

1991

Varieties of Irish Republican womanhood : San Francisco lectures during their United States tours 1916-1925

Joanne E. Mooney
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.63w4-vsgx>

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**Varieties of Irish republican womanhood: San Francisco lectures
during their United States tours, 1916–1925**

Mooney, Joanne Evelyn, M.A.

San Jose State University, 1991

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VARIETIES OF IRISH REPUBLICAN WOMANHOOD:
San Francisco Lectures During Their United States Tours
1916-1925

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of History

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

By

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May, 1991

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ABSTRACT

VARIETIES OF IRISH REPUBLIC WOMANHOOD:
SAN FRANCISCO LECTURES DURING THEIR UNITED STATES TOURS,
1916-1925

by Joanne E. Mooney

This thesis addresses the topic of the lecture tours of four Irish republican women in the United States from 1916 to 1925: Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, Mary MacSwiney, Countess Constance Markievicz, and Mrs. Margaret Pearse. It examines the role of women in the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin, the Irish-American role in the Rising, and Irish-American organizations and leadership. The thesis focuses on the reactions to the mass meetings held in San Francisco by these women during their cross-country tours.

Research on this subject reveals that these women contributed to the unifying of the Irish-American community even after republican nationalism waned as a result of the confusion caused by the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty. Each tour reflected the political situation on both sides of the Atlantic, as indicated by the nervousness of the United States government and some of the American people.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Louis Bisceglia, my teacher. The author will forever be grateful for his friendship, his scholarship, and for the idea for the thesis, which breaks new ground in Irish historical research. I chose to retain his tentative suggested title, and hope that he would have approved of and been pleased with the research and final paper.

Dr. Billie Jensen, Dr. James P. Walsh, and Dr. Charles Keserich, past teachers and present advisors, graciously and without hesitation advised, assisted, and encouraged me when I needed it most. Dr. Walsh has given constant guidance and support during my years at San Jose State University. I would also like to thank Dr. Nancy Grey Osterud and Dr. Cliona Murphy for their expertise and invaluable criticisms.

Mrs. Margaret Keohane, librarian at the San Francisco Irish Cultural Center, provided constant assistance during research. Thank you also to Jack Douglas, Special Collections, San Jose State University Library; Dr. Jeffrey M. Burns, Chancery Archives, Archdiocese of San Francisco; Steven Corey and Father Michael Kotlanger, SJ, Donohue Rare Book Room, Richard A. Gleeson Library, University of San

Francisco; Willie Cressler, American Irish History Society, New York City; the newspaper/microform staffs of the Main Boston City Library at Copley Square, the University of California, Berkeley Library, and the San Jose State University Library; and the Inter-Library Loan Department of San Jose State University Library. Special thanks to the Right Reverend Monsignor Florence D. Cohalan, Retired, Church of Saint Agnes, New York City, who graciously granted the author an interview in July 1989.

Portions of Chapter 4, Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, were given as papers to the American Conference for Irish Studies, Western Region, Southern Oregon State College, Ashland, Oregon, on October 13, 1990; to the Irish Literary and Historical Society, San Francisco Cultural Center, San Francisco, California, on November 30, 1990; and to the Fifth Annual Graduate Student Conference on Irish Literature, Culture and Politics, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, on March 15, 1991.

No words can express to my husband, Jack, my gratitude for his support in my pursuit of an education. He has travelled through the journeys of these Irish republican women with me, provided excellent criticism and critical proof reading, and I shall ever be grateful that he supported me in many different ways.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AARIR	American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic
ACCI	American Commission on Conditions in Ireland
ACII	American Commission on Irish Independence
AOH	Ancient Order of Hibernians
<u>Clan</u>	<u>Clan na Gael</u>
<u>Cumann</u>	<u>Cumann na mBan</u>
<u>Dail</u>	<u>Dail Eireann</u>
<u>Fianna</u>	<u>Fianna na hEireann</u>
FOIF	Friends of Irish Freedom
GPO	General Post Office
INAVDF	Irish National Aid and Volunteer Dependent's Fund
<u>Inghinidhe</u>	<u>Inghinidhe na hEireann</u>
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IRF	Irish Relief Fund
IVDF	Irish Volunteer Dependent's Fund
IWFL	Irish Women's Franchise League
IWWU	Irish Women's Workers Union
IRB	Irish Republican Brotherhood
KRB	Knights of the Red Branch
TD	<u>Teachta Dala</u> (Deputy)

UIS

United Irish Societies

WIEL

Women's Irish Education League

INTRODUCTION

Ireland, held in bondage as an English colony for seven and a half centuries, initiated its struggle for independence in the Easter Rising of 1916 in Dublin. Led by a handful of men and women and not supported by a majority of the Irish, it set in motion a chain of events that would lead down a painful path to eventual independence from England. The price was high: loss of lives, a civil war, and a divided country. However, the dedication of those men and women who believed in an Irish Republic was complete and without reservation.

From the beginning, the Irish were supported tactically and financially by the Irish-Americans. Visits by Irish republicans to the United States to raise funds were necessary for the Irish and welcomed by the Irish-Americans.

The Irish women who traveled to America for support came for their own purposes and accomplished their own goals, yet they all had a common thread of republicanism woven between them. They were all directly or indirectly involved in the Easter Rising, they all shared a deep love and commitment to Ireland, and above all they held in common their devotion to the Irish Republic. Each in her own way displayed irrefutable courage, tenacity, and leadership.

They came at different times to conduct lectures in towns and cities across the United States. Although each lecture tour involved fund raising, money did not overshadow their individual primary goals.

This study focuses on the San Francisco (Northern California) lectures of four republican women between 1916 and 1925: Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, Mary MacSwiney, Countess Constance Markievicz, and Mrs. Margaret Pearse. They were not the only women to visit California during that time, and San Francisco was not the focus of the United States tours. San Francisco and Los Angeles became the centers of West Coast Irish-American republican nationalism during this period. These four women received extensive American and Irish-American press coverage in both cities and across the United States. These newspapers form the base of research for this thesis.

These republican women did not hold in common a class, religion, or political background. Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington and Mary MacSwiney held advanced university degrees. Countess Constance Markievicz was an accomplished horsewoman and artist. Margaret Pearse quietly raised a family of four children. They were all praised by the American press for their eloquent speaking abilities, dignity, and intellect.

Eamon de Valera, President of the Irish Republic, traveled secretly to the United States in June 1919 to

organize a bond drive to support the Republic and to secure American recognition of Ireland. Although the paths of de Valera and several of the Irish women crossed occasionally, his tour remained independent of theirs.

Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, suffragist and pacifist, set aside her own work and belief system to become the first successful and most controversial Irish republican lecturer to tour the United States. She came to tell the true story of the death of her husband, Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, during the 1916 Easter Rising, to solicit American recognition of the Irish Republic, and to raise funds for Sinn Fein¹ to support the Anglo-Irish war.

The political climate in the United States was uneasy because of World War I and her first tour, December 1916 to June 1918, reflected the tension. Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington suffered prejudice and harassment throughout her time in the United States. In spite of the controversy her visit provoked, the well-attended mass meetings she held in San Francisco produced a unifying effect on Irish-Americans and strengthened their Irish republican nationalism.

¹Sinn Fein (Gaelic for "ourselves alone"), was organized in 1905 by Arthur Griffith as a compromise between Republicanism and Home Rule. The 1916 Easter Rising became labeled "the Sinn Fein Rebellion," although they played no formal role. Sinn Fein won its first by-election in February 1917 and reorganized in October 1917 as part of the republican movement with de Valera as President and Griffith as Vice President.

She conducted a second lecture tour of the United States in March 1923 as head of an Irish Women's Mission to raise funds for relief of the families of Irish Republican soldiers and prisoners held in Irish prisons by the Irish Free State.

Mary MacSwiney and Mrs. Muriel MacSwiney travelled to the United States in December 1920 to appear before the Committee of One Hundred Fifty.² After testifying, Muriel MacSwiney returned to Ireland and Mary MacSwiney toured the country at the height of Irish-American republican nationalism in support of the Irish Republic. Brass bands, parades, welcoming committees, and extensive press coverage were hallmarks of her cross-country tour. California Irish-Americans unquestionably supported Eamon de Valera and the Republic. The support given her in San Francisco reflected that loyalty. Her visit further unified San Francisco Irish-Americans.

Mary MacSwiney returned for a second tour of the United States in 1925 after the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty, the Irish Civil War, and the decline of Irish-American interest in order to revitalize and up-date Irish-American support organizations.

²See page 90n21.

Countess Constance Markievicz arrived in New York in April 1922 on an assignment to tour the United States for four months to vie with the Irish Free State for American support. The political upheaval in Ireland necessitated her return home after two months. Countess Markievicz received generous welcomes and support in appreciation of her role in the 1916 Easter Rising and her "romantic" image.

Mrs. Margaret Pearse began her cross-country tour of the United States in May 1924 to raise funds to save St. Enda's School in Dublin and to support Eamon de Valera and the Irish Republic. She was welcomed warmly as "the most glorious of Irish mothers," particularly as the mother of martyred Patrick and William Pearse.

The tours of these four republican women shared in common the foundation of independence for Ireland, a new Irish nationalism that began with the 1916 Easter Rising, and the success of rallying Irish-Americans behind the Irish cause.

CHAPTER 1
THE MAKING OF IRISH REPUBLICAN WOMEN:
EASTER RISING, 1916

The women directly or indirectly involved in the 1916 Easter Rising, shared a deep love of and commitment to Ireland, and above all when it was over held in common their devotion to the Irish Republic. Each in her own way displayed irrefutable courage and tenacity by stepping outside the norm of femininity that was expected of women at that time. Although some women had participated in the suffrage movement, the 1916 Easter Rising gave rise to a new level of political participation for women.

The Military Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) in Ireland, in consultation with the Clan na Gael (Clan), the militant Irish-American organization in the United States, set the date for revolution as Easter Sunday, April 23, 1916. The Clan provided the funds and secured Germany's promise to furnish guns and ammunition. On Easter Monday morning, while most Dubliners were on holiday, 1,528 men and women, under the command of Patrick Pearse, IRB Director of Organization, and his deputy, James Connolly, organizer of the Irish Citizen Army (Citizen Army), marched from Liberty Hall, just north of the Liffey

River in central Dublin, to the General Post Office (GPO) and other strategic buildings. The republican tricolor flag of green, white, and orange was hoisted to the top of the GPO and Patrick Pearse read a Proclamation to "IRISHMEN and IRISHWOMEN," which might have encouraged some republican women, from the steps of the GPO that declared independence from England and established an Irish Republic.¹ (See Appendix 1.)

The Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army fought the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC), the Dublin Metropolitan Police, and the British army for six days before they surrendered on April 29. Historians who have examined the event have stressed that the press and government initially accredited the Rising to the Sinn Fein, although Sinn Fein played no role.²

British soldiers rounded up the rebels and marched them through the streets of Dublin to Richmond Barracks and Kilmainham Jail. With Irish fighting in the British army in World War I, many onlookers cursed, jeered, and spit at the "Sinn Feiners." British civil authorities decided not to

¹Alan J. Ward, The Easter Rising, Revolution and Irish Nationalism (Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1980), 5; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, Ireland from Colony to Nation State (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1979), 140.

²McCaffrey, Ireland, 5, 140; The New York Times, April 29, 1916, p.1; May 15, 1916, p. 2; San Francisco Chronicle, April 30, 1916, p. 1.

imprison the insurgents and turned them over to military courts for trial.³

Over a ten-day period, firing squads executed fifteen Irish nationalists, including the seven signers of the Republican Proclamation. Patrick Pearse's brother, William, was executed although he held no position of leadership in the Volunteers. Thomas Ashe and Eamon de Valera escaped the firing squad because of a delay in being brought to trial. Countess Constance Markievicz, sentenced to death, was granted "mercy" because of her sex.⁴

By July 1, 1916, over three thousand men and seventy-seven women had been arrested and taken to Richmond Barracks; over eighteen hundred were held without trial. British soldiers assaulted citizens in the streets of Dublin. Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, respected pacifist, feminist, and editor of the Irish Citizen, was arrested and shot without a trial. This English brutality triggered a re-evaluation of Easter Week by the Irish public and the rebels became martyred heroes.⁵

³McCaffrey, Ireland, 141.

⁴John O'Beirne Ranelagh, A Short History of Ireland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 182; The Earl of Longford and Thomas P. O'Neill, Eamon de Valera (London: Hutchinson of London, 1970), 50; Jacqueline Van Voris, Constance de Markievicz, In the Cause of Ireland (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1967), 197, 210.

⁵Van Voris, 201; McCaffrey, Ireland, 147.

The typical historical overview of the Easter Rising of 1916 includes the role of Countess Markievicz. Her activist role in the nationalist and labor movements and her leadership during the Rising justify her place in Irish history. However, other women played important and sometimes dangerous roles prior to, during, and after Easter Week, 1916. These middle-class women of varied backgrounds took separate paths to the Irish Republic which corresponded to the overall political events in Ireland.

The Countess wrote in the Irish Citizen in December 1914 that three great movements were taking place in Ireland at that time: "the national movement, the women's movement and the industrial one, yet as each converged on 1916 they moved at their own pace."⁶ Irish middle-class women not only supported these movements, but formed their own separate organizations in order to have an independent political voice.

The alliance of Irish republican women can be traced back to the formation of Inghinidhe na hEireann in 1900, the Irish Women's Franchise League in 1908, the Fianna na hEireann in 1909, the Irish Citizen Army in 1913 and the Cumann na mBan in 1913. After Easter 1916, many of these

⁶Margaret MacCurtain, "Women, The Vote and Revolution," in Women in Irish Society, ed. Margaret MacCurtain and Donncha O'Corrain (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1979), 52.

woman gained fame and recognition for their political activism in support of the Irish Republic.

During the early development of the Irish separatist movement, Maud Gonne MacBride and Helena Molony, dedicated nationalists, founded the Inghinidhe na hEireann (the Daughters of Erin) in October 1900 "to work for the complete independence of Ireland"⁷ with a commitment to the "physical force tradition of Irish republicanism."⁸ According to Countess Markievicz, Inghinidhe was "always in favour of the most extreme action possible."⁹ It developed as an early feminist and nationalist organization. Although, known as "working girls," its early members were not of the working class.¹⁰

In Unmanageable Revolutionaries, Margaret Ward comments on the importance of Inghinidhe:

Had not Inghinidhe existed, a whole generation of women would never have developed the self-confidence which eventually enabled them to hold their own in organizations composed of both sexes. No matter what reservations might be expressed concerning some of their policies, their importance is that they rebelled against their exclusion and by their very existence

⁷Brian Farrell, "Markievicz and the Women of the Revolution," in Leaders and Men of the Easter Rising: Dublin 1916, ed. F. X. Martin (New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), 229.

⁸Margaret Ward, Unmanageable Revolutionaries, Women and Irish Nationalism (London: Pluto Press, 1983), 69.

⁹Ibid., 77.

¹⁰Ibid., 51.

opened up a whole world of new possibilities for women.¹¹

Alongside but not aligned with Inghinidhe, the Irish Women's Franchise League (IWFL), organized by Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington and Margaret Cousins, feminists and pacifists, held its first meeting on November 4, 1908. From its inception, women involved in the nationalist movement were antagonistic toward the IWFL formation.¹² Cliona Murphy, in The Women's Suffrage Movement and Irish Society, states: "For despite their [suffragists] intense consciousness of being Irish, their primary goal remained the attainment of women's suffrage."¹³

According to Margaret Ward, the feminists saw women as an oppressed group and the franchise as the major symbol of citizenship, no matter what political implications were involved. The nationalistic women argued that "the national issue was of such overwhelming importance that it could not be divorced from short-term political ends."¹⁴

¹¹Ibid., 86.

¹²Van Voris, 64; Leah Levenson and Jerry H. Natterstad, Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, Irish Feminist (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 24.

¹³Cliona Murphy, The Women's Suffrage Movement and Irish Society in the Early Twentieth Century (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 7.

¹⁴Margaret Ward, 72-73.

Fianna na hEireann (Fianna), sometimes referred to as the Irish Boy Scouts, is considered Countess Markievicz's greatest contribution to Irish nationalism and the Easter Rising. Along with Bulmer Hobson, a member of the IRB, she organized the Fianna in August 1909 "to train boys in the old tradition of the Gaels" to take arms against England in the cause of Irish independence.¹⁵

The Countess purchased rifles and trained the boys to use them on the land surrounding her cottage near the mountains of Dublin.¹⁶ The IRB later used her Fianna handbook as a training manual, particularly for drill and rifle exercises. The Fianna's original members formed the nucleus of ready-trained officers of the IRB.¹⁷

Speaking of the importance of the Fianna, Patrick Pearse remarked that the boys were trained to work for an Ireland "not free merely but Gaelic as well, not Gaelic merely, but free as well,"¹⁸ and that "if the Fianna had not been founded in 1909, there would have been no

¹⁵Van Voris, 59, 67, 70.

¹⁶Ibid., 71.

¹⁷Ibid., 145; Anne Marreco, The Rebel Countess, The Life and Times of Constance Markievicz (Philadelphia and New York: Chilton Books, 1967), 114-15.

¹⁸Marreco, 113.

Volunteers in 1913. The Easter Rising of 1916 would have been impossible."¹⁹

The third movement in Ireland, labor, converging on Easter 1916, organized the Irish Citizen Army as a self-defense force during the Great Walkout Strike in Dublin in 1913. The Citizen Army, headed by James Connolly, socialist and labor leader, was praised by some for its sexual equality--far more, they claimed, than the Irish Volunteers.²⁰ The Citizen Army constitution states "the Citizen Army shall be open to all who accept the principle of equal rights and opportunities for the Irish people."²¹

Countess Markievicz and Dr. Kathleen Lynn became commissioned officers, men and women drilled together, and first-aid classes were co-educational.²² However, Elizabeth Coxhead, in Daughters of Erin, points out that "at no time was it any part of Connolly's plan that the women of Cumann na mBan or of the Citizen Army should do any actual

¹⁹Van Voris, 66; MacCurtain, 53.

²⁰Alan J. Ward, The Easter Rising, Revolution and Irish Nationalism (Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1980), 100; Robert Kee, The Green Flag, Volume Two: The Bold Fenian Men (London: Penguin Books, 1972), 199; Margaret Ward, 99.

²¹M. O. O'Dubhghaill, comp., Insurrection Fires at Eastertide, A Golden Jubilee Anthology of the Easter Rising (Cork: The Mercier Press, 1966), 101-2.

²²Anne Haverty, Constance Markievicz, An Independent Life (London: Pandora Press, 1988), 121.

fighting. They were to be the cooks, the medical auxiliaries, the despatch riders."²³

Corresponding to the changing political situation in Ireland in 1913, nationalist women organized the Cumann na mBan (Cumann) as a counterpart to the Irish Volunteers and merged it with the Inghinidhe. At its first public meeting in April 1914 in Dublin, a circular was distributed stating its objectives:

1. To advance the cause of Irish liberty.
2. To organize Irish women in furtherance of this object.
3. To assist in arming and equipping a body of Irish men for defence of Ireland.
4. To form a fund for these purposes to be called the "Defence of Ireland Fund".²⁴

Taking a traditional approach in her inaugural keynote speech, Agnes O'Farrelly ruled out the probability of women taking a direct part "in the defence of Ireland," except as a last resort, and dismissed the possibility of discussion of politics.²⁵ Concerning the speech, Margaret Ward comments:

²³Elizabeth Coxhead, Daughters of Erin (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe Limited, 1979), 93.

²⁴Lil Conlon, Cumann na mBan and The Women of Ireland, 1913-25 (Kilkenny: Kilkenny People Ltd., 1969), 8.

²⁵Margaret Ward, 93.

The political arena was to be reserved for men, while women's role was to "put Ireland first", by helping to arm the men. Agnes O'Farrelly's emphasis did not challenge prejudices but reinforced them. . . . In her [O'Farrelly's] eyes, national women were simply extending their domestic concerns to the public sphere.²⁶

Cumann initially appealed to those women whose husbands, fathers, or brothers were involved with the Volunteers. Like the Inghinidhe and the IWFL, its first members were independent women who had the time to devote to its organization. In August 1914 there were forty branches, some with one hundred members; by October there were sixty-three branches. Many were also active members of the suffrage movement who, when the outbreak of World War I aggravated the tensions between the two movements, gave their full commitment to Cumann.²⁷

Countess Markievicz, a member of the executive committee of Cumann complained they were "an animated collecting box for a male organization"²⁸ and that:

today the women attached to national movements are there chiefly to collect funds for the men to spend. These Ladies' Auxiliaries demoralize women, set them up in separate camps, and deprive them of all initiative

²⁶Ibid., 93.

²⁷Ibid., 92-95; Charlotte H. Fallon, Soul of Fire, A Biography of Mary MacSwiney (Cork and Dublin: The Mercier Press, 1986), 22.

²⁸Quoted in Amanda Sebestyen, "Introduction," in Prison Letters of Countess Markievicz (London: Virago Press Limited, 1987), xviii.

and independence. Women are left to rely on sex charm, or intrigue and backstairs influence.²⁹

By the end of 1915, Cumann adopted a militaristic attitude and, in October 1915, it designed its own uniform. The insignia showed the words "Cumann na mBan" written in Celtic script encircling a rifle.³⁰

By acquiring suffragist speakers like Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington to appear on their platforms, Cumann was able to identify the nationalist cause with that of women.³¹

Louise Gavan Duffy, in her recollections, writes:

There were women on the Cumann na mBan committee who were suffragists; others of different opinions, but so urgent, so important was the work of the Volunteers, that we could not afford to divide. Everything was put aside and we were ready to do what we were told: carry messages, give first aid, make meals, in short any work.³²

Cumann na mBan "effectively radicalised the women towards revolution."³³

Nora Connolly and Margaret Skinnider, both members of the Citizen Army, individually took on dangerous missions prior to the Easter Rising that illustrate dedication to Irish nationalism.

²⁹Van Voris, 157.

