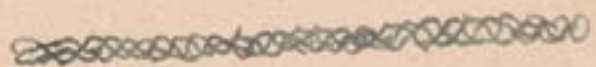
Sinn féin Linn féin mar iad san,

Com briobhar, buaimhear leo:

Seo Clanna Gaedheal,-

Gan buaidheart, gan baoghal;

Fíor-Clanna Gaedheal go deo.



Diarmuid S. Ó Laoighaire

Bhfrongoc dom.

An 15ú Lá Deireadh Fómhair, 1916.

Oglaigh Londain

Transcription

*'Sinn Féin, Linn Féin, mar iad san,
Com briombar, buaimhear leo
Seo Clanna Gaedheal
Gan buaidheart, gan baoghal
Fíor clanna Gaedheal go deo'*

Diarmuid S. Ó Laoighaire
Oglaigh London,

Bhfrongoc,
An 15 Lá Deireadh Fómhair, 1916

Composition

O'Leary's contribution, which seems an original reflection translates as follows.

*'It is ourselves and ourselves alone,
Energised and victorious,
This is the Irish people
Without worry, without danger,
True Irish forever'*

Eamon Praidheas (Bob Price)

Eamon ‘Bob’ Price was living at Arran Quay, Dublin at the turn of the twentieth century. His father Edward was a blacksmith and in 1911 Eamon was working as a boy clerk in the Irish Land Commission.¹⁹ Price was born on the 10th of October 1891 which as he noted in his statement to the Bureau of Military History, was the day of Charles Stewart Parnell’s funeral at Glasnevin Cemetery. For much of Price’s young life, he disagreed with the notion of physical force and opposed the polices of Sinn Féin. However, his exposure to the working conditions of his fellow Dubliners, as well as the 1913 Lock Out and broader realisation of British repression, brought about a gradual change.²⁰

By the time of the Easter Rising, Price was a member of the IRB and an officer in C Company, 2nd Battalion of the Dublin Brigade. At the end of the Easter Rising, Price was present when the surrender notice came to his men at Jacob’s Factory. There he witnessed scenes of disconsolation and anger as Major John McBride, Michael O’Hanrahan, Seamus Hughes and others debated whether to comply with Pearse’s order to surrender or not. There he watched Tomás Mac Donagh respond to the assertion of Hughes that to surrender would mean certain execution of the leaders, including himself.

‘MacDonagh listened carefully and then summed up. His voice shook as he spoke and finally with tears in his eyes broke down, crying ‘Boys, we must

¹⁹ NAI, Census of Ireland, 1901, Returns for Phibbsborough Road, Arran Quay, Dublin, Census of Ireland 1911, Returns for Murtagh Road, Arran Quay, Dublin.

²⁰ The 1913 lockout was a significant industrial dispute in Dublin City between approximately 20,000 workers led by Jim Larkin and James Connolly and 300 employers led by William Martin Murphy and supported by John Redmond, which ran from 26 August 1913 to 18 January 1914.

give in. We must leave some to carry on the struggle.’ It was a poignant moment and one to remain indelibly in the memory of those present.²¹

Before imprisonment Price saw ‘Men, old in the movement, seeing their dearest hopes dashed to the ground became hysterical weeping openly, breaking their rifles against the walls.’²² Price’s last words in his BMH statement recalled potently that while encircled by British soldiers and heading to Richmond Barracks, ‘We still had MacDonagh’s parting words ringing in our ears ‘We must leave some to carry on the fight.’²³

A member of Collins inner circle, Price remained a senior figure in the IRA throughout the War of Independence holding positions in Training and Organisation. While Price has been described as at one stage holding the position of Director of Organisation, it has been suggested that he instead worked in support to Diarmuid O’Hegarty. Tom Barry, Price’s brother in law stated that ‘Price extensively toured the country, organising and inspecting Units of the Army’ but maintained that the latter was in assistance to O’Hegarty.²⁴ Price took the Free State side in the Civil War and later worked in the Civil Service, a position he retired from early due to ill health. The historian Fearghal McGarry claimed that as part of his role in the Free State Army, Price covered up the murder of anti-treaty volunteers in Kerry by Free State forces, most notably at Ballyseedy Cross.²⁵

After being contacted by the Bureau of Military History, Price began documenting his memories of the revolutionary period. Unfortunately, as his wife later explained in a letter written in 1954, he died in April 1951 before

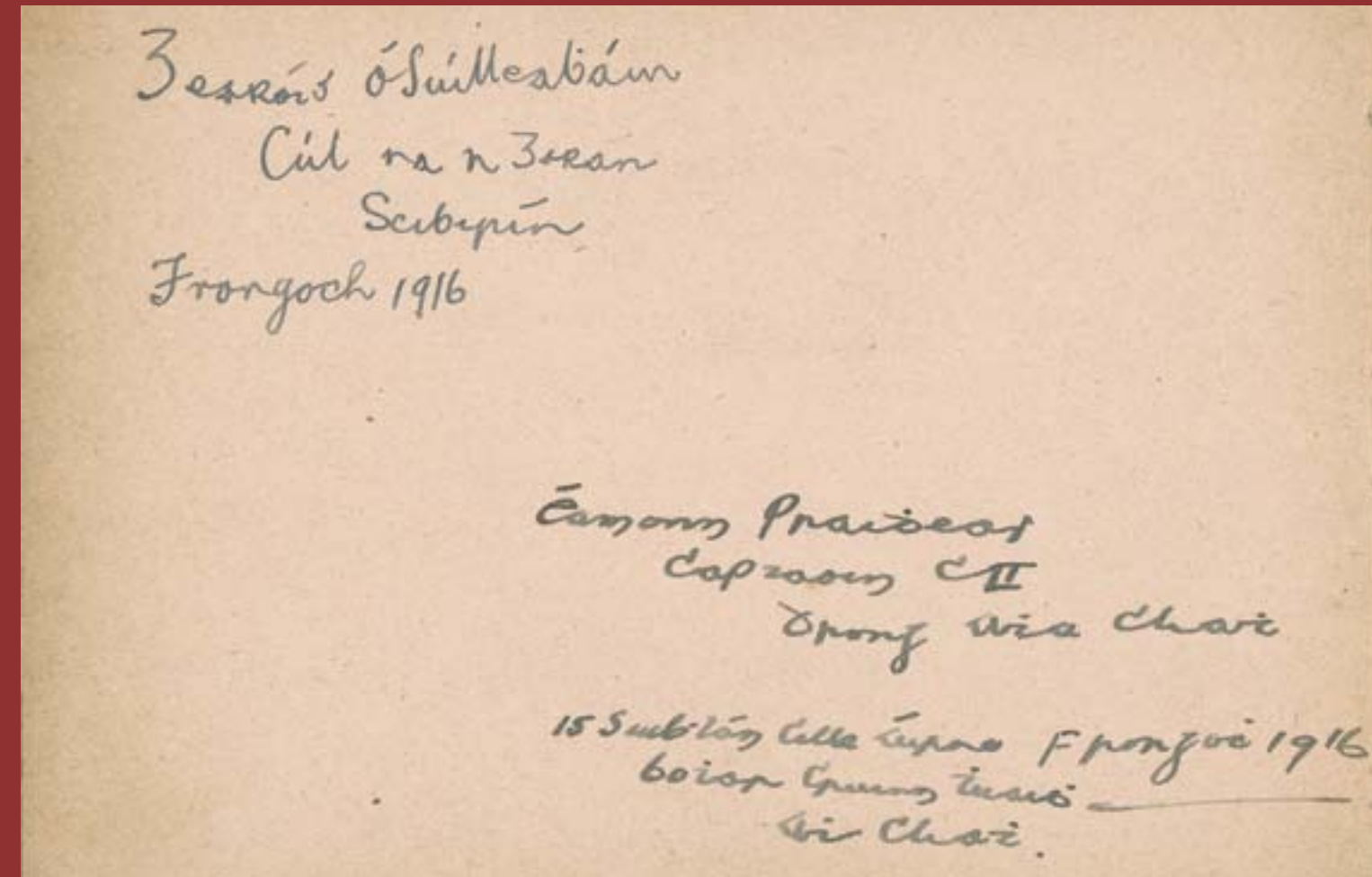
²¹ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Major General Eamon Price, WS, 995, p.2.

²² Ibid, p.2

²³ Ibid, p.3.

²⁴ Tom Barry, *Gurilla Days in Ireland*, (Cork, 2014)

²⁵ Fearghal McGarry, *The Abbey Rebels of 1916: A Lost Revolution*, (Dublin, 2015).



Eamon Praidheas (Bob Price)

he had been able to complete his recollections.²⁶ Not typical of BMH statements, in the short statement he had made before his death, Price had recorded the predominant influences which led to his involvement in the republican movement. They included the vacuum in Irish politics after the death of Charles Stewart Parnell, which led to lack of interest in Westminster, the Boer War and the pro-Boer and inter British relations, the influence of the IRB, Sinn Féin and the Gaelic League. Price also stated that the centenary celebrations of the 1798 Rebellion were a key catalyst of republican sentiment.

Price also noted that the foundation of the Abbey Theatre was a significant influence. It is interesting to note his attention to the Abbey Theatre considering his later marriage to one of its founders Máire Nic Shiubhnaigh in 1929. Nic Shiubhnaigh had participated in the founding of the Abbey Theatre and fought in Jacob's Factory in the Easter Rising. According to McGarry, in 1916 Price had vowed to marry Nic Shiubhnaigh when he saw her in Jacob's Factory during the rebellion. Nic Shiubhnaigh from the Liberties in Dublin had been a leading figure in both Inghnidhe na hÉireann and Cumann na mBan.²⁷ As a young teenager she had come into contact with William Rooney, the nationalist poet who some of the contributors to the autograph book quoted. She was also an accomplished actress and appeared in the first Irish language play performed in Ireland. She also played Cathleen Ni Houlihan in 1904. Eamon Price's younger sister Leslie married the West Cork IRA Commander Tom Barry. Leslie had operated under Máire Nic Shiubhnaigh during the Easter Rising.

26 NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Major General Eamon Price, WS, 995.

27 Inghnidhe na hÉireann (Daughters of Ireland) was founded by Maud Gonne and Jenny Wise Power in 1900 to support the notion of an Irish Ireland.

Transcription

[On Same Page as Gearóid O'Sullivan]

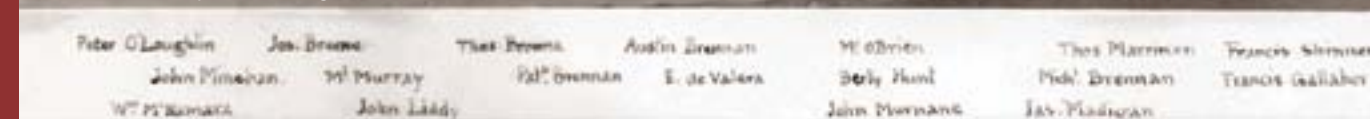
Eamon Praidheas
 Captain C II
 Baile Átha Cliath
 15 Suiblán Ché Airne
 Frongoch 1916
 [Ineligible]
 Atha Cliath



Example Of A Letter From A Pow At Frongoch



Photo Taken Of Republican Hubger Strikers After Release From Dundalk. Patrick Brennan Is Seated Next To Eamon De Valera



Gearóid O’Sullivan

Historically, O’Sullivan has lingered under the shadow of his more famous West Cork contemporary and close friend Michael Collins. However, throughout the entire revolutionary period he retained a senior position within the republican movement. O’Sullivan was born in Skibereen in January 1891 and throughout his life was an Irish teacher and scholar, army officer, barrister and a political representative for both Sinn Féin and Fine Gael.

O’Sullivan became immersed in the Irish language movement from a young age joining the Gaelic League in west Cork. The interest was cultivated within his family who in 1911, filled out their entire census form in Irish. Having already become a committed member of the IRB, after the formation of the Irish Volunteers, O’Sullivan was appointed to F Company, 1st Battalion of the Dublin Brigade. He served as Aide-de-camp to Seán Mac Diarmada in the GPO during the Rising and is reputed to have been one of two men, the other being Eamon Bulfin, who raised the Irish flag on the GPO.²⁸

It was in Frongoch that Collins and O’Sullivan began a friendship and deep bond which would last until Collins’ death in the Irish Civil war. Reflecting on the often severe conditions and its impact on the men in Frongoch, a fellow prisoner and contributor to the autograph book JB O’Driscoll, recalled later that for a period in Frongoch, Gearóid O’Sullivan ‘was weak and thin at the time’ and that Michael Collin and himself ‘put him between us in bed to keep him warm.’²⁹

²⁸ Dermot Keogh, (Ed.), Gabriel Doherty, *Michael Collins and the Making of the Irish State*

²⁹ John Borgonovo, Pádraig Ó Rúaic, Andy Bielenberg, *The Men Will Talk To Me, Ernie O’Malley Series, West Cork Brigade*, (Cork, 2015), pp. 35-29..

O’Sullivan spent time with the Carlow IRA Brigade where he taught at Knockbeg College. Like Seán McMahon, O’Sullivan’s promotion within the IRB paralleled his rise within the IRA. In February 1920, he assumed the role of Adjutant General of the IRA. During the revolutionary period, he often went by the secret name ‘George’ which Collins had chosen for him. In January 1922, he was made a Lieutenant-General in the new National Army, responsible for personnel and promotions. O’Sullivan had been elected in 1921 for the Carlow-Kilkenny constituency and was re-elected a year later as a Pro-Treaty candidate. For his leadership in the Civil War, O’Sullivan was criticised by republicans for the brutal treatment of his former comrades who had taken the anti-treaty position. He, along with Mulcahy and Seán McMahon were also condemned for employing former British officers as state advisers.

After the Civil War, O’Sullivan left the military to qualify as a barrister and build a successful career while spending time with his family and wife Maud Kiernan, the sister of Kitty Kiernan. In fact, Michael Collins and O’Sullivan were set to wed the two Kiernan sisters in a double wedding, shortly after Collins was shot dead in Béal na Bláth in August 1922. Maude died from Bright’s Disease at the age of 40, after which O’Sullivan married Mae Brennan from Belfast.³⁰

O’Sullivan was later encouraged back into politics and was elected as a Cumann na nGaedheal and later Fine Gael candidate on four occasions. He also served as a member of the Seanad. O’Sullivan died in March 1948 and was given a State Funeral on Easter Monday of that year. The tri-colour which had draped Michael Collin’s coffin was also used to cover O’Sullivan, as he passed the GPO, 32 years after both he and Collins had fought there.

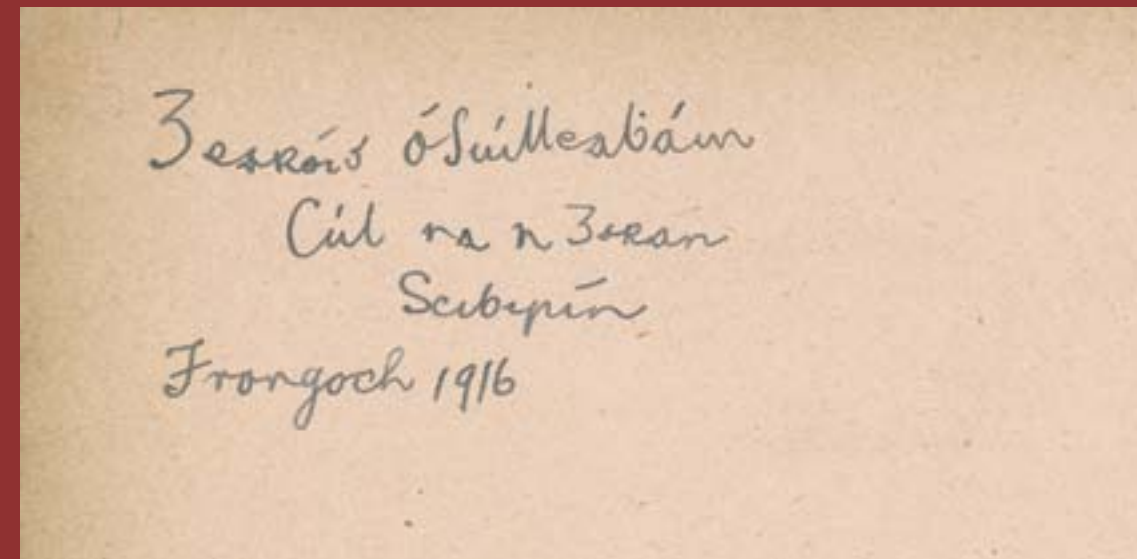
³⁰ Tim Pat Coogan, *Tim Pat*, 1916: The Easter Rising, (London, 2001), p. 100.

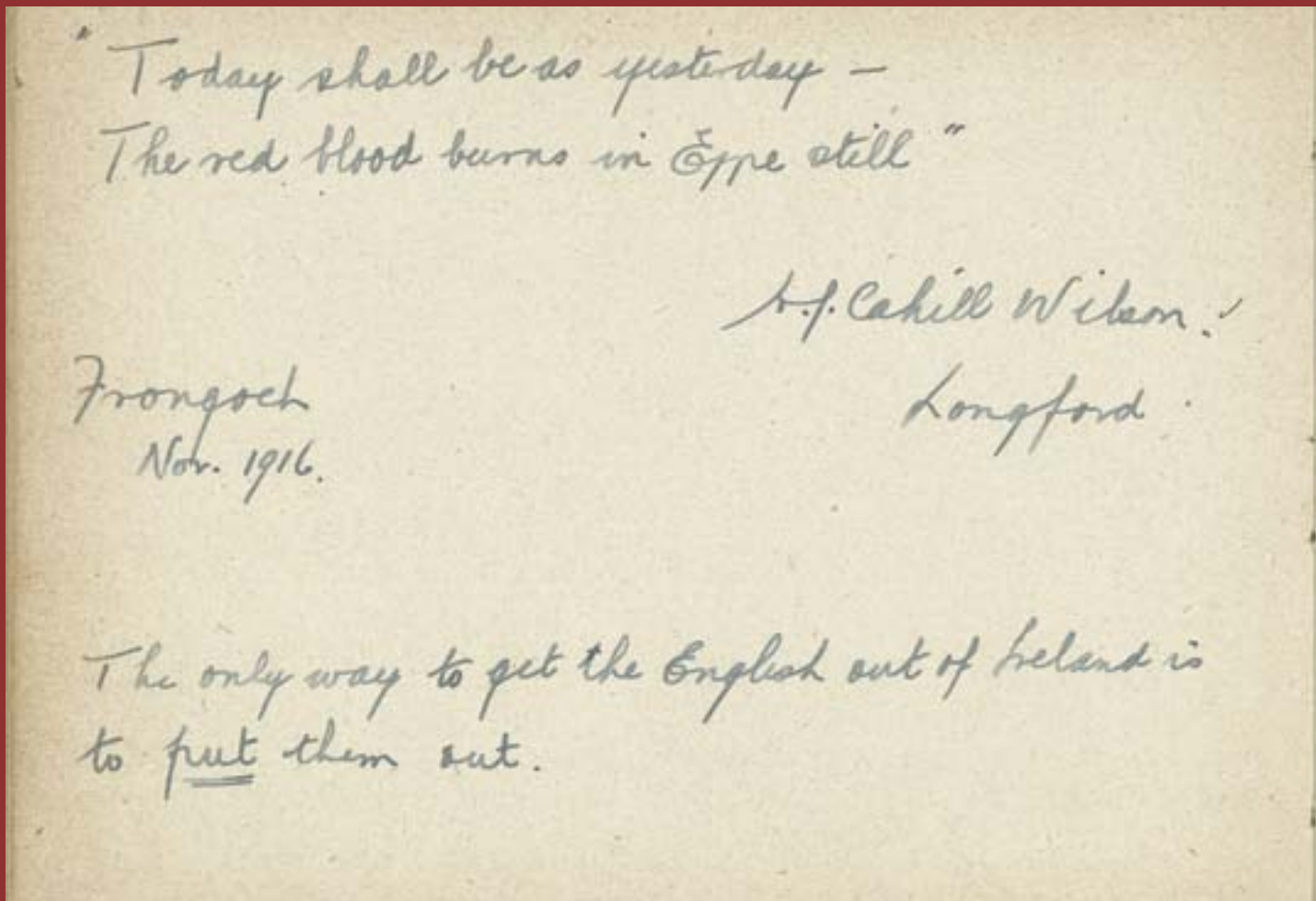
Transcription

‘Gearóid Ó Suilleabháin
Cill na Bran Scibirín,
Frongoch 1916



O’Sullivan (With white hat) with members of Collin’s squad. Second from the left is Clare’s Jimmy Slattery.





H J Cahill

One of eight Longford men imprisoned after the Easter Rising, Hubert Wilson was born in December 1886, the son of Joseph and Catherine Wilson, both from Dublin. Wilson became involved in the Irish language movement in London when he along with Michael Collins helped build the presence of the Gaelic league there. While in London he also played rugby, tennis and spent time boating. After returning from Frongoch in early 1917, Wilson continued his involvement in the republican movement and was later interned for a second time in Ballykinlar, Co. Down with Seán Lemass and Seán T. O'Kelly, in 1918. He was a successful Director of Elections for Count Plunkett in February 1917 and for Joe McGuinness in May 1917, who were both elected for the fledgling Sinn Féin party.

Wilson remained on the republican side in the Irish Civil War but later broke with Fianna Fáil having become increasingly disillusioned. In the 1923 and 1954 General Elections he was a candidate for the Labour Party but polled poorly in both. In the interim he ran as an independent in 1932 and supported Clann na Phoblachta in the late 1940s.³¹ Wilson died tragically in 1978 when at the age of 92 he was killed instantly when struck by a car in his native Longford.

Wilson was related to the Irish political activist Todd Andrews. In *Dublin Made Me*, Andrews recalled being sent to Longford in the summer of 1916 'to keep company with my grand aunt Kate Wilson and her husband. The only son remaining at home in Longford - Hubert Wilson - had been arrested and deported to Knutsford in Cheshire, England.'³²

³¹ Hubert Joseph Wilson 1886 - 1978, <http://www.cousinscousins.com/tngwww/getperson.php?personID=10026&tree=cousins>, (accessed 03 March 2016)

³² C.S. (Todd) Andrews, *Dublin Made Me* (Dublin, 1979), p.92

Transcription

*'Today shall be as yesterday
The red blood burns in Erin still'*

*HJ Cahill Wilson
Longford*

*Frongoch
Nov. 1916*

'The only way to get England out of Ireland is to put them out.'

Composition

Wilson's contribution is taken from a song composed by the poet and satirist of the Celtic Revival Susan Mitchell (1866-1926). Mitchell first published the song 'To the Daughters of Erin', in the *United Irishwomen* in 1910, as a way of shining a light on the role of women in Irish society. The full stanza which Cahill selected from reads as follows;

*'Our mother is still young and fair,
Let the world look into your eyes
And see her beauty shining there
Grant of that beauty but one ray,
Heroes shall leap from every hill,
To-day shall be as yesterday,
The red blood burns in Ireland still.'*³³

³³ Hilary Pyle, *Red-headed Rebel: Susan L. Mitchell, Poet and Mystic of the Irish Cultural Renaissance*, (Dublin, 1998).

"
 May Ireland's voice be ever heard
 Amid the world's applause!
 And never be her flag-staff stirred
 But in an honest cause!
 May Freedom be her every breath
 Be Justice ever dear,
 And never an ennobled death
 May sons of Ireland fear!"

J. Layng.
 Dunleer Co. Louth
 Portumna
 Co. Galway.
 B Co. Dundalk Bat.

Loughrea 1916.

James Layng



Although born in County Sligo, James Layng was raised in Portumna in County Galway where his father James, a native of Sligo, was an RIC constable. In 1911 Layng is listed in St. Patrick's Training College in Dublin where he was studying to become a primary school teacher. In 1916, Layng was living in Dundalk where he had become attached to the Irish Volunteers. He mobilised on 23rd and 24th of April before being sent home to await further orders.

Following his arrest, Layng was sent to Wakefield Prison on 1st June 1916 and from there to north Wales. He seems to have been living in Dundalk in 1920 where, according to the republican Eddie Fullerton, he participated in several republican actions including an attack on the RIC barracks in Camlough, County Armagh with a reported 300 IRA volunteers.³⁴ In January of that year he was arrested with several other republicans including three McGuill brothers and removed to Crumlin Road prison in Belfast.³⁵ He later ran as a Fianna Fáil candidate in local elections in the Loughrea Electoral Area.

³⁴ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Eddie Fullerton, WS, 890, p. 9.
³⁵ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement James McGuill, WS, 353, p. 64.

Transcription

*May Ireland voice be ever heard,
 Amid the world's applause!
 And never be her flag staff stirred
 But in an honest cause
 May freedom be her every breath
 Be justice ever dear
 An never an ennobled death
 May son of Ireland fear*

J.J Layng
 Dunleer, Co. Louth
 Portumna, Co. Galway
 B Co. Dundalk Bat
 Frongoch 1916

Composition

The poem which Layng quotes is taken from 'Nationality' by Thomas Davis.³⁶

³⁶ Pádraic Fehán, *Education and Celtic Myth: National Self-Image and Schoolbooks in 20th Century*, (New York, 2012), p. 118.

Jack Kilgallon



The author was better known as John 'the Yank' Kilgallon. Born in New York in 1891 to Irish parents, in 1914 he was sent to Pádraig Pearse's school St. Endas. There he became convinced of the need for Irish independence and by 1916 he was part of a unit known as 'Pearse's own.' He was also a keen photographer and captured valuable images of E Company on the eve of the Easter Rising at Rathfarnham.

Kilgallon was one of four American citizens arrested after the Easter Rising.

Kilgallon was born in Far Rockaway in New York to parents from County Mayo. His father Luke Kilgallon had been a blacksmith in Mayo and set up an auto repair business in America. It has been suggested that Kilgallon was sent to Ireland to escape imprisonment in his home country. In August 1912 he was reputed to have been driving a car at 2.00am with at least ten partygoers when it crashed leaving a 16 year old girl, Cecilia Welstead crippled for life. When Ms Welstead sought \$50,000 in damages, John Kilgallon was in Ireland.

Kilgallon spent the Easter Rising in the GPO as part of E Company. Desmond Ryan recalled in his BMH statement that in the midst of the fighting Kilgallon was heard declaring;

'Holy Gee!! cried John A. Kilgallon in his American accent to two bewildered postal officials. "This 'ain't no half-arsed revolution! This is the business. Thousands of troops and seige guns outside. The whole country is ablaze. Twenty transports outside are coming in when the submarines have sunk the rest of the warships. We have our own mint.

Light your pipes with Treasury notes and fling all but gold away. When we do things, we do things!³⁷

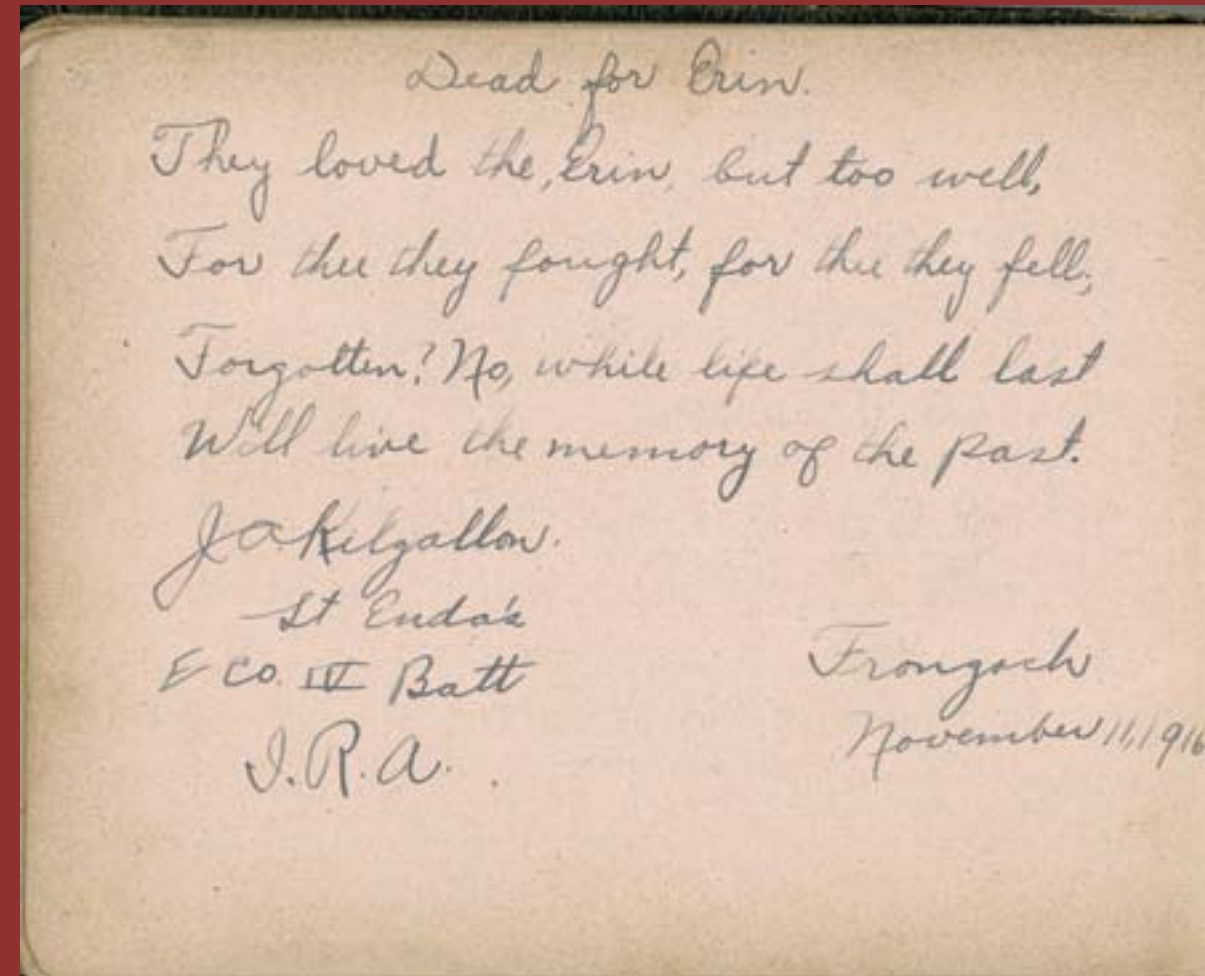
Kilgallon was first taken to Stafford jail and then to Frongoch where he became one of the hut leaders in the camp. A letter published in the *Brooklyn Eagle* in February 1917 affirmed that Kilgallon had rejected an offer of release from the British authorities, on the basis that the offer was subject to the swearing of an oath of allegiance to the British crown. The case of Kilgallon's involvement in the Easter Rising was given significant press coverage in American and in particular in New York.

According to Eamon Murphy, Kilgallon was said to have saved Eamonn Bulfin's life when he pulled him in from a window which was under heavy fire in the GPO. He also gained notoriety when he appeared in the GPO later in the week dressed as Queen Elizabeth I after raiding the costume from the waxworks in Henry Street!³⁸ According to Lyn Ebenezer there were four US citizens at Frongoch; including Kilgallon, the others were Peter Fox, William Pedlar and Michael Joseph Lynch. Ebenezer also claims that the American President Woodrow Wilson personally intervened in his case. In 1917 he was deported back to the United States and joined the US Air Force where he served briefly in World War I. He remained in America afterwards and took no further part in the fight for Independence.³⁹

³⁷ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Desmond Ryan, WS, 724, pp. 10-11

³⁸ John 'The Yank' Kilgallon, <https://fiannaireannhistory.wordpress.com/2015/06/13/john-the-yank-kilgallon/> (accessed 11 March 2016).

³⁹ The History of Fianna Éireann, <https://fiannaireannhistory.wordpress.com/2015/06/13/john-the-yank-kilgallon/> (accessed 31 July 2015).



Transcription

*Dead for Erin
‘They loved the Erin, but too well
For thee they fought, for thee they fell,
Forgotten? No! While life shall last,
Will live the memory of the past.’*

J Kilgallon
St. Endas
E Co, IV Battalion,
Frongoch
IRA
November 11 1916

Composition

Kilgallon’s seemingly original contribution is once again an invocation of the theme of memory and yet another example of its significant role in the republican movement. His assertion is reminiscent of many of the Easter Rising leaders who predicted their sacrifice would ultimately serve as an ongoing inspiration to those left in their wake and to future generations.

John ‘Jack’ Plunkett (Eoin Ó Pluinchéid)

The author of the above entry is John (better known as Jack) Plunkett, the brother of executed leader and signatory to the Proclamation of Independence, Joseph Mary Plunkett. Jack with his brother George fought in the Easter Rising and were interned after the rebellion. Jack was only 17 years of age when he followed his two older brothers into revolution in 1916. Both Jack and his brother George were initially sentenced to death but were commuted to ten years penal servitude, meaning that at one point, all three Plunkett brothers faced execution. They both continued their involvement in the republican movement following their release in 1917 and took the anti-treaty side in the Irish Civil War.

Unlike the contributors to this autograph book, Jack did not spend his period of internment in Frongoch and instead was imprisoned in Portland and Lewes. The autograph to Brennan’s book was made during the East Clare by-election of July 1917, during which Plunkett was part of a large contingent of republicans who came to the county to support Sinn Féin’s Eamon de Valera. In his statement to the Bureau of Military History, made in July 1963, he recalled the intensity of the campaign.

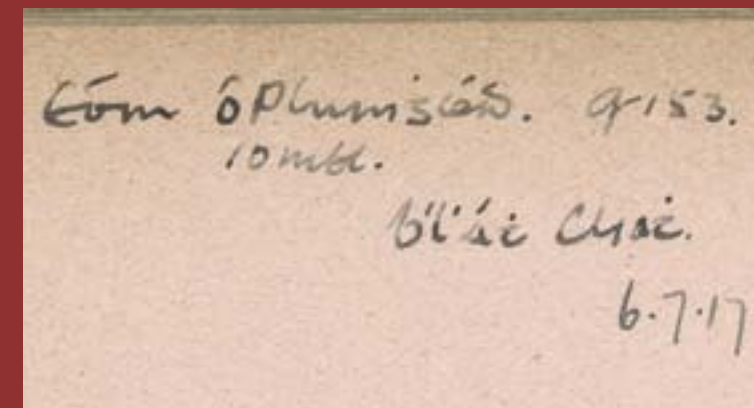
‘A week after our release from gaol I went down to help at the East Clare election. My part was canvassing, stewarding and clerking. Each day that passed Paddy’s chance of success seemed to recede, while that of de Valera seemed to get more secure, in spite of the propaganda spread by Lynch’s supporters. I remember being warned not to leave my post as guard because of the risk of a riot, should Paddy Lynch get in.’⁴⁰

⁴⁰ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, John Plunkett, WS, 865, p. 11

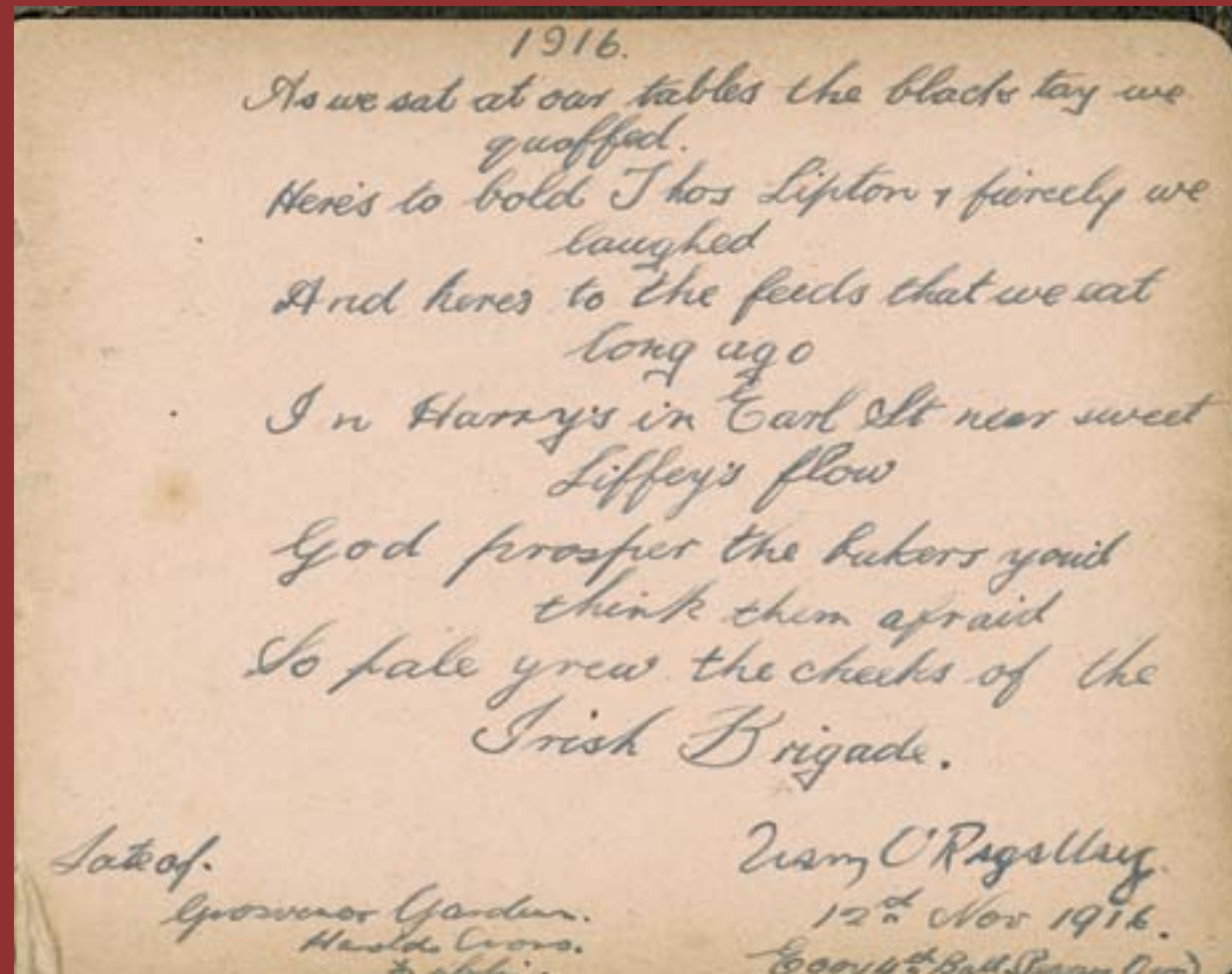
According to Lawrence William White, Jack had been an engineering student in UCD and utilised his technical skills over many years in the 1920s and 1930s to produce explosive devices for the IRA. In December 1939, he was arrested with his brother George and imprisoned in the Curragh due to their involvement in the IRA bombing campaign of England. While interned in the Curragh he engaged in and survived a 40 day hunger strike.⁴¹

Transcription

*Eoin Ó Pluinchéid 9 153
10 mths
blat cliat
6.7.17*



⁴¹ James Quinn and Lawrence William White, *1916: Portraits and Lives*, (Dublin, 2015), p. 91. Jack Plunkett was joined on hunger strike by other IRA prisoners who were demanding better conditions and political status from the Eamon de Valera led Irish government. Tony Darcy from Galway and Jack MacNeela from Mayo later died on the same hunger strike in 1940.



