

# 1916

THE 1916 RISING:  
PERSONALITIES &  
PERSPECTIVES

*an online exhibition*



LEABHARLANN  
NAISIÚNTA  
na hÉIREANN

NATIONAL  
LIBRARY  
of IRELAND

- 3.
- 3. 2. **Those who set the stage**
- 3. 2. **Those who would resort to physical force**

### 3. 2. 2. **John Devoy, Joseph McGarrity and Clan na Gael**

Clan na Gael directly contributed to the Rising by providing American funding and arms for the Irish Volunteers.

John Devoy (1842-1928) was born into a family living in a cottage on half an acre at Kill, Co. Kildare. The family moved to Dublin where he was educated by the Christian Brothers at O'Connell's Schools on North Richmond Street, at Marlborough Street model school, and at Strand Street model school, where he became a paid monitor for a couple of years before finding more remunerative employment as a clerk.

Devoy came into contact with political activists while learning Irish at evening classes, eventually being sworn into the secret society known as the Fenians in 1861. After a year with the French Foreign Legion in Algeria, he settled in Naas, Co. Kildare, where he worked as a Fenian organiser. The Fenian leader, James Stephens, next entrusted him with the recruitment of Irishmen in British regiments. He was eventually arrested in February 1866 and sentenced to fifteen years penal servitude; he was released in 1871, having served four years in various British prisons. On his release he emigrated to the United States.

Around 1873 Devoy joined Clan na Gael (founded in 1867) which under his leadership became the premier Irish-American nationalist organisation. One of his most spectacular coups was the daring rescue of six Fenians from penal servitude in Fremantle, Australia in 1876 by means of the whaler *Catalpa*. He engineered an agreement with the other major Irish separatist organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, creating a joint revolutionary directory. Under his leadership, Clan na Gael contributed significant financial support to the Land League in the period 1879-81. It also supported Parnell's Irish Parliamentary Party, but considered Home Rule an inadequate settlement and only of use as a stepping stone to complete independence.

Devoy worked mainly as a journalist in New York. In 1903 he established and edited a successful paper, the *Gaelic American*, with Tom Clarke as assistant editor for a period. Under the leadership of Devoy, Clan na Gael supported many of the Irish nationalist projects of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Gaelic League, Arthur Griffith's *United Irishman*, and the Irish Volunteers. Regarding the Irish Volunteers as potentially an army of insurrection, the Clan supported the organisation with funding and consignments of arms; it is believed to have contributed \$100,000 towards the Rising between 1913 and 1916. The Clan also worked hard to promote anti-British feeling and so prevent the entry of the United States into the war on the side of Britain.

In 1914, Devoy took a leading role in promoting a lecture tour of the United States by Patrick Pearse to save Saint Enda's School from closure. That same year he hosted Roger Casement, later funding his mission to Germany to procure arms and to recruit Irish prisoners of war for service in the proposed insurrection. He was also involved in exploiting the funeral in Dublin (1 August 1915) of the veteran Fenian, Jeremiah O'Ronovan 'Rossa', who died in New York, as an occasion for the outpouring of extremist national sentiment.

Devoy was kept abreast of plans for the 1916 Rising, being in the confidence particularly of Clarke, Pearse and Joseph Plunkett. Although then in his seventies, he wanted to take part, being thwarted only by his failure to get the necessary travel papers in time.

RECOLLECTIONS OF  
AN IRISH REBEL

THE FENIAN MOVEMENT  
ITS ORIGIN AND PROGRESS, METHODS OF  
WORK IN IRELAND AND IN THE BRITISH  
ARMY. WHY IT FAILED TO  
ACHIEVE ITS MAIN OBJECT,  
BUT EXERCISED GREAT  
INFLUENCE ON IRE-  
LAND'S FUTURE

PERSONALITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION

THE CLAN-NA-GAEL AND THE  
RISING OF EASTER WEEK, 1916

A PERSONAL NARRATIVE

by

JOHN DEVOY



*John Devoy.*

Title-page of Devoy's *Recollections of an Irish Rebel* (1929).

