

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILÉATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 637

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COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 637

Witness

Mrs. Muriel McSwiney,
c/o National City Bank,
College Green, Dublin;

78 Rue Blomet, Paris 15.

Identity.

Widow of Terence McSwiney.

Subject.

- (a) Events of national interest, 1915-1921;
- (b) Biographical note on Terence McSwiney.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. ...S. 1634.....

Form B.S.M. 2

ORIGINAL

43 Westbury Rd
London N 12

CO

10-57

a Singad scaped
I am terrible but have had to
cope with the accumulation of
two years, besides current
work.

I am coming to Dublin for
a few days this coming week
& will ring you.

I thought it best to
type some of the account
as it is clearer.

20 year yours
by W. J. C. Sweeney

from
I met Mrs M^{rs} Sweeney in the street
and she promised to come in. She
said she was Chand only a few days
here. She did not bring any notes
9/11/57

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRS: MILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 637

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 637

STATEMENT BY MRS. MURIEL McSWINEY,

c/o National City Bank, College Green, Dublin.

*See these two
pages re-typed
by Mrs. M. Swiney*

The first national occasion at which I was present was a public meeting in memory of the Manchester Martyrs at the Grand Parade in Cork in the autumn of 1915. I was, of course, interested in the national ^{Sighfóga} movement before that.

In 1914 after the outbreak of the world war I answered a call for girls to train as nurses at the South Infirmary, Cork, to nurse wounded soldiers. I realised, young as I was, that the need for nurses would be great as the war was bound to be ~~very destructive~~ ^{cause of criminally appalling suffering}. It was not that I had any romantic interest in soldiers, ^{whom I never hated as a child} as young girls often have.

I imagine my motive must have been purely humanitarian.

That period would not have lasted more than six ^{weeks or less} months.

When I realised that my course of action put me down as

pro-British I gave it up at once. My family, of course,

were completely imperialistic, conservative and capitalistic

+ Roman Catholic

and these were the ideas that were instilled into me and

carefully fostered. We were all sent to school in

England, because we would meet only common people in Irish

schools. I was in an English Convent

Singh ~~with~~ + Irish Volunteer 2.
was such

I think reading nationalist newspapers was what

~~x~~ turned my mind away from the ideas favoured by my family. ~~I~~

I was the youngest of a family of six with a gap of six years between me and my next eldest brother. ~~The result~~

~~was that I was~~ kept ^{me} completely isolated and not allowed to

play with anyone of my own age, ^{I was} or even see other people ^{or even see other}

I was seventeen when I left my snobbish school at ^{convent}

St. Leonard-on-Sea where I learned nothing except to be a

^{class differences} lady which I ~~really~~ never became ✓ I got to know the

McSwineys and probably some others but I fancy it was the

newspapers that put me on to things and made me realise that

there was a national movement and ~~that my continuing the~~

~~nursing course at the infirmary was looked upon as~~

~~pro-British~~ so I gave it up. ✓ The papers instructed me

about what was going on here. ~~x~~ I read Connolly's 'Workers'

Republic', Arthur Griffith's 'Nationality', 'Scissors and

Paste", 'The Spark' and McNeill's 'Irish Volunteer' and all

~~the papers of that trend.~~ ^{every week x} I also became immediately

interested in the Irish language and got Norma Borthwick's

wonderful little books, Ceachta Beaga Gaedhilge. It was

in Liam Russell's shop in the Grand Parade that I got these

papers and books. You met everybody there. He was a

Volunteer and all the heads of the Volunteers, ~~x~~ Tomás McCurtain,

Co Cork Commandant

And my family's snobbish

I had suffered since the age of 4 from the appallingly social conditions.

Continuation of Mrs. Swiney's own typescript

Cork City Commandant

Sean O'Sullivan - the ~~head of the Volunteers~~ - Liam de Róiste and occasionally Terry McSwiney ~~used~~^{to} be there. It was a meeting place for people of that kind. There was another little newspaper shop kept by two sisters, the Misses Wallace, but I think it was a little later I got acquainted with that, though I think it was going all the time. *The Misses Wallaces were later connected with the citizen army.*

It would be about the end of 1915, I imagine, that I became actively interested in the national movement. I met Deóra French at her uncle's, Professor Stockley and she was deeply involved in the Gaelic movements.

I became a member of Cumann na mBan either in the end of 1915 or the beginning of 1916 and attended the meetings at different places. I used to visit the McSwiney's house in Victoria Road. As far as I can remember, Mary McSwiney was the President and Miss Nora O'Brien who had a hat shop, was Secretary of Cumann na mBan.

I remember Terry, *(I think in January 1916,)* being arrested and tried for a speech. He was let off with a fine of one shilling and many of his friends, including Sean McDermott sent him a shilling. I did too and his sisters told me afterwards that he kept mine. He was

a Technical teacher at this time and used to organise the Volunteers in the county. Previous to this he had been working as an accountant in Dwyer's. He organised a strike of the workers which was successful in improving their condition. His family were very poor. Mary was teaching at St. Angela's in Cork and Annie in the Isle of Wight. Terry left Dwyer's about a year after the strike and became a Technical teacher which enabled him to do the work he wanted to do with the Volunteers. About a year before the Rising he gave up his teaching altogether and devoted himself entirely to ^{organizing} ~~work for~~ the Volunteers. He was especially active in the Bandon and Ballinadee areas.

+ especially Donal O'Ceallachain
Liam de Róiste_x who was also a Volunteer and was a

Technical teacher should be able to tell about all this better than I can.

On one of the occasions before Easter on which I visited McSwiney's house, I met Alice Cashel who was very active in the preparations for the Rising. She would know all about that period and before. Donal Ó'Cealachain is another person who was active then and would be able to give a complete account of the events of that time. He is now employed in the E.S.B. and living in Dublin at Cúilín Mara, Seafort Avenue, Sandymount.

A short time before the Rising I was in Dublin and I must have had a message for Terry, because I waited for him in Parnell Square outside the Gaelic League offices (25) and after giving him whatever message I had, I asked him was something going to happen and he said "Any day".

We all knew that the Volunteers marched out to the country on Easter Sunday, taking two days' rations with them. They came back some time on Monday, I cannot remember when. Although I came from such a frightful family, the Volunteers always treated me very well and trusted me, even Seán O'Hegarty who was a very suspicious man. I afterwards learned that Terry distrusted me before he met me. *(because of the family I came from) he was right.*

I should mention here that Micheál Ó Cuill, who was, I think, from Cill na Martire, when he found that there was to be no rising in Cork, walked to Dublin. It must have taken him the rest of the week, because the Volunteers were all ~~assembled~~ *arrested after the surrender* ^{and} in the Rotunda Gardens when he arrived. He was deported with the rest to England. *in 1920* ~~afterwards~~ when Terry who was Lord Mayor of Cork, ^{in Brixton} ~~was arrested~~, he suggested from Brixton that Micheál of whom he had a very great opinion and who had been helping him in Irish language *when he was mayor* matters, should act as his ~~substitute~~. I think Micheál is *successor*

still alive.

The events in Cork during Easter could be better described by other people than myself, although I was in and out of the Volunteer Hall all the time. On the Monday our coachman came into the house and said "There is war in Dublin". I imagine I went out then to see what was happening in Cork. Everyone of the staff at home was all for the Rising and for me and against the family. My eldest brother was a great admirer of Sir Edward Carson. It must have been that time my family gave up speaking to me altogether. I was alone with my mother in the house for two years and we were not speaking to each other. She considered the Volunteers were cowards and criminals of the deepest dye,

~~I think~~ It was towards the end of Easter Week that the Volunteers surrendered their arms. Some of them gave up wooden instruments wrapped in stuff and kept their rifles. During the week on my visits to the Volunteer Hall, I often saw Terry and Tom McCurtain. I think they were still hoping that something would happen in Cork. I think they ^{and would} were very much concerned about maintaining discipline among the Volunteers. The surrender of the arms put an end to

any hopes they had.