Liam O'Rahilly

Composition

Liam O'Rahilly was a member of E Company of the 4th Battalion known as 'Pearse's Own', a company comprised of former pupils of Pádraig Pearse. These included Eamon Bulfin, John Kilgallon, Frank Burke and Desmond Ryan. Of these Pearse has been criticised for inculcating 'extremist' ideas in his pupils yet only 17 of them at the most participated in the rising.

The poem contributed by O'Rahilly is a satirical take on the Thomas Davis ballad, 'The Battle Eve of the Brigade.' The reference to 'Bold Thos Lipton' related to Thomas Lipton, a Scottish merchant, who was the owner of Lipton Teas.

Transcription

Liam O'Rahilly

1916

*As we sat at our table, the black tar we quaffed
Here's to bold Thos Lypton and fiercely we laughed
And here's to the feeds that we eat long ago
In Harrys in Earl St. near sweet Liffey flow
God prosper the bakers you'd think them afraid
So pale grew the cheeks of the Irish Brigade.'*

Liam O'Rahilly
12 Nov 1916
E Coy, 4th Batt. (Pearse's Own)

Late of
Grosvenor (SIC) Gardens
Harolds Cross
Dublin

J B O'Driscoll

James Bernard 'Barney' O'Driscoll was born in Castletownsend near Skibbereen in west Cork in 1891. At the age of 17, O'Driscoll emigrated to the United States where he became deeply involved in Irish republican affairs. There he also joined the 14th Regiment, a National Guard (military reserve) unit, in New York. O'Driscoll gave an interview to IRA officer and author Ernie O'Malley when the latter visited over 400 republicans in the 1940s and 1950s to document their experiences of the revolutionary period. Speaking to O'Malley, O'Driscoll recalled some of the methods used to get communications out of Frongoch.

'I wrote a letter [and] gave it to one of the RDC's, Royal Defence Corps men of above military age who helped to guard us ... In public, to take away suspicion, I was particularly nasty to this man. I used to abuse him, for the British were then looking out for our sources. I had the letters in my pocket addressed to an English address with Irish letters inside. He came up behind me, took out the letters, dropped them into a half-full tea chest. Always there was a little money for himself'.

During the War of Independence, O'Driscoll was Battalion O/C of the Skibereen Battalion of Cork's IRA Brigade but stayed largely neutral in the Civil War. O'Driscoll later became involved in the quarry business and opened Killaloe Slate Quarry Company in 1923, which still remains within the O'Driscoll family at the time of writing. The quarry dates back to the time of Brian Ború (High King of Ireland 1002-1014) and from the 1920s to the 1940s exported to Scotland, Holland and elsewhere. Fin O'Driscoll, the son of J.B. recalled in an oral history interview that in the 1930s the slate operation had approximately 180 workers employed.⁴² The slate was

quarried at Portroe, Nenagh, County Tipperary, beside Lough Derg but as the main shipping jetty was at Killaloe, the name became associated with the latter. O'Driscoll later moved into plastic and metal manufacturing and became one of Ireland's leading industrialists. His interest in natural elements was discernable during his internment in Frongoch when, as the Wexford republican Joseph McCarthy recalled 'O'Driscoll was always talking about alluvial soil'.⁴³ O'Driscoll settled with his wife and children in Nenagh, County Tipperary. Dying in 1961, his large funeral attendance included the President of Ireland Eamon de Valera.

Transcription

*If you pray for freedom my friend,
Freedom will be apt to come,
But the prayer that is best is the one that is made,
with a rifle or a good shot gun'.*

J.B. O'Driscoll
Skibereen,
Cork

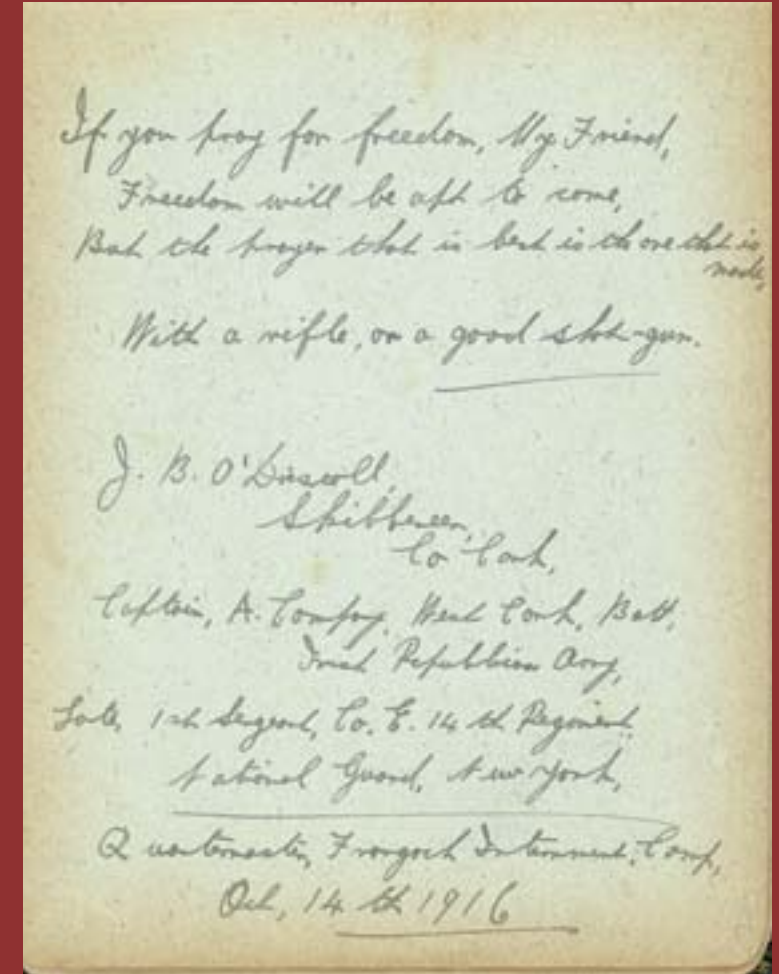
Captain, A Coy, West Cork Battalion,
Irish Republican Army
Late - 1st Sergeant, Co. E, 14th Regiment,
National Guard, New York.
Quartermaster, Frongoch Internment Camp
Oct. 14 1916

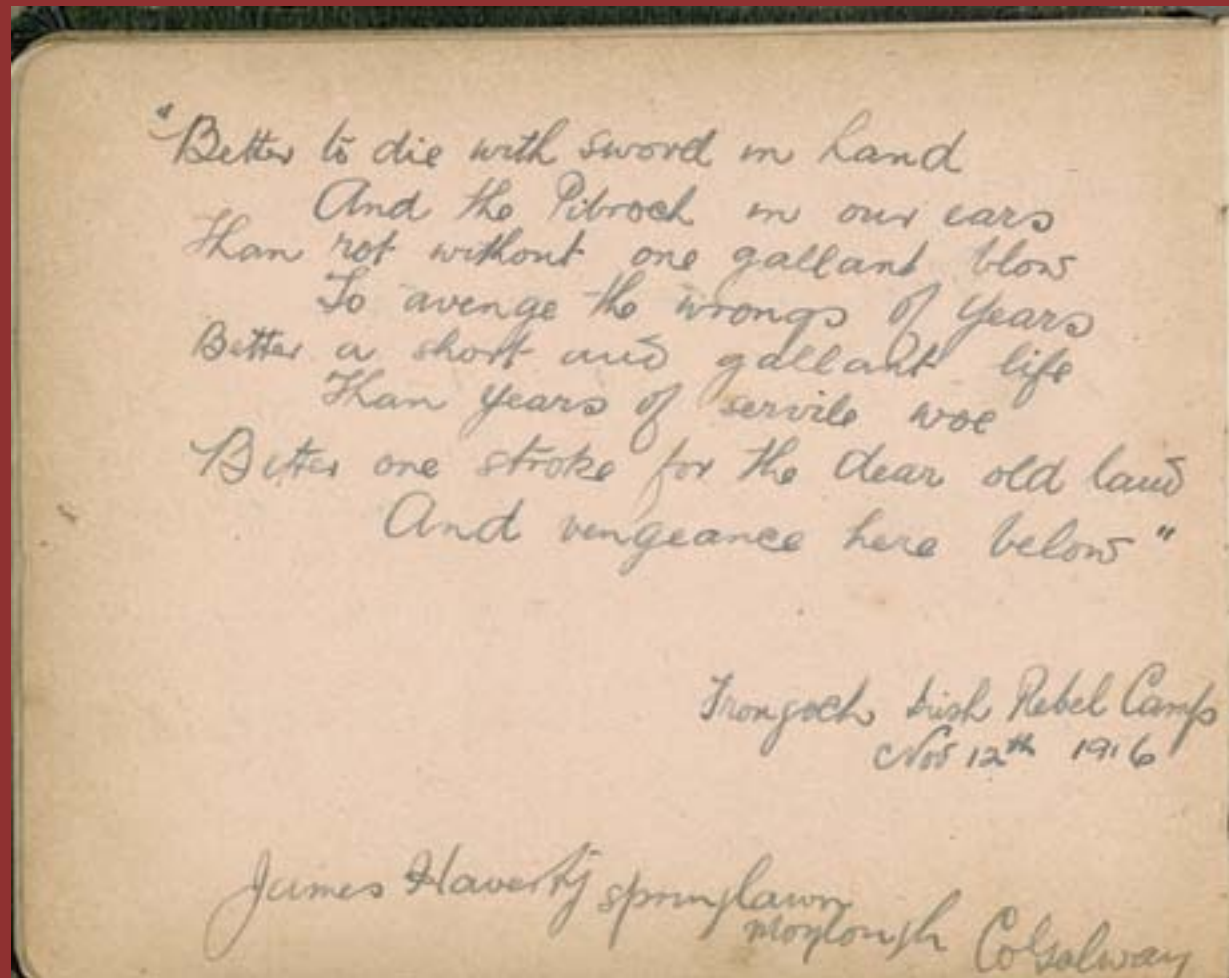
⁴² Joseph Jenkins, 'The Slate of Ireland', in *Traditional Roofing Magazine*, Issue 5, (2006), pp. 8-9.

⁴³ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Joseph McCarthy, WS, 1497, p. 1

Composition

O'Driscoll's assertion is reminiscent of the commonly used quote by contemporary republicans that 'The Rifle Brown and Sabre Bright can freely speak and nobly right'. The conviction that violence would be necessary to free Ireland had become embedded in large segments of the republican movement, due to the failure of constitutional politics to deliver Home Rule and their suppression of previous attempts at liberation.





James Haverty

Transcription

*'Better to die with the sword in hand
and the pibroch* in our ears
Than not without our gallant blow
To avenge the wrongs of years,
Better a short and gallant life
Than years of servile woe
Better one stroke for the dear old land
And vengeance here below.'*

Frongoch Irish Rebel Camp
Nov 12th 1916
James Haverty
Springlawn,
Moylough
County Galway

Composition

The contribution of Haverty is taken from the nineteenth century poem *'The Uplifting of the Banner'*, which is an ode to the 16th Century Irish Gaelic Chieftain Red Hugh O'Neill.

*A Pibroch is a type of bagpipe often associated with marching to war.

Haverty had been involved in republican politics in his native Galway for many years prior to the Easter Rising. In the 1950s, Galway republican Michael Manning recalled Seán Mac Diarmada reading a letter written by Haverty in 1909, when he visited the county to recruit men into the IRB. The letter had been written to the local press and revealed Haverty's republican principles, which according to Manning greatly impressed Mac Diarmada.⁴⁴ Mac Diarmada seems to have impressed himself on the Galway man also. On 16 June 1916, in a separate autograph book discovered among the papers of another Frongoch internee James Mallon, Haverty wrote a poem of six stanzas "To the Memory of Sean MacDermott".⁴⁵ The poem was sold by Adams Auctioneers in 2009.

Haverty had been taken from Richmond Barracks to Glasgow and from there to Frongoch. The Galway man was a prominent debater within Frongoch in the many discussion which developed around military strategy, Irish history and farming, the latter of which Haverty was particularly adept according to the Wexford republican Joseph McCarthy.⁴⁶ According to north Galway republican Patrick Treacy, following his release from Frongoch, Haverty went on to become a leading Sinn Féin figure in the Galway area.⁴⁷ In 1923, Haverty ran as a farmers candidate in the General Election.⁴⁸ The Irish Statute Book Database informs that he received 343 votes, just 0.7% of the overall vote.

⁴⁴ NMI, BMH, Witness Statement, Michael Manning, WS, 1,164, p. 2

⁴⁵ Adams Auctioneers, Lot: 137, Auction Date 28 April 2009.

⁴⁶ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Joseph McCarthy, WS, 1497, p. 1

⁴⁷ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Patrick Treacy, WS, 1425, p. 1

⁴⁸ 'Who ran in the General Election of 1923 by Ronan Killeen', <http://athenrylocalhistory.blogspot.ie/2012/12/athenry-historic-politics-who-ran-in.html> (Accessed 18 April 2016)

John P Faller

Transcription

The son of a German watchmaker, John P. Faller was 25 years old when the Easter Rising broke out. He, along with several other republicans, was arrested in Galway after the rising and transported to Frongoch. Although Faller did not make a statement to the BMH, according to the Sean O Mahony collection in NUI Galway, he was appointed as the optician to the prisoners in Frongoch. There was evidently some family background in optometry as his first cousin Stephan qualified as an optician in Derry in 1931.⁴⁹ The Dublin republican Thomas Pugh described Faller as 'a cute kind of a lad' and explained how after some of the Frongoch prisoners began to fear the camp was haunted and ordered in Holy Water, Faller capitalised by ordering in poitin in bottles ostensibly filled with the blessed liquid.⁵⁰

In 1911, Faller had been listed as living with his younger brother William and both worked as Watchmaker Finishers.⁵¹ Faller's father Stephen, a clockmaker from the Blackforest region of Germany, opened Fallers Jewellers in Galway City in 1879. Stephen was a clock maker and was known throughout the west of Ireland for his famous wall clocks. He also popularised the Fallers Cladagh Ring. At the time of writing, Fallers Jewellers remains a thriving business in Williamsgate, Galway city. However there is no mention of John P. on the shop's detailed website www.fallers.com. Faller's uncle William was also a clockmaker and opened a jewellery shop in Ferryquay Street, Derry in 1883, which also continues to operate in the early twenty-first century.

John P. Faller
Irish Prisoner 38
Frongoch, Wales
Williamsgate
Galway

Composition

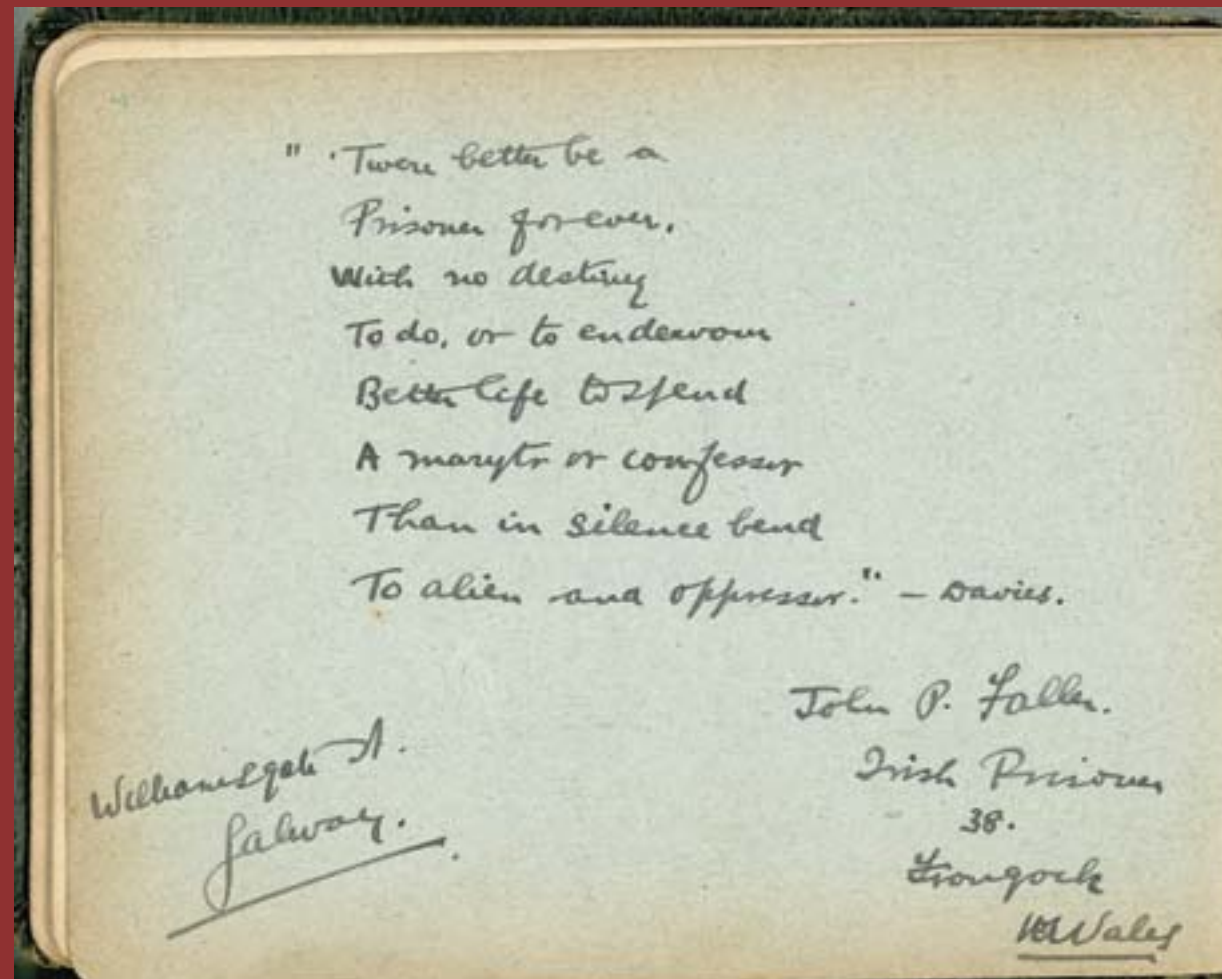
Faller's quote is taken from *Sweet and Sad, A Prison Sermon* by Thomas Davis.

*'Twere better be a prisoner forever
with no destiny
To do or endeavour
Better life to spend
A martyr or confessor
Than in silence bend
To alien or oppressor'*
- Davis

⁴⁹ History of Faller, <http://www.faller.com/pages/history.php>

⁵⁰ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 17-24

⁵¹ NAI, Census of Ireland, http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Galway/Galway_North_Urban/Williamsgate/901927/



40

God of the wronged. and can thy vengeance sleep?
 And shall our night of anguish know no day.
 And can thy justice leave our souls to weep.
 yet and yet longer. o'er our land's decay.
 Must we still cry—How long O Lord how long?
 For seven red centuries a country's woe
 Has wept the prayer in tears of blood. and still
 Our tears to night for fresher victims flow.
 (Mrs. O'D. Rossa)

John J. Murphy. Coy. Adg.
 A Coy. Batt III. Dublin Brigade
 J. R. A.

Asst. L. M.
 Frongoch Camp.
 12/11/16.

John J Murphy

According to his Military Service Pension Application, Murphy was born in 1883 and gave his address at the time of the Rising as 1 Lower Clonbrassil Street in Dublin. When the Rising broke out, he was an employee at Harold's Cross Laundry. Murphy, who was a volunteer in A Company of the Dublin Brigade's 3rd Battalion, was stationed at Jacob's Factory for most of the rebellion where his immediate commanding officers were Thomas Hunter and Joseph O'Connor.

Murphy was a member of the Irish Volunteers from 1913 and participated in the Howth gun running on 26th July 1914, later storing guns procured during that event at his home. After meeting Michael Collins in Frongoch, Murphy, like many other Frongoch internees worked closely with 'the Big Fellow' in gathering intelligence and in reorganising the Volunteers and IRB, of which he was also a member. In 1920, Murphy was elected to the Dublin Corporation.⁵² Murphy took the Free State side in the Irish Civil War and worked as Superintendent of the Protection and Identification Staff at Government buildings. He died on the 17th of May 1966 at St. Mary's Hospital in Phoenix Park, Dublin, just one month after the fiftieth anniversary of the Easter Rising in which he had been a participant, was celebrated.



Mary Jane Irwin - The Last Wife Of The Fenian O'donovan Rossa, Quoted By Murphy

⁵² Military Archives of Ireland, Military Service Pensions Collection, John J. Murphy, <http://mspcsearch.militaryarchives.ie/detail.aspx?parentpreref=> (accessed 01 February 2016).

Transcription

*'God of the Wrongs - And can the vengeance sleep?
 And shall our night of anguish know no day
 And can THY justice leave our souls to weep
 Yet, and yet longer o'er our land's decay?'
 "Must we still cry—How long, O Lord, how long!
 For seven red centuries a country's woe
 Has wept this prayer in tears of blood, and STILL
 Our tears to-night for fresher victims flow'.*

Mrs. O'D. Rossa

John J. Murphy
 Coy Adj.
 A Coy, Batt. III Dublin Brigade, IRA
 Ass. LM
 Frongoch
 12/11/16

Composition

Murphy chose an interesting source for his contribution to the autograph book. The 'Mrs. O'D. Rossa' quoted by Murphy was Mary Jane Irwin, the third wife of Irish Patriot Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa (1831 - 1915), with whom he had 13 children. Irwin, a poet and nationalist, was born in 1845 in Clonakilty in West Cork and strongly supported her husband and the Fenian ideal of Irish independence. She died suddenly in Staten Island, New York on 16 August 1916, a year after her husband had been buried, four months after the Easter Rising and three months before John J. Murphy evoked her words in a Frongoch prison cell.

Séan McLoughlin



Better known as Séan McLoughlin or ‘the Boy Commandant’, he began the Easter Rising as a young boy of 19 years of age. He ended the rebellion as a leader who Pearse, Connolly, Clarke and the HQ staff handed their authority to, in order to restore order to an increasingly volatile situation towards the end of the rebellion. A leading Irish republican throughout the revolutionary period, McLoughlin

faded from the historical narrative and social memory of the period, partly due to his move to England where he lived quietly until he died from heart failure in 1960. However, his silent, unrecognised passing was undoubtedly also due to his communist leanings, which saw him excluded by a conservative establishment, which in the first half of the twentieth century wished to present a narrative of the past which accorded with their present social, cultural and importantly, economic condition.

McLoughlin was born into a politically active family in Dublin in June 1895. His father Patrick was an ITGWU activist who was actively involved in the 1913 Dublin Lock Out, an event which had a profound effect on his son.⁵³ McLoughlin became involved initially in Fianna Éireann and later joined the Irish Volunteers upon their inception in late 1913. Like many other republicans, he was also a member of both the Gaelic League and the IRB. By Easter 1916 he was a Lieutenant in ‘D’ Coy. 1st Battalion of the Dublin Brigade.

As a member of D Company with Séan Hueston, McLoughlin was involved in taking the Mendicity Institute on Easter Monday. The activity of D Company was strategically connected to that of Ned Daly, who was

stationed at the Four Courts. In an indication of the often divided nature of political and military loyalty, during the first exchange that involved Commandant Daly’s group, Gerald Neilan of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers was shot dead. Neilan’s brother was a member of the volunteers operating under Daly in the Four Courts. McLoughlin’s own brother, Danny, was a well known clarinet player who had joined the British Army and was permanently blinded at the Battle of Ypres. His sister Mary also fought in the Easter Rising and his younger brother Patrick later joined the IRA during the War of Independence.⁵⁴

Early in the rebellion, McLoughlin was engaged in a fierce defence of the Mendicity Institute, which was under heavy assault from British Forces. After three days, the small group of approximately 25 rebels was overrun. McLoughlin, who had been returning from the GPO with a dispatch at the time of surrender, escaped arrest. He eventually made his way back to the GPO where he joined the fight once more. Due to his impressive leadership shown in the early part of the week, McLoughlin was given command of 30 men by James Connolly and ordered to take over the offices of Independent Newspapers. As Connolly admiringly watched the young McLoughlin and his men take control of the offices, a bullet from a sniper shattered his leg.⁵⁵ Later, as the evacuation of the GPO began, McLoughlin was witness to the understandable panic and disorder which resulted from many young and relatively untrained men being overcome by a vastly more equipped and professionally trained force. The building had been under heavy artillery bombardment from three sides which had intensified and was destroying buildings throughout Sackville Street (O’Connell Street). McLoughlin, who was turning back from Henry Street towards the GPO from where he had been attempting in vain to warn The O’Rahilly of a British advance, witnessed the chaotic scenes.

⁵⁴ Séan McLoughlin, ‘The Forgotten ‘Boy’ Commandant’, *Carlow Nationalist*, 07 January 2015

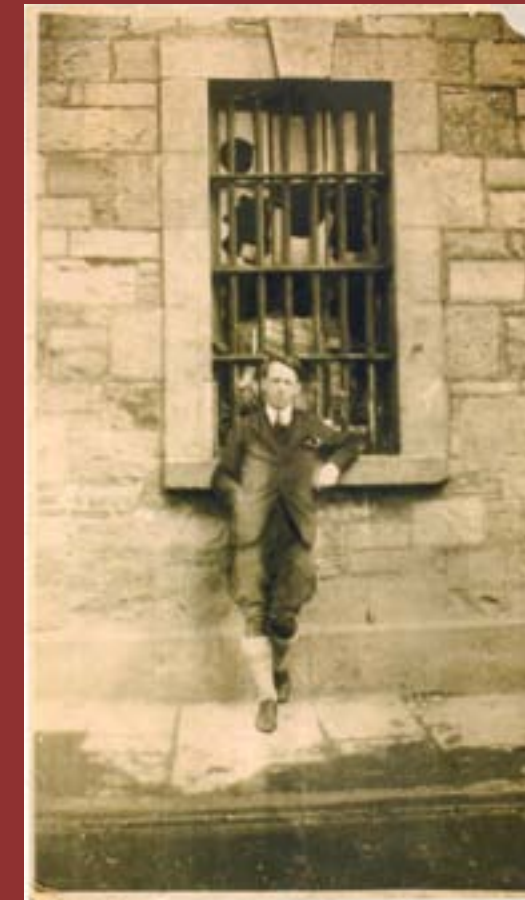
⁵⁵ Charlie McGuire · Séan McLoughlin – the boy commandant of 1916’, in *History Ireland*, Issue 2, March/April 2006

‘I turned back towards the GPO and saw the whole garrison coming towards me at the run. There was terrible confusion—almost panic. Somebody shouted that they were being fired on from the roof of a mineral water factory. I detailed a number of men to break the door down. Another party entered from the opposite door and they opened fire on each other—one man was killed and several injured. I was incensed with rage, calling “have you all gone mad, what the hell is wrong!” and I drove them to the wall, threatening them’.⁵⁶

McLoughlin then assumed a role of leadership and was witnessed by many taking control of a seemingly hopeless and uncontrollable situation. He attempted to place some order the volunteers who were fleeing from heavy artillery and machine gun fire. This included the provisional government leadership, who bore witness to McLoughlin’s coolness and composure under the most intense pressure. In order to establish control, the command of the men was then handed over to McLoughlin, who ordered the establishment of barricades and created a relatively safe line of retreat for his men. In doing so, he managed to safely take 300 volunteers into Moore Street where a HQ was established in a corner-shop. At a meeting held on Friday with Pearse, Connolly, Mac Diarmada, Clarke and Plunkett, the promotion of McLoughlin to Commandant General was ratified with the initial and daunting task of planning an escape from Moore Street. However, before McLoughlin could implement his plan, Pearse surrendered, a decision which McLoughlin disagreed with.

‘Connolly beckoned to me from the bed and said “you must not take it so hardly”; you are young, you will see a lot more struggles before you die . . . you must keep quiet about the part you played. You will still be needed. You will have plenty to do in the future, if you keep quiet . . . we

⁵⁶ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Séan McLoughlin, WS 290, p. 21.



McLoughlin Outside The Gpo After His Release From Frongoch In December 1916.

have done our best; it was better than we hoped. It has not ended as it might have, in disaster⁵⁷.

In surrender, McLoughlin's coolness and courage again were evident. Contrary to the agreement accepted by Pearse that his men would lay down their arms, McLoughlin marched with his men carrying their unloaded weapons and, despite Lowe's seething contempt, the surrender was effected.⁵⁸

Seán McLoughlin died from heart failure on the 13th of February 1960 at Sheffield Royal Infirmary. There was no mention of his death in any Irish newspaper, nor did any member of any republican party attend his funeral or cremation.

Transcription

'Ireland'

*Sarsfield is sad there with his last desire
Fitzgerald mourns with Emmet, ancient chiefs,
Dream on their saffron mantled hosts, alive
Against the rivers of their mother's griefs,
Was it for nought, captain asks captain old
Was it in vain, we fell?
And no green spring wake from the very dark spell
Shall never a crown of summer privilege come
From blood of martyrdom
Yet, to our own faith will we not say farewell*
(Lionel Johnson)

57 NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Seán McLoughlin, WS 290, pp. 29-30.

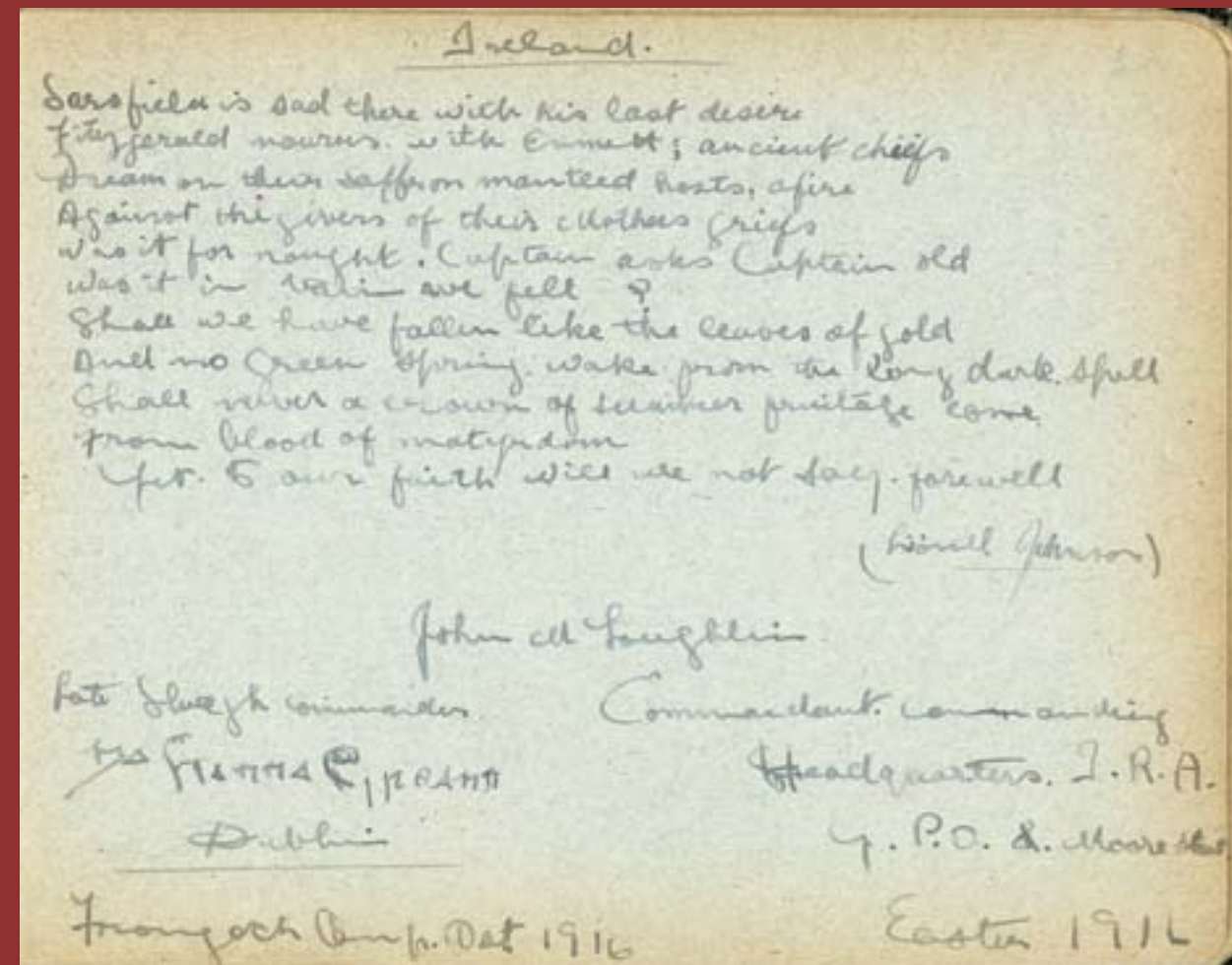
58 In late 1917, McLoughlin was seen in county Clare making speeches with Countess Mackiewicz on behalf of Fianna Éireann, to which he had been appointed Chief Officer. See NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Seán McLoughlin, WS 290, p. 37.

John McLoughlin
Commdt. Commanding,
Headquarters, IRA
GPO and Moore Street
Easter 1916

Late Slaugh Commander
Fianna Éireann
Dublin
Frongoch Camp Dec 1916

Composition

McLoughlin's contribution is taken from a selection of poems by the English poet and social critic Lionel Johnson (1867-1902) entitled *Ireland and Other Poems*.



Thomas Pugh

Thomas Pugh was from Charliville Mall near Mountjoy in Dublin. The son of a Glass Commission Agent from Scotland, he was 32 years old at the time of the Easter Rising. At the age of 17, Pugh attended the funeral of the Nationalist poet William Rooney, which seemed to have left a deep and lasting impression on the young Dubliner.⁵⁹ Pugh recalled later that he was ‘very much on the Labour side in the 1913 strike’. He later joined the Socialist Party of Ireland in which he became acquainted with James Connolly and William O’Brien.⁶⁰

‘Before the Rising the last long conversation I had with James Connolly was at the Wolfe Tone Commemoration in Bodenstown in 1915. We sat on the grass there and ate our lunch together. We had a long conversation. That was the year of the famous trip to Limerick.’⁶¹

Pugh had worked in the Engineering Department of the Post Office over Manfields in O’Connell Street, a building held by Oscar Traynor during the Easter Rising. While working there he got to know fellow Frongoch internee Dick Mulcahy, who was in the Engineering Department of the Post Office in Aldborough House. Pugh spent the early part of the Easter Rising as orderly to Dick McKee.⁶² The potency of the moment of surrender is conveyed by many of the men and women who participated in the rising. In his statement to the Bureau of Military History, Pugh recalled vividly the moment the news reached his section.

⁵⁹ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 1, William Rooney was an Irish national, journalist, poet and key figure in the Gaelic revival. He died on the 6th of May 1901 at the young age of 27 from Tuberculosis. His funeral which Thomas Pugh attended took place at Glasnevin Cemetery.

⁶⁰ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 2.

⁶¹ Ibid, pp. 17–24

⁶² Ibid, p. 4.

‘The word of the surrender came as a bit of a surprise and a shock on Sunday morning. Two priests, Franciscans, came in some time during the afternoon, I think, and there was terrible confusion, men crying and breaking their rifles. Tomás MacDonagh made a short sensible speech, he was very cool and very much to the point’.⁶³

During the period that followed, Pugh was witness to many moments which would only grow in their significance over time. Amidst the chaos and destruction, Pugh was able to make some fleeting observations which would in time become indelibly marked on his country’s consciousness.

‘Out at the back there was a big square [Richmond Barracks] with grass on it, and I remember either the first or the second morning seeing Pádraig Pearse, cleanly shaved and brushed and looking ten feet high, with a huge guard around him. That was the last I saw of him.’⁶⁴

Pugh also witnessed a Russian sailor being forcibly taken at Ormond Quay and imprisoned with the volunteers despite his having nothing to do with the rebellion.⁶⁵ In London, Pugh was examined by the Sankey Commission, the name given to the interrogation of Irish rebel prisoners in Wormwoods Scrubs and Wandsworth jail. Imprisoned in Wandsworth initially, Pugh recalled scores of Australian prisoners on the opposite side of their floor.⁶⁶ He was witness too, to the way in which different sections of English society reacted to the Irish insurgents. He recollected in the early 1950s that while under military guard at Paddington Station in 1916.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 6.

