

**Title of File: Miss Dorothy Macardle - Imprisonment, 1922**  
**National Archives of Ireland**  
**Department of the Taoiseach files**  
**TAOIS/ s 1369/18**

This file is from the Department of the Taoiseach relating to Miss Dorothy Macardle's imprisonment and it runs from 1922-23.

The National Archives acquire departmental records when they become 30 years old. And they acquired these files as a tranche of records from the Department of Taoiseach.

The file consists of correspondence written in an effort to have Dorothy Macardle released from prison. There are letters exchanged between Dorothy's parents on one side and the military authorities and president Cosgrave on the other.

The letters start in December, 1922 and run until 30<sup>th</sup> April, 1923. Dorothy is released in May, 1923 on health grounds. Because of Dorothy's middle class background and coming from a well-known brewing family, these letters are exchanged on quite a high level.

There is only one letter on the file from Dorothy. It is the only time we hear the voice of the woman who is at the centre of the entire file. It is quite a long letter that she writes demanding to know the grounds that the Free State has imprisoned her. Because as far as she knows it is not a crime to write propaganda.

The letters are from the following persons:

Thomas Callan Macardle, St Margaret's, Dundalk brewery (Dorothy's father)

Minnie Macardle, Stanhope Court Hotel, London (Dorothy's mother)

President Cosgrave

Commander -in- chief

Mr. Baker (Cosgrave's Secretary)

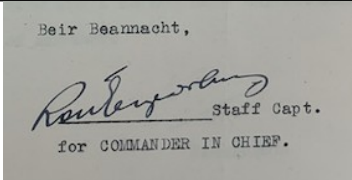
General Richard Mulcahy (Minister for Defence)

J.J. O'Neill, Editor of the Manchester Guardian, Fleet Street

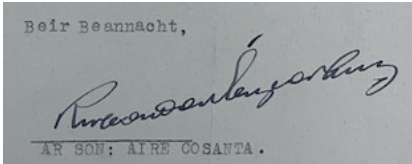
Creation	Title	Description
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Date		
<p>19<sup>th</sup> December , 1922.</p>	<p>From St. Margaret's, Dundalk. To: R.J. Bajer Esqr., Secretary to President Cosgrave, Government Buildings, Dublin.</p>	<p>Dear Sir, Following my conversation with you yesterday when you were good enough to say that you would consult the President with regards to getting me permission to see my daughter, Miss Dorothy Macardle, at present in Mountjoy Prison, and your request to let you know the facts. As published in Madame Gonne MacBride's speech, in the "Freeman's Journal" of the 13<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1922, they are as follows: - "Miss Dorothy Macardle, a lecturer in Alexandra college, and the Editor of "Freedom", was arrested on Friday morning under the following circumstances: She (Madame MacBride) received a cablegram from Mrs. Skeffington from New York stating that Mrs. MacSwiney, widow of Terence MacSwiney, was ill with anxiety for her child, whom, on her departure for America at the call of duty, she had left in charge of Madame O'Rahilly. Madame O' Rahilly having been arrested and on hunger strike. She (Madame MacBride) was ill that morning and could not go out, and Dorothy Macardle said she would take the cablegram to Suffolk Street and find out there is they knew who had charge of the babe. She went into the Suffolk Street premises on that mission during the raid and was arrested. I am naturally, now at Christmas time, most anxious to get in to see my daughter, and indeed the President might consider whether he could not recommend her release. Her mother is an invalid and is almost permanently in London, and I would like her to go over there for six months until all this trouble is dead and gone. I don't know whether the President is aware of the fact that this girl rushed off to London when Mrs. Potter told her son and young Conway were condemned to death, and that she herself interviewed all the press in Fleet Street, and interviewed, or caused to be interviewed, Mrs. Asquith, Mr. Bonar Law, Lord Haldane, Sir John Simon, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Sir Hamar Greenwood, and brought such pressure to bear that these two boys were saved, and so far as I know this got her into look after the prisoners, and that was the main thing that occupied her attention outside her own business. I fully appreciate all your difficulties, and anxious as I am to get in to see my daughter I don't want to ask the President to do anything except what he thinks he can conscientiously do. With many thanks for your courtesy, Yours faithfully, T.Callan Macardle. R.J. Bajer Esqr.,</p>

