



**AN EXHIBITION IN
MARSH'S LIBRARY, DUBLIN
MARCH 2016 – DECEMBER 2016**

CURATED BY ELAINE DOYLE

1916

**TALES FROM THE
OTHER SIDE**



MARSH'S LIBRARY IS a beautifully-preserved library of the early Enlightenment located right in the heart of Dublin.

It houses important collections of European books and manuscripts from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. When it opened in 1707 it was the first public library in Ireland. The interior of the library has remained largely unchanged over the past 300 years, and visitors come from all over the world to admire the architecture and soak up the atmosphere. Children are particularly welcome.

Every year we mount a themed exhibition which draws upon the library's holdings, and every working day of the year we post an image from one of our rare books or manuscripts on Facebook and Twitter.

Scholars who wish to consult our holdings can access our complete catalogue at www.marshlibrary.ie. Marsh's Library has ambitious plans to preserve and conserve our rare books and manuscripts. There are also plans to digitise some of our most precious treasures. If you are in a position to contribute to either of these projects, please contact the library for details of how you can help to secure the future of this remarkable institution.



THERE IS A feature that all revolutions — however ‘glorious’ — share: though their supporters perceive them as struggles for political or social liberation, they are also civil wars. 1916 is no exception, as Iris Murdoch argued in her book *The Red and the Green*, published one year before the fiftieth anniversary of the Rising. At the time, her view fell predominantly on deaf ears. As in most countries which underwent revolutionary traumas, in the Republic the received narrative of the events of Easter Week was long dominated by those who had supported the winning side. Indeed, I remember the days — not long ago — when the owners of documents similar to those displayed in this exhibition would have regarded the idea of publishing them with alarm and felt uneasy even about allowing scholars to examine them, fearing that they might shed a ‘controversial’ light on their ancestors’ attitudes to the Rising and, therefore, to Ireland.

However, most of us would now take the view that there were many ways to be patriotic in 1916, and indeed both before and since. Nor were all the fighters in this civil war animated by hatred for the other side. As T. C. Kingsmill Moore noted about his own experience of defending Trinity College against the Volunteers, ‘to be forced in self defence to shoot down our countrymen — these are things which even the knowledge of duty well fulfilled cannot render anything but sad and distasteful.’ And Ernest Bateman, then Church of Ireland Curate of Taney, eloquently expressed the same anguish in a poem composed while the fighting was raging:

*My heart is hot
To see your sacrifice
Pour down in rain
Of blood, a cruel price,
Spent but in vain.*

In the end, their sacrifice was not ‘in vain’, as Bateman himself was ready to acknowledge a little later, when in another poem he wrote that it was the patriot’s duty:

*To fling aside the outworn party creeds,
Bad heritage of faction and of hate,
To learn to trust, before it be too late,
To follow where his country’s genius leads,
To cast far from him everything that breeds
Unworthy fears, suspicions, and slate,
To aid the fortunes of our new-born state,
In good and evil times, by words and deeds,
This is the patriot’s service — to forget
The past with all its bitterness and wrong,
To lay it with the dead where it belongs,
And on the future all his purpose set,
Unheeding blame and seeking not for praise,
Content to give his country all his days.*

In this spirit, we ought to approach the evidence displayed here. It constitutes a remarkable testament to an age of rapid and dramatic changes, which enthused many but left others perplexed and painfully aware of the need to make difficult choices.

PROFESSOR EUGENIO BIAGINI, SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

MARSH'S LIBRARY WAS established as the first public library in Ireland in 1707. It was a product of the early Enlightenment, and reflected a hope that in the future Irish people might engage in rational discussion rather than resorting to violence, as we had done so frequently during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The library was established by an Anglican archbishop and has long been associated with the Church of Ireland. It has, however, always been a place where readers are welcome without reference to their religious beliefs. It was, during the dark days of the Penal Laws, one of the few public institutions with no rules barring admission by Catholics and Protestant Dissenters.

Marsh's houses important collections of early books and in the early eighteenth century was located in the most vibrant part of the city. As the centre of gravity of Dublin moved inexorably eastwards, the library gradually found itself physically and intellectually isolated and marooned. When the young James Joyce visited in 1902 he found a forlorn and unfrequented institution which he described as 'stagnant' and 'fading'. By the time of Joyce's visit, the once prosperous and salubrious area in the vicinity of the library was drowning in a sea of poverty, want and deprivation. There were islands of progressive thinking, such as the social housing built by the Iveagh Trust, but there were huge social and economic problems in the locality.

The area around Marsh's housed one large industrial employer in 1916: Jacob's biscuit factory. At the start of the Rising, a force of rebels under Thomas MacDonagh seized the factory complex as a defensive point and command centre. At its closest point, Marsh's was no more than 200 yards from Jacob's, which is now the site of the National Archives. Between the two buildings stood the police barracks which now serves as Kevin Street Garda Station. The proximity of Marsh's Library to the police station and the rebel garrison put it in great physical danger during Easter Week.

For the local civilian population, Easter Week would have been a confusing time. Many must have been unclear as to what the Proclamation of the Republic meant, and been unsure as to the extent of related revolutionary acts across the city and the country. Whatever the civilian population did or did not understand about the unfolding events, it would have been clear that an armed group had occupied a strong defensive position in a heavily-populated, poor and working-class area. It would also have been clear that if there were to be any fighting many civilians were likely to die.

1916: Tales from The Other Side looks at the experience of the library and the local population during that fateful week. It also addresses broader questions of shifting identities during the turbulent years between 1916 and the creation of an independent Irish state. This exhibition deliberately foregrounds a non-heroic narrative which speaks to the ambiguities, nuances, complexities and contradictions of the period. 'The other side' is a phrase laden with historical, religious and cultural connotations in Ireland. This exhibition uses it in a deliberately ambiguous way: who constitutes the 'other side' in the Irish revolution? It invites visitors to think about the ways in which violence forced difficult and unwanted choices upon the populace.

The 1916 Proclamation is a gloriously stirring and eloquent document which explicitly promised full civil and religious liberty to all Irishmen and women. It also implicitly held out the tantalising prospect of gender and social equality in the new Ireland. Yet, it was indifferent to the grubby reality that one would have to wade through human blood, much of it civilian blood, to have any prospect of reaching this Promised Land.

The personal bravery and heroism of the men and women of 1916 is unassailable, but one hundred years later we are aware of some of the difficulties in marking appropriately an insurrection which not only had no democratic mandate, but flew in the face of the democratically

expressed will of the Irish people over the previous decades. Many countries have key historical moments of violence — England in 1688, America in 1775, and France in 1789 — which define their modern identity and are commemorated, and even celebrated, without any qualms. This can be done because they are purely historical events; in Ireland, the situation is necessarily different because within recent memory, thousands of people were killed in Northern Ireland by groups which claimed to be the legitimate descendants of the heroes of 1916.

Stepping back from these broader questions, *1916: Tales from The Other Side* draws attention to the human experience of the vast majority: the non-combatants. The rebels of 1916 saw themselves as fighting for, and being willing to die for, their ideals. They rarely, if ever, countenanced the fact that they were killing for the Republic. Talk of killing raises the question, then as now, as to the grounds on which it is legitimate to kill other human beings for one's beliefs. Some of the most striking exhibits (items 5–8) are the 'bullet books' — inanimate, ancient texts which provide eloquent testimony to the physical dangers experienced by civilians during the Rising. These objects help to explain the severe antipathy of the local civilian population to the Jacob's garrison. The soldiers of the new Republic were bemused and angry at the ferocity of the verbal and physical attacks upon them by local women. These women were generally dismissed by the rebels as traitors or a politically unconscious group whose loyalty to the crown had been bought for the pittance provided for them while their menfolk were on active service in France with the British army. Yet, the 'bullet books' suggest that it is probably more accurate to view those women as 'salt of the earth' working-class Dubs who were unhappy — to put it mildly — that they and their children had been placed in mortal danger by the rebels.

Throughout 1916 the emotions we trace are overwhelmingly those of fear, anger, confusion and bemusement. In continuing the story through the difficult days of the War of Independence, the Civil War, and the early years of the newly independent state, we continue to encounter those emotions, but also begin to focus on the ways in which people were forced to make decisions as to who and what they were.

One intriguing snapshot of the way in which one individual adapted to changing circumstances is afforded by the visitors' book signed by readers to the library (item 26). During the Civil War, a young man named William Burd paid numerous visits to the library. William was from the 'other side', in the sense that he lived on the north side of the river Liffey. During his first visits he signed himself as 'W. Burd' of 43 Lindsay Road, but from 29 November 1922 he entered his name in *cló Gaelach*, or Irish script, as 'W. MacBurd' of 'Bothar Linsai'. Over the next months, as the new state fought a civil war and tried to consolidate its authority, William experimented with various forms of his name and address in Irish, before finally settling on a formulation that he was happy with. It took him a while, but he eventually found both an identity and a place in the new Irish state.