⁶⁴ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 8.

⁶⁵ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 9, The official roll of honour refers to a Antli Makapaltis who is described as a Russian seaman.

⁶⁶ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 13

‘A great big well-fed, prosperous looking Englishman came along and said, “I don’t want to wish anybody any harm, but I hope that the train piles up and kills the whole lot of you”. Pugh recalled that the soldiers who were guarding the prisoners sharply responded telling the Englishman to ‘Go away, you big, fat so-and-so. These men fought at least.’⁶⁷

In a statement to the BMH, Pugh recalled the early days in the north Wales internment camp.

‘It was terrible in Frongoch at the start. There were about 1,100 men in the South Camp, and in the room where I was, No. 3 room, we were heads and tails. There was no space between us, and the atmosphere at night was shocking, even though we kept the windows open.’⁶⁸

After his release, Pugh became involved again with the IRB and the labour cause. As a consequence, he was refused employment and was out of work for almost a year.

Election in Clare

In early June 1917, Pugh travelled with Cranny’s Peadar Clancy to the latter’s native county. They were going there to support the candidature of Eamon de Valera in the by-election of East Clare, which had been occasioned by the death of Major Willie Redmond at the Battle of Messines. The men stayed at Daly’s house in Limerick, the family home of Ned Daly, one of the executed leaders. Pugh later recalled that ‘the bed in which Peadar Clancy had slept the night before had been slept in, from time to time, by all the men who had been executed. It was a shocking thing in

⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 8.

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 14

view of what happened afterwards.’⁶⁹ Pugh was referring to the fact that in the years prior to 1916, many of the leaders of the rebellion had visited the Daly home and had each slept in the bed where Clancy rested on his way to his native county in 1917. Clancy, who went on to become one of the leading figures in the Dublin IRA Brigade, was tortured and murdered by members of F Division of the British Auxiliaries in Dublin Castle in November 1920.

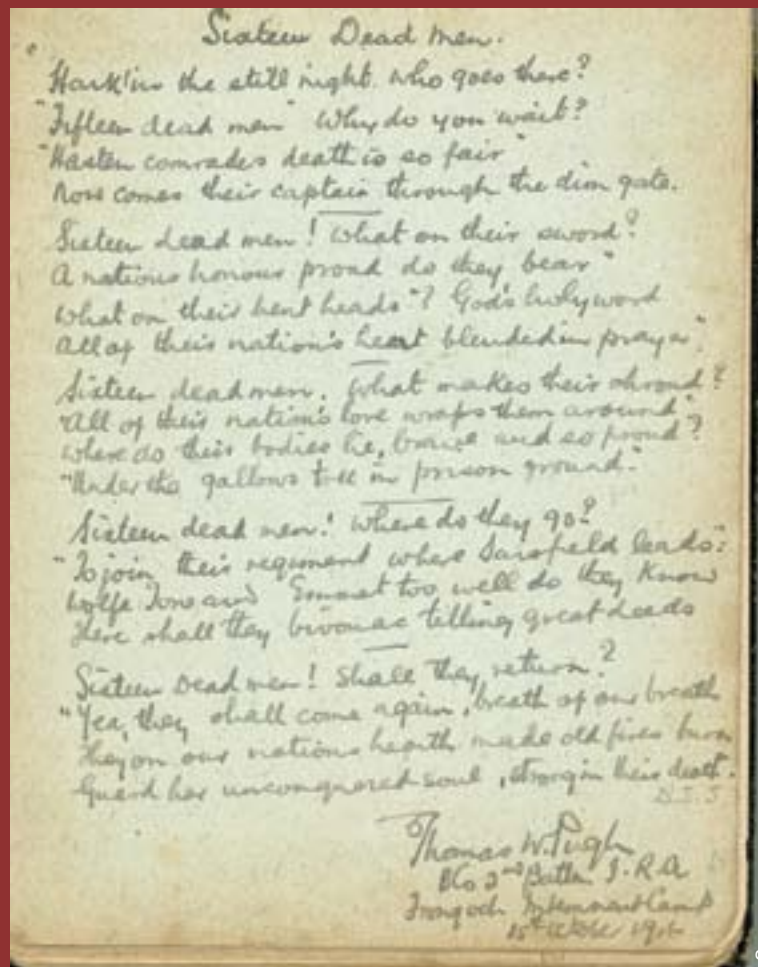
While in County Clare, Pugh, standing on top of a motor car in Broadford, introduced what would become the Irish National Anthem to the people of that locality. It was he who was the first man to sing ‘The Soldier’s Song’ in the county.⁷⁰ The song, written by Peadar Kearney and arranged by Frongoch internee Cathal Mac Dudhghail, had been a popular sound in Frongoch and now echoed through the hills of east Clare. Pugh was one of two Sinn Féin ‘counters’ who attended the official enumeration of ballots. In his BMH statement he accepts that many of Lynch’s votes were placed in the de Valera’s box, but declares that victory was already certain for Sinn Féin. He was present when the details of the count were finally announced to the select representatives within Ennis Courthouse. Sinn Féin had won and Pugh was eager to disseminate the news.

‘I took a cigarette packet from my pocket and wrote on the inside that de Valera got so many votes and Lynch got so many, and threw the packet out the window. Lynch told me I should not have done that. Some man dropped off the wall outside and got the paper, and when we heard the cheer outside we knew the crowd had the news.’⁷¹

⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 14

⁷⁰ The National Anthem, called The Soldier’s Song was written in 1907 by Peadar Kearney, an uncle of Brendan Behan. It was first published in the newspaper, Irish Freedom in 1912, but was not widely known until it was sung at the GPO during the Easter Rising of 1916.

⁷¹ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 24–28



Thomas Pugh

Transcription

Sixteen Dead Men

'Hark! In the still night who goes there?'
'Fifteen dead men why do you wait?'
'Hasten comrades death is so fair'
Now comes their captain through the dim gate
Sixteen dead men! What on their sword?
A Nation's honour proud do they bear
What on their bent heads? God's holy word
All of their nations heard blended in prayer

Sixteen dead men! What makes their shroud?
All of their nation's love wraps them around
Where do their bodies lie, brave and so proud?
'Under the gallows tree in prison ground.'

Sixteen dead men! Where do they go?
To join their regiment where Sarsfield leads
Wolfe Tone and Emmet, too, well do they know
There shall they bivouac*, telling great deeds

Sixteen dead men! Shall they return?
'Yea, they shall come again, breath of our breath
They on our nations hearth made old fires burn
Guard her unconquered soul, strong in their death'

D.S.S

Thomas W. Pugh,
B Co. 2nd Battalion, IRA,
Frongoch Internment Camp,
15 October 1916

*The word bivouac come from the French language and was used from the early nineteenth century to describe an encampment of soldiers without shelter. Usually referred to a contingent of troops who were posted to keep a watch in the open during the night.

Composition

The poem contributed by Thomas Pugh, 'Sixteen Dead Men', was written by Dora Maria Sigerson Shorter, an Irish Poet and sculptor, who was a significant figure in the Irish Literary Revival of the late 1800s. She was born in Dublin in 1866 and died in London in 1918, less than two years after she wrote this poem. The author Lucy Collins commented that the question and answer structure of the poem offer the hypnotic power of repetition together with the incantatory quality of the answering voice.⁷²

⁷² Lucy Collins, *Poetry by Women in Ireland: A Critical Anthology 1870-1970* (Liverpool, 2012), p. 117

The real wealth of a nation does not consist in material possessions, their employment, or development, however important and necessary these may be. It consists in the masculinity of its sons. England is falling because it has lost its nationality, and its sons their masculine spirit. These lost, its dissolution is at hand; mere prestige may delay for a little while but cannot prevent it. Ireland through all the centuries has preserved its nationality, and its sons have proved that today that they are possessed of a splendid masculine spirit. Therefore the Irish nation lives, virile and assertive. But the full price must be paid ere the independence of Ireland is achieved. It was paid in part during Easter week 1916. The greater part will be paid in the near future on a more momentous though bloodier day.

Peadar Ó Bryain.
 Sec. Comd. "A" Co. 4th Batt. Dublin Regiment
 Marrowbone Lane, 24th April 1916 Knutsford Prison 3rd May '16.
 Frongoch Camp 24th June '16. Dublin (again) -----
 "Tá fá le gac rud"

Peadar Ó'Bryan

Composition

O'Bryan fought in Marrowbone Lane off Cork Street in Dublin.⁷³ There he fought under Eamon Ceannt occupying the distillery located on the street. Other prominent figures whom Bryan fought alongside were Cathal Brugha, W.T. Cosgrave, Joseph McGrath and Dennis O'Brien.⁷⁴

O'Bryan's assertion is a powerful example of the determined and philosophical mindset of many republicans in 1916. The 'masculinity of its sons' evokes the thoughts of Pearse while the affirmation that 'the wealth of a nation does not consist in material possessions' is reminiscent of the words of Connolly. The prediction of England's downfall is also consistent with that of many contemporary republican writings. O'Bryan's forecast of a 'more momentous though bloody day' certainly materialised in the fighting of subsequent years.

Transcription

'The real wealth of a nation does not consist in material possessions, their employment or development, however important or necessary they may be. It consists in the masculinity of its sons. England is falling because it has lost its nationality and its sons their masculine spirit. These lost, its dissolution is at hand. Mere prestige may delay for a little while but cannot prevent it. Ireland through all the centuries has preserved its nationality and its sons have proved that today are possessed of a splendid masculine spirit. Therefore the Irish nation lives, virile and assertive. But the full price must be paid ere the independence of Ireland is achieved. It was paid in part during Easter Week 1916. The greater part will be paid in the near future on a more momentous though bloody day.'

Comd. A Company, 4th Batt. Dublin Regiment - IRA
 Marrowbone Lane 24 April 1916 - Knutsford Prison 3rd May 1916
 Frongoch Camp, 24 June 1916 Dublin (Again) -----
 ---?

"Tá fá le gac rud"

⁷³ The street name is a corruption of St. Mary Le Bone and has been known as Marrowbone lane since at least 1743.

⁷⁴ Desmond Ryan, *The Rising (4th Edition)*, (Dublin, 1966), pp. 172-184.

Stephen Jordan

Stephen Jordan was a bootmaker from Davis Street in Athenry, County Galway. Jordan had joined the IRB in 1906 and had been active in local republican politics and land agitation since at least 1908, leading to several confrontations with the RIC.⁷⁵ In 1915, he had been imprisoned due to his continued republican activities and so following the Easter Rising, in which he mobilised, it was not surprising that the police were in pursuit of the Athenry man. Jordan had mobilised under Liam Mellows and had previously been centrally involved in organising the volunteers in Galway.

On Tuesday of Easter Week, joining with other units under the command of Mellows, Jordan was part of a group that took control of Athenry's agricultural college, fortifying it. Jordan and his comrades then moved to Moyode House. On the Thursday of Easter week, he was involved in a 'pitched battle' with the RIC on the Loughrea road, after which the RIC were forced back to Athenry by the Galway rebels. He was not arrested in the immediate aftermath of the rebellion, having gone 'on the run' with a number of other rebels. He was finally captured in Tuam in June 1916 and transferred to Frongoch, via Knutsford.

Jordan continued his involvement in the republican movement throughout the revolutionary period and took the anti-treaty side in the Irish Civil War. He was later elected as a Fianna Fáil TD.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Stephen Jordan, WS. 346.

⁷⁶ Roman Kileen, Athenry and the Easter Rising, <http://athenrylocalhistory.blogspot.ie/2014/03/athenry-and-easter-rising-1916-revised.html>

Transcription

*°Recreant Irish fight for England if you list
By ancient foe be led
But bear forever more, aye bear,
The curse of Ireland's Dead'*

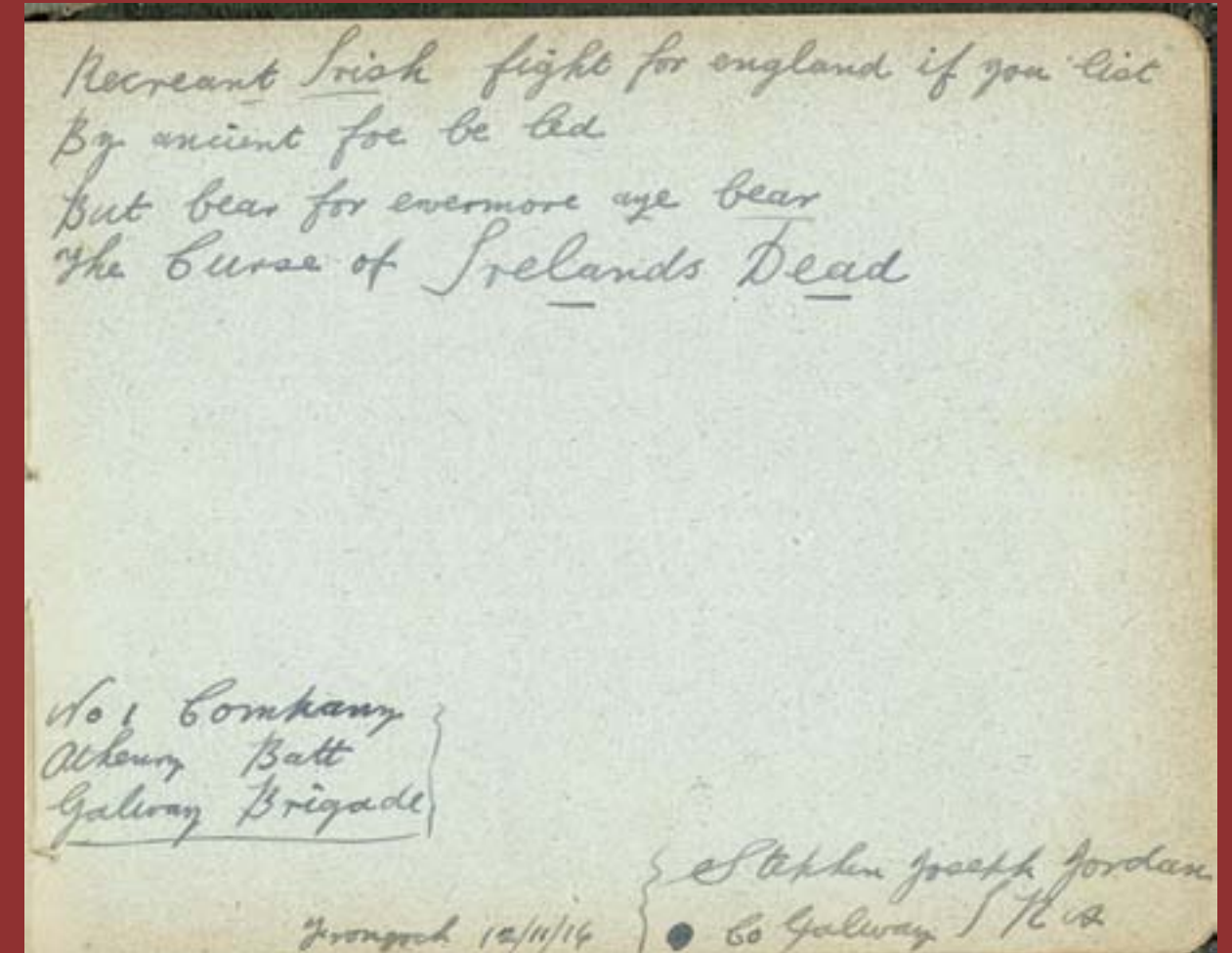
Stephen Joseph Jordan
Co. Galway IRA
No 1 Company
Athenry Batt.
Galway Brigade

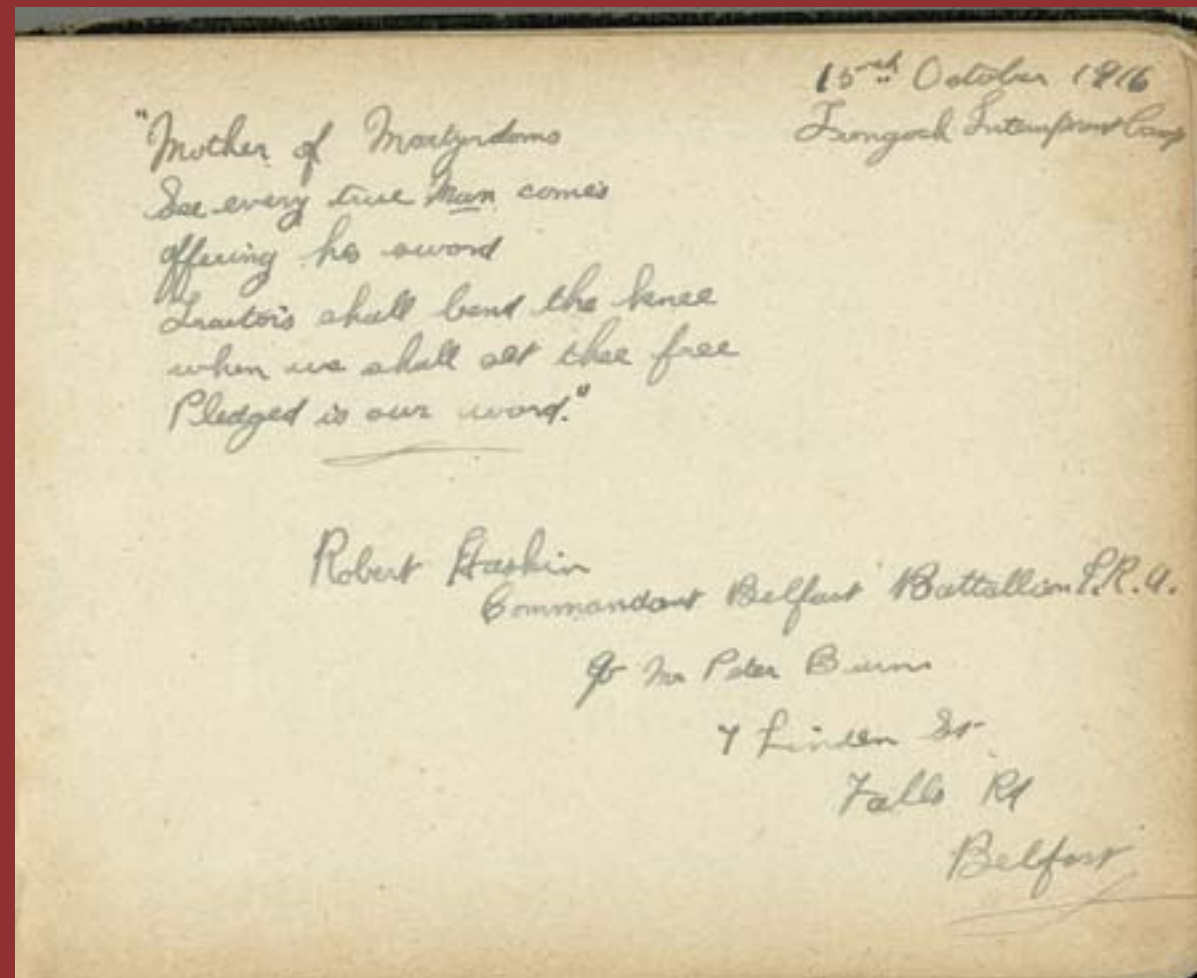
Composition

Jordan's fiery stanza relates to the enlistment of Irishmen in the British army to fight in the First World War. Thousands of Irish men had followed the call of John Redmond and joined the British army. Many had enlisted for economic reasons, others for adventure and some for loyalty to Britain, while others still joined in the hope that their involvement would result in Home Rule for Ireland. For republicans, the notion of Irish men fighting for the British Empire was an anathema. That attitude increasingly became the norm in the more expressive post Easter rising political environment.



Stephen Jordon (Back Row - Second From Left) With Fellow Galway Republicans





Robert Haskin

Robert Haskin

Robert Haskin was born into a Unionist family in Anderstown, Belfast. In 1912, just four years before the Easter Rising, he joined his local Orange Order and later the Ulster Volunteers to resist Home Rule. He had previously served for six years in the British Army. Haskin was therefore an unlikely resident in Frongoch internment camp in October 1916 when he signed this autograph book. His conversion was brought about by his introduction to the Freedom Club and IRB by Frank Wilson, Denis McCullough, Bulmer Hobson and others.⁷⁷ Haskin had previously worked as a 'yarn bundler' and cambric weaver but in 1916 was employed at Belfast Corporation's Gas Department. As a result of his republican activities, Haskin was ostracised by his fellow Protestants and fired from his job.⁷⁸ By 1914 he was a committed member of the Irish Volunteers in Belfast for which he acted as Military Instructor. By the time of the Easter Rising he was married with children and living in Elizabeth St. off the Falls Road in Belfast.

Haskin spent most of Easter week travelling across the province of Ulster to establish the mobilisation plans and levels of weaponry of Volunteer companies. He was arrested in Tyrone with a revolver and ammunition and was charged at Omagh Police Station from where he was taken to Derry Jail. Haskin and many other northern republicans were then transferred to Richmond Barracks in Dublin from where he was sent to Wakefield and from there to Frongoch. He later made a statement about his experiences in Frongoch.

⁷⁷ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Robert Haskin, WS, 223, p. 1.

⁷⁸ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Robert Haskin, WS, 223, p. 4.

'I met in Frongoch a lot of men who were prominent in Easter Week, and others who became prominent later, Mick Collins, Terence McSwiney Austin Stack, Dick Mulcahy, Thomas McCurtain, Hales Brothers from Cork. A lot of our time was taken up in lectures, lessons in Irish, dancing, chemistry, architecture and other scientific subjects.'⁷⁹

The response to the Easter Rising across Ulster was one of confusion. As in most parts of the country, the countermand order of MacNeill led to a demobilisation of available and willing volunteers. Denis McCullough, the head of the Supreme Council of the IRB, had impressed on his senior officers the seriousness of the upcoming events. A large advance party of volunteers had travelled to Coalisland, County Tyrone, during which time they met Robert Haskin, who was also on his way to Tyrone, where he would meet senior republican Dr Patrick McCartan near Carrickmore. McCartan indicated to Haskin that the men in his company refused to leave their area, a contention disputed by men of that company who Haskin spoke to in Frongoch. McCullough eventually stood down his Belfast men and Cumann na mBan, partially due to the confusion surrounding the countermand but also due to the dominance of the Ulster Volunteers in the north east of the country and the inevitability of sectarian civil war.⁸⁰

According to the Dublin republican Joseph Lawless, Haskin was interested in wrestling and attempted to show some of the younger volunteers in Frongoch the rules and science of the sport. Lawless recalled that 'the wrestling classes ended with a general degeneration into rough horse-play, where one needed all one's self-control to take hurts in good part, when ragged by a boisterous group'.⁸¹

⁷⁹ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Robert Haskin, WS, 223, p. 4.

⁸⁰ Robert Lynch, *The Northern IRA and the Early Years of Partition*, (Dublin, 2006) pp 13-14

⁸¹ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Colonel Joseph V. Lawless, WS, 1,043, p. 191.

Transcription

15 October 1916

Frongoch Internment Camp

*'Mother of martyrdoms,
See ever time man comes,
offering his sword
Traitors shall bend the knee
When we shall set thee free
Pledged is our sword'*

Robert Haskin
Commandant Belfast Battalion, IRA
C/O Mr. Peter Burns
7, Linden St.
Falls Road
Belfast

Composition

Haskin's contribution is particularly forceful considering his background. His reference to traitors bending the knee and of pledging his sword is reminiscent of the nineteenth century nationalist literature which influenced many of the rebels.

Seán Mathghámhna (Seán McMahon)

Seán McMahon (better known as General Seán McMahon) was born in Cork Street in Dublin in September 1893.⁸² The son of a malt labourer, McMahon grew up in a tenement house, in which 31 people lived in eight rooms. In the early 1900s, McMahon, his four siblings and parents lived in just two rooms but by 1911 had moved to Sandwith Street, where their now nine strong family lived in slightly more comfortable conditions with four rooms. McMahon worked for the postal service and later as a clerk in a Dublin firm.

In 1913, McMahon joined the Irish Volunteers upon their formation in Dublin and immediately became attached to 'B' Company, 3rd Battalion of the Dublin Brigade, which he remained active with during the 1916 Rising. By the time of the Rising, McMahon had been promoted to Captain of B Company, having previously served as 1st Lieutenant under The O'Rahilly. During the Rising, he fought under Eamon de Valera in Boland's Mills. After the Easter Rising, he spent time in Wakefield, Frongoch and Wormwood Scrubs, before returning to Dublin and, like so many of his comrades, threw himself back into the republican movement. He soon rose to the position of Vice-Commandant of the 3rd Battalion and also spent time in the staff of *The Nationality* newspaper, edited by Arthur Griffith.

His upward trajectory continued and by March 1918 he was made Quarter Master of the IRA and a senior member of GHQ. As Quarter Master, McMahon established one of the least well known units of the period 'Q Company', comprised of men working on the Dublin docks who carried

⁸² 'Gen Seán McMahon', <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=76552633>, (Accessed 05 February 2016).

significant amounts of ammunition and weaponry from English to Irish ports. Many of the members of this unit were older men and so did not arouse suspicion with the authorities. In 1967, William Nelson estimated in *An Toglach* that fifty per cent of the IRA's guns came through this source in the War of Independence. McMahon remained active throughout the war and participated in many engagements, including an ambush in Great Brunswick Street in March 1921, during which his brother in law, Leo Fitzgerald, a prominent republican, was killed.⁸³

McMahon took the Pro-Treaty side in the Civil War and was one of nine GHQ staff who supported the Anglo-Irish Treaty with four opposing it. Four of the pro-treaty side, Richard Mulcahy, Michael Collins, Gearóid O'Sullivan and McMahon contributed to the autograph book. In September 1922, McMahon succeeded Michael Collins as head of the IRB and following General Richard Mulcahy's move sideways to the Ministry for Defence, became Chief of Staff of the National or Free State Army. McMahon had the formidable challenge of reorganising the Free State army after the Civil War, which included demobilising over two thirds of the troops who had enlisted in the war. With his health suffering, McMahon retired from his position as Chief of Staff in 1927. He died at his home in Dundrum, Dublin in 1955 from Coronary Thrombosis, having suffered Encephalitis Lethargica, for over 30 years. A large headstone was unveiled over his grave in Deansgrange Cemetery a year later by Richard Mulcahy, who was then Minister for Education. McMahon Bridge, over the Grand Canal Basin in Dublin, where many of his 'Q' Company men operated, was renamed in his honour in 1963.

⁸³ McMahon married Lucinda Fitzgerald in 1919. Her brother Leo Fitzgerald was a member of B Company, of Dublin's 3rd IRA

Brigade who was killed in action in Great Brunswick Street in Dublin on 14 March 1921.

Transcription

*You may speak of the land where the toiler
Can build up a free happy home
The land never cursed by the spoiler
Over the white ocean foam
Oh! Dearest to me is my sireland
The Emerald Fair of the Sea,
My beautiful, beautiful Ireland
Oh! Will, will she ever be free?*

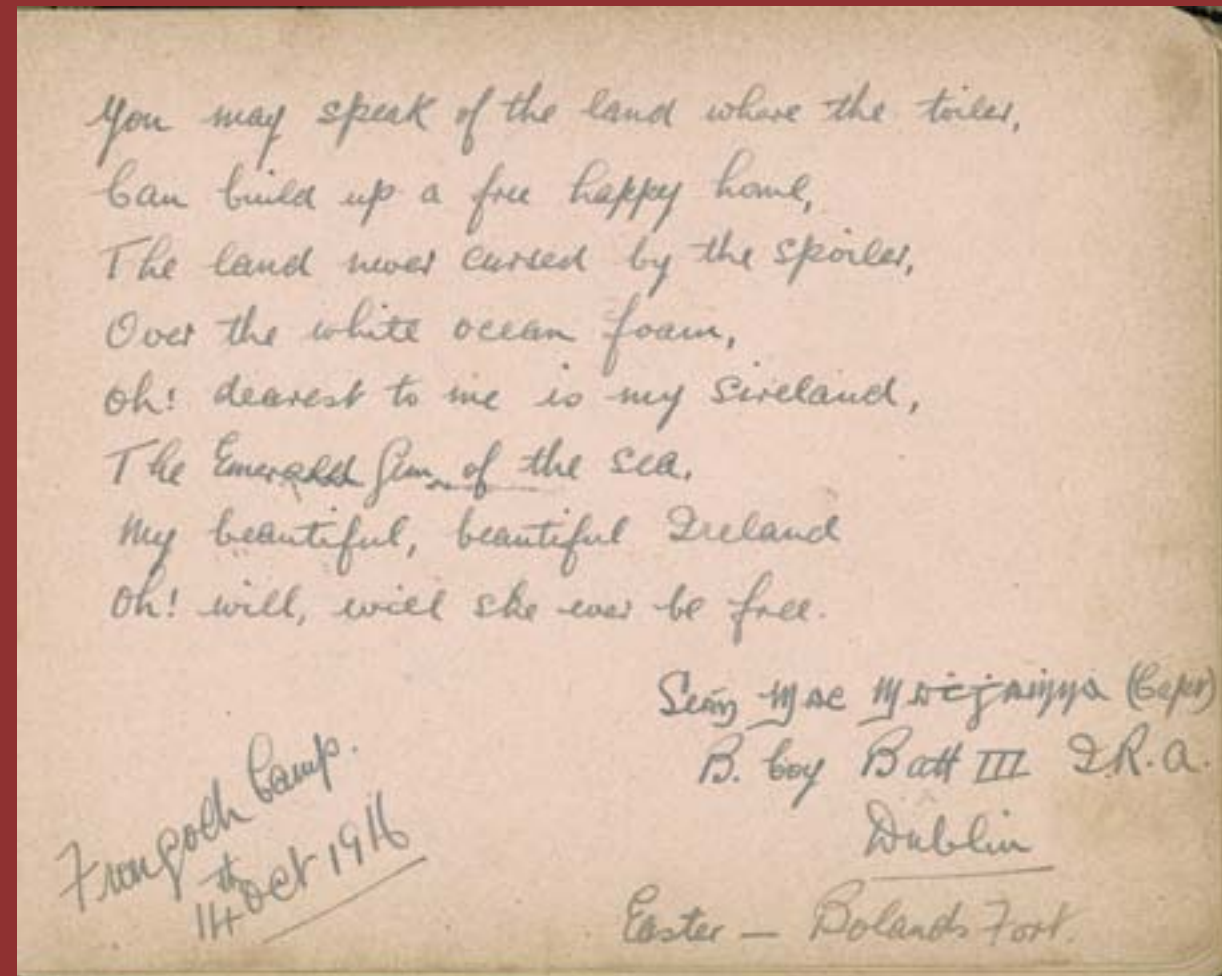
Seán Mathghámhna (Capt).
B Coy, Batt III IRA Dublin
Easter - Boland's Fort
Frongoch 14 October 1916

Composition

McMahon quotes Charles J. Kickham, the Irish revolutionary poet from Mullinahone in County Tipperary. For republicans of the early twentieth century, Kickham was a heroic figure. His name was later commemorated by several GAA clubs across Ireland.

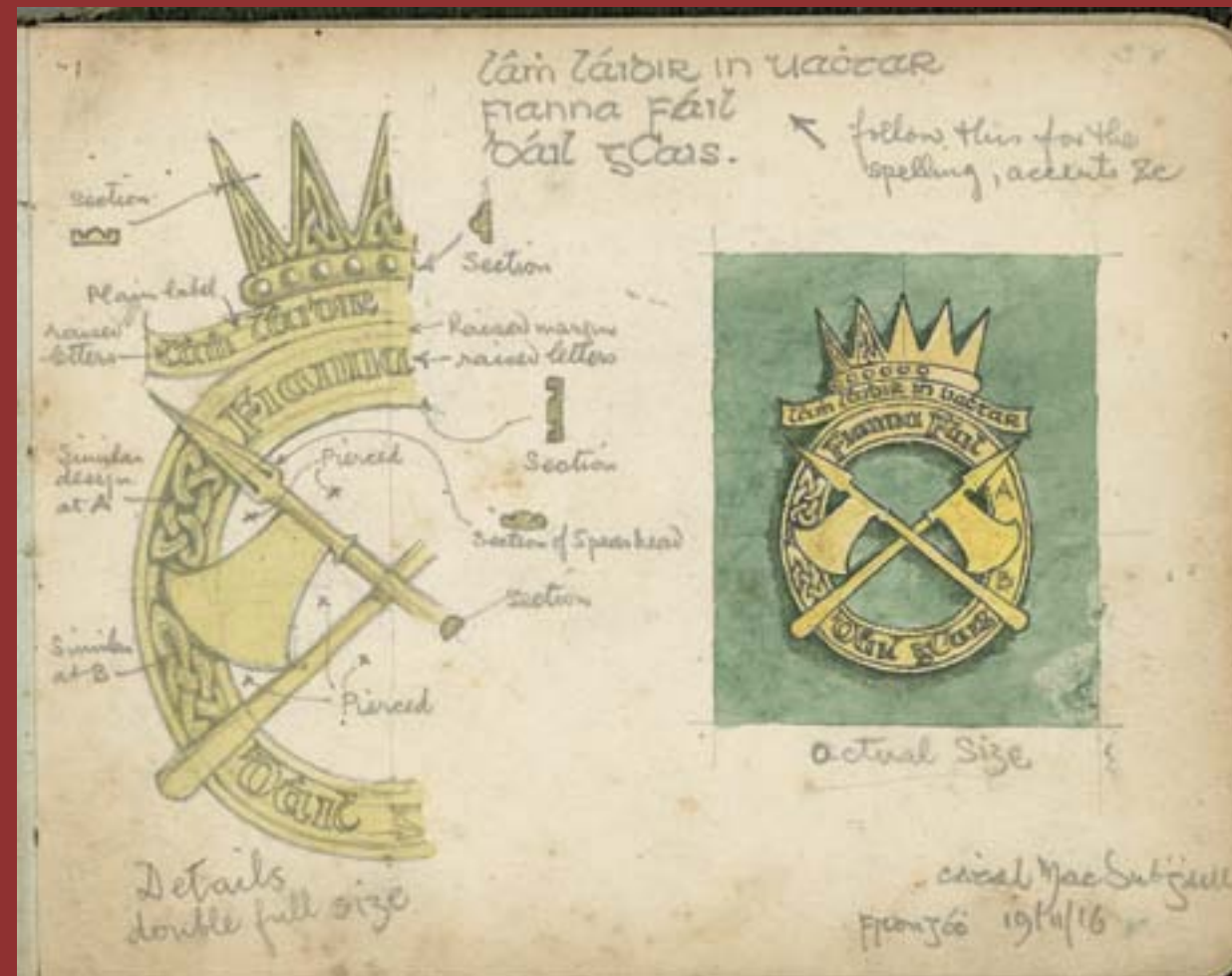


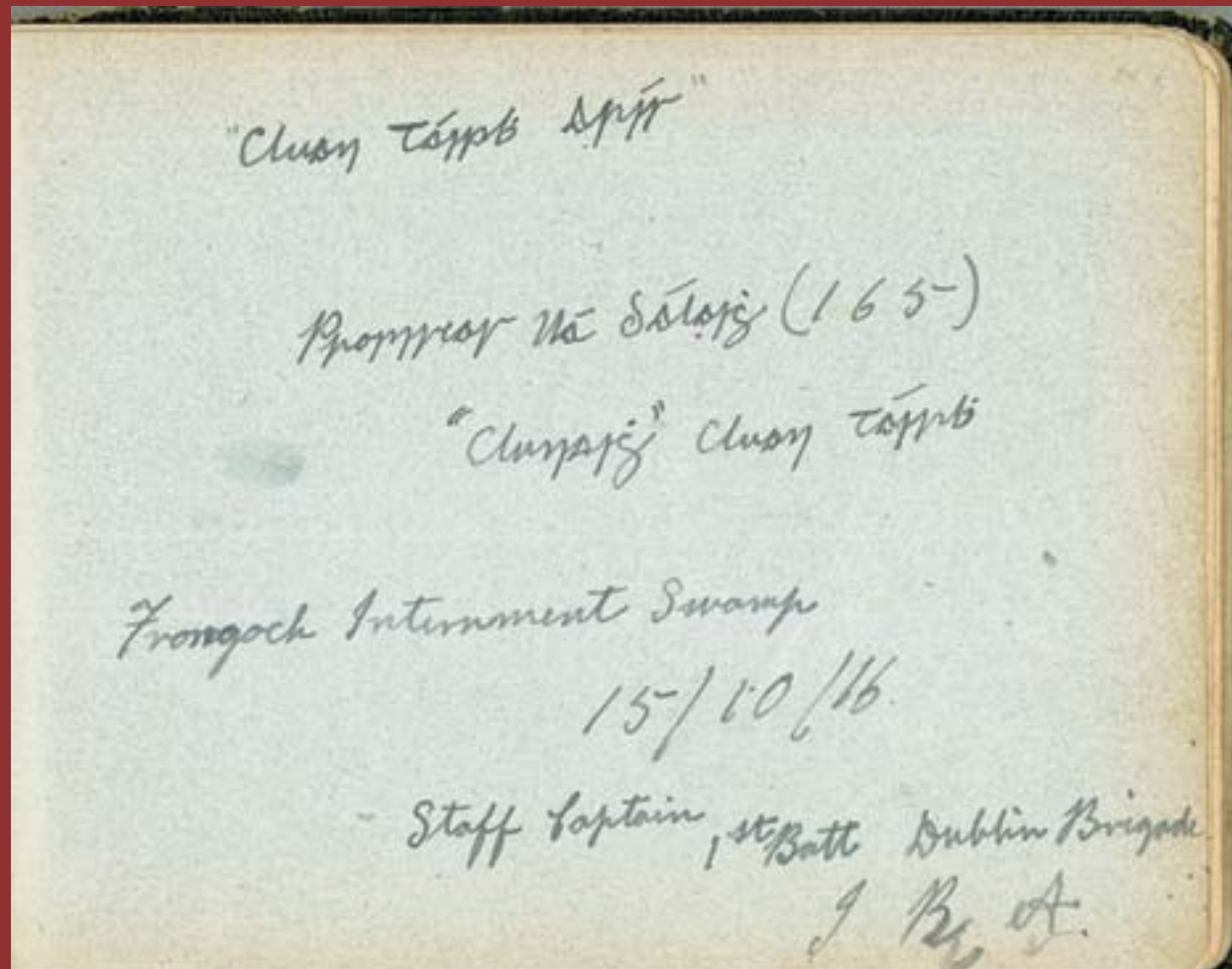
Plaque On McMahon Bridge, Dublin





In this image, Mac Dubhghaill presents two crossing pikes evoking the rebellion of 1798 enveloped by the words Fianna Fáil (Soldiers of Destiny) and Dal gCais, the ancient warriors of Thomand. Above the pikes hangs a golden crown, presumably representing the crown of Brian Ború, leader of the Dal gCais and High King of Ireland from 1002-1014. It can only be presumed that the owner of the autograph album was the inspiration for the distinctly Clare based illustration.