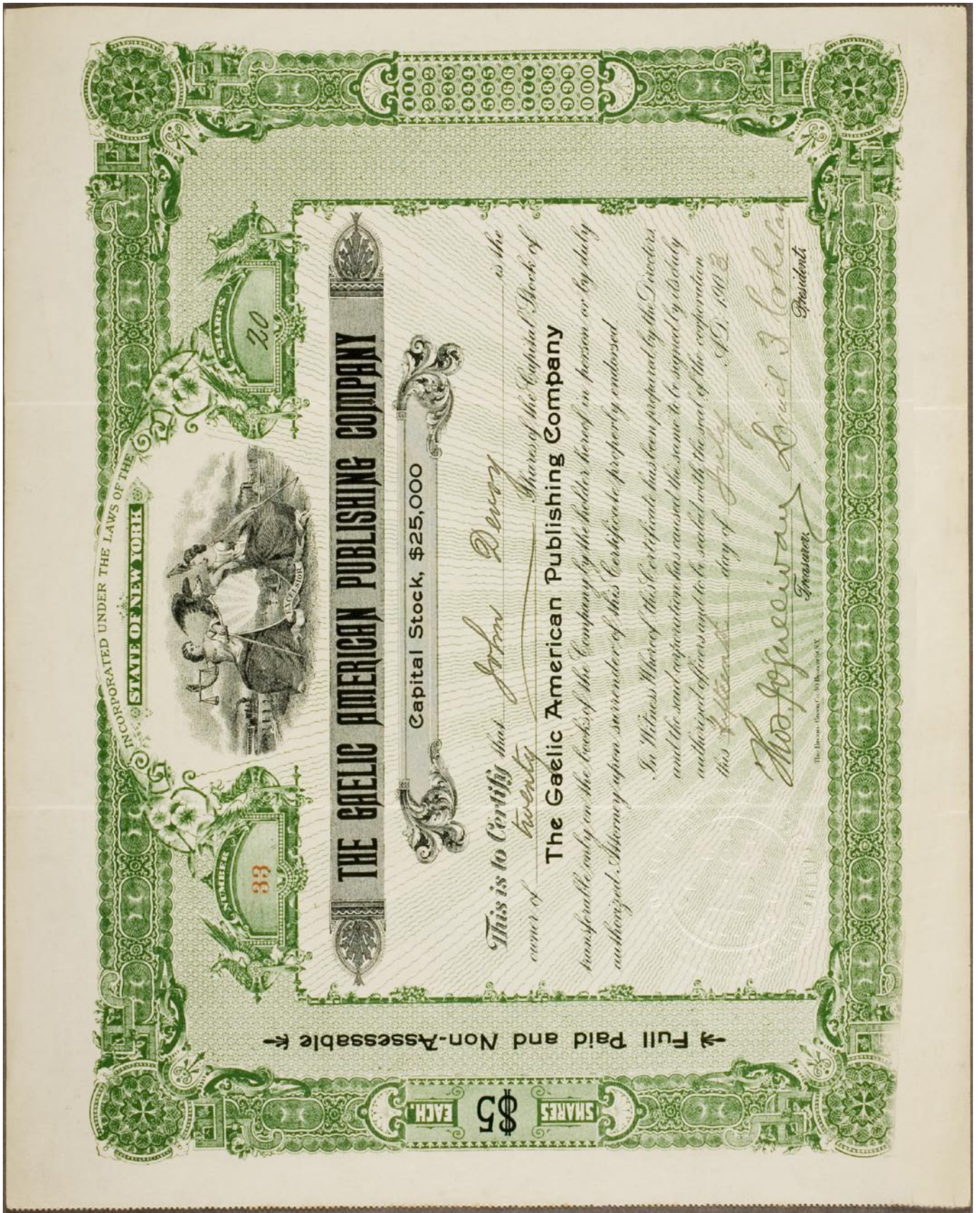


1894

Oct. 14. Asked by Ex. to go on organizing tour. Meeting in Philada: \$500 appropriated for trip. Remained in Phil. revising and proof reading of Convention Report, Constitution, Circular, &c. till 19th.  
Oct. 19. Went to Atlantic City, N. J. to see if C. could be organized there and remained till 23<sup>rd</sup>. Mr. Glade paid all expenses and promised to try start C. Returned to Phil. 23<sup>rd</sup> and finished up Constitution &c.