The widespread sense of fear experienced by many people during the Irish revolution is also suggested by a curious incident on the front steps of Marsh's Library in 1923. When, during the Civil War, a young man named Patrick J. O'Connor came to read in the library, he found his way barred by the cleaner on the front steps. It was only after he took off his trench-coat and fedora hat (the unofficial uniform, he realised, of the gunman) and showed her that he was not carrying a gun or anything which might set fire to the library, that the brave woman allowed him to cross the threshold. O'Connor recounted the story with fond regard for the cleaner after he learned of her death in 1949 (item 21), but the incident speaks to the fear that an institution associated with a minority

church could be subject to arson. This fear was in no way irrational in the light of the burnings across the country during the Civil War.

1916: Tales from The Other Side moves beyond traditional tales of heroic derring-do to look at a range of experiences associated with the Irish revolution. If the stories it tells sometimes make for uncomfortable reading for citizens of modern Ireland, we can at least take pride in the fact that there is no longer anything about those traumatic years which is taboo, or off-limits for public discussion and debate. This is a testament to the vibrant nature of Irish democracy in 2016, and to our willingness to engage with the messy realities of history as it happened, not how one would like it to have happened. It also speaks to our ability to envisage a future which is neither imprisoned nor defined by the past.

DR JASON MCELLIGOTT, THE KEEPER, MARSH'S LIBRARY.

The Record of the Irish Rebellion of 1916 (Dublin, 1916)

1. This magazine was published by *Irish Life* in 1916. The cover shows the burning of O'Connell Street, which was particularly badly affected during Easter Week.

Inside, the magazine claims to be 'a plain narrative of events as they occurred.' Documents, maps and photographs from the Rising sit alongside advertisements for prisoner-of-war funds and army supplies, a reminder that the First World War was ongoing.



Weekly Irish Times, 29 April, 6 May, 13 May 1916

- 2. The *Irish Times* was the only Dublin paper to stay in print during the Rising. It called the rebellion ‘the darkest week in the history of Dublin’ and ‘an orgie of fire and slaughter.’

The photographs feature three insurgents from Jacob’s biscuit factory, the rebel garrison closest to Marsh’s Library: Thomas MacDonagh (*top row, second from left*); John MacBride (*top row, far right*); and Michael O’Hanrahan (*bottom row, second from left*).



1916: The Sinn Fein Rebellion (Belfast, 1916)

3. This souvenir book shows some of the devastation suffered by Dublin city centre during the Rising.

The rubble is all that remains of a four-storey building belonging to the bookbinders and printers, Messrs Thom, in Middle Abbey Street. A number of rare and precious books were sent for repair to Thom's from the library in the week before the Rising and were lost in the fire.



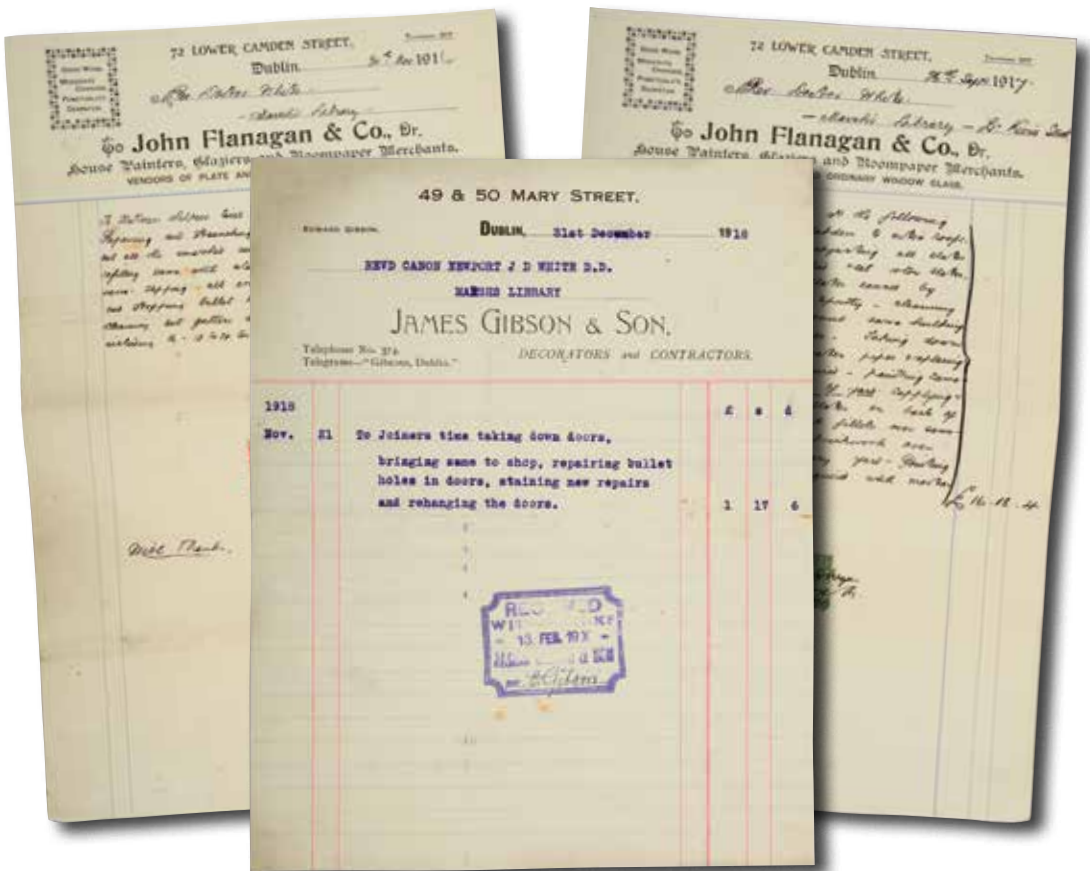
Image by permission of the estate of T.W. Murphy

Invoices for repairs to Marsh's Library

- The Library came under rifle fire throughout the week but significant damage was inflicted only on the morning of Sunday 30 April. The Library's minute book recorded that a British army machine-gun 'inadvertently' sprayed the building with bullets.

Repair work to the Library was first undertaken by John Flanagan & Co., whose handwritten invoices list bullet repairs among general upkeep of the library, including clearing gutters.

Further repairs were provided by James Gibson & Son, who were responsible for 'repairing bullet holes in doors'. This repair work is still visible in the entrance door today.



CASE TWO: BULLET BOOKS

Jean Mestrezat, *Traité de l'Eglise* (Geneva, 1649)

- 5. A small entry hole conceals a wave of destruction inside this book, and the bullet's exit point is much larger. The bullet passed through the *Traité de l'Eglise* and hit the wall behind it, before ricocheting back into two other books.

The books serve as a potent visual reminder of the trauma inflicted by bullets on human flesh.



CASE TWO: BULLET BOOKS

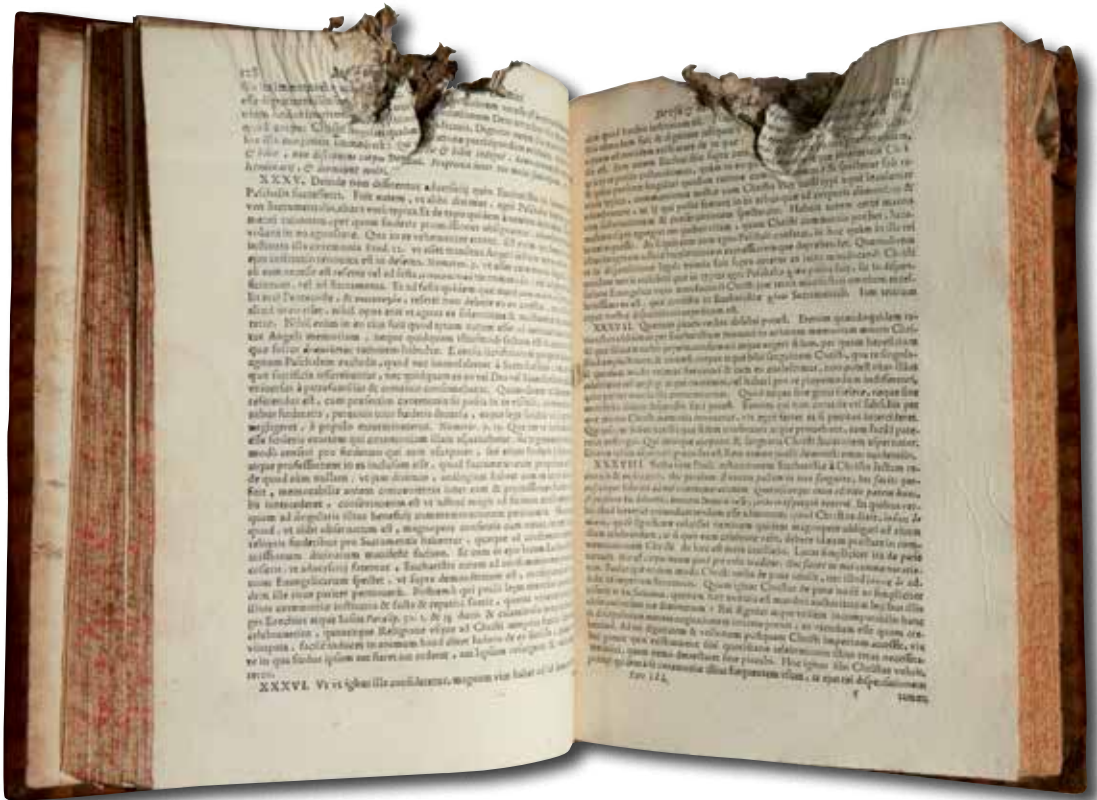
Jean Claude, *Reponse au livre de Monsieur l'Evvesque de Meaux* (Charenton, 1683)

- 6. This book is one of the few which was not named in the library's account of damaged books — might it have been noticed later? If so, a surprise awaited its discoverer. Buried deep inside the volume, as if nested among the words, is a fragment of a bullet. It has been flattened by its travels.