Mary McSwiney was arrested at St. Angela's on the Monday of the following week. She was teaching a class of small children when it happened. She was of the opinion that the children were expecting it. Miss O'Brien was also arrested. They were the only women. The Volunteer leaders were also arrested. The Bishop ^{+ mayor} ~~who~~ had made an agreement with which promised no arrest. ~~been promised by the military that this would not happen~~ ~~went to the military and protested.~~ They were all released

~~then~~

Mary McSwiney went up next day - Tuesday - to the school and ^{one} ~~some~~ of the nuns, probably the Revd. Mother, said to her that they thought her own good feelings would have prevented her from coming back. So she went home and did not go back again. After some time she got a letter from the Revd. Mother saying that they had no intention of dismissing her. ["] ~~As far as I understand this letter was the result of the Co Adjuter Bishop's intervention~~ That was Dr. Cobalan. ["] ~~He was a native speaker of Irish.~~

I think it was the next week that all the Volunteers throughout the county were arrested and brought into Cork Gaol. The city Volunteers were also picked up one by one. I was talking to ^{Tom} ~~Tom~~ ²⁰⁴²⁷ McCurtain one day and when he went back

to his home in Blackpool he was arrested and the next time I saw him was in Richmond Barracks. ^{and many others} I went to ~~see~~ the Bishop to protest about the ^{volunteers'} ~~man's~~ arrest. I did not know him. I cannot remember what he said. I learned afterwards, a year later, that Terry was very annoyed with him ^{on account of the arrests} and would prefer not to see him. Tomás McCurtain said to me that he did not expect Dr. Cohalan would be made Bishop because he had acted as arbitrator for the Volunteers. Mr. Butterfield, the Mayor had acted with Dr. Cohalan.

The executions created a revulsion of feeling in Cork as elsewhere. The news was ^{posted} ~~chalked~~ up on the pavement in front of the Cork Examiner office ^{day & night} and the crowd gathered to read it.

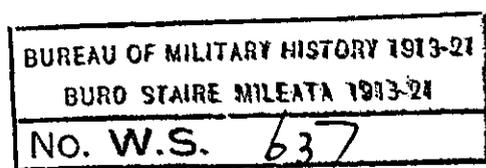
I came to Dublin to see the prisoners who had been moved up there from Cork. I went to Richmond Barracks and found a Sergeant Major who when he heard my name was Murphy - his own name - admitted me at once and anyone else who happened to be ^{a Murphy} ~~there~~. I saw Tomás and, I think, Terry and the Lynchs from Mionán Bridge near Bandon. These were Diarmuid's brothers, Micheál and another. The latter had not been a Volunteer ^{& like many was arrested by mistake} but Micheál had done a lot with his motor-bicycle. Micheál is, as far as I know, still

living on the farm at Mionán Bridge.

They were deported then and I was back in Cork and those who were interested in the Volunteers - probably the McSwineys among others, asked me to find out about the National Aid Fund which was just starting. I went ^{to Dublin} to Eccles St. where Louise Gavan Duffy was teaching and to Min Ryan in Ranelagh Road. I also saw Deóra French who put me on to Mrs. Wyse-Power. I did not achieve very much, chiefly because the organisation was only beginning. When I went back to Cork there was a meeting of sympathisers in the City Hall to start a branch of the National Aid and a Committee was formed.

^{the end of} About May ^{the end of} Sean O'Sullivan who was the city Commandant, and had up to then escaped arrest, asked me to go to England to visit the different prisons where the Volunteers were interned, as no news or communications were coming from them. I was a free lance, but I had no money at all. The Volunteers gave me £5 and I went to London and visited Wandsworth Prison bringing comforts for the prisoners. There were not many Cork men there. I asked to see Arthur Griffith but he was not allowed to see me. I saw Ginger O'Connell and Douglas French-Mullen. I cannot remember who else I saw, but I saw several. I then went to

Wakefield where most of the Cork Volunteers were. I spent a week there. I had a permit from the War Office which made things easy for me. But other visitors had difficulty. Towards the end of the week everybody was gaining admission. Deóra French was among them. She had wired to me to let her know whether it was possible to see friends.



STATEMENT BY MRS. TERENCE MACSWINEY

c/o National City Bank, College Green Dublin.

and 78 rue Blomet, Paris XVIeme.

The first national occasion at which I was present was a public meeting in memory of the Manchester Martyrs at the Grand Parade Cork in the Autumn of 1915. Sean MacDermott, Terence MacSwiney, and Peadar O'Hourrahan spoke at it. Sean MacDermott was the only one of the executed leaders of Easter week who I ever saw. I was interested in the national Sinn Fein movement before then.

In 1914 after the outbreak of world war I. I answered a call for girls to train as nurses at the South Infirmary Cork to nurse wounded soldiers. I realised young as I was, that the need for nurses would be great as the war was bound to cause criminally appalling suffering. I had no romantic interest in soldiers who I had always hated even as a child. My motive must have been purely humanitarian. When I realised that my course of action put me down as pro-British I gave it up at once. My family of course were completely Imperialist, conservative, capitalist, and roman catholic. These were the ideas that were instilled into me and carefully fostered. We were all sent to school in England, because we would meet only "common people" in Irish schools.

I think reading Sinn Fein and Irish Volunteer newspapers was what enlightened me, and also the wonderful principles and high moral standing and self sacrifice of all men and women in the Nationalist Sinn Fein movement. This contrasted very favourably with the people I had been brought up with.

I was the youngest of a family of six with a big gap between me and the next to me. I was kept completely isolated as a child, not allowed to play with other children, or even to speak to people outside the family, no one was considered "good enough".

I was seventeen when I left my snobbish covent school at St. Leonards Sussex. I had learned literally nothing there but class differences and how to be a lady. I never assimilated either.

I had suffered since the age of four from seeing the appalling social conditions, especially among the children, the Irish movement besides fulfilling my Nationalist aspirations seemed to me at that time to also solve that great wrong.

I got to know the MacSwineys and others in the movement about '14 '15 but I think it was the newspapers more than anything else which converted me to the Irish Nationalist movement.

I read Connolly's Workers,

Workers' Republic, Arthur Griffiths' Nationality, Scissors and Paste
The Spark, McNeills' Irish Volunteer etc. I bought them all every
week and used to leave them about purposely for my family to see.

I went to stay in Cambridge about Xmas 1916-1917. While there I read in the press that Terry and some of the other Volunteers who had been released after 1916, had been re-arrested. Although we had corresponded there had been no thought of an engagement between us. I went then however to try and find Terry. First to Shrewsbury where an English soldier told me. "They were here but they're

gone, you'll never find them." Then I went to the Lawrence Ginnells in London, whose kindness I shall remember to my dying day. Naturally they were in communication with the prisoners, they always were. Lawrence Ginnell was for years called "the member for Ireland," because he was the only one of the Irish members of the British House of Commons who had not sold himself to British Imperialism and Capitalism. I should like to emphasise this as it has been conveniently forgotten in Ireland today. Mrs. Ginnell old and ill who so ably seconded her husbands' work and made it possible at great personal sacrifice, has not been supported by the Irish Government.

I returned to Cambridge and found a wire from Terry, who had had the same thought as myself. It was from Bromyard Herefordshire where he was with Sean Nolan from Cork. Tomas MacCurtain and Peddar O'Hourahan, and another Volunteer (I am afraid I forget who it was) were in Ledbury quite near. They were all not in prison but had to report regularly to the police.