Prionsias Ua Sáilaig (Francis Scullin)

Francis Scullin was born in Chancery Lane, Dublin in 1884. His mother was a waistcoat maker and his father a clerk.⁸⁴ At the time of the Easter Rising, Scullin was employed in Dublin Corporation. As a member of F Company in the 1st Battalion, Dublin Brigade, Scullin was active in Liberty Hall, the GPO and the Mendicity Institute, during the Easter Rising. Scullin was badly wounded while bringing reinforcements to Reis's Jewellers, after which he was taken to Wynn's Hotel. Seamus Robinson, later O/C of the Mid Tipperary IRA Brigade was running behind Scullin when he fell. In October 1948, he recalled.

'As we got into Marlborough Street, machine-gun fire was opened on us from a new British post. They must have moved closer when they spotted our evacuation. We rushed up Marlborough Street to get into the shelter of Abbey Street. A man in front of me fell and I had to leap over him to avoid falling. Then I realised that he had been hit and turned back to assist him. It was Frank Scullin. He said to me, "For God's sake, get in out of the rain". I'm alright, it's only in the leg". The machinegun was still firing but not in my direction. Even at that moment I got the impression that the gunner was respecting my efforts to help a wounded comrade and had trained his gun elsewhere. Frank crouched into a hallway in Marlborough Street and I rushed on into Abbey Street and back into the Hibernian Bank."⁸⁵

Scullin remained active with the Dublin IRA Brigade during the War of Independence, involving himself in armed patrols, raids for arms and an ambush at Cross Gun in Dublin. He took the anti-Treaty side in the

⁸⁴ NAI, Census of Ireland, http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1901/Dublin/Inns_Quay/Chancery_Street/1278826/

⁸⁵ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Seamus Robinson, WS, 156, p. 19.

Civil War and was involved in action in Fowler Hall, Barry's and Hamman Hotels. He was also involved in the Broadstone and Blessington Street ambushes as well as the destruction of railways lines and raids on printing presses, including Talbot Press and Thom's Printing Works. He was also involved with anti-Treaty troops in destroying Phibsborough Post Office. Most seriously, Scullin claimed in his Military Service Pension Application to have been involved in an attempt on the life of WT Cosgrave, Chairman of the Provisional Government, in Herbert Park before being arrested and interned in April 1923. He died on the 14th of May 1961 and was buried in the republican plot at Glasnevin cemetery

Transcription

*'Cluain Tairbh Abú
Prionsias Ua Sáilaig
'Cluanaigh' Cluain Tairbh*

Frongoch Internment Camp - 15/10/16
Staff Captain Dublin Brigade IRA

Seosamh Ó Tallamháin (Joe Tallon)

Joe Tallon was the son of newspaper publisher Denis Tallon from Dublin's North Richmond Street. He was 21 years of age at the time of the Easter Rising, in which his older brother James also fought. Tallon held the rank of Lieutenant in C. Company of the Dublin Brigade, which was stationed between the GPO and Richmond Road (McCabe's Public House). According to Michael Staines, on Saturday 29th April 1916, Joe Tallon was one of six men selected to carry the severely wounded James Connolly on a stretcher to Dublin Castle to arrange terms of surrender. Tallon stood quietly in the company of Pearse, Connolly, McDermott, Clarke, Plunkett and others as the leaders of the rebellion readied themselves for an inevitable surrender. It was a profound moment when death opened up for the leaders, and for the men who had served under them, an uncertain future lay ahead. Tallon was then called forward to carry the veteran socialist leader. He did so with a quiet pride that would grow with each year of his life that passed.⁸⁶

Transcription

Spring 1916

*Our Spring awake with thine,
O mother nature! And thy flowers'
Smiled under freedom's fair sunshine
In our dear land's Emerald Lowers*

⁸⁶ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Michael Staines, WS 284, p. 19.

*That spring was shortlived as the dew
That flees before the sun,
The autumn came with days as few
Its setting drab and dim*

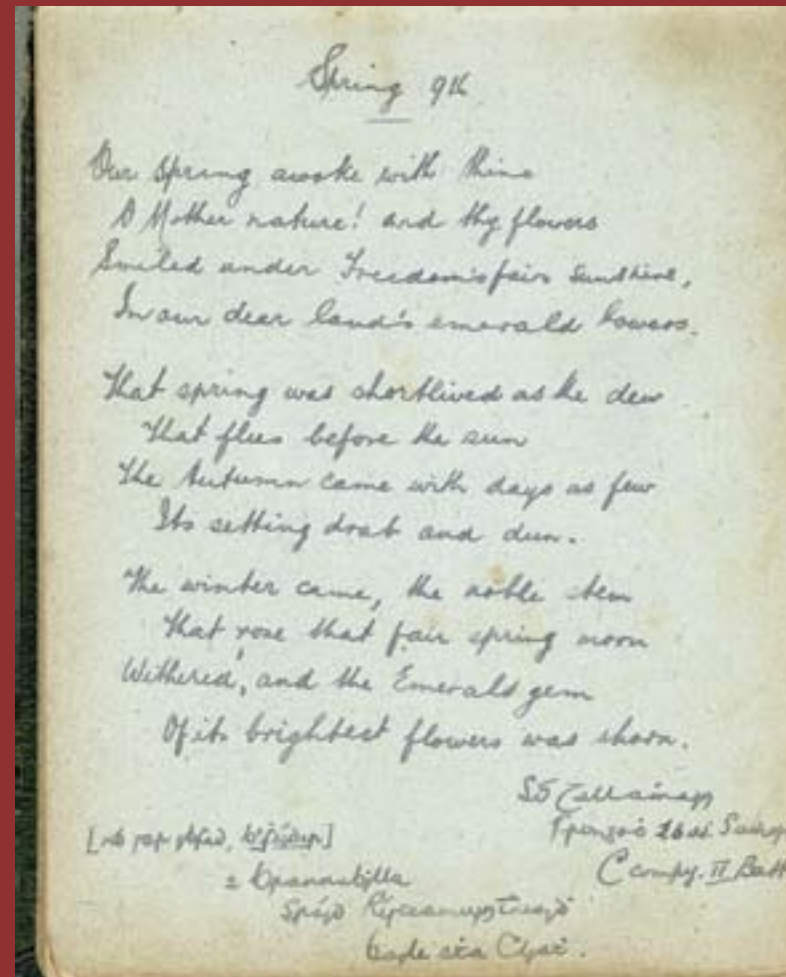
*The Winter came, the noble stem,
That rose that fair spring morn,
Withered and the Emerald gem,
Of its brightest flowers was shorn.*

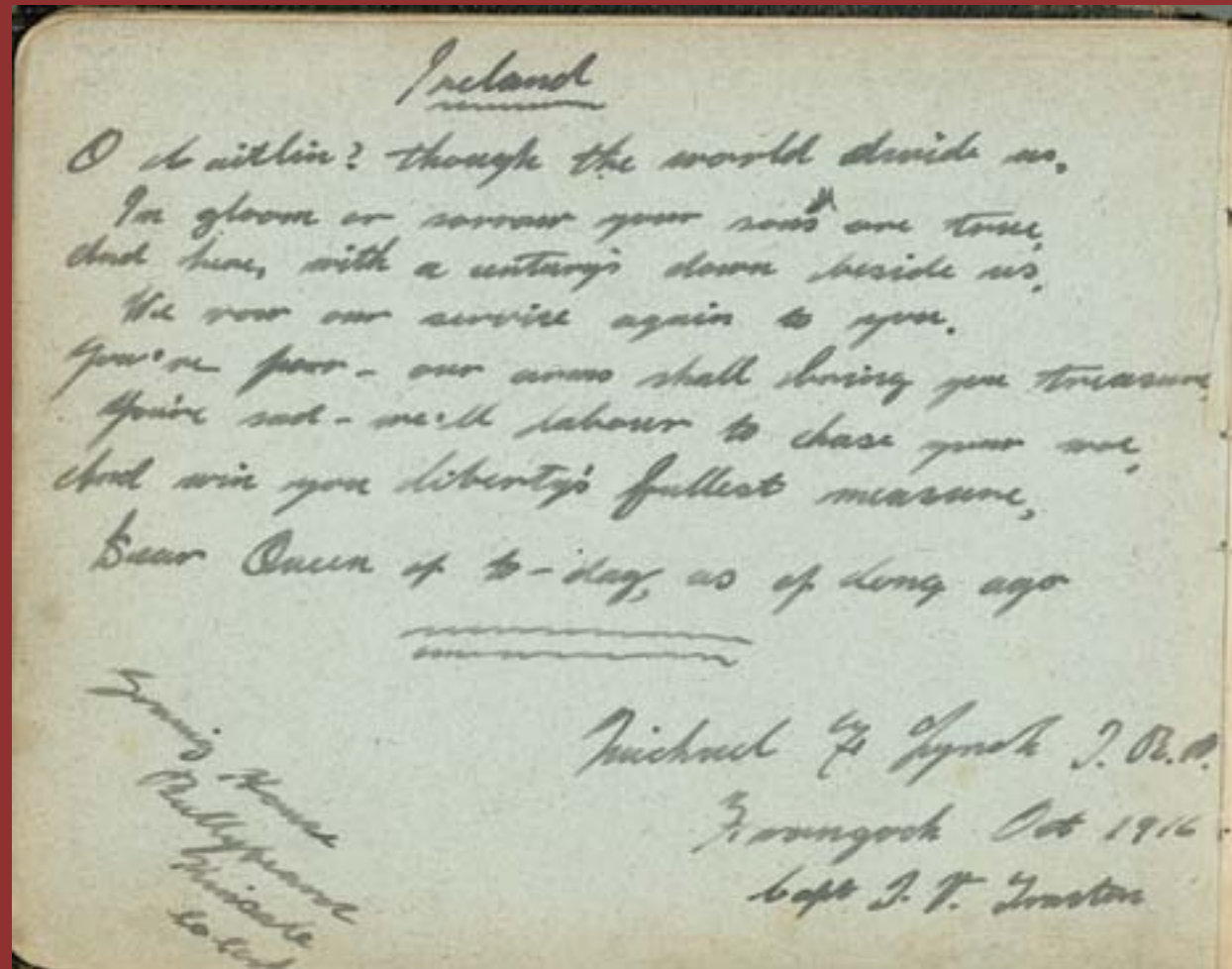
S Ó Tallamháin
Frongoch 16 Samhain, 16
C Company, II Battalion

[[Inelligible], b'fheidir]
2 Brannabilla,
Sráid 'Ritheamuin Thuaidh
Baile Átha Cliath

Composition

Tallon's contribution, seems to be an original composition which invokes the theme of Spring to signify the rebellion and its hoped new awakening, which by the time it was writtten was becoming a reality.





Michael F Lynch

Michael F. Lynch from Tracton in East Cork was the less well known brother of Diarmaid Lynch, a key figure in the Irish republican movement. It was Diarmuid Lynch who attended a meeting on the night of the 22nd of April 1916 with Tomás Mac Donagh, Pádraig Pearse, Seán Mac Diarmada and Joseph Mary Plunkett, at which it was decided to go ahead with the rising, despite the countermand of Eoin MacNeill. When his brother penned the contribution shown here, all the other attendees at that meeting were dead. An IRB member, Diarmuid Lynch acted as Aide de Camp to James Connolly during the Easter Rising.⁸⁷

Thirty one years to the month after making the above entry, Michael F. Lynch made a statement to Bureau of Military history on the 24th of October 1947, making him one of the earliest contributors to the project.⁸⁸ Lynch's brother Diarmaid was centrally involved in the organisation of BMH statements. Reflecting on the period in the lead up to the rebellion Michael F. Lynch recalled.

'I had a small IRB circle in Tracton and Kinsale before 1914. I was centre ... There were about 50 men in the Company when the Split in the Volunteer organisation took place in September, 1914. Our strength was reduced by the Split to about 19 or 20, and that continued to be the position up to Easter, 1916. I attended the first Volunteer Training Camp, conducted by J.J. O'Connell, in Wicklow from 6th to 14th August, 1915. I again attended the Training Camp held in Sheares' Street, Cork, in January, 1916.'⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Eileen McGough, Diarmaid Lynch, A Forgotten Irish Patriot, (Cork, 2013)

⁸⁸ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Michael F. Lynch, WS 35.

⁸⁹ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Michael F. Lynch, WS 35, p. 1

One of Michael Lynch's contributions to the republican struggle was his innovative use of an iron mould which could be used to make plaster of paris slugs as ammunition. The template was used in Dublin by The O'Rahilly who sent down several hundred weights of lead to Tracton which were used by Lynch and his comrades over the following period.⁹⁰

On Easter week, Lynch acted under the instructions of Tomás Mac Curtain, who while not revealing the plans for rebellion, instructed Lynch and his men to mobilise on Easter Sunday.⁹¹ At Bweeing in west Cork, Lynch and his comrades were addressed by MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney. Standing on the roadside fence, Mac Curtain told the men that 'they had expected the enemy would attack on that day but it had not come off, the men were to return to their homes, keep their organisation intact, safeguard their arms and be ready when called upon again.'⁹² Lynch was arrested on the 5th of May 1916 and eventually imprisoned in Frongoch. He remained actively involved in the republican movement and was one of the many canvassers and campaigners who travelled throughout East Clare in 1917 in a bid to elect Eamon de Valera to that constituency.⁹³ He spent much of the revolutionary period in America working for the Friends of Irish Freedom, an Irish American republican organisation which by 1920 had 100,000 members across the United States.

⁹⁰ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Michael F. Lynch, WS 35, The O'Rahilly was a republican from Ballylongford in county Kerry who was killed during the fighting of Easter Week.

⁹¹ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Michael F. Lynch, WS 35, pp. 1-2.

⁹² Ibid, p. 3.

⁹³ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 8

Ireland

*'O Nation? Though the world divide us
In gloom or sorrow your sons are true
And him, with a century's dawn behind us
We vow our service again to you
You're poor - our arms shall bring you treasure
You're sad - we'll labour to chase your woe
And win your liberty's fullest measure
Dear queen of today as of long ago'*

Michael F Lynch IRA
Frongoch, October 1916
Capt. Irish Volunteers Tracton

[On Corner of page]
Spring House,
Ballyfeard
Kinsale
Co. Cork

Composition

Lynch quotes an nineteenth century Irish ballad which was based on the experience of the 1798 Rebellion.



Michael Lynch Order Of Eoin Macneil Second Row,
Third From The Left



Diarmuid Lynch, Michael's Brother Who Was Present The Rebel Leaders Decided To Carry On With The Easter Rising, Despite The Countermand Order Of Eoin Macneil

Liam Ó Bráin

The historian Paul Rouse informs that Ó Bráin was born on the 16th of September 1888 at 10 Church St. North Wall, Dublin and began learning Irish by himself from a grammar book, as it was not encouraged by his teachers nor spoken by his parents. He later became involved in the Lorcan O'Toole branch of the Gaelic League until his parents and teachers insisted that it would be better if he concentrated on his homework in the evenings.⁹⁴ Despite such discouragement, Ó Bráin persisted and in fact dedicated much of his life to the promotion of his native tongue. In 1911 he received the first travelling scholarship awarded by the National University of Ireland and studied Irish literature and language across Europe in Berlin, Bonn, and Freiburg. After his return to Ireland in 1914, he joined the Volunteers, wrote for *An Claidheambh Soluis*, and was elected to the Executive of the Gaelic League. He was also appointed as assistant in the French department in University College Dublin in October 1914. In 1915, he encountered Seán T. O'Kelly, who swore him into the IRB. He later became close friends with O'Kelly, the second President of Ireland and attended O'Kelly's wedding to Mary Kate 'Kit' Ryan as his best man.⁹⁵

After being sworn into the IRB by O'Kelly, he fought in the College of Surgeons during the rising as a member of 'F' Company, 1st Battalion, Dublin Brigade, Irish Volunteers. Ó Bráin also helped print the proclamation of the republic in Liberty Hall in the days before the 1916 rising but spent the final days travelling through much of the country distributing the countermand order of Eoin MacNeill. Having distributed

⁹⁴ Lorcan or Lawrence O'Toole was a 12th Century Archbishop of Dublin who was a key figure in the reform of the Irish church who was later canonised a Saint by Pope Honorius III.

⁹⁵ 'Kit' Ryan from Tighmon in County Wexford died in 1934 and O'Kelly later married her younger sister Philomena two years later. Ryan's brother James was a Fianna Fáil Minister, while another sister was married to Dick Mulcahy, later Chief of Staff of the Free State army.

the message which demobilised much of the country, Ó Bráin joined the fight when it began.⁹⁶ Although both Liam O'Bráin and Harry Nicholls were members of the Irish Volunteers, during the Easter Rising they fought with the Irish Citizen Army under the command of Michael Mallin in the vicinity of the College of Surgeons. In an interview with RTE Television in 1962, O'Bráin described how upon surrender at the end of the rebellion, Mallin addressed the men and recalled Countess Markievicz trying to keep up their spirits declaring, 'I trust Connolly, I trust Connolly'. He testified that before the garrison surrendered, Commandant Mallin ordered his officers including Ó Bráin to mix among the rank and file in order to save them from identification, insisting that 'They know Madame and myself but they don't know anybody else and there's no need to give them any further information.'⁹⁷ Mallin was executed in Kimainham Gaol on the 8th of May.

By the time of his release from Frongoch, Ó Bráin had lost his position at University College Dublin for being absent from his duties. However, in 1917 he was made professor of Romance languages at University College Galway, where he was to work for the following 42 years. A further entry made later by Ó Bráin in a private autograph book uncovered in Clarecastle County Clare in 2016 notes 'East Clare July 1917' in addition to the list of various prisons and internment camps within which he was held in 1916. This statement relates to his presence there with many other republicans in support of Eamon de Valera's by-election candidature for Sinn Féin in which the latter was victorious. A member of Sinn Féin, he stood for that party in Mid Armagh in the 1918 general election and received 5,689 votes as against 8,431 won by the unionist candidate. On the instructions of Michael Collins, Ó Bráin later travelled to France and Italy in order to secure a shipment of arms. In November 1920 he was arrested in the

⁹⁶ 'Notes on Literature in Irish Dealing with the Fight for Freedom', in *Éire-Ireland*, 3, 2, Summer 1968 [pp.138-48]

⁹⁷ 'It Was A Colossal Shock, A Most Unbelievable Shock', <http://1916.rte.ie/> (accessed 27/04/2016)

UCG dining-room by British forces and was imprisoned for 13 months in Wandsworth prison.

He supported the Anglo-Irish Treaty and took the Free State side in the Civil War. He subsequently ran for the Seanad in 1925 before concentrating on an academic and writing career, during which time he wrote several Irish language books and helped establish Gaelic literary initiatives. This included the establishment in the late 1920s of *Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe*, an Irish-language theatre with Micheál MacLiammóir, where he often acted in its plays. In the early 1930s, Ó'Briain met a young aspiring American actor called Orson Welles, who was on a journey through Europe. Ó'Briain encouraged Welles to learn Irish and join the group. However, famously, Welles instead debuted at the Gate Theatre in Dublin. Ó'Briain also was central in establishing Galway's first Irish-language primary school. He appeared frequently on radio and later on television and was on the panel of the first 'Late Late Show', broadcast on Irish television on the 6th of July 1962. O'Briain's recollections of the rising were published in *Cuimhne Cinn* in 1951, which has been described as 'one of the best first-hand accounts of the Rising from the pen of a participant, made all the more attractive by the humanity, humour and honesty of the man'.⁹⁸ In the same year, the French government honoured Ó'Briain by making him a *Chevalier de la légion d'honneur* to mark his services in the cause of good relations between France and Ireland. He died on the 12th of August 1974 at St Gabriel's Hospital, Cabinteely, Co. Dublin. His funeral to Glasnevin was almost a state occasion, with a huge attendance of public figures, and a military firing party at the graveside where the oration was given by Micheál MacLiammóir and a lesson was read by the screen actress Siobhán McKenna.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Paul Rouse, Liam Ó'Briain, http://centenaries.ucl.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/C%3%93_Briain-Liam.pdf

⁹⁹ Paul Rouse, Liam Ó'Briain, http://centenaries.ucl.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/C%3%93_Briain-Liam.pdf

Liam O'Briain and Harry Nicholls were interviewed for the television programme 'I Remember Easter' broadcast on Telefís Éireann, on the 22nd of April 1962.¹⁰⁰ Their friendship seems to have predated the rising as Harry Nichol's is mentioned in a letter from James Ryan to O'Briain on the 1st of June 1916.¹⁰¹

Transcription

'Láim Láidir Abú'

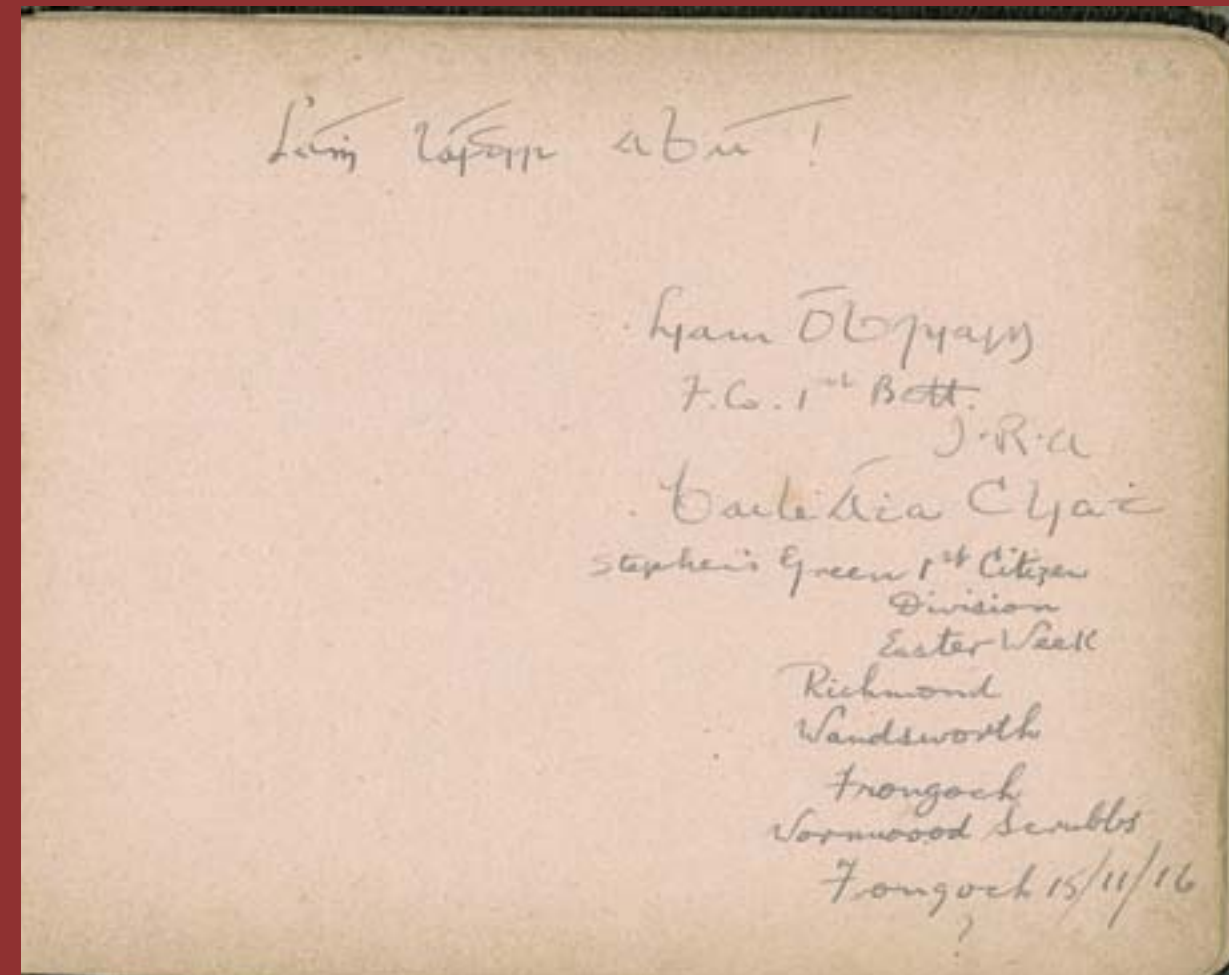
Liam Ó Briain
7 Co. 1st Battalion, IRA
Baile Áthá Cliatha
Stephen's Green, 1st Citixen Division Easter Week
Richmond
Wandsworth
Wormswood Scrubs
Frongoch 15/11/16

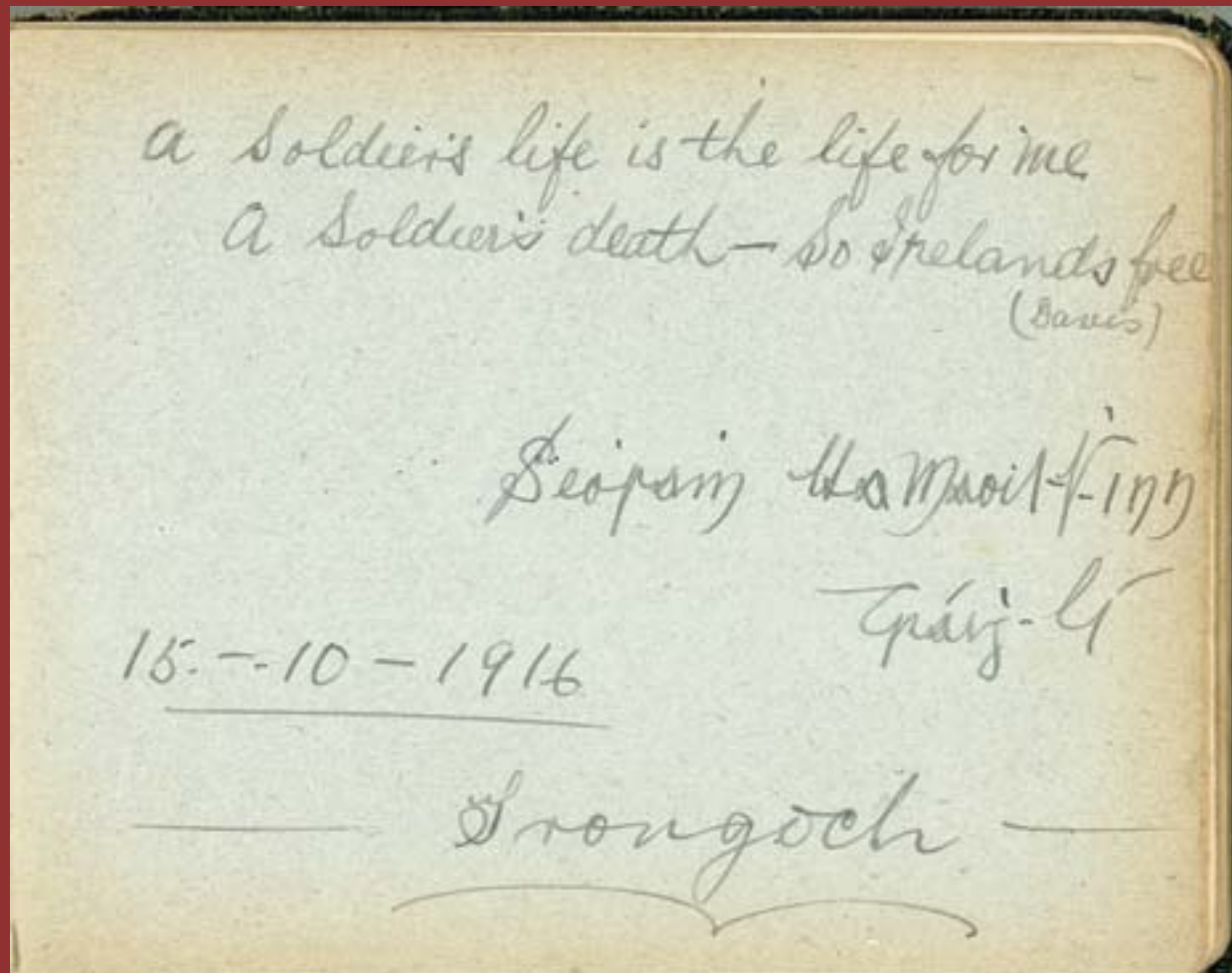
Composition

O'Brien's simple reference 'Lámh Laidir Abú' is in deference to the ancient motto of his family surname 'Lamh laidir an uachtar', which translates as 'The strongest arm uppermost'. At the foot of his contribution, Ó'Briain inserts a question mark, as if to ask where next? Many of the rebel prisoners had reason to suspect that their young lives following their release would be anything but serene.

¹⁰⁰ 'It Was A Colossal Shock, A Most Unbelievable Shock', <http://1916.rte.ie/> (accessed 27/04/16).

¹⁰¹ University College Dublin Archives, Letter from James Ryan to Liam Ó Briain, 1 June 1916, <http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/diyhistory/scripto/transcribe/226/568>





Seosamh Mac Maoilfinn (Joseph McLinn)

Composition

McLinn's quote is taken from *A Song for the Irish Militia* by Thomas Davis. The stanza which McLinn's quote is taken is as follows.

*'The tribune's tongue and poet's pen
May sow the seed in prostrate men
For it is the soldier's sword alone
Can reap the crop so bravely sown
No more I'll sing no more I'll pine
But train my soul to lead a line
A soldier's life is the life for me
A soldier's death and Ireland free.'*

In the 1901 census Joseph McLinn is listed as the ten year old son of Mary McLinn, a widow and shopkeeper in Ballynacliffy in Muckanagh, County Westmeath.¹⁰² By 1916 he was working as an insurance agent in Tralee, County Kerry. McLinn was active in the Kerry Volunteers in 1914 and had attended lectures and orations delivered by leading figures including Seán Mac Diarmada. On 25 October 1914, he was delegated to represent C. Company at the first National Convention of the Volunteers in Dublin. Little is known of his activities during Easter Week but following the rising, he was transferred from Richmond Barracks to Knutsford on 06 June 1916 and from there to Frongoch.

Transcription

*'A soldier's life is the life for me
A soldier's death - So Ireland's free.'
Seosamh Mac Maillfinn
Traighli*

15 - 10 - 1916
Frongoch

102 NAI, Census of Ireland, 1901, <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1901/Westmeath/Muckanagh/Ballynacliffy/1774796/>

Eamon Ó Morcháin (Eamon Morkan)

On the 14th of October 1916, as Eamon Morkan was considering his contribution to Patrick Brennan's autograph book, his mind must have drifted to his young wife who was expecting their first child back home in Dublin. A Cumann na mBan member, she had participated in the Easter Rising despite being over four months pregnant. Just days after Eamon Morkan wrote the above, he heard news that his wife had given birth to their son but that due to severe difficulties at the birth, both she and the child were in danger of dying. Writing many years later he recalled 'In October, 1916, my wife gave birth to a son, Edward Daly, named after my friend—the Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion.' Morkan was given parole of one week from Frongoch to visit his wife and child who made a full recovery before having to return on 30th October.¹⁰³

According to his fellow Frongoch internee Eamon T. Dore, Morkan seems to have been considered for significant positions within the republican movement. At one point Morkan was among four candidates including Michael Staines, Joe Derham and Michael Collins to fill the position on National Aid following their release, but lost out to Collins who was selected by Jenny Wise Power.

Like two other contributors to the book, Bob Price and Jimmie Mulherns, Morkan was from Arran Quay in Dublin. Unusually, in the 1911 Census of Ireland, both Eamon and his brother Michael J, who are listed as publicans, declare their religion as 'Agnostic', while their younger sister

states she is Roman Catholic.¹⁰⁴ Their father Michael, who evidently died between 1901 and 1911 was a vintner from County Tipperary.

Morkan was a member of A Company 1st Battalion Dublin Brigade from 1913 to 1916 and was stationed in the Four Courts area during the Easter Rising. During the revolutionary period he was O/C of the Birr Battalion in 1917 and Vice O/C of the West Waterford Brigade in 1919. In his statement to Bureau of Military History, Morkan revealed that he had been reared in a house with 'strong national leanings' but that as a young man had become disillusioned with John Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party, declaring 'in common with other young men, I felt that a more active policy would be needed if anything was to be achieved in the line of independence for the country.'¹⁰⁵

Morkan was one of those who experienced the derision of certain Limerick people in mid 1915 when he and close friends Ned Daly, Seán Hueston, Con Colbert and others were attacked during a republican parade in the city. He was also present at the funeral of the Fenian O'Donovan Rossa on 29 June 1915. He was there as a member of the firing party who pulled their triggers after Pádraig Pearse uttered the immortal words 'They think that they have foreseen everything, think that they have provided against everything; but the fools, the fools, the fools! — they have left us our Fenian dead, and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace.'¹⁰⁶

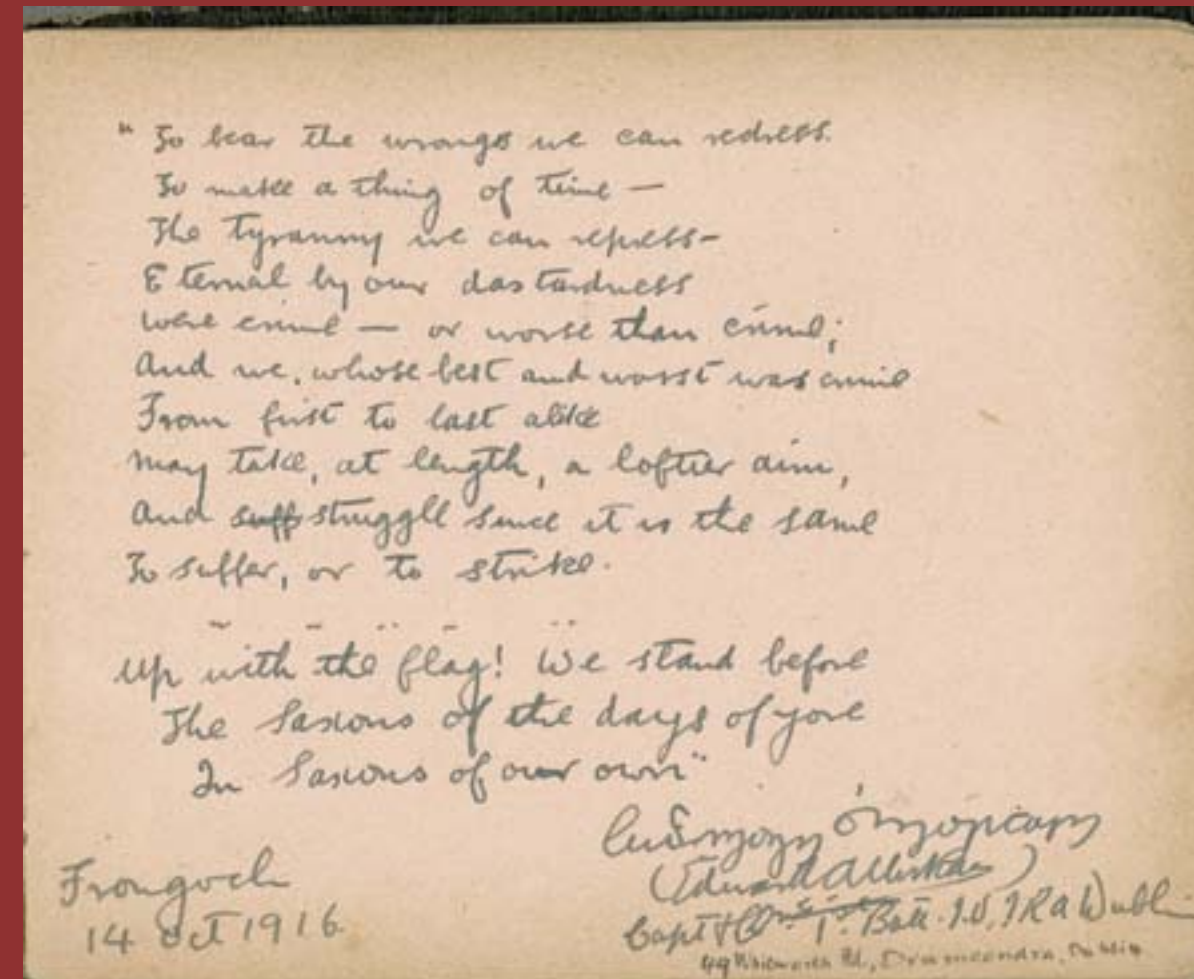
Following the rebellion and while under the captivity of the British, he was witness to the severe ill treatment of Tom Clarke by Captain Lea Wilson, a scene which was also stamped indelibly on the mind of another observer,

¹⁰³ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Eamon Morkan, WS 466, p. 6, Joe Stanely, a fellow Frongoch internee also was in North Wales when his first child was born. Like Morkan, Stanley named his first born after another of the executed leaders, calling him John Colbert Stanley, after Con Colbert, the executed leader from Limerick.

