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FORGOTTEN LORD MAYOR

Donal Óg O'Callaghan 1920-1924

This book is dedicated to:

Théo Quinlivan, our 'one per cent baby' who was born on 3 March 2020; he has brought so much joy into our family and is loved to pieces by his wonderful siblings, Adam (12), Lucie (10) and Alice (8).

John Ger O'Riordan, a wonderful friend, public servant and researcher – and, above all else, a lover of all things Cork.

To the councillors elected to Cork Corporation in 1920 who had their lives tragically cut short – Tomás MacCurtain, Terence MacSwiney and Tadhg Barry.

FORGOTTEN LORD MAYOR

Donal Óg O'Callaghan 1920-1924

AODH QUINLIVAN

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Cover image: Photo of Donal O'Callaghan taken by his attorney, Michael Francis Doyle, Philadelphia, 19 April 1921
[Courtesy of Cork City and County Archives and Áine Healy]

Back cover:
Donal O'Callaghan receiving the keys of Union Quay Barracks
[Hogan-Wilson Collection, courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

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[Courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]

Acknowledgements

'There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you'
Maya Angelou (American poet, memoirist and civil rights activist)

The motivation for this book was simple – to bring Donal Óg O'Callaghan to life and tell his story as accurately and honestly as possible. I think it is a remarkable story but I will let you, the reader, make up your own mind about it. Above all else, I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it. Writing a book always involves a long journey on a windy road and I had good company as I travelled. Primarily, my family was with me every step of the way – my beautiful wife, Emmanuelle, and my amazing children, Adam (12), Lucie (10), Alice (8) and Théo (8 months). They gave me the space I needed to research and write, and get inside the head of Donal Óg. Emmanuelle was also a great sounding-board and improved the final product in many subtle ways. Someone who deserves to be included as a family member is the redoubtable John Ger O'Riordan, an exemplary research assistant. I have worked with professional editors, proof-readers and researchers but none match John Ger in terms of thoroughness, insightful analysis and attention to detail. In truth, his only flaw is an over-use of capital letters! As a proud Corkman, I know John Ger enjoyed working on this book which hopefully will give Donal Óg a position of prominence in the rich history of this city. Thanks John Ger, this book is a lot better because of your involvement.

Forgotten Lord Mayor forms part of Cork City Council's 2020 commemoration projects and many people inside the organisation deserve a mention, particularly Liam Ronayne (now retired as City Librarian) and Paul Moynihan who were exceptional as always. Helen McGonagle was a tremendous help over the last couple of months and no request was too big or

small for her. I am extremely grateful to former Lord Mayor, Councillor Tony Fitzgerald, who encouraged me at the beginning to tell the story of Donal Óg. I also received wonderful support from the two following Lord Mayors, Councillor Mick Finn and Councillor John Sheehan. Equally, the current Lord Mayor, Councillor Joe Kavanagh, has assisted and encouraged and I am honoured that the book is launched during his tenure as Cork's first citizen. Cork City Council's history expert, Councillor Kieran McCarthy, offered me sound advice and guidance too.

Brian McGee in the Cork City and County Archives could not have been more helpful and the same can be said for Dan Breen and Dara McGrath in the Cork Public Museum. Kieran Wyse in the local studies section of the Cork City Library also came to my aid on more than one occasion. A special mention goes to Selina Collard in the UCD Archives who scanned material and sent it to me when I was not able to get to Dublin during the Covid-19 lockdown. The staff in the National Library of Ireland, especially Nora Thornton and Mary Broderick, were also brilliant, as were the staff in the National Archives and the National Museum. Jason McLean, unprompted, took it upon himself to take a picture of Donal Óg O'Callaghan's grave in Dublin's Dean Grange Cemetery and send it to me; this was a really kind gesture which was greatly appreciated. At the start of the book, there is an original poem by Caoimhín Mac Unfraidh called 'An Epic of Cork City' which commemorates Cork's three Republican Lord Mayors of 1920. I am honoured that Caoimhín has allowed us to use his wonderful poem in *Forgotten Lord Mayor*.

I found some great material in the Kilmurry Independence Museum and I would encourage anyone with an interest in Cork history to pay a visit. Speaking of Kilmurry, thanks to Niall Murray for his valuable input and to Trish Collier who helped with the translation of some tricky Irish text. I also want to acknowledge my great friend, Finbarr Crowley – he was there when I wrote the first words of this book and has been there pretty much every day since!

Sharon Collins and Shane Ryan in the North Monastery warrant a mention and the History Club does much great work in the school. On foot of newspaper articles that I wrote about Donal Óg in the *Echo* and *Irish Examiner*, Brian Gould, Derek Poole, Terry O'Leary and Shirley Kelleher came forward with vital information – thank you all. I am also grateful to Áine Healy in UCC's School of Pharmacy who sent me some wonderful photographs. Áine's grandmother's sister was married to Donal O'Callaghan! Fiona Forde (aka 'Irish Family Detective') was a real star and unearthed some important civil records for me about Donal Óg and his family. Some of Donal Óg's relatives in Boston also made contact and sent me pictures; I am extremely grateful to Monica Andrews, Maura McCurtin, Nancy Holler and her mother Barbara (Barbara's father was Jeremiah O'Callaghan, brother of Donal).

I received great support, for which I am grateful, from my colleagues in University College Cork and especially those in the Department of Government and Politics. Equally, I am indebted to the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences who came to my aid through the Research Publication Fund. In UCC, J. P. Quinn was always there for me, through good and bad days, and, as a dear friend, he is a man apart.

Stuart Coughlan at edit+ put the book together and I am thrilled by how well it looks. This is my second time working with Stuart and I hope to do so again in the future – thank you.

Finally, thanks to Donal Óg O'Callaghan for leading such a remarkable political life, especially during some of the most pivotal years in Ireland's history, 1920-1924. I hope I have done him justice. For any errors or omissions, I take full responsibility.

Aodh Quinlivan
November 2020

Foreword

Lord Mayor of Cork, Councillor Joe Kavanagh

Cork city played a pivotal role in our country's fight for freedom. In 1920, our city was facing its biggest trial yet. Lord Mayor Tomás MacCurtain was murdered and his successor, Terence MacSwiney, died on hunger strike in Brixton Prison. Our citizens of the past were experiencing escalating violence, tension, fear and distrust. It was during this tumultuous time that Donal Óg O'Callaghan succeeded Terence MacSwiney as Cork City's third Lord Mayor of 1920, yet little (to date) has been published on the extraordinary political life he led between 1920 and 1924 as Lord Mayor of Cork and Chairman of Cork County Council.

In this significant publication, Aodh explores the extraordinary political life that Donal Óg O'Callaghan led between 1920 and 1924. Although overshadowed understandably by Lords Mayor MacCurtain and MacSwiney, O' Callaghan's story is captivating. Born in 1892 in Peacock Lane, he went to school at Eason's Hill and later to the North Monastery – a school that has educated many of our city's political figures.

On 4 November 100 years ago, Cork's forgotten Lord Mayor was elected as first citizen by Cork Corporation. Little over a month in office, on 11-12 December 1920, O'Callaghan witnessed the burning of his beloved city – City Hall, Carnegie Library and Cork city destroyed. Following the Burning of Cork in December 1920, O'Callaghan's life was under threat and he fled to America on a steamship. During his time in America, he worked hard to bring justice to our city and its citizens. In 1921 he gave evidence at the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland. In May 1921 our former Lord Mayor was elected unopposed to the second Dáil. Despite losing his seat the following year, he was part of Eamon de Valera's alternative Republican government and served as the (Acting) 'Minister' for Local Government and 'Minister' for Foreign Affairs.

I am delighted that Cork City Council, through Cork City Libraries, is publishing this fascinating book as part of its 1920-2020 Centenary Commemoration Programme. Cork city's diverse Commemoration Programme aims to help us learn more about contemporary society – giving us a deeper understanding of how Irish society was shaped by our past. During this significant time in Cork city's past we are acknowledging the people who took part in the struggle. The dynamic programme of events taking place aims to reflect pride in Cork and its people and the roles they played in the events of 100 years ago – pride in the Fire Brigade and their heroic efforts, and pride in the resilience of our people in rebuilding their city.

Aodh has done us a great service by bringing Donal Óg O'Callaghan's fascinating story to life and this book is a valuable addition to the existing works on the rich history of Cork.

Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine (under the shelter of each other, people survive). Or Ní neart go cur le chéile (there is no strength without unity).



An Roinn Cultúir, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

Cuimhneachán Commemoration 1920-1923
Corcaigh I Cork

Lord Mayor of Cork, Councillor Joe Kavanagh [Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]



About to testify before the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland – (from left to right) Tom Nolan, Donal O'Callaghan, Senator George W. Norris, Washington DC, January 1921 [Courtesy of the Library of the US Congress]

Remarks by An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin TD

I would like to congratulate Aodh Quinlivan on this fascinating and important study. His biography of Donal Óg O'Callaghan is a comprehensive and very timely work. It reflects on a period of extraordinary tumult and change through the career of a man, recognition of whose contribution is long overdue. The circumstances of Donal Óg O'Callaghan's election as Lord Mayor of Cork could not have been more traumatic. The third Republican Lord Mayor elected in one year, following the murder and death by hunger strike of his two storied predecessors, he took on the role at enormous personal risk and in a city already deeply traumatised and about to be burned to the ground. Trusted by both Éamon de Valera and Michael Collins, O Callaghan was a substantial figure, not only in this country but on the international stage where he was tasked with a series of important roles. In his introduction to this work, Aodh writes that '(his) motivation was simple – to bring Donal Óg O'Callaghan to life'. He has achieved this goal, and more besides. Through O'Callaghan's career, we get a new insight into the civic life and tensions of Cork at that time, while the tragedy of the Civil War unfolds on the national stage. The factors leading to O'Callaghan's early and almost complete withdrawal from public life are fascinating and are explored here. There is no doubt that his early exit from public life contributed to his low profile for contemporary audiences. This is unfair on a man who took on civic leadership in the worst of times. Aodh Quinlivan has addressed an injustice with this comprehensive account of his life.

Micheál Martin TD
An Taoiseach

A Triumvirate of North Mon Heroes

Caoimhín Mac Unfraidh

An original work commemorating Cork's
three Republican Lord Mayors of 1920

It was a Christian Brother stopped me on the Quay,
Master of Latin verse, of Grecian lore,
but I, a dreamer of Young Ireland - one might say –
had never understood what Latin verse was for.
Now, he held me to the spot, not by
his native hurler's grip
but only by his glittering eye.
"Suigh síos and listen to this tale, this epic".
Though aged now, his voice was strong
"A hundred years have passed and I
would share this story I have framed in song,
in epic verse, that it may never die".
Mesmerised by his crinkling grin, by sharp recall
of old authority, learning, force of will,
I forgot my local business on the Mall
and sat before him, once again his pupil.
Then adopting his familiar teaching stance –
Feet planted, head bowed, thumb and fingers
to each temple spread, as if in trance,
from memory, he drew forth these verses:

"*The God of Nations will stand by*
the David of Nations and strike down Goliath.
Our Republic will endure forever".
Thus Tomás MacCurtain sets our epic's tone.
I remembered him from my student days,
climbing 'up the lodge' to the Monastery,
reciting *laudo, laudas, laudat…*

I knew the signs of pending poetry! Spoke he
"Saint Finbarr's sacred city of the reeds,
that marshy, boggy place of early fame,
sits proud as Rome upon her seven hills
and that republic cedes to her the claim
that Cork surpasses Rome in more than hills,
in more than her location on the Lee,
which, dropping gently through the city, fills
her port, her "*Statio Bene Fide Carinis*",
in more than her great temples and her towers;
(Rome never had such bells and clocks to lie
to Roman citizens about the hour
or sound salutes to those about to die).
Note well that Rome, despite her power,
was beaten once and bound by flame.
Cork, too, was sacked, sacked and burned
one night when the barbarians came.

"A Bhráthair!" I cried "It is absurd,
drawing parallels twixt now and then,
between these famous fateful urbs –
one ruled the world as known to men!"
The other's Rome. Obviously.
"Such comparisons," he replied "may jar
with modern minds but I sing of deeds
performed by those of purer heart
than any raised on Roman streets.
Both cities had their magistrates;
Rome her Tribunes, by tribe selected.
Cork had three brave sons,
duly elected.
Just as the brothers Gracchi fell to evil blades
so the boys from Cork's North Monastery
would rise unto their tribunate
and then be done to death by perfidy;
MacCurtain by an assassin's plot,

MacSwiney by a different cruelty,
O'Callaghan, from the same brave Brothers' stock,
would bear his cross in exile o'er the sea".

"Enough," said I "of Gracchi and of Rome.
Cork was never such a place, it's not the same!"
"Yet I have more!" he said. "Romans held a bridge
as onward King Porsena's royal forces came.
Horatio and his steadfast colleagues fought
and Thomas Davis ensured their Irish fame
with his fine verse '*Three Hundred Men and Three Men*',
'*A Nation Once Again*' his holy theme.
MacCurtain, MacSwiney and O'Callaghan,
sons of Cork, of the North Monastery,
our own 'Three Men' who stood against the ranks
of his Imperial British Majesty
who had come to take the bridges o'er the Lee".

"Enough!" smiled I. "'*Epic*' goes too far.
The scale is wrong. This was but a mêlée.
You might as well make of it the Trojan War
and name MacCurtain as bold Achilles!"

"Well, Troy did have heroes" he said, correcting me,
"who fell in combat with the Greek Achilles.
Let us see MacCurtain, rather, as our Hector, treated shamefully,
struck down in violence. I will again avert
to the official record of the words that tell
in truthful verse, unaltered by the poets,
of how Cork's Council rang out on freedom's bell.
When all around were seeking clever ways
to excuse the fractious province from the fray,
Cork Council called the British to account
and found the strength to overcome dismay:

"Alderman Mac Curtain, Lord Mayor died from shock
and haemorrhage caused by bullet wounds
and that he was wilfully murdered under
circumstances of the most callous brutality
and that murder was organized and carried out
by the Royal Irish Constabulary,
officially directed by the British Government
and we return a verdict of wilful murder
against David Lloyd George, Prime Minister".

District Inspector Swanzy, RIC,
linked by Michael Collins to this tale,
was shot on his order with MacCurtain's very gun.
How like you that who doubts our epic's scale?
Now, let us see MacSwiney as another
actor in that fateful city's siege,
another who was treated like a dog
despite holding an elected magistracy.
See how fine a figure was this man
who replaced (requiescat) MacCurtain.

"*I come to office more a soldier than*
a man for administration".

MacSwiney organised his daily tasks
of democratic local government by day
but, nightly, from City Hall's deep basements
he ran Number One Brigade Cork IRA;
This dual approach that was required
to drive the new Republic on
left him exposed to the informer
who sold him cheaply to the Crown.
Three hundred men of the RIC
with armoured cars in close support
from Victoria Barracks on Patrick's Hill,
seized the man for a drumhead court.

And so this dashing, daring mayor,
a patriot to his noble core,
was locked away and starved to death
in Brixton, prisoner 6794.
Now tell me, with a straight face,
that MacSwiney was no warrior
to compare with those of Trojan race?
Or Roman? So fell our second Hector.

As with myths where heroes come in threes,
so we see our third boy from the Mon
begin his lonely, anxious watch;
Donal Óg O'Callaghan.
As MacCurtain's bones are whitening
and MacSwiney's bones protruding, stark,
what courage must this young man bring
to step up to be Mayor of Cork!
Combining work for the magistracy
with work for the Brigade and still
building in his faithful heart
the shining city on the hill.
But then that city was burned black
and the O'Callaghan was on the run.
Aeneas too escaped Troy's sack,
leaving all he'd ever known.
That same Aeneas founded Rome,
was father of the Roman race.
From the fall of his beloved Troy
arose Rome's mighty city-state.
Thus O'Callaghan, our third Lord Mayor,
was sent abroad by tragic fate
and called to carry as his cross
the building of the 'shining state'.
On his young back no earthly burden
but an order from his chieftain;
he was to raise the Dáil Loan for the means

to set the New Republic free.
See now those men of epic cast
with shields of bronze and helms and grieves;
Hector, Achilles, Horatio, Aeneas.
Would they have ever dared to dream such sentiments as these?"

"This contest of ours is not, on our side,
a rivalry of vengeance but one
of endurance. It is not they
who can inflict the most, but they
who can suffer the most, will conquer".
The canvas of this, our epic, was
a Rising and its executions,
a conscription crisis, a massive war,
a heady decade of disruption,
a German plot and an election
won entirely by Sinn Féin,
a Republic bravely announced.
And then a running fight between
the ill-matched forces of hunted Gaels
and war-embittered foreign troops;
Why, all this compares in tragic scale
to any epic you may choose!
Cork city may not have the sweep
of the topless towers of Ilium.
But let us not doubt, when the poet weeps
and sings of Troy or Rome and all her glut
of human misery and grief,
with all her prisoners and slaves,
conquest, plunder, cruelty –
he's been seduced by epic scale!
Martial courage must be apprised
but so too must be the cause; There's none
fought for by Caesar, by Achilles,
to match the cause of Irish freedom".

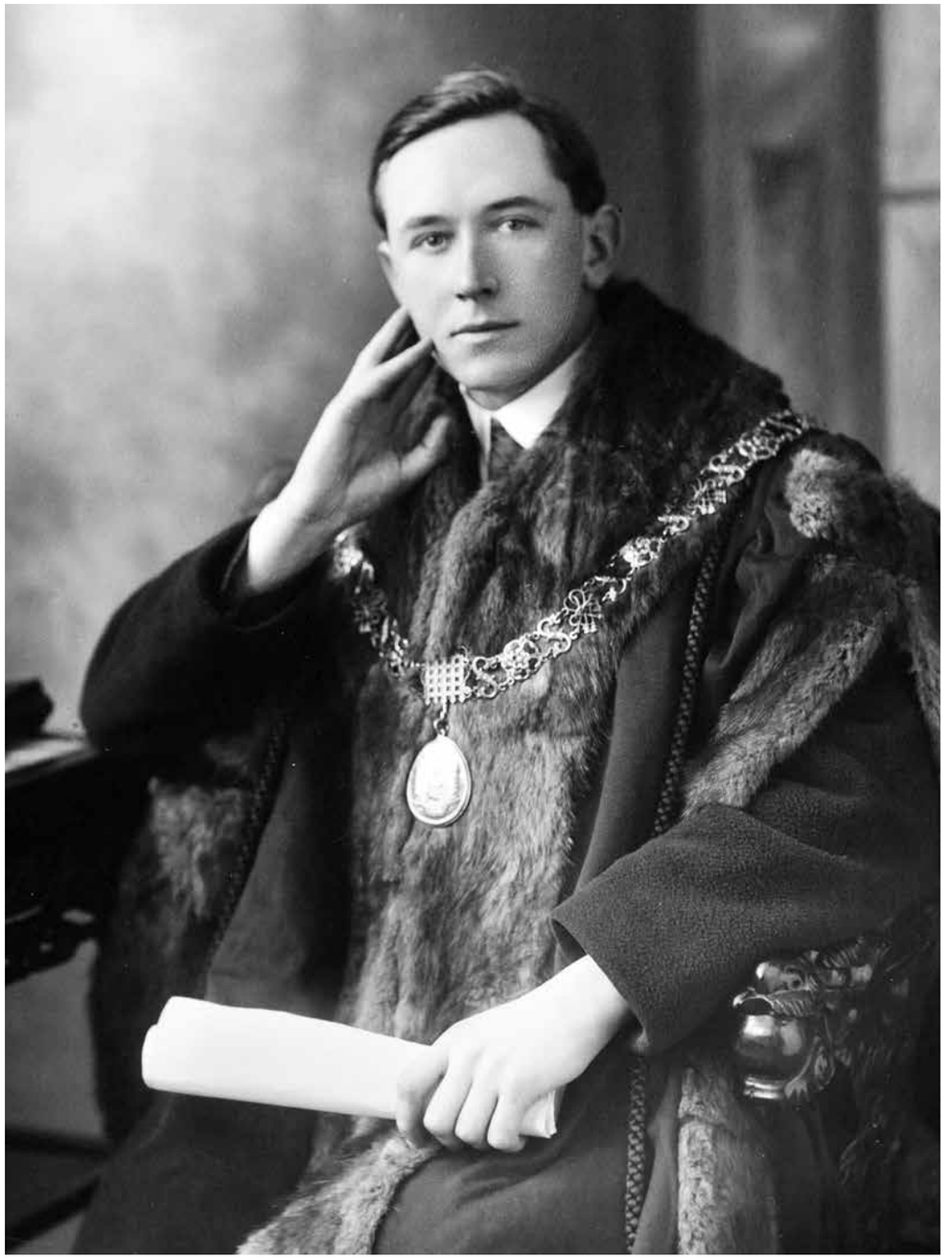
"Now, please!" said I, "It is too local.
Too homely are the names you share.
O'Callaghan, MacSwiney and MacCurtain.
They could be today our neighbours, friends.
I will allow they did some things
but they're no heroes of an ancient state!
Those humble names don't fit your epic".

His quick reply; "It is but deeds that I relate.
Yet if I grant your point to modern ears,
hear those names in their native splendour,
cast your mind back these last hundred years
and hear them as they rang out in the Mon.
Traolach Mac Suibhne. Tomás MacCurtáin. Domhnall Ó Ceallacháin"

The Bráthar lowered his hand, raised his eyes,
bade farewell and strode away.
The crowd flowed as the Lee around me.
I sat quietly on the Quay,
contemplating what he'd said;
cause, courage, Rome, Cork, Troy and all,
then, for all the Mon Boys long since dead,
I rose and walked to the City Hall
and sang, louder as my passion grew,
(though my singing doubtful glances drew),
"*Ar aghaidh, ar aghaidh, an Mhainistir Thuaidh abú*
Ar aghaidh, ar aghaidh, is troidigí go luth.
Gan staonadh ins an gcomhrac
Le neart's brí nár lámh
Ar aghaidh, ar aghaidh, an Mhainistir Thuaidh go brách".

List of Abbreviations

IRB	Irish Republican Brotherhood
AOH	Ancient Order of Hibernians
INAA	Irish National Aid Association
IPP	Irish Parliamentary Party
IRA	Irish Republican Army
TD	Teachta Dála [Deputy of Dáil Éireann]
LGB	Local Government Board
PR-STV	Proportional Representation [by the] Single Transferable Vote
FOIF	Friends of Irish Freedom
AARIR	American Association of the Recognition of the Irish Republic
ITGWU	Irish Transport and General Workers Union
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
ACCI	American Commission on Conditions in Ireland
ISDL	Irish Self-Determination League [of Great Britain]
ESB	Electricity Supply Board
CIDA	Cork Industrial Development Association
MP	Member of Parliament [House of Commons]
RIC	Royal Irish Constabulary



Chapter 1
Thursday 4 November 1920

Council Chamber, Cork City Hall

Donal O'Callaghan stood and watched as a large crowd of people made their way into the Council Chamber of Cork City Hall to take their seats in the public gallery. There was an air of excitement in City Hall, even though the occasion was a solemn one. A special meeting of Cork Corporation had been called to elect a Lord Mayor, for the third time that year. The previous Sunday, 31 October, Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney had been laid to rest in St. Finbarr's Cemetery, close to his friend and colleague, Tomás MacCurtain, who had served as Cork's first Lord Mayor of 1920. Since Terence MacSwiney was arrested on the fateful evening of 12 August, Donal O'Callaghan had been deputising as Lord Mayor of his beloved city. Now, the time had come for him to be formally elected as Cork's first citizen. It should have been a crowning moment in his political career, but the occasion was a sad one and O'Callaghan's heart was heavy. The highly respected Alderman, Professor William Stockley, called the meeting to order and asked for silence in the public gallery. Dublin-born Stockley was the Professor of English at University College Cork and he had been elected to the Corporation in the local elections of January 1920, after topping the poll in the city's North-East ward. Stockley was a member of Sinn Féin, the dominant force in City Hall, and he had survived an assassination attempt earlier in the year.[1]

Occupying the seat on one side of Professor Stockley was Fr. Dominic O'Connor, a fervent Nationalist, who had been Terence MacSwiney's chaplain

during his hunger strike and final days. Town Clerk, Florence W. McCarthy, sat on the other side of Professor Stockley and, having taken a roll call, he announced that the sole purpose of the meeting was to elect the Lord Mayor of Cork, in succession to the late Councillor Terence MacSwiney. The newly elected Lord Mayor would hold office until 23 January 1921.

When the Town Clerk called for nominations, Sinn Féin's Councillor Michael O'Cuill stood up to address the meeting. Speaking in Irish, he proposed Councillor Donal O'Callaghan for the position of Lord Mayor. Councillor O'Cuill's proposal was seconded by his party colleague, Alderman Edward Coughlan, who also spoke in Irish. With no other nominations and with no dissenting voices, Councillor Donal O'Callaghan was accordingly unanimously elected as Lord Mayor of Cork. Amidst sustained applause from the councillors and those in the public gallery, O'Callaghan signed the declaration of office and was invested with the historic Mayoral chain. Cork's new Lord Mayor then rose to speak, initially in Irish and then in English. In a short but passionate address, he referred to his two Republican predecessors who were 'murdered by the British Government', which he characterised as a 'murder gang'. He added:

> My position, which I am setting forth as clearly and distinctly and glaringly as it can possibly be set forth, is that we absolutely refuse to be tyrannised. Our demand in this country has been made and we are not going to flinch no matter what the result or cost might be. If that gang [British Government] continues its campaign of organised murder, we will only release the grip of Republicanism on the chair I occupy when they have closed the grave over the last Republican in Cork (*Cork Examiner*, 5 November 1920).

As those assembled in the Council Chamber rose to applaud, Lord Mayor Donal O'Callaghan sat in his chair. What would the immediate future hold for him, taking over as Lord Mayor of Cork following the deaths of MacCurtain and MacSwiney? Like his two martyred predecessors, O'Callaghan's political beliefs were well known to all and, as such, he was a threat to the British Government. In his roles as Deputy Lord Mayor and Chairman of Cork County Council, he had received multiple death threats and he had been forced into hiding, rarely spending a night at home in his own bed.

As proud as he was on 4 November 1920 to succeed MacSwiney as Lord Mayor of Cork, O'Callaghan was also afraid. These were uncertain times and he was a wanted man. In becoming Lord Mayor, would he too be called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice for the Irish Republic?

NOTE

1 The title 'Alderman' was conferred on the initial candidate or candidates elected in different local electoral areas within urban authorities. It ceased to be used after the 2004 local elections (Callanan, 2018). In the case of Cork Corporation in 1920, the top two candidates elected in each area received the title.



A formal portrait of Donal Óg O'Callaghan, aged two, with his parents, William and Kate. [Courtesy of Monica Andrews, grand-daughter of Donal's brother, Jeremiah]

Chapter 2
Donal Óg

Daniel John (or Donal as he would be called) O'Callaghan was born on 23 June 1891 in Peacock Lane (now called Gerald Griffin Avenue), beneath the shadow of the North Cathedral and within hearing distance of the Bells of Shandon. His parents, William O'Callaghan and Catherine (Kate) Donovan, had married the previous year on 20 July. On his wedding papers and on the register of births for June 1891, William is listed as a 'labourer' and he worked for the nuns in the North Presentation Convent. Donal was baptised in the North Cathedral on Thursday 25 June 1891. By the time his birth was registered four days later (29 June), the O'Callaghan family had moved house and 1 Factory Lane was the address on the official registration form.[1]

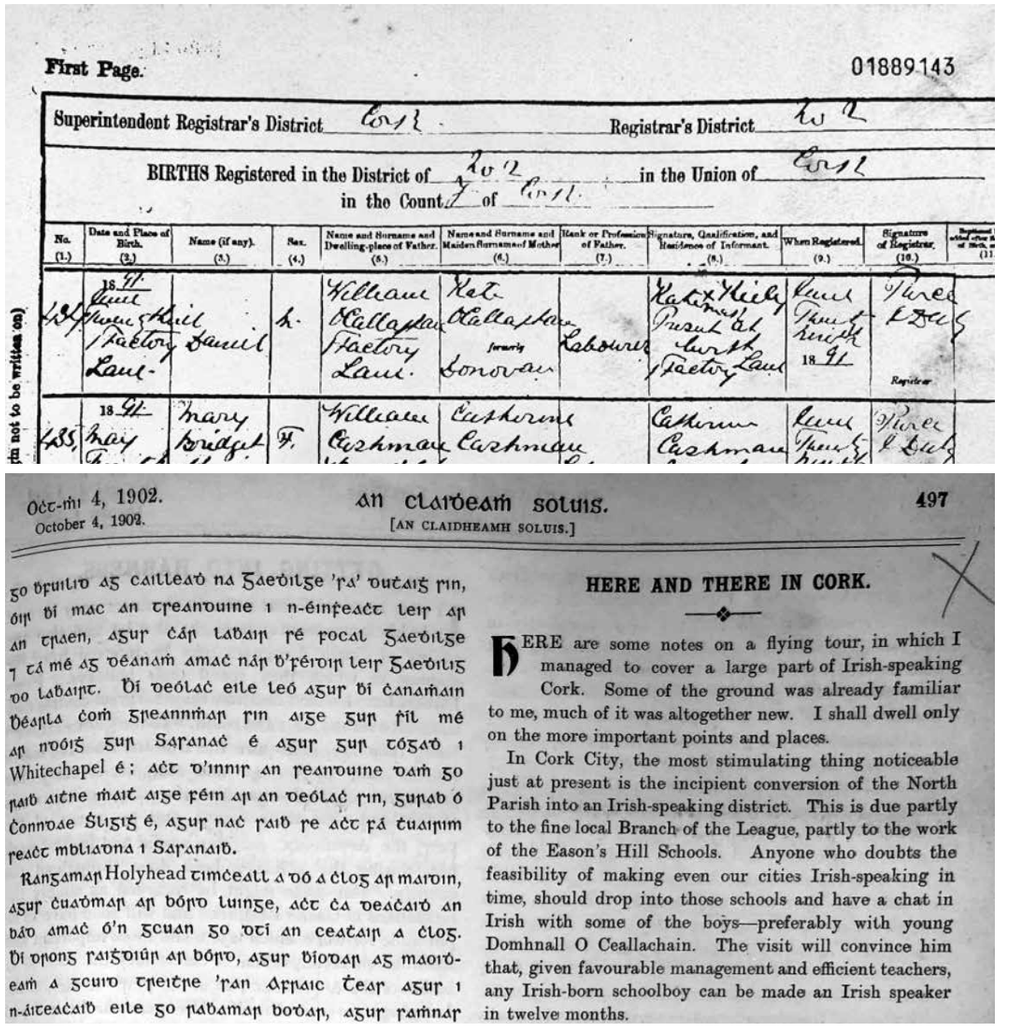
When the 1901 census, taken on the night of 31 March, William (aged thirty-four) is described as an insurance agent and his wife, Kate (aged thirty-four), as a housekeeper. The couple now resided in 11 Cathedral Place with their four children – Donal (aged nine), Mary (aged five), William (aged two) and Jeremiah (aged eight months). Their second-born son, also called Jeremiah, had died at the age of seventeen months from scarlet fever, in October 1894.[2] Kate's twenty-three-year-old brother, Jeremiah Donovan, listed as a labourer, also lived with the family at this time. In a column on the census form, William and Donal were noted as having very good levels of Irish. According to O'Callaghan (2000), Donal 'was reared in the same tradition that men such as Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney were reared in – a love of Ireland'. Young Donal went to school at Eason's Hill,

where he was taught by the renowned Eamonn O'Donnchadha. To assist with his teaching, O'Donnchadha wrote books such as *Mionchainnt Scoile* and *Ceachta Mioneolais*, both in 1906. Later, O'Donnchadha wrote *Slán le Corcaigh* and *Drúcht Geal Ceoidh* and he became a Professor of Irish in University College Cork.

The noted Irish speaker, Pádraig Sweeney, wrote an article for *An Claidheamh Soluis* (The Sword of Light) on 20 September 1902, in which he referred to Donal O'Callaghan. *An Claidheamh Soluis* was the weekly newspaper of Conradh na Gaeilge and Sweeney wrote: 'At Feis na Mumhan we had evidence of genuine teaching in one school at least – the Eason's Hill School in the North Parish'. Donal O'Callaghan won the first prize in recitation, with Sweeney noting: 'Other competitors from the same school came, showing good teaching, but Domhnall Ó Ceallacháin overshadowed them'.

The following month, the Republican political activist Pádraig Pearse – who subsequently was one of the leaders of the Easter Rising in 1916 – wrote an article in *An Claidheamh Soluis* (4 October) under the title 'Here and There in Cork'. In the article, Pearse discussed the viability of making the cities Irish-speaking. He wrote: 'In Cork city, the most stimulating thing noticeable just at present is the incipient conversion of the North Parish into an Irish-speaking district. This is due partly to the fine local branch of the [Gaelic] League, partly to the work of the Eason's Hill Schools. Anyone who doubts the feasibility of making even our cities Irish-speaking in time should drop into those schools and have a chat in Irish with some of the boys – preferably with young Domhnall Ó Ceallacháin'.

O'Callaghan was earning a reputation as an eloquent speaker of the Irish language and, due to his proficiency from an early age, he was frequently referred to as 'Donal Óg', which stuck with him through the remainder of his life. In January 1903, *An Claidheamh Soluis* reported that he spoke at a Gaelic League event establishing a branch in Burnfort, Mourneabbey. He had a letter and a picture published in the magazine *Irisleabhar na Gaeilge* in March 1903, for a competition where children had to describe how they spent the previous Christmas holidays. Donal had passed the holidays visiting family in county Cork, during which time he collected stories and songs from old Irish speakers. This formed the basis for his entry to the magazine and he was awarded joint first place with Pádraig Ághas. In May of the same year, he represented Cork's North Parish in the Oireachtas na Gaeilge festival which took place in Dublin.



First Page. 01889143

Superintendent Registrar's District Cork Registrar's District Cork

BIRTHS Registered in the District of Cork in the Union of Cork
in the County of Cork

No. (1.)	Date and Place of Birth. (2.)	Name (if any). (3.)	Sex. (4.)	Name and Surname and Dwelling-place of Father. (5.)	Name and Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother (6.)	Rank or Profession of Father. (7.)	Signature, Qualification, and Residence of Informant. (8.)	When Registered. (9.)	Signature of Registrar. (10.)
435	18 91 June Factory Lane	Daniel	M.	William O'Callaghan Factory Lane	Kate O'Callaghan formerly Donovan	Labourer	Kate O'Keeffe Present at Factory Lane	18 91	Registrar
435	18 91 May	Mary Bridget	F.	William Cashman	Catherine Cashman		Catherine Cashman		

(Do not to be written on)

Oct-mi 4, 1902. October 4, 1902. AN CLAIDEAM SOLUIS. [AN CLAIDHEAMH SOLUIS.] 497

go bruilio as caitleab na Gaedilge 'ra' dtaig rin, oir bi mac an treanduine i n-einfeacht leis an traen, agus cair labair re focal Gaedilge 7 ta me ag deanamh amach nar b'feidir leis Gaedilis do labairt. Bi deolac eile leo agus bi canamain deasla com gleannmar rin aige gur fil me an nodig gur Saranac é agus gur togad i Whitechapel é; act d'innir an treanduine dam go raib aithe maith aige fein ar an deolac rin, gurab é Connrac Sligig é, agus nac raib re act ra cuairim reacht mbliadna i Saranaib.

Rangamar Holyhead timceall a dó a clog ar maidin, agus cuadmar ar bord luinge, act ca deacair an bád amach ó'n gcuan go dti an ceatair a clog. Bi drong raigdiuil ar bord, agus biodar ag maideam a gcuid treicthe 'ran Arrais Tear agus i n-aiteacaib eile go rabamar bodar, agus ramnar

HERE AND THERE IN CORK.

HERE are some notes on a flying tour, in which I managed to cover a large part of Irish-speaking Cork. Some of the ground was already familiar to me, much of it was altogether new. I shall dwell only on the more important points and places.

In Cork City, the most stimulating thing noticeable just at present is the incipient conversion of the North Parish into an Irish-speaking district. This is due partly to the fine local Branch of the League, partly to the work of the Eason's Hill Schools. Anyone who doubts the feasibility of making even our cities Irish-speaking in time, should drop into those schools and have a chat in Irish with some of the boys—preferably with young Domhnall O Ceallachain. The visit will convince him that, given favourable management and efficient teachers, any Irish-born schoolboy can be made an Irish speaker in twelve months.

From top: Register of births for June 1891 with Daniel (Donal) O'Callaghan address listed as Factory Lane. [Courtesy of Fiona Forde]

An Claidheamh Soluis, Conradh na Gaeilge's weekly newspaper, was published between 1899 and 1932. Amongst its editors were Pádraig Pearse and Eoin Mac Neill. The paper changed regularly and was published also under other titles - Fáinne an Lae and Misneach. On 4 October 1902, Pádraig Pearse wrote an article titled 'Here and There in Cork', in which he urged people to visit Cork's North Parish and talk to children who were fluent in Irish, such as Donal O'Callaghan.

Dr. Douglas Hyde, President of the Gaelic League, presided over the event. Nineteen years later – when he was Lord Mayor, Chairman of Cork County Council and a member of Dáil Éireann – O'Callaghan was part of a delegation with Douglas Hyde which attended the Irish Race Convention in Paris. Subsequently, Hyde became the first President of Ireland in June 1938.

Like Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney, Donal O'Callaghan went to secondary school in the fabled North Monastery and his love affair with the Irish language continued. Upon leaving school, Donal began working with his father as an insurance agent (as per the census of 1911) before starting a career as a teacher. By the time of the 1911 census, Kate had given birth to three more children – John (aged eight), Tadhg (aged five) and Cáit (aged three).

The eldest of the seven surviving O'Callaghan children, Donal increasingly focused on Republicanism and he associated with the likes of Tomás MacCurtain, Terence MacSwiney, Liam de Róiste and Michael O'Cuill. From the age of eighteen in 1910, Donal was immersed in every Republican organisation and association in Cork city. For example, when Diarmuid Lynch of Tracton (who would be a major figure in the 1916 Easter Rising) was transferred to the Cork city Circle of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) around 1910, he noted: 'The Cork Circle was in its infancy with a small membership which included Seán O'Hegarty, Thomas Barry, Tomás MacCurtain, Seán Murphy, Domhnall Óg O'Callaghan, Diarmuid Fawsitt, Bob Langford, Tadhg Barry, Tommy O'Riordan, Tommy O'Mahony, Seán O'Sullivan and Billy O'Shea' (Lynch, 1947). The IRB was a secret oath-bound fraternal organisation dedicated to the establishment of an independent democratic Republic in Ireland (McGee, 2005). The IRB used interesting terminology with a 'Circle' regarded as equivalent to a regiment; the Circle was led by a 'Centre' who could be considered as a colonel.

In this period, young Donal O'Callaghan was also heavily involved in the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) American Alliance and in Fianna Éireann. Both organisations used rooms in An Dún on Queen Street to hold meetings and conduct their business. The whole building was rented by the Gaelic League but was sub-let to various political and cultural groups. Borgonovo (2013) notes: 'Much of the city's revolutionary era leadership can be traced to the Gaelic League including Liam de Róiste, Tomás MacCurtain, Mary MacSwiney, Terence MacSwiney, Donal Óg O'Callaghan, Tadhg Barry, Seán O'Hegarty, Margaret O'Leary and Diarmuid Fawsitt'. The Dramatic Society had a room in An Dún and its members included Daniel Corkery and Terence MacSwiney. Bob Langford (1947) describes the AOH as 'a Cork organisation which was active in anti-British activities before the Volunteer movement started'. In 1911, the AOH was involved in a protest against the visit of King Edward to Ireland. Langford notes that amongst its more prominent members were Tomás MacCurtain, Michael O'Cuill and Donal O'Callaghan. The AOH was responsible for all anti-British and anti-recruiting activity and it was closely aligned with the local IRB Circle, under the control of Seán O'Hegarty who was the 'Centre'.

Another fascinating organisation was Fianna Éireann (or the Irish National Boy Scouts), established in Cork in 1910 by Republicans who were involved in the local O'Growney Branch of the Gaelic League (see Harrington, 2016). In truth, it was the same group of young men connected to the Gaelic League, the IRB, and the AOH and they were centred around An Dún. The original Fianna Éireann was founded by Countess Constance Markievicz and Bulmer Hobson at a public meeting in Dublin in August 1909. It was established 'as a Nationalist antidote to the growing popularity in Ireland of British uniformed youth groups, such as the Boys' Brigade and Sir Robert Baden-Powell's Boy Scout movement' (Hay, 2017). While the Fianna was a national organisation open to Irish boys, in truth its members tended to be products of working and middle class families with Irish Nationalist tendencies (Hay, 2017). Over time, it became more militant when a Fianna Circle was created in the IRB.

On Leeside, familiar names appeared in the membership of the Fianna, such as Seán O'Hegarty, Michael O'Cuill and Tomás MacCurtain, who was elected treasurer at the first meeting. The Fianna was engaged in carrying out an active anti-recruiting campaign aimed at the British Army. Seán Healy and Liam O'Callaghan (1947) recall: 'Tomás MacCurtain used to get us to go round to shops asking for specific articles of Irish manufacture which we knew were available but not stocked, in order to create a demand for them'. The Fianna focused on providing training to its members in areas such as map reading, knots, Morse code, first aid, tent pitching and scouting. Healy and O'Callaghan (1947) note: 'Irish and History classes were held in An Dún. Donal Óg O'Callaghan, Michael O'Cuill and Bob Langford conducted the Irish classes, Seán O'Hegarty the History class. Discipline was strict. There was an order that members of the Fianna would not appear on the streets in uniform in company with girls'.

Fianna Éireann became a prominent organisation in Cork. In September 1912, its members provided a guard of honour for Gaelic scholars, Kuno Meyer and Canon Peadar Ó Laoghaire, who were conferred with the Freedom of Cork in City Hall (see Quinlivan, 2013). At the following year's annual public procession in Wilton, it provided a guard of honour for the blessed sacraments. These events helped to raise the profile of the organisation and the Fianna held public wreath-laying ceremonies at Fenian graves in St. Finbarr's Cemetery, at Aghabullogue and elsewhere. Cleverly, the Fianna also tried to take ownership of the annual commemoration for the Manchester Martyrs (their laying of wreaths at Fenian graves was linked to this). The Manchester Martyrs were William Allen, Michael Larkin and Michael O'Brien, all born in Ireland but living in Manchester and active Fenians. After a highly dubious trial in 1867, they were executed for their part in a successful ambush to free two Fenian leaders from a prison van in which a policeman was killed. Their deaths made them martyrs but the courage and eloquence of their speeches from the dock after being condemned to death established them as heroes (Doyle, 2014; see also O'Neill, 2012).

The formation of the military organisation, the Irish Volunteers (Óglaigh na hÉireann), at the end of 1913 did not threaten Fianna Éireann. Both organisations shared members and they worked well together over a number of years. A large public meeting in Dublin on 25 November 1913 had seen the establishment of the Volunteers in the capital and a similar meeting was held in Cork's City Hall on 14 December. The meeting was chaotic due to chronic overcrowding, partly owing to the fact that the AOH had duplicated invitation cards which had already been issued by the organisers of the meeting. This was a high-profile event, chaired by J. J. Walsh (President of the Cork County Gaelic Athletic Association Board), with esteemed speakers including Sir Roger Casement, Eoin MacNeill and Liam de Róiste. Twenty-one-year-old Donal O'Callaghan was an interested spectator. MacNeill's speech can best be described as 'contrary' and elements of what he said irked the crowd. In lavishing praise on the Ulster Volunteers, MacNeill appeared to call on the crowd to give three cheers for Sir Edward Carson, the Irish Unionist Alliance MP for Trinity College Dublin and leader of the Ulster Unionist Council in Belfast. This drew an angry response from the crowd, with the *Cork Examiner* (15 December 1913) reporting: 'Professor MacNeill smiled at the indignation of the audience'. John Horgan claimed that they should be cheering for John Redmond instead of Edward Carson. With the crowd getting more and more animated and with MacNeill incensing people by remaining at the podium, a scuffle broke out and the meeting ended in disarray. It was subsequently reported that J. J. Walsh attended at the South Infirmary Hospital for a scalp injury sustained at the meeting. MacNeill wrote to the *Cork Examiner* (15 December) to explain what had happened.

> To the editor of the 'Examiner'
>
> Sir,
>
> It is my duty to explain the interruption at the Volunteer meeting tonight. A number of the audience understood me to ask for cheers for Sir Edward Carson. This would amount to an endorsement of Sir Edward Carson's present policy, which was far from my mind, and to which they no less than the majority of the audience were, no doubt, resolutely opposed. Such a request, coming from a principal speaker and in hostility to the feeling of the audience, would throw any public meeting into disorder. Any other explanation of the interruption would plainly be untrue.
>
> EOIN MacNEILL

Despite a less than auspicious start, the Cork Brigade of the Irish Volunteers was formed. Bob Langford (1947) recollects: 'At first the strength was small, but after a while it worked up to about 400 men in the city. Four companies were formed – A, B, C and D. A and B were in the south of the city and C and D in the north. This four-company formation was not changed at any time up to Easter 1916'. Significantly, Donal O'Callaghan was elected as the Second Lieutenant in Company B and he threw himself enthusiastically into the work of the Volunteers. Unsurprisingly, Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney were also heavily involved.

A split in September 1914 saw the Irish Volunteers establish its headquarters in a big store in Fisher Street while the Irish National Volunteers based themselves in the Corn Market. O'Callaghan remained with the original Irish Volunteers and, by the end of 1914, they transferred their headquarters from Fisher Street

to a four-storied building in Sheare's Street. A room was allocated to each company of the battalion and the ground floor was given to Fianna Éireann. At the side of the building, a large shed was converted into a miniature rifle range. The efficient running of the range was the responsibility of quartermaster Sean Jennings, an uncle of Donal O'Callaghan. In September 1914, the Volunteers in Cork set out to disrupt a meeting in City Hall organised by Cork's two members of the House of Commons, William O'Brien and Tim Healy, to encourage recruitment to the British Army for the Great War. Jerry Fawsitt and other members of the Volunteers had prepared a pamphlet derisively entitled 'All for England League' which argued against offering the Volunteers for service in the British army (White and O'Shea, 2001). Bob Langford, Michael O'Cuill and Donal O'Callaghan tried to distribute the pamphlet during the meeting, but they were met with an antagonistic reaction and were evicted from City Hall. According to Langford (1947): 'We got a hostile reception and it [their efforts to distribute the pamphlets] had no effect. The O'Brienites were as pro-English and as pro-war as the Redmondites'.

O'Callaghan continued to work tirelessly on behalf of the Volunteers during 1915. He was particularly keen to develop the organisation in the towns and villages of Cork county. To this end, he was instrumental in the setting-up of district units of the Volunteers. William Desmond (1947) recounts that when Terence MacSwiney came to Newcestown to start the Volunteers there, he was accompanied by Donal O'Callaghan. Desmond describes O'Callaghan as an 'inspiration' because he cycled the twenty-three miles from Cork to Newcestown and back every Sunday to take charge of parades. He always wore a uniform on these occasions. O'Callaghan could also regularly be found at the Dooniskey Company (which became the Kilmurry Company) of the Irish Volunteers. Matthew Murphy (1947), a member of the Dooniskey/Kilmurry Company recollects: 'Parades were held one night a week and every Sunday. Tomás MacCurtain, Terence MacSwiney and Donal Óg O'Callaghan used to come out drilling us, and Pat Higgins, who was in charge of despatches, came also sometimes. We got copies of the *Irish Volunteers* every week'.

Throughout 1915, the Irish Volunteers became more and more prominent with a series of massive parades, including on St. Patrick's Day. An especially impressive show of strength was demonstrated in Glasnevin Cemetery in Dublin on 1 August when an estimated ten thousand Volunteers gathered for the funeral of the county Cork-born Fenian Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa. Fionnuala MacCurtain (2006), grand-daughter of Tomás MacCurtain, writes: 'The display by Tomás and his brigade at the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa on 1 August 1915 was impressive. Never before had so many Volunteers walked in uniform and stood in silence to show respect. Glasnevin Cemetery was over-run with Volunteers'. The Cork contingent was very large at the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa and likely included Donal O'Callaghan as the Second Lieutenant in Cork city's Company B. Pádraig Pearse, in the full uniform of the Volunteers, took the opportunity to deliver a strong and chilling oration at the graveside of O'Donovan Rossa: 'The defenders of this realm have worked well in secret and in the open. They think they have pacified Ireland; they think they have foreseen everything; but the fools, the fools, the fools – they have left us our Fenian dead; and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland un-free shall never be at peace'. Three months earlier, Pearse, Joseph Plunkett and Éamonn Ceannt had established a draft plan for a rebellion at a secret meeting of the IRB military council (see White, 2017).

As the Volunteers gained in strength and visibility, their leading members were targeted by the British authorities. J. J. Walsh, Chairman of the Cork Volunteers, was banished to England and prevented from returning to Cork under the Defence of the Realm Act. This legislation was passed in the House of Commons in 1914 without debate and it allowed the British Government to imprison without trial any person who was deemed to be acting in a non-patriotic way. The Vice-Chairman of the Cork Volunteers, Diarmuid Fawsitt, also faced jail or exile and chose to leave for America.

Undeterred, the Cork Brigade of the Irish Volunteers showed its strength at the annual demonstration for the Manchester Martyrs on Sunday 28 November 1915. Over 1,200 Volunteers from eighteen districts took part in the procession. The attendance was testament to the hard work of Donal O'Callaghan in helping to establish district units in Cork county. Led by a number of bands, the procession made its way along the quays and down St. Patrick's Street. As the marchers approached the national monument, the bands played the 'Dead March'. White and O'Shea (2001) note: 'The Manchester Martyr demonstration proved that the Cork Brigade of the Irish Volunteers, poorly armed though they were, were now a force to be reckoned with … MacCurtain and MacSwiney, assisted by the membership of the Executive Committee and Military Council, had built a brigade that encompassed most of the county and now had forty-six active companies in training'.



Officers of the Irish Volunteers at the Manchester Martyrs demonstration on 28 November 1915. Back: Dick Murphy, Seán Nolan, Daithí Cotter, Seán Scanlan, Fred Murray. Centre: Tom O'Sullivan and Diarmuid O'Shea (with rifles), Tom Barry, Pat Corkery, Donal Barrett, Donal Óg O'Callaghan, Tadhg Barry, Diarmuid Lynch, Con Twomey (with rifle). Front: Seán Murphy, Tomás MacCurtain, Seán MacDermott, Herbert Moore Pim, Seán O'Sullivan, Seán Ó Murthile.
[Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]

The Irish Volunteers were in a position of strength in late 1915 and continuously demonstrated this through parades, training drills and the establishment of new district units. Behind the scenes however, Seán MacDermott and other senior colleagues in the IRB were planning to escalate their activities through an armed rebellion against the crown in Easter 1916.

In many ways, the Rising of 1916 was poorly conceived, chaotic, and shambolically organised. This was certainly the case in Cork where different units of the Irish Volunteers rendezvoused in Macroom. Borgonovo (2013) claims that over one thousand Cork Volunteers were armed with two hundred mainly obsolete rifles, along with assorted pistols, shotguns, homemade bombs, and pikes. As the Volunteers departed Macroom, a message came through from Eoin MacNeill in Dublin cancelling their actions. They disembarked the train in Crookstown and walked back in the driving rain to Macroom, where they

were dismissed by Tomás MacCurtain. Confusion was a theme of the build-up to the rebellion. Patrick Harris (1947), a member of Donal O'Callaghan's Company B of the Irish Volunteers, offers a fascinating insight: 'We got orders for Easter Sunday 1916 from Seán O'Sullivan during the week before it. We were to mobilise for a two-day exercise, bring all arms, ammunition and equipment, and two days' rations. We had no definite information as to what was intended, but there was a general feeling that it was something serious. Rumours were plentiful, and when officers advised everyone to go to confession – and when we saw the preparations being made in assembling ammunition and so on – it was clear to everybody that it was going to be more than an ordinary exercise'.

At this point, Donal O'Callaghan was living with Michael O'Cuill and other Volunteers in Douglas Street. The property was owned by O'Callaghan's godmother, Mrs. Phillips, and it was a safe house where Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney could regularly be found. Early on the morning of Easter Sunday, O'Callaghan left Douglas Street and gathered his B Company in the Sheare's Street headquarters of the Volunteers. There were approximately fifty men in his group and each was given a scapular and a holy medal. Oxo cubes and first aid outfits were also distributed. Harris (1947) recalls: 'It was evident that there was going to be a fight, but we did not know where we were going or what plans had been made … Everyone in B Company was armed with a rifle. Every man had at least fifty rounds. Some had revolvers as well – I know Donal Óg (O'Callaghan) had one'.

The Volunteers marched to Capwell Station and got a train as far as Crookstown where they disembarked and marched in the pouring rain to Béal na Bláth to meet up with Pat Higgins and a contingent from Ballinhassig. From there they made their way to Macroom, via Kilmurry, where they met up with other units. It was only when they reached Macroom that they received the cancellation order and were instructed to return home. On Easter Monday, many of the Cork Volunteers gathered again in Sheare's Street. Con Collins (1947), a member of D Company, remembers: 'On Easter Monday we were ordered to stand to at home. I went to the hall some time during the day and there was considerable confusion … The message from Dublin had come: "We start here at noon today" … There was considerable discussion which went on until late Monday night. Donal Óg O'Callaghan appeared to be heading the group who wanted to take action'. Ultimately, to O'Callaghan's disappointment, no action was taken and the Cork Volunteers did not participate in the Rising. Michael O'Cuill (1947) recounts: 'I was staying at Phillips in Douglas Street. Donal Óg was staying there also. On Easter Monday Donal Óg went to the hall. I was going there later when I met him in Mary Street. He had the news that the Rising had started in Dublin. We went back to Douglas Street, filled bandoliers and got ready for a call. None came that night. I went to work on Tuesday, as did most of the Volunteers. On Tuesday or Wednesday, I met Tomás MacCurtain. He was very disappointed and seemed to blame the Dublin men. They did not seem to have acted in accordance with the arrangement made with Cork as he understood it'.

In the aftermath of the Rising, eleven of the Volunteers in Cork were arrested and brought to Cork Jail, including Donal O'Callaghan. The other ten were Con Collins, Tomás MacCurtain, Seán Nolan, Fred Murray, Chris O'Gorman, Cornelius Murphy, Seán MacCurtain, James Murphy, Patrick Tracey and Daithí Cotter. Terence MacSwiney was not amongst those arrested at that time. The group remained in jail for a very short period and were released following the intervention of the Auxiliary Bishop of Cork, Daniel Cohalan.

From the perspective of the Irish Volunteers in Cork, the Rising of Easter 1916 was a failure. The plan had been to seal off all roads to Kerry so that guns could be landed safely from the German ship, the *Aud*. This did not happen and Tomás MacCurtain received countermanding orders from Eoin MacNeill calling off the manoeuvres. Donal O'Callaghan was left disappointed by his failure to partake in the Rising. This was a sentiment shared by Terence MacSwiney. More than four years later, during his hunger strike, MacSwiney wrote to Cathal Brugha: 'If I die, the fruit will exceed the cost a thousand fold. The thought of it makes me happy. I thank God for it. Ah, Cathal, the pain of Easter week is properly dead at last' (Billings, 2016).

Notes

1 Information supplied by Brain Gould, who possesses Donal O'Callaghan's Baptismal Certificate.

2 Information supplied by Fiona Forde from civil records.

Chapter 3
Rise of Sinn Féin

In terms of changing public opinion it was not so much the Easter Rising itself but the arrests and executions after the rebellion which were important. The executions in Kilmainham caused revulsion across the world; in Ireland, there was an ever-increasing resentment towards the British authorities. One month after the rebellion, Liam de Róiste wrote in his diary: 'This much we can judge: never again can we get back to the conditions that existed before the storm burst; its effects will remain, either in the shaping of facts or the stimulation of inspirations. Ireland cannot be the same'.

Though Terence MacSwiney was not arrested in the immediate aftermath of the Rising, in the following four years he was in and out of a variety of jails and internment camps. Along with Tomás MacCurtain, he spent the second half of 1916 in the Frongoch Internment Camp which became known as the 'University of Revolution' because it housed prisoners who shared doctrines, methods, ideas, hopes and aspirations about a free and independent Ireland. Dwyer (2001) notes: 'Frongoch proved to be a veritable training camp for the Volunteers and they might never have organised themselves so efficiently had the British not made the mistake of interning them together'. Frongoch Internment Camp was opened for Irish prisoners of war on 9 June 1916 and it held approximately 1,850 prisoners. Frongoch, a small Welsh valley between Bala and Blaneau Festinog, was noted for whisky distillation. One of the prisoners interned at the camp, James Malone, wrote a book entitled *B'fhiú an Braon Fola* (which means 'the drop of blood was worth it') in 1958, in which he described the countryside as initially appearing to resemble Connemara. However, he went on to note that there was no place so remote in Connemara. It did not take the men long to organise themselves while in Frongoch. Elections took place and a General Council was formed with the first president being William Ganly, a veteran Nationalist from Skerries in Dublin. Tomás MacCurtain was elected to the executive and was responsible for Irish classes. Terence MacSwiney became a commandant and Richard Mulcahy and Michael Collins were also prominent (Quinlivan, 2006).

With MacCurtain and MacSwiney in Frongoch, Donal O'Callaghan filled the vacuum and assumed a leadership role in Cork. He took over as Chairman of the local branch of Sinn Féin and worked diligently to boost the profile of the party. Sinn Féin had been founded by Arthur Griffith in 1905 but had not made an impact on the Irish political landscape. By 1915, the party was on the rocks and financially insolvent. To all intents and purposes, it was a party without a future. Yet, in a short period of time, it would become dominant and overtake the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP). The Easter Rising of 1916, and the events which followed it, helped to transform the fortunes of the party. With membership on the rise, Donal O'Callaghan travelled around Cork to help set up local Sinn Féin clubs, just as he had done with district units for the Volunteers. O'Callaghan was also to the forefront of the Cork branch of the Irish National Aid Association (INAA), which was established to collect funds in aid of the dependents of the men executed or sent to prison after the Easter Rising. A public meeting to form the INAA Cork branch took place on Thursday 29 June 1916 in City Hall and was chaired by Lord Mayor, Thomas Butterfield. A governing committee was established with the Auxiliary Bishop of Cork, Daniel Cohalan, appointed as President. Donal O'Callaghan was one of three honorary secretaries selected, along with Liam de Róiste and Seán O'Sullivan. At the first meeting of the committee, it was decided that all money collected should be lodged in a bank in the name of the association, before being forwarded to Dublin. A list of all subscriptions received would be published in the local Cork newspapers. Republicans dominated the Cork branch of the INAA, 'through the simple tactic of attending its weekly meetings' (Borgonovo, 2013) and, by the middle of August 1916, £500 had been sent to Dublin, after a variety of fundraising initiatives throughout Cork city and county.

At this stage, Donal O'Callaghan was devoting most of his energies to reviving Sinn Féin. A preliminary meeting in December 1916 had not gone

well, with both de Róiste and O'Callaghan initially refusing to take the chair of the Cork branch. De Róiste (1916) wrote in his diary: 'Thus was Sinn Féin re-established in Cork and I would say it was not too promising a beginning'. However, the fortunes of Cork Sinn Féin soon picked up, with O'Callaghan leading the way in establishing branches in the city and the county. Maurice Brew (1947) recalls that a Sinn Féin club was formed in Donoughmore after a public meeting at Donoughmore Cross at which Liam de Róiste and Donal O'Callaghan spoke passionately.

The same duo played a leading role in the reorganisation of the Irish Volunteers in Cork in October 1917 (see O'Driscoll, 1947) and O'Callaghan was also promoted to Head Centre of the Cork IRB. Four months earlier, in June 1917, British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, announced a general amnesty for the one hundred or so remaining Republican prisoners held in English jails since the Easter Rising. These included senior figures such as Countess Markievicz, Count Plunkett, Eoin MacNeill, Éamon de Valera, Thomas Ashe, and Cathal Brugha. Upon their release and return to Ireland, they were greeted with wild scenes of celebration and euphoria. Eight of the released prisoners were from Cork and they arrived, with much fanfare, into Glanmire Railway Station (now Kent Station) on the night of Saturday 23 June. The eight prisoners were Fergus O'Connor, William Tobin, Diarmuid Lynch, J. J. Walsh, Maurice Brennan, David Kent, Thomas Hunter, and Con O'Donovan. The celebrations to mark the return of the Cork prisoners were orchestrated by Sinn Féin and the Irish Volunteers, with Donal O'Callaghan to the fore.

The *Cork Examiner* (25 June 1917) noted: 'Long before their arrival to the Glanmire Station, premises were taken charge of by Irish Volunteers, and large numbers of people gathered both inside and outside the buildings'. Accompanied by hundreds of supporters, the former prisoners made their way by torchlight procession from the train station, led by various brass bands. When they reached Grand Parade, a series of passionate speeches were delivered. J. J. Walsh thanked the 'legions of Irish Republicans' for their enthusiastic reception, adding: 'I am glad that the true spirit at last has become apparent in Cork. Three years ago I nearly wept over the latent spirit existing in Cork but I always knew that Cork would come right and show its true spirit, as it is doing at the present time' (*Cork Examiner*, 25 June 1917). Con O'Donovan delivered an emotive passionate address, calling for an 'All-Ireland, not a half, or three-quarters Ireland'. Terence MacSwiney also spoke and did so in Irish, which he stated must be the language of the Republic. Reflecting the rising tide for Sinn Féin, he proclaimed: 'What is uppermost in my mind at the moment is how many thousands of members and volunteers we are going to have next week. If there was a miscarriage the last time [the Easter Rising] there will be none next time. When the flag goes up the next time, it must be for good'. After the speeches, the procession continued, with the aim of escorting the party to the Victoria Hotel. The *Cork Examiner* reported: 'While the proceedings in connection with the procession were orderly, there were some untoward incidents subsequently including the smashing of the windows of the Recruiting Office and the breaking of the fire escape at the Courthouse. The escape was used as a means to hoist a Sinn Féin flag over the Courthouse'. The following day, the Cork Executive of Sinn Féin organised another well-attended public meeting at the national monument on Grand Parade, addressed by Liam de Róiste, J. J. Walsh, Diarmuid Lynch, and Donal O'Callaghan in his role as Chairman of the local branch.

Membership of Sinn Féin was rising rapidly and the death of Thomas Ashe in September 1917 contributed to this. Ashe, President of the IRB, had taken part in the Easter Rising. Following arrest and release after a term in prison, he was subsequently re-arrested on a charge of sedition. He went on hunger strike in Mountjoy Prison and died due to forced feeding. Ashe's funeral was a massive affair, used by Michael Collins as a show of strength for the Irish Volunteers and Sinn Féin. The English *Daily Express* newspaper noted that the funeral had made '100,000 Sinn Féiners out of 100,000 constitutional Nationalists'. The *Irish Independent* claimed that the death of Ashe had driven the country to the verge of desperation and it became clear that the tide was turning against the IPP and its leader, John Redmond. Ever the opportunist, Éamon de Valera took full advantage of this rising tide. In October 1917, he was elected as President of Sinn Féin and the party adopted a new constitution. De Valera spoke of gaining international recognition for Ireland as an independent Republic.

On 6 March 1918, the leader of the IPP, John Redmond, died after heart failure. The IPP, the once dominant force in Irish Nationalist politics, was now rudderless and Redmond's death felt like the end of an era with Sinn Féin support on the rise. Lloyd George and the British Government continued to play into de Valera's hands. In response to a major German offensive through

Allied lines, the British war cabinet raised the age limit for compulsory military service in Britain to fifty-one and extended conscription to Ireland. This led to a major backlash in Ireland with protests and a general strike across the country. De Valera stoked the flames and asserted that the passing of the Conscription Act in the House of Commons was a declaration of war on the Irish nation. Ultimately, the British Government backed down on the issue of conscription but Travers (2017) describes the crisis as a landmark one which impacted negatively on Anglo-Irish relations: 'The affair was significant in developing British-Government policy towards Ireland, changing the balance of political power and hastening the advent of guerrilla war'. The balance of political power shift was in favour of Sinn Féin and the Volunteers (both now led by Éamon de Valera) with the IPP – still reeling from the death of John Redmond – suffering.

The misguided Conscription Act was not the only piece of legislation introduced by the British Government in April 1918. An amendment to the Defence of the Realm Act stated that any person acting in a manner deemed prejudicial to public safety or the defence of the realm could be arrested and interned in England. This legislation paved the way for what became known as the 'German Plot' – essentially an implausible retaliatory measure by the British Government due to the fierce opposition to conscription. Acting on highly dubious information, supplied by Sir Edward Carson, arrest orders were made against Sinn Féin leaders on the basis that they were colluding with Germany. Over seventy senior members of the Sinn Féin and Irish Volunteers leadership were arrested including Éamon de Valera, Arthur Griffith, George Noble Plunkett, Constance Markievicz, Maud Gonne McBride, and William T. Cosgrave. Interestingly, Michael Collins evaded capture having received advance warning of the planned arrests. Yeates notes (2011): 'It was ironic that the decision to carry out the arrests led to the most militant and committed separatists taking control of the radical Nationalist movement – most notably [Michael] Collins'.

Sinn Féin was in a very strong position entering into the general election of December 1918, a contest that marked a turning point in Irish history. The party emerged victorious with an impressive seventy-three seats. By any standards, the election was an extraordinary one. It had been on the cards for a while as during the final few months of the Great War, British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, had made it clear that he would call an election shortly after the Armistice. Martin (2009) describes the mood in Cork in the lead-in to the 1918 election: 'The timing of the campaign generated optimism among Republicans, fear in Redmondites, and indecision among Unionists and trade unionists'. This was the first election held in eight years and the passing of the Representation of the People Act, 1918, had extended the franchise to virtually all men over the age of twenty-one and women over thirty who were householders. The Irish electorate rose from seven hundred thousand to almost two million voters.

Even though Sinn Féin was riding the crest of a wave entering the election, the party still faced significant hurdles. Most of its leaders and workers were in jail following the German Plot; much of the country was under martial law, and Republican papers were suppressed and censored. Countering those considerations however, the party was young and populist, in stark contrast to the IPP which was ageing and middle-class and struggling for relevance after the death of John Redmond. If anything, of course, the fact that so many of its candidates were in prison was an advantage for Sinn Féin. This was foreseen by the new leader of the IPP, John Dillon. He addressed the House of Commons in November, just before the parliament was dissolved, and called on the British Government to release the Sinn Féin prisoners. He stated: 'The prisoners were arrested in connection with the alleged German Plot which everybody now looks upon as a pure invention'. Dillon was right to be concerned. Sinn Féin out-organised and out-campaigned his party in 1918. The IPP raised the white flag in many constituencies by not running a candidate against Sinn Féin. More than forty sitting MPs decided not to stand for re-election – they saw the writing on the wall.

Since all three Cork newspapers at the time were decidedly anti-Republican, Cork Sinn Féin produced its own election literature and posters. Donal O'Callaghan was prominent in this work. The printing costs were covered by an election fund of £1,600, raised almost entirely through small donations. The Sinn Féin election manifesto summoned the electorate to the flag of the Irish Republic and promised to boycott the Westminster parliament while establishing its own assembly. The manifesto also vowed that Sinn Féin would use 'any and all means available to render impotent the power of England to hold Ireland in subjection by military force or otherwise'.

In truth, the election was a walk-over for Sinn Féin in Cork county. At the close of nominations on 4 December, there was no opposition to Sinn Féin in

the county's seven constituencies. This meant that the following seven Sinn Féin candidates were automatically elected: -

- Cork East — David Kent
- Cork Mid — Terence MacSwiney
- Cork North — Patrick O'Keeffe
- Cork North East — Thomas Hunter
- Cork South — Michael Collins
- Cork South East — Diarmuid Lynch
- Cork West — Seán Hayes

The Sunday after the closing of nominations, Sinn Féin held a large celebratory rally in Cork city on the Grand Parade. Alfred O'Rahilly, Professor of Mathematical Physics at University College Cork and Sinn Féin councillor on Cork Corporation, presided. Seán Hayes spoke and reminded the crowd that the aim and object of England since 1172 was to crush Ireland. He re-iterated the manifesto promise that the newly elected Sinn Féin members to the House of Commons would not attend the parliament in London – he said to do so would 'be nothing more than a silly farce'. David Kent then addressed the gathering and stated that in the past, Republicans seeking independence for Ireland were called rainbow chasers but, since last Wednesday, they were doing something else than chasing rainbows – they were chasing the humbugs out of county Cork.

In contrast to the county constituencies, there was a contest in the city constituency simply named 'Cork'. The electorate was just over forty-five thousand and there were six candidates for two seats. The two Sinn Féin candidates were J. J. Walsh and Liam de Róiste and they were challenged by two IPP Nationalist candidates, Maurice Talbot Crosbie and Richard O'Sullivan, and by two unionists, Daniel Williams, and Thomas Farrington. Turnout was a healthy sixty-seven per cent which meant that thirty thousand Corkonians went to the polls, despite a flu pandemic. Even though the electorate was forty-five thousand, more than sixty thousand votes were cast. This is due to the strange circumstance where the electoral mechanism was First-Past-the-Post but, because there were two seats up for grabs, voters were entitled to cast two votes of equal value. Accordingly, the top two candidates received a massive 20,801 and 20,506 votes respectively. To no one's surprise, these were the two Sinn Féin candidates, J. J. Walsh and Liam de Róiste.

The two city Sinn Féin candidates had framed the election as a referendum on Irish independence in advance of the Paris Peace Conference. In many ways, the Great War transformed the political scene in Ireland, partly because the policy of Home Rule was abandoned and the eight-year gap between general elections created a vacuum in which there was the Easter Rising, the executions, the Conscription Crisis, and the German Plot. Liam de Róiste admitted as much during the 1918 campaign, writing: 'The war brought about a new situation and Sinn Féin was taking advantage of that new situation'.

In Cork and across the country there were isolated allegations of intimidation by Sinn Féin supporters. There is also evidence of voter fraud, not all of which can be blamed on Sinn Féin. In Cork, the respected solicitor and election agent, Henry Donegan, complained that the voting register was 'hopelessly stuffed with bogus names'. When Liam de Róiste arrived at the polling station to vote, he had many family members with him, including his elderly mother-in-law. She was shocked to discover that she had apparently already voted earlier in the day – someone had impersonated her. Borgonovo's (2013) conclusion is that the voting irregularities were unexceptional by the standards of the time, and cannot be used to explain Sinn Féin's victory margin.

The *Cork Examiner* had predictably taken a stance against Sinn Féin during the campaign but, on the Monday after the votes were cast – but before they were counted – it took a more conciliatory stance: 'Whatever way the general election has gone, the coming months will be fateful ones in the history of Ireland as well as of Great Britain, and Irish men and Irish women who love their country will earnestly hope that out of the fog of uncertainty that now hovers over the land, a new Ireland will emerge, united and progressive, prudent and patriotic. Irish men differ as to the best means of achieving their ends, but they can at any rate be unanimous in desiring their achievement'.

Just after 7.00 p.m. on Saturday 28 December 1918 – a full fortnight after votes were cast – the election results were declared from the upper steps of Cork Courthouse. The delay until late December was to allow soldiers' ballots to be counted. J. J. Walsh and Liam de Róiste romped home and, having addressed the large crowd which had assembled, they led a procession through the city. It should be noted that Maurice Talbot Crosbie and Richard O'Sullivan polled well with fourteen and-a-half thousand votes between them. In fact, compared to 1910, the IPP increased its tally by almost 3,000 votes.

However, the electorate had changed and new voters made up three-quarters of the total figure; for them, Sinn Féin was young, dynamic and vibrant, expressing a clear vision. Donal O'Callaghan was part of this new breed of Sinn Féin members and was undoubtedly delighted by the success of the party. In particular, he had developed a close friendship with Liam de Róiste and rejoiced in his success.

As promised, the Sinn Féin successful general election candidates refused to take their seats in Westminster. Instead, the underground Dáil Éireann met for the first time at 3.30 p.m. in Dublin's Mansion House on 21 January 1919. Earlier in the day, the Mansion House was used to host a reception for soldiers of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers who had been prisoners of war in Germany. One correspondent for *The Irish Times* (22 January 1919) noted the 'mingled portents' of the display of Union Jacks and Sinn Féin colours at the Mansion House. He wrote that the Mansion House, and possibly the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alderman Laurence O'Neill, were playing two parts: 'Thoroughly loyal in the morning and exceedingly disloyal in the afternoon'. Later that same fateful day, members of the Irish Volunteers – or the Irish Republican Army (IRA) as it began to call itself – killed two policemen in Tipperary. As noted by Dorney (2017): 'Together the events, though unconnected, signalled the beginning of a new insurrection against British Rule in Ireland'. Some would argue that this marked the start of the War of Independence.

At the first meeting of the Dáil – described as the 'Parliament of the Republic of Ireland' – the twenty-seven Sinn Féin members present confidently declared Irish independence. The low turnout reflected the fact that more than thirty members of the new parliament were still in prison; additionally, four of the Sinn Féin deputies were duplicates – in other words, they had been elected for two seats in different constituencies. Interestingly, the roll-call included the Unionists who had won seats at Westminster in the general election, even though, as Coogan (2003) notes, they would not have 'touched the Dáil with a forty-foot bargepole'. They were officially declared '*as láthair*' (absent) while the missing Sinn Féin deputies were declared either '*ar dibirt ag gallaibh*' (deported by the foreigner) or '*fé ghlas ag gallaibh*' (jailed by the foreigner). Michael Collins and Harry Boland also missed the meeting, as they were plotting the escape of Éamon de Valera from Lincoln Jail.

Cathal Brugha chaired the meeting and, speaking in Irish, he declared that the members had much work ahead of them, 'the most important, perhaps, that has been undertaken for Ireland since the Gaels first landed on our shores'. The meeting lasted just under two hours and was a productive one, in front of approximately one hundred journalists, many of them from overseas. The members, or Teachtaí Dála (TDs), approved a short, provisional constitution, appointed three delegates to the post-war peace conference in Paris, and issued a Declaration of Independence, a message to the Free Nations of the World, and a Democratic Programme, setting out core principles to inform socio-economic policy.

There is no doubt that the 1918 general election ushered in a new political era. Some would say that it was the defining act of Irish self-determination. Sinnott (1995) argues: 'In immediate political terms, the importance of the 1918 election was that it conferred a democratic legitimacy on the demand for total separation from Britain that had been voiced manifestly without such legitimacy in 1916. The party system of what is now the Republic of Ireland began in 1918 with an overwhelmingly dominant single party – Sinn Féin'. Neeson (1998) claims that results of the 1918 election 'shook the United Kingdom to its foundations and may be said to have signalled the threat to the British Empire that was to materialise over the next three years'.

The political realignment was massive and it is little wonder that, in the aftermath of the election results, Edward Shortt, Chief Secretary to Ireland under Sir John French, predicted: 'The Irish question will be settled peacefully or bloodily within six months'. The newly elected Sinn Féin MP/TD for Cork city, Liam de Róiste, an enthusiastic diarist, wrote to Diarmuid Lynch in America soon after the election, simply stating: 'All Co. Cork is Sinn Féin at one stroke'.

Needless to say, the stunning Sinn Féin success occupied many inches of newspaper columns. The *Times of London* conceded: 'After ten years of obscure agitation and two or three of noisy turbulence, Sinn Féin is at last in the saddle, and in practically unchallenged political control of three fourths of Ireland …… Sinn Féin has won a tremendous political victory'. The *Cork Examiner* was cautious and commented: 'Ireland has thrown discretion to the wind, and at a very critical moment has trusted her affairs to men of little experience'. It added: 'For the first time, Sinn Féin has an opportunity of showing what constructive faculty it possesses'. Following on from the establishment of Dáil Éireann, a Local Government Department was created under Minister William T. Cosgrave in 'competition' with the Local Government Board (LGB) for

Ireland which had been set up in 1872 and was based in the Custom House. The LGB was, nominally at least, in control of the local councils but now there were two central authorities in Ireland.

Donal O'Callaghan continued to work ardently for Sinn Féin and the Irish Volunteers. Much of this work was behind-the-scenes, supporting Terence MacSwiney, Tomás MacCurtain, Liam de Róiste and J. J. Walsh. An impressive orator, O'Callaghan spoke at many public meetings and he was well known to the British authorities. In January 1919, he addressed a meeting in Cork – organised by Sinn Féin, the Labour Gaelic League and the Irish Volunteers – to consider the question of the disposal of money collected in Cork for the National Defence Fund. The fund had been set up to resist the imposition of compulsory military service. O'Callaghan proposed the appointment of a committee consisting of two delegates each from the Irish Volunteers, Labour, Sinn Féin and the Gaelic League, with J. J. Walsh, Liam de Róiste, Maurice Conway and Seán Good as trustees in charge of the fund. He argued that, as far as possible, the fund should be kept intact for national emergencies and crises that were likely to arise: 'No person should be allowed to flout the will of the people and it is our will that the money should be devoted to its proper purpose'. O'Callaghan's motion was unanimously adopted.

O'Callaghan was also a regular speaker at *aeridheachts* (public assemblies), usually ostensibly organised by the Cork Gaelic League for the purpose of recruiting members for the Irish Volunteers. In the aftermath of the 1916 Easter Rising, the hosting of *aeridheachts* was banned by Westminster's Defence of the Realm Act but they continued unabated (see McCarthy, 2018). One such *aeridheacht* was organised for May 1919 in Cullen but was prevented when bodies of police and military were drafted in. O'Callaghan was one of the invited speakers and helped to re-arrange the assembly for Glashakindeen, a few miles north of Cullen.

As 1919 drew to a close, Donal O'Callaghan was not sure what the future held in store for him. He was a prominent and highly respected figure in Sinn Féin and the Irish Volunteers and had helped the latter organisation to create a sophisticated communications system, with message-delivery stations established along primary and secondary roads to evade police observation (Borgonovo, 2017). As the violence of the War of Independence escalated, he oversaw attacks by the Cork Volunteers on RIC barracks across the county. In the background, he was acutely aware that local elections were scheduled to take place in January 1920 and he and his Sinn Féin colleagues were determined to shake-up the membership of Cork Corporation and usher in a new political era. Significantly, these elections were to be contested using a new electoral system. The Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1919, made proportional representation by the single transferable vote (PR-STV) the voting mechanism in Irish local elections. As events transpired, this was to be the final piece of British legislation on local administration in Ireland.

Chapter 4
Reluctant City Councillor

Buoyed by the stunning rise to prominence of Sinn Féin, twenty-eight year-old Donal O'Callaghan must have considered taking his first tentative steps into the world of elected public life at the local municipal elections for Cork Corporation on 15 January 1920. The *Cork Examiner* noted on Friday 2 January that interest in the elections was gathering pace but, 'with so many varied parties involved, it will be difficult to forecast anything like an approximate result, a difficulty that will be greatly increased by the introduction of the PR (proportional representation) system'.

When nominations closed three days later, one hundred and sixty-five candidates were in place to contest the fifty-six seats on the Corporation, across seven electoral wards. Alas, the name of Sinn Féin's Donal O'Callaghan did not appear. For now, he was content to play a role behind the scenes, helping his party candidates as best he could. As election day approached, one very prominent figure in the city was Lord Mayor, Alderman William F. O'Connor, who was nominated in three separate electoral wards. Playing the publicity game to perfection, the Lord Mayor, representing the Irish Nationalist Party, hosted a fete for two thousand boys from disadvantaged backgrounds in City Hall on Wednesday 7 January. The *Cork Examiner* gave generous coverage to the event with two photographs and a report which stated: 'The little ones were served with tea, cakes, apples, oranges, and sweets and an animated but pleasurable scene was presented as the feast progressed, and as the hundreds of happy, eager faces, some of them munching their fare and others waiting expectantly, watched the progress of the distribution'.



The Lord Mayor and some of his very little friends, *Cork Examiner*, Thursday 8 January 1920

The use of PR-STV as the electoral mechanism caused some consternation in the build-up to polling day. The *Cork Examiner* printed what it called 'An Elector's Catechism', supplied by the Proportional Representation Society of Ireland. With regard to marking preferences down the ballot paper, it explained: 'Under proportional representation a candidate is often able to secure victory at the very last moment. He may creep up on the fourth, fifth, or later counts and, although very low down on the poll after the early counts, he may find himself victorious before the close'.

On the day of the elections, Thursday 15 January, the *Cork Examiner* referred to the fact that proportional representation had 'tempted many parties and interests that under old conditions would have little hope of gaining representation on the council, to put forward candidates'. The newspaper expressed the wish that 'the voters will return fifty-six public spirited and intelligent men, representing the best in all parties, that will not only not neglect the interests of the city, but will promote and encourage commercial enterprise'. Another article reported that six men had attacked the Lord Mayor, Alderman William F. O'Connor, on Washington Street the previous night after he addressed a meeting of the Discharged and

Demobilised Sailors and Soldiers' Federation. The Lord Mayor was aided by a group of ex-soldiers who were in the vicinity and he emerged unscathed from the alleged incident.

Turnout for the elections was reported as 'about two-thirds, including many women'. Generally, good order prevailed but an exception was Grattan Street 'where bodies of Sinn Féiners from the country, and ex-soldiers came into rather fierce conflict. Revolvers and knives were used and three men were treated in the Mercy Hospital in the late afternoon, one with a bullet wound in the arm' (*Cork Examiner*, 16 January 1920).

Notably, Sinn Féin provided meals for Corporation officials at the city's voting centres. The *Cork Examiner* printed a picture from the Sinn Féin Club in the Shandon Area, from where meals were served all day and food was sent to the voting booths where it was given to presiding officers, clerks and agents.

Counting of votes commenced in City Hall at 9.30 a.m. on 16 January. For the next two days, the *Cork Examiner* and the *Evening Echo* covered the count in enormous detail, marvelling in the intricacies of the process, as overseen by Town Clerk, Florence W. McCarthy: 'The system of election under the Proportional Representation Act brings its most drastic change from the old method. It is a most elaborate procedure. In all areas the votes have to be scrutinised to see if they are in order and correct. Only such papers go into the count, and when the total has been ascertained it is divided by the number of vacancies plus one, and to the quotient is added one. In this way, the quota is arrived at' (*Cork Examiner*, 17 January 1920).

Police presence was high in City Hall and only the candidates and their agents were allowed to enter the building. By early afternoon, large crowds had gathered outside the municipal headquarters and the first result declared by the Town Clerk, in his role as Chief Returning Officer, was for the Shandon Area (North West No. 2). With six vacancies and a total valid poll of 1,747, the quota was 250. Sinn Féin's Edward Coughlan and Patrick Higgins, both exceeded the quota on the first count and were deemed elected as Aldermen. The four remaining seats went to John F. O'Sullivan (Irish Nationalist), Patrick F. O'Sullivan (Irish Nationalist), Simon Daly (Sinn Féin and Transport Workers), and Timothy O'Neill (Ex-Sailors and Soldiers). At the conclusion of the count, the City Coroner, John J. Horgan, delivered a speech in which he praised the work of Town Clerk, Florence W. McCarthy, and all of the Corporation staff. Coroner Horgan said: 'There have been many gloomy prophecies as to when the results of the election would be available. We were told that we would not be able to do the work at all properly, that Belfast and similar places would wipe us out. It was also said that the count would take weeks – that it would be next Christmas before the results were available. The work has been completed in two days, and Belfast, which had only five areas to deal with against our seven, and where they had five staffs to our two, took one and-a-half days to complete its work. We in Cork have established the record for all Ireland'. The Town Clerk was then lifted in the air and treated to a rousing rendition of 'He's a jolly good fellow'.

CORK ELECTIONS: Congratulations to Town Clerk
Letter in the *Cork Examiner*, Friday 23 January

Standard Hotel, Dublin
20 January 1920

Dear Mr. McCarthy,
I have seen the reports of the counting of the votes in Cork, and I have seen the result sheets. May I congratulate you most heartily upon your great success. No other town or city in Ireland had as many as thirty-three candidates for one electoral area. Such a task might well tax the patience of any Returning Officer, but the completed results sheet shows that it was not too much for you and your excellent staff. Again, most hearty congratulations.

Yours very sincerely,
John H. Humphreys
Secretary of the Proportional Representation Society
Representative of the Local Government Board for Ireland

The elections in Cork city were a success for Sinn Féin and the Transport Workers who ran on a combined ticket. In total, they claimed thirty out of the fifty-six seats available. The outgoing Lord Mayor, William F. O'Connor, was elected in three different electoral areas. While this was a triumph for him, he could only accept a seat in one of the areas, meaning that two by-elections would be needed.