³⁰MacCurtain, 52; Margaret Ward, 103; Fallon, 25.

³¹MacCurtain, 54-55.

³²Ibid., 52-53.

³³Ibid., 54.

Nora Connolly, daughter of James Connolly and member of the Belfast Cumann, was asked by her father to make a secret trip to the United States since it was too dangerous to commit communications to writing. If caught, she risked death for treason for herself, her father, Countess Markievicz, and Tom Clarke and Sean MacDermott, members of the IRB.³⁴ The purpose of the mission remains unknown. Historians suggest that it may have been to make contact with Germany from the United States through Irish-American connections or it may have pertained to British anti-submarine operations.³⁵

Upon her arrival in New York, Nora Connolly stayed with Padraic Colum, Irish poet, and his wife, Mary, for several weeks until it was deemed safe for her to return to Ireland.³⁶ At the request of John Devoy, leader of the Clan na Gael, she brought back money and letters for Roger Casement, a member of the Volunteers. Casement was in Germany at that time trying to obtain arms and ammunition and to raise an illegal Irish Brigade from the Irish

³⁴Van Voris, 148.

³⁵Ibid., 148-49.

³⁶Ibid., 149; Henry Boylan, A Dictionary of Irish Biography (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), 65.

prisoners in German camps. Devoy paid her passage back on the Lusitania.³⁷

Margaret Skinnider, a young Irish teacher living in Glasgow and a member of the Glasgow Cumann na mBan became a member of the Citizen Army through her friendship with the Countess. She learned to shoot at a Glasgow rifle club and smuggled in military equipment on her frequent trips to Ireland.³⁸ During Christmas 1915, she brought detonators over on the Glasgow boat and delivered them to the Countess in Dublin.³⁹ They both gained experience in using explosives by testing dynamite in the hills around Dublin.⁴⁰

About ninety Irish women took part in the 1916 Easter Rising; sixty were Cumann members, the remainder belonged to the Citizen Army. With few exceptions, they served as nurses, cooks and couriers; however, these jobs were not without danger. They not only carried messages to and from headquarters in the GPO, but crossed British lines to bring

³⁷Marreco, 182; Van Voris, 149.

³⁸Margaret Ward, 113.

³⁹Coxhead, 92; Farrell, 234.

⁴⁰Margaret Ward, 113.

in food and ammunition, sometimes hidden in their clothing. Some women held up food trucks for their contents.⁴¹

Women, whether members of the Citizen Army or Cumann, were not welcomed by all Irish insurgents during the Rising. Eamon de Valera, in command of Boland's Mill, told the women who came to the mill that he did not want them:

I said we have anxieties of a certain kind here and I do not want to add to them at the moment by getting untrained women, women who were clearly untrained for soldiering--I did not want them as soldiers in any case.⁴²

Countess Markievicz, active in the nationalist, suffrage, and labor movements, took the most militant, dramatic, and publicized role of the women who participated in the Rising. At the time the leaders of the Citizen Army were informed that the Rising would take place and were given their assignments, she was accepted by Tom Clarke and the members of the provisional government as the one of Connolly's "ghosts."⁴³ She later wrote:

'Ghosts' was the name we gave to those who stood secretly behind the leaders and were entrusted with enough of the plans of the Rising to enable them to carry on that Leader's work should anything happen to himself. . . . Connolly had appointed two staff officers--Commandant Mallin and myself. I held a

⁴¹Ibid., 111.

⁴²Ibid., 110.

⁴³Van Voris, 173.

commission, giving me the rank of Staff Lieutenant.⁴⁴
(See Appendix 2.)

With a dramatic flair, the Countess arrived at Liberty Hall dressed in a dark green woolen blouse and tweed knee breeches, black stockings, a black hat trimmed with a spray of feathers, and armed with a small automatic pistol and a Mauser rifle-pistol.⁴⁵ She was also described as carrying a rifle with a fixed bayonet.⁴⁶

As second-in-command to Commandant Michael Mallin of the Citizen Army, she was placed in charge of digging trenches and barricading gates at St. Stephen's Green. She found the work exciting once the fighting began and took care of "any sniper who was particularly objectionable."⁴⁷

When Mallin decided that St. Stephen's Green was indefensible, he sent the Countess, along with two other women and four men, to secure the Royal College of Surgeons on the west side of the Green.⁴⁸ Accounts of her entry into the College vary. In summary, the Countess rang the

⁴⁴Constance Markievicz, "Some Women in Easter Week," in Prison Letters of Countess Markievicz (London: Virago Press Limited, 1987), 37-39.

⁴⁵O'Dubhghaill, 253-54.

⁴⁶The New York Times, April 29, 1916, p. 1.

⁴⁷Markievicz, 38.

⁴⁸Charles Duff, Six Days to Shake an Empire (New York: A. S. Barnes and Co., Inc., 1966), 130.

bell at the front door. When no one answered, she blew the lock with her pistol and entered.⁴⁹ She then ordered the caretaker and his wife locked in their rooms and the building searched.⁵⁰

The Countess is reported to have been a capable combatant during the fighting. For instance, as she and William Partridge, a member of the Citizen Army, observed British soldiers marching down Harcourt Street, she fired into the group. Margaret Skinnider, in her position as a sniper, saw two officers drop to the ground. The Countess took aim again and the soldiers retreated the way they came.⁵¹ The Countess had no qualms about shooting an enemy. When Constable Michael Lahiff tried to enter the Green and refused to retreat, she shot him with her Mauser rifle. She repeatedly shouted, "I shot him."⁵²

The Countess ended Easter Week with the same dramatic flair with which she started. As she and the others at the College of Surgeons surrendered on Sunday, April 30 to British Captain de Courcy Wheeler, she took off her pistol and kissed it "reverently" before handing it over. When

⁴⁹Marreco, 203-4.

⁵⁰Haverty, 149.

⁵¹Marreco, 203-4; Haverty, 149.

⁵²Max Caulfield, The Easter Rebellion (New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston, 1963), 87-88.

Captain Wheeler offered to drive her to Dublin Castle, she refused saying she would march at the head of her men as she was second-in-command and would share their fate.⁵³

At her trial, on May 4, 1916, she pleaded guilty to participating in the Rising, not guilty to assisting the enemy, and guilty to causing disaffection. She stated: "I went out to fight for Ireland's freedom, and it doesn't matter what happens to me. I did what I thought was right and I stand by it." She was found guilty and sentenced to death "by being shot." However, the Court recommended mercy because of her sex and her sentence commuted to "Penal Servitude for Life."⁵⁴

The only female casualty during the Rising, Margaret Skinnider, craved more action than her role as courier provided. Mallin agreed to use her as a sniper and sent her out with a party on Wednesday evening to set fire to houses behind the Russell Hotel. British soldiers fired on them, killing one man and seriously wounding Margaret. She was carried back under fire to the College of Surgeons and a few days later taken to Vincent's Hospital.⁵⁵

⁵³Ibid., 358; Marreco, 207.

⁵⁴Marreco, 162.

⁵⁵Ibid., 40-41; Haverty, 154.

Dr. Kathleen Lynn, Captain and medical officer of the Citizen Army, set up and headed a medical station in the City Hall. At the time of surrender, she was the only officer present and tenaciously insisted on following the proper military procedure in conceding to the surrender herself. The British military were at first unsure whether their code of conduct would allow them to accept surrender from a woman.⁵⁶ After her arrest, she was sent to Mountjoy Prison.⁵⁷

Other women of the Cumann and Citizen Army held out through Easter Week until the final surrender on Sunday, April 30. Nora Connolly, Brigid Foley, Marie Perolz, Nora Daly, Eily O'Hanrahan, and Miss Wyse-Power were couriers. Helena Molony assisted Madeleine French Mullen, who was in charge of the Red Cross and the commissary at St. Stephen's Green. Louise Gavan Duffy set up a kitchen in the GPO. Lily Kempson and Mary Hyland seized supplies at gun point. Aine and Lily Ceannt were with Eamonn Ceannt in the South Dublin Union. Rose MacNamara and sixteen Cumann women who joined Ceannt at Marrowbone Lane Distillery insisted on surrendering with the men.⁵⁸

⁵⁶Margaret Ward, 112; Van Voris, 184.

⁵⁷Conlon, 25.

⁵⁸Markievicz, 39; Conlon, 22-25; Margaret Ward, 114-15; Caulfield, 158-59.

At the time of the rebel surrender, Nurse Elizabeth O'Farrell was selected to act as emissary between the British authorities and the insurgents. At 12:45 pm, she walked out from the GPO into the street holding a Red Cross flag. She told the nearest British troops she was sent by Pearse and wanted to deliberate. She was sent back by the British to inform Pearse that he must surrender "unconditionally." She then carried Pearse's surrender to the other rebel command posts.⁵⁹

Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington could not know at the start of the Easter Rising that her own feminist path would "converge" so dramatically with nationalism and republicanism. Neither she nor her husband, Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, both feminists and pacifists, took an active part in the Easter Rising.⁶⁰

Although Maud Gonne MacBride had been exiled from Ireland for twelve years after her divorce from Major John MacBride, she maintained her political connections in Ireland from France. She had remained active in Inghinidhe with the help of Helena Molony and was elected honorary president of Cumann na mBan in 1914.⁶¹

⁵⁹Duff, 173-76; Conlon, 25.

⁶⁰Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 77-80.

⁶¹Coxhead, 58-59.

While in Normandy for the 1916 Easter holidays, she received incomplete and garbled accounts of the fighting during Easter Week. She believed Connolly had been killed, the Countess arrested, and Pearse wounded,⁶² and immediately decided to return to Ireland. When she was refused permission, she outwitted the British officials by travelling in disguise.⁶³

Margaret Ward comments that with Maud Gonne MacBride's inspiration at a time when "women were not expected to have any public presence at all" and her many personal and organizational contacts in Ireland, "her influence upon the other women cannot be overestimated."⁶⁴

Commenting on the aftermath of the Easter Rising, Brian Farrell, in "Markievicz and the Women of the Revolution," states:

It was immediately after Easter Week that the women came into their own. Proving, if the proof were needed, that this was no romantic affair of a couple of headstrong and flamboyant personalities but a full-fledged and broadly based movement. Within a couple of days of the rising Mrs. Tom Clarke⁶⁵ was again picking up the threads of the IRB conspiracy.

⁶²Samuel Levenson, Maud Gonne (New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1976), 296.

⁶³Coxhead, 64-65.

⁶⁴Margaret Ward, 58.

⁶⁵Farrell, 235.

On the Tuesday following the execution of her husband, Tom, Kathleen Clarke set up the Irish Volunteer Dependent's Fund (IVDF) to distribute the IRB fund of 3100 pounds he had left with her. The most immediate task was to organize aid for the dependents of those who had been killed or imprisoned. The need for public awareness also took precedence since the majority of the Irish population did not understand why the Rising had taken place.⁶⁶

The IVDF merged with the Irish National Aid Association, formed by public figures with no direct connection with the Rising, to become the Irish National Aid and Volunteer Dependent's Fund (INAVDF). In February 1917, Michael Collins, an IRB member who had been stationed in the GPO during the Rising, became the paid secretary.⁶⁷

Nora Connolly, Margaret Skinnider, and Nellie Gifford toured the United States in the first months after the Rising to lecture for support of the dependents of the martyrs and to enlighten the American public on the events of the Rising.⁶⁸

By the end of 1916, Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington began the first of her four lecture tours in the United States to

⁶⁶Margaret Ward, 119-20.

⁶⁷Ibid., 119, 122.

⁶⁸Ibid., 120.

explain the circumstances of her husband's death to the American public and to see that justice was done, to gain recognition of the new Irish Republic, and to raise funds for Sinn Fein. Countess Markievicz arrived in New York in April 1922. Mrs. Margaret Pearse, mother of Patrick and Willie, began her tour in May 1924 in support of Eamon de Valera, the Irish Republic, and to solicit funds for Patrick Pearse's school, St. Enda's. Kathleen Clarke also toured the United States in 1923-24 and Maud Gonne MacBride in 1927.

Five of the six women who took their seats in the first Dail Eireann (Assembly of Ireland) in January 1919 were relatives of men who had been executed or involved in the Rising: Mrs. Margaret Pearse, Mrs. Kathleen Clarke, Mary MacSwiney, Mrs. O'Callaghan, Dr. Ada English. Countess Markievicz had participated in the Rising.⁶⁹ Mary Clancy suggests that "most women Dail Deputies, in the period 1922 to 1937, entered politics in order to strengthen the position of political parties which were associated with male relatives."⁷⁰

⁶⁹John A. Murphy, Ireland in the Twentieth Century (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1975), 7; MacCurtain, 55.

⁷⁰Mary Clancy, "Aspects of Women's Contribution to the Oireachtas Debate in the Irish Free State, 1922-37," in Women Surviving: Studies in Irish Women's History in the 19th & 20th Centuries, ed. Maria Luddy and Cliona Murphy (Dublin: Poolbeg, 1990), 225.

The importance of the role women played in the Easter Rising in 1916 was summed up in 1917, when the Cumann na mBan claimed the women of Easter Week:

have regained for the women of Ireland the rights that belonged to them under the old Gaelic civilization where sex was no bar to citizenship and where women were free to devote to the service of their country every talent and capacity with which they were endowed.⁷¹

Beth McKillen claims that prior to 1916, nationalism inhibited the growth of the IWFL, the Irish Women's Workers Union, and Cumann na mBan and impaired the Irish feminist movement. The 1916 Easter Rising forced changes within the three groups: The Cumann grew in numbers, became more active, less subordinate, and more feminist; the IWFL and Women's Workers Union changed in similar ways.⁷²

Although the women of the Rising did not represent all Irish women, they stepped out of the traditional role of the "cult of true womanhood and domesticity" expected of their class to fight for their own political beliefs, or for those of their husbands, sons, or brothers--an act of courage in and of itself.

⁷¹Farrell, 236.

⁷²Beth McKillen, "Irish Feminism and Nationalist Separatism, 1914-23," Eire-Ireland 17 (No. 4, 1982), 72.

CHAPTER 2

IRISH-AMERICAN REPUBLICAN NATIONALISM: NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND LEADERSHIP

From the time of the mass migration from Ireland to the United States in the early nineteenth century, Irish-American nationalism developed and manifested itself in organizations such as the Young Irelanders, Fenians, Land League, Clan na Gael, Ancient Order of Hibernians, and Friends of Irish Freedom in the major cities of the United States. Lawrence J. McCaffrey states:

Irish nationalism jelled and flourished in the ghettos of urban America as a search for identity, an expression of vengeance, and a quest for respectability. . . . The development of an Irish identity among American immigrants speeded the progress of Irish nationalism on both sides of the Atlantic.¹

The Irish in America maintained a strong financial and political connection to the Irish in Ireland so that for every action in Ireland, there was a reaction in the United States. Many of the leaders of Irish-American organizations had been exiled to the United States after arrests in Ireland for their political activities and subsequent imprisonment in England. Alan J. Ward states:

¹Lawrence J. McCaffrey, The Irish Diaspora in America (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), 107, 109.

They [Irish-Americans] were the ones who financed and sustained Irish Nationalism in the years before the Rising, and they were the ones who kept alive the dream of an independent Ireland when most at home would have settled for less. . . . They supported the revolutionary movement in Ireland that led to Easter Week, 1916.²

The 1916 Easter Rising triggered a need for political activism in the Irish-American organizations and unification of their nationalism. World War I, the pressure of British propaganda in the United States, and the pro-German attitude of several Irish-American organizations led to accusations of disloyalty from fellow Americans. Once the war began, however, Irish-Americans not only fought in the war in Europe, but their organizations sponsored Liberty Bond rallies and fervently declared their loyalty to America.

Irish-Americans appeared unified until Eamon de Valera's arrival in 1919. His personality clash with the Irish-American leader, Daniel Cohalan, resulted in a split within the organization of the Friends of Irish Freedom (FOIF). While some of the old leaders on the East Coast continued the work of the FOIF, the West Coast, particularly California, shifted their total allegiance to de Valera and his new organization, the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic (AARIR). With the signing of the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty, the creation of the Irish

²Alan J. Ward, Easter Rising, 64, 66.

Free State, and the beginning of the Irish Civil War, the division in loyalties, East and West, in the United States became more pronounced.

The Irish-American link to Ireland can be traced back to the mid-1850s when one out of two families in Ireland communicated with a friend or relative in the United States. It is estimated that between 1848 and 1887, money from North America to the United Kingdom exceeded \$170 million, with approximately nine-tenths sent by Irish-Americans to Ireland.³

The first important Irish-American organization, the American Fenians, founded in 1858 by John O'Mahony, paralleled the Irish Fenians. The American Fenian organization grew dramatically during the American Civil War, but with the failure of their raids into Canada in 1867 and 1870, the movement faded.⁴

The rise of Irish-American nationalism began in America with the growth of the Clan na Gael (Clan) out of the Fenian Brotherhood in 1867. John Devoy, born in County Kildare, headed the Clan after his release from prison in England and arrival in the United States in 1871. More secretive, militant, and disciplined than the Irish Republican

³Donald Harman Akenson, The United States and Ireland (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1973), 39-40.

⁴Ibid., 41.

Brotherhood (IRB) in Ireland, the Clan financially supported the IRB and favored revolution. In 1900, Devoy and the son of Cork immigrants, Daniel F. Cohalan, a New York attorney, reorganized the Clan. They collected and distributed money through a front, the Irish National and Industrial League of the United States.⁵ When Devoy founded The Gaelic American in 1903 in New York, it became the Clan's "mouthpiece."⁶

Clan member Tom Clarke, from County Tyrone and close friend of Devoy, served fifteen years in a British prison and immigrated to the United States in 1899 upon his release. He returned to Ireland from the United States in 1907 to reorganize the IRB.⁷

In 1916, the Clan formed a new Irish-American organization, the Friends of Irish Freedom, headed by Cohalan, then a New York State Supreme Court Justice. Fifteen of the seventeen members of the FOIF executive committee were also members of the Clan.⁸ The FOIF constitution stated its prime objective to "encourage and

⁵Ibid., 54, 72; Charles Callan Tansill, America and The Fight for Irish Freedom: 1866-1922 (New York: The Devin-Adair Co., 1957), 120-21; McCaffrey, Ireland, 124; McCaffrey, Diaspora, 130; Boylan, 93.

⁶Carl Wittke, The Irish in America (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1956), 164.

⁷Boylan, 60; Alan J. Ward, Easter Rising, 54.

⁸Alan J. Ward, Easter Rising, 54; McCaffrey, Ireland, 124.

assist any movement that will tend to bring about the National Independence of Ireland."⁹ Its membership grew to approximately 257,000 members in 1919.¹⁰

Concerned about possible United States intervention in World War I, the FOIF, which viewed World War I as a conflict between militaristic empires, prepared a message to President Woodrow Wilson. It set forth reasons why America should not become involved in foreign wars and protested the proposed legislation aimed at suppressing "so-called revolutionary conspiracies against friendly foreign Governments."¹¹ The FOIF feared that American troops would be sent to Ireland to prevent further rebellions if the United States became involved in the war and that Irish-American actions against England could be interpreted as treason to the United States.¹²

Once the United States entered the war in April 1917, most Irish-Americans placed their loyalty to the United States ahead of their commitment to Ireland.¹³ Following the armistice of World War I, Irish-Americans again

⁹Tansill, 189.

¹⁰Alan J. Ward, Easter Rising, 128.

¹¹Tansill, 220.

¹²Ibid., McCaffrey, Irish Diaspora, 135.

¹³McCaffrey, Irish Diaspora, 135.

contributed money and guns to Sinn Fein in Ireland and pressured the United States government to recognize the Irish Republic.¹⁴

At the same time, the political scene in Ireland changed with the December 1918 post-Armistice election. Sinn Fein won 73 of 105 Irish seats in Parliament. However, the Sinn Fein candidates, including Countess Constance Markievicz, refused to take their seats at Westminster and met instead in Dublin as Dail Eireann to govern Ireland in the name of the Irish Republic. The Dail elected Eamon de Valera President.¹⁵

When the Sinn Fein Party proclaimed a Declaration of Independence, on January 2, 1919, and established Dail Eireann, the Irish of San Francisco endorsed them. The FOIF began a new campaign for the recognition of the Irish Republic by the United States.¹⁶

Michael Collins, a dominant member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), reorganized the Volunteers into the Irish Republican Army (IRA). By 1919, an all-out war between the IRA and the Royal Irish Constabulary was

¹⁴Ibid., 136.

¹⁵McCaffrey, Ireland, 144; Van Voris, 256.

¹⁶Timothy J. Sarbaugh, "Culture, Militancy, and de Valera: Irish-American Republican Nationalism in California, 1900-1936," (San Jose State University: MA thesis, 1980), 168.

under way. The British fought a disorganized campaign in the beginning. In March 1920, ex-servicemen recruited in England and labeled the Black and Tans, a brutal and undisciplined group, were sent to Ireland where they committed many atrocities over the next year. A truce was arranged in July 1921 when the fighting between the rebels and the Black and Tans stalemated and public pressure mounted.¹⁷

Eamon de Valera's 1919 visit to the United States to raise funds for the cause of Ireland, to obtain President Wilson's support for the Irish Republican cause, and to gain the support of both American political parties, triggered a split in the Irish-American leadership.¹⁸ A number of Clan leaders considered him "too tepid in his hostility to Britain."¹⁹ Devoy and Cohalan broke with de Valera, while Joseph McGarrity, editor of the Irish Press in Philadelphia, continued to support him.²⁰

De Valera and Cohalan developed a "mutual antipathy." Cohalan "insisted that Irish Americans should work to oppose

¹⁷ Alan J. Ward, Easter Rising, 125-26, McCaffrey, Ireland, 146.

¹⁸ Tansill, 340; John A. Murphy, 15-16.

¹⁹ McCaffrey, Irish Diaspora, 137.

²⁰ Sean Cronin, The McGarrity Papers, Revelations of the Irish Revolutionary Movement in Ireland and America, 1900-1940 (Tralee: Anvil Books, Ltd., 1972), 17, 74.