Oct. 24. Started for N. Y. to commence work. Committee on Org. consisting of H. V. & K. was appointed at Ex. meeting. Brought V's views and consent to abide by decision of other two. Called on K. at noon of 25<sup>th</sup>. Recommended that I should first try to reorganize Peekskill, Sing Sing, White Plains and Newburgh, capture Triang. C's in New Rochelle and Mamaroneck, in S. Dist. 1 and organize new one in Middletown, N. Y. where there are two transfers from I. R. B. and some of





The Gaelic American newspaper (Sept 1903-1927) was published by Devoy to promote the work of Clan na Gael. (Ms. 18,075).



FINAL CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



State of Illinois, }  
COUNTY OF COOK. } SS.

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

HON. ORRIN N. CARTER, Judge.  
JAMES PEASE, Sheriff.  
PHILIP KNOPF, Clerk.

Be it Remembered, That on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of September in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety five personally appeared before the County Court of Cook County, in the State aforesaid (the same being a Court of Record, having common law jurisdiction, and a Seal and Clerk, and sitting judicially for the dispatch of business at the County Court House in Chicago, in the County aforesaid), the Honorable ORRIN N. CARTER, sole Judge thereof, presiding,

James Devoy  
an alien born, free, white male person, above the age of 21 years, and applied to the said Court to be admitted to become a naturalized citizen of the United States of America, pursuant to the several Acts of Congress heretofore passed on that subject; and the said applicant having thereupon produced to the Court, Record testimony showing that he has heretofore reported himself and filed his declaration of his intention to become a citizen of the United States, according to the provisions of the said several Acts of Congress, and the Court being satisfied, as well from the oath of the said applicant as from other satisfactory evidence, that the said applicant has resided within the limits and under the jurisdiction of the United States for at least five years last passed, and at least one year last passed within the State of Illinois, and that during the whole of that time he has behaved himself as a man of good moral character, attached to the principles contained in the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order, well being and happiness of the same; and two years and upwards having elapsed since the said applicant reported himself and filed his declaration of his intention as aforesaid, IT WAS ORDERED, that the said applicant be permitted to take the oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and the usual oath whereby he renounced all allegiance and fidelity to every foreign Prince, Potentate, State and Sovereignty whatever, and more particularly to the Queen of Great

Britain & Ireland whereof he was heretofore a subject, which said oath having been administered to the said applicant by the Judge of said Court:

It was Ordered by the Court, That the said James Devoy

be admitted to all and singular the rights, privileges and immunities of a naturalized citizen of the United States, and that the same be certified by the Clerk of this Court, under the seal of said Court, accordingly.



In Testimony Whereof, I, PHILIP KNOPF, Clerk of said Court, have hereunto affixed my hand and the seal of the said Court, at Chicago, in said County, this 30<sup>th</sup> day of September A. D. 189<sup>5</sup>, and of the Independence of the United States, the one hundred and twenty

Attest, Philip Knopf  
Clerk of the County Court of Cook County.

Devoy became a naturalised United States citizen in 1895. (Ms. 18,063).



**Defence of Ireland Fund**

September 7, 1915.

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY**

That Mr. John Devoy of New York City has contributed the sum of one Hundred Dollars to enable the Irish people to defend their homes, their rights, their liberties and their persons, now menaced by a foreign Government, and to assert and maintain the Independence of Ireland.

\$100.00.

**CUMANN NA SAOIRSE**

Taoiseach  
Riaghaltóir  
Árd-Ollamh

Ireland a Nation

The Defence of Ireland Fund was one of the means by which Devoy contributed to promoting his objectives in Ireland. (Ms. 18,091).

476 DEVOY'S POST BAG

I sent a translation of Schiemann's latest pamphlet for the G.A. to [Captain George] Freeman which perhaps you will publish in instalments. I hope to be back in N.Y. about the end of October. Thanking you once more.

I remain,  
Yours very sincerely,  
K. M.

I enclose a photograph which I would ask you to accept.