RESULTS OF CORK CORPORATION ELECTIONS, 15 JANUARY 1920

North East Electoral Area (10 seats)

Professor William Frederick Stockley, Alderman (Sinn Féin) – 186 Lower Glanmire Rd
James Daly, Alderman (Irish Nationalist) – 4 St. Luke's Place
Anne Sutton (Sinn Féin) – Eagle Lodge, Summerhill
Michael Joseph O'Riordan (Irish Nationalist) – 21 Wellington Road
Sir John Scott (Commercial) – Wellington House, Lee Road
Seán O'Leary (Sinn Féin) – 3 Ashburton Hill
Seán French (Sinn Féin) – 58 Patrick Street
Robert Day (Sinn Féin) – 9 Nicholas Street
Daniel Horgan (Irish Nationalist) – 1 Rockgrove Terrace
James Thomas Mulligan (Commercial) – Edenvale, Douglas Road

North West Electoral Area No. 1, Sunday's Well (7 seats)

Frederick J. Murray, Alderman (Sinn Féin) – 8 Sunday's Well Road
Tadhg Barry, Alderman (Sinn Féin) – 54 Blarney Street
Patrick Murphy (Irish Labour) – 49 Sunday's Well Road
William F. O'Connor (Irish Nationalist) – 5 Highfield Avenue
James Allen (Sinn Féin) – 5 Man's Lane
Thomas Daly (Sinn Féin) – 3 and 4 Kearney's Lane
Michael Joseph O'Callaghan (Independent) – 10 Cattlemarket Street

North West Electoral Area No. 2, Shandon (6 seats)

Edward Coughlan, Alderman (Sinn Féin) – 19 Pine Street
Patrick Higgins, Alderman (Sinn Féin) – 70 Dominick Street
John F. O'Sullivan (Irish Nationalist) – 45 Pope's Quay
Patrick F. O'Sullivan (Irish Nationalist) – 12 Dominick Street
Simon Daly (Sinn Féin) – 25 John Street
Timothy O'Neill (Ex-Sailors and Soldiers) – 3 St. Patrick's Square

North West Electoral Area No. 3, Blackpool (6 seats)

Tomás MacCurtain, Alderman (Sinn Féin) – 40 Thomas Davis Street
Denis Lucey, Alderman (Sinn Féin) – 32 Dublin Street
Gerald Byrne (Ex-Sailors and Soldiers) – 45 Great William O'Brien Street
Michael O'Cuill (Sinn Féin) – 5 Red Abbey Street
Thomas Patrick Forde (Sinn Féin) – 17 St. Catherine's Place
Michael Egan (Irish Labour) – 19 Commons Road

Central Electoral Area (10 seats)

James Joseph Walsh M.P., Alderman (Sinn Féin) – 10 Sullivan's Quay
Richard F. Beamish, Alderman (Commercial) – Ashbourne, Glounthaune, Co. Cork
Daniel Gamble (Irish Nationalist) – 29 Grattan Street
Terence MacSwiney M.P. (Sinn Féin) – 4 Belgrave Place
Professor Alfred O'Rahilly (Sinn Féin) – University College Cork
Thomas Stack (Irish Nationalist) – Maryville, Mardyke
William Desmond (Commercial) – 2 Pembroke Street
Jeremiah Kelleher (Irish Labour) – 10 Gillabbey Terrace
John Fitzpatrick (Sinn Féin) – 10 Greenmount Avenue
William F. O'Connor (Irish Nationalist) – 5 Highfield Avenue

South Area No. 1 (11 seats)

Charles Coughlan, Alderman (Sinn Féin) – 137 Barrack Street
Seán O'Sullivan, Alderman (Sinn Féin) – 16 Abbey Street
Seán Cronin (Irish Nationalist) – 28 St. Finbarr's Place
Seán Good (Sinn Féin) – 54 Grand Parade
John Horgan (Irish Nationalist) – 9 St. Nessan Street
Jeremiah Kelleher (Sinn Féin) – 58 Lough Road
Simon Mahony (Irish Nationalist) – 1 Tower Street
William F. O'Connor (Irish Nationalist) – 5 Highfield Avenue
William Russell (Sinn Féin) – 68 Grand Parade
John Sheehan (Sinn Féin) – 130 Evergreen Road
Maurice Walsh (Sinn Féin) – 1 Frenches Quay

South Area No. 2 (6 seats)

Liam de Róiste M.P. Alderman (Sinn Féin) – 2 Upper Janemount
Sir Edward Fitzgerald, Alderman (Irish Nationalist) – Geraldine House, Albert Road
Daniel Barry (Sinn Féin) – 57 Hibernian Buildings
Stephen J. O'Riordan (Sinn Féin) – 16 High Street
John Desmond (Irish Nationalist) – Ballinlough Road
William Ellis (Irish Nationalist) – 13 Douglas Street

As mentioned earlier, Sinn Féin and the Transport Workers joined forces in the election and their combined total of thirty seats gave them a working majority in City Hall. Of this group, six councillors were members of the Transport Workers – Alderman Tadhg Barry, Thomas Forde, John Fitzpatrick, Jeremiah Kelleher, Robert Day, and Daniel Barry. Between them the Sinn Féin and Transport Workers also boasted eleven of the Corporation's fourteen new Aldermen (two in each ward), the exceptions being James Daly (Irish Nationalist), Richard Beamish (Commercial) and Sir Edward Fitzgerald (Irish Nationalist). In a *Cork Examiner* editorial on 20 January, an optimistic tone was struck about the make-up of the new Corporation: 'In a word, it may be said that the new Corporation, irrespective of party or other classification, will take a broad outlook and serve the city's interests by helping to make the most of their opportunities in contributing to its commercial and industrial upliftment. It has been said that there is a tide in the affairs of men which, if taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. Cork now stands on the edge of opportunities which, if wisely handled, should bring prosperity to the city and provide an abundance of employment for all classes. Upon her public representatives much depends. If they be wise, tolerant, progressive and broad-minded, the outlook is full of promise'.

Attention soon turned to the statutory meeting of the new Corporation at which a Lord Mayor would be elected. This was scheduled for Friday 30 January, a week later than normal. With Sinn Féin and the Transport Workers in control of the Council Chamber, the *Cork Examiner* (22 January) speculated that Alderman J. J. Walsh was the most likely candidate: 'It is stated that for political reasons the choice will fall on Mr. J. J. Walsh MP. He is "on the run" and the point argued in favour of his election, other considerations apart, is that the arrest of the Lord Mayor of the city would place the authorities in a still more awkward position'.

The statutory meeting of Cork Corporation was held at 12.00 noon on Friday 30 January in the Council Chamber of City Hall. Half an hour before the start of the meeting, the public galleries were virtually full. By midday, the galleries were completely packed and there was a danger of overcrowding as more and more people tried to make their way into the chamber. The *Cork Examiner* (31 January 1920) noted that there some clergymen were in attendance and 'perhaps for the first time in the history of this meeting, a large number of ladies were present'. When the outgoing Lord Mayor, Councillor William F. O'Connor, took the chair he was greeted by a combination of cheers and hissing from the galleries. Town Clerk, Florence W. McCarthy called the roll and this established that fifty-one members out of the fifty-six elected were present (effectively, the total was fifty-four due to Councillor William F. O'Connor winning seats in three separate wards).

The Sinn Féin councillors answered the roll call in Irish and, when the name of Alderman Frederick Murray was called, his party colleague, Councillor Michael O'Cuill, answered in Irish to the effect that Murray was in prison, 'under the lock of the foreigner'. A similar situation occurred when the name of Alderman J. J. Walsh was called – it was explained that he was 'on the run from the foreigner'. Chairman of the meeting, Councillor William F. O'Connor, then called for nominations for the office of Lord Mayor. Again, it was Councillor Michael O'Cuill who spoke and, in Irish, he proposed Alderman Tomás MacCurtain, who had topped the poll in Blackpool. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Terence MacSwiney. The Lord Mayor asked if there were any other candidates, at which point Sir John Scott (Commercial) unexpectedly rose to speak. With no reference to the Mayoralty election, Scott commenced a rambling speech about the necessity of a housing scheme. He was ruled out of the order by the Lord Mayor but continued to stand. This led to Alderman Richard Beamish quipping: 'He is going to be in order again if you don't be careful. You can't suppress that gentleman'. As the Lord Mayor tried to get order, Scott sat down, only to immediately stand up again to propose Beamish as Lord Mayor. An indignant Beamish retorted that he was not allowing his name to go forward and that Scott had no permission to nominate him. Labour's Councillor Michael Egan interjected and, somewhat threateningly, declared: 'If Sir John is going to pursue these tactics for the next twelve months, he had better look out for himself'.

Keen to get a grip on the meeting, Councillor William F. O'Connor declared that, with no other candidate, Alderman Tomás MacCurtain was the Lord Mayor of Cork for the coming twelve months. Amidst scenes of great excitement, MacCurtain made his way to the Lord Mayor's dais at the top of the Council Chamber: 'Most of those in the chamber rose and cheered him, the men waving their hats and caps, and the women handkerchiefs. "The Soldier's Song" was called for, and others shouted "Up Blackpool" and as the newly-elected Lord Mayor signed the declaration accepting the office, "The Soldier's Song" was sung' (*Cork Examiner*, 31 January). The outgoing

Lord Mayor, Councillor William F. O'Connor, congratulated MacCurtain on his election and wished him a prosperous year in office. He then presented MacCurtain with the Mayoral chain, amidst 'a renewal of lusty cheering'. The new Lord Mayor then delivered a short but business-like speech. He thanked Councillor William F. O'Connor for his generous remarks and his fellow councillors for unanimously electing him as Lord Mayor of Cork. MacCurtain noted with regret that he did not possess the oratory skills of Sir John Scott but he wanted to take the opportunity to thank the people of his ward who voted for him in large numbers. He declared that his main duty would be to stick to the principles of the Irish Republic and to promote the freedom of the country. In Cork, there were certain issues in relation to the Corporation in the past that it would be well to forget but there were other things it would be well to emulate. The new Lord Mayor then challenged his fellow elected members to put the interests of their communities before anything else. He said that all of them would have to put forward their best efforts to improve and advance the citizens' prosperity, adding: 'The people do not want speeches. They want the work done and with as little "froth" as possible. In doing our work, the people expect from us a sacrifice of time and a sacrifice, perhaps, of personal interest'. The motto for the year ahead would be self-reliance, efficiency and economy. The Lord Mayor concluded his acceptance speech by highlighting an issue that was very dear to his own heart – the Irish language. He was delighted to hear it used during the meeting and he hoped that future meetings of the Corporation would preserve a bi-lingual attitude. In time, it was his wish that Cork Corporation would completely conduct its business in the language of the country.

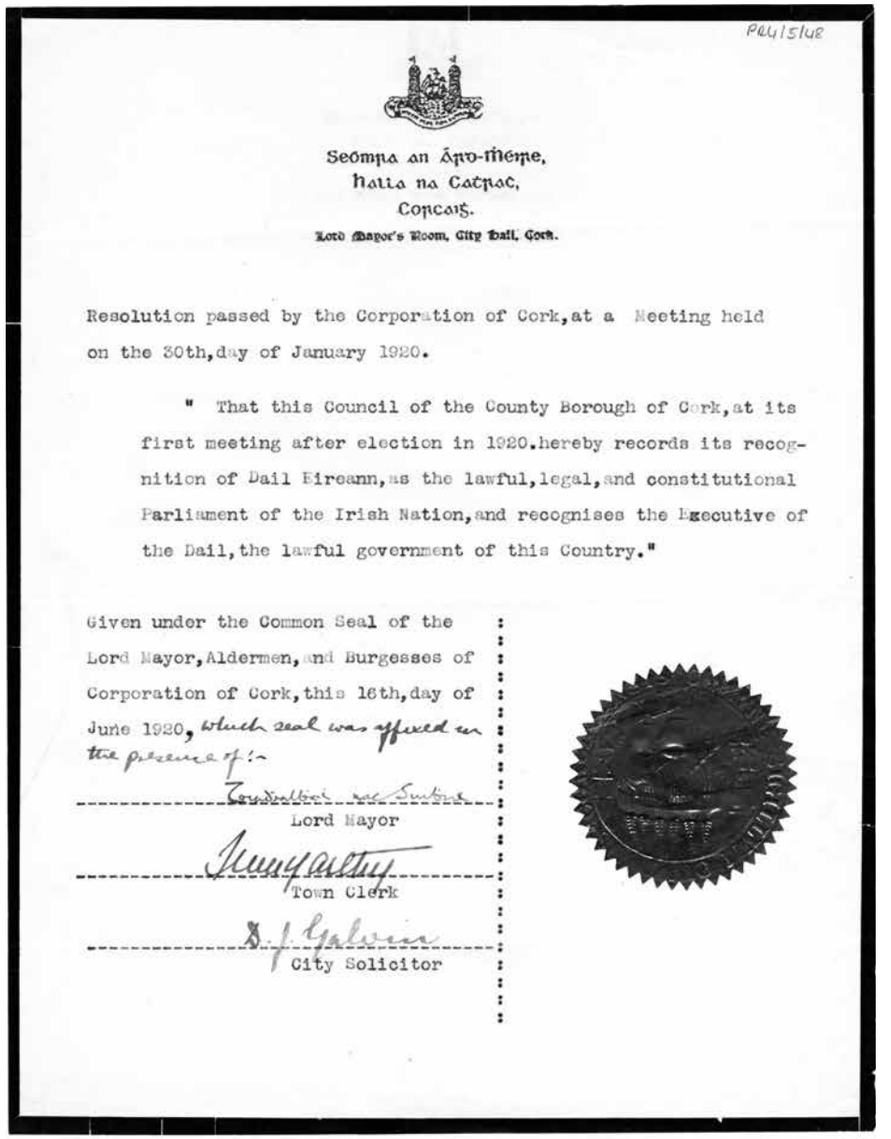
The next business of the meeting was to fix the Lord Mayor's salary for the year ahead. Councillor Michael Joseph O'Riordan proposed a salary of £1,000 and his motion was seconded by Councillor Daniel Gamble. Both councillors were members of the Irish Nationalist Party. In response, Lord Mayor MacCurtain told the meeting: 'Personally, I don't think I will take the motion because I don't think we should start off the new era with that salary'. His Sinn Féin colleague, Professor Alfred O'Rahilly, recommended a salary of £500, remarking: 'We in Sinn Féin are often charged with being impractical idealists, but that does not prevent us from being practical administrators. We consider that £500 is a sufficient salary, considering the conditions and difficulties with which we are confronted. We will not ask the ratepayers to subscribe any money for wines and entertainments'. Lord Mayor MacCurtain called on this recommendation to be agreed and, accordingly, it was unanimously passed that his salary for the year would be £500.

Following this decision, the Town Clerk announced that the next duty of the elected members was to select three gentlemen qualified to fill the office of High Sheriff of Cork. The Lord Lieutenant to Ireland, John French, would then select one of three nominated men for the job. The Town Clerk's announcement was met with jeering from the public galleries and from some of the elected members themselves. Alderman Tadhg Barry referred to the oaths of office, pledging allegiance to Britain, that the Sheriff would have to take and he stated: 'No self-respecting Irishman would take these oaths. The position of Sheriff was created by an alien government to do their dirty, low, mean work in Ireland. I move that the office not be filled'. This call was seconded by Councillor John Sheehan, who stated: 'We will not sully the name of Cork by sending names to Lord French to enable him to make a selection. We would be abject slaves if we did so, as we do not recognise French any longer'. Sir John Scott objected, stressing that the Corporation had to guard its municipal privileges. He proposed three names for the office of High Sheriff but his motion was not seconded. Therefore, the original motion was passed unanimously and the position of High Sheriff was not filled.

Under 'Lord Mayor's privilege', MacCurtain then brought a special motion before the elected members, pledging the council's allegiance to Dáil Éireann. The Lord Mayor proclaimed that a little over twelve months ago the Irish people, at the general election, declared by an overwhelming majority for an Irish Republic and elected seventy-three representatives pledged to that declaration. He said: 'The people, at the recent elections to local bodies, ratified the decision of the general election. It is now up to those bodies to pledge their allegiance to the government set up by the representatives of the country'. The motion was formally read by Alderman Liam de Róiste and seconded by Councillor Terence MacSwiney. De Róiste forcefully ended his speech by saying: 'In our minds and souls we recognise that there is only one lawful authority in the country – Dáil Éireann and its Executive. I propose the resolution as the expression of opinion of the overwhelming majority of the people of this ancient city'. In seconding the motion, Terence MacSwiney argued that the machinery of the British Government was not being used for peace in Ireland: 'The police are not doing the duties of officers of peace.

They are watching my house and the Lord Mayor's house, and the houses of our friends. They are considering only when the great "round up" will begin. This is a very serious matter for those claiming to be advocates of law and order'. In a dramatic ending to his contribution, MacSwiney declared: 'I am quite convinced that the God of Nations will stand by the David of Nations and strike down Goliath. I am satisfied that we will establish our Republic on foundations that will endure forever'.

Sir John Scott argued that the motion was not permitted without notice, in accordance with the Corporation's bye-laws. This was rejected by MacCurtain who stressed that he was entitled to bring the motion forward under the privileges afforded to the Lord Mayor. Professor Alfred O'Rahilly supported the Lord Mayor, directing his comments to Sir John Scott: 'In God's name, where are your brains? There has been five years' notice of motion of this'. Alderman Richard Beamish then delivered an impassioned speech, saying that all councillors were animated with love for their country and anxious for the advancement of the city. Over the years he had fought to keep the Corporation clear of all political questions and matters: 'The motion brought forward today is not agreeable to my line of thought, though I sincerely hope for an honourable solution to this desperate tangle, the Irish question'. Councillor William F. O'Connor, who had begun the evening as Lord Mayor, contributed to the debate by stating: 'I would have to consider myself a Sinn Féiner if I subscribed to this motion. I am not prepared to consider myself a Sinn Féiner'. A person in the public gallery shouted out: 'We don't want you', and when O'Connor tried to continue his speech he was drowned out by a chorus of hissing. After order was restored, O'Connor defiantly noted: 'You gentlemen are out for the freedom of Ireland. I wish you God speed on your venture. I am also sure that the responsible leaders of your party will see to it that the minority here will get freedom of speech. I don't see why, when I open my mouth, why I should be hissed if there is going to be toleration shown. When I was Lord Mayor, I allowed no member of the council be insulted and I am sure Lord Mayor MacCurtain will see to it that no man is denied the freedom of speech here'. At the end of a lengthy debate with contributions by many councillors, the motion, pledging allegiance to Dáil Éireann, was put to a vote and passed by the Sinn Féin majority. The winning margin was thirty votes to eleven.



P&L/5/48

Seomra an Ard-Mhéara,
Halla na Cathrach,
Corcaigh.
Lord Mayor's Room, City Hall, Cork.

Resolution passed by the Corporation of Cork, at a Meeting held on the 30th, day of January 1920.

" That this Council of the County Borough of Cork, at its first meeting after election in 1920, hereby records its recognition of Dail Eireann, as the lawful, legal, and constitutional Parliament of the Irish Nation, and recognises the Executive of the Dail, the lawful government of this Country."

Given under the Common Seal of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of Corporation of Cork, this 16th, day of June 1920, which seal was affixed in the presence of :-

Lord Mayor

Town Clerk

City Solicitor

The Cork Corporation resolution recognising Dáil Éireann was passed on 30 January 1920 but the Lord Mayor's seal was not applied until 16 June 1920, at which point Councillor Terence MacSwiney was Lord Mayor.
[Courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]

At the conclusion of the meeting, Lord Mayor MacCurtain was presented with a Sinn Féin rosette by a member of the Cork Branch of Cumann na mBan. The new Lord Mayor then watched as the Sinn Féin flag was hoisted at high mast over City Hall. As he celebrated with his family and friends, MacCurtain had no idea what the future would bring. Sacrifice had been a theme of his acceptance speech and, within a few short months, he would make the ultimate sacrifice for his beliefs.

The following morning's editorial in the *Cork Examiner* commented favourably on the new era following the 1920 local elections and, in particular, the composition of Cork Corporation. Under the heading of 'The New Men' (completely ignoring the fact that the Corporation contained one woman councillor, Anne Sutton), the editorial stated:

> Extract from editorial in the *Cork Examiner*
> 'The New Men'
> Saturday 31 January 1920
>
> Irishmen who are not Unionists – though some Unionists may honourably be included in the category – admit the justice of majority rule, and accept it as a fundamental principle in the conduct of the country's affairs. Therefore, it was a pleasant feature of the proceedings of the Cork Lord Mayoralty election to find that while opinions differed on matters which some regarded as extraneous to the business of the meeting, that the minority, while dissenting, and maintaining their own views on what may be the precise definition of patriotism, had the courage of their convictions and did not hesitate to express them. In the newly-formed Cork Corporation, if one may judge from the speeches delivered, different views exist as to the most effective means of achieving Irish liberty, but on the other hand a frankness and spirit of toleration is to be discerned which augurs well for securing it. Political honesty is not the exclusive property of any section or party, and sincerity of purpose is to be found in plenty of minorities. Perhaps it is the existence of it that has had the effect of transforming such minorities into majorities, because as far as this country is concerned, the swing of the pendulum is to be attributed to conviction rather than to a desire for variety or change. And as the principle of majority rule must be recognised, the dissentients having expressed their opinions and recorded their votes, bowed to the rule which causes minorities to go under.
>
> The speech of the new Lord Mayor on his acceptance of office, besides containing a frank enunciation of his personal political principles (which are not necessarily those of a considerable minority of the citizens of Cork), contained a sentence that indicated his full appreciation of the tasks his new representative position imposes upon him. 'It will be my duty', he said, 'as far as it lays in my power, to assist every party and every man and every citizen who has the interest of the country at heart, in furthering the country's interests, including local enterprises, and especially the larger issue of the freedom of their country'. That declaration of Lord Mayor MacCurtain cannot fail to give satisfaction to all classes. It exhibits a tolerant spirit and a grasp of affairs essential in the occupant of the municipal Chair, and indicates that under the new Corporate regime the traditions that ensured a fair hearing for all sides will be maintained and respected. In the composite body which now comprises the Cork Borough Council, there are, no doubt, conflicting elements, but it may be assumed that all will assist in conserving the interests of the citizens and in endeavouring to make the city prosperous and progressive. If unanimity does not prevail regarding the whole of yesterday's procedure in the City Hall, it does exist in desiring the country's welfare – that is to say, the well-being and contentment of the people. With that as a basis to work upon, and differences existing only as to the best and most effective manner of achieving it, and with a spirit of toleration in the air, the newly-formed Corporation of Cork may, and possibly will, reach worthy achievement.

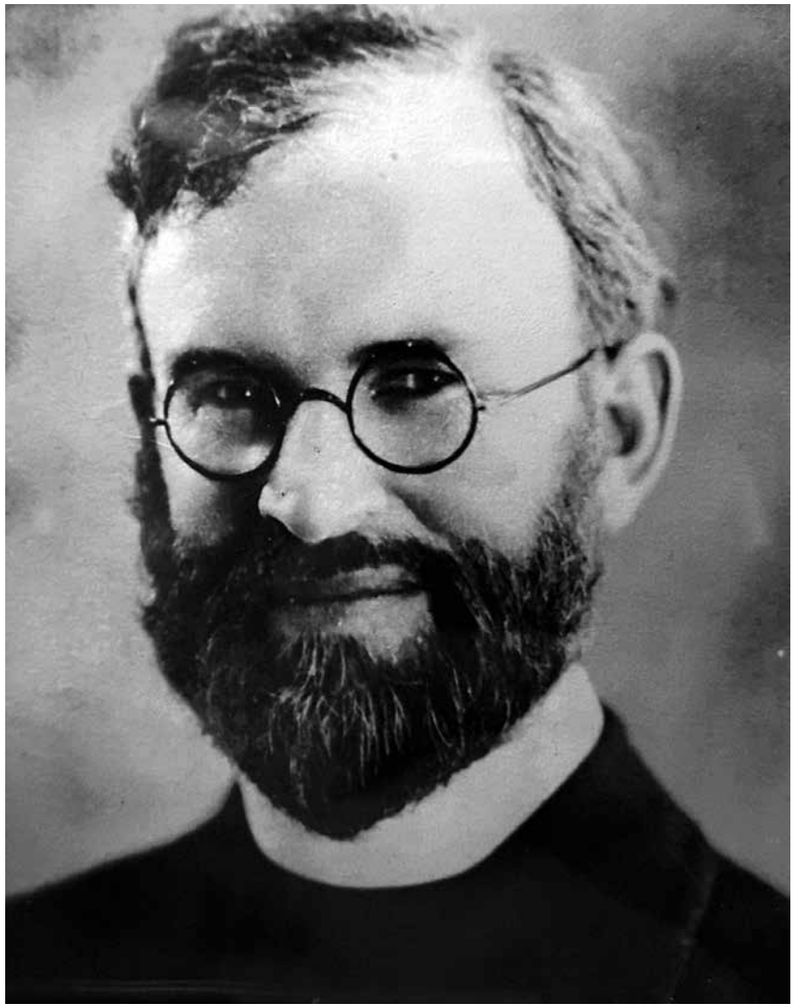
Lord Mayor MacCurtain threw himself enthusiastically into his new role. As noted subsequently by Florence O'Donoghue, Head of Intelligence of the Cork No. 1 Brigade of the IRA (1947): 'Though he would have preferred to devote his whole attention to the army, once elected he took up his new duties with the same vigour and ability he had displayed in the Volunteers,

and in a short time, Cork discovered that it had the most popular, as well as the most efficient, Lord Mayor in its stormy history'. On the Monday after his election, the Lord Mayor began the traditional round of visits to educational establishments and charitable organisations in the city. He was accompanied by Alderman Liam de Róiste, Town Clerk, Florence W. McCarthy, and by his private secretary, William Hegarty. The first official stop was a courtesy visit to the Most Rev. Dr. Daniel Cohalan, Bishop of Cork, at the Diocesan seminary at Farrenferris. Bishop Cohalan wished the Lord Mayor a pleasant and successful year in office and expressed the hope that he and the newly-elected council would do everything possible to advance the interests of the city. On leaving the Diocesan College, the Lord Mayor and his party, went to a variety of schools, including the Greenmount Industrial School. At each school, the Lord Mayor spoke in Irish and impressed upon pupils the necessity for studying in their native language. There was also a courtesy visit to University College Cork, where the Lord Mayor was welcomed by the President, Professor Patrick J. Merriman. The *Cork Examiner* (3 February 1920) reported: 'On entering and leaving the College, his lordship was accorded a genuine reception from the students who had assembled on the grounds to receive him'.

Lord Mayor, Alderman Tomás MacCurtain chaired his first meeting of Cork Corporation on Friday 13 February at 3.00 p.m., before a full public gallery in City Hall. Initially, he struggled to make himself heard amidst noise from the gallery. He reminded citizens that they had a right to attend the meeting but all of them could not be admitted to the Council Chamber which was already full to capacity. After the reading of the minutes from the meeting of 30 January, Councillor Terence MacSwiney complained that the resolution pledging the council's allegiance to Dáil Éireann had not been properly recorded. Alderman Liam de Róiste, speaking in Irish, supported MacSwiney's assertion. This drew a sharp response from Sir John Scott who asked that elected members should speak in a language that they all could understand. This led to much heckling from the public gallery, which necessitated an intervention from Lord Mayor MacCurtain. He calmed tensions by stating that the minutes could be corrected and he read the resolution that was passed a fortnight earlier. He defended the Town Clerk, arguing that a copy of the resolution had not been sent to him; in the circumstances, the Town Clerk had recorded the proceedings as best he could. Tellingly, the Lord Mayor then addressed Sir John Scott and informed him that the elected members were within their rights to address the council in Irish.

Professor William Stockley next addressed the meeting and passionately argued against what he called 'the deportation of the Lord Mayor of Dublin'. On 30 January, Dublin Corporation elected the imprisoned Alderman Thomas Kelly as Lord Mayor. Alderman Stockley contended that Kelly should be released from prison in England so that he could fulfil his duties as Dublin's democratically elected Lord Mayor. Councillor Terence MacSwiney supported Stockley's remarks and the Lord Mayor added: 'We are not passing a resolution about this. We are simply making a protest, and we are prepared to stick this kind of thing as long as England is prepared to stick it'. As events transpired, when the date of inauguration for Dublin's Lord Mayor arrived, on 23 February, Kelly was still in prison. As he had not signed the declaration of acceptance of the Mayoralty, it was agreed that Alderman Laurence O'Neill would remain in office until his successor could be properly installed. Following his eventual release from prison, Kelly returned to Dublin on 28 April but – in poor health and having suffered a severe mental breakdown – he was not able to assume the position of Lord Mayor of Dublin (see Quinlivan, 2020).

The next business of the meeting was proposed by the Lord Mayor himself. He said that Cork Corporation had the prerogative to appoint a chaplain. This had not happened for a number of years but he wished to reinstate the practice. With the consent of Bishop Cohalan, Rev. Fr. Dominic O'Connor was to be appointed as chaplain to the Corporation. This announcement was greeted by applause from the public gallery. John Francis O'Connor was born in county Cork on 13 February 1883 and he took the name 'Dominic' when he entered the Capuchin novitiate sixteen years later. In March 1906, he was ordained a priest in the Capuchin Friary in Kilkenny and later enrolled in the Catholic University in Louvain where he received a bachelor degree of Sacred Theology. In response to a call from Cardinal Michael Logue, Archbishop of Armagh, Fr. Dominic volunteered for chaplaincy work with British forces during the First World War. After spending two months with a Scottish brigade in England, he transferred to a hospital unit bound for Salonika, Greece. After approximately two years of service, Fr. Dominic resigned his post in 1917, returned to Cork and was appointed to the Capuchin community at the Holy Trinity Church. He soon attained notoriety in Nationalist circles (see Irish Capuchin Archives and Connell, 2014).



Fr. Dominic O'Connor was appointed chaplain to Cork Corporation by the new Lord Mayor, Tomás MacCurtain.
[Courtesy of Independence Museum, Kilmurry, county Cork]

An important matter was raised at the end of the meeting, namely, that the composition of the new Cork Corporation was not complete. With Councillor William F. O'Connor having won seats in three electoral wards, two by-elections were required. O'Connor was elected in the North West Electoral Area No. 1, the Central Area and the South Area No. 1. He chose to take his seat for the North West ward, thus creating vacancies in the other two. A deadline of 25 February was set for nominations for the two by-elections. For the Central Area, the two nominees were Sinn Féin's Barry Michael Egan and the Independent, Jeremiah Lane, who had failed to win a seat in January. Donal O'Callaghan went forward for South Area No. 1. Sinn Féin put a big effort into the by-elections. The *Cork Examiner* reported on Monday 23 February that two large rallies had been held over the weekend on the Grand Parade and Sheare's Street. At the first meeting, the Volunteers' Pipe Band played music and speeches were delivered from the back of a lorry by Professor Alfred O'Rahilly, Alderman Liam de Róiste, Barry Egan and Donal O'Callaghan. When O'Callaghan addressed the crowd, he stated that the strong position of the Irish cause at the present time was due to the discipline in the Republican movement: 'That discipline needs to be maintained until the Republic is an accomplished fact'. Given that no other candidate had been nominated for the South Area No. 1, O'Callaghan used the remainder of his speech to launch a blistering attack on Jeremiah Lane, who was opposing Sinn Féin's Barry Egan.

> The gentleman now opposing us was a member of the Sinn Féin movement and a member of the executive. But now he has behind him all the force of Unionism and rottenism in order to defeat the Republican candidate. He wants to tear down and discredit our flag, the flag sacrificed by the blood of Ireland's most noblest sons.

After O'Callaghan's speech, the lorry, on which the speakers were seated on chairs, was dragged by a number of men along Grand Parade, Washington Street and Courthouse Street to Sheare's Street, where another rally took place (*Cork Examiner*, 23 February 1920).

When nominations closed a couple of days later, no other candidate had emerged to challenge Donal O'Callaghan in South Area No. 1. O'Callaghan, who had decided not to contest January's Corporation elections, was now a member of the council, though he would have to wait until 11 March to be formally ratified.

Voting for the vacancy in the Central Area was held on Wednesday 10 March and resulted in a decisive victory for Barry Egan. He secured 2,385 votes, compared to 846 for Jeremiah Lane. Lord Mayor MacCurtain was present at

the declaration of the result and he said that Egan would be a great addition to the council. Town Clerk, Florence W. McCarthy, expressed his regret that the defeated candidate, Jeremiah Lane, was unable to be there due to illness. Shortly after the proceedings closed, Jeremiah Lane arrived into City Hall, asking to make an important statement in respect of a disgraceful element of the election. The Town Clerk told him that such a statement was not in order as the proceedings were over and a result had been declared. Subsequently, it emerged that Lane was alleging intimidation by Sinn Féin supporters in the weeks leading up to the by-election.

Bolstered by the elections of Barry Egan and Donal O'Callaghan, the Sinn Féin grouping in City Hall was now strengthened to thirty-two members. At twenty-eight years of age, Donal O'Callaghan had taken his first tentative steps into the world of elected office. A dramatic period of time lay ahead for the young man born in Peacock Lane. Within nine months he would be Lord Mayor of Cork.

Chapter 5
Murder of a Lord Mayor

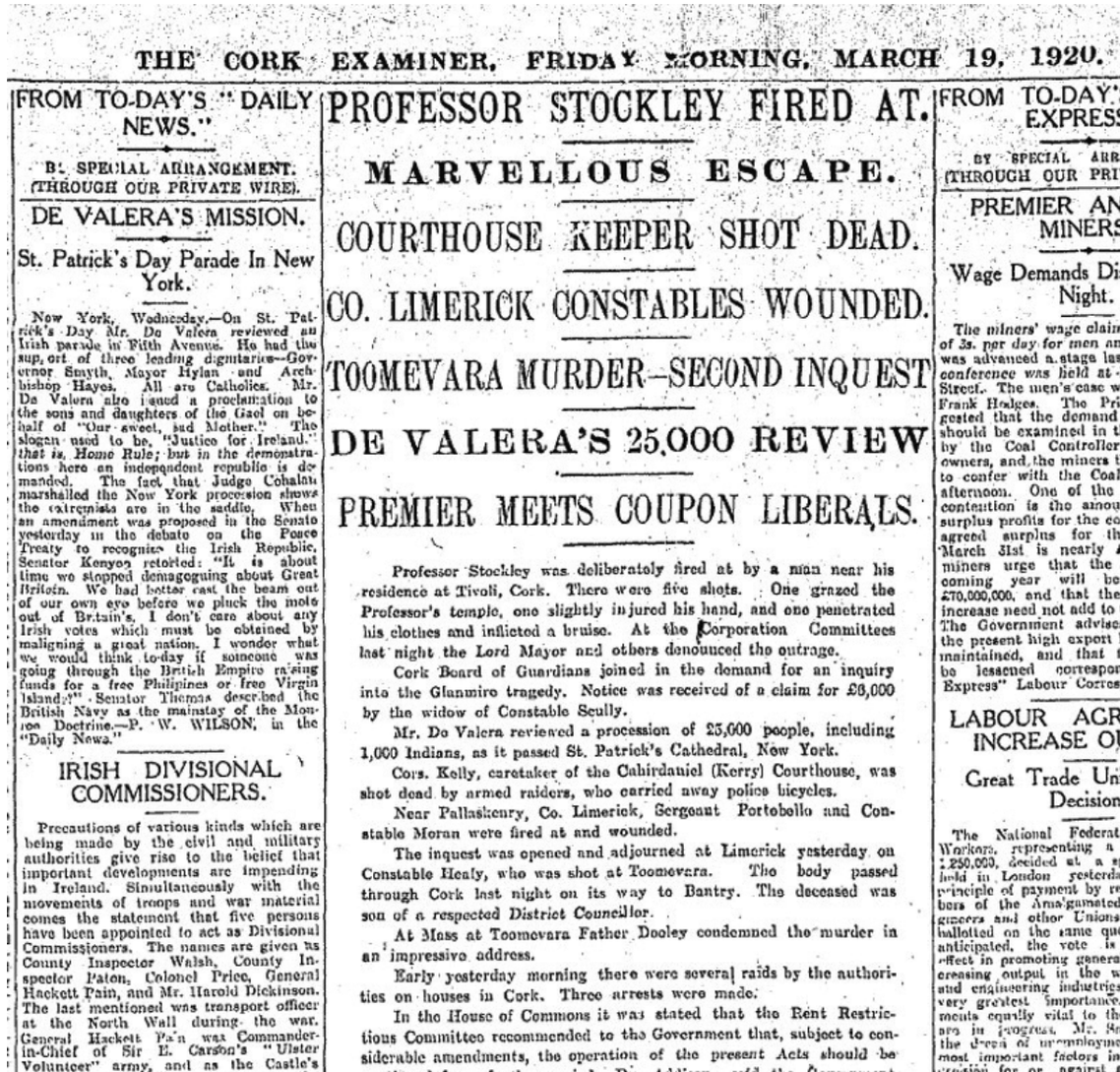
Donal O'Callaghan attended his first meeting as a member of Cork Corporation on the night of Friday 12 March 1920 in City Hall. The meeting was chaired by Lord Mayor, Alderman Tomás MacCurtain. As new councillors following their by-election successes, O'Callaghan and Barry Egan received a warm welcome from the public gallery as they entered the chamber. In contrast, when Sir John Scott arrived, he was greeted with hissing (*Cork Examiner*, 15 March 1920). O'Callaghan's first contribution as a councillor was delivered in Irish and he complained that he had been denied access by the police to City Hall the previous day when the by-election votes were being counted. He asked who gave the police the authority to be there. Town Clerk, Florence W. McCarthy, replied and said that O'Callaghan should have been permitted to enter the building. He explained: 'I am the Returning Officer under the Local Government Board and not under the Corporation. I have to take my instructions from the former and they ordered that police should guard the ballot boxes'. The guarding of the ballot boxes was a contentious matter. On the night of 10 March, the day of voting, RIC District Inspector McDonagh of King Street Barracks was shot and seriously wounded. He had been guarding the ballot boxes, before visiting the police barracks on Blackrock Road. On his return journey from Blackrock Road to Union Quay, he was shot through the back. Following O'Callaghan's complaint, the councillors agreed that in future, if it was necessary to preserve order in City Hall, security arrangements should be made by the council and not the police. The remainder of the meeting was mundane and much of it was taken up with committee nominations. Donal

O'Callaghan was nominated to sit on the Profiteering Committee. Drawing the meeting to a close, Lord Mayor MacCurtain reminded the elected members that the next full meeting of the Corporation was scheduled to take place in a fortnight, on the evening of Friday 26 March. Alas, the Lord Mayor would not be present at the meeting.

The following Wednesday night, 17 March, an attempt was made on the life of Corporation Alderman, Professor William Stockley, near Tivoli Railway Station on the Glanmire Road, as he walked home. The *Cork Examiner* (19 March 1920) reported that 'no fewer than five revolver shots were discharged at him'. Fortunately, Stockley avoided serious injury and his account of the incident was vivid: 'One bullet passed through my overcoat, undercoat, vest and trousers. It did not, luckily for me, enter my body, and must have struck a button or safety pin, which probably altered its course. The bullet has left a painful, blackened bruise but, beyond this, I don't feel very much put out'. The *Cork Examiner* noted that the shots must have been heard by people in the locality but due to existing conditions in Cork, 'they did not display any anxiety in the direction of investigating the occurrence'.

Tensions were certainly high in Cork city and the attempt on Professor Stockley's life was a forewarning for what was to come. In the early hours of Saturday 20 March 1920, unidentified members of the British forces, their faces covered in black paint, broke through the front door of the MacCurtain home on 40 Thomas Davis Street. They ran upstairs and assassinated the Lord Mayor at his bedroom door (see Martin, 2009 and Hannigan, 2010). The murder of MacCurtain 'marked the beginning of a new reign of terror which lasted throughout the year and from which the people and city of Cork suffered greatly' (Martin, 2009). Earlier in the week, the Lord Mayor had concluded his visits to schools in Cork city by going to St. Patrick's Male and Female National Schools, accompanied by his chaplain, Fr. Dominic, and by Councillor Michael O'Cuill. The *Cork Examiner* of 20 March featured the visit to St. Patrick's on page 8; on page 7, details of MacCurtain's murder were provided under the heading 'CORK LORD MAYOR SHOT DEAD BY DISGUISED MEN'. The article provided a vivid account of the events that had taken place just a few hours earlier.

Facing page: Professor William Stockley, Cork Corporation Alderman, had a 'marvellous escape' a matter of days before the murder of Lord Mayor, Tomás MacCurtain. [*Cork Examiner*, 19 March 1920]



THE CORK EXAMINER, FRIDAY MORNING, MARCH 19, 1920.

FROM TO-DAY'S "DAILY NEWS."

BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT. (THROUGH OUR PRIVATE WIRE).

DE VALERA'S MISSION.

St. Patrick's Day Parade In New York.

New York, Wednesday.—On St. Patrick's Day Mr. De Valera reviewed an Irish parade in Fifth Avenue. He had the support of three leading dignitaries—Governor Smyth, Mayor Hylan and Archbishop Hayes. All are Catholics. Mr. De Valera also issued a proclamation to the sons and daughters of the Gael on behalf of "Our sweet, sad Mother." The slogan used to be, "Justice for Ireland," that is, Home Rule; but in the demonstrations here an independent republic is demanded. The fact that Judge Cohalan marshalled the New York procession shows the extremists are in the saddle. When an amendment was proposed in the Senate yesterday in the debate on the Peace Treaty to recognise the Irish Republic, Senator Kenyon retorted: "It is about time we stopped demagoguing about Great Britain. We had better cast the beam out of our own eye before we pluck the mote out of Britain's. I don't care about any Irish votes which must be obtained by maligning a great nation. I wonder what we would think to-day if someone was going through the British Empire raising funds for a free Philipines or free Virgin Islands?" Senator Thomas described the British Navy as the mainstay of the Monroe Doctrine.—P. W. WILSON, in the "Daily News."

IRISH DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONERS.

Precautions of various kinds which are being made by the civil and military authorities give rise to the belief that important developments are impending in Ireland. Simultaneously with the movements of troops and war material comes the statement that five persons have been appointed to act as Divisional Commissioners. The names are given as County Inspector Walsh, County Inspector Paton, Colonel Price, General Hackett Pain, and Mr. Harold Dickinson. The last mentioned was transport officer at the North Wall during the war. General Hackett Pain was Commander-in-Chief of Sir E. Carson's "Ulster Volunteer" army, and as the Castle's "Competent Military Authority" for the district ordered the suppression of the Nationalist meeting at Caledon, County Tyrone, some months ago. Before the meeting was held he was relieved of his position as "Competent Military Authority." Colonel Price is, it is stated, to be transferred to Limerick, where he will have charge of five counties. He was intelligence officer to the Irish Command before and after the insurrection of 1916. —"Daily News."

NO NAVAL RIVALRY.

PROFESSOR STOCKLEY FIRED AT.

MARVELLOUS ESCAPE.

COURTHOUSE KEEPER SHOT DEAD.

CO. LIMERICK CONSTABLES WOUNDED.

TOOMEVARA MURDER—SECOND INQUEST

DE VALERA'S 25,000 REVIEW

PREMIER MEETS COUPON LIBERALS.

Professor Stockley was deliberately fired at by a man near his residence at Tivoli, Cork. There were five shots. One grazed the Professor's temple, one slightly injured his hand, and one penetrated his clothes and inflicted a bruise. At the Corporation Committees last night the Lord Mayor and others denounced the outrage.

Cork Board of Guardians joined in the demand for an inquiry into the Glanmire tragedy. Notice was received of a claim for £8,000 by the widow of Constable Scully.

Mr. De Valera reviewed a procession of 25,000 people, including 1,000 Indians, as it passed St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York.

Cors. Kelly, caretaker of the Cahirdaniel (Kerry) Courthouse, was shot dead by armed raiders, who carried away police bicycles.

Near Pallaskenry, Co. Limerick, Sergeant Portobello and Constable Moran were fired at and wounded.

The inquest was opened and adjourned at Limerick yesterday on Constable Healy, who was shot at Toomevara. The body passed through Cork last night on its way to Bantry. The deceased was son of a respected District Councillor.

At Mass at Toomevara Father Dooley condemned the murder in an impressive address.

Early yesterday morning there were several raids by the authorities on houses in Cork. Three arrests were made.

In the House of Commons it was stated that the Rent Restrictions Committee recommended to the Government that, subject to considerable amendments, the operation of the present Acts should be continued for a further period. Dr. Addison said the Government were prepared to accept this recommendation, and a Bill for this purpose would in due course be submitted to Parliament.

The Premier addressed the Coalition Liberals yesterday. He said if the by-elections were an index the Labour Party, or as he preferred to call them, the Socialist Party, would snatch a temporary majority if the Unionists and Liberals were in conflict. One of the aims of the Labour Party was avowedly common ownership, known in France as Communism and in Russia as Bolshevism. He asked those who suggested a Liberal-Labour Coalition if they could accept that menace to the whole fabric of society.

FROM TO-DAY'S EXPRESS

BY SPECIAL ARR (THROUGH OUR PRI

PREMIER AN MINERS

Wage Demands Di Night.

The miners' wage claim of 3s. per day for men an was advanced a stage las *conference was held at* Street. The men's case w Frank Hodges. The Pri gested that the demand should be examined in t by the Coal Controller owners, and the miners t to confer with the Coal afternoon. One of the contention is the amou surplus profits for the co agreed surplus for th March 31st is nearly miners urge that the coming year will be £70,000,000, and that the increase need not add to The Government advise the present high export maintained, and that be lessened correspon Express" Labour Corres

LABOUR AGR INCREASE O

Great Trade Un Decision

The National Federat Workers, representing a £250,000, decided at a held in London yesterda principle of payment by re bers of the Amalgamated gineers and other Unions ballotted on the same qu anticipated, the vote is effect in promoting genera creasing output in the w and engineering industries very greatest importance ments equally vital to th are in progress. Mr. H the dread of unemployme most important factors in cession for or against general scheme of "pay "Every industry in my should provide out of its for its own unemployme added to a guaranteed ganised management, up- improved methods of pr limitation of earnings, gre be secured quickly witho physical exertion by the I said yesterday, many e ing to support such an ganisation if payment by extension of the wage re agreed to."—"Daily Expre

> The two men who led the party, and who were described as tall and young, proceeded upstairs, followed by the two men who carried rifles. They knocked at the door of Mr. MacCurtain's bedroom, and inquired if he were inside. The Lord Mayor replied that he was dressing himself and would see them in a moment. They said, 'Come out here' and Lord Mayor MacCurtain, leaving his room, wearing his pants and night-shirt, was then confronted by his assailants, who, without question or warning, fired two revolver shots at him. A moan was heard and the Lord Mayor was seen to fall backwards on the landing. Immediately that the sound of shots was heard, the household was out of bed, and first help was rendered to the Lord Mayor in his prostate condition. Blood flowed copiously from his chest, and it was obvious that he was mortally wounded.

The newspaper also predicted that MacCurtain's murder would create a profound sensation throughout the country and would likely lead to a rallying of public opinion behind Sinn Féin.

Since Alderman Tomás MacCurtain, Commandant of the Cork No. 1 Brigade of the IRA, had been elected Lord Mayor there was an escalation of violence in Cork, which became the epicentre of the War of Independence. On 18 February, ex-soldier Timothy Quinlisk, was shot in nine different places at close range and his body was left at Tory Top Lane in Ballyphehane. Quinlisk, a former member of Roger Casement's Irish Brigade, had been acting as a spy and his shooting was sanctioned by the Cork No. 1 Brigade (*Irish Examiner*, 29 August 2016). On the night of 10 March, as previously mentioned, RIC District Inspector McDonagh of King Street Barracks was shot and seriously wounded while guarding ballot boxes from the Cork Corporation by-election contest between Barry Egan and Jeremiah Lane. Later in the evening, RIC officers rampaged through Cork city, ransacking homes and threatening people while brandishing rifles. Retaliation by the IRA was swift, and Constable Timothy Scully was shot dead during an attack on Glanmire Barracks on 12 March. One week later, on the night of 19 March, just a matter of hours before the murder of Lord Mayor MacCurtain, Constable Joseph Murtagh was killed



People gathering outside 40 Thomas Davis Street on the morning after the murder of Lord Mayor Tomás MacCurtain. [Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]

as he walked along Pope's Quay. When MacCurtain was informed of Murtagh's death, it is claimed by Hart (1998) that he dissociated himself from the killing and spoke of disciplining the perpetrator: 'We can't have men roaming around armed, shooting police on their own'. However, some elements of the RIC



MINER, SATURDAY MORNING, MARCH 20, 1920.

FROM TO-DAY'S "DAILY NEWS."

BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT. (THROUGH OUR PRIVATE WIRE).

NEW TREASURY BILLS.

Value Of The Pound Still Rising In New York.

ISSUE JOINED.

The Two Wings Of The Opposition And Premier.

APPALLING CRIME.

CORK LORD MAYOR SHOT DEAD

BY DISGUISED MEN

IN PRESENCE OF HIS WIFE.

DETAILS OF THE MURDER.

Early this morning the Lord Mayor of Cork was shot dead by disguised men, who forced their way into his house after the door had been opened by his wife. His Lordship received two wounds in the chest, and died in a short time.

CORK CONSTA

EIGHT BUI

U.S. SENATE

SELF-DETERMINATIO

MILITARY R

MAGISTRA

LATEST SENSATION

CORK CONSTABLE SH DEAD ON POPE'S QUAY.

Eight Bullet Wounds.

Cork Examiner, Saturday 20 March 1920 – on the right of the story about Lord Mayor Tomás MacCurtain, there's a report of the murder of Constable Joseph Murtagh which took place a few hours before the Lord Mayor was killed in his home.

blamed the spate of recent attacks on MacCurtain and decided to retaliate (White, 2020).

Immediately after MacCurtain's murder, the British suggested that he had been killed by members of the IRA as he was not radical enough and had fallen out with them (see Keane, 2017). In the hours after his death, a large group of military personnel conducted a thorough search of MacCurtain's house, including under the bed where his body lay.

A special meeting of Cork Corporation was convened for 3.00 p.m. that fateful day, Saturday 20 March. Taking the chair, Professor William Stockley explained that the meeting was informal from a legal standpoint but had been called for the purpose of expressing sympathy with the family of their late Lord Mayor. Alderman Liam De Róiste, initially speaking in Irish before reverting to English, expressed his sympathies to the wife, children and relatives of Tomás MacCurtain. He noted: 'It is a source of pride to his friends and family that the Lord Mayor died a noble and Christian death. They know that he died on behalf of the country that we all love'. Councillor Terence MacSwiney seconded the motion of sympathy and he was followed by Alderman Richard Beamish who said: 'The Lord Mayor and I did not see eye to eye on many matters, but one thing I desire to state is that I have never met a fairer man, a man who was more anxious for the advancement of the city of Cork, a man who tried most sincerely to show himself kindly and agreeably to those who did not hold his political opinions'.

The motion to hold a public funeral for Tomás MacCurtain was proposed by the new member of the Corporation, Councillor Donal O'Callaghan:

> I propose that we, the Corporation of Cork, decree a public funeral for the late Lord Mayor, to take place on Monday, after solemn High Mass at 11.00 a.m., and so as to enable the citizens to show their sorrow at this terrible event, we ask the proprietors of business houses and shops, as well as the managers of schools, to close on that day so that the citizens may take part.

O'Callaghan's motion was seconded by Professor Alfred O'Rahilly and passed unanimously. At this point, the special meeting ended. The *Cork Examiner* (22 March 1920) reported: 'During the course of the meeting, many of the speakers were visibly affected and more than one of them resumed his seat without apparently having finished what he wished to say'.

The remains of the Lord Mayor were removed from his home on Thomas Davis Street on Saturday night and brought to the City Hall where he lay in state until Sunday evening. Throughout Saturday night and Sunday, throngs

of people came to City Hall to pay their respects to the deceased Lord Mayor. On the Saturday night, when the time finally came to close the doors of City Hall, Terence MacSwiney stayed behind: 'He wanted to spend the night beside the coffin he had earlier shouldered up the steps' (Hannigan, 2010).

The details of the funeral were contained in the *Cork Examiner* on Monday morning and were printed in the name of MacCurtain's trusted chaplain, Fr. Dominic.

> **TO THE CITIZENS OF CORK**
>
> Citizens of my native city,
>
> With grieved heart, I announce to you the death of our Lord Mayor, Alderman Thomas MacCurtain, Commandant 1st Brigade of the Army of the Republic. The following arrangements have been made for his internment: -
>
> Solemn Requiem Mass, at which his Lordship the Bishop will preside, in the Cathedral at 11 a.m. after which funeral to St. Finbarr's Cemetery.
>
> The public will please observe today as a Civic Holiday to afford the Citizens an opportunity of testifying their respect for their deceased Chief Citizen, and their horror at the brutal and cowardly manner in which he was done to death.
>
> Let no provocation move the Citizens, or any one of them, to retaliation or any unseemly act. Let the utmost calmness be observed. No private individual can justify himself in punishing the evildoers.
>
> To the prayers of all I command the Soul of our departed hero, Father and Friend; and forget not his bereaved wife, children and friends.
>
> FR. DOMINIC OF CORK, OSFC

Under the heading, 'Murder Most Foul' the editorial in the *Cork Examiner* stated (22 March 1920):

> Cork is in mourning today, the shadow of crime darkens its fair streets, and the hearts of the people are heavy. Nothing that may be written can mitigate the offence of murder which doubly darkens the city's fair name. The close of last week has brought sorrow and suffering in its train and, today, the people, with bowed heads are grief-stricken and subdued in the presence of death.

In his contribution in the newspaper, Bishop Cohalan referred to two murders – Constable Murtagh on Pope's Quay and Lord Mayor MacCurtain at this

Funeral procession of Lord Mayor Tomás MacCurtain.
[Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]

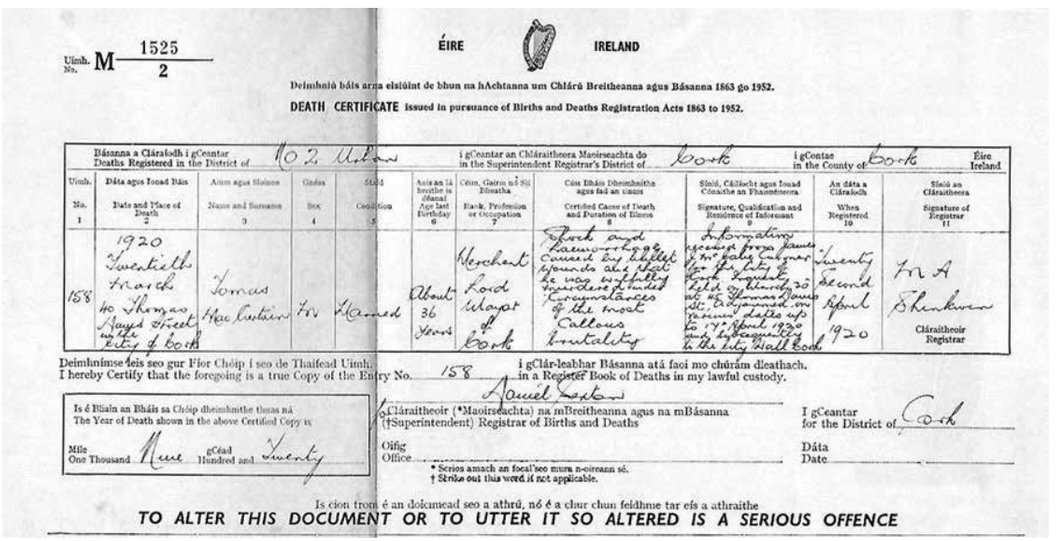


home. He condemned both atrocities and described Murtagh as 'a good Catholic and an inoffensive neighbour'.

The funeral of Tomás MacCurtain was a massive event, with an outpouring of grief by the citizens of Cork. As described by Martin (2009): 'Cork virtually closed down. Thousands of young men and women wore the tricolour crossed with black, some houses draped their windows, the theatres and places of amusement closed, and concerts, lectures and other fixtures were cancelled'. Bishop Cohalan celebrated Mass in the North Cathedral, before the cortege left for St. Finbarr's Cemetery. The *Cork Examiner* (23 March 1920) described 'a demonstration of sympathy unequalled in the history of the city'.

Donal O'Callaghan, an elected member of Cork Corporation for little over one week, was distraught at the murder of his friend and Sinn Féin colleague. When Cork Corporation convened for its scheduled fortnightly meeting on Friday 26 March, Professor William Stockley chaired a short and sombre session. After passing a resolution condemning the 'brutal murder of the Lord Mayor' and agreeing to form a provisional MacCurtain Memorial Committee, the meeting was adjourned as a mark of respect. The council would convene again the following Tuesday to elect a new Lord Mayor.

Death certificate for Lord Mayor Tomás MacCurtain, which refers to a murder of 'callous brutality'. [Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]



Uimh. No. M 1525 / 2

ÉIRE IRELAND

Deimhniú báis arna eisiúint de bhun na hAchtanna um Chláruithe Breitheanna agus Básanna 1863 go 1952.

DEATH CERTIFICATE issued in pursuance of Births and Deaths Registration Acts 1863 to 1952.

Básanna a Cláraíodh i gCeantar Deaths Registered in the District of No. 2 Union — i gCeantar an Chláraitheora Maoirseachta do in the Superintendent Registrar's District of Cork — i gContae in the County of Cork — Éire Ireland

Uimh. No. 1	Dáta agus Ionad Báis Date and Place of Death 2	Ainm agus Sloinne Name and Surname 3	Gnéas Sex 4	Staid Condition 5	Aois an lá breithe is déanaí Age last Birthday 6	Ceárd, Gairm nó Slí Bheatha Rank, Profession or Occupation 7	Cúis Bháis Dheimhnithe agus fad an ghalair Certified Cause of Death and Duration of Illness 8	Síniú, Cáilíocht agus Ionad Cónaithe an Fhaisnéiseora Signature, Qualification and Residence of Informant 9	An dáta a Cláraíodh When Registered 10	Síniú an Cláraitheora Signature of Registrar 11
158	1920 Twentieth March 40 Thomas Street in the City of Cork	Tomas Mac Curtain	Male	Married	About 36 Years	Merchant Lord Mayor of Cork	Shot and haemorrhage caused by bullet wounds as well as he was wilfully murdered under circumstances of the most Callous Brutality	Information received from James Wm Galvin Coroner for the City Cork Present at Inquest held on Thursday 20 March 1920 adjourned on various dates up to 17 April 1920 and by enquiry in the City Wall Book	Twenty Second April 1920	T M A Blankman Cláraitheoir Registrar

Deimhnímse leis seo gur Fíor Chóip í seo de Thaifead Uimh. I hereby Certify that the foregoing is a true Copy of the Entry No. 158 i gClár-leabhar Básanna atá faoi mo chúram dleathach. in a Register Book of Deaths in my lawful custody.

Samuel Foster

Is é Bliain an Bháis sa Chóip dheimhnithe thuas ná The Year of Death shown in the above Certified Copy is

Mile One Thousand Nine gCéad Hundred and Twenty

(*Cláraitheoir (*Maoirseachta) na mBreitheanna agus na mBásanna (†Superintendent) Registrar of Births and Deaths

I gCeantar for the District of Cork

Oifig Office

Dáta Date

* Scrios amach an focal seo mura n-oireann sé.
† Strike out this word if not applicable.

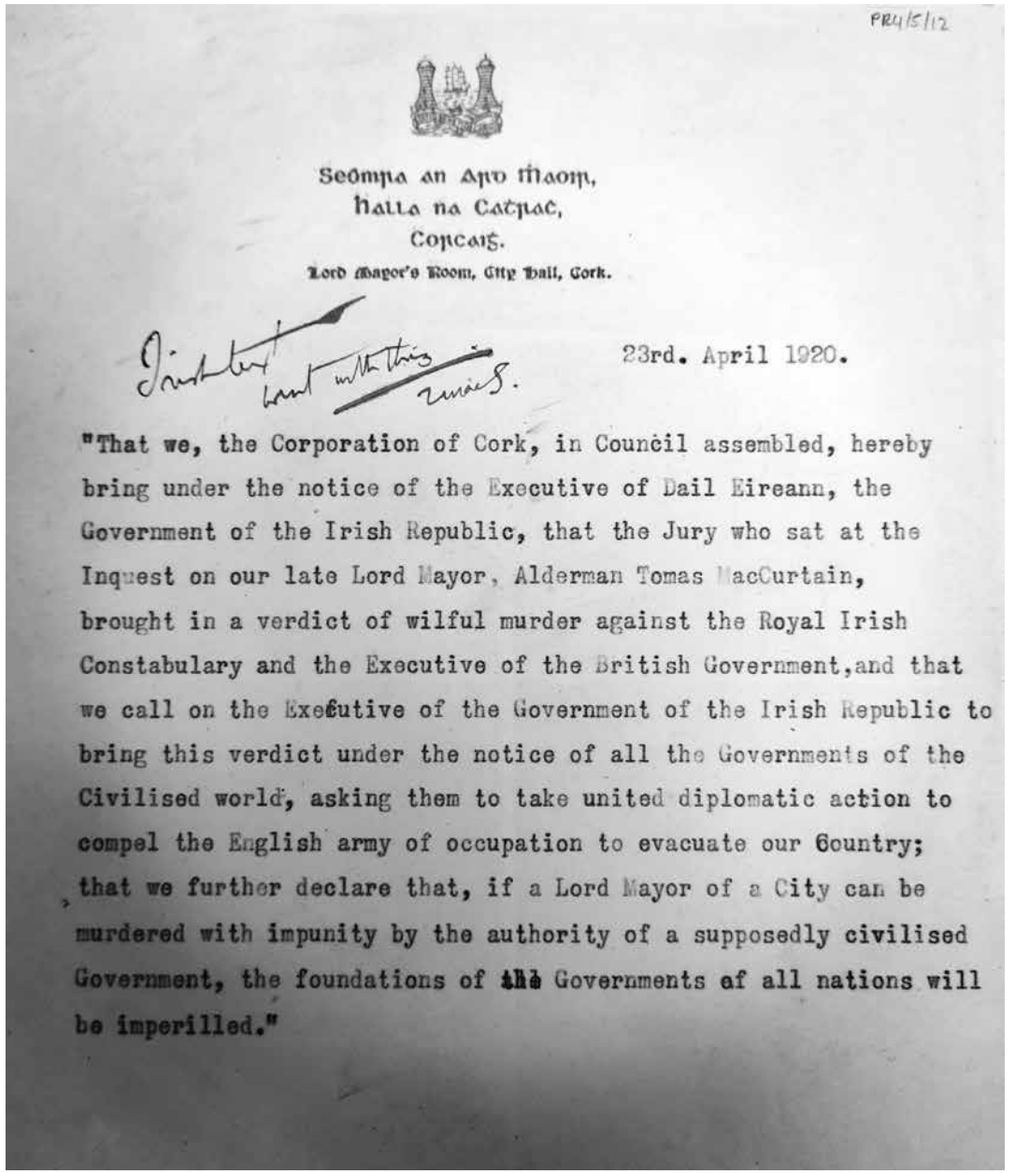
Is cion tromm é an doicimead seo a athrú, nó é a chur chun feidhme tar eis a athraithe

TO ALTER THIS DOCUMENT OR TO UTTER IT SO ALTERED IS A SERIOUS OFFENCE

A coroner's inquest into the death of Tomás MacCurtain had started on the evening of Saturday 20 March (McCarthy and O'Mahony, 2020). Just seven people answered the initial summons to appear on the jury. One of those, an ex-RIC serviceman, Mr. Sherman, withdrew just minutes before the commencement of the inquest, telling the coroner, James J. McCabe: 'I have a summons in my pocket signed by you, but if there is no objection, I'd rather be off' (*Cork Examiner*, 22 March 1920). The coroner pressed for more jurors to be found and, finally, he managed to convene a jury of sixteen men (see Keane, 2017). Over the course of an inquest with lasted nearly a month, Coroner McCabe examined ninety-seven witnesses in total, sixty-four of whom were members of the RIC. The sixteen-man jury delivered its verdict on Saturday 17 April (for a detailed account of the inquest, see McCarthy and O'Mahony, 2020).

> We find that the late Alderman MacCurtain, Lord Mayor of Cork, died from shock and haemorrhage caused by bullet wounds, and that he was wilfully murdered under circumstances of the most callous brutality, and that the murder was organised and carried out by the Royal Irish Constabulary, officially directed by the British Government, and we return a verdict of wilful murder against David Lloyd George, Prime Minister of England; Lord French, Lord Lieutenant of England; Ian McPherson, late Chief Secretary of Ireland; Acting Inspector General Smith of the Royal Irish Constabulary; Divisional Inspector Clayton of the Royal Irish Constabulary; District Inspector Swanzy and some unknown members of the Royal Irish Constabulary. We strongly condemn the system at present in vogue of carrying out raids at unreasonable hours. We tender to Mrs. MacCurtain our sincerest sympathy. We extend to the citizens of Cork our sympathy in the loss they have sustained by the death of one so eminently capable of directing civic administration.

Questions still remain about the murder of Tomás MacCurtain. Was it a locally organised retaliation after the shooting of Constable Joseph Murtagh or was it part of a wider plan to kill Sinn Féin leaders while attributing their deaths to internal feuds? (Maume, 2009). If MacCurtain's murder was retaliation



PR4/5/12

Seomra an Ard Maor,
Halla na Cathrach,
Corcaigh.
Lord Mayor's Room, City Hall, Cork.

23rd. April 1920.

"That we, the Corporation of Cork, in Council assembled, hereby bring under the notice of the Executive of Dail Eireann, the Government of the Irish Republic, that the Jury who sat at the Inquest on our late Lord Mayor, Alderman Tomas MacCurtain, brought in a verdict of wilful murder against the Royal Irish Constabulary and the Executive of the British Government, and that we call on the Executive of the Government of the Irish Republic to bring this verdict under the notice of all the Governments of the Civilised world, asking them to take united diplomatic action to compel the English army of occupation to evacuate our Country; that we further declare that, if a Lord Mayor of a City can be murdered with impunity by the authority of a supposedly civilised Government, the foundations of the Governments of all nations will be imperilled."

The resolution approved by Cork Corporation on 23 April 1920 in relation to the verdict reached at the inquest into the death of Tomás MacCurtain, Lord Mayor of Cork [Terence MacSwiney papers, courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]

for the killing of Constable Murtagh two hours earlier, could it have been organised that quickly? RIC District Inspector Oswald Swanzy was the man held responsible for ordering MacCurtain's murder. Fearful of retribution, the RIC transferred him to Lisburn in County Antrim. However, Swanzy was not safe in Lisburn. Michael Collins used his vast intelligence network – which included RIC Sergeant, Matt McCarthy – to track him down. In August 1920, Oswald Swanzy was shot dead as he left Christ Church Cathedral in Lisburn. Allegedly, the murder weapon was the revolver which had been owned by Tomás MacCurtain.

The murder of Lord Mayor, Tomás MacCurtain, was a significant event in Cork and Irish history. As noted by Maume (2009): 'MacCurtain's death represented a major escalation in violence that marked the last year of the War of Independence'.

Chapter 6
Dual Mandate

Cork City Hall was the venue for a public meeting on the afternoon of Tuesday 30 March 1920 to inaugurate a memorial fund for the widow and family of Tomás MacCurtain. Bishop Cohalan chaired the meeting before a very large crowd. He stated that everyone present was sad that such a tragic event had brought them together. In his view, Cork had lost an intelligent man, an upright man and an unselfish man. The Bishop explained that the objective was to erect a monument to the late Lord Mayor. To that purpose, he appealed to all citizens – irrespective of creed or class – to support the fund. Alderman Liam de Róiste proposed the title, 'The MacCurtain Memorial Fund' and a special committee was formed to start the process of raising money. Key personnel of the Corporation were appointed to the committee, including the Town Clerk, City Solicitor, City Engineer and the Lord Mayor's Secretary.

At the end of the gathering, City Hall was readied for the meeting of Cork Corporation at 7.00 p.m., convened to elect a new Lord Mayor. The public gallery was full by the time Professor William Stockley called the meeting to order. Alderman Liam de Róiste proposed his Sinn Féin colleague, Councillor Terence MacSwiney, for the office of Lord Mayor. Alderman Tadhg Barry seconded the motion and Sir John Scott also spoke in support of the nomination. With no other candidate proposed, Professor Stockley, amidst great applause, declared Terence MacSwiney unanimously elected. Having been invested with the chain of office, the new Lord Mayor commenced his speech in Irish, saying that his remarks would be brief. He solemnly noted (*Cork Examiner*, 31 March 1920):

> The circumstances of the vacancy in the office of Lord Mayor govern inevitably the filling of it. I come here more of a solider, stepping into the breach, than an administrator to fill the first post in the municipality. At a normal time, it would be your duty to find for this post the councillor most practiced and experienced in public affairs. But the time is not normal. We see in the manner our late Lord Mayor was murdered an attempt to terrify us all. Our first duty is to answer that threat in the only fitting manner by showing ourselves unterrified, cool and inflexible for the fulfilment of our chief purpose – the establishment of the independence and integrity of our country, the peace and happiness of our country. To that end, I am here. I was more closely associated than any other here with our late murdered friend and colleague, both before and since the events of Easter week, in prison and out of prison, in a common work of love for Ireland, down to the hour of his death. For that reason, I take his place.

Despite the promise of brevity, Lord Mayor MacSwiney proceeded to deliver a lengthy speech. In addressing the national issue, he stated: 'This contest of ours is not, on our side, a rivalry of vengeance, but one of endurance. It is not they who can inflict most, but they who can suffer most, will conquer'. In a rousing finish to his speech, the Lord Mayor described their struggle as a holy one and predicted that victory was assured due to the martyrdom of people like Tomás MacCurtain. The meeting ended soon after, following the fixing of the Mayoral salary at £500. Subsequently, Lord Mayor MacSwiney announced the gift of £250 from his salary to the MacCurtain Memorial Fund.

On the day after his election, the new Lord Mayor fired off a letter to the *Cork Examiner*, complaining of how the newspaper had reported his inauguration speech.

The Lord Mayor did not specify precisely what issues he had with the coverage of his speech but he was laying down a marker with the *Cork Examiner*. Michael Collins, the Dáil's Finance Minister, was one of the first people to congratulate Cork's new Lord Mayor on the honour that had been bestowed on him by his fellow councillors. Alluding to the death of Tomás MacCurtain, Collins wrote (31 March 1920): 'Many thoughts will arise at this

time in the circumstances of the election but, it will serve if I just say that we all feel the best selection has been made'.

To the Editor, 'Examiner'
Lord Mayor's Room
Cork City Hall
31st March, 1920

Sir,

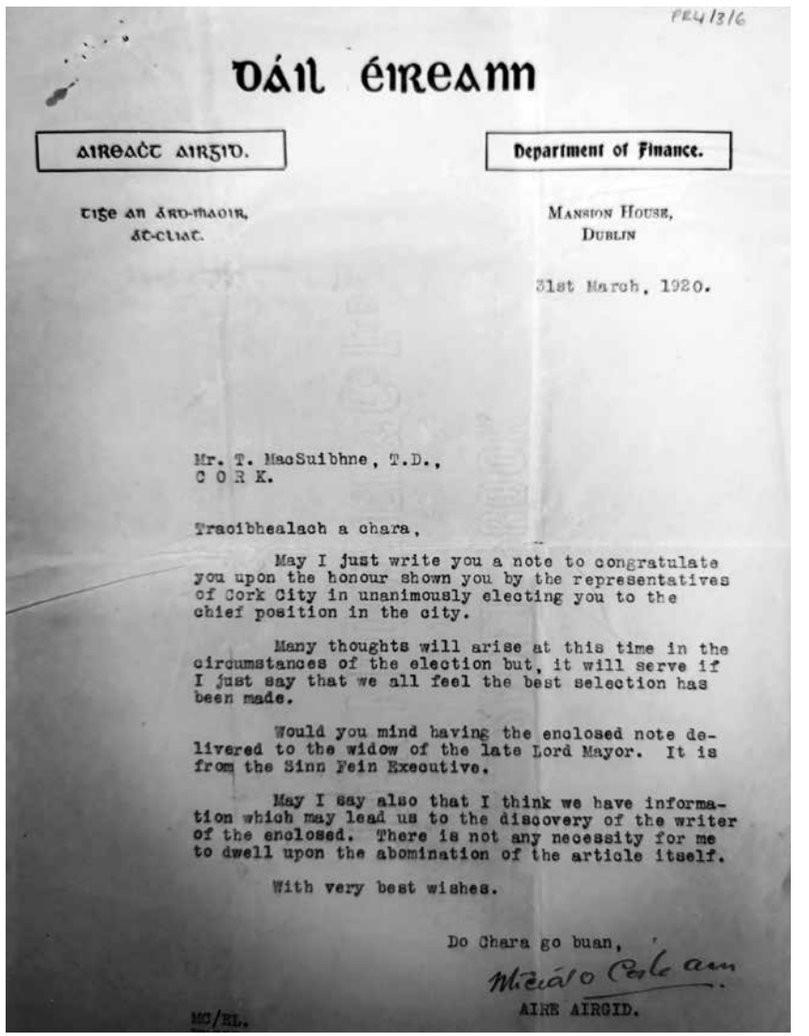
I find in reading your report of what I said at last night's meeting of the Corporation that you have been guilty of the unpardonable conduct of, in places, altering my words, and substituting others of your own, which you publish as spoken by me. This would be a serious liberty to take in any circumstances, but in one particular instance, you make me responsible for what would be an act of presumption if the situation stood simply as you report it. I lay the blame on your representative because, labouring as I did under a heavy cold, and unable to make myself heard clearly, I wrote what I had to say, and I gave a copy in my own writing to him. So the alterations did not arise from any error in his reporting.

I realise in publishing my exact words you might take a risk. You could, in the alternative, have published nothing, and I would not have troubled you with a letter about it. But to substitute words of your own for mine, and publish them as mine, is another matter.

Mise,

Toirdhealbhach Mac Suibhne
Ard Mhaor

In fact, Collins also wrote to MacSwiney the previous day, expressing relief at having received a note from him saying that he was going to carry on with public life and had agreed to let his name go forward for the Mayoralty. In the days after the murder of his close friend, Tomás MacCurtain, MacSwiney had given serious consideration to walking away from political life. In his congratulatory letter of 31 March, Collins referred to having information which could lead to the discovery of the writer of an article in the English *Daily Mail* newspaper, which claimed that MacCurtain had been the victim of Sinn Féin vengeance.



FE4/3/6

Dáil Éireann

AIREACT AIRGID.

Department of Finance.

Tigh an Ard-Maoir,
Ath-Cliath.

Mansion House,
Dublin

31st March, 1920.

Mr. T. MacSuibhne, T.D.,
C O R K.

Tracibhealach a chara,

May I just write you a note to congratulate you upon the honour shown you by the representatives of Cork City in unanimously electing you to the chief position in the city.

Many thoughts will arise at this time in the circumstances of the election but, it will serve if I just say that we all feel the best selection has been made.

Would you mind having the enclosed note delivered to the widow of the late Lord Mayor. It is from the Sinn Fein Executive.

May I say also that I think we have information which may lead us to the discovery of the writer of the enclosed. There is not any necessity for me to dwell upon the abomination of the article itself.

With very best wishes.

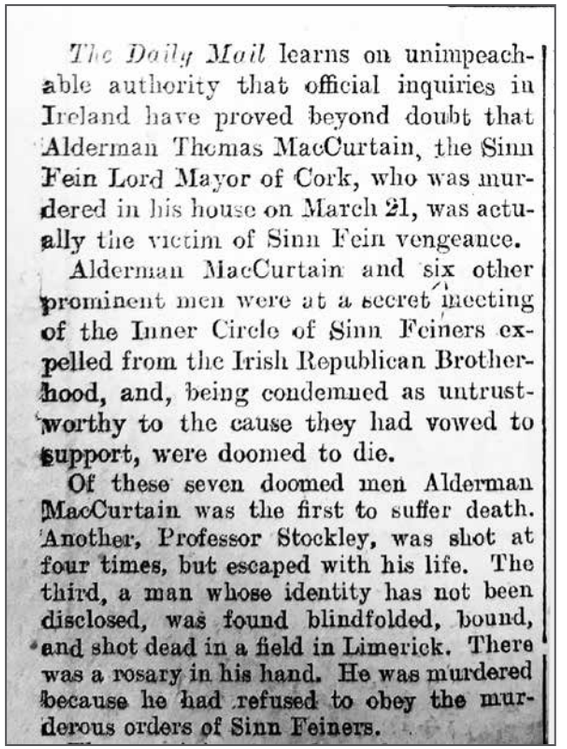
Do Chara go buan,

Micheál O Coileain

AIRE AIRGID.

MC/EL.

Previous page: Letter from Michael Collins to Terence MacSwiney, 31 March 1920. At the end, the letter refers to an article in the *Daily Mail*, right, claiming that Sinn Féin had murdered Tomás MacCurtain. [Terence MacSwiney papers, courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]



The Daily Mail learns on unimpeachable authority that official inquiries in Ireland have proved beyond doubt that Alderman Thomas MacCurtain, the Sinn Fein Lord Mayor of Cork, who was murdered in his house on March 21, was actually the victim of Sinn Fein vengeance.

Alderman MacCurtain and six other prominent men were at a secret meeting of the Inner Circle of Sinn Feiners expelled from the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and, being condemned as untrustworthy to the cause they had vowed to support, were doomed to die.

Of these seven doomed men Alderman MacCurtain was the first to suffer death. Another, Professor Stockley, was shot at four times, but escaped with his life. The third, a man whose identity has not been disclosed, was found blindfolded, bound, and shot dead in a field in Limerick. There was a rosary in his hand. He was murdered because he had refused to obey the murderous orders of Sinn Feiners.

During this period of time, Donal O'Callaghan was settling into his role as a local councillor. His contributions to Corporation meetings in the first half of 1920 were few and far between. One matter which he strongly supported was the re-election of Kuno Meyer as a Freeman of Cork in May 1920. German-born Meyer was conferred with the Freedom of Cork on 25 September 1912, along with his friend and fellow Irish writer, Canon Peadar Ó Laoghaire. Meyer was recognised by Cork Corporation for the work he had done in the cause of reviving the Irish language. However, on 8 January 1915, his name was expunged from the roll of honorary freemen due to his pro-German speeches in America. In moving the motion, Independent councillor, William Hart, argued that the members of the Corporation could not permit on their roll of freemen 'a man who attacked Ireland and glorified the people with whom she was at war' (*The Irish Times*, 9 January 1915). Even though a direct negative to motion was tabled, Councillor Hart's motion was passed by twenty-four votes to three and the name of Kuno Meyer was removed from the freedom roll. More than five years later, on 14 May 1920, Sinn Féin councillor, Michael O'Cuill proposed that the 1915 resolution should be rescinded and that the name of Kuno Meyer (seven months after his death) be restored to the roll. Donal O'Callaghan seconded the motion, referring to Meyer's outstanding work as an Irish scholar. There was one strident dissenting voice, in the form of Councillor Gerald Byrne, ex-Soldiers and Sailors, who argued that he had gone out to fight the Germans and Kuno Meyer was a German whose kinsmen had murdered thousands of Irishmen. Lord Mayor, Councillor Terence MacSwiney, asserted that a debate was not necessary: 'We can sympathise with Councillor Byrne's feelings without agreeing with him'. He then criticised the Corporation members in 1915 who voted to expunge Meyer from the roll of freeman: 'Our predecessors, by that act of theirs, showed ignorance as well as prejudice, and their unfitness to represent the people'. The motion of Michael O'Cuill and Donal O'Callaghan was then passed, with Councillor Byrne as the sole objector. The Corporation's decision to restore Meyer's honour was reported in *The New York Times* on 16 May and received generally favourable commentary in the national and international press (Quinlivan, 2013).

At the same meeting, 14 May 1920, Lord Mayor MacSwiney tabled a motion that 'a deputation of four be appointed to attend at Rome on the occasion of the Beatification of Oliver Plunkett, martyred by the English Government'. Pope Benedict XV had fixed the Beatification ceremony for Sunday 23 May. The City Solicitor, Daniel J. Galvin, informed the elected members that Cork Corporation could not pay the expenses of the deputation. The Lord Mayor replied that he understood this. A deputation of four members was then appointed as follows:

- Lord Mayor, Councillor Terence MacSwiney – Sinn Féin
- Alderman, Professor William Stockley – Sinn Féin
- Councillor Donal O'Callaghan – Sinn Féin
- Councillor Simon Daly – Sinn Féin

When Sir John Scott expressed his gratification at the passing of the motion, an irate Alderman Tadhg Barry stated: 'I am sure, in the days of Oliver Plunkett, somebody conniving at those who martyred him spoke in such manner as we have just listened to. It is time we woke up to the idea that such

codology must stop. The same government that martyred Oliver Plunkett killed Tomás MacCurtain, and we do not want to hear any more hypocritical nonsense from those who sympathise by their acts with the murderers of Tomás MacCurtain'. Sir John Scott rejected the comments of Alderman Barry, saying that he did not sympathise with the murderers of Tomás MacCurtain. He supported the resolution for the delegation to go to Rome as a mark of respect. The Lord Mayor then raised a practical issue – the necessity for the four members of the delegation to acquire passports. He explained that he would try to get passports directly from the Italian Government, adding: 'You can all understand that I will not be going for a passport thorough the ordinary formalities of attending the nearest police barracks on King Street'. Councillor Donal O'Callaghan, addressing the meeting in Irish, suggested that the four members of the deputation proceed as far as they could without passports and, if they were not allowed to go the whole way, they should send a message to Rome explaining their difficulties. This was unanimously approved. The elected members then agreed to change the name of George's Street to Oliver Plunkett Street.

As Donal O'Callaghan prepared for his trip to Rome, he had other matters on his mind, most notably the upcoming elections for Cork County Council. Though he had only taken his seat in City Hall in March, the ambitious O'Callaghan was targeting a place on Cork County Council as well. Following the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1919, the Local Government Board had restructured the system in Cork county and the council was now to have fifty-two members – thirty-two elected members, eighteen Rural District Council representatives and two co-opted members (Marnane, 1999). The eight new electoral areas from which thirty-two councillors would be elected were:

Ballincollig	4	Kanturk	4
Bandon	4	Macroom	3
Bantry	4	Mallow	5
Dunmanway	3	Queenstown	5

Polling day for the elections to Cork County Council was 2 June 1920, but only three of the eight electoral areas were contested. In the other five electoral areas, withdrawals left the Sinn Féin candidates unopposed. As Marnane (1999) notes: 'How much pressure or intimidation was brought to bear on candidates to stand down is difficult to establish'. An editorial in the *Cork County Eagle* (29 May) stressed: 'There are no elections because elections were made impossible; that is all need now be said'. The editorial also referred to 'the devices by which this unanimity of selection was achieved'. The *Cork Examiner* (13 May) took a more positive stance: 'The withdrawals have occasioned a feeling of relief for, in the peculiar circumstances of the time, and having regard to the political tenseness underlying national aspirations, an election campaign would be fraught with much unpleasantness'.

With regard to the Dunmanway electoral area, the *Cork County Eagle* (15 May) reported:

> All the old members of the Dunmanway Rural District Council having retired, there will be no contest and the Sinn Féin nominees will be returned unopposed. For the coming three years therefore, the Board of Guardians and the Rural District Council will be composed exclusively of Sinn Féiners, practically all of whom are young men of no means, it being 'according to plan' not to nominate anyone of financial standing, save in a few exceptional cases, the idea underlying the 'plan' being to ignore the Local Government Board in practically all matters and making it impossible to recover any surcharges that may be made by that body.

Donal O'Callaghan sought a seat in Ballincollig, which was one of the contested electoral areas. Competition though was limited, with just five candidates for the four vacancies. On 2 June, election day, the *Cork Examiner* listed the five candidates as:

- Joseph Barrett – Farmer
- Patrick Murphy – Farmer
- Donal O'Callaghan – Accountant
- Patrick Buckley – Labourer
- William Murphy – Landowner

The landowner, William Murphy, stood as an Independent candidate, while the four others represented Sinn Féin (Patrick Buckley was listed as Sinn Féin and Transport Workers). Bizarrely, after the close of nominations, William Murphy wrote to the press stating that he did not intend to be a candidate and he asked the electors of Ballincollig not to vote for him. Counting of votes commenced at 3.00 p.m. on Thursday 3 June in the Grand Jury Room of the Courthouse, under the supervision of the Returning Officer, Michael Kirwan. He was assisted by Michael Mehigan, who had recently returned from a spell in Wormwood Scrubs. Mehigan was arrested in February and his imprisonment was questioned in the House of Commons by Lieutenant Commander Joseph Kenworthy, a Liberal Member of Parliament (Hansard, House of Commons, 11 March 1920). He asked the Chief Secretary to Ireland, Ian Macpherson MP:

> Why Mr. Michael Mehigan was arrested at his home, Blackrock, Cork, on the night of 1st February and deported to Wormwood Scrubs Prison on 15th February; whether he is aware that Mr. Mehigan is the Returning Officer appointed by the Cork County Council for the council and local elections to be held in June next; why documents dealing with the proportional representation system of election were taken from his house; whether Mr. Mehigan will be brought to trial; and, if not, whether he will be released in time for the elections in June?

Macpherson replied that Mehigan was arrested under the terms of the Defence of the Realm Regulations 'as a person suspected of having acted, and being about to act in a manner prejudicial to the public safety and the defence of the Realm'. He confirmed that Mehigan would not face trial and he was subsequently released in time for the Cork County Council elections.

With William Murphy having effectively withdrawn from the contest, there was no great drama surrounding the counting of votes for the Ballincollig electoral area. Votes were cast by 8,664 people and the quota was set at 1,672. Donal O'Callaghan comfortably exceeded the quota on the first count. Patrick Buckley and Joseph Barrett also reached the quota, while Patrick Murphy fell just short but was still elected. Despite urging people not to vote for him, William Murphy still attracted sixty first preference votes.

Cork County Council Elections, 2 June 1920
Ballincollig Electoral Area
Four seats available; quota of 1,672

Donal O'Callaghan	3,173
Patrick Buckley	1,911
Joseph Barrett	1,694
Patrick Murphy	1,517
William Murphy	60

To no one's surprise, Sinn Féin achieved a clean sweep in the area. As Donal O'Callaghan was not present in the Courthouse, party colleague, Séamus Kelleher, spoke on his behalf. After thanking Michael Kirwan and Michael Mehigan for their efficiency, he argued that due to the present crisis in the history of the country, it was unfair to be thrown into an unnecessary election. Indeed, the election was farcical as William Murphy was not a genuine candidate.