British foreign-policy interest in general and Anglo-American cooperation in part." Conversely, de Valera was "interested only in Ireland and had no quarrel with Anglo-American harmony." He wanted "Irish-Americans to fight for Ireland, not against Britain."²¹ While Cohalan asked the 1920 Republican and Democratic national conventions to express "sympathy for Ireland," de Valera asked recognition of "the elected Government of the Republic of Ireland."²² McGarrity wanted money raised in America to be sent directly to Ireland. Devoy and Cohalan wanted most of it spent indirectly through American activities in support of Ireland.²³ In addition, de Valera became angry at Cohalan's use of the Irish Victory Fund, raised by the FOIF, for a campaign to defeat the League of Nations.²⁴

De Valera received a great deal of criticism on both sides of the Atlantic concerning his Cuban analogy in which he asked, "Why doesn't Britain do with Ireland as the United States did with Cuba? . . . Why doesn't Britain declare a

²¹Alan J. Ward, Easter Rising, 128.

²²Cronin, McGarrity Papers, 74, 81.

²³John A. Murphy, 15-16.

²⁴Alan J. Ward, Easter Rising, 129.

Monroe Doctrine for the two neighbouring islands?"²⁵ In an exchange of letters, he asked Cohalan to condemn Devoy's attacks in the Gaelic American. De Valera wrote to Cohalan on February 20, 1920 that "I am answerable to the Irish people for the proper execution of the trust with which I have been charged. I am definitely responsible to them, and I alone am responsible."²⁶ In rebuttal, Cohalan replied to de Valera on February 22:

I know no reason why you take the trouble to tell me that you can share your responsibility to the Irish people with no one. I would not let you share it with me if you sought to do so. That is a matter between them and you.²⁷

De Valera called a Washington, DC conference of Irish-American leaders, on October 20, 1920, to announce the formation of a new organization, the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic (AARIR), and launched a bond-certificate drive with a goal of ten million dollars.²⁸ According to Sean Cronin, the AARIR

²⁵Quoted in Sean Cronin, Washington's Irish Policy, 1916-1986: Independence, Partition, Neutrality (Dublin: Anvil Books, 1987), 25.

²⁶Eamon de Valera, Washington, DC, to Hon. Daniel F. Cohalan, New York City, February 20, 1920, Daniel F. Cohalan Collection, American Irish Historical Society, New York, Box 4: File 1.

²⁷Daniel F. Cohalan, New York City, to Hon. Eamon de Valera, Washington, DC, Daniel F. Cohalan Collection, Box 4: File 1.

²⁸Sarbaugh, "Culture, Militancy, and de Valera," 87; Tansill, 112.

"supplanted" the FOIF, "proving that de Valera was a more important name to the American Irish than Devoy and a better political tactician than Cohalan."²⁹

Three thousand supporters of de Valera met in secret session at the Central Opera House in New York to draw up the constitution of the AARIR. Hundreds were turned away when they failed to give the Celtic password. The purpose of the meeting had been announced to be the discussion of the welcome of Muriel MacSwiney, widow of Terence, the late Lord Mayor of Cork who died in a hunger strike, and Mary MacSwiney, his sister.³⁰

Five and one-half million dollars of bond-certificates were sold, to be redeemed for official government bonds when the Irish Republic was internationally recognized (see Appendix 3). Four million dollars of that amount was to be used in Ireland in support of the Anglo-Irish War. The balance, held in America, became the subject of litigation after the Civil War in Ireland. In 1927, the New York State Supreme Court ordered the money returned to the investors.³¹

²⁹Cronin, Washington's Irish Policy, 26.

³⁰The New York Times, December 1, 1920, p. 10.

³¹John A. Murphy, 16; Cronin, McGarrity Papers, 75-76; Alan J. Ward, Easter Rising, 130.

De Valera was smuggled aboard the S.S. Celtic and left the United States in December 1920 to return to Ireland. According to John A. Murphy, de Valera's eighteen-month American tour was an enormous financial and personal success and at the same time a failure because of dissensions in Irish-American leadership, the failure to secure official American recognition of the Irish Republic, and the failure to secure a voice at the Peace Conference.³²

On December 6, 1921, the British and Irish Republic representatives signed the "Articles of agreement for a treaty between Great Britain and Ireland." The Dail Eireann split on the issue of the Treaty immediately. The Anglo-Irish Treaty (London Treaty) was accepted, on January 7, 1922, by a vote of sixty-four to fifty-seven and the Irish Free State Government was established. The six women deputies unanimously opposed the Treaty.³³ De Valera and his cabinet resigned.

Anti-Treatyites supported de Valera's alternative to the Treaty, Document No. 2, which promoted his idea of external association (Ireland within the states of an English Commonwealth), omitting the oath and the provision

³²Alan J. Ward, Easter Rising, 130; Longford and O'Neill, 114; John A. Murphy, 17.

³³John A. Murphy, 35, 39, 41-42, 47; Longford and O'Neill, 171; Tony Gray, The Irish Answer, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966), 86-87.

for a governor-general, and mention of the king only as head of the "association." Pro-Treatyites accepted Dominion status and a post-Treaty Boundary Commission that would redefine the border of Northern Ireland.³⁴ Although de Valera claimed the majority of people were opposed to the Treaty, John A. Murphy asserts that "all the evidence is that initial popular reaction was favourable" and that "there was general relief that a settlement had been reached and appreciation that the substance of independence seemed to have been secured."³⁵ January to June 1922 became a period of confusion and conflict between the "Treatyites" and "anti-Treatyites."

Armed clashes between the opposing groups eventually broke into a Civil War on June 28, 1922, lasting until April 10, 1923 when the republicans laid down their arms. With no amnesty granted them, the republicans went "on the run to avoid arrest." During the years of the Irish Free State, 1923-1932, William T. Cosgrave, a participant in the 1916 Easter Rising, headed the pro-Treatyite Cumann na nGaedheal conservative government.³⁶

³⁴John A. Murphy, 39; McCaffrey, Ireland, 149; J. J. Lee, Ireland, 1912-1985, Politics and Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 51.

³⁵John A. Murphy, 39.

³⁶Ibid., 54, 58-59.

The events of 1921-23 profoundly affected the Irish-American republican nationalism campaigns of the FOIF and AARIR, and further split Irish-American leadership. The FOIF, Devoy and Cohalan, strongly supported the Irish Free State Government. The AARIR, particularly in California, continued to support de Valera and the Irish Republic.

CHAPTER 3

SAN FRANCISCO IRISH-AMERICAN REPUBLICAN NATIONALISM

From the time of its heavy influx of immigrants during the Gold Rush, California Irish nationalist movements developed concurrently with national organization commitments, including support for the Young Irelanders, the Fenians, the Land League, and the Gaelic League.

In 1890, the Gaelic League sponsored a statewide movement under the leadership of Father Peter C. Yorke of San Francisco and Attorney Joseph Scott of Los Angeles. In 1902, Yorke founded and edited The Leader, the only Irish-American newspaper in California.¹

After the 1916 Easter Rising, California Irish-Americans determined that militant measures were necessary to free Ireland. The formation of the FOIF in California by Yorke and Scott carried forward a "new dominant militant republicanism." Yorke was the principal spokesman for the Irish Republic in California until his death in 1925.²

Because of their previous pro-German position, the FOIF in San Francisco conducted four Liberty Loan campaigns to demonstrate their loyalty to America once the United States

¹Sarbaugh, "Culture, Militancy, and de Valera," 4, 14.

²Ibid.

entered World War I.³ In a front page article in The Leader, Yorke charged President Wilson with "conspiring to ally the United States with England . . . to stir the people of this country to a feeling of great resentment against Germany."⁴ However, to verify Irish-American nationalism and loyalty, at the same time he pledged loyalty to the United States once war was declared:

Though we must bow our heads to their decision, as we are bound to do by our oath of allegiance, not for fear or by compulsion, but for conscience sake and love of country, and though we shall loyally do our full duty to the State in whatsoever manner the constituted powers demand, still before the blow has fallen let us go on record concerning our stand.⁵

After the war, the FOIF launched a national political campaign for self-determination for small nations--including an independent Irish nation.⁶

Yorke founded the California AARIR at a state convention of the FOIF held in Fresno in November 1920. The California FOIF merged completely with the AARIR, unlike the New York FOIF which completely divorced itself from de

³Ibid., 4; Timothy Sarbaugh, "Exiles of Confidence: The Irish-American Community of San Francisco, 1880 to 1920," in From Paddy to Studs, Irish-American Communities in the Turn of the Century Era, 1880 to 1920, ed. Timothy J. Meagher (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 168.

⁴The Gaelic American, April 21, 1917, p. 1.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Sarbaugh, "Culture, Militancy, and de Valera," 4-5.

Valera. The delegates pledged to dedicate themselves to the recognition of the Irish Republic, to the financial support of de Valera, to condemn all British military action in Ireland, and to support the national AARIR.⁷

By January 1921, eighty-five branches of the AARIR, under the direction of Yorke, had been formed with more than five thousand members. California became the fourth largest AARIR in the United States, behind Massachusetts, New York, and Illinois. The California headquarters of the AARIR was established in the Grant Building, Seventh and Market Streets. Membership rallies were open to the public, all American citizens were eligible for membership, and required a commitment to work for recognition of the Irish Republic by the United States government.⁸

Although the AARIR became the most active Irish-American organization in California, it was supported by other established Irish-American organizations in San Francisco, such as the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Ladies' Auxiliary, the Knights of the Red Branch, and the Cumann na mBan. The Women's Irish Education League was founded in 1919 to educate the American public on the Irish cause and to raise funds in its behalf. Other less

⁷Ibid., 5, 89, 91.

⁸Ibid., 105; The Monitor, January 2, 1922, p. 7; January 22, 1921, p. 7.

permanent organizations were founded to conduct special campaigns as the need arose, such as the American Commission on Irish Independence (1920), and the Irish Relief Fund (1923).

During the years of 1916-1925, those San Francisco Irish-American women who were politically active were middle class. Some were active in other political issues in the city, such as the suffrage movement. Others were socially active in the FOIF and the AARIR as organizers and members of reception committees, honorary luncheons, and fund raising activities.

The AOH Ladies' Auxiliary promoted American nationalism during World War I and, after the war, worked to support Irish republican nationalism. Beyond fund raising events, little is known of the work done by the women of the Knights of the Red Branch. The Cumann na mBan remained active in supporting the Irish Republic but did not receive press coverage. The Women's Irish Education League became the most politically active women's group in San Francisco in these years and received good press coverage. The door-to-door women canvassers during the special drives to raise funds for Irish independence, recognition, and relief cannot be ignored.

The Ancient Order of the Hibernians (AOH) was founded in Ireland to protect the Catholic religion with a motto of

"Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity." The AOH was first introduced in the United States about 1836 as a secret benevolent organization.⁹ The AOH was organized in San Francisco in March 1869. By 1880, there were ten divisions who met in the Hibernian Hall once a week.¹⁰

De Valera attended the Fifty-Third Annual Convention of the AOH and Ladies' Auxiliary, July 1919, held in San Francisco at the Exposition Auditorium. Mrs. Mary McWhorter, president of the Ladies' Auxiliary announced a goal of five million individual investors in Irish Republic bond-certificates. The women of the Auxiliary worked nationally for the Irish cause in support of de Valera.¹¹

San Francisco Fenianism continued on in the Knights of the Red Branch (KRB) as a branch of the Irish Confederation. Founded in 1869, they were dedicated to "principle, honor and virtue."¹² The KRB rented a hall on Market street, opposite what is now Grant Avenue, and furnished it with a library, billiard tables, gymnasium, and established the first Gaelic School in the United States. They later

⁹Non-cataloged Miscellaneous Irish Box, Donohue Rare Book Collection, Richard A. Gleeson Library, University of San Francisco, San Francisco.

¹⁰R. A. Burchell, The San Francisco Irish, 1848-1880 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), 102.

¹¹The Monitor, July 12, 1919, p. 1; July 19, 1919, p. 1.

¹²The Leader, May 31, 1919, p. 5.

assisted Yorke when he organized the California Gaelic League.¹³ Many mass meetings and fund raising events were held in their new hall at 1133 Mission Street.

The Cumann na Ban held meetings, with a focus on teaching the Irish language and history, in the KRB Hall on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. They urged that "all women of Irish blood should as far as they are able assist our Volunteers at home and abroad to carry on the good work."¹⁴

During his visit to San Francisco in November 1919, de Valera set up a state branch of the American Commission on Irish Independence (ACII). In February 1920, Archbishop Edward J. Hanna was appointed as Honorary Chair of the San Francisco Executive Committee of the ACII in charge of the sale of the bond-certificates, ranging from \$10 to \$10,000. The AOH and the Ladies Auxiliary, the United Irish Societies (UIS), the FOIF, and clergy supported the ACII (see Appendix 3).¹⁵

The San Francisco Women's State Executive Committee of the ACII established their headquarters on the main floor of the Palace Hotel. They held their first meeting in the

¹³Ibid.; Burchell, 101.

¹⁴The Leader, January 6, 1917, p. 6.

¹⁵Ibid., February 21, 1920, p. 1; Sarbaugh, "Culture, Militancy, and de Valera," 54, 68-69.

Knights of Columbus Auditorium, 150 Golden Gate Avenue, on February 26, 1920 to promote the sale of bond-certificates. The Honorable Andrew J. Gallagher, stated that five hundred ladies had volunteered to canvas the city in behalf of the drive.¹⁶

Father Yorke, principal speaker of the evening in the hall packed to capacity, commented that "the Irish women of California . . . must be prepared to put forth their best efforts in the coming bond certificate drive, for the task was the most important thing they had ever been asked to aid." He explained that the Irish people for the "first time were being asked to help finance an Irish nation."¹⁷

The ACII California bond-certificate drive surpassed its quota of \$1,500,000 by March 1920 and set a new goal of \$2,000,000. Although the drive officially concluded on March 17, the canvass continued in most of the state.¹⁸

The Women's Irish Education League (WIEL) was organized in May 1919 to provide on-going education on the Irish cause. By 1922, the WIEL had a membership of over two thousand Americans and Irish-Americans, men and women. The WIEL promoted political activism, such as anti-British

¹⁶The Leader, February 21, 1920, p. 1.

¹⁷Ibid., February 28, 1920, p. 1.

¹⁸Ibid., March 20, 1920, p. 7.

picketing, boycotting English goods, and media protests. They sponsored not only mass meetings, but fund raising events such as "Old-Fashioned Irish Nights" with dancing, food, and Irish entertainment, whist and dancing, and "parlor meetings" in the homes of members.¹⁹

Charlotte Anita Whitney and Minnie McCarthy presided at a meeting of 1,500 women of the WIEL, on May 22, 1919, in the Native Sons' Hall to support the cause of Irish freedom. In accordance with a vote, telegrams were sent to Senator James D. Phelan, Senator Hiram Johnson, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House asking that no peace treaty be ratified that did not include recognition of the Irish Republic. Kathleen O'Brennan, sister-in-law of Eamonn Ceannt and a Dublin newspaper woman, spoke on "Women in the Irish Republic."²⁰

More than five hundred women of the WIEL met at the St. Francis Hotel, on June 9, to elect permanent officers and formulate plans for a statewide campaign to inform the public on Ireland's demands for independence and to spread the truth about Ireland. Their headquarters was set up in

¹⁹The Monitor, September 13, 1919, p. 7; October 25, 1919, p. 3; November 1, 1919, p. 7.

²⁰Ibid., May 31, 1919, p. 7; July 12, 1919, p. 3; San Francisco Chronicle, May 23, 1919, p. 2.

the Phelan Building, Room 1068.²¹ The San Francisco Chronicle reported that "their work was national in scope and international in character." They pledged political, moral, and financial support to aid Ireland to gain full independence and recognition of the Irish Republic.²²

Kathleen O'Brennan left San Francisco, on June 14, 1919, to tour Nevada to enlist new members to increase the strength and effectiveness of the WIEL. Upon her return to San Francisco, the WIEL held a meeting at the St. Francis Hotel on July 14. Miss O'Brennan reported the founding of several branches of the WIEL in Nevada. She asked that help from the United States to Ireland not be given as a gift, but in payment for the freedom the Irish helped America win in 1776.²³

The WIEL invited the general public to a mass meeting at the Dreamland Rink, on Steiner Street, between Sutter and Post, on September 12, 1919 to present arguments on the League of Nations question. The purpose was not to plead the Irish cause, but to give the women of the city an understanding of the issues connected with the League. Mrs. Ida Finney Mackrille, San Francisco suffragist, opened the

²¹The Monitor, June 14, 1919, p. 7.

²²San Francisco Chronicle, June 10, 1919, p. 7.

²³The Monitor, June 14, 1919, p. 7; July 12, 1919, p. 1; July 19, 1919, p. 5.

discussion with arguments favoring the League. Mrs. Fred H. Colburn, lecturer and author, and Annie Laurie of The Examiner presented the opposition.²⁴

To protest the incarceration of Terence MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork, by the British, sixteen members of the WIEL prevented the loading of the British steamer Muncaster Castle on September 8, 1920. They convinced thirty longshoremen to walk off the job and appealed to them to boycott all British vessels. They pointed out that similar actions had been taken by longshoremen in New York and Boston. The banners carried by the pickets read: "You Are Not Dependent Upon England--Let Her Do Her Own Dirty Work," and "Every Pound Handled For an English Vessel Has Blood on It--the Blood of Brother Irish Workers." The pamphlets they distributed read:

Workers of San Francisco, every pound you put aboard or take off an English vessel has blood on it, the blood of brother workers in Ireland. Don't get blood on your hands. Don't help a government that starves men to death. Terence MacSwiney is²⁵ starving to death that others may live as free men.

The WIEL published and distributed a pamphlet calling for the boycott of English goods, "To Stop Atrocities in Ireland, Discrimination Against American Shipping, and the Opium Trade." They asked that Shell Oil products, Colgate

²⁴Ibid., September 13, 1919, p. 7.

²⁵Ibid., September 11, 1920, p. 5.

products, Scotch Shortbread, Eton's Highland Linen Stationary, Coleman Mustard, Lea & Perrins Sauce, Dundee Marmalade, Cheddar cheese, and other British products not be used. They contended that traditionally, "trade follows the flag," but more correctly "the flag follows trade" so "show that the Stars and Stripes are good enough for you--." ²⁶

Marie C. Dillon, Executive Secretary of the WIEL, forwarded to The Monitor a letter sent to E. D. Coblentz, managing editor of the San Francisco Examiner, in protest of the "very anti-Irish attitude" in which the proceedings of the Dail were reported by Hayden Talbot and other Examiner correspondents in Dublin. The WIEL claimed that the reports indicated the "enormous significance of what English controlled cables would mean to Ireland." ²⁷

Confusion within the ranks of the AARIR, beginning with the 1921 Treaty, bewildered Yorke, Scott, and other California members. The fragmentation of Irish-American nationalism that set in was completed by the creation of the Irish Free State and the Irish Civil War. Yorke maintained that the AARIR had to remain active for the Irish Republic.

A second bond-certificate drive was launched, but financial and political support no longer existed. At the

²⁶Non-catalogued Miscellaneous Irish Box, Donohue Rare Book Collection.

²⁷The Monitor, January 21, 1922, p. 7.

Second Annual Convention of the AARIR in San Francisco, on February 22, 1922, Yorke resigned because of his inability to cope with the confusing conditions in Ireland and its effect on the California AARIR. The AARIR never regained the strength in California that it had before the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty.²⁸

With de Valera's loss of the Irish Civil War, many Irish republican families became destitute when family members suffered imprisonment. During July 1923 branches of the AARIR, along with organizations of the United Irish Societies, were revitalized to aid in a campaign to provide relief for the families of more than sixteen thousand Irish republicans held in Free State prisons.

Campaign headquarters for the California Irish Relief Fund (IRF) were opened in Room 202 of the Grant Building in San Francisco. The California quota was set at \$25,000, with the San Francisco goal set at \$10,000. On October 1, 1923, Yorke launched the San Francisco IRF campaign at a mass meeting at the Hibernian Hall. Volunteers were asked to conduct a house-to-house canvass of the city.²⁹

Yorke received a cable for help from Dublin, November 26, 1923: "Numerous prisoners released ill after hunger

²⁸Sarbaugh, "Culture, Militancy, and de Valera," 113, 116-18.

²⁹The Monitor, July 28, 1923, p. 5; The Leader, September 22, 1923, p. 1; October 6, 1923, p. 1.

strike. Awful distress. Powerless without funds. Cable help. PRISONERS' COMMITTEE, Mansion House."³⁰ In response, the San Francisco IRF cabled \$10,000 to Dublin during the first week of December. This amount fulfilled the city's quota, but the campaign continued to collect additional funds.³¹

Whether as politically active speakers and organizers, as socially active fund raisers, or as door-to-door canvassers to solicit contributions, the role of San Francisco Irish-American women in the support of Irish republican nationalism must be acknowledged. A great deal of money was raised in a very short time.

The 1921 Treaty, the establishment of the Irish Free State government, and the Irish Civil War affected Irish republicanism not only in California, but nationwide. According to Alan J. Ward, many Americans who supported Ireland did not understand the "distinctions between limited autonomy, that is home rule, Dominion status, or complete republican independence." In addition, Ward states:

The record shows that the American press lost interest in Ireland in 1922, that there was a great diminution in the amount of political material flowing into the State Department from its agents in Ireland, although atrocities in Ireland were well documented, and that in 1922 the American government exchanged agents with the

³⁰The Leader, December 1, 1923, p. 1.

³¹Ibid., December 8, 1923, p. 1.

Irish Free State without significant opposition in the United States.³²

De Valera's loss of the Irish Civil War brought changes to the AARIR, but did not cause its collapse. According to Timothy J. Sarbaugh, "By 1925, the AARIR, the last vestige of Irish republicanism in California, lost all of its political activism and became de Valera's personal collective society."³³ The AARIR and its cause survived into the 1930s, although Yorke died in 1925.³⁴

³²Alan J. Ward, Ireland and Anglo-American Relations, 1899-1921 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 267.