DEVOY'S PLEA FOR PLUNKETT

From Frank Oliver to John Devoy.

UNITED STATES SENATE,  
Committee of Interoccenic Canals,  
8 September, 1915.

My DEAR DEVOY,

Senator O'Gorman has been absent from the City for some time, but I note your letter regarding Mr. Joseph Plunkett. I wired to the Senator about the matter and he has instructed me to take it up with the Labour Department in his name and to secure him a release if possible.

Faithfully yours,  
FRANK OLIVER,  
Secretary.

JOSEPH PLUNKETT ENTERS U.S.A.

From Frank Oliver to John Devoy.

UNITED STATES SENATE,  
Committee of Interoccenic Canals,  
11 September, 1915.

Mr. John Devoy,  
c/o *The Gaelic American*,  
165, William Street, City.

My DEAR Mr. DEVOY,

Senator O'Gorman directs me to say in regard to your recent communication, concerning Mr. Joseph Plunkett,\* that he appealed to

\* Devoy states, *Recollections*, pp. 460-1, that Plunkett came to New York in 1915, and was detained at Ellis Island because of glandular tuberculosis: "I visited him at the Island where I had long talks with him. His condition was so plainly one justifying the immigration authorities in barring his admission that no fight for him was possible, but I appealed to United States Senator James A. O'Gorman and he succeeded in procuring permission for him to land, under a thousand dollar cash bond, and remain in New York for two months 'to do literary work.' I provided the thousand dollars, and during his stay ashore introduced him to all the men whom it was necessary for him to see. The decision to fight in Easter Week had not then been taken, but he was able to give us a better idea of the situation in Ireland than we had yet received."

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

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the Secretary of Labour and secured a temporary admission for Mr. Plunkett covering a period of three months.

With kind regards, I am,  
Faithfully yours,  
FRANK OLIVER,  
Secretary.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Roger Casement to John Devoy and Joseph McGarrity, 24/9/15.

A

I herby acknowledge to have received the following sums from Joseph McGarrity and John Devoy, since August, 1914, to the present date [September, 1915], remitted to me on behalf of the Irish organisation they control for expenditure incurred by me, and being incurred now, in connection with my visit to the United States (17 July—17 October, 1914), to aid in procuring funds to arm the Irish Volunteers and my present Mission to Germany, dating from 17 October, 1914, when I sailed from New York:—

August-September, 1914	...	...	One Thousand Dollars.
12 October, 1914	...	...	Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars.
December, 1914—			
Remitted to Germany	...	...	One Thousand Dollars.
June, 1915—			
Received in Germany	...	...	One Thousand Dollars.
September, 1915—			
Received in Germany	...	...	Two Thousand Dollars.
April, 1915—			
Paid in Philadelphia against			
Cash in Berlin	...	...	Two Hundred and Forty Dollars.

TOTAL RECEIVED:—

Seven Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty Dollars (\$7,740).

ROGER CASEMENT.

Berlin. 24 September, 1915.



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# Easter Week.

## John Devoy tells how the Rising was arranged.

**The following Letter was seized by the American Government and published in the American Newspapers, February 26, 1918:—**

“DEAR FRIEND,—I avail myself of the chance of our friend returning to San Francisco to send you this letter by hand. Nothing is safe in the mails in this free country.

“Our information as to what occurred at home, on the inside, was very meagre up to a couple of weeks ago. Now, authentic accounts coming by hand show us that we guessed pretty accurately. One is a young lady from your country. She was in the thick of it all, and she saw Seán M'D. the night before he was shot.

“Then came a man who had been in prison and was released. He is from Kilkenny, and had very accurate information about what occurred immediately before the fight.

“Then a young fellow named —, a Waterford chap, who does not belong to anything, but is all right, brought me a message verbally from the son of a Dublin man now dead.

“He said the S.C. had been reorganised.

### The German Arms.

“The substance of it all is that the betrayal of the information about the shipload of arms by Wilson's men enabled the English to catch the vessel. There is no doubt at all about this. They got in the raid on Von Igel's office a note of mine—the transcript of a message received in cipher from Dublin and wirelessed to Berlin the day before—April 17—a request not to land arms 'before the night of Sunday, 23rd.' That was its meaning, but it used the word 'goods.' It was at once given to the English, and they sent out their patrol boats and caught the ship. Then they sent troops to Tralee.