Having decided at the start of the year not to contest the January elections for Cork Corporation, Donal O'Callaghan now found himself, six months later, a member of both the Corporation and the County Council. He was joined on the County Council by his Sinn Féin City Hall colleague, Michael O'Cuill, who had been nominated as a representative of the Rural District Councils. Before the first statutory meeting of the new County Council on 19 June, Donal O'Callaghan attended the regular meeting of Cork Corporation on Friday 11 June. At the meeting, he spoke about his recent trip to Rome for the Beatification of Oliver Plunkett. The delegation from the Corporation had attended the ceremony, with the notable exception of Lord Mayor MacSwiney who remained in Cork due to concerns for his safety and difficulties in securing a passport. Donal O'Callaghan told his fellow elected members:

> There is no need to make a report to the council but I would like to say that we attended a splendid series of Republican functions. The spirit amongst the Irish people in Rome is magnificent. There is one very painful and very serious thing that I wish to direct attention to in connection with the matter. It is the fact that the delegation to Rome and the entire events of the week in Rome have been

> absolutely boycotted by the press in Ireland and by none more so than by that section of the press which prides itself as the champion of nationalism and Catholicism. I think it is right to comment on that. Despite the outstanding importance of the events of the week in Rome, none of the papers in Ireland, either individually, or collectively, thought fit to send a representative to Rome and they failed to get decent reports, or tolerably decent reports, for the people of Ireland of events in which they took the keenest interest. I contrast the attitude of the press towards the events in Rome with the treatment it extended to delegations sent in other days and in other circumstances and with other views, to Cork or Blarney or Blackrock. We now know how deeply entrenched in bigoted anti-nationalism the daily papers are. It throws a glaring light on their rooted hostility to the Irish language at home. It enables the people to see why it is that the one living, powerful and active influence against the Irish language today is the rooted hostility of the press, which has to be forced and dragged to do the smallest atom of justice. I hope that the day will very soon come when we can remedy the defect and fittingly reward the malignancy and infidelity of these papers.

Lord Mayor MacSwiney supported the comments of O'Callaghan, adding: 'Notwithstanding the propaganda and the lies of the English press, the feeling in Rome is unanimously in favour of the Irish Republic'. The passionate speech delivered by Donal O'Callaghan about the lack of press coverage for the Rome trip was his first major contribution in City Hall. Having found his feet, he was emerging as a strong councillor and a supportive ally for the likes of Lord Mayor MacSwiney, Liam de Róiste and Michael O'Cuill. His next challenge would be to conquer the County Council.

Chapter 7
County Council Chairman

In advance of the first meeting of the newly elected Cork County Council, violent episodes continued across Cork city and county. On 12 June, members of the IRA murdered RIC Constable, Thomas King, in Bantry. This was in apparent retaliation as it was reported that Constable King had taken part in the murder of IRA men at Bouladuff (The Ragg), County Tipperary. Attorney-General, Denis Hurley, told the House of Commons on 17 June: 'Constable King was murdered near Bantry on Saturday evening last, when returning in plain clothes on a bicycle to the barracks at Glengarriff. He was fired at and wounded, he then escaped and hid in a farmer's house, but was followed, dragged outside and shot dead. He was on leave of absence at the time. He had served four years in the Navy, and took part in the Battle of Jutland' (Hansard, House of Commons, 17 June 1920).

The first meeting of the new Cork County Council took place on Saturday 19 June and drew a large crowd to the Council Chamber of the Courthouse. The excitement surrounding the meeting was heightened by the fact that only four of the fifty-two councillors were members prior to the June election – Liam Jones, William Rice Kent, Michael Walsh and John Dineen (Marnane, 1999). Outgoing Chairman, William Rice Kent – whose brother David was a Sinn Féin TD for Cork East – opened the meeting. He said that it gave him great pleasure and pride to welcome the new elected members and he expressed the confidence that all would discharge their duties with ability and with credit to the country. He then called on nominations for the office of Chairman. Speaking in Irish, Councillor Peadar O'Hourihane proposed

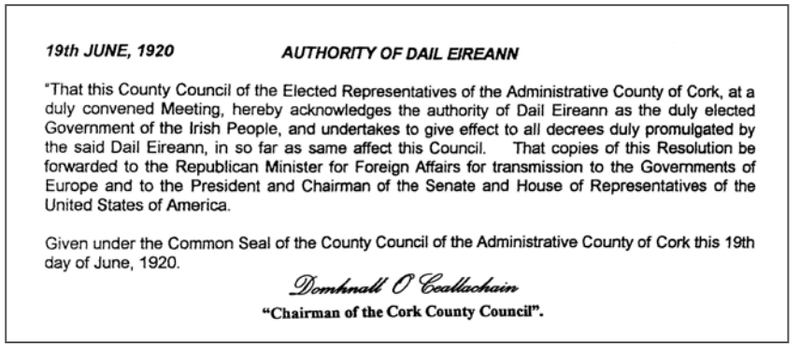
Donal O'Callaghan for the position. This was seconded by Councillor Michael O'Sullivan, who also addressed the meeting in Irish. As no other candidates were nominated, Donal O'Callaghan was duly confirmed as the Chairman of Cork County Council.

Accepting the position, O'Callaghan told his fellow councillors in Irish: 'Everything we do in this council will be seen entirely in the light of our loyalty to Dáil Éireann, the Government of the Irish Republic. Secondly, our outlook and the spirit actuating us, will be the restoration of the Irish language to its proper place. It is a matter of regret that the business of the council cannot be altogether done in Irish, but as much as possible will be'.

Reflecting these two positions, the council passed two important resolutions. The first was a declaration of allegiance to Dáil Éireann as the elected government of the Irish people. It was proposed by Councillor Peadar O'Hourihane, seconded by Councillor Edmond Condon and passed unanimously. The second resolution, which was also passed unanimously, called on all school managers, principals and head masters to have the education programme of the Gaelic League introduced into the schools under their charge; it also called on all parents to send their children to schools in which Irish was properly taught.

Councillor O'Donovan then addressed the meeting and referred to the fact that after the Easter Rising of 1916, their predecessors on Cork County Council had passed a resolution condemning the rebellion and pledging allegiance to his Majesty, King George. He called on the new council of 1920 to rescind that resolution. A short break in proceedings ensued, while the Secretary left the chamber to retrieve the minute book for 1916. On his return, he read aloud the resolution passed by the council on 26 April 1916: 'That we, the Cork County Council, beg to assure his Majesty the King, of our loyal support in the war and in the government of our country, and we are of the opinion that the outbreak in Dublin has been largely caused by the differential treatment given to Sir Edward Carson and his followers by the Government'. Councillor O'Donovan shouted: 'Tear it out and burn it'. Amid loud applause, Chairman Donal O'Callaghan erased the minute and officially rescinded it. He added: 'It is painful to think that there was such a collection of renegades to such a resolution'.

Councillor O'Keane then asked the Secretary to read out the wording of a resolution passed in May 1916 asking that martial law be continued. The



19th JUNE, 1920 ***AUTHORITY OF DAIL EIREANN***

"That this County Council of the Elected Representatives of the Administrative County of Cork, at a duly convened Meeting, hereby acknowledges the authority of Dail Eireann as the duly elected Government of the Irish People, and undertakes to give effect to all decrees duly promulgated by the said Dail Eireann, in so far as same affect this Council. That copies of this Resolution be forwarded to the Republican Minister for Foreign Affairs for transmission to the Governments of Europe and to the President and Chairman of the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America.

Given under the Common Seal of the County Council of the Administrative County of Cork this 19th day of June, 1920.

Domhnall O Ceallachain

"Chairman of the Cork County Council".

One of Donal O'Callaghan's first actions as Chairman of Cork County Council was to sign a resolution of the council pledging allegiance to Dáil Éireann as the elected government of the Irish people.

Secretary was in the middle of reading it out when Chairman O'Callaghan interrupted by asking: 'Is there much more to it?' The Secretary replied: 'Yes', which led to the Chairman saying: 'That will do'. He then erased that resolution too, which led to more applause and cheering.

A motion was then proposed by Councillor Brisbane pledging practical support to the trade unionists who were on strike 'as a result of their refusal to handle munitions of war for the enemy army of occupation in the country'. The Chairman supported the motion, stating:

> This is a most important and serious matter. The labour men concerned have behaved in a most admirable manner. There is, however, a danger that the people of the country are not taking the interest they ought to in such an important matter. It would, indeed, be most lamentable if the country were to turn down such men or to allow their cause to be dropped. I am sure that the country appreciates their position and will do everything needed to bring their fight to a successful conclusion. I have received a letter from the Lord Mayor (Councillor Terence MacSwiney) stating that he intends to raise the question at the next meeting of the Corporation and advocating moral and material support for the men on strike. Such a fight should make everyone realise that the national and labour fight for freedom are phases of one common fight.

On the question of practical support, the Law Adviser told the members that money could not be taken from council funds to support the strikers. The councillors accepted the Chairman's suggestion that each member should organise a collection in his own district. After further discussion, it was agreed that a minimum rate of one penny in the pound should be collected by the councillor for each district and a progress report submitted to the next meeting. This ended Donal O'Callaghan's first meeting in Cork County Council, a meeting at which politics dominated every discussion.

The following Tuesday, 22 June, Cork Corporation lost one of its members when John Desmond passed away. He had been elected in South Area No. 2 for the Irish Nationalist Party. His brother, William Desmond, was also a member of the Corporation. When the Corporation met on Friday, the death of Councillor John Desmond featured prominently. Lord Mayor, Councillor Terence MacSwiney, proposed the adjournment of the meeting as a mark of respect, once a number of pieces of business were concluded. The first was another resolution pledging allegiance to Dáil Éireann. The Lord Mayor explained that the original resolution from the meeting of 30 January had been recorded in English and, owing to 'a slight verbal alteration' he wanted to propose two new motions, one in Irish and one in English. His proposal was seconded by Alderman Liam de Róiste and passed unanimously. The second business of the meeting was to appoint a member to the Harbour Board – on the proposal of Alderman de Róiste, as seconded by Councillor Michael O'Cuill, Councillor Barry Egan was unanimously elected.

At this point, the Lord Mayor expressed his sympathy on the death of Councillor John Desmond and he called on a proposer and seconder for the adjournment of the meeting. Councillors Michael O'Cuill and Donal O'Callaghan duly obliged. Fr. Dominic, chaplain to the Corporation, said he deeply sympathised with Councillor William Desmond and his family, adding: 'Every young man is a loss to the country at this moment, especially one who has been elected to represent the people'. The resolution to adjourn the meeting was then passed in silence. Despite agreeing to adjourn the meeting, the councillors spoke on a couple of other matters. Sir John Scott congratulated Donal O'Callaghan on his unanimous election as Chairman of Cork County Council: 'Personally, I am greatly pleased for I do not believe a better selection could be made. I am sure the ratepayers of the county will be safe in his hands'. O'Callaghan thanked Scott in Irish. Congratulations were then offered to Alderman Frederick Murray on his return to City Hall after a spell in prison. Alderman Liam de Róiste stated: 'The incarceration of Alderman Murray shows that the English authorities have no regard for law, justice or order. When they put an innocent man – an Alderman of this council – into prison and keep him there for over a year, and then ultimately let him out without bringing him to any trial, shows the state of law in this country under British rule'. The Lord Mayor welcomed Alderman Murray and expressed the wish: 'I hope we will all be here for a long time with Alderman Murray, when the enemy is gone and done with'. Murray thanked the elected members for their cordial welcome and their support while he was incarcerated.

In addition to his roles on Cork Corporation and Cork County Council, Donal O'Callaghan was a prominent member of the Republican or Dáil Courts. After the establishment of the first Dáil in January 1919, the British system of justice was replaced by Irish Republican courts. These Courts were described in 1923 by Minister for Home Affairs, Kevin O'Higgins, as follows: 'You had through the country an improvised system of justice which was forged more as a weapon against the British administration in exceptional times and exceptional circumstances than as a definite system which would meet and answer the needs of normal times'. In May 1920, the Dáil formally adopted the Courts and they were placed under the Department of Agriculture; an indication of their initial function as a means of resolving land disputes. However, in June 1920, the Republican authorities upped the stakes, transferring the authority over the Courts to the Ministry for Home Affairs under Austin Stack. The Dáil Courts were now to be seen as criminal and civil courts, declared to have the right to administer law in place of the British courts (Dorney, 2019). In Cork, Bishop Daniel Cohalan expressed his support for the Dáil Courts, arguing that they had almost entirely supplanted the other courts in the country, adding: 'The capacity for government exhibited by Sinn Féin has won the recognition and admiration of friend and foe' (Heffernan, 2004).

On Friday 11 June, Donal O'Callaghan presided over a slander case in which Daniel Donovan, Church Road, Whitechurch was the plaintiff. The defendant was Rev. Father Philip Sheehan, also of Whitechurch. Fr. Sheehan had accused Donovan of burgling his house. He refused to apologise for the accusation and this prompted Donovan to bring a case for slander against the priest. The proceedings were open to the public and attracted a great deal of interest. The case had previously been heard in the Four Courts in Dublin

but the jury was unable to agree on a verdict. The case was listed again for the following week in Dublin, but the Republican Court had stepped in to try to find a resolution. The Court consisted of Donal O'Callaghan (President), Seán Jennings and Seán Nolan.

When the Clerk of the Court called on Daniel Donovan to give evidence, there was no response. Donal O'Callaghan, in his role as President of the Court, asked who was responsible for summoning the plaintiff. The Town Clerk replied: 'The Lord Mayor'. O'Callaghan then ordered that Lord Mayor MacSwiney should appear before the Court. After an interval, MacSwiney arrived and stated that the plaintiff had agreed to accept arbitration from the Republican Court. The hearing was adjourned for a couple of hours and, when it resumed, the plaintiff, Daniel Donovan, was present. He stated his case that Rev. Fr. Sheehan had slandered him by claiming that he broke into the priest's house during Mass and stole money. Fr. Sheehan had called to Daniel Donovan's house where he was confronted by the plaintiff's mother. She told the priest: 'You are making my son out to be a robber and disgracing him all over the parish'. Fr. Sheehan allegedly replied: 'I will disgrace him more, and tell him if I catch him in my premises between now and next Sunday, I will shoot him dead. Also, tell him to come up to the churchyard next Sunday after last Mass and I will hold a court-martial on him in the presence of the congregation and I will let the public know who took my money'. Subsequent to this altercation, a meeting was arranged between the plaintiff and the defendant. Holding a prayer book in his hand, Fr. Sheehan told Daniel Donovan that he would teach him Christian doctrine and he denied having ever accused him of stealing. Donovan stated that he wanted a public apology from the priest in the local newspapers. An angry Fr. Sheehan refused the request.

The dispute between the two men had escalated and the Republican Court had convened to resolve the matter. However, Daniel Donovan announced that he had received inadequate notice of the hearing and he was not willing to abide by the decision of the Court. When pressed by Donal O'Callaghan, Donovan explained: 'I would rather have the case tried here by the Republican Court but it has been going on for thirteen months and will be heard again in Dublin next week'. Fr. Sheehan stated that he was happy to abide by a decision made by the Republican Court but, with Daniel Donovan insisting that the case was scheduled to be heard in Dublin the following week, an exasperated Donal O'Callaghan announced his verdict:

> I will give the Court's findings in the case as it stands. The Court is strongly of the opinion that there is no reason why Mr. Donovan should carry the case to a foreign court in Dublin. We are of the opinion that his first consent and subsequent refusal to accept a Republican tribunal amounts to virtual contempt of court. In view of the attitude adopted by the plaintiff in not going on with the case, we cannot give a judgement, but you will find that the expression of opinion from the Court covers judgement provisionally. I suggest to the plaintiff, Mr. Donovan, that he should go and see the Lord Mayor and have an interview with him.

Donal O'Callaghan (centre) with Seán Nolan and Seán Jennings, adjudicating over the case between Daniel Donovan and Fr. Philip Sheehan, believed to be the first Republican Court held in public in Ireland. [Courtesy of National Museum of Ireland]



Donal O'Callaghan was extremely frustrated at the plaintiff's resolve in having the case heard in the Four Courts as opposed to the local Republican Court. However, following the intervention of Lord Mayor MacSwiney, Daniel Donovan eventually agreed to cancel the proceedings in the Four Courts and have the matter adjudicated by the Republican Court.

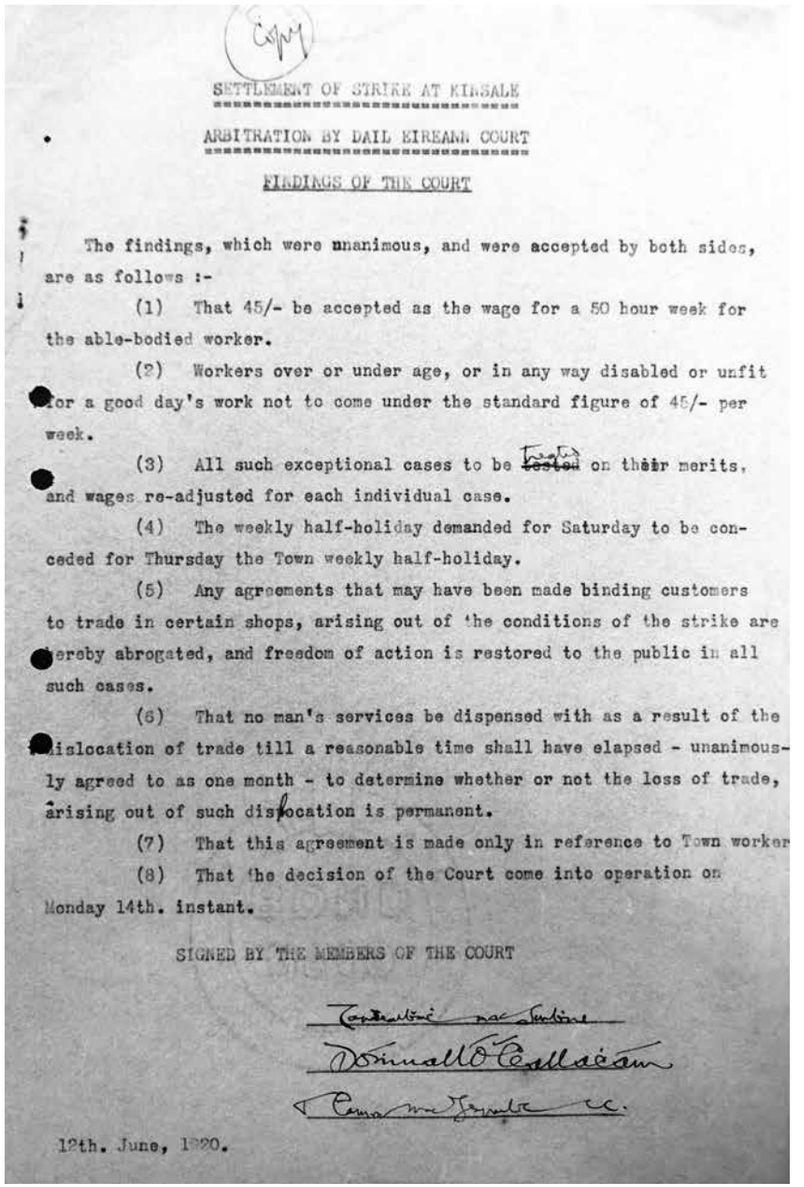
A large crowd gathered in the Council Chamber of Cork County Council the following Thursday, 17 June, for the resumption of the case before Donal O'Callaghan (President), Seán Jennings and Seán Nolan. Detailed, and often contradictory, testimony was provided over two days, before Donal O'Callaghan announced the verdict. He began by stating (*Cork Examiner*, 19 June 1920):

> Before announcing the findings, I wish to say that the Court is unanimous that it is a matter of regret that a case of this kind, so simple in its inception and, at the same time, having such grave possibilities, was not settled amicably at the start. I also wish to comment on the manner in which the evidence was given. A large number of the witnesses – in fact, the majority – did not tell the whole truth so far as they knew it in connection with the case. We are satisfied that important evidence was withheld by many of the witnesses.

O'Callaghan then announced the verdict in favour of the plaintiff, Daniel Donovan. He criticised Fr. Sheehan for 'labouring under a state of great excitement' but also condemned Donovan for 'unnecessarily aggravating' the case. He awarded Donovan nominal damages of one shilling and ordered Fr. Sheehan to pay the costs of arbitration. As noted by Heffernan (2004), Fr. Sheehan had lost much of the sympathy of his parish priest, Canon Michael Barrett, who told the Republican Court that the whole parish was in agony as the case had dragged on for so long.

Also in June, alongside Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney, O'Callaghan was part of the Republican Court which brokered an agreement with the local employers and unions to end a three-week strike in Kinsale.

Donal O'Callaghan resumed his local government duties the following month and an issue close to his heart – the Irish language – was to the fore at the Cork Corporation meeting on 9 July in City Hall. Lord Mayor, Councillor



SETTLEMENT OF STRIKE AT KINSALE

ARBITRATION BY DAIL EIREANN COURT

FINDINGS OF THE COURT

The findings, which were unanimous, and were accepted by both sides, are as follows :-

(1) That 45/- be accepted as the wage for a 50 hour week for the able-bodied worker.

(2) Workers over or under age, or in any way disabled or unfit for a good day's work not to come under the standard figure of 45/- per week.

(3) All such exceptional cases to be ~~tested~~ treated on their merits, and wages re-adjusted for each individual case.

(4) The weekly half-holiday demanded for Saturday to be conceded for Thursday the Town weekly half-holiday.

(5) Any agreements that may have been made binding customers to trade in certain shops, arising out of the conditions of the strike are hereby abrogated, and freedom of action is restored to the public in all such cases.

(6) That no man's services be dispensed with as a result of the dislocation of trade till a reasonable time shall have elapsed - unanimously agreed to as one month - to determine whether or not the loss of trade, arising out of such dislocation is permanent.

(7) That this agreement is made only in reference to Town worker

(8) That the decision of the Court come into operation on Monday 14th. instant.

SIGNED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE COURT

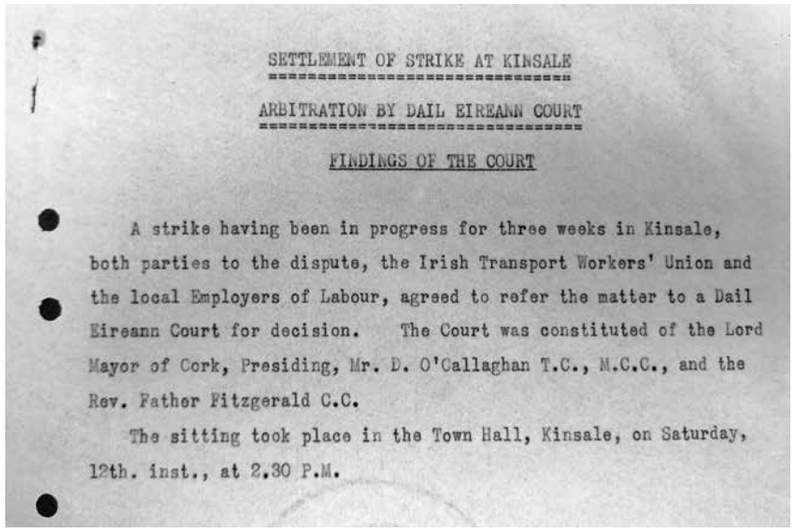
Cathaoirleach na Cúirte

Donnall O Callaeáin

Comhalta

12th. June, 1920.

Above and following page: The Republican Dáil Courts occupied much of Donal O'Callaghan's time in June 1920; this included bringing an end to a three-week strike in Kinsale. [Terence MacSwiney papers, courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]



SETTLEMENT OF STRIKE AT KINSALE

ARBITRATION BY DAIL EIREANN COURT

FINDINGS OF THE COURT

A strike having been in progress for three weeks in Kinsale, both parties to the dispute, the Irish Transport Workers' Union and the local Employers of Labour, agreed to refer the matter to a Dail Eireann Court for decision. The Court was constituted of the Lord Mayor of Cork, Presiding, Mr. D. O'Callaghan T.C., M.C.C., and the Rev. Father Fitzgerald C.C.

The sitting took place in the Town Hall, Kinsale, on Saturday, 12th. inst., at 2.30 P.M.

Details of the Republican Dáil Courts sitting to settle a three-week strike in Kinsale. [Terence MacSwiney papers, courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]

Terence MacSwiney, proposed a motion that future job appointments in the Corporation would favour those candidates who could speak and write Irish fluently. The motion added: 'We impress on parents and teachers the injustice they are doing to the children under their care by not taking steps to have Irish taught to them efficiently'. An addendum to the motion stated that Cork County Council would be invited to join in the resolution and that copies of the decision – signed by the Lord Mayor and the Chairman of the County Council – would be sent to every parish priest in the city and county so that it could be read from the altar at Mass. With Sinn Féin controlling both local councils in Cork and Donal O'Callaghan playing his part as a member of the Corporation and Chairman of the County Council, the motion had been carefully crafted by MacSwiney and O'Callaghan. Though the motion was adopted unanimously, Professors William Stockley and Alfred O'Rahilly, both Sinn Féin councillors, urged that there should be nothing religious about the matter. The Lord Mayor explained that his intention was to be as inclusive as possible and the resolution would be brought to the attention of clergy for every denomination in Cork. Later in the meeting, Donal O'Callaghan supported a proposal by Sir John Scott that employers in the city should make goods in their trade and household necessities available to their employees at cost price. Professor Alfred O'Rahilly registered his objection, arguing that it was not the role of council to tell employers how to run their businesses. After a discussion, Sir John Scott agreed that the matter should be referred to the Trade Council and to the Corporation's Law and Finance Committee.

July brought a major escalation in violence all over Cork. On the seventeenth day of the month, Lieutenant Colonel Gerald Brice Ferguson Smyth, the Divisional Police Commissioner for Munster, was shot dead in the Cork County Club on the South Mall. Smyth had not been expected so he telegraphed ahead to the club. Alas, the message was intercepted and passed on to Seán O'Hegarty. A squad was quickly assembled and Smyth was killed while sitting in the club (see Keane, 2017). The shooting of Smyth resulted from a speech he had delivered in Listowel Barracks to quell a mutiny amongst RIC officers (Keane, 2017). *The Freeman's Journal* of 10 July reported that Smyth told the police officers:

> Police and military will patrol country roads at least five nights a week……. If the persons approaching carry their hands in their pockets, or are in any way suspicious looking, shoot them down. You may make mistakes occasionally and innocent persons may be shot, but this cannot be helped and you are bound to get the right persons sometimes. The more you shoot, the better I will like you, and I assure you that no policeman will get into trouble for shooting any man …… No policeman will be asked to give evidence at inquests. Hungers strikers will be allowed to die in jail, the more the merrier.

An editorial in the 'Daily News' segment of the *Cork Examiner* (19 July 1920) lamented the killing of Colonel Smyth, describing it as 'an insane act which reduces the warmest friends of Ireland in this country almost to despair'. Responding to Smyth's murder, Major General Edward Peter Strickland, the General Officer Commanding the 6th Division in Victoria Barracks[1], issued a curfew order requiring the citizens of Cork to remain indoors between 10.00 p.m. and 3.00 a.m. (White, 2020). An order soon followed from Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney that that the Corporation would extinguish the city's street lights during the hours of the curfew. This strengthened the view held

by the British forces that 'City Hall was a symbol of Republican resistance in Cork' (White, 2020). The curfew caused mayhem throughout the city and one incident on Saturday 24 July nearly had devastating consequences for Donal O'Callaghan's family. The *Cork Examiner* (26 July 1920) reported:

> In the northside of the city, there were some regrettable incidents, the exact truth concerning which it is impossible to ascertain. At Eason's Hill Gardens, the military patrol fired. The reason for this is not obtainable, but it is said that it was considered necessary to adopt these measures to impel people that congregated in large numbers at street junctions to disperse and get in home. These shots were fired in the air, but one soldier had his rifle too low, with the result that the bullet went through the window of the house of Mr. and Mrs. O'Callaghan, the parents of Mr. Donal O'Callaghan, Chairman of Cork County Council. No one in the house fortunately was injured, but a photograph on the opposite wall to the window was smashed.

King Street (MacCurtain Street) RIC Barracks after being attacked and destroyed by the Cork No. I Brigade of the IRA, July 1920. [Courtesy of the *Irish Examiner*]



Violence in Cork had escalated since March with the deaths of Constable Joseph Murtagh and Lord Mayor, Tómas MacCurtain. As noted by Lyons (2010): 'The pattern of assassination and counter-assassination, once embarked on, has an ugly tendency to repeat itself almost indefinitely. As the year 1920 progressed, such incidents multiplied and each side could claim both to have suffered and to have inflicted atrocities'. In an attempt to regain order, the British Government decided to recruit new members to augment the RIC: 'These new constables had begun arriving in Ireland in January but, due to a shortage of police uniforms, were clad in a mixture of British army service dress and dark green RIC uniforms. This led to them being named "Black and Tans"' (White, 2020). The first Black and Tans arrived in Cork on 25 March 1920 and they soon gained a reputation for ill-discipline and brutality. Within days, the IRA issued an order as follows:

> **1** Whereas the spies and traitors known as the Royal Irish Constabulary are holding this country for the enemy, and whereas said spies and bloodhounds are conspiring with the enemy to bomb and bayonet and otherwise outrage a peaceful, law-abiding, and liberty-loving people;
>
> **2** Wherefore we do hereby proclaim and suppress said spies and traitors, and do hereby solemnly warn prospective recruits that they join the RIC at their own peril. All nations are agreed as to the fate of traitors. It has the sanction of God and man.
>
> By order of the GOC
> Irish Republican Army

This effectively marked the beginning of the 'Tan War', much of which was fought in Cork (see Bennett, 1995). This was due in part to the excessive approach adopted by the Black and Tans. Another contributory factor, as discussed by Borgonovo (2017), was the independent streak which existed in the Cork branch of the IRA: 'Cork IRA units undertook a series of well-planned sorties that yielded precious arms and cleared strategic locales of their police presence. These early successes generated Republican self-belief, inspired similar attacks in neighbouring areas, and damaged the prestige of the Crown forces …… They also instilled an independence of thought and action well suited to a rapidly evolving situation. The Cork Volunteers became ambivalent about the authority of IRA GHQ as they grew accustomed to arming, funding and thinking for themselves'.

At local government level, things were also changing. By the end of July, the Local Government Board and Dublin Castle issued letters to Cork Corporation and Cork County Council threatening cuts in funding. In effect, 'the British Government became tired of subsidising a shooting war aimed at dislodging it from power in Ireland' (Garvin, 2001).

Letter from the Local Government Board to Cork County Council

Local Government Board
Dublin, 29 July 1920

Sir,

I am directed by the Local Government Board for Ireland to state that their attention has been called to the series of resolutions passed by certain local authorities in Ireland repudiating the authority of the Imperial Parliament and declaring their intention to place every obstacle in the way of the exiting administration under His Majesty's Government.

In view of the possible effect of this policy upon the responsibilities of the departments acting under the control of Parliament, which regulate the issue of loans and subsidies to public bodies in Ireland, the Government has given the Board explicit instructions that no loans or grants from public funds for any purpose shall be made by the Local Government Board to any local authority without a definite assurance that they will submit their accounts to audit, and be prepared to conform to the rules and orders of the Local Government Board, as heretofore.

The Board has observed that concurrently with the adoption of the resolutions above referred to, many local authorities are engaged in the preparation of schemes for housing, road construction, and public health improvements, all of which involve loans and large subsidies from the Imperial Exchequer. They, therefore, deem it right to give early intimation that unless the applications for the loans and grants from these authorities are accompanied by an assurance, as aforesaid, it will not be within the discretion of the Local Government Board to entertain them.

In this connection, the Board desires to point out that the new Council seem to be under a misconception as to the purpose of the regulations and orders of the Local Government Board. These orders were not framed with a view of restricting the authority of the Councils; their sole object and intention is to secure efficiency and uniformity in the system of administration, and to safeguard the interests of the ratepayers throughout the country.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
A.R. Barlas
Secretary

Letter from Dublin Castle to Cork County Council

Chief Secretary's Office
Dublin Castle
4 August 1920

Sir,

I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to state that in view of the resolutions passed by certain bodies in Ireland repudiating the authority of the Imperial Parliament, it is necessary for His Excellency to withhold further payments from the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account to any local authority until a definite assurance is received from County and Urban District Councils accustomed to share in such payments that they will distribute the money to the services to which they are assigned by statute; that they, as also the Rural District Councils and the Boards of Guardians on whose behalf potion of the payments are made, will submit their accounts to Local Government Board Audit, as heretofore, and that they will conform to the rules and orders of the Board.

I am accordingly to request that an assurance in the foregoing terms may be forwarded by your Council at an early date.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
James McMahon

As the political heads of their respective organisations, Terence MacSwiney (Cork Corporation) and Donal O'Callaghan (Cork County Council) were in the eye of the storm, both acutely aware that the withholding of funds by the LGB could have devastating consequences. Across the country, many local councils were struggling to stay afloat. One of the measures undertaken by Dublin Corporation was to sell off pictures and paraphernalia associated with British kings (O'Neill, 1994). The majority of councils broke off all contact with the LGB but others – such as Kilkenny County Council – continued to recognise both sides, much to the annoyance of the imprisoned Minister William T. Cosgrave. On 29 June, the Dáil agreed to establish a Commission of Experts to examine the possibility of carrying on local administration without financial aid from the LGB (Daly, 1997). Chairman of the new commission, Kevin O'Higgins, argued against a complete break from the LGB. He received support from Terence MacSwiney, who told the Dáil: 'We are playing for position. By adopting the Declaration of Allegiance to Dáil Éireann, the councils have put themselves in the position of declaring war. It was only a question of when the crisis would arise. It is now for the British Local Government Board to make the next move. The questions of minutes and auditors are not vital ones'. Michael Collins was amongst those who argued strongly for a complete break from the LGB. In the event, having decided to establish the Commission of Experts, it was agreed that individual local authorities would take no action without the approval of the Minister, pending the report. The O'Higgins Commission approached its work very efficiently, producing an interim report on 6 August and a final report on 17 September. In between the publication of the two reports, dramatic events unfolded in Cork, with Terence MacSwiney and Donal O'Callaghan to the fore.

Note

1 Victoria Barracks was renamed Collins Barracks after the Civil War, in memory of Michael Collins.

Chapter 8
Deputising for a Martyr

Donal O'Callaghan presided over a special meeting of Cork County Council in the Courthouse on Thursday 12 August 1920. This was the first meeting of the council since correspondence had been issued by the LGB, threatening to withhold funds due to the resolutions passed by local authorities pledging allegiance to Dáil Éireann. O'Callaghan described the letter as 'an unnecessary and unwarranted introduction of outside considerations into the council's business'. He said that the sole concern of the council was efficiency and economy in local administration. He stood by the resolution passed by the council in support of Dáil Éireann and asserted that the letter from the LGB did not warrant further consideration. Clonakilty councillor, John. J. Donovan, claimed that the letter was a threat but pledged: 'It won't frighten us'. The elected members agreed to refer the LGB letter to the Minister for Home Affairs for consideration. As it transpired, later in the same day, Dáil Éireann's Department of Local Government issued a strong letter to all public bodies, lambasting the LGB and referring to the ongoing work of the Commission which had been appointed under the chairmanship of Kevin O'Higgins. The letter from the Department of Local Government stated:

> The effect of the recent Coercion Act has been to simplify to a great extent the deliberations of the Commission. The proposal of the enemy Government to set the grants in aid of local administration against the 'Malicious and Criminal Injury' decrees means that these grants need no longer be considered as a factor in the situation, and the only reason that might induce the local bodies in Ireland to tolerate any further touch or communication with the English institution in the Custom House is now removed. National dignity and self-respect dictates as the response to this last clumsy dying kick of the enemy a complete severance of the relations between the Republican Boards and Councils of Ireland and the English Local Government Board. The Commission came unanimously to that decision at a very early stage of its deliberations. Its further investigations were conducted on the basis that a definite breach with the Custom House was not only desirable but inevitable.

The elected members next discussed the work of a council committee which was examining costs in relation to the recent local elections. Donal O'Callaghan told the meeting that the matter could not be fully discussed as the committee had not completed its work. He noted though that the LGB rules and regulations governing the elections 'permitted wholesale waste and useless expenditure of the money of the rate-payers'. This accusation drew an angry response from the County Council's Returning Officer, Michael Kirwan, who wrote a letter to the editor of the *Cork Examiner*, published on Saturday 14 August. Kirwan described O'Callaghan's comments as 'unfair and unwarranted', noting: 'I feel very keenly the suggestion that I have been guilty of gross extravagance and I repudiate it emphatically. The committee investigating the accounts have adopted the extraordinary attitude of excluding me from their meetings, although I am working in an adjoining room'. Kirwan ended his letter with a direct criticism of Donal O'Callaghan as Chairman of the County Council: 'No man, no matter what his position is should treat an official in this fashion. It is very unIrish to say the least of it'.

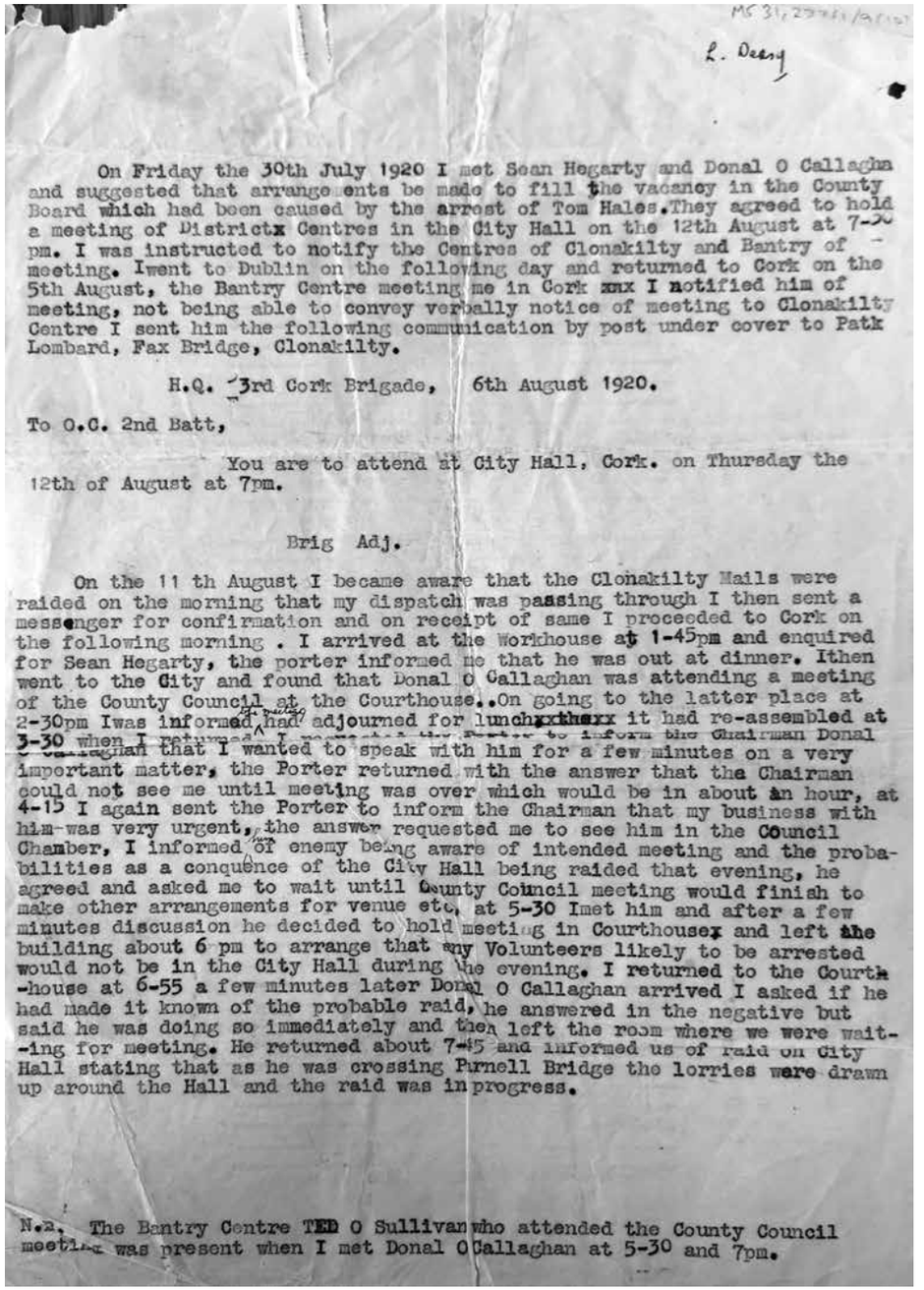
As an aside, another matter that was dealt with at the Cork County Council meeting of 12 August was to approve and unanimously adopt a resolution of Queenstown Urban District Council that the name of Queenstown Urban District Council and Queenstown Urban District be changed to Cobh Urban District Council and Cobh Urban District, respectively. The County Council meeting, which began at 12.00 midday, did not end until the late afternoon. A few short hours later, dramatic events were to unfold in City Hall. Donal O'Callaghan's close friend and colleague on Cork Corporation, Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney was at the heart of it.

MacSwiney was being closely watched by British Crown forces and Costello (1995) records that 'he led a hunted existence, unable to spend a night at home'. MacSwiney was famed for his work ethic and he was essentially combining three full-time jobs – Lord Mayor of Cork, TD in Dáil Éireann representing the constituency of mid-Cork, and Commandant of the Cork No. 1 Brigade of the IRA. Writing in 1922, P. S. O'Hegarty reflected: 'Meals were hurriedly snatched and in the shortest possible time. In those days it was hardly possible for any of his friends to see him on anything but business. From 10.00 a.m. until 10.00 p.m., with short intervals for dinner and tea, he was at the Cork City Hall, working, interviewing, directing ……. No man in Ireland had a higher sense of the responsibility which the local elections placed upon the Republican Party'.

Those close to MacSwiney observed that he was under enormous stress. On the advice of doctors who felt that he was close to a breakdown, he was scheduled to take a short holiday with his wife Muriel and daughter Máire starting on 14 August. In their three years of married life together, Terence and Muriel had not known a single place in Cork that they could call home: 'As a young mother, Muriel MacSwiney found herself alone with baby Máire in various temporary houses, while Terence remained on the run' (Costello, 1995). MacSwiney was determined to work hard in the days leading up to his holidays and, at his suggestion, a meeting of the staff of the Cork No. 1 Brigade of the IRA was convened for City Hall on the night of 12 August. Florence O'Donoghue, Head of Intelligence of the No. 1 Brigade, later wrote that City Hall was not a normal venue for such meetings but it was arranged to suit the Lord Mayor (see O'Donoghue, 1954). Perhaps unknown to the Lord Mayor, a local meeting of IRB officers was also scheduled for City Hall that night, as well as a sitting of a Republican Court. With so many Republican leaders in one location at the same time – Hannigan (2010) comments that the corridors were teeming with some of the most wanted men in the whole country – a convoy of six lorries and six armoured cars departed Victoria Barracks. Before too long, City Hall was surrounded by two to three hundred RIC officers. When Terence MacSwiney was alerted to the arrival of the troops, his first thought was to use a trapdoor in the ceiling of the room next to his office. In turn, this led to a series of other trapdoors all the way to the roof: 'Crucially, on this night, MacSwiney had left the key to the door in his sisters' house in Belgrave Place' (Hannigan, 2010). He tried to escape by a rear exit of City Hall, but was arrested along with almost the entire staff of the Cork No. 1 Brigade. Immediately on arrest, all of the prisoners went on hunger strike.

Thirty-four years later, Florence O'Donoghue (1954) described the raid on City Hall on 12 August 1920 as 'an accident of war' due to the fact that notice of the activities due to take place was intercepted through the mail by British authorities. Donal O'Callaghan was partially responsible for the events of that night and the arrest of Terence MacSwiney. In a lengthy statement to an IRB inquiry in 1921, the prominent Republican activist, Liam Deasy, noted that he met Donal O'Callaghan and Seán Hegarty on 30 July 1920 and suggested that arrangements be made to fill the vacancy created by the arrest of Tom Hales. They agreed to hold a meeting of IRB District Centres in Cork City Hall on 12 August at 7.30 p.m. Deasy verbally informed the Bantry District Centre of the meeting but notified the Clonakilty District Centre by post. On 11 August, the day before the meeting was due to take place, Deasy received word that his mail to the Clonakilty District Centre had been intercepted. The following day he went to Cork city, where he found out that Donal O'Callaghan was chairing a meeting of the County Council in the Courthouse. Deasy's attempts to meet O'Callaghan were thwarted by the length of the meeting. At 4.15 p.m., having impressed upon a porter in the Courthouse that his business was urgent, he was permitted to meet O'Callaghan for a couple of minutes, though the council meeting was ongoing. Deasy records that he informed O'Callaghan that the enemy was aware of the intended IRB meeting that night and that the City Hall was likely to be raided. O'Callaghan promised that once the County Council meeting was over, he would make arrangements to change the venue for the IRB gathering. The council meeting ended at 5.30 p.m., at which point O'Callaghan told Deasy that the IRB District Centres should meet in the Courthouse instead of City Hall. He left the building at 6.00 p.m. to make the necessary arrangements and inform those who were due to attend. According to Deasy's statement a year later:

> I returned to the Courthouse at 6.55, a few minutes later Donal O'Callaghan arrived. I asked if he had made it known of the probable raid. He answered in the negative but said he was doing so immediately and then left the room where we were waiting for the meeting. He returned about 7.45 and informed us of a raid on City



MS 31,237(1)/a(12)

L. Deasy

On Friday the 30th July 1920 I met Sean Hegarty and Donal O Callaghan and suggested that arrangements be made to fill the vacancy in the County Board which had been caused by the arrest of Tom Hales. They agreed to hold a meeting of District~~x~~ Centres in the City Hall on the 12th August at 7-30 pm. I was instructed to notify the Centres of Clonakilty and Bantry of meeting. I went to Dublin on the following day and returned to Cork on the 5th August, the Bantry Centre meeting me in Cork ~~xxx~~ I notified him of meeting, not being able to convey verbally notice of meeting to Clonakilty Centre I sent him the following communication by post under cover to Patk Lombard, Fax Bridge, Clonakilty.

H.Q. 3rd Cork Brigade, 6th August 1920.

To O.C. 2nd Batt,

You are to attend at City Hall, Cork. on Thursday the 12th of August at 7pm.

Brig Adj.

On the 11 th August I became aware that the Clonakilty Mails were raided on the morning that my dispatch was passing through I then sent a messenger for confirmation and on receipt of same I proceeded to Cork on the following morning . I arrived at the Workhouse at 1-45pm and enquired for Sean Hegarty, the porter informed me that he was out at dinner. I then went to the City and found that Donal O Callaghan was attending a meeting of the County Council at the Courthouse. On going to the latter place at 2-30pm I was informed had adjourned for lunch ~~xxthexx~~ it had re-assembled at 3-30 when I returned I requested the Porter to inform the Chairman Donal O Callaghan that I wanted to speak with him for a few minutes on a very important matter, the Porter returned with the answer that the Chairman could not see me until meeting was over which would be in about an hour, at 4-15 I again sent the Porter to inform the Chairman that my business with him was very urgent, the answer requested me to see him in the Council Chamber, I informed of enemy being aware of intended meeting and the probabilities as a conquence of the City Hall being raided that evening, he agreed and asked me to wait until County Council meeting would finish to make other arrangements for venue etc, at 5-30 I met him and after a few minutes discussion he decided to hold meeting in Courthouse~~x~~ and left the building about 6 pm to arrange that my Volunteers likely to be arrested would not be in the City Hall during the evening. I returned to the Courthouse at 6-55 a few minutes later Donal O Callaghan arrived I asked if he had made it known of the probable raid, he answered in the negative but said he was doing so immediately and then left the room where we were waiting for meeting. He returned about 7-45 and informed us of raid on City Hall stating that as he was crossing Parnell Bridge the lorries were drawn up around the Hall and the raid was in progress.

N.B. The Bantry Centre TED O Sullivan who attended the County Council meeting was present when I met Donal O Callaghan at 5-30 and 7pm.

Hall, stating that as he was crossing Parnell Bridge, the lorries were drawn up around the Hall and the raid was in progress.

It is not clear why O'Callaghan took such a casual approach to changing the venue for the IRB meeting, given that he knew a raid was likely to take place on City Hall. Irrespective of the IRB meeting, the raid may well have happened anyway, given that the members of the Cork No. 1 Brigade of the IRA were meeting and there was a sitting of a Republican Court. Nonetheless, between the conclusion of the County Council meeting in the Courthouse at 5.30 p.m. and the raid of City Hall at approximately 7.40 p.m., why did O'Callaghan not inform Lord Mayor MacSwiney?

At a meeting of Cork Corporation the following night, 13 August, the Town Clerk Florence W. McCarthy reported that he had seen the Lord Mayor that morning and he had given the instruction that Councillor Michael O'Cuill deputise for him in his absence. O'Cuill then occupied the Lord Mayor's seat and delivered a strong speech in Irish: 'Our chief has been taken from us again, but that is nothing new. We have become used to it by now and there will be one good result from it – namely, that the people of the world who thought that love of liberty existed in England will soon be disillusioned. England's minions are listening to me here, but I don't begrudge them. The mask of hypocrisy has at last been torn from England's face …… The action of the government forces in this Hall last night, and in other places, is hastening the time when we should reach our goal, no matter who suffers today'.

When Alderman Liam de Róiste rose to speak, three military officers entered the public gallery and remained there for the duration of the meeting. Undeterred, de Róiste stated: 'It is the last resort of Lloyd George to use military force to break up the work of the municipality. When he has to do that, he has reached the last extremity'. He then urged the council to carry on with its business as usual as the Lord Mayor would wish. Accordingly, the meeting continued and the elected members discussed the letter from the LGB, threatening to withhold funding to local authorities that had pledged loyalty to the Dáil. Once again, Alderman Liam de Róiste came to the fore and he told the meeting: 'If the Local Government Board wishes to force the

Facing page: Statement by Liam Deasy to IRB inquiry in 1921
[Florence O'Donoghue Papers, courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

pace, we are prepared for it and the money will come for houses from other sources, from the elected government of the country. The work of building houses will not be stopped. It is up to the Irish people to refuse to pay money into the British Treasury, and to give it to the proper quarter, where it will be utilised for the benefit of the country'. On the conclusion of the meeting, the councillors were stopped and searched by soldiers as they attempted to leave the Council Chamber. The *Cork Examiner* (14 August 1920) reported: 'The City Hall seems to be the present centre of military anxiety, for not alone was a general hold-up of the members of the Corporation carried out last evening, but a further thorough ransacking of the various offices was made'.

With the exception of Terence MacSwiney, all of those arrested in City Hall on the night of 12 August were released three days later. Due to his multiplicity of Republican activities, MacSwiney was a special case: 'It is clear that the British greatly desired his arrest and conviction. Terence MacSwiney had shown himself to be a particularly dangerous man in the eyes of the British Government' (Costello, 1995). According to Street (1921), the British authorities blamed MacSwiney for the murder of Lieutenant Colonel Smyth in the Cork County Club the previous month.

MacSwiney was charged under Regulation 224 of the Defence of the Realm Act of having a cipher under his control, and under Regulation 27 for having in his possession two documents, the publication of which 'would be likely to cause disaffection to his Majesty' (see Hannigan, 2010 and MacSwiney Collection, 48b/452). When the court-martial hearing commenced on Monday 16 August in Victoria Barracks, the visibly weakened Lord Mayor was already in the fifth day of his hunger strike. Amongst those supporting him in the gallery were his wife Muriel, his sister Annie, his chaplain Fr. Dominic O'Connor, as well as Donal O'Callaghan and Town Clerk Florence W. McCarthy. When asked by the Presiding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel James (South Staffordshire Regiment) if he was represented by counsel, MacSwiney replied: 'I would like to say a word about your proceedings here. The position is that I am Lord Mayor of Cork and Chief Magistrate of this city. And I declare this court illegal and that those who take part in it are liable to arrest under the laws of the Irish Republic' (*Cork Examiner*, 17 August 1920).

Despite his protestations that the proceedings were illegal, the Lord Mayor was formally charged with four offences.

1. Without lawful authority or excuse, being in possession of a numerical cipher on 12 August that belonged to the RIC.
2. Having this cipher under his control.
3. Being in possession of a document containing statements likely to cause disaffection to his Majesty.
4. Possession of a copy of his own inaugural speech as Lord Mayor when he had been elected in succession to Tomás MacCurtain.

The document referred to in the third charge was an amended version of the resolution passed by the Corporation acknowledging the authority of the Dáil and pledging allegiance to it. This resolution and the speech referred to in the fourth charge had been widely publicised through the local and national newspapers. Having laid out the charges, Lieutenant Colonel James asked Lord Mayor MacSwiney if he wished to plead guilty or not guilty. MacSwiney responded: 'Without wishing to be in any way personal to you, I wish to point out that it is an act of presumption to ask me that question. I say this whole proceeding is illegal'. This was entered by James as a refusal to plead.

Captain W. C. Gover OBE then outlined the case for the prosecution. He called a series of witnesses, including Private Norris, Lieutenant Gillisk, Lieutenant Kells and Lieutenant Koe, all of whom participated in the raid of City Hall on the night in question. County Inspector Mausell declared that the cipher had only come into operation on 28 July and was used by RIC officers when transmitting messages. The Lord Mayor interrupted at this point to state: 'The only thing relevant about a code is this: any person in possession of such a code who is not a member of the Irish Republic is evidence of a criminal conspiracy against the Irish Republic. Therefore, in giving that evidence, you do not indict me, but yourself' (*Cork Examiner*, 17 August; see also O'Hegarty, 1922 and Hannigan, 2010). Testimony was also given by Sergeant Major Bailey who was in charge of detaining the Lord Mayor following his arrest. Bailey reported that he had asked the Lord Mayor to take off his chain of office but MacSwiney refused, stating: 'I would rather die than part with it'. Accordingly, he was allowed keep the Mayoral chain while in custody.

After the prosecution case closed, the Lord Mayor was invited to mount his defence. Due to his weak state, Lieutenant Colonel James offered him the option of remaining seated. A defiant MacSwiney refused the offer and, after struggling to his feet, declared: 'I believe I will be able to hold my feet until

after the close of these proceedings, and then it is quite immaterial'. The Lord Mayor then proceeded to deliver a lengthy and impressive speech. Rather than defend himself, he attacked the nature of the proceedings:

> These proceedings, as I have said, are quite illegal. Anything I have to say is not in defence, and it is in the written statement, parts of which are made the subjects of charges here in this illegal court. You have got to realise, and will have to realise it before very long, that the Irish Republic is really existing. I want to remind you of the fact that the gravest offence that can be committed by any individual is an offence against the head of the state. The offence is only relatively less great when committed against the head of a city, and the illegality is very much more grave when, in addition to seizing that person, his building and private room are violated and his papers taken. I wish to reverse the position and, for the moment, put you, gentlemen, in the dock.

The Lord Mayor pointed out the inconsistency of the prosecution case, noting that Captain Gover had 'neglected to mention a document seized from MacSwiney's desk that was a resolution regarding the inquest which found the British Government and RIC guilty of the murder of Tomás MacCurtain' (Hannigan, 2010). He further referenced MacCurtain when he said: 'You must know that holding the office I do is absolutely grave for me, in view of the way my predecessor was sent to his death …… I cannot say but that the same will happen myself, at any moment'. MacSwiney ended his speech by proclaiming: 'I ask for no mercy'.

During the fifteen minutes that the court deliberated, MacSwiney was permitted to speak to his wife, Muriel. They chose to do so in Irish. When Lieutenant Colonel James returned to the room, he announced that the Lord Mayor of Cork was not guilty on the first charge, but guilty on the second, third and fourth charges. Before he revealed the sentence to be imposed, MacSwiney told him: 'I wish to state that I will put a limit to any term of imprisonment you may impose as a result of the action I will take. I have taken no food since Thursday, therefore I will be free in a month'. When James asked if he was intent on maintaining his hunger strike, MacSwiney replied: 'I simply say that I have decided the terms of my detention whatever your government may do. I shall be free, alive or dead, within a month'. Lieutenant Colonel James pronounced a sentence of two years' imprisonment. In the early hours of the following morning, Lord Mayor MacSwiney was placed on a British naval vessel bound for South Wales. He was then transported by train to London and brought to Brixton Prison where he was registered as Prisoner No. 6794 (Hannigan, 2010).

On 17 August, the day after the court-martial proceedings, the *Cork Examiner* published a letter from Donal O'Callaghan, who signed it as Deputy Lord Mayor.

> To the editor 'Examiner'
> Lord Mayor's Room
> City Hall, Cork
> 16 August 1920
>
> A fhir eagair,
>
> I wish to direct attention to the only possible object of the activities here of the military during the past few days, viz. the prevention of the carrying on of the administration of the city.
>
> On Thursday night, the Lord Mayor, with others, was arrested. On Friday night, another raid was made, and an open attempt to intimidate the members of the Corporation in meeting assembled, followed by an individual search. Again this morning, armed military visited the City Hall and the Lord Mayor's Room.
>
> On my own behalf, as Deputy Lord Mayor, and on behalf of the members of the Corporation, I assure the citizens of Cork that intimidation of this kind will have only one effect, that is, to make those responsible keener, if possible, in the carrying on of the work for which they were elected.
>
> Mise,
> Domhnall Ó Ceallacháin
> Deputy Lord Mayor



PR4/5/98

Seomra an Árd-Mheara,
Halla na Cathrach,
Corcaigh.
Lord Mayor's Room, City Hall, Cork.

Dear Sir,

Owing to my present inability to carry on the duties of my office as Lord Mayor, I herewith nominate , as my locum tenens, till such time as I can resume duty.

Mise,

le meas mor,

To the Town Clerk,
City Hall,
Cork.

There was some confusion about who should deputise for Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney; This undated letter from him to the Town Clerk of Cork Corporation provided no clarity as the name of the deputy was left blank.
[Terence MacSwiney papers, courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]

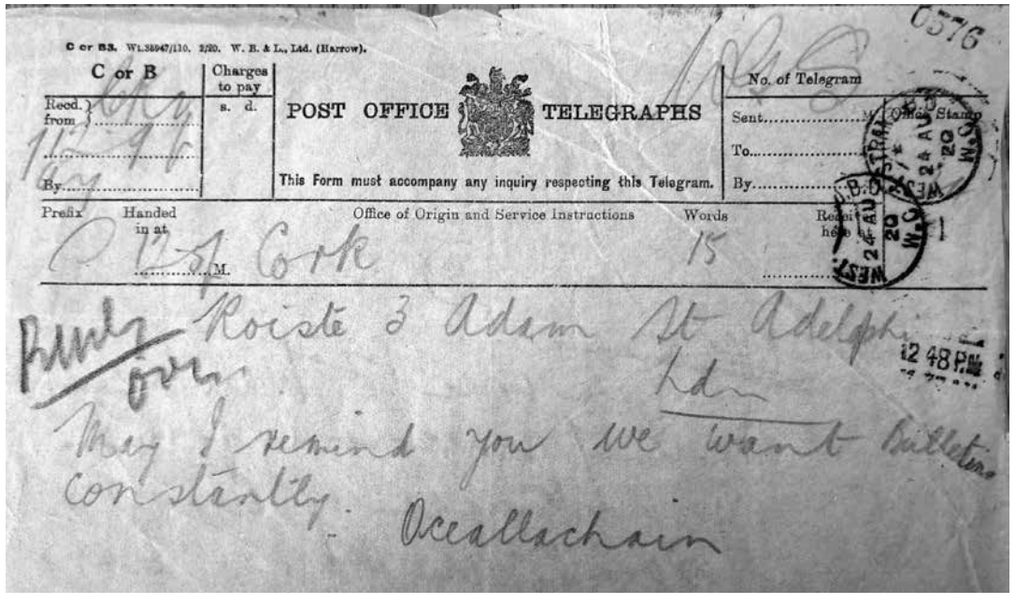
It is interesting that three days after Terence MacSwiney asked Councillor Michael O'Cuill to deputise for him as Lord Mayor, it was Donal O'Callaghan who occupied that position. It appears that MacSwiney changed his mind – this was confirmed in a letter which was read at the next Corporation meeting on 27 August. MacSwiney felt that O'Callaghan was a safer pair of hands who might achieve more as he was less uncompromising than O'Cuill (Muscraí, 2016).

With Tomás MacCurtain dead and Terence MacSwiney on hunger strike in Brixton Prison, Donal O'Callaghan was now the leading local politician in Cork – Chairman of Cork County Council and Deputy Lord Mayor. His life was also now in danger, as MacSwiney had stated during his court-martial: 'You must know that holding the office I do is absolutely grave for me'.

Chapter 9
Bed of Torture and Death

One of the Donal O'Callaghan's first actions as Deputy Lord Mayor of Cork was to appoint a Cork Corporation delegation of Alderman Liam de Róiste and Alderman Professor William Stockley to go to London and provide regular updates on the condition of Terence MacSwiney in Brixton Prison. Fr. Dominic O'Connor also travelled to London and he was virtually a constant companion of MacSwiney during his hunger strike. Sinn Féin's representative in London, Art O'Brien, was another regular visitor to MacSwiney in Brixton Prison. De Róiste and Stockley were only one day in London, on 24 August, when Donal O'Callaghan impatiently sent a telegram, reminding the pair that he expected regular updates.

In addition, O'Callaghan sent a letter to Art O'Brien at 3 Allen Street, Adelphi, London. The Deputy Lord Mayor wrote: 'If this reaches you before anything definite has happened at Brixton, would you be good enough to tell Liam de Róiste or Fr. Dominic that we are very dissatisfied here with the manner in which they are sending, or are not sending, us news. As you may well imagine, the entire city here are intensely anxious to get news every hour of the day. I write you this letter at 12.30. The last message that I got from London was handed in exactly at this hour on yesterday. Please tell them that even in the absence of any particular or definite news we expect to get regular bulletins from them every two or three hours …… I am sending this letter by hand, and hope that before it reaches you all our anxiety with regard to Brixton will be allayed'.


C or B

Charges to pay

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS

No. of Telegram

This Form must accompany any inquiry respecting this Telegram.

Prefix | Handed in at | Office of Origin and Service Instructions | Words

Cork 15

Róiste 3 Adam St Adelphi Ldn

Reply over

May I remind you we want bulletins constantly.

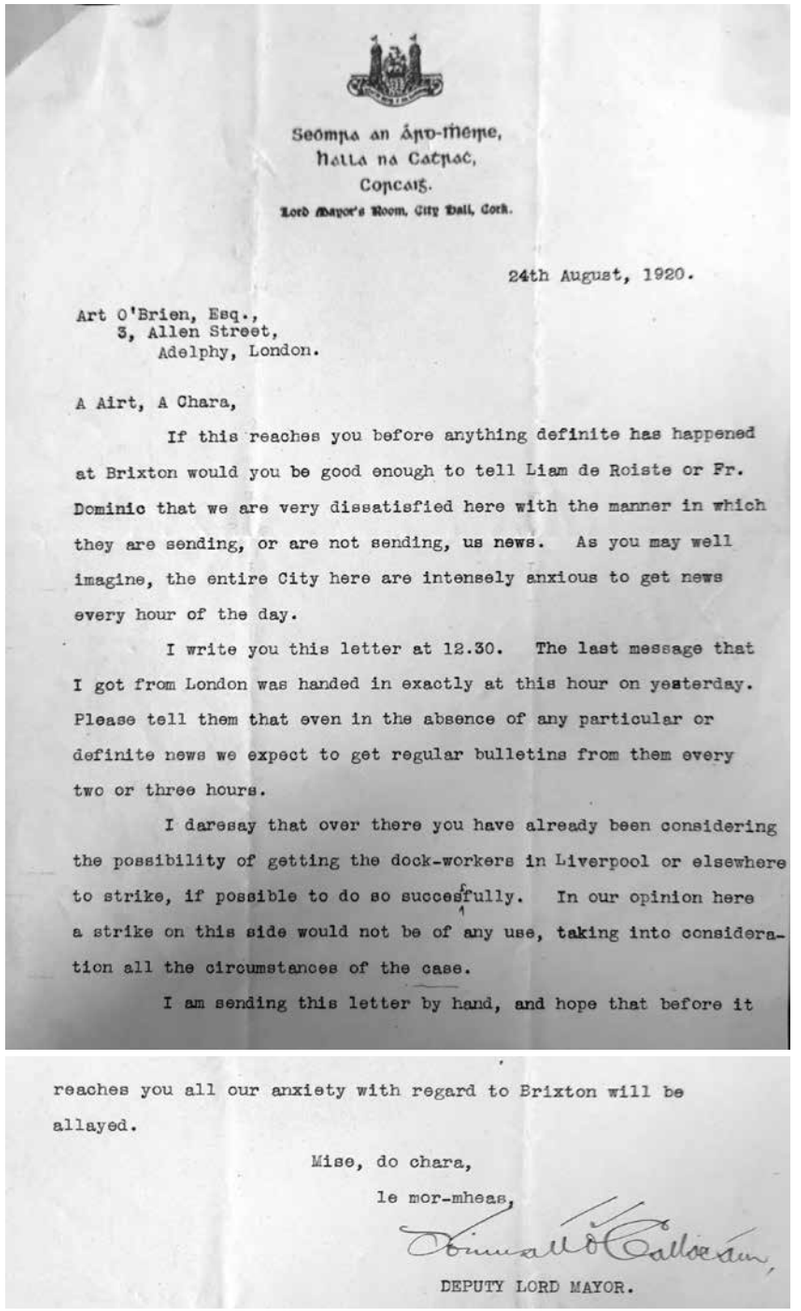
Ocallachain

Telegram from Donal O'Callaghan to Liam de Róiste in London, asking for more frequent updates on the condition of Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney.
[Art O'Brien Papers, courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

From this point forward, O'Callaghan received updates from Brixton at least once a day. In turn, he sent regular bulletins to London, reporting on the condition of the eleven Republican hunger strikers in Cork Jail.

On 24 August, a major event began in Dublin – a Peace Conference attended by almost six hundred delegates from Anglo-Irish communities across the island. Before the first morning's proceedings commenced, William James Fennell from Athy, county Kildare, gained permission from the conference to bring forward the following motion (*The Irish Times*, 25 August 1920):

> That the Peace Conference, in session assembled, and before entering upon any business whatsoever, appeals to the Government, in the interests of justice, peace, and the welfare of Ireland, to at once release the Lord Mayor of Cork – [applause] – who is dangerously ill and weak, and request the Chairman and committees to convey the above resolution at once, by wire, to the proper quarters.



Seómra an Árd-Mhéara,
Halla na Cathrach,
Corcaigh.
Lord Mayor's Room, City Hall, Cork.

24th August, 1920.

Art O'Brien, Esq.,
3, Allen Street,
Adelphy, London.

A Airt, A Chara,

If this reaches you before anything definite has happened at Brixton would you be good enough to tell Liam de Roiste or Fr. Dominic that we are very dissatisfied here with the manner in which they are sending, or are not sending, us news. As you may well imagine, the entire City here are intensely anxious to get news every hour of the day.

I write you this letter at 12.30. The last message that I got from London was handed in exactly at this hour on yesterday. Please tell them that even in the absence of any particular or definite news we expect to get regular bulletins from them every two or three hours.

I daresay that over there you have already been considering the possibility of getting the dock-workers in Liverpool or elsewhere to strike, if possible to do so successfully. In our opinion here a strike on this side would not be of any use, taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case.

I am sending this letter by hand, and hope that before it reaches you all our anxiety with regard to Brixton will be allayed.

Mise, do chara,

le mor-mheas,

Donnall O Callachan,

DEPUTY LORD MAYOR.

Facing page: Letter from Donal O'Callaghan to Art O'Brien in London.
[Art O'Brien Papers, courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

The resolution was passed, with two delegates dissenting, but received what Hannigan (2010) describes as 'a tepid response' from the British Government. Two days later, a second resolution was passed at the conference. This was a direct plea to King George V to exercise his royal prerogative to release Lord Mayor MacSwiney.

This led to King George V sending a telegram to the Home Office on 26 August, stressing that he had received many requests to release MacSwiney and he was advocating clemency. Home Secretary, Edward Shortt, rejected the King's recommendation, stressing (following the advice of the Irish Chief Secretary): 'The release of the Lord Mayor would have disastrous results in Ireland and probably lead to mutiny of both police and military' (Hannigan, 2010). There was a constant dialogue between the King and the British Government during the period of MacSwiney's hunger strike. The government was determined to hold firm and the pleas for leniency from the King were ignored, not always politely. Hannigan (2010) refers to comments made by Prime Minister Lloyd George while in Lucerne, Switzerland: 'The King is an old coward. He is frightened to death and is anxious to make it clear that he has nothing to do with it'.

In particular, Edward Shortt adopted a firm and unyielding attitude. Mary MacSwiney, sister of the Lord Mayor, wrote to him on 20 August, seeking a meeting. The Home Secretary rejected the request, stating that it 'would serve no good purpose'. He further added: 'It is the final decision of His Majesty's Government that Mr. MacSwiney will not be released from prison because he refuses to take food. Owing to the state of his health Mr. MacSwiney cannot be forcibly fed. For any consequence that may ensue from his refusal to take food Mr. MacSwiney alone is responsible'.

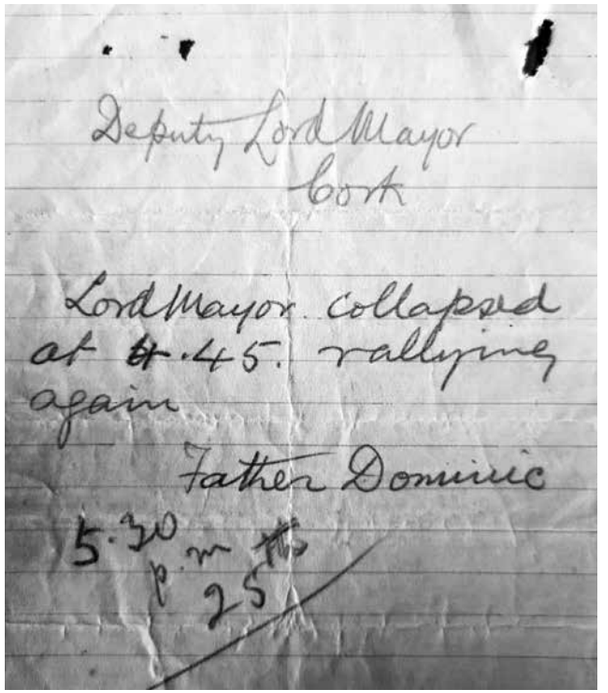
Meanwhile, MacSwiney's hunger strike was providing a major source of international propaganda for the Republican cause (Costello 1995). Art O'Brien sent a memo to Michael Collins from London on 25 August: 'I must say that both the *Independent a*nd the *Freeman*, the Press Associations and the American Press are kept constantly supplied with news …… Yesterday, for instance, messengers were sent down to these on six occasions with different reports and news items' (SPO/Dáil Éireann files). MacSwiney was also acutely

Examples of notes and telegrams sent by Fr. Dominic to Donal O'Callaghan, reporting on the condition of Terence MacSwiney in Brixton Prison.

Right:
25 August – 'Lord Mayor collapsed at 4.45, rallying again'.

Below:
26 August – 'Lord Mayor better and brighter this morning'.

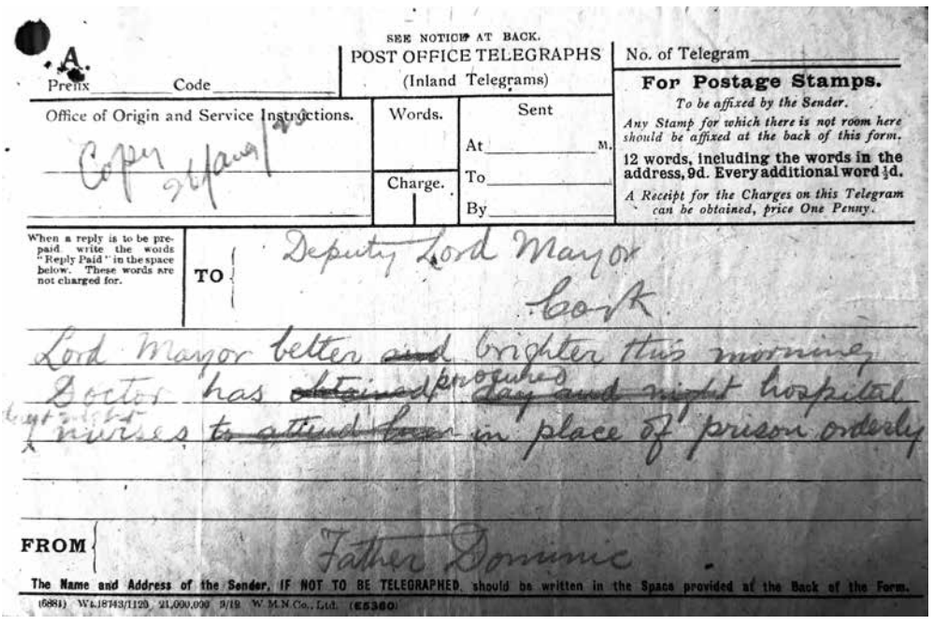
[Art O'Brien Papers, courtesy of National Library of Ireland]


Deputy Lord Mayor
Cork

Lord Mayor collapsed at 4.45. rallying again

Father Dominic

5.30 p.m. 25th


SEE NOTICE AT BACK.

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS
(Inland Telegrams)

No. of Telegram

Prefix A Code

Office of Origin and Service Instructions.

Words.

Sent At M. To By

Charge.

For Postage Stamps.
To be affixed by the Sender.
Any Stamp for which there is not room here should be affixed at the back of this form.
12 words, including the words in the address, 9d. Every additional word ½d.
A Receipt for the Charges on this Telegram can be obtained, price One Penny.

When a reply is to be prepaid write the words "Reply Paid" in the space below. These words are not charged for.

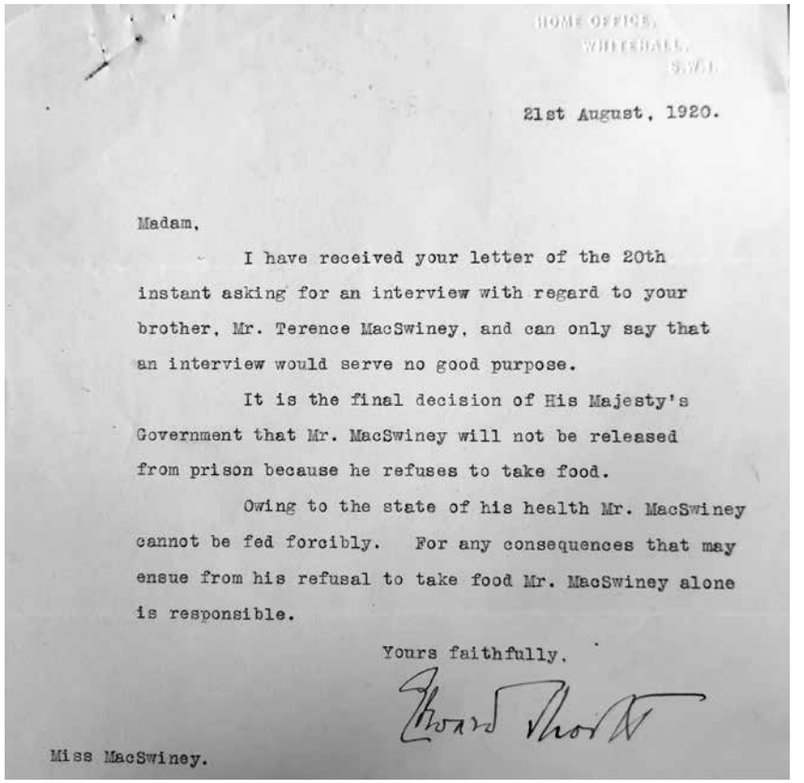
TO Deputy Lord Mayor Cork

Lord Mayor better and brighter this morning. Doctor has ~~obtained~~ prognosis ~~day~~ and night hospital nurses to attend her in place of prison orderly

FROM Father Dominic

The Name and Address of the Sender, IF NOT TO BE TELEGRAPHED, should be written in the Space provided at the Back of the Form.

(6881) Wt.18743/1129. 21,000,000. 9/19. W.M.N.Co.,Ltd. (E5360)


HOME OFFICE,
WHITEHALL,
S.W.1.

21st August, 1920.

Madam,

I have received your letter of the 20th instant asking for an interview with regard to your brother, Mr. Terence MacSwiney, and can only say that an interview would serve no good purpose.

It is the final decision of His Majesty's Government that Mr. MacSwiney will not be released from prison because he refuses to take food.

Owing to the state of his health Mr. MacSwiney cannot be fed forcibly. For any consequences that may ensue from his refusal to take food Mr. MacSwiney alone is responsible.

Yours faithfully,

Miss MacSwiney.

Letter from Home Office to Mary MacSwiney, 21 August 1920
[Courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

aware of the impact of his hunger strike and probable death. The *Cork Examiner* reported on 24 August that he told his doctor in Brixton: 'I am a soldier and not afraid of death. My death will be of more use to Ireland'.

When Donal O'Callaghan chaired a meeting of Cork Corporation on Friday 27 August, Terence MacSwiney was in the fifteenth day of his hunger strike. O'Callaghan told his fellow councillors that he had received a variety of telegrams that day from London. One was from MacSwiney himself, confirming that O'Callaghan was to serve as Deputy Lord Mayor in his absence. He ended his telegram: 'Greetings to comrades in Cork Gaol – MacSwiney'. There were also messages from Liam de Róiste and Fr. Dominic, stating that MacSwiney was weak but his condition was unchanged. After the councillors

passed a motion strongly condemning the 'brutal treatment' of MacSwiney, the meeting was adjourned by O'Callaghan.

In the days leading up to the Corporation meeting, Donal O'Callaghan had exchanged letters with one of his fellow councillors, Sir John Scott. Scott had asked O'Callaghan to use his influence to encourage the Lord Mayor to take food 'so as not to risk his valuable life any further'. O'Callaghan's brief reply – 'What you ask is impossible and, even if it were not so, would be unavailing' – led to a second letter from Scott, imploring O'Callaghan to intervene. This prompted a lengthier reply from O'Callaghan, following correspondence with the Lord Mayor in Brixton Prison.

> Dear Councillor,
>
> I am desired by the Lord Mayor to thank you for your letter. He further wishes me to refer to the fact that on his election to the Mayoralty, again on his imprisonment in Cork, and now once more, you asked him what you could do for him. I understand from his Lordship that on the previous occasion his reply was that your first act should be resignation of the Shrievalty conferred on you by the enemies of this country, who are just now apparently about to become his murderers. He wishes me to inform you that his reply now is again the same. May I, in conveying to you this message, add on my own behalf that it seems to me to have been unnecessary on your part to repeat the inquiry, seeing that apparently you are unwilling to the take the essential preliminary step? I feel that, speaking for the Lord Mayor, who is on his bed of torture and probably of death, it is my duty to ask you not to make a similar inquiry until you have made manifest your sincerity by taking the step that he suggested.
>
> Mise,
> Domhnall Ó Ceallacháin
> Deputy Lord Mayor
>
> [**Cork Examiner, 26 August 1920**]

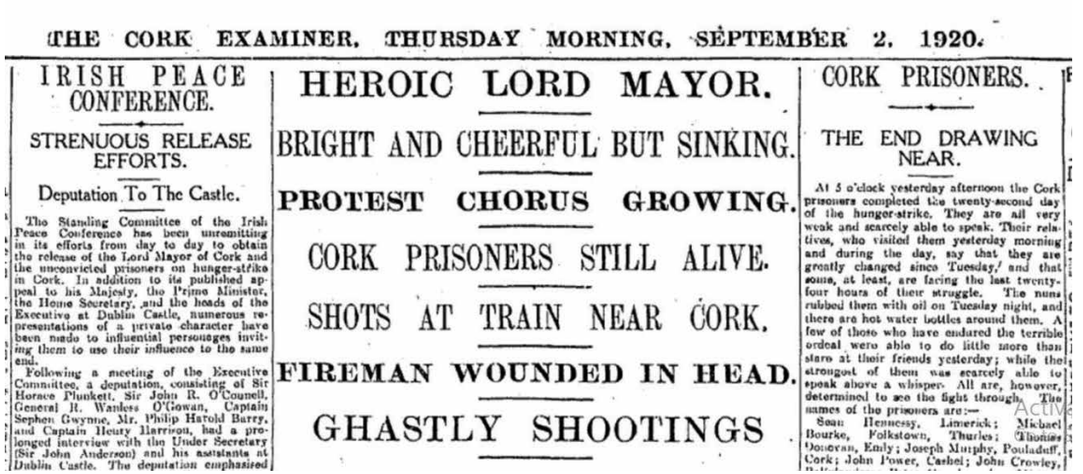
As a follow-up, O'Callaghan informed Scott that since he [Scott] had forwarded his letters to the local newspapers, the replies would also be sent to the press.

On the same day of the Corporation meeting, 27 August, MacSwiney was visited by Bishop Daniel Cohalan who told the *Cork Examiner*: 'Although he was in a terribly weak state, he chatted with me and expressed his determination to continue to the end. He is perfectly resigned to die'. While in London, Bishop Cohalan sought a meeting with Home Secretary, Edward Shortt, but was informed that a meeting was pointless unless it was to discuss how MacSwiney might be induced to take food. Bishop Cohalan returned to Cork without meeting Shortt.

As August gave way to September, there was an expectation that Terence MacSwiney could pass away at any moment. Donal O'Callaghan was receiving multiple telegrams from London each day and, in turn, he was providing regular updates about the hunger strikes in Cork Jail. For example, on Wednesday 1 September, O'Callaghan was sent messages by Muriel MacSwiney, Liam de Róiste and Fr. Dominic O'Connor. Muriel MacSwiney sent two, the first of which read: 'Saw Terry just now; weaker every day but spirit strong as ever'. Her second message stated: 'Just saw Terry; very weak. Just whispered, "How are men in Cork?"'. Liam de Róiste's telegram struck a defiant note: 'One o'clock. Situation unchanged. Body weaker. Mind undimmed. Will unbroken. Am awaiting news of Corkmen from you – Liam'.

Fr. Dominic was more downbeat: 'Still conscious. Little sleep. Limbs numbing. Weaker – Father Dominic'. Donal O'Callaghan sent a telegram in Irish the same day to Terence MacSwiney. He reported that the men in Cork Jail were doing as well as could be expected and he ended with: 'We will beat the enemy eventually somehow and that is enough. May God pray for you – Donal'. O'Callaghan was a frequent visitor to the prisoners in Cork Jail. The *Cork Examiner* of Tuesday 31 August reported: 'On Saturday last, the Deputy Lord Mayor, accompanied by the Town Clerk, proceeded to the Cork Male Prison to visit the hunger strikers …… The Deputy Lord Mayor interviewed each of the prisoners, all of whom were in a very weak state, and in seven cases the condition was critical. After spending about an hour in the prison, the Deputy Lord Mayor returned to the City Hall. Councillor D. O'Callaghan also visited the prisoners on Sunday and again yesterday'.

The *Cork Examiner* was dominated each day by accounts from Brixton Prison and, on 2 September, a headline in the newspaper read: 'HEROIC



THE CORK EXAMINER. THURSDAY MORNING. SEPTEMBER 2. 1920.

IRISH PEACE CONFERENCE.

STRENUOUS RELEASE EFFORTS.

Deputation To The Castle.

The Standing Committee of the Irish Peace Conference has been unremitting in its efforts from day to day to obtain the release of the Lord Mayor of Cork and the unconvicted prisoners on hunger-strike in Cork. In addition to its published appeal to his Majesty, the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, and the heads of the Executive at Dublin Castle, numerous representations of a private character have been made to influential personages inviting them to use their influence to the same end.

Following a meeting of the Executive Committee, a deputation, consisting of Sir Horace Plunkett, Sir John R. O'Connell, General R. Wanless O'Gowan, Captain Sephen Gwynne, Mr. Philip Hatold Barry, and Captain Henry Harrison, had a prolonged interview with the Under Secretary (Sir John Anderson) and his assistants at Dublin Castle. The deputation emphasised

HEROIC LORD MAYOR.

BRIGHT AND CHEERFUL BUT SINKING.

PROTEST CHORUS GROWING.

CORK PRISONERS STILL ALIVE.

SHOTS AT TRAIN NEAR CORK.

FIREMAN WOUNDED IN HEAD.

GHASTLY SHOOTINGS

CORK PRISONERS.

THE END DRAWING NEAR.

At 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon the Cork prisoners completed the twenty-second day of the hunger-strike. They are all very weak and scarcely able to speak. Their relatives, who visited them yesterday morning and during the day, say that they are greatly changed since Tuesday,' and that some, at least, are facing the last twenty-four hours of their struggle. The nuns rubbed them with oil on Tuesday night, and there are hot water bottles around them. A few of those who have endured the terrible ordeal were able to do little more than stare at their friends yesterday; while the strongest of them was scarcely able to speak above a whisper. All are, however, determined to see the fight through. The names of the prisoners are:—

Sean Hennessy, Limerick; Michael Bourke, Folkstown, Thurles; Thomas Donovan, Emly; Joseph Murphy, Pouladuff, Cork; John Power, Cashel; John Crowley,

Cork Examiner of 2 September 1920

LORD MAYOR – BRIGHT AND CHEERFUL BUT SINKING'. The story on the left referred to the ongoing call at the Irish Peace Conference for the Lord Mayor's release. The condition of the prisoners on hunger strike in Cork Jail was the subject of the story on the right, with the sub-heading, 'The End Drawing Near'.