³³Sarbaugh, "Culture, Militancy, and de Valera," 6.

³⁴Ibid., 133.

CHAPTER 4

HANNA SHEEHY-SKEFFINGTON: THE MILITANCY OF A PACIFIST

Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, widow of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, and an Irish suffragist, was not the first Irish republican woman to visit the United States after the Easter Rising. Min Ryan, Margaret Skinnider, Nellie Gifford, and Nora Connolly preceded her in the months immediately following the Rising.¹ However, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington, determined to carry on her husband's work as a "militant pacifist,"² set aside her work as an Irish suffragist to tour formally as the first successful Irish female nationalist lecturer in the United States.

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington's time in the United States was not without discord, prejudice, and harassment. She was barred from meeting halls, prevented from speaking publicly, assailed for being a rebel, fanatic, and traitor. She was arrested by the San Francisco police. The British labelled her a dangerous person, attempted to kidnap and transport

¹Margaret Ward, 120.

²Leah Levenson, With Wooden Sword, A Portrait of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, Militant Pacifist (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1983), Title Page.

her to Canada,³ refused her a passport to return to Ireland, and attempted to have her detained at the Angel Island immigration station in San Francisco Bay.

Cliona Murphy quotes Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington's comments of the threat she posed for the British authorities:

The British Agents in the United States are naturally very perturbed at the Irish propaganda on behalf of our small nation. They dislike particularly propaganda of such Irish exiles as myself who had come directly from Ireland, and could speak with first hand knowledge. As one of them observed: "My objection to Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington is that she has a lot of damaging facts".⁴

On the other hand, masses of supporters and well-wishers greeted her. The press described her as well educated, refined, and a natural and eloquent speaker. She raised a large amount of money for Sinn Fein. Through her lectures, Irish-Americans united to organize additional Friends of Irish Freedom chapters in the United States.

The political climate in the United States at the time of her first visit in 1917-18 was tense and uneasy. The successful British propaganda machine rallied support to their own cause in World War I. America entered the war on April 6, 1917 as an ally of England and the previous Irish-American pro-German position aroused suspicion. At the time of the United States' entry into World War I, Mrs. Sheehy-

³The Gaelic American, December 8, 1917, p. 8.

⁴Cliona Murphy, 80.

Skeffington added a new dimension to her lectures. She began to call for United States recognition of the Irish Republic so that Ireland would have a place at the Peace Conference at the end of the war.

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington was no stranger to political activism. Both her father, David Sheehy, MP, and his brother, Father Eugene Sheehy (the "Land League priest") spent six prison sentences in Tullamore, Mountjoy, and Kilmainham jails for their involvements in the Land League and memberships in the Irish Republican Brotherhood.⁵

Johanna (Hanna) Mary Sheehy was born on May 24, 1877 in County Cork, Ireland. Growing up in a middle class family, Hanna Sheehy received a Bachelor of Arts degree in modern languages from the Royal University in 1899 and a Master of Arts degree in 1902 by competing for and winning scholarships. She met Francis Skeffington while they both attended the university.⁶

When she married Francis Skeffington, on June 27, 1903, they took each other's names to illustrate their commitment to the woman's movement. Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington helped organize and became active in the Irish Women's Franchise League (IWFL) in 1908. Francis Sheehy-Skeffington supported

⁵Ibid., 91; Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 2-3.

⁶Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 6-9.

the IWFL as an associate member. They both took an unpopular stand against World War I and Irish conscription.⁷

Both Hanna and Francis Sheehy-Skeffington developed a militant stand as the suffrage movement in Ireland matured.⁸ According to Leah Levenson and Jerry Natterstad, "To Hanna's mind . . . the women's movement would not become an important force without militancy being added to solidarity." She supported the "pillar box" attacks of suffragists in which small open bottles containing a black fluid were placed in mail boxes to damage their contents. Along with other members of the IWFL, she was arrested on June 13, 1912 and served a month's sentence in Mountjoy Prison for breaking windows in the General Post Office, the Customs House, the Land Commission Office, and the Ship Street Barracks.⁹

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington saw no contradiction in using militancy to protest war:

War destroyed life in order to protect property she [Hanna] said; militants destroyed property in order to enhance the value of life. This being

⁷Ibid., 7, 24.

⁸Leah Levenson, 79.

⁹Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 37-38, 45; MacCurtain, 50.

the case, she felt it was her duty as an Irish militant suffragist to make war upon war.¹⁰

As pacifists, neither Hanna nor Francis Sheehy-Skeffington took an active part in the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin. Francis Sheehy-Skeffington found himself in the midst of the insurrection when he went into town on Easter Monday. To control the heavy looting, he formed a Citizens' Defence Force. The following day, he posted a few guards to prevent shops from being looted and hung posters advertising the first meeting of the Defence Force. On his way home that evening, he was apprehended and taken to Portobello Barracks. The following morning, under the orders of British Captain J. C. Bowen-Colthurst, he was shot by a firing squad without a hearing or trial.¹¹

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington went into town the next day, Wednesday, to obtain information concerning her husband's whereabouts. She learned that he had been arrested, but could not ascertain where he was being held. She tried again on Thursday, but still learned nothing. On Friday, accompanied by her sisters, Margaret Culhane and Mary Kettle, she went to Portobello Barracks. They talked with Bowen-Colthurst who denied any knowledge of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington. The same afternoon she learned from a reliable

¹⁰Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 57.

¹¹Ibid., 77-79.

source that her husband's body was in the mortuary of Portobello Barracks. When she asked the military chaplain of Portobello to reclaim her husband's body, he told her that Francis had already been buried. It would be many weeks before Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington learned all the details of her husband's death.¹²

A court martial in Richmond Barracks, Dublin, in June 1916 found Bowen-Colthurst "guilty but insane at the time of the murders" and confined him to an asylum.¹³ Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington, not satisfied with the verdict, travelled to London in July to storm the press with letters and besiege members of Parliament to convene a formal inquiry. Her tenacity yielded a full inquiry in August, but it proved unsatisfactorily narrow in its focus.¹⁴

Still unsatisfied, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington decided to bring her story to America. In October 1916, John F. Byrne of New York City, a long-time friend, contacted Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington to urge her to tour the United States without delay. The FOIF in New York arranged and supported her tour.¹⁵

¹²Ibid., 79-80.

¹³Leah Levenson, 231, 235.

¹⁴Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 92, 94, 96.

¹⁵Ibid., 101-2.

The major objectives of the lecture tour were to draw attention to British brutality against Irish opponents of conscription and the war, and to explain that Francis Sheehy-Skeffington's death was not the result of the actions of an insane British officer but "deliberately planned by Dublin Castle."¹⁶ With few exceptions, the themes of her speeches did not vary. She turned the funds she raised over to Michael Collins for Sinn Fein.¹⁷

Obstacles developed even before she left Ireland. The British denied her a passport when she refused to agree not to discuss Ireland or the war while in the United States, even in private conversations. Tenaciously, she and her seven-year-old son, Owen, circumvented the authorities and entered the United States in disguise and undetected.¹⁸

She stated:

I was determined, I say, to tell the American people the facts and also the real conditions in Ireland, and I used my experience as a suffragette, and as one who has been in jail and knows the stupidity of the English policemen, to elude the spies and to come to New York City, which I have done.¹⁹

¹⁶Quoted in The Gaelic American, December 23, 1916, p. 5.

¹⁷Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 112.

¹⁸Ibid., 101.

¹⁹The Gaelic American, December 23, 1916, p. 5.

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington first appeared before a crowd of three thousand at Carnegie Hall, New York City, on January 6, 1917 to speak on "British Militarism as I Have Known It." The sixty-six boxes of the hall were filled by journalists, Supreme Court Justices, clergy, labor leaders, leading suffragists and society women. She referred to her husband's death as "murder in cold blood."²⁰

Between January 6, 1917 and June 27, 1918, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington spoke at over 250 meetings across the United States. From New York, she traveled through New England to Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri and on to the Pacific Northwest and California. She spoke to civic groups, university students, peace groups, socialists, suffragists, and Irish-American organizations. Enormous crowds attended these well-publicized mass meetings.

Although some important American newspapers denounced her as a "dangerous person who was endeavoring to stir up trouble for our British Ally,"²¹ most local newspapers across the nation liberally devoted space to coverage of her speeches and interviews.²²

²⁰The New York Times, January 7, 1917, p. 4; The Monitor, January 20, 1917, p. 1.

²¹The Monitor, March 3, 1917, p. 7.

²²The Gaelic American, April 28, 1917, p. 7.

Representatives of the FOIF welcomed Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington when she arrived in San Francisco on June 12, 1917. After setting up headquarters at the Palace Hotel, she began her lectures, at the Knights of Columbus Hall on June 14, speaking on "Military Autocracy and Conditions in Ireland." The hall was filled to capacity, with every inch of standing room used, and hundreds were turned away. Again and again as she spoke, the crowd rose to their feet to applaud her.²³

She reported for over an hour her version of her husband's death. She explained to the audience that she spoke without bitterness or vindictiveness and was not out for vengeance. Rather, she wanted "to see the whole system of British government driven out of Ireland as St. Patrick drove out the snakes. . . . It would be a poor tribute to my husband if grief were to break my spirit."²⁴

Far-sighted in her approach to world politics, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington did not want democracy to "stop short of the Irish sea, but to begin there." Contrary to England's claim, the question of Ireland was not a domestic matter but an international one. She claimed the cause of Ireland was identical to that of other small nations, such as Belgium

²³The Monitor, June 23, 1917, p. 1; The Leader, June 23, 1917, p.1.

²⁴The Monitor, January 20, 1917, 1; June 23, 1917, p. 1.

and Serbia. She proposed that: "At the end of the war we hope to see a 'United States of Europe' on the model of your own United States, where each state is free and independent, yet all are part of a great federation." Ireland wanted to belong to a united Europe and did not want to be governed without consent as a British vassal.²⁵

In an interview at the Palace Hotel with The San Francisco Examiner, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington described food shortages in Ireland and the "army of occupation" in Ireland. One hundred fifty thousand trained men supplemented the police force of about twelve hundred in "a semi-military organization in Ireland." She predicted that the enforcement of conscription upon the Irish would produce "another and bloodier uprising."²⁶

Conflict and tension developed over Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington's scheduled address to the members of the San Francisco Center of the California Civic League on June 15. She had been met by a reception committee from the Center upon her arrival and asked to speak at a luncheon at the St. Francis Hotel. After attending Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington's lecture the previous evening at the Knights of Columbus Hall, a Center committee decided "it would be impossible to

²⁵San Francisco Chronicle, June 15, 1917, p. 4.

²⁶The San Francisco Examiner, June 13, 1917, p. 8.

have Mrs. Skeffington speak before such a patriotic society as the San Francisco Center."²⁷ In their judgment, her remarks:

although perfectly true, were painful. . . . As individuals we love to listen to her, but after her tremendous criticism of Great Britain . . . we felt we have not the right to present her now when we are allies of Great Britain.²⁸

After speaking at the Sacred Heart Hall, 40th and Grove Streets in Oakland on June 16, 1917,²⁹ Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington returned to the Dreamland Rink in San Francisco on June 25. She lectured on the "European Crisis and Conditions in Ireland" to a crowd of eight thousand. More than a thousand people had to be turned away.³⁰ Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington began her speech by wittily thanking the women of the Civic Center whose refusal to allow her to speak the previous week guaranteed the success of the present meeting.³¹

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington spoke in Vallejo on July 5, 1917 and again in San Francisco at the Dreamland Rink on July 16 under the auspices of the Ulster-Celtic Benevolent

²⁷The Gaelic American, June 30, 1917, p. 2.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹The Leader, June 9, 1917, p. 1.

³⁰The Monitor, June 30, 1917, p. 7.

³¹San Francisco Chronicle, June 26, 1917, p. 3.

Association on "The Ulster Question." For the first time during her tour, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington devoted the entire lecture to the Ulster question. She opposed Home Rule or a division of Ireland as a means of settling the Irish question. She insisted that the majority of Ulster's population, both Catholics and Protestants, with the exception of a handful of "Carsonites and politicians," supported complete Irish freedom.³²

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington lectured at the Clunie Theater in Sacramento, on July 19, and on July 22 at the Stockton Auditorium on "An Account of Present Conditions in Ireland."³³ She related to her Stockton audience that her husband, Francis, "often said that he would die for his cause, but not kill for it." She again described the "cold blooded murder on the part of the British troops" during the Easter Rising. "Young boys were shot down in the streets to instill into the Irish a proper respect for the British government." She did not know what the Germans would do if they came to Ireland, but she did know what the English did. She proclaimed that no Irish volunteer had enlisted in the British army since Easter 1916:

There is no conscription in Ireland and there will be no conscription because the Irish have sworn to

³²The Monitor, July 14, 1917, p. 3.

³³The Sacramento Bee, July 20, 1917, p. 2.

die at home fighting rather than to fight Great Britain's wars in Flanders and on the continent.³⁴

The success of Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington's lectures led to the organization of branches of the FOIF in Sacramento, Lodi and Stockton.³⁵

At a farewell public banquet given in her honor on August 2, at the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington related to the audience that she had been under constant surveillance by two men during her stay in San Francisco. She expected them to follow her to Tacoma, her next scheduled lecture.³⁶

She travelled from the west coast, through Texas, to New York, and on to Washington, DC for meetings and an interview with President Woodrow Wilson. Accompanied by a delegation of thirty-eight, she met with the President on January 11, 1918 for approximately an hour.³⁷

She presented him with a petition signed by all the members of the Cumann na mBan council (the Irish Women's Council). According to Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington, "It put forth the claim of Ireland for self-determination and

³⁴Stockton Daily Evening Record, July 24, 1917, p. 4.

³⁵The Monitor, July 28, 1917, p. 5.

³⁶San Francisco Chronicle, August 3, 1917, p. 8.

³⁷Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 106; Conlon, 58.

appealed to President Wilson to include Ireland among the small nations for whose freedom America was fighting."³⁸ Although not at liberty to divulge the contents of their conversation, she could say she discussed Ireland's rights, American support, and his commitment to small nations.³⁹ Specifically, she asked that Ireland's cause be included in the war aims of the United States. She urged America to "attend to the matter of Ireland and Belgium and all of the small nations when the peace conference comes."⁴⁰ She commented that when she reminded the President of his Irish ancestry, he bantered back "Scotch-Irish, Madam!"⁴¹

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington presented Champ Clark, Speaker of the House of Representatives, with a copy of the Cumann petition. She spoke with Congresswoman Jeannette Rankin of Montana to thank her for the joint resolution proposing recognition of Irish independence by the United States Congress. After additional meetings with other senators and congressmen to plead Ireland's cause, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington spoke at Cumann na mBan mass meetings in New

³⁸Margaret Ward, 121.

³⁹The Monitor, February 16, 1918, p. 7.

⁴⁰Ibid., January 26, 1918.

⁴¹Tansill, 241.

York City⁴² and returned to the West Coast in April 1918 for another series of lectures (see Appendix 3).

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington held her return meeting in San Francisco on April 17, 1918 at the Dreamland Rink on the "Sinn Fein Movement." A crowd of more than six thousand packed the hall. She made reference to a local newspaper article which reported that she had refused to stand to "The Star Spangled Banner" in the Exposition Auditorium the previous week. To the charge she responded pointedly:

Although I am not a musician myself, I know the difference between the American National Anthem and "God Save the Queen". I am always proud to stand up for the former, but never for the latter.⁴³

She insisted that Ireland's case depended on being liberated at the end of the war and referred to President Wilson's remarks on "the principle of . . . self-determination of nations upon which the modern world insists." She said she had to believe the President, otherwise she would have to accuse him of the "grossest hypocrisy."⁴⁴

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington was not permitted to address the audience at her meeting in Sacramento at the Native Sons

⁴²The Monitor, February 16, 1918, p. 7; Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 107.

⁴³The Leader, April 20, 1918, p. 5.

⁴⁴Ibid.

Hall on April 22. Even if the crowd called for her, she would not be allowed to speak. Chief of Police, Ira Conron, and his force of policemen were to close the meeting, if necessary. Lieutenant Swain of the United States Army also covered the meeting.⁴⁵

Blanche Ribel, Chairman, presented her with a bouquet of roses. When Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington thanked the crowd, Supervisor Robert E. Callahan mounted the speakers platform in an attempt to stop her. With that, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington pluckily asked the crowd if they would like her to say a few words. In response to their shouts of "go on," Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington began speaking of free speech. When Miss Ribel stepped forward to persuade her to return to her seat, the crowd gave "three cheers for Mrs. Skeffington."⁴⁶

Her next meeting held in the Knights of the Red Branch Hall, 1133 Mission Street, ended in a near riot. After she had spoken for almost an hour, Detective Jerry Ball of the Police Neutrality Squad, followed by seven federal agents, interrupted the meeting and informed Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington she had to leave the platform and come with them.⁴⁷

⁴⁵The Sacramento Bee, April 23, 1918, p. 1; April 24, 1918, p. 11.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷San Francisco Chronicle, April 26, 1918, p. 1; The Monitor, April 27, 1918, p. 8.

She and William Short, a minister and chairman of the meeting, were taken to the Southern Police Station, where she was questioned by Special Agent Don S. Rathbun of the Department of Justice. She asked Rathbun to arrest her if she had violated the law. He told her she would not be arrested at that time. In a statement made outside his office, she said that if arrested, she would "go on a hunger strike."⁴⁸ Short was held without bail for the United States Marshal for violating the Espionage Act.⁴⁹

Later at the Whitcomb Hotel, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington said she was bewildered at the actions of the authorities, saying they treated her and Short roughly.⁵⁰ However, she said if attacking England was treason in this country, then she was guilty "ten times over,"⁵¹ because she "was not

⁴⁸According to Charlotte Fallon, "Civil War Hungerstrikes: Women and Men," Eire-Ireland 22 (No. 3, 1987): 75-76, the hunger strike in ancient Ireland goes back to the Brehon Laws which allowed creditors to hunger strike at their debtors doors until repayment could be worked out. English and Irish suffragists renewed the tradition between 1911 and 1913 to acquire release from prison after arrest for militant activities. The hunger strike became a sanctioned tool by republican leadership during the Irish Civil War.

⁴⁹San Francisco Chronicle, April 25, 1918, p. 1; April 26, 1918, p. 1.

⁵⁰The Monitor, April 27, 1918, p. 8.

⁵¹San Francisco Chronicle, April 25, 1918, p. 1; April 26, 1918, p. 1; The Monitor, April 27, 1918, p. 8.

dealing with affairs in the United States [but] merely protesting against conscription in Ireland."⁵²

When Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington appeared for arraignment before United States Commissioner Thomas E. Hayden on April 25, her case was dismissed. However, Short was accused of publishing a pamphlet, The Bulletin of the People's Council of America. The United States District Attorney claimed it was "intended to create disloyalty, mutiny and refusal of duty among persons belonging to the military and naval forces of the United States."⁵³

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington faced more trouble, on April 28, when the management of the Dreamland Rink refused her admittance and refunded the deposit. Undaunted, she announced from the steps of the building that the meeting would move to the Knights of the Red Branch Hall. Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington and her followers walked to Seventh and Mission Streets to begin the meeting.⁵⁴

She began her lecture with the bold statement: "I have not the slightest intention to allow myself to be muzzled." If stopped at any point during her address, she said she intended to refuse bail and to hunger strike. "The last

⁵²The Sacramento Bee, April 25, 1918, p. 6.

⁵³San Francisco Chronicle, April 26, 1918, p. 1.

⁵⁴Ibid., April 19, 1918, Second Section, p. 9; April 26, 1918, p. 1.

meal has passed my lips, as far as this country is concerned . . . Dying for principle is in my family."⁵⁵ She dared United States District Attorney John W. Preston to arrest or detain her.⁵⁶

John Redmond, a San Francisco resident, was so impressed with Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington's speech he walked into the Bush Street Police Station the next day and tore up his draft registration card. According to Policeman Isaac Norris, he said: "I heard Mrs. Skeffington speak last night and they'll never get me now in their army." He was jailed and transferred to the United States Federal Marshal.⁵⁷

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington left San Francisco on April 29, 1918 to return to Los Angeles, New York, New Jersey, and Rhode Island for speaking engagements before her return to Ireland.

Speaking in New York at a mass meeting under the auspices of the Irish Progressive League at Madison Square Garden on May 4, 1918, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington told the audience the British authorities, with no reason given, had withdrawn her passport the previous week. In addition, she claimed, Mr. Preston, the Federal Attorney in San Francisco,

⁵⁵The Gaelic American, May 4, 1918, p. 1.

⁵⁶San Francisco Chronicle, April 29, 1918, p. 9; The Monitor, May 4, 1918, p. 7.

⁵⁷The Monitor, May 4, 1918, p. 7.

had wanted to detain her in the Angel Island immigration station. It seemed to her that if it was treason to the United States to talk against conscription in Ireland, "then I think the best place for any self-respecting man or woman is in prison."⁵⁸

Ironically, at the same time, British Ambassador Gerard requested she be sent home to Ireland as a "dangerous agitator." In a letter to the editor of The New York Times, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington reminded Mr. Gerard that she was being detained by England. She asked him to use his influence with the British Government to have her passport returned.⁵⁹

After British authorities in New York City granted their passports, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington and Owen left New York on June 27, 1918. Owen was permitted to return to Ireland to attend school. Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington was detained in Liverpool upon their arrival. In a letter to the editor of The Gaelic American, she wrote that it was not the intention of any "returning exiles" to remain in England a moment longer than necessary. As soon as possible, she

⁵⁸The Gaelic American, May 11, 1918, p. 8.

