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COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 653.....

Witness

Mrs. T.M. Sullivan,  
Shamrock Hill,  
Stillorgan Road,  
Dublin.

Identity.

Daughter of T.M. Healy, K.C., Governor-Gen.  
for Ireland, 1922-1928.

Subject.

Biographical notes on T.M. Healy, K.C.,  
Governor-General for Ireland, 1922-28.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S.267.....

Form B.S.M. 2



m.s.D. 267  
W.S. 653  
CASAIRE.....

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The attached documents are extracts  
from a projected book by

Mrs. Tim Sullivan

on the subject of her <sup>Father</sup>~~brother~~

Mr. T.M. Healy, K.C.

Late Governor General of  
Saorstát Éireann.

The extracts were selected by Mr. Michael McDunphy  
B.L., Director of the Bureau of Military History  
from Chapters XII to XIV of the manuscript which  
was loaned to him for the purpose by Mrs. O'Sullivan.

*B. Connolly*  
*Keeper of Records.*

*5 mch. 1952*

Extract from manuscript of a projected book by  
Mrs. Tim Sullivan, wife of ex-Chief Justice Tim Sullivan,  
loaned by her to the Director. 24th September, 1947.

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Chapter XII.  
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"The Great War, as everyone knows, broke out in August, 1914; "early in 1915".\*. Sean McDermott (one of the leaders afterwards executed for the Rebellion of 1916) sent to Glenaulin to ask T.M.H. to undertake the defence of a Volunteer named O'Hegarty who had been captured in possession of arms and explosives. The man he sent, Sean McGarry, another Volunteer, was instructed to offer T.M.H. a hundred guineas on his brief.

"In my opinion" said T.M.H., looking very hard at McGarry, "you boys are Fenians".

McGarry made no reply. T.M.H. interpreted his silence correctly, at once consented to appear for O'Hegarty's defence, and said "Never mind the hundred guineas".

When the case came on for trial T.M.H. gave his services gratis, although he was a busy man and the proceedings lasted several days. O'Hegarty was acquitted.

At this period, of course, no one dreamt that the adherents of this persecuted underground movement would ever rise to power.

Batt O'Connor also mentions "another similar" case in which ~~two~~ Volunteers had recourse to T.M.H.

From the first then, the "Sinn Feiners", as they were then called, regarded T.M.H. as a man whom they instinctively turned to in their need."

.\*. Footnote.

With Michael Collins, by Batt O'Connor, T.D., Page 27.

"It is regrettable that Maurice's replies were not preserved, but T.M.H. was the most unmethodical of men, and the few letters from correspondents that were still in his possession when he wrote his memoirs had probably survived by accident".

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Chapter XIII.

"The majority of the Sinn Fein prisoners were released in September(?) 1917 but some were still left in durance. All through these years T.M.H.'s letters to Maurice continually mention his private efforts to obtain clemency for these men. He had many influential political friends in England and he seems never to have met them without "pressing strongly for the release of the prisoners".

"Winston Churchill said to me, when I remonstrated with him about the continued imprisoning of the Sinn Feiners, and their (the Government's) absurd Irish policy, that the Cabinet would be reconstructed next month" and so on.

"Smith, the Lord Chancellor is here (at Lord Beaverbrook's) for the week-end.....and I spoke very strongly to him about the treatment of the prisoners....."

There are references also which show that the prisoners, after their release, often turned to T.M.H. for help and advice, sometimes these references are amusing enough, and always they show how T.M.H., who had seen so much of pose and self-seeking, never failed to be won by disinterestedness.

"I had with me today (29th September 1916) a solicitor and his client, a Dublin publican named Phil Shanahan, whose licence is being opposed, and whose house was closed by the military because he was in Jacob's during the Easter Week Rebellion. I was astonished at the type of man - about forty years of age, jolly and respectable, evidently delighted to have a crack at the English, and not at all concerned with the question of success or failure. He was a Tipperary hurler in the old days. Certainly for such a man to join the Rebellion and sacrifice the splendid publican's trade which he enjoyed, makes one think there are still many disinterested Nationalists in Ireland".

T.M.H. probably took some pleasure in rubbing this in to his beloved Maurice who was slow to believe than an abortive rising which brought about fifteen executions, thousands of imprisonments and much destruction of property, could have been the work of any but the young and crack-brained.

"The feeling in Dublin and in the entire country, I think, is against the Party.....and we have been vindicated in the most unexpected manner. If there were good (Sinn Fein) candidates, half the Redmondites would not be re-elected. The people speak of them everywhere with contempt" (28th August 1916).

"I met Duke last night at Dartry.....I pressed strongly for the release of the prisoners....." (29th September 1916).

And after the release:

"On Monday I was instructed by Corrigan who had been sentenced to death. He seemed a nice, moderate chap" (16th August 1917).

"I had with me this week (6th September 1917) on legal business a brother of McDonagh who was shot (i.e. executed after the Rebellion) and afterwards Doctor Hayes, accompanied by the new Member for Kilkenny - Cosgrave - and Corrigan, solicitor, all jailbirds!! I must say I found them very reasonable and pleasant fellows".

As the reference to William Cosgrave shows, the Sinn. Feiners were opposing the Irish Party at the polls and winning their first victories. Count Plunkett had already been elected for Roscommon, defeating the local president of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. In 1918 Arthur Griffith defeated John Dillon.