		Secretary to President Cosgrave, Government Buildings, Dublin.
21 <sup>st</sup> December , 1922.	President's Office to Sir Thomas Macardle,	President's Office. Sir Thomas Macardle, St. Margaret's Dundalk A Chara, I am directed by the President to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 19 <sup>th</sup> instant, in regard to your desire to obtain permission to visit your daughter. Miss Dorothy Macardle, at present in Mountjoy Prison, and I am to state that your letter has been referred to the Military Authorities at Portobello Barracks, in whose province this matter lies. Mise le meas, Runaidhe Aire.
21 <sup>st</sup> December , 1922.	President to Commander in Chief	President's Office. Commander - In - Chief Attached is copy of a letter which has been received from Sir Thomas Callan Macardle, St Margaret's. Dundalk, requesting permission to visit his daughter in Mountjoy Prison. The matter is entirely within your jurisdiction, and I do not make any recommendation one way or another. President.
29 <sup>th</sup> December , 1922	Commander in Chief to President	General Headquarters, Dublin. The President, Your R.A 2741 of the 21 <sup>st</sup> December. Visits are not allowed. The question of Miss Macardle's release will, however, be considered. Beir Beanacht,

		 <p>Staff Capt. For Commander in chief.</p>
2 <sup>nd</sup> January, 1923.	To Sir Thomas Macardle	<p>Sir Thomas Macardle St. Margaret's, Dundalk. A Chara, Referring to my letter of the 21<sup>st</sup> December. I am directed by the President to state that he regrets that he is informed by the Military Authorities that visits are not allowable, and that the question of release is under consideration. Mise, le meas mor, Runaidhe Aire</p>
5 <sup>th</sup> January, 1923.	To Baker from father	<p>St. Margaret's, Dundalk. Dear Mr. Baker, I appreciate very much what you have done for me with regard to my daughter, and I am glad they are considering her release. Many thanks, Yours Sincerely, T. Callan Macardle R.J. Baker Esq., President's Office, Dublin</p>
9 <sup>th</sup> January, 1923.	Father to Secretary	<p>St. Margaret's, Dundalk. Dear Mr. Baker, In your letter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan. You kindly told me that my daughter's (Dorothy M.C. Macardle) release</p>

		<p>from Mountjoy was under consideration.</p> <p>I have a long letter from a lady (Maud Gonne) who has just come out from Mountjoy, stating Dorothy is looking ill and that she is not sleeping. I don't like to be giving you trouble but I am naturally very anxious, and perhaps you would be good enough to push on the matter of her release. I would personally undertake, that as far as a father's influence could go, let her understand that I am under a moral obligation that she will not, under any circumstances do anything that will militate against the interests of the Free State. Most probably she will go to her mother in London at once.</p> <p>Yours faithfully, T. Callan Macardle R.J. Baker Esq., President's Office, Saorstad Eireann. Ps: I want to let you understand that I have every reason to believe from another source that the Doctors are paying every attention to these girls.</p>
10 <sup>th</sup> January, 1923.		<p>The Military Secretary, Portobello Barracks, Dublin. Captain O'Hegarty, With reference to your letter of 29<sup>th</sup> ultimo (A. 7223), I send you herewith extract from a further letter which has been received by the President from Sir Thomas Macardle regarding the imprisonment of his daughter (Dorothy M.C. Macardle) in Mountjoy Prison. Private Secretary</p>
13 <sup>th</sup> January 1923.	To: The President	<p>Department of Defence to President, Portobello Barracks, Dublin. To: - The President, Upper Merrion St.</p>