⁵⁹Quoted in The New York Times, May 27, 1918, p. 12.

hoped to return to Ireland to take part in the fight against conscription.⁶⁰

Avoiding the surveillance of the British police, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington returned to Dublin in August. British authorities took her into custody and sent her first to Bridewell Prison in Dublin and then to Holloway Prison in England. After refusing to eat, she was released and returned to Dublin.⁶¹ This was not her first time in jail, nor was it her first hunger strike. She had participated in a hunger strike in June 1912 during her imprisonment in Mountjoy Prison for suffragist activities.⁶²

During an interview upon her return, she stated she intended to teach French and German in technical schools, to return to work as editor of the Irish Citizen (the IWFL newspaper), and to return to her work as a suffragist in the IWFL. She intended to take the advice of George Bernard Shaw and petition for the right of women to sit as members of [Irish Republican] Parliament.⁶³ Mrs. Sheehy-

⁶⁰The Gaelic American, July 13, 1918, p. 1.

⁶¹The New York Times, August 6, 1918, p. 24; Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 112-14.

⁶²Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 36-38, 42.

⁶³The Monitor, September 21, 1918, p. 7.

Skeffington was more in demand as a speaker than ever after her return from the United States.⁶⁴

Her first tour of the United States can be deemed a success by an examination of the enormous crowds she drew in the many cities she visited, the unifying effect she had on the Irish-American community and the strengthening of their Irish republicanism.

She came to the United States as a young widow, still in her period of bereavement, to tell the "true" story of her husband's murder. In none of her speeches did she espouse anti-war activities by Irish-Americans. She spoke only of anti-conscription in Ireland and asked for United States recognition of the Irish Republic as an independent nation. Conversely, she raised funds to be used against the English in Ireland. American newspaper interviews and articles give no account of the amount of contributions and subscriptions.

The political scene in the United States during the 1917-18 tour was tense and the criticism of Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington reflected the tension. She met the situation with courage, determination, and a wit that endeared her to audiences. Irish republicanism in California had not reached its crest during her lecture tour. Irish-American

⁶⁴Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 121.

nationalism was beginning to stir and the extensive newspaper coverage given to her addresses reflects this rustling.

In praise of the success of Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington's lecture tour, The Gaelic American reported:

Mrs. Skeffington has done more real good to the cause of Ireland during her short stay in America than all the Irish orators and writers who have undertaken to enlighten the American people for the past twenty-five years. . . . She has reached a class of American people who have never been reached before by an missionary from Ireland and has won them over. She has supplied our own people with unanswerable arguments which they can use with effect on their American neighbors.⁶⁵

Father Peter Yorke, FOIF in San Francisco, wrote of Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington's achievements in The Leader in 1918:

At the outset, her [Hanna] task looked like an impossible one. However, she had the fortitude and the courage of her convictions. She kept plodding along, spreading her propaganda in every section in the United States, and she was finally successful in convincing many millions of American people that Ireland is entitled to her independence.⁶⁶

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington's success on the other side of the Atlantic may be measured by the increased demand in speaking engagements after her return to Ireland. She spoke on a variety of subjects: the role of the United States in the fight for Irish freedom, conditions in Ireland, release

⁶⁵The Gaelic American, March 3, 1917, p. 5.

⁶⁶The Leader, September 7, 1923, p. 4.

of political prisoners, literary and historical subjects, and the socialist movement.⁶⁷

Perhaps another measure of her success can be made by the fear she instilled in Dublin Castle. The British considered her a "menace" and informed the police that "no meeting addressed by Mrs. Sheehy Skeffington can be permitted."⁶⁸

When the Anglo-Irish truce was arranged in July 1921, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington played a prominent role in the peace negotiations as an intermediary between Irish Republican President Eamon de Valera and Prime Minister Lloyd George.⁶⁹ At that time, she also held the position of Director of Organization for Sinn Fein.⁷⁰ Along with other republican women, she later opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty and the Free State government. She condemned the petition of Ireland and the oath of allegiance to the king.⁷¹

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington again shifted her priorities from feminism to nationalism during the Anglo-Irish and

⁶⁷ Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 121.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 122.

⁶⁹ San Francisco Chronicle, June 29, 1921, p. 1.

⁷⁰ Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 138.

⁷¹ Ibid., 139-41.

Irish Civil Wars.⁷² She returned to the United States in 1922 and to San Francisco Bay Area in March 1923 during the height of the Irish Civil War to tour as head of an Irish Women's Mission for the purpose of raising funds for the relief of the families of Irish Republican soldiers and prisoners held in Irish prisons by the Free State. More than forty thousand people, relatives of the eighteen thousand men in jail, needed support. They were cared for largely through the efforts of this delegation of women.⁷³

Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington, accompanied by Kathleen Boland and Lynda Mary Kearns, spoke in twenty-five states in the United States and in Canada under the auspices of the American Committee of the Irish Republican Soldiers' and Prisoners' Dependents Fund.⁷⁴ Kathleen Boland, sister of Harry J. Boland (the first Irish Republican envoy to the United States), was a member of the Cumann na mBan during the Black and Tan terror. Lynda Mary Kearns, head of the Red Cross hospital during the Easter Rising, was later arrested and sentenced to ten years penal servitude at

⁷²Ibid., 145-46.

⁷³San Francisco Chronicle, March 4, 1923, p. 10.

⁷⁴Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 146.

Mountjoy Prison, where she spent seven months in solitary confinement and later escaped.⁷⁵

The three women arrived in Northern California to speak first at the Native Son's Hall on March 2, 1923 in Stockton. They spoke in "human terms" of the struggle in Ireland, and made no attempt to discuss the political situation there.⁷⁶ They told of the efforts being made by the republicans in Ireland to insure Ireland's complete separation from England and the establishment of an Irish Republic.⁷⁷

Because of illness, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington did not speak at the meeting in Sacramento in Red Men's Hall on March 1, 1923. Miss Boland and Miss Kearns described the Irishmen who signed the Anglo-Irish Treaty in London as "traitors to their country . . . [who] should have been arrested and tried for treason by the supporters of the republican movement."⁷⁸

More than 3,000 supporters met to raise funds for the Irish Women's Mission at the San Francisco Civic Auditorium on March 6, 1923. Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, Lynda Kearns, and Kathleen Boland confirmed that Irish women were

⁷⁵San Francisco Chronicle, March 1, 1923, p. 1.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Stockton Daily Evening Record, February 22, 1923, p. 9; February 28, 1923, p. 3; March 3, 1923, p. 6.

⁷⁸The Sacramento Bee, March 2, 1923, p. 2.

dedicated to Irish liberty and would accept nothing short of the Irish Republic.⁷⁹ However, it must be noted that Irish women related to members of the Free State government formed an organization in support of the Treaty and in opposition to the Cumann na mBan--the Cumann na Saoirse (Society of Freedom).⁸⁰

This second tour of Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington, as head of an Irish Women's Mission, cannot be compared with her first in 1917-1918. It must be evaluated by monetary gains and not by the newspaper coverage given in the San Francisco Bay Area, which was considerably less than in 1917-18. This lack of coverage can be traced back to the news black-out in Ireland by the Free State government and the declining Irish republican support in California.

The 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty, the creation of the Irish Free State, and the Irish Civil War all precipitated a decline of Irish republicanism in California. Most Irish-Americans believed the Treaty resolved the Irish question, the provisional Irish Republic had been replaced by the Irish Free State, and the campaign for Irish independence was over.⁸¹

⁷⁹San Francisco Chronicle, March 7, 1923, p. 7; The San Francisco Examiner, March 7, 1923, p. 6.

⁸⁰Margaret Ward, 173.

⁸¹Sarbaugh, "Culture, Militancy, and de Valera," 5.

As in her first tour in 1917-18, the press did not give an account of the funds raised. Success, therefore, must be measured by Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington's statement at her last meeting at the Academy of Music in Brooklyn, April 29, 1923, that she had collected \$100,000 during her tour.⁸²

⁸²The Gaelic American, May 12, 1923, p. 5.

CHAPTER 5

MARY MacSWINEY: UNCOMPROMISING IRISH REPUBLICAN

Throughout 1919 and 1920 a full-scale guerilla war (Anglo-Irish War) developed between British forces and the Irish Republican Army. In reaction to the atrocities committed by the Black and Tans in Ireland and the hunger strike and death of Terence MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork, Oswald Garrison Villard, owner and editor of The Nation, created the Committee of One Hundred Fifty. Hearings were held in Washington, DC from November 18, 1920 to January 21, 1921. Mary MacSwiney, Terence MacSwiney's sister, and Muriel, his wife, traveled to the United States in December 1920 to testify before the Committee.¹

Thousands of supporters greeted them in each city and town they visited on the East Coast before and after their appearances in Washington, DC. The press described them both as forceful and eloquent speakers. Mrs. Muriel MacSwiney was praised for her youth, beauty, and demeanor. Miss Mary MacSwiney was admired for her ability as a

¹Tansill, 409-10.

"convincing" speaker with an absence of "oratorical frills."²

The St. Louis Globe Democrat described Miss MacSwiney.

Of middle height, rounded figure, entirely feminine, a crown of rich brown hair very slightly grayed, dressed in deep mourning, the sister of the late Lord Mayor made an appealing figure. Color high, chin long and firm, the upper lip very short, the nose retrousse and long, the forehead high and temperate, the Irish woman in many ways resembles a duodecimo figure of the famous contralto, Madame Schuman-Heinck. Her style of speech is that of the very newest American women, clear, cool, concise, direct, an appeal to reason rather than to the passions or to the emotions.³

Soon after her appearance before the Villard Committee, Muriel MacSwiney returned to Ireland to care for her daughter, Maire. Mary MacSwiney remained in the United States to tour in support of the Irish Republic. With few exceptions, she did not vary the theme of her speeches on British tyranny and the necessity of an Irish Republic. She visited fifty-eight cities and spoke at more than three hundred meetings.

The reception accorded her across the country varied. She spoke to 100,000 people in three mass meetings held in Philadelphia.⁴ The Chicago Herald-Examiner described her

²The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator, February 19, 1921, p. 6.

³Ibid., February 26, 1921, p. 6.

⁴Ibid., April 9, 1921, p. 3; The New York Times, July 18, 1921, p. 4.

reception in Chicago as the "greatest tribute ever paid a women in this city" when twenty thousand people attended her address.⁵ The Massachusetts, Oklahoma, Kansas, and California legislatures invited her to speak. Conversely, the Nebraska House of Representatives refused her permission to appear before them because her "mission to the country [the United States] was not of importance to the people of Nebraska."⁶

Mary Margaret MacSwiney, born March 27, 1872 as the eldest of seven children to two struggling teachers, John and Mary, was educated at Ursuline Convent in Cork and graduated from the National University of Ireland. She taught in England and France for a short time until she entered Cambridge University. Supported with a loan from the Students Aid Society in Ireland, she earned a teaching diploma as one of two Irish Catholic women in a class of one hundred, mostly men. After her parent's deaths, she returned to Cork to support the family as a teacher at St. Angela's Convent School.⁷

⁵The Monitor, January 1, 1921, p. 6; February 23, 1921, p. 2.

⁶The New York Times, February 11, 1921, p 15.

⁷Fallon, Soul of Fire, 11-12, 14-15; The Leader, February 18, 1921, p. 1; The New York Times, January 7, 1921, p. 2.

Mary MacSwiney first became politically involved in the Munster Women's Franchise League in 1910.⁸ In the beginning, she argued for the vote saying that without the right to vote, women "were as irrelevant as the village omadawn or the children playing in the streets."⁹ She changed her views after joining the Cumann na mBan to a belief that "if Ireland were free, women would get the vote" and that "self-government for Ireland was the most important question." She also felt that the growing militancy of the suffragists was "unsuitable to Ireland."¹⁰ Her growing Irish nationalism was greatly influence by her younger brother, Terence. The MacSwiney home hosted many Sinn Fein discussion groups.¹¹

Mary MacSwiney founded the Cork branch of the Cumann n mBan in May 1914. She later became one of the most uncompromising Cumann members,¹² and according to the remembrance of her activities by Monsignor Florence D. Cohalan, son of Daniel Cohalan, "the most radical follower of de Valera. There had to be a whole of Ireland and a

⁸Fallon, Soul of Fire, 15.

⁹Quoted in Margaret Ward, 71.

¹⁰Quoted in Fallon, 17-18.

¹¹Ibid., 17, 19.

¹²Margaret Ward, 67.

Republic now."¹³ After leaving the suffrage movement the previous year amid controversy with the IWFL, she formally resigned from the Munster Women's Franchise League in November 1914 "owing to the fact that they (were) devoting their money and energy to war [World War I] propaganda, other than the purpose for which the society was founded."¹⁴

Terence MacSwiney became second-in-command of the Irish Volunteers in Cork in 1914, under the leadership of Tomas MacCurtain. With the confusion of orders and counter orders during the 1916 Easter Rising, Cork Volunteers did not participate. After the surrender and imprisonment of the Irish rebels in Dublin, British troops were sent to occupy Cork. On the morning of May 2, British soldiers arrested Mary MacSwiney in her classroom at St. Angela's and held her until the same evening in Cork jail, along with other Cumann members.¹⁵

Mary MacSwiney was dismissed from her teaching position on May 3 and told that "not on any account" should she enter

¹³Monsignor Florence D. Cohalan, son of Judge Daniel F. Cohalan, Interview by author, July 15, 1989, New York City, tape recording, San Jose State University Special Collections, San Jose.

¹⁴Quoted in Fallon, 22.

¹⁵Ibid., 20, 30-33.

the school again. With a loan from a friend, Mary opened St. Ita's High School and Kindergarten in Cork.¹⁶

On the same day St. Angela's dismissed his sister, Mary, Terence was arrested and sent to prison in Frongach, North Wales. Upon his release in 1917, he married Muriel Murphy of Cork. The Murphys had not initially been sympathetic to the republican cause. Muriel became an Irish republican in 1914 when she met Terence MacSwiney at the home of a priest in Cork. Although she held no official position in any of the republican organizations, she claimed she took a part in the 1916 Easter Rising and "in all other manifestations for Irish freedom."¹⁷

On March 20, 1920, Terence MacSwiney succeeded Tomas MacCurtain as Lord Mayor of Cork when MacCurtain was murdered in his bedroom by the RIC.¹⁸ MacSwiney was arrested during a meeting at Cork City Hall, on August 12, 1920, for being "in possession of documents, the publication of which would be likely to cause disaffection to His Majesty."¹⁹ He and the ten men arrested with him went on hunger strike in protest against the arrests of public

¹⁶Ibid., 33-35.

¹⁷The New York Times, December 6, 1920, p. 2.

¹⁸Fallon, 45.

¹⁹The New York Times, December 2, 1920, p. 3; December 5, 1920, p. 1.

officials. On the third day, Terence was taken to Brixton Jail in England. He survived seventy-four days without food and died on October 25, 1920. His hunger strike received world-wide attention and further stimulated the rise of Irish nationalism.²⁰

On December 4, 1920, Mary and Muriel MacSwiney arrived in New York City aboard the Celtic to testify before the Committee of One Hundred Fifty in Washington, DC.²¹

Ten thousand supporters and a committee of over three hundred people, comprised of both Irish and Italian organizations, welcomed them. Jeannette Rankin headed a reception committee of five hundred women. The longshoremen of New York harbor, who had staged a protest strike against

²⁰Van Voris, 287; Tansill, 406-10.

²¹Tansill, 409; Alan J. Ward, The Easter Rising, 131. According to F. M. Carroll, "'All Standards of Human Conduct': The American Commission on Conditions in Ireland, 1920-21," Eire-Ireland 16 (No. 4, 1981): 60-61, Oswald Garrison Villard and Dr. W. J. M. A. Maloney, a former British medical officer committed to Irish nationalism in the United States, formed an impartial committee to investigate charges of atrocities in Ireland. Committee members included five State governors, twenty-two United States Senators, thirteen members of the House of Representatives, four Catholic bishops, four Methodist bishops, and other public figures such as Jane Addams and Robert M. LaFollette. From the committee, eight members were selected to form the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland (ACCI). Based on the final report of the ACCI, the American Committee for Relief in Ireland was founded and raised \$5,250,000 for Sinn Fein.

the imprisonment of Terence MacSwiney the previous summer, furnished a body guard for the two women.²²

Mary and Muriel MacSwiney travelled from New York to Washington, DC on December 6. They were met at Union Station by a committee headed by Mrs. Champ Clark, wife of the former speaker of the House of Representatives, and Mrs. James A. Reed, wife of the Senator from Missouri. After a reception in the Presidential waiting room, they were taken by automobile to the home of Peter A. Drury, President of the Merchants' Bank, who hosted their stay in Washington, DC. Hundreds of people lined both sides of Pennsylvania Avenue during the procession.²³

Muriel and Mary MacSwiney appeared at the second ACCI hearing, held between December 8 and 19, 1920. Senator David Walsh of Massachusetts asked Muriel MacSwiney if "the women of Ireland steeled themselves so much for their cause that weeping was unknown." She replied, "Oh, I never cried."²⁴

She recounted her husband's arrest on August 12, 1920 and the beginning of his hunger strike. She told that at

²²The New York Times, December 2, 1920, p. 3; December 5, 1920, p. 1; The Monitor, December 4, 1920, p. 7.

²³The Monitor, December 11, 1920, p. 7.

²⁴The New York Times, December 8, 1920, p. 3; December 10, 1920, p. 2.

first, the shock of it hit her hard, but she became resigned to it by the time of his trial and promised him she would not insist he take food. She became convinced at that time he would die unless the British government released him. She stated, "I know my husband was happy and I never, never would interfere with my husband in a matter of conscience. It was his choice, it was the decision of his spirit."²⁵

Mary MacSwiney spoke for one entire session and part of a second to give her views of Irish history and Ireland's struggle to preserve nationalism and Catholicism. She discussed the situation in Ireland since the 1916 Easter Rising, the Sinn Fein government, Dail Eireann, and the breakdown of British civil control.²⁶ She described Terence's arrest and the uneasiness of the family for over a week when they could find no information on his whereabouts. Only after petitioning the English Governor, the Prime Minister, and members of the House of Commons did she locate him.²⁷ She believed the British motive for letting Terence die was to force the Irish Volunteers into the open.

²⁵ Ibid., December 10, 1920, p. 2.

²⁶ Carroll, 67; Fallon, 59.

²⁷ "The Background of The Irish Republic," (Testimony given by Mary MacSwiney before the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland, Donohue Collection, University of San Francisco, Miscellaneous Irish Box, 29.

And they [Lloyd George and the British] thought, since my brother had the confidence and affection of the Volunteers of Cork, that if they let him die, the Volunteers would lose their heads and come out into the open, and then they could shoot them down.²⁸

She claimed there were three "stumbling blocks" to American sympathy: The fight was religious, the Irish murdered policemen, and the difficulty of giving the British guarantees against Irish assault or use of the Irish coast for military aggression.²⁹

At the conclusion of their testimonies, Mary and Muriel MacSwiney travelled to New York and New England. Mary MacSwiney spoke to the Massachusetts Senate and addressed a mass meeting of ten thousand people at Mechanics' Hall in Boston on December 19, 1920. After spending the Christmas holidays with Senator David Walsh and his family in Clinton, Massachusetts, Muriel MacSwiney returned to Ireland on Saturday, January 1, 1921 and Mary MacSwiney, at the request of de Valera, began her lecture tour of the United States.³⁰

On January 7, 1921, Mary MacSwiney appeared at a mass meeting of five thousand people in Madison Square Garden,

²⁸Ibid., 89.

²⁹Ibid., 53.

³⁰The New York Times, December 16, 1920, p. 2; December 20, 1920, p. 2; December 26, 1920, p. 7; The Pilot, December 25, 1920, p. 1; Fallon 61-62.

New York City. Seventy-five thousand dollars was raised for the American Committee for Relief in Ireland. Although she asked for relief for Ireland, her address centered on an appeal for recognition of the Irish Republic by the United States.³¹ She emphasized that "she had not come to this country with a song of hate on her lips."³²

Mary MacSwiney left New York to begin her cross-country tour in early January. Prior to her arrival in California, the legislature adopted a resolution, on March 2, 1921, to invite her to speak at a joint session of the Senate and Assembly on March 8. Protests of the address by the Sacramento Church Federation began immediately.³³

The Federation denounced her address and claimed Sinn Feiners were trying to drive a wedge between America and the Allies. Sinn Fein purportedly prevented conscription during World War I in Ireland and Australia, and delayed it in Canada while our allies fought "with their backs to the wall." The petition, signed by Mrs. L. C. Harbaugh, secretary of the Federation, requested the "California Legislature not to invite anyone advocating the principles

³¹The New York Times, January 7, 1921, p. 2.

³²The Irish World, January 22, 1921, p. 3.

³³San Francisco Chronicle, March 1, 1921, p. 2; The Sacramento Bee, March 2, 1921, p. 1; March 3, 1921, p. 3; March 5, 1921, Second Sec., p. 15.

of Sinn Fein to address The People of the State of California through the Legislature."³⁴

Contention next arose concerning the location of the mass meeting to be held on March 8. P. C. Roddy and Dr. J. W. O'Brien had rented the Masonic Hall, paid a deposit and stated the purpose of the meeting. When the members of the Masonic Lodge learned Mary MacSwiney would be the speaker, they refused to rent the hall. The meeting place then moved to the Stone Theater.³⁵

On March 8, 1921, Mary MacSwiney arrived in Sacramento, under the auspices of the AARIR, by train from Los Angeles. Peter J. McCormick, president of the United Irish Societies; a San Francisco delegation; and a crowd of supporters greeted her.³⁶ Blanche Ribel, a member of the Sacramento AARIR committee, presented her with a bunch of California poppies and a statement of welcome.

Dear Miss MacSwiney: We wish these first field flowers of spring, and especially the California poppies of this Golden State, to express to you, a visitor from afar, our cordial greeting from the Capital City, the heart of California.³⁷

³⁴The Sacramento Bee, March 3, 1921, p. 11; The San Francisco Examiner, March 5, 1921, p. 4.

³⁵The San Francisco Examiner, March 8, 1921, p. 1.

³⁶Ibid., March 7, 1921, p. 12; The Leader, January 15, 1921, p. 5.