We got engaged at once. This was February. My family were of course violently opposed to my marrying Terry, they looked on the Volunteers as murderers and criminals. A year before the Easter Rising Terry had given up his job as technical teacher, he did nothing except drill volunteers and work for the Gaelic league. As when we married we intended to have children and as Terry's work for Ireland naturally came before everything else, we waited until after my 25th birthday (June 8th.), as my father long dead had left me money which I was only ^{at} ₅ to get if unmarried, or married with the consent of my mother. Naturally my mother did everything she could to prevent my marriage. We took the money reluctantly as we both hated private property and thought that most of the evils of the world came from this. After all, England's case was that Ireland was her private property; and therefore a domestic question.

We were married on June 9th. in Bromyard a tiny place.

I had not believed in the doctrine of the roman Catholic religion since I was quite a young girl but I remained formally a member of that Church as I had no objection to them as an organisation. Later when I had seen more of the world and was less ignorant, I left them publicly. This was at the time of the civil war in 1922. I consider everybody has a right to whatever religious beliefs they think right of to the Freethinker ideal which is mine. It is a private and personal matter. It is extremely wrong when religious bodies interfere with the government of a country as they do in Ireland today.

Some of the Volunteers who had been deported in 1917 escaped back to Ireland. We wanted to do the same, but wanted first to be married as Terry might have been arrested. I went to London to interview our Irish Organisation there the Self Determination League. I met Art O'Brien and I think Sean MacGrath. They laughed when they heard that we wanted to go back but not separately. Just after we were married and were going anyhow the deportation order was lifted Dick Mulcahy who was one of Terry's best friends (Tomas MacCurtain and Fred Cronin were the others) came over to be our best man. Naturally Terry's sisters were there; Annie was one of my bridesmaids; and Geraldine Sullivan who at that time was a very dear friend of mine.

On arriving in Dublin with Terry, I met De Valera for the first time; also Pierce Beaslai, the latter took off his hat to show us his shaven head; he had just been released from penal servitude.

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We went to visit the Eoin MacNeills' It struck me that whereas in Cork only working class people or at anyrate those who worked for a very tiny living were volunteers, in Dublin there were people like the MacNeills. I was personally for the working class people.

After this we went to Ballingearry. It was my first visit to this beautiful place. We were in a farm house near Siobann a Taggart (I am afraid spelt wrong). She was a very famous Irish speaker. When she was telling you a story in Irish she broke into verse quite naturally. I loved Ballingearry.

We returned to Cork and had a small house on the Douglas Rd. Sean O'Hegarty and Mid lived not very far from us. I also then met for the first time P.S. and Mina O'Hegarty with Seán OG a most beautiful baby in a pram. The O'Hegarty's, Terry, Fred Cronin and a few others had formed the Cork Celtic Literary Society very many years before. A little group of pioneers.

Terry was arrested and was for a few weeks in Cork jail in October 1917.

It was on the day of his arrest that I knew that I was pregnant. There was a short hunger strike of a few days when the prisoners were released. Bob and Mrs. Una Brennan who had done such wonders in Wexford for the cause, and another prisoner whose name I think was Synnott stayed a few days with us. After this Terry was out every night and all Sunday drilling volunteers. It was also during this time that the memoirs of Sean Dun an old Cork Fenian were written down at the dictation of the old man, by Terry + Diarmuid ~~xxx~~, O'Murcáda, his son in law, and published with the help of Sean O'Cuiv. Terry also published a small volume of his poems where I was some use in reading proofs. Terry did not enjoy drilling volunteers, he hated militarism and political work. If Ireland had been free and the condition of everyone satisfactory, he would have written principally poetry, and he would like to have been a librarian. He told me this often.

At this time Terry went every month to Dublin to the Coiste Gnotha, and at the same time privately to the meetings of the Volunteers. I am I am glad to say no judge of military matters, but it was said by those who are that it was the munitions Terry brought every month from Dublin that made the war in the South possible, unlike the '16 Rising when they had nothing.

We had a childrens' party at Xmas with a tree.

In March Terry was re-arrested under the cat and mouse act. I never went with him to Dublin on his monthly trips, this was to save expense, but I did by great luck go this once, I think it was principally because I wanted to get the clothes for my baby in Dublin. We were having tea in the Clarence Hotel on the quays when the porter arrived and said to Terry that two gentlemen wanted to see him "officially" he added. He was no doubt what was then called a sympathiser, it is now fellow traveller. Terry told me to come up to our room at once and emptied his pockets, he also gave me a verbal message for Sean O'Hegarty and Fred Murray. Then he went down and the detectives took him. Sean O'Cuiv came soon after to see Terry by appointment, he found out for me where they had taken Terry and also advised me kindly to give him a rug and pillow. I crossed the river to the bridewell. I saw Terry who asked me to find out where they were going to take him. He said I had to ask the Lord Mayor which I did not want to do as we thought him far too proBritish. However of course I did I dont remember what he said I dont think I got any information. Sean O'Cuiv who knew the detectives personally found out the they were sending Terry to Belfast. I then went immediately to Cork with a very heavy suitcase full of arms. I had telephoned on the night of Terry's arrest. When I arrived at St. Itas' Sean O'Hegarty was there to meet me and all was well. I next carried a cardboard box to the nursing home Mrs. Blundell's

Mrs. Blundells' where I was going to have the baby, all the way I was followed by a policeman. I was terribly sorry that he did not ask me to open my parcel. I went the next day to Belfast and visited Terry daily in the prison. It was difficult at first to get in, one had to have permission from a magistrate. I stayed with a Mrs. McNamee. Joe Conolly and Denny McCullagh were very kind. Then Terry was moved to Dundalk, here everything was easier. I lived with a ^{good} volunteer family near the jail. railway people. Kieran. I went to Cork for ^{people} the birth of my daughter (taken from me aged 14 by the Dublin so called courts of justice.) Terry wished the child to be born in Cork. He was in Belfast jail again when I took her to see him aged 6 weeks. Annie MacSwiney went with me, and Dick Mulcahy met us at Kingsbridge and took us across Dublin to Amiens St. looking after everything.

In August 1918 Terry was released and re-arrested on the doorstep of the prison, then taken to Lincoln prison, he was there when De Valera escaped and knew how it had been done, he naturally refused to tell. I was the only person in Cork who did not ask him. I never asked these kind of questions. He was released in March 1919. Then in the general election of '19 elected as Teactra Dail, he did not want this, he did not like politics although in those days the Sinn Fein politics were clean.

After Terry's release I went to live in Ballingeary. Terry was only able to be there for part of each week as his duties kept him in Cork. My daughter Maire was nine months old and we both wanted her to speak our own language from the first. Terry of course spoke Gaoluinne fluently, and had even studied the highly difficult rules for writing poetry, in prison, he had no time outside.

We were there until the following winter. I was soon a fluent speaker, and then went round with the pram (sometimes down precipices) to all the old Irish speakers who knew no English. It was then I got the Fainne. Terry of course had it already.

Here I am afraid is a blank in my memory. Except that I was ill. (I had been before and only found out about ten years later that it was caused by food poisoning. I used to be quite incapacitated.) During my well times I was active naturally in the movement and the language. I spoke nothing but Irish for two years.

All this time people were being arrested, homes were being raided. The bishops were fulminating against the volunteers, excommunicating people, and refusing absolution and the sacraments to men and women in the movement. But no one gave in. Terry was an extremely orthodox Roman Catholic, and in religious matters he would have obeyed the Pope without questioning but not in lay matters.