¹⁰⁴ Census of Ireland 1911, http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Dublin/Arran_Quay/Arran_Quay/53482/

¹⁰⁵ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Eamon Morkan, WS 466, p. 2.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 4.



Michael Collins.¹⁰⁷ In Frongoch, Morkan was Hut leader and was later appointed Camp Commandant at north Camp. Following his release at Christmas 1916, Morkan recalled that his wife was ‘Particularly glad to see me so unexpectedly. However, one of her first requirements was the removal of the moustache, which most of the prisoners had begun to affect.’¹⁰⁸ While initially finding it hard to assume his employment, in March 1917 he was reinstated by the National Bank, and appointed to their branch in Birr, Offaly. There he became O/C of the Birr Battalion, with Eamon Bulfin as second in command until his arrest in July 1918, in connection with the ‘German Plot.’

Transcription

*‘So bear the wrongs we can redress,
So make a thing of time,
The tyranny we can repress
Eternal by our dastardness
Were crime—or worse than crime!
And we, whose best and worse was shame,
From first to last alike,
May take at length, a loftier aim,
And struggle, since it is the same
To suffer—or to strike.*

*Up with the flag! we stand before
The Saxons of the days of yore
In Saxons of our own.’*

¹⁰⁷ Morkan notes that ‘as a matter of historic interest it might be mentioned that this officer was later identified as Captain Lea Wilson who was shot in Gorey, County Wexford, in May 1920.’

¹⁰⁸ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Eamon Morkan, WS 466, p. 4.

Eamon Ó Murcháin
Captain 1st Battalion, I.V. IRA Dublin
49, Whitworth Road, Drumcondra, Dublin
Frongoch, 14 Oct. 1916

Composition

The poem quoted by Morkan is taken from ‘The Gathering of the Nation by John D. Fraser. Frazer was born in Birr, Offaly in 1809 and although a cabinet maker by trade, was an author of many fine poems.

Joe Good



Joe Good was born in Soho in London 1895. He set foot on Irish soil for the first time in February 1916, two months before he would participate in one of the most significant moments in the country’s history. He came from a London Irish family who were strongly anti-imperialist. Good was initially christened Alfred but later used his second name Joseph in order to ‘de-anglicise’ himself.¹⁰⁹ In London as a boy he heard stories of the 1798 Rebellion and other Irish struggles which had a profound and enduring impact. While working in a weaving and spinning factory in London, Good would turn a wheel for the spinner with one hand and hold a book about Irish history in the other.¹¹⁰ He joined the same group of Volunteers to which Michael Collins was attached and would form a bond with the West Cork man that would endure over the following years.

During the Easter Rising he guarded the approach across O’Connell Bridge and later joined the garrison in the GPO. The horror and violence of the Easter Rising is often overshadowed by the depth of emotion surrounding the event. On one occasion when Good was attempting in the dark to find a teenage girl in a slum, ‘He thought he put his fingers into her mouth as he thought he had felt her teeth, but when he struck a match, he found that it was through a hole in her skull he had put his fingers.’¹¹¹ The experience of Good serves powerfully to illustrate the violent and traumatic nature of the Easter Rising experience for many.

After being released from Frongoch, Good was employed at the shell munitions factory in Parkgate in 1918. He worked closely with Collins in the

¹⁰⁹ Joe Good, *Enchanted By Dreams: Journal of a Revolutionary*, (Kerry, 1996), p.x.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p.5.

³ Fearghal McGarry, *Rebels: voices from the Easter Rising* (London, 2011) p 64.

Irish War of Independence but resigned his commission at the outset of the Civil War, refusing to engage in fighting with his fellow countrymen. Only the death of his former comrade and friend in Beal na Bláth could entice him to return to the Free State uniform, which he wore until the Civil War’s end. He then returned to civilian life and worked as a maintenance electrician in the College of Science in Dublin.

In 1946, after gentle pressure from his son, Joe Good wrote an account of the revolutionary period in a journal which was later edited by his son Maurice and published as *Enchanted By Dreams: Journal of a Revolutionary*. Later, *Inside the GPO 1916, A First Hand Account* was also edited by his son and published. Good left a powerful insight into the leaders of the Easter Rising. Among his recollections was the memory of Joseph Mary Plunkett reading Erasmus’ *In Praise of Folly*, as the GPO in which he sat was under heavy fire from British shells.¹¹²

Commenting on Seán Mac Diarmada, Good recalled that ‘His was the most powerful personality I’d ever encountered. I don’t know if he was a Marxist . . . but it was the sheer scale of his persona that mattered.’¹¹³ He recalled Mac Diarmada speaking to the volunteers at the close of the Rising and asking them to ‘to take a long look at the dead civilians lying outside our windows’, reminding them that ‘the civilians nearest us were all very poor and would [if fighting resumed] be butchered with us.’ In *Enchanted by Dreams*, Good offers a vivid insight into life in both Knutsford and Frongoch prison. It was Joe Good who poetically reflected that ‘while Pearse was the soul of the Rising and Connolly its heart, MacDermott was its mind.’¹¹⁴

¹¹² *In Praise of Folly* is an essay first written in Latin in 1509 by the Catholic priest and social critic Desiderius Erasmus a satirical attack on superstitions and other traditions of European society as well as on the western Church.

¹¹³ Good, *Enchanted By Dreams*, p. 65.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p. 71.

'Tis sweet to suffer for thee dear Erin
 Fair land of Saint and Scholar
 But the brave and fair again will dare
 Though the patriot's fate must follow
 They'll put a halo around thy head
 Well knowing the cost not curin'
 Just to catch a glimpse of freedom's light
 And die for thee Dear Erin
 What land can boast of patriot host
 As our dear country Ireland
 There's not a race on God's green earth
 Have more love for their sinland.
 Perhaps dear Isle thou must wait awhile
 The reward shall never be given
 Till thy martyrs, mystans and braves
 arise from their graves
 And Justice is found in Heaven
 Joe. Good. H. B. P. R. A.

Transcription

'Tis sweet to suffer for thee, dear Erin
 Fair land of Saint and Scholar
 But the brave and fair again will dare
 Though the patriot's fate must follow
 They'll put a halo around thy head
 Well knowing the cost not [[illegible]]
 Just to catch a glimpse of freedom's light
 And will for thee, Dear Erin,
 What land can boast of patriot's host
 As our dear country Ireland
 There's not a race on God's green earth
 Have more love for their sireland
 Perhaps dear isle thou must wait awhile [sic]
 The reward shall never be given
 Till thy martyrs and braves arise from their graves
 And justice is found in heaven'

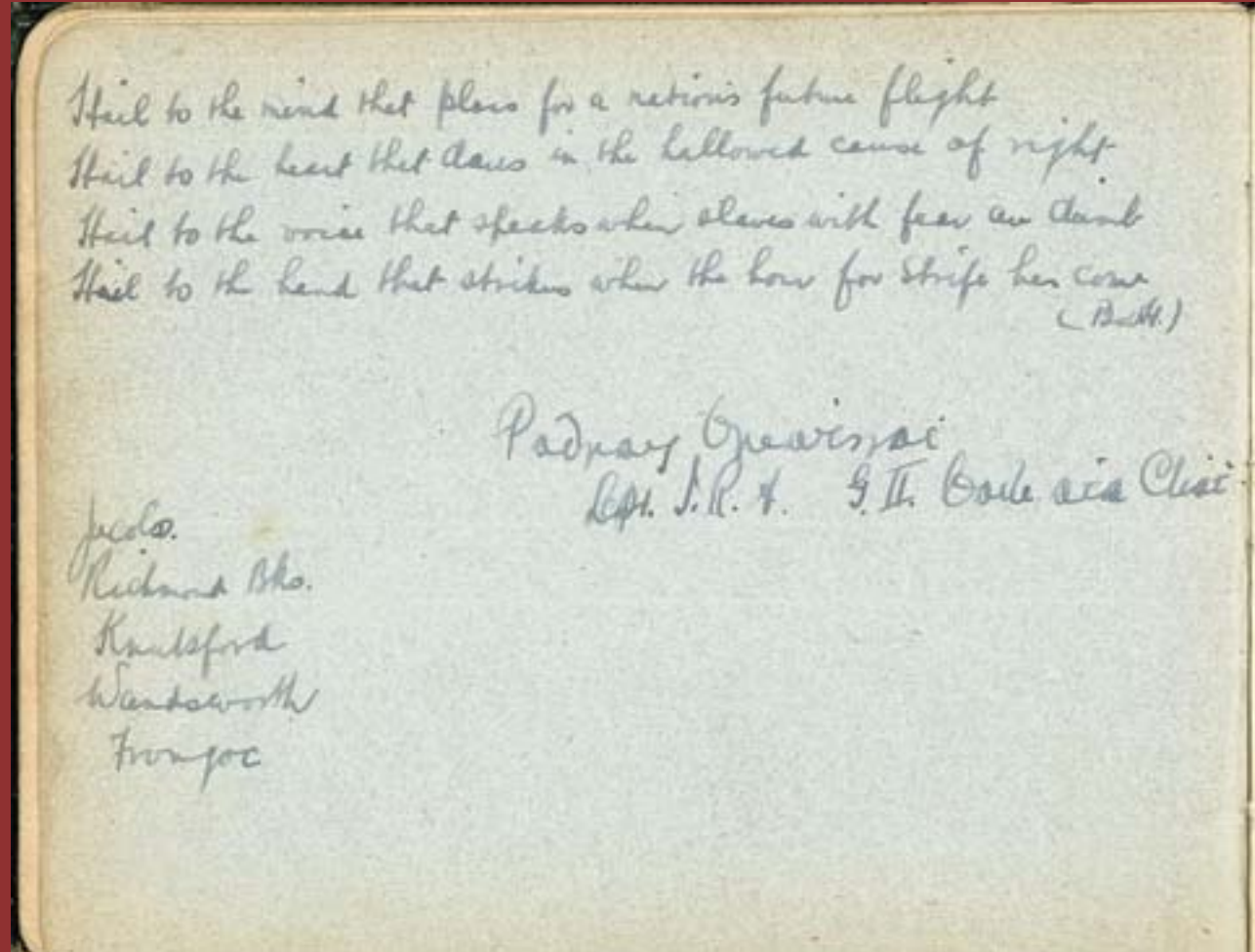
Joe Good II B, IRA

Composition

Good's contribution reflects the determined mindset of the rebel movement in 1916 and affirms their conviction that the sacrifices then being made would result in justice for the people of Ireland. It is also replete with the religious reference which characterised much of the republican literature in the early part of the 20th century.



Interior View Of A Hut, Frongoch Camp 1916



Padraic Breathnac (Patrick Walsh)

Dublin republican Patrick Walsh is listed as having participated in the Jacob's Factory Garrison in the 1916 Rebellion Museum's Roll of Honour.¹¹⁵ He was sent to Knutsford on the 3rd of May and was later transferred to Frongoch.

Jacob's Factory on Bishop Street, where Walsh was based during the rebellion, now the building that hosts the National Archives, was occupied by the 2nd Battalion under Tomás MacDonagh. Major John MacBride was second in command with Michael O'Hanrahan next. The garrison also included Peadar Kearney, who wrote the lyrics to the national anthem, Amhrán na bhFiann. Early in the Easter Rising, the battalion in Jacob's engaged a company of military travelling from Portobello Barracks to strengthen the garrison at Dublin Castle. There followed a relatively quiet week, which mainly consisted of sniping at Portobello Barracks and other military positions which were overlooked by the two towers. Jacob's Factory itself was largely ignored by General Lowe as he focussed on the GPO and Four Courts. News of the surrender did not reach Jacob's Factory until Sunday.

In 2014, a 1916 medal awarded to Patrick Walsh, named and numbered '267' with original green and gold ribbon and clasp bar was sold by Adam's Auctioneers for €1,700.

115 Jacob's Factory Garrison, <http://1916rebellionmuseum.com/1916-easter-rising/roll-of-honour/jacobs-factory-garrison/>

Transcription

*'Hail to the mind that plans for a nation's future flight
Hail to the heart that dares in the hallowed cause of right
Hail to the voice that speaks when slaves will fear are dumb
Hail to the hand that strikes when the hour for strife has come'*

BOH

Padraic Breathnac
B II Baile Átha Cliath
'Jacobs
Richmond
Knutsford,
Wandsworth
Frongoch'

Composition

It is unclear who Walsh is quoting but the BOH may have been his fellow Frongoch internee the republican poet and later Sinn Féin TD for Clare, Brian O'Higgins.

Éamonn Waldron



Note: The following information has been kindly supplied to the author by Mick O'Connor, who comprehensively researched the history of Waldron for an article published in the *Clare Association Yearbook*, 2016.

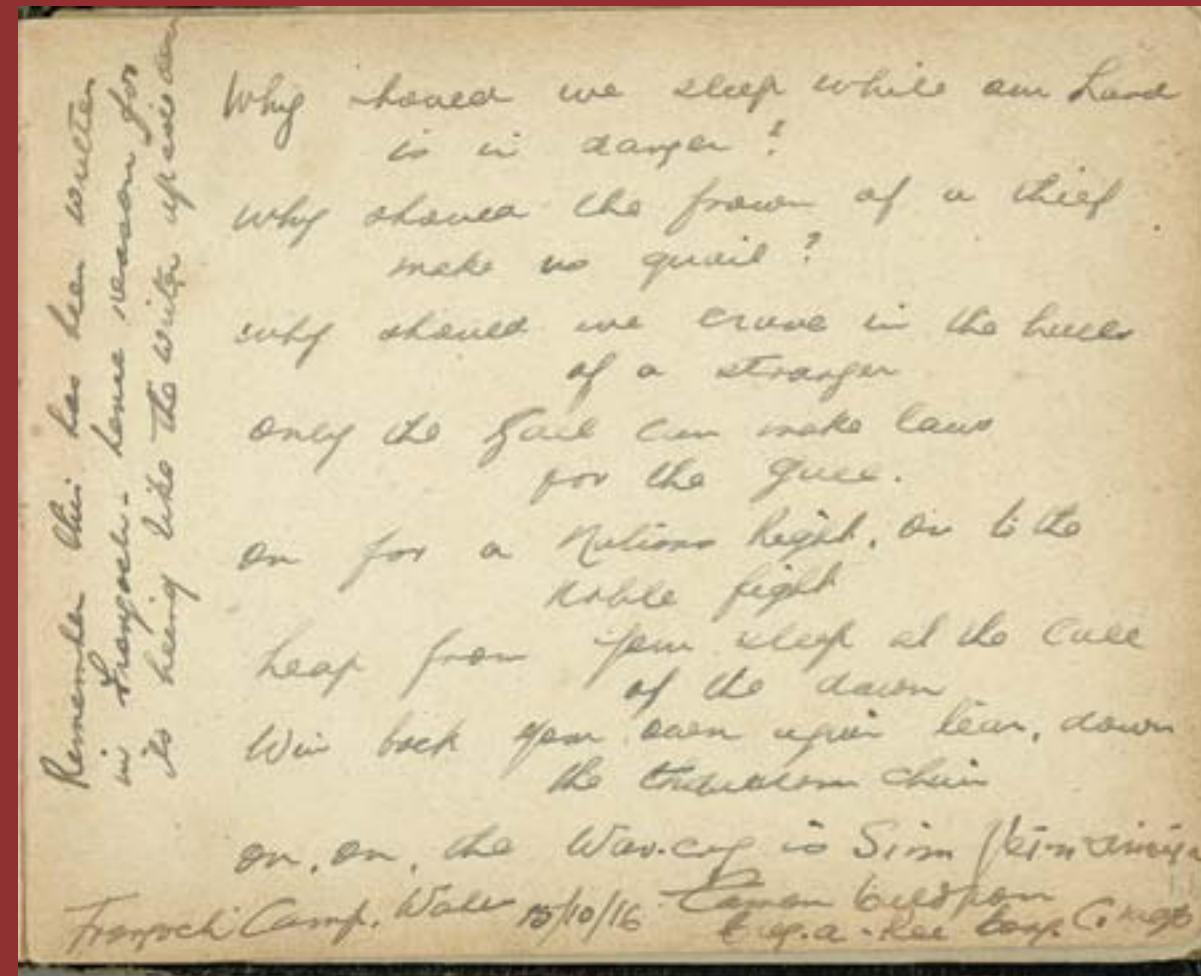
Éamonn Waldron was born into a farming background in Cregaree, Cong, Co. Mayo, on 26th May 1887, when Irish was still spoken in the area. He was educated at St. Jarlath's College, Tuam, Co. Galway. While still a young man, he joined the Gaelic League and was teaching in various locations in Ireland. He was one of the founders and the first principal of the Irish College in Tamhain, Oranmore, Co. Galway, in 1909. He was succeeded in this position by Éamon De Valera. In 1912, Éamonn Waldron was teaching in Coláiste Bhríde, Omeath, Co. Louth, where one of his colleagues was Eoin MacNeill, founder the Irish Volunteers in November 1913. Éamonn followed MacNeill's example and joined the Volunteers, a decision which was to have a major impact on his future.

In 1915 Éamonn Waldron was based in Ennistymon, Co. Clare, working for the Gaelic League. In this capacity he attended the Gaelic League Ard-Fheis in Dundalk as head of the Ennistymon District Committee. Waldron was awaiting orders during Easter week, and was arrested in Ennistymon shortly afterwards for possession of a rifle. He was brought into Limerick Jail and among the other prisoners were Micheál Brennan and his brother Paddy. After Éamonn's release from Frongoch, he was working for the Gaelic League in Mayo and was later ordered to return to Clare to work for the National Gaelic League Collection.

By January 1917, according to the statement of Art O'Donnell, an IRA Commandant from Tullycrine outside Kiltrush and fellow Frongoch internree, Waldron was Brigade Quarter Master of the Clare IRA. Later that year, he was once again arrested under the Defense of the Realm Regulations, prohibiting him from residing in or entering County Clare or any other part of Ireland except the county of Waterford. During Éamonn's time in Waterford, he was involved in organising Oireachtas na Gaeilge as part of his work for the Gaelic League.

Éamonn was arrested May 1918 as part of the roundup in reaction to the alleged 'German Plot', which was a conspiracy allegedly between the German Empire and the Sinn Féin movement. He spent the best part of a year in prison in Birmingham and was released due to ill health. In 1919, Éamonn was arrested, this time in Castlebar, Co. Mayo, and was incarcerated in Castlebar Prison charged as follows: "Being Suspect Of Having Arms In His House And Further With Being A Dangerous Person And Likely To Cause Disaffection Among The King's Loyal Subjects."

Although Éamonn was interned and known for his nationalist activities, he obtained a teaching position in St. Flannan's College, Ennis. This was probably due to the influence of Canon Hamilton and Canon William O'Kennedy, two nationally minded individuals. On Christmas Day 1920, Éamonn was arrested again by a party of RIC and was physically assaulted, firstly by the RIC and later in Ennis Jail by an officer of the Royal Scots Regiment. Imprisoned in Limerick Jail for over three months, he subsequently required medical and convalescent care in Dublin afterwards due to his ill treatment. In March 1922, Éamonn was one of the principal graveside speakers at the second anniversary commemoration of Commandant Martin Devitt, Mid Clare Brigade, who was killed in action at Crowe's Bridge, Inagh, on the 28th of February 1920.



In 1932, Éamonn married Harriet Kathleen Gibson, daughter of John and Margaret Gibson of Ballyvoe House, Inch, Kilmaley, County Clare. For the latter part of his life he and Harriet lived in Galway at St Mary's Park, where he devoted his life to teaching and promoting the Irish language. Éamonn spent 30 years in Coláiste Éinne and Coláiste Iognáid in Galway teaching through the medium of Irish. He was one of the founders of Scoil Samhraith an Ardeaspaig Mhic Héil (1929), Scoil Fhusra and Áras na nGael. Éamonn Waldron died on the 6th of April 1966, in his 78th year during the 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising and is buried in Bohermore Cemetery in Galway City.

Transcription

*Why should we sleep while our land is in danger?
 Why should the frown of a thief make no quail?
 Why should we crave in the halls of a stranger?
 Only the Gael can make laws for the Gael!
 On for a nation's right, on for a noble fight,
 Leap from your sleep at the call of the dawn,
 Win back your own again, leave down the tyrant's chain
 On on, the cry is Sinn Féin, Sinn Féin!*

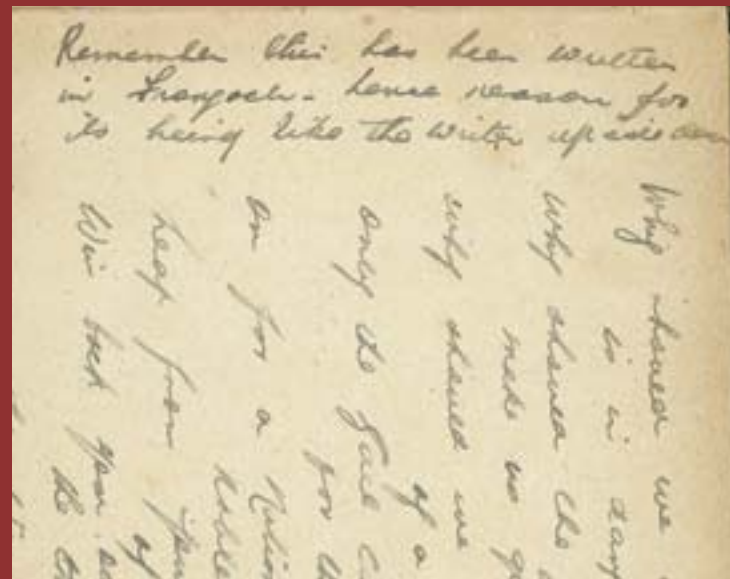
Eamon Waldron
 Cregaree, Cong Mayo
 Frongoch Camp, Wales, 15.10.16

[on side]

'Remember this has been winter in Frongoch. Hence reason why it being like the writer was upside down'

Composition

There is a certain irony, considering his lifelong commitment to the Irish language, that Waldron's contribution is written in English. However, his original composition leaves no doubt with regard to his national feelings and is characteristic of the increasingly defiant attitude of the republican prisoners in October 1916. The note written on the side of the page demonstrates the levity which often broke through the challenging situation in which Waldron and his comrades found themselves .



Jimmie Mulkerns - 'The Rajah of Frongoch'



One of the most entertaining, if not the most interesting of contributors, Mulkerns was perhaps the most recognisable of characters in the North Wales internment camp where he became known as 'The Rajah of Frongoch'. After fighting in the Four Courts Garrison in the Easter Rising, Mulkerns eventually found himself in Frongoch via Wormwood Scrubs and Knutsford prisons, with almost 2,000 Irish republican prisoners from all across Ireland and England.¹¹⁶ While there, Mulkerns formed what was called the 'Entertaining Committee', the weekly activities of which reportedly did much to boost morale among the prisoners. The committee, led by Mulkerns, performed plays and sketches and organised musical and singing performances by the prisoners. According to O'Mahony, due to his overtly flamboyant performances as comic Master of Ceremonies, Mulkerns earned the nickname "The Rajah of Frongoch".

He was described by his granddaughter as a comedian, juggler, singer and magician. In 1997, Helena Mulkearns wrote that 'one of the most popular events on the compound was the performance of a weekly variety show, which was participated in and created by the camp inmates themselves, and emceed by one of Collin's friends and fellow inmates, Jimmy Mulkerns, my grandfather'.¹¹⁷ Although born in Athlone, Mulkerns grew up in Royal Canal Bank, in Dublin's Arran Quay. With Eamon Price and Eamon Morkan, he is one of three Frongoch contributors to the book who hailed from that area of Dublin city. Although Mulkerns had worked as a fireman and also was employed by the Great Western Railway when he was

¹ Mulkerns older brother Patrick had worked as a lineman in the GPO in the early part of the century.

¹¹⁷ So what did you do in the war Grandpa?, *Irish Echo*, 12-18 March, 197, p. 51.

a young man, he had trained as an actor and it was in the arts that his true passion lay. Mulkerns also sang and wrote satirical songs, usually with a republican bent or aimed at challenging British army recruitment campaigns. For example, he penned 'Come Along and Join the British Army', a common satirical song sung throughout Ireland during the First World War.

Following his release, Mulkerns played little direct role in the republican movement and worked for the British Electrical Company. However, having spent a period of his internment in hut No. 10 with Michael Collins, he later remained loyal to the west Cork revolutionary, offering Collins a safehouse at his office on Trinity Street. There, a young Dublin actor George Brendan Nolan, who acted as a body double for Michael Collins would often enter as himself and exit as Michael Collins. Nolan later became a well known Hollywood actor using the alias George Brent. As a result of this continued association with the IRA, Mulkerns was interned in Ballykinlar, County Down during the revolutionary period where he again entertained the prisoners within the camp. He later toured with the 'Ballykinlar Players' also known as 'the company behind the wire'. After he toured following his release, contemporary press heaped high praise on Mulkerns. The *Fermanagh Herald* described "The Rajah" as 'a born humourist who kept the house in roars of laughter', while the *Enniscorthy Echo*, edited by fellow Frongoch internee William Sears, characterised his productions as 'inimitable' declaring that 'the audience persisted on his remaining on stage'.

Mulkerns died in 1956, reportedly disillusioned with the conservative nature of the Irish republic he had fought to achieve. His gravestone in Drumconrda in north Dublin carries the inscription of 'the Rajah of

To Sir Rodger

No tears we shed dear Casement
 As we hear the bell proclaim,
 The passing of a soul so pure
 To the scroll of Ireland's fame,
 To the vengeance of a living God
 In voices loud we pray,
 For the sound of freedom's trumpet
 And the dawning of 'The Day'

Jimmie Mulkerns,
 21 St Catherine's Terrace
 Royal Canal Bank
 Dublin

Four Courts Surrender 29th April
 Richmond Barracks 30th "
 Knutsford Prison 1st May
 Wormwood Scrubs 5th to 7th July
 Frongoch Camp 26th June.
 Dublin

"We'll have our own again" / 20.11.16.

Jimmie Mulkern

Frongoch'.¹¹⁸ The Cáca Milis Caberet owes its origin to 'The Rajah' and is run by his granddaughter Helena Mulkerns.¹¹⁹ His son Jim Mulkerns was a stalwart of the Irish Film industry and in 1969 wrote, produced and directed the Irish-language documentary, An tOileánach a d'Fhill (The Return of the Islander). Mulkerns' daughter is the noted writer Val Mulkerns.

Transcription

To Sir Roger

*No tears we shed dear Casement
 As we hear the bell proclaim
 The passing of a soul so pure
 To the scroll of Ireland's fame
 To the vengeance of a living God
 In voices loud we pray
 For the sound of freedom's trumpet
 And the dawning of 'The Day'*

Jimmie Mulkerns
 21 St. Catherine's Terrace
 Royal Canal Bank
 Dublin
 Four Courts Surrender 29th April
 Richmond Barracks 30 April
 Knutsford Prison 1st May
 Wormswood Scrubs 5th to 7th July
 Frongoch Camp 26 June
 Dublin

"We'll have our own again" / 20.11.16

¹¹⁸ 'Welsh Village summons ghosts of Ireland's revolutionary past', *The Guardian*, 27 December 2015

¹¹⁹ 'The Rajah of Frongoch', <http://www.cacamiliscabaret.com/about-us/the-rajah-of-frongoch/>

Composition

It is not surprising, given his flair for the literary that Mulkerns contributed an original composition to the autograph book, when approached by Patrick Brennan. His short piece 'To Sir Rodger' is dedicated to Roger Casement, the humanitarian activist, republican and poet, who on 3rd August 1916 was hanged in Pentonville prison, less than four months prior to Mulkerns' contribution and while he and his comrades were imprisoned in north Wales.



an illustration of Mulkerns dressed satirically.

William J Brennan Whitmore

William J. Brennan Whitmore was a native of County Wexford where he was born in 1886. He was raised by his uncle John Brennan at Clonlee in Ferns where as a young man he joined the British Army and served with the Education Corps in India. After leaving the army in 1907, Brennan Whitmore returned to Ferns where he worked on his father's farm and soon commenced employment as a journalist. He also became involved with the emerging Irish Volunteer movement then building in north Wexford.

Due principally to his military experience, Brennan Whitmore found himself on the general staff of the volunteers in the lead up the Easter Rising. North Wexford had an active republican presence to which Whitmore had become attached. However, he later resigned from the Ferns company after a disagreement over discipline with Seamus Doyle and was in Dublin at the outbreak of the Easter Rising. During the fighting in Dublin, over 30 men from Ferns were mobilised in north Wexford. There they occupied the local RIC Barracks which they held for the period of the rising, only vacating it after an RIC District Inspector and Sergeant had arrived under a flag of truce with a copy of Pearse's surrender order.¹²⁰

While his native Ferns was held by his former comrades, in Dublin Brennan Whitmore commanded a position in Noblett's Corner, Great North Earl Street. After coming under heavy fire, Brennan Whitmore and his men were captured by British Forces and imprisoned. Following his release from Frongoch, he became closely associated with Michael Collins with whom he worked with during Irish War of Independence and supported in the Anglo-Irish Treaty debates. He remained in the Free State army until 1926 after which he became actively involved in Clann na Poblachta.¹²¹

¹²⁰ 'The Easter Rising in County Wexford', http://enniscorthy1916.ie/?page_id=4, (accessed 30/04/2016).

¹²¹ Clann na Poblachta was a republican political party founded by Seán MacBride in 1946.

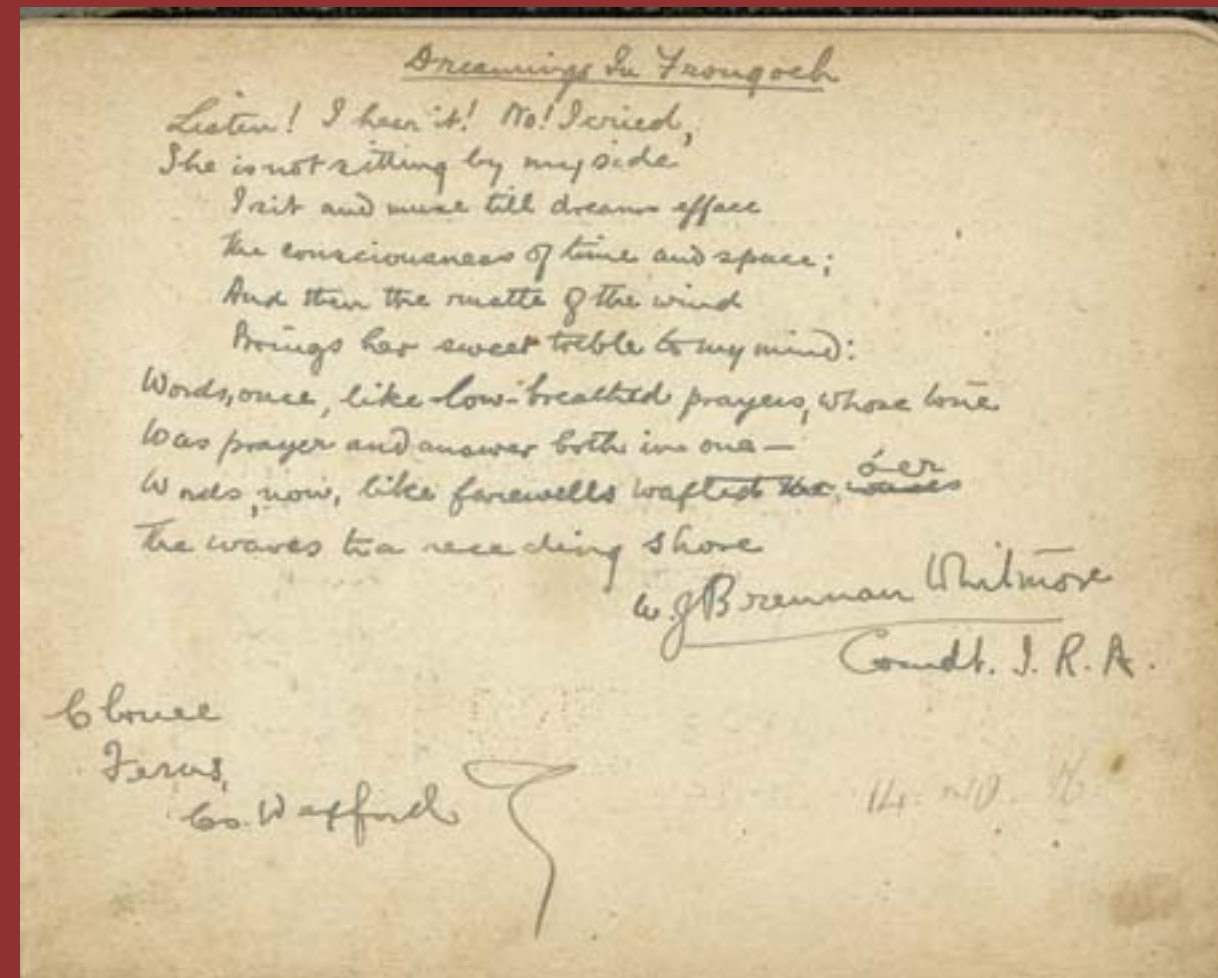
Critically, Brennan Whitmore later went onto write two books: *Dublin Burning: The Easter Rising from Behind the Barricades* and *'With the Irish in Frongoch.'* The latter was first published in 1918 and provides an important insight into life in the Welsh internment camp. The book was largely responsible for popularising the 'University of Revolution' notion of Frongoch. In the book, he explained how the detention camp was turned into an unofficial military college and described how secret lectures on guerrilla warfare were given to selected officers. The book also detailed the sometimes harsh life and conditions in the camp. Brennan Whitmore died in 1977 at the age of 91 and was the last surviving commandant of the Easter Rising.

Transcription

Dreamings in Frongoch

*'Listen! I hear it! No, I cried!
She is not sitting by my side.
I sit and muse till dreams efface
The consciousness of time and space
And then the rattle of the wind
Brings her sweet treble to my mind
Words, once like low breathed prayers whose line tone
Was prayer and answer both in one -
Words, now like farewells wafted oer,
The waves to receding shore'*

- WJ Brennan Whitmore, Comdt. IRA
14/10/16
Clonlee



Ferns,
Co. Wexford
Composition

His contribution seems to be an original composition and evokes the sound of Ireland calling her sons to battle. The personification of Ireland in female form was a recurrent theme in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, immortalised in the presentation of Cathlín Ní Houlihan by William Butler Yeats and Lady Gregory in 1902.

John J Scollan

John Joseph Scollan was born in 1876 in South Shield, Durham in England. In the 1911 Census, he is listed as living at 35 Creggan Street, Derry where he worked as a printer/compositor. Scollan was principally responsible for establishing the Hibernian Rifles, an important if little known military unit which fought independently during the Easter Rising. In November 1949, Scollan told the Bureau of Military History that in 1911 he came from Derry to Dublin following a conference of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) American Alliance in Dundalk, at which he had been appointed National Director.¹²² The AOH had had broken from the Board of Erin in 1907 due to ‘narrow sectarianism’ and by 1916, was under the influence of Clan na Gael. In Dublin, he founded the organisation between 1912 and 1913. Scollan was also Editor of the Irish American Alliance (IAA) newspaper *The Hibernian* which was published from June 1915 until March/April 1916.

The first recruiting advert for the force appeared in the militant labour newspaper *The Worker* on the 22nd of November 1913, appealing for ‘all Catholic Irishmen of good character.’ Despite the distinctly Catholic hue, Scollan claimed that the Hibernian Rifles were a non-sectarian body that its constitution did not bar anyone from joining. The Hibernian Rifles were initially opposed to the National Volunteers whom they resented for their anti-union stance under John Redmond during the 1913 Lock Out. The membership was predominately made up of working class Dubliners who helped to raise money for the strikers of 1913. Until the split which produced a much more radical minority of Irish Volunteers, ‘the rifles’ had maintained much stronger ties with James Connolly and the Irish Citizen Army. In December 1914, an indication of their militancy was shown

¹²² NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, John Joseph Scollan, WS, 318

when Scollan declared at a meeting of the Michael Dwyer Cumann of Sinn Féin that ‘Many more of us through God’s grace shall live to see the Union Jack of England down in the dust and our own immortal green interwoven with orange and white of the Irish republic waving proudly and victoriously over the land.’¹²³

After overtures from Tomás Mac Donough, cooperation with the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army increased as 1916 approached. However, the Hibernian Rifles remained a separate and independent group. On Easter Sunday the Hibernian Rifles paraded as usual in North Frederick Street, where they soon realised the plans for rebellion. The following day, Scollan addressed his men.

‘I addressed them and told them that as far I knew this fight which was just starting was unofficial, but as it had started we should join in and take our place in it. At the same time I said that if any man did not wish to volunteer for the fight was at liberty to go home.’¹²⁴

Soon, Scollan and his men were in the thick of the action. Later he recalled;

‘We Got into the Exchange Hotel and on to the roof. At this time some of the Volunteers were supposed to be trapped in the Evening Mail Office and in the City Hall. We found that the City Hall was occupied by British soldiers and we engaged them by fire. In the afternoon units of the Irish Fusiliers and Enniskillen Fusiliers advanced to storm our position and were met by a fusillade from our shot-gun men and Rifles. They were actually slaughtered by our fire. Twenty-three or four of them were killed or seriously wounded.’¹²⁵

¹²³ Pádraig Ó'Ruairc, ‘A Short History of the Hibernian Rifles 1912-1916’ in *The Irish Story*, 31 March 2013

¹²⁴ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, John Joseph Scollan, WS, 318

¹²⁵ Ibid.

Sacrifice!
Friends may chide and pals shall frown
At men who dared, and gave their lives
So that their mother yet might live
To bring forth progeny to her renown!
Dear Mother Erin, you yet shall live
To chide false friends - scourge your foes -
When men like they come from your womb
To give - to die - that you may live!