Louis Cappel, Josué de La Place and Moïse Amyraut, *Syntagma thesium theologiarum in Academia Salmuriensi variis temporibus disputatarum* (Saumur, 1665)

7. This book was partially written by the French scholar Moïse Amyraut (1596–1664). Remarkably, five books by Amyraut were damaged here in 1916. Amyraut attracted fierce criticism across the centuries, but perhaps no attack quite so harsh as that experienced in the bays of Marsh's Library.



CASE TWO: BULLET BOOKS

Thomas Beard, *A Retractive from the Romish religion*
(London, 1616)

Christopher Carlile, *A Discourse of Peters life, peregrination and death* (London, 1582)

John Floyd, *The Overthrow of the protestants pulpit-babels*
(Saint-Omer, 1612)

8. Unlike the other ‘bullet books’, these volumes were stored in the ‘cages’ of Marsh’s Library and were damaged by rifle fire from the rebels in Jacob’s factory.

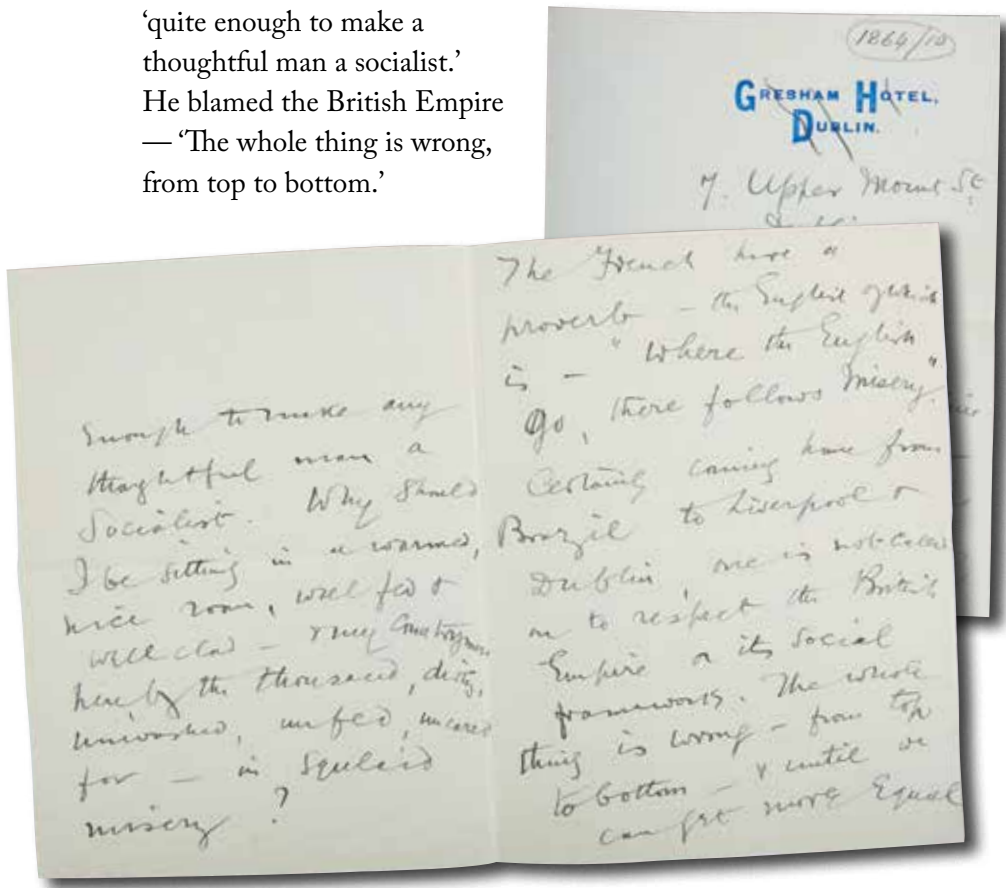
The bullet mangled the top right corner of *A Retractive from the Romish religion*, a book which equated the Pope with the anti-Christ, and which was written by the schoolmaster who taught Oliver Cromwell when he was a boy. Next, the bullet destroyed much of the binding of a book by Christopher Carlile, a controversial Church of England clergyman. However, it scarcely grazed the third book, written by a Jesuit priest. Whether this would have reflected the preferences of the shooter is, of course, unknown.



Letter from Roger Casement to Major Berry, 7 December 1908

9. Roger Casement was an Irish nationalist, British diplomat and humanitarian. He attempted to land guns and ammunition from Germany for the Easter Rising, and was later arrested and executed.

In this letter, Roger Casement's growing disaffection with the British Empire is apparent. He was dismayed at the suffering brought about by the Dublin carters' strike of 1908, and observed that 'I never saw so much poverty & sheer hunger staring out of the eyes of the poor as this winter.' It was, he thought, 'quite enough to make a thoughtful man a socialist.' He blamed the British Empire — 'The whole thing is wrong, from top to bottom.'



Postcard from Roger Casement to Major Berry, 5 August 1905

10. Roger Casement wrote a quick note to his friend, Major Robert Berry, on this peat postcard. It was made by the Celbridge Peat Paper Mills, in Kildare, which produced brown paper from harvested bogland.

According to advertisements in the *Irish Times* in 1904, the postcards were 'selling in the thousands' and were popular with relatives abroad, who might want 'a bit of the old country.' The business was financially unsuccessful and closed in 1905.

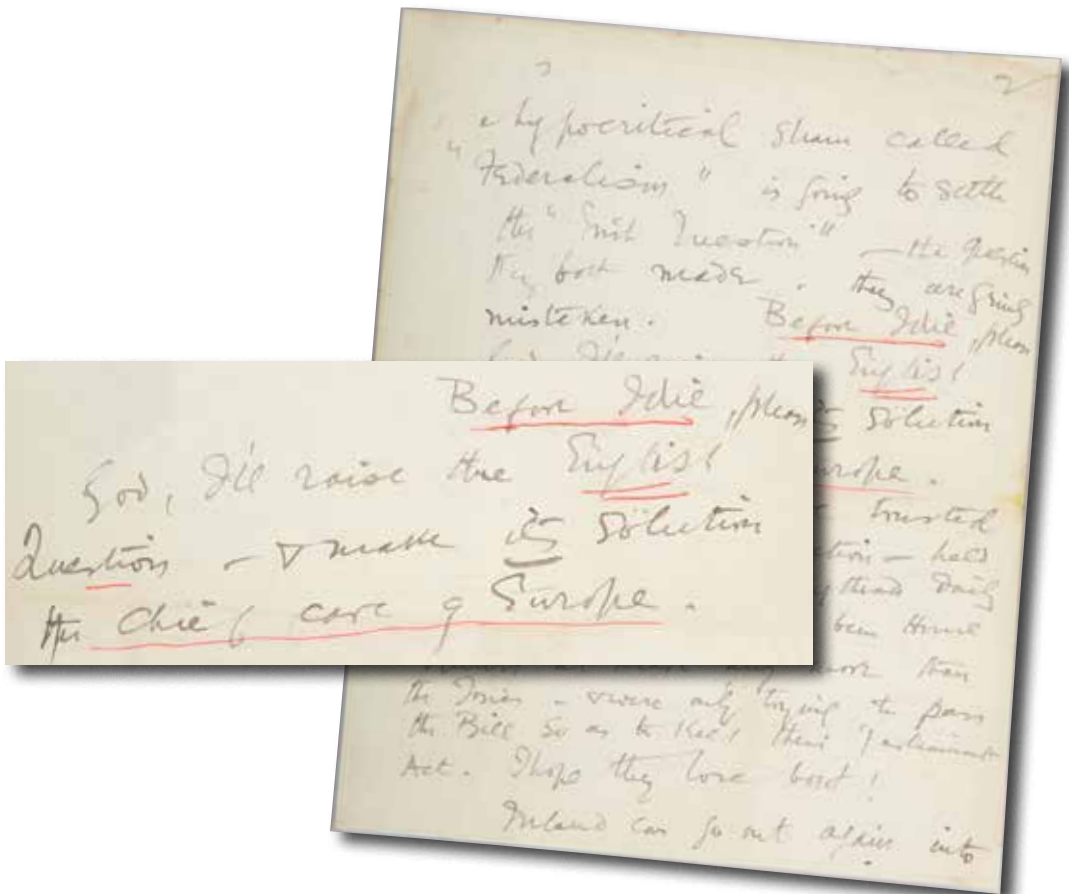
Casement was an enthusiastic supporter of Irish industry. He wore clothes woven in Ireland and encouraged his friends to buy Irish products.