		<p>Dublin A Chara, Your R.A 2741 regarding Sir Thomas Macardle's daughter. She refused to sign the form of Undertaking and in the circumstances and in view of her previous record it is not intended to release her. Beir Beannacht, Ar Son: Aire Cosanta</p> 
		<p>Presidents Office to Father 18<sup>th</sup> Jan, 1923</p>
18 <sup>th</sup> April, 1923	To Sir Thomas Callan Macardle,	<p>Sir Thomas Callan Macardle, St. Margaret's, Dundalk. A Chara, The President is in receipt of your letter of 17<sup>th</sup> instant and he wishes me to state that he is taking the matter up personally with the military Authorities and will let you know the result. Mise, le meas, Runaidhe Aire</p>
18 <sup>th</sup> January, 1923.	President's Office to Father	<p>Sir Thomas Callan Macardle, St. Margaret's, Dundalk.</p> <p>A Chara,</p>

		<p>I am directed by the President to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9<sup>th</sup> instant and to state that he referred the matter to the Military Authorities, Portobello Barracks, who inform him that in the case to which you refer the Form of Undertaking has not been signed- that it has in fact been rejected. In these circumstances it is difficult to see what can be done. As you know, the matter is altogether in the hand of the military authorities.</p> <p>Mise le meas, Runaidhe Aire</p>
19 <sup>th</sup> January, 1923	Mother to President	<p>Stanhope Court Hotel, 50-52 Stanhope Gardens, South Kensington London, S.W.7</p> <p>President Cosgrave, I am the mother of Dorothy Macardle who is in Mountjoy prison and against whom no charge has been made. I am writing to you...I know she has done nothing to cause her to be arrested. I believe she wrote harmless articles in a paper...my daughter has been foolish, but she and other girls, have been influenced and led astray by the woman released last week after 24 hours in jail- she and the Comerford woman must do untold harm to these girls who are just following ideals- it is useless asking my girl to sign anything, she is too loyal to her friends to do that but she is [...] gentler nature and violence of any sort would be quite impossible to her... Sir Thomas Macardle and myself will do our best to keep her out of Ireland and I pray you to consider her case and relieve my fear and distress. Yours truly, M. Macardle.</p>
19 <sup>th</sup> January, 1923.	To lady Macardle from president office	<p>Lady Macardle, Stanhope Court Hotel, 50-52 Stanhope Gardens, South Kensington</p>

		<p>London, S.W.7</p> <p>Dear Madam,</p> <p>I am directed by the President to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17<sup>th</sup> instant regarding Miss Dorothy Macardle, at present in Mountjoy Prison. The President's attention has already been drawn to this matter by Sir Thomas Macardle and he has communicated with the military Authorities, who now inform him that the Form of Undertaking has not been signed by Miss Macardle - that it has in fact been rejected by her. In these circumstances it is difficult to see what can be done. The matter is altogether in the hands of the Military Authorities.</p> <p>Faithfully Yours,</p> <p>Private Secretary.</p>
13 <sup>th</sup> April, 1923	Father to Manchester Guardian,	<p>The Dundalk Brewery</p> <p>My dear O'Neill,</p> <p>I am extremely grateful to you for your kind offer to give employment to my daughter, Dorothy Macardle, who has been in prison since the 13<sup>th</sup> Nov., 1922.</p> <p>I enclose you copy of letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> Dec., '22, addressed to President Cosgrave's private secretary at this request, giving the exact circumstances of her arrest.</p> <p>Dorothy never at any time was militant. A considerable time ago she wanted to rent a flat in Dublin and the fates sent her to 73. Stephens Green where Madame Gonne had just what she wanted. She became friendly with Madame Gonne and Mrs. Despard, got interested in their concerns, and became an active worker for the White Cross Dependents' Fund, which got her interested in the prisoners, and she edited a little paper called 'Freedom', which so far as I now dealt entirely with the question of the prisoners. She thinks that she was unjustly arrested, that anything she did was constitutional, that she went in a free woman and she will come out a free woman- this is making allowances for feminine exaggeration. Her mother, Lady Macardle is staying at the Standhope Court Hotel, Kensington, s.w.7 and is a confirmed invalid, and the loss of our eldest boy in the war in 1916 considerably affected her health, and the strain through this continued imprisonment of Dorothy is exceedingly trying on her. I am confident that President Cosgrave will at once accede to your request when you are so good as to attach her to your famous paper.</p> <p>You can use the enclosed letter anyway you want.</p>