With pressure mounting on the British Government, a cabinet conference on 2 September discussed the plight of MacSwiney. Differing views were expressed but the position of the Home Office was unchanged: 'To release him would, in effect, be equivalent to giving up the Coercion Act recently passed' (Minutes of cabinet conference, CAB 23/22). Members of the cabinet were suspicious about how MacSwiney continued to live without food. One of the Prime Minister's senior officials, J. T. Davies, wrote to Lord Stamfordham as follows: 'The Lord Mayor of Cork still lives …… The Prime Minister and other members of the government are unable to understand how it is that he is kept alive, but they have no definite information that he takes nourishment privately, although very remarkable stories are flooding around as to the different methods by which he is fed – one being that his wife feeds him on the quiet. The government still adhere to their determination that if he wishes to commit suicide he must be allowed to do so' (as quoted by Costello, 1995).

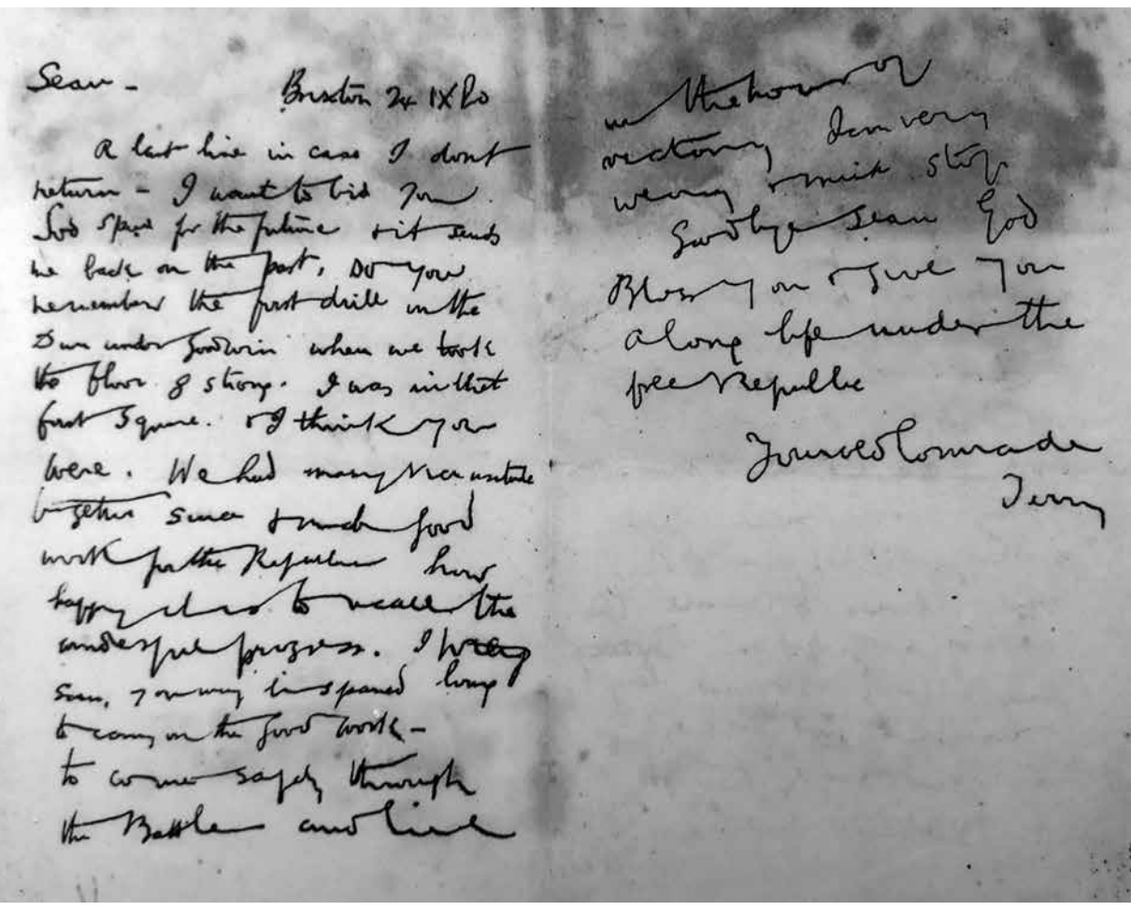
Unsurprisingly, the plight of the Lord Mayor and of the prisoners in Cork dominated the meetings of Cork Corporation and Cork County Council. At the quarterly meeting of the County Council at the beginning of September, Councillor Tadhg Lynch proposed that the proceedings be adjourned 'as a protest against the cruel treatment being meted out to the Lord Mayor and the other Irish prisoners in both Irish and English gaols'. Councillor John J. Donovan queried if an adjournment was advisable – he suggested that the Lord Mayor and the other prisoners would wish for the council to continue its work. Donal O'Callaghan, as Chair of the meeting, expressed his strong opinion on the matter:

> Generally, the principle of adjourning public business is not to be encouraged but the facts in connection with this particular case are unprecedented, because while the man [MacSwiney] is actually dying at the moment, despite all indications and theories, there is always the possibility that it may be avoided. The Lord Mayor and the other prisoners need no manifestation of the feelings of the councillors towards them but it is just possible it might be of use, with others, to make clear the absolute extent to which the feelings of horror and repugnance we feel at this appalling brutality towards men who, so far from being criminals or belonging to the criminal class, are men who, under any ordinary system of government, would be the pride and glory of their country, and whose guerdon would be all the honours that the country could bestow in them. Instead of that, these men were from early youth hounded down and persecuted until the crime was consummated by murder, as seems inevitable in the present instance. In the circumstances, I think we should adjourn. I realise that the adjournment might cause some inconvenience, but that inconvenience is small compared to the issues at stake. Anything that tends to make those issues clear to those in a position to remedy matters, we should not neglect to fully avail of, and I accordingly declare the resolution passed and the meeting adjourned.

A similar situation arose when Cork Corporation met in City Hall on Friday 3 September. After councillors delivered speeches condemning the treatment of

the Lord Mayor and other prisoners, the meeting was adjourned. This followed reports in the press that MacSwiney's health was rapidly deteriorating and that he was likely to soon slip into a coma. As the weeks went by, MacSwiney, remarkably and tenaciously, clung to life. Towards the end of September, he wrote a series of letters, in which he was effectively saying goodbye to friends and colleagues in Cork. Seán O'Hegarty – a leading member of the IRB, a founding member of the Irish Volunteers in Cork and an officer in the Cork No. 1 Brigade of the IRA – received one such letter.

Letter from Terence MacSwiney to Seán O'Hegarty, 24 September 1920
[Courtesy Independence Museum, Kilmurry, county Cork]


Sean -
Brixton 24 IX 20
A last line in case I don't return - I want to bid you God speed for the future, it sends me back on the past. Do you remember the first drill in the Dún under Goodwin when we took the floor 8 strong. I was in the first square. I think you were. We had many vicissitudes together since and much good work for the Republic. How happy it is to recall the wonderful progress. I pray Sean, you may be spared long to carry on the good work - to come safely through the Battle and live in the hour of victory. I am very weary and must stop.
Goodbye Sean. God Bless you and give you a long life under the free Republic
Your old Comrade
Terry

MacSwiney wrote:

> Brixton 24 IX 20
> Seán,
>
> A last line in case I don't return – I want to bid you God speed for the future, and it sends me back on the past. Do you remember the first drill in the Dún, under Goodwin, when we took the floor eight strong? I was in the first square, and I think you were. We had many vicissitudes since and much good work for the Republic. How happy it is to recall the wonderful progress. I pray, Seán, you may be spared long to carry on the good work – to come safely through the Battle and live in the hour of victory. I am very weary and must stop.
> Goodbye, Seán. God bless you and give you a long life under the free Republic.
>
> Your old comrade,
> Terry

At this stage, Cork Corporation had virtually ground to a halt, at political level at least, as the councillors awaited the inevitable news from London. It was now standard practice that meetings were adjourned as a show of solidarity to the Lord Mayor. It was therefore no great surprise that some councillors chose not to attend the meetings, which meant that on at least two occasions (17 September and 8 October) there was a lack of a quorum.

As noted by Costello (1995), 'contacts between MacSwiney and the Cork inmates were made possible through channels established by Donal O'Callaghan, the Deputy Lord Mayor, and Fr. Dominic'. O'Callaghan was a daily visitor to Cork Jail to speak to the eleven Republican prisoners on hunger strike. They had been arrested on a variety of perceived offences against the crown. In a letter to Fr. Dominic on 22 September, O'Callaghan referred specifically to one prisoner, Michael Fitzgerald, who was in an especially weak state. Fitzgerald had been imprisoned since September 1919 for the killing of a British private but he was being held without trial and was never convicted of the offence. O'Callaghan wrote:

> It was with a view to getting Fitzgerald to change his mind on the matter of medical attention that I wrote to London asking particulars with regard to Terry's treatment, as obviously the longer the men can be kept alive the better. However, he [Fitzgerald] fears the doctor would avail of the opportunity to play tricks and there the matter ends.
>
> [Source: MacSwiney Collection, P48/b]

O'Callaghan also wrote to Liam de Róiste, reporting: 'Of eleven men dying here, ten are untried, unconvicted, no charge having been preferred against them. The eleventh man, though twelve months in prison, is still unconvicted. Bring this fact under notice of English Labour. All the men are now very weak and send greetings to the Lord Mayor'. De Róiste forwarded the letter to the English Trades Congress in Portsmouth and to a variety of trade unions, seeking support. He ended his correspondence with the question: 'Will English Labour let them die?'

In the last week of September, Donal O'Callaghan's telegrams to London became increasingly pessimistic about the prospects for the hunger strikers in Cork Jail. In one telegram to Liam de Róiste, he wrote: 'At least two prisoners here at death's door. All very weak but determined as ever'. In another telegram, O'Callaghan simply noted: 'Situation unchanged here. All bad'.

On Saturday 2 October, the fifty-first day of Terence MacSwiney's hunger strike, the doctor on duty in Brixton Prison made what he called 'a final appeal' for the Lord Mayor to take food. As defiant as ever, MacSwiney replied: 'My mind is made up. My decision is irrevocable' (Hannigan, 2010). By now, Annie MacSwiney was telling reporters that her brother weighed a mere five stone, ten lbs, and was resembling a skeleton in the bed (Hannigan, 2010). When Fr. Dominic sent Donal O'Callaghan a telegram from London on 5 October, reporting 'no appreciable change', the Deputy Lord Mayor replied in a surprisingly light-hearted manner.

> The position here with regard to the eleven men continues unchanged, the particular men vary from day to day but in no great danger. Personally I have long since come to believe that this state of affairs is to continue indefinitely and that we will find ourselves old men, with the Channel running between, sending one another periodical messages such as 'situation unchanged' or, as you vary it today, 'no appreciable change'.

On the same day, MacSwiney dictated a remarkable letter to the hunger strikers in Cork, which Hannigan (2010) describes as 'part prayer, part call to arms';

> On your 56th day, I greet you. I ask you to join with me in the following prayer for our people suffering such persecution in the present crisis.
>
> 'O my God, I offer my pain for Ireland. She is on the rack. O my God. Thou knowest how many times our enemies have put her there to break her spirit but by Thy mercy they have always failed. I offer my sufferings here for our martyred people beseeching Thee, O my God, to grant them the nerve and strength and grace to withstand the present terror in Ireland, not only for two months but for two years if needs be, that by Thy all powerful aid, the persecution may end in our time and Ireland arise at last triumphant. Thy power, O God, is Ireland's resurrection. If we are to die in prison, it is Thy will, accept our willing sacrifice for our people. May we in dying bring glory to Thy Name, and honour to our country that has always been faithful to Thee. We rely on Thy mercy to sustain us in the last moment for the constancy of our martyred people and the redemption of our country. God save Ireland! God save, Bless and Guard the Irish Republic to live and flourish and be a model government of truth and justice to all nations. May the liberty of the Irish people shine with Thy Glory, O my God, forever and ever. Amen'.
>
> Comrades, if we twelve go in glorious succession to the grave, the name of Ireland will flash in the tongue and flame through the world and be a sign of hope through all time to every people struggling to be free. Let that thought inspire us, and let our dying prayer be an exhortation to each other and to our people that everyone be prepared to sacrifice everything and God will at last redeem our country.

In his diary from this period, Fr. Dominic records that the Republican prisoners in Cork Jail were to the forefront of MacSwiney's thoughts (O'Hegarty, 1922): 'In spite of his own sufferings, his mind and heart were full of his comrades in Cork Jail. He daily asked for them and daily prayed for them. Their heroic fortitude was he constantly praising. They were "his boys". He looked upon them almost as his children'.

When Cork Corporation met for a special meeting on Friday 15 October, the proceedings were again adjourned inside thirty minutes by Donal O'Callaghan. However, on this occasion, the adjournment had nothing to do with Terence MacSwiney, Rather, the members paid tribute to former councillor and Lord Mayor, James Simcox, who had passed away. Donal O'Callaghan was dealing with many difficult issues at this time. The previous day, City Hall was again raided by British soldiers. Money was taken from the safe in the City Treasurer's office and one staff member, John Eager, a clerk in the Highways Department, was arrested for having a ticket for the raffle of a revolver (*Cork Examiner*, 15 October 1920).

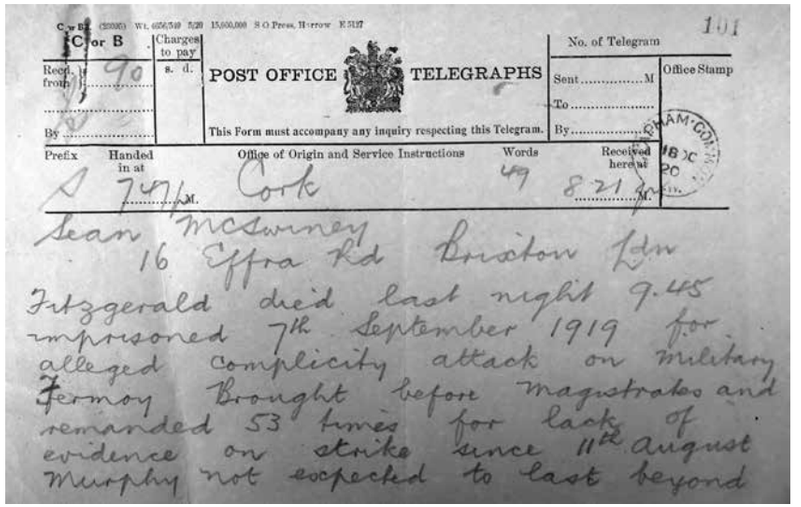
O'Callaghan also found himself immersed in a major industrial relations dispute, involving the new Ford and Son automobile plant. Masses had been organised across Cork city on the morning of Friday 15 October for Terence MacSwiney and the Cork hunger strikers. When Ford employees came to work on the morning, a notice was posted on the premises that any worker who left the plant to attend Mass would be dismissed or would have money docked from their wage packet (*Cork Examiner*, 16 October 1920). Ignoring the threat, the majority of workers, approximately one thousand, left Ford's at 11.30 a.m. to attend Mass. They returned to find the gates locked. Over the next two days, ably assisted by J. J. Walsh TD, the Deputy Lord Mayor tried to broker an agreement with Ford's Managing Director, Edward Grace. Grace's initial intention was to hire a completely new workforce to replace the men who had left to go to Mass. According to Grimes (2008), Grace was guilty of 'disregarding the heightened political and emotional state of the people of Cork city and the feelings of his own workers'.

Eventually, after assurances were given about labour discipline in the future, Grace relented and the men who had been locked out on Friday were permitted to return to work the following Monday. In a statement that was designed to soothe tensions, Grace stressed that his actions were not motivated by any religious or political feeling against the sympathies of the workers who left the factory to attend Mass. Deputy Lord Mayor, Donal O'Callaghan, responded with a letter which was published in the *Cork Examiner* on Monday 18 October. He stressed that the workers had been right to show their support for Terence MacSwiney and the Cork hunger strikers. O'Callaghan noted: 'I have to make it clear that all workers who obeyed the call [to attend the Mass] were not only justified in so doing, but were bound to do so as loyal citizens … Mammon is not paramount in Cork'. Grace was enraged when he read the letter in the *Examiner*; he wrote to Charles Sorensen, a senior executive in Ford and Son, based in Detroit, saying that his blood was boiling as a result of O'Callaghan's 'entirely unwarranted' letter (Grimes, 2008). Grace publicly called for O'Callaghan to recall his letter and he threatened to sack any employees who left the factory without permission in the future. Knowing the importance of the company to Cork, the Deputy Lord Mayor backed down. His retraction came in the form of another letter to the *Cork Examiner*, printed on 20 October.

> As some misunderstanding has occurred over my letter of the 16th, I wish to make it clear that it was no way my intention or that of the bodies on behalf of which I wrote, to interfere with or undermine the authority of the management of Messrs Henry Ford and Son. Such would be very regrettable, as the maintenance of efficiency at an establishment like Fords is of great importance to the city. A misunderstanding also seems to have arisen over the reference to Mammon. This was not a reference to Messrs Ford's establishment but was obviously, merely a general statement.

Grace accepted the retraction and, in another letter to Sorensen, he referred dismissively to O'Callaghan as 'only a boy of twenty-five years' (O'Callaghan was in fact twenty-nine).

Donal O'Callaghan must have felt as if he was moving from one crisis situation to another. On the morning of Monday 18 October, he sent a telegram to London informing Terence MacSwiney that the first of the Cork hunger strikers, Michael Fitzgerald, had died after a struggle lasting sixty-seven days. His telegram read: 'Fitzgerald died last night 9.45. Imprisoned 7th September 1919 for alleged complicity attack on military Fermoy. Brought before magistrates and remanded 53 times for lack of evidence. On strike since 11th August. Murphy not expected to last beyond a few hours – O'Ceallacháin'.


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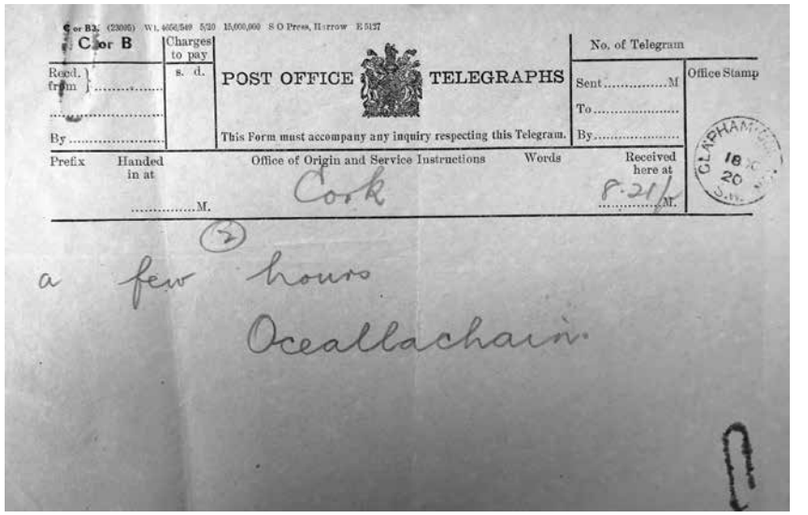
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Cork 49 8.21 M.

Sean MacSwiney
16 Effra Rd Brixton Ldn

Fitzgerald died last night 9.45
imprisoned 7th September 1919 for
alleged complicity attack on military
Fermoy Brought before magistrates and
remanded 53 times for lack of
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Cork 8.21 M.

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a few hours

Oceallachain.

Above and facing page: Telegram from Donal O'Callaghan to Seán MacSwiney in London, telling him of the death of Michael Fitzgerald in Cork Jail.
[Art O'Brien Papers, courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

The Lord Mayor of Cork, close to death himself in Brixton Prison, dictated a message for Donal O'Callaghan which was then issued as a statement. MacSwiney urged people to only shed tears of joy for Fitzgerald who was ready to meet his God and had been willing to die for his country. He added: 'We do not know who is to be second to step into the path of immortality, but by offering unreserved sacrifice, we are safeguarding the destinies of Ireland'.

Donal O'Callaghan called a special meeting of Cork Corporation for Monday 18 October for the purpose of expressing sympathy on the death of Michael Fitzgerald. Speaking in Irish, as usual, the Deputy Lord Mayor referred to Fitzgerald's 'heroic sacrifice for principle'. Alderman Liam de Róiste proposed that the meeting be adjourned as a mark of respect and this was unanimously approved. Sir John Scott articulated his wish that Fitzgerald's passing might prove a turning point in relieving the 'present tension and anxiety of the people'.

Despite regular adjournments and the occasional failure to secure a quorum, Donal O'Callaghan was determined that the work of the Corporation should continue to the greatest extent possible. The councillors met in City Hall again the following night and dealt with a lengthy agenda. A resolution from the Cork City Sinn Féin executive was noted and accepted. The resolution called on all traders in Cork city and county to boycott goods from North East Ulster and to cease dealing with all Belfast and northern banks until all dis-employed workers were unconditionally reinstated, and all burned and destroyed houses rebuilt and returned to the former occupants. The resolution was a reference to the 'Belfast Pogrom', a brutal period of violence, with urban rioting and the forceful removal of thousands of Catholic workers from the shipyards of East Belfast (Lynch, 2008). The elected members also discussed a letter from the Under Secretary in Dublin Castle, stating that as the Corporation had failed to fulfil its duties in collecting rates, it would not receive payment from the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account. The Town Clerk informed the elected members that this would amount to a shortfall of approximately £23,000 per annum. Sir John Scott noted that this was a significant sum of money and he called on the Deputy Lord Mayor to 'make friends with them'. The request was greeted with laugher from the councillors. Tears, rather than laughter, had been the order of the day in the morning when the Deputy Lord Mayor and many of his fellow councillors attended Mass in St. Peter and Paul's Church for the repose of the soul of Michael Fitzgerald.

In Brixton Prison, Terence MacSwiney was drifting in and out of consciousness and delirium. He was all but blind and was in severe pain.

Art O'Brien's letter to Michael Collins on 20 October painted a devastating picture: 'I need not relate to you the effect on his wife and sisters of witnessing these terrible paroxysms of delirium, in which he says the most violent things, and added to which is terrible screaming and shrieking' (SPO/Dáil Éireann files). It was during this time that MacSwiney was force fed with some meat juice and drops of brandy, while unconscious. MacSwiney was angry that he had been tricked and a statement was quickly issued through the Irish Self-Determination League (ISDL) in Great Britain, which had been founded by Art O'Brien: 'It should be made clear that the meat extract given to the Lord Mayor during his delirium on the sixty-ninth day of his fast was the first nourishment which had passed his lips since his arrest on 12 August' (as quoted by Hannigan, 2010).

The Lord Mayor's life was slipping away. His brother, Seán, as well as Fr. Dominic, were permitted to stay overnight in the prison on the night of 24 October and they watched as the last rites were administered. Early the following morning, Fr. Dominic sent a telegram to Donal O'Callaghan in Cork.

> Lord Mayor completed his sacrifice for Ireland at 5.40 this morning. Seán and myself present. Inform Bishop of Cork agus Ceann Feadhma. Respectfully request my fellow citizens to maintain the same calm, dignified and noble bearing as on occasion of Tomás MacCurtain. Deepest sympathy to his friends and fellow-citizens and fellow-soldiers. No vain regrets, but fervent prayers. No useless sighs, but stern resolve to emulate his patient and heroic endurance in bearing all that God requires of us in establishing the Republic on a firm basis. May his noble spirit be with us always to guide and guard us. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

Cork Examiner, 22 October 1920, with the headline 'Lord Mayor's Agony'.



THE CORK EXAMINER. FRIDAY, MORNING. OCTOBER 22. 1920.

GROWING UNEMPLOYMENT.

PREMIER'S NEW WORLD.

Debate In Parliament.

LORD MAYOR'S AGONY.

CONDITION VERY PRECARIOUS.

GIVEN FOOD WHILE UNCONSCIOUS.

PROTEST IN COMMONS.

CORK PRISONERS' STRUGGLE.

CARDINAL LOGUE'S MESSAGE.

PARLIAMENT AND REPRISALS.

CHIEF SEC.'S SURPRISING REPLIES.

POLICE AMBUSHED AT LEAP

FROM TO-DAY'S "DAILY NEWS."

THROUGH OUR PRIVATE WIRE. BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT.

CHIEF SECRETARY AND REPRISALS.

A devastated Donal O'Callaghan issued a statement later in the morning.

> **DEATH WILL NOT TERRORISE US**
>
> Since the Municipal Chair of Cork has been taken possession of by Republicanism, the first gentleman who held it, apart from upholding during his short period in office, the ideals of the Republic, also carried on the actual civic administration in a manner that commanded absolutely the unanimous appreciation of the citizens. After a few short months he was murdered by the English Government. Every effort was made to throw doubt on the authorship of that murder for foreign consumption, but it was obviously impossible to do so here in Ireland. The guilt of the Government was definitely established at the legally constituted inquest. His successor, Councillor Terence MacSwiney, followed on the same line. Again the Chief Magistrate won the universal admiration of the citizens. Now, after a few short months, England has also consigned him to the grave. In the short interval since his imprisonment, while I have been temporarily taking his place, I have received notices of original origin, threatening me with a similar end. The only message that I, on behalf of the Republicans of Cork, give today over the corpse of the late Lord Mayor, is that Cork has defiantly yielded its allegiance to the Republic, that the people of Cork will continue that allegiance unswervingly and that those of us who man the Municipal Council will attempt, as far as in us lies, to follow the noble and glorious lead of the two martyred Republican Magistrates. The Republican hold on the Municipal Chair of Cork ceases only when the last Republican in Cork has followed Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney into the grave. Death will not terrorise us.



EVENING ECHO

SPECIAL EDITION

NO. 8,341 CORK, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1920 PRICE—ONE PENNY

Woodford, Bourne & Co. Ltd. CORK AND LIMERICK.

WOODFORD'S Ports & Sherries

DEAD LORD MAYOR.

LYING IN STATE

At Southwark Cathedral.

A SAD PICTURE.

AN INTERESTING PHOTOGRAPH.

LATE LORD MAYOR MacSWINEY AND THE LADY MAYORESS.

A GOOD PORTRAIT OF THE LATE LORD MAYOR.

SECOND TRAGEDY AT CORK GAOL.

JOE MURPHY DEAD.

SEVEN VOLUNTEERS ARRESTED AT HOLYHEAD

HIS LAST MOMENTS.

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS.

FURTHER MESSAGES OF SYMPATHY.

FINAL MESSAGES.

BODY REMOVED.

FRENCH PRESS TRIBUTES.

EXCLUSION OF RELATIVES FROM BROXTON PRISON.

Question in Parliament.

THE SOUTHERN PLAYERS.

MUNSTER PLAYERS' DRAMATIC SOCIETY.

SYMPATHY OF CORK HIBERNIANS.

CORK CATHOLIC YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY.

SOUTH OF IRELAND CATTLE TRADE ASSOCIATION.

PRAYERS IN COBH CATHOLIC CHURCHES.

MESSAGE OF SYMPATHY.

CORK UNION.

LEHORE'S TRIBUTE.

BISHOP OF CLONFERT On Briton Martyrdom.

WHAT "ALL" THINKS.

CORK CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE.

U.S. & LORD MAYOR'S DEATH.

PROTEST MEETING CALLED.

NEWS IN NEW YORK.

Women Picket British Consulate

MESSAGE FROM MR. DE VALERA.

MESSAGE FROM DISABLED IRISH SOLDIERS.

SKIPPER'S BODY Found in Paddle Box of Trader.

BOXING Big Series Of Fights.

CORK BANKRUPTCY COURT.

CURFEW IN CORK. OFFICIAL REPORT.

HARBOUR BOARD'S FLAG Military Order.

MAY CAN RAIDED BY MASKED MEN

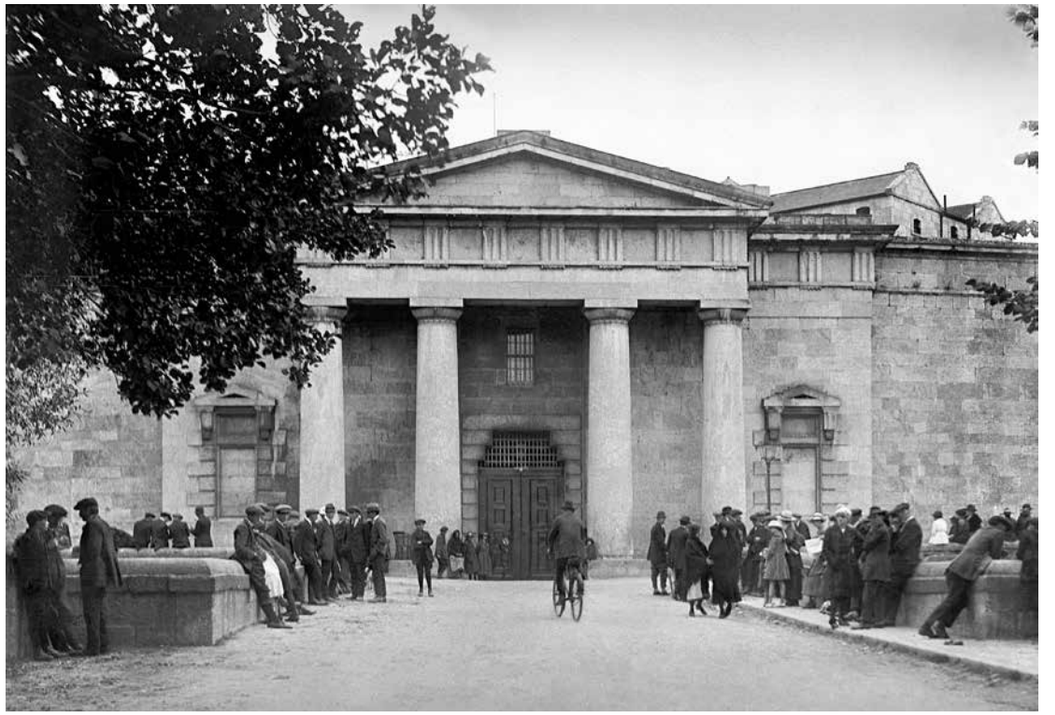
CO-PARTNERSHIP CONGRESS.

Having issued the statement, the Deputy Lord Mayor then quickly convened a special meeting of Cork Corporation for later that day. He opened the meeting by stating that for the second time in a few short months, they were gathering over the body of a Lord Mayor murdered by the English Government. At the age of forty-one, Terence MacSwiney had died after a hunger strike lasting a staggering seventy-four days. O'Callaghan expressed the view that there were only two things to be said on this solemn occasion. First, to tender the Corporation's heartfelt sympathy and condolence to the Lord Mayor's relatives 'whose hearts are torn with grief'. Secondly, he wanted to assure the English Government that its campaign of organised murder against the occupant of the civic chair of Cork would not prevail. Alderman Liam de Róiste delivered a typically eloquent speech, during which he said: 'The materialists must see that the spirit Terence MacSwiney represents cannot be conquered. The death of Terence MacSwiney is a cause for sorrow to us his colleagues, but also a cause for pride. We glory in his death, because we look upon it as representing the resurgence of Ireland'. The meeting ended with a decision that Donal O'Callaghan would lead a Corporation delegation to London to attend ceremonies in connection with the late Lord Mayor and to accompany his body back to Cork.

Facing page:
Evening Echo of Tuesday 26 October 1920, carrying the news of the death of Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney.
[Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]

Chapter 10
Cork's Third Republican Lord Mayor

As Donal O'Callaghan was preparing for his journey to London, news came through that fateful Monday night (25 October) that the second of the hunger strikers in Cork Jail, Joseph (Joe) Murphy, had passed away. Murphy, a commandant of H Company in the 2nd Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, was born in Massachusetts in the United States of America, but was reared in Cork city from a young age. He was arrested on 15 July, accused of an involvement in an attack on British forces. He died in the presence of family and friends at the tender age of twenty-five, after a heroic hunger strike lasting seventy-six days. As observed by O'Riordan (2019): 'Dying only a few hours after the Lord Mayor, Joe Murphy was almost destined to be overlooked'. Murphy was laid to rest in the Republican plot at St. Finbarr's Cemetery on 27 October, as a large presence of British army soldiers observed the proceedings. The *Cork Examiner* (28 October 1920) reported: 'The last chapter in the sad story of the life of Joe Murphy was that which closed with the honours accorded by the people in recognition of the sacrifice he made for his country and for his people. His funeral was a memorable and impressive spectacle, in which all classes of people vied with each other, in an undemonstrative way, in paying tribute to one who was not alone prepared, but actually did, lay down his life in support of a principle'. Murphy's coffin was draped with an American flag and IRA Volunteers from H Company fired a volley of bullets in salute to their fallen comrade. Owing to the fact that the Deputy Lord Mayor was in London the Cork Corporation delegation to Joe Murphy's funeral was led by Alderman Liam de Róiste. He was accompanied by Alderman J. J. Walsh and Alderman Tadhg Barry, amongst others.



Scene outside Cork Jail, off the Western Road, during the Republican hunger strikes, October 1920 [Courtesy of the *Irish Examiner*]

Donal O'Callaghan, along with twenty-one other members of Cork Corporation, arrived in London on the morning of Wednesday 27 October. At 11.00 a.m., the inquest into the death of Terence MacSwiney began in Brixton Prison. A frail Muriel MacSwiney was in attendance alongside the Lord Mayor's siblings, Annie, Mary, Seán and Peter. Art O'Brien and Fr. Dominic were also there, as were three prominent Cork Corporation officials – Florence W. McCarthy (Town Clerk), William Hegarty (Lord Mayor's Secretary) and Donal J. Galvin (City Solicitor). Muriel MacSwiney was called to give testimony about her husband's death and was asked if he had a wish to die. She replied: 'No, none whatever. He told everyone that he did not wish to die but to be unconditionally released'. When asked why her husband had gone on hunger strike, Muriel stated: 'Because they had no right to arrest him. He went on hunger strike as a protest against being arrested. It was an offence

against the laws of the Irish Republic' (*Cork Examiner*, 28 October 1920). At the close of the inquest, Coroner Dr. George Percival Wyatt told the jury that they had three questions to consider.

- Did the Lord Mayor deliberately take his own life by refusing food?
- Did refusing food unbalance his mind to such an extent that he did not realise what was happening?
- Did he refuse food hoping that this would lead to his release, only for his body to give up during the protest?

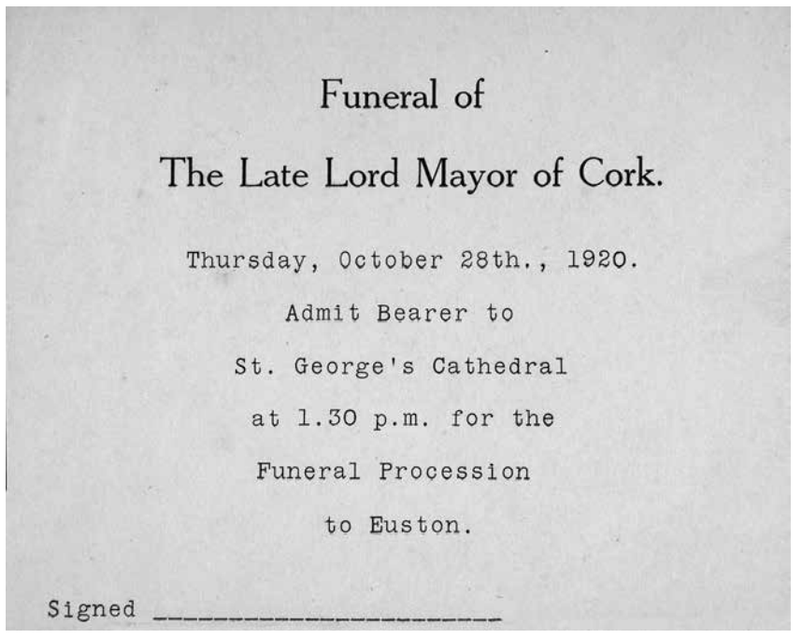
After deliberating for fifteen minutes, the jury opted for the third scenario and asked for the record to show that the Lord Mayor died from heart failure consequent upon his refusal to take food. Coroner Wyatt added: 'Death was due to heart failure, dilated heart, acute delirium, following scurvy, due to exhaustion from prolonged refusal to take food' (*Cork Examiner*, 28 October 1920). This verdict was a satisfactory one for the MacSwiney family: 'The only thing that mattered was that there was no verdict of suicide' (Hannigan, 2010). Interestingly, the verdict of the military inquiry into the death of Joe Murphy in Cork was harsher. The inquiry found that Murphy deliberately caused his own existence to end and feloniously killed himself. As the *Cork Examiner* astutely noted (28 October 1920): 'We make no comment on the difference in form which marks these verdicts, except to suggest that the verdict returned by Brixton civilians in the case of the Lord Mayor of Cork appears to be less hurtful to the susceptibilities of the Lord Mayor's friends than the findings in the case of Joe Murphy appear to be for his bereaved relatives'. Similarly, Henchion (2003) comments: 'The response [to Murphy's death] was in keeping with the view that when the lowly die there are no comets seen; it is only for the death of princes that the heavens themselves blaze forth in all their glory'.

At approximately 7.00 on the night of 27 October, the Lord Mayor's body was removed from Brixton Prison and taken to St. George's Roman Catholic Cathedral in Southwark. By the time the cortege arrived at the cathedral, an estimated five thousand people were present (Hannigan, 2010). The Lord Mayor's coffin was shouldered up the aisle of St. George's Cathedral by six members of Cork Corporation, including Deputy Lord Mayor Donal O'Callaghan. The coffin was inscribed in Irish with the name and position of the deceased, as well as the following words (as translated):

Murdered by the Foreigner
in
Brixton Prison, London, England
on
October 25th, 1920
The fourth year of the Republic
Aged 40 years
God have mercy on his soul

An honour guard of Irish Volunteers stayed by the side of the dead Lord Mayor throughout the night, until Requiem Mass was celebrated at 11.00 the following morning. With a massive crowd both inside and outside the cathedral, Mass was celebrated by the Irish-born, William Cotter, Bishop of Portsmouth and by Cork-born, Daniel J. Mannix, Archbishop of Melbourne. Conspicuous by her absence was the Lord Mayor's widow. Muriel MacSwiney

Admission card to St. George's Cathedral, 28 October 1920, for the funeral procession to Euston Station. [Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]


Funeral of

The Late Lord Mayor of Cork.

Thursday, October 28th., 1920.

Admit Bearer to

St. George's Cathedral

at 1.30 p.m. for the

Funeral Procession

to Euston.

Signed _____



The body of Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney is carried out of St. George's Cathedral, Southwark, London. [Courtesy Cork Public Museum]



The funeral cavalcade made its way in a slow procession through London to Euston Station. [Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]

was deemed too ill to attend the ceremony in St. George's Cathedral or to accompany her husband's body back to Cork.

When Mass ended at 2.30 p.m., the funeral cavalcade made its way in slow procession across the River Thames to Euston Station. Hannigan (2010) records that behind the hearse and members of MacSwiney's family there was 'a veritable sea of dignitaries from the Dáil, Cork Corporation [led by Donal O'Callaghan], Dublin Corporation, and what seemed like every Irish association in the British Isles'. Similarly, Costello (1995) writes: 'After the service in the packed cathedral, the journey back to Ireland began with a ten thousand strong procession from the cathedral that included contingents from virtually every Irish society in London. Perhaps an even greater cause of concern to the British Government, however, was the response of the British public, who lined the streets in respectful silence'.

At Euston Station, the body of the Lord Mayor was loaded onto the funeral van of a train. Members of the MacSwiney family and seventy others were also booked on the train, which departed at close to 6.00 p.m. Amongst those accompanying the Lord Mayor were Donal O'Callaghan, Fr. Dominic, Art O'Brien and Archbishop Mannix. The destination was Holyhead, from where the deceased Lord Mayor and the mourning party were due to travel to Dublin where a demonstration had been arranged by Sinn Féin. As the train made its way to Holyhead, a letter from Sir Hamar Greenwood, Chief Secretary to Ireland, was handed to Seán MacSwiney. The letter stated that, due to concerns about demonstrations of a political nature in Dublin, it had been decided that the remains of the late Lord Mayor would go directly to Cork on the steamer, the *Rathmore*. Greenwood's letter explained that there were places available on the *Rathmore* for MacSwiney's family and twenty friends. At Holyhead, there was an ugly scene as the Lord Mayor's family and friends tried to prevent the police from taking the body. The *Cork Examiner* (30 October 1920) reported that Mary MacSwiney was thrown to the ground. When her brother, Seán, went to her assistance he was grabbed by the throat and violently dragged away. Hannigan (2010) describes the scene as follows: 'All those who placed themselves around the coffin were manhandled until the police and military had cleared the van and begun the process of lifting MacSwiney's coffin onto the back of a lorry. It was speedily brought to the pier, wrapped in sackcloth,

and hoisted onto the *Rathmore* by a crane. Once safely on board, it was quickly surrounded by British soldiers'.

Sadly, the late Lord Mayor set off on his last journey back to his beloved Cork surrounded by British soldiers rather than by his family and friends. They had decided to stick with the original plan of boarding a mail train for Dún Laoghaire. On the morning of Friday 29 October, Mary, Annie, Seán and Peter MacSwiney attended Requiem Mass at 11.00 in the Pro-Cathedral on Marlborough Street in Dublin. A day of mourning had been declared by Dáil Éireann and, after the conclusion of Mass, an impressive procession, with tens of thousands of people, followed a hearse drawn by four black horses. In the absence of a coffin containing the body of Terence MacSwiney, the hearse was piled high with wreaths.

As the procession made its way slowly through the streets of Dublin, the *Rathmore* arrived in Cobh where the Lord Mayor was welcomed back home by a big crowd of people. The body was transferred to the tug boat, the *Mary Tavy*, which made its way to Custom House Quay to be handed over to the

The arrival of the body of Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney into Cork. [Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]



Deputy Lord Mayor, Donal O'Callaghan. Here a stand-off ensued, as Cork Corporation officials – following the instructions of Donal O'Callaghan – refused to receive the body in the absence of the Lord Mayor's family. For the best part of six hours, until 10.00 that night, the *Mary Tavy* and the body of the Lord Mayor remained docked at Custom House Quay, surrounded by military and police, until the MacSwiney family arrived from Dublin. As Annie MacSwiney wrote in her diary, her brother was guarded in death by the English military. The MacSwiney family took possession of the body and started a procession to City Hall: 'It was dark and the town was quiet as the Lord Mayor made his last trip to the place where he had been plucked less than three months earlier. His brothers and sisters strode behind the coffin, satisfied at last that now at least his remains were in their control. There was a sense too among them that this is what he would have wanted, returning to the job he'd thrown himself into, and the scene of the crime perpetrated against him' (Hannigan 2010).

Terence MacSwiney lay in state in City Hall on Saturday 30 October. The *Cork Examiner* (1 November 1920) noted: 'Though the weather was most inclement, thousands stood in queues for long periods before gaining admission to pass by the coffin. The display of wreaths was probably beyond all local record'. One of those who paid respects that day to his deceased friend was P. S. O'Hegarty. He later wrote (1922):

> The face was almost the face of a bronze statue, but that was not the unfamiliar thing about it. The lines were different, for it was a face in which all the tissue had gone, in which everything had gone but the fundamental things. It was a face, in fact, in which the real Terry, the fundamental Terry, first appeared. And what was left now was essentially a warrior face. Nobody had been accustomed to regard Terry as primarily a fighter, in that sense. His many other activities obsessed the outward show of it. And yet that was what death revealed, that this man was fundamentally a warrior, a warrior of the highest caste known to mankind. As one looked at the face, stern and set, one's mind instinctively leaped to the word 'Samurai'. It was his type. Unflinching courage, unflinching resolution, unflinching self-sacrifice on the altar of duty. That was Terry.



After the doors of City Hall finally closed on that Saturday night, Mary and Annie MacSwiney remained by their brother's side, in the same way that Terence MacSwiney had stayed with the body of Tomás MacCurtain after his murder in March. The funeral Mass took place at 12.00 noon the following day in the North Cathedral. There was a substantial military presence but this did not deter Corkonians from attending in their droves. Shortly before 12.00, a group of pupils from MacSwiney's old school, the North Monastery, carried a large floral cross past the gauntlet of soldiers and into the chapel (*Cork Examiner*, 1 November 1920). The chief celebrant at the Mass was Cork's Bishop Daniel Cohalan and he was assisted by Archbishop John Harty of Cashel. The *Cork Examiner* (1 November 1920) recorded that dignitaries were accommodated with seats before the rails of the High Altar. This group included Arthur Griffith TD (the acting President of Dáil Éireann, deputising for Éamon de Valera who had spent the last seventeen months in the United States), Count George Noble Plunkett TD, Fr. Dominic, Donal O'Callaghan and a host of senior local government figures from across Ireland. Dublin Corporation was represented by Deputy Lord Mayor, Alderman Michael Staines TD. It is perhaps surprising that the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alderman Laurence O'Neill was not in attendance (Quinlivan, 2020). He had been present at the Requiem Mass in Southwark but then stayed in the United Kingdom to lobby for the life of eighteen-year-old, Kevin Barry, a first year medical student at University College Dublin, to be saved. Barry had been condemned to death for the murder of a British soldier, 'even though the evidence that he fired the fatal shot was doubtful' (Macardle, 1968).

In the absence of Muriel MacSwiney, the chief family mourners in the North Cathedral were the deceased Lord Mayor's siblings, Mary, Annie, Seán and Peter. After the Mass, Seán and Peter led the mourners behind the hearse on the journey across the city to St. Finbarr's Cemetery. The graveside oration was delivered by Arthur Griffith, who stated: 'We, his colleagues of Dáil Éireann, stand by the grave of Terence MacSwiney in sorrow, but also pride. He has laid down his life to consolidate the establishment of the Irish Republic, willed by the vote of the people of Ireland. His heroic sacrifice has made him in death the victor over the enemies of his country's independence. He has won over

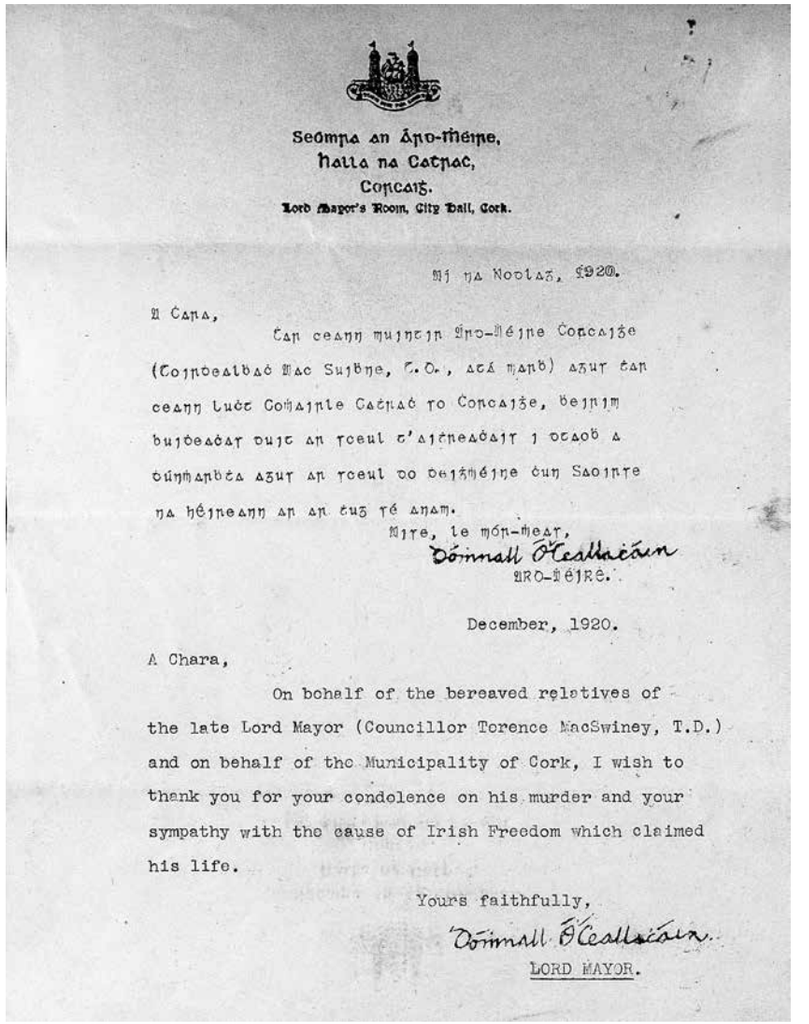
Facing page: The body of Terence MacSwiney in Cork City Hall, 30 October 1920 [Courtesy of the *Irish Examiner*]

them, because he has gained by his death for Ireland the support and sympathy of all that is humane, noble and generous in the world'. Fittingly, Terence MacSwiney was laid to rest in the Republican Plot of St. Finbarr's Cemetery alongside Tomás MacCurtain and Joe Murphy.

On the same day that Terence MacSwiney was buried, across the Atlantic Ocean the President of Dáil Éireann, Éamon de Valera, addressed a crowd of forty thousand people in the Polo Grounds, home of the New York Yankees. The event was organised at short notice to commemorate the death of the Cork Lord Mayor. De Valera and MacSwiney knew each other well, having spent time in prison together. During a passionate speech, de Valera lambasted the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, describing him as a 'miserable opportunist' and a 'contemptible demagogue' (McCullagh, 2017). At the conclusion of his address, de Valera promised the crowd that just as MacSwiney had taken the place of the murdered MacCurtain, so others would take the place of MacSwiney.

On Leeside, attention soon turned to who that person would be. The *Cork Examiner a*nd *Evening Echo* of Monday 1 November both contained a notice from Town Clerk, Florence W. McCarthy, that the members of Cork Corporation would meet in City Hall at 7.00 that Thursday night to elect a Lord Mayor in succession to Terence MacSwiney. Also, on the first day of the new month, young Kevin Barry was hanged, despite the best efforts of the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alderman Laurence O'Neill, to have his sentence commuted. Barry's hanging was the first execution since the aftermath of the 1916 Easter Rising. The deaths of Terence MacSwiney and Kevin Barry brought worldwide attention to the British presence in Ireland and helped to sway the propaganda battle in Sinn Féin's favour. As explained by Keane (2017): 'The Irish war had gone from being ignored to being on the front pages of the world's newspapers'. Significantly, events in Ireland were also featuring prominently in the US presidential election of 1920, contested by Republican Senator, Warren G. Harding, and Democratic Governor, James M. Cox.

The global impact of Terence MacSwiney's hunger strike was apparent to Deputy Lord Mayor, Donal O'Callaghan, when he went to work in City Hall on 1 November. On his desk was a mountain of telegrams and letters from all over the world, expressing sympathy on the death of MacSwiney. Dutifully and conscientiously, O'Callaghan read through each one and noted its contents. In most cases, he then issued a standardised reply written in Irish and English, in



Seomra an Ard-Mheara,
Halla na Cathrach,
Corcaigh.
Lord Mayor's Room, City Hall, Cork.

Mí na Nodlag, 1920.

A Chara,

Tar ceann muintir Ard-Méara Corcaighe (Comhdealbhóir Mac Suibhne, T.D., atá marbh) agus tar ceann Lucht Comhairle Cathrach go Corcaigh, beirim buidheachas duit as fceul d'aithneachtain i dtaobh a dúmhanbtha agus an fceul do deighméine chun Saoirse na hÉireann an an cuis ré anam.

Mire, le mór-mheas,
Dómnall Ó Ceallacháin
ARD-MÉARA.

December, 1920.

A Chara,

On behalf of the bereaved relatives of the late Lord Mayor (Councillor Terence MacSwiney, T.D.) and on behalf of the Municipality of Cork, I wish to thank you for your condolence on his murder and your sympathy with the cause of Irish Freedom which claimed his life.

Yours faithfully,
Dómnall Ó Ceallacháin.
LORD MAYOR.

Letter issued by Deputy Lord Mayor, Donal O'Callaghan to those who expressed sympathy on the death of Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney.

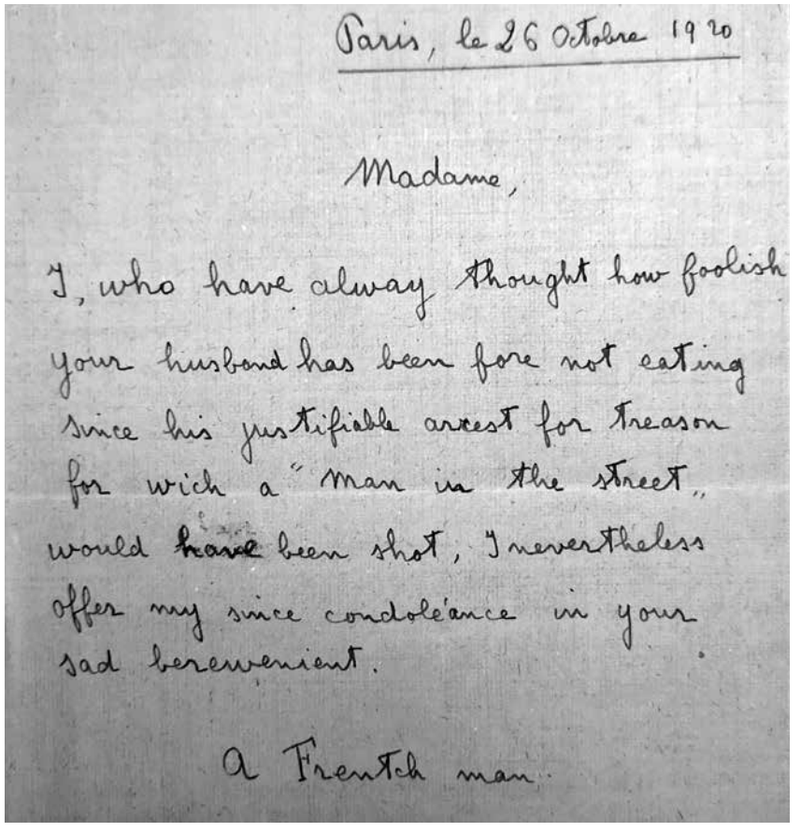
which he noted: 'On behalf of the bereaved relatives of the late Lord Mayor (Councillor Terence MacSwiney TD) and on behalf of the municipality of Cork, I wish to thank you for your condolence on his murder, and your sympathy with the cause of Irish freedom which claimed his life'.

From America, Éamon de Valera's message to Muriel MacSwiney stated: 'May the noble pride that such a man was your husband console you for the loss and may the knowledge that your sufferings and his have touched the hearts of an apathetic world and aroused it to a realisation of the agonies that are being endured for liberty's sake in Ireland comfort you at the shrine of his bier and the deathbed of his comrades. We pledge that whilst an Irish heart beats, we shall resist till the hands of those who would rob our country of its independence shall fall nerveless or a just Judge has taken his vengeance'.

The Dáil's representative in Paris, Seán T. O'Kelly, wrote: 'My deepest sympathy to MacSwiney family. Ireland mourns one of her noblest and bravest. The name of Terence MacSwiney, the second Lord Mayor of Cork done cruelly to death by the English Government inside six months, will ever shine forth resplendent wherever love of country is understood and honoured. People of France horrified at England's cold brutality. Office here besieged with sympathisers wishing to honour our heroic comrade'.

The note of sympathy from Constance Markievicz was penned from the female prison in Mountjoy: 'Our great light of valour has flamed across the night of Ireland's woe, a beacon to guide us, a martyr to die for us, and a saint to pray for us. Very humbly we offer him our homage, and very humbly we pray to God to give us strength that we may not fail, but that each of us in our own small way may do the task that God has allotted us for Ireland. He and his kittle band in Cork have struck as decisive a blow against tyranny as was struck at Easter week; a blow, too, that took more courage, more faith, more endurance, that had none of the glory and ecstasy of battle, but was one long act of suffering and renunciation'.

On 2 November, Donal O'Callaghan wrote to the stricken Muriel MacSwiney in the Jermyn Court Hotel in Piccadilly, London. After apologising for not saying goodbye to her before leaving London, he praised her for her 'splendid fortitude'. O'Callaghan then thanked her for sending him a keepsake of her late husband. The Deputy Lord Mayor enclosed a copy of the resolution passed by Cork Corporation on 25 October which offered sympathy on the death of Terence MacSwiney and which reaffirmed allegiance to the ideals of the Republic. O'Callaghan noted that there might be propaganda value in the resolution. In hand-writing at the bottom of the letter, the Deputy Lord Mayor apologised for using English in the correspondence.



Paris, le 26 Octobre 1920

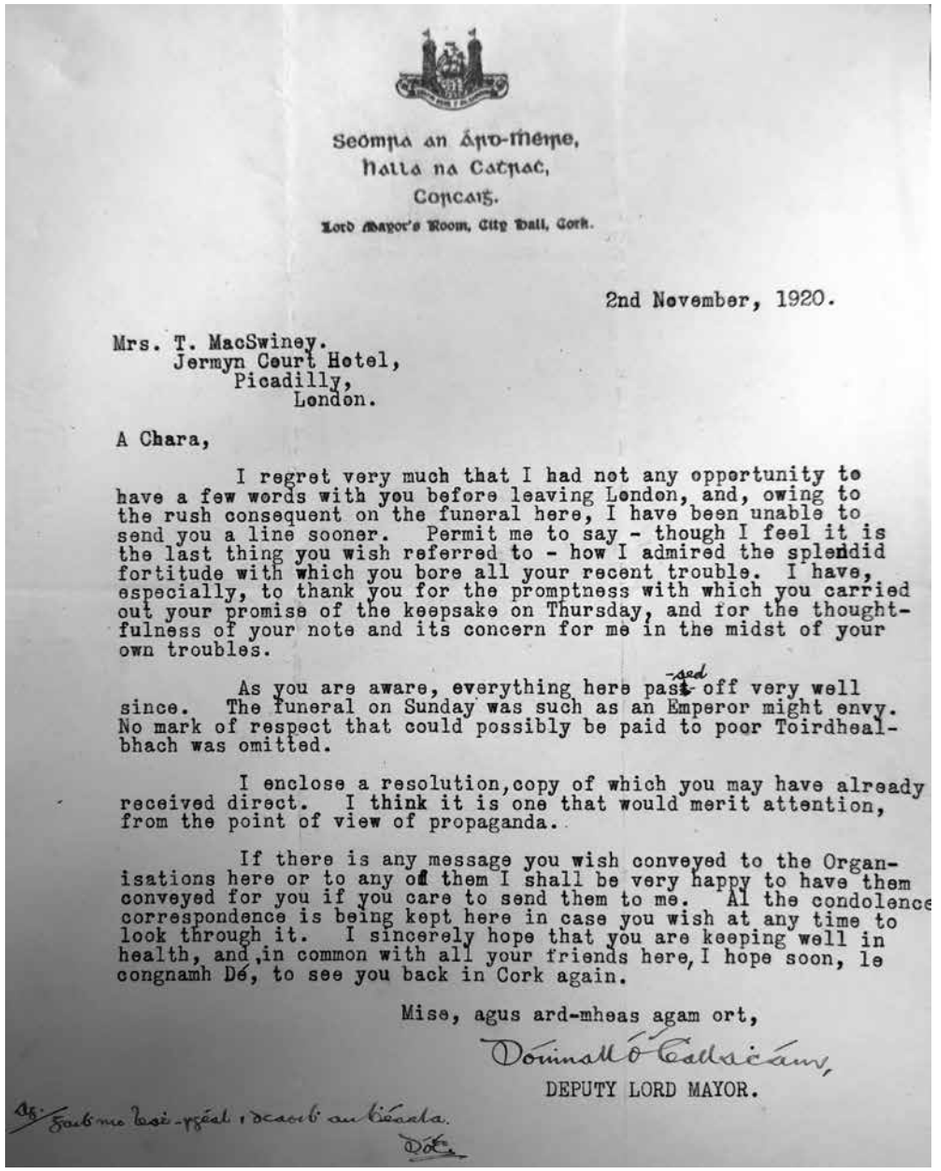
Madame,

I, who have alway thought how foolish your husband has been fore not eating since his justifiable arrest for treason for wich a "man in the street" would have been shot, I nevertheless offer my since condoléance in your sad bereavement.

a French man.

A letter sent by 'A French man' to Muriel MacSwiney the day after her husband died, stating that his hunger strike was foolish and his arrest for treason was justified. Nonetheless, the letter ends with an offering of condolence.
[Art O'Brien Papers, courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

With the special meeting of Cork Corporation to elect a new Lord Mayor in succession to Terence MacSwiney fast approaching, the Sinn Féin members of the council met and agreed to nominate Donal O'Callaghan for the position. This was a strong statement of support for O'Callaghan and recognition that he had performed admirably as Deputy Lord Mayor while MacSwiney was in Brixton Prison. Given that he held the role as Chairman of Cork County Council, the party might well have opted to give the Mayoralty to one of its other prominent councillors, such as Liam de Róiste, Michael O'Cuill or



Seomra an Ard-Mheara,
Halla na Cathrach,
Corcaigh.
Lord Mayor's Room, City Hall, Cork.

2nd November, 1920.

Mrs. T. MacSwiney.
Jermyn Court Hotel,
Picadilly,
London.

A Chara,

I regret very much that I had not any opportunity to have a few words with you before leaving London, and, owing to the rush consequent on the funeral here, I have been unable to send you a line sooner. Permit me to say - though I feel it is the last thing you wish referred to - how I admired the splendid fortitude with which you bore all your recent trouble. I have, especially, to thank you for the promptness with which you carried out your promise of the keepsake on Thursday, and for the thoughtfulness of your note and its concern for me in the midst of your own troubles.

As you are aware, everything here past off very well since. The funeral on Sunday was such as an Emperor might envy. No mark of respect that could possibly be paid to poor Toirdhealbhach was omitted.

I enclose a resolution, copy of which you may have already received direct. I think it is one that would merit attention, from the point of view of propaganda.

If there is any message you wish conveyed to the Organisations here or to any of them I shall be very happy to have them conveyed for you if you care to send them to me. All the condolence correspondence is being kept here in case you wish at any time to look through it. I sincerely hope that you are keeping well in health, and, in common with all your friends here, I hope soon, le congnamh Dé, to see you back in Cork again.

Mise, agus ard-mheas agam ort,

Donnall Ó Callaċáin,

DEPUTY LORD MAYOR.

Letter from Donal O'Callaghan to Muriel MacSwiney, 2 November 1920
[Art O'Brien papers, courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

Professor Alfred O'Rahilly. Instead, the party decided that O'Callaghan should combine the two top positions in Cork local government.

Accordingly, as Donal O'Callaghan watched large crowds flock into the public gallery of Cork City Hall on Thursday 4 November, he knew the outcome of the meeting. Nonetheless, there was an air of excitement in City Hall because, uniquely, this was the third special meeting of Cork Corporation called in 1920 to elect a Lord Mayor. Of course, it was also a solemn occasion because Terence MacSwiney had only been laid to rest the previous Sunday afternoon in St. Finbarr's Cemetery, close to his friend and colleague, Tomás MacCurtain, who had served as Cork's first Lord Mayor that year. Since Terence MacSwiney was arrested on the fateful evening of 12 August, Donal O'Callaghan had been deputising as Lord Mayor of his beloved city. Now, the time had come for him to be formally elected as Cork's first citizen. It should have been a crowning moment in his political career, but the occasion was a sad one and O'Callaghan's heart was heavy. The highly respected Alderman, Professor William Stockley, called the meeting to order and asked for silence in the public gallery. Occupying the seat on one side of Professor Stockley was Fr. Dominic O'Connor, the fervent Nationalist, who had been Terence MacSwiney's chaplain during his hunger strike and final days. Town Clerk, Florence W. McCarthy, sat on the other side of Professor Stockley and, having taken a roll call, he announced that the sole purpose of the meeting was to elect the Lord Mayor of Cork, in succession to the late Councillor Terence MacSwiney. The newly elected Lord Mayor would hold office until 23 January 1921.

When the Town Clerk called for nominations, Sinn Féin's Councillor Michael O'Cuill stood up to address the meeting. Speaking in Irish, he proposed Councillor Donal O'Callaghan for the position of Lord Mayor. Councillor O'Cuill's proposal was seconded by his party colleague, Alderman Edward Coughlan, who also spoke in Irish. With no other nominations and with no dissenting voices, Councillor Donal O'Callaghan was accordingly unanimously elected as Lord Mayor of Cork. Amidst sustained applause from the councillors and those in the public gallery, O'Callaghan signed the declaration of office and was invested with the historic Mayoral chain. Cork's new Lord Mayor then rose to speak, initially in Irish and then in English. In a short but passionate address, he referred to his two Republican predecessors who were 'murdered by the British Government', which he characterised

as a 'murder gang'. He added: 'My position, which I am setting forth as clearly and distinctly and glaringly as it can possibly be set forth, is that we absolutely refuse to be tyrannised. Our demand in this country has been made and we are not going to flinch no matter what the result or cost might be. If that gang [British Government] continues its campaign of organised murder, we will only release the grip of Republicanism on the chair I occupy when they have closed the grave over the last Republican in Cork' (*Evening Echo*, 5 November 1920).

On the proposal of Councillor Barry Egan the Mayoral salary was fixed at £250 from 4 November 1920 until 23 January 1921. Sinn Féin's Alderman Tadhg Barry then proposed a motion condemning 'the latest abominable crime perpetrated by the British Government in Ireland, the murder, by hanging, of young Kevin Barry' (*Evening Echo*, 5 January 1920). Town Clerk, Florence W. McCarthy, stated that the special Corporation meeting had been called for the sole purpose of electing a Lord Mayor. He advised Alderman Barry that his motion would have a greater impact if it was submitted for the next regular meeting of the Corporation, on 12 November. Alderman Barry agreed and the meeting was adjourned, after those assembled in the Council Chamber rose to applaud Cork's latest Lord Mayor.

As Donal O'Callaghan acknowledged the acclaim of the elected members and those in the public gallery, he reflected on the speech delivered by Éamon de Valera four days earlier in New York. De Valera had promised the crowd that just as MacSwiney had taken the place of MacCurtain, so too would someone take the place of MacSwiney. Donal O'Callaghan was that person. Like his two martyred predecessors, O'Callaghan's political beliefs were well known to all and, as such, he was a threat to the British Government. In his capacity as Deputy Lord Mayor and Chairman of Cork County Council, he had received multiple death threats, including a chilling one a fortnight earlier which stated: 'Final warning – whereas it has come to our knowledge that the Sinn Féin organisation, of which you are a prominent member, through the so-called IRA, or murder gang, has been committing outrages in this hitherto God-fearing and law-abiding country, this reign of terror must be stopped. You are therefore most earnestly warned that in the event of those heartless and cowardly crimes being continued, you will be personally held responsible and punished in such a manner that others will be deterred from criminal courses – By Order'.

Donal O'Callaghan may have reached the pinnacle of his political career in Cork City Hall on Thursday 4 November 1920 but his pride was mixed with trepidation. Like his Sinn Féin friends and colleagues, Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney, would he too be called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice for the Irish Republic?

Chapter 11
A City in Flames

In his diary entry for 4 November 1920, Liam de Róiste described Donal O'Callaghan as 'a good young man', before adding: 'May God preserve his life. His eagerness in some directions is the eagerness of youth. The circumstances of his election are unprecedented, not alone in the history of Cork, but probably in the history of any city'. The local press reacted positively to Donal O'Callaghan's election as Lord Mayor. An editorial in the *Cork Examiner* on 5 November, the day after the election, stated:

> Last evening, the Corporation of the city of Cork, at a special meeting, unanimously elected Mr. D. O'Callaghan to the position of Lord Mayor of Cork for the term ending in January next. The tragic circumstances surrounding the fate of his two immediate predecessors in office this year are familiar to the public, and do not require to be detailed here. Mr. O'Callaghan has, in his capacity as Chairman of the Cork County Council, exhibited considerable ability as an administrator, and it may be assumed that as Lord Mayor of Cork his abilities will be freely placed at the disposal of his fellow-citizens. A man of strong convictions, and fearless in the enunciation of his political views, Lord Mayor O'Callaghan also possesses the business capacity which will enable him intelligently to grasp the various details of the work of the municipality, and wherever possible to effect legitimate economies and necessary reforms. In taking up the office of Lord Mayor of Cork, Mr. O'Callaghan has assumed a position which, in the existing tragic state of affairs in this country, is not one that might be expected to arouse keen competition. He has, for some time past, occupied the position of Deputy Lord Mayor; and his colleagues in the Municipal Council, by electing him unanimously, have indicated that they are satisfied with his political aims and his general efficiency. The citizens will wish Mr. O'Callaghan the best of good-luck in his new capacity, and trust that before his term of office expires the affairs of the country, as well as of the city, may be placed on a footing which will satisfy the aspirations of all who desire progress and ordered peace.

At just twenty-nine years of age, Donal O'Callaghan was now a leading member of Sinn Féin and of politics in Cork. As well as highlighting his staunch political convictions, the *Cork Examiner* drew attention to his skills as an administrator and it is true that O'Callaghan had gradually turned his focus to his significant duties as Lord Mayor and County Council Chairman. This involved pulling back from his involvement in the IRB, the Volunteers and the IRA. His desire to see an Irish Republic was as strong as ever but, in the words of the editorial, his focus to achieve this was through ordered peace, rather than violence. There may not have been keen competition for the Mayoralty but that was largely due to the fact that it was seen by the elected members of the Corporation as the most dangerous job in Ireland. It was both an honour and a poisoned chalice.

One of the first things that Donal O'Callaghan wanted to achieve as Lord Mayor was to bring the hunger strikes in Cork Jail to an end. After the deaths of Michael Fitzgerald, Terence MacSwiney (in Brixton Prison) and Joe Murphy, the nine remaining hungers strikers in Cork Jail continued to refuse to take food. The Lord Mayor worked closely with Bishop Daniel Cohalan and Arthur Griffith to try to resolve the situation. On Friday 12 November, both Cohalan and Griffith had letters in the *Cork Examiner*. The Bishop stated that the hunger strikes should 'end at once'. He drew attention to the heroic sacrifice of Terence MacSwiney, claiming that the worldwide sympathy which ensued for the cause of Ireland meant that the nation had got value for his life. He added: 'But if the hunger strike in Cork Jail is not called off, these self-sacrificing men will pass away one after another without impressing

the world any more than it has been impressed already. The continuance of the hunger strike will only lead to a waste of human life' (*Cork Examiner*, 12 November 1920). Griffith, acting President of Dáil Éireann, struck a similar note. His letter was sent to the Lord Mayor in City Hall and O'Callaghan forwarded it to the *Cork Examiner*. Griffith pleaded as follows: 'I am of the opinion that our countrymen in Cork Prison have sufficiently proved their devotion and fidelity, and that they should now, as they were prepared to die for Ireland, prepare again to live for her'. In what was a carefully orchestrated move, Lord Mayor O'Callaghan spent most of 12 November (the day that the letters of Cohalan and Griffith were published) in Cork Jail, pleading with the prisoners and impressing upon them that the acting President of the Dáil had essentially ordered them to cease the hunger strikes. That evening, the hunger strike in Cork Jail ended and the nine prisoners took food for the first time in ninety days.

The hungers strikes of Terence MacSwiney and the prisoners in Cork had served a purpose, generating news around the world, especially in America. During the month of September alone, the story of the Lord Mayor and the Cork hungers strikers made front-page news in more than 500 daily newspapers throughout the US (Dwyer, 2019). The Parisien newspaper, *Le Petit Journal*, which sold more than two million copies each day, and claimed to have the largest circulation in the world, devoted its entire front page on 19 September to the plight of Terence MacSwiney in Brixton Prison (Dwyer, 2019). South African premier, Jan Smuts, criticised Britain for its handling of the situation in Ireland and he warned Lloyd George that it threatened the concept of the British Commonwealth of Nations.


Le Petit Journal
ADMINISTRATION 15 CENT. SUPPLÉMENT ILLUSTRÉ 15 CENT. ABONNEMENTS
DIMANCHE 19 SEPTEMBRE 1920
LE MARTYR IRLANDAIS

Such was Donal O'Callaghan's determination to bring an end to the Cork hunger strikes that he missed the Cork Corporation meeting on 12 November, which should have been the first one he chaired as Lord Mayor. Instead, Councillor Michael O'Cuill chaired the meeting as councillors passed motions of sympathy for Kevin Barry and Christopher Lucey. Lucey was shot dead by Auxiliaries in Ballingeary on 10 November. He had been on the run from his home in Pembroke Street due to the increased pressure on the IRA in the city, which led to most of the senior IRA officials retreating westwards (Keane, 2017). The elected members, despite the reservations of Sir John Scott, also agreed that they would have no further communication, on any matter, with the Local Government Board.

Donal O'Callaghan would have approved of this resolution and he was to the fore as the members of the County Council discussed a similar motion at its meeting on 17 November. The councillors agreed: 'That we, the members of the Cork County Council, will hold no further communication on any matter with the English Local Government Board in Ireland, and for the supervision and authority hitherto exercised by that body, we will henceforth accept the supervision of the Local Government Board of Dáil Éireann. All minutes and necessary communications of every nature will in future be sent to the Local Government Department of Dáil Éireann, whose power and authority as a Department instituted by the Government of the Republic we recognise'. On the question of how the County Council would operate without funding from the LGB, Donal O'Callaghan expressed confidence that rates would be collected from citizens without any difficulty. He told his colleagues: 'We must impress on the ratepayers of the county the fact that the council, on behalf of the Republic, has taken over the administration of the country and is committed to seeing that administration carried out. We have on the one hand, of course, the absolute enmity of the British Government, which has done the only thing it could do to render it impossible for the council to carry on, by cutting off the grants. I am satisfied that with the loyal co-operation of the people we can carry on the administration absolutely independently of the grants that were cut off, but to do so will necessarily mean retrenchment in different directions'. The Chairman warned that rates might have to be increased but regular and prompt payment would ensure that the council could continue to operate efficiently.

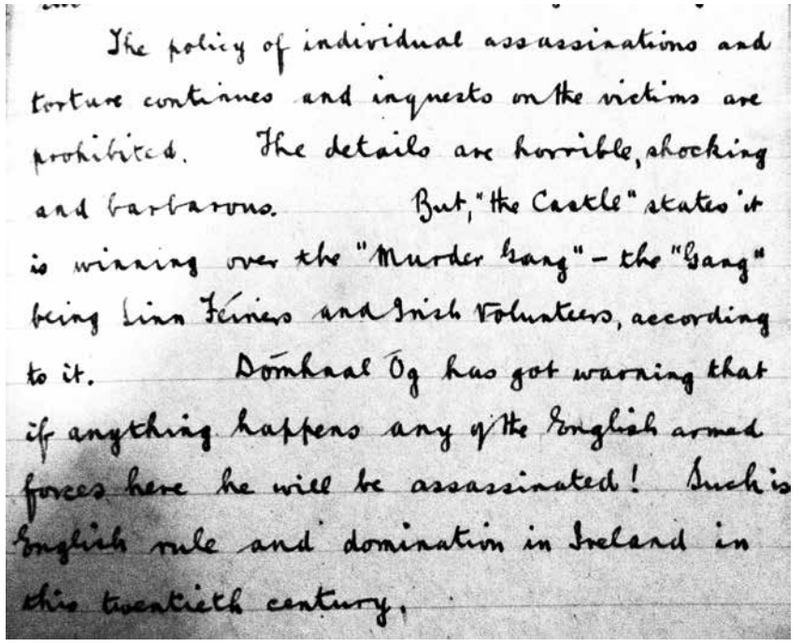
O'Callaghan's belief that rates from citizens would make up for the loss of financial support from the LGB was misguided. Crown forces intimidated ratepayers and 'raided council offices and seized documents in an effort to render local administration unworkable' (Daly, 1997). In addition, rate

The Parisien newspaper, *Le Petit Journal*, devoted its front page of 19 September 1920 to the plight of Terence MacSwiney, with the heading, LE MARTYR IRLANDAIS.

collectors were arrested and, often, the process of collecting rates had to be undertaken secretly. Kerry County Council struggled to operate after the burning of Tralee in the autumn of 1920 and many local councils were targeted in similar fashion. On 23 November, the *Cork Examiner* reported. 'All the rate books and documents in connection with the County Council rates and the Rural District of Cork were taken from the collectors' offices in Cook Street some time yesterday morning. It is not known how the removal was effected. When the collector arrived at the usual hour he noticed that the books had been abstracted, but he has no idea as to how or why and by whom they were taken'. As noted by Daly (1997): 'Lack of money posed the greatest threat to the survival of rebel councils'. Dublin Corporation was on the verge of bankruptcy until the Dáil Minister for Local Government, William T. Cosgrave, intervened and approached the banks for assistance (Quinlivan, 2006). Local authority officials had to contend with threats and the withdrawal of funding from the LGB – equally, they had to cope with an aggressive approach from the Dáil Department of Local Government. A circular letter issued by the latter in November 1920 told councils that any official who was unwilling to carry out orders from the Dáil Department of Local Government could resign on pension. Those who chose to remain in office would be dismissed. The circular stated that pensions would not be paid to officials dismissed 'for endeavouring to thwart the will of the people of Ireland' (Daly, 1997).

Donal O'Callaghan had taken over the Mayoralty in Cork at a point when tensions and violence were at their highest levels. Lenihan (2018) points out: 'City Hall was constantly watched and raided, and many council meetings were cancelled due to impending raids. O'Callaghan spent his time constantly moving from house to house at night, on the run, carefully keeping his eyes and ears open for unwelcome visitors'. Alderman Liam de Róiste wrote in his diary that assassinations and torture continued and that inquests were prohibited, before adding: 'Dómhnall Óg has got warning that if anything happens any of the English armed forces here, he will be assassinated! Such is English rule and domination in Ireland in this twentieth century'.

The Black and Tans, and the Auxiliaries, were now taking the fight to the IRA and they exhibited an extraordinary ruthlessness. Premises associated with Sinn Féin and the Gaelic Athletic Association were frequently destroyed and, on 9 November, a confident Lloyd George boasted during a speech in Guildhall, 'We have murder by the throat!'.


The policy of individual assassinations and torture continues and inquests on the victims are prohibited. The details are horrible, shocking and barbarous. But, "the Castle" states it is winning over the "Murder Gang" – the "Gang" being Sinn Féiners and Irish Volunteers, according to it. Dómhnal Óg has got warning that if anything happens any of the English armed forces here he will be assassinated! Such is English rule and domination in Ireland in this twentieth century.

Entry in Liam de Róiste diary about a threat to the life of Donal O'Callaghan [Liam de Róiste diaries, courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]

By late November, things had spiralled out of control in Cork. There were so many attempts to burn City Hall that a fireman was always on duty there and lines of hose were kept in readiness (Lenihan, 2018). Councillors feared for their lives and, much to the frustration of Lord Mayor O'Callaghan, meetings were often adjourned because a quorum was lacking. On Sunday 21 November, three civilians were shot dead by Black and Tans at Broad Lane and the North Mall and there was an arson attack on Dwyer and Co. Wholesalers on Washington Street.

In Dublin, 21 November would go down in history as 'Bloody Sunday'. The IRA, under the direction of Michael Collins, targeted British intelligence agents, killing fifteen people (not all intelligence agents) and wounding four. Foy (2017) describes the event as 'a remarkable achievement by Collins [which] sent a seismic shock wave through the British political system, shaking public faith in the Government's Irish policy and forcing Lloyd George to reassess his goals in Ireland'. Retaliation was swift and brutal. That afternoon, at a Gaelic

football match in Croke Park, the Black and Tans and the RIC drove up in lorries and opened fire on the crowd, killing twelve and wounding sixty people in a shooting spree which is reported to have lasted ten minutes (Neeson, 1998). It is little wonder that the *Cork Examiner* of Monday 22 November contained the headline 'Appalling Weekend' on its main news page. In the week that followed, a series of coordinated attacks were carried out in Cork city by the anti-Sinn Féin Society. This was the IRA's term for suspected loyalist informers and also the cover used by policemen for reprisals. In the space of five days, Sinn Féin clubs on Watercourse Road, Hardwick Street, Grand Parade and the North Main Street were burned and destroyed. Shortly afterwards, on Sunday 28 November, a unit of the IRA (Cork No. 3 Brigade Flying Column) led by Tom Barry, a British Army veteran of the First World War, ambushed and killed sixteen Auxiliaries in Kilmichael. Three IRA members – Pat Deasy, Michael McCarthy and Jim Sullivan – also lost their lives during the Kilmichael ambush, an attack that was a major shock to the British, but which led to widespread repercussions across Cork over the following weeks.

There were not enough members present to proceed with the scheduled Cork Corporation meeting on 26 November but the re-arranged meeting took place in City Hall on Wednesday 1 December, with Donal O'Callaghan presiding. At the outset, the Lord Mayor acknowledged that the Corporation was doing its work under graver circumstances than any similar body ever before faced. The meeting was a brief and mundane one. Sir John Scott raised the issue of the recent malicious arson attacks in the city and urged that the council should do more to safeguard the interests of the citizens. On the proposal of Councillor Michael O'Cuill, it was agreed that future Corporation meetings should be held on the second Wednesday and fourth Sunday of each month at 3.30 p.m. Accordingly, the next meeting was fixed for Wednesday 8 December. However, the meeting was unable to proceed because Auxiliaries surrounded City Hall and maintained positions along Anglesea Street, Lapp's Quay, Albert Quay, Parnell Bridge and Brian Boru Bridge. Though Corporation members were not stopped from entering City Hall, many were intimidated by the presence of the Auxiliaries and returned home.

Buoyed by the Kilmichael ambush, the IRA carried out another ambush at Dillon's Cross on 11 December which resulted in the death of one Auxiliary, with many more wounded. The *Evening Echo* of Monday 13 December reported: 'The residents of St. Luke's and the immediate neighbourhood have been envied very frequently on their immunity from participation in the serious disturbances which have taken place in other parts of the city, but they are no longer as safe as they have been beforehand. This is the direct result of the dreadful occurrence which took place there on Saturday night …… Somewhere between 7.30 and 7.40 the inhabitants of the district were greatly startled by, first an exceedingly loud explosion and then two or three others in rapid succession not quite so loud'. Retaliation was swift and vicious. The Delaney brothers, Jeremiah and Cornelius, who were members of the 1st Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade of the IRA, were shot at their farmhouse at Dublin Hill. Jeremiah died that night; Cornelius lived until 18 December before succumbing to his injuries at the Mercy Hospital.

Crown forces then set their sights on destroying the centre of Cork city – as Lenihan (2018) remarks, their reaction to the ambushes at Kilmichael and Dillon's Cross was to bring the terror campaign to a new level. What happened next would have major ramifications for Cork's Lord Mayor, Donal O'Callaghan.

At around 9.00 p.m. on Saturday 11 December, in the immediate aftermath of the Dillon's Cross ambush and the shooting of the Delaney brothers, Auxiliaries began to fire indiscriminately at civilians, trying to clear the main streets of Cork city, even before the official curfew began at 10.00. Having set fire to houses in the Dillon's Cross area, the vengeful Auxiliaries – comprising approximately fifty men from K Company – then headed towards the commercial heart of the city, where their number was augmented by Black and Tans (Dorney, 2017). One of the Auxiliary officers, Charles Schulze, later wrote to his mother: 'I just escaped the ambush [at Dillon's Cross] …… but later arrived as a reinforcement. We took sweet revenge. Houses in the vicinity were set alight and from there various parties set out on their mission of destruction' (as quoted by Dorney, 2017).

While members of the RIC and British soldiers seemingly did not participate in the burnings, equally they did not attempt to stop the Auxiliaries, many of whom were drunk and out of control. With the Cork City Fire Brigade desperately trying to deal with fires in Dillon's Cross, a call came through at 10.30 p.m. that the Grant and Co. department store on St. Patrick's Street was ablaze. Soon, flames were also seen coming from the Munster Arcade and Cash's department store. The Superintendent of the Fire Brigade, Captain Alfred J. Hutson, had difficult choices to make as he did not have enough resources to



Devastation caused by the Burning of Cork. [Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]

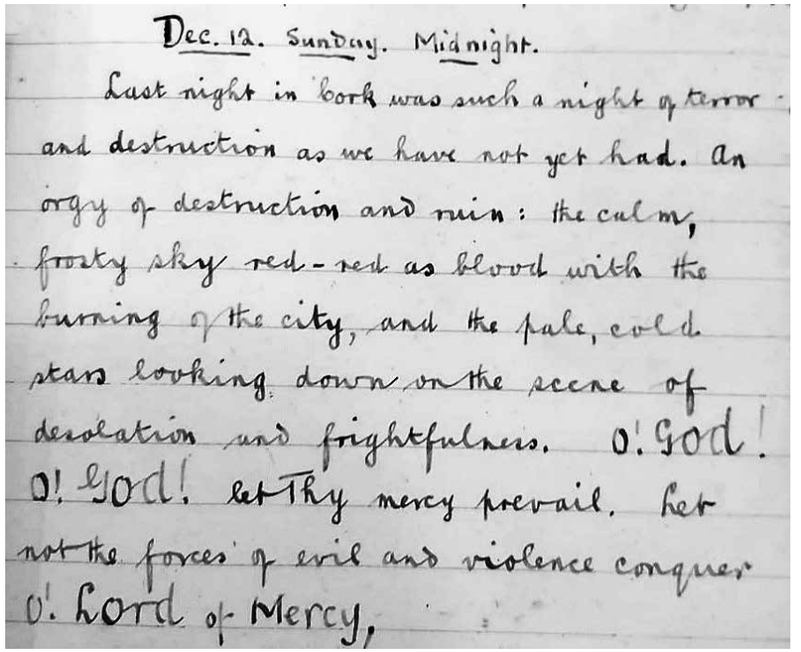


Grant's Drapery Shop on St. Patrick's Street. [Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]

deal with all of the fires at once. He headed for the centre of the city where he met a reporter from the *Cork Examiner*, Alan Ellis. Ellis subsequently wrote: 'I saw Fred Hutson, Chief of the Cork Fire Brigade, who I knew slightly. He told me bluntly that all the fires were being set deliberately by incendiary bombs, and in several cases, he had seen soldiers pouring cans of petrol into buildings' (Ellis, 1920).