Extract from manuscript of a projected book by Mrs. Tim Sullivan, wife of ex-Chief Justice Tim Sullivan, loaned by her to the Director; 24th September, 1947.

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Chapter XIII

"After the Rebellion, on the 10th June, 1916, T.M.H. wrote to Maurice: "The only reason the Government want to do anything is fear of America, not love of Ireland. The longshoremen in New York refused to handle munitions for England. The London Government now consider that Maxwell has been a misfortune. Why? Not that they care a curse for us, or for the wrong done to individuals, but because of the blaze in American opinion.... The Government now admits that Maxwell's ferocity was a mistake but they can't get rid of him, and they can't release their victims for fear of their becoming further centres of "infection". They are like men who forged bills of exchange and have to forge more and more to keep themselves afloat. Or addicts for whom the doses of the drug must be increased....."

"I don't know if the Dublin feeling has spread to Cork, but among moderate Catholics who are intensely loyal I find nothing but Sinn Fein sentiment. I don't care to mention names, as letters are opened, but I heard of one man whose son was burned alive at Suvla Bay, who said he would now rather the Germans won. The looting of the soldiers - downright robbery and ruffianism against innocent people - the shocking illtreatment of the prisoners, the insolence of the military in the streets, the foul language used to women, and the incompetence shown, all have aroused that contempt and hatred for which there was no parallel in Irish history in our days. The small boys are singing: "Who fears to speak of Easter Week?"

"Now the military have changed their tone, and the wind that blew North three weeks ago is blowing South today. All to no purpose. They have lost the heart of this people and are beyond hope of retrieving their mistakes. Our clerics have discovered that "a probable hope of success" \* in rebellion does not necessarily mean military success, and that Pearse achieved his object. Anyhow he builded better than he knew. I think Maxwell would now give a good deal to have him back safe and sound in jail..."

And on the 18th June 1916 he writes: "This has been one of the most successful rebellions in the world, from the standpoint of its authors. It has revolutionised Irish feeling, and I suppose that was what Pearse aimed at".

The fact that the "reasonable prospect of success" (without which rebellion was morally unjustifiable) had hitherto been interpreted as implying military success, had undoubtedly kept such men as T.M.H. at a distance from the physical force movements of his younger days. I think I am right in saying that the wider interpretation given to the words in 1916 was somewhat novel, and that its correctness

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\* To justify a rebellion in the eyes of the Church there must be not only a just cause for it but a reasonable prospect of success.

was admitted only when circumstances had made it obvious. It is remarkable that in June 1916 at sixty-one years of age, and when the rebel leader was still anathema to many people, T.M.H. should have written of Pearse with so much understanding, although his own lifelong and fruitful labours for Ireland had taken a course so different.

In August 1916 T.M.H. went to stay with Lord Devonport at the latter's Welsh home, in order that he might visit Frongoch where hundreds of the defeated Irish Volunteers were imprisoned, and he obtained a permit also for his host, in the hope that the interest shown by influential men in the prisoners might tend to benefit them. He was not, however, personally acquainted with many of the prisoners, and he was allowed to see only those for whom he asked by name, and to see them only in the presence of a prison official."



Extract from manuscript of a projected book by Mrs. Sullivan, wife of ex-Chief Justice Tim Sullivan, loaned by her to the Director, 24th September, 1947.

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Chapter XIII.

Letter from Tim M. Healy to his brother, Maurice.

"16th August 1920. ".....I hear that they found a police code on your Lord Mayor (Terence McSwiney) and that, when he has been sentenced, he is to be allowed to die on hunger-strike. The Government do not mean or wish such extraordinary military vengeance as is being taken, but they are powerless". And then, next day: (17th August)

"The plucky stand of your Lord Mayor yesterday will win general admiration except from those who take towards the Sinn Féiners the same attitude that old \_\_\_\_\_ and Sir Pat O'Brien and W. O'Sullivan used to take towards us in 1881 !!!"

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#### Chapter XIV.

"Before the end of the month (November 1918) T.M.H. was asked to support the Sinn Fein candidate in Rathmines, Mr. Little, and he spoke for him in the Town Hall. The Irish Party put up a candidate to oppose him named Moonan (afterwards a Circuit Judge). This split the Nationalist Vote, and the Unionist candidate, Dockrell, got the seat. At the General Election in December the Irish Parliamentary Party was swept from the face of the country by the Sinn Feiners. "I am profoundly comfortable that we are out of the hurly-burly", T.M.H. wrote to Maurice that month (6th December, 1918)".

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#### Chapter XIV

"In the month following his retirement (7th November, 1918) he was receiving Michael Collins and Harry Boland at his Chapelizod home, Glenaulin, and discussing the wisdom (or otherwise) of their plan of campaign. He was often visited by Collins while the latter was "on the run", and he even pressed him to lie hidden in Glenaulin, but Collins declined the offer. I remember meeting Collins at supper one Sunday night at Glenaulin. I do not think that Sir John Lavery's portrait of him gives a true impression of him; it makes him look like a blacksmith, and to my mind he looked like a statue. However, Michael Collins (fortunately for him) had a face which lent itself to many disguises, and he may have been one of those people who keep one's interest by being different every time one sees them. I thought him almost too handsome. He was deadly pale, perhaps from confinement and lack of exercise, with a shock of dark hair, a high forehead and massive, clear cut features. His manners were gentle and quiet, rather boyish. But I can understand that he may have made a totally different impression on other people".

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