Letter from Roger Casement to Richard Morten, 1 May 1914

11. Casement had a strong reaction to the Ulster crisis of 1914. Writing to his closest friend, Richard Morten, he berated the ‘impotency, indiscipline, lawlessness and inefficiency of the Army and its Heads.’ The previous month, a large consignment of weapons had been landed at Larne by unionists opposed to Home Rule. Casement was thoroughly disillusioned with the prospect of limited Home Rule for Ireland — ‘The [Home Rule] Bill may or may not pass — most of us don’t care a damn now.’

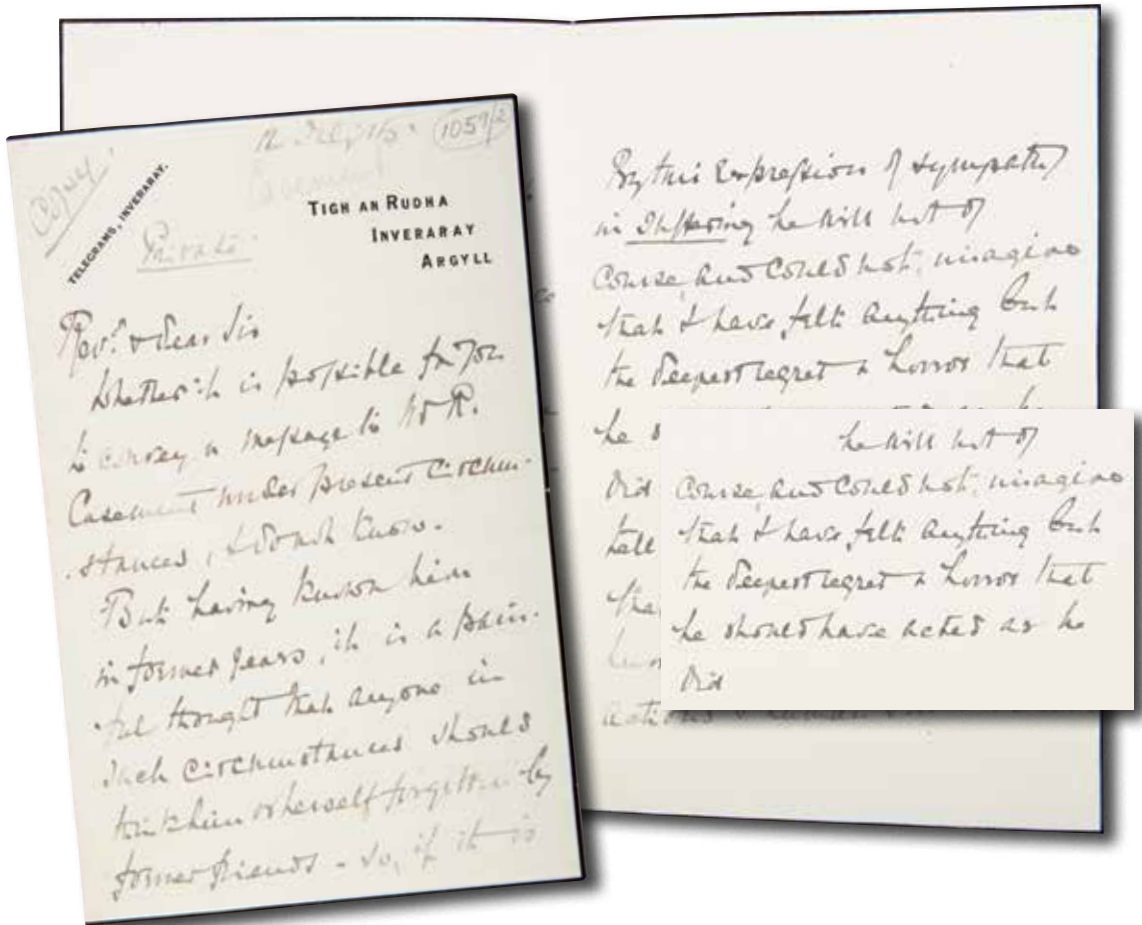
He hoped instead that ‘Before I die, please God, I’ll raise the English Question — and make its solution the chief care of Europe.’



Letter from Lady Constance Emmott to Father James McCarroll, 12 July 1916

12. This letter was written by Roger Casement's friend, Lady Constance Emmott, to his chaplain at Pentonville Prison, as Casement awaited execution.

By this time, the British secret service had privately circulated Casement's diaries among his friends, hoping to discredit him by revealing his homosexuality. It is not clear from this letter whether Constance Emmott was aware of the revelations. She asks that her best wishes be conveyed to Casement, but is at pains to establish her 'deepest regret & horror that he should have acted as he did'.



Diary of Jessica Taylor, 30 November 1915–15 June 1916 Jessica Taylor with school group, 1916

On loan from the family of Jessica Taylor

13. Jessica Taylor was a middle-class Protestant teenager, living in north county Dublin. The photograph on display shows Jessica as a schoolgirl in 1916. Her diary, here made public for the first time, was kept in a series of school jotters, some marked 'PRIVATE', and continued until 1918.

In 1916, Jessica recorded her reaction to the Easter Rising, and her horror at what was unfolding in the city centre.

She described how she and her father travelled to Talbot Street on Tuesday of Easter Week, and watched the rebels in the GPO at close quarters. Since there were 'no trams running', they walked to his butcher's shop on Baggot Street. They were lucky to pass through the city unharmed: more than half the people killed during the Easter Rising were civilians.

Her use of language betrays her sympathies, for while she quite liked the British soldiers, she thought the rebels were 'brutes'. The voice of a teenage girl comes through: the 'Tommies' were 'awfully nice especially a lance corporal of about 20.'



Memo book Photograph of soldier in 1916

On loan from the family of Jessica Taylor

14. In addition to her diary, Jessica Taylor kept a small memo book, where she detailed her social engagements and significant dates. She collected the signatures and regiments of the soldiers she met during the First World War, noting cryptically: ‘Seaside flirtations, attentions without intentions.’

This small black-and-white portrait was tucked into an internal pocket of the memo book. It was given to her by a soldier in the British army whose regiment moved to Dublin ‘for the Rebellion’.