The Auxiliaries and Black and Tans also hindered the efforts of the firemen by assaulting them and cutting hoses. The situation was now desperate as much of St. Patrick's Street was in flames and the fire was moving southwards, consuming some of the smaller streets behind (Dorney, 2017). As the fire spread rapidly, Lord Mayor Donal O'Callaghan was summoned. Immediately, he issued a call for assistance to other cities. Captain John Myers arrived from Dublin with a group of fire-fighters and the fire brigades from Limerick and Waterford also responded to the call (Lenihan, 2018). However, they faced an increasingly difficult task of not only trying to contain the fire but also controlling the Auxiliaries. Over the course of the night, four fire-fighters were taken to hospital with bullet wounds (Poland, 2015). By 4.00 a.m. City Hall and the Carnegie Library were burning fiercely. Eye witnesses reported that the firemen trying to guard City Hall had shots fired and grenades thrown at them. Petrol was carried into the building and loud explosions soon were heard. Of course, there had been many attempts over the preceding months to set fire to the municipal headquarters of Cork Corporation. As Lenihan (2018) explains: 'The building which faced the greatest threat in the city was City Hall …… With a series of Republican Lord Mayors being elected, it came to be regarded by the British forces as a hotbed of Republicanism and, unsurprisingly, became a particular target of British ire …… City Hall was the main municipal building in the city and the offices of the Lord Mayor, Town Clerk, the City Engineers, City Solicitors and the Public Health Department were all located within it. The Council Chambers, Lord Mayor's rooms, committee rooms and the room for the members of Cork Corporation were all at the front of the building. One of the most unfortunate results of the burning of City Hall was that all the city records up to that time were destroyed'.

By 8.00 a.m. on Sunday 12 December – due to the heroic work of the Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Dublin Fire Brigades – Captain Hutson was able to report that most of the fires in the city centre were under control.


Dec. 12. Sunday. Midnight.
Last night in Cork was such a night of terror and destruction as we have not yet had. An orgy of destruction and ruin: the calm, frosty sky red – red as blood with the burning of the city, and the pale, cold stars looking down on the scene of desolation and frightfulness. O! God! O! God! let Thy mercy prevail. Let not the forces of evil and violence conquer. O! Lord of Mercy,

Diary entry of Liam de Róiste for 12 December 1920
[Liam de Róiste diaries, courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]

That morning, a broken-hearted Donal O'Callaghan surveyed the damage inflicted on his beloved Cork city. He was accompanied on his walk through the city by Alderman Liam de Róiste whose diary entry for 12 December read: 'Last night in Cork was such a night of destruction and terror as we have not yet had. An orgy of destruction and ruin: the calm sky frosty red – red as blood with the burning city, and the pale cold stars looking down on the scene of desolation and frightfulness. The finest premises in the city are destroyed, the City Hall and the Free Library'.

Poland (2015) describes the burning of Cork on the night of Saturday 11 December as 'the single greatest act of vandalism of the Irish War of Independence'. More than 500 people lost their homes, 2,000 were made unemployed, fifty-seven buildings were destroyed and twenty were damaged in a night of terror (White, 2020; White and O'Shea, 2006). Since the Kilmichael ambush, the British Government had declared martial law in Cork – Dorney (2017) states: 'To say the Crown forces, and the Auxiliaries in particular, were in vengeful mood after Kilmichael would be an understatement'. Alan Ellis, the *Cork Examiner r*eporter wrote: 'It had been coming all week. The city had been disturbed by sounds of gunfire, rifles, carbines and the occasional explosion …… By that weekend, the city had become almost used to the scattered and intermittent sounds of gunfire'.

After surveying the devastating destruction in the city that Sunday morning, Lord Mayor O'Callaghan contacted his fellow councillors to summon a special meeting of the Corporation the following day. He also asked Captain Hutson to supply him with a full report of events which had taken place in the city that Saturday night.

As he made his way through the blackened piles of ash, the Lord Mayor was unaware that another controversy was about to unfold, thanks to Bishop Daniel Cohalan. In an extraordinary move on the morning of Sunday 12 December, at the end of midday Mass in the North Cathedral, Bishop Cohalan issued a decree of excommunication on all those involved in acts of violence. This was published in the local newspapers the following morning. With large parts of the city still smouldering from the previous night's fires, the Bishop blamed the burning of Cork on the 'murderous ambush at Dillon's Cross' (*Cork Examiner*, 13 December 2020). He asked the congregation to 'consider reasonably the subject of the murders, of the arsons, of the kidnapping and ambushes with which unfortunately we have got too familiar'. He then vowed: 'I will certainly issue a decree of excommunication against anyone who, within this diocese of Cork, shall take part in an ambush or a kidnapping or attempted murder or arson'.

The decree of excommunication applied to all people involved in these violent activities including Catholic members of the Crown forces, 'but it was clear to all that the IRA was the main target of Cohalan's measures' (Heffernan, 2014). The Bishop's condemnation was ill-received by his Catholic flock (Lenihan, 2018) and it is telling that the two other Cork Bishops, Kelly of Ross and Browne of Cloyne, refrained from following his example (Heffernan, 2014). In fact, Cohalan was the only Irish Bishop to issue a decree of excommunication during the War of Independence. As a man of the cloth, Bishop Cohalan

Following pages: The Lord Mayor walked through the ruins of Cork city on the Sunday morning. [Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]



wanted to see an end to the daily violent occurrences in Cork. He felt that murder was murder and arson was arson, no matter who the perpetrator was. Heffernan (2014) explains: 'He [Cohalan] was more of a dogmatist that a diplomat, and the practical ramifications of his actions were less important to him than the necessity to speak his mind'. The Bishop of Cork could certainly be accused of poor timing and lack of tact, issuing his decree while much of the city centre smouldered from the previous night's fires.

As the Lord Mayor read the details of Bishop Cohalan's decree the following morning, he was seething. He had worked closely with the Bishop to secure the release of the Cork hunger strikers following the death of Terence MacSwiney. The Bishop had conducted MacSwiney's funeral and now it appeared he was blaming the IRA for the violence which had engulfed the city. When the Lord Mayor scanned the main news page of the *Cork Examiner* on Monday 13 December, he saw the lead story bore the headline 'Cork in Flames – Night of Terror – Damages Reaches Millions'. Next to the story about the burning of Cork, was a public notice signed by the Secretary of the Death or Victory League which threatened Cork men who were seen loitering in the streets or standing with one or both hands in their pockets. The men were warned that they would 'suffer the consequences' of their actions. The notice ended with the words: GOD SAVE THE KING AND FRUSTRATE HIS ENEMIES. To the right of the public notice, the newspaper carried a report on Bishop Cohalan's decree of excommunication and an account of the Dillon's Cross ambush. The Lord Mayor resolved to issue a strong response to Bishop Cohalan, but first he had to prepare for that afternoon's special Corporation meeting.

The meeting was a tense one. With the City Hall destroyed, the elected members instead gathered in the Corn Exchange. Sir John Scott was the first to speak and he proposed a motion in support of the Archbishop of Tuam who had called for a truce to be proclaimed. Alderman Tadhg Barry said he would support the motion for the purpose of starting a discussion. Councillor Barry Egan offered an amended motion: 'We, the Corporation of Cork, affirm once more that the Irish nation is fighting for its very existence against an unscrupulous enemy, but is desirous of an honourable peace consistent with its position as a sovereign State, express our undiminished confidence in our elected representatives who alone are authorised to speak on our behalf. We proclaim our unaltered determination to seek or sanction no truce or peace save such international agreement is arranged between Dáil Éireann and the English Government'. Alderman Barry then withdrew his support for the original motion and the Lord Mayor, Donal O'Callaghan, declared the amended motion carried. The Lord Mayor next opened a debate about the burning of Cork. He told the members that he had walked through the rubble the previous morning and described the streets after the fire as 'a wilderness of ruin and debris'. The councillors were business-like in their approach to the meeting and passed a series of practical resolutions. They agreed to form a committee to take steps to relieve the unemployment caused by the destruction in the city. They also resolved that Lord Mayor O'Callaghan should send telegrams to the Pope and representatives of European nations and America, drawing attention to the state of affairs existing in Ireland, particularly in Cork city, and asking for intervention.

At this point Alderman J. J. Walsh – described by the *Cork Examiner* as 'red faced with anger' – rose to speak. He said that Cork had been going through hell but the Bishop of Cork had issued no word of protest against the atrocities that had been visited upon the city. Instead, he had chosen to add insult to injury by portraying the people as evil doers and blackmailing them with a threat of excommunication. Walsh argued that the elected members of the Corporation should express their disappointment to Bishop Cohalan for his 'untimely and unfair action'. Though admitting that he had not read the Bishop's letter, Sir John Scott urged the councillors to consider the matter further before firing off an angry response. He stated: 'I have the pleasure of knowing his Lordship well and I do not think he would wish to do anything that was against the wishes of his people'. This provoked an irate retort from Councillor Michael O'Cuill: 'He is really your Bishop now, Sir John. He is no longer mine'.

Lord Mayor O'Callaghan then spoke at length, explaining that he agreed with the sentiments expressed by Alderman Walsh: 'It is terrible to think that when the people woke up to find part of their city in ruins at the termination of a week of unbridled ruffianism by the Crown forces, there was no word of condemnation from the Bishop. The ruin caused will run into millions of pounds, and thousands and thousands of people have been thrown out of employment – but there was no condemnation of that, save words that add to the power of terrorism possessed by those who have done the damage'. The Lord Mayor then added that the Corporation, composed as it was of mixed political parties, might not be the best body to pass censure on the Bishop. As an initial response, he felt it was sufficient that the Bishop would read in the

newspapers the views expressed by the elected members of the Corporation. It was then up to the public to endorse the stance taken by the Bishop, or differ from it. Professor Alfred O'Rahilly supported the Lord Mayor's suggestion, noting: 'It is entirely an ecclesiastical matter and we ought not interfere. Action can be taken in another way. It is for the Bishops of Ireland who made an entirely different pronouncement at their last meeting'. The Lord Mayor ended the discussion and, accordingly, no letter was sent by the Corporation to Bishop Cohalan. Nonetheless, the majority of members had clearly and articulately expressed their dissatisfaction at the actions of the Bishop in issuing a decree of excommunication. The *Cork Examiner* was next in the firing line, with Councillor Seán O'Leary asserting that the newspaper was palliating the violence of the Crown forces and that it should have taken a stronger tone. It is the case that tensions had been increasing between the Republicans and the owners of the *Cork Examiner*, the Crosbie family. The Lord Mayor betrayed a sense of frustration when he commented: 'I think it would be taking too much notice of the *Examiner* to criticise it. For a long time, the people in charge of it have been without the confidence of the people or their representatives, whereas we, the council, have manifest proof that the confidence of the people is increasingly with us'.

Before the meeting ended, the elected members called for an impartial enquiry into the burning of the city and emphatically rejected the notion that the fires had been started by citizens. In the immediate aftermath of the burning, the reaction of Sir Hamar Greenwood, Chief Secretary of Ireland, was to blame Sinn Féin extremists for the devastation. He also inexplicably claimed that the fire had started in City Hall, before spreading to businesses on St. Patrick Street. The British newspaper, the *Daily Chronicle*, went as far as drawing up a map of Cork which placed City Hall in the centre of the city (*Daily Chronicle*, 13 December 1920; also Lenihan, 2018). Responding to a question in the House of Commons, Greenwood also stated there was 'not an atom of evidence' that Crown forces had shot at fire fighters and cut hoses (Lenihan, 2018).

The Lord Mayor ended the lengthy Corporation meeting of 13 December by wishing his fellow elected members a happy Christmas, despite the difficult circumstances of the time. While committee meetings would be ongoing, the Corporation was not due to meet in full session until 29 December. As events transpired, the Lord Mayor would not attend a Corporation meeting for the next eight months. The days which followed were very busy ones for Donal O'Callaghan as he dealt with issues arising from the burning of the city. He sent a telegram to Sir Hamar Greenwood repudiating the 'vile suggestion' that Cork city was burnt by a section of its own citizens: 'In the name of truth, justice and civilisation we demand an impartial civilian inquiry into the circumstances of the city's destruction. We are quite willing to submit evidence before any international tribunal, even a tribunal of Englishmen'. He also sent letters and telegrams to a variety of international organisations, seeking assistance for Cork, including the American Red Cross. On 15 December, the Lord Mayor received the official report from the Superintendent of the Cork City Fire Brigade, Captain Alfred J. Hutson. Hutson chronicled the events of Saturday 11 December and the difficulties faced by his fire fighters. Regarding City Hall, he noted: 'About 4.00 a.m., I was informed that the Municipal Buildings were on fire. Knowing that there was a practical man, with half a dozen other men under his control there, I had some confidence that they would be able to deal effectively with the fire as had already been done on three previous occasions. I very much regret, however, that the incendiaries were successful in driving my men out of the buildings and also from the Carnegie Free Library'. Hutson's report criticised the British military for refusing the use of their fire appliances: 'It is remarkable that the military never brought any fire appliances whatever – as they had done on nearly all previous occasions'. The final paragraph of Hutson's report read:

> I have no hesitation in stating I believe all the above fires were incendiary fires and that a considerable amount of petrol or some such inflammable spirit was used in one and all of them. In some cases, explosives were also used and persons were seen to go into and come out of the structures after breaking an entrance into same, and in some cases that I have attended, the people have been brought out of their houses and detained in by-lanes until the fire had gained great headway. I have some of the petrol tins left behind in my possession.

The row with Bishop Cohalan also rumbled on. Even though the Lord Mayor had ruled out a formal response from the Corporation, he sent a letter, also signed by Alderman J. J. Walsh, to all members of the Catholic hierarchy

protesting against the decree of excommunication. O'Callaghan and Walsh put forward the view that underlying the Bishop's action was a 'false supposition concerning this nation, which we cannot allow to go unchallenged' (DDA, Walsh papers, 380/5). They argued:

> The Bishop's action assumes that Ireland is not a nation, a complete political community, with all the rights, powers and functions consequent thereon. He assumes that there is no such thing as an Irish government and an Irish army, that the English invaders have a moral right in this country. Furthermore, he implies that we, as an organised nation, have no right of self-defence, no right after an order of murder, arson and robbery, to strike back the criminals who are attacking us.

Bishop Cohalan was not the kind of man to back away from a fight and his response came in the form of a pastoral letter. In it, he published the decree of excommunication for a second time and criticised the 'false teachings of persons [such as O'Callaghan and Walsh] who should know better, that Ireland is at the moment a sovereign independent state, and that consequently Irishmen have authority to kill English forces and to burn English property in Ireland' (CDA, Cohalan papers, box vi).

Meanwhile, two enquiries were taking place into the burning of Cork – though neither was an impartial civilian one as demanded by the Lord Mayor. Brigadier General Harold Whitla Higginson, Commander of the 17th Infantry Brigade in Victoria Barracks, held an enquiry consisting of interviews with soldiers based in the barracks. Lenihan (2018) astutely observes: 'The main purpose of this enquiry seems to have been to clear the military of wrongdoing, which not surprisingly it did'. The British Government also ordered Major General Peter Strickland, the commanding officer in Cork, to conduct an official military enquiry. The Strickland enquiry commenced on 16 December and ran for five days, with evidence provided by thirty-eight witnesses. Strickland submitted his report to the British Government who decided not to publish it. It is therefore little wonder that Corkonians regarded the enquiry as a sham, 'part of a larger attempt by the British authorities to cover up what had happened' (Lenihan, 2018). It was only in 1999 that the final report of the Strickland enquiry was made publically available. Its findings were highly critical of the Auxiliaries and the chain of command. The report stated (see Lenihan, 2018; White and O'Shea, 2006):

- The fires at the premises of Messrs. Grant & Co. and Messrs. Cash & Co. and at the Munster Arcade, and also the burning of bicycles outside the Republican Bicycle Shop were caused by men of 'K' Company of the Auxiliary Division of the RIC.
- Circumstantial, but not conclusive, evidence exists that three members of the RIC were implicated in the fire at the City Hall.
- Numerous cases of looting are proved in evidence of which the most serious can be traced to men of the Auxiliary Police.
- The firing of arms without cause, and other lawless behaviour, has been proved against ten of the Auxiliary Police.

Interestingly, the Strickland Report released in 1999 detailed that notices to attend the enquiry were issued to the Lord Mayor of Cork, Donal O'Callaghan, as well as Alderman J. J. Walsh and Alderman Liam de Róiste. The attendance of O'Callaghan and Walsh could not be enforced as their whereabouts were unknown; de Róiste was escorted to the enquiry but refused to give evidence (Lenihan, 2018).

A damning report however was produced by the British Labour Commission. It reported on 29 December and expressed the belief that the burning of Cork city was not a reprisal for the Dillon's Cross ambush: 'The fires appear to have been an organised attempt to destroy the most valuable premises in the city, and we do not think that arrangements could have been carried out if they had been hastily made after the unfortunate occurrence at Dillon's Cross' (Report of the Labour Commission, 1920). Former Prime Minister Asquith spoke out strongly: 'I say deliberately that never in the lifetime of the oldest amongst us has Britain sunk so low in the moral scale of nations …… Things are being done in Ireland that would disgrace the blackest annals of the lowest despotism in Europe' (Neeson, 1998).

Donal O'Callaghan was effectively on the run, continuing the policy adopted by MacCurtain and MacSwiney, of moving house each night. He was acutely aware that he was a target of the British Crown forces who continued to round up and arrest Republican sympathisers. McMahon (2008) contends that from December 1920, the War of Independence moved into a fourth

phase, a period of sustained coercion by British forces: 'The death penalty was enforced for carrying guns, curfews extended, and internment of IRA suspects introduced'. One person who fell foul of this intensified approach was Fr. Dominic O'Connor, the loyal chaplain to the Cork Lord Mayors of 1920. He was arrested in Church Street in Dublin on 16 December and sentenced to three years' penal servitude (he was released in January 1922). The *Cork Examiner r*eporter, Alan Ellis, who was also arrested and spent some time in prison with Fr. Dominic, wrote: 'I thought him to be a great man; intellectual and far sighted; the antithesis of Bishop Cohalan'.

Back in Cork, leading the life of a fugitive and with his work-place, Cork City Hall, burnt to the ground, Donal O'Callaghan came to a decision. Though only Lord Mayor for less than two months, he felt that his immediate future lay away from Leeside. He could help the cause of the Republic better by going to America to plead Ireland's case.

Chapter 12
Stowaway

When Cork Corporation met in the Council Chamber of the Courthouse on the afternoon of Wednesday 29 December 1920, Councillor Barry Egan presided. Egan had won his council seat in a by-election in March, defeating Jeremiah Lane. He told the councillors that the Lord Mayor had asked him to deputise for him while he was away. Egan explained that the Lord Mayor was 'unlikely to be back for some time' but offered no other details (*Cork Examiner*, 30 December 1920). While Egan chaired a meeting that was mostly about the re-building of the city, Lord Mayor O'Callaghan was on board the steamship *West Cannon* heading for Virginia in the United States of America. The Lord Mayor's decision to flee to the US was influenced by different factors. First and foremost, he genuinely feared for his life in the aftermath of the burning of Cork city. He had seen the way that his predecessors, Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney, had been forced to live, as fugitives from Crown forces in their own city. Ultimately, both had lost their lives and O'Callaghan had no desire to be Cork's third dead Republican Lord Mayor of 1920. Following MacCurtain's murder, the IRA had maintained a twenty-four hour armed guard over Terence MacSwiney; the Black and Tans frequently committed attacks on prominent Republicans and, in November alone, there were ten failed assassination attempts against Republicans in Cork city (as claimed by Donal O'Callaghan in January 1921 at the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland; see also Borgonovo, 2007).

Secondly, intriguingly, perhaps O'Callaghan was also fearful of the IRA. As revealed by Borgonovo (2007), after MacSwiney's death, British intelligence

officers thought that O'Callaghan was likely to take over command of the Cork No. 1 Brigade. They set out to portray him as British spy, 'clearing the way for a less militant officer to take charge of the Brigade' (Borgonovo, 2007). The British Army arranged that a letter would be sent through the post, alluding to a payment of money for information supplied (Borgonovo, 2007). Knowing that the mail system was an important source of information for the IRA, the British hoped that the letter would be intercepted and that its contents would cast doubt over Donal O'Callaghan. The letter was indeed intercepted but Michael Collins immediately recognised it as a trap (as he later explained in a letter to Florence O'Donoghue, 14 April 1921, MS, 31, 192, National Library). More than anything else, the episode showed that the British intelligence officers were very poorly informed; O'Callaghan was not an 'extreme leader' as they portrayed him and was not going to take command of the Cork No. 1 Brigade. Ironically, while the British focused on discrediting O'Callaghan, it was the militant and cold-blooded Seán O'Hegarty who assumed command of the Brigade (see Girvin, 2007). The IRA were not fooled by the clumsy attempt to portray O'Callaghan as a British spy but it added to the suspicion of some Republicans who were wary of Cork's new Lord Mayor due to his failure to raise the alarm about the raid on 12 August 1920 which led to the arrest of Terence MacSwiney in City Hall.

Thirdly, Donal O'Callaghan wished to provide evidence to the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland (ACCI) which was in session in Washington. In mid-December, he had received a telegram from Frank P. Walsh, a senior counsel who had led the American Commission on Irish Independence to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. Walsh's telegram stated that it was important that two witnesses from Cork Corporation would appear before the Commission to testify about the burning of the city. He suggested that Liam de Róiste and J. J. Walsh would be the most suitable (*Cork Examiner*, 18 December 1920). Donal O'Callaghan's reply by telegram read: 'Shall endeavour to secure best witnesses available'. He felt that as Lord Mayor of Cork, he would be best placed to give testimony, more so than de Róiste or Walsh. O'Callaghan was intensely aware that the hunger strike of Terence MacSwiney had made a big international impact, especially in America. Equally, there was a propaganda opportunity in telling the story of the burning of Cork which, to a large degree, had been a self-defeating strategy on behalf of the British. Dorney (2017) explains: 'The burning of Cork city centre did hurt the reputation of the British State in Ireland more than they terrorised the population into compliance'. This view is supported by Hopkinson (2004): 'What mattered most was the perception of British responsibility and guilt …… the most significant events in the War of Independence should be judged by the effect they had on public opinion and the headlines they generated rather than on the scale of military conflict'. In this context, Dorney (2017) asserts that of all the images emerging from Ireland at this time, none was as visually striking as the smouldering ruins in the centre of Cork city in December 1920. The Lord Mayor was determined that the influential ACCI should hear a first-hand account of the death and destruction that had been visited on Cork.

A fourth reason for O'Callaghan's departure for America was perhaps the most significant one. The Dáil Minister for Finance, Michael Collins, had asked him to act as his emissary in America to help secure a loan for the Dáil, so that the Republic could function properly. Ireland's domestic finances were in a perilous position and Collins had decided in 1919 that overseas contributions were a necessity. An initial bond scheme in America had been successful, due mainly to the work of Justice Daniel Cohalan (not to be confused with the Cork Bishop of the same name). Cohalan was a senior member of the New York based Irish-American Clan na Gael and later set up the Friends of Irish Freedom (FOIF). As noted by Doorley (2019), Cohalan – nicknamed the 'Judge' – fell out with Éamon de Valera during the latter's visit to America in 1919-1920. De Valera established a new organisation – the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic (AARIR) – in competition with Cohalan's FOIF. The tempestuous relationship between the two men threatened American funding for the Dáil and, in a letter to J. J. Walsh on 3 December, Michel Collins explained that he wanted Donal O'Callaghan to go to America to diffuse tensions. Collins stressed the need for diplomacy and he hoped that O'Callaghan would end the feuding in America by pointing out how damaging it was to Ireland's cause: 'The lack of unity casts a gloom here at home and gives a corresponding brightness to the English' (letter from Collins to Walsh, 3 December 1920, Adam's Collection). Accordingly, while the Burning of Cork was a catalyst for Donal O'Callaghan to go to America and the invitation to attend the ACCI was an added incentive, the reality, not known by many people, is that the Lord Mayor was already planning to cross the Atlantic as the emissary of Michael Collins.

However, getting to America was not straightforward for the Lord Mayor of Cork. The British Ambassador to the United States, Auckland Campbell Geddes, had publicly given an assurance that passports would be issued to witnesses summoned by the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland and that the British Government would put no obstacles in the way of witnesses attending. O'Callaghan was highly sceptical of this assurance, as he later testified in America:

> Believing that if I presented myself in person to the consular representative of Great Britain, I might be imprisoned or killed, I addressed a communication in writing to said consular representative, requesting a passport to the United States. That said consular representative at Dublin Castle, the British headquarters in Dublin, addressed a letter to me at the City Hall in Cork, which was subsequently conveyed to me where I was hiding, which letter directed me to apply for my passport to the Clerk of the Police Court of the city of Cork. That said court was at the time surrounded and invested by the military forces of the British Government; and I believed that if I did so present myself, that I would be immediately seized and put to death or imprisoned by said forces.

O'Callaghan needed an alternative plan and Liam de Róiste came to his aid. Of course, de Róiste had been recommended by Frank Walsh as a possible witness at the Commission in America but this was ruled out by Michael Collins in another letter to J. J. Walsh. Collins wrote: 'I note what you say about Liam – but what on earth does he want to go away for? Surely Donal Óg will give all the evidence that is necessary in connection with events in Cork' (as quoted by McCarthy, 2010). Part of the reason that Collins was insistent on O'Callaghan attending as a witness at the Commission is that he had already lined him up to rescue the Dáil loan.

In what McCarthy (2010) describes as 'a typical Cork happenstance' Liam de Róiste discovered that he was related to one of the officers of the steamship, *West Cannon*, through a forgotten uncle in America. De Róiste convinced his relative to help and the Lord Mayor was slipped aboard the *West Cannon*. He was accompanied by Peter MacSwiney, brother of Terence. The Lord Mayor later claimed that once the *West Cannon* was beyond the three-mile limit of the jurisdiction of Britain, his presence was discovered. The Master of the steamship placed him at work as an ordinary seaman and he worked as a crew member until they docked at Newport News, Virginia, on 4 January 1921. O'Callaghan and MacSwiney were arrested upon arrival in America and the following day they appeared before a Board of Special Inquiry, composed of immigration officials. Neither man was represented by counsel and O'Callaghan claimed that he was not appraised of his legal rights. Peter MacSwiney possessed a passport issued by the American Consul and he was set at liberty. O'Callaghan had no passport and a deportation order was issued against him. With the help of Irish-American supporters of Sinn Féin, O'Callaghan reached out to two attorneys, Michael Francis Doyle and J. T. Lawless. They had been contacted prior to O'Callaghan leaving Cork and were aware of the situation. Doyle and Lawless submitted an appeal against the deportation order to the Department of Labour and the Lord Mayor was paroled to them.

Very quickly, O'Callaghan was at the centre of a media storm, both in Ireland and America. The *Cork Constitution* newspaper reported on 6 January: 'The case of Mr. Daniel O'Callaghan who arrived as a stowaway to give evidence before the American Committee of Inquiry on Ireland is to be dealt with by the US State Department, who will decide whether O'Callaghan is permitted to remain in the United States'. The newspaper carried daily reports on O'Callaghan, who was frequently described as the 'Refugee Mayor'.

The *Cork Examiner* was also transfixed by the plight of the Lord Mayor in America. On Saturday 8 January, it ran a Reuters report following an interview given by O'Callaghan in America. His story had been somewhat embellished during his four days in Virginia:

> Daniel O'Callaghan, one of the Irish stowaways, says he boarded the American steamer, *West Cannon*, dressed as a labourer. He hung about the quay at Cork waiting for his chance. When it came, he climbed a ladder and slipped on board and into the hold where he remained concealed in a bunker for seven days when sea-sickness forced him to come out of his hiding place. He was put to work in the forecastle. Mr. MacSwiney remained hidden for three days, after which he was put to work, but he was able to supply Mr. O'Callaghan with water and food.

O'Callaghan made the front page of *The New York Times* on 10 January and he was quoted as expressing confidence that he would be able to testify in Washington at the Commission on Conditions in Ireland. His case was formally placed before the Secretary of Labour the same day, 10 January. His attorneys, Doyle and Lawless, delivered oral arguments and they submitted a written brief to the Secretary of Labour. O'Callaghan's attorneys focussed on the term 'seaman' and an Executive Order issued by President Woodrow Wilson on 22 May 1918. The President's Executive Order defined the term 'seaman' as follows:

> The term 'seaman' as used herein includes, in addition to persons ordinarily described thereby seagoing fishermen and all owners, masters, officers and members of crews and other persons employed on vessels which, for purposes of business or pleasure, cruise on tidal waters beyond the shore line or on the Great Lakes.

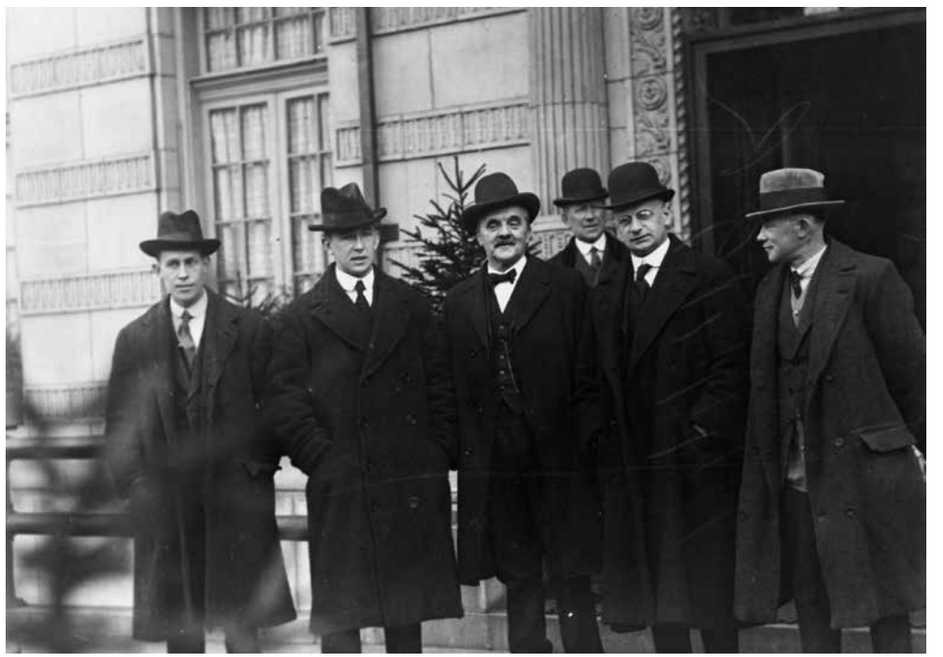
Doyle and Lawless argued strenuously that the Executive Order was intended to go further and include stowaways who were employed on vessels. They asserted that since O'Callaghan had been employed as a crew member by the Master of the *West Cannon* he was a seaman within the terms of the Executive Order. An argument was also made that a passport was not required as the Executive Order referred to seamen applying to an immigration inspector for identity cards. Doyle and Lawless concluded: 'It is clear, therefore, that a passport is not required in the case of a seaman who desires to land in the country, and the determination of his right to land rests with an immigrant inspector, who is a subordinate official of the Secretary of Labour'.

William B. Wilson, the US Secretary of Labour, agreed with the arguments brought forward by Doyle and Lawless and decreed that Donal O'Callaghan was a stowaway, employed on the *West Cannon* and therefore he constituted a 'seaman' as defined in law. He ordered that O'Callaghan's parole be cancelled, allowing him to give evidence to the Commission on Conditions in Ireland.

It is unlikely any of this happened by chance. It would be naïve to think that O'Callaghan was discovered on the *West Cannon* and the Master of the steamship happened to give him work as a crew member. In all probability, the scenario had been worked out with the relative of Liam de Róiste prior to the Lord Mayor leaving Cork. O'Callaghan had taken legal advice and it was decided that his best chance of avoiding deportation was to assert that he was employed on the ship as a seaman.

After the cancellation of his parole, Donal O'Callaghan made his way immediately to Washington. Over the course of two days, 13 and 14 January, at the Commission on Conditions in Ireland in Hotel LaFayette, he provided detailed testimony and 'became the public advocate of his country and city' (McCarthy, 2010). The Commission, which arose from a call by the New York newspaper, the *Nation*, was made up of public figures from across the United States – eleven Senators, thirteen Congressmen, fifteen Mayors, Catholic, Methodist and Protestant Episcopal Bishops, and a range of prominent figures, including the newspaper magnet, William Randolph Hearst, and the African-American civil rights activist, William Edward Burghardt du Bois (Ó Drisceoil, 2017). Levi Hollingsworth Wood, a lawyer and well-known

About to testify before the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland – (from left to right) Tom Nolan, Donal O'Callaghan, Senator George W. Norris, Peter MacSwiney and Jeremiah Dempsey, Washington DC, January 1921 [Courtesy of the Library of the US Congress]



Quaker, was appointed as Chairman of the Commission. Frederic Howe was the Vice Chair and other Commission members included the sociologist Jane Addams (Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1931) and the former Governor of Massachusetts, David Walsh. The Commission gathered for six public hearings between 18 November 1920 and 21 January 1921. Muriel and Mary MacSwiney, widow and sister respectively of Terence MacSwiney, both gave evidence to the Commission. Unsurprisingly, the British Government took a dim view of the Commission and the London *Times* (22 September 1920) disparagingly described the committee as 'a strange mixture of Anglophobes, idealists and radicals'.

For Donal O'Callaghan, the Commission hearings were an opportunity to tell an American audience of the situation that prevailed in Ireland, and especially in Cork. He did not waste the opportunity. McCarthy (2010) remarks: 'The Lord Mayor's evidence, as recorded by Albert Coyle, was damning'. When asked about how difficult it was to carry out his duties as Cork's first citizen, O'Callaghan replied:

> I have been able to preside at a good many meetings, but always under these circumstances: for instance, when a meeting of the Corporation is summoned one night, the meeting may pass off all right; and the next time a meeting is summoned, the word gets around that a raid is to be made that night, and then the question is to decide on the men who will be able to go to the meeting and the men who will not. You have to study the men who may in safety go to the meeting and will not be arrested, and the men who will. In that situation I have had to use the City Hall as little as possible and spend as little of my time as possible there. And it is only there, of course, that I could attend to the affairs of the city and look into the details of administration. With the exception of that, I have moved around the city without a break, excepting possibly a week or two since my election as Lord Mayor. While in the city of Cork, of course I move around carefully, always keeping a careful look-out for unwelcome visitors; and of course at night moving from house to house in the way that all men in Ireland connected with the movement do.

The Lord Mayor explained that he was in constant danger of arrest and, over the previous six months, his house had been raided eight times. He said that this situation applied to his fellow councillors as well, who were frequently targeted by British forces. O'Callaghan was very well prepared for his appearance before the Commission and he read more than thirty affidavits, depositions and testimonials relating to incidents such as the shooting of Professor William Stockley and the burning of the city.

A report chronicling outrages committed by British forces in Cork during the month of November 1920 was also submitted by the Lord Mayor. The report contained the following details:

- Two hundred and eighty arrests
- Four publicly placarded threats to the citizens of Cork
- Hundreds of general outrages
- Trains regularly held up
- Upwards of two hundred curfew arrests
- Four Sinn Fein Cumanns (clubs) burned to the ground
- Twelve large business houses burned to the ground
- Many attempts made to set fire to other buildings, including the City Hall
- Damage done by fires in November alone estimated at £1,000,000
- Seven men shot dead
- Upwards of twelve men dangerously wounded by shots
- Attempted assassination of upwards of ten men
- Upwards of five hundred houses of private citizens forcibly entered and searched
- Much indiscriminate shooting

When the Commission members turned their attention to the Burning of Cork, an angry O'Callaghan criticised Sir Hamar Greenwood for his claim that the City Hall and the Carnegie Library had not been set alight deliberately, but merely suffered as a result of the spread of the fire from St. Patrick's Street. O'Callaghan told the Commission:

> An effort was made by the Chief Secretary for Ireland to say that that was a part of the same fire, and that those premises had simply

> taken fire from the large fire in Patrick Street. It is quite clear how obviously ridiculous that is, and how typical of the truth of the government's statements with regard to Ireland, when the fact is remembered that the City Hall, the municipal buildings and the free library were fully a distance of a quarter of a mile and were at the other side of the river. Not only would the fire have had to pass through all the intervening buildings and streets in that quarter of a mile, but it would also have blown across the River Lee.

During his testimony on the Burning of Cork, the Lord Mayor was interrupted by the Commission Chairman, Levi Hollingsworth Wood, who asked: 'Before you go on from there, I want to get this clearly and definitely settled. I do not think that it has been brought out yet. To whom, definitely and specifically, do you charge the Burning of Cork upon?' Without hesitation, O'Callaghan replied: 'I charge definitely the British Crown forces in Cork'.

Showing a different side to his character, O'Callaghan devoted parts of his testimony to the effects of terrorism on women and children, identifying 'the old women and the children' as being especially affected. In the absence of young men, who, he said, 'may go home once a week, and then go away again' mothers were 'feeling it worse'. The Lord Mayor referred to the wreckage caused by the Black and Tans which, in some cases, left mothers and children homeless. He noted: 'These experiences can have long-term consequences, disastrous from a physiological and psychological standpoint' (Evans and Meehan, 2017). O'Callaghan also made the claim that the *Cork Examiner* and the *Evening Echo* had been 'forced at the point of a revolver' to print anti-Republican stories and threatening notices to the citizens.

At the conclusion of his second and final day of testimony, O'Callaghan was thanked by Chairman Wood for having come before the Commission and for being so well prepared. When the Chairman asked if he had any general remarks to make by way of conclusion, the Lord Mayor took full advantage, not so much delivering remarks, but a 1,500-word pre-prepared speech, during which he challenged America to come to Ireland's aid. He also pledged that Ireland was prepared to fight to annihilation for the right of self-determination.

I have just a few remarks in the nature of a summing up of the evidence generally. I think, gentlemen, that it would be well that, having come here and having testified as to conditions obtaining in Ireland, that that be supplemented by giving you what is Ireland's view at the moment: first of all, of her own position; and secondly, what she thinks she has a right to expect from the other free nations of the world, and especially from America; and finally, her position in the event of that help being refused. It will not take very long. Ireland has declared a desire to be free in every legitimate way in which an oppressed country could do it, through the ballot box. She has elected her Republican parliament, her Republican councils, who function to carry on the administration of the country. The men engaged in that movement have not been dreamers, as has often been alleged. They are men who are at least as keen, and probably much more so, about the importance of commercial advancement and commercial progress than any recent generation, at all events in Ireland. These men have worked along these lines, even under the difficulties of the state of unrest which obtains in the country; and their efforts, in spite of these difficulties, have been to a large extent crowned with success – a success which is only an indication of the state of things that would obtain were they free to work entirely on different lines, and to devote their energies and their abilities solely to that purpose.

I have described for you how the people are suffering, what their record is, what their daily life in Ireland is at present; and I put it to you, gentlemen, and through you to the American people, that that suffering is being entailed and is being endured by the Irish people because of their determination to seek the right to decide for themselves their own form of government. In Ireland the term 'Republican' is used, as it is used here in referring to Ireland, in order to convey a definite and a concrete conception of liberty, not definitely that a Republican, as such, or any other particular form of government has been decided on for the country, or is being insisted on for the country. The Republican parliament and the Republican party ask merely for, and will be perfectly satisfied if they secure, the

right of self-determination. They will be satisfied if that question is allowed to be decided by the people of Ireland themselves, be their verdict what it may, be the form of government which they decide on for themselves what it may. In Ireland there is at least as much if not more unanimity on this question of freedom than there is in any other country in the world, or than there was in any other country in the world which struggled to be free.

Obviously, clearly at no time in history was it possible to secure, never will it be possible to secure, and it is a good thing that it is so, a nation where every individual of that nation has his thoughts and has his mind running along the same lines as every other individual in that nation. Never, obviously, will a nation be found where there is absolute, thorough, and complete unanimity from the north and south, east and west. The most that one can expect is that a large majority of the people of the country are unanimous. That state of affairs obtains in Ireland, obtains to a very large extent. The fact that there are a very small number of people in one corner of Ireland does not in any way imply that the country, spoken of as a country and as a nation, is not unanimous in seeking freedom. The people in Ireland have also, during recent years while the struggle for freedom has been going on, awakened to the fact that their culture, their mentality, just as their race characteristics, are entirely different from those in England, and that is the aspect of the case which I put to you gentlemen. Parliament has awakened to the fact that through a very, very clever system of education, so-called, the Irish had been brought to the point, very recently, where they had almost lost all sense of race consciousness, where all that was best, inasmuch as all that was distinctive of them as a face, had been submerged, and where they were being modelled into a poor imitation of English men and women. All that is being changed, and contemporaneously with the fight for freedom there is the effort for reconstruction of the Irish idealism of our race. The Irish language, which, with all else that typified our individuality, had been crushed, is now more generally spoken throughout Ireland than for generations past. Every school in Ireland, practically without exception, teaches the Irish language.

The children in Ireland today know their own language and are proud of their own language. They realize exactly what it is that makes that language so important and so dear to them.

During the war England, and not only England but all the other nations that fought in that war, including America, were very, very loud in their declarations that the war was being waged for the right of self-determination. That principle awakened hopes in every country where freedom was being denied. It certainly awakened hopes in Ireland, and the Irish people looked forward to freedom without much delay. The war ended, and England now very clearly shows by her conduct in Ireland that that pretence of self-determination, that pretence of fighting for the rights of small nations, was the merest humbug, the merest camouflage. Before leaving you today, gentlemen, I do not think it is in any way out of place or in any way improper, even though it may perhaps seem harsh, if I ask you, and through you the American people, whether we in Ireland have got to take it that England was not alone in that respect; whether Ireland has got to take it that every other nation which entered the war ostensibly for that same reason, and which was equally responsible for awakening these hopes in Ireland and other subjugated countries, whether the position is the same in all of them, and whether it is equally admitted all around that that plea was the merest smoke screen and humbug? Even should that be so, even if it should apply to America, which itself suffered somewhat along the, lines of our sufferings such as I have been describing for you, and which itself fought the same fight that we are waging, and fought it against the same enemy; if it be true that America also refuses to stand by her declarations, and if Ireland is forced to realize that no help is to come to her from any nation, Ireland is placed with a situation, on the one hand, which will show her as making a fight, after all the noisy pretences of the great and free powers of the world, as making the fight alone, on her own small island, with her four and a half millions of people, against this great and powerful Empire – making their fight for self-determination, which it was alleged was being made on the battlefields of France and Belgium.

> While that is so, she will also be faced with a fight which would seem to lead almost with certainty to annihilation. What I wish to put before you, gentlemen, and before the American people, is that we have a perfect right to expect help from every free nation of the world, not only because of the justice of our cause, but also because no nation, especially a nation which has been gifted in the past with ability and genius, can give of its best to the world, to the advancement and progress of the world and of civilization generally, while enslaved. For that reason, so that Irish culture might be developed freely and in an unhindered manner, and that Ireland might give of her best for the advancement of the world; for that, as well as for the reason of the absolute justice of the fight for her freedom – if despite all these reasons we are told in Ireland that neither America nor any other nation is going to raise a hand to prevent our people being bled to death; if despite all that we say to them, through you, sirs, and the other powerful peoples who made the pretence of making this fight for self-determination, you now admit, when faced with a concrete case, that it was humbug, then we will make the fight, and in our case it will not be humbug. We will continue the fight, be the result what it may. I again thank you for your courtesy.

The Lord Mayor's lengthy closing speech was greeted by sustained applause from those present. His testimony was widely reported across America, which was partly due to the fact that William Randolph Hearst was a member of the Commission. According to McCarthy (2010), the Lord Mayor's evidence went a long way to counteracting the 'official' version of the Burning of Cork.

As Ó Drisceoil (2017) rightly points out, the ACCI was one-sided in terms of the evidence that it heard. Its final published report concluded: 'Behind the tragedy in Ireland lies the determination of the Imperial British Government to hold Ireland in its grip even at the cost of substituting for the orderly government of the people's choice, fairly established in the face of opposition, a system which can only be called organized anarchy. The answer to this attempt, as events make increasingly plain, is violence and yet more violence' (ACCI, p.110; see also Meehan). The report referred to the testimony of Cork Lord Mayor, Donal O'Callaghan, about the Burning of


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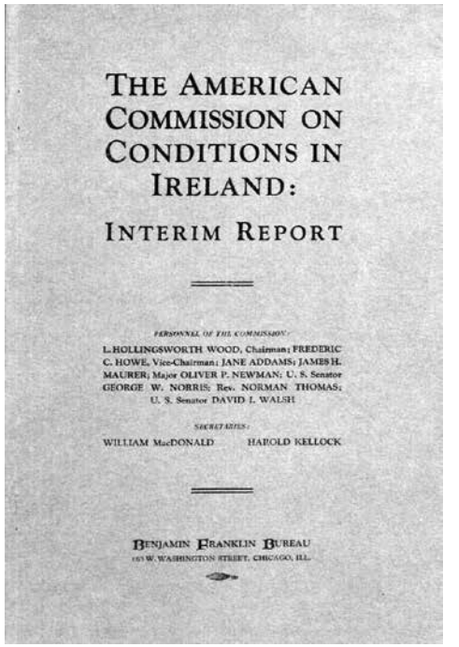
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MAYOR TELLS OF CITY'S RUIN; ENGLISH ATTACKS ON AMERICANS

AMERICANS SUFFER FROM ENGLISH BRUTALITIES


THE AMERICAN COMMISSION ON CONDITIONS IN IRELAND:

INTERIM REPORT

PERSONNEL OF THE COMMISSION:

L. HOLLINGSWORTH WOOD, Chairman; FREDERIC C. HOWE, Vice-Chairman; JANE ADDAMS; JAMES H. MAURER; Major OLIVER P. NEWMAN; U. S. Senator GEORGE W. NORRIS; Rev. NORMAN THOMAS; U. S. Senator DAVID I. WALSH

SECRETARIES:

WILLIAM MacDONALD HAROLD KELLOCK

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN BUREAU

105 W. WASHINGTON STREET, CHICAGO, ILL.

Left: Front page story on the *Irish Press* about the testimony provided by Donal O'Callaghan relating to English atrocities in Ireland. Right: Cover of the interim report into conditions in Ireland by Levi Hollingsworth Wood, Chairman of the ACCI.

Cork. It stated that he had charged the British Imperial forces as being guilty. While there was not direct proof of this accusation, the Commission felt on balance that this was indeed the case. The report drew attention to: the refusal of the British Government to permit a civil inquiry; the secrecy by which the Strickland Enquiry was conducted; the suppression of the Strickland Report by the British Government; and the admission in the House of Commons by Sir Hamar Greenwood that certain Black and Tans had been mildly disciplined for their part in the Burning of Cork (p. 43).

After his star turn at the Commission, Donal O'Callaghan was a man in high demand. A series of public lectures were lined up for him across America and he was also anxious to begin his work on behalf of Michael Collins to help secure the Dáil loan. He was unsure how long he would be permitted to stay in the US – though the Secretary of Labour had ruled in his favour, the Secretary of State disagreed. A new hearing, involving both of them, was scheduled for

15 February. Until then, at least, Donal O'Callaghan was free to travel across the US making the case for Irish self-determination. He was generally very well received, although one letter writer to *The New York Times* argued forcibly that as a 'law-breaking alien' O'Callaghan should be sent home to Ireland (31 March 1921).

One impediment to O'Callaghan touring the US and making speeches as the Lord Mayor of Cork was that his term of office was coming to an end in late January. When the members of Cork Corporation met in the Council Chamber of the Courthouse on Monday 31 January to elect a new Lord Mayor for the coming twelve months, it was widely known that the Sinn Féin-led council intended to propose Donal O'Callaghan. Since he had only held the post since 4 November 1920, the councillors felt that he deserved to continue in the role. Some councillors, however, speculated that there might be legal difficulties: 'It was the practice for the elected Lord Mayor to accept the Chain of Office and then to sign the roll, thereby giving legal status to his accepting the position. Since Domhnall O'Ceallacháin was still away in America at this time, how could this be achieved?' (O'Callaghan, 2000). As it transpired, the meeting was disrupted by British troops and the question did not arise.

Shortly after the beginning of the meeting, a District Inspector of the RIC, accompanied by some police officers, entered the chamber and demanded to see the attendance list of those present. On receipt of the list, they left the room to examine the names. The councillors were not sure if they should continue with the meeting or not. While they speculated about what to do, an impromptu 'concert' was started by Sir John Scott who sang 'I Fear No Foe'. Following Scott's lead, Councillor Simon Daly sang 'There is a Flower that Bloometh' and he was followed by Alderman Edward Coughlan with a rendition of 'Ireland' and Councillor Stephen J. O'Riordan with 'Cruskeen Lawn' (O'Callaghan, 2000).

The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Barry Egan, then informed the members that he felt they should proceed with the business of the meeting and he called for nominations for the office of Lord Mayor. It was Alderman Liam de Róiste who proposed the name of Donal O'Callaghan and the motion was seconded by Councillor William Russell. Sir John Scott offered his support for the motion, saying: 'He [Donal O'Callaghan] is a very clever and able man, who, if he was permitted to apply a little more time to municipal affairs, it would be greatly to the advantage of the Corporation and the city' (*Cork Examiner*, 1 February 1921). No other candidate was nominated and Donal O'Callaghan, *in absentia*, was declared elected by Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Barry Egan. Egan then delivered a robust speech in which he spoke of the Lord Mayor's 'mission' in America and criticised the British press propaganda for their attempts to ridicule the trip.

> Unanimously electing Donal O'Callaghan to be the Lord Mayor of Cork is the only answer befitting the dignity of the city of Cork that we can make to the lying British press propaganda that has sought to expose our first citizen to humiliation and insult in America. I can tell you this – the Lord Mayor of Cork was received in America with all the respect that is due to the office he holds and the city he belongs to. His own personality has been sufficient to gain for him the warm welcome and friendship of the citizens of the great Republic. His mission is one of truth and liberty; it is opposed to everything that may be known as Britishism.

After fixing the Mayoral salary at £500, the councillors noted a letter from the shipping agency Dowdall and Company proposing to establish a direct cargo service between Cork and France. Two weeks later in America – during his hearing with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Labour – Donal O'Callaghan declared that he was the Managing Director of Dowdall and Company, which also had a trans-Atlantic remit.

As the councillors prepared to move on to other business, the British forces re-entered the Council Chamber and called for eleven members to make themselves known. Nine members responded and they were immediately arrested and taken away. Councillors William Russell and Seán Good, though present at the meeting, did not answer and the remaining councillors covered for them (O'Callaghan, 2000). The nine arrested councillors were amongst the first people interned on Spike Island, though some of them were subsequently moved (Murphy, 2014). One of those arrested was Alderman Tadhg Barry who was shot and killed by a sentry at Ballykinlar Detention Camp in county Down on 15 November.

In America, the newly re-elected Lord Mayor of Cork, Donal O'Callaghan, addressed a crowd of four thousand people on Sunday 6 February in the Philadelphia Metropolitan Opera House. The American *Irish Press* newspaper

CORPORATION OF CORK.

Election of Lord Mayor

January 31st, 1921, at 12 noon.

ADMIT BEARER to Council Chamber, Courthouse.

James Carthy

Town Clerk.

Admission card for the election of Lord Mayor in the Council Chamber of the Courthouse on 31 January 1921. Donal O'Callaghan was re-elected *in absentia*. [Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]

(12 February 1921) reported that as well as those present in the Opera House, thousands also gathered outside. Diarmuid Fawsitt, the Irish Consul in New York, was one of the speakers at the event, while Donal O'Callaghan was introduced by his attorney, the influential Michael Francis Doyle. The *Irish Press* recorded: 'Mr. O'Callaghan, on stepping to the front of the stage, received an ovation that lasted several minutes'. During an extensive speech, frequently interrupted by applause from an enthusiastic audience, the Lord Mayor emphasised the general election of December 1918. The election, he said, was fought with 'the greatest difficulties' by Sinn Féin due to the efforts of the British forces. Despite intimidation, the people of Ireland were undaunted: 'The verdict of that election is the most important fact in all recent Irish history'. He stated that once the Republican Government began to function, 'little by little, England saw her grip on the administration of Ireland slipping'. The local elections, he said, confirmed the dominance of Sinn Féin and the



The Irish Press

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VOL. 3. NO. 47 PHILADELPHIA, FEBRUARY 5, 1921 PRICE TEN CENTS.

O'CALLAGHAN TO VISIT PHILA. SUNDAY

Lord Mayor of Cork Will Address Public Mass Meeting at Metropolitan Opera House

LEADING QUAKERS TO INVESTIGATE IRISH CONDITIONS FOR RELIEF COM.

Unit of American Members of Society of Friends, Sent by American Committee for Relief in Ireland, Sailed From New York Saturday—To Ascertain at First Hand Nature and Extent of Assistance Needed—Members of Unit Experienced in Relief and Reconstruction Work—First Meeting of Committee Is Held in New York.

IRELAND ALWAYS READY FOR PEACE, SAYS COLLINS

But What England Wants Is Surrender, and Ireland Will Not Give In.

BY MICHAEL COLLINS.

WOULD HAVE IRISH DOCTORS SPY ON THEIR PATIENTS

New English Regulation Would Require Hospitals to Report Wound Cases.

ENGLISH MILITARY WRECK HOME OF MRS. PEARSE

Cullenswood House, Once Seat of St. Enda's, Is Destroyed by Troops.

ENGLISH BUILDING A GALLOWS AT KILMAINHAM.

O'CALLAGHAN RE-ELECTED LORD MAYOR OF CORK

VEHICLES OF A NATION SHOW ITS CHARACTER

Irish Scenery Best Seen and Appreciated From the Side-Car.

FR. DOMINIC SENTENCED TO 5 YEARS IN JAIL

PRISONER IN CORK IS EXECUTED BY ENGLISH

Cornelius Murphy Was Charged With Being in Possession of a Loaded Revolver.

MAN SLAIN IN BED

ATTORNEY TELLS OF BEING "ON THE RUN"

How Irish Country People Guarded With Care the Man "On His Keeping."

MASS-MEETING WILL OPEN AT 8 P. M. MAYOR WILL TELL OF CITY'S RUIN

Donal O'Callaghan, Lord Mayor of Cork, will visit Philadelphia Sunday. At a public mass-meeting, to be held in the Metropolitan Opera House, Broad and Poplar streets, he will tell of the suffering of his city.

The mass-meeting will open at 8 o'clock. It will be under the auspices of the Irish Relief Committee.

Lord Mayor O'Callaghan, who is only 29 years old, arrived in this country a few weeks ago at Newport News as a stowaway aboard the steamship West Canon. Efforts to deport him have been make by officials of the State Department.

DONAL O'CALLAGHAN
Lord Mayor of Cork

TWO BROTHERS OF PHILA. WOMAN HELD BY ENGLISH

HUNTING FORBIDDEN

PRIEST AND MINISTER TELL OF ENGLISH CRIMES

Coverage in the *Irish Press* before Donal O'Callaghan's speech in the Philadelphia Metropolitan Opera House.



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GREAT RECEPTION HERE FOR LORD MAYOR

Crowd Fills Metropolitan Opera House Sunday Evening, While Thousands Gather Outside

PHILA. BRANCH OF AMERICAN COMM. FOR RELIEF IN IRELAND FORMED

Leading Citizens Attend Meeting in Bellevue-Stratford Monday. Names of Group Who Called Meeting Include Those of Archbishop Dougherty, Governor Sproul and Mayor Moore. Judge Campbell, of New York, Tells of Conditions in Ireland and Need for Assistance.

THE IRISH REPUBLIC AND WOMAN SUFFRAGE

How the Methods That Gained the Vote Could Be Used to Aid the Irish Cause.

N. Y. HAS BIG COLLECTION FOR IRISH RELIEF FUND

Over One Hundred Thousand Dollars Turned in From Churches in Archdiocese.

EXPECT 4000 DELEGATES AT MASS. CONVENTION

Growth of the A. A. R. I. R. in That State Has Been Record-Breaking.

VISITOR ADDRESSES BOTH MEETINGS; JAMES A. FLAHERTY IS CHAIRMAN

While more than four thousand persons crowded the Metropolitan Opera House from the stage to the topmost part of the house, last Sunday evening, several thousand others, in the street outside, clamored for admission to hear Donal O'Callaghan, Lord Mayor of Cork, voice the Irish Republic's plea for recognition. Those who were shut out were appeased when the Lord Mayor came out, after finishing his address inside the opera house, and addressed the overflow meeting.

James A. Flaherty, Supreme Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus, presided at the meeting inside. He was introduced by Michael Francis Doyle. Other speakers were Col. Edward J. Meehan, J. L. Fawsitt, Consul General of the Irish Republic to the U. S., and Right Rev. William Kieran, rector of St. Patrick's.

Resolutions read by Francis S. Clark, State Secretary of the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic, demanded the recall of American loans to England.

Lord Mayor O'Callaghan arrived in Philadelphia shortly after 6 o'clock Sunday evening. He went to the Bellevue-Stratford, where he was met shortly before 8 o'clock by a body of Irish Volunteers, under command of Captain Joseph H. Collins, who escorted him to the meeting.

Coverage in the *Irish Press* before and after Donal O'Callaghan's speech in the Philadelphia Metropolitan Opera House.

results across the country 'handed over to the Republic the management of everything'. Repeating the pledge he had made to the American Commission, the Lord Mayor stressed that Ireland would fight to the bitter end for the right of self-determination and the 'invader' would eventually be expelled. The crowd rose, once again, in a prolonged ovation at the end of his speech.



Donal O'Callaghan at the famous Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. Recognisable by its crack, the iconic Bell bears a timeless message: 'Proclaim Liberty Throughout All the Land Unto All the Inhabitants thereof'. [Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]

The next stop for Donal O'Callaghan was Albany, the state capital of New York where he delivered another passionate speech. He also sent a cable to Cork, addressed to Deputy Lord Mayor, Barry Egan. It stated: 'Thank Corporation and people of Cork for re-election [as Lord Mayor]. Americans admire tenacity of Ireland in fight for freedom. Feeling in favour of recognition here grows daily

– O'Callaghan' (*Cork Examiner*, 9 February 1921). After another successful speech before a large crowd in Buffalo, O'Callaghan awaited the result of his hearing before the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Labour, which took place on 15 February. A lengthy, detailed and well-researched submission was made by the Lord Mayor's attorneys, Michael Francis Doyle and J. T. Lawless, which focussed on the right of asylum to political refugees. They asserted that the right of asylum was introduced so that 'the spirit of humanity, religion and justice should have some escape from indiscriminate vengeance'. Stressing the threat to the life of Donal O'Callaghan, they argued that the deportation of a political refugee was virtually the surrender of that refugee. Perhaps exploiting the tensions been the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Labour, Doyle and Lawless insisted that the application of immigration laws was solely the responsibility of the Department of Labour. They added: 'Where no demand has been made for extradition, the Department of State is without authority to deport, and has no jurisdiction to pass upon the question'.

The statement and memorial of the Lord Mayor were then presented. He declared the following:

- That the government of Great Britain has unlawfully claimed the right to rule the territory in which the Republic of Ireland has been set up, established, and is now functioning.

- That I deny allegiance to any government whatsoever, save and except the government of the Republic of Ireland.

- That from time immemorial, and prior to the 14th day of December 1918 [date of general election], the vast majority of the people of Ireland have denied the right of Great Britain to rule them, and by agitation, protest, and in every generation, since their country was invaded, have, by resort to arms, attempted to repel their invaders and establish the form of government acquiesced in by the free will of the people of Ireland.



Facing page: Photo of Donal O'Callaghan taken by his attorney, Michael Francis Doyle, Philadelphia, 19 April 1921
[Courtesy of Cork City and County Archives and Áine Healy]

- That the operations of the military forces of Great Britain have been marked with acts of the greatest ferocity, particularly directed against those individuals who have been elected to public office by the people of Ireland, and those who preach, teach and advocate the right of the people to govern themselves, but also perpetrated upon the civilian population, including women, children, and the aged and infirm.

- That subsequent to my election as Lord Mayor and Chief Magistrate of Cork, I was, and still am, Chairman of the Cork County Council. That for many months prior to my election efforts were made by the military forces of Great Britain to apprehend and arrest me. That frequent raids were made upon my office and my private residence by members of the military forces of the opposing Government.

- That for two years last past I have been unable to sleep more than two consecutive nights in my habitation on account of my pursuit by such military forces; that subsequent to my departure from Ireland, under proclamations officially and publicly issued by the British military authorities, should I be forced to return to Ireland, any person or persons, who might give me asylum, aid or shelter, or who, knowing my whereabouts, failed to betray me to the British military forces, would be adjudged guilty of an offence punishable by death.

- That during the time I was hunted by the military forces of Great Britain, as aforesaid, it is my belief that it was their intention to take my life; that shortly before my departure for the United States, the home of a subordinate official of the Cork City Government was invaded by members of the British military forces, for the avowed purposes of finding me and putting me to death; that the members of said forces carried firearms; that they assaulted, beat, and otherwise maltreated the said official in an endeavour to force him to disclose my whereabouts.

- That before I left Ireland for the United States, the military forces of the opposing Government destroyed by fire the City Hall, in which I had my office as Lord Mayor, and destroyed the business places and residences of the citizens of Cork by fire and explosive bombs, the destroyed portion of the city covering an area of more than three acres, and the property destroyed being of the approximate value of more than twenty million dollars.

- That I believe and allege the fact that to be that if forced to return to Ireland at the present time, my liberty and life would be imperilled, and that the forces of the British Government will imprison me or put me to death as soon as I reach, or am found, in Ireland.

At the end of his statement, marked Exhibit A, O'Callaghan attached Terence MacSwiney's inaugural address as Lord Mayor, which started with the sentence: 'I come here more as a soldier stepping into the breach than as an administrator to fill my post in the municipality'. Exhibit B was a copy of the initial ruling by the Secretary of Labour that Donal O'Callaghan lawfully entered the US as a seaman, having been employed on the *West Cannon*. Pending a decision from the hearing, Donal O'Callaghan was permitted to remain in the US. When the ruling came through in March, it was in favour of the Lord Mayor, but subject to an appeal by the new Secretary of State, Bainbridge Colby.

For now, Donal O'Callaghan turned his attention to his work as an emissary of Michael Collins, the Dáil's Minister for Finance. In 1919, Collins had started the process of raising money in America through a publicly subscribed $5 million 'loan'. Though the initiative came from Collins, the responsibility for raising the money lay principally with Éamon de Valera, President of the Dáil, who arrived in the US in June 1919 and began an eighteen-month campaign, accompanied by Harry Boland, a senior figure in the IRB (Mitchell, 2017). The main objective of de Valera's time in the US was to gain formal recognition for the Irish Republic and to raise funds in support of the Dáil: 'He criss-crossed America, he addressed mass rallies, met with public officials, helped sell Dáil Éireann bonds, and attended multiple state legislatures as a visiting dignitary' (Doorley, 2017). The bond drive was officially launched in January 1920, coinciding with de Valera receiving the Freedom of New York. He explained to reporters: 'Each subscriber to the

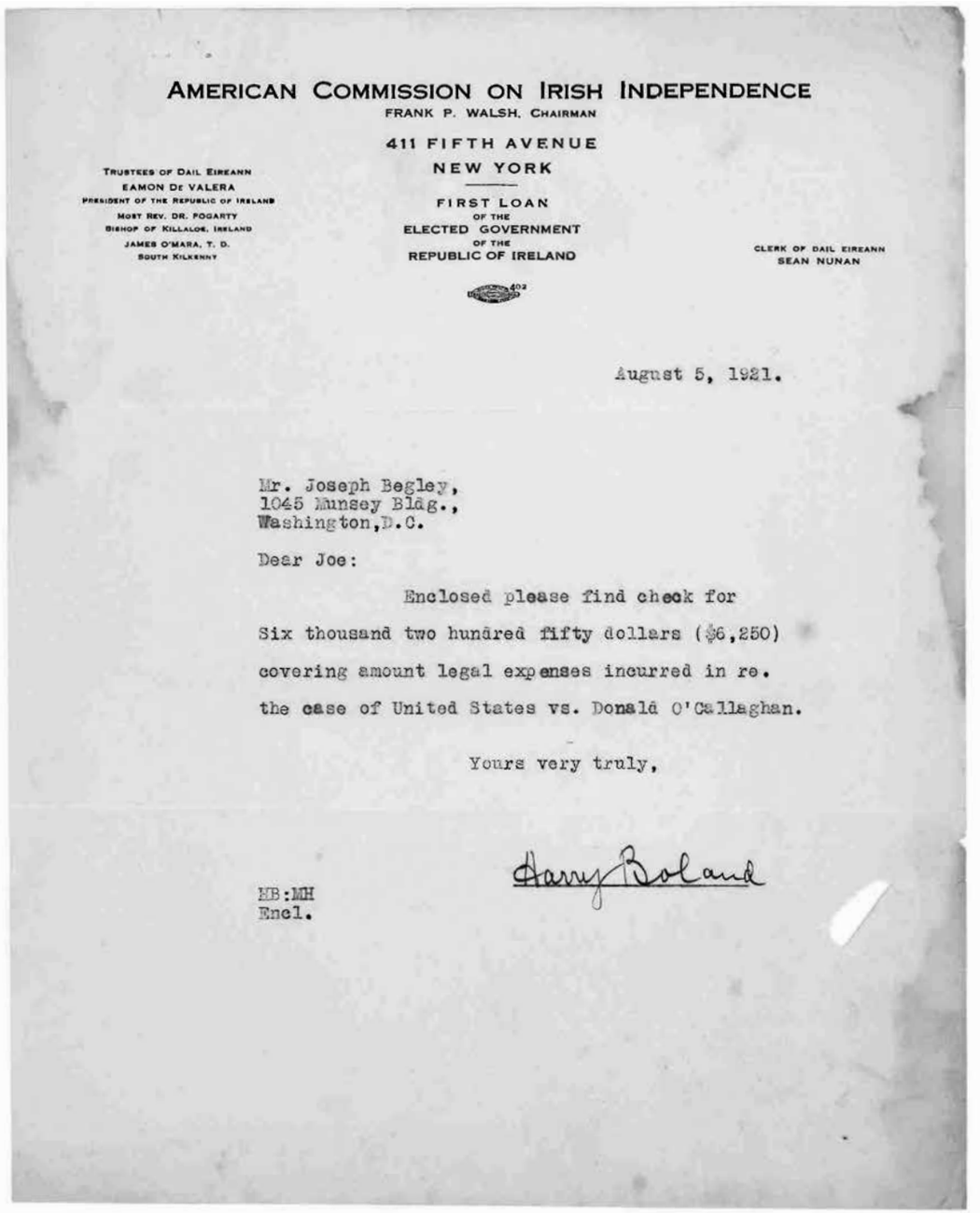
loan is making a free gift of his money. Repayment of the amount subscribed is contingent wholly upon the recognition of the Irish Republic as an independent nation' (Hannigan, 2008).

Before long however, de Valera crossed swords with Justice Daniel Cohalan (the 'Judge') and the prominent Fenian, John Devoy. New York-born, Cohalan, a son of Irish emigrants from Cork, was the head of the Friends of Irish Freedom (FOIF) and was regarded as the leader of Irish America. Tension arose between de Valera and Cohalan, partly due to a clash of personalities but also because the latter had concerns about the legality of the bond scheme. The FOIF had already helped to raise thousands of dollars for the Dáil and Cohalan was opposed to this new initiative being driven by de Valera. Comments made by the President of the Dáil during a newspaper interview also did not help – de Valera suggested that Ireland and Britain could have a relationship similar to Cuba and America. This was seen by Cohalan, and by Devoy, as surrendering the idea of full Irish sovereignty (Lynch, 2019). De Valera was keen to assert control over the FOIF and he made his feelings clear when he stated: 'I realised early on that, big as this country is, it was not big enough to hold the Judge and myself' (McCullagh, 2017). With Cohalan unwilling to cede control of the FOIF, de Valera made a decisive break by establishing a rival organisation – the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic (AARIR). As McCullagh (2017) comments: 'While the name, and the acronym AARIR, didn't quite roll off the tongue, there could at least be no ambiguity about its aim'. The AARIR soon became the dominant force in Irish America – over time, membership in the FOIF fell from 100,000 to 20,000 (Doorley, 2019), while the AARIR quickly grew to a membership of 700,000 (Ferriter, 2004). The bond scheme, effectively a free gift rather than a loan, proved popular, as more than 300,000 people bought certificates, mostly in amounts of $25 or less, making for a total of $5 million (Ferriter, 2015). However, when de Valera left America to return to Ireland in December 1920, significant problems existed in getting the money to the Dáil. It had to be laundered through two banks, then sent by draft from a New York priest to Bishop Michael Fogarty of Killaloe, a trustee of the Dáil (McCullagh, 2017). By the end of 1920, only $1 million had made its way to Dublin, much to the exasperation of Michael Collins (Fitzpatrick, 2003).

In an attempt to secure the balance of the Dáil loan, continue the American fund-raising efforts and help to mend fences with Cohalan and Devoy, Collins turned to a loyal Cork ally, Donal O'Callaghan. O'Callaghan and de Valera crossed each other on the high seas of the Atlantic in December 1920 – the former heading to the US and the latter returning to Ireland. De Valera had raised the profile of the Irish cause in America but his eighteen-month visit was not an unqualified success. McCullagh (2017) reaches the conclusion: 'The Republic was no nearer to being recognised, and Irish-America was split more profoundly than when he arrived'. The decision to send O'Callaghan to America was a personal initiative of Collins, operating independently and outside the remit of the Dáil and the cabinet. The letter from Collins to J. J. Walsh on 3 December 1920 (Adam's Collection) – confirming O'Callaghan as his emissary – made it clear that there were risks involved for the Cork Lord Mayor: 'He [Donal Óg] would need to be careful of any communications he carries, as he will be subjected, not so much to search, but to a continuous observation, and it is not outside the bounds of possibility that he will be seized'.

O'Callaghan struck up a very close friendship with Harry Boland who had remained in America after de Valera returned to Ireland. The Cork Lord Mayor features prominently in Boland's diaries, with an entry for 10 January 1921 noting: 'New York. Much trouble with State Dept. and Donal Oge [O'Callaghan]' (Fitzpatrick, 2003). The payment of O'Callaghan's US legal fees for Michael Francis Doyle and J. T. Lawless were funnelled through Boland. One letter from Doyle to Boland requested a payment of $1,250, but the attorney added: 'It is needless to say that this sum will find its way back to the Irish cause in one avenue or another, as I do not care to personally profit by any service which I may render' (Doyle, 1921). The total bill for O'Callaghan's legal expenses amounted to $6,250 and was paid through Boland. His accompanying letter was on the headed paper of the American Commission on Irish Independence, which listed Éamon de Valera, Bishop Michael Fogarty and James O'Mara TD as trustees of the Dáil, with Seán Nunan named as Clerk of the Dáil.

Donal O'Callaghan and Harry Boland spent a lot of time together in America and there are references in Boland's diary to the two of them attending hurling matches in Celtic Park, New York (see McGowan, 2012). Boland also helped O'Callaghan to reach out to Cohalan and Devoy, who continued their work on behalf of Irish freedom in the US, despite their differences with de Valera.



AMERICAN COMMISSION ON IRISH INDEPENDENCE
FRANK P. WALSH, CHAIRMAN
411 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK

TRUSTEES OF DAIL EIREANN
EAMON DE VALERA
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND
MOST REV. DR. FOGARTY
BISHOP OF KILLALOE, IRELAND
JAMES O'MARA, T. D.
SOUTH KILKENNY

FIRST LOAN
OF THE
ELECTED GOVERNMENT
OF THE
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

CLERK OF DAIL EIREANN
SEAN NUNAN

August 5, 1921.

Mr. Joseph Begley,
1045 Munsey Bldg.,
Washington,D.C.

Dear Joe:

Enclosed please find check for
Six thousand two hundred fifty dollars ($6,250)
covering amount legal expenses incurred in re.
the case of United States vs. Donald O'Callaghan.

Yours very truly,

Harry Boland

MB:MH
Encl.

Facing page: Correspondence from Harry Boland, 5 August 1921, relating to the settlement of the bill for Donal O'Callaghan's legal expenses, amounting to $6,250 [Éamon de Valera papers, courtesy of UCD Archives]

However, from an early point, O'Callaghan recognised that the AARIR was the most important Irish-American organisation with which he should liaise and he worked closely with Frank P. Walsh, Chairman of the American Commission on Irish Independence, to continue the money-raising efforts and arrange for funds to go to Ireland more easily. On Saturday 16 April, he left New York for Chicago, accompanied by Boland. They attended the first annual convention of the AARIR on 18 and 19 April in Chicago and the Lord Mayor impressed all those present with his thoroughness and attention to detail.

Michael Collins clearly had great faith in O'Callaghan to entrust him with such a significant job. O'Callaghan rewarded that faith with his work in the US. The Dáil loan and continuing American funding were very important in the cause for Irish freedom. Though he is not credited in many sources for his work in America, it was Donal O'Callaghan, acting as the emissary of Michael Collins, who retrieved the Dáil loan negotiations after de Valera left the US with Irish-America deeply divided.

Interestingly, one of Éamon de Valera's ideas to raise the profile of Ireland's plight and to link with global anti-imperialism was to send a delegation to Russia (Fitzpatrick, 2003). On 29 June 1920, the Dáil had had authorised the dispatch of 'a diplomatic mission to the government of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic with a view to establishing diplomatic relations'. Later, the Dáil ratified the Lord Mayor of Cork, Donal O'Callaghan, as a member of the proposed delegation to accompany Pat McCartan TD and Harry Boland TD. O'Callaghan was not a member of the Dáil, so his inclusion highlights the high regard in which he was held by the likes of Éamon de Valera and Michael Collins. It was suggested that O'Callaghan and Boland should travel from America to Russia but, as it transpired, the plans for the delegation fell through. Pat McCartan TD did go to Russia but he failed to gain support for Irish independence.

Rather than going to Russia, the Lord Mayor continued to tour America, making a series of public speeches before large crowds. For the most part he was very well received, but there were a couple of exceptions. The City Council of Macon, Georgia, passed a resolution prohibiting O'Callaghan from speaking

there. Also, the local branch of the American Legion of Veterans of the World War passed a resolution opposing his visit to Charleston, South Carolina. They claimed that the Lord Mayor was part of a movement trying to create an anti-British sentiment.

O'Callaghan's time in the US was running out. Various legal rulings had continuously extended his time, but the Secretary of State, Bainbridge Colby, was losing patience and he was coming under increasing pressure from Britain to bring an end to the Cork Lord Mayor's propaganda tour. Additionally, William Henry King, the US Senator for Utah, led a series of public protests against O'Callaghan's continued presence in America and initiated a fresh legal challenge. Eventually, a court order was issued in mid-April which set a deadline for 6 June for Donal O'Callaghan to leave the US. The Lord Mayor was not too disappointed by the decision. He felt that he had achieved what he had set out to do in America. Though the War of Independence continued unabated in Ireland, there were growing signs that peace talks might commence between the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George and the President of Dáil Éireann, Éamon de Valera. Also, O'Callaghan had set himself another goal – helping the cause of the Irish Republic on the national stage through Dáil Éireann.

Chapter 13
Balancing Act

During his time in the US, Donal O'Callaghan was in regular contact with officials in Cork Corporation, as well as Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Barry Egan and Alderman Liam de Róiste. He had been shocked and saddened to learn of the arrests of nine of his Corporation colleagues at the meeting on 31 January 1921, at which he was re-elected Lord Mayor, *in absentia*. The actions of the RIC that night confirmed his belief that, had he remained in Cork, he would, at the very least, be in jail now. Even more appalling for the Lord Mayor were the accounts he received of executions of prisoners in Victoria Barracks. On Tuesday 1 February, Cornelius Murphy, a Volunteer from Rathmore in Kerry was executed, having been found guilty of possessing a loaded revolver (*Cork Examiner*, 2 February 1921). On the morning of 28 February, six prisoners – Patrick Mahoney, Timothy McCarthy, John Lyons, Daniel Callaghan, Thomas O'Brien and John Allen – were executed at Victoria Barracks, for their parts in a failed RIC ambush at Dripsey. As reported in the local newspapers, shots were heard fired at 8.00 a.m., and again at 8.15 and 8.30. Shortly afterwards, a note was posted on the gate of the barracks officially announcing the executions (Keane, 2017). The editorial in the *Cork Examiner* (1 March 1921), the day after the executions, struck a despondent tone.

> The executions at Victoria Barracks yesterday – the final scene in the lives of the men whose love of country has led them along the path where many Irishmen have travelled before them – almost fill one with despair that force should, in the 20th century, still be the

> arbiter to decide an issue that honest statesmanship might readily, bloodlessly, and satisfactorily solve. Tragic events of the most deplorable kind – ambushes and reprisals, burnings and executions, force as represented by fire and sword – seem more like a survival of the barbaric past than an indication of the march to progress and civilisation.

As if to illustrate the point made in the editorial, the immediate aftermath of the executions on 28 February, saw the IRA retaliate. Signaller Bowden and Private Whitear were shot and killed near Summerhill. Corporal Hodnett was killed on the Douglas Road and Private Wise died near the ruins of Cash's department store, after being shot on St. Patrick's Street (Keane, 2017).

Touring America, the Lord Mayor felt helpless in terms of influencing events in Cork. However, during his frequent correspondence with Sinn Féin colleagues – including Michael Collins, whose trust he had earned – O'Callaghan was persuaded that he had much to offer on the national stage. The target was the general election of May 1921. This was the first election since the partitionist Government of Ireland Act, 1920 established two governments and parliaments in Dublin and Belfast. The legislation came into effect on 3 May and elections were organised. The Southern Parliament was to have 128 members, the Northern Parliament fifty-two. The South was entitled to send thirty-three members to Westminster, the North thirteen (Neeson, 1998).

The Sinn Féin approach to these elections was intriguing. Given that the first Dáil was established in January 1919, legitimising the idea of a Republic, the party could have seen the elections following the Government of Ireland Act 1920, as illegal and refused to take part. Instead, despite some internal disagreement, the decision was taken to contest the elections but to regard them as elections to the second Dáil. The President of the Dáil, Éamon de Valera, mistakenly believed that partition would prove temporary (McCullagh, 2017). P. S. O'Hegarty (1952) was one of those who disagreed with the decision to participate in the May 1921 elections. He wrote: 'One would expect that something like the sinister import of this Act of 1920 would have penetrated to the minds of the Dáil members …… [but] it entirely escaped them that this Act would, in fact, partition Ireland. They could have declared the Act *ultra vires*, as being an act of a parliament which was not an Irish parliament and whose authority had been repudiated in a most unmistakable manner by the Irish people'.

For the Southern Parliament, every Nationalist party, even the Irish Parliamentary Party under John Dillon, agreed to support Sinn Féin. Accordingly, Republican candidates won all of the contestable 124 seats; the four other seats were allotted to Trinity College (Neeson, 1998). The Cork city Borough constituency had increased from a two-seater to a four-seater and Sinn Féin nominated four high-profile candidates, J. J. Walsh, Liam de Róiste, Mary MacSwiney and Lord Mayor, Donal O'Callaghan. There were objections by representatives of the IRA to the nomination of de Róiste due to his lack of military activity; however, the Standing Committee and Executive of Sinn Féin overruled the IRA objections and de Róiste, an incumbent member of Dáil Éireann, was nominated (Martin, 2009). Nominations had to be submitted by 13 May and, on that morning in the Courthouse, the Returning Officer, John Maguire, and the High Sheriff, Sir John Scott, accepted papers on behalf of the four Sinn Féin candidates. Councillor Donal Ó Ceallacháin's address was listed as 58 Douglas Street and his nomination papers were signed by two priests from the St. Finbarr's South parish, Rev. T. O'Leary and Rev. Patrick McSweeney. By the close of nominations, papers had not been submitted for any other candidates.

The *Cork Examiner* (14 May) recorded: 'There was a strong force of police on duty in the Courthouse, but their presence was the only indication that anything unusual was on. Nobody expected a contest, and that being so, there was but little interest in the election'. The four Sinn Féin candidates were duly elected to the Parliament of Southern Ireland, under the terms of the Government of Ireland Act 1920. Of the four, only Liam de Róiste was present at the Courthouse; J. J. Walsh was in prison, and both Mary MacSwiney and Donal O'Callaghan were in America. Flanked by John Maguire, the Returning Officer, de Róiste delivered an acceptance speech in which he stated: 'There has been no contest, as all who know Ireland have anticipated there would be no contest, for the simple reason there is nothing to have a contest about. There is no basis left on which to have a contest. This unopposed return we accept, and the world must accept, as evidence of the unanimity and solidarity of the Irish people in their adherence to the principle of Ireland's sovereign independence, in their allegiance to Dáil Éireann as the constitutional authority in this country, and their abhorrence of, and



GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND ACT, 1920.

ELECTION

OF MEMBERS TO SERVE IN THE PARLIAMENT of SOUTHERN IRELAND For The Parliamentary Borough of the County of the City of Cork.

I, the Undersigned, being the Returning Officer for the above-named Parliamentary Borough of the County of the City of Cork, HEREBY GIVE NOTICE, that the undermentioned persons have been duly elected to serve as Members for the said Parliamentary Borough of the County of the CITY OF CORK, in the Parliament of Southern Ireland:—

DE ROISTE, Liam, 2 Janemount Tce., Sunday's Well, Cork, secretary.

McSWINEY, Mary, 2 Belgrave Place, Wellington Road, Cork, teacher, B.A.

O'CEALLACHAIN, Donal, 56 Douglas-st., Cork, Lord Mayor.

WALSH, James Joseph, 10 Sullivan's Quay, Cork, merchant.

Signed,
JOHN P. MAGUIRE,
Under Sheriff and Returning Officer,
Dated this 13th day of May, 1921.

SOUTHERN PARLIAMENT.

YESTERDAY'S NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS.

DUBLIN UNIVERSITY'S SELECTION.

COUNCILLOR DONAL O'CEALLACHAIN, Lord Mayor of Cork (Cork City).

EAMON DE VALERA (Clare).

(Lafayette, Dublin).
PROFESSOR SIR JAMES CRAIG, M.D.

MRS. KATE O'CALLAGHAN (E. Limerick).

Cork Examiner, 14 May 1921, showing Donal O'Callaghan (top left) as being nominated for Dáil Éireann and winning a seat unopposed.

protest against, the partition of their country by the English Government'. He added that the English Government had failed to grasp the fact that a new generation had grown up in Ireland who dreamed of realising the great principles and ideals put before nations during the Great War. Ireland sought the right to self-determination and the Home Rule chapter was closed. The *Cork Examiner* (14 May) concurred with the analysis of de Róiste and proclaimed the outcome of the elections, in twenty-six counties at least, as sounding the death-knell of partition.

The May 1921 elections went unnoticed by most people and had no impact on the War of Independence, other than increasing the levels of hostility towards the British. Two days after the election results were declared in Cork, the Black and Tans entered the home of Liam de Róiste at Janemount, Sunday's Well and shot dead Fr. James O'Callaghan, who was lodging there at the time.

More than likely, Liam de Róiste was the intended target of the attack but, like many of his Sinn Féin colleagues, he rarely spent the night at home. The *Cork Examiner* (16 February) reported that the occupants of the house that night were de Róiste's wife, his mother-in-law, Fr. O'Callaghan and the priest's maid. As noted by the newspaper: 'By his lamented death, Cork city, as well as the country, has lost a zealous and pious clergyman, and deep and sincere regret will be felt at his terribly tragic end. Rev. Father O'Callaghan was a brilliant Irish scholar, and took a deep interest in the language movement. He was a professor at Ballingeary College and a well-known Irish scholar'. Upon hearing the news of Fr. O'Callaghan's death, a distraught Liam de Róiste telegrammed the news to Pope Benedict XV and asked him to protest to the British Government (Martin, 2009).

Later in May, the Custom House in Dublin – headquarters of the English Local Government Board – was destroyed by the IRA and all of its records were lost in flames. The LGB was now homeless. British control over Ireland was gradually disintegrating and the military advice to Prime Minister Lloyd George – primarily from the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Ireland, General Nevil Macready – was to either send more troops to Ireland and 'stage an all-out war of extermination', or reach a settlement (Neeson, 1998). With many people in Britain voicing their considerable displeasure at what was happening in Ireland, Lloyd George opted for the latter strategy. Having previously declared that his forces had murder by the throat in Ireland, the Prime Minister now stated: 'Two-thirds of the population of Ireland demand the setting up of an independent Republic in that island. At a recent election they reaffirmed that demand. Every effort I have made, publicly and otherwise, to secure a modification of that demand has failed. They have emphatically stated they will agree to nothing less' (Neeson, 1998).