In January ¹⁹²⁰ (I may have the exact date wrong) Terry said to me that as there was to be a new mayor elected did I not think Tomas McCurtain would be the best person? he did, I too. After he had been a short time in office the Black and Tans came and knocked at his house at 4. A.M. and murdered him in the presence of his wife and children. Mrs. McCurtain was pregnant, this killed the babies (twins, and she had always wished for twins), the birth came much later fortunately in a good nursing home or she would have died.

All the details of this are well known. We Irish had at that time a civil Government, Irish mayors and corporations, Irish courts of justice, ~~and~~ even police to keep order. This worried the British government more than the war I think because they could not say it was murder. After Tomas' murder Terry thought he should take his place, it meant of course the end of his life. He was arrested in August 1920. at a session of the corporation in the town hall the ⁵¹ T.C.'s being present.

I and my little daughter were at a tiny little place on the sea coast near Youghal when this happened. Terry had been going to come to stay with us on the day he was arrested. He said to me when we were leaving. "I don't see why I should not have a holiday Dick Mulcahy is having one, shall I come to you or not?" I said, "you may as well" usually at this time we were not openly together because I was a mark by which the English Imperialists and their allies Irish Imperialists and Redmondites would find Terry and kill him but at this juncture they knew all the hiding places so that he was not much worse off with us.

I went to the courtmartial in Cork Barracks. Mary MacSwiney came to the little place we were at and took charge of the baby during this time. At this date the Volunteers did not recognise the British alien courts whether military or lay, but Terry said he would defend himself because he was Mayor of Cork elected by the will of the people. There were three indictments. Having a police code was one, being able to use it was another, I forget the third. Terry said that of course he had the code and was able to use it, but that he was the only person in Cork entitled to both these things, or somebody authorised by him which the British were not.

He had already at this time been on hunger strike several days. He was taken to England in a submarine and brought to London arriving at two in the morning for fear of demonstrations. In Brixton prison the Miss MacSwiney's and I took it in turns to be with him all the time during the day, his two brothers at night, and his great friend Fred Cronin, a married man with a big family who left everything to do this. One of the greatest workers in the cause of Irish Independence who never wanted any limelight. Whilst Terry was there the assistant doctor in the prison asked me to ask my husband to take food. I did not resent this I understood. He said "He might be released permanently injured, you might have more children and this might affect them." I said I had been thinking this for the past two years but that I never interfered with my husband in a matter of conscience. "I wish my wife were like you" said the doctor, and never asked me again. I naturally tried to save Terry's life. On arrival in London I asked Art O'Brien if the B.C. intended to release him. We of course had our own secret service who told us these things. Art said "not at present, of course they may change" I therefore sent a letter to the heads of the Volunteers Dick Mulcahy, Cathal Brugha, and I forget the third, (I said it did not matter which of them the letter reached) saying that Terry in my opinion was more valuable to Ireland alive than dead, (naturally I could not give expression to any personal wishes) and would they think of giving him an order to give up the hunger strike. Then something very unpleasant happened. The Irish Government did not do this. It was not until after Terry's death and that of two of his comrades in Cork prison that they called off the strike. Terry became delirious during the last few days of his life and had to be given morphia. He died as all the world knows on October 25th. Until these last few days he was perfectly clear, in fact some of his best friends said almost more so than in ordinary life. He said to me once that he had often suffered from the fact that the Volunteers objected to his going into action in ambushes etc. because they considered him too valuable; but he said to me I feel this is as dangerous & more so.

During the time in Brixton we also learned that the R.C. Church wanted to ex-communicate Terry on the grounds that he was committing suicide, they only desisted from doing this because Terry's hunger strike and Ireland's cause was so well put before the whole world, and everybody knew that he only desired to be released from prison, so that this would have made them ridiculous.

I was invited to Washington D.C. by the Editors of the New York Nation. I did not want to go to America at all, and naturally not at such a time. However various Irish people in London said I ought to go, so I wrote to Arthur Griffiths (Leas Uachtarán) and he sent me a wire "urge you to go" This was a polite command. I thought that I had better choose my sister-in-law M. MacSwiney as my companion, it was usual to go in pairs. I did not blame her but she had been very difficult in London (not with me but with the Irish organization there). I therefore made an appointment with Arthur Griffiths who was practical and kind. It was my one meeting with him. He understood the situation and asked me if I knew Harry Boland, I said I did. "Well" A. Griffiths said, "he is in the U.S.A. and will see to that."

We went from Cobh. I was terribly ill all the way over. On arriving at New York we were besieged by journalists before landing. Fortunately A. O'Brien had taught me interviewing in London but I had not yet had to interview 20 together. Fausset who was our consul in New York also came on to the boat. On landing Harry Boland and many other Irish were there to greet us officially, and important Americans. We would have been killed several times over by kindness. We were taken to the St. Regis Hotel and millions of people wanted to see us. Jane Adams, Doctor Gertrude Kelly, and of course our hosts the Villards. Mrs. Frances Villard widow of the founder of the New York Nation, and daughter of Garrison who was tarred and feathered for protecting the negroes. I stayed the night with her on my subsequent visit in '23 and joined the Womens' League for Peace and Freedom founded by her and others during the 1914 war. I am still a strong Pacifist.

After a few days we went to Washington with Harry Boland and others. When there we stayed with Mr. and Mrs. P. Drury and met Senator David I. Walsh, Senator Borah and several other important people. Doctor McCartan who was our official representative took me round Washington to show me that beautiful city. Dr. McCartan did wonderful work during those years, so did De Valera. While in the U.S.A. Harry Boland showed me the famous Russian jewels, rubies and sapphires to the best of my recollection. They had been given by their owners, the Soviet Government to the Irish Republican Government as security for a loan made by the Irish R.G. to the Soviet G. It was shortly after this that Dr. McCartan visited Soviet Russia officially.

We received wonderful kindness from all Americans who were very pacifist and idealist in those days, one hopes this will return.

We testified before the Commission in Washington constituted to enquire into the atrocities perpetrated by the British Government in Ireland.

We were at a friendly evening party at the Villards with a German Christmas tree. Mrs. Henry Villards' daughter a very clever child, spoke some words of Irish in our honour. I was given the freedom of the city of New York, not of course for myself, but to honour and in recognition of Terry's heroic fight.

Back in Dublin Jan. Feb. 1921 the war was raging, people being raided, taken out and shot, curfew. My daughter had been staying with my mother in Cork, she was now of course with me in Dublin. In the summer of 1921 was the Truce. De Valera, Bob Barton, (who had been in penal servitude) and others went to London. D.V. negotiated with Lloyd George. I met them all in London, I was on my way to Germany where I was going for the first time. I and my German girl friend followed the Treaty negotiations at fever point. I was not in Wiesbaden for political work but for medical treatment. It was the time of the allies occupation of the Rhineland, Wiesbaden was occupied by the French troops and a lot of civilian French were there. I did a lot of work for the Irish Republic.

amongst both French and Germans. I wrote to Sean T O'Kelly who was our diplomatic representative in Paris (an honourable post in those days) and he sent me propaganda in French at my request, there was nothing in German. When the Treaty was signed with England it was the greatest even personal tragedy that had befallen me up to that time. I little dreamt of what was to come later.

I was alone as far as anybody was concerned who understood the Irish situation. I wrote a letter card to Sean T O'Kelly saying that if the Treaty was accepted it would be the worst calamity that ever had happened to Ireland. This was read in the Dail subsequently at the Treaty debates.

*hospitál Gearr níc Suibhíe
(has Terence MacSwiney)*

Paris December 1951.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 637

Fortunately there are others like him in different parts of the world. If it were not so our life would be unbearably abominable.

Nevertheless it is hard to do Terry justice.