“That would not have spoiled the rising, because if they were in the field other shipments would have been sent. Casement did the rest. He landed on Friday, and sent a message to MacNeill to stop it, that it was hopeless, etc. MacNeill got it Saturday, and issued his countermand.

“From our experience of a year of his (Casement's) utter impracticability, we sent, with the first note from home that we transmitted to Berlin, a request that R. (Casement) be asked to remain there 'to take care of Irish interests.' We knew he would meddle in his honest but visionary way, to such an extent as to spoil things, but we did not dream that he would ruin everything as he has done.

### Casement's Obsession.

“He was obsessed with the idea that he was a wonderful leader, and that nothing could be done without him. His letters always kept me awake on the night of the day I got them. Mrs — says that he told Duffy that the Germans treated us shamefully, and that he had hard work to get a few arms that were on that ship; that they were no good, etc., etc.



“Well, they were good enough for the Russians to overrun East Prussia with and to drive the Austrians across the Carpathians; and if our fellows had got them they’d be able to shoot a good many Englishmen with them. It is not true that the Germans treated us badly; they did everything we asked; but they were weary of his impracticable dreams, and told us to deal directly with them here.

“He had no more to do with getting that shipload than the man in the moon. The request was made from Dublin, and we transmitted it from here. They replied in nine days, and the message was sent to Dublin by a girl who had brought out the request.

“He (Casement) told everything to every fellow who called on him. —, who saved him, is one of the worst crooks I ever met, and was in the pay of the English all along. Casement was warned of that from Ireland, and the first thing he did was to tell the fellow himself, and to give the name of the man who had warned him. — was going over from here to testify against him—and incidentally to give away all our secrets that he had got from Roger. But *we kept him here.*

#### Money for “Our” Work.

“I don’t want you to tell any of this—I mean about Roger—to anyone except Father Yorke, but the rest you can use your judgment about.

“If that countermand had not been issued they would have taken Dublin, and the big force that was concentrated on Dublin (British force) would have to be divided up.

“The turn over of the people to our side, according to everybody, is astonishing. The conversion to our side among the priests is the most remarkable thing of all.

“We have sent a good sum of money for *our* work, and it is already there. We expect to be in direct communication with an re-organised S.C. or a re-organised one very soon.

“Of course, a lot of the future will depend on the course of the war, which is now going somewhat against us, but whatever comes, the old Ireland is gone.

“With the few facts I have given you in your mind, you will understand the situation. Kind regards to Mrs. De L. and Father Yorke.

Yours truly,

“JOHN DEVOY.”