This was the changing environment to which Donal O'Callaghan returned to Ireland. The precise nature of his departure from America is not known. As the deadline of 6 June approached, some newspapers in America reported that the Lord Mayor's whereabouts were unknown and that he was effectively on the run. Fearing another controversy, the US Deputy Secretary of Labour, Edward J. Henning, contacted O'Callaghan's attorneys, Michael Francis Doyle and J. T. Lawless. Henning was satisfied by the response he received and he informed reporters in Washington that the attorneys had provided him with information about the whereabouts and plans of the Cork Lord Mayor. He was content

that O'Callaghan was in the process of leaving America but, 'in the interests of justice' he was treating the information he received as confidential and was not willing to disclose the details of what he had been told (*Cork Examiner*, 10 June 1921). There is every chance that the Lord Mayor celebrated his thirtieth birthday on 23 June 1921 crossing the Atlantic.

In Ireland, cautious attempts to promote peace had started. A public appeal for reconciliation by King George V opened the door for Lloyd George to invite Éamon de Valera to a conference. First, de Valera sought to hold consultations with representatives of the Irish Unionists, and the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alderman Laurence O'Neill hosted the meeting in the Mansion House on Monday 4 July. At the end of the meeting, the Lord Mayor informed the press that good progress had been made; at that night's meeting of Dublin Corporation, he declared that it was the happiest day of his life and that peace was in the air (*The Irish Times*, 5 July 1921). When the talks resumed on Friday, the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Ireland, General Nevil Macready, sat across from Éamon de Valera in the Mansion House and 'the principles of governing a truce were agreed' (Morrissey, 2016). Though Macready did not form a very positive impression of de Valera – describing the President of the Dáil in his memoirs as 'a highly strung, vain individual of limited outlook, incapable of a broad view on any subject, but adept at splitting hairs' (see Dudley Edwards, 1987) – it was announced that the truce would commence on Monday 11 July. The following day, de Valera led a delegation to London for talks with British Prime Minister, Lloyd George.

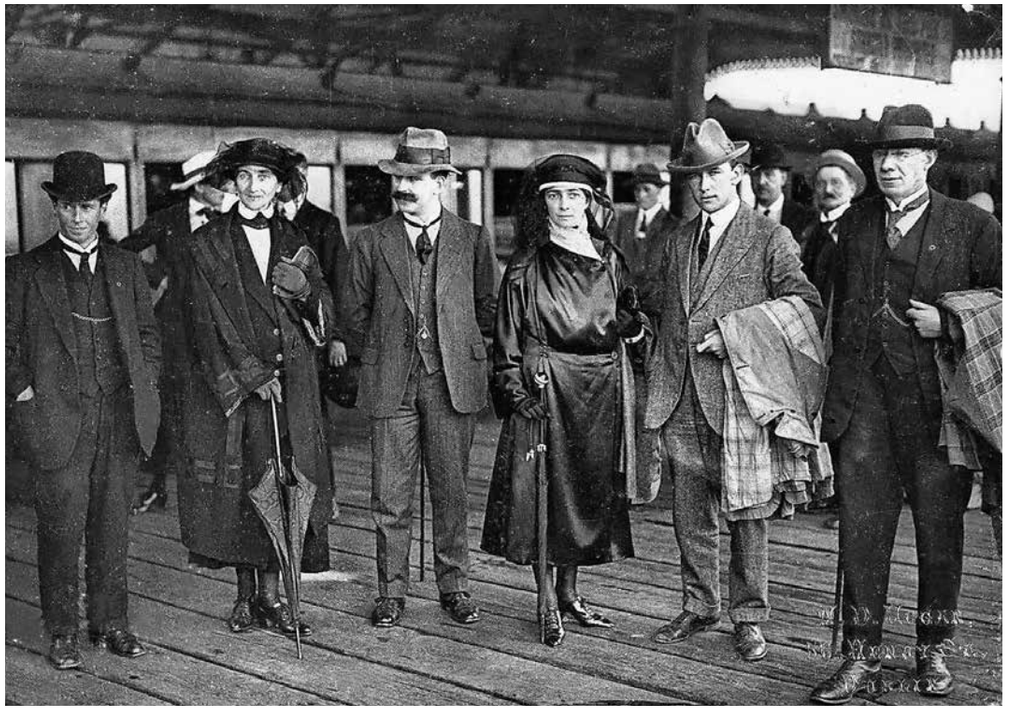
The following week, back in Cork, Lord Mayor Donal O'Callaghan, gave an extensive interview to the *Cork Examiner* (18 July). He placed on record his thanks to the people of America for the 'magnificent manner' in which they received him, and thanked them for their interest in Ireland's fight for freedom. He also expressed gratitude to the American Government and authorities for the considerate way they had treated him, despite the 'necessarily irregular circumstances' of his arrival in the country. The Lord Mayor then directly addressed the citizens of Cork:

> To the people of Cork, the first thing I want to say, on my return, is that I left Cork, and left momentarily the duties to which you elected me, as the result of an order from the Republican government [to act as the emissary for the Minister for Finance]. Only on such an order would I leave you or Ireland under the circumstances. That my stay in America was longer than I initially intended is also due to the same cause. While my duty, in the first instance, is to the people of Cork, of course at all times, like every citizen of the Republic, I hold myself in readiness to obey any orders of the government of the country.

In giving the interview to the *Cork Examiner*, the Lord Mayor clearly felt that he had to justify his time in America. As an articulate and intelligent man, O'Callaghan was not averse to using the press to explain himself. His exploits in America had been generously reported but he was aware that some people felt that his departure for America was an act of desertion. Equally, though it may have been a minority view, the opinion had been expressed through letters in the *Cork Examiner* that he had abandoned Cork and its citizens at a critical time, in the days after the burning of the city. The Lord Mayor was making it clear that he had not fled to America; rather, he had obeyed an order from the Republican Government, through the Minister for Finance, Michael Collins.

As part of the interview, the Lord Mayor expressed his gratitude at the state of affairs to which he had returned. Like the President of the Dáil, Éamon de Valera, he desired peace and he praised the people of Cork for their 'discipline and unity' in observing the truce. Notably, however, he added: 'While I would regret at the moment to say a word which might be construed as calculating to interfere with the existing peace, I feel bound to say that the truce doesn't appear to have been as loyally kept by the British Army in Cork as it might have been'. Nonetheless, the Lord Mayor ended the interview on a positive note expressing the hope that 'the temporary peace of today will be the lasting peace of tomorrow'.

Donal O'Callaghan was now in a position to resume his duties as Lord Mayor in a less-threatening environment, but when Cork Corporation next met on Friday 22 July, the Mayoral chair was occupied once again by Councillor Barry Egan. O'Callaghan was in Dublin, part of the welcoming party for the peace delegates, led by Éamon de Valera, returning from talks in London with the British Prime Minister. In the welcoming group with Donal O'Callaghan were the Chairman of Dublin County Council, H. Friel; the acting Mayor of Limerick, Máire O'Donovan; Waterford TD, Vincent White; Limerick TD, Kate O'Callaghan; and Cork Corporation's Alderman Liam de



Welcoming party for Éamon de Valera at Kingston (Dún Laoghaire) – from left to right, H. Friel, Máire O'Donovan, Vincent White, Kate O'Callaghan, Donal O'Callaghan, and Liam de Róiste. [Courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

Róiste. This group of six public representatives went to Kingston (now Dún Laoghaire) where they went on board the boat returning from London to meet and congratulate Éamon de Valera. Following a brief discussion, Donal O'Callaghan accompanied de Valera off the boat to a rapturous reception from the crowd which had gathered.

The mood in Dublin was positive, as people greeted the truce and the ongoing talks with a mixture of relief and hope. McCullagh (2017) notes: 'Crowds flooded the streets, and overladen trams took tens of thousands of day trippers to the seaside. Members of the Auxiliary Division commandeered military vehicles to join them. Ice cream vans sold "Gaelic ice cream", and the city's dealers laid out the fruit and vegetables on their handcarts in patriotic displays' (see also Yeates, 2015).

Now a TD, Donal O'Callaghan took part in discussions that weekend in Dublin about the peace talks and what the next steps might be. He was disappointed to miss the funeral in Cork of Town Clerk, Florence W. McCarthy, on the morning of Monday 25 July. McCarthy a loyal official of Cork Corporation, had died a few days earlier. He had served as a solicitor and as Town Clerk of the Corporation since 1901, following in the footsteps of his grandfather and father, who had both been Town Clerks of Cork (Alexander McCarthy, 1845-1859, Alexander McCarthy Jr., 1859-1901). Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Barry Egan, led the Corporation delegation to the funeral at St. Finbarr's Cemetery.

Donal O'Callaghan's biggest challenge at this time was to balance his local and national roles, as he was Lord Mayor of Cork, Chairman of the County Council and a TD. Wednesday 10 August marked his appearance at a meeting of Cork Corporation for the first time since the previous December. Councillor Michael Joseph O'Riordan commenced the meeting by saying it was the duty of the council to congratulate and welcome the Lord Mayor back from his visit to the States where he had been an ambassador for Ireland. O'Riordan praised the Lord Mayor for the success of his mission and he proposed a vote of thanks for the people of America for their hospitality to Cork's first citizen. A copy of the resolution, he recommended, should be sent to the President of the United States and to all of the places that the Lord Mayor had visited. Alderman Edward Coughlan, speaking in Irish, seconded the proposal. Donal O'Callaghan pronounced the resolution passed and he then signed the declaration of office as Lord Mayor, which he had been unable to do when elected in his absence in January. After thanking his colleagues for their warm welcome, the Lord Mayor launched a scorching attack on the *Cork Examiner*, stating:

> It is hardly necessary to say that while in America I was everywhere received as befitted the Lord Mayor, but I resented very much on my return to how I had, in my absence, been treated by the Press of Cork. I think it is a scandal that while the Lord Mayor of Cork was in America for eight months, engaged in touring the States, addressing large and enthusiastic meetings in connection with the Irish struggle, the *Cork Examiner* during that time could find nothing to print about me, but whatever was invented by the

> British press agencies for the purpose of discrediting me and the work in which I was engaged. This is typical of the governing policy of that particular paper. It shows that its anti-Republican views are as strong as ever.

O'Callaghan then stressed again, as he had done directly to the *Cork Examiner* in the interview printed on 18 July, that, as Lord Mayor, the only circumstance that would make him leave Cork was an order from the government. He had been asked by the Minister for Finance, Michael Collins, to go to America to help the Irish cause for freedom and he could not refuse the request.

The Lord Mayor next spoke about the truce that was in place. While he hoped that negotiations might lead to a lasting peace, he felt obliged to comment on the way that people across the country, including members of the Corporation, were being treated in internment camps. He described the conditions in the internment camps as 'appalling' and suggested that the council should pass a resolution asking the Dáil government to consider the advisability of proceeding no further with the peace negotiations until the prisoners at present under British control in Ireland were treated as prisoners of war. Sir John Scott expressed the view that the Lord Mayor's suggestion was neither wise nor prudent during a time of delicate negotiations. In spite of Scott's reservations, a resolution was passed asking 'the Ministry of Dáil Éireann to see that proper treatment is accorded to the prisoners of war before proceeding further with the peace negotiations'. The next order of business was the formation of a committee of the council to consider not only the rebuilding of the city, but also the revaluation of the city and the possibility of an extension of the borough boundary. This was a delicate issue for the Lord Mayor given his role as Chairman of the County Council; nonetheless he was one of the six members appointed to sit on the committee with Alderman Richard Beamish, Alderman Fred Murray, and Councillors Barry Egan, William Ellis and Seán French.

The report of the meeting of Cork Corporation was printed the following day in the *Cork Examiner.* Unsurprisingly, the newspaper took the opportunity to respond to the Lord Mayor's attack.

> At yesterday's meeting of the Cork Corporation, Lord Mayor O'Callaghan saw fit to make an attack upon this journal. We give that attack full publicity in another column. As invariably happens to all newspapers, we have been often attacked, but we can say that seldom has any attack been made with less justice than on the present occasion. Our sole object in dealing with public questions is to serve the interests of the citizens of Cork and the whole of Ireland. That any comments which we have felt called upon to make regarding local administration were actuated by the slightest hostility towards the Lord Mayor or the members of the Corporation we most emphatically deny …… As we have already stated, our policy has not been, and is not animated by hostility to the Corporation, but whenever we believe their administration calls for comment or criticism we shall not fail in our duty to the citizens.

Certainly it appears that the Lord Mayor's attack on the *Cork Examiner* was over-the-top. The paper had been very generous in praising his role as Deputy Lord Mayor during Terence MacSwiney's imprisonment and warmly welcomed his election as Lord Mayor. Coverage of his eight months in America was fair and reasonable and he had been granted a platform on his return, in an extensive interview, to tell people about the success of the trip. Nonetheless, the Lord Mayor was sensitive to personal criticism and negative comments about the work of the Corporation. For a long time, Sinn Féin had been distrustful of the *Examiner* and what it felt was an anti-Republican editorial stance.

The first meeting of the second Dáil took place on Tuesday 16 August 1921 in Dublin's Mansion House and Donal O'Callaghan was in attendance as a new TD. The *Cork Examiner* (17 August) noted that there were 'remarkable scenes of enthusiasm' in Dublin and the TDs received a great reception in the streets and later in the chamber. The newspaper reported:

> Striking scenes witnessed today's opening of the fateful session of Dáil Éireann in the Mansion House, Dublin. The historic building has been, from time to time, the assembly place of many momentous gatherings, but doubtful if the annals of contemporary history could yield a parallel to the scenes witnessed within its walls today. In the famous Round Room of this building, the cause of Ireland's freedom has been voiced under many different regimes and



A picture of Sinn Féin members (not all) on Cork Corporation, taken in 1921 after Donal Óg O'Callaghan returned from the US. [Courtesy of Cork Public Museum]

> in many varying conditions, and today the new movement which has supplanted that espoused by Butt, Parnell and Redmond, found historic expression at a juncture perhaps the most critical in the country's history. It may be said in truth that the eyes of all the world were today turned to the Mansion House where Dáil Éireann – the parliament of the new movement – entered on deliberations of a character, perhaps the most fateful that ever confronted any body of Irishmen.

The Lord Mayor of Cork – who signed the attendance roll as 'Domhnall Ó Ceallacháin' – must have felt a tremendous excitement and pride at being present at such an occasion. Before a full discussion in a private session, Éamon de Valera provided an outline to deputies of the peace negotiations. He stated that in December 1918 the people had given their 'unmistakable' answer as to how they wanted to be governed (McCullagh, 2017). He explained (President's statement, Dáil Éireann debates, 16 August 1921): 'I do not say that that answer was for a form of government so much, because we are not Republican doctrinaires, but it was for Irish freedom and Irish independence, and it was obvious to everyone who considered the question that Irish independence could not be realised at the present time in any other way so suitably as through a Republic'.

When the Dáil convened again the next day, de Valera proposed a vote of thanks for the American people who had so generously subscribed to the bond scheme. He said that Ireland had received 'full value' for the bond, and five and-half million dollars was now in the Treasury. He especially highlighted the work of Frank P. Walsh, the Chairman of the American Delegation on Irish Independence. Minister for Finance, Michael Collins, rose to support the vote of thanks. He paid tribute to the work that had been done to secure the Dáil loan but did not specifically mention his emissary in America, Donal O'Callaghan. The following vote of thanks was formally approved: 'That we, the Members of Dáil Éireann, the duly elected Parliament of the Irish Republic, in Public Session assembled this 17th day of August, 1921, hereby declare the gratitude of the Irish nation to the people of the United States of America for the warm support they have always given to the cause of Ireland and particularly for their generous subscription to the First Loan of the Irish Government, and we furthermore declare that each Bond Certificate purchased in the United States will be redeemed in due course by the Irish nation'.

The following day's sitting of the Dáil brought the first contribution, at least in public session, from Donal O'Callaghan. During a debate on a report from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cork deputy and member of Cork Corporation, J. J. Walsh stated that, even though the Dáil loan had been declared a success, he felt they were not getting 'the full value of the force of our twenty millions of kith and kin in America'. Donal O'Callaghan disputed Walsh's figure, arguing that there was never more than half a million people in the Irish movement in America. He added: 'I am afraid many of the Teachtaí,

like Deputy J. J, Walsh, are under a grave illusion regarding America …… We cannot expect the Irish in America to be better than the Irish at home. It is only during the last eighteen months that we are getting in America the repercussion of the events of Easter Week …… Deputy J. J. Walsh's suggestions are all sheer nonsense. It is nice to talk about twenty million Irish but it is not true. There may be twenty million descendants of Irish blood but they are Irish of such a kind that they do not recognise it themselves……We cannot expect more from America than from our own people at home'. J. J. Walsh may have been a friend, a fellow member of Sinn Féin and a colleague on both Cork Corporation and Cork County Council, but this did not stop Donal O'Callaghan from severely criticising him in the Dáil.

Before the Dáil met again on Monday 22 August, Donal O'Callaghan was part of the welcoming party which greeted Harry Boland on his return to Ireland. Boland's diary entry for 21 August reads: 'Dublin. Arrive 6 a.m. [William T.] Cosgrave, Frank P. Walsh, Donal Oge [O'Callaghan], Gresham Hotel. Seán McKeown. Meet de Valera 3 p.m. Mick, St Enda's. Hand ten thousand to Collins'. The next day, O'Callaghan, Boland, Cosgrave, de Valera and Collins were in the Dáil as TDs discussed the peace negotiations. De Valera described what was on offer as 'a sort of Home Rule for a divided Ireland with more general powers than were offered in the best Home Rule proposals heretofore' (Dáil debates, 22 August 1921). He told deputies that if they were determined to make peace only on the basis of the recognition of a Republic, they were going to face war' (Dáil debates, 22 August 1921; also McCullagh, 2017). Later in the day, during a discussion on a report presented by the Minister for Local Government, Donal O'Callaghan praised the work of the Dáil Department, saying that it was performing well in difficult times.

Four days later, on 26 August, at a public session of the Dáil, deputies voted for a President and a new cabinet was elected. Donal O'Callaghan made his first major Dáil speech, passionately supporting the nomination of Éamon de Valera. O'Callaghan addressed the house in Irish, as follows (Dáil debates, 26 August 1921):

> A Chinn Chomhairle is a lucht na Dála, cúis áthais is bróid domhsa é a bheith orm cuidiú leis an ainmniú so. Tuigeann sibhse, a lucht na Dála, is tuigeann muinntir na hÉireann go hiomlán a bhfuil déanta ag an Uachtarán. Más fíor é, más fíor go bhfuil muinntir na hÉireann díreach tar éis coga a dhéanamh, coga agus troid nár dineadh a leithéid riamh cheana i nÉirinn, ní foláir nó tuigeann sibh an dlúth-bhaint a bhí ag an Uachtarán le cúrsaí na troda le linn an chogaidh sin; do stiúrigh sé obair an chogaidh go cliste agus go ciallmhar. O cuireadh sos lois an gcoga, bhí obair le déanamh ag an Uachtarán—obair a bhí níos deacra fós ná obair an chogaidh, obair maidir le cúrsaí ina bhfuil an namhaid sár-chliste. Go dtí anois, tá an bua againn san obair sin díreach mar a bhí an bua againn sa choga. Tá muinntir na hÉireann tagaithe go dtí an crosbhóthar agus ní beag d'éinne an bóthar atá romhainn le gabháil. B'fhéidir gur b'é an dorta fola agus an t-ár atá in ndán dúinn arís. Is mór an dorta fola agus an t-ár a dineadh ar mhuinntir na hÉireann le fada, ach b'fhéidir ná fuil deire leis fós. Ar an dtaobh eile, b'fhéidir go bhfuil Sasana ar intinn géille agus go bhfuil ceart agus cothrom le fáil ag muinntir na hÉireann. Má tá an sgeul mar sin, sí an tsíocháin atá romhainn. Má sí ní fhéadfadh cúrsaí na síochána a bheith i lámhaibh ní b'fhearr ná ní ba chliste ná i lámhaibh Eamonn de Valéra. B'fhéidir, ámhthach, ná fuil deire leis an gcoga. Bhí mórchuid dorta fola ann le déanaí, ach b'fhéidir go ndortfaí a thuille sara mbeidh deire leis an ár. Ba bhreágh le muinntir na hÉireann an tsíocháin a bheith rómpa. Má thuiteann san amach, agus má thuigeann an namhaid nách foláir dóibh géille agus cothrom na féinne a thabhairt d'Eirinn, beidh árd-áthas orainn. Tá lán-dóchas ag muinntir na hÉireann as Eamon de Valéra chun náisiún na hÉireann do threorú i gcúrsaí na troda nó i gcúrsaí na síochána.

Not all of the deputies in the Dáil were fluent Irish speakers and some may have struggled to understand O'Callaghan's words. The Lord Mayor of Cork stressed that he was delighted and proud to support the nomination of Éamon de Valera. He praised the smart and wise work that de Valera had done to that point. The people of Ireland had arrived at a crossroads and the road ahead was not certain; perhaps England was on the verge of giving up, but it was also possible that more blood needed to be shed. Irish people loved peace and their hopes rested with de Valera.

De Valera was unanimously elected as President of the Republic and, in his acceptance speech, he praised the loyal comrades who worked with him –

Arthur Griffith, Cathal Brugha and Michael Collins (Dáil debates, 26 August 1921). A new cabinet was then elected, with six executive officers, or ministers, supporting de Valera. They were:

- Arthur Griffith (Foreign Affairs)
- Austin Stack (Home Affairs)
- Cathal Brugha (National Defence)
- Michael Collins (Finance)
- William T. Cosgrave (Local Government)
- Robert Barton (Economic Affairs)

Over the next fortnight, events moved quickly. Following a series of letters between Éamon de Valera and Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister invited the President of the Dáil to a conference to begin negotiations. At a Dáil cabinet meeting on 9 September, it was agreed to accept the invitation. Critically, the Irish negotiating team that was selected did not include de Valera. He argued that as Head of State, he should be kept in reserve. William T. Cosgrave disagreed fundamentally with the decision as he felt that it was unwise to leave a man with de Valera's noted negotiating skills at home. He famously argued that the Irish 'team' was leaving its ablest player in reserve and now was the time to use him (Laffan, 2014). The five delegates who formed the Irish negotiating team were Arthur Griffith, Michael Collins, Robert Barton, George Gavan Duffy, and Eamonn Duggan. The starting date for the talks was fixed for Tuesday 11 October.

Throughout the remainder of August and September, the national situation was dominant for Donal O'Callaghan and he missed meetings of Cork Corporation and Cork County Council. At the Corporation meeting of 14 September, chaired by Councillor Seán French, a motion was tabled by the Irish Nationalist Councillor, Michael Joseph O'Riordan. He called for the Freedom of Cork to be conferred on Henry Ford. Councillor O'Riordan stressed that Ford, by establishing a branch of his motor factory and tractor engineering works in Cork, had conferred lasting benefits on the city, for its trade and commerce and for its citizens. He asked the council to unanimously support the motion in recognition of Henry Ford, who he labelled 'the Irish-American magician' (*Cork Examiner*, 15 September 1921). Alas, when Chairman Seán French called for one of the councillors to second the motion, nobody did.

Different councillors spoke and expressed the view that the time was not right to confer the prestigious award on Ford. Alderman Richard Beamish stated: 'The Freedom of Cork is not a thing to be passed round from hand to mouth, passed about by anybody until what has been promised is accomplished …… We should not accept promises, but reward facts. This motion is premature and should be postponed to a later date'. With no seconder, Chairman Seán French declared O'Riordan's motion out of order. The promise of Henry Ford that 2,000 men would be employed in Cork had not yet been fulfilled. Undoubtedly, the councillors also recalled the previous October when the company had threatened to sack workers who left the factory to attend Mass in support of Terence MacSwiney and the Cork hunger strikers. French emphasised that it was not intended to slight Henry Ford in any way and the matter could be revisited in the future, especially if Ford visited Cork.

Lord Mayor, Donal O'Callaghan, was in the chair for the next Corporation meeting on Saturday 24 September. The elected members discussed a letter from the Cork and District Trades Council stating that it had unanimously agreed not to take part in a Commission on Wages which the Corporation had proposed to establish. A frustrated Lord Mayor told the meeting: 'The one thing I regret in the matter is this: the object of the proposed Commission is simply to try and prevent, by an anticipatory arrangement, the possibility of labour trouble'. O'Callaghan expressed dissatisfaction that the Trades Council had said that it would not participate in the Commission, but had offered no explanation. The Lord Mayor agreed with a proposal by Alderman Liam de Róiste that the Trades Council should be officially asked to give reasons for not taking part in the Commission. Much of the remainder of the Corporation meeting was spent discussing the reconstruction of the city. Members expressed their regret that in the nine months since the Burning of Cork, very little work had been carried out, even though insurance money had been paid out.

The next meeting of the Corporation, on Wednesday 12 October, was an extraordinary one. A deputation from the city's jarvey drivers appeared before the meeting to object to an application by Albert Holmes for a licence to ply a motor charabanc for hire in the city. The jarveys argued that motorised coaches were affecting their business, to which Alderman Richard Beamish replied that the Corporation should not oppose progress. Alderman Beamish was interrupted by shouts from the crowded public gallery, which led to a rebuke from the Lord Mayor, Donal O'Callaghan: 'Before we proceed further, I ask

you if you are going to make up your minds to interrupt or not. You will get nothing from the Corporation by any effort at intimidation or bullying. We are going to conduct our business as we think best, and I ask you not to force us to take the action that we will have to take if you persist'. Sir John Scott proposed that the application by Albert Holmes that was before the council should be adjourned for six months, as none of the councillors wanted to add to the prevailing high rates of unemployment by putting jarveys out of work. The proposal was rejected by a vote of twenty-one to seven. However, there was support for a proposal from Councillor Seán French that the licence be granted on condition that the motorised vehicle would only be for passengers who were travelling at least three miles outside the borough boundary. French reasoned that this would mean competition for the railway companies and not for the jarveys. Following a vote, this was agreed, even though doubts were expressed by the Law Agent about the practicalities of the condition, given that the Corporation could not enforce anything outside of its own jurisdiction. At this point, the jarveys in the public gallery left their seats in an apparent intention to leave; however, they then ran back into the Council Chamber 'waving hats and whips, and shouting terms of abuse at the Lord Mayor and members of the council' (*Cork Examiner*, 13 October 1921). The *Cork Examiner* reported: 'It was impossible to catch anything distinctly in the pandemonium they created. All were shouting and some struck the desks with their fists, so as to give adequate emphasis to their remarks. Above the din, one heard such threats as: "No Orangeman will come down here" and "We will set fire to ye"'. Amidst the chaos, the Lord Mayor adjourned the meeting until later in the day, sarcastically remarking: 'I have to compliment the gentlemen responsible for this exhibition, and also the gentlemen who skilfully played to the gallery today'.

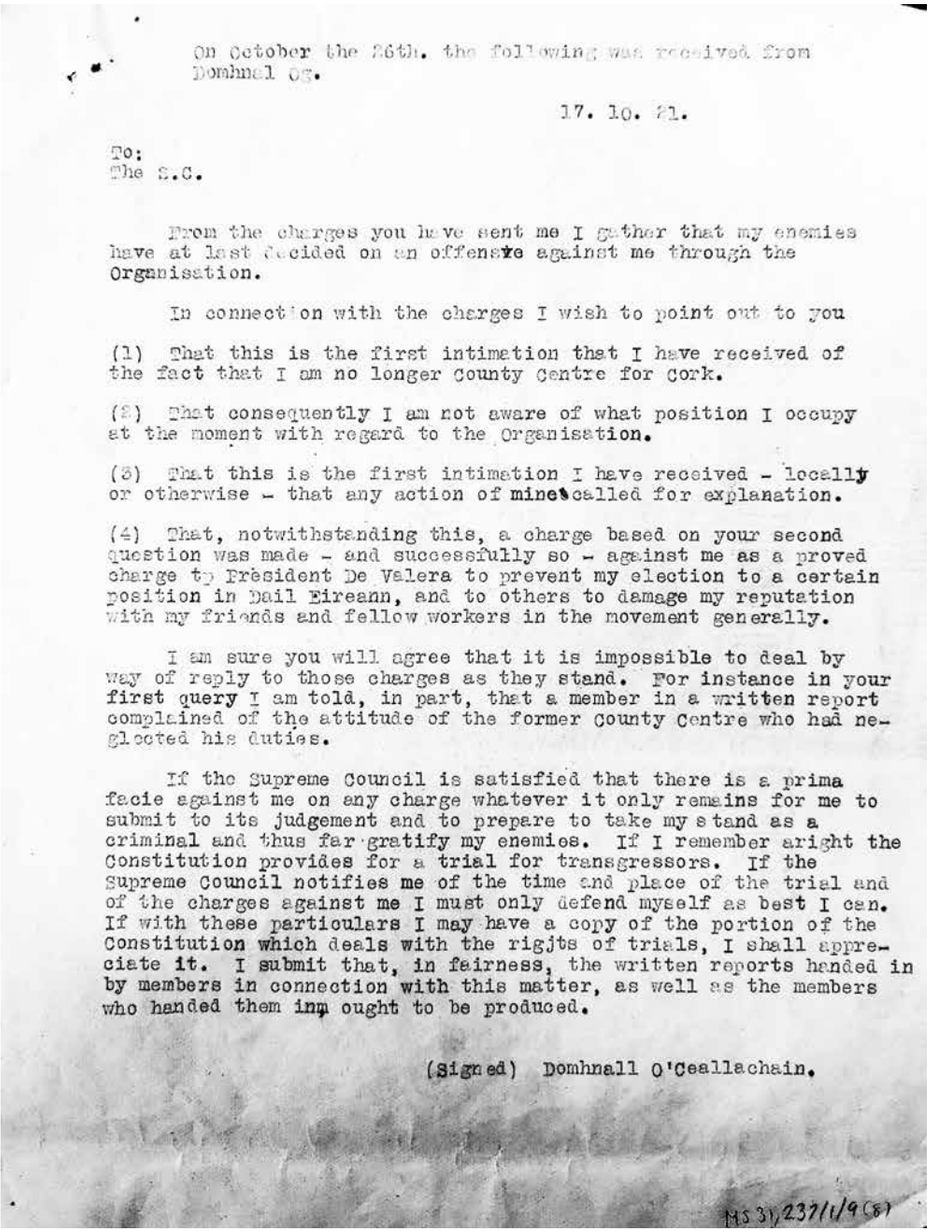
For Donal O'Callaghan, his day-to-day life now revolved around local issues such as trade disputes and angry jarveys, and national issues about the future of the country and Irish freedom. Behind the scenes he was also dealing with a disciplinary case instigated by the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The IRB was a secret insurrectionist movement established in 1856. Known as the 'Organisation' to insiders, the IRB had a shadowy existence. Murray (2015) explains: 'Being a secret society, it was not in its nature to advertise itself or leave convenient records for historians'. The IRB dedicated itself to the establishment of a free Republic in Ireland and it was heavily involved in the Easter Rising of 1916, having effectively hi-jacked the Volunteer movement (Neeson, 1998). Donal O'Callaghan had been a member of the Cork City Circle of the IRB since 1910. In 1917, when the 'Organisation' restructured itself after the failed Rising, O'Callaghan was promoted to Head Centre in County Cork. However, since his successful elections to Cork Corporation and Cork County Council in 1920, he had drifted away from the IRB and neglected his duties. Due to the lack of activity of the IRB Circles in Cork city and county, Florence O'Donoghue was given the responsibility in 1921 of reviving them. A combination of unfortunate circumstances had contributed to the demise of the IRB in Cork: 'Tom Hales, who had represented South Munster for the IRB as a Divisional Commander, had been arrested in July 1920 by British soldiers. His replacement, Paddy Cahill, had been unable to come from Tralee to take over, so [Liam] Lynch had been asked to instead. O'Donoghue's role would be to replace Domhnall O'Callaghan as County Centre, as the latter had left without telling anyone, leaving the local IRB floundering'.

On 1 September 1921, Donal O'Callaghan received a letter from the executive of the IRB stating that they intended to hold an inquiry into his conduct. O'Callaghan was charged with 'neglect of duty' and he was asked to explain his behaviour in two circumstances. The first was that he had left Cork, without reporting his departure to the IRB. He was absent for eight months and this was regarded as desertion. The second charge, as discussed previously, was his failure to alert Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney, and prominent IRB members, of the raid on Cork City Hall on 12 August 1920. On that fateful day, IRB member Liam Deasy told O'Callaghan that a raid would take place, as the British had intercepted a letter to the Clonakilty District Centre. The British authorities were aware that an IRB meeting, a meeting of the Cork No. 1 Brigade of the IRA and a Republican Court sitting were all due to take place in City Hall that night. Donal O'Callaghan was detained at a meeting of Cork County Council in the Courthouse until 5.30 p.m., at which point he informed Deasy that the IRB meeting should be changed to the Courthouse. He set off at 6.00 p.m. to make the necessary arrangements, inform members of the change in venue and also alert the Lord Mayor of the impending raid. According to Deasy's version of events, O'Callaghan returned to the Courthouse an hour later and, when asked, answered that he had not informed any IRB members of the venue change and had not alerted the Lord

Mayor. He left the Courthouse again to do so but, as he approached City Hall, he saw that it was surrounded by British forces and the raid was about to start. Prominent members of the IRB were arrested, as well as Terence MacSwiney whose return to City Hall two and-a-half months later was in a coffin after dying on hunger strike in Brixton Prison.

The Lord Mayor did not reply to the IRB charges until 17 October. He began his letter by claiming: 'My enemies have at last decided on an offensive against me through the Organisation'. O'Callaghan then noted that the letter from the executive of the IRB, dated 1 September, referred to him as the former Head Centre in Cork. He expressed surprise at this, stating: 'This is the first intimation that I have received of the fact that I am no longer County Centre for Cork. Consequently, I am not aware of what position I occupy at the moment with regard to the Organisation'. O'Callaghan then claimed that until his receipt of the September letter he had no idea that any action of his called for an explanation. Referring to the second charge about events on 12 August 1920, O'Callaghan alleged that a whispering campaign about his failure to warn IRB colleagues and MacSwiney about the City Hall raid had already damaged his reputation. Intriguingly, he also stated that the allegation of neglect of duty had cost him a position in Éamon de Valera's government. He laid down a challenge in the final paragraph, stressing that under the constitution of the IRB, he was entitled to a trial and that he would defend himself there, in front of his enemies. It is interesting to note that O'Callaghan did not address either of the charges made against him in his reply to the executive of the IRB.

It was 22 November when Donal O'Callaghan received a reply from the IRB, informing him that the Supreme Council felt that an inquiry was needed 'to clear up the whole position'. It was fixed for Sunday 11 December at a venue to be decided. Five IRB officers had been chosen to lead the inquiry – Martin Conlon (Chairman, Dublin), Frank Crummy (Belfast), Eamon Price (Dublin), P. Whelan (Dungarvan) and Humphrey Murphy (Kerry). Unfortunately, no public record exists of the inquiry, if indeed Donal O'Callaghan attended or if it even took place. The likelihood is that it did not. Seán O'Hegarty provided a written statement which suggested that both the IRB and the IRA had concerns about informers but, regarding 12 August and the arrest of Terence MacSwiney, he concluded that despite 'the closest inquiries' and 'our individual suspicions' their investigations came to nothing (Written testimony regarding Donal



On October the 26th. the following was received from Domhnal Ó.

17. 10. 21.

To:
The S.C.

From the charges you have sent me I gather that my enemies have at last decided on an offensive against me through the Organisation.

In connection with the charges I wish to point out to you

(1) That this is the first intimation that I have received of the fact that I am no longer County Centre for Cork.

(2) That consequently I am not aware of what position I occupy at the moment with regard to the Organisation.

(3) That this is the first intimation I have received - locally or otherwise - that any action of mine called for explanation.

(4) That, notwithstanding this, a charge based on your second question was made - and successfully so - against me as a proved charge to President De Valera to prevent my election to a certain position in Dail Eireann, and to others to damage my reputation with my friends and fellow workers in the movement generally.

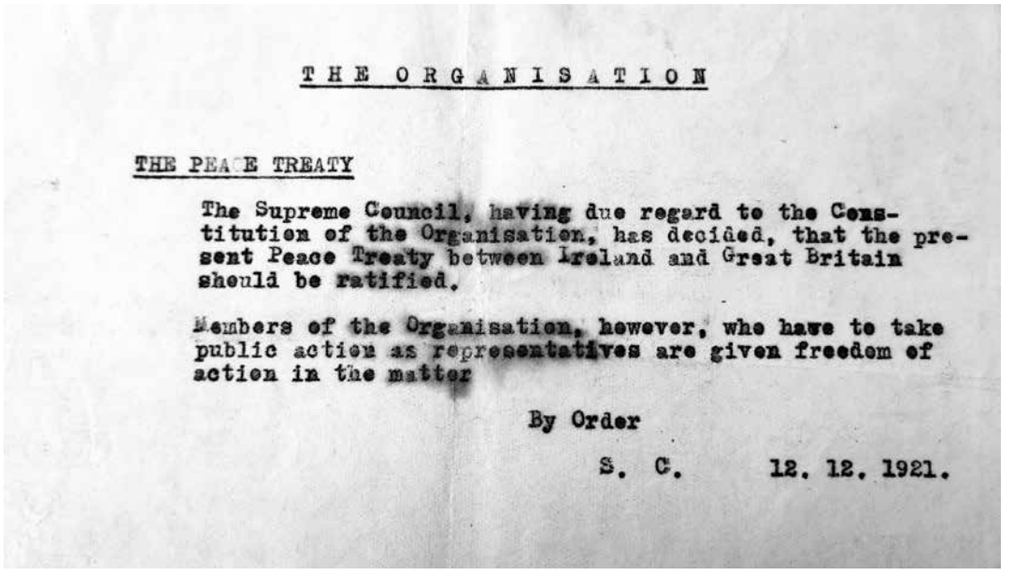
I am sure you will agree that it is impossible to deal by way of reply to those charges as they stand. For instance in your first query I am told, in part, that a member in a written report complained of the attitude of the former County Centre who had neglected his duties.

If the Supreme Council is satisfied that there is a prima facie against me on any charge whatever it only remains for me to submit to its judgement and to prepare to take my stand as a criminal and thus far gratify my enemies. If I remember aright the Constitution provides for a trial for transgressors. If the Supreme Council notifies me of the time and place of the trial and of the charges against me I must only defend myself as best I can. If with these particulars I may have a copy of the portion of the Constitution which deals with the rights of trials, I shall appreciate it. I submit that, in fairness, the written reports handed in by members in connection with this matter, as well as the members who handed them in ought to be produced.

(Signed) Domhnall O'Ceallachain.

MS 31,237/1/9(8)

Reply from Donal O'Callaghan to the IRB, 17 October 1921
[Courtesy of National Library of Ireland]



THE ORGANISATION

THE PEACE TREATY

The Supreme Council, having due regard to the Constitution of the Organisation, has decided, that the present Peace Treaty between Ireland and Great Britain should be ratified.

Members of the Organisation, however, who have to take public action as representatives are given freedom of action in the matter

By Order

S. C. 12. 12. 1921.

On 12 December 1921, the Supreme Council of the IRB recommended that the Treaty should be ratified. [Courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

O'Callaghan, MS 31,327, National Library). The IRB Supreme Council may have decided that there was nothing to be gained from pursuing a case against Donal O'Callaghan, who had not been actively involved in the Organisation for a couple of years. Nonetheless, in some quarters, O'Callaghan's failure to sound the alert in advance of the City Hall raid on 12 August 1920, lingered as a black mark against him and his character.

A reason why the IRB may not have proceeded with its planned inquiry on 11 December is that the national political situation had altered dramatically the previous week. At 2.15 a.m. in London on Tuesday 6 December, the five Irish delegates who formed the Irish negotiating team in the peace talks – Griffith, Collins, Barton, Duffy, and Duggan – signed a treaty with the British. Both sides agreed to recommend it to their respective parliaments. The Treaty stated that the Irish Free State – comprising twenty-six of Ireland's thirty-two counties – would have the same constitutional status as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, that is, it would be a dominion of the British Empire. Members of the new Free State's parliament would be required to take an oath of allegiance to King George V, his heirs and successors. Rather than holding an inquiry into the performance of Donal O'Callaghan, the Supreme Council of the IRB spent 11 December intensely debating the Treaty. The following day, it recommended ratification of the Treaty, while stating that members of the IRB who were public elected representatives had freedom of action.

With de Valera's cabinet split, but agreeing on a four-three basis to side with the Treaty, attention soon turned to Dáil Éireann. Would a majority of members ratify the Treaty? Starting on 14 December, debates were held in University College Dublin over a fifteen-day period (with a short Christmas break). As described by Aldous (2009), the debates were 'an intense, often high-minded, occasionally vitriolic battle not just for the hearts and minds of the deputies, but for those of the people'. Lord Mayor of Cork, Deputy Donal O'Callaghan, participated fully in the discussions and adopted a strong position that defined the remainder of his political career.

Chapter 14
No Monopoly of Patriotism

Though preoccupied with his political roles at local and national level, Donal O'Callaghan continued to work on behalf of the Gaelic League, whenever time allowed. He was passionate about the promotion of the Irish language and Irish culture and, on many occasions, he spoke in Irish at local authority meetings and in Dáil Éireann. He attended a large Gaelic League *aeridheacht* in Kanturk on Sunday 9 October. Typically, an *aeridheacht* was a social event with traditional music, dance, storytelling and speeches. Sinn Féin members and Volunteers, often in uniform, regularly attended these events in large numbers and, due to the political nature of speeches, the hosting of *aeridheachts* had been banned by Westminster's Defence of the Realm Act. However, with a truce now in place, the *aeridheacht* in Kanturk had been well publicised locally. It was originally intended that it would take place outdoors but, the inclemency of the weather meant that proceedings had to be moved inside. Despite the weather, a generous crowd attended, a testament to 'the deep hold that the language movement had taken in the hearts of the youth of North Cork' (*Cork Examiner*, 11 October 1921).

The speech by the Lord Mayor was the highlight of the *aeridheacht*. Speaking initially in Irish, O'Callaghan told the audience that it was imperative they preserved the study of the Irish language. This, he said, could only be done by hard work and the earnestness of people to acquire and master the Irish language. He stated: 'In the past, we were in the habit of blaming the British Government for preventing us from doing many things but, in the matter of the Irish language revival, there is no-one to prevent us, it rests entirely with ourselves' (*Cork Examiner*, 11 October 1921). The Lord Mayor then directed his focus to the peace negotiations which were starting in London in two days' time. He expressed confidence in the Irish delegation led by Arthur Griffith who were going to London with a 'clear and definite demand' from which they would not move. To loud applause from the crowd, he insisted: 'The forthcoming conference will ascertain whether the English leaders of today have sufficient common sense and sufficient political wisdom and foresight to realise that never again can they crush our country and impose their will on the people of Ireland or their form of government'. O'Callaghan warned that if the talks broke down, due to British intransigence, they must be prepared to renew the war: 'If war comes again, it cannot be confined to the few who have battled so long and so successfully against such terrible odds …… The people of Ireland should go into it as a whole and the sufferings, work and activities should be more equally distributed than in the past'. The Lord Mayor was followed on the stage by his colleague on Cork Corporation, Alderman Fred Murray, who treated the crowd to a hornpipe rendition. Murray was a noted musician and Irish dancing champion.

With the peace conference ongoing, the *Cork Examiner* of Monday 24 October 1921 included a picture of Michael Collins – described as 'the renowned chief of the IRA' – leaving Downing Street the previous day following talks with the British Prime Minister. Next to the picture was a report on the meeting of Cork Corporation, chaired by Lord Mayor Donal O'Callaghan, on Saturday 22 October. These two items side-by-side in the newspaper accurately reflected O'Callaghan's dual roles. At local level, he was dealing with some seemingly mundane aspects of administration; at national level he was part of a Dáil that was to take historic decisions which would have long-term consequences for the future of Ireland. At both levels, he faced increasing difficulties – he fell out with some councillors in the Corporation due to disagreements about labour issues and, in the Dáil, his views on the Treaty differed from some Sinn Féin colleagues and friends.

The main item on the agenda on 22 October was consideration of a report of the Corporation's Special Departmental Committee, comprising the Lord Mayor, Alderman Edward Coughlan, Alderman Fred Murray, Councillor Barry Egan, Councillor William Ellis, and Councillor Seán French. The committee was formed on 27 August to look into the more efficient working of some Corporation departments. There had been attempts to establish

such a committee under the Mayoralties of Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney, but due to the tragic circumstances of both of their tenures, nothing had progressed. However, Lord Mayor Donal O'Callaghan was determined to examine how the local authority could become more efficient in its use of public monies. On 22 October, he presented a report on the progress made by the committee over the previous two months, stressing at the outset that the details were 'appalling and monstrous' and highlighted an 'absolute neglect of duty' by some Corporation officials (*Cork Examiner*, 24 October 1921). In relation to the Stores Department, the Lord Mayor reported: 'On examination of the books kept to enter stock received and taken from the stores, we discovered a most serious state of affairs; in fact, we are perfectly satisfied that, up to quite recently, there has not been even the semblance of an attempt to comply with the ordinary entries of the books'. Going through the Day Books of the Stores Department, O'Callaghan expressed his anger that the 'cement book' contained no entry from March1917 to June 1921. Equally, the 'gravel book' had no entry between 1913 and 1921. This sparked the committee to launch an internal investigation led by the City Engineer. On that basis the committee was now recommending to the council the immediate dismissal of an employee in the Stores Department, John Bradshaw Junior. During an interview before the committee, Bradshaw Junior admitted he had done no work during the entire period he was in the Stores Department. The report of the Special Departmental Committee called as well for the dismissal of John Bradshaw Senior, who also worked in the Stores Department. It was recommended that the question of his superannuation be referred to the Law and Finance Committee. The Lord Mayor told the councillors that the committee was still considering the question of the City Engineer's responsibilities.

Turning his attention to the time sheets signed by Corporation officials, the Lord Mayor stated that two staff members in the City Engineer's department, D. Tobin and B. Kelleher, had consistently refused to comply and there were no completed time-sheets for them. They had been suspended and the committee now recommended their dismissal. Following the suspension of Tobin and Kelleher, the remaining staff in the City Engineer's Department, under instruction from the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU), had refused to do the work of their colleagues. The Lord Mayor complained of the approach adopted by the ITGWU but informed members that they were working to find a solution. He stated that the work of the committee would continue but, for now, he wanted the council to adopt this interim report and agree to the dismissals of Bradshaw Junior, Bradshaw Senior, Tobin and Kelleher.

Sir John Scott said that it was unfortunate that two staff members were not entering their details in the time-book; however, he argued that they should be treated leniently and he called for their suspensions to be lifted. Alderman Richard Beamish disagreed and stressed that attendance of Corporation officials was unsatisfactory; nothing would change unless an 'example was made' of some staff. Next to contribute to the debate was Councillor James Allen, who warned his colleagues that unless the men were reinstated to their jobs, the union might take 'very drastic action'. The Lord Mayor asked sharply if Councillor Allen was issuing a threat – this was denied. At this point, O'Callaghan closed off the debate, telling the members: 'The Departmental Committee will not consider the matter any further. It is finally decided'. Sir John Scott protested and tried to make a case for Tobin, who had over twenty years of employment in the Corporation. By now, the Lord Mayor was showing increasing signs of anger; he pointed out that Tobin's offence was not a minor matter but an 'entirely unwarrantable act of insubordination'. He maintained that staff had to be dismissed if they were openly flouting his authority, the authority of the committee, and the authority of the council. Councillor Robert Day, who was a trade union official, claimed that the Departmental Committee did not have the legal power to suspend staff and therefore the suspensions that were being discussed were illegal. The Lord Mayor replied that the City Engineer had carried out the suspensions, on the recommendation of the Departmental Committee. Councillor Day would not let the matter rest, contending that if the City Engineer suspended the workers, his actions were taken under duress. The Lord Mayor said that this was not the case and, after further discussion, the councillors resolved to ask the four staff members in question to tender their resignations; if they did not do so within one week, the report from the Departmental Committee would be adopted and they would be dismissed. As the Lord Mayor was about to end the meeting, Councillor Seán Nolan queried if the City Engineer would get off 'scot- free'. O'Callaghan responded: 'We will deal with everyone in a just fashion. Our work is partly held up over this report, but the Departmental Committee will report to you when it has considered the whole matter. As one of the committee, I would be inclined to expect more

support than we have got today, considering the glaring circumstances. We must complete our inquiries'. Improving the administration of the Corporation and increasing efficiency was proving a difficult task for the Lord Mayor; he had already incurred the wrath of the Trades Council which had refused to take part in a Commission on Wages and now he was in dispute with the ITGWU and with some of his fellow councillors.

When Cork Corporation next met on 9 November, the controversy about Tobin and Kelleher was again to the fore. The acting Town Clerk, William Hegarty – following the death of Florence W. McCarthy – told councillors that Tobin and Kelleher had not responded to the letters asking them to tender their resignations. A letter was then read from the General President of the ITGWU, Thomas Foran, stating that the Labour Department of Dáil Éireann had been asked to intervene. The ITGWU recommended that the two Corporation workers should not be dismissed until a proper investigation was instigated, in order that there would be 'no misunderstanding or friction' arising from the case (*Cork Examiner*, 10 November 1921). Foran also alluded to 'grave unrest' amongst Corporation staff. Councillor Seán Nolan objected to Foran's letter and asserted that a fair and proper inquiry had been conducted by the Corporation's Departmental Committee and they should abide by the recommendation of that committee to dismiss both men; his remarks were endorsed by the Lord Mayor. Councillor Robert Day disagreed and offered his view that no decision should be taken until representatives of the Ministry of Labour carried out an investigation. The Lord Mayor ended the discussion, pending the investigation of the Department of Labour and the formal submission of a motion by Councillor Nolan to accept the report of the Departmental Committee and the recommendation to dismiss Tobin and Kelleher. By referring the matter to the Dáil, the ITGWU had upped the ante. It did so even more by submitting another letter refusing the Corporation's offer to sit on the local Wages and Cost of Living Commission.

The meeting on 9 November marked the return of Councillor Seán Good to the Council Chamber following a period of internment. He had avoided arrest at the Corporation meeting on 31 January but was subsequently apprehended. After being warmly welcomed by the Lord Mayor, Councillor Good told the meeting that the men interned had not been treated well. However, he wanted it to be clearly understood that nothing should be done to jeopardise the national movement and the peace talks. He was grateful for the support of the Corporation but questioned the wisdom of the resolution recently passed by his colleagues that the negotiations in London should be suspended until the issue of the treatment of prisoners was resolved. The Lord Mayor explained that it had not been their intention to embarrass the Dáil government or jeopardise the negotiations. The talks were ongoing and he hoped for a successful outcome. Next, the councillors noted the resignation letter of John Bradshaw Senior as Corporation Storekeeper and Paymaster, following the inquiry by the Departmental Committee, led by the Lord Mayor.

The following Corporation meeting was fixed for 21 November and that was a sorrowful occasion as the councillors lamented the killing of their colleague, Alderman Tadhg Barry. Barry had been seized at the Corporation meeting on 31 January and interned at the Ballykinlar Detention Centre in Down. His shooting by a sentry at the camp was a particularly senseless one, occurring as it did during a period of Truce. At the coroner's inquest, it was reported that Barry had approached a perimeter fence in the camp to say goodbye to fourteen departing friends who were being released on parole under the terms of the Truce. He did not heed an order from a sentry to move away from the fence and was shot and killed. Colonel Little, Adjutant of the camp, admitted at the inquest that it was the duty of the sentry to report and not to shoot (Keane, 2017). Tadhg Barry's funeral was a massive affair. His body was initially brought from Down to Dublin where a Requiem Mass took place in the Pro-Cathedral. Though he was in the midst of the peace talks in London, Michael Collins insisted on attending the Mass in Dublin and he marched in the funeral cortège to Kingsbridge Station (now Heuston Station), from where Barry's remains were transported to Cork. Lord Mayor, Donal O'Callaghan, attended the funeral Mass in Cork and the burial of his colleague in the Republican Plot in St. Finbarr's Cemetery, next to Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney, on 20 November. The *Cork Examiner* (21 November 1921) poignantly reported:

> Lying side by side with them [MacCurtain and MacSwiney] in the Republican Plot, the story of Tadhg Barry's death is bound to enhance the tragic nature of a picture in which the central figure, whilst acclaiming freedom for some fellow internees, was shot down himself. Yesterday, Alderman Barry's funeral supplied an effective, if touching, illustration of the resentment felt at the circumstances of

> his death, and denoted in more than one respect the unyielding call for the realisation of the principle of which his name was yesterday added to those in the Republican Plot. Cork has had her share of tragedy and tribulation, but Cork does not forget, and that was the lesson of yesterday.

When the councillors met the day after the funeral of their colleague, emotions ran high. A resolution was passed calling on the cabinet of the Dáil to consider suspending the London negotiations until the question of the Irish political prisoners had been satisfactorily adjusted. Councillor Seán Good paid a very personal tribute to his departed friend who he had known since he was eight or nine years of age. He described Barry as 'an honest, upright and a deeply religious man' (*Cork Examiner*, 22 November 1921). Tadhg Barry had been a leading trade union official who worked closely with Councillor Robert Day. Day told the councillors that he had travelled to Ballykinlar to bring back Barry's body to Dublin and then to Cork. He was appalled by the behaviour of a handful of British soldiers in Ballykinlar who 'jeered, laughed and used the foulest language towards the corpse' as it was being removed. The Lord Mayor spoke last and delivered an emotional address. He started by saying: 'It should be clearly understood that while figuratively we are standing by the graveside of another murdered comrade, neither the resolution nor the sentiments we have expressed are in any way attributable to the emotions of the moment, but the deliberate opinion of the Corporation, representing the voice of the citizens of Cork, and with full consciousness of the importance of the resolution we have passed, and all the possible results thereof'. O'Callaghan explained that many of the men in prison in Cork or Belfast, or in internment camps such as Spike Island and Ballykinlar, had not been tried or convicted of any offence. In his view, they had not done anything of which they or the Irish nation was not proud and did not applaud them for. The resolution had been passed for a simple reason: 'The men whom England holds today with sentences of death or imprisonment hanging over them, these men by that recognition are immediately placed in the category of prisoners of war. England is entitled to hold them as prisoners of war, but only as prisoners of war. That was a condition at the time of the Truce'. The Lord Mayor stated that was why the Corporation of Cork had taken a definite stance and was calling for the peace talks in London to be suspended.

It was never likely that the resolution by Cork Corporation was going to lead to a suspension of the talks but the issue of the treatment of prisoners was raised by Michael Collins during the discussions. The talks culminated in the signing of an agreement in the early hours of Tuesday 6 December, subject to the approval of the Dáil and Westminster. Under the terms of the Treaty an Irish Free State of twenty-six counties would be established – critically however it would be a dominion of the British Empire and members of the Irish parliament would have to pledge allegiance to King George V. *The Irish Times* of 7 December took a positive view of the Treaty agreement:

> The Irish situation has undergone a swift and almost bewildering change. Men rubbed their eyes like people who step suddenly from the darkness into sunshine. Forty-eight hours ago, a renewal of civil warfare seemed to be imminent. Today, we are offered, in Lord Birkenhead's words, 'the sure and certain hope of peace' …… We shall not indulge in premature felicitations. Though the whole outlook has been transformed, the future is still uncertain. It is possible that the Imperial Parliament may hold that the promise of Irish peace has been bought too dearly. It is possible that Dáil Éireann may raise objections on the question of allegiance …… One thing, however, is certain. If this Treaty is ratified, if Irishmen of all creeds and parties combine to administer it in a spirit of broad-minded patriotism, if it bridges the gap between North and South, if it reconciles Ireland to the Empire – if it gives us all these blessings, it will be one of the most fruitful and most glorious achievements of modern statesmanship. It will close a hideous era of strife and bloodshed and will open a new era of material and intellectual progress.

Though *The Irish Times* optimistically hoped for the end of an era of strife, the reality is that the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty 'provoked an immediate cabinet crisis' in the Dáil (Martin, 2009). An emergency meeting of the cabinet, comprising seven members, took place on 8 December, hosted by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alderman Laurence O'Neill, in the Mansion House. Tensions were high, with Arthur Griffith, Michael Collins and Robert Barton speaking in favour of the Treaty, as opposed to a return to war. Collins

expressed the belief that the Treaty, though far from perfect, would be a stepping stone to greater freedom. Griffith argued that, under the terms of the Treaty, the Irish Free State would be a self-governing dominion in the British Commonwealth, thus ending '120 years of direct British rule over twenty-six of the thirty-two counties of the island of Ireland' (Kennedy, 2017). Éamon de Valera, Cathal Brugha, and Austin Stack were opposed, believing that more concessions could be gained through further negotiations with the British. William T. Cosgrave was uncertain and, as such, he occupied the unenviable position of the 'swing' vote.

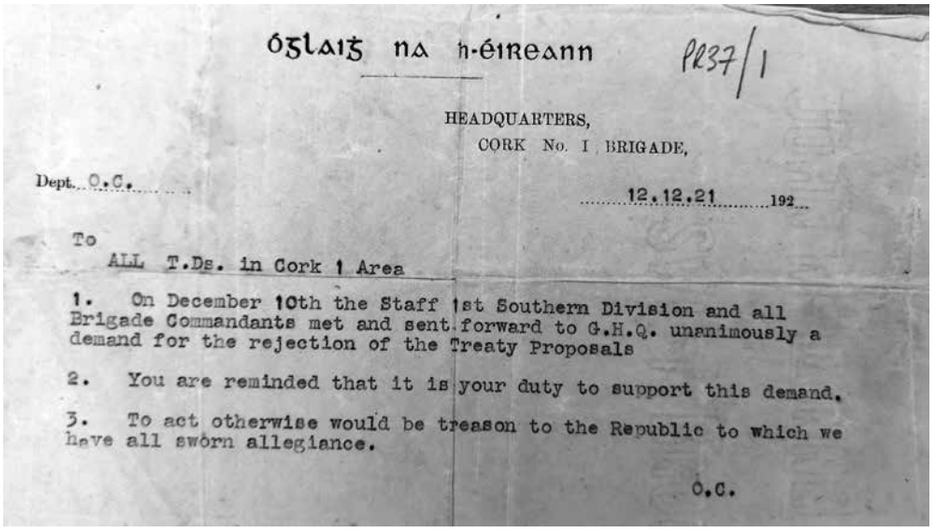
While much has been written about the cabinet meeting on 8 December 1921, it is not widely acknowledged that Donal O'Callaghan was in the Mansion House that evening and he held meetings with some of the cabinet members individually. Writing nearly a decade later, Lord Mayor Alderman Laurence O'Neill noted (Morrissey, 2014; Yeates, 2015):

> The memory of that night is as fresh before me, now as I write …… over nine years ago, as if it were yesterday …… The fierceness of the language could be heard outside. The pent up animosity of Brugha [Minister for Defence] towards Collins was let loose. De Valera pleading, and Cosgrave made many visits to the study, where the Lord Mayor of Cork, Donal O'Callaghan and I were. Cosgrave was battling with his conscience, and speaking to himself [said], 'I cannot leave Dev. He stood by me when others wanted me turned down. My oath to the Republic haunts me'.

Laurence O'Neill also wrote of one of the visits that Cosgrave made to the study to discuss the Treaty with Donal O'Callaghan and himself: 'Cosgrave was battling with his conscience, and talking to himself …… Never again do I wish to see a human being struggling so much between love and duty' (Morrissey, 2014). After agonising for quite some time, and resorting to prayer, Cosgrave supported acceptance of the Treaty. Cosgrave was not the only one in the Mansion House that night who was battling with his conscience. O'Neill wrote: 'All this time, the Lord Mayor of Cork was in the same position of doubt' (Morrissey, 2014). The split in the cabinet reflected the split in the wider body-politic. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Cork city where the four Sinn Féin TDs were divided. Liam de Róiste and J. J. Walsh favoured the Treaty, but Mary MacSwiney was intractably opposed. After much reflection and consideration, Donal O'Callaghan also came out in opposition to the Treaty, despite pressure from Bishop Cohalan. The well-known West Cork Republican and Sinn Féin activist, Barney O'Driscoll (see Bielenberg, Borgonovo and Ó Ruairc, eds., 2015) noted: 'Cork was controlled by Mick Collins. Bishop Cohalan in Cork was very pro-Treaty. He went very hard on Donal Óg to vote for the Treaty and it was said that he made him promise to vote for it.' O'Driscoll's version of events was denied by colleague, Andy Doyle: 'I don't believe that, for Donal Óg wouldn't give his word lightly'.

Following the cabinet meeting, the President of the Dáil, Éamon de Valera, issued a statement announcing that the Dáil would start its debate on the Treaty on 14 December. De Valera ended his statement as follows: 'The greatest test of our people has come. Let us face it worthily, without bitterness and, above all, without recriminations. There is a definite constitutional way of resolving our political differences – let us not depart from it, and let the conduct of the cabinet in this matter be an example to the whole nation' (Neeson, 1998). However, trying to keep Sinn Féin united would prove a futile task. As noted by Neeson (1998): 'The split that had been latent in Sinn Féin came into the open. Divisions in what had been a movement united in the common purpose of driving the enemy out of Ireland, now accelerated'. The Lord Mayor of Cork, Donal O'Callaghan, was present in the Council Chamber of University College Dublin (UCD) in Earlsfort Terrace when the Dáil gathered to debate the Treaty on Wednesday 14 December. Accordingly, he missed the meeting of Cork Corporation held on the same day. University College Dublin was not the regular meeting place of the Dáil but the Mansion House was occupied with the annual *Aonach*, or Christmas fair (McCullagh, 2017). The venue was not ideal as the Council Chamber was long and narrow and acoustics were unsatisfactory: 'Not only was it almost impossible for members in the back of the hall to hear what the orators were saying, it was difficult even to see who was speaking' (Briscoe, 1958). The Treaty debate, over fifteen long days, remained in UCD even after the ending of the *Aonach* when the Mansion House became available.

All TDs were under immense pressure as they entered UCD on 14 December. In Cork, the 'military leadership of Sinn Féin began to flex its muscles' (Martin, 2009). The four Cork city TDs – de Róiste, Walsh, O'Callaghan and MacSwiney – received letters dated 12 December from the headquarters of the



Óglaiġ na h-Éireann PR37/1

HEADQUARTERS,
CORK No. 1 BRIGADE,

Dept. O.C.

12.12.21 192

To
ALL T.Ds. in Cork 1 Area

1. On December 10th the Staff 1st Southern Division and all Brigade Commandants met and sent forward to G.H.Q. unanimously a demand for the rejection of the Treaty Proposals

2. You are reminded that it is your duty to support this demand.

3. To act otherwise would be treason to the Republic to which we have all sworn allegiance.

O.C.

The notice that was sent to the four Sinn Féin Cork city TDs reminding them that it was their duty to vote against the Treaty. [Courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

Cork No. 1 Brigade of the IRA saying that it was their duty to vote against the Treaty. They were warned that 'to act otherwise would be treason to the Republic to which we have all sworn allegiance'. Liam de Róiste interpreted the letter as meaning that a failure to vote against the Treaty would mean death (Martin, 2009).

As observed by Briscoe (1958), the lines of battle were drawn immediately in UCD's Council Chamber – de Valera sat with Brugha and Stack, facing Griffith, Collins and Cosgrave on the other side of the room. The first session of the Treaty debate was a private one and de Valera began his initial contribution by complaining that the Treaty had been signed without consulting him. Arthur Griffith responded by saying: 'As regards any suggestion that the plenipotentiaries exceeded their instructions, that I, as Chairman of the Delegation, immediately controvert it'. Griffith claimed that the delegation was sent to London to negotiate a settlement and that recognition of the Republic had not been a precondition for the talks. Donal O'Callaghan spoke twice in the Dáil on 14 December. The first was in favour of a proposal that the Treaty debates should mainly be held in public session. He told the house:

> Upon this question of a public session, may I suggest that we are all vitally concerned in the matter before us and that we will not be found lined up for or against ratification, and that our attitude will not be for the justification of one particular set of men or another, but having before us the unquestioned patriotism of every man and woman in the Dáil, that the only concern of every individual member of the Dáil or cabinet is the best interests of the country. I think, and I am not very optimistic in that, that the result will not be a barren discussion one way or another, meaning naturally disaster to the country, but will result in a decision which will be satisfactory from the point of view of all concerned here and to the country as a whole.

All of O'Callaghan's contributions to the Treaty debates reflected a calm and measured tone. He deplored the rancour of the debates and he wanted discussions that were not marred by personal comments, insults and accusations. He spoke again later in the day about the letter the Cork city TDs had received from the No. 1 Brigade of the IRA, directing them to vote against the Treaty. The issue had been raised by Liam de Róiste who informed the deputies about the contents of the letter, noting: 'We can presume what the consequences would be [for not voting against the Treaty]'. De Róiste asked the Minister of Defence, Cathal Brugha, how the divisions in the cabinet were affecting the army. He stated: 'It is most important for the Minister of Defence to consider this and give an answer to us who are threatened to be shot like dogs if we take a certain action here. Whether we take that action or not I think should be a matter for our consciences. It is serious I should think for the army that these divisions in the cabinet are permeating the army already and we should like an answer to that'. Mary MacSwiney told the meeting that she had also received the notice but she had not interpreted it the same way as de Róiste: 'Whatever I think of the wisdom of sending it, I don't think it was meant in the same way as Mr. de Róiste says. I don't think there is a threat to be shot in that'. Though Donal O'Callaghan would ultimately vote with Mary MacSwiney against the Treaty, he supported Liam de Róiste's analysis of the letter, saying it contained 'a definite threat'.

> I got that notice. It is a definite threat that I would be shot if I do a certain thing. I do not raise it from a personal point of view because it does not matter to me in the least. Any vote I have to give will be given on the merits of the case and actuated solely by the dictates of my conscience. The point is, the question raises the extent to which the army as a whole has been affected. I don't think it has appeared in the Dublin press; I read it in the Cork papers today there is quite a feature made of a report of a meeting of the Brigade Commandants of Dublin announcing a decision that was arrived at by the majority to follow Mr. Griffith. That I may think can further indicate the tendency of the army. I raise this to impress upon the cabinet as whole, to impress upon them the danger to the army of their present differences. I have already written to the officer from whom I received it to that effect. It does not matter to me a bit.

In response, Éamon de Valera stated: 'I think it is absolutely wrong for the army, as an army, to send any notice to any members of this Dáil. And if I were directly in charge I would make it my duty that every member of the headquarters staff who sent that thing to the paper I would immediately ask for the resignation of the staff and I would do the same with the Southern Division'. Both Cathal Brugha and Michael Collins said they had heard nothing about such notices being issued by the IRA. Cork Corporation's Professor William Stockley, elected to the Dáil through the National University of Ireland, remarked that he too had received such a notice, but a second one had arrived today, stating that the original notice had no authority whatsoever.

The Treaty debate continued over the following days and many of the exchanges were acrimonious and bad-tempered. There was a focus on the oath of allegiance, 'with much less emphasis on the more substantive issue of partition, while a minority believed the fight should continue for a united Irish Republic' (Corcoran, 2013). Deputies also concentrated on the instructions given to the Irish delegation before the peace negotiations. They referred back to 14 September when the Dáil met to ratify the plenipotentiaries. De Valera had outlined the terms of reference for the negotiations, reading aloud his latest letter to Lloyd George. The second paragraph of that letter read: 'In this final note we deem it our duty to reaffirm that our position is, and can only be, as we have defined it throughout this correspondence. Our nation has formally declared its independence and recognises itself as a sovereign state. It is only as the representatives of that state and as its chosen guardians that we have any authority or powers to act on behalf our people' (Dáil Éireann debates, 14 September 1921). The Dáil deputies unanimously agreed that this was their clear position entering the negotiations.

Cork TD, Mary MacSwiney, spoke strongly against the Treaty, declaring: 'Half measures are no longer possible because on 21 January 1919 this Assembly, elected by the will of the sovereign people of Ireland, declared by the will of the people the Republican form of government as the best for Ireland, and cast off forever their allegiance to any foreigner' (Martin, 2009). McCullagh (2017) points out that there were light moments too. On 17 December, Gearóid O'Sullivan, a deputy representing Carlow-Kilkenny, pondered the difference between 'allegiance' and fidelity' in the oath, noting: 'A man getting married promises to be faithful to his wife, which is a very different thing from owing allegiance to her'. This prompted a response from one of the deputies who remarked: 'Wait until you get married'.

When the Dáil adjourned for its Christmas break, there had been no substantive vote on the Treaty. Apart from his comments on the opening day of the discussions, Donal O'Callaghan remained quiet but he made his feelings known on 3 January 1922 on the resumption of the debate. In between times, he attended lively meetings of Cork Corporation and Cork County Council. When Cork Corporation met on 30 December, the *Cork Examiner* (31 December 1921) reported that the attendance of aldermen and councillors was very large and the public gallery was full to its utmost capacity. At the outset, letters were read on behalf of Liam de Róiste and J. J. Walsh. The former explained that his absence was due to the fact that he feared that councillors would discuss national politics and the Treaty. President de Valera had asked all members of the Dáil not to engage in political controversy during the recess in the Dáil debate. On that basis de Róiste had decided it was best not to attend the Corporation meeting. Walsh's letter was similar and noted that he felt 'honourably bound to refrain from participation in political discussions in the interval of the Dáil adjournment'.

Referring to the letters, the Lord Mayor told the meeting that any undertaking made to de Valera by TDs did not preclude him from continuing to discharge his Corporation duties to the best of his ability. Steering clear of the Treaty was never likely, especially after Councillor Seán Nolan tabled

a motion calling on the Corporation to reaffirm its commitment to Dáil Éireann. Sir John Scott objected as was his wont. He said that it was wrong to table a motion of this nature without notice. He also pointed out that not all of the councillors had pledged allegiance to the Dáil on the earlier occasion when a similar resolution was passed. The Lord Mayor ruled Councillor Nolan's motion in order and asked Scott if he wished to table an amendment. Scott said that he did not wish to table an amendment but, rather, wanted an opportunity to speak against the motion. The Lord Mayor denied the request, which led to a prolonged argument between the two men. Scott accused the Lord Mayor of tyranny and acerbically told him: 'All the brains in Cork are not under your hat'. Finally, Scott offered an amendment which recommended that Nolan's motion should be deferred to the next Corporation meeting. However, there was no seconder for the amendment and the Lord Mayor declared the motion passed, before commenting: 'The troubled waters have subsided'. Towards the end of the meeting, the Lord Mayor and Sir John Scott shared a lighter moment. During a discussion on securing economies in the Corporation, Scott asked if they should dispense with the services of the Sword Bearer, leading O'Callaghan to retort: 'I would like to give him some work to do, if I could!'

The following day's meeting of the County Council was even more fractious. At the beginning, by a vote of eighteen to twelve, the county councillors agreed to conduct the meeting in the presence of the press. As Chairman, Donal O'Callaghan did not vote. Noting that a discussion on the Treaty was on the agenda, he advised members that it was appropriate for them to present their views on the Treaty but not to consider the Treaty in detail as such. After issuing these vague instructions, he added: 'Personally, I am not going to take any part. As a member of the Dáil, I feel myself bound not to take part' (*Cork Examiner*, 2 January 1922). He then handed the meeting over to Vice Chairman, Councillor Patrick O'Donoghue. There followed one of the most hostile debates in the history of the County Council, which Councillor O'Donoghue found difficult to control. Observing proceedings from the side of the chamber, but not participating, Donal O'Callaghan maintained a neutral facial expression as his fellow councillors, by a vote of fifteen to fourteen, adopted a long-winded and heavily nuanced resolution which urged acceptance of the Treaty.

> We, the members of Cork County Council, realising our responsibilities to the people, deplore the differences of opinion that exists in Dáil Éireann, over the proposed Treaty with Britain. We have no desire to unduly interfere with the deliberations of Dáil Éireann but, under present circumstances, we feel it our duty to express the feelings of the people in this matter of life or death for them. We shall now, as in the past, work for the whole people. We have admired and helped our leaders in this great struggle for freedom and if we have not reached our goal it is because that goal is admitted by all to be not immediately attainable. We see no alternative to the acceptance of the Treaty and we urge the people's wish that it should be accepted. We urge further the earnest appeal of the people of Cork county that those who have done so much to bring us to victory should continue to work together for the common good and act upon the principle of government with the consent of the governed.

In the background, a row continued to rumble on about the letter which had been sent to the Cork city TDs in December by the Cork No. 1 Brigade of the IRA. Commanding officer, Seán O'Hegarty, refused to apologise for the notice or to withdraw it. He stated that the Cork TDs needed to be informed 'in plain English of our attitude towards these proposals' (Girvin, 2007). An incensed Minister of Defence, Cathal Brugha, wrote to the IRA's Chief of Staff, General Richard Mulcahy, on 29 December, suggesting that O'Hegarty required some enlightening as to scope of his duties. Brugha noted: 'It is intolerable that the military men as such should interfere in matters of this kind. This officer should be severely reprimanded' (Valiulis, 1992).

On 3 January 1922, Donal O'Callaghan was back in UCD to make his major contribution to the Dáil Treaty debate. His speech, which was twice interrupted by comments from Michael Collins and J. J. Walsh, is reproduced in full below. As was customary for him, O'Callaghan began in Irish before reverting to English. He declared himself thoroughly weary of the long speeches made by deputies on both sides of the debate. He resented the series of lectures he had sat through since 14 December, remarking: 'I take the view that every member of the Dáil has sufficient brains and sufficient intelligence and a sufficient conception of his responsibility from every point of view to decide

for himself or herself what the course of action to be taken is'. O'Callaghan told the Dáil deputies that he deplored the spirit of the debate which had given rise to so much bitterness and ill-feeling. Pointedly, he stated: 'I think it is perfectly clear that on no side of this question is there a monopoly of patriotism, a monopoly of common sense. Why we cannot here take different views without levelling charges at one another is beyond me'.

Turning his attention towards his constituents in Cork, O'Callaghan claimed that he had not been elected to the Corporation, the County Council or, indeed, the Dáil because of his statesmanship or political ability – the people had elected him because his views on 'absolute freedom for Ireland' were well-known and long-established. Therefore, he could only cast his vote in one way and that would be against the Treaty. As Dáil deputies they should listen to the people and he suggested that the Treaty should be put before the citizens in a plebiscite. Elaborating on his opposition to the Treaty, the Lord Mayor of Cork outlined that the Dáil had been unanimous in its understanding of what it wanted to achieve from the negotiations in London, but the Minister for Finance had compromised. Michael Collins interjected and, referring to himself in the third person, stated: 'The Minister for Finance has not compromised'. Continuing his speech, O'Callaghan said he visualised an independent Ireland but was dismayed that one of his Cork colleagues, J. J. Walsh, stated earlier that he had not shared that vision. Walsh protested that this was a misrepresentation of his speech and O'Callaghan withdrew the remark.

Returning to his earlier theme, O'Callaghan again stated that he detested the divisive way that the Treaty debate had been conducted, not only in the Dáil, but also in other public institutions and on the streets, where 'the country has been lined up for and against'. He expressed the wish that they would move on from internal divisions and party turmoil and ended by stating: 'For the rest, I will close by regretting the strained feelings which have been visible in this House, and by hoping that when the vote has been taken here – if a vote be taken, and if my suggestion for a plebiscite be not accepted – then at least the bitterness and strained feelings and animosity that has so suddenly arisen in a House where there was wont to be such friendship will end with the division'. As O'Callaghan resumed his seat, deputies on both sides of the debate generously applauded his measured contribution. Though he had referenced Michael Collins and J. J. Walsh, he had avoided personalised attacks. He had explained his own thought-process and the reasons behind his decision but had not sought to influence the other deputies in how they should vote. The speech would prove to be Donal O'Callaghan's crowning moment in a brief Dáil career.

Full Text of Speech by Donal O'Callaghan TD
during Treaty Debate,
Dáil Éireann, Tuesday 3 January 1922

A Chinn Chomhairle agus a lucht na Dála, is beag atá le rá agamsa. Leanfad dea-shompla na ndaoine nár fhan abhfad ag labhairt iniu. Táimse, agus tá furmhór na Dála, agus furmhór na ndaoine tuirseach de bheith ag éisteacht agus ag léigheamh óráidí lucht na Dála. Nílimse chun óráid do dhéanamh. Is beag atá le rá agamsa ar fad. Like most members of the Dáil I am thoroughly wearied of those speeches and appeals made on the question of the ratification or approval of the Treaty, and I think so are the people of the country. For my part I shall follow the example set to-day by, I think, most of the speakers, by being very brief. I am not going to appeal to any member of the Dáil, or to seek to influence the views of any member of the Dáil. I am concerned only with the views of and the vote of one member of the Dáil, and that is myself. I rather resent, myself, the series of lectures and appeals to which this House has been treated by all, or both, sides in this matter. I take the view that every member of the Dáil has sufficient brains and sufficient intelligence and a sufficient conception of his responsibility from every point of view to decide for himself or herself what the course of action to be taken is. There are just two things I want to make clear, and I shall finish – my position for myself, and my position with regard to the people I represent here. I may say, while I have deplored and do deplore the keen difference of opinion – the disruption – which has taken place in our assembly, which was wont to be so harmonious, I deplore perhaps still more the spirit in which it has been done. I deplore the fact that we, the members of the Dáil, could not differ – even on a question of the importance of the present one – without introducing bitterness or ill-feeling, and

without charges or suggestions, either in public or in private. For my part, I take the view, and I should be very sorry if I took any other, that every member of this Dáil is actuated solely by a desire to do the best thing in the interests of Ireland, and the best thing in conformity with his or her adherence to the ideal of absolute Irish independence. I think it is perfectly clear that on no side of this question is there a monopoly of patriotism, a monopoly of common sense. Why we cannot here take different views without levelling charges at one another is beyond me, and is one of the things I regret, at least as much, if not more, than the difference itself. To-day, while a member was speaking, I heard an interruption from a member of the House near him. The Deputy was speaking against the Treaty, and the member said: "The country will fix you, too."

Now I say what my constituents will do to me, is not a matter of indifference to me, but it is not a consideration which can influence me in my action in this matter. For my part, I am voting against the Treaty. I cannot, in conscience, do anything else. Now with regard to the result of that, and with regard to the people whom I represent, I have had for some time the honour to represent the people of Cork in more than one capacity. I represent them as the Lord Mayor of Cork, and as the Chairman of their County Council, and I represent them here. The people of Cork did not elect me to any of these positions because of any ability of mine, real or supposed, or because of any statesmanship of mine, or because of any political ability. They elected me simply and solely because I believe in absolute freedom for Ireland, and because my views on that question were well known and established. If the people of Cork have since changed their minds – indeed I maintain the people of Ireland have not changed their minds but if they have decided, as is absolutely of course within their right, that a halt may be made on the way, and that rather than hold out for the full measure of Irish freedom, entailing as it probably would still further war and suffering, I have no means of gathering that fact. I have no means, I repeat, in the first instance, nor am I, no matter how my colleagues here may differ with me, going to accept it, even if it were so available. The people of Cork have the right to decide that, and I here and now suggest, and I regret it has not been suggested earlier, that the people of the country ought to be given a deciding voice in this question. My position is probably, in this matter, the position of many other members of the Dáil. I have no desire to record a vote if the people who sent me here desire it to be otherwise; but if a vote be taken, and no other means be provided the electorate, I certainly, as an individual, cannot cast my vote in any but one way. Then the electorate can only repudiate my action and recall me or replace me. I, naturally, will be perfectly content to abide by their decision, but that is my position.

That is the position I state to you and to the members of the House, and through you to my constituents. With regard to my personal position, I regret the members of this House in favour of the Treaty have not confined themselves to supporting the Treaty. I regret an effort has been made pretty generally to establish the fact that this House as a whole had agreed to accept something less than freedom. Now, a Chinn Chomhairle, it is of no importance, perhaps, to members of the House, but it certainly is to me and to the people, or in my opinion to my constituents. I want to make it clear here publicly at this Dáil that my views to-day – and in this respect let me be absolutely fair to the members of this House who favour the Treaty – are the same as when returned to this House. I do not mean to suggest that the views of members who differ with me on this question are not the same. I personally believe that they are in the main, if not entirely. At all events my views are the same now as then, and nothing, a Chinn Chomhairle, transpired at any meeting of this Dáil which justifies any other assertion. It will be in the recollection of this House when, in the course of the correspondence which preceded these negotiations, the British Prime Minister had refused to accept the status which was laid down as necessary by our President for our plenipotentiaries. When the President decided or suggested a particular reply, before sending that reply a special meeting of the House was summoned, and each member was supplied with a copy of the proposed reply.

Furthermore, the President himself read it, and directed the special attention of the House to the now famous paragraph 2. He further impressed on the House before they agreed that he should send that reply, that they should realise a possible and I think he said a probable result would be the breaking off of negotiations and the immediate renewal of war. There was not a suggestion that that reply should be altered by even a comma. The House was unanimous. After deciding that, there was a feeling of absolute relief in the House that there had been such a clear decision taken. When at a later meeting of the Dáil the plenipotentiaries were appointed, the one fact of all others which weighed with me was the possibility of a compromise. In connection with the possibility of compromise was the mention of one particular name. I mention it now without suggesting any reproach – far be it from me – that was the Minister of Finance.

Michael Collins: *The Minister for Finance has not compromised.*

I do not mean a compromise in the sense of definitely deciding to change the stand from the Republic, but to accept something less as a means to it. I want to be absolutely fair to every man. I do not wish to suggest that any member here has in any way acted in such a manner as would deserve reproach. I trust I have said nothing that would in any way interfere with them. I certainly had no intention of saying anything that would hurt the Minister of Finance (hear, hear). I also make it clear that some of us in the Dáil have visualised an independent Ireland. I have learned to-day, I must say with considerable surprise, from one of my colleagues in the representation of Cork that he never did. I can only say ….

J. J. Walsh: T*hat is not a correct interpretation of my speech.*

Very well, I withdraw it. For the rest, I regret very much the manner in which public boards and other institutions through the country have been divided up on this question. That there should be a division in this House is and would be in itself regrettable. There was a hope that it might have ended there and that division would not be forced through the country – but the country has been lined up for and against. The people of the country, even those who desire the Treaty ratified, are still keener about avoiding the return of days of internal divisions and party turmoil. I think, and still hope, that such a result, which would be so deplorable, may still be avoided, be the result what it may, for some time at least. I would furthermore suggest to those in favour of ratification that they should place it on record, saying that its acceptance by those who favour it is based on the desire of the people that it be accepted, and that their view also be placed on record in connection with it. That is, formally, that they desire the ratification of the Treaty, not as a case of absolute freedom, but that in view of the circumstances of the moment they desire its ratification rather than embark at the moment again in war to secure what remains, and what was withheld from them, of their liberty. I would ask those in favour of ratification to place that on record because that is a fair representation of those of our people who do desire ratification. For the rest I will close by regretting the strained feelings which have been visible in this House, and by hoping that when the vote has been taken here – if a vote be taken, and if my suggestion for a plebiscite be not accepted – then at least the bitterness and strained feeling and animosity that has so suddenly arisen in a House where there was wont to be such friendship will end with the division (applause).

As the debate moved on, O'Callaghan seconded a proposal to allow Michael Collins to speak even though he was not scheduled to do so. O'Callaghan explained that he believed that Collins was doing what he felt was in the best interests of Ireland and he praised his 'magnificent moral courage'.

I beg to second that. As something I have said may be taken differently, I now wish to say that I have long since, before this House met, told the Minister of Finance privately, and I now say it publicly, that when he arrived at the point when he was satisfied to recommend the Treaty as the best thing in the interests of Ireland,

> I quite realised the magnificent moral courage that required from him. I told him that privately, I now say it publicly. I am not aware of having said anything which would have riled him, or injured or hurt any of his feelings.

Collins was permitted to speak and, in a brief contribution, stated that the Treaty was inevitable and the country would not be weaker if it accepted it. He claimed that the Irish people had endorsed the Treaty and some of the deputies who had spoken against it were standing on principle and nothing else. Deputy James Nicholas Dolan from Leitrim referenced Donal O'Callaghan during his speech when he said: 'I have listened to all the arguments against the ratification of the Treaty, and I must say they have all left me cold. I expected when the Lord Mayor of Cork rose to support the rejection of the Treaty that he, at least, would have some sensible alternative proposal. He had not. There is no alternative to this Treaty, as all the speakers on the other side have plainly pointed out, but chaos, and a gamble and a chance'.

Donal O'Callaghan's suggestion that the Treaty be put before the people by way of a plebiscite was not accepted. The vote on the Treaty finally took place in the Dáil on Saturday 7 January 1922. Three abstentions were recorded and when the votes were counted, the result was an approval of the Treaty by sixty-four to fifty-seven. In many ways, the Treaty debates were remarkable. Over fifteen days, with twelve public sessions of parliament and three private sessions, in excess of a quarter of a million words were spoken. Weeks and Ó Fathartaigh (2018) point out that many of the TDs were inexperienced politicians who had faced no competition for their seats and were not accustomed to parliamentary debates. This contributed to debates which were characterised by bitterness, repetition and no little confusion.

The fifteen Dáil deputies for Cork City and County voted by a margin of nine to six against the Treaty. In addition, Professor William Stockley – who won a seat through the National University of Ireland as opposed to a Cork constituency – voted against.