He was of middle height, strong, neither very thin or the opposite. He had raven black hair and an olive complexion. I think his eyes were his most remarkable feature, rather light blue they had an expression of idealism I could never describe. None of his photos are like him. I think what resembles him most is the portrait of John Mitchell young (who Terry had a very great admiration for). that is almost exactly like Terry except that the lower part of the face is a bit thicker or larger in Mitchells' portrait. There is a description by Chief Justice Russell of his seeing Mitchell on the coach going from Newry to Drogheda. Russell was of course a little boy. His description of Mitchells' appearance is exactly like Terry. But apart from appearance! He was of course for absolute separation from England everyone knows this. But with him it did not end there. Nor was an Irish speaking Ireland enough. He wanted justice. I am certain that if he were alive today he would not turn his back on the first Irish constitution to which he had sworn allegiance. He would "cherish equally all the children of the nation." He would have been horrified at the rich people lay and clerical in a country governed by an Irish Dail, and equally horrified at the lack of education and welfare.

He was absolutely straight and self sacrificing, and I remember how terribly the state of corruption in the workhouse and the asylum in Cork worried him when he was Mayor. He said to me once that if only that was clean it would be a greater load off his mind than anything else. But at that time it was the Redmondites who were corrupt, not us.

Terry was not always serious he liked a good joke and fun. I remember him dressing up to play charades at Mrs. O'Riordan's in Cork at Xmas.

Terry was eminently reasonable. Also he could speak quietly to his greatest opponents. He had been years working in the wholesale department office of Dwyers' where by the way they had to stand. He had had a man at each side of him abusing all his ideals the whole day. He said this taught patience. I believe I only saw him lose his temper once. This was when the police asked me to sign a form in Bromyard. Part of this was the law as the war was on, but they asked me to continue to fill out the part that only concerned aliens, Terry flew at them.

Years before I knew him he studied for his degree in philosophy. He told me this himself. He was hard at work all day and studied in the evenings. He got serious headaches and was advised by a doctor not to work late at night. He then took to going to bed at 8'0'clock after his tea, and getting up at two. First of all he had a good fire, he thought this made him go to sleep so he studied without in the freezing cold.

See page 16 of (clean copy) also this page to insert
S.M.C.

STATEMENT BY MRS. TERENCE MacSWINEY,

c/o National City Bank,
College Green, Dublin,
and 78 Rue Blomet, Paris XVIeme.

The first national occasion at which I was present was a public meeting in memory of the Manchester Martyrs at the Grand Parade, Cork, in the autumn of 1915. Seán MacDermott, Terence MacSwiney and Peadar Ó hAnnracháin spoke at it. Seán MacDermott was the only one of the executed leaders of Easter Week whom I ever saw. I was interested in the national Sinn Féin movement before then.

In 1914 after the outbreak of World War I, I answered a call for girls to train as nurses at the South Infirmary, Cork, to nurse wounded soldiers. I realised, young as I was, that the need for nurses would be great as the war was bound to cause criminally appalling suffering. I had no romantic interest in soldiers whom I had always hated even as a child. My motive must have been purely humanitarian. When I realised that my course of action put me down as pro-British I gave it up at once. My family, of course, were completely Imperialist, conservative, capitalist, and roman catholic. These were the ideas that were instilled into me and carefully fostered. We were all sent to school in England, because we would meet only "common people" in Irish schools.

I think reading Sinn Féin and Irish Volunteer newspapers was what enlightened me, and also the wonderful principles and high moral standing and self-sacrifice of all men and women in the Nationalist Sinn Féin Movement. This contrasted very favourably with the people I had been

brought up with.

I was the youngest of a family of six with a big gap between me and the next to me. I was kept completely isolated as a child, not allowed to play with other children, or even to speak to people outside the family, no one was considered "good enough".

I was seventeen when I left my snobbish convent school at St. Leonard's, Sussex. I had learned literally nothing there but class differences and how to be a lady. I never assimilated either.

I had suffered since the age of four from seeing the appalling social conditions, especially among the children. The Irish movement, besides fulfilling my nationalist aspirations, seemed to me at that time to also solve that great wrong. I got to know the MacSwineys and others in the movement about '14-'15, but I think it was the newspapers more than anything else which converted me to the Irish Nationalist Movement.

I read Connolly's "Workers' Republic", Arthur Griffith's "Nationality", "Scissors and Paste", "The Spark", and McNeill's "Irish Volunteer" every week. I also became immediately interested in the Irish language and got Norma Borthwick's wonderful little books "Ceachta Beaga Gaedhilge". It was in Liam Russell's shop in the Grand Parade that I got these papers and books. You met everybody there. He was a Volunteer and all the heads of the Volunteers - Co. Cork Commandant Tomás McCurtain; Seán O'Sullivan, the Cork City Commandant; Liam de Róiste and occasionally Terry McSwiney used to be there. It was a meeting place for people of that kind. There was another little newspaper shop kept by two sisters, the Misses

Wallace, but I think it was a little later I got acquainted with that, though I think it was going all the time. The Misses Wallace were later connected with the Citizen Army.

It would be about the end of 1915, I imagine, that I became actively interested in the national movement. I met Deóra French at her uncle's, Professor Stockley, and she was deeply involved in the Gaelic movements.

I became a member of Cumann na mBan either in the end of 1915 or the beginning of 1916 and attended the meetings at different places. I used to visit the McSwiney's house in Victoria Road. As far as I can remember, Mary McSwiney was the President and Miss Nora O'Brien who had a hat shop, was Secretary of Cumann na mBan.

I remember Terry (I think in January 1916) being arrested and tried for a speech. He was let off with a fine of one shilling and many of his friends, including Seán McDermott, sent him a shilling. I did too and his sisters told me afterwards that he kept mine. He was a Technical Teacher at this time and used to organise the Volunteers in the county. Previous to this he had been working as an accountant in Dwyer's. He organised a strike of the workers which was successful in improving their condition. His family were very poor. Mary was teaching at St. Angela's in Cork, and Annie in the Isle of Wight. Terry left Dwyer's about a year after the strike and became a Technical Teacher which enabled him to do the work he wanted to do with the Volunteers. About a year before the Rising he gave up his teaching altogether and devoted himself entirely to organising the Volunteers. He was especially active in the Bandon and Ballinadee areas.

Liam de Róiste and especially Dónal Ó Ceallacháin,

(who was also a Volunteer and was a Technical Teacher) should be able to tell about all this better than I can.

On one of the occasions before Easter on which I visited McSwiney's house, I met Alice Cashel who was very active in the preparations for the Rising. She would know all about that period and before. Dónal Ó Ceallacháin is another person who was active then and would be able to give a complete account of the events of that time. He is now employed in the E.S.B. and living in Dublin at "Cúilín Mara", Seafort Avenue, Sandymount.

A short time before the Rising I was in Dublin and I must have had a message for Terry, because I waited for him in Parnell Square outside the Gaelic League offices (25) and after giving him whatever message I had, I asked him was something going to happen and he said "any day".

We all knew that the Volunteers marched out to the country on Easter Sunday, taking two days' rations with them. They came back some time on Monday, I cannot remember when. Although I came from such a frightful family, the Volunteers always treated me very well and trusted me, even Seán O'Hegarty who was a very suspicious man. I afterwards learned that Terry distrusted me before he met me, (because of the family I came from) - he was right.

I should mention here that Micheál Ó Cuill, who was, I think, from Cill na Martire, when he found that there was to be no rising in Cork, walked to Dublin. It must have taken him the rest of the week, because the Volunteers were all arrested after the surrender and in the Rotunda Gardens when he arrived. He was deported with the rest to England. In 1920 when Terry, who was Lord Mayor of Cork, was in Brixton, he suggested from Brixton that Micheál of whom he had

a very great opinion and who had been helping him in Irish language matters, when he was Mayor, should act as his successor. I think Micheál is still alive.