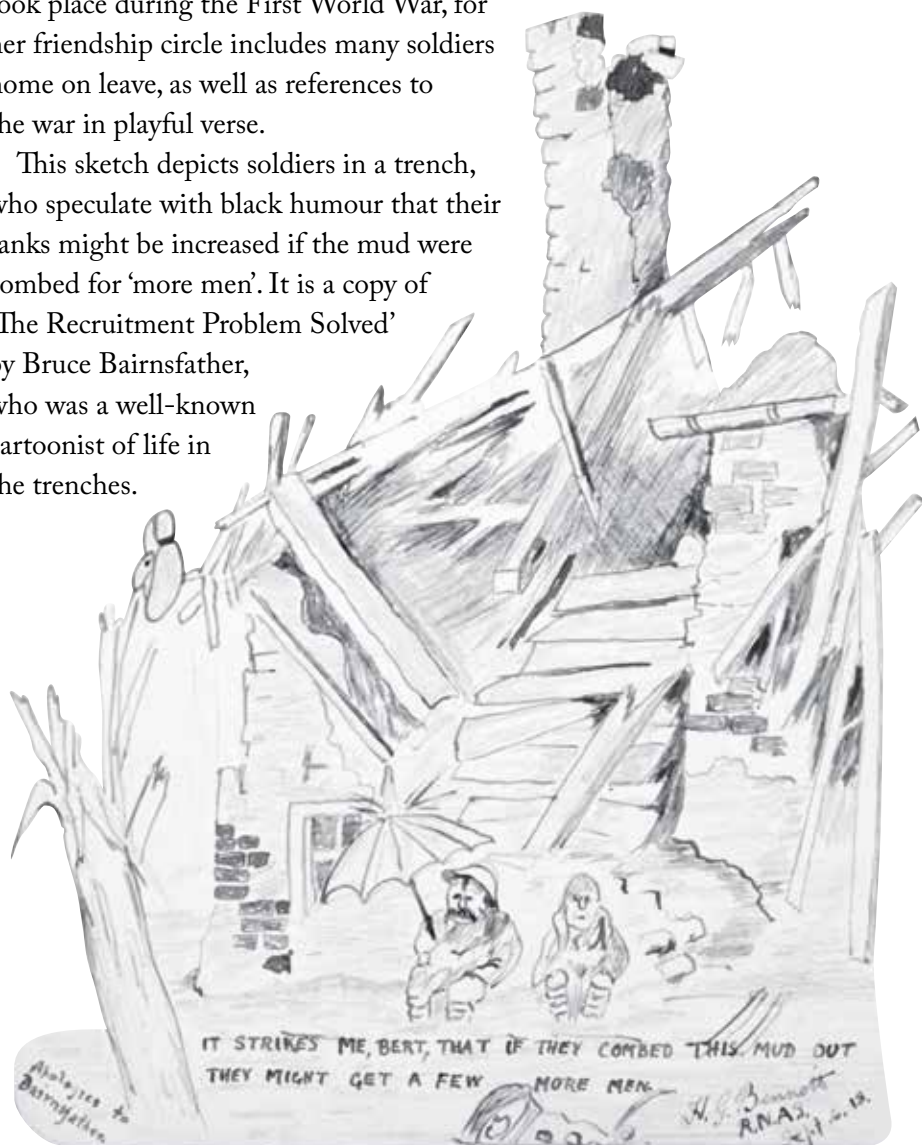


Autograph album

On loan from the family of Jessica Taylor

15. Jessica Taylor's autograph album is filled with watercolours, poetry, short notes and sketches. It acts as a reminder that the Easter Rising took place during the First World War, for her friendship circle includes many soldiers home on leave, as well as references to the war in playful verse.

This sketch depicts soldiers in a trench, who speculate with black humour that their ranks might be increased if the mud were combed for 'more men'. It is a copy of 'The Recruitment Problem Solved' by Bruce Bairnsfather, who was a well-known cartoonist of life in the trenches.



CASE FOUR: A SCHOOLGIRL SEES THE RISING

Postcards

On loan from the family of Jessica Taylor

- 16. Jessica Taylor received a number of postcards throughout the First World War. Many of these refer to the conflict: one postcard depicts scenes from an army camp, while another shows soldiers embarking on a ship. Yet another refers to her cousin, home on leave from service in the British army.

One postcard is of special interest. It is dated 23 January 1914, and features a small boy on one side, which the reverse of the card explains is 'A British Child'. The correspondent has written across the picture 'We will not have Home Rule'. The postcard underlines that, to contemporaries, Home Rule, not independence, was the dominant issue in 1914.



Committee of the Irish National War Memorial, *Ireland's Memorial Records 1914–1918* (Dublin, 1923)

17. The book is one of eight volumes commemorating almost 50,000 men who died in Irish regiments during the First World War. The copy in Marsh's Library was acquired in July 1923, just two months after the end of the civil war. It was stored in a purpose-built cupboard hidden from public view, possibly in deference to the sensitivities of the new Irish state.

Among the names recorded in this memorial book is that of Cecil Barker, an Assistant Librarian from Marsh's Library. Born in Belfast in 1895, he served as an officer with the 6th Battalion of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, and died at Suvla Bay in Gallipoli, Turkey, in August 1915.

The memorial features decorative borders drawn by the famous Irish artist and illustrator, Harry Clarke.



Henry Hanna, *The Pals at Suvla Bay: being the record of "D" company of the 7th Royal Dublin Fusiliers* (Dublin, 1917)

On loan courtesy Dublin City Library and Archive

- 18.** Four Assistant Librarians at Marsh's served in the British army during the First World War. William E. A. Moore came to Marsh's Library in 1916 after his military service the previous year, having been discharged as medically unfit.

In 1914 he joined the 7th Battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, better known as the 'Pals' battalion. The group consisted of volunteers from a professional background, and saw devastating losses on the shores of Suvla Bay.

The Pals at Suvla Bay was published in Dublin during the First World War, in tribute to the sacrifice of the men of the 7th Battalion.

A remarkable section gives biographical details of the men who served, and includes a photograph of William E. A. Moore.



T.C.D. [Miscellany], Special Trinity Number, June 1916

19. Richard William FitzPatrick served as an Assistant Librarian at Marsh's Library for one year, before resigning in 1916 to join the British army.

As a student at Trinity College, he was a member of the Officer Training Corps, and helped to defend Trinity College against the rebels during the Easter Rising. Just two months later, in June 1916, he joined the Army Service Corps.

This student magazine is a special memorial edition produced in the aftermath of the Easter Rising. It contains an advertisement for everything a young man in the Officer Training Corps might require.

OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS
REGIMENTAL INSTITUTES & OFFICERS' MESSES

Supplied on the most favourable terms with

**GROceries, PROVISIONS, CIGARS & TOBACCO, WINES,
CUTLERY, LINEN, GLASS, CROCKERY, &c., &c.**

Officers' Outfits and Camp Kit
COMPLETE IN EVERY DETAIL.

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NURSES' OUTFITS
Supplied complete. :: Price List on application.

JUNIOR ARMY & NAVY STORES
D'OLIER STREET, DUBLIN.



**‘Troops in Trinity College during the Sinn Féin Rebellion’,
photograph by S. J. Carrol; from *T.C.D. [Miscellany]*, *Special
Trinity Number*, June 1916**

20. This photograph was included with the *T.C.D. Miscellany*, and shows Front Square of Trinity College during Easter Week. The college was used as a staging ground for the British army, and the square is thronged with troops, including some soldiers lounging on the lawn.

The Keeper of Marsh’s Library, Newport J. D. White, also taught theology at Trinity College and had rooms there. He was not pleased by the disruption to his routine, and when soldiers were billeted in his rooms, he bitterly complained that they stole ‘coal... a bucket, a clothes brush, my towels & dusters’.

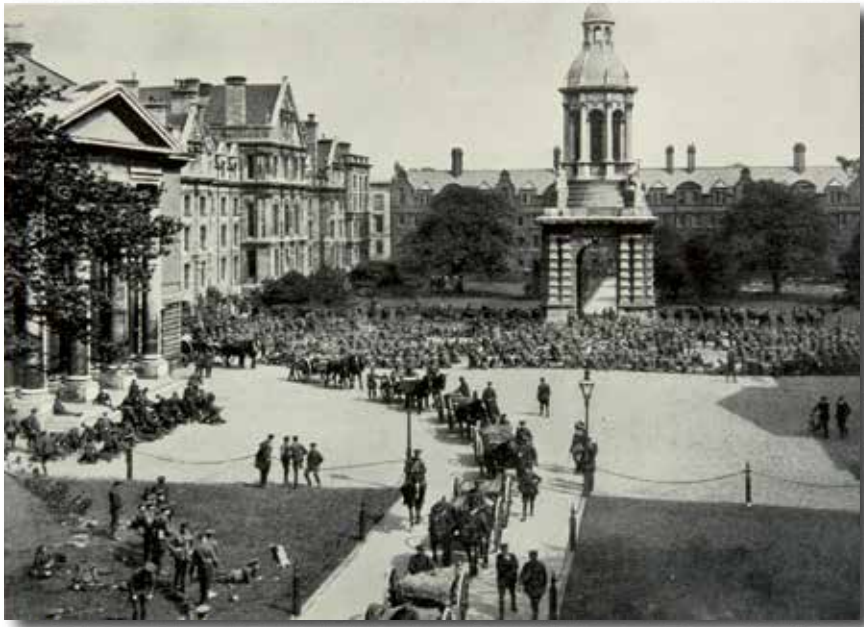
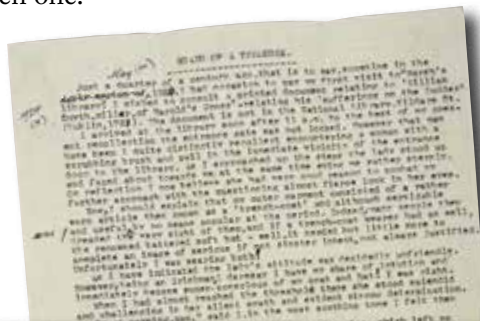


Image by permission of The Board of Trinity College Dublin

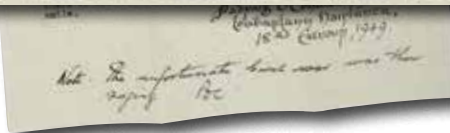
Letter from Pádraig Ó Conchubhair (Patrick J. O'Connor) of the National Library of Ireland, 18 January 1949

21. In 1923, a young man visited Marsh's Library, only to be blocked by a woman cleaning the front steps. Just over two decades later, Pádraig Ó Conchubhair described the encounter in a letter to Marsh's Library. Evidently, the woman thought him a danger to the Library and refused to let him pass — possibly because he wore the archetypal trenchcoat of a revolutionary. In fact, the young man had come from the National Library of Ireland on a legitimate research trip.

Pádraig Ó Conchubhair had fought in the 1916 Rising and was interned for his troubles in Frongoch, Wales. He later fought with the Irregulars on the anti-Treaty side of the Civil War. He had only recently been re-employed at the National Library at the time of this encounter. The instincts of the cleaner were entirely correct — Pádraig Ó Conchubhair looked like a revolutionary because, until very recently, he had been one.