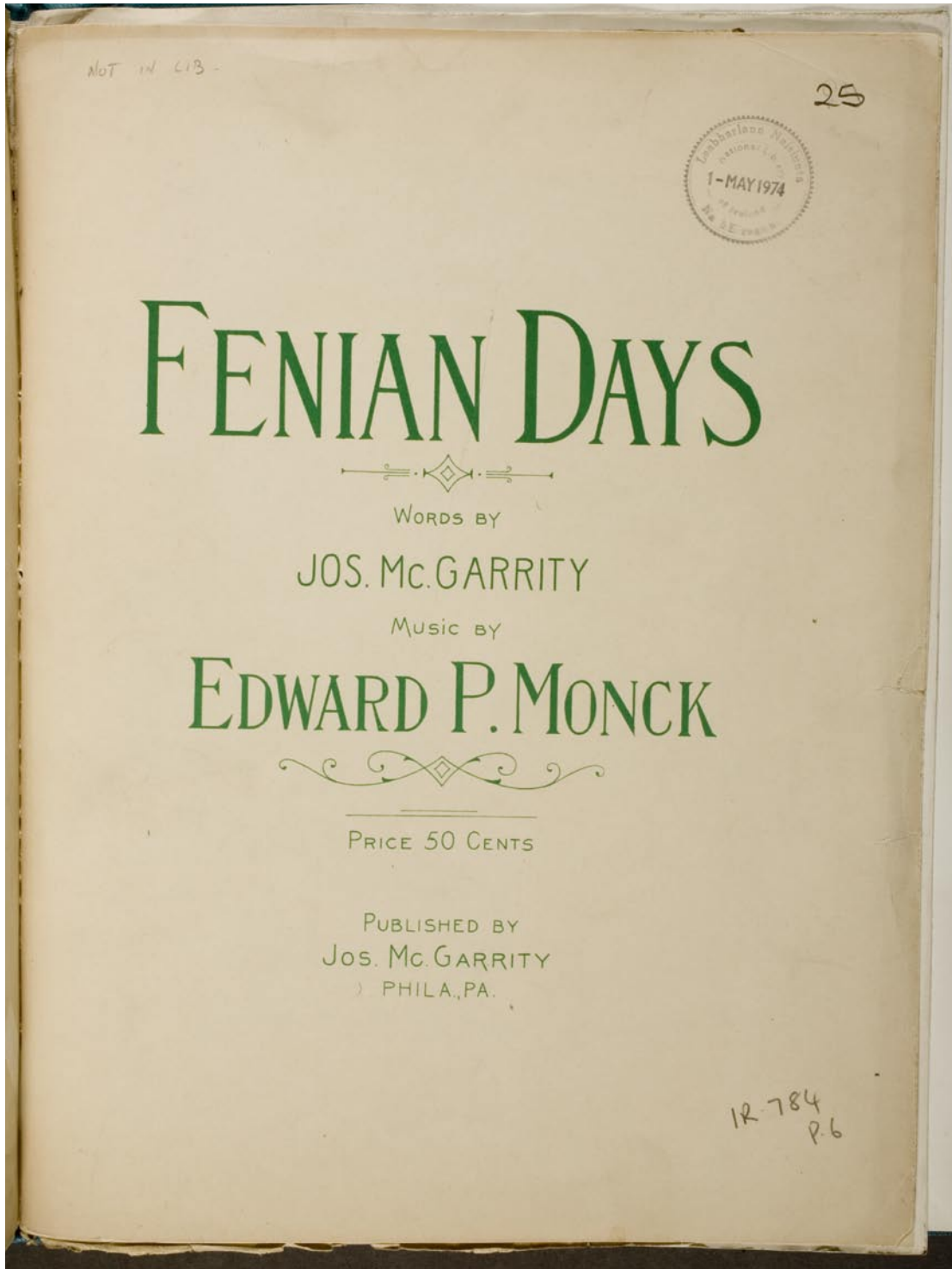
Joseph McGarrity and Col. Rickard O'Sullivan Burke, a Fenian who served in the Union army in the American Civil War.





McGarrity's pub in Philadelphia.





*Fenian Days*, 1909.

3

## "FENIAN DAYS."

Words by  
JOS. McGARRITY
Music by  
EDWARD P. MONCK

*Maestoso*

*Marziale*

Read those sad and truth - ful pa - ges, Read a - bout the Fen - ian a - ges,

Read a - bout the pris - on ca - ges That our fa - thers oft have filled.

Copyright 1909 by Jos. McGarrity.

*Fenian Days*, 1909.



3. 2. 2. John Devoy, Joseph McGarrity and Clan na Gael

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Swear ye by the lines in - dict - ed That the young names that were blight - ed Yet shall have their wrongs a - right ed,

5

By their deeds that now are damn - in them for galli - less blood they spilled.

Swear that on the plains you'll meet them,  
Swear you'll die, or else defeat them,  
As your shining pike will greet them,  
Call on God to guard the right.  
Then as they will crouch before you,  
Think how as a babe they tore you,  
From the bosom of their mothers,  
Put them to the sword's edge,  
Do not listen to their pleading,  
They have kept your wounds a - bleed - ing,  
On your flesh, they have been feed - ing,  
Manhood sickened at the sight.

They have hung your heroes high,  
Twixt the Irish earth and sky,  
How they have done for the land that gave them birth.  
Stand ye like a granite wall,  
Quickly speed the rifle ball,  
Make the rotten redcoats fall,  
To manure the Irish earth,  
Think of how they used your sires,  
Juries packed with hollish liars,  
Took the gold, and swept the fires,  
And the loved ones from your hearth.

