

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO 'STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 457

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 457.....

Witness

Miss Dorothy Macardle,
Creevagh,
Dundrum Road, Dublin.

Identity

Author of "The Irish Republic"
and
Member of "The Irish White Cross"

Subject

"The Irish White Cross" and the
Republican Party, 1920-1923.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

N11

File No. ...S.73.....

Form B.S.M. 2.

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STATEMENT OF MISS DOROTHY MACARDLE,
"CREEVAGH", DUNDRUM ROAD,
DUBLIN.

with

I was brought up under the influence of an English mother. I was awakened to an awareness of Irish nationality, like so many others of my generation, by the poetry of Yeats, especially Cathleen Ni Houlihan, the Irish Legends collected by Standish O'Grady, Lady Gregory and others, the Abbey plays and all the writings of the Celtic Twilight School. These interests and my own very imitative writing introduced me to the circle of writers and active nationalists ~~at~~ centring around George Russell and Maud Gonne McBride.

In the autumn of 1920 I became resident in Madame McBride's house in St. Stephen's Green and was very proud to be allowed to act as her assistant in her innumerable activities for victims of the fighting, and particularly in initiating the organisation which developed into the Irish White Cross.

In the intervals of my teaching at Alexandra College I did investigation for the White Cross in various parts of the country. This took place especially during the Truce.

Like most converts to a cause, I was zealous to the point of fanaticism.

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My intense anti-Treaty feeling separated me from most of the people with whom I had been associated in republican work and in 1922 I volunteered to Erskine Childers who was editing a paper called the Republic, in 1922. I visited Belfast during the pogroms and wrote articles for his paper.

When the Civil War started he had to work underground. I served as one of his staff and when he was ordered to join the army in the south I accompanied him as far as Waterford.

Returning to my flat in Madam McBride's house, and instigated by Mrs. Childers, I began to bring out one of the innumerable little cyclostyled papers which were circulating. I called it "Irish Freedom". Madame Markievicz did sketches for the cover. Very few numbers had appeared when I was arrested in November 1922.

During my six months as a military prisoner, I had the honour of helping to nurse Mary McSwiney through two hunger strikes. I kept, and still have, a journal during those days.

After my release on health grounds I did a good deal of speaking and investigating and election work in various parts of the country and began to collect material for a history of the republican movement since 1916. I wrote articles for the republican papers and spoke once or twice in England. I had an unlimited belief in the value of propaganda for the cause.

Some time in 1925 Mr. de Valera asked me to undertake the writing of a history. Having lost my post at Alexandra College on my arrest, and ^{being} unwilling to ask my father to subsidise this work, since he was a supporter of the Cosgrave government, I accepted a small salary - I think it was £2.10. a week - from Sinn Fein, and began the work. I immediately realised the unsatisfactory position of a writer on a controversial issue who is an employee of a party. After three months, coming into control of a private income, I paid back the total sum received and undertook the completion of the book as a private enterprise. As the work proceeded, I was exceedingly thankful to be a free agent. Mr. de Valera, who gave me a great deal of help with documentation, paid scrupulous regard to my freedom and responsibility as the author of the book.

I was profoundly depressed by what appeared to be the overthrow of the republican cause. The Fianna Fail movement seemed to me a miracle of resurgence and I abandoned all other

work to become its Director of Publicity.

When the preliminary struggle was over and the party entered the Dail, I severed all connection with political work, took up the work on the history again, and, with an immense amount of assistance from people who had been active during the period described, completed it in 1936.

It was published in 1937 by Gollancz. It ran quickly into three editions - one of them a cheap Book Club edition at 7s.6d. About 4,000 copies had been sold when, early in the war, the entire publisher's stock was destroyed in a fire caused by incendiary bombs.

Signed: *Joseph Macawk*

Date: *Dec. 4, 1950*

Witness: *Sam Adams*