The events in Cork during Easter could be better described by other people than myself, although I was in and out of the Volunteer Hall all the time. On the Monday our coachman came into the house and said "There is war in Dublin". I imagine I went out then to see what was happening in Cork. Everyone of the staff at home was all for the Rising and for me and against the family. My eldest brother was a great admirer of Sir Edward Carson. It must have been that time my family gave up speaking to me altogether. I was alone with my mother in the house for two years and we were not speaking to each other. She considered the Volunteers were cowards and criminals of the deepest dye.

It was towards the end of Easter Week that the Volunteers surrendered their arms. Some of them gave up wooden instruments wrapped in stuff and kept their rifles. During the week on my visits to the Volunteer Hall, I often saw Terry and Tom McCurtain. I think they were still hoping that something would happen in Cork. I think they were very much concerned about maintaining discipline and morale among the Volunteers. The surrender of the arms put an end to any hopes they had.

Mary McSwiney was arrested at St. Angela's on the Monday of the following week. She was teaching a class of small children when it happened. She was of the opinion that the children were expecting it. Miss O'Brien was also arrested. They were the only women. The Volunteer leaders were also arrested. The Bishop and Mayor had made an agreement with the military which promised no arrest.

Mary McSwiney went up next day - Tuesday - to the school and one of the nuns, probably the Reverend Mother, said to her that they "thought her own good feelings would have prevented her from coming back". So she went home and did not go back again. After some time she got a letter from the Reverend Mother saying that they "had no intention of dismissing her".

I think it was the next week that all the Volunteers throughout the county were arrested and brought into Cork Gaol. The city Volunteers were also picked up one by one. I was talking to Tomás McCurtain one day and when he went back to his home in Blackpool he was arrested and the next time I saw him was in Richmond Barracks. I and many others went to the Bishop to protest about the Volunteers' arrest. I did not know him. I cannot remember what he said. I learned afterwards, a year later, that Terry was very annoyed with him on account of the arrests and would prefer not to see him. Tomás McCurtain said to me that he did not expect Dr. Cohalan would be made Bishop because he had acted as arbitrator for the Volunteers. Mr. Butterfield, the Mayor, had acted with Dr. Cohalan.

The executions created a revulsion of feeling in Cork as elsewhere. The news was posted up on the pavement in front of the "Cork Examiner" office, day and night, and the crowd gathered to read it.

I came to Dublin to see the prisoners who had been moved up there from Cork. I went to Richmond Barracks and found a Sergeant Major who when he heard my name was Murphy - his own name - admitted me at once and anyone else who happened to be a Murphy. I saw Tomás and, I think, Terry and the Lynchs from Mionán Bridge near Bandon. These were Diarmuid's brothers, Micheál and another. The latter had

not been a Volunteer and like many, was arrested by mistake, but Micheál had done a lot with his motor-bicycle. Micheál is, as far as I know, still living on the farm at Mionán Bridge.

They were deported then and I was back in Cork and those who were interested in the Volunteers - probably the McSwiney's among others, asked me to find out about the National Aid Fund which was just starting. I went to Dublin to Eccles Street where Louise Gavan Duffy was teaching and to Min Ryan in Ranelagh Road. I also saw Deóra French who put me on to Mrs. Wyse-Power. I did not achieve very much, chiefly because the organisation was only beginning. When I went back to Cork there was a meeting of sympathisers in the City Hall to start a branch of the National Aid and a Committee was formed.

About the end of May, Seán O'Sullivan who was the city Commandant, and had up to then escaped arrest, asked me to go to England to visit the different prisons where the Volunteers were interned, as no news or communications were coming from them. I was a free lance, but I had no money at all. The Volunteers gave me £5 and I went to London and visited Wandsworth Prison bringing comforts for the prisoners. There were not many Cork men there. I asked to see Arthur Griffith but he was not allowed to see me. I saw Ginger O'Connell and Douglas French-Mullen. I cannot remember who else I saw, but I saw several. I then went to Wakefield where most of the Cork Volunteers were. I spent a week there. I had a permit from the War Office which made things easy for me. But other visitors had difficulty. Towards the end of the week everybody was gaining admission. Deóra French was among them. She had wired to me to let her know whether it was possible to see friends.

I went to stay in Cambridge about Christmas 1916-1917. While there I read in the press that Terry and some of the other Volunteers who had been released after 1916, had been re-arrested. Although we had corresponded there had been no thought of an engagement between us. I went then, however, to try and find Terry, first to Shrewsbury, where an English soldier told me "They were here but they're gone. You'll never find them". Then I went to the Lawrence Ginnells in London, whose kindness I shall remember to my dying day. Naturally they were in communication with the prisoners; they always were. Lawrence Ginnell was for years called "the member for Ireland", because he was the only one of the Irish members of the British House of Commons who had not sold himself to British Imperialism and Capitalism. I should like to emphasise this as it has been conveniently forgotten in Ireland today. Mrs. Ginnell, old and ill, who so ably seconded her husband's work and made it possible at great personal sacrifice, has not been supported by the Irish Government.

I returned to Cambridge and found a wire from Terry who had had the same thought as myself. It was from Bromyard, Hertfordshire, where he was with Seán Nolan from Cork. Tomás MacCurtain and Peadar Ó hAnnracháin and another Volunteer (I am afraid I forget who it was) were in Ledbury quite near. They were all not in prison but had to report regularly to the police.

We got engaged at once. This was February. My family were, of course, violently opposed to my marrying Terry; they looked on the Volunteers as murderers and criminals. A year before the Easter Rising Terry had given up his job as technical teacher; he did nothing except drill Volunteers and work for the Gaelic League. As when

we married we intended to have children, and as Terry's work for Ireland naturally came before everything else, we waited until after my 25th birthday (June 8th), as my father long dead had left me money which I was only to get at 25 if unmarried, or married with the consent of my mother. Naturally my mother did everything she could to prevent my marriage. We took the money reluctantly as we both hated private property and thought that most of the evils of the world came from this. After all England's case was that Ireland was her private property, and therefore, a domestic question. We were married on June 9th in Bromyard, a tiny place.

I had not believed in the doctrine of the Roman Catholic religion since I was quite a young girl but I remained formally a member of that Church as I had no objection to them as an organisation. Later when I had seen more of the world and was less ignorant, I left them publicly. This was at the time of the Civil War in 1922. I consider everybody has a right to whatever religious beliefs they think right or to the freethinker ideal which is mine. It is a private and personal matter. It is extremely wrong when religious bodies interfere with the Government of a country as they do in Ireland today. Some of the Volunteers who had been deported in 1917 escaped back to Ireland. We wanted to do the same, but wanted first to be married as Terry might have been arrested. I went to London to interview our Irish Organisation there - The Self Determination League. I met Art O'Brien and I think, Seán MacGrath. They laughed when they heard that we wanted to go back but not separately. Just after we were married and were going anyhow, the deportation order was lifted. Dick Mulcahy, who was one of Terry's best friends (Tomás MacCurtain and Fred Cronin were the others) came over

to be our best man. Naturally Terry's sisters were there; Annie was one of my bridesmaids, and Geraldine Sullivan who at that time was a very dear friend of mine.

On arriving in Dublin with Terry, I met De Valera for the first time, also Pierce Beasláí; the latter took off his hat to show us his shaven head, he had just been released from penal servitude. We went to visit the Eoin MacNeills. It struck me that whereas in Cork only working-class people or at any rate those who worked for a very tiny living were Volunteers, in Dublin there were people like the MacNeills. I was personally for the working-class people. After this we went to Ballingeary. It was my first visit to this beautiful place. We were in a farmhouse near Siobhán a Taggart (I am afraid spelt wrong). She was a very famous Irish speaker. When she was telling you a story in Irish she broke into verse quite naturally. I loved Ballingeary.