³⁷The Leader, March 12, 1921, p. 1.

An AARIR committee escorted Mary MacSwiney to the Travelers Hotel, where a delegation of Sacramento women greeted her and held an informal reception. She attended a luncheon held in her honor and later a social tea at the Convent of the Sisters of Mercy.³⁸

Escorted to the Capitol by a brass band and parade, Mary MacSwiney addressed the State Legislature in the Senate Chamber on "The Truth About Ireland." She asked not to go on record; she only wished an opportunity to reiterate the conditions in Ireland.³⁹ Her reference to Ireland's intention to fight to the end brought applause. She maintained it was the duty of the United States, under its policy toward small nations, to recognize the Irish Republic, and asked that petitions be sent to Congress requesting recognition by the United States government.⁴⁰

She charged British troops with "committing worse atrocities in Ireland than the Germans were ever charged with committing in Belgium during the world war." With that, she displayed a proclamation of Cumann na mBan, which

³⁸Ibid., March 7, 1921, p. 12.

³⁹Ibid., March 9, 1921, p. 13; San Francisco Chronicle, March 9, 1921, p. 6.

⁴⁰San Francisco Chronicle, March 9, 1921, p. 6.

invited "defiance" to England and pledged the women of Ireland to loyalty to the Irish cause.⁴¹

Every seat in the Stone Theater was filled an hour before Mary MacSwiney arrived at the mass meeting. After an introduction by Dr. James W. O'Brien, chairman of the meeting, she explained her only purpose in touring the United States was to obtain recognition for the Irish Republic. She stated she did not expect the American people to go to war with England, she did not seek military intervention, but she did seek recognition. To the allegation that she was here to stir up trouble between England and the United States, she simply said it was not true.⁴²

Following a short address to the crowd gathered outside the theater, Kathleen Byrne, of the AARIR, presented her with a bouquet of roses. Miss MacSwiney left Sacramento the following morning to travel to San Francisco.⁴³

Joseph Scott and Father Peter Yorke met her at the Ferry Building in San Francisco. Exemplifying the apex of republican nationalism in California, she was escorted by a parade of approximately fifty thousand people, headed by

⁴¹Ibid., March 9, 1921, p. 6.

⁴²The Sacramento Bee, March 8, 1921, p. 1.

⁴³Ibid., March 8, 1921, p. 1; March 9, 1921, p. 6.

mounted police, and a brass band from the Ferry Building up Market Street to her headquarters at the Fairmont Hotel. The band played the national anthem of the Irish, "The Soldier's Song." Yorke managed her California itinerary and a committee of four hundred women arranged her stay and reception in San Francisco. Mayor James Rolph officially welcomed her to the city. The Board of Supervisors held a special session to hear her speak on the conditions in Ireland and the need for American recognition.⁴⁴

Mrs. Frederick H. Colburn hosted the AARIR reception and tea in the ballroom and Red Room of the Fairmont Hotel.⁴⁵ Mary MacSwiney impressed those gathered with her "more than ordinary ability" as a speaker and her extensive knowledge of American and French history.⁴⁶ According to Florence Mullen, Women's Irish Education League, reservations were limited to one thousand. Alice Rose Power, a member of the Board of Education, chaired the reception committee. Mary MacSwiney read a statement from Cumann n mBan, asking her to "emphasize the fact that the

⁴⁴The Leader, February 26, 1921, p. 1; March 5, 1921, p. 1; The Irish World, March 26, 1921, p. 6.

⁴⁵San Francisco Chronicle, March 7, 1921, p. 3; The Leader, March 12, 1921, p. 1.

⁴⁶The Sacramento Bee, March 8, 1921, p. 1.

women of Ireland are not taking a pacifist attitude in the present [Anglo-Irish] war."⁴⁷

A crowd of over fifteen thousand filled the Civic Auditorium to overflowing on the evening of March 10. People sat on the floor around the speaker's platform, in the organ loft, on the steps of the galleries, and many were forced into the corridors and lobby. Her appearance brought applause and cheering that lasted several minutes.⁴⁸

Mary MacSwiney commented that she felt at home in San Francisco with so many supporters of the cause of the Irish Republic.⁴⁹ However, she warned:

I have not come here to ask you to do or to think or to say any single thing which would be subversive of or inconsistent with your duty as American citizens. . . . I want those of you who are of Irish blood to realize that it is not as Irish-Americans that you can best help Ireland today, but by being American citizens. . . . We know that if you give us the recognition which we crave, and which we are entitled to, every country in Europe will follow your example.⁵⁰

Referring specifically to the Argentine Republic in 1819, Greece in 1821, Belgium in 1832, and more than a score of South American Republics between 1822 and 1852, she asked

⁴⁷The San Francisco Examiner, March 7, 1921, p. 1; March 10, 1921, p. 1.

⁴⁸The Sacramento Bee, March 8, 1921, p. 1.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Mary MacSwiney's Address, March 10, 1921, 11-12, John Byrne Collection, File: G453.

"why then could we [the United States] not recognize the Republic of Ireland?"⁵¹ She asked for a pledge of six letters a week to leaders in Washington, DC to ask support for the Republic.⁵²

Mary MacSwiney claimed the most harmful distortion of the British propaganda program was the assertion that the war in Ireland was religious. Ireland had carried on the struggle against England for seven hundred fifty years. She asked pointedly, "If this is a religious war today, what was it 400 years ago, before Martin Luther was born?"⁵³

Her most pointed remarks pertained to World War I and the peace treaty negotiations at Versailles:

You went into the war--the World War--on behalf of the small nations of the earth. You laid down fourteen points which were to be the basis of the world's freedom. We in Ireland analyzed all your statements, all your promises. You were fighting 'to make the world safe for democracy,' to 'insure that no small nation would henceforth have to live under a sovereignty under which it did not wish to live.' You promised that as a result of your entry into the war, no great nation would henceforth be allowed to exploit a weaker nation for its own benefit. . . . and we in Ireland listened.⁵⁴

We know, to our cost, that America saved England; we believed that America would win the war and would keep

⁵¹Ibid., 15.

⁵²The Leader, March 19, 1921, p. 1.

⁵³MacSwiney address, John Byrne Collection, San Jose State University, 17-18.

⁵⁴Ibid., 25.

her word. But--you have come out of the war, you have left 70,000 of your best and bravest dead on the field of France and Flanders, and you have left your beautiful ideals shatter on the diplomatic tables in Versailles.⁵⁵

The California press bureau of the AARIR headquarters reported the campaign to write letters to Washington, DC as a success. According to a AARIR member who had returned from Washington, DC, the legislatures were deluged with protests, some receiving three hundred letters a day. He commented, "so Miss Mary MacSwiney is evidently on the right track."⁵⁶

Mary MacSwiney travelled from San Francisco to Portland, Oregon on March 12 and then through the mid-West to the East Coast. She concluded her tour to return to Ireland, in August 1921, to attend the Second Dail as a deputy (Teachta Dala) from Cork, the area previously represented by Terence MacSwiney. Upon her departure from New York on the anniversary of his hunger strike, she thanked the United States in his name for the welcome accorded her and for the work done to obtain recognition for Ireland.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Ibid., 26.

⁵⁶The Monitor, April 3, 1921, p. 7.

⁵⁷Fallon, 75-76; The Leader, August 25, 1921, p. 1; August 27, 1921, p. 1.

To evaluate the success of this first tour of Mary MacSwiney, the newspaper coverage should be examined. The American and Irish-American presses favorably covered each event and reported the welcomes and addresses in great detail. The scheduled events were publicized well in advance and the events themselves usually received front-page coverage.

Mary MacSwiney arrived at the height of Irish-American republican nationalism. The receptions given Mary and Muriel MacSwiney on the East Coast and Mary MacSwiney on the West Coast reflect this rise in nationalism prior to the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty conflict and the Irish Civil War.

The Irish World reported Mary MacSwiney's tour as the most successful conducted by a United States visitor.⁵⁸

Her biographer, Charlotte Fallon comments on her success:

With the American tours of Eamon de Valera and Mary MacSwiney, the precedent had been established that Americans would give money without being in total command of the facts. . . . America contributed generously, asked few questions, and trusted that those responsible would use the funds⁵⁹ to obtain a suitable solution to Ireland's problems.

The financial success of Mary MacSwiney's first tour reflects the unification of Irish-Americans. They supported the Irish cause with tremendous monetary contributions. The

⁵⁸The Irish World, April 9, 1921, p. 3.

⁵⁹Fallon, 73.

outpouring of support given her not only demonstrates the willingness and ability of Irish-Americans to support the Irish Republic, but is also a reflection of her articulation and poise as a speaker. Mary MacSwiney's 1920-21 tour must be considered a success.

After her return to Ireland, Mary MacSwiney spoke for two hours and thirty-two minutes at the Dail session debating the Anglo-Irish Treaty. She denounced the Irish who opposed the rejection of the Treaty, all world governments (except the Irish Republican government), and the American press, especially the Hearst newspapers.⁶⁰ She had been feuding with the American press since a February 1921 address to American press correspondents when she criticized them for "their deliberate misrepresentations" and accused the majority of being "willfully blind or hopelessly ignorant."⁶¹

Mary MacSwiney was astounded over the signing of the Treaty and became the most inflexible opponent of the Irish Free State Government. With de Valera imprisoned at Arbour Hill during the Civil War, she made frequent speeches throughout Ireland in support of the Republic. In November, while staying in Dublin with Nancy O'Rahilly, the Free State

⁶⁰The San Francisco Examiner, December 22, 1921, p. 1.

⁶¹The Leader, September 3, 1921, p. 2.

arrested and imprisoned Mary MacSwiney in Mountjoy Prison, where she went on hunger strike for twenty-four days. She was re-arrested upon her release in April 1923 and went on hunger strike for twenty-one days.⁶²

At the same time P. J. Rutledge wrote from the United States that the situation in America was "extremely unsatisfactory." Irish-American organizations needed to be restructured in order to regain American support. In addition, the Clan, reorganized by Joseph McGarrity and Luke Dillon, became more secretive and independent.⁶³ Mary MacSwiney made plans to return to the United States to describe Ireland during the three years under the Free State government and to ask financial and political support of the Irish Republic.⁶⁴

She arrived in New York in late January 1925 unannounced, unseen, and reportedly without a passport from the Irish Free State. She commented from her headquarters in the AARIR office that, "the Irish Republic is still in existence, though unrecognized. The Irish Free State is

⁶²Fallon, 79, 88-9, 113; The Leader, March 14, 1925, p. 4.

⁶³Michael Hopkinson, Green Against Green: The Irish Civil War (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), 49.

⁶⁴Publicity, John Byrne Collection, San Jose State University, File: B195.

neither "Irish" nor "Free" nor a "State," and it cannot last."⁶⁵

Charlotte Fallon maintains that unlike her reception in 1920 with bands, welcoming committees, and parades, there were no crowds to welcome Mary MacSwiney. The crowds attending her speeches were smaller and their response repressed. After two months, she wrote to de Valera that the "broader-minded and better-educated people have mostly dropped out (of the AARIR)."⁶⁶ Conversely, The Leader reported that when Mary MacSwiney addressed a mass meeting at the Earl Carroll Theater, February 8, 1925, the theater was filled to capacity, with as many people outside as inside. She spoke, under the auspices of the AARIR and Clan na Gael, of her return to Ireland from the United States in August 1921 to take part in the Dail Treaty debates and vote.⁶⁷

In support of Peter Yorke's revitalization of the AARIR in California, Mary MacSwiney returned to San Francisco to preside at the official 1925 St. Patrick's Day celebration as the principal speaker. Reflecting Yorke's efforts and the traditional celebration of St. Patrick's Day, one

⁶⁵The Irish World, February 7, 1925, p. 1.

⁶⁶Fallon, 120-21.

⁶⁷The Irish World, February 14, 1925, p. 1, 10.

hundred thousand people welcomed her to San Francisco on March 14. She was taken by motorcade up Market Street to the Whitcomb Hotel for an informal reception. Andrew J. Gallagher organized her California itinerary.⁶⁸

Mary MacSwiney spoke at several civil and social functions and was the honored guest at several private dinners given by social and financial leaders. The delegates of the AOH and the Ladies' Auxiliary and organizations of the United Irish Societies made up the St. Patrick's Day convention, headed by Jeremiah V. Coffey. The celebrations began with a parade of more than two thousand people who assembled at the Hibernian Hall, 454 Valencia Street. They proceeded down Mission Street to St. Peter's Church to celebrate a high mass.⁶⁹

More than ten thousand people crowded into the Civic Auditorium that evening. She began her speech in Gaelic, but continued in English. She called the Treaty by which the Irish Free State government was established a "sham" and gave an account of the August 1921 Dail session, the role of the Irish delegates in the negotiations in England, and the signing of the Treaty. She insisted that "the

⁶⁸The Monitor, March 7, 1925, p. 1; San Francisco Chronicle, March 15, 1925, p. 6; The Leader, March 14, 1925, p. 1.

⁶⁹Ibid., March 14, 1925, p. 1; The Irish World, April 4, 1925, p. 2; The Leader, March 14, 1925, p. 1; San Francisco Chronicle, March 18, 1925, p. 3.

delegates were forbidden to sign any document until it had been submitted to the Cabinet at home, but that Lloyd George made contact again and, whatever charm he exerted in getting them to disobey the instructions of the President and Cabinet," they signed the Treaty and "thereby not only split the country but brought on us a war more horrible than any the English had ever fought directly."⁷⁰

After completing the speaking engagements in San Francisco, she travelled to Los Angeles and Portland, Oregon. By the time she arrived in Chicago in April, a furor had developed over her passport. According to newspaper reports, she not only admitted not having a passport, but had no intention of ever getting one and threatened to hunger strike if arrested. Local immigration officials began an inquiry on orders from the State Department on behalf of the Irish Free State Government.⁷¹

According to The Leader, "it has been developed that it was as a result of the mean and cowardly action of Smiddy-- The Free State 'informer'--the United States immigration authorities started an inquiry into the methods whereby Miss MacSwiney entered this country." Reportedly, immigration

⁷⁰The Leader, March 21, 1925, p. 1, 5.

⁷¹The Irish World, April 18, 1925, p. 2; The New York Times, April 30, 1925, p. 1; San Francisco Chronicle, May 1, 1925, p. 11.

officials first questioned Miss MacSwiney in Chicago at Smiddy's request.⁷²

In rebuttal, Miss MacSwiney issued a statement from Kansas City, Missouri in the Star Report, May 5.

Everyone is fussing about my passport. I never said I'd go on a hunger strike over the question. I never said I hadn't obtained a passport into the United States. I've a passport into the United States. I've never said anything at all about it, but now I'm saying I came in on a sun ray during the eclipse. There is no law against that mode of entry. I've no intention of breaking the laws of your country.⁷³

Once her passport conflict was settled, the remainder of her tour received no press coverage. She returned to Ireland in November as quietly and unnoticed as she had arrived in the United States almost a year earlier.

The success of her second tour of America in 1925 is questionable. At least on the East Coast, her biographer and the American and Irish-American presses do not agree. Charlotte Fallon claims there were no huge receptions and fan-fare. At the same time, the Irish-American press reported a well-attended and successful mass meeting in New York City at Madison Square Garden. Both presses agree that thousands turned out to welcome her in San Francisco while Fallon only mentions Mary MacSwiney visited the city.

⁷²The Leader, June 6, 1925, p. 1; AARIR Bulletin No. 13, National Headquarters, New York City, May 20, 1925, John Byrne Collection, San Jose State University, File: B219.

⁷³The Irish World, May 18, 1925, p. 1.

Overall reduced newspaper coverage, both in the Irish-American and American presses, reflected the split in Irish-American leadership and the decline of republican nationalism when many Irish-Americans accepted the Free State government and the conditions in Ireland.

Mary MacSwiney's 1925 tour did not sustain the attempted revitalization of Irish-American republican nationalism on either Coast. According to Charlotte Fallon, the money Miss MacSwiney raised in 1925 was not substantial, the organizations remained ineffective, many Irish-Americans accepted the Treaty, and Mary's appeals left them unchanged.⁷⁴

⁷⁴Fallon, 124.

CHAPTER 6

COUNTESS CONSTANCE MARKIEVICZ: ROMANTIC REPUBLICAN

As a strong anti-Treatyite, Countess Constance Markievicz traveled to the United States to campaign for support of de Valera and republicanism. Factionalism and confusion over the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty reigned in Ireland and representatives of both the Irish Republic and the Irish Free State government sought Irish-American support. At the time of her arrival in the United States, the incident that triggered the beginning of the Irish Civil War on June 28, 1922 was still almost three months away.

Enormous crowds greeted Countess Markievicz during her tour across the United States. The peak of Irish-American republican nationalism contributed to the publicity and fanfare given her speaking engagements. The press emphasized her "romantic" republican image as rebel, heroine, and the "glory of Irish womanhood."¹

Constance Georgina Gore-Booth was born February 4, 1868 at No. 7 Buckingham Gate, London, to aristocratic Georgina and Henry Gore-Both, members of the ascendancy in Ireland. Along with two sisters and two brothers, her early years were spent at Lissadell in County Sligo. Constance Gore-

¹The Irish World, April 15, 1922, p. 1.

Booth spent her young adult life as an artist educated in Paris, a poet, and an expert horsewoman. She and her sister, Eva, founded the Sligo Women's Suffrage Society in 1896. In 1909, however, she abandoned the suffrage movement to become a militant nationalist. She appealed to the women of Ireland to "take part in politics and in the national movement, not as women fighting for the franchise only, but for Ireland."²

She married Casimir Markievicz, a Polish Count and playwright, and performed in many of his plays in the Abbey Theater. Constance Markievicz became known in Dublin as "the Countess" or "Madame."³

Biographer Jacqueline Van Voris describes her:

Constance was born into a charmed circle of privilege, wealth, and power where she formed habits of leadership and service. In her middle years when she wished to extend privilege to others less fortunate, she rebelled against the class that nurtured her.⁴

Through her associations with labor leaders James Larkin and James Connolly, Countess Markievicz became active in the labor cause and became well-known during the labor strikes in Dublin in 1913 when she set up a kitchen in the

²Van Voris, 42-43, 63.

³Ibid., 15, 20; Esther Roper, "Biographical Sketch," in Prison Letters of Countess Markievicz (London: Virago Press Limited, 1987), 55.

⁴Van Voris, 15.

basement of Liberty Hall to prepare and distribute meals to the wives and families of the strikers. With the hope of forming "women workers into an army of fighters," she became an active supporter of the Women Workers' Union.⁵

After her arrest and court-martial as a one of the leaders of the 1916 Easter Rising, Countess Markievicz was sentenced to death and transferred to Mountjoy Jail and then to Aylesbury Prison in England. After her death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, she was released in 1917, rearrested in 1918, and imprisoned in Holloway Jail in London for a year. While in jail, she was elected the first woman member to the English House of Commons, but refused to take her seat. In a letter to her sister, Eva, from Aylesbury Prison in 1917, she wrote she had "no ambition to have a vote for an English Parliament, and don't suppose I would use it. I don't think that Parliaments are much use anyhow."⁶ She returned to Ireland after her release to take her seat in the second Dail Eireann as Minister of Labor--the first woman cabinet minister in Western Europe. Because of opposition to and suppression by the British Government, the Dail went underground. Meeting in different

⁵Conlon, 12-13; Coxhead, 89; Van Voris, 100.

⁶Markievicz, 174.

houses and hiding places, they became known as the "Dail on the run."⁷

The Countess was re-arrested on September 26, 1920, imprisoned in Mountjoy, and held for two months without a trial. She was then court-martialed on a charge of "conspiracy" and of "organizing the killing of soldiers," and sentenced to two years' hard labor.⁸ Along with other imprisoned Dail members, she was freed by the Truce of July 1921. The second Dail met in August to re-elect President de Valera and re-appoint Countess Markievicz as Minister of Labour. Along with the other women deputies, Countess Markievicz vehemently opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty. Dressed in a green Cumann uniform she spoke out during the Dail debates to say, "while Ireland is not free I remain a rebel, unconverted and inconvertible . . . I have seen the stars and I am not going to follow a flickering will o-the-wisp."⁹

She received the assignment to tour the United States to insure continued support of the Republic. At the same time, representatives of the Provisional Government, which would become the Irish Free State government, also met with

⁷Coxhead, 104, 107; Van Voris, 217.

⁸Margaret Ward, 145.

⁹Quoted in Margaret Ward, 137, 163, 168; Coxhead, 108-9.

Irish-American groups throughout the United States to compete for support. Jacqueline Van Voris maintains that, "since the nineteenth century America had been the bank for Irish nationalism." Kathleen Barry, sister of Kevin Barry who was executed during the Anglo-Irish war, accompanied Countess Markievicz. The two women left Southampton on April 1 aboard the Aquitania.¹⁰

Arriving on a United States revenue cutter, fifty reporters and photographers boarded the Aquitania at the quarantine station in New York.¹¹ Reporter Marguerite Mooers-Marshall, of the New York Evening World, described the Countess:

Despite her martial achievements she is not a martial looking person--frail, rather, and almost deprecatory except when she is talking about the Irish Republic. Very tall and slender she has the stoop characteristic of so many women of her height. Her soft, waving ash-brown hair is done in the quaint psyche knot at the crown of her head, her eyes behind the eye-glasses are clear blue, and there is a dash of pink in her thin cheeks. Her smile is charming. Back of everything she says one feels emotion like a flame.¹²

Countess Markievicz and Kathleen Barry received an enormous welcome at the Cunard pier when they arrived in New York City on April 7, 1922 for a five-day stay. Father

¹⁰Coxhead, 113-14; Van Voris, 310; Haverty, 212; Letter from AARIR, Congress District Council, No. 3, LA, April 29, 1922, Byrne Collection, File: B123a.

¹¹The Irish World, April 15, 1922, p. 6.

¹²Ibid.