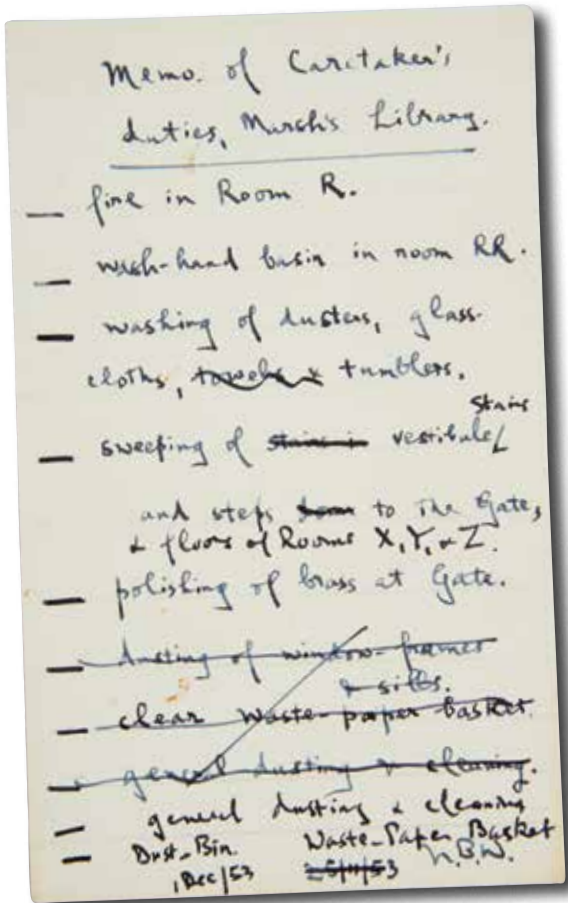
I arrived at the library soon after 11 a.m. To the best of my present recollection the entrance gate was not locked. However that may have been I quite distinctly recollect encountering a woman with a scrubbing brush and pail in the immediate vicinity of the entrance door to the library. As I approached up the steps the lady stood up and faced about towards me, at the same time eving me rather sternly. On reflection I now believe she had very good reason to combat my further approach with the questioning almost fierce look in her eyes.



Memo of caretaker's duties, Marsh's Library

22. The caretaker, or cleaner, traditionally lived in rooms at the Library. This handwritten memo dates from the mid-twentieth century and describes the duties of a working caretaker. Ó Conchubhair (see item 21) describes his encounter with 'a woman with a scrubbing brush and pail'; sharp-eyed readers will notice that 'sweeping of ... steps down to the Gate' was only one of her many tasks.

We know very little about the caretakers of Marsh's Library. Account books kept in the library list the names of tradesmen, but unfortunately omit the female cleaners' names.



Fire insurance certificates from County Fire Office, Limited — 30 Sept 1916, 2 Oct 1917, 9 Oct 1919

23. Marsh's Library was insured against fire throughout the Irish revolutionary period, and in the years which followed. Fire remained a worry, not least because of the irreplaceable nature of the library's contents.



Minimax fire extinguisher, Dublin, 1920

On loan from the private collection of Las Fallon

24. Marsh's Library bought its first fire extinguishers in 1920, during the War of Independence. The minute book records that, for the princely sum of £7 16s, the library acquired two 'Minimax extinguishers ... as a precaution against fire'.

The fire extinguishers were a well-timed purchase. Two years later, with the onset of the Civil War, Dublin's city centre was once more aflame. In June 1922, the Public Record Office caught fire, with the loss of hundreds of years of Irish history. By the end of July, compensation claims in Dublin were more than 60 per cent higher than those for the Easter Rising. Protestant and unionist organisations and businesses were particularly badly affected, in part because they formed a large share of the buildings in the city centre, where the fighting was most intense.

By the time of Pádraig Ó Conchubhair's visit (see item 21), Marsh's Library may have felt particularly vulnerable. Under its founding act, the library had no religious bar to entry, but it was historically associated with the Church of Ireland. In an atmosphere of widespread destruction, and the perceived risk to Protestant institutions, it was not unreasonable that the staff of Marsh's Library should feel nervous.



Accounts book of Marsh's Library, 9 January 1925

25. The accounts book in Marsh's Library shows that on 16 May 1924, the library received £3 10s as 'compensation for malicious injuries in 1922.'

The library's application for compensation to the Ministry of Finance of the new Irish Free State sheds some more light. According to the Keeper, 'the electric bell at the entrance gate of the Library [was] damaged on two occasions, Dec 1921 and Aug 1922'. On the latter occasion, the windows to the front of the library were also 'smashed by stones.'

The Keeper was unable to say who was responsible for the attacks, although he attributed it to the unrest of the Irish revolution. 'It would be impossible to state the day or hour at which, or the agent by whom, this damage was done,' wrote Newport White. 'It was due to the spirit of lawlessness and destruction now rampant.' A clearly aggrieved Keeper formally submitted a compensation claim on behalf of the Governors of the library 'and the civilised world.'

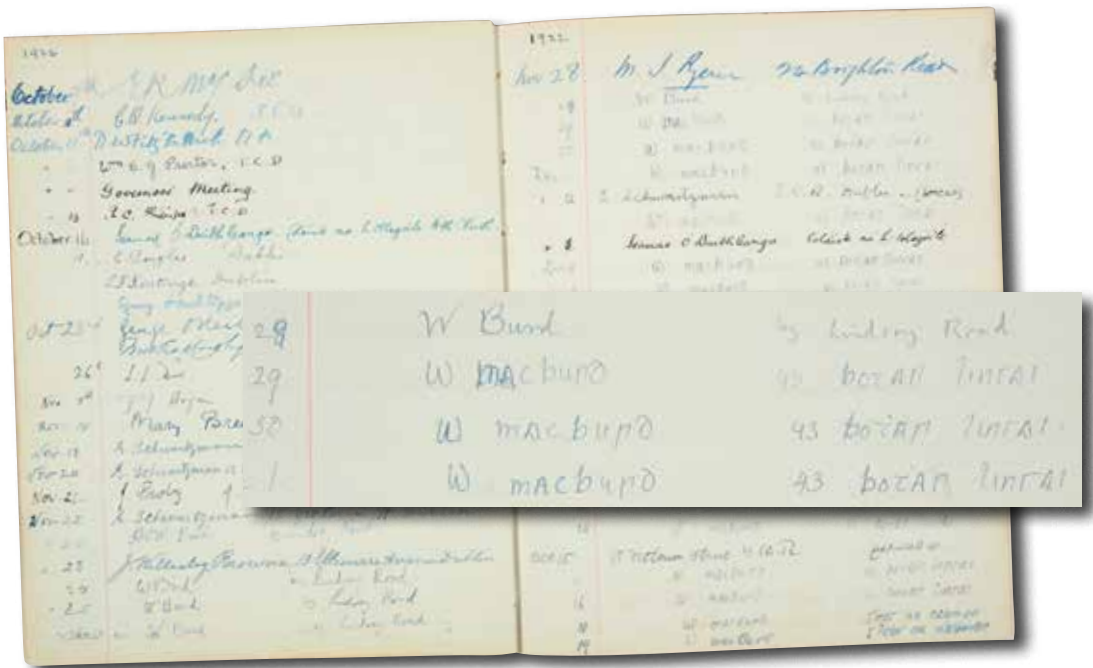
		<i>Cash</i>		
		£	s	d
1925				
9 Jan.	Compensation for malicious injuries in 1922. Claim sent in, 17 Jan. 1923, for £ 3:13:4, award made, 16 May, 1924	3	10	
	Balance of Book Fund on deposit receipt	89	10	1
	Interest on deposit receipts	2	4	3
	Original Book and Repair Fund	18	9	4
	Guinness Book and Repair Fund	27	7	4
	Rent of ground leased to S ^t Patrick's	0	1	0
	Contributed by Library Keeper for repairs	22	9	7
		163	11	7

Marsh's Library Visitors' Book 1897–1935

26. On 22 November 1922, William Burd, of 43 Lindsay Road, Glasnevin, visited Marsh's Library for the first time and signed the register. Over the next days and weeks, he returned often to consult material in the library.

On his fifth visit, on the morning of 29 November, William signed his name in *cló Gaelach*, or Gaelic script, as 'W MacBurd' of 'Bothar Linsai', changing his address on 19 December to 'Gleas na naomhan', an Irish language form of 'Glasnevin'. Over five visits, he tested three different spellings of the placename.

It took a few attempts, but he finally found an identity and a place in the new Irish state.



Stamp Collection belonging to Newport J. D. White, Keeper of Marsh's Library

27. This stamp collection belonged to Newport J. D. White, the Keeper of Marsh's Library during the Irish revolution.

This section begins with British stamps overprinted with 'Saorstát Éireann 1922', or 'Irish Free State, 1922'. When the new state began to print its own stamps, they featured symbols of Ireland, including a Franciscan friar at work, and a map of the country — notably without the border with Northern Ireland.