John J. Scollan, A. J. R.
Comdt. Hibernian Rifles
Editor "The Hibernian"
Nat. Secty. A.O.H. (I.R.A.)
Camp Treasurer, Frongoch

Frongoch,
28th Oct.
1916

John J. Scollan

In the GPO on the Thursday of Easter Week, Connolly requested that Scollan go to Broadstone Station on reconnaissance. There, Scollan was challenged by a British sentry and although he claimed he was a stranger in Dublin, was taken prisoner and transferred to Ship Street Barracks the following day.

On Friday 6th of May Scollan was transferred to Richmond barracks before being transported to England by cattle boat and interned in Wandsworth prison. In July he was transferred to Frongoch Internment camp where at least seven other 'Riflemen' who had fought in the rising were interned. Scollan was appointed camp treasurer until he was transferred to Reading jail for 'disciplinary reasons' on the 30th of October, just two days after signing the autograph book. Michael Collins was then elected to fill his position. Scollan was released from Reading Jail on Christmas Eve 1916, after which he noted that "There was a decided change in the outlook of the people now. Whereas they were hostile to us when we were being deported, they were now friendly."¹²⁶

Scollan kept an interesting autograph book covering his period in Frongoch and Reading. The autograph book, which had contained the names of Seán T. O'Kelly, Brian O'Higgins, Darrell Figgis, William Sears, Pádraig Ua hEigeartaigh and Dómhnall Ua Buachalla, was later sold by Whytes auctioneers for €4,200.¹²⁷ Scollan later contributed to various newspapers in the 1920s and 1930s, usually writing about folklore, customs or places in Derry or Fermanagh. He died in 1962.

Transcription

¹²⁶ Ibid.
¹²⁷ 1916-17. Reading Jail and Frongoch Internment Camp for Rising Prisoners. Autograph book including Arthur Griffith, Terence MacSweeney, Tomas MacCurtain, and good illustrations, <http://www.whytes.ie/PrintCatalogue.asp?Auction=20090314>

Sacrifice

*Friends, may chide and pals shall frown
At men who dared and gave their lives
So that their mother yet might live
To bring forth progeny to her renown
Dear mother Eri you yet shall live
To chide false friends, scourge your foes
When men like they come from your womb
To give - to die - that you may live'*

John J. Scollan IRB
Comdt. Hibernian Rifles
Editor: The Hibernian
National Secretary AOH - IAA
Camp Treasurer - Frongoch
Frongoch
28 Oct.
1916

Composition

The contribution of Scollan reminds the reader of the often isolated and ostracised position of republicans in Irish history. For Scollan and his comrades, involvement in republican politics had for many years prior to the rising resulted in being mistreated by police and shunned by neighbours. It also once again shows the traditional representation of Ireland in female form.

William Sears

William Sears was the owner and Editor of *The Echo* newspaper in County Wexford at the time of the Easter Rising. Born in Ballinrobe, County Mayo in 1868, Sears had been a prominent nationalist for many years and had been critical in the recruitment and development of the well known republican Robert Brennan, who he headhunted for his paper. *The Echo* founded in 1902, became one of the first local newspapers to support Sinn Féin and strongly endorsed the efforts of the Irish Volunteers. The managing director of the paper was C.J. Irwin of Kilcannon House, Enniscorthy and Sears was employed as Editor.¹²⁸ In July 1908, Sears took the bold decision to hire and offer a regular column in his paper to Úna Bolger, a nationalist and feminist whose father John had been an active Land League leader.¹²⁹

In December 1913, Sears was present when Enniscorthy came to a standstill as a large parade led by the Brass band of the Vinegar Hill Branch of the Irish National Foresters marched through the town. Sears was on stage with nationalist figures including the O’Rahilly from Kerry, who would later die in the fighting of Easter Week. Sears was by then a member of the IRB, one of several active around the town. Addressing the large crowd Sears declared “There’s an old saying, that a burglar never went near a house when there was a policeman around and if Ireland had her policemen in the shape of the Volunteers no burglar nation would again interfere with her rights.”¹³⁰ Following the meeting a reported 200 men from those assembled, followed Sears into the GAA rooms and joined the new Wexford branch of the Irish Volunteers.¹³¹

Sears was well known and respected as a senior figure in Frongoch. As someone who had been active in public life for some time, he was known to more than the rebels. The republican Joe Lawless recalled an incident involving Sears which characterised the hardening of attitudes among the rebel movement, towards anyone associated with the British establishment. Many of the Frongoch prisoners later recalled the appointment of Fr. Stafford as the prison chaplain. To their universal disappointment, Stafford was an overtly pro-British appointment, who wore British regalia when attending to the irritated prisoners. As Lawless observed Fr. Stafford approach the veteran republican from Wexford, he was taken aback by Sears’ reaction.

‘One of the prisoners in our camp was William Sears, of Wexford, a veteran Irish Nationalist ... who wore a flowing beard, was walking in the compound when Father Stafford was leaving the Camp, and, as the latter had known Sears in Ireland years before, he walked over to him, hailing him as an old friend and holding out his hand in greeting. Sears stood and looked him up and down disdainfully, ignoring the outstretched hand, and keeping his own firmly in his coat pockets, he said, “I don’t know you. I have no friends in the ranks of the British Army”. Trying to break down the barrier, Father Stafford then took hold playfully of the end of Sears’ beard, and said something like, “Oh, come come now”, when Sears, sweeping the hand away with a lordly gesture, turned on his heel and left him. He must have been very hurt by Sears’ treatment of him, particularly as the snub was pretty public, and, indeed, I felt a little sorry for him at the time, but he took it well, and I think he began to appreciate the depth of National feeling amongst us, and to re-shape his ideas of approach.”¹³²

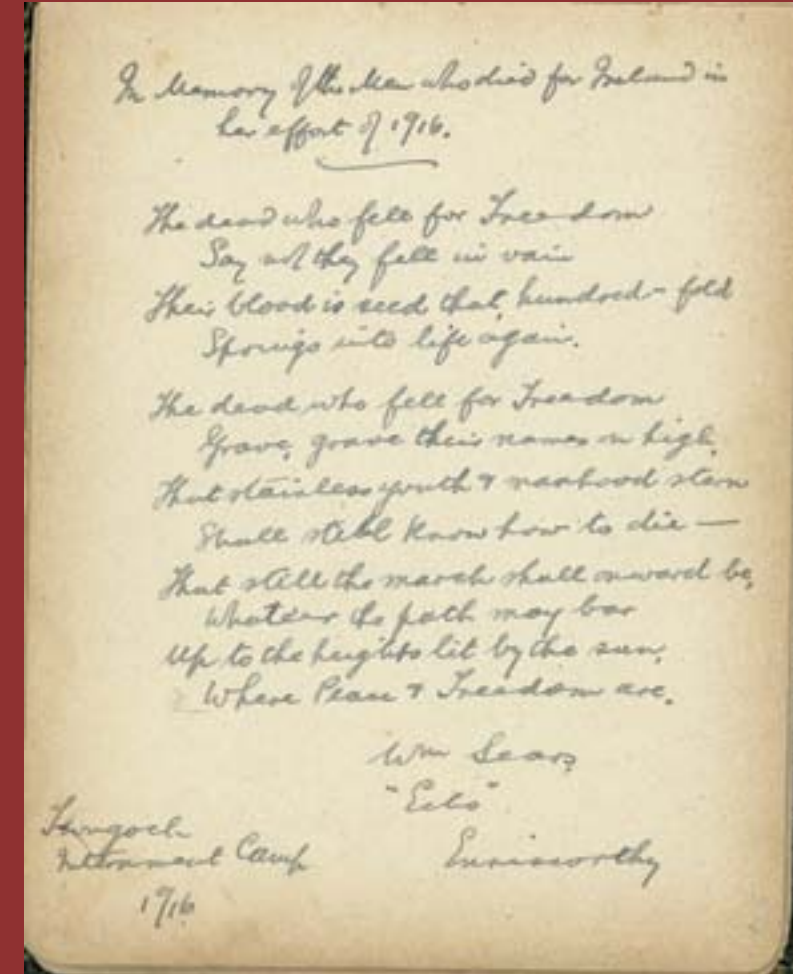
¹²⁸ The 1916 Rising and County Wexford, An Educational Resource, pp. 8-9.

¹²⁹ William Sears, //www.wexfordpeople.ie/news/wexford-man-was-a-giant-of-his-time-31077071.html published 17/03/2015

¹³⁰ William Sears, //www.wexfordpeople.ie/news/wexford-man-was-a-giant-of-his-time-31077071.html published 17/03/2015

¹³¹ Ibid

¹³² NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Colonel Joseph V. Lawless, WS, 1043, pp. 180-182.



Following his release, Sears became more actively involved in the political side of the republican movement. He was elected as a Sinn Féin MP for the Mayo South constituency at the 1918 general election. In January 1919, when Sinn Féin MPs refused to recognise the Parliament of the United Kingdom and assembled at the Mansion House in Dublin as a revolutionary parliament called Dáil Éireann, Sears was again in prison. In 1921, he was elected unopposed as a Sinn Féin TD for the Mayo South–Roscommon constituency. Having taken the Pro-Treaty side in the Civil War, he was re-elected unopposed for the same constituency at the 1922 general election. He was later elected as a Cumann na nGaedhail TD for Mayo South constituency at the 1923 general election, but lost his seat at the June 1927 general election and a year later was elected to the Seanad. Sears died on the 23rd of March 1929.

Transcription

‘In Memory of the men who died for Ireland in her effort of 1916’

*‘The dead who died for Ireland,
Say not they died in vain.
The blood is seed that hundred fold,
Springs into life again
The dead who died for Ireland,
Grave, grave, their names on high.
That stainless youth and manhood stern
Shall still know how to die,
That still the march shall onward be,
What ever the path may bar,
Up to the heights lit by the sun,
Where peace and freedom are.’*

Wm Sears
‘Echo’
Enniscorthy
Frongoch Internment Camp
1916

Composition

Sears contributed an original poem to the autograph book which once again reinforces the recurrent theme of sacrifice and rebirth. The following poem about Pádraig Pearse was also written by Sears during his internment in Frongoch.

The Master

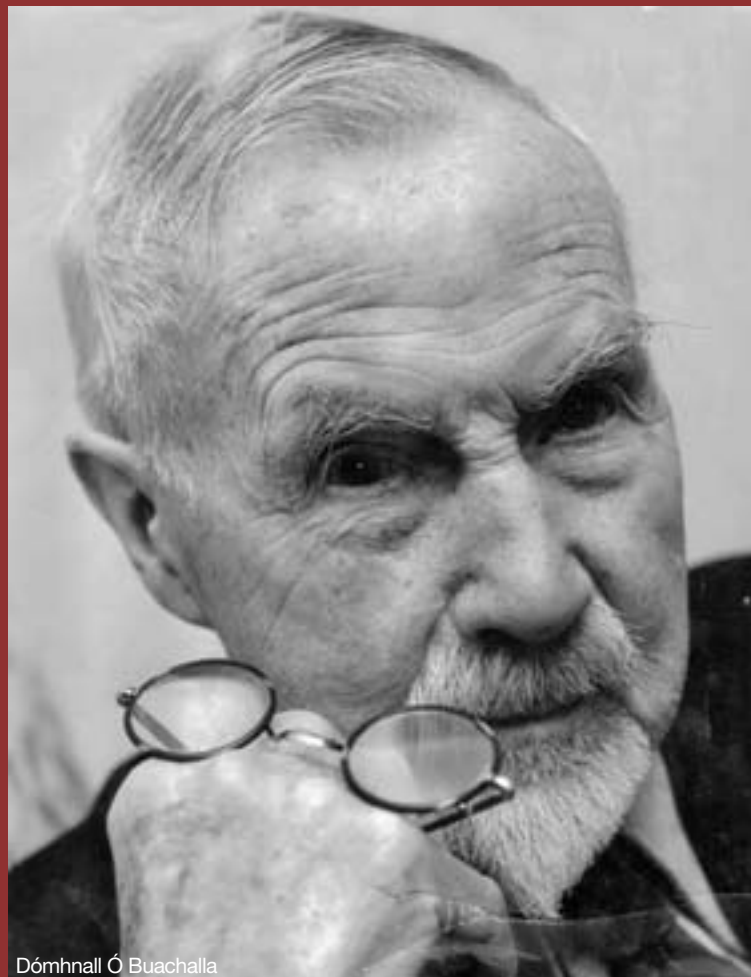
In loving memory of P. H. Pearse Schoolmaster of all Ireland
may God give Eternal rest to your noblest soul;

*You have more pupils now upon your Roll Than ever at St. Enda’s;
and the new outdo The old in prouder love of you.
Learning with kindred hearts your lesson high
Who taught your boys how Irish boys should live
And your countrymen how Irishmen should die..¹³³*

¹³³The 1916 Rising and County Wexford, An Educational Resource, pp. 57-58.



Black Hand Group -The ‘Black Hand’ had been a traditional symbol of revolution in at the turn of the twentieth century. This photograph of Frongoch internees includes Michael F. Lynch (far left in front row), Dómhnall Ó Buachalla (third from left in front row) and Eamon Waldron (fourth from left in front row).



Dómhnall Ó Buachalla

Domhnall Ua Buachalla

Domhnall Ua Buachalla, a native of Maynooth in County Kildare and was 47 years of age at the time of the Easter Rising. He ran a grocery store and public house in Maynooth where he was a committed member of Conradh na Gaeilge (Gaelic League). Famously in 1905, it was Ó Buachalla who was prosecuted for having his name in Irish on his cart, which was against British law. Ua Buachalla refused to remove his Gaelic name and in the case which followed, was defended by Pádraig Pearse, the latter's only case in court.¹³⁴ After losing the case, Ua Buachalla was fined and again he refused to pay. As a consequence, goods were forcibly removed from his shop and sold at public auction. To the frustration of the British authorities, the goods were bought by local people and handed back to Ó Buachalla!

Ua Buachalla was also a member of the IRB and Irish Volunteers and upon hearing of the Easter Rising, marched to Dublin with a small group of republicans from Kildare to participate in the rebellion, where he fought as a sniper, reportedly killing at least three British soldiers. While in Frongoch, he immersed himself in the intensive Irish language activities within the camp. In a reflection of the often intolerable conditions at Frongoch, Ó Buachalla was bitten under the eye by a rat while asleep and had to receive medical treatment.¹³⁵ Following his release from Frongoch, Ua Buachalla threw his efforts into the Sinn Féin party, then turning its attention towards political ascension. He was returned as the TD for Kildare in the 1918 General Election.¹³⁶ He later took a strongly anti-treaty position in the Irish Civil War, fought in the Four Courts and was interned by the Free State authorities, only to be later freed when Frank Aiken bombed the jail and freed the

¹³⁴ Domhnall's son Joe attended Pádraig Pearse's school in St. Endas.

¹³⁵ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Joseph McCarthy, WS, 1497, p. 1

¹³⁶ Adhamhnan Ó Suilleabháin, *Domhnall ua Buachalla: Rebellious Nationalist, Reluctant Governor* (Cork, 2015).

prisoners.¹³⁷ He later became a member of Fianna Fáil and won the Kildare seat in the 1927 General Election. Ironically, he lost his seat in 1932 when Fianna Fáil rose to power. Eamon De Valera then appointed Ua Buachalla to the post of Governor General of Ireland, an official of the sovereign of the Irish Free State. The position was abolished in 1936 with Ua Buachalla as the last sitting holder of the title. In effect, De Valera had used Ua Buachalla's appointment to kill off the position. He instructed Ua Buachalla not to attend any public events and in so doing render the position invisible and irrelevant. Ua Buachalla and de Valera subsequently had a bitter row over the way in which the abolition of the position left Ua Buachalla with a bill for the residency of a house, which the government had selected for him. The matter was finally resolved with the government relenting and covering the cost.¹³⁸ Having later served on the Council of State, Ua Buachalla died in Dublin on the 30th of October 1963 at the age of 97 and was buried in Laraghbryan Cemetery in Maynooth. After a state funeral, the graveside oration was given by Eamon de Valera, then the President of Ireland. During the oration, President de Valera said of Ua Buachalla that;

'He was a man who gave the love of his heart for Ireland, one of a band of sterling people who helped to found Conradh na Gaeilge, who started the Volunteers, made the Easter Rising possible and who continued his efforts until freedom had been achieved for this part of the country.'¹³⁹

In 2015, Ua Buachalla's grandson Adhamhán Ó Suilleabháin, wrote a carefully researched and comprehensive account of his life entitled *Domhnall ua Buachalla: Rebellious Nationalist, Reluctant Governor*.

¹³⁷ Henry Boylan, (Ed.), *A Dictionary of Irish Biography*, (Dublin, 1998).

¹³⁸ Brendan Sexton, *Ireland and the Crown, 1922-1936: The Governor-Generalship of the Irish Free State*, (Dublin, 1989), p. 157.

¹³⁹ Funeral of Domhnall Ua Buachalla, Leinster Leader, 09 November 1963

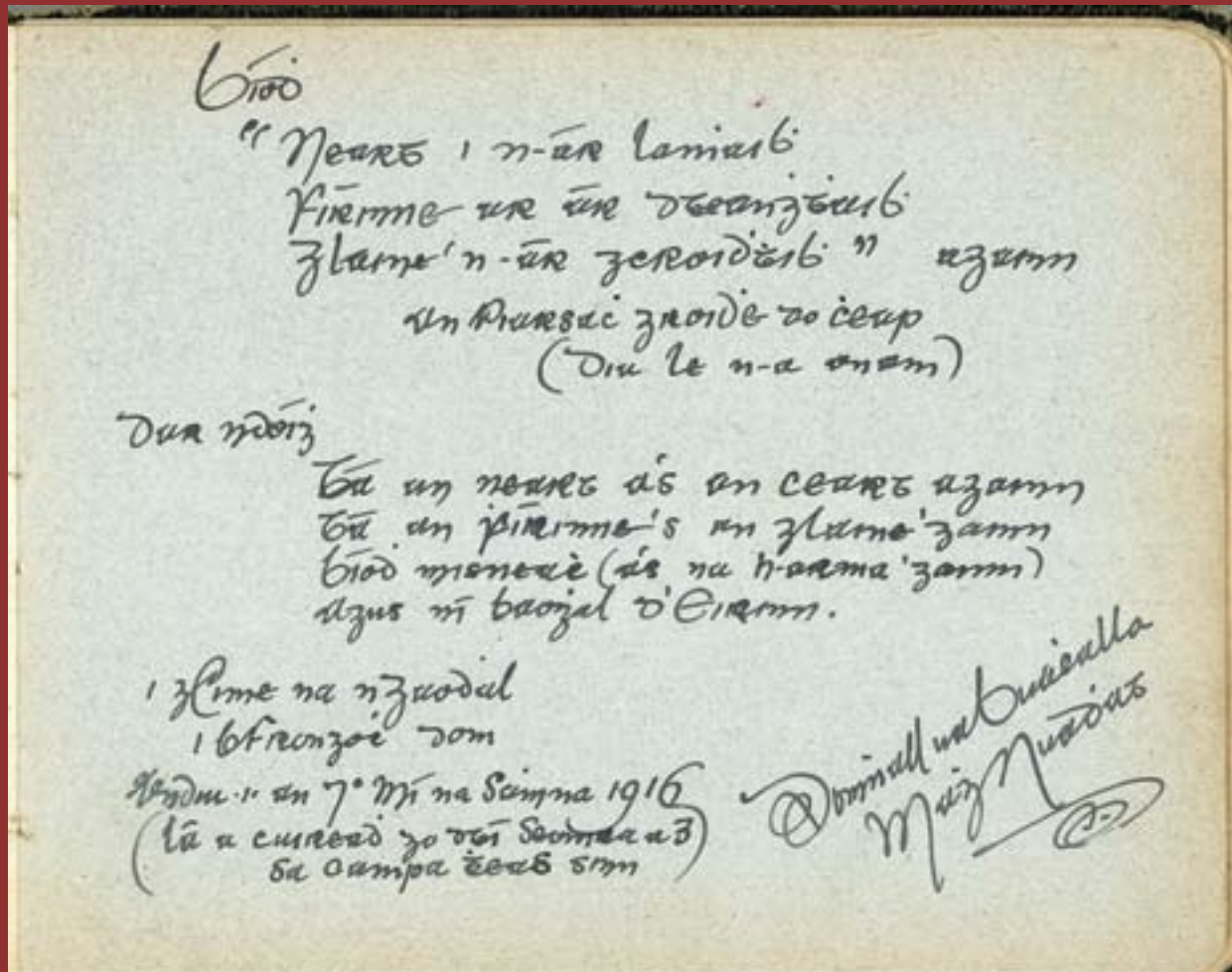
Transcription

*'Biodh
Neart in ár laimh
Firinne ar ár dteangacha,
Glaine n-ár croidhe againn,
An Piarasach [[groidhe]] do cheap,*

*(Dia le na anam)
Ar ndoigh,
Tá an neart is an ceart againn,
Tá an firinne is an [[glaine]] againn,
Biodh misneach (is na harma againn)
Agus ní baoghal dÉireann'*

*Domhnall Ó Buachalla
Magh Núaid
I Gcime na Ghaedhal,
I bhFrongoch dom,*

*Inniu an 7ú lá mí na Sámhan, 1916
(Lá a cuireadh go dtí seomra a 3 sa campa theas san)*



6100

" Neacs i n-ár lámhaib
Fíricme ar ár dtéanigeaib
Zlame' n-ár zercoidéib " azam
An Pharsai zroide do ceap
(Diu le n-a onam)

Dua ndóiz

Ba an neacs a's an ceap azam
Ba an fíricme's an zlame' zam
Bíod mioncaí (a's na h-ama' zam)
azus ní baofal d'Éiream.

i zlime na n-zuodal
i b'fionzoi dom

Ándu. i. an 7^o Mí na Seimna 1916
(lá a cuiread go dtí Seimna a 3
sa campá éas 5^o Mí)

Domnall na Buachalla
Máire Ní Dála

Composition

The contribution of Ó Buachalla is taken from his friend, lawyer and teacher of his sons Pádraig Pearse. The poem is selected from the Pearse's story entitled 'To the Boys of Ireland' in which he invokes the spirit and dignity of the Fianna as an example to young boys of Ireland in the early twentieth century.

'We, the Fianna, never told a lie, Falsehood was never imputed to us said Oisín to Saint Patrick and again when Patrick asked Caoilte Mac Ronain how it came that the Fianna won all their battles, Caoilte replied: 'Strength that was in our hands, truth that was on our lips, and purity that was in our hearts.'¹⁴⁰

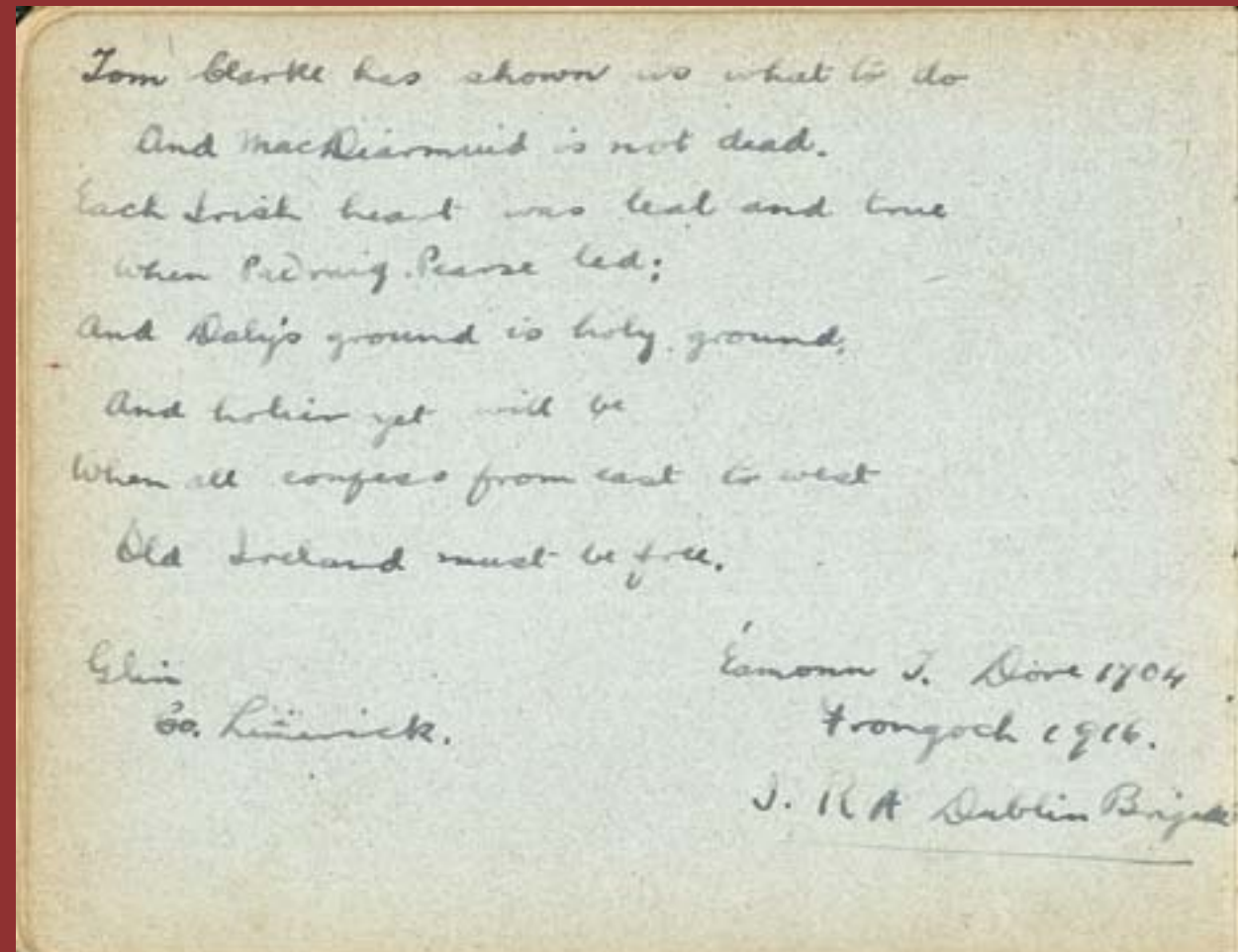
The contribution of Ó'Buachalla translates as follows;

*Be it so
Strength in our hand,
Truth on our tongues
Purity in our hearts
Pearse the powerful composed this*

*Of Course
We have strength and right on our side,
Truth and purity,
Let us have courage and arms
And there is no fear of Ireland*

*I gCimena Gaedhal (Prison of the Irish)
Day moved into room three in south camp*

140 Pádraig Pearse, *The Coming Revolution: The Political Writings and Speeches of Patrick Pearse*, (Cork, 2012), p. 63, 'Strength in our arms, truth on our lips, purity in our hearts', was also the motto at St. Endas, Pearse's school in Rathfarnham.



Eamon T Dore

Eamon Thomas Dore was born in Limerick in 1896. The son of a railway worker from Glin, Dore was a relation of the well known Daly family and was by 1916, a committed member of the IRB. As a member of that organisation, Dore was witness to the pivotal influence the IRB had before the Easter Rising and was also central to its reorganisation within Frongoch. During his post-Easter Rising internment, Dore had a falling out with Michael Collins while in Stafford Jail and was later involved in reprimanding the west Cork republican in Frongoch internment camp, for having operated outside of the IRB constitutional framework. However, both Collins and Dore were men prepared to break nominal frameworks if necessary for the cause of Irish freedom, illustrated by his involvement in January 1916 in one of the most significant meetings in Irish history.

As a medical student in Dublin and a member of the 1st Battalion, Dore was involved in the crucial meeting of James Connolly with the Military Committee of the IRB at a house in Dolphin's Barn in Dublin. It was January 1916, and the meeting had been arranged with Connolly in order to secure his co-operation for the planned Rising. The socialist had been planning an independent assault on the British authorities with his Citizen Army and had been, according to Dore, 'causing trouble' for the IRB.¹⁴¹ It had been strongly suggested that Connolly was in fact arrested and taken by force to the meeting which lasted for three days, after which Connolly had committed to the plan of Mac Diarmada, Pearse and Clarke. It was reported that the car in which Connolly was driven to the meeting was manned by volunteers of the 1st Battalion including the contributor Eamon Dore.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Eamon T. Dore, WS, 392, p. 2.

¹⁴² RTE Century Ireland, <http://www.rte.ie/centuryireland/index.php/articles/the-secret-meeting> (accessed 19 May 2016).

Due to their valid concern for the unexplained absence of their leader, the disappearance of Connolly for three days was almost enough to send the Citizen Army into insurrection. However, Connolly returned late on Saturday 22nd January without accounting for where he had been. The meeting was undoubtedly one of the most important in Irish history, leading to Connolly joining the IRB, committing his Citizen Army to co-operate with the Volunteers and fixing a date for the rebellion. There has been much confusion and speculation on the matter. But, while Dore was close to the incident and aware of the meeting, he did not in fact travel with Connolly. In his initial statement to the BMH, Dore himself clarifies that while he and Frank Daly were ready to forcibly convey Connolly to the meeting if he refused, 'Connolly did agree to go with McDermott and so our services were not required in the matter.'¹⁴³ The playwright Eugene McCabe's based his one act play *Pull Down a Horseman* on the three day meeting.

Dore fought in the GPO during the Easter Rising and on 28th of April was one of approximately 30 rebels who took part in the 'O'Rahilly Charge' from the GPO to Moore Street, which led to the death of 'The O'Rahilly and three other volunteers.'¹⁴⁴ After release from Frongoch, Dore returned to Limerick in 1917 where he remained active in the republican movement. He was one of many leading republicans who participated in the East Clare by-Election of June 1917. As a member of the Limerick IRA, Dore continued as an active volunteer throughout the War of Independence as an Intelligence Officer.

Dore later married Nora Daly, the sister of the executed leader and owned a confectionary shop in Upper William's Street in Limerick City for many years. Unusually, Dore made two statements to the BMH, first in June 1950

¹⁴³ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, Eamon T. Dore, WS, 392, p. 2.

¹⁴⁴ Eamon Dore was interviewed for the programme 'A Munster Journal: The Daly's of Limerick Remembered', broadcast on Radio Éireann, 27 May 1966.

and then in May 1951. In May 1954, Dore unveiled a plaque in memory of Con Colbert of Fianna Eireann at Barrington's Hospital, Limerick. The plaque was donated by Eamon Martin, a former friend of Colberts, and former Chief of Staff of Fianna Eireann. Dore died in 1972 and is buried in Glin, County Limerick, where he is commemorated by a public plaque.

Transcription

*'Tom Clarke has shown us what to do
and MacDiarmuid is not dead
Each Irish heart was real and true
When Pádraig Pearse led
And Daly's ground is holy ground
and holier yet will be
When all confess from east to west
Old Ireland must be free.'*

Eamon T. Dore 1704
Frongoch 1916
IRA Dublin Brigade
Glin
Co. Limerick

Composition

The short original contribution of Dore is all the more interesting considering that he knew all the men involved and was related to Ned Daly, who had only been executed months before. It is also noteworthy that James Connolly, who Dore was ready to forcibly arrest in January 1916, is not mentioned.



Con Colbert

John Kevin O'Reilly

At 54 years of age, John Kevin O'Reilly was one of the oldest internees in Frongoch. According to fellow Frongoch prisoner Thomas Pugh, O'Reilly 'was an old man who had four sons, as well as himself, out in the Rising.'¹⁴⁵ O'Reilly was a public accountant and lived in Ellesmere Terrace, Circular Road, Dublin, close to Glasnevin Cemetery. A native of County Cavan, both O'Reilly and his wife Kate Harriet was a fluent Irish speakers.¹⁴⁶ In the 1911 census, O'Reilly chose to fill his form out entirely in Irish using the spelling Ua Raghallaigh.

As 1st Lieutenant in B Company 1st Battalion of the Dublin Volunteers, O'Reilly was active in both the GPO and the Cabra area of the Rising. At the Cabra, his son Sam is listed as having fought there and he would have been close to Clare's Joseph Canny.¹⁴⁷ After the rising, he was transferred from Richmond barracks to Wandsworth on the 8th of May 1916 and arrived in Frongoch a month later. According to Pugh, O'Reilly had some difficulties dealing with some of the rebel prisoners, many of whom were more than 30 years his junior.

'There was a crowd of boys along the wall where he slept. They were great big young colts from the West of Ireland, and they used to play tricks when it was time to go to bed J.K. O'Reilly could not sleep on account of them, and he called them all the names he could think of. He had beautiful virile vocabulary.'¹⁴⁸



Cover for sheet music of *Wrap the Green Flag Round the Lads*

¹⁴⁵ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 14

¹⁴⁶ Census of Ireland, 1901, http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1901/Dublin/Glasnevin/Ellesmere_Terrace/1273615/,
Census of Ireland, 1911, http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Dublin/Glasnevin/Ellesmere_Terrace_Circular_Road_North/13526/

¹⁴⁷ 'Rebellion Participants', <http://www.irishmedals.org/rebellion-participants.html>

¹⁴⁸ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 14

O'Reilly was one of the older prisoners at Frongoch. However, others like Jeremiah Reardon, had been jailed as far back as 1881. Most remarkably, another Frongoch internee James Stritch, had been jailed in 1867 when he was part of a group involved in an incident that became known as 'The Smashing of the Van.' This was an incident in Manchester where Thomas Kelly and Timothy Deasy were freed from a prison van by Stritch and other Fenians, which led to the death of Sergeant Charles Brett and ultimately the hanging of those who became known in republican folklore as 'The Manchester Martyrs.'¹⁴⁹

O'Reilly composed the famous Irish republican ballad *Wrap the Green Flag Around Me Boys*.¹⁵⁰ The song became an anthem for the republican movement and their supporters. For example, when six IRA Volunteers were hung by British authorities on 14 March 1921, the sombre crowd which had assembled outside in solidarity sang both 'A Soldier's Song' and 'Wrap the Green Flag Around Me.'¹⁵¹ In 1917, Reilly was one of many republicans who travelled to Clare during the East Clare by-election campaign which was won by Sinn Féin's Eamon de Valera.¹⁵² He died in 1929. Mary Holt Moore, the second female grand marshal of the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade was the grand-niece of O'Reilly.

¹⁴⁹ Lyn Ebenezer, *Fron-Goch and the birth of the IRA*, (Wales, 2006), p. 77.

¹⁵⁰ Ebenezer, *Fron-Goch and the birth of the IRA*, p. 26.

¹⁵¹ Joseph McKenna, *Guerrilla Warfare in the Irish War of Independence, 1919-1921*, (USA, 2011), p. 72.

¹⁵² NAI, BMH, Witness Statement Thomas Pugh, WS 397, p. 8

Transcription

*'While England lives and flourishes,
Ireland must die a daily death and suffer endless martyrdom
and that if Irishmen are ever to enjoy their rights as human beings
The British Empire must first perish
No cause is utterly lost so long as it can inspire heroic devotion,
No country is hopelessly vanquished whose sons love her better than their
lives'*

John Kevin O'Reilly

1st Lieut.

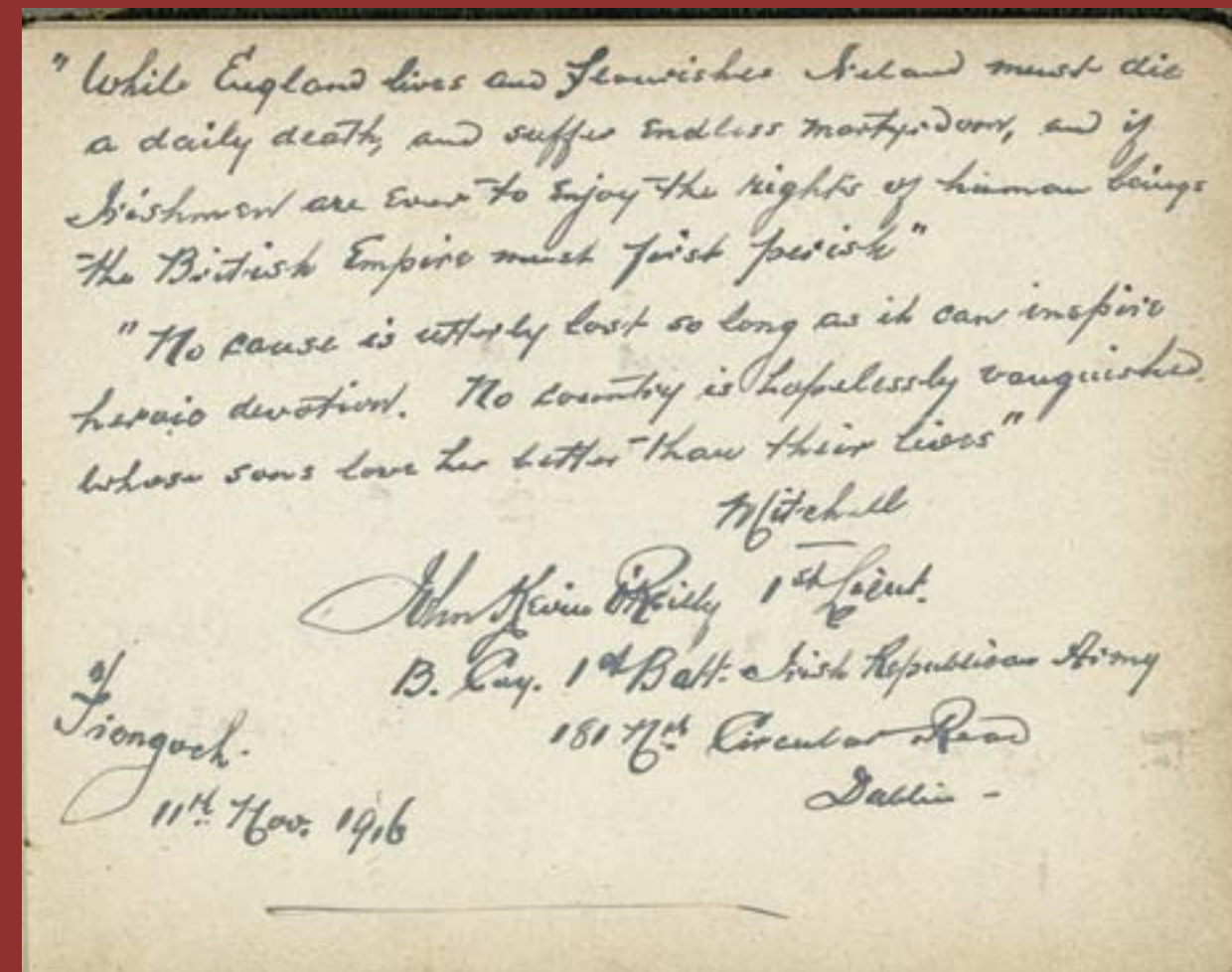
B Coy, 1st Battalion, Irish Republican Army

18 Sth. Circular Road, Dublin

Frongoch 11 November 1916

Composition

The quote chosen by O'Reilly as his contribution was taken from the writings of John Mitchell (1815 - 1875), the Irish nationalist, political journalist, author and former prisoner. Mitchell was born in County Derry and later became a central figure in the Young Ireland movement. He spent the latter part of his life in America where he worked as a journalist and supported the confederates in the American Civil War. He was elected to the British House of Commons in 1875, shortly before his death, but was disqualified from taking his position on account of being a felon. When jailed by the British authorities, Mitchell wrote his Jail Journal, which became one of Irish republicanism's most famous works.