Blood of Irish hero ages,  
Spirits of our saints and sages,  
Help us pay the despot's wages,  
Speed our swords to strike the blow,  
Speed the bullet to his heart,  
Speed our spirits bright to dart,  
Speed our sabres bright to dart,  
Give us of your former fires,  
Help us raise our standard higher,  
And amidst your Angel Choir,  
Sound "the foeman's overthrow"

*Fenian Days, 2*

Fenian Days, 1909.

Philadelphia  
March 16<sup>th</sup> 14

Dear Sir

P. H. Pearse B. L. President of St. Enda's College Dublin, a member of the Provisional Committee of the new "Irish Volunteers" will lecture here next Monday evening, see tickets enclosed.

A class of 60 young men are graduated from this thoroughly Irish College each year. Gaelic is the premier language of the College, so it too much to ask you to prevent the foreclosure of a mortgage on the college by the purchase of the enclosed tickets.

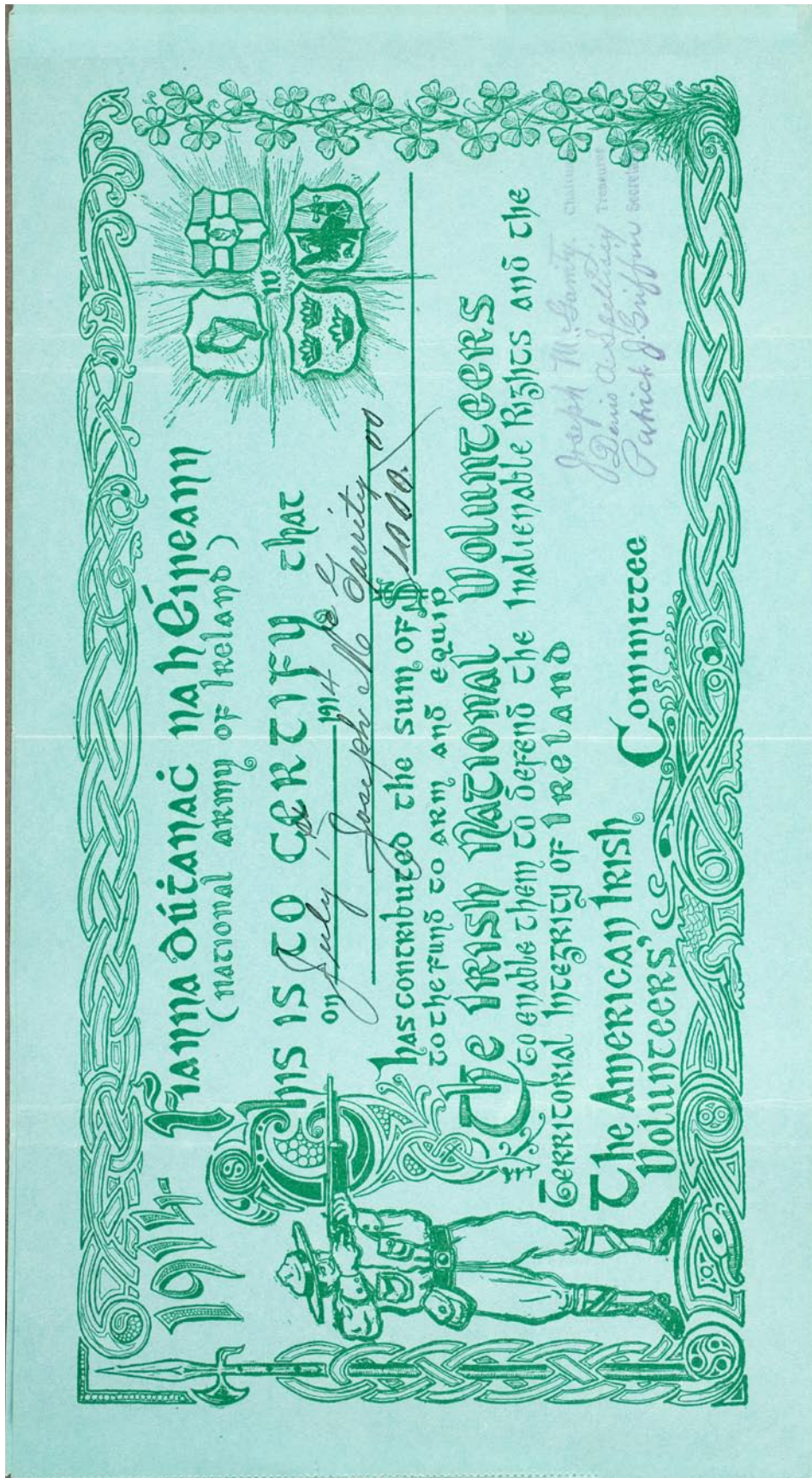
Come and hear St. Pearse and Mr. Dubner Hobson of Belfast and learn the truth about Irish conditions