We returned to Cork and had a small house on the Douglas Road. Seán O'Hegarty and Mid lived not very far from us. I also then met for the first time P.S. and Mina O'Hegarty with Seán Óg, a most beautiful baby in a pram. The O'Hegartys, Terry, Fred Cronin and a few others had formed the Cork Celtic Literary Society very many years before - a little group of pioneers.

Terry was arrested and was for a few weeks in Cork Jail in October 1917. It was on the day of his arrest that I knew that I was pregnant. There was a short hunger strike of a few days when the prisoners were released. Bob and Mrs. Una Brennan who had done such wonders in Wexford for the cause, and another prisoner whose name I think was Synott stayed a few days with us. After this Terry was out every night and all Sunday, drilling Volunteers. It was

* also during this time that the memoirs of Seán drúin, an old Cork Fenian, were written down at the dictation of the old man, by Terry and Diarmuid Ó Murchadha, his son-in-law, and published with the help of Seán Ó Cuiv. Terry also published a small volume of his poems where I was some use in reading proofs. Terry did not enjoy drilling Volunteers; he hated militarism and political work. If Ireland had been free and the condition of everyone satisfactory, he would have written principally poetry, and he would like to have been a librarian. He told me this often.

At this time Terry went every month to Dublin to the Coiste Gnótha and at the same time privately to the meetings of the Volunteers. I am, I am glad to say, no judge of military matters, but it was said by those who are, that it was the munitions Terry brought every month from Dublin that made the war in the South possible, unlike the '16 Rising when they had nothing.

We had a children's party at Christmas with a tree. In March, Terry was re-arrested under the 'cat and mouse' act. I never went with him to Dublin on his monthly trips; this was to save expense, but I did by great luck go this once. I think it was principally because I wanted to get the clothes for my baby in Dublin. We were having tea in the Clarence Hotel on the Quays when the porter arrived and said to Terry that two gentlemen wanted to see him "officially" he added. He was no doubt what was then called a sympathiser, it is now fellow traveller. Terry told me to come up to our room at once and emptied his pockets. He also gave me a verbal message for Seán O'Hegarty and Fred Murray. Then he went down and the detectives took him. Seán Ó Cuiv came soon after to see

Terry by appointment. He found out for me where they had taken Terry and also advised me kindly to give him a rug and pillow. I crossed the river to the Bridewell. I saw Terry who asked me to find out where they were going to take him. He said I had to ask the Lord Mayor, which I did not want to do as we thought him far too pro-British. However, of course, I did. I don't remember what he said. I don't think I got any information. Seán Ó Cuiv, who knew the detectives personally, found out they were sending Terry to Belfast. I then went immediately to Cork with a very heavy suitcase, full of arms. I had telephoned on the night of Terry's arrest. When I arrived at St. Ita's, Seán O'Hegarty was there to meet me and all were well. I next carried a cardboard box to the Nursing Home, Mrs. Blundell's, where I was going to have the baby. All the way I was followed by a policeman. I was terribly sorry that he did not ask me to open my parcel. I went the next day to Belfast and visited Terry daily in the prison. It was difficult at first to get in - one had to have permission from a magistrate. I stayed with a Mrs. McNamee. Joe Connolly and Denny McCullough were very kind. Then Terry was moved to Dundalk. Here everything was easier. I lived with a Volunteer family near the jail, railway people - Kieran. I went to Cork for the birth of my daughter (taken from me aged 14 by the Dublin so-called Courts of Justice). Terry wished the child to be born in Cork. He was in Belfast Jail again when I took her to see him, aged six weeks. Annie MacSwiney went with me, and Dick Mulcahy met us at Kingsbridge and took us across Dublin to Amiens Street, looking after everything.

In August, 1918, Terry was released and re-arrested on the doorstep of the prison, then taken to Lincoln prison. He was there when De Valera escaped and knew how it had

been done. He naturally refused to tell, I was the only person in Cork who did not ask him. I never asked these kinds of questions. He was released in March 1919. Then in the General Election of 1919 elected as Teachta Dála. He did not want this; he did not like politics although in those days the Sinn Féin politics were clean.

After Terry's release I went to live in Ballingeary. Terry was only able to be there for part of each week as his duties kept him in Cork. My daughter Máire was nine months' old and we both wanted her to speak our own language from the first. Terry, of course, spoke Gaoluinne fluently, and had even studied the highly difficult rules for writing poetry, in prison; he had no time outside.

We were there until the following winter. I was soon a fluent speaker, and then went round with the pram (sometimes down precipices) to all the old Irish speakers who knew no English. It was then I got the Fáinne. Terry, of course, had it already.

Here I am afraid is a blank in my memory. Except that I was ill. (I had been before and only found out about ten years later that it was caused by food poisoning. I used to be quite incapacitated). During my well times I was active naturally in the movement and the language. I spoke nothing but Irish for two years.

All this time people were being arrested; homes were being raided. The Bishops were fulminating against the Volunteers, excommunicating people and refusing absolution and the sacraments to men and women in the movement. But no one gave in. Terry was an extremely orthodox Roman Catholic, and in religious matters he would have obeyed the Pope without questioning but not in lay matters.

In January, 1920, (I may have the exact date wrong) Terry said to me that as there was to be a new Mayor elected did I not think Tomás MacCurtain would be the best person? He did, I too. After he had been a short time in office the Black and Tans came and knocked at his house at 4 a.m. and murdered him in the presence of his wife and children. Mrs. MacCurtain was pregnant. This killed the babies (twins, and she had always wished for twins); the birth came much later fortunately in a good Nursing Home or she would have died.

All the details of this are well known. We Irish had at that time a civil Government, Irish Mayors and Corporations, Irish Courts of Justice, even police to keep order. This worried the British Government more than the war I think because they could not say it was murder. After Tomás' murder Terry thought he should take his place. It meant, of course, the end of his life. He was arrested in August 1920, at a session of the Corporation in the Town Hall, the T.C.s. being present.

I and my little daughter were at a tiny little place on the seacoast near Youghal when this happened. Terry had been going to come to stay with us on the day he was arrested. He said to me when we were leaving, "I don't see why I should not have a holiday, Dick Mulcahy is having one. Shall I come to you or not?". I said, "You may as well". Usually at this time we were not openly together because I was a mark by which the English Imperialists and their allies Irish Imperialists and Redmondites would find Terry and kill him but at this juncture they knew all the hiding places so that he was not much worse off with us.

I went to the courtmartial in Cork Barracks.

Mary MacSwiney came to the little place we were at and took

charge of the baby during this time. At this date the Volunteers did not recognise the British alien courts, whether military or lay, but Terry said he would defend himself because he was Mayor of Cork elected by the will of the people and therefore representing them. There were three indictments. Having a police code was one, being able to use it was another. I forget the third. Terry said that of course he had the code and was able to use it, but that he was the only person in Cork entitled to both these things, or somebody authorised by him, which the British were not.