Vol. Michael Flannery, Vol. Samuel O'Reilly, & Jean McLoughlin- Easter Monday, Mineola, New York, 1987. Sam O'Reilly fought in the Easter Rising with his father John Kevin who contributed the above.

Séamus Ó Maoileóin

Seamus Ó Maoileóin was born near Tyrrellspass in County Westmeath in 1891. Throughout the revolutionary period, it has been suggested that Ó Maoileóin spent much of his time working as a spy for Michael Collins, using the alias Liam Forde. His brother Tomás was later a volunteer in the East Limerick IRA Brigade and used the name Seán Forde during the same period.

As the Easter Rising raged in Dublin city, both brothers became involved in a siege at their home in Meedin in County Westmeath. There, local volunteers under the leadership of Seamus and his brother Tomás had mobilised at the outset of the rebellion with the intention of joining Liam Mellows in Galway. The countermand resulted in the Westmeath men returning to Meedin, they heard about the rising in Dublin, they determined to make a stand. Aware of the presence of republicans, they attempted to raid the house and were fired on from within. A siege then commenced, which only ended when news of the surrender reached the rebels in Meedin. A neighbour of Ó Maoileóin testified in 1938 that the house was garrisoned and defended, and shots were exchanged with R.I.C. on at least three occasions on the Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday of Easter Week.¹⁵³ A former Head Constable of the RIC William J. McGreal, also later gave evidence that Seamus and Tomás were much wanted men by military and police.¹⁵⁴

Ó Maoileóin managed to evade capture initially, but was later arrested near Limerick where he was arranging for the removal of arms that were in danger of being captured. He had been teaching in Crescent College in

¹⁵³ Tomás Ó Maoileóin, Bushfield, Nenagh, GO, Tipperary, WS 845, Appendix 3

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

Limerick City. After arriving in north Wales, and assessing the landscape, Ó Maoileóin remarked on its outward similarity to Connemara. However, he recalled that 'there is nowhere in Connemara as remote, as lonely, as cold and as dreary.'¹⁵⁵ While in Frongoch, Ó Maoileóin listened attentively to the contributions of various rebels to the many seminars and discussions which took place and was particularly impressed by speeches given by Richard Mulcahy, in which the Waterford man declared the need for violent, armed and sustained war to remove the British from Ireland. While interned, Ó Maoileóin received letters from his mother written in Irish, in Frongoch. An officer who was charged with censoring the letters befriended Ó Maoileóin, who translated honestly the fiercely republican communications. The offensive segments were removed but were later handed back to Ó Maoileóin in an envelope labelled 'Clippings from the letters of a she-wolf.'¹⁵⁶

He continued to remain active throughout the War of Independence in the Limerick IRA and took an anti-treaty position in the Irish Civil War. In doing so, he was one of the few men in Ireland to have intimately come under the influence of Michael Collins and who fought against him in the Civil War. Ó Maoileóin published a memoir entitled *B'fhiú an braon fola* (The drop of blood was worth it) which was published posthumously in 1959, a year after his death at the age of 67. The book was later translated and published by Fr. Patrick Twohig as *Blood on the Flag* in 1996.

¹⁵⁵ Seamus Ó Maoileóin, *B'Fhiú An Braon Fola* (Dublin, 1958).

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

"Tá pé ceangailte ar gach fir chura te lag,
 láidir a neart pé beag mór a ghairge
 iad dimirt go bár, ag cosaint a tíre agus a muintire
 a inmhuine."

Cu Cullainn (An t-athair Peadar)

Séamus Ó Maoil Eóin,
 Bealach a' Trialaigh,
 (Fianna na hEireann i Luimnigh)

i bhFrongoch. 19-11-'16.

Séamus Ó Maoileóin

Transcription

*Tá sé ceangailte ar gach fir chura te lag,
 láidir a neart pé beag mór a ghairge,
 iad dimirt go bár, ag cosaint a tíre agus a muintire'*

'Cu Cullain' (An t-athair Peadar)
 Séamus Ó Maoil Eóin
 Bealach an Trialaigh
 Fianna na hEireann i Luimnigh
 19 - 11 - 1916
 i bhFrongoch

Composition

As an enthusiast of the Irish language, it was fitting that Ó Maoileóin would select a quote from the writer and Catholic Priest An tathar Peadar Ó'Laoghaire (1839-1920), who by 1916 was a well known cultural figure in Ireland.¹⁵⁷ Ó'Laoghaire from the Muscraí Gaeltacht in Cork, is regarded as one of the founders of modern literature in Irish. His book *Séadna*, is regarded as the first major work of the emerging Gaelic Revival, which Ó Laoghaire was centrally involved in. The quotation selected by Ó Maoileóin translates as follows.

*'Every true hero is bound whether he be strong or weak,
 Whether his ability be great or small,
 to use them until he dies defending his country and his people'*

An t-Athair Peadar Ó'Laoghaire (Cu Cullainn)

157 Ó'Maoileoin's passion for the Irish language was manifest in his refusal to speak English at the Sankey Commission in London in July.

Seamus Mac Domhnall (James McDonnell)

McDonnell was from Little Strand St., Skerries in Fingall, north Dublin. He seems to have been a member of the 5th Battalion of the Irish Volunteers (Fingal Brigade), who operated largely around the north of the county, under O/C Tomás Ashe and his deputy Richard Mulcahy. It has also been suggested that McDonnell fought in City Hall during the Easter Rising. Nineteen volunteers from Skerries, to whom McDonnell was attached reported for duty in Dublin city. Two of the company were sent home; Bill Norton because he was deemed too old and Jack McGowan because he was too young! McDonnell himself became trapped with Henry Winstanley of E Company, 3rd Battalion in the Evening Mail Office and was unable to contribute to the fighting throughout the week.

McDonnell was imprisoned in Frongoch with many of his fellow Fingalians where they played leading roles in the camp. For example, after the general committee of the prisoners was elected to run the prison, William Ganly, the veteran nationalist from Skerries was elected to lead it.¹⁵⁸

Transcription

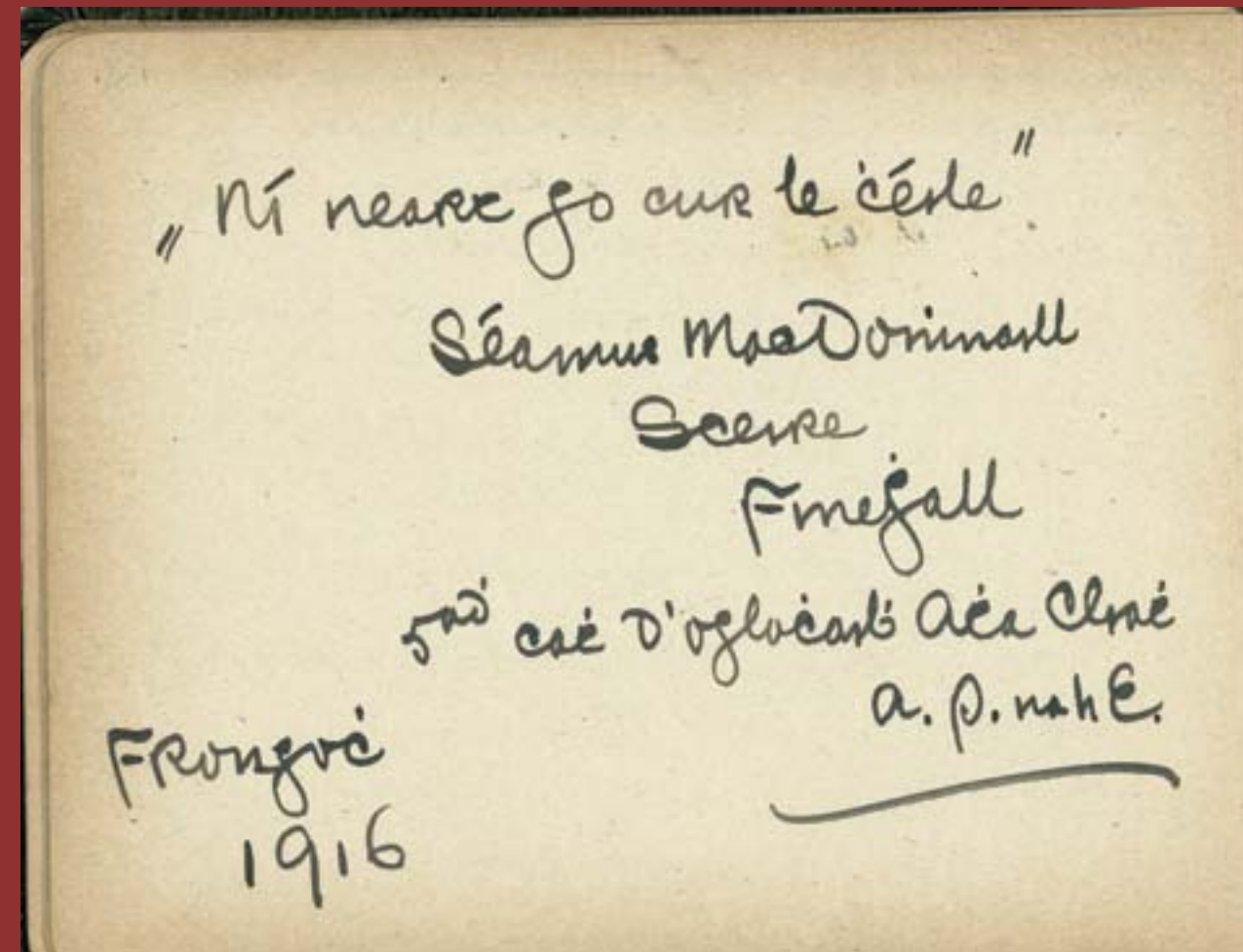
'Nil neart gur chur le chéile'

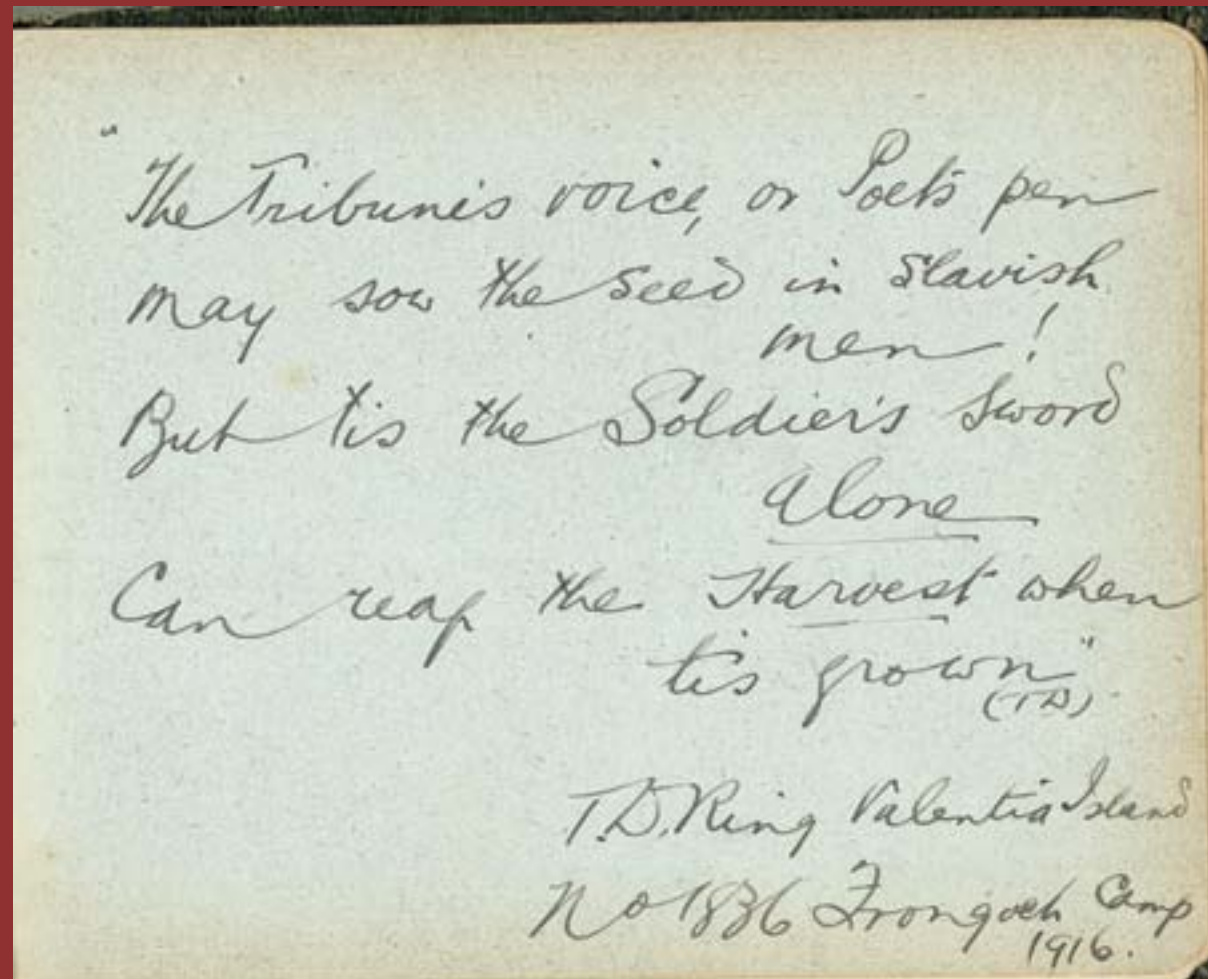
Seamus Mac Domhnall
Sceire
Fingall
5th Bt. Ogláigh Átha Cliath
Frongoch 1916

¹⁵⁸ 'Fingal fighters were held in Welsh prison camp', *Irish Independent*, 12 April 2006

Composition

McDonnell's simple contribution translates directly as 'Strength in Unity.'





Tim Ring



Tim Ring was a native of Valentia Island off the coast of Kerry, where he and his brother Eugene played a critical role in the Easter Rising, taking it to a global audience before the British authorities were aware it was happening.¹⁵⁹ In 1916, a Cable Station based at Knightstown in Valentia Island was the communication centre for transatlantic messages between Ireland and America, from the mid 1860s. The Ring brothers had inherited telegraphy from their grandfather Jeremiah who was one of the Western Union Company's earliest executives. Tim and his brother Eugene who worked for Western Union, acted as liaison between Pádraig Pearse in Ireland and John Devoy, the Fenian Leader and head of Clan na Gael in America.¹⁶⁰

"Do you want to buy a bicycle?"

The brothers outwitted the entire British communication system by Eugene's transmission of a simple message immediately prior to the rising. Some days before the Rising, operator Eugene Ring sent an irregular message to Heart's Content, Newfoundland where it was detected by the Post Office checker and reported to the superintendent. After the censor intercepted the private unauthorised message "Do you want to buy a bicycle?" Tim Ring travelled to Fermoy and sent a second simple but coded message to the housekeeper of John Devoy, stating "Tommy successfully operated on today", which with its sign off by 'Kathleen', was enough to inform those in America, the rebellion had begun.

¹⁵⁹ "Barbed wire, military tents, guns, searchlight posts and all that went with war" ...1916 on Valentia Island., <http://www.valentiaisland.ie/barbed-wire-military-tents-guns-searchlight-posts-went-war-1916-valentia-island/> (accessed 27/04/2016).

¹⁶⁰ Ring brothers' key role in the Easter Rising', *The Irish Independent*, 31 January 2015

Both brothers were arrested on the 15th of August 1916, well after the rising, when it was established that they had contravened company regulations by transmitting private messages. After his release from prison in May 1917, Tim Ring applied to be reinstated to Valentia Island but was instead appointed to the Accounts Department in London, where he stayed until January 1920.¹⁶¹ His brother Eugene had been held in Caherciveen barracks for a period before being released. He later fought in the War of Independence before emigrating to America, having taken the anti-Treaty side in the Civil War, a fate similar to many of his republican comrades in the new Free State.

Transcription

*'The Tribune's voice or poet's pen
May sow the seed in slavish men
But it's the soldier's sword alone
Can reap the harvest when 'tis grown'
(TD)*

T.D. Ring Valentia Island
No 1836 Frongoch Camp 1916

Composition

Ring quotes the famous poem by Thomas Davis entitled *'A Song for the Irish Militia.'*

¹⁶¹ Donard de Cogan, Ireland, Telecommunications and International Politics by Donard de Cogan 8th-9th-Century History, 20th-century/Contemporary History, Features, Issue 2 (Summer 1993), Revolutionary Period 1912-23, Volume 1

D De Puirseálaigh (Jeremiah Purcell)

According to the Tipperary republican James Ryan, Jeremiah Purcell was arrested with several other Tipperary volunteers in Clonmel on the Wednesday of Easter Week 1916.¹⁶² Purcell was a 35 year old writing clerk from Albert Street in Clonmel.¹⁶³ Both his brother Patrick and sister Anne also participated in the republican struggle. Another Clonmel born man, John William Humfrey was shot dead on Tuesday 25th April, the day before the former's arrest. Humfrey was 29 years old and a member of A Company, 5th Battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers when he was shot dead during the fighting in Dublin.¹⁶⁴

Purcell and the Clonmel volunteers operated from early 1916 under the direction of Frank Drohan, whose coachbuilder's yard was converted into a munitions factory. As Easter 1916 approached, Drohan and others including Eamon Ó'Duibhir, were made aware of the plans for rebellion. Willie Myles, a local republican and reporter for the *Clonmel Nationalist* was given the message that 'The goods will be delivered tomorrow night.'¹⁶⁵ Later, Myles recorded his anticipation and excitement;

'I went on to an evening of suppressed excitement and tension. I was imagining to myself what a shock my fellow workers and the people in general would get the following night ... when they became aware of the history making events that were about to break upon them.'¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, James Ryan, WS, 151, p.4

¹⁶³ NAI, Census of Ireland, 1911, Albert Street (Clonmel West Urban, Tipperary)

¹⁶⁴ 'Casualties in Easter Rising 1916 - Royal Dublin Fusiliers', <http://www.dublin-fusiliers.com/easter-1916/easter-rising-casualties.html> (accessed 15 April 2016)

¹⁶⁵ Joe Ambrose, *Seán Treacy and the Tan War*, p. 45

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Pierce McGann, the County Commandant of the Volunteers in Tipperary told his men that;

'The rising is on, starting in Dublin at 4pm tomorrow (Sunday). The Pope has sent his blessing through Count Plunkett. The Germans are to launch a big air raid on England, to cover the landing of German officers, arms and ammunition in Ireland.'¹⁶⁷

The plan of the Clonmel Volunteers was to attack Lisronagh and Clerihan barracks, as Clonmel was a heavily fortified town. Subsequently, news came from Kerry of the failed landing of arms. It was Willie Myles who also received information on Good Friday about the arrest of Roger Casement in Kerry and of the death of Donal Sheehan, Charlie Monahan and Con Keating, who had drowned accidentally at Ballykissane Pier in Kerry.¹⁶⁸ The countermand order of Eoin Mac Neill led to further deflation and despite the effort of men like Seán Treacy, the rising passed in Tipperary as elsewhere, almost without incident. However, two RIC men were shot dead in Tipperary during Easter Week, when Mick O'Callaghan shot and killed Sergeant O'Rourke and Constable Hurley, who had come to arrest him in Mounour. The RIC had earlier watched on as O'Callaghan was seriously assaulted and beaten by a crowd of British sympathisers in Tipperary Town. After retreating to his cousin's house in Mounour, O'Callaghan, determined to make a stand and when he was confronted by the RIC, opened fire.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 47, Pierce McGann was later elected as Sinn Féin TD for East Tipperary. He died in Glouster prison in England in 1919 due to the flu epidemic then raging across Britain and Ireland.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 46

¹⁶⁹ Desmond Ryan, *Seán Treacy and the Third Tipperary Brigade*, (Kerry, 1945), pp. 18-20.



Frongoch Camp 1916



Transcription

Nil Desperandum

D. De Puirseálaigh ó Cluain Meala in Éireann
Bhfrongoc North Wales
15 - 10 - 1916'

Composition

Nil Desperandum, decoratively cited by Purcell, is a quote from Horace, the Roman poet who lived during the reign of Augustus, the founder and first Emperor of Rome. The term, which literally translates as 'No need to despair' is taken from a reference in Horace's *Odes* (1. VII 27) and relates to the Greek Mythological figure Teucer, son of King Telamon and famous warrior in the Trojan War. The full quote which Purcell's contribution is taken from, states 'no need to despair with Teucer as your leader' and relates to the latter's bravery in defying Gods and man to make sure his brother Ajax received a burial, despite his suicide. For his loyalty to his brother and for opposing the laws of his people, Teucer was disowned by his father King Telemon and set out to find a new home. In Horace's telling of the story, as Teucer departs from his home, he exhorts *Nil Desperandum* and announces '*Cras ingens iterabimus aequor*' (tomorrow we shall set out upon the vast ocean). The speech has since been applied to the theme of voyage and discovery. Purcell's invocation of this classical expression marries powerfully with the expanse of experience which unfolded before himself and his republican comrades in Frongoch in 1916.

Micheál Ua Coileán (Michael Collins)



The most recognisable name in the autograph book in Frongoch in 1916, the young West Cork man was only emerging as a leader in the republican movement. Most historians agree that it was in the north Wales camp that Michael Collins forcefully impressed himself on the leadership and by sheer force of will, as well as a careful manipulation of the IRB influence within the camp, placed himself in the position of architect for the coming revolution. Upon arriving at the camp, Collins declared in a letter to his girlfriend from County Clare, Susan Kileen, that ‘This is Frongoch, an internment camp. There is only one thing to do when the situation is as it is, make what I can of it.’¹⁷⁰ While working tirelessly to develop strategies towards guerrilla war, Collins also became well known for his physical exploits as well as through his force of personality and intellect. Joe Good recalled that Michael Collins and he once made a bet in Frongoch as to which one knew more Irish songs. According to Good, he could name 250 songs which he conceded was 100 shy of Collins!¹⁷¹

The way in which Michael Collins could cultivate loyalty would be a significant factor in his success as a revolutionary leader, an ability which was manifest in Frongoch. This is underlined by the fact that at least ten of the contributors to the autograph book became so deeply connected with Michael Collins during their time together in north Wales, that for the following revolutionary period, their skills were placed loyally at the disposal of the West Cork leader.¹⁷² Eamon de Valera, forever to be contrasted with

¹⁷⁰ Tim Pat Coogan, *Michael Collins, The Man who made Ireland*, (New York, 1990), p. 50.

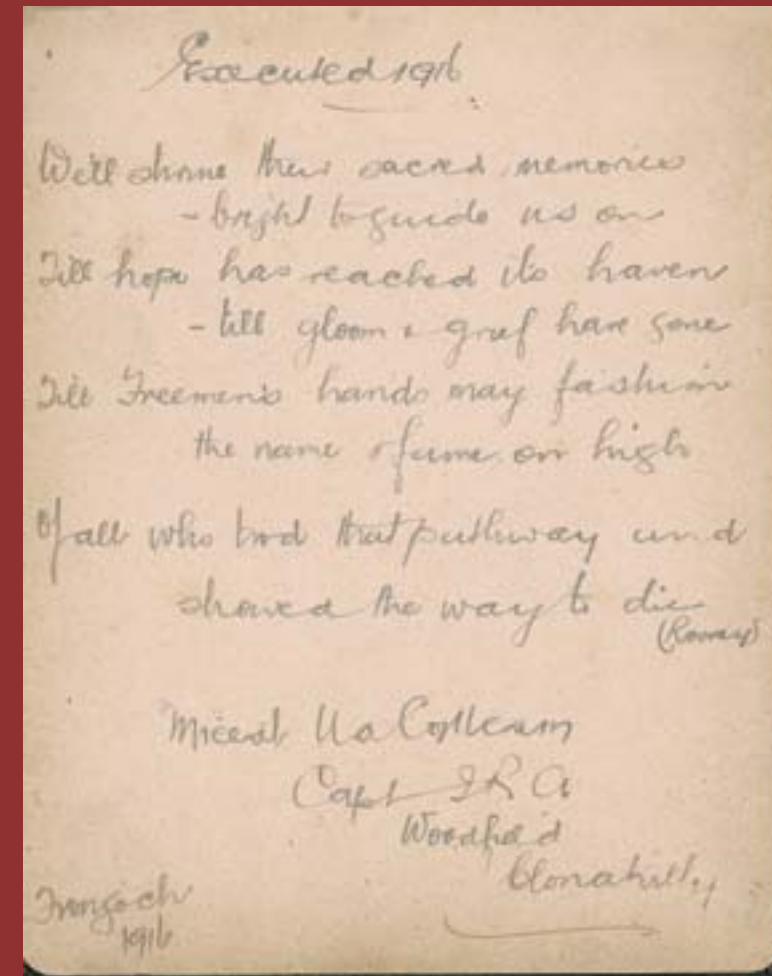
¹⁷¹ Joe Good, *Enchanted By Dreams: Journal of a Revolutionary*, (Kerry, 1996), p. 6.

¹⁷² Christy Carbarrey, Eamon ‘Bob’ Price, Gearóid O’Sullivan, John J Murphy, Jimmie Mulherns, Liam O’Brian, Joe Good, Michael

Collins, did not get the same chance to cultivate loyalty in north Wales, as he spent the period after the Easter Rising in Dartmoor, Maidstone and Lewes prisons.

After his release from Frongoch, Collins would go on to become one of Ireland’s best known historical figures and a revolutionary icon for many throughout the world. In the six years after he walked from Frongoch internment camp, Collins held the positions of Minister for Finance, TD for Cork South, and the IRA’s Director of Information, Intelligence and Organisation. He was also President of the Supreme Council of the IRB and in the Civil War, Chairman of the Provisional Government and Commander in Chief of the Free State Army. He was shot and killed at Béal na Bláth in August 1922.

O’Murchadha, Seán Mac Mahon and William Brennan Whitmore all became closely associated with Collins in Frongoch.



'Executed 1916'

*'We'll shine the sacred memories
bright to guide us on,
till hope has reached its haven
and gloom and grief are gone.'¹⁷³
Till freeman's hands may fashion
the name of fame on high
Of all who trod that pathway
And showed the way to die'*

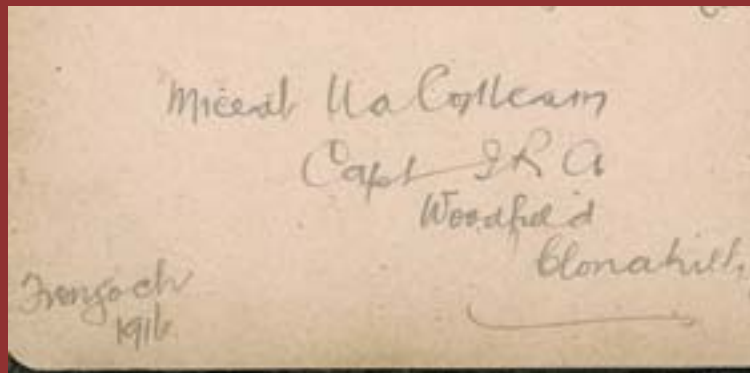
(Rooney)

Micheál Ua Coileán
Capt. IRA,
Woodford, Clonakilty

Composition

Michael Collins chose a poem written by the nationalist poet William Rooney which he himself entitled 'Executed 1916.' The stanza forcefully demonstrates the important role which memory played in the republican movement and the understanding of how this would continue to be employed in the campaign for independence over the following years. The novelist James Joyce had famously disparaged Rooney's poem for what he characterised as excessively patriotic verse, in a posthumous review of the poet's work in 1902.

¹⁷³ Clare Museum: CM 2015: For Registration, Prison Autograph Book of Patrick Brennan.



Michael Collins

[[James J Hunter]]

*[[James J Hunter]]
Limaveane
Sandown Rd, Knock
Belfast*

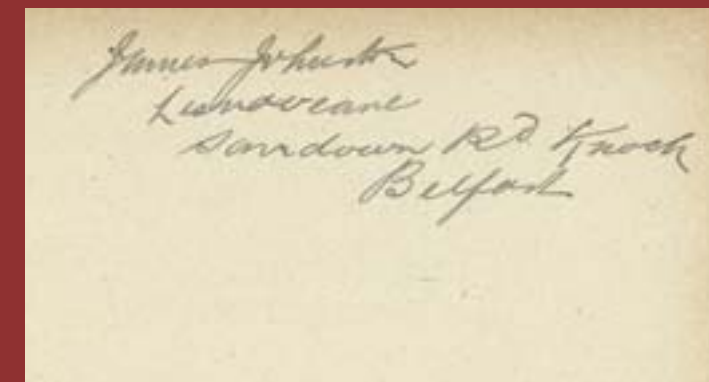
Despite significant research, it has been difficult to clarify the identity of this man. The contributor is possibly James J. Hunter, who is listed as participating in the Easter Rising. However, an address given for Hunter is listed as 32 Sackville Avenue, Ballybough Rd Dublin.¹⁷⁴ Clearly the address given by this contributor is Sandown Rd., Knock in Belfast. Upon investigation of the latter, a James J. Hunter was found living in Sandown, Knock, in County Armagh (Postal address Belfast) in 1911. However, this man would have been a 55 year old Presbyterian at the time of the rising. As evidenced by the participation of a number of Protestants as well as many men in their fifties, the presence of 55 year old James J. Hunter would not be excessively surprising.

An alternative suggestion is that the name is James Johnson, an individual who is listed in the Sinn Féin Handbook as living in Sandown, Knock, Belfast.¹⁷⁵ However, the Census Returns do not show anyone of that name living in the area, or even Armagh in 1911, five years before the rising. A cursory glance at the autograph could result in the assumption the surname is Johnson. However, upon closer examination it is difficult to dismiss the suggestion it may be James J. Hunter. The fact that a man of that relatively uncommon name was found living in that very townland five years prior to the Easter Rising is sufficient to suggest that the contributor may have been a 55 year old Presbyterian rebel.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ 'The Roll of Honour', <http://the1916proclamation.ie/the-roll-honour/h/> (accessed 19 April 2016).

¹⁷⁵ Sinn Féin Rebellion handbook. : Easter, 1916. Complete and connected narrative of the rising', https://archive.org/stream/sinnfeinrebellio1917dubl/sinnfeinrebellio1917dubl_djvu.txt

¹⁷⁶ Census of Ireland 1901, <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1901/Armagh/Carrowbrack/Knock/1027755/>, Census of Ireland, 1911, <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Armagh/Carrowbrack/Knock/298215/>



R Ua O'Maolchathaig (Richard Mulcahy)



Richard 'Dick' Mulcahy was born in Waterford 1886 and at the time of the Easter Rising was a senior figure in the republican movement. During the 1916 Rising, Mulcahy fought at the Battle of Ashbourne under Tomás Ashe, with the 5th Battalion of the Dublin Brigade, better known as the 'Fingal Brigade'. There they led a hugely successful military engagement in which the rebels took four RIC barracks and captured 90 members of the British forces. During the War of Independence, Mulcahy served as Chief of Staff of the IRA and became commander of the Pro-Treaty forces in the Irish Civil War, following the death of Michael Collins. He is regarded along with W.T Cosgrave and Kevin O'Higgins as a leading strategist in the execution of seventy-seven anti-treaty IRA Volunteers during the Irish Civil War. Mulcahy later became leader of Fine Gael and Minister of Government. However, his leadership and prospects for becoming Taoiseach were hampered by his role in the Civil War, leading him to step down as Fine Gael leader. Mulcahy married Min Ryan, from a well known Wexford republican family and former member of Cumann na mBan. He died on the 16th of December 1971.¹⁷⁷

Transcription

'Mara bhfaghaidh an gráinne arbhair a thuiteann sa talamh bás, ní bhíonn ann ach é féin; ach má gheibheann sé bás, tugann sé toradh mór uaidh' – Eoin Soisgéalaidhe

R Ua Maolchatha
Frongoch, Deire Fógmhair 1916.

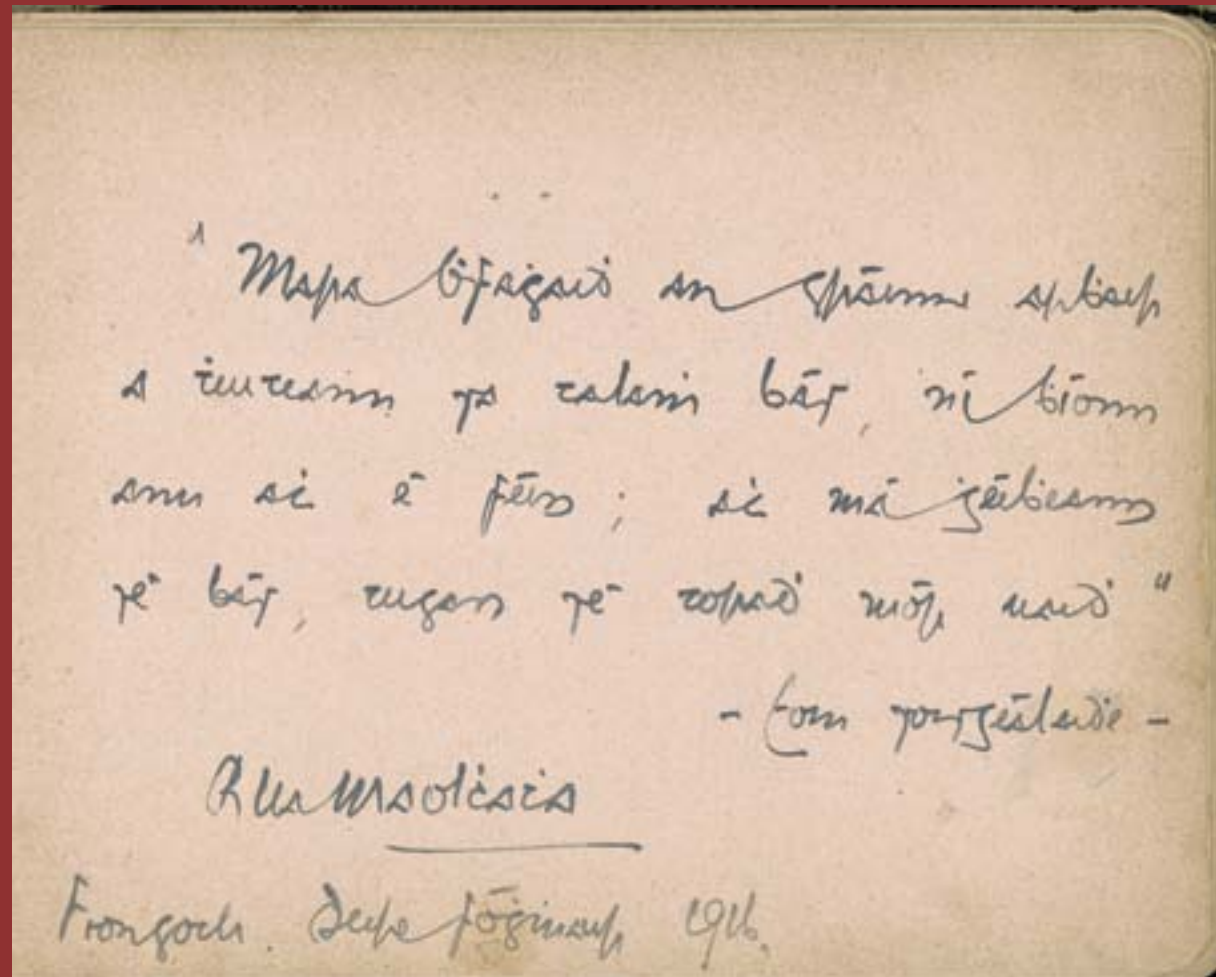
Composition

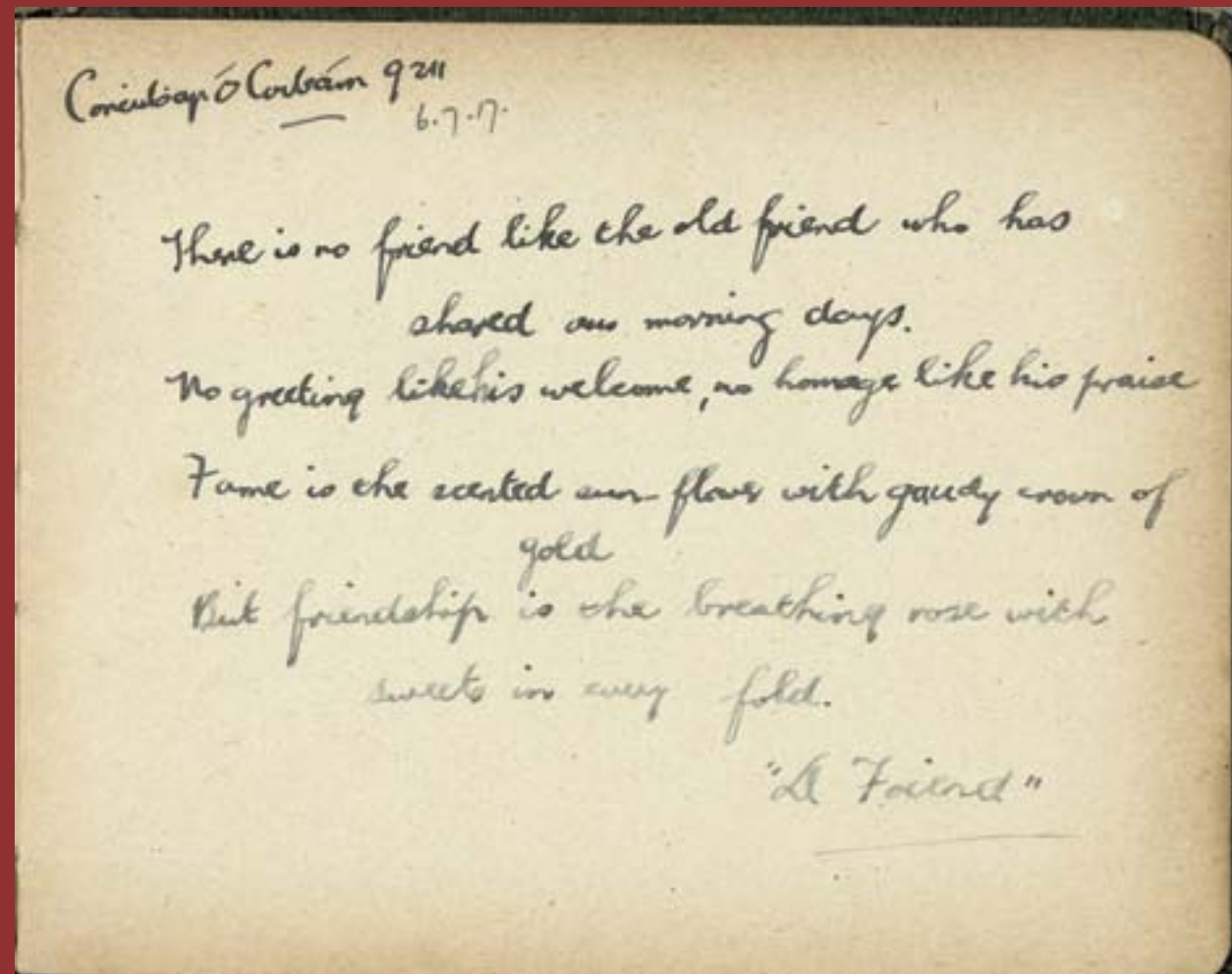
Taken from 'John 12.24', Mulcahy's contribution to the autograph book is a biblical reference, translated by the author into Irish. The quote has been used in various forms over the centuries to reflect the need for sacrifice in order to stimulate and sustain movements towards liberation. The words are reputed to be that of Jesus Christ, who in predicting his own death, foretold of the impact it would have in bringing people to the word of God. A fuller version of the quote is translated as follows; 'Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.'¹⁷⁸ Mulcahy's use of the quotation is a powerful example of the cognisance amongst many republicans of the inevitably of bloodshed and of the power of sacrifice and martyrdom in Irish culture. The quote used by Mulcahy translates into English as follows.