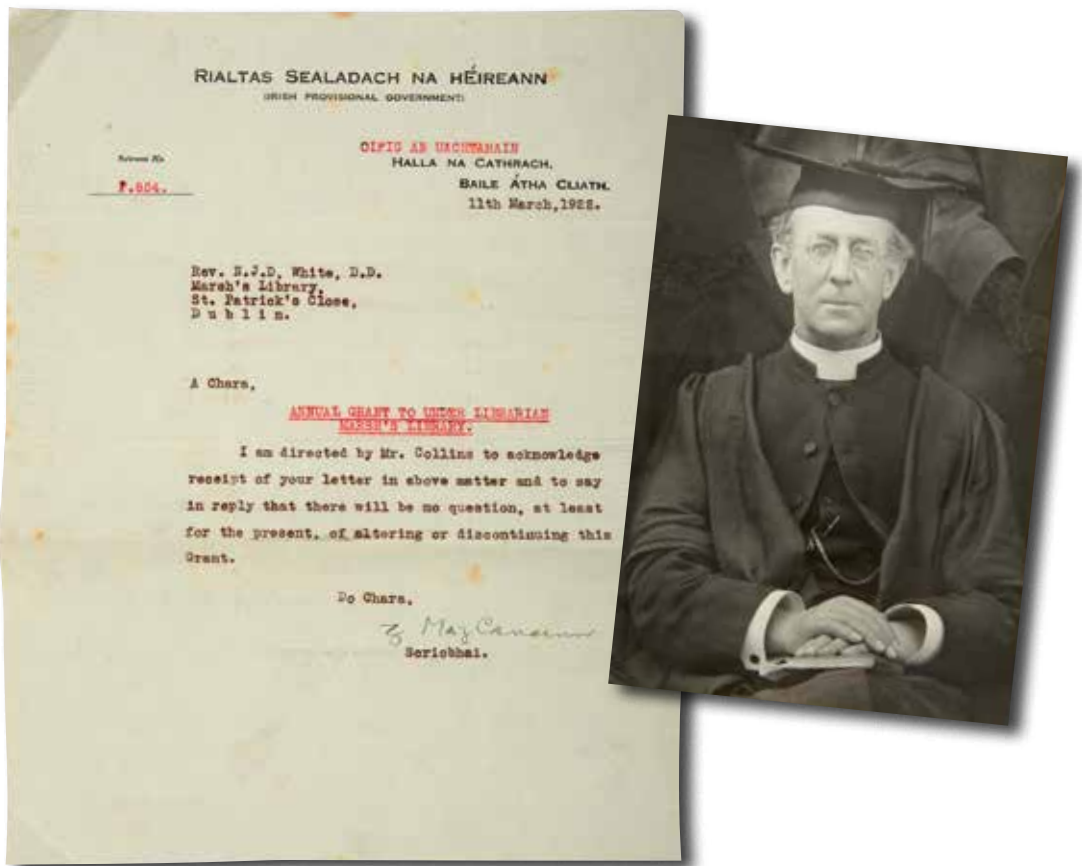
Newport White is present as an invisible observer, quietly arranging the symbols of the new state into orderly lines. Irish stamps are listed separately to those of Great Britain, a small but powerful statement of the new political order.



Letter from the Irish Provisional Government to Newport J. D. White, Keeper of Marsh's Library, 11 March 1922 Photograph of Newport J. D. White

28. In March 1922, the Keeper of Marsh's Library wrote to 'Michael Collins Esq.', Minister of Finance in the new Irish Provisional Government. He wished to confirm that 'the new Irish Government will not be less generous than the old one', and that the library would continue to receive an annual grant of £26 2s 8d.

The library received this encouraging letter in reply. Within a few months, Collins was dead: a victim of the Civil War which engulfed the new state.



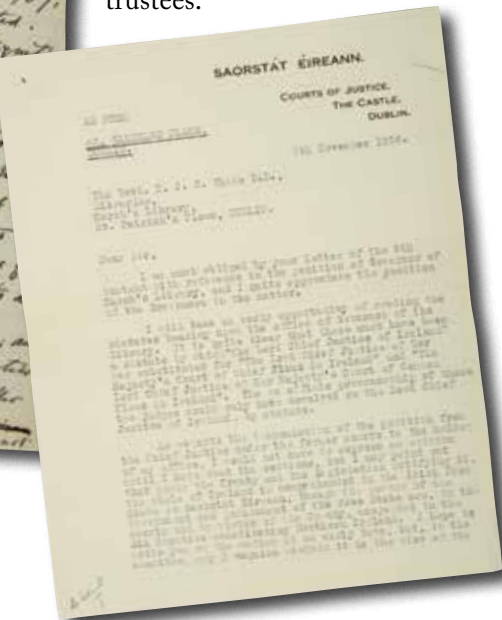
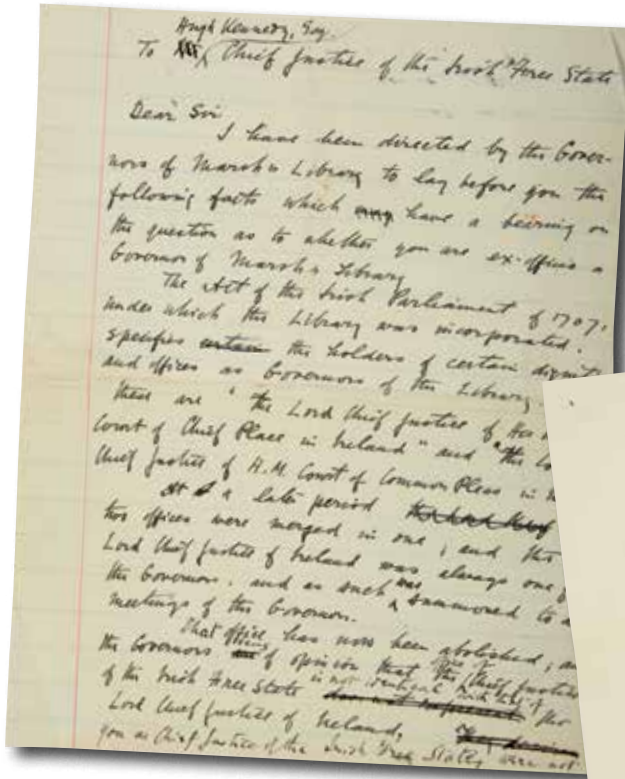
Correspondence between Marsh's Library and the Chief Justice of the Irish Free State

29. These documents relate to a curious incident in the history of the library. When the library was established, the Lord Chief Justice was made an *ex officio* trustee, and was invited to attend the annual meetings of the board. After Irish independence, no such invitation was sent to the new Chief Justice, Hugh Kennedy.

Newport J. D. White wrote to explain. 'That office has now been abolished,' he wrote, and '... the office of Chief Justice of the Irish Free State is not identical with that of the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland'.

Hugh Kennedy immediately replied, offering to resolve the matter by government legislation. The library's answer was brief and bordered on the discourteous.

The matter was dropped, and the relationship was not mended until 1968, when the library approached the then Chief Justice, Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh, to join the board of trustees.



THE WATERCOLOURS ON display were painted by the playwright Seán O'Casey, for a German production of his play *The Plough and the Stars*. O'Casey was born in Dublin to a working-class Protestant family. In early life, he was drawn to nationalism, before becoming deeply involved with trade union and socialist causes in Dublin.

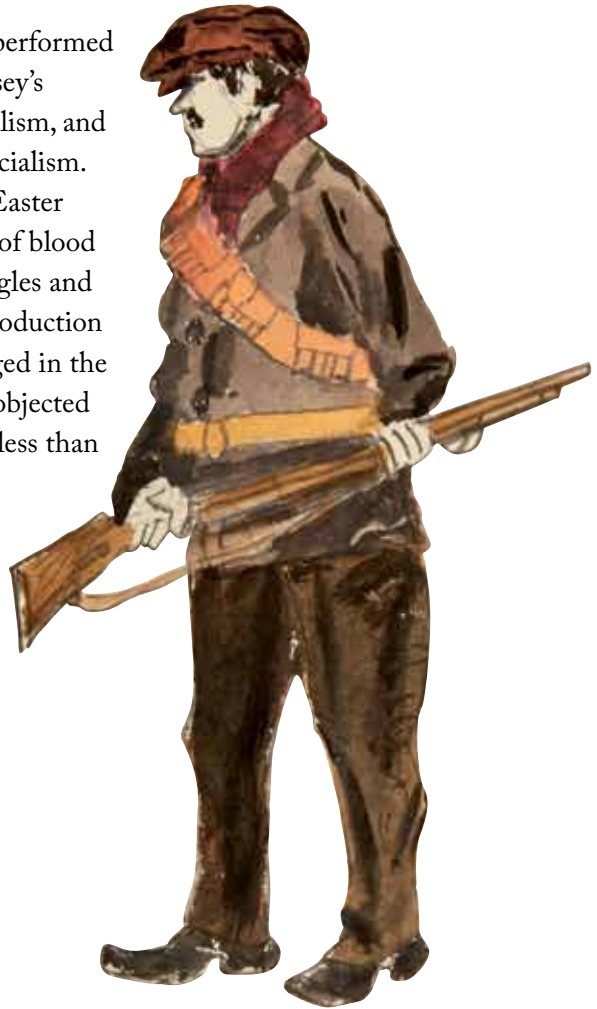
The Plough and the Stars was first performed in February 1926, and reflects O'Casey's disillusionment with violent nationalism, and the betrayal of his hopes for Irish socialism.