He had already at this time been on hunger strike several days. He was taken to England in a submarine and brought to London, arriving at two in the morning, for fear of demonstrations. In Brixton Prison the Misses MacSwineys and I took it in turns to be with him all the time during the day, his two brothers at night, and his great friend Fred Cronin, a married man with a big family who left everything to do this, one of the greatest workers in the cause of Irish Independence who never wanted any limelight. Whilst Terry was there the assistant doctor in the prison asked me to ask my husband to take food. I did not resent this. I understood. He said, "He might be released permanently injured, you might have more children and this might affect them". I said I had been thinking this for the past two years but that I never interfered with my husband in a matter of conscience. "I wish my wife were like you", said the doctor, and never asked me again. I naturally tried to save Terry's life. On arrival in London I asked Art O'Brien if the British Government intended to release him. We, of course, had our own secret service who told us these things. Art said, "Not at present. Of course, they may change". I therefore sent a letter to the heads of the

Volunteers - Dick Mulcahy, Cathal Brugha and I forget the third. (I said it did not matter which of them the letter reached) saying that Terry, in my opinion, was more valuable to Ireland alive than dead (naturally I could not give expression to any personal wishes) and would they think of giving him an order to give up the hunger strike. Then something very unpleasant happened. The Irish Government did not do this. It was not until after Terry's death and that of two of his comrades in Cork Prison that they called off the strike. Terry became delirious during the last few days of his life and had to be given morphia. He died as all the world knows, on October 25th. Until these last few days he was perfectly clear. In fact, some of his best friends said almost more so than in ordinary life. He said to me once that he had often suffered from the fact that the Volunteers objected to his going into action in ambushes, etc. because they considered him too valuable, but he said to me "I feel this is as dangerous and more so".

During the time in Brixton we also learned that the Roman Catholic Church wanted to excommunicate Terry on the grounds that he was committing suicide. They only desisted from doing this because Terry's hunger strike and Ireland's cause were so well put before the whole world, and everybody knew that he only desired to be released from prison, so that this would have made them ridiculous.

Fortunately there are others like Terry in different parts of the world. If it were not so our life would be unbearably abominable. Nevertheless it is hard to do him justice. He was of middle height, strong, neither very thin or the opposite. He had raven black hair and an olive complexion. I think his eyes were his most remarkable feature, rather light blue, they had an expression of

idealism I could never describe. None of his photos are like him. I think what resembles him most is the portrait of John Mitchell, young (whom Terry had a very great admiration for). That is almost exactly like Terry except that the lower part of the face is a bit thicker or larger in Mitchell's portrait. There is a description by Chief Justice Russell of his seeing Mitchell on the coach going from Newry to Drogheda. Russell was, of course, a little boy. His description of Mitchell's appearance is exactly like Terry. But apart from appearance! He was of course for absolute separation from England - everyone knows this. But with him it did not end there. Nor was an Irish-speaking Ireland enough. He wanted justice. I am certain that if he were alive today he would not turn his back on the first Irish Constitution to which he had sworn allegiance. He would "cherish equally all the children of the nation". He would have been horrified at the rich people, lay and clerical, in a country governed by an Irish Dáil, and equally horrified at the lack of education and welfare.

He was absolutely straight and self-sacrificing, and I remember how terribly the state of corruption in the Workhouse and the Asylum in Cork worried him when he was Mayor. He said to me once that if only that was clean it would be a greater load off his mind than anything else. But at that time it was the Redmondites who were corrupt, not us.

Terry was not always serious. He liked a good joke and fun. I remember him dressing up to play charades at Mrs. O'Riordan's in Cork at Christmas. Terry was eminently reasonable. Also he could speak quietly to his greatest opponents. He had been years working in the wholesale

department office of Dwyer's where by the way they had to stand. He had had a man at each side of him abusing all his ideals the whole day. He said this taught patience. I believe I only saw him lose his temper once. This was when the police asked me to sign a form in Bromyard. Part of this was the law as the war was on, but they asked me to continue to fill out the part that only concerned aliens. Terry flew at them.

Years before I knew him he studied for his degree in philosophy. He told me this himself. He was hard at work all day and studied in the evenings. He got serious headaches and was advised by a doctor not to work late at night. He then took to going to bed at 8 o'clock after his tea, and getting up at two. First of all he had a good fire; he thought this made him go to sleep so he studied without in the freezing cold.

I was invited to Washington D.C. by the Editors of the "New York Nation". I did not want to go to America at all, and naturally not at such a time. However, various Irish people in London said I ought to go, so I wrote to Arthur Griffith (Leas Uachtarán) and he sent me a wire "Urge you to go". This was a polite command. I thought that I had better choose my sister-in-law, M. MacSwiney, as my companion. It was usual to go in pairs. I did not blame her but she had been very difficult in London (not with me but with the Irish organisation there). I therefore made an appointment with Arthur Griffith who was practical and kind. It was my one meeting with him. He understood the situation and asked me if I knew Harry Boland. I said I did. "Well", Arthur Griffith said, "he is in the U.S.A. and will see to that".

We went from Cobh. I was terribly ill all the way

over. On arriving at New York we were besieged by journalists before landing. Fortunately A. O'Brien had taught me interviewing in London but I had not yet had to interview twenty together. Fausset, who was our Consul in New York, also came on to the boat. On landing, Harry Boland and many other Irish were there to greet us officially, and important Americans. We would have been killed several times over by kindness. We were taken to the St. Regis Hotel and millions of people wanted to see us. Jane Adams, Doctor Gertrude Kelly, and of course, our hosts the Villards; Mrs. Frances Villard, widow of the founder of the "New York Nation", and daughter of Garrison who was tarred and feathered for protecting the negroes. I stayed the night with her on my subsequent visit in 1923 and joined the Women's League for Peace and Freedom, founded by her and others during the 1914 War. I am still a strong Pacifist.

After a few days we went to Washington with Harry Boland and others. When there we stayed with Mr. and Mrs. P. Drury and met Senator David I. Walsh, Senator Borah and several other important people. Doctor McCartan, who was our official representative, took me round Washington to show me that beautiful city. Dr. McCartan did wonderful work during those years, so did De Valera. While in the U.S.A., Harry Boland showed me the famous Russian Jewels, rubies and sapphires to the best of my recollection. They had been given by their owners, the Soviet Government, to the Irish Republican Government as security for a loan made by the Irish Republican Government to the Soviet Government. It was shortly after this that Dr. McCartan visited Soviet Russia officially.

We received wonderful kindness from all Americans who were very pacifist and idealist in those days. One hopes this will return.

We testified before the Commission in Washington constituted to enquire into the atrocities perpetrated by the British Government in Ireland.

We were at a friendly evening party at the Villards with a German Christmas Tree. Mrs. Henry Villard's daughter, a very clever child, spoke some words of Irish in our honour. I was given the freedom of the city of New York, not of course for myself, but to honour and in recognition of Terry's heroic fight.

Back in Dublin, January/February 1921, the war was raging, people being raided, taken out and shot: curfew. My daughter had been staying with my mother in Cork. She was now of course with me in Dublin. In the summer of 1921 was the Truce. De Valera, Bob Barton (who had been in penal servitude) and others went to London. De Valera negotiated with Lloyd George. I met them all in London; I was on my way to Germany where I was going for the first time. I and my German girl-friend followed the Treaty negotiations at fever point. I was not in Wiesbaden for political work but for medical treatment. It was the time of the Allies' occupation of the Rhineland. Wiesbaden was occupied by the French troops and a lot of civilian French were there. I did a lot of work for the Irish Republic, amongst both French and Germans. I wrote to Seán T. O'Kelly who was our diplomatic representative in Paris (an honourable post in those days) and he sent me propaganda in French at my request. There was nothing in German. When the Treaty was signed with England it was the greatest

even personal tragedy that had befallen me up to that time. I little dreamt of what was to come later.

X I was alone as far as anybody was concerned who understood the Irish situation. I wrote a letter-card to Seán T. O'Kelly saying that if the Treaty was accepted it would be the worst calamity that ever had happened to Ireland. This was read in the Dáil subsequently at the Treaty Debates.

SIGNED

MUIRGHEAL BEAN MHIC SUIBHNE
(Mrs. Muriel MacSwiney).

DATE

PARIS, DECEMBER 1951.

WITNESS _____