How the fifteen Cork deputies voted on the Treaty, 7 January 1922	
FOR	**AGAINST**
Michael Collins	Daniel Corkery
Liam de Róiste	Séamus Fitzgerald
Seán Hales	Thomas Hunter
Seán Hayes	David Kent
Patrick O'Keeffe	Mary MacSwiney
J. J. Walsh	Seán MacSwiney
	Seán Moylan
	Seán Nolan
	Donal O'Callaghan

As Donal O'Callaghan and his colleagues sat in the Dáil to reflect on an historic result, an ashen-faced Éamon de Valera rose to speak and announced that he felt it was now his duty to resign as Chief Executive (President). He declared that the vote was simply an approval of a certain resolution: 'The Republic can only be disestablished by the Irish people. This Republic goes on'. Michael Collins called for unity, but the words of Cork deputy, Mary MacSwiney, indicated that this would not be the case. The sister of the deceased Lord Mayor of Cork defiantly stated: 'I, for one, will have neither hand, act, nor part in helping the Irish Free State to carry this nation of ours, this glorious nation that has been betrayed here tonight, into the British Empire……There can be no union between the representatives of the Irish Republic and the so-called Free State'.

The Lord Mayor of Cork, Donal O'Callaghan, was understandably disappointed by the outcome of the Treaty vote but he was even more troubled by the splits which were now apparent in the Dáil and in the Sinn Féin party, both nationally and locally in Cork. He was fearful of what the next chapter might bring. For his own part, he also wondered how the Treaty could impact on Cork Corporation and whether his anti-Treaty stance might adversely affect his chances of re-election as Lord Mayor later in the month.

Chapter 15
Agree Where We Can, Disagree Where We Must

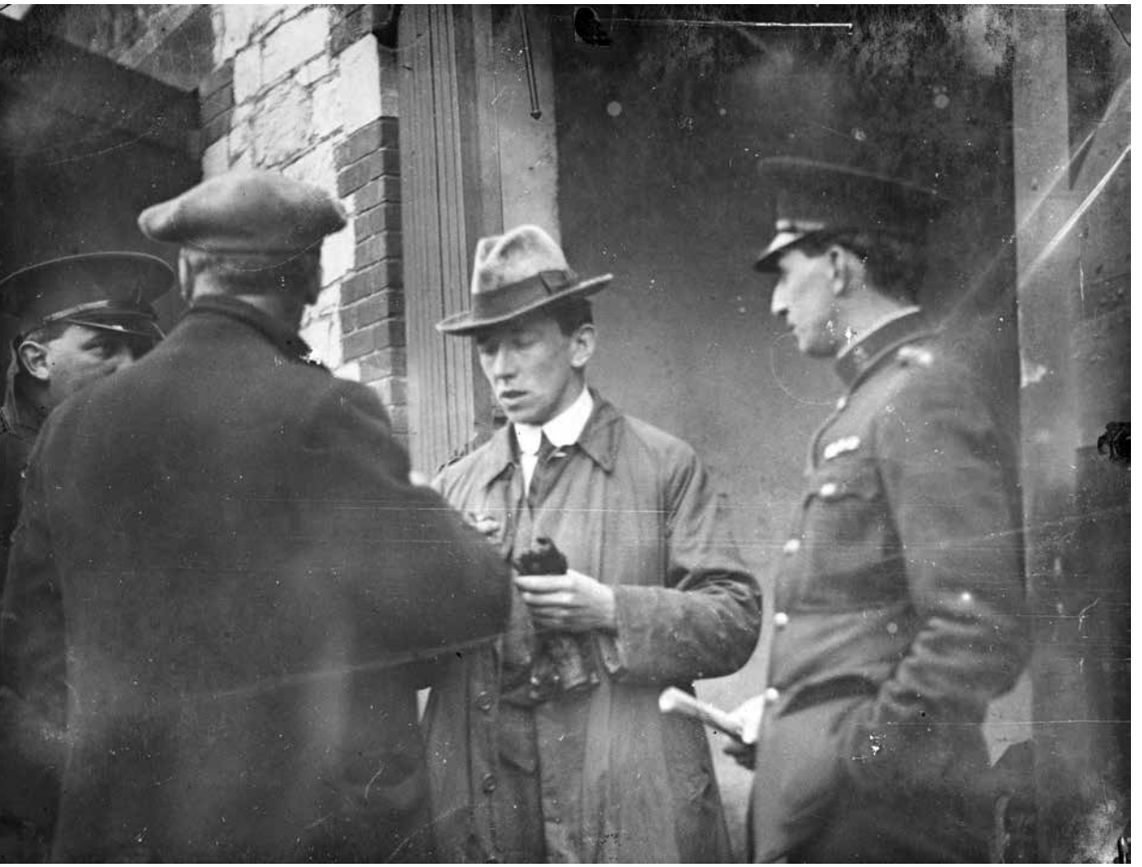
The Irish Times reported on the Treaty vote on Monday 9 January and concluded that Ireland was saved, but that the tragic figure of the Republican President [de Valera] threw a gloom over the popular rejoicing. The report noted: 'The session was to end in a tragic vein. Mr. de Valera tried to speak a final word, but he could hardly speak, and, abandoning the attempt, buried his head in his hands. Tears were running down Mr. Harry Boland's cheeks'. The *Cork Examiner* (9 January 1922) supported the ratification of the Treaty and stated that the result would be 'received with gratitude and relief by the Irish people, and by the friends of Ireland everywhere'. Though he had opposed the Treaty, the newspaper praised the contribution of Donal O'Callaghan, describing him as a 'notable figure' in the Dáil debate.

Éamon de Valera resigned as President of the Dáil (or President of the Republic of Ireland, as he described it) but ran for re-election, only to lose by two votes. Arthur Griffith was elected as President and a new pro-Treaty cabinet was formed. McCullagh (2017) astutely notes that this vote has received much less attention than the vote on the Treaty, but it was potentially just as significant because, if de Valera had won re-election, he would have appointed an anti-Treaty cabinet. Donal O'Callaghan supported the re-election of de Valera and told the Dáil on 9 January: 'I hope this is not going to develop into a series of speeches. The central fact is that there must be a Government until such time as a certain form of negotiations has taken place. There must be a Government. It is also clear from certain statements that that Government must come from one side or the other. Now, this House is here and I think the House should decide now'. Liam de Róiste spoke next and, referring to Donal O'Callaghan as his friend, explained that voting for de Valera would make it difficult to establish the Provisional Government and would inevitably delay the evacuation of British forces. Arthur Griffith prevailed over de Valera in the vote and put in place a pro-Treaty cabinet of six members, including Michael Collins in Finance.

The new constitutional position was complicated. The Republican Dáil still existed, but alongside side it was the recently created instrument of the Treaty, the Provisional Government, with Collins as Chairman (Neeson, 1998). To add to the complexity, the Treaty did not recognise the Dáil. Neeson (1998) explains: 'Griffith, a principal architect of the Treaty was now President of the Republic he was committed to abolishing, while the Opposition were those equally committed to its preservation'. Every pro-Treaty member of the Dáil was a member of the Provisional Government and five of the Dáil ministers were also ministers in the Provisional Government. Arthur Griffith informed the Dáil on 10 January that the Irish Republic still existed until the Free State was set up and that he hoped to get the opinion of the public on it. In protest against Griffith's election as President, de Valera and his supporters walked out of the chamber. Michael Collins shouted at the anti-Treaty deputies as they left: 'Deserters all to the Irish nation in her hour of trial. We will stand by her'. Countess Constance Markievicz shouted back that Collins and his supporters were 'oath breakers and cowards' (Dáil Éireann debates, 10 January 1922). 'It was an appalling demonstration of the animosity that was building, and one that reflected little credit on anyone' (McCullagh, 2017).

As the meeting of the Dáil continued with Griffith and his new cabinet colleagues addressing the remaining TDs, the anti-Treaty TDs, including Donal O'Callaghan, convened in another room. They urged de Valera to continue to lead them. After lunch, de Valera and his followers returned to the chamber and the mood was calmer. Griffith and de Valera agreed to adjourn the Dáil for one month, until 14 February, to allow for a period of reflection and to give time to the new Government to get organised.

Though the Dáil had adjourned, the Provisional Government continued to meet in the Mansion House and, later in January, it took ceremonial possession of Dublin Castle, the headquarters of British administration in Ireland. Dublin



Donal O'Callaghan receiving the keys of Union Quay Barracks
[Hogan-Wilson Collection, courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

City Hall, which had been taken over by British forces in December 1920, was also handed over to the Provisional Government and William T. Cosgrave, Minister for Local Government and an Alderman in Dublin Corporation, raised the national flag over the municipal authority amidst much celebration. In Cork, Lord Mayor Donal O'Callaghan received the keys for Union Quay Barracks which had been under British control.

On the surface, this was a period of calm but, behind the scenes, the pro and anti-Treaty sides were becoming ever more entrenched. This became apparent at the Irish Race Convention held in Paris from 21-28 January. This convention had been organised for a long time and attracted delegates representing the Irish diaspora from the United States of America, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, Mexico, Spain, Belgium, France, Java, Scotland and England (Kennedy, 2017). The event was problematic for the Provisional Government. It was the brainchild of the Irish Republican Association of South Africa and had been planned meticulously a year in advance, with the Dáil's representative in London, Art O'Brien, the main organiser. The initial aim was to host a convention which would support the effort to win international recognition for an Irish Republic (Kennedy, 2017). The recent ratification of the Treaty had fundamentally altered the situation but the Provisional Government felt duty-bound not only to attend, but to invite anti-Treaty representatives as well. The cabinet decided to nominate four delegates to go to Paris and, in a gesture of conciliation, invited Éamon de Valera, as leader of the opposition, to nominate four others to go as a joint delegation to the French capital (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1922). De Valera insisted that four representatives should accompany him to the convention and he selected the Lord Mayor of Cork, Donal O'Callaghan, Mary MacSwiney, Countess Constance Markievicz and Harry Boland. This was a high-profile anti-Treaty group of TDs who were very prominent in the Dáil. Accordingly, Arthur Griffith also picked a strong delegation of five – Eoin MacNeill, Douglas Hyde, Michael Hayes, Diarmuid Coffey and Laurence O'Neill (Lord Mayor of Dublin). From the outset, the tensions were obvious as the two delegations travelled separately and 'there was no communication between the factions' (Keogh, 1987).

Upon arrival in Paris, the pro-Government group, led by Eoin MacNeill, were met by Joseph Walshe, who later was Secretary at the Department of External Affairs. The Irish representative in Paris, Seán T. O'Kelly, welcomed the anti-Treaty delegation. George Gavan Duffy, the Irish Foreign Minister, had instructed O'Kelly to behave impartially towards both groups but he did not do so, refusing to welcome MacNeill and his party (Keogh, 1987). As noted by Murray (2001), the convention was an impressive affair, with a very strong cultural programme which featured lectures on Anglo-Irish literature by William Butler Yeats and talks on Irish art by Jack B. Yeats. In addition, there was a notable social programme, including a banquet hosted by Seán T. O'Kelly, a tour of Paris by motorcar and a reception in the Irish College.

However, nothing could disguise the strained atmosphere at the convention, due to the Treaty and this dominated every panel discussion: 'What was intended to be a demonstration of the common purposes of the Irish race tragically reflected the disharmony among Irish people on the Treaty issue. A divisive note was sounded from the start when, at the inaugural banquet, de Valera proposed a toast to the Republic' (Murray, 2001).

Keogh (1987) describes the convention as a combination of 'the bizarre and the tragic' which was partly caused by the fact that de Valera stacked the event with partisans. Keown (2001) labels the Paris Race Convention as a 'débâcle' and criticises the choice of the divisive Eoin MacNeill to lead the pro-Government group. The South African Irish newspaper, *The Republic*, likened the convention to a family reunion on a world-wide scale, but with all of the tension and disagreement which are sometimes apparent at family events. Donal O'Callaghan maintained a low profile in Paris. Though honoured to be selected by de Valera and happy to speak at panels about Irish culture and the Irish language, he despised the politicking and the division caused by the Treaty. The initial goal for the convention was changed by the Treaty and, ultimately, the delegates from across the world decided to establish an international federation, *Fine Gaedheal* ('The Irish Family') to promote Irish interests. The conclusion of Keogh (1987) is that while the gathering in Paris did not end in open conflict between Treaty and anti-Treatyites, it 'demonstrated the difficulties of trying to heal successfully the wounds inflicted by the Treaty'. The pro-Government delegation did not pull its punches in the report it submitted to the Provisional Government in February, noting: 'During the days we had been in Paris it had become clear that the Irish Envoy's office in Paris was being used as head-quarters by Messrs. de Valera, Art O'Brien and Boland. Mr. Seán T. O'Ceallaigh acted throughout in close conjunction with the opponents of the Government'. The report complained: 'It should be noted that, taking advantage of the party majority on the closing day of the Congress, the supporters of Mr. de Valera succeeded in placing four active and declared opponents of the Irish Government on the Executive Committee [of *Fine Gaedheal*] of seven, and only one declared supporter of the Government was elected'. It is little wonder that the Provisional Government was hostile towards *Fine Gaedheal* and subsequently did little to promote the activities of the international federation.

On his return from Paris, Donal O'Callaghan faced into the annual statutory meeting of Cork Corporation, at which a Lord Mayor would be elected for the coming twelve months. The meeting was held in the Council Chamber of the Courthouse at 12.00 noon on Monday 30 January. Entering the Courthouse, O'Callaghan was confident of success as the dominant Sinn Féin grouping had decided to nominate him again. Perhaps it was precisely because Sinn Féin was split over the Treaty that the Cork city group of councillors wanted to 'project the appearance of unity' (Martin, 2009). O'Callaghan was seen as an effective Lord Mayor who was in the midst of trying to reform the Corporation to make its operations more efficient. Had Sinn Féin opted to nominate another councillor in his place as Lord Mayor, this may have been perceived as punishment for his anti-Treaty stance. Another consideration is that if the party councillors nominated a pro and anti-Treaty candidate, there was a danger that they would split their vote and a non-Sinn Féin member of the Corporation might seize the Mayoralty. Fascinatingly, Liam de Róiste also wrote in his diary that suitable candidates were lacking, due to Sinn Féin's rule that the Lord Mayor had to be able to speak Irish fluently. For all of these reasons, the Sinn Féin councillors decided in advance of the meeting that the safest option was to nominate Donal O'Callaghan to continue as Lord Mayor. However, the party imposed the condition on O'Callaghan that he would be a civic and apolitical candidate who should not use his position as Lord Mayor to publicly oppose the Treaty and the Provisional Government. De Róiste's diary entry for 26 January (while O'Callaghan was still in Paris) reflects the thinking of Cork's Sinn Féin members: 'If we do not hold together, as at present, in the Corporation, we can at any time be outvoted by the other parties in that body. So an understanding was arrived at, to be reduced to writing by a small committee tomorrow night; that Donal be purely a "civic candidate" and that party politics be not introduced'.

Despite their opposing views on the Treaty, Liam de Róiste and Donal O'Callaghan retained the highest regard, respect and friendship for each other. The statutory annual meeting on 30 January commenced with an agreement that the proceedings would be chaired by Alderman Edward Coughlan. Alderman Liam de Róiste then rose to propose Donal O'Callaghan as Lord Mayor for the year ahead. De Róiste spoke in Irish but his speech was interrupted by 'considerable commotion at the door' (*Cork Examiner*, 31 January 1922) as members of the public tried to get in and officials tried to

keep them out. By the time de Róiste finished speaking, the public gallery was congested. Councillor Barry Egan seconded the nomination of O'Callaghan, stating: 'Donal O'Callaghan was first elected as Lord Mayor at a time when there were very few men in Cork who would have dared to accept the position. It was a position at that time that rendered a man's life very unsafe, and only a man of the highest order of courage and of national feeling would have accepted it. While he has been Lord Mayor he has proved himself as a civic administrator a man of the highest order of intelligence'.

Next to speak was Sir John Scott. Though he did not object to the nomination of Donal O'Callaghan, he argued that being the Lord Mayor of Cork should be O'Callaghan's only job and that the position required all of his energies. Scott remarked: 'At times when the Lord Mayor has been absent, I have been jealous of the other bodies that were occupying his time and attention. He is Chairman of the municipality of Cork and also Chairman of the County Council – two positions one man should not hold. The interests of the city and county might clash; they have clashed from time to time in the past'. Scott added that in addition to his local duties, O'Callaghan was also a Dáil deputy and was heavily involved in the administration of the Mental Hospital – he recommended that he should release himself from some of his extra duties and 'devote the whole of his great ability to the city of Cork'. Scott's point was a reasonable one. Donal O'Callaghan had spent the first half of 1921 in America and, on his return to Cork, missed as many Corporation meetings as he attended.

Alderman William Kenneally told the meeting that, as a labour man, he could not conscientiously see his way to agree with the re-election of Donal O'Callaghan. He said that he could not forget his attitude towards the labour movement during various disputes over the past few months. In his view, O'Callaghan was no friend of labour. Councillor Robert Day echoed the comments of Kenneally and accused O'Callaghan of treating labour and the trade union movement badly. Day also protested against the terms 'Free State' and 'Republic', declaring his preference for a 'Workers' Republic'. Scott, Kenneally and Day may all have spoken against O'Callaghan but they did not propose an alternative candidate for the Mayoralty as they knew that Sinn Féin possessed the numbers in the chamber. Due to the absence of another candidate, Donal O'Callaghan was duly declared elected as Lord Mayor for the next twelve months. No vote was needed but, in light of the comments of some councillors, it cannot be regarded as a unanimous decision. Alderman Edward Coughlan, chair of the meeting, congratulated O'Callaghan and presented him with the chain of office, as cries of 'Long live the Republic' came from the public gallery.

O'Callaghan delivered his acceptance speech through a combination of Irish and English. Addressing the comments of Sir John Scott, he stated that he was not interested in accumulating different titles and jobs: 'Though not quite a patriarch, still I have arrived at a time when I have enough of these things and indeed I would have insisted on refusing to be nominated were it not for certain circumstances'. He then explained that the coming twelve months would be 'a year of difficulties' due to the uncertainty at national Government level and the challenge of continuing the reconstruction of the city with limited finances. His party felt that he had something to offer and that there was a benefit to him continuing as Lord Mayor. On that basis, he had allowed his name to go forward. The Lord Mayor then answered Alderman Kenneally's criticism, saying that he was of the working class himself and had been a trade unionist for many years' (O'Callaghan, 2000). In his role as Lord Mayor it was his duty to look at each labour claim individually to see if it was justified before deciding to support it or not. He emphasised that he had never favoured any interest or section and he never would, adding: 'The only section I have a particular interest in, and naturally so, is labour. My concern is for the city as a whole'. Stressing his labour credentials, O'Callaghan pointed out that he had attended and participated in the 27th Annual Meeting of the Irish Labour Party and the Trade Union Congress the previous August in the Mansion House.

The Lord Mayor next noted that his views on other matters were well known and he linked the national question with labour, stating: 'I have never been so very foolish, and never been purely a theorist, as to rant and rave about national independence merely as a theory. I have believed in national independence, and have worked for it, not because it is a theory, but because it meant a new Ireland in which the people were free and the rights of the worker were not talked about but secured'. O'Callaghan's rousing speech ended with a defiant message: 'When I was elected a while ago, there were two shouts – "Long live the Republic", which was countered with "Long live Labour". The people who shouted those terms used them blindly as shibboleths and catch cries, for the two mean the same thing; they mean an absolutely free Ireland, in which the appalling conditions of poverty have disappeared'.

Though Donal O'Callaghan had secured the Mayoralty for another year and had not faced a vote against another nominated candidate, the statutory annual meeting of the Corporation had not been a comfortable one. Perturbed especially by the criticisms of Alderman William Kenneally and Councillor Robert Day, Sinn Féin held a meeting the following night to discuss relations with the 'Republican labour members' of the party (Martin, 2009). Sinn Féin had contested the 1920 local elections on a joint platform with the Transport Workers' Union but the relationship was strained, especially with Kenneally and Day who had stopped attending party meetings.

Liam de Róiste wrote in his diary (28 January 1922) that he was concerned by Day who was perceived as being a 'Red Flag Republican' and 'more extreme' than the Republicans themselves. Sinn Féin had feared that Day would stand against O'Callaghan for Lord Mayor; he had not done so but, during the Corporation meeting, he and Kenneally both expressed the hope that a labour mayor would be elected in January 1923. At the Sinn Féin meeting on 31 January, some councillors argued that the comments made by Kenneally and Day were an attack against the party; others felt that their criticisms were a reflection of personal hostility against Donal O'Callaghan (Martin, 2009). It was agreed that every effort should be made to work collaboratively with Kenneally, Day and all members of the Corporation, and that it was imperative that Sinn Féin retained the Mayoralty the following year.

Not only was the ruling coalition in the Corporation under strain but the Sinn Féin grouping in Cork was also in danger of splitting due to the Treaty. Liam de Róiste's diaries for this period give a fascinating account of the tensions that existed, despite the appearance of unity. Pro-Treaty members of Sinn Féin in Cork held a number of private meetings at which it was suggested that they should break from the anti-Treatyites. De Róiste recorded in his diary for 1 February 1922:

> I met a few pro-Treaty supporters last evening to discuss with them the position in Cork and relations with our friends on the anti-Treaty side …… AJR (Professor Alfred O'Rahilly) was strong for a break in the Corporate party, but in the end the understanding was that we would all go on in that party; agree where we can, disagree where we must; that no written agreement be drawn up, but let circumstances decide.

De Róiste and O'Callaghan remained close despite taking opposing positions on the Treaty. When the full Cork Sinn Féin group met later in February, O'Callaghan endorsed the position of the party sticking together, agreeing where they could, disagreeing where they had to. One issue where the Sinn Féin members of Cork Corporation were completely united was the nomination of Fr. Dominic O'Connor to receive the Freedom of the city. This was proposed by Alderman Edward Coughlan and seconded by Alderman Liam de Róiste at the Corporation meeting in the Courthouse on Saturday 25 February. Coughlan's motion, which was unanimously agreed, read:

> That the Freedom of the City be conferred on Rev. Fr. Dominic, OSFC, as a mark of respect for his valuable services rendered as Chaplain to the first two Republican Lord Mayors of Cork and, especially, for his steadfast devotion to the late Toirdhealbach Mac Suibhne TD while suffering and dying for his country in Brixton Prison, and as a mark of appreciation of his own sufferings in Ireland's cause. And further, that the said resolution be engraved, sealed with the Common Seal and presented to Rev. Fr. Dominic in a silver casket.

The Lord Mayor said that he was delighted to support the nomination of Fr. Dominic who had been a great friend of the Corporation. Fr. Dominic was a captivating man. As a Capuchin priest he did not work in a parish but had served as chaplain to the mid-Cork Brigade of the IRA and, later, as chaplain to both Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney. He had tended to MacSwiney during his hunger strike in Brixton Prison and was with the Lord Mayor when he passed away. Each day in Brixton he wrote letters and notes dictated by MacSwiney and he was in regular contact with Donal O'Callaghan, who was Deputy Lord Mayor at that time. He vehemently disagreed with the excommunication edict issued by Bishop Cohalan after the Burning of Cork. Fr. Dominic argued that the Volunteers and the IRA were not carrying out kidnappings, ambushes and killings as private citizens, but with the authority of the Republic of Ireland; hence their actions were not sinful, but were good and warranted. In January 1921, he had been arrested for aiding the Republican cause, but was released twelve months later in a general amnesty after the ratification of the Treaty. On his return to Cork,

he was refused renewal of his canonical faculties by Bishop Cohalan until he resumed theological studies and submitted to examination (White, 2015). He was also not allowed to act as chaplain to Lord Mayor Donal O'Callaghan. In November 1922, he was transferred to the Irish Capuchin mission in Oregon, America, where he died in 1935 (White, 2015, and Borgonovo, 2017). More than twenty years later, his remains were repatriated to Ireland, and reinterred at Rochestown in Cork. White (2015) describes Fr. Dominic as follows:

> Of sturdy build and erect carriage, with long flowing beard, Father Dominic was a practical man of action, with great moral and physical courage, and mind and habits disciplined with a military-like precision. He was given to frequent citation of the Old Testament books of Maccabees as justification of armed insurrection to secure religious and political liberty, and maintained that violence done toward such an end was not only not sinful but meritorious.

Despite showing a united front at the Corporation meeting on 25 February, it was proving very difficult for Sinn Féin to avoid a split. The diary entries of Liam de Róiste became increasingly pessimistic and he predicted that Sinn Féin would inevitably be split into two organisations. More troublingly, violence was on the rise and Cork was a particular hot spot. A majority of its TDs had voted against the Treaty and all of Cork's senior IRA brigades had voiced their opposition. As noted by Hart (1998): 'Seán O'Hegarty and the Cork No. 1 Brigade adopted the most belligerent course of action, breaking up public meetings, harassing local newspapers, and suppressing pro-Treaty publications'.

The Dáil also reconvened on 14 February but it was clear to Donal O'Callaghan that romance was not in the air and the month's adjournment had not softened deputies' positions. The chief protagonists were at loggerheads – Kissane (2017) writes: 'Collins and de Valera stood at the fault line between the two dominant tendencies in Irish nationalism: revolutionary Republicanism and peaceful pragmatic politics'. With the Provisional Government and Dáil Éireann both in place, it was ever more clear that a general election would be needed sooner rather than later. This was destined to be a plebiscite on the Treaty, as Donal O'Callaghan had called for during his contributions in the Dáil.

Chapter 16
Henry Ford's Strong Arm Tactics

The fourteenth Sinn Féin *Ard Fheis* which began on Tuesday 21 February 1922 in Dublin's Mansion House had the potential to be a volatile occasion as party members were fundamentally divided on the issue of the Treaty. Donal O'Callaghan spent the days before the *Ard Fheis* in the company of Éamon de Valera and Countess Constance Markievicz. They had travelled to Cork for a series of meetings and a massive anti-Treaty rally in the city on Sunday 19 February.

When de Valera and other leading members of Sinn Féin arrived in Cork on the Saturday night, they were welcomed by the Lord Mayor. De Valera delivered an impromptu short speech to the crowd which had assembled, telling them: 'You don't want to go into the British Empire; you don't want to dis-establish the Republic, and if an election is forced upon you, we feel certain that the people of Cork will do their part in proving to the world that they stand still for the Irish Republic' (*Cork Examiner*, 20 February 1922). The following day, thousands attended an anti-Treaty demonstration and rally in the Grand Parade. Lord Mayor, Donal O'Callaghan – 'who was most cordially received' (*Cork Examiner*, 22 February 1922) – was the first to address the crowd. Speaking in Irish, he affirmed his allegiance to the Irish Republic and repudiated the 'alien' British Crown. He then stated that it was his pleasure to welcome to the podium the rally's main speaker, Éamon de Valera. De Valera told his enthusiastic supporters that, just like the Lord Mayor, he had crossed the Atlantic Ocean to ask the people of America to recognise the Republic that had been established in Ireland. 'Little did I dream', de Valera said, 'that

the day would ever come when I would have to come to the Irish people themselves, asking them to affirm that Republic'. In a hard-hitting speech, de Valera argued that if the Treaty had been signed under duress, then the men who went to London broke their faith with the Irish people. If they had signed it without duress, they were traitors to their cause. The President of Sinn Féin concluded his rousing address by warning the crowd that freedom was never achieved without the determination to make the necessary sacrifices and they must be prepared to travel a hard road together. Countess Markievicz ignited the crowd when she stated that before the rally she had visited the graves of Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney; she said that the cause for which they worked and died had been lowered by their former comrades who negotiated the Treaty. She proclaimed that Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith had returned with 'a shameless surrender of a Home Rule bill that they are now seeking to force down the throats of the people of Ireland as a Treaty, and to have a tricolour waved over it'. On an adjoining platform, passionate speeches were also delivered by Mary MacSwiney, Cathal Brugha and Liam Mellows. Drawing the proceedings to a close, Donal O'Callaghan said that the words spoken that day would not only ring through the rebel city of Cork but into the headquarters of the Provisional Government. One of the assembled bands then played 'A Soldier's Song' before the crowds dispersed. De Valera and his entourage, including Donal O'Callaghan, departed Cork on Monday morning to attend the Sinn Féin annual *Ard Fheis* which was starting the next day.

The *Cork Examiner* reported an attendance of two thousand, seven hundred people on the opening morning of the *Ard Fheis* and stated that delegates would make a momentous decision which would 'determine the future of the greatest political organisation the country has ever known' (*Cork Examiner*, 22 February 1922). When Éamon de Valera entered the Round Room of the Mansion House he was greeted with acclaim, at least by some: 'The scene was remarkable, in as far as the supporters of de Valera rose in their places and waved hats or handkerchiefs. The pro-Treaty delegates remained seated, and the impression conveyed was that they were in a big majority' (*Cork Examiner*, 22 February 1922). This was confirmed later in the morning when Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins entered the room together, to an enthusiastic ovation. De Valera, as party President, wasted no time in pressing his views and he proposed a motion asking the delegates to vote against the acceptance of the Treaty and to support those candidates at the next election who pledged 'not to take an oath of fidelity to or own allegiance to the British King'. Arthur Griffith tabled a counter-motion supporting the vote of Dáil Éireann in approving the Treaty. He told the delegates: 'The Treaty is fully justified by Article 3 of the Sinn Féin constitution. I believe the Treaty is the first instrument that gives the Irish people the power of regaining their country for themselves. For that reason, I signed the Treaty and stand by the Treaty. We have received in this Treaty the essentials of freedom, the power to build up our own country, and the honourable recognition of Ireland as a nation'.

The ensuing debate was predictably heated. Michael Collins called for unity, telling the delegates: 'We will be weaker if we are divided'. De Valera conceded that the pro-Treatyites represented a majority at the present time, 'but he argued that the people should not be asked to pronounce on the Treaty' until a new constitution was ready (McCullagh, 2017). In his view, a speedy election would indeed split the party. To their credit, rather than continue with the debate and vote on de Valera's motion and Griffith's counter-motion, the main party leaders agreed to adjourn the session and confer privately. Éamon de Valera, Austin Stack, Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins met for over four hours and produced an agreement that was endorsed the following morning at the *Ard Fheis*. Under the terms of the agreement, the *Ard Fheis* was adjourned for three months and the election was postponed until after a constitution was ready (McCullagh, 2017). It was also agreed, as confirmed by Griffith in the Dáil on 28 February, that the Provisional Government would work in harmony with the Dáil until an election was held. As Donal O'Callaghan travelled back to Cork after the adjourned Sinn Féin *Ard Fheis*, he felt relieved that the party had not torn itself asunder and the leaders had bought themselves some breathing space before an election. Though he would continue to attend Dáil sessions until the election, he also resolved to dedicate himself more to the affairs of Cork Corporation. The criticisms of Sir John Scott at the meeting on 30 January had stung him, mainly because they were justified. He had been an 'absent Lord Mayor' on too many occasions since his first election on 4 November 1920.

O'Callaghan chaired the meeting of Cork Corporation on 4 March. The main item on the agenda was the reconstruction of the city, but the meeting was overshadowed by another controversy involving the Ford and

Son Company which perhaps showed naiveté on the part of some of the councillors. At the previous meeting on 25 February, at which it has been decided to confer the Freedom of the City on Fr. Dominic, Councillor Seán French tabled a motion that Henry Ford and Son Limited should be made comply with the terms of their lease. French asserted that one of the terms of the company's lease, negotiated with the Corporation in late 1916, was that for a period of five years it would employ at least two thousand adult males at a minimum wage rate of one shilling an hour. With this legal covenant in place, Ford's had signed a lease agreement in 1917 at a bargain price of £12,000. Furthermore, under the terms of the agreement, Ford's had agreed to build a road through the Marina and hand it over to the Corporation. The company, claimed French, only employed one thousand, six hundred men and some of them were on a three or four-day week. French stated: 'The Ford Company is not entitled to preferential treatment and the Corporation cannot allow it to continue to avoid the clause in its agreement' (*Cork Examiner*, 27 February 1922). Sir John Scott spoke against the motion, making the point that Ford's was a large firm which gave a lot of employment to Corkonians. He suggested that 'the matter be adjourned for three months, when the days will be better and brighter'. Councillor Seán Nolan told the members that Ford's had 'got the most important part of Cork for £12,000' and was reneging on its commitment to employ two thousand men on a full-time basis. The Corporation's Law Agent warned the councillors that if a notice was served on Ford's and the covenants of the lease were not complied with, the Corporation would have to take proceedings for forfeiture of the lease which might lead to the company being ejected from the site. Ignoring Galvin's warning, the Lord Mayor stated: 'The Corporation has been very lenient with Messrs. Ford and, in the matter of employment, has not been treated properly by the firm. We have all along made allowances for the exceptional circumstances which prevailed'. He then indicated that he was supporting the motion and voted accordingly, along with seventeen of his colleagues, which was a majority at the meeting (the vote was eighteen to eight).

News of the resolution adopted by Cork Corporation made the headlines on both sides of the Atlantic. When an angry Henry Ford read the evening newspapers in Detroit, he immediately sent a cable to Edward Grace, the Managing Director of Ford's in Cork (Benson Ford Research Centre):

> Papers here tonight state that Cork Council voted to evict us if we don't live up to terms of lease. Make no changes in our plans and operations whatever. We stand ready to go and will do so immediately on their order without any further protest on our part, further, we will go no further under any restrictions of this lease. If this lease is not removed at once we will proceed to move to localities where we are not handicapped. Sorensen discussed this question with present mayor of Cork also Mr. Horgan who knows what we want.

The cable referred to Charles Sorensen, the company's trusted executive who had been given the nickname 'Cast-Iron Charlie' by Henry Ford. John J. Horgan was the company's solicitor in Cork. Sorensen, who had travelled from Detroit, and Horgan met with Donal O'Callaghan in Cork in December 1921 and apparently assured the Lord Mayor that Ford and Son would comply with the terms of the lease (Grimes, 2008). Now, following the resolution passed by the Corporation, Henry Ford was incensed and he also cabled Donal O'Callaghan declaring that he was willing to shut down his operations in the city.

On 28 February, the *Cork Examiner* contained an opinion piece from one of its writers who went by the name 'Murricaun'. Though acknowledging that the Corporation was exhibiting courage, the writer urged caution, noting that driving Ford's out of Cork would be counter-productive, not least because of the substantial annual rates the company paid to the city. 'Murricaun' wrote that the youthful young men who had been elected to the Corporation in 1920 were playing a dangerous game, trying to bluff Henry Ford, adding: 'A favourite theme amongst Irishmen is that our industries were cribbed, cabined and confined by English trade jealousy …… I would find it difficult to show that any action the British Government – well say in the last century – took meant the closing of an industry where one thousand, five hundred men at excellent wages were employed. Will our Corporation have more courage than the British Government?' The piece ended with the recommendation that the Corporation should show discretion, 'which Falstaff maintained was the better part of valour' (*Cork Examiner*, 28 February 1922).

The editorial position of the newspaper was harsher, as expressed on 2 March. It said there was 'no justification for the action of the eighteen councillors who

have already gone a long way towards wrecking an Irish industry which is already extensive and which holds out the promise of becoming a gigantic one …… This city cannot afford that a Corporate cabal, eighteen out of a council of fifty-six, should jeopardise the decent employment of one thousand, five hundred men, dictate conditions to the greatest employer of labour the world has ever known, and crush out a great Irish industry'. The editorial quoted the response of Henry Ford to what it referred to as the 'pin-pricking' of the Corporation. Ford's cabled reply to the Lord Mayor following the passing of the resolution on 25 February stated that it would be impossible for his company to continue its business operations in Cork unless the Corporation immediately agreed to waive the enforcement of the few covenants of the lease which were unfulfilled. The *Examiner* editorial called on the Corporation to 'repair its grave error' and said that the citizens would not submit to 'Corporate dictatorship' in this matter: 'If the Fordson works are closed down, one thousand idle men can look to the eighteen members of Cork Corporation to find them employment' (*Cork Examiner*, 2 March 1922). That night, several hundred Ford workers held a meeting at the Marina and agreed the following: 'That this meeting of Ford workers strongly protests against the ill-advised and ill-judged action of a section of Cork Corporation, and hereby call on the Corporation as a whole to take immediate steps to rectify what may easily become a serious calamity to us, our families, and to the city of Cork' (*Cork Examiner*, 3 March 1922). Equally, the Cork Chamber of Commerce called on the Corporation to 'get in touch' with Henry Ford with a view to reaching an amicable settlement.

This controversy provided the backdrop to the Corporation meeting on Saturday 4 March. At the beginning of the meeting, Lord Mayor O'Callaghan permitted Councillor Seán French to deliver a lengthy statement. French defended the resolution passed on 25 February, asserting that over the preceding eight months, meetings had taken place with officials of the Ford Company, including Edward Grace and Charles Sorensen. The Corporation had been assured that Ford's would comply with the terms of its lease, including the guarantee of employing two thousand men full-time and the building of a road at the Marina. French also accused the press of slandering the eighteen members of the Corporation who had supported the resolution. The Lord Mayor told the elected members that he had no intention of re-opening a debate on the matter, as it would be dealt with at their next meeting. However, not untypically, he severely criticised the *Cork Examiner*, especially regarding its ironical use of the headline 'Cork Courage'. O'Callaghan noted: 'I say here today, and I thank God, that Cork never took its courage from the office of the *Cork Examiner*, and it never will' (*Cork Examiner*, 6 March 1922). Despite the best efforts of French and O'Callaghan to defend their actions in antagonising Ford's it seems that they were out of step with the prevailing sentiment amongst Cork's citizens. A letter from M. J. O'Sullivan of 106 Oliver Plunkett Street was printed in the *Cork Examiner* on 6 March. O'Sullivan claimed it was 'absurd' that Cork Corporation was risking the addition of one thousand, six hundred men to the ranks of the unemployed in Cork. He wrote: 'It is unthinkable that the body Corporate would be so stupid as to attempt to interfere in this matter …… If Mr. Ford transfers his works somewhere else, what would our City Fathers (God bless the mark, hardly any of them have earned the name "father" yet) propose doing with the beautiful "White Elephant" on the Marina?' (*Cork Examiner*, 6 March 1922). According to O'Sullivan, Seán French and the Lord Mayor were bluffing, but their bluff had been very successfully called by Mr. Ford. Another letter, this time from 'The Man in the Street' was published on 7 March. Given that Ford's had agreed the previous November to extend its covenant to employ two thousand men for a further five-year period, the writer wondered why 'Mr. French and his friends' were threatening the company with a legal notice. The Cork Ratepayers' Association, at a meeting chaired by Sir John Scott, also issued a statement in support of Ford's, saying it had 'rarely known such a universal outburst of public indignation against any local act of the Corporation' (*Cork Examiner*, 10 March 1922).

At the next Corporation meeting on Friday 10 March, it was clear that Henry Ford had indeed called the bluff of the councillors. The meeting had an unsavoury start as members of the Fire Brigade who were on duty at the door denied entry to the press, on the instructions of the Lord Mayor. The Lord Mayor told the meeting that he had received a letter from the Managing Director of Henry Ford and Son, repeating the threat of Henry Ford, to withdraw from its Cork operations. He also said that he had received correspondence from James Charles Dowdall and Mr. O'Herlihy from the Cork Industrial Development Association (CIDA). Before he read the letter from CIDA, Councillor Seán French asked to speak and was granted permission. French acknowledged that Ford and Son had come to Cork at a time when the city was at a low ebb in terms of industry. Though insisting that the company should adhere to the

terms of its lease agreement with the Corporation, French proposed a motion that the resolution passed on 25 February be rescinded. French described the idea that the Corporation was trying to force Ford's out of Cork as 'false and malicious' and that the position of the elected members had been 'grossly misinterpreted' to Henry Ford. He added that a delegation of two members of the Corporation should visit Henry Ford for talks in Detroit, in light of the recent controversy. The resolution was unanimously passed, but not before Sir John Scott remarked that if a delegation from the Corporation went to meet with Henry Ford, it should be at their own expense and not paid for by the municipal authority. The Lord Mayor explained that a delegation would only visit Ford in America if it was deemed necessary. He was confident that the trip would not be required and that any outstanding matters could be resolved by correspondence between the Corporation's Law Agent and the company. It had not been their intention to force Ford and Son out of Cork and there was no need to appoint a delegation at that time. When Sir John Scott commented: 'I assume it would be yourself and myself, Lord Mayor', O'Callaghan replied while laughing: 'I admire your presumption' (*Cork Examiner*, 11 March 1922). However, Donal O'Callaghan was not laughing when he complained of the 'campaign of scurrility and falsification' by which the local newspapers had misled the public (*Cork Examiner*, 11 March 1922). Grimes (2008) argues that there was validity to O'Callaghan's complaint: 'Seán French and the Lord Mayor claimed, with some justification, that the newspapers were biased against the Corporation and orchestrated public opinion against them. Certainly they [the newspapers] gave little publicity to the fact that Ford and Son was reneging on a legal agreement and using strong arm tactics to get its way'. It should also be noted that one reason for the tough stance adopted by the *Cork Examiner* was that the newspaper's owner, George Crosbie, had been influential in attracting Ford and Son to Cork and in helping to secure an appropriate site.

The latest Ford's controversy did not reflect very well on the Corporation or the Lord Mayor and had resulted in the members backing down in the face of a threat from the company. Grimes (2008) attributes the approach of the Corporation to the 'political immaturity and naiveté' of some of its members. The Provisional Government also played a part in the about-turn. Minister for Economic Affairs, Kevin O'Higgins, had asked Diarmuid Fawsitt from his department, to intervene to ensure an amicable settlement. Fawsitt had insisted to the Lord Mayor that the resolution be rescinded. The last thing that the Provisional Government needed was the withdrawal of a major industry from Cork and an increase in the numbers unemployed. Minister O'Higgins issued a statement on 11 March, the day after the Corporation meeting, saying that the matter was resolved and Ford's would proceed with the development of its property in Cork (*Cork Examiner*, 13 March 1922). Tellingly, on the same day, Michael Collins was in Cork to speak at a pro-Treaty rally and, before returning to Dublin, he made a point of visiting the Ford's factory and meeting with managing director, Edward Grace. The visit to Ford's received generous coverage in the *Cork Examiner*, including a picture of a beaming Collins sitting on a tractor, with Edward Grace standing beside the vehicle.

The matter was not completely at an end, however. Having forced the Corporation to rescind its original resolution, a stubborn Henry Ford wanted more. Through the company's local solicitor, John J. Horgan, he requested the Corporation to waive the condition in the lease for the employment of at least two thousand adult men for five years. He also demanded that once the Central Park Road was completed and handed over to the Corporation, that the local authority should convey the fee simple to his company. The elected members discussed these matters at a heated Corporation meeting on 10 April, much of which was held in a private session. It was Councillor Barry Egan who formally proposed that the Corporation should accede to Henry Ford's requests. Councillor Seán French objected; he stated that he was willing to extend the time period for the employment of two thousand men but he could not agree to the transferring of public property to any individual for private profit. French was supported by Councillor James Allen who said: 'If the Corporation hands over the fee simple to Ford it might mean that when he has his plans ready in another country he might pitch Cork to hell and throw the workers out then …… But the Yank is a big swank and he might be bluffing us' (*Cork Examiner*, 11 April 1922).

Before calling for a vote, a crestfallen but defiant Lord Mayor spoke at length and it was clear that he felt conflicted. He announced at the outset that he was supporting Councillor Egan's motion, even though it was against his inclination to do so. For the 'good of the city and its citizens' he was prepared to 'make a sacrifice' and support the waiving of the lease covenants (*Cork Examiner*, 11 April 1922). He then proceeded to deliver what Grimes (2008) describes as 'a persuasive analysis of the issue'. The Lord Mayor asserted that

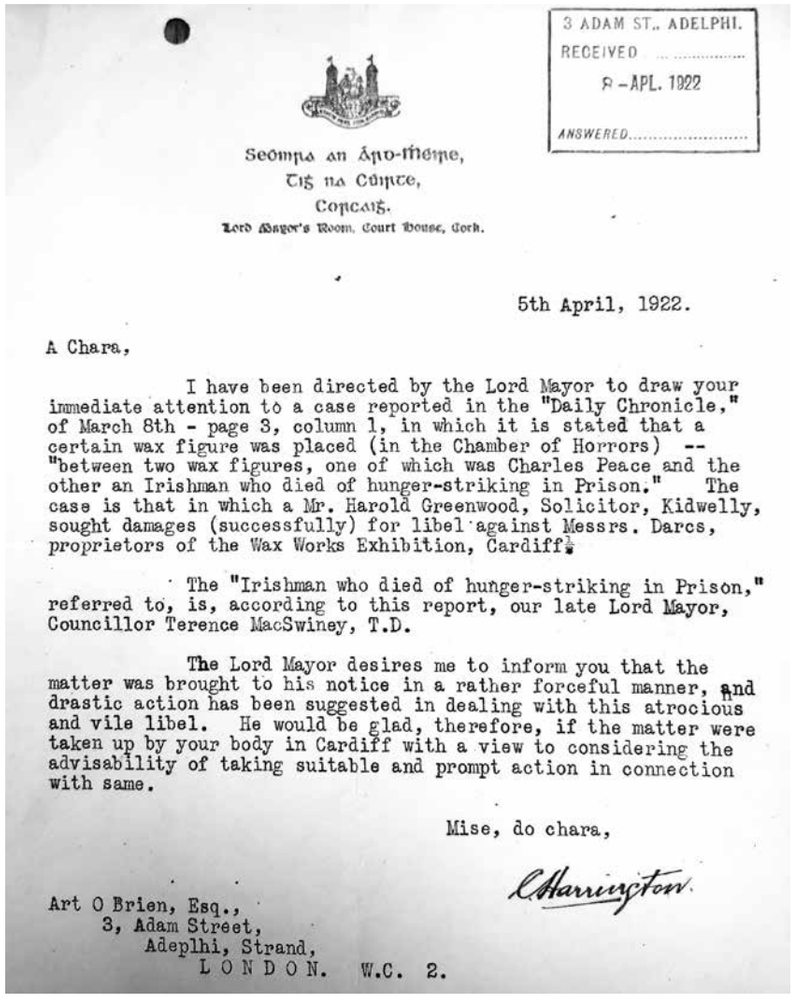
it had not been the Corporation's intention to enter into a dispute with Ford and Son but to seek the implementation of a definite legal agreement that was entered into voluntarily by both parties. He felt that this was the duty of the elected members of the Corporation, as the 'custodians of the city's property'. O'Callaghan then denounced the 'hold-up tactics' of Henry Ford who had 'used a revolver to force home the argument'. He accused Ford of dealing with the Corporation in a 'petty spirit' and lamented the fact that 'public opinion had been stampeded' by certain elements, especially the press. The Lord Mayor concluded that Cork and the Corporation had not been treated fairly during the dispute; in spite of this, he repeated that he would vote in favour of the motion as he believed this is what his constituents and the public wanted. The acting Town Clerk, William Hegarty then read Councillor Egan's motion.

> That the covenant on the part of Messrs Henry Ford and Son Ltd, contained in the lease from the Corporation to them of the lands at the Marina and Cork Park for the employment of at least two thousand adult males for a period of five years be waived by the Corporation and the fee simple in reversion in the said lands convened as soon as the Central Park Road has been completed and handed over to the Corporation, and that the necessary agreement be entered into for this purpose.

It was passed by eighteen votes to thirteen, reflecting once again the poor attendance of councillors at Corporation meetings. The next day, Edward Grace sent a triumphant cable to Henry Ford and Charles Sorensen informing them of the latest development: 'Council granted all our requests, last night. Horgan sailing Saturday on *Mauretania* with draft deed for your approval' (Benson Ford Research Centre). The following day, Grace sent a more detailed note to Sorensen in which he urged him to overlook the 'apparent antagonism of some members of the Corporation'. Grace wrote: 'If you fully understood the conditions here and knew under what circumstances the Corporation was elected, you would make allowance for the action of some of the members. The present Corporation is not a representative body, and when things settle down here, we will have a better set of men to run the city'. The last sentence was presumably a dig at Sinn Féin which had taken control of the Corporation in 1920, and especially Seán French and Donal O'Callaghan who not only had provoked the issue, but were also against the Treaty which Henry Ford hoped would improve business conditions in Cork.

The *Cork Examiner* (11 April 1922) rejoiced in the settlement of the dispute and praised the Corporation for acting wisely and conforming to the wishes of the citizens. Grimes (2008) applauds the Corporation for moderating its 'initial impulse and obstinate response'. He also sympathises with the local authority, noting: 'Ford's attack on the Corporation was solely based on bullying tactics and brute force and was a very unequal contest. Ford could remove the jobs and with it a large part of Cork's prosperity, all the Corporation had was the power of the law. As the Lord Mayor had pointed out, for someone who failed to meet an agreement to then demand that the agreement be replaced by one more beneficial to them, was both illogical and illegal. The Corporation had only demanded its rights under the lease'. Though the whole saga had been bruising for the Corporation, it did not lose every aspect of the battle. As part of the settlement, Ford's agreed to re-employ hundreds of men who had been laid off by the company over the previous months. The bitter dispute however probably ended any lingering chance of Henry Ford being conferred with the Freedom of the City (see Chapter 13).

While Donal O'Callaghan was embroiled in the Ford's controversy, he was also dealing with a bizarre issue in Wales. In March 1922, a Llanelli solicitor, Harold Greenwood, commenced a libel case at the Cardiff Assizes against John D'Arc, the owner of D'Arc's Waxworks. Eighteen months earlier, in a well-publicised case, Greenwood had been acquitted of murdering his wife, Mabel, by poison. Greenwood, originally from Yorkshire, had been accused of using arsenic to kill his wife on the night of 16 June 1919 at their home in Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire. Mabel Greenwood had felt unwell after eating gooseberry pie at lunch and subsequently died after being administered brandy by her husband, which forced her to vomit. Within a few months of Mabel's funeral, Harold Greenwood married the much younger Gladys Jones. He was brought to trial in November 1920 after an inquest concluded that he had murdered his wife by arsenic poisoning – her body contained sixteen to thirty-two milligrams of the poison. The trial jury returned a verdict of 'not guilty' against Harold Greenwood, due to insufficient evidence (Greenwood, 1930). The belief in Greenwood's guilt persisted in the local community and he became a notorious figure across Wales, to such an extent that John D'Arc included an effigy of him in the 'Chamber of Horrors' section of his waxworks



3 ADAM ST., ADELPHI.
RECEIVED .....
8 -APL. 1922
ANSWERED.....

Seomra an Ard-Mhéara,
Tig na Cúirte,
Corcaig.
Lord Mayor's Room, Court House, Cork.

5th April, 1922.

A Chara,

I have been directed by the Lord Mayor to draw your immediate attention to a case reported in the "Daily Chronicle," of March 8th - page 3, column 1, in which it is stated that a certain wax figure was placed (in the Chamber of Horrors) -- "between two wax figures, one of which was Charles Peace and the other an Irishman who died of hunger-striking in Prison." The case is that in which a Mr. Harold Greenwood, Solicitor, Kidwelly, sought damages (successfully) for libel against Messrs. Darcs, proprietors of the Wax Works Exhibition, Cardiff.

The "Irishman who died of hunger-striking in Prison," referred to, is, according to this report, our late Lord Mayor, Councillor Terence MacSwiney, T.D.

The Lord Mayor desires me to inform you that the matter was brought to his notice in a rather forceful manner, and drastic action has been suggested in dealing with this atrocious and vile libel. He would be glad, therefore, if the matter were taken up by your body in Cardiff with a view to considering the advisability of taking suitable and prompt action in connection with same.

Mise, do chara,

C Harrington

Art O Brien, Esq.,
3, Adam Street,
Adelphi, Strand,
LONDON. W.C. 2.

Letter from the Lord Mayor's office to Art O'Brien, asking him to take action in relation to the effigy of Terence MacSwiney in D'Arc's Waxworks in Cardiff [Source: Art O'Brien Papers, courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

in Cardiff. Greenwood successfully took a case against D'Arc, arguing that he had been found innocent and did not deserve such questionable and distasteful publicity. During the libel case, Greenwood claimed that his wax effigy had been exhibited in the 'Chamber of Horrors' in between the infamous murderer Charles Peace and the former Lord Mayor of Cork, Terence MacSwiney. As part of the evidence, the effigies of Greenwood and MacSwiney were produced in court and this generated much press coverage. Mary MacSwiney read an account of the case in the *Daily Chronicle* and was appalled to learn that there was a wax effigy of her brother in the 'Chamber of Horrors' in Cardiff. She immediately asked Lord Mayor Donal O'Callaghan to intervene and have the effigy removed. A letter was issued by O'Callaghan's private secretary to Art O'Brien in London asking that the matter 'be taken up by your body' in Cardiff (this was a reference to the Irish Self-Determination League). The letter from Cork City Hall noted: 'The Lord Mayor desires me to inform you that the matter was brought to his notice in a rather forceful manner, and drastic action has been suggested in dealing with this atrocious and vile libel'.

Art O'Brien dutifully contacted Seosamh Ó Triann, Secretary of the Cardiff branch of the Irish Self-Determination League (ISDL), who visited D'Arc's Waxworks and interviewed the manager. The manager asserted that MacSwiney's effigy had never been exhibited in the 'Chamber of Horrors' but had been placed in the 'Celebrities' section alongside Lloyd George and the Pope. It was now not on display at all and was, in fact, missing. O'Brien wrote to the Lord Mayor to this effect. He concluded that he felt that the matter was now resolved and he asked O'Callaghan to convey the news to Mary MacSwiney. A letter was issued from the Lord Mayor's office on 12 April to Art O'Brien, stating: 'The Lord Mayor is of the opinion that the matter is now satisfactorily settled …… He desires me to thank you for the promptness with which you had the matter taken up and so satisfactorily dealt with, and he appreciates your assurance that, according to the description of the figure, no disrespect was intended by its exhibition'. Furthermore, the letter noted that the information would be forwarded to Mary MacSwiney.

For Donal O'Callaghan the saga with Ford and Son had been stressful and took up a lot of his time. The issue of Terence MacSwiney's wax effigy in Cardiff had been an unwelcome distraction, largely handled by his staff in City Hall. He must almost have felt relieved to, once again, turn his attention to national issues. The Treaty continued to divide opinion in the Dáil and the reconvened Sinn Féin *Ard Fheis* was due to take place in May. The Lord Mayor also hoped to devote time to the upcoming general election in which the people of Cork city would pass judgement on his anti-Treaty position.

Chapter 17
Crushing Defeat

Institutional arrangements at the national level continued to be complicated. Even though Arthur Griffith had been elected as President of Dáil Éireann, a minority of TDs treated the Dáil as the parliament of the Republic and as its main public platform (Fitzpatrick, 2003). They also refused to recognise the Provisional Government or the Treaty. Kevin O'Higgins was Minister for Economic Affairs in both the Dáil and the Provisional Government and, on 28 February, he clashed with Donal O'Callaghan. Earlier in the day, Éamon de Valera had stated that the 'supreme authority' of the nation was the Dáil and not the Provisional Government. Speaking in the Dáil later in the day, Kevin O'Higgins referred to Donal O'Callaghan who had repeatedly raised the issue of extra funding for Cork to help with a reconstruction programme following the burning of the city in December 1920. O'Higgins criticised O'Callaghan for sending a letter to Michael Collins, the Dáil's Minister for Finance, asking for a rebuilding package of two million pounds for Cork. O'Higgins argued that the letter should have been sent to the Provisional Government. The Minister told the Dáil (Dáil debates, 28 February 1922; see also McCarthy, 2006).

> The liability for damage done in Cork is the liability of the British Government, and if money is made available for the rebuilding of Cork, it can be made available only by way of payment in advance of the British Government's liability. Mr. Collins, Minister for Finance, Dáil Éireann, is not in a position – and the Lord Mayor of Cork knew it – to put up two million pounds for the rebuilding of Cork, but Mr. Collins, Chairman of the Provisional Government, is in a position to secure from the British Government payment in advance on the liability.

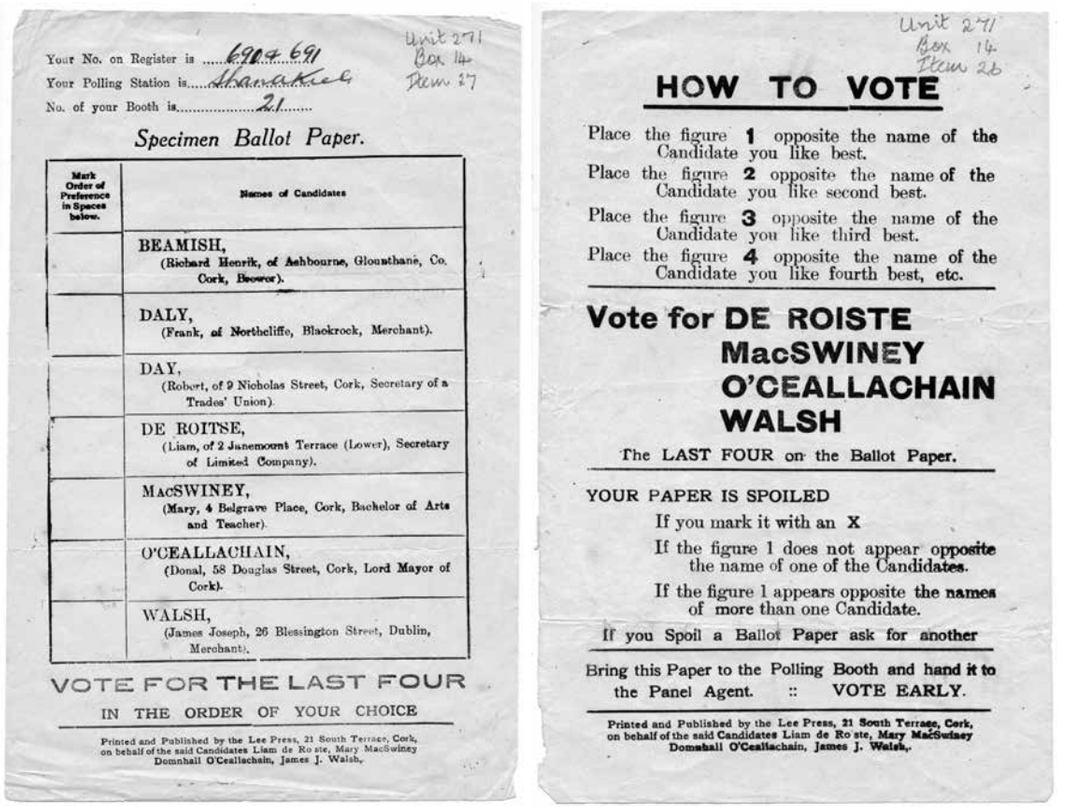
In reply, Donal O'Callaghan declared that he had not written to the Dáil's Minister for Finance asking for two million pounds, but to receive a deputation from Cork Corporation's Reconstruction Committee. An appointment was made but, according to O'Callaghan, the deputation was received 'not by the Minister of Finance, Dáil Éireann, but by the Chairman of the Provisional Government' (Dáil debates, 28 February 1922). Of course, the Minister of Finance and the Chairman of the Provisional Government were one and the same person – Michael Collins. However, Collins had informed the deputation that he was only in a position to help them through his role in the Provisional Government. Repeating the mantra of Éamon de Valera, Donal O'Callaghan told the Dáil on 28 February: 'I, or any other citizen of this country, have a perfect right to have available all the governmental functions that are available through the machinery of Dáil Éireann while it exists, and while Dáil Éireann is, as we all admit it to be, the supreme government in this country'. This exchange was typical of many which took place in the Dáil during the first half of 1922, as anti-Treaty TDs attempted to destabilise the Provisional Government. In particular, this exasperated Kevin O'Higgins who, after this confrontation with Donal O'Callaghan on 28 February, brusquely stated: 'In my capacity as a member of the Provisional Government I am engaged in taking over certain departments of the British Government – the Ministry of Transport, Mercantile Marine Department of the Board of Trade, and so on. When I am doing these things, certain people – a minority in this house – say I am a national apostate. Now in my capacity as a national apostate, I will not answer questions to the minority in this house'. As one of the minority referred to by Kevin O'Higgins, Donal O'Callaghan was a persistent thorn in the side of the Provisional Government and a loyal ally of Éamon de Valera.

The deferral of the Sinn Féin *Ard Fheis* had done little to defuse tensions, and attitudes were hardening on both sides. The situation became even more fraught when the IRA proposed to hold a convention in the Mansion House, partly in response to the Provisional Government's attempts to build up the National Army as a separate force. Even though the Provisional Government

banned the convention, it still went ahead on 26 and 27 March, and members 'reasserted the Republican status of the IRA and insisted it should be under the complete control of its own executive selected at the convention' (McCarthy, 2006). As such, the delegates at the convention aligned themselves with the Republic, thus repudiating both the Dáil and the Provisional Government. Borgonovo (2017) claims: 'Within the anti-Treaty IRA, two major divisions emerged: militants wanting to immediately declare a military dictatorship and forcibly end the rule of the Provisional Government; and moderates seeking a compromise that would avoid Civil War but undermine the Treaty'. De Valera was doing little to calm the situation and McCarthy (2006) writes that he had 'begun to lapse into provocative oratory that would plague him for the rest of his days'. On St. Patrick's Day he had delivered a speech in Thurles during which he stated that if the Treaty was accepted, people would have to continue their work for Irish freedom 'not over the bodies of foreign soldiers, but over the dead bodies of their own countrymen' (McCullagh, 2017). He added that they would 'have to wade through Irish blood, through the blood of the soldiers of the Irish Government, and through, perhaps, the blood of some of the members of the Government'. Subsequently, de Valera would argue that his Thurles speech was misinterpreted. Michael Collins was shocked at the incendiary language used by de Valera and he told an audience in Wexford: 'Can he not cease his incitements? They are incitements whatever may be his personal intention. Can he not strive to create a good atmosphere instead of seeking to create a bad one?' (Dwyer, 1982). Speaking in the Dáil on 3 May, Donal O'Callaghan appealed for calm, arguing that all avenues for negotiation should be explored 'to prevent the shedding of blood amongst our own people' (Dáil debates, 3 May 1922). Like others in the Dáil, O'Callaghan feared that the country was heading for a Civil War.

With a general election in the offing for June, de Valera and Collins met and agreed to enter into a pact to safeguard the dominance of Sinn Féin. They decided that the party would present a panel of candidates, filled from the pro and anti-Treaty sides, in proportion to their present strength in the Dáil. After the election, the party would retain power as a coalition government with the winning side allocated five cabinet seats, compared to four for the losers. Corcoran (2013) describes the pact as an 'undemocratic device designed to maintain the status quo and prevent the people expressing their opinion on the Treaty. Parties other than Sinn Féin were grudgingly allowed put candidates forward'. It was perhaps naïve to think that the election would not become a referendum on the Treaty, and unsurprisingly, the newspapers published details of each candidate's stance on the Treaty (Corcoran, 2013). The diary entry of Liam de Róiste for 29 May shows that he was pessimistic about the pact. He wrote that the agreement between de Valera and Collins had come too late and that de Valera's 'blood speech' in Thurles had 'seared bitter thoughts into many minds'. Despite de Róiste's pessimism, the pact agreement had been endorsed at the previous week's reconvened Sinn Féin *Ard Fheis*. By that point, Arthur Griffith had announced that the election would take place on Friday 16 June. The tenure of the second Dáil had been brief, fewer than three hundred days since it first sat on 16 August 1921. Donal O'Callaghan hoped that he would not become a one-term TD. However, unlike in 1921 when Sinn Féin had not faced competition, the latest election was contested with the Labour Party entering the fray. Gallagher (1981) notes: 'The 1922 election was the first of the new order – the two wings of Sinn Féin were challenged by Labour and other interests, as was to be the pattern for the next fifty years at least …… Furthermore, the 1922 election merits attention because of the unusual circumstances under which it was held, foremost amongst which was the "pact" between Michael Collins and Éamon de Valera'.

When nominations closed on 6 June, there were seven candidates for the four Dáil seats in Cork city. Sinn Féin put forward the four outgoing TDs, J. J. Walsh and Liam de Róiste, both pro-Treaty, and Mary MacSwiney and Donal O'Callaghan, both anti-Treaty. The Lord Mayor was nominated by Very Rev. Maurice McGrath, St. Augustine's, and by Frederick J. Cronin of 11 Valentine Villas. The four Sinn Féin candidates were joined on the ballot paper by Frank Daly, Chairman of the Harbour Commissioners, and Richard Beamish, who were standing as Independent Commercial candidates, and by Robert Day, running for the Labour Party (Martin, 2009). As Cork Corporation meetings over the previous eighteen months had demonstrated, Day was not a fan of the Lord Mayor. The *Cork Examiner* noted that the existence of a contest for the four Cork city seats would add 'zest' to the election. However, the newspaper was circumspect about the Collins and de Valera Sinn Féin pact: 'The pact arrived at in Dáil Éireann by the rival Teachtaí on the Treaty issue has been the subject of much discussion, but to an extent it appears to deprive the elections of the value of a definite pronouncement by the country on the



Your No. on Register is 6907 69
Your Polling Station is Shanakiel
No. of your Booth is 21

Unit 271 Box 14 Item 27

Specimen Ballot Paper.

Mark Order of Preference in Spaces below.	Names of Candidates
	BEAMISH, (Richard Henrik, of Ashbourne, Glounthane, Co. Cork, Beemer).
	DALY, (Frank, of Northcliffe, Blackrock, Merchant).
	DAY, (Robert, of 9 Nicholas Street, Cork, Secretary of a Trades' Union).
	DE ROITSE, (Liam, of 2 Janemount Terrace (Lower), Secretary of Limited Company).
	MacSWINEY, (Mary, 4 Belgrave Place, Cork, Bachelor of Arts and Teacher).
	O'CEALLACHAIN, (Donal, 58 Douglas Street, Cork, Lord Mayor of Cork).
	WALSH, (James Joseph, 26 Blessington Street, Dublin, Merchant).

VOTE FOR THE LAST FOUR
IN THE ORDER OF YOUR CHOICE

Printed and Published by the Lee Press, 21 South Terrace, Cork, on behalf of the said Candidates Liam de Ro ste, Mary MacSwiney Domnhall O'Ceallachain, James J. Walsh.

Unit 271
Box 14
Item 26

HOW TO VOTE

Place the figure **1** opposite the name of the Candidate you like best.
Place the figure **2** opposite the name of the Candidate you like second best.
Place the figure **3** opposite the name of the Candidate you like third best.
Place the figure **4** opposite the name of the Candidate you like fourth best, etc.

Vote for DE ROISTE
MacSWINEY
O'CEALLACHAIN
WALSH

The LAST FOUR on the Ballot Paper.

YOUR PAPER IS SPOILED
If you mark it with an X
If the figure 1 does not appear opposite the name of one of the Candidates.
If the figure 1 appears opposite the names of more than one Candidate.
If you Spoil a Ballot Paper ask for another

Bring this Paper to the Polling Booth and hand it to the Panel Agent. :: VOTE EARLY.

Printed and Published by the Lee Press, 21 South Terrace, Cork, on behalf of the said Candidates Liam de Ro ste, Mary MacSwiney Domnhall O'Ceallachain, James J. Walsh.

Facing page: Specimen ballot paper and Sinn Féin voting instructions In the in build-up to the June 1922 general election. The party's motto was: 'In Unity is Strength' [Courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]

great issue that has caused the dissension'. For his part, the Lord Mayor saw the electoral pact 'as evidence of the determination of both sides to avoid bloodshed' (Martin, 2009).

The not inconsiderable challenge facing Sinn Féin was to present a united front, even though the party was divided on the Treaty. No money was spared as they ran daily advertisements in the *Cork Examiner*, listing the names of their four Cork city 'National Panel Candidates' above the following, carefully crafted, message:

> Those candidates stand for the supreme National interests. They represent the National ideals to which the Irish people gave adherence during the past four years. They represent the unity of the forces that worked and fought for freedom during those years. They stand for ordered Government and stabilised conditions and the utilisation of every advantage which had been secured to advance the nation in strength and freedom.

The Sinn Féin slogan may have read 'In Unity is Strength' but when a major election rally was held in Cork city on the night of Sunday 11 June, with Éamon de Valera as the principal speaker, J. J. Walsh was not on the platform and Liam de Róiste 'attended only after much argument' (Martin, 2009). His diary entry noted: 'After argument and cogitation, I decided that I would attend tonight, but not to "orate" – and indeed I can say nothing, for I have nothing to say! I feel as a dumb man – and have no heart in the meeting'. De Róiste's lack of enthusiasm was due to the hasty manner in which the meeting had been organised by Donal O'Callaghan, without consulting his pro-Treaty party colleagues (Martin, 2009). De Valera told the crowd on the Grand Parade that he was there as the President of Sinn Féin and he 'stood by the letter and the spirit of the agreement he had signed' (*Cork Examiner*, 12 June 1922). He admitted that his party had fundamental differences on one question, but they agreed on most other things and it was on that basis they were contesting the election. He expressed the hope that both sections of his party would come together as a coalition government with a large majority to steer the country though the next critical eight or ten months. Donal O'Callaghan's speech was low-key and brief. He said that stability was needed to get Ireland through the coming period of time, which was bound to be challenging. In his view, that meant re-electing the four Sinn Féin candidates who had worked hard for Cork city in the last Dáil. If Sinn Féin secured 'a solid working entity' in the new parliament, it would be best for Ireland and for Cork. He told the crowd that it would create instability if Independent candidates were returned and he urged voters not to deceived by 'cowardly lies and villainous backbiting'. Mary MacSwiney echoed the sentiments of O'Callaghan but, typically, was blunter in how she delivered the message. She stated that the electorate was not being asked to vote on 'the one great difference' that concerned the Dáil. Rather, they were asked 'to send back to the third Dáil the members they had

sent to the second in order that the common enemy might see that he would not have the pleasure of disuniting the Irish people' (*Cork Examiner*, 12 June 1922). Despite indicating in his diary that he would not speak, Liam de Róiste also addressed the crowd, but he stuck rigidly to the party script, stressing unity and the restoration of law and order. He expressed his feelings more openly in his subsequent diary entry (12 June 1922): 'Both sides on the Panel are only playing a political game; and it seems to me exceptional audacity and assurance to ask the people so seriously to vote only for us and for no others'. Notably, Donal O'Callaghan's close friend, Harry Boland, also spoke at the rally in Cork and it is true that the event was dominated by anti-Treaty speakers, even though everyone was very careful not to directly mention it.

As election day approached, the pact came under increasing strain. Another Sinn Féin rally took place in Cork on 14 June, this time dominated by pro-Treaty speakers, including Michael Collins, J. J. Walsh and Liam de Róiste. In a now famous speech, Collins said: 'I am not hampered now by being on a platform where there are Coalitionists. I can make a straight appeal to you citizens of Cork to vote for the candidates you think best of, to vote for the candidates whom the electors of Cork think will carry on best in the future the work that the citizens of Cork want carried on …… You understand fully what you have to do and I will depend on you to do it' (*Cork Examiner*, 15 June 1922). Though the speech by Collins and his instructions to the crowd were benign, the perception in some quarters was that he had broken the terms of the pact. For the majority of people however, this was not how the speech was regarded and the *Cork Examiner* report the next day did not indicate that he had reneged on his agreement with de Valera. Gallagher (1981) comments: 'Although it has been suggested that his speech was a direct repudiation of the pact (as stated by Macardle, 1937), this is very much a *post hoc* interpretation'.

The presence of candidates other than those on the National Panel caused some annoyance to Sinn Féin. Many incumbent Sinn Féin TDs had not faced a contested general election in either 1919 or 1921, 'and they were not eager to become acquainted with the experience' (Gallagher, 1981). The Collins and de Valera pact acknowledged the right of others to contest the election, but stated that Sinn Féin should be entrusted with carrying on the work that it had been doing over the previous years. Both the Labour Party and the Farmers' Party nominated more candidates than finally stood. Gallagher (1981) remarks: 'Beyond any doubt, some non-panel candidates, or would-be candidates, were the victims of violence intended to persuade them to stand down' One man who refused to be intimidated was Labour's Robert Day. He made a virtue of this point during a very effective and energised campaign in Cork city. At a big rally in Cork three days before the election, Day asked the crowd: 'Why should Labour stand down? It has been stood down long enough' (*Cork Examiner*, 14 June 1922). He then referred to a statement that had been made earlier in the week by a Sinn Féin member, to the effect that Cork never put an untried player on the field in a hurling or football match. Day conceded this was true, before pointedly criticising Cork's incumbent Sinn Féin TDs: 'I can safely say that when the people of Cork tried a man and found him wanting, they quickly substituted him with another'. Alderman William Kenneally also addressed the meeting and he spoke strongly in support of Day, stating: 'Labour is going forward and is not going to stand down for de Valera, the Lord Mayor or anyone else' (*Cork Examiner*, 14 June 1922). In addition to the Labour Party and the Farmers' Party, twenty-one Independents contested the election across the country, 'none of them hostile to the Treaty' (Gallagher, 1981). On the day before polling, the draft Irish Free State Constitution was published. It declared that the Irish Free State would be a co-equal member of the community of nations forming a British Commonwealth. Irish would be declared the official language and the legislature would consist of Dáil Éireann and an upper House, Seanad Éireann. Arthur Griffith told reporters: 'The Constitution is that of a free and democratic State and, under it, Ireland, for the first time in centuries, secures the power and opportunity to control and develop her own resources, and to lead her own national life' (*Cork Examiner*, 16 June 1922).

The *Cork Examiner* (17 June 1922) reported that the elections in the city had passed off 'with great humour and most quietly'. It said that there was a big poll of nearly thirty thousand votes and warned that counting could 'take some days' due to the intricacies of PR-STV. This did not turn out to be the case and the election results for Cork city were announced that night around midnight, by the city's sub-Sheriff, John Maguire. A large crowd of people were present in the Courthouse, including Michael Collins. The outcome was a shock. Labour's Robert Day topped the poll, exceeding the quota on the first count. The bigger news, however, was that Donal O'Callaghan, Lord Mayor of Cork and sitting TD, finished last of the seven candidates.

CORK CITY ELECTION RESULTS JUNE 1922

Electorate:	48,817
Total Valid Poll:	30,347
Quota:	**6,070**

First Preferences

Robert Day	Labour Party	6,836
J. J. Walsh	Sinn Féin Panel, pro-Treaty	5,731
Liam de Róiste	Sinn Féin Panel, pro-Treaty	5,657
Mary MacSwiney	Sinn Féin Panel, anti-Treaty	4,016
Richard Beamish	Independent Commercial	3,485
Frank Daly	Independent Commercial	2,826
Donal O'Callaghan	Sinn Féin Panel, anti-Treaty	1,796

O'Callaghan was eliminated on the second count, as his three Sinn Féin colleagues, Liam de Róiste, J. J. Walsh and Mary MacSwiney secured seats along with Robert Day. The result was a personal humiliation for the Lord Mayor. Not only was he the only incumbent Cork city TD to lose his seat, one of his main political rivals, Robert Day, secured nearly four times as many first preference votes. Richard Beamish, the only ex-Unionist standing outside Dublin University, also finished ahead of him (Gallagher, 1981). In trying to explain O'Callaghan's disastrous performance, the *Cork Examiner* (19 June 1922) noted that since he was already the Lord Mayor, perhaps the electorate had decided one person should only have one job. It also reasoned that the Lord Mayor's 'anti-Treaty proclivities weighed against him', though it pointed out that his anti-Treaty colleague, Mary MacSwiney was returned. The newspaper's British Correspondent wrote: 'The Lord Mayor is personally popular with all parties, and his return was thought by many to be certain. The new member [Robert Day] is of the party which did not declare itself officially as for or against the Treaty, but all its candidates, while standing for a distinct Labour programme, were unofficially stated to be in favour of the agreement'. He also added that Day's work as a prominent trade unionist stood to him, and this included his role in trying to find a solution to the difficult dispute between the Corporation and Ford's. By extension, the dispute likely did damage to O'Callaghan.

Liam de Róiste recorded the results of the election, in his usual neat and precise fashion in his diary. Regarding the outcome, he wrote (18 June 1922): 'The result of the Cork city election is, I have no doubt, a surprise to the people of Cork and to the people of Ireland today. Not quite such a surprise to me and it has rather restored my faith in the people and verified my idea as to the insistence of "public opinion"'. He also penned that he was 'maddened' by the 'opprobrium' which leading anti-Treaty members sought to heap on people who did not accept their views. Donal O'Callaghan and Mary MacSwiney were the only two anti-Treaty candidates in the city but it appears that de Róiste's anger was directed more at the latter. In his entry for 17 June, before the results were announced, he wrote: 'If she [MacSwiney] gets returned in the result of today, it will be because of fraud and fake oaths'.

On Monday 19 June, just two days after the general election results were announced, Cork County Council met to elect a Chairman for the coming twelve months. A despondent Donal O'Callaghan, still trying to come to terms with the loss of his Dáil seat, could not bring himself to attend. Even so, he was once again elected as Chairman unopposed. He was proposed by Councillor Seán Collins who said that he was disappointed that O'Callaghan was not present but he deserved to be nominated 'because of certain recent occurrences' (Cork County Council minutes, 19 June 1922 and *Cork Examiner*, 20 June 1922). Councillor Collins went on to express the view that in the recent general election, 'Donal O'Callaghan had not been treated as he deserved to be treated'. In seconding the proposal, Councillor Seán Nunan paid a tribute to O'Callaghan, stating: 'I have been associated with him in the national movement for the past eight years, and a straighter and better man than Donal O'Callaghan I have never met. He is worthy of the highest honour that we can confer on him'.

Instead of attending the meeting of Cork County Council, Donal O'Callaghan was pouring over the national general election results. As an ambitious man who had harboured hopes of a seat at the cabinet table after the election, he was not only very disappointed by his own failure, but also dismayed by the electorate's rejection of anti-Treaty candidates. While Sinn Féin won a comfortable overall majority, the pro-Treaty candidates performed

Following page: Liam de Róiste diary entry for 18 June 1922
[De Róiste diaries, courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]

first preference surpluses. at the very least, 2000 of Miss MacSwiney's first preferences were personated votes. The personations were clear even from a glance at the papers.

1 p.m. In the final result, Miss MacS. was declared elected, without the quota.

Official return, in a special morning newspaper, is given as follows:

Total Poll 30,939 Quota 6,070.
Invalid 592
Valid 30,347

	First count.	Second. From Day		From O'C.	Third	From Deasy	From Fourth	From Daly
Beamish	3,485	67	3,552	6	3,558	2	3,560	1209
Daly	2,826	176	3,002	32	3,034	9	3,043	—
Day	6,836	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Deroiste	5,657	309	5,966	181	6,147	—	—	—
MacSwiney	4,016	35	4,051	1,431	5,482	21	5,503	563
O Ceallachain	1,796	11	1,807	—	—	—	—	
Walsh	5,731	168	5,899	153	6052	45	6097	
	30,347	766	24,277	1803	24,273	77	18203	1772
Non-transferable		174	6070	4	6070 4		12140 4	1271
		766	30,347	1807	30,347		30,347	3043

There is an error in connection with Day's surplus in

above return: 766, his total surplus, is given as transferred, though 174 is stated to be non-transferable. ※

The pro- and anti-Treaty voting may be taken as follows:

Pro.	Anti.
3485	4,016
2826	1,796
6836	5,812
5657	
5731	
24,535	

※ The 174 non-transferable does not belong to the surplus, but to the whole number secured by Day. —

Though many, perhaps, of Beamish's voters may be considered as anti-Treaty from the view-point that they Final. favour the Union rather than anything else: and
4769 there may be some for Day who are sincere for a
— Worker's Republic. Of the 5812 recorded on the
— Panel anti-Treaty side, 3000 may be considered as
— personated votes.
6,066 applying general principles of which we heard so much in the Dáil, one may cynically ask on above result, "where is the intelligent minority?" and where the "unintelligent majority?" It is shattered by the commonsense of the people of Cork, in the same fashion by which they have shattered humbug.

much better. Gallagher (1981) notes: 'In only five of the sixteen constituencies where each [of the two Sinn Féin wings] had candidates did the anti-Treatyites win more votes'. Just eighteen members of the second Dáil who voted against the Treaty managed to hold onto their seats in an elected contest (Gallagher, 2005). It is also noteworthy that nearly a quarter of a million people voted for Independents and other parties, all of whom supported the Treaty. The 1922 general election was a breakthrough for the Labour Party – it ran eighteen candidates, seventeen of whom won seats, despite facing the might of the Sinn Féin national panel of candidates. Éamon de Valera admitted to a visiting American: 'We are hopelessly beaten, and if it weren't for the pact it would have been much worse' (Fitzpatrick, 2003). The *Irish Independent* (19 June) welcomed the decisive nature of the election results, declaring that the people had expressed 'the will to replace the rule of the gun by ordered government'.

As a demoralised Donal O'Callaghan pondered the results, he did not know what the next course of action would be for his party President, Éamon de Valera. Would he enter a coalition Government with Griffith and Collins, with a cabinet comprising pro and anti-Treaty TDs? The Treaty remained the elephant in the room. Sinn Féin had parked the issue at the *Ard Fheis* and had fought the general election as an apparently united party, telling the electorate that it would deal with the issue afterwards. However, as much as Sinn Féin used the slogan 'In Unity is Strength' during the election campaign, it was clear to all that the party was massively divided. This was proven by the election because more transfers from Sinn Féin pro-Treatyites went to Independents and the Labour Party, than to Sinn Féin anti-Treaty candidates. Chastened by the election result in Cork city, Donal O'Callaghan feared that Sinn Féin would split into two distinct parties. He also was concerned that the IRA, which already possessed a militant anti-Treaty Army Executive, would splinter. The Lord Mayor's fears were soon realised – before the month of June was over, a bitter Civil War had started.

Chapter 18
Last Days in Cork

On Sunday 18 June 1922, two days after the general election, the anti-Treaty IRA held another convention in the Mansion House. Delegates narrowly defeated a motion proposed by Tom Barry to declare war on Britain after seventy-two hours' notice to both the British and the Provisional Government (Dorney, 2017). The defeat of the motion led to a walkout of nearly half of the members, led by Rory O'Connor, Liam Mellows, Tom Barry and Ernie O'Malley. There was now a major split in the IRA which could not be ignored. In one camp, there was Liam Lynch, Liam Deasy and Seán Moylan who wanted the IRA to be united and controlled by the Free State Army (O'Malley and Dolan, 2007). The other camp comprised the more extreme members of the organisation, led by O'Connor and Mellows. This group convened a meeting in the Four Courts where they voted in Belfast's Joe McKelvey as Chief of Staff in place of Liam Lynch (Borgonovo, 2017). Since April, the Four Courts had been occupied by a militant anti-Treaty IRA force and had become a heavily armed garrison. As noted by Borgonovo (2017), the militants now stayed in the Four Courts, while Liam Lynch and moderate IRA members used the Clarence Hotel as their headquarters.

The course of Irish history took a turn for the worse on 22 June when two IRA gunmen assassinated the retired Field Marshal, Henry Wilson, in London. Currently an MP and security advisor to Sir James Craig, Wilson was 'particularly reviled in Republican circles for his role as military advisor to the Northern Ireland Government at a time when hundreds of Northern Catholics had been killed in the violence in Belfast' (Dorney, 2017). The

British Government believed that the anti-Treaty IRA faction in the Four Courts, was responsible for the murder. Prime Minister, Lloyd George, wrote to Michael Collins as Chairman of the Provisional Government (Richard Mulcahy Papers, UCD):

> The assassins of Henry Wilson had documents clearly identifying them as individuals with the Irish Republican Army and they further reveal the existence of a deeper conspiracy against law and order in this country. We have information that the Irregular elements of the IRA are to resume attacks upon lives and property of British subjects both in England and Ulster …… The ambiguous position of the Irish Republican Army can no longer be tolerated by the British Government. Still less can Rory O'Connor be permitted to remain with his followers and his arsenal in the heart of Dublin in possession of the Courts of Justice.

Lloyd George's ultimatum to Collins was straightforward: 'You must move against the Four Courts or the Treaty is void. British troops will return and the Free State will be extinguished' (Dorney, 2017). Accordingly, at 4.00 a.m. on Wednesday 28 June, the pro-Treaty forces of the Provisional Government attacked the Four Courts and began the Civil War. The Adjutant-General of the pro-Treaty forces, Gearóid O'Sullivan, told the government that the Irregulars (the disparaging term for anti-Treaty militants) would be dealt with within a week or, at most, a fortnight (McCullagh, 2017). The *Cork Examiner* (29 June 1922) reported that once the attack on the Four Courts started, the entire city of Dublin was awakened by the din, 'and even in the remote suburbs many found sleep impossible'.

For Donal O'Callaghan, his worst fears had been realised; a Civil War had not been avoided. He immediately travelled to Dublin and went to the Four Courts where he joined with the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alderman Laurence O'Neill, in a futile and unsuccessful effort to bring about a cessation of hostilities. Éamon de Valera issued a statement lamenting that, 'at the bidding of the English, Irishmen are today shooting down on the streets of our capital brother Irishmen' (as quoted by McCullagh, 2017). The Four Courts garrison were prepared for a battle and would not give in easily. As noted by Dorney (2017): 'At first, the pro-Treaty leadership hoped that a mere show of force, opening fire on the Four Courts with artillery, would be enough to bring about a surrender. This proved to be a grave misapprehension'. The siege of the Four Courts lasted for three days before it was occupied by the pro-Treaty National Army.