Michael O'Flanagan, Vice President of Sinn Fein; Austin Stack, Minister of Home Affairs; and J. J. O'Kelly, President of the Gaelic League in Ireland; and a large crowd greeted them.¹³ Countess Markievicz told the press that the purpose of her visit was "to put the truth before the friends of Ireland in the United States who so magnificently supported us in our fight."¹⁴ She said, "the Free Staters have left us. Collins and Griffith are traitors to the cause. I am willing to give up my life for the [republican] cause if it is necessary."¹⁵

During her stay in New York, Countess Markievicz attended a secret Clan na Gael meeting; visited Irish labor leader James Larkin, jailed for "criminal syndicalism" for helping to organize the American Communist Party,¹⁶ in Sing Sing Penitentiary; and spoke at mass meetings at Laurel Garden in Newark. After leaving New York, she visited cities where Irish sympathy was strongest--Philadelphia,

¹³Marreco, 274; Van Voris, 310; The Irish World, May 27, 1922, p. 1.

¹⁴Van Voris, 310-11.

¹⁵The New York Times, April 8, 1922, p. 6.

¹⁶Emmet Larkin, James Larkin, Irish Labour Leader, 1876-1947 (London: The New English Library, 1965), 214-20; Boylan, 192-93.

Detroit, Cleveland, St. Paul, Anaconda, Butte, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.¹⁷

She arrived in Philadelphia on Good Friday, April 16. Joseph McGarrity greeted her at the railroad station. At a mass meeting on Easter Sunday at the Academy of Music,¹⁸ Countess Markievicz stated Eamon de Valera was "worthy to be a comrade of George Washington or Commodore Barry." At the mention of de Valera's name, the crowd rose to cheer. The Irish World reported the supporters contributed over \$75,000 in cash and pledges.¹⁹

On May 7, 1922, Countess Markievicz arrived in San Francisco under the auspices of the American Irish-Liberty League, 794 Mission Street. A committee of one hundred civic and business leaders of San Francisco and Oakland greeted her at the Oakland pier. Representatives of the American Irish-Liberty League and other Irish societies, along with young girls dressed in Celtic clothing to represent the Cumann na mBan and young boys dressed in the uniform of the Fianna na hEireann, met her at the San

¹⁷Van Voris, 310-11; Marreco, 275.

¹⁸Marreco, 275-76.

¹⁹The Irish World, April 22, 1922, p. 1, 3.

Francisco Ferry Building and escorted her to the Hotel Whitcomb.²⁰

During an informal reception at the hotel, she told those assembled that in the 1916 Rising as second-in-command of the Irish citizen army, she felt bullets fly past her like "bees buzzing." She said she saw a good deal of heavy fighting, but did not mind it. "When your cause is just there is nothing you will not do. I will fight again, gladly, when the time comes."²¹

She appeared that evening at a mass meeting of more than nine thousand people in the Civic Auditorium (see Appendix 3). A color guard bearing both the United States and Irish Republic flags and a squad of uniformed riflemen escorted her into the auditorium. The audience rose to its feet and cheered as she entered. Dr. J. Franklin Smith presided as chairman. Miss Mary Crossan, of the American Irish-Liberty League introduced the Countess. The press reported that she gave the appearance of being frail;

²⁰The Monitor, April 29, 1922, p. 7; San Francisco Chronicle, May 6, 1922, p. 12; May 7, 1922, p. 3.

²¹San Francisco Chronicle, May 5, 1922, p. 5; May 6, 1922, p. 12; May 8, 1922, p. 15.

however, when she spoke, her qualities of leadership became apparent.²²

She recounted her experiences during the fighting in Ireland to the audience. She claimed that every [republican] woman in Ireland took an active part in the cause of Ireland. They fought side-by-side with the men, held political offices, and became some of the most trusted spies and messengers in the Irish Republican Army.²³

In discussing the Treaty, she declared the people who fought and bled for Ireland would not accept the terms of the Free State. She described the day the Treaty was signed as a day of mourning in Erin. She accused Lloyd George of tricking the Irish representatives into betraying their country by accepting the Treaty and praised de Valera as one of the "biggest men in the world."²⁴ She was convinced that when the people of Ireland realized the full meaning of the Treaty, they would unite with de Valera in opposition to it because "Ireland is republican at heart and will assert itself again."²⁵

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

Speaking to an audience of mostly women in the Colonial Room of the St. Francis Hotel on May 8, the Countess expressed her belief that Northern Ireland should not remain an "outpost and seat of British authority. God made Ireland an island and the seas alone should be the boundary of the republic." She insisted that "the continued reports of dissension among the Irish people are highly exaggerated and are the propaganda of the British government."²⁶

Countess Markievicz was recalled home from San Francisco to take part in the "Pact" election of June 24. At the conclusion of her meetings in San Francisco, on May 8, she travelled to Los Angeles, through Arizona and returned to New York for her departure to Ireland on May 30, 1922.²⁷

Before departing, she appeared in New York City at a mass meeting of five thousand in Madison Square Garden on May 21. Every council of the AARIR and other Irish-American societies that supported de Valera and the Irish Republic attended. Tickets were advertised to be available from the headquarters of the AARIR at 8 East 41st Street, New York, and from The Irish World, The Irish Nation, and

²⁶Ibid., May 9, 1922, p. 15.

²⁷Van Voris, 312; Coxhead, 115.

The Monitor. Proceeds from the sale of tickets were pledged to the Irish Republic Fund.²⁸

The crowd cheered for six minutes when former Supreme Court Justice John W. Godd introduced Countess Markievicz. She announced that the Irish Republic was still functioning and would continue to do so regardless of the Treaty. She claimed that Michael Collins and Arthur Griffin "had no power to sign away the freedom of Ireland." The Irish plenipotentiaries who negotiated the Treaty were to ascertain what and how much Ireland could get; not sign a treaty. She did not understand.

We had trusted those men as we had trusted ourselves. They had twice taken an oath of allegiance to the Irish Republic by our side, and we could as little have believed that they could have signed that treaty as that we could have signed it ourselves. I do not intend to attack or condemn them. The treaty can bring nothing but war for Ireland is not going to give up the ideals for which she has fought through seven hundred years.²⁹

Countess Markievicz issued a farewell statement to The Irish World in which she said that "this flying visit of mine through your young Republic has given me great heart and encouragement. . . . Today we have Eamon de Valera and

²⁸The New York Times, May 22, 1922, p. 3; The Irish World, May 6, 1922, p. 3.

²⁹The New York Times, May 22, 1922, p. 3.

the Irish Republican Army to repeat Washington's words:
'Nothing but independence will do.'³⁰

On May 30, she returned to Ireland from New York aboard the Berengaria. During her absence in the United States, anti-Treatyites seized and occupied the Four Courts in Dublin. Countess Markievicz attended her last Dail meeting on June 8, and made several election speeches. On June 28, "Free Staters" opened fired on the Four Courts. The Irish Civil War had begun.³¹

According to Anne Haverty, during the Countess' two-month tour, planned to last four months, the Irish Republican Fund received subscriptions and pledges worth approximately twenty thousand pounds.³² Similar to the receptions given Mary MacSwiney in the United States, the Countess attracted large crowds, front-page news coverage and general enthusiasm and support. Although she appeared frail, the dynamics of her personality and popularity contributed to the success of her tour in the United States.

Irish-American Monsignor Florence C. Cohalan, Retired, commented on his memories of Countess Markievicz during an interview in July 1989:

³⁰The Irish World, June 10, 1922, p. 3.

³¹Van Voris, 312, 314; Haverty, 215.

³²Haverty, 213.

I never met, but I would have enjoyed meeting, the Countess Markievicz. . . . She was one of those incendiary figures who come along. If there had been no revolution in any country she was in, there would have been a revolution because she was there. She was a lovely looking, eloquent, irrepressible, undisciplined fire-brand--a women of great character.³³

³³Florence D. Cohalan interview, July 1989, San Jose State University.

CHAPTER 7

MRS. MARGARET PEARSE: MOST GLORIOUS OF IRISH MOTHERS

Mrs. Margaret Pearse toured America in 1924 primarily to seek funding for her martyred son's nationalist school, St. Enda's in Dublin, but also in support of President Eamon de Valera and the Irish Republic. As a Dail deputy and a staunch anti-Treatyite, she remained loyal to de Valera and the ideal of republicanism. She spoke often of her commitment to the work begun by her son, Patrick, and continued by de Valera.

Great crowds greeted Mrs. Pearse in the United States. With a sense of respect and warmth, she was hailed as the most glorious of Irish mothers. The press described her as "a white-haired, gentle-voiced little woman with a cultured and unmistakable Irish accent . . . and eyes the blue of cornflowers."¹ The themes of her speeches did not vary and usually began:

Don't sympathize with me over the loss of my sons. Congratulate me. It is a grand thing to know that I have had the privilege of being the mother of two young men who died battling for our dear old land."²

¹The Irish World, August 23, 1924, p. 11; The Leader, August 2, 1924, p. 1.

²The Leader, August 2, 1924, p. 1.

Although the American press focused on Mrs. Pearse's fund raising for St. Enda's, her speeches included pleas for financial and political support of Eamon de Valera and the Irish Republic.

Mrs. Pearse was born in 1857 into a Gaelic-speaking family who moved from County Meath to Dublin in 1848 during the Great Famine.³ She met and married James Pearse, an English monument stone carver, in 1877.⁴ Within six years, they had four children, Margaret, Patrick, Willie and Mary Bridget. James Pearse, a silent man, took up the cause of Irish nationalism and Margaret Pearse led an unusually quiet and isolated life with few friends and no visitors in her home.⁵ Patrick Pearse wrote of his parents in his unfinished Autobiography:

When my father and my mother married there came together two very widely remote traditions--English and Gaelic. Freedom-loving both, and neither without its strain of poetry and its experience of spiritual and other adventures. And these two traditions worked in me, and, prised together by a certain fire proper to

³Ruth Dudley Edwards, Patrick Pearse, The Triumph of Failure (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1977), 5; Seamas O'Buachalla, The Letters of P. H. Pearse (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1980), 460-61.

⁴Edwards, 5.

⁵Ibid., 6-7; Ranelagh, 174.

myself--but nursed by that fostering of, which I have spoken--made me the strange thing I am.⁶

Patrick Pearse, born on November 10, 1879, founded the bilingual private school in Dublin, St. Enda's, in 1908 as part of the Gaelic revival. Because he believed the English educational system in Ireland suppressed Irish nationalism, the school emphasized Irish language, history, culture, and games. Five years later he became a founder-member of the Irish Volunteers. In December 1913 he joined the IRB as Director of Organization and a member of their top secret military committee and commanded the Irish Republican forces during the 1916 Easter Rising. His brother, William, a Captain in the Volunteers, participated in the take-over of the Dublin GPO.⁷

Desmond Ryan, secretary to Patrick, described the departure of Patrick and Willie from St. Enda's the night before the Rising: "She [Margaret] had said: 'Now, Pat, above all, do nothing rash!' and he had dutifully replied: 'No, mother.'"⁸

⁶Padraig Pearse, The Home Life of Padraig Pearse, as Told by Himself, His Family and Friends, ed. Mary Brigid Pearse (Dublin and Cork, The Mercier Press, 1979), 11.

⁷Padraig Pearse, 11; Xavier Carty, In Bloody Protest--The Tragedy of Patrick Pearse (Dublin: Able Press, 1978), 15; McCaffrey, Ireland, 137; Alan J. Ward, Easter Rising, 3-4, 8, 61; Brian O'Higgins, The Soldier's Story of Easter Week, (Dublin: Elo Press Ltd., 1966), 65; Boylan, 326.

⁸Edwards, 273.

After the Volunteer surrender on Saturday, April 29, Patrick and William were court-martialed, sentenced, shot by a firing squad in Kilmainham Jail, and buried without coffins in quick lime in Arbour Hill.⁹ During May, Mrs. Pearse pleaded with the British authorities to release the bodies of Patrick and William for a proper burial; however, General John Maxwell refused on the ground that it would create an unfavorable precedent. He also refused the family's request for Patrick's last writings because "they are seditious!"¹⁰ Such British reactions to the 1916 Rising resulted in a shift in Irish public opinion of the participants in the Rising. According to Lawrence J. McCaffrey, the "back-stabbers," "dirty bowlers," and "hooligans" became martyred heroes.¹¹ In addition to dealing with her grief, Mrs. Pearse managed St. Enda's ongoing precarious financial situation.

Her financial difficulties with St. Enda's continued through the years of the Anglo-Irish and Irish Civil Wars. With a renewed effort to save the school, seventy-year-old

⁹Ibid., 323.

¹⁰Ibid., 327-28; Carty, 12.

¹¹McCaffrey, Ireland, 141.

Mrs. Pearse began a tour of the United States in 1924 to raise money.¹²

She appeared first in New York City at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, on May 18, 1924. In spite of heavy rain, the hall was filled to capacity long before she appeared on stage and many people could not gain admittance. The Irish World commented:

It was regard for Mrs. Pearse and anxiety to do honor to her who may justly be set down as the true embodiment of the patriotic Irish mother, that brought such a throng. Most of those who came never thought they would have an opportunity of seeing Mrs. Pearse in person,¹³ and to them the chance was one not to be lost.

In her address, she described herself as the "proudest mother in Ireland." Both her sons "gave their lives to the cause of Ireland and it was their hope and wish that the school [St. Enda's] should go on to perpetuate Irish culture and ideals." She explained that she had worked extremely hard to maintain the school, but could no longer manage the mortgage. She reminded the audience that a debt of \$7,250 was not a large sum to wealthy and prosperous Americans, but it was a large one to the Irish. The Irish World reported

¹²Carty, 12; Edwards, 330, 134, 327-28.

¹³The Irish World, May 24, 1924, p. 12.

that two thousand dollars in subscriptions were collected.¹⁴

Mrs. Pearse also spoke to a capacity crowd at the Earl Carroll Theater, 50th Street and Broadway, on June 1, 1924. When she walked on the stage, the crowd cheered her for several minutes. Subscriptions of \$2,580 were contributed to St. Enda's.¹⁵

Mrs. Pearse travelled from New York to the West Coast during July 1924. She arrived at Port Costa, California from Portland on August 16, 1924. Andrew J. Gallagher, Peter J. McCormick, and Mrs. Thomas Fay escorted her to the San Francisco Ferry Building for a public reception. A committee headed by Peter Yorke, representatives of local Irish societies, and a crowd waving American and Irish Republic flags greeted her. Yorke personally sponsored her itinerary and the mass meeting held at the Dreamland Rink.¹⁶

Speaking to reporters at the Whitcomb Hotel, where she was a guest of the United Irish Societies, Mrs. Pearse said, "this is a proud day for me, coming here in the winter of my

¹⁴Ibid.; The New York Times, May 19, 1924, p. 4; June 2, 1924, p. 5.

¹⁵The Irish World, June 7, 1924, p. 12.

¹⁶The San Francisco Examiner, August 8, 1924, p. 8; San Francisco Chronicle, August 9, 1924 p. 5; August 10, 1924, p. 9; The Monitor, August 16, 1924, p. 1.

years to visit this city and thank people here for their generosity to my dear land." She was described to be "snowy haired, dressed in black, with a hammered bronze brooch at her throat framing a photograph of her two boys . . . and a locket enclosing a bit of moss from the Tara bog."¹⁷ From the time of her arrival, Mrs. Pearse's rooms were filled with flowers from the constant stream of several thousand people who called to pay their respects.¹⁸

On August 15, Mrs. Pearse met with Superior Court Judge Thomas F. Graham to accept the eight thousand dollar estate of Edward F. Murphy. After working twenty-six years as an oiler for the United Railroads in San Francisco, Murphy willed his estate to the Irish cause. Mrs. Pearse declared it "a gift from heaven." She explained that she tried to keep up the work of her son, but she was sadly in debt. Through the "gift," Patrick's goal was given new life.¹⁹

On August 16, a number of local women's organizations, headed by Mrs. Honor Roberts, hosted a luncheon for more than 125 guests at the Whitcomb Hotel in honor of Mrs.

¹⁷The San Francisco Examiner, August 11, 1924, p. 5.

¹⁸San Francisco Chronicle, August 11, 1924, p. 11.

¹⁹Ibid., August 16, 1924, Second Sec., p. 17.

Pearse. As a tribute to her, the tables were decorated with green, white and gold flowers.²⁰

In support of her mass meeting, the only one to be held in San Francisco, Seamus Moriarty wrote in The Leader:

Come and listen to Mrs. Pearse. . . . California was always to the front. You sent the gallant Desmond to Australia to free the prisoners from Freemantle, and California is proud to hold his ashes. You sent the remains of Father Eugene O'Growney, the founder of the Gaelic League, from the sand dunes of the South to his beloved Maynooth. You collected more money for Dr. Douglas Hyde in 1906 than all the rest of Americans put together. And since Easter Week you have done more than any other State in the Union.²¹

On August 17, 1924, three thousand people attended a mass meeting at the Dreamland Rink to welcome Mrs. Pearse as "the greatest mother in all Ireland."²² The ovation given her was reported to have "brought tears."²³ Seamus Moriarty welcomed her in Gaelic and W. I. O'Douglas, of the Irish Society of Sacramento, presented her with a scholarship for St. Enda's. Mrs. Pearse told the audience that:

When my son, Patrick, founded St. Enda's School in Dublin, he was asked: "What are you starting that school for?" He said: "To make Irish boys, and out of Irish boys to make Irish men." I am proud to say that

²⁰The Leader, August 16, 1924, p. 1; September 6, 1924, p. 5.

²¹Ibid., August 16, 1924, p. 1.

²²Ibid.

²³San Francisco Chronicle, August 14, 1924, Second Section, p. 13; August 16, 1924, p. 9; August 18, 1924, p. 4.

it is not Irish men alone I made of my boys, but Irish volunteers, willing to give their lives for Ireland.²⁴

She added she would willingly make that sacrifice again.²⁵

Commenting on the situation in Ireland, Mrs. Pearse declared her support for Eamon de Valera, who she believed followed in Patrick's footsteps. She declared the Free State, built on a false foundation, could not last and that Ireland stood then as it had always stood as a nation that would not surrender her birthright or give allegiance to a foreign king. Of the two parties in Ireland, she said the Free State stood for England and slavery and the Republic for Ireland and freedom.²⁶

Speaking on the 1921 Treaty and the men who signed it, she said that:

they were like what we say at home, 'bold children.' They were sent on an errand and told to bring a certain thing back, and they brought the wrong thing back. Well, we all know what this certain thing did, and we all know that the wily Lloyd George knew what it would do. It split the country from top to toe.²⁷

²⁴San Francisco Chronicle, August 18, 1924, p. 4.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷The Leader, August 23, 1924, p. 1.

Every mention of Eamon de Valera's name brought applause. More than \$4,000 in cash, checks, pledges, were collected for St. Enda's.²⁸

Mrs. Pearse spoke at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Oakland before travelling to Los Angeles. After leaving Los Angeles, she travelled to Salt Lake City and Chicago before returning to the East Coast and then to Ireland.²⁹

Mrs. Pearse, traditionally a housewife and mother, came to the United States as a seventy-year old business woman and politician. She received tremendous support and affection as Patrick Pearse's mother. Both the American and Irish-American presses described her with respect and warmth. The public supported her by their great numbers, donations, subscriptions, and floral gifts. Through the more than \$10,000 raised during her lecture tour of the United States, Mrs. Pearse saved St. Enda's school.³⁰ In spite of the confusion caused by the 1921 Treaty and the Irish Civil War, Irish-American Californians supported Mrs. Margaret Pearse, the mother and republican.

²⁸The Monitor, August 23, 1924, p. 4.

²⁹Ibid., August 18, 1924, p. 4; The Leader, September 6, 1924, p. 5.

³⁰Edwards, 330.

EPILOGUE

Irish republicanism did not die with the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty, the Irish Civil War, or the formation of the Irish Free State Government. Republicans continued their work "on the run," in prison, and in the United States. Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, Mary MacSwiney, Countess Constance Markievicz, and Mrs. Margaret Pearse continued their support of the Irish Republic in their own ways upon their return to Ireland from their lecture tours of the United States.

Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington resumed her work with the Irish Women's Franchise League until Irish women were given the vote in 1918, and later worked for the Women's Prisoners' Defence League. In 1926 she was appointed to the executive of Fianna Fail. A year later when de Valera side-stepped the oath of allegiance and took his seat in the Dail, she broke with him and Fianna Fail. She viewed the oath as "a lapse from Republican principles & traditions."¹ She visited the United States again in 1934-35 to publicize conditions in Ireland and in 1937-38 on the eve of World War II to speak for peace.²

¹Quoted in Leah Levenson and Natterstad, 152.

²Ibid., 160, 163, 166, 176.

Distrust between Mary MacSwiney and de Valera developed as she continued her hard-line republicanism and he took a more moderate approach. When she spoke out against his leaving Sinn Fein, feelings developed against her on both sides of the Atlantic. Irish-American groups who had previously hesitantly accepted the Irish Free State turned their support to de Valera and rejected her radicalism.³

Shortly after her return from the United States, Countess Constance Markievicz took an active military role in the Irish Civil War in Dublin. After the fighting moved into the country, the Countess spent her time "on the run in Dublin." She wrote articles in support of the Republic and worked with Maud Gonne MacBride to aid republican prisoners and their dependents. She campaigned for Fianna Fail candidates in the June 1927 election until she became ill and died in July 1927.⁴

Mrs. Margaret Pearse became a senator and member of the Fianna Fail executive after she lost her seat in the Dail. She died in 1932, leaving St. Enda's to her daughter, Margaret, and then to the nation as a memorial to Patrick and Willie Pearse.⁵

³Fallon, 126-28, 131-32.

⁴Van Voris, 324-27, 346-48.

⁵Edwards, 332-33.

Mrs. Muriel MacSwiney, along with Linda Kearns, returned to tour the United States in 1922 to aid the Irish Republican Soldiers' and Prisoners' Dependents Fund. Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington replaced Mrs. MacSwiney as head of the mission when the latter returned to Ireland.⁶ According to Margaret Ward, Muriel joined the Irish Communist Party in 1922, lived in Germany and then England, where she joined the British Communist Party.⁷

⁶The Irish World, September 23, 1922, p. 3; October 28, 1922, p. 3.