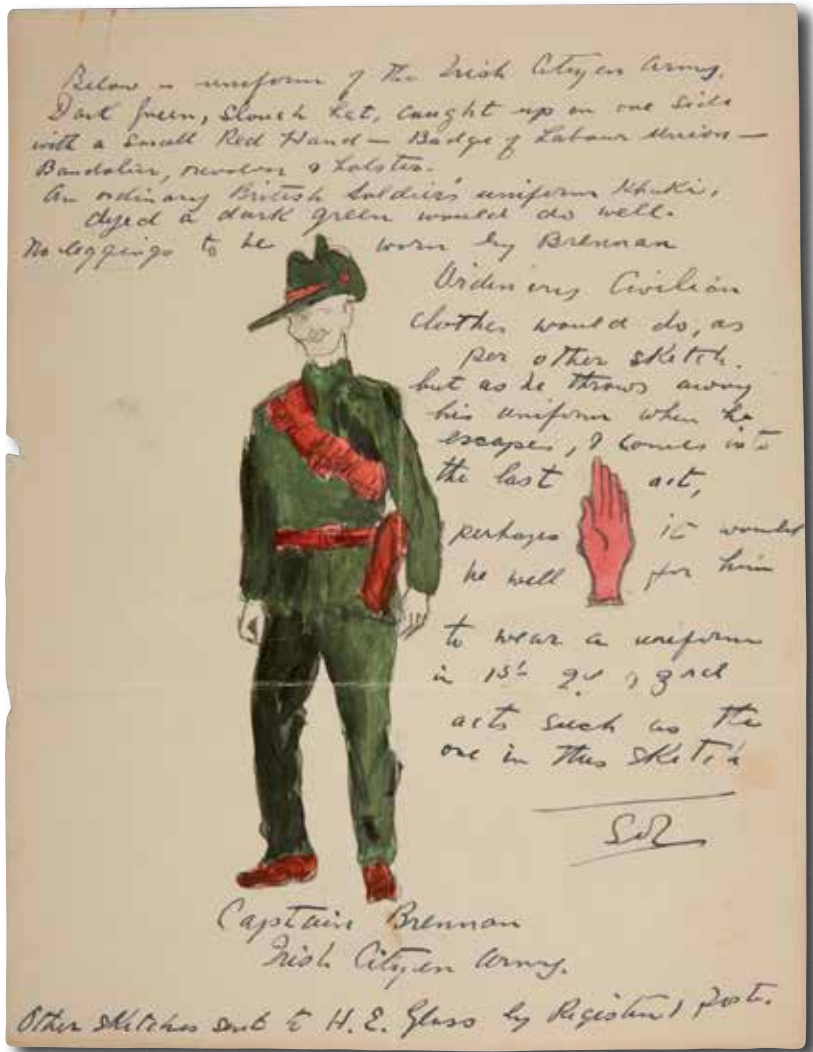
It offers an angry critique of the Easter Rising, in which the rebels' rhetoric of blood sacrifice is contrasted with the struggles and despairs of the working poor. The production caused outrage when it was first staged in the Abbey Theatre. Protesters violently objected to O'Casey's vision of the Rising as less than heroic.

These watercolours are held in our Benjamin Iveagh collection at Farmleigh House. They were donated to Marsh's Library by the Guinness family and are managed by the Office of Public Works.

Images are reproduced by kind permission of the estate of Seán O'Casey.

30. *Captain Brennan wearing clothing typical of revolutionaries in the period.*





31. Captain Brennan wearing the uniform of the Irish Citizen Army (ICA). The ICA was formed to protect workers during the Lockout of 1913, and fought in the 1916 Rising.

O'CASEY'S "DES PFLUG UND DIE STERNEN"

UNIFORM DER IRISCHEN FREIWILLIGEN (LEUTNANT LANGDON)
GRAUGRÜNE UNIFORM UND WICKELGAMASCHEN
BRAUNE STIEFEL. KAPPE LAUT VORLAGE (A)



Lieutenant Langdon, Irish Volunteers
Grey Green uniform & puttees—
Brown boots; cap as above.

32. Lieutenant Langdon, wearing the uniform of the Irish Volunteers, a paramilitary nationalist organisation formed in 1913.



33. Peter Flynn in Irish National Forester's uniform. The Foresters were a Catholic and nationalist society, given to elaborate regalia and costumes.

ESTELLA SOLOMONS WAS an important Irish artist of the early twentieth century. From a prominent Jewish family, she joined Cumann na mBan in 1915. Famously, she stored ammunition in her family's vegetable patch. She took the anti-Treaty side during the Civil War and resigned her teaching post when required to take an oath of allegiance to the British crown. Soon afterwards, Estella visited Marsh's Library and signed the visitors' register ten times between January and March 1923. The etchings on display were probably drawn at this time.

Estella Solomons is a reminder that Irish revolutionaries could, and did, wear multiple identities without contradiction: Irish, Jewish, nationalist, artist, and revolutionary.

Images are reproduced by kind permission of the estate of Estella Solomons.

34. *View of the Wired Alcoves ('Cages') of Marsh's Library*





35. *View of the Second Gallery of Marsh's Library*

FURTHER READING

Marie Coleman, *The Irish revolution, 1916–1923* (London, 2014).

Ronan Fanning, *Fatal Path: British government and Irish revolution, 1910–1922* (London, 2013).

Ronan Fanning, *Éamon de Valera: a will to power* (London, 2015).

Diarmaid Ferriter, *A nation and not a rabble: the Irish revolution, 1913–23* (London, 2015).

R. F. Foster, *Vivid faces: the revolutionary generation in Ireland, 1890–1923* (London, 2014).

Michael T. Foy and Brian Barton, *The Easter Rising* (Dublin, 2011).

John Horne (ed.), *Our War: Ireland and the Great War* (Dublin, 2008).

Tomás Irish, *Trinity in war and revolution 1912–1923* (Dublin, 2015).

Keith Jeffery, *Ireland and the Great War* (Cambridge, 2000).

Fearghal McGarry, *The Rising. Ireland: Easter 1916* (Oxford, 2010).

Lisa Godson and Joanna Brück (eds), *Making 1916: The material and visual culture of the Easter Rising* (Liverpool, 2015).

Charles Townshend, *Easter 1916: the Irish rebellion* (London, 2006).

Niall Whelehan, ‘*The Irish revolution, 1912–23*’ in Alvin Jackson (ed.) *The Oxford handbook of modern Irish history* (Oxford, 2014), pp 621–44.

Pádraig Yeates, *A city in civil war: Dublin 1921–4* (Dublin, 2015).

The Bureau of Military History Collection, 1913–1921 (BMH)
www.bureauofmilitaryhistory.ie

Military Service Pension Collections
www.militaryarchives.ie

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Thanks to John McDonough and the National Archives of Ireland for permission to quote from the Property Losses Ireland Compensation files and the Finance Compensation (post-truce) files; and to Bishop David Chillingworth, Primus of the Scottish Episcopalian Church, for permission to quote from the Ernest Bateman papers held at the Representative Church Body Library, Dublin.

Images are reproduced courtesy of The Board of Trinity College Dublin; the estate of Seán O'Casey; the estate of Estella Solomons; the estate of Barbara Bruce Littlejohn; and the estate of T.W. Murphy, with the kind support of David Knight at Willow Design & Publishing.

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the Irish Military Archives; the Irish Times; The National Archives (TNA), Kew; and the Imperial War Museum, London.

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Sincere thanks to Alan Costello for his design work and to Louise Daly for her photography.

Marsh's Library gratefully acknowledges the continuing support of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

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Dr Elaine Doyle holds an MPhil in Historical Studies from the University of Cambridge and a PhD in History from Queen's University Belfast. She has worked in a range of curatorial and editorial roles across the heritage sector, and is the Exhibitions Research Officer at Marsh's Library.

For more information on the exhibition, please visit
www.marshlibrary.ie/1916



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TRINITY IN WAR AND REVOLUTION 1912–1923 (DUBLIN, 2015), PAGE 155.

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BATEMAN PAPERS, NOTEBOOK FOR 1915–1916,
REPRESENTATIVE CHURCH BODY LIBRARY, DUBLIN.

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