Led by Oscar Traynor and Cathal Brugha, a group of anti-Treaty IRA forces took over an area around O'Connell Street. By 5 July they were overwhelmed and Cathal Brugha gave an order for his men to surrender. However, he did not surrender himself and approached pro-Treaty troops with two pistols drawn. The pro-Treaty troops deliberately aimed to shoot him low but one bullet severed his femoral artery and he died of his injuries two days later in the Mater Hospital. Brugha was the first major casualty of the Civil War. He had been elected as an anti-Treaty TD in the election of the previous month and he previously served as President of the Dáil, Ceann Comhairle and as Minister for Defence. On hearing of Brugha's death, de Valera wrote in his diary: 'Our lion heart is gone …… We are all robbed of the one man who could have made victory possible …… Oh cruel, cruel that it was by Irish men he should be killed' (as quoted by McCullagh, 2017). *The Irish Times* (8 July 1922) noted: 'Of all Ireland's many extremists, he was the most extreme. The manner of his death was typical of his life. Cathal Brugha died, as he lived, in the last ditch. No other modern country save Ireland produces such types. They belong in point of time to the Middle Ages, when men would face the stake for an idea, whether it was right or wrong. Of such stuff was Cathal Brugha made. All his life he hated England with an intensity of feeling which is rarely found even in this country of painful memories'.

While the Civil War would continue until May 1923, the first phase – from 28 June to 5 July 1922 – was concentrated on the centre of Dublin and resulted in a decisive win for the pro-Treaty forces of the Provisional Government. There was extensive damage to buildings and structures in the capital and O'Connell Street was sadly reduced to rubble for the second time in six years. One consequence of the start of the Civil War was that the second Dáil did not convene, as planned, on 30 June to be formally dissolved. McCullagh (2017) points out: 'The first Dáil had met after the election of its successor, in order to be formally dissolved, in a procedure devised by de Valera to ensure there would be no break in continuity'. De Valera and indeed Donal O'Callaghan would subsequently rely a lot on the argument that the second Dáil was not dissolved.

Returning to Cork, after failing in his efforts to bring about a ceasefire in Dublin, Donal O'Callaghan focussed on his work in Cork Corporation and, to a lesser extent, Cork County Council. On 6 July he took the unusual step of issuing a statement to the citizens of Cork to try and reassure them (as printed in the *Cork Examiner* on 7 July). It read:

> Under the circumstances prevailing at the moment in our midst, it is inevitable that a certain anxiousness should arise among the citizens, and it may not, perhaps, be amiss to reassure them on certain points and warn them against certain dangers. In times of exceptional stress, such as the present, the principal danger to public peace and security is the circulation of wild, unfounded rumours, which lead to scares and, ultimately, panic. Uneasiness has, I understand, been generated in this way with regard to the adequacy of the local food supply. I have convened a meeting of local manufacturers, importers, wholesale merchants and traders in food and provisions. At this meeting the position with regard to the food supply has been thoroughly explored, and the citizens may rest assured that there is no cause whatsoever for alarm and anxiety, as ample provision is in view for all requirements. With a view to the protection of the public interest, I have requested the meeting referred to, to continue as the Cork Food Committee, and meet as frequently as may be necessary to consider, and thoroughly safeguard, the position of the local food supply.
>
> A sense of want of security and protection has been caused among the trading community by the commandeering which has been carried out for some days past by the Irish Republican Army, and the raids of an unauthorised character which have been carried out under cover of the actual military commandeering. It has now been arranged that commandeering for army purposes will be effected through a representative of the trade concerned. In this way, the minimum inconvenience to the trading community will be secured, as well as the clearest safeguard against unwarranted seizures. Demands made on traders, otherwise than through the channel mentioned, will be unwarranted, and special military patrols are being placed on duty through the city to ensure an effective check of, if needed, an immediate protection against raiding of that description.
>
> Arrangements are being made for the maintenance, as far as possible, of all public services, postal, transit etc. and every protection necessary will be available for the maintenance of the city's commercial life. A special effort is being made to reduce unemployment in the city, by securing a start on a larger scale of the rebuilding of Patrick Street. The immediate cooperation of the firms concerned is urgently sought in this connection. I strongly urge that for the common good all interests will carry on as usual, despite the activities of the scaremongers.
>
> Enquiries or complaints re matters dealt with in above, should be submitted in writing to the Secretary, Cork Food Committee, Courthouse Cork.
>
> **Lord Mayor's Room,**
> Courthouse, Cork
> 6 July 1922

The *Cork Examiner* (7 July 1922) praised the Lord Mayor for his timely and calming statement and expressed the hope that it would put an end to unhelpful rumours which had been circulating in the city. A few days later, Donal O'Callaghan made his way to Dublin again, this time for the funeral of Cathal Brugha which took place on Tuesday 11 July. The impressive funeral cortege made its way from St. Joseph's Church, Berkeley Road to the Republican plot in Glasnevin Cemetery, via Amiens Street, Talbot Street, Earl Street and O'Connell Street. In particular, many people lined O'Connell Street, the scene of Brugha's last stand. At the next meeting of Cork Corporation on 14 July, Donal O'Callaghan paid an emotional personal tribute to Cathal Brugha whom he said he knew 'rather intimately' (*Cork Examiner*, 15 July 1922). The Lord Mayor described Brugha as 'a brave man who devoted his life to the attainment of the freedom of his country, and laid down his life for it'. The meeting adjourned as a mark of respect after the elected members unanimously passed the following resolution:

> That we, the Cork Corporation, hereby place on record our sincere sorrow at the death of Cathal Brugha, ex-Minister of Defence, and tender to his widow and family our sincere sympathy and our admiration for his heroic death in action. And that this meeting stand adjourned.

Cork Corporation met twice more that month, on 17 and 28 July. Donal O'Callaghan chaired both meetings which were dominated by the commencement of work on the Wycherley Terrace housing scheme, the rebuilding of St. Patrick's Street and plans to find a new location for the City Library (the Carnegie Free Library was destroyed in the Burning of Cork in December 1920). The Lord Mayor expressed the hope that large-scale construction projects in the city would help to ease the unemployment situation. As he left the Courthouse on 28 July, little did Donal O'Callaghan realise that he would never attend another meeting of Cork Corporation (though he would remain as Lord Mayor for a further eighteen months).

Donal O'Callaghan left his beloved Cork in August 1922 and never again resided there. His decision to depart Cork, and Ireland, was influenced by a number of factors. He was deeply saddened by the death of Cathal Brugha but, even more devastating, was the death of his close friend and anti-Treaty Republican activist, Harry Boland. They had spent a lot of time together in America in 1921 and had also attended the Irish Race Convention in Paris. On 31 July, men in the green uniform of the Irish Free State entered the Grand Hotel in Skerries, Dublin, looking for Boland (Dorney, 2018). He was shot in his hotel room and died two days later in St. Vincent's Hospital. The exact circumstances of his killing remain unclear, but *The Irish Times* (5 August 1922) reported that he 'was shot while resisting arrest and was hit in the right abdomen'. The *Cork Examiner* (5 August 1922) stated: 'It is alleged that he resisted arrest, but even so it is inconceivable that it was necessary to shoot an unarmed man – as it has been definitely established that Mr. Boland was unarmed'. Donal O'Callaghan was graveside as Harry Boland was laid to rest in Glasnevin Cemetery on 4 August, just three weeks after Cathal Brugha had been buried there. The occasion was a remarkable one. The *Freeman's Journal* (5 August 1922) reported that the funeral was met on O'Connell Street by a Lancia car, containing National Army troops: 'The vehicle was pulled up, and the occupants, having laid down their arms, removed their caps, and stood to attention until the hearse had passed'. Next to Donal O'Callaghan at the grave of Boland, stood the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alderman Laurence O'Neill, Mrs. Cathal Brugha, Count and Countess Plunkett, as well as Countess Constance Markievicz who, speaking in Irish, said that there was no more loyal or faithful comrade than the deceased. Doherty and Keogh (2006) note:

> From the press reports of the funeral, it would be hard to believe that there was a Civil War going on in the countryside. The government had allowed the funeral to take place without interruption. The display of gallantry by the government troops in O'Connell Street may, it is possible to speculate, have been the only manner in which [Michael] Collins could pay his last respects to his great friend. It was a noble act in a war which quickly became characterised by ignoble actions.

Donal O'Callaghan was left crushed and shattered by the violent deaths of Brugha and Boland. Before the end of the month of August, Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins would also be dead and buried. As a staunch anti-Treatyite, O'Callaghan had received death threats, just as he had in 1920. At the very least there was a real fear of arrest as many of his anti-Treaty colleagues, such as Art O'Brien, had been rounded up. An intelligent man, O'Callaghan was acutely aware that the focus of the Civil War fighting was shifting from Dublin to Muster. The National Army had arrived in Kerry on 3 August and their next target was Cork. Intensive clashes began in Cork after the National Army arrived by sea at Passage West and Youghal on 8 August (Dorney, 2019). Over the next two days, fervent fighting took place in Rochestown and Douglas in which at least ten National Army and four anti-Treaty IRA volunteers were killed (Keane, 2017).

The simple truth is that Donal O'Callaghan had no stomach for the Civil War. He was broken-hearted by the deaths of Brugha and Boland and, having witnessed the centre of Cork city destroyed during the War of Independence, he had no intention of seeing it ruined again in a battle between Irishmen. Disillusioned at his rejection at the recent general election and appalled that politicians had not been able to avoid a Civil War, he fled Cork for Europe, 'taking no part in the public life of the city of which he was Lord Mayor' (O'Callaghan, 2000).

Chapter 19
‘Minister’ O’Callaghan

Donal O’Callaghan’s precise departure date from Cork in August 1922, and what he did over the following three months, is not known. He travelled through Europe and it is believed that he spent most of his time in Strasbourg, a city he came to love (O’Callaghan, 2000). O’Callaghan was very good at languages and he spoke French to a high level. For the most part, he switched off from Irish politics for three months and instead pursued his interests in literature, theatre and travel. There is no evidence that he maintained a correspondence with Cork Corporation during this period. This time in his life was effectively a sabbatical during which he re-charged his batteries. Though intentionally detached from events at home, he would undoubtedly have heard the sad news that the President of Dáil Éireann, Arthur Griffith, died of a brain haemorrhage on 12 August. Ten days later, Michael Collins, on the way to a meeting in Cork with the apparent intention of trying to bring an end to the Civil War, was killed by a single shot to the head near Béal na Bláth, West Cork. He was thirty-one years old. When Cork Corporation met on Friday 25 August, Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor William Ellis, was in the chair and the councillors resolved: ‘That, as a tribute of respect to the memory of the late General Michael Collins, whose loss the city of Cork so deeply deplores, this council do now adjourn’. In the absence of the Lord Mayor, the Cork Corporation delegation to Collins’ funeral in Dublin was led by Councillor William Ellis and Alderman Liam de Róiste. Vice Chairman, Councillor Joseph Barrett, led the delegation representing Cork County Council. Donal O’Callaghan would have been deeply saddened by the death of Michael Collins. Though their views on the Treaty differed, the Lord Mayor of Cork had a deep respect for the man who had appointed him as his emissary to America in the first half of 1921.

It was Éamon de Valera who brought an end to O’Callaghan’s sabbatical. In the midst of the Civil War, the IRA Army Executive approved the appointment of a government. It called for the government to be formed by de Valera to preserve the continuity of the Republic. De Valera believed that this government would be legitimate as, in his view, the second Dáil had not been legally dissolved and he refused to recognise the authority of the pro-Treaty Free State Government. In October 1922, de Valera proposed a cabinet comprised of Austin Stack (Finance), P. J. Ruttledge (Home Affairs), Liam Mellows (Defence), Seán T. O’Kelly (Local Government), Robert Barton (Economic Affairs) and Erskine Childers (Director of Publicity and Government Secretary). There were a number of problems with this cabinet, notably that Mellows, O’Kelly and Barton were in prison. De Valera recommended that Mellows’ replacement as Acting Minister would be Liam Lynch, and Michael Colivet would act for Barton. For the position of Acting Minister for Local Government, he nominated Donal O’Callaghan, conveniently ignoring that the Lord Mayor of Cork was out of the country and had lost his seat in June’s general election.

On 13 November, de Valera formally wrote to each member of the IRA Army Council stating his cabinet nominations – since he had drawn up his initial list, Erskine Childers had been arrested. De Valera added: ‘Under the Republic, all industry will be controlled by the State for the workers’ and farmers’ benefit. All transport, railways, canals etc. will be operated by the State – the Republican State – for the benefit of the workers and farmers. All banks will be operated by the State for the benefit of industry and agriculture, not for the purpose of profit-making by loans, mortgages etc. That the lands of the aristocracy (who support the Free State and the British connection) will be seized and divided amongst those who can and will operate it for the national benefit etc.’. The document was revealed when it was found in the possession of an Army Council member when he was arrested. The Publicity Department of the Provisional Government wasted no time in dismissing de Valera’s cabinet. In a statement to the newspapers, it noted: ‘Of the five ‘Ministers’ appointed, three are in prison’ (*Cork Examiner*, 29 November 1922). The concluding paragraph of the statement read:

> Mr. Liam Mellows, the so-called 'Minister of Defence', and Mr. D. O'Callaghan, substitute for another 'Minister', have been appointed as 'Ministers' even though they are not now members of the Dáil, having been rejected by their constituents at the last elections! It is characteristic of the inconsistencies of the Irregular leaders that while pretending to deny to the representatives of over ninety-five per cent of the population of Ireland any representative capacity whatsoever, they appoint as their 'Ministers' men who were actually rejected by their own constituents at the June elections!

By the end of 1922, Donal O'Callaghan was in regular correspondence with de Valera. Initially sceptical about the Republican cabinet and his own role as Acting Minister for Local Government, he soon warmed to the task. In letters to his leader, O'Callaghan referred to the different activities of the local government department and of policies he hoped to develop. Perhaps O'Callaghan was delusional about the status of de Valera's cabinet and his absence from Ireland was undoubtedly a contributory factor. Back home, the Civil War was going from bad to worse. Erskine Childers, de Valera's Director of Publicity, was executed in November. On 7 December, one day after the Irish Free State came into legal existence, Republicans shot Seán Hales TD and Pádraig Ó Máille TD as they returned to the Dáil after lunch (McCullagh, 2017). Hales died from his injuries. By way of response, the Executive Council of the Free State ordered the executions of Rory O'Connor, Liam Mellows, Joe McKelvey and Dick Barrett.

As O'Callaghan, from a distance, continued his role as an Acting Minister in an illegitimate cabinet, he was reinstated as Lord Mayor of Cork in January 1923, by default. This was due to the fact that Ernest Blythe, the Free State's Minister for Local Government, issued a circular stating that, due to the Civil War, local elections were postponed. The circular also decreed that every Lord Mayor who was in office would continue until the first meeting of a new council, following the holding of the postponed local elections. Thus, without a vote of the members of Cork Corporation, Donal O'Callaghan retained his position as Lord Mayor. The irony of the situation would not have been lost on him. The Free State Minister for Local Government had issued the circular, resulting in the Acting Minister for Local Government in de Valera's underground cabinet, staying on as Cork's first citizen. The contents of Blythe's circular were noted, without comment, at the Corporation meeting on 12 January, chaired by Councillor William Ellis.

Of course, in his own mind, Donal O'Callaghan was the Minister with responsibility over Cork Corporation and he was keenly aware that de Valera's government would have no credibility unless it was in a position to levy taxes and raise money. He discussed this in a series of letters with the 'Minister' for Home Affairs, P. J. Ruttledge, in late January and early February. O'Callaghan signed all of these hand-written letters as AMLG (Acting Minister for Local Government). In a letter dated 5 February, Ruttledge conceded to O'Callaghan that de Valera's Republican government lacked legitimacy, noting: 'It is essential that we give evidence of functioning as a government and, to that end, there must be a local government policy'. Central to this was the collecting of rates. Ruttledge and O'Callaghan both acknowledged that there would be difficulties with rate collectors. Ruttledge recommended that the IRA would have to be used to collect rates, though he did admit: 'This would not be popular, there will be very many other difficulties which I am sure you have fully considered'. Lack of money would mean that many main roads would not be repaired but O'Callaghan viewed this as a plus as the roads were being used for 'enemy transport', i.e. by the Provisional Government. O'Callaghan was also keen to write to all local authorities and other public bodies to ask them to renew their allegiance to the Republican movement. In particular, he was anxious to remind the councils that most of them had pledged allegiance to the Republic following the 1920 local elections. While it is true that the 1922 general election had been won by the pro-Treatyites, many of the local councils elected in 1920 contained anti-Treaty majorities. In this respect, the decision of the Provisional Government to postpone the local elections in 1923 might have been a mistake.

In late January, Donal O'Callaghan had been shocked to receive a copy of a plea for surrender from Liam Deasy, a senior officer in the anti-Treaty IRA. After being captured earlier in the month, court-martialled and sentenced to death, Deasy wrote to Éamon de Valera with the pledge: 'I accept and will aid in immediate and unconditional surrender of all arms and men as required by General Mulcahy'. He called on a group of sixteen, including Donal O'Callaghan, to give a similar undertaking. In an accompanying note, Deasy wrote: 'On reading through you will probably feel very bitter regarding my action. Candidly, I have felt with some time that we would one day end

the unfortunate scrap by negotiation, the feeling is held by more than me. Therefore, I was anxious to see the end before any more would be sacrificed. It may appear strange on my part to have delayed action until I was a prisoner, but that would not have happened were I arrested two days late'. De Valera sent a copy of Deasy's correspondence to all members of his cabinet noting: 'I need not impress upon you that this is the most serious blow that has been aimed at the Republic since the government was formed, and I expect you will give careful thought to the best manner of meeting it'. On 2 February, Donal O'Callaghan wrote to de Valera about Deasy's correspondence which he described as a 'bomb'. O'Callaghan expressed concern about the extent to which Deasy's view were shared by senior officers in the IRA: 'It is essential, if we are to carry on, that we should, now at all events, know definitely and be able to feel that what remains of the army is dependable'. O'Callaghan's references to 'what remains of the army' and 'if we are to carry on' suggest that he had some doubts about continuing with the Republican government and the Civil War. However, these sentiments do not carry through in the remainder of the letter and he advised de Valera not even to bother replying to Deasy.

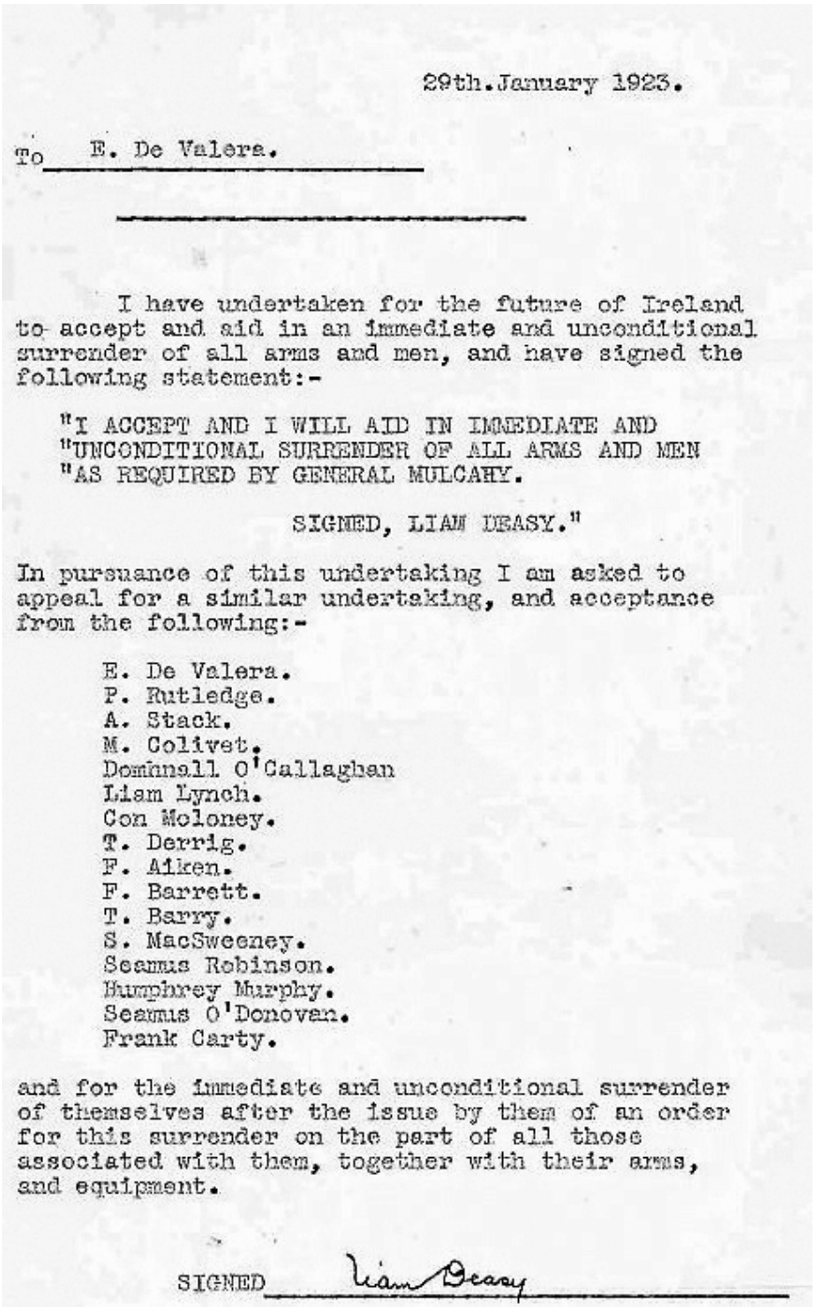
Two days later, O'Callaghan wrote to Liam Lynch, the IRA's Chief of Staff, repeating similar concerns to those he had expressed to de Valera: 'We rely entirely on the army to fight and carry out our decrees. If the army is not in a position to, or is not willing to, do this, then we cannot carry on …… thereby prolonging the war in the country'. The untypically rambling and repetitive three-page letter to Lynch demonstrated that O'Callaghan was deeply concerned by the defection of Deasy as a senior IRA officer and the effect on the army. On the third page, O'Callaghan bluntly noted: 'Either the state of the army is as bad as he [Deasy] paints it, or it is not'. Essentially O'Callaghan was seeking reassurance from the IRA Chief of Staff and he ended his letter by predicting that 'another such bombshell' could fall in their midst, i.e. more senior army officers might call for an unconditional surrender. Liam Lynch sent a detailed eighteen-point reply the following day. He dismissed Deasy's claim that many senior officers in the IRA shared his views and wanted a surrender. He conceded that the IRA was on the defensive in Munster, due to the enemy sending 'thousands of troops' into Kerry but predicted that the tables would turn quickly in their favour if artillery was to arrive as promised. Lynch concluded that he saw 'no alternative but to push the fight with all the vigour required'. Liam Lynch also received a letter from Mary MacSwiney on 4 February which is of interest because, in it, she referenced a conversation she had with Eibhlín Ní Shuillebháin, who would marry Donal O'Callaghan in London the following year. Eibhlín Ní Shuillebháin, from Candroma, Inchigeelagh, told MacSwiney that the men who were fighting in west Cork felt isolated and despondent and that morale was low following Deasy's unexpected surrender.

Unsurprisingly, de Valera dismissed Deasy's correspondence. He wrote to Lynch saying that if they abandoned the Republic at this point, it would be an even greater blow that the signing of the Treaty. He added: 'In taking upon ourselves to be champions of this cause, we have incurred obligations which we must fulfil even to death' (De Valera letter to Lynch, 2 February 1923, as quoted by McCullagh, 2017).

On de Valera's instructions, Liam Lynch sent a terse reply to Liam Deasy on 5 February, which simply stated: 'I am to inform you officially, on behalf of the government and Army Command, that the proposal contained in your circular letter of 30 January, and the enclosure, cannot be considered'.

In the early months of 1923, Donal O'Callaghan also maintained regular contact with de Valera's Finance 'Minister', Austin Stack, about staffing arrangements in the Department of Local Government. In a hand-written letter dated 30 January, O'Callaghan asked Stack: 'Could you suggest the name of a member of Dublin Corporation, either Republican or sympathetic, who would be willing to assist us? Such a man would probably be very useful after a short time?' Running the local government department from a distance, with no staff and no money, was an almighty challenge for O'Callaghan who needed someone he could trust in Dublin to assist him. When Stack replied, it was not with the name of a man but rather Alderman Kathleen Clarke, the widow of Tom Clarke, one of the signatories of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic in Easter 1916. Kathleen Clarke was a prominent member of Dublin Corporation and, over the next few months, she kept O'Callaghan informed of activities in the local authority.

O'Callaghan also relied on information supplied by Robert Brennan, the Director of Publicity for the anti-Treaty forces. He asked Brennan to provide him with a list of proclamations and resolutions in favour of the Republic passed by local authorities and other public bodies. Brennan replied that he did not have access to his files which were in Dublin Castle and noted: 'There is one



29th.January 1923.

To E. De Valera.

I have undertaken for the future of Ireland to accept and aid in an immediate and unconditional surrender of all arms and men, and have signed the following statement:-

"I ACCEPT AND I WILL AID IN IMMEDIATE AND
"UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER OF ALL ARMS AND MEN
"AS REQUIRED BY GENERAL MULCAHY.

SIGNED, LIAM DEASY."

In pursuance of this undertaking I am asked to appeal for a similar undertaking, and acceptance from the following:-

E. De Valera.
P. Rutledge.
A. Stack.
M. Colivet.
Domhnall O'Callaghan
Liam Lynch.
Con Moloney.
T. Derrig.
F. Aiken.
F. Barrett.
T. Barry.
S. MacSweeney.
Seamus Robinson.
Humphrey Murphy.
Seamus O'Donovan.
Frank Carty.

and for the immediate and unconditional surrender of themselves after the issue by them of an order for this surrender on the part of all those associated with them, together with their arms, and equipment.

SIGNED Liam Deasy

Facing page: The 'surrender' letter of Liam Deasy in which he called for Donal O'Callaghan, amongst others, to concede defeat.
[Éamon de Valera papers, courtesy of UCD Archives]

[file] in the National Library, carefully locked away'. Frustrated, O'Callaghan wrote to Eamon Donnelly, Director of Elections for the reorganised anti-Treaty Sinn Féin, in February, asking him: 'Have you a copy of Resolutions of Allegiance to Dáil Éireann adopted by the public bodies, or a list of the Boards that adopted it? I am finding it very difficult to get any records or date at all dealing with local government'. Donnelly's reply stated that all Sinn Féin candidates had taken the same pledge before the last local elections; there had been no standard Resolution of Allegiance but each local authority had passed one and had also broken off communications with the British LGB. Following the exchange of further letters, O'Callaghan and Donnelly agreed that, rather than writing to the local authorities, a circular letter should be sent to all public representatives reminding them of the pledge they had taken. If they were true to the pledge, they would support de Valera's Republican Government and not the Free State Provisional Government. Somewhat threateningly, Donnelly noted: 'It is much easier to take drastic action against individuals than against Public Boards'. The strategy that O'Callaghan and Donnelly agreed upon was to make it as difficult as possible for the Free State Government to function. Another issue at the forefront of O'Callaghan's mind was the safety of communications. This was particularly problematic for him given that he was based outside of Ireland. In a letter to P. J. Ruttledge on 26 March he referred to 'the extraordinary leakage of communications in transit' which had been taking place. He argued strenuously that de Valera's government needed to appoint a Director of Foreign Communications.

By this time, the continuation of the Civil War was looking increasingly futile. On 23 March, eleven of the sixteen members of the Army Executive met in Bliantas, west of the Nire Valley in Waterford. Éamon de Valera was there in a non-voting role. A fervent debate took place on a proposal by Frank Aitken that de Valera should be empowered to open peace discussions. With the Chief of Staff of the Army, Liam Lynch, abstaining, the vote was split five to five, meaning that the proposal did not pass (McCullagh, 2017). Tom Barry brought forward a motion which stated that further armed resistance and operations against the Free State Government would not further the cause

of independence of the country. Barry's motion was lost by six votes to five, with Lynch casting the decisive ballot. Thus, the Civil War continued even though the Army Executive was split. McCullagh (2017) argues that a major defect of Liam Lynch as Chief of Staff was that he didn't know when to stop fighting. A similar point is made by Murray (2018) who claims that since the start of the Civil War, Lynch had been 'underestimating the opposite side and overestimating his own'. De Valera was aware that the game was up. In a letter to P. J. Ruttledge on 9 April, he wrote: 'To me our duty seems plain – to end the conflict without delay …… The hope of success alone would justify our continuing the fight, and, frankly, I see no such hope …… The time has definitely come, I think, when a new policy for the prosecution of the cause of national Independence will have to be adopted. The phase begun in 1916 has run its course' (De Valera to Ruttledge, 9 April 1923, UCD Archives, P150/1710).

The Army Executive of the anti-Treaty IRA was due to meet again on 10 April but the meeting was postponed after Liam Lynch was shot and killed by National Army soldiers in Crohan West at the Knockmealdown Mountains. *The Irish Times* (12 April 1923) described him as 'the most obstinate and unflinching of the government's opponents' and noted: 'The death of Liam Lynch removes one of the most important – if he was not actually the most important – of the leaders of the Republican party'. Lynch's deputy, Frank Aitken took over as Chief of Staff and, by the end of the month – with the support of de Valera – he signed an order for the suspension of hostilities. On 13 and 14 May, a meeting of the senior members of de Valera's Republican Government and the anti-Treaty IRA Army Council met at a secret location in Dublin. Seven people were in attendance – Éamon de Valera, P. J. Ruttledge, Michael Colivet, Donal O'Callaghan, Frank Aitken, Comdt. Gen. Barry and Comdt. Gen. Pilkington. O'Callaghan had travelled from Europe at de Valera's request. Intense discussions took place over two days, with the minutes noting: 'The Army position and FS [Free State] 'Govt' attitude towards peaceful settlement were discussed at length'. Eventually, the following decision was reached: 'It was unanimously decided to instruct C/S [Chief of Staff] to issue "Cease Fire – Dump Arms" Order to the Army' (Ernie O'Malley Papers, National Library of Ireland). Accordingly, on 24 May, Aitken ordered all IRA units to dump their weapons. The Civil War, which had gone on much longer than was necessary, was finally at an end.

Donal O'Callaghan was at the heart of the decision to end the war and he was now a trusted member of de Valera's inner circle.

Such was de Valera's state of mind, he regarded defeat in the Civil War as just a setback and he continued the charade of his Republican cabinet. McCullagh (2017) states: 'Now that the fighting was over, de Valera was full of schemes'. One such scheme was to send Donal O'Callaghan to America as his envoy. On 1 June – in a letter co-signed by his Acting 'Minister' of Finance, Michael Colivet – de Valera wrote to his cabinet and to all representatives of the Republic in America. The letter stated:

> Domhnall ua Ceallacháin (Donal O'Callaghan), Lord Mayor of Cork, is hereby authorised by me to act as representative and financial agent of the Minister of Finance in the USA, and to take all necessary steps to secure on behalf of the Minister monies and properties of the Republic therein existing or in the future coming into existence.
>
> He has authority to issue all necessary instructions regarding collection, custody, and disposition of such properties and monies, in accordance with the Minister's orders.

The decree giving effect to this was signed by de Valera on 28 June 1923 on the headed paper of Dáil Éireann (Government of the Republic of Ireland). He signed it as President of the Dáil and Minister for Foreign Affairs. O'Callaghan was to replace Laurence Ginnell as the Republican Special Envoy to the US. A colourful character, Ginnell had acted as de Valera's representative in the US since 1922, before dying in a Washington hotel on 17 April 1923. Previously, on the instructions of de Valera, he had been the only TD opposed to the Treaty to enter the Dáil in August 1922, but had been 'forcibly removed after repeated questioning of the constitutional status of the assembly' (Dempsey and Boylan, 2009).

De Valera was aware that O'Callaghan was highly regarded in Irish America after his eight months there in 1921 when he had worked closely with the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic (AARIR) and Clan na Gael. Knowing that another general election was inevitable now that the Civil War was ended, de Valera recognised that the Republican movement

and Sinn Féin needed money. On 6 July he wrote to O'Callaghan urging him to 'waste no time in getting away'. De Valera explained that he wanted to put forward at least one candidate in each constituency at the next election, but noted: 'This cannot be done without a special fund'. He insisted to O'Callaghan the need to begin a fund-raising drive as soon as he set foot in America: 'To get it going should be your first work when you arrive at the other side. I know you will do your utmost'.

Accompanying the letter, de Valera included a detailed set of instructions, as follows:

1 Make your headquarters at Washington unless, for some sufficient reason which you will furnish in writing to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, you decide that a change is necessary.
2 You will secure the official papers of the late Envoy, Laurence Ginnell, and also the balance of monies standing to his account. Information on these matters can be got by Mr. Finnerty, Mr. Garth Healy, and Mr. Castellini, who is Mrs. Ginnell's attorney. You should communicate with Mrs. Ginnell yourself before you leave.
3 You will investigate the conditions under which the late Envoy sanctioned the drive of one million dollars instituted by the AARIR, and safeguard the interests of the Republic in connection with this drive.
4 You will endeavour to reconcile the aims and coordinate the efforts being made by the several American organisations working in support of the Republic, and assume complete control over all delegations from Ireland seeking funds, whether for the Government or relief purposes.
5 You will act as direct representative and financial agent of the Minister of Finance, and see that accounts are rendered and audits made in accordance with his instructions and otherwise safeguard the financial interests of the Republic in the US, seeing that all subscriptions from sympathisers are applied strictly to the purposes for which they were subscribed.
6 You will act generally as the representative of our Government, and safeguard the interests of the Government and of the Republic to the utmost of your ability. Your credentials accompany this letter.
7 You will act as deputy and substitute for me in my capacity as Trustee of Dáil Éireann, and do your utmost to safeguard my interests as such and those of my co-Trustee, Mr. Stephen M. O'Mara, in the litigation now pending in the American courts and in all other matters affecting our interests. Accompanying this letter is a formal legal authorisation from me for this purpose.

As he prepared to cross the Atlantic, thirty-two-year-old Donal O'Callaghan was under no illusions about the size of the task he had been set by Éamon de Valera. Coordinating the efforts of the different Republic organisations in the US would not be straightforward as, ironically, it was de Valera himself who had split the Irish American community during his time there in 1919 and 1920. In this regard, various cases were before the American courts and de Valera had given him power of attorney. The immediate priority for the new Republican Envoy to the US was money. The date for the general election to the fourth Dáil was set for 27 August which gave O'Callaghan very little time to raise money and get it over to Ireland. No sooner had he arrived in Washington on 10 July when a cable arrived from de Valera saying: 'One hundred thousand dollars needed immediately to contest elections'. O'Callaghan was helped in his fund-raising mission by Seán Moylan who had been working in the US for de Valera since December 1922 (see Carroll, 2010).

The Lord Mayor of Cork set about his work with determination and his first report to de Valera was sent on 20 July, just ten days after he arrived in the US. In the report, O'Callaghan called for a reorganisation of the AARIR and recommended that the ongoing Republican fund-raising drive should be closed down temporarily so as to focus on the election fund. O'Callaghan stated that he was trying to access $30,000 which was currently being held in an account by the American Committee for Relief in Ireland. He also recommended to de Valera that more people should be sent over from Ireland to help with raising money in the States. De Valera's response to the first report of his US Envoy was to emphasise the urgency of the election fund and ask for 'immediate results'. O'Callaghan was under pressure and working around the clock. He instructed Seán Moylan to write to all members of Irish-American organisations asking for money. The letter to officers and members of Clan na Gael was issued on 28 July; in it, Moylan admitted: 'We cannot hope to secure a majority in the election, but a certain number of Republicans can be returned

which will form a nucleus round which Republican activities will centre and which will preserve the continuity of the Republican Government'. Moylan explained that Éamon de Valera had issued an appeal to America for $100,000 to fight the election and had appointed the Lord Mayor of Cork as his Envoy to co-ordinate the fund-raising efforts. All members of Clan na Gael were asked to contribute at least $5 within the next ten days. Moylan concluded the letter as follows: 'Every moments delay in responding to this, the Republic's appeal, gives aid to the enemy and may be fatal to the cause. Do not fail us in this vital moment' (Seán Moylan Papers, National Library of Ireland).

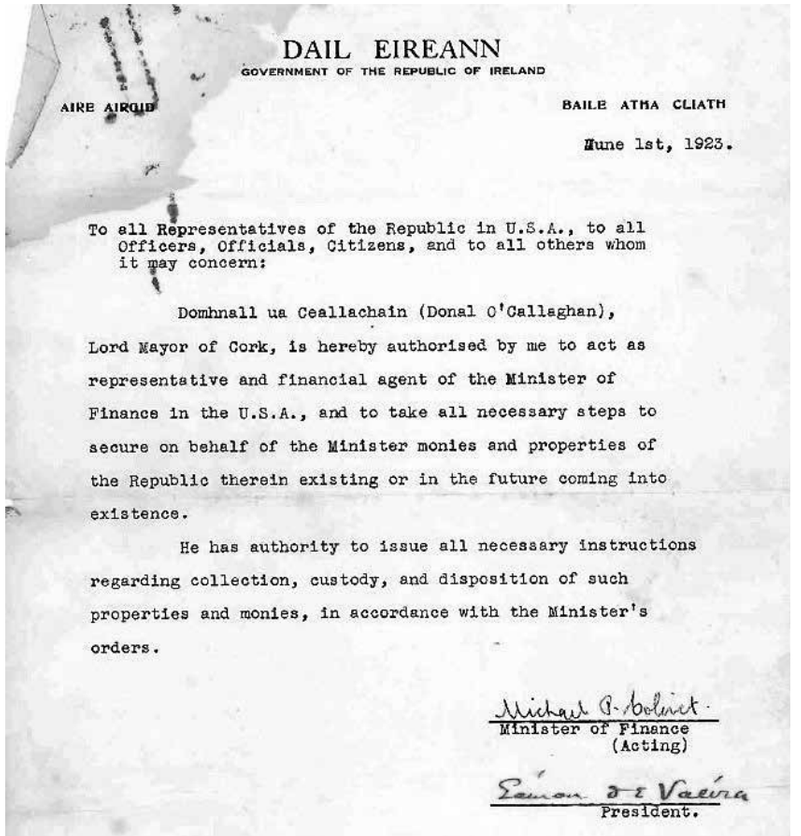
On 1 August, O'Callaghan wrote to influential Irish-American leaders, including Joseph McGarrity (an ardent supporter of de Valera), asking them to attend a conference in the Park Avenue Hotel, New York on Sunday 5 August, 'with a view to arranging for the wholehearted support of the Republic of Ireland'. At the conference in New York, O'Callaghan pressed the case of the Irish Republic to delegates and he urged them to present a united front. However, he got the sense from those present that this would be difficult to achieve. By the following week, O'Callaghan was able to report to de Valera that he had successfully raised three-quarters of the total amount asked for. By this time, he had travelled to Boston to attend a Clan na Gael convention. It was a difficult convention and he reported to de Valera: 'The position is extremely bad, due to splits, dissensions, and local personalities'. If anything, the situation was even worse than outlined by O'Callaghan. According to Murray (2018a), the main features of the Boston convention were recognition of the Irish Free State as a stepping-stone to a Republic and a vitriolic attack on de Valera. Frustrated by the divisions in Irish America, O'Callaghan asked de Valera to put the AARIR in his hands, with a nominated advisory committee, for a period of six months. He promised that he could re-build the organisation and make it work in cooperation with Clan na Gael. De Valera agreed to the proposal. The Lord Mayor of Cork also took it upon himself to send a message of condolence to the US Secretary of State (and to Mrs. Harding) on the death of Warren G. Harding, the twenty-ninth US President, who passed away from a heart attack on 2 August.

Though his mission to America was progressing fairly well, Donal O'Callaghan was feeling the strain. In a cable to Dublin (30 July) he indicated that he intended to return home and he called for de Valera to appoint his successor. He noted: 'My health necessitates that I lie up for a period. I have done all that was in my mind regarding America and it now remains for an able and energetic successor to take advantage of the situation'. O'Callaghan claimed that 'the appointment of a woman would be popular' and he recommended Mary MacSwiney. A reply was not sent for three weeks and O'Callaghan was shocked by the news contained therein, namely that Éamon de Valera was in jail after being arrested at an election rally in Ennis on 15 August. O'Callaghan was advised that a new Republican Envoy to the US would be appointed after the election. While he waited for the appointment of his successor, O'Callaghan was instrumental in organising a rally at the Lexington Theatre in New York to protest at the jailing of Éamon de Valera. The keynote speaker was de Valera's aged mother, Catherine, who travelled from Rochester. Donal O'Callaghan, Seán Moylan and Frank P. Walsh also addressed the crowd.

Back in Ireland, the election on 27 August was won by the new pro-Treaty Government party, Cumann na nGaedheal, with sixty-three seats but de Valera's Republicans (anti-Treaty Sinn Féin) polled well and claimed forty-four seats. Again though, they refused to take their places in the Dáil, which meant that Cumann na nGaedheal was able to govern, with William T. Cosgrave at the helm. The relative success of de Valera's Republicans at the election was partly due to the work of Donal O'Callaghan in the US; with the help of Seán Moylan and Joseph McGarrity he raised $200,000, double the original target (Carroll, 2009).

With de Valera still in jail, Donal O'Callaghan did leave America in the autumn of 1923. However, he did not return 'home' to Cork. Most of his time was spent in Europe, although he did make visits to Dublin. His interim replacement in the US was John Joseph O'Kelly (known as 'Sceilg'); ultimately, Seán T. O'Kelly took over the role (following his release from jail) and he served as US Envoy from 1924 to 1926. Anti-Treaty Sinn Féin and the alternative Republican Government continued, in spite of the imprisonment of its leader. Mary MacSwiney took de Valera's place at the Sinn Féin *Ard Fheis* in October and, when a new cabinet was formed, Donal O'Callaghan was named as 'Minister' for Foreign Affairs.

In this capacity, Donal O'Callaghan, accompanied by Conn Murphy, went to Rome to try to see Pope Pius XI. The aim of the trip was to convince the Pope to support the Irish Republic, to ask him to publicly call for the release from prison of de Valera, and to raise the issue of mistreatment of prisoners by the Free State Government (see John Hagan Papers, Archives of the Pontifical



DAIL EIREANN

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

AIRE AIRGID

BAILE ATHA CLIATH

June 1st, 1923.

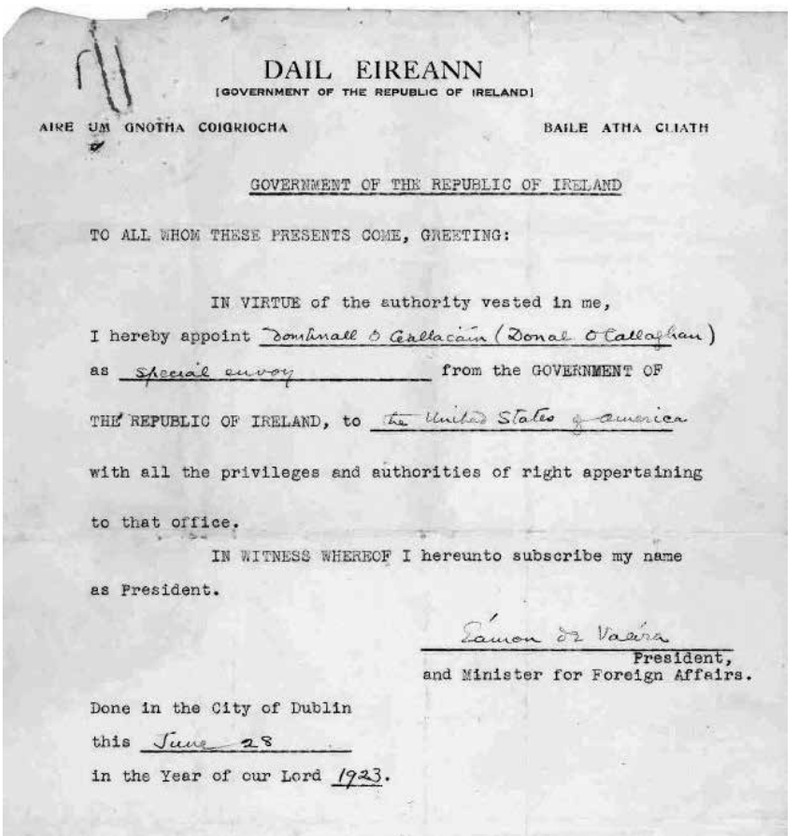
To all Representatives of the Republic in U.S.A., to all Officers, Officials, Citizens, and to all others whom it may concern:

Domhnall ua Ceallachain (Donal O'Callaghan), Lord Mayor of Cork, is hereby authorised by me to act as representative and financial agent of the Minister of Finance in the U.S.A., and to take all necessary steps to secure on behalf of the Minister monies and properties of the Republic therein existing or in the future coming into existence.

He has authority to issue all necessary instructions regarding collection, custody, and disposition of such properties and monies, in accordance with the Minister's orders.

Michael B. Bolster
Minister of Finance
(Acting)

Éamon de Valéra
President.



DAIL EIREANN

[GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND]

AIRE UM GNOTHA COIGRIOCHA

BAILE ATHA CLIATH

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

TO ALL WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME, GREETING:

IN VIRTUE of the authority vested in me, I hereby appoint Domhnall Ó Ceallacáin (Donal O'Callaghan) as Special envoy from the GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND, to the United States of America with all the privileges and authorities of right appertaining to that office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I hereunto subscribe my name as President.

Éamon de Valéra
President,
and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Done in the City of Dublin this June 28 in the Year of our Lord 1923.

Above and right: Letter from Éamon de Valera appointing Donal O'Callaghan as Special Republican Envoy to the US. [Éamon de Valera Papers, courtesy of UCD Archives]

Irish College, Rome). O'Callaghan and Murphy did not meet the Pope, getting no further than the Cardinal Secretary of State, Pietro Gasparri. O'Malley and Keane (2014) write: 'He [O'Callaghan] when out to see the Pope when de Valera was in gaol, himself and Conn Murphy …… The Pope wouldn't see them'. Apparently, Conn Murphy was not impressed by the meeting with Gasparri and he told the Cardinal Secretary of State: 'You are all pro-British, they have you on a string. This place [the Vatican] is festooned with pro-Britishers'. Gasparri replied: 'We serve only God' (O'Malley and Keane, 2014).

Donal O'Callaghan continued to travel extensively and he showed no signs of the ill-health referred to when he stepped down as US Envoy. The strong anti-Treaty vote in the general election appeared to renew both his hope and his energy. On 11 October, from Dublin, he wrote to an unidentified priest in the US, saying: 'The unexpected success of the elections has stimulated people considerably …… All here in HQ are well and the spirit is very hopeful'. At the conclusion of the letter, O'Callaghan requested – to avoid interception – that any reply should be posted directly to Mrs. Clifton at 60 Beechwood Avenue in Ranelagh, Dublin. By the end of the month, he was in Paris from where he sent a cable to Joseph McGarrity about hunger strikes which had been started by some Republican prisoners. The cable read: 'Free State spreading lying propaganda at feverish rate [about hunger strikes] ……



Members of the Irish Free State Army take over a ruined Collins Barracks at the end of the Civil War. [Courtesy of the *Irish Examiner*]

All a repetition of British poison about Terence MacSwiney'. He ended the message: 'In great spirits'.

Meanwhile, in Cork, towards the end of 1923, some elected members and officials were losing patience with their absent Lord Mayor who continued to draw a salary, even though he had not attended a Corporation meeting for seventeen months. It was agreed that the City Solicitor should report on the matter to the Law and Finance Committee. The City Solicitor's report was considered by the committee at a meeting on Wednesday 12 December. The report was unambiguous:

> I beg to report that any member of the council who absents himself from the council meetings for a period of twelve months, unless it be for a reason approved by the council, becomes disqualified from being a member of the council, and it is the duty of the council to declare his office vacant and to proceed to the election of a successor. If, therefore, the Lord Mayor has been absent for a period of twelve months, and if the council are not satisfied that he had good reason for being so absent, they must proceed to declare the office vacant.

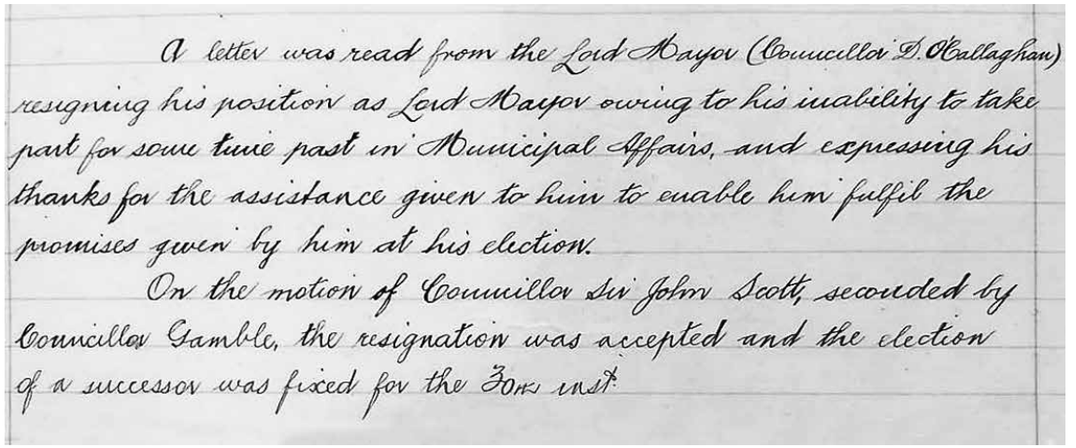
Councillor Michael Joseph O'Callaghan argued that it was very unfair to ask the citizens to pay £600 a year to a man who did not give his services to the Corporation or the city. Councillor Michael Joseph O'Riordan urged the committee members to consider the matter in a broad-minded way. He explained: 'The Right Honourable Donal O'Callaghan, Lord Mayor of Cork, has carried that name to London, to America, and he has carried that name and the Republican banner wherever he went with honour. The matter should be left over for the present …… Disturbing elements ought not to be roused now. When Donal O'Callaghan took up the position of Lord Mayor, he took it up at a time when it might have meant death to do so. Now we have men creeping and crawling to get the position' (*Cork Examiner*, 13 December 1923). Pointing out the he was not making a personal or political attack on the Lord Mayor, Councillor O'Callaghan countered by stating that they were at the committee as custodians of the people's money and £600 should not be paid to any member who was not doing his job. Chair of the Law and Finance Committee, Councillor Michael Egan said that the report by the City Solicitor was very clear and, in his view, every member of the Corporation, including the Lord Mayor, who did not attend meetings should be replaced. The committee decided to strike off a payment to the Lord Mayor of £50 – one month's salary – and to write to him explaining that his disqualification from office had been recommended.

The Lord Mayor replied with a letter of resignation, which was read at the Cork Corporation meeting on 25 January 1924. The letter stated:

> A chairde,
>
> I hereby resign the Lord Mayoralty of the city. I wish to thank you for the assistance you gave me to fulfil the promises we gave to the citizens when we were elected, since my election as Lord Mayor at the end of 1920, after Terence MacSwiney's sacrifice, RIP. It has been a troubled time since. The thoughts and opinions I had when I was elected are the same thoughts and opinions I have today on the question of the Irish Republic. Because of that I have been unable to be with you for more than a year. Because of that I should probably be unable to take part in municipal affairs for some time to come. Wishing you prosperity to the city and those who will be working for it.
>
> Is mise,
> Domhnall Ó Ceallacháin

On the motion of Sir John Scott, seconded by Councillor Daniel Gamble, the resignation letter was accepted and the election of a new Lord Mayor was fixed for 30 January.

When Cork Corporation met on 30 January, Councillor Seán French was elected Lord Mayor, defeating Councillor Barry Egan by twenty-three votes to twenty-two. Paying tribute to the outgoing Lord Mayor, Councillor Seán Nolan proposed the following motion: 'That we express our regret that it was necessary for our retiring Lord Mayor, Domhnall Ó Ceallacháin, to vacate the chair which he worthily occupied since the murder of Terence MacSwiney, and that circumstances prevent him from attending this council. That we convey our deep gratitude and thanks to him for the unselfish and heroic manner in which he stepped into the gap of danger after the murder of the first two



A letter was read from the Lord Mayor (Councillor D. O'Callaghan) resigning his position as Lord Mayor owing to his inability to take part for some time past in Municipal Affairs, and expressing his thanks for the assistance given to him to enable him fulfil the promises given by him at his election.

On the motion of Councillor Sir John Scott, seconded by Councillor Gamble, the resignation was accepted and the election of a successor was fixed for the 30th inst.

Extract from minute book of Cork Corporation, 25 January 1924
[Courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]

Republican Lord Mayors of this city, at a time when the probability was that he, too, would be numbered amongst the martyrs for Irish freedom; that we fully appreciate his sacrifice and his efforts to secure that freedom'. Speaking in support of his motion, Councillor Nolan, paid a personal tribute to Donal O'Callaghan, noting: 'He was probably one of the youngest Lord Mayors ever in office in this historic city but, despite his years, he was certainly one of the most competent and most unselfish. From his boyhood, he worked for Ireland, and he was always filled with a great love of country' (*Cork Examiner*, 31 January 1924). Concluding his speech, which was met by applause, Nolan described O'Callaghan as 'a brave and noble leader, and patriot'. The motion was unanimously approved. Cork city now had a new Lord Mayor. After more than three years – 1,182 days – Donal O'Callaghan's reign as first citizen was at an end.

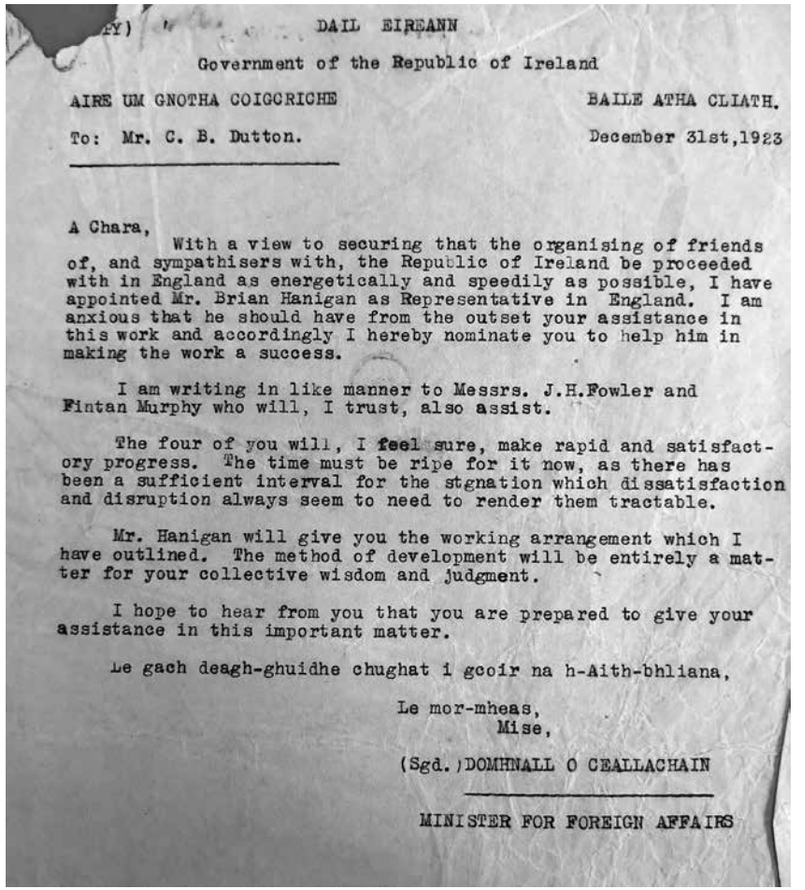
Chapter 20
The Dimming of Hope

Though he had been forced into resigning as Lord Mayor of Cork, Donal O'Callaghan did not face similar pressure to step down as Chairman of Cork County Council. He held onto the position, without attending meetings, throughout 1924 until Fermoy's David Leo O'Gorman was elected Chairman following the 1925 local elections. In his capacity as de Valera's 'Minister' for Foreign Affairs, O'Callaghan continued to work closely with Seán Moylan and Joseph McGarrity to improve relations amongst Irish-American Republican organisations and maintain a general fund-raising drive. In a February 1924 letter to McGarrity, Moylan wrote that O'Callaghan continued to 'plug away' at a variety of projects, in spite of the fact that his leader, Éamon de Valera, remained in jail. Now a senior figure in the Republican movement, O'Callaghan was very aware that the battle for hearts and minds had to be fought with words rather than weapons; therefore, publicity and propaganda were key. On 31 March 1924, he wrote to the IRA Chief of Staff, Frank Aitken, offering to pen an editorial for *Sinn Féin*, the weekly Irish Nationalist newspaper. He warned Aitken: 'If you agree to the publication of mine, please do not make drastic alterations in it which would necessitate re-writing. I write a thing once and find it difficult to amend'. O'Callaghan was insistent that the members of de Valera's Republican Government – though they did not take their seats in the Dáil and some, like O'Callaghan, were not TDs – should act like an opposition party and scrutinise the activities of the Cumann na nGaedheal Government. He wrote to Aitken on 17 April and enclosed the Free State's Financial Estimates for 1924-1925, noting: 'I have extracted some juice

for you. The figures I send will be of interest'. O'Callaghan informed Aitken that he would distribute the estimates to each member of the cabinet, adding: 'Each Dept. ought to examine the details of the corresponding FS [Free State] Dept. As a matter of fact, this is a most important document which could be used as an educational text-book'.

O'Callaghan was also centrally involved in reorganising the Irish Republican organisation in London. The London office had been run by Art O'Brien, ever since he had been appointed by Michael Collins in January 1919 as the Envoy of the first Dáil. O'Brien became a central figure in Anglo-Irish relations MacDiarmada (2019) writes: 'He [O'Brien] embarked on a zealous campaign to disseminate Sinn Féin propaganda to the world's press, particularly as leader and founder of The Irish Self-Determination League (ISDL) of Great Britain. He was also the conduit through which funds were dispersed to Sinn Féin offices throughout the world'. After the passing of the Treaty in 1922, Art O'Brien (who was fiercely against the agreement) was removed as the government's Envoy but he continued to exert significant influence through the ISDL and as de Valera's representative in London. However, in 1923, de Valera had a falling out with O'Brien after press interviews given by the latter. There was also concern that while the ISDL was struggling financially and de Valera was trying to raise money to fight a general election, O'Brien was living in the luxurious Grosvenor Hotel, with a yearly salary of £750, plus generous expenses (Noonan, 2014). By the end of 1923, both men were in jail and de Valera took the opportunity to re-organise the Republican organisation in London, through his 'Minister' for Foreign Affairs, Donal O'Callaghan. On 31 December, O'Callaghan wrote to C. B. Dutton, who was deputising for the imprisoned O'Brien. In the letter, O'Callaghan stated that he was appointing Brian Hannigan as the new Republican representative in London. This was the first step in establishing a new Republican body, the Irish Freedom League of Great Britain, to replace the ISDL. Within two months, the Irish Freedom League was created, with Hannigan appointed as president of the organisation.

By this point, Donal O'Callaghan himself was predominantly based in London, where he lived with his fiancée, Eibhlín Ní Shuilleabháin, at 134 Jamaica Road, Bermondsey. Art O'Brien was understandably upset by the side-lining of the ISDL and himself and he claimed that he was owed over two thousand pounds by de Valera's government. De Valera argued that O'Brien had spent money without authorisation and that he had never submitted his accounts for audit (Noonan, 2014).



DAIL EIREANN

Government of the Republic of Ireland

AIRE UM GNOTHA COIGCRICHE — BAILE ATHA CLIATH.

To: Mr. C. B. Dutton. — December 31st,1923

A Chara,

With a view to securing that the organising of friends of, and sympathisers with, the Republic of Ireland be proceeded with in England as energetically and speedily as possible, I have appointed Mr. Brian Hanigan as Representative in England. I am anxious that he should have from the outset your assistance in this work and accordingly I hereby nominate you to help him in making the work a success.

I am writing in like manner to Messrs. J.H.Fowler and Fintan Murphy who will, I trust, also assist.

The four of you will, I feel sure, make rapid and satisfactory progress. The time must be ripe for it now, as there has been a sufficient interval for the stgnation which dissatisfaction and disruption always seem to need to render them tractable.

Mr. Hanigan will give you the working arrangement which I have outlined. The method of development will be entirely a matter for your collective wisdom and judgment.

I hope to hear from you that you are prepared to give your assistance in this important matter.

Le gach deagh-ghuidhe chughat i gcoir na h-Aith-bhliana,

Le mor-mheas,
Mise,

(Sgd.)DOMHNALL O CEALLACHAIN

MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

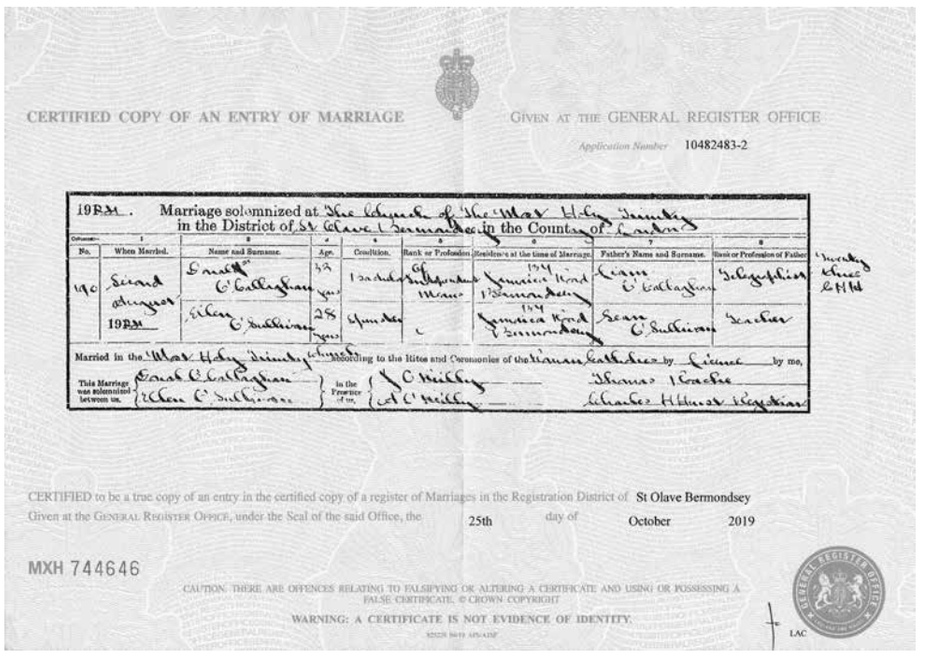
Letter from Donal O'Callaghan to C. B. Dutton, informing him of the appointment of Brian Hannigan as Republican representative in London
[Art O'Brien Papers, courtesy of National Library of Ireland]

In July 1924, both de Valera and O'Brien were released from prison. A letter was issued by Donal O'Callaghan asking O'Brien to come to Dublin as soon as possible for a meeting. O'Callaghan noted: 'The cabinet is very desirous that you should refrain from making any pronouncement, in the meantime, on the matter of Irish political organisation pending a discussion with you on this

side'. O'Brien replied that he was willing to travel to Dublin for discussions with the cabinet and he concluded his correspondence by stating: 'The first essential is to bring back to the movement the old discipline and the mutual confidence which gave it strength and purpose prior to the inception of that vicious document which still goes by the name of a Treaty'. Having written to O'Callaghan on 24 and 31 July, without receiving a reply to either letter, O'Brien wrote again on 9 August saying that he would be in Dublin three days later, based in Seán T. O'Kelly's house. O'Callaghan can be forgiven for his tardiness in replying to O'Brien. On Saturday 2 August, he married Eibhlín Ní Shuilleabháin in London, at the Holy Trinity Church in Bermondsey. On the wedding certificate, in the category of 'Rank or Profession' thirty-three year-old O'Callaghan is listed as being 'of independent means'.

Below: Wedding certificate for Donal O'Callaghan and Eibhlín Ní Shuilleabháin who were married in London on 2 August 1924. [Courtesy of Fiona Forde]

Right: Donal O'Callaghan married Eibhlín Ní Shuilleabháin in London on 2 August 1924 [Courtesy of Cork City and County Archives and Áine Healy]



CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE

GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number 10482483-2

1924. Marriage solemnized at the Church of the Most Holy Trinity in the District of St Olave Bermondsey in the County of London

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
190	1924 August 2nd	Donal O'Callaghan	33 yrs	1st Bachelor	Of Independent Means	104 Jamaica Road Bermondsey	Liam O'Callaghan	Telegraphist Mercantile Marine Office & Rtd
	1924 August 2nd	Eileen O'Sullivan	28 yrs	Spinster		104 Jamaica Road Bermondsey	Sean O'Sullivan	Teacher

Married in the Most Holy Trinity Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Roman Catholic by Licence by me,

This Marriage was solemnized between us. Donal O'Callaghan, Eileen O'Sullivan. In the Presence of us, J C O'Reilly, J C O'Reilly. Thomas J Gaehe, Charles Hillman Registrar

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a register of Marriages in the Registration District of St Olave Bermondsey

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 25th day of October 2019

MXH 744646

CAUTION: THERE ARE OFFENCES RELATING TO FALSIFYING OR ALTERING A CERTIFICATE AND USING OR POSSESSING A FALSE CERTIFICATE. © CROWN COPYRIGHT

WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.

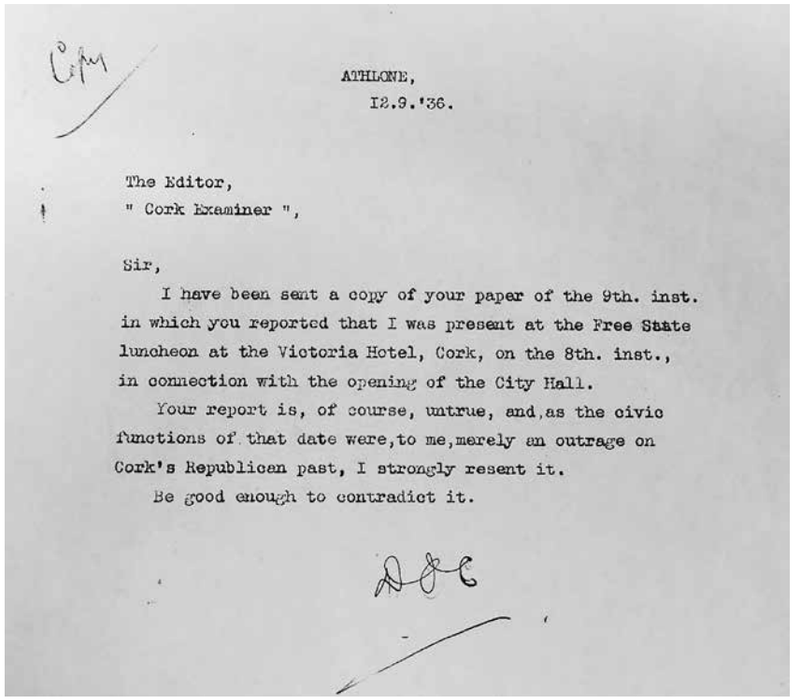
LAC



Donal O'Callaghan was back in Dublin by 11 August from where he wrote to Art O'Brien informing him that the London office of the ISDL was to be closed down and that his appointment as Representative of the Irish Republic in London was terminated. In an accompanying hand-written letter, he explained that 'P' (President, i.e. de Valera) was unable to meet him as planned; however, O'Callaghan promised O'Brien that he would call to see him at Seán T. O'Kelly's house.

Throughout the remainder of 1924, O'Callaghan continued to work with the Irish Freedom League in London. He also helped to reorganise the Republican office in Paris and was in regular contact with Seán T. O'Kelly about improving relations between the AARIR and Clan na Gael in America. However, he gradually began to withdraw from public life, preferring to travel with his wife and pursue his cultural interests. The optimism generated by the strong performance of the anti-Treaty Republican movement at the previous year's general election had disappeared and Hennessy (1962) notes: 'Politics, with its ramifications and quicksands and apparent wastefulness wearied him and he decided to return to ordinary life. He had been prepared to give all he had as a soldier but, by now, the soldiering was over. He preferred the things of the mind, necessarily neglected in years of revolution and war. Public life held no particular attraction for him'.

It is remarkable that a man who was such a central character in the Republican cause from 1916 to 1924, someone who had been a trusted ally of both Michael Collins and Éamon de Valera, withdrew so quickly and quietly from politics and the public spotlight. O'Callaghan was a very strong-willed and stubborn man and, once he made his mind up to walk away and begin a new chapter in his life, he was not for turning. In late 1924 and early 1925, de Valera made attempts to persuade O'Callaghan to stay involved in the fight for the Irish Republic. He offered the former Lord Mayor of Cork a variety of roles and committee positions, but each was politely and firmly declined. The readjustment to private life was not necessarily an easy one and O'Callaghan opted again to live outside of Ireland, basing himself in Strasbourg where he worked in a variety of jobs, including as an accountant. He did not return to Ireland until 1929 and worked as an accountant in Athlone, and later Dún Laoghaire, for the Electricity Supply Board (ESB). Though the fire inside of him had dimmed, it was not completely extinguished. When the new Cork City Hall was officially opened on 8 September 1936 by Éamon de Valera –



ATHLONE,
12.9.'36.

The Editor,
" Cork Examiner ",

Sir,

I have been sent a copy of your paper of the 9th. inst. in which you reported that I was present at the Free State luncheon at the Victoria Hotel, Cork, on the 8th. inst., in connection with the opening of the City Hall.

Your report is, of course, untrue, and,as the civic functions of that date were,to me,merely an outrage on Cork's Republican past, I strongly resent it.

Be good enough to contradict it.

Letter from Donal O'Callaghan to the *Cork Examiner* stating that he did not attend the lunch to mark the official opening of the new Cork City Hall
[Courtesy of Cork City and County Archives]

now leader of Fianna Fáil and President of Dáil Éireann – the *Cork Examiner* mistakenly reported that Donal Óg O'Callaghan was one of the guests at the celebratory lunch in the Victoria Hotel. An irate O'Callaghan fired off a letter from Athlone to the newspaper stating that he was not present at the 'Free State luncheon' before adding: 'Your report is, of course, untrue and, as the civic functions of that date were, to me, merely an outrage on Cork's Republican past, I strongly resent it. Be good enough to contradict it' (Cork City and County Archives, letter by Donal O'Callaghan, 12 September 1936).

Donal O'Callaghan died in Dublin's Baggot Street Hospital on Wednesday 12 September 1962, at the age of seventy-one. The following day, the tricolour over Cork City Hall was lowered to half-mast as a mark of respect. Both the *Cork Examiner* and *Evening Echo* paid tribute to the former Lord Mayor but

presented cursory accounts of his life, focusing on November 1920 when he was elected as the city's first citizen. The *Examiner* noted that, as a young man, O'Callaghan had fearlessly stepped into the breach at a time when the Black and Tan terror was at its peak. Striking a similar note, the *Echo* stated that when he took over as Lord Mayor, it was 'the most dangerous public appointment in Ireland' and that he was 'marked for death' like his two famous predecessors. The Cork Council of Trade Unions adjourned its meeting the night after O'Callaghan's death. Treasurer, Seán Ó Murchú, stated: 'No words of mine can describe the noble and courageous part the late Mr. O'Callaghan played in the fight for independence and in establishing a state where Irish people can be their own masters'. Donal O'Callaghan may well have been amused at these comments given his negative reputation in the 1920s in the trade union and labour movements. Lord Mayor of Cork, Alderman Seán Casey TD, issued a statement describing O'Callaghan as 'a brilliant young man who was prepared, at a stage when things were very difficult for Cork city and the country generally, to take his part in standing out in the fight for Irish freedom'. He announced that a special meeting of Cork Corporation would take place the following Tuesday night to remember O'Callaghan. The Lord Mayor, accompanied by City Manager, Walter McEvilly, also attended the funeral in Dublin the following day, 14 September. After 10.00 a.m. Mass at St. Mary's Church, Haddington Road, Donal O'Callaghan was laid to rest in Dean's Grange Cemetery in Blackrock. The chief mourners were his widow, Eibhlín, and his siblings William (Liam), Seán, Jeremiah, Mary and Cáit. The Taoiseach, Seán Lemass TD, was represented by his Parliamentary Secretary and there was a large turnout from former colleagues in the ESB. Under his name, the headstone simply reads: 'Donal Óg ó Corcaigh'.

At the special meeting of Cork Corporation the following Tuesday night, Councillor Seán McCarthy formally proposed the vote of sympathy for Donal O'Callaghan. He described the former Lord Mayor as a 'brave and patriotic man' and a 'great Gael' whose story would be an inspiration for people in the years to come. Alderman Stephen Barrett TD recalled the sacrifices that O'Callaghan had made for the cause of Irish freedom. Barrett referred to his great courage in stepping into the shoes of Terence MacSwiney at the age of twenty-nine. After many other elected members spoke, to associate themselves with the motion of sympathy, Lord Mayor Alderman Seán Casey TD adjourned the meeting.



Donal O'Callaghan's headstone in Dean's Grange Cemetery in Blackrock, Dublin [Courtesy of Jason McLean, Dean's Grange Cemetery]

The purpose of this book is to tell the story of Donal Óg O'Callaghan's political life and, especially, his time as Lord Mayor of Cork. He formally entered political life in March 1920, aged twenty-eight, taking a seat on Cork Corporation after an uncontested by-election. He was elected Lord Mayor on 4 November 1920 and held that position until resigning on 25 January 1924, aged thirty-two. To a large degree, his public life ended at that moment. Over the previous four years, he was a pivotal player in Ireland's Republican movement, seeking independence and the right to self-determination for his country. O'Callaghan was Lord Mayor, Chairman of Cork County Council, a TD and a minister (of sorts) in the Republican cabinet. At different times, he was a trusted colleague and ally of Michael Collins and Éamon de Valera. He represented the first Dáil at the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland which took place in Washington in 1921. As the emissary of Michael Collins, he helped to secure a loan for the Dáil from Irish-America.

The following year, de Valera selected him as one of his delegates at the Paris Race Convention. Later, he was de Valera's (Acting) 'Minister' for Local Government and 'Minister' for Foreign Affairs. He was also de Valera's trusted problem-solver and was sent on different missions to Rome, Paris and London; of course, O'Callaghan was also appointed as Special Republican Envoy to the US and given the responsibility of raising a significant election fund in a very short period of time. He was in the Mansion House on 8 December 1921 when the cabinet of the first Dáil agreed by four votes to three, after an acrimonious debate, to recommend the Treaty to the parliament. He was the man who failed to sound the alarm in Cork City Hall on 12 August 1920 which might have led to Terence MacSwiney escaping rather than being arrested. For many people, Donal O'Callaghan was a patriot and hero. Others were suspicious of his character, his ambition and his manner and some, bizarrely, thought he was a spy for the British. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, when the elected members of Cork Corporation met in September 1962 to pass a vote of sympathy following O'Callaghan's death, Councillor Seán McCarthy predicted that his story would be an inspiration to people in the years ahead. This did not happen because, until now, Donal O'Callaghan's story has never been told. He has become Cork's forgotten Lord Mayor, overshadowed by Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney, and neglected by historians. One reason for this neglect is that for the seventy-one years Donal O'Callaghan lived, only four of the years were spent in the public eye. At heart, he was a very quiet and private man who was happy in the company of books and a small number of trusted friends. When he walked away from public life, he did so without a backward glance. The door was firmly closed and he had no desire to revisit his glory years of the early 1920s. O'Callaghan shunned the limelight – he did not write an autobiography, he did not keep diaries and he was unwilling to provide a written statement to the Bureau of Military History. He also refused to be interviewed by his former colleague, Ernie O'Malley, who travelled around Ireland in the 1940s and 1950s, speaking to survivors of Ireland's struggle for independence. O'Callaghan's refusal was a firm one, leading to O'Malley in the book, *The Men Will Talk to Me*, describing O'Callaghan as an extremely rude bastard. This characterisation may well be unfair on O'Callaghan who simply did not want to re-open a door he had shut decades earlier. Perhaps the O'Malley book should bear the title, *Most of the Men Will Talk to Me*.

As for Donal O'Callaghan the man, it is hard to paint a definitive picture. In *The Lord Mayors of Cork, 1900-2000*, Antóin O'Callaghan describes him as 'a man of sharp wit and humour, believing in his principles and not shy about letting his position be known'. In a beautifully written obituary by his friend and colleague, Micheál Hennessy, for the *ESB Journal* of September 1962, O'Callaghan's faculty for humour and fun is also mentioned. O'Callaghan's political years were a time of enormous stress when his life was threatened; yet, there are moments when his sense of fun is apparent, particularly in some of his exchanges with Sir John Scott in the Council Chamber and in his telegrams to Fr. Dominic during Terence MacSwiney's hunger strike. Like many people, Donal O'Callaghan had a tendency to resort to humour as a stress coping mechanism. The obituary by Hennessy is the most intimate portrait we have of Donal O'Callaghan, who carried the name 'Donal Óg' from his earliest days in Cork, but was more commonly known by his colleagues in the ESB as 'Doc'. Here was a man who took a deep interest in young people, who had little time for material benefits and comforts, but who loved to read, travel and pursue his cultural interests. The following wonderful passage by Hennessy says much about Donal O'Callaghan:

> Reserved, even austere, he appeared to some, but behind the outer curtain resided a kindliness and sincerity, an understanding and helpfulness that encouraged many in the early stages of their career. His knowledge of languages, his interest in literature, in the theatre, in travel, in people, his searching and incisive mind and delicate taste for the *bon mot* combined to make a sociable and entertaining companion of high degree. He did not suffer foolishness or mediocrity gladly so that his unassuming courtesy and concern for others surprised those who had not penetrated beyond the brusque exterior.

Clearly, Donal O'Callaghan was nobody's fool. In fact, he was a man of exceptional intelligence which was obvious to his teachers at Eason's Hill and the North Mon. He led a life of great circumspection and enjoyed nothing better than a quiet night at home reading a book. To some extent, he was a lonely and solitary figure. For four years his public face loomed large but, for the most part, his private face was deliberately obscured. Even over the

course of his brief political career he was frequently on the run and living in the shadows. Tellingly, Hennessy's obituary refers to O'Callaghan's 'grief for unfulfilled hopes' and speaks about the dimming of his dreams and his sadness at the tragedies and losses he suffered during the first half of the 1920s. There is no doubt that O'Callaghan felt let down by different people during his career. He thought long and hard about the Treaty, but he could not support it as it fell short of his vision for Ireland. In this regard, he was left disappointed by Michael Collins, though he retained a great respect for the 'Big Fella'. He lost faith too in Éamon de Valera who ultimately formed Fianna Fáil and entered the Dáil after taking an oath of allegiance to the Irish Free State, which was linked to Britain and King George V. It is therefore little wonder that he was appalled when the *Cork Examiner* reported that he was with de Valera for the opening of Cork's new City Hall in September 1936. O'Callaghan regarded this as a Free State function and an insult to Cork's proud Republican history. O'Callaghan also felt let down by the people of Cork who rejected him in the general election of May 1922. Losing his seat was bad enough but he felt humiliated, as an incumbent TD and Lord Mayor, to finish in last place in the ballot.

The elephant in the room for Donal O'Callaghan is his role in the arrest of Terence MacSwiney on 12 August 1920, which led to his imprisonment and death by hunger strike in Brixton. This will remain a mystery as O'Callaghan did not explain in his written statement to the IRB why he neglected to warn MacSwiney of the raid on City Hall on that fateful night. If one accepts the version of Liam Deasy, there is a missing hour between 6.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. when Donal O'Callaghan left the Council Chamber in the Courthouse to sound the alarm in City Hall but he did not do so.

O'Callaghan can also be accused of being an absent Lord Mayor. He spent the first eight months of 1921 in the US and he did not attend a Corporation or County Council meeting after July 1922, despite continuing to draw a salary from both local authorities. In total, he missed more than half of his Corporation meetings as Lord Mayor and was out of the country for much of the time. This has to be balanced by the fact that his life was under threat. When he left for the US after the Burning of Cork, the terror campaign of the Black and Tans was at its peak. He was in serious peril and unable to spend a night at home in his own bed. None of the other Sinn Féin councillors in the Corporation were willing to replace Terence MacSwiney as they realised that the position of Republican Lord Mayor of Cork came with a death sentence. The circumstances of O'Callaghan's second departure, after the outbreak of the Civil War, are different. Perhaps the threat to his life was initially not as serious in this period but, after his appointment to de Valera's cabinet, he was a marked man. Proof of this comes in the fact that two members of the cabinet initially nominated – Liam Mellows and Erskine Childers – were executed, while Éamon de Valera and Seán T. O'Kelly both spent long spells in jail. By nature, Donal O'Callaghan was cautious and he possessed a strong instinct for survival. Unlike most of his Republican contemporaries he spent very little time in jail, just a couple of days after the Easter Rising of 1916. He had an excellent intelligence network and, on quite a few occasions, narrowly evaded capture. O'Callaghan had been willing to bear arms in 1916 and during his time with the Volunteers but, after his elections to Cork Corporation and Cork County Council in 1920, he devoted himself to political and peaceful means to achieve his goals. He was an intellectual who favoured the things of the mind over violence. This was not immediately recognised by the British whose intelligence reports incorrectly portrayed O'Callaghan as an extremely militant leader who was likely to take over command of the Cork No. 1 Brigade of the IRA following Terence MacSwiney's death. The campaign of the British Army to portray him as a spy was unsuccessful for the most part and was instantly dismissed by Michael Collins. However, a small minority of people within Sinn Féin and the IRA, had doubts about O'Callaghan, particularly after the raid on City Hall on 12 August 1920.

One of the disappointments for Donal O'Callaghan was that he was unable to reduce wastefulness and introduce modern practices into Cork Corporation. While he led a small group of councillors who were anxious to make the Corporation more efficient, other elected members were disinterested or had lost faith in the local authority. The Council Chamber was a difficult arena, with an anti-Treaty majority, despite the pro-Treaty national general election results of 1922 and 1923. This fed into a consistent campaign by the *Cork Examiner* that the Corporation did not represent the feelings of the citizens. Attendance at Corporation meetings was very poor over the period from 1920 to 1924 and it was not unusual for meetings to be cancelled due to the lack of a quorum. O'Callaghan's own frequent absences did not help his efforts to transform the Corporation. Of course, this was a council which straddled a chaotic period of transition from British

control to the Free State. City Hall lay in ruins after December 1920, office accommodation was appalling, some councillors spent periods in jail, the city had suffered major damage, meetings were regularly interrupted by armed forces and records destroyed. Had Cork Corporation performed effectively in this period, it would have been miraculous. O'Callaghan was replaced as Lord Mayor by Councillor Seán French in January 1924 after a bitter debate and vote. By October of 1924, Cork Corporation was dissolved and was not re-instated until 1929. The Free State Government argued that the elected members of Cork Corporation had 'rendered disinterested service' to their citizens and Philip Monahan was appointed as Commissioner, replacing the councillors. Interestingly, the Commissioner system was something that Donal O'Callaghan had recommended to de Valera, during his time as Acting 'Minister' of Local Government. O'Callaghan wanted to see local authorities operate more efficiently with greater managerial and technocratic dimensions. Many of his innovative ideas did not come to fruition. In 1922, he proposed that Cork should have a municipal police force but he was not supported by his colleagues. Some members, such as Alderman Liam de Róiste, feared that what O'Callaghan had in mind was a politicised anti-Treaty police force. O'Callaghan had a deep interest in mental health and he was heavily involved in the administration of the Cork Mental Hospital/Lunatic Asylum. Want of money and his own absences from Cork meant that most of his ideas to reform the hospital never saw the light of day. Blessed with an ability to see the 'bigger picture' O'Callaghan impressed those who heard him give evidence in Washington to the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland in January 1921. He devoted part of his testimony to the plight of women and children as a result of the War of Independence. He drew attention to the fact that the terror campaign of the Black and Tans had left many Cork families homeless and he feared for people's long-term physiological and psychological well-being.

One aspect of Donal O'Callaghan's life which would be wrong to ignore was his passionate devotion to Irish. Perhaps his greatest love was his native language. Hennessy writes in his obituary of O'Callaghan: 'To want to speak it [Irish] seemed to him as natural as to want to breathe or walk. In it he found recompense and satisfaction that mere political success could never afford'. Many of O'Callaghan's speeches in Cork Corporation, Cork County Council and the Dáil were delivered in Irish. In some of his letters, he apologises for using English. O'Callaghan's beloved wife, Eibhlín, came from the Cork Gaeltacht and Irish was the language they spoke in their daily lives at home. Again, his friend and confidant, Micheál Hennessy sums it up perfectly: 'Gaelgeóir árdnósach a bhí ann. Níl aon agó ná go raibh an Ghaeilge ar a thoil aige. B'aoibhinn beith ag éisteacht leis agus é ag stealladh teanga na n-Gaedheal'.

There were many different levels to Donal Óg O'Callaghan but it would be incorrect to call him a complex man. He was straightforward, honest and, above all else, principled – perhaps to a fault. Those who knew him well – and there were not many who did – found him to be charming, witty, cosmopolitan and cultured. During a turbulent four-year period, from 1920 to 1924, his life was interwoven with the most notable events and figures in Irish political history – the War of Independence, the Burning of Cork, the Treaty, the Civil War, Tomás MacCurtain, Terence MacSwiney, Michael Collins and Éamon de Valera. As a Gael, a solider, a patriot, a staunch Republican and a devoted public servant, he helped lay the foundations on which Ireland was built. Until now, he has been largely forgotten and erased from history. At the very least he deserves to be remembered, and fondly so. Hopefully this book will help to cement his place in the history of Cork and Ireland.



Unveiling of a portrait of Donal O'Callaghan by Lord Mayor, Councillor Tony Fitzgerald, Lord Mayor's Office, Cork City Hall, 2018
[Courtesy of the *Irish Examiner*]

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