⁷Margaret Ward, 282-83.

CONCLUSION

The lecture tours of Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, Mary MacSwiney, Countess Constance Markievicz, and Mrs. Margaret Pearse influenced Irish-American communities across America, the American population as a whole, attracted the attention of the United States government, and raised tremendous amounts of contributions and subscriptions for the Irish Republic. Regardless of the political climate in the United States and Ireland, the divisions in leadership in Irish-American organizations, or the years of their visits, thousands of supporters attended each of the mass meetings held by these Irish republican women. Only the degree of organized Irish-American participation varied from year to year.

Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington's first visit in 1916-1918 coincided with political tension in the United States caused by World War I and reflected an uncertainty of Irish-American loyalty. Labeled a traitor and a dangerous person, she met each challenge with a sharp wit which defused the confrontations. She was successful in her contribution to the unification of Irish-American republican nationalism and raised funds for Sinn Fein. She was not successful in her

efforts to gain recognition of the Irish Republic at the Versailles Peace Conference after World War I.

The reduced press coverage of her second visit to San Francisco in 1922-23 reflects the confusion over the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty and the resulting decline of Irish republican support in California. In monetary terms, however, she gained success by raising \$100,000.

Mary MacSwiney's 1921 United States tour reflects the plateau of Irish-American republican nationalism, particularly in California. Like Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington, she encountered conflicts resulting from American involvement in World War I, which she met with unmistakable directness. Her speeches reflect the clarity with which she presented her arguments, backed them up with historical facts, and stated her final objectives of a unified Ireland governed by the Republic of Ireland. In the continuance of the work begun by de Valera in the United States, she contributed to the strengthening of Irish-American unification and financial commitment to the Irish Republic.

The failure of her tour in 1925 to revitalize Irish-American republican nationalism reflects the split in Irish-American leadership, the decline of republican nationalism, and the conditions in Ireland. Despite reduced interest in other areas of the United States, her San Francisco mass meeting, as part of the St. Patrick's Day celebration,

received great press coverage at a time when little attention was given to the Irish Republic.

Great crowds greeted Countess Constance Markievicz in 1922 as the famous heroine of the 1916 Easter Rising. Although her tour was extremely short, she attracted support in the United States by the dynamics of her personality and raised considerable contributions for the Irish Republican Fund.

Mrs. Margaret Pearse's place in the hearts of Irish-Americans as Patrick Pearse's mother, the greatest of Irish mothers, was evidenced by the warmth and affection with which she was greeted in 1924. Even though fund raising for St. Enda's school was not new in the United States, or in San Francisco, Irish-Americans turned out to pledge further aid to save the school.

All the women received commendations in the local and Irish-American press for their expertise, eloquence, and dignity. The importance of these female republican lecturers in first unifying, and later reinforcing Irish nationalism in California, can be determined by the amount of financial support they promoted. Although no firm figure was reported by the press of the amount raised by the women, each must be given due credit for the more than two million

dollars raised by California Irish-Americans between 1900-1936.¹

¹Sarbaugh, Culture, Militancy, and de Valera, 178.

APPENDIX 1

POBLACHT NA H-EIREANN
The Provisional Government of The
Irish Republic
To The People of Ireland

IRISHMEN and IRISHWOMEN in the name of God and the dead generations from which she receives her old traditions of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom. Having organized and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organization, the Irish Republican brotherhood, and through her open military organization, the Irish Volunteers, and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself, she now seizes that moment, and, supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory.

We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland and the unfettered control of Irish destinies to be sovereign and indefeasible. The long usurpation of that right by a foreign people and Government has not extinguished the right, nor can it ever be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people. In every generation the Irish people have asserted their

right to national freedom and sovereignty; six times during the past three hundred years have they asserted it in arms. Standing on that fundamental right, and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a sovereign independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades in arms to the cause of its army, of its welfare and of its exaltation among the nations.

The Irish Republic is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Irishman and Irishwoman. The Republic guarantees religious and civil property, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the national equally and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien Government which have divided a minority from the majority in the past.

Until our arms have brought the opportune moment for the establishment of a permanent national Government representative of the whole people of Ireland and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women the provisional Government here constituted will administer the civil and military affairs of the Republic in trust for the people. We place the Irish Republic under the protection of the Most High God, Whose Blessing we invoke on our arms, and we pray

that no one who serves that cause will dishonour it. In this supreme hour the Irish nation must by its valour and discipline, and by the readiness of its children to sacrifice themselves for the common good, prove itself worthy of the august destiny to which it is called.

Signed on behalf of the Provision Government:--

Thomas J. Clarke

Thomas MacDonagh

Sean MacDiarmada

Eamon Ceannt

P. H. Pearse

Joseph Plunkett

James Connolly

APPENDIX 2

SOME WOMEN IN EASTER WEEK¹

(Account of Countess Markievicz of Easter Week
as given to members of the Cumann na Ban.)

You ask me to write you an account of my experiences and of the activities of the women of Easter Week. I am afraid that I can only give you a little account of those who were enrolled like me in the Irish Citizen Army, and those who were with me or whom I met during the Week. Some were members of Cumann na-Ban, and others, just women who were ready to die for Ireland.

My activities were confined to a very limited area. I was mobilised for Liberty Hall and was sent from there via the City Hall to St. Stephen's Green, where I remained.

On Easter Monday morning there was a great hosting of disciplined and armed men at Liberty Hall.

Padraic Pearse and James Connolly addressed us and told us that from now the Volunteers and the I.C.A. were not two forces, but the wings of the Irish Republican Army.

There were a considerable number of I.C.A. women. These were absolutely on the same footing as the men. They took part in all marches, and even in the manoeuvres that lasted all night. Moreover, Connolly made it quite clear to us that unless we took our share in the drudgery of training

¹Markievicz, 37-41.

and preparing, we should not be allowed to take any share at all in the fight. You may judge how fit we were when I tell you that sixteen miles was the length of our last route march.

Connolly had appointed two staff officers--Commandant Mallin and myself. I held a commission, giving me the rank of Staff Lieutenant. I was accepted by Tom Clarke and the members of the provisional Government as the second of Connolly's 'ghosts.' 'Ghosts' was the name we gave to those who stood secretly behind the leaders and were entrusted with enough of the plans of the Rising to enable them to carry on that Leader's work should anything happen to himself. Commandant Mallin was over me and next in command to Connolly. Dr. Kathleen Lynn was our medical officer, holding the rank of Captain.

We watched the little bodies of men and women march off, Pearse and Connolly to the G.P.O., Sean Connolly to the City Hall. I went off then with the Doctor in her car. We carried a large store of First Aid necessities and drove off through quiet dusty streets and across the river, reaching the City Hall just at the very moment that Commandant Sean Connolly and his little troop of men and women swung round the corner and he raised his gun and shot the policeman who barred the way. A wild excitement ensued, people running from every side to see what was up. The Doctor got out, and I remember Mrs. Barrett--sister of Sean Connolly--and others

helping to carry in the Doctor's bundles. I did not meet Dr. Lynn again until my release, when her car met me and she welcomed me to her house, where she cared for me and fed me up and looked after me till I had recovered from the evil effects of the English prison system.

When I reported with the car to Commandant Mallin in Stephen's Green, he told me that he must keep me. He said that owing to MacNeill's calling off the Volunteers a lot of the men who should have been under him had to be distributed round other posts, and that few of those left him were trained to shoot, so I must stay and be ready to take up the work of a sniper. He took me round the Green and showed me how the barricading of the gates and digging trenches had begun, and he left me in charge of this work while he went to superintend the erection of barricades in the streets and arrange other work. About two hours later he definitely promoted me to be his second in command. This work was very exciting when the fighting began. I continued round and round the Green, reporting back if anything was wanted, or tackling any sniper who was particularly objectionable.

Madeleine French Mullen was in charge of the Red Cross and the commissariat in the Green. Some of the girls had revolvers, and with these they sallied forth and held up bread vans.

This was necessary because the first prisoner we took was a British officer, and Commandant Mallin treated him as

such. He took his parole 'as an officer and a gentleman' not to escape, and he left him at large in the Green before the gates were shut. This English gentleman walked around and found out all he could and then 'bunked.'

We had a couple of sick men and prisoners in the Bandstand, the Red Cross flag flying to protect them. The English in the Shelbourne turned a machine-gun on to them. A big group of our girls were attending to the sick, making tea for the prisoners or resting themselves. I never saw anything like their courage. Madeleine French Mullen brought them, with the sick and the prisoners, out and into a safer place.

It was all done slowly and in perfect order. More than one young girl said to me, 'What is there to be afraid of? Won't I go straight to heaven if I die for Ireland?' However it was, they came out unscathed from a shower of shrapnel. On Tuesday we began to be short of food. There were no bread carts on the streets. We retired into the College of Surgeons that evening and were joined by some of our men who had been in other places and by quite a large squad of Volunteers, and with this increase in our numbers the problem of food became very serious.

Nellie Gifford was put in charge of one large classroom with a big grate, but alas, there was nothing to cook. When we were all starving she produced a quantity of oatmeal from somewhere and made pot after pot of the most delicious

porridge, which kept us going. But all the same, on Tuesday and Wednesday we absolutely starved. There seemed to be no bread in the town.

Later on Mary Hyland was given charge of a little kitchen, somewhere down through the houses, near where the Eithne workroom now is.

We had only one woman casualty--Margaret Skinnader. She, like myself, was in uniform and carried an army rifle. She had enlisted as a private in the I.C.A. She was one of the party who went out to set fire to a house just behind Russell's Hotel. The English opened fire on them from the ground floor of a house just opposite. Poor Freddy Ryan was killed and Margaret was very badly wounded. She owes her life to William Partridge. He carried her away under fire and back to the College. God rest his noble soul. Brilliant orator and Labour leader, comrade and friend of Connolly's, he was content to serve as a private in the I.C.A. He was never strong and the privations he suffered in an English jail left him a dying man.

Margaret's only regret was her bad luck in being disabled so early in the day (Wednesday of Easter Week) though she must have suffered terribly, but the end was nearer than we thought, for it was only a few days later that we carried her over to Vincent's Hospital, so that she would not fall wounded into the hands of the English.

The memory of Easter Week with its heroic dead is sacred to us who survived. Many of us could almost wish that we had died in the moment of ecstasy when, with the tri-colour over our heads we went out and proclaimed the Irish Republic, and with guns in our hands tried to establish it.

We failed, but not until we had seen regiment after regiment run from our few guns. Our effort will inspire the people who come after us, and will give them hope and courage. If we failed to win, so did the English. They slaughtered and imprisoned, only to arouse the nation to a passion of love and loyalty, loyalty to Ireland and hatred of foreign rule. Once they see clearly that the English rule us still, only with a new personnel of traitors and new uniforms, they will finish the work begun by the men and women of Easter Week.

CONSTANCE DE MARKIEVICZ.

APPENDIX 3
ILLUSTRATIONS

\$.....	Date.....								
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND									
First Loan Subscription of the Elected Government of the Republic of Ireland To EAMON DE VALERA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND									
I.....hereby tender to the Government									
of the Republic of Ireland the sum of \$.....This sum is voluntarily subscribed by me.									
Neither the President of the said Republic of Ireland nor the Government of the said Republic									
nor its agents are under any obligation to repay this sum, or to pay interest on said sum to me or									
to my heirs until the said Republic of Ireland is internationally recognized and until the lapse of									
six months from the date of the freeing from British military control of the territory of the said									
Republic of Ireland.									
Amount Subscribed \$.....	Signed								
Amount Paid \$.....	Address								
Amount Due \$.....	City.....								
BOND-CERTIFICATE DEMONIANATIONS									
Den.	\$10	\$25	\$50	\$100	\$250	\$500	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
No.									
Hand this Card to usher or mail to P. F. McCarthy, District Chairman, 625 Higgins Building, Los Angeles, California									
<small>SULLIVAN COMPANY</small>									

Figure 1: Republic of Ireland Bond-Certificate Subscription

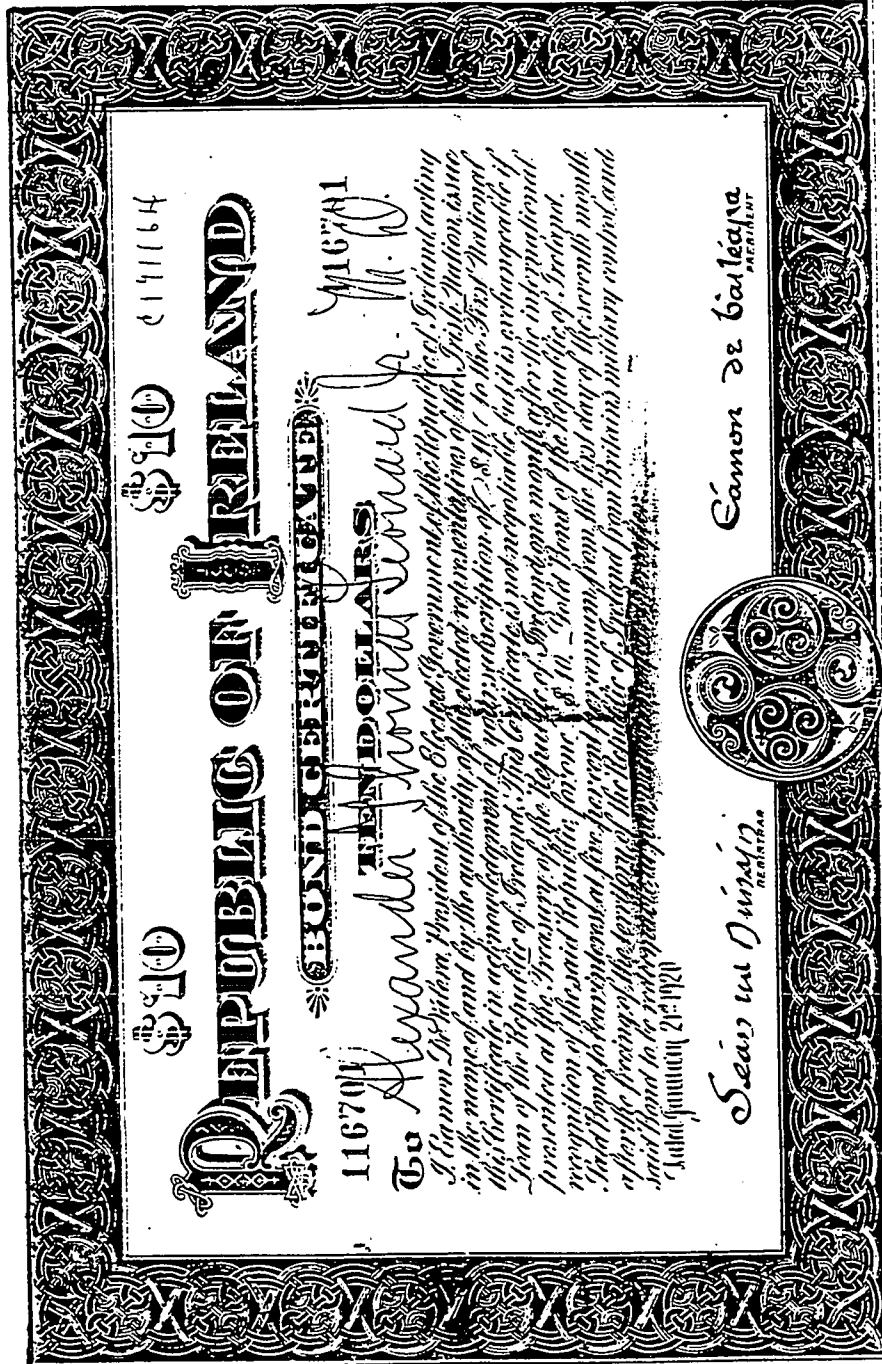


Figure 2: Republic of Ireland Bond Certificate

ONE WEEK MORE
The Irish Awake---The Truth Told
 ---BY---
The Gaelic Amusement Company
 ---AND---
 American
Commission on Irish Independence
 PRESENTS
"IRELAND A NATION"
 ---AT---
Valencia Theatre
 WEEK BEGINNING SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17 - 1920
 Evenings at 8:15 MATINEE WED. & SAT.

OVERTURE Orchestra
 Selections From Ireland

ACT I

IRISH TRAVELS Photoplay
FINANCING IRISH REPUBLIC Photoplay
45 MINUTES IN IRELAND Photoplay

ACT II

PEGGIE O'BRIEN
 Songs of Ireland

ACT III

EMMETT MOORE Himself
 In "A Merry Ramble 'Round Ireland"

ACT IV

IRELAND A NATION Photoplay
 First Part
 Intermission of 5 Minutes

ACT V

IRELAND A NATION Photoplay
 Second Part

ACT VI

EMMETT MOORE AND THE IRISH PLAYERS
 In The Playlet "IRISH LIBERTY" By Walter Montague
 CAST OF CHARACTERS

SIR PATRICK CONDON, A Wealthy Landlord Mr. Henderson
EILEEN, His Daughter Helen O'Neil
MRS. O'MOORE, Mother of Rory Maud Leahy
DINNY, The Piper W. F. Healy
KATHLEEN, A Guest May Burke
PEGGY, A Guest Peggie O'Neil
ROBY O'MOORE, The Irish Minstrel Emmett Moore
 Place---In County Kerry Time---The Year 1820
 Exit March---Irish Liberty

**WE HAVE BEEN OFFERED \$25,000 NOT TO PLAY IN THE
 UNITED STATES. WHY? BECAUSE IT TELLS THE TRUTH**

Secure your Reserve Seats now. Box Office Open from 11 A. M. to 9 P. M.
 Seats on sale also at office of American Commission on Irish Independence.
 Mission Enterprise Print, 315 22nd St.

Figure 3: ACII Fund Raising Handbill

— GRAND —

Patriotic Mass Meeting

Under the auspices of the Friends of Irish Freedom

COLUMBUS AUDITORIUM
621 South Flower Street

TO-NIGHT

APRIL 14th, 8:00 p. m.

— ADDRESS BY —

Mrs. Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington

Hear a real, genuine message to the Irish people of Los Angeles, in the big farewell address, under the auspices of the Irish Societies. She is the widow of one of the Dublin Martyrs. She stands for right and justice as outlined by President Wilson. She has interviewed the President and talked with many leading members of Congress.

The date will commemorate the 1916 Irish Rebellion.

It will be a true American Meeting. Liberty Loan will be Advocated. Come and Boost It. The success of Liberty Bonds means the success of our Army. Success of our Army means the freedom of ALL Small Nations.

Hear the distinguished orators, the Gaelic and other singers.

ADMISSION IS FREE. The date is To-night, April 14

Figure 4: Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington Mass Meeting Handbill

The crucial hour in the whole history of Ireland is here! Can those who are flesh of your flesh and blood of your blood count on you Today?

COUNTESS CONSTANCE GEORGINA MARKIEVICZ

who comes to San Francisco to plead for your flesh and blood in Ireland, is one of the most romantic characters in modern history and for this reason she has often been called Ireland's "Joan of Arc." Her achievements in behalf of the people of Ireland place her among the world's greatest women.

Countess Markievicz comes from the old aristocratic Gore-Booth family of Ireland. She was reared in the midst of luxury and comfort. While a young woman she studied art in Paris and there married the Polish Count Casimir Dunin Markievicz.

After her marriage she returned to Ireland and was welcomed into Dublin Castle circles. In 1907 she became interested in the Sinn Fein movement and joined a branch of Sinn Fein in Dublin.

In 1909 she founded Fianna Eireann, the Irish boy scouts. This was a campaign to enlist all the young boys in Ireland in bands such as were known in ancient Ireland when all the children of Irish warriors were trained as great fighters and athletes.

The Countess has had an especial interest in the welfare of those who work for their daily bread. In 1913 during the strike and lock-out in Dublin she personally took charge of a relief kitchen where the strikers, their wives and their children, were fed. As a result of that strike the Irish Citizens' Army was established under the command of Padraig Pearse, and with this force Countess Markievicz fought for Ireland in Easter Week, 1916.

Many of the Fianna were in the Countess' army during the rising of 1916—boys 16 and 17 fighting like young heroes. The Countess was a vallant fighter but once was ordered by the commander of the Irish Republican party to surrender. Sending word to the British officer in charge that she would surrender at a certain hour the military surrounded



COUNTESS MARKIEVICZ
will speak in the Civic Auditorium
San Francisco, on Sunday, May 7th
at 8 P. M.

the headquarters of the Countess. At the appointed hour the Countess, wearing the uniform of a lieutenant of the Irish Volunteers, stepped forward to the British officer and kissing her rifle handed it to the military. After this she was court-martialed and sentenced to death. This was about the time of the execution of Edith Cavell in Belgium and public opinion was much aroused. It was generally supposed that the wave of indignation might be directed against England and should the death of the Countess be carried out. The sentence was then changed to penal servitude for life. During the months pending her release the Countess served as a convict among the sweepers of English streets and gutters.

She was released in the general amnesty of 1917, but was re-arrested in 1918. So dear was she to the people of Ireland that in the general election of 1918 she was victorious over her opponent, and thus was the first woman ever elected to the British Parliament. She refused to take the seat.

For one year the Countess was "on the run." Disguising herself as an old apple woman she went about Dublin, although the secret service force of the British Empire was continuously in search of her. One day on one of the principal streets of Dublin, where hundreds of people were passing by, an old beggar woman asked for alms. The Countess gave of her store. The old beggar woman, seeing the large amount which she had been given, looked up in astonishment at the disguised Countess and after studying her a few moments cried, "Och! the blessings of God on you my beautiful Countess and is it yourself I see?" And this is the woman whom certain parties who are friendly to the British Empire do not want you to hear at the Mass Meeting in the Civic Auditorium on Sunday night on May 7th. What are you going to do about it?

Do not throw this announcement away!
Help the good work by passing it on to a friend or neighbor



Figure 5: Countess Markievicz Mass Meeting Handbill

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