Yours truly

Joe. McBarrierty  
144 N<sup>o</sup>. 3<sup>rd</sup> St

Make remittance to Joe McBarrierty at C. O. St. Peter's  
% Irish Industrial Association 120 N<sup>o</sup>. 15<sup>th</sup> St





Certificate acknowledging a contribution by McGarrity to the Irish National Volunteers. The Irish Volunteers were sometimes styled the Irish National Volunteers, especially in America. (Ms. 17,646(4), McGarrity Papers).



13

M E M O R A N D U M  
O N I 9 I 6

James Smith who made trip to Ireland as special messenger from the Clan-Na-Gael lived at 2419 south Mole st Philadelphia, was born in Tyrone Ireland, he had a brother killed in the world war on the English side, and had been a member of the Board of E'rrin Hibernians this connection and letters from his mother in Ireland made it possible for him to get a Pasport and make the trip when it was very hard to get a man who could get a pasport and at the same time be willing and trustworthy to go, he brought the last instructions to Tom Clark before the Easter Rising, following instructions he called on Tom Clark at his shop and residence on Great Britain St Dublin, on entering he asked for a Cigar Tom Clark appeared suspicious of him or perhaps he was suspicious of a man who entered Toms shop about the same time and was undoubtedly watching Smith who was a stranger in town, Tom gave Smith the Cigar and looking towards the door (that is the store door) and keeping his eye on Smith and the party that followed Smith into the store he told his little girl to give the gentleman his change and backed into the door leading to the residence part of the house, and did not come out again until Smith left if he came at all, he was evidently fearful of a trap and took no chances,

Smith left the Clark shop and proceeded to take the next train north to Tyrone where he sought and found Doctor Patrick McCartan and through another party delivered the message, which reached Tom Clark the following day, see Smiths own narrative and Doctor McCartan's also.

Miss Plunket, (Count Plunket's daughter) followed Smith with the message and some funds, we did not know when Smith volunteered to make the trip that Miss Plunket was available, Smith did his service to Ireland well, he acted wisely and discreetly and deserves the gratitude of his countrymen His narrative gives dates etc,

February 12th 1916

Received the following message from Patrick H Pearse,  
"Send Rifles to Limrick, between Good Friday and Easter Sunday; May have to Strike before then, but in any case cannot delay longer, men would be imprisoned, Answer,."

Note there was considerable delay in getting the answer ready as the German representetives in America had to be interviewed several times and they in turn had to code cable their Governmant, when we finally got from the Germans a statement of what they proposed to do the following message was sent, to Pearse and Clark.

March 9th 1916

Will send 20.000 Rifles, 10 Machine Guns, Small Boat's, to place near Tra-lee, between 23rd and 25th April,.

The R. D. met on March 10th at 23 East 94th st New York, Lynch who was in America was returning to Ireland and we sent by him £2300 pounds to the Volunteers.

Saturday Night April 22nd 1916 at 11.30 P m I received from D. F. C. New York the following message ( remember this would be about Five oclock in Ireland Easter sunday morning, - The message from Valincia Ireland and relayed to me by telephone was as follows " Tom successfully operated on today" "O'Sullivan"

This was arranged beforehand.

Note I answered " Thank God" and burning with excitement and anxiety I left my home alone 5412 Springfield Ave Phila,

*J. McGarrity*