*If the grain of wheat that falls on the ground does not die, it will be on its own,
But if it dies, it yields great fruit'*
- John The Gospel

¹⁷⁷ Maryann Gialanella Valinulis, *Portrait of a Revolutionary: General Richard Mulcahy and the Founding of the Irish Free State*, (USA, 1992)

¹⁷⁸ Dr MATTHEW N. O. SADIKU, *John 12-21: A Pentecostal Commentary*, (USA, 2015), p. 75.





Cornelius 'Con' Collins



Con Collins was born in Newcastle West, County Limerick in 1881. While working in London, he joined the Gaelic League and later became both a member of the Irish Volunteers and IRB. Collins was with Austin Stack when both were arrested on Easter Saturday 1916 while attempting to rescue Roger Casement near Banna Strand in County Kerry. Stack's role was to distribute the arms which were to

be landed with Casement off the coast of Kerry. Their successful landing and distribution was to be the key factor in the armed revolution across the province of Munster.

Collins, who was a close friend of Seán Mac Diarmada had arrived in Kerry from Dublin on Thursday 20th April 1916 at 10 pm and stayed with Stack in Rock Street, Tralee. The following morning, Stack and Collins received a message while at breakfast that 'a strange man' was asking for them. The 'strange man' was Robert Montieth, who with a former member of the Royal Irish Rifles Julian Bailey and Roger Casement, had come ashore at Banna Strand the previous night at 3 am. Collins and Stack later met with Bailey and Montieth, while Casement was in hiding in Currahane, near Ardfert in an ancient ring fort now referred to as Casement's Fort.¹⁷⁹ While Casement was waiting in isolation, Collins, Stack, Bailey and Montieth went on a confused mission to rescue the former British diplomat and humanitarian activist.¹⁸⁰ Burst car tyres, confusion over where Casement was hiding and the inevitable presence of RIC conspired and ultimately as history records, Casement was captured as were all of the other men.¹⁸¹ Collins was therefore intimately

¹⁷⁹ The fort is now called Casement's Fort.

¹⁸⁰ J Anthony Gaughan, *Austin Stack, Portrait of a Separatist*, (Kerry, 1977), pp. 54-62.

¹⁸¹ 'Two Men Arrested', *Sunday Independent*, 22 April 1916, p 3.

close to one of the most significant near misses in Irish history. At the eve of their arrests, three republicans, Charlie Monaghan, Con Keating and Donal Sheehan, who were to link up with Casement and Stack, plunged accidentally off Ballykissane pier and drowned. Tom McInerney from Limerick, the only survivor from the vehicle, was interned in Frongoch with Con Collins. For Collins, the period of the Easter Rising was spent in Tralee Barracks and in solitary confinement on Spike Island off County Cork, from where he was later taken to Richmond Barracks and Frongoch. In the 1918 General Election, Collins was elected for Sinn Féin in Limerick West and was re-elected in Kerry-Limerick West in 1921. Although opposed to the Anglo Irish Treaty, he did not participate in the fighting of the Civil War but was re-elected on an anti-treaty platform for Sinn Féin in 1922. Collins died in 1937 and is buried in Mount St. Lawrence cemetery in Limerick city. In an interesting footnote to the autograph book entry of Con Collins in Paddy Brennan's book, it was he who replaced Brennan on the Executive of the Irish Volunteers when he resigned in protest in 1918.¹⁸² Like McGarry and Plunkett, Collins made his contribution to the autograph book during the East Clare by-Election of 1917.

Transcription

Conchubhar Ó Coileáin

*There is no friend like an old friend who has shared our morning days
No greeting like his welcome, no homage like his praise
Fame is the scented sun flower with gaudy crown of gold
But friendship is the breathing rose with sweets in every fold
"A Friend"*

¹⁸² J Anthony Gaughan, *Austin Stack, Portrait of a Separatist*, (Kerry, 1977), pp. 54-62.

The contribution here is taken from *No Time Like the Old Time, The Poetical Works of Oliver Wendell Holmes*. Homes (1809–94) was an American physician, poet, lecturer and author from Boston in the United States. Although based on the Scottish Surgeon Joseph Bell, Arthur Conan Doyle named the famous fictional Detective Sherlock Holmes after the poet quoted by Ó'Coileáin, due to his meticulous detail and logical way of thinking.

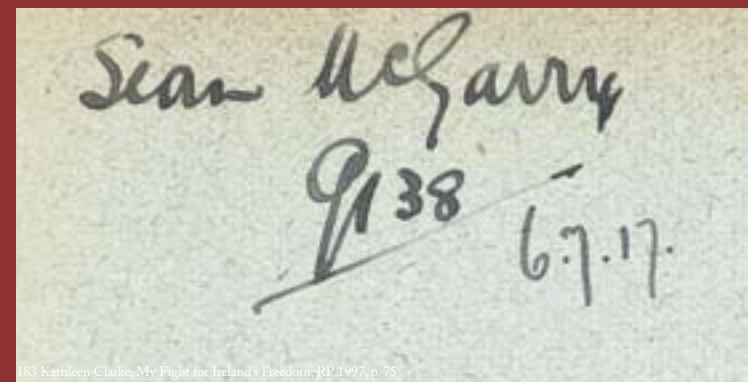
Seán McGarry



Seán McGarry with four other Frongoch internees, Seán McLoughlin, Seán Mac Mahon, Richard Mulcahy and Michael Collins, would later ascend to the highest military office in the Irish state. Born in August 1886, McGarry was a senior member of the IRB and would later serve as its President from May 1917 until November 1918.

McGarry had been actively involved in republican politics before the rising and was one of a minority who had already served time in British jails before the rebellion. With his friend Bulmer Hobson, Helena Moloney, Countess Markievicz and Dr Pat McCartan, McGarry founded Fianna Éireann in 1909, as a republican youth organisation which would play a central role in the cultivation of young minds in the years before the rebellion.

McGarry fought in the GPO during the rising, where he served as aide-de-camp to Tom Clarke.¹⁸³ In October 1917, he was appointed General Secre-



¹⁸³ Kathleen Clarke, *My Fight for Ireland's Freedom*, RP 1997, p. 75

tary of the Irish Volunteers – at the same meeting Eamon de Valera was appointed President. This placed him amidst the leadership of the republican movement. Other members of the Executive appointed at the convention were Michael Collins, Diarmuid Lynch, Michael Staines, Rory O'Connor and Cathal Brugha.

Arrested several times during the War of Independence, McGarry was famously central to the escape of Eamon de Valera from Lincoln Prison in February 1919. McGarry communicated with Kathleen Talty from Kilkee in west Clare who is reported to have made the cake within which a key was concealed that would assist Eamon de Valera, Seán Milroy and McGarry escape from the prison.¹⁸⁴ In fact, Talty was central to many other aspects of the incident. Her reduced characterisation as maker of the cake, can be presented as a fitting analogy for the reduction of Cumann na mBan's role in the overall revolution. Despite being centrally involved in the escape from co-ordination to conveyance, she is remembered for making the cake within which the key to liberty was placed.¹⁸⁵

In the 1921 General Election, McGarry was elected as TD for Mid Dublin for Sinn Féin. Having taken the pro-treaty side in the Civil War, he was seen by anti-treaty republicans as something of a hate figure due to his support of the Public Safety Bill, which made it possible for the Free State Authorities to execute anti-treaty republicans with relative ease. The intensity of the Civil War is illustrated by the recollections of Frank Henderson, whose sons were interviewed by the author in 2012¹⁸⁶. Henderson remembered,

¹⁸⁴ NAI, BMH, Statement by Liam McMahon, WS 274, pp. 7-12, Pádraig de Bhaldraithe, 'Brave Brave Clare Girls', in *The Other Clare*, Volume 12, p. 35, Declan Dunne has illuminated the crucial role played by his grandfather Peter DeLoughry in the escape, See Declan Dunne, *Peter's Key, Peter DeLaughry and the Fight For Irish Independence*, (Cork, 2012).

¹⁸⁵ Mac Conmara, Tomás, 'They men would talk amongst themselves, she was a secondary influence', *The position of Cumann na mBan in the Social Memory of the Anglo-War of Independence in Clare*, Unpublished paper, Women's History Association of Ireland, Cumann na mBan 100, 1914-2014 Conference, 4-5 April 2014, Collins Barracks Dublin.

¹⁸⁶ Interview with Fr Eanna Henderson and Fr Con Henderson, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary, 21 January 2012

I could have shot [TDs] Eamon Duggan and Fionan Lynch for they went home drunk every night, but I left them alone. Sean McGarry was often drunk in Amiens Street and the boys [IRA men] wanted to shoot him but I wouldn't let them.¹⁸⁷

While the intervention of Henderson was enough to save McGarry's life, his young son Emmet was later tragically killed when his house was set on fire, allegedly by anti-treaty republicans on 10th December 1922¹⁸⁸.

Although initially committed to Cumann na nGaedheal, McGarry became increasingly disillusioned with the party and later defected to the 'National Party' led by Joseph McGrath. Although seen by many as a hate figure in the Civil War, he was one of the main instigators of the 1916-21 Club, which was set up in the 1940s to heal the divisions brought about by the Civil War. He served two terms as President of the 'Club' before his death in 1960.

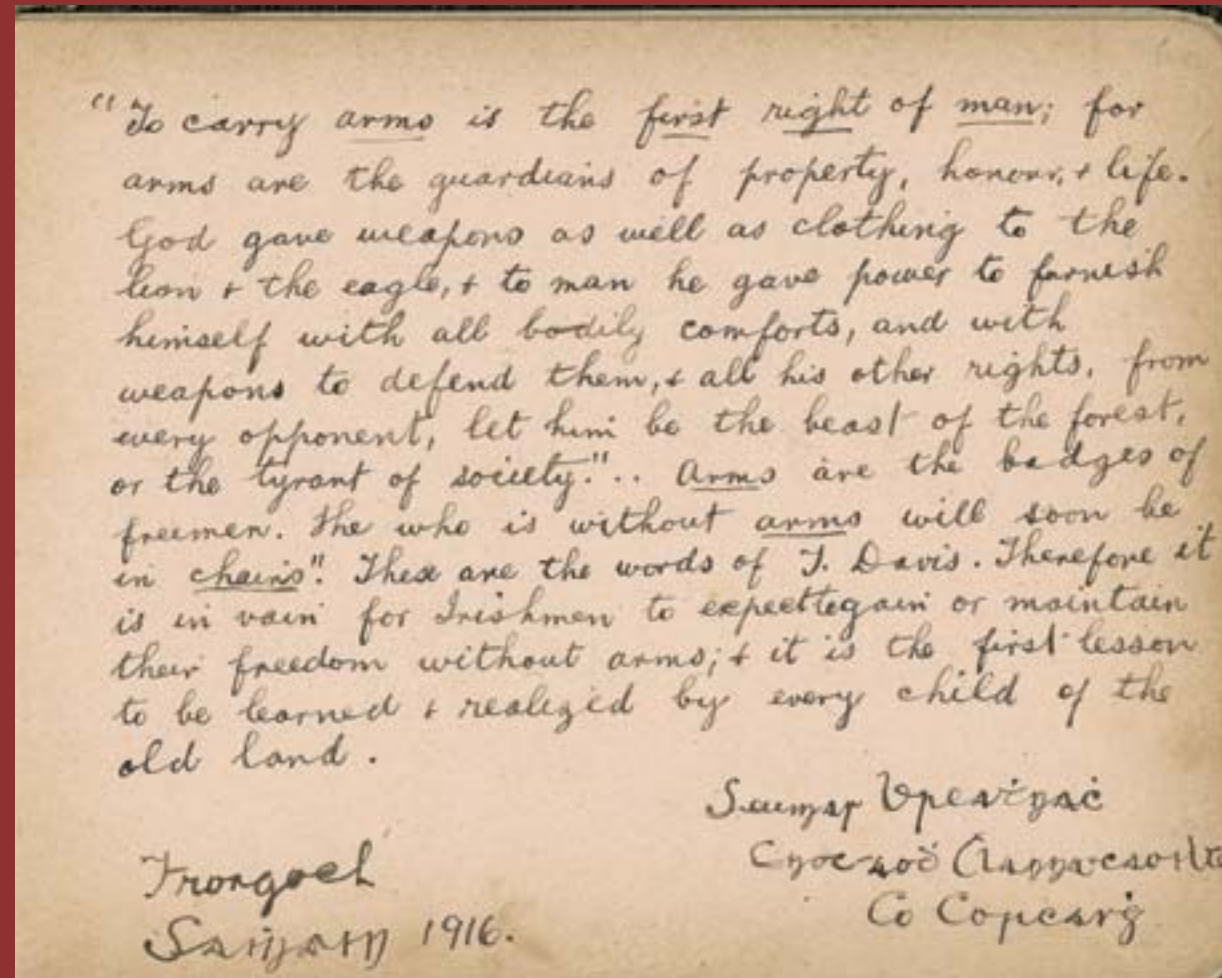
Transcription

'Sean McGarry
9 138
6.7.17'

¹⁸⁷ Frank Henderson's *Easter Rising*, p7
¹⁸⁸ Cathal Liam. *Blood on the Shamrock: A Novel of Ireland's Civil War, 1916-1921*. Cincinnati: St. Padriac Press, 2006. (pg. xlv)



Countess Markievicz



"To carry arms is the first right of man; for arms are the guardians of property, honour, + life. God gave weapons as well as clothing to the lion + the eagle, + to man he gave power to furnish himself with all bodily comforts, and with weapons to defend them, + all his other rights, from every opponent, let him be the beast of the forest, or the tyrant of society.".. Arms are the badges of freemen. The who is without arms will soon be in chains". These are the words of J. Davis. Therefore it is in vain for Irishmen to expect to gain or maintain their freedom without arms; + it is the first lesson to be learned + realized by every child of the old land.

Tronogel
Sarjay 1916.

Seamus Breathnach
Cnoc an Chasaid
Co. Copestry

Seamus Breathnach (James Walsh)



James Walsh who made the affirmative declaration regarding the need and legitimacy of arms in the struggle for liberation was born in Lyre in West Cork, an area with an increasing republican sentiment in the lead up to the Easter Rising. In September 1914 Walsh attended a parade of the Clogough Company of the Irish Volunteers in west Cork, where he witnessed men carrying pikes and guns. There he also saw Terence MacSwiney, who later, as Lord Mayor of Cork, would die after seventy-four days on hunger strike in Brixton prison in England.¹⁸⁹ Walsh listened attentively as MacSwiney ‘addressed the whole crowd at some length and a number of new men fell in and were put through some drill’.¹⁹⁰ Inspired by both the spectacle of the parade and MacSwiney’s words, following the parade, Walsh and others from Lyre established a company there, which comprised approximately thirty men. Like others connected to the republican movement throughout the country, Walsh and several members of the Lyre Company travelled to Cork city for the Manchester Martyrs’ parade in November 1915, where again speeches were given and intentions made clear. On St Patrick’s Day 1916, one month before the Rising, Walsh was one of thirty men from the same company who attended the parade in Cork city.

In October 1947 Walsh made a brief statement into the BMH in which he recalled MacSwiney calling to him before Easter week. MacSwiney informed Walsh that Volunteers were to turn out on Easter Sunday and

¹⁸⁹ ‘MacSwiney Funeral’, *Irish Times*, 6 November 1920, Whelan, *United States Foreign Policy and Ireland*, p. 260.

¹⁹⁰ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, James Walsh, WS, 36

to be prepared for violence.¹⁹¹ At approximately 4.30am on Easter Sunday morning at Knockskeagh Crossroads, a few miles north of Clonakilty, Walsh and 17 members of the Lyre company quietly assembled. Walsh who was the O/C of the company, arrived in his horse and cart, within which were carefully secreted rifles, shotguns and a number of croppy pikes. In Dunmanway, they knelt and heard mass from Canon Magner, a priest who would later be shot dead by British auxiliaries outside Dunmanway on the 15th December 1920, in the weeks after the Kilmichael ambush.¹⁹² Following mass from the fated priest, Walsh and his men proceeded with the sound of bagpipes played by Michael McCarthy clearing the air before them. McCarthy would later be shot in the Kilmichael ambush of November 1920, which had led indirectly to the death of Canon Magner. At Inchigeela on the outskirts of the Muscraí Gaeltacht both Mac Swiney and Tomás Mac Curtain told them the parade was called off and informed them that they should return home again. Walsh recalled that

‘However, in a few days we heard of the arrests of the Hales and Terry MacSwiney and we concluded it was no use for us to be holding on any longer so we planked our arms and ammunition and waited developments. The military and police came around on the 4th of May and arrested Jim Leary, Tim and John Crowley, James and William Meade, John O’Keeffe John Donovan, Ned Sullivan, Peter Donovan, Maurice McCarthy. and myself.’

The march of Walsh and his men is a profound example of the preparedness of Volunteers across the country to mobilise and fight in line with their comrades in Dublin. During the march, which lasted at least ten hours, James Walsh would intersect with at least four men who would lose their

¹⁹¹ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, James Walsh, WS, 36

¹⁹² ‘Wreath laying marks 1916 march’, *West Cork People*, 05 May, 2015

lives in the coming struggle, Tomás Mac Curtain, Terence Mac Swiney, Canon Magner and Michael McCarthy.

Transcription

‘To carry arms is the first right of man for arms are the guardians of property, honour and life God gave weapons as well as clothing to the lion, the eagle and to man he gave power to furnish himself with all bodily comforts and with weapons to defend them and all his other rights from every opponent.

Let him be the best of the forest, or the tyrant of society’.

‘Arms are the badges of freemen. He who is without arms will soon be in chains’.

These are the words of T. Davis. Therefore is it in vain for Irishmen to expect to gain or maintain their freedom without arms . It is the first lesson to be learned and realised by every child of the old land’.

Seamus Breathnach
Cnoc Árd, Cluaina Coilte
Co, Corcaig

Frongoch,
Samhain,
1916

Composition

The words committed to the autograph book by Walsh are representative of the increasingly militaristic nature of Irish republicanism in the post Easter Rising political environment. Borrowed from Thomas Davis, the words convey the militant mindset of republicans who had resolved that conflict would be inevitable in the struggle for independence. The experience of Walsh is a powerful demonstration that the words written by Davis and quoted by Walsh would prove true.

Micheál Ó Murchada (Michael Murphy)

Michael Murphy was a member of F Company of the 1st Battalion, which was 120 strong on Easter Sunday and was led by Kerry republican Fionán Lynch. Murphy may have been involved with a small group of rebels which, included Seán Byrne, in the occupation of a group of cottages between Church Street and Beresford Street, backing on to Jameson's Malt House Granary. This placed Murphy between two Clare rebels, Peadar Clancy in Church Street and Mick O'Dea, who was stationed near Jamesons Distillery, where the latter was shot and wounded.

Murphy was shipped from Richmond Barracks to Lewis on 19 May and in June was transferred to Frongoch. His Military Service Pension application confirms his activity during Easter Week and subsequent imprisonment. It also shows that during the War of Independence he remained active. In 1919 he imported arms from Birmingham to his home in Dublin. During this time he was employed in the Hotel Workers Trade Union and, acting on the instructions of Michael Collins, identified hotel workers who would help provide information on British agents who were resident in various hotels.¹⁹³ He also worked with Liam Mellows in an attempt to bring arms from the United States to Ireland through Manchester. Murphy took the anti-treaty side in the Irish Civil War and was interned by the Free State from December 1922 to December 1923.

Transcription

*'Were our land a trackless desert, staring blank against the sun
Where the leaves can never whisper and the rivers never run
It were ours to chase its sorrows, ours to lift it into bloom
Though the cost of our endeavours, soldiers death or felon's doom.'*

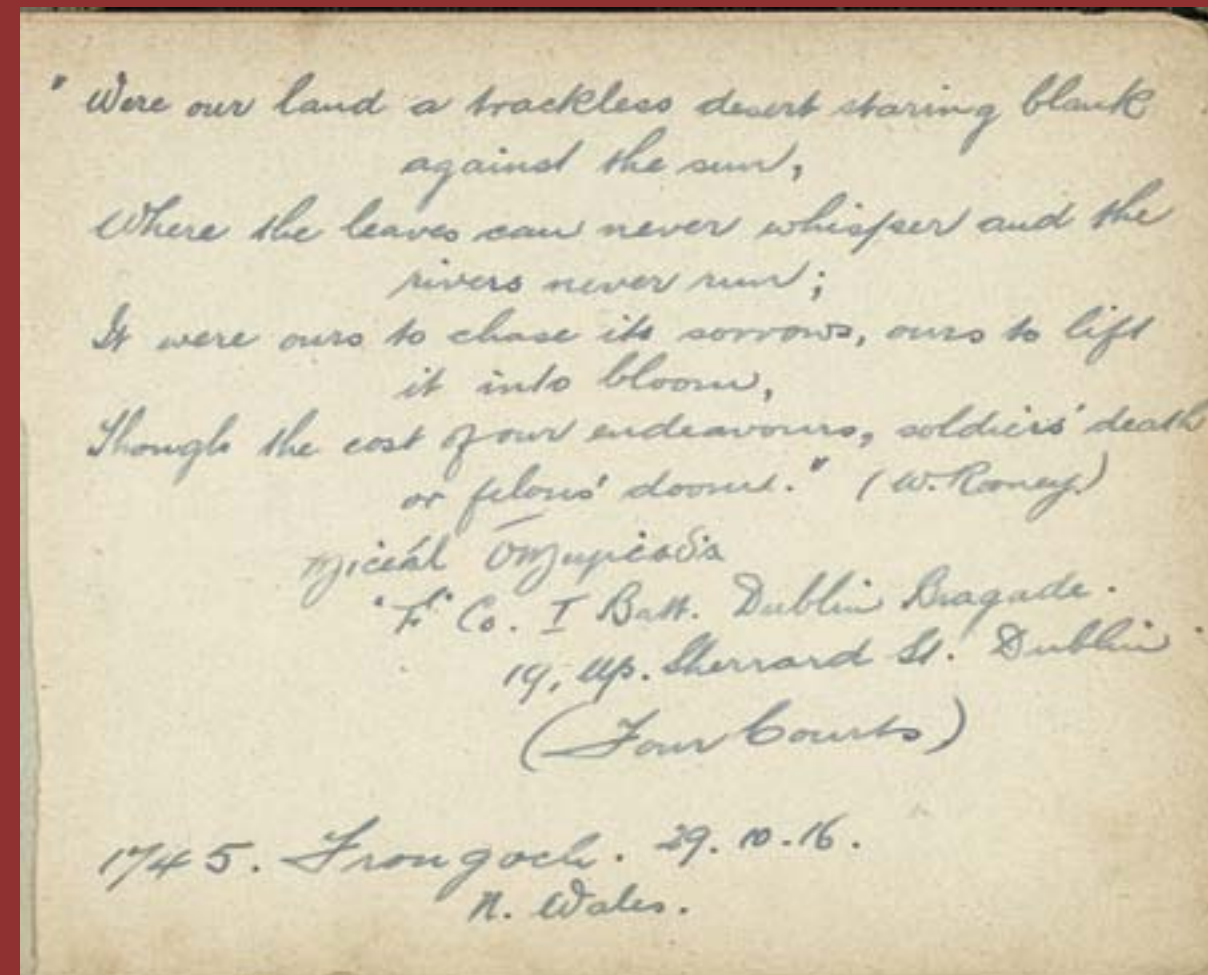
(W. Rooney)

Micheál Ó Murchada

F. Company 1st Battalion Dublin Brigade
19 Up Sherrard St. Dublin
Four Courts
1745 Frongoch 19.10.16
N. Wales

Composition

The poem quoted by O'Murchada was penned by William Rooney, the Irish nationalist, journalist, poet and key figure in the Gaelic revival. Rooney died on the 6th May 1901 at the young age of 27 from Tuberculosis. His funeral, which fellow Frongoch internee Thomas Pugh attended, took place at Glasnevin Cemetery.



¹⁹³ Michael Murphy Military Pension Application, <http://mspcsearch.militaryarchives.ie/> (accessed 27/04/2016).

Seosamh Ó [[Chochlainn]]

It has not been possible to locate information on the contributor here, who may be a Dublin born republican named Joseph Coughlin. Alternatively, the contributor may be James Coughlin who was later a member of the Fourth Battalion in the Dublin IRA Brigade.¹⁹⁴

Transcription

*'Then to the staff - Head let our flag ascending,
Our fires on every hill,
Tell to the nations of the earth attending,
We wage the battle still*

Seosamh Ó [[Chochlainn]]
Frongoch, 1916
D Coy of 3rd Batt. IRA
18 Tritonville Avenue,
Sandymount,
Dublin

¹⁹⁴ NAI, BMH, Witness Statement, James Coughlan, WS 304.

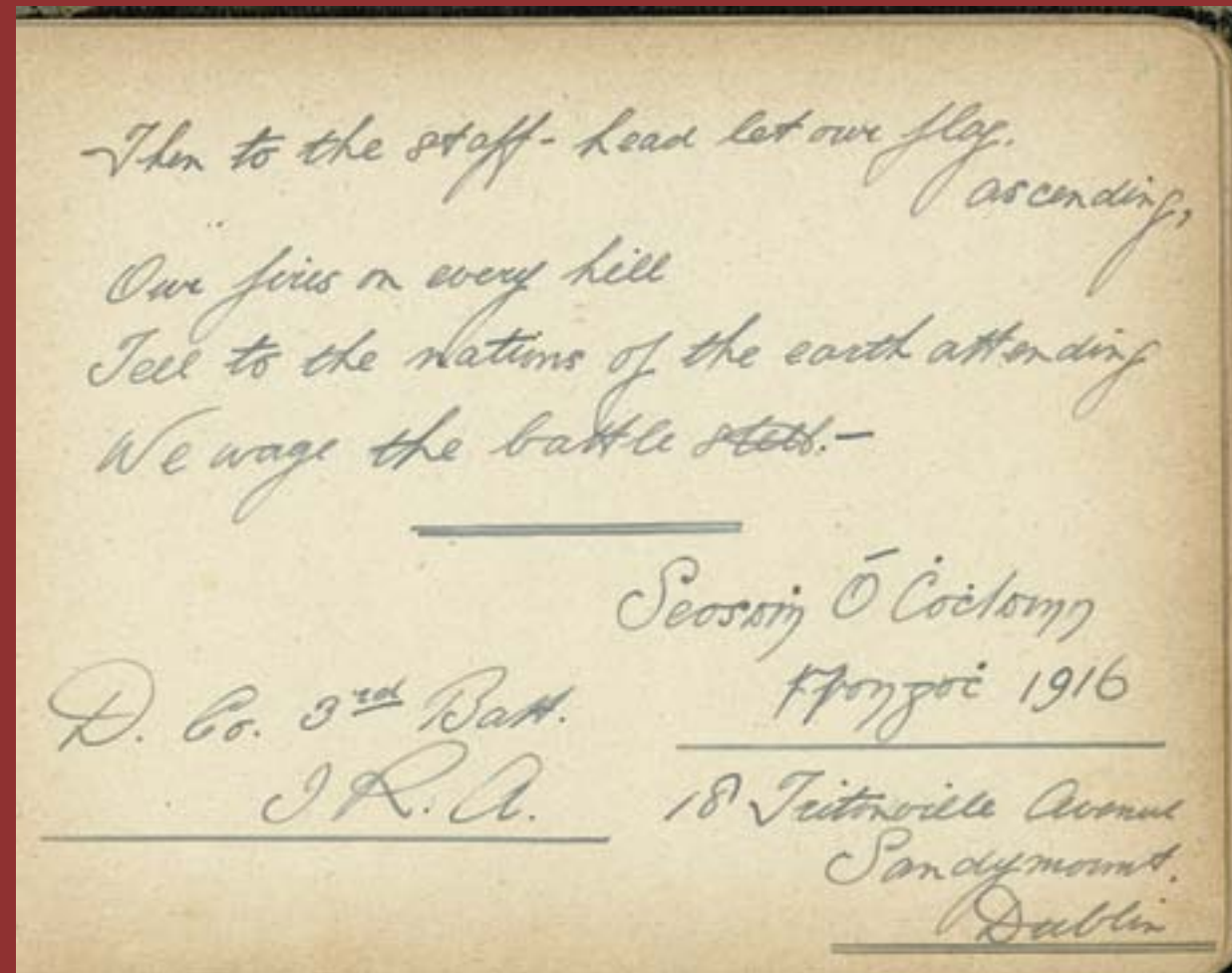
Composition

The poem quoted by the contributor is taken from *A Centenary Ode, 1898* by William Rooney. 1898 was a critical year for the development of Irish republican consciousness. The centenary of the 1798 Rebellion was celebrated throughout the country with many monuments installed and centenary pageants held. Guy Beiner, in his seminal work on the 1798 rebellion, employed oral tradition and folk memory to demonstrate the way in which the event lingered well into the 20th century in the consciousness of the Irish people.¹⁹⁵ Similarly, Whelan's contention that the 1798 rebellion lingered in history due to its continuing presence in politics further reinforces this idea.¹⁹⁶ In 1948, at national events to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the 1798 rebellion, firing parties invariably comprised of former War of Independence IRA volunteers.¹⁹⁷ For the rebels imprisoned in the aftermath of 1916, theirs was a story continued. They saw themselves as fundamentally fulfilling their generational responsibility as heirs to the republican tradition, seen by many to have been instigated by Wolfe Tone and other members of the United Irishmen in 1798.

¹⁹⁵ Guy Beiner, *Remembering the Year of the French*.

¹⁹⁶ Kevin Whelan, *Fellowship of Freedom, The United Irishmen and 1798*, (Cork, 1998) p. 141; Beiner, *Remembering the Year of the French*, p. 69.

¹⁹⁷ Peter Collins, 'Who fears to speak of '98?', 'Historic commemoration of the 1798 Rising' in *Commemorating Ireland, History, Politics, Culture* (Dublin, 2004), p. 27.



'We'll come back with memories beaming' - Conclusion

In late 1916, when the autograph book explored in this publication was compiled, a small isolated village in the mountains of Snowdonia in north Wales had become home to a group of men, who were united in their determination to end British rule in Ireland and to liberate their native land.¹ What Seamus Ó Maoileóin called a 'Heterogeneous mass of small socialist communities' were economical with their time and when finally released in December of that year, were more ready than ever to realise their dreams. As one prisoner stated 'many left with the seeds of Fenianism deep in their hearts.'² For Joe Good, the experience in 'Frongoch welded us together, irrevocably'.³

For all of those interned, their lives had been altered forever, through their involvement with the republican movement and Easter Rising. When they recorded their thoughts for posterity in the autograph book, the most significant moment in their relatively young lives was still fresh in their memory. Seamus Ó Maoileóin wrote on 19 November, encouraging all Irish people to fight for their freedom, with the siege that he and his brother had fought in his native Meedin during Easter Week, still fresh in his mind For prisoner number '1836', Tim Ring from Valentia Island off the Kerry coast, when he declared that 'the soldier's sword alone' would free Ireland, he may

1 The local school *Ysgol Bro Tryweryn* now stands on the site of the former camp but a commemorative plaque stands nearby, with inscriptions in Irish, Welsh and English

2 'Fingal fighters were held in Welsh prison camp', *Irish Independent*, 12 April 2006
3 Good, *Enchanted By Dreams*, p.96.

have reflected on the transatlantic communication he managed to impart long before the British knew there was a rebellion in Dublin.

For all of the contributors, the future presented an expanse of turmoil and struggle with a violent War of Independence, in which many of the men in the book would face the RIC, Black and Tans, Auxiliaries and regular British Army. There would also follow a tragic Civil War, when many in the book would turn to face each other in battle. For example, one contributor, Francis Scullin later attempted to kill the first Chairman of the Provisional Government WT Cosgrave, during the Civil War. Both men had walked the same ground together in Frongoch.

In the Irish historical consciousness, the incarceration of those who had overtly declared the right of Ireland to be free of British rule, has played an important role. For those on the outside, there was a sense of obligation to support the prisoners and their families. For those on the inside, prisons were seen as an opportunity to develop the movement in a different arena. In Frongoch, the IRB was reorganised and vital information about local places across the country was collected and stored. On Christmas eve, 1916, 569 prisoners were released from Frongoch.⁴ Seven months after they were sent away with jeers, the men of Frongoch would return 'with memories beaming'. Paddy Brennan left the prison with the eventual destination of Meelick in south-east Clare in his mind, the autograph book, replete with expressions and sentiments, carefully concealed. Only three additional contributors made their imprint on the autograph book after 1916. Appropriately, the last entries were made in Clare, the county of the book's owner

4 David Fitzpatrick, *Politics and Irish Life, 1913-21: Provincial Experiences of War and Revolution* (Dublin, 1977), p. 64.

Patrick Brennan. John Plunkett, brother of executed leader Joseph Mary Plunkett, Con Collins and Seán McGarry, were the last three to add their names to the book when approached by Brennan in July 1917. Plunkett, Collins and McGarry simply wrote their names and recorded the date as '6/7/17'. They were in Clare to support the candidature of Eamon de Valera in the East Clare by-Election, occasioned by the death in France of the sitting MP Willie Redmond. As they wrote, Ireland had changed. Four days later, the people of Clare would give voice to that change and Eamon de Valera would be elected by a majority of 2,975 votes as the third Sinn Féin MP since the Easter Rising.

As the election results were announced, many of the men who in late 1916 wrote determined statements about Ireland past and future in Brennan's autograph book, stood defiantly and triumphantly in Ennis, County Clare. John Kevin O'Reilly, Thomas Pugh, Eamon Dore, John Plunkett, Seán McGarry, Seán McLoughlin, Con Collins, Michael Lynch and Liam Ó Briain were among those who assembled as Frongoch veterans. As they observed the celebrations with an inward satisfaction, they now began to realise that their own hopes, inscribed a year earlier, were now beginning to gradually manifest themselves as reality.



Plaque commemorating Frongoch Camp at Ysgol Bro Tryweryn <http://cf.broadsheet.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/frongoch3.jpg>