		Yours sincerely, Thomas Callan Macardle
14 <sup>th</sup> April, 1923.	To the Adj - Genl., Portobello Barracks. From Dorothy	<p>Kilmainham Prison, To the Adj - Genl., Portobello Barracks.</p> <p>Sir,</p> <p>I was arrested at 23 Suffolk St. where I had called to enquire for an address, in the course of a raid on Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>, 1922. I was not a member of the office staff or of any military organisation nor was I connected with military work of any kind. Nothing of a military nature was found in my possession either then or during the numerous raids made by your troops and C.I.D officials on my flat at 73, St. Stephens Green. Nevertheless, I have been imprisoned for five months in conditions most injurious to my health.</p> <p>I have hitherto left the matter to be investigated by my father, Sir Thomas Macardle. I understand that in answer to his enquiries as to the cause of my imprisonment he has been informed: =</p> <p>(a) That I am a writer (b) That I have refused to sign a certain form.</p> <p>I am not aware that, even according to the Free State assumption of authority, either of these facts constitutes a charge which could justify my detention. No act has been passed that I am aware of either by the Free State assumption of authority, either of these facts constitutes a charge which could justify my detention. No act has been passed that I am aware of either by the Free State Parliament or the British Imperial Parliament making it illegal to practice the profession of writing or obligatory to sign the form. I therefore demand to know what charge has been made against me and a full enquiry into any such charge.</p> <p>Dorothy M. Macardle, B.A.</p>
18 <sup>th</sup> April, 1923.	The Manchester Guardian, London 40-43 Fleet Street. To president	<p>The Manchester Guardian, London 40-43 Fleet Street.</p> <p>My dear President,</p> <p>I am going to, if I may, take the liberty of writing to you about a very dear friend of mind, the daughter of a man whom you will know, if not personally, certainly by reputation, exceedingly well.</p>

		<p>Dorothy Macardle has been under arrest for quite a long time and my own private view is that she has been so influenced by some of the mad women who have been prominent in Irish affairs that she has been persuaded to behave as if she were in agreement with them. As a matter of strict truth I know she is not in agreement with them. She is not the sort of girl likely to be guilty of riot in any shape or form, and though she is very active with her pen she has never written anything as far as I know that could be construed as an attack in any shape or form on the elected Government.</p> <p>As a matter of truth, I am quite firmly convinced in my own mind, if you could possibly see your way to authorize it, that her release would be interpreted as a very fine gesture on the part of the Home secretary in a moment like the present.</p> <p>There is no comparison between her and Mrs. Comerford or the MacSwiney people. She is altogether a different type- an educated type- and her father has assured me that he will watch her very anxiously indeed immediately her release is affected- if you do agree to it.</p> <p>I hope you will forgive me for writing you this letter. I know the family exceedingly well- I know that they are actively sympathetic with the government - and this must be my excuse. Now that I am writing you, will you let me as an individual with no stake in Ireland beyond a sentimental one, congratulate you and your government on the extraordinarily efficient manner in which an exceedingly difficult situation was handled?</p> <p>With regards, Yours sincerely J. O'Neill</p>
20 <sup>th</sup> April, 1923.	To Commander - In - Chief	<p>President's Office, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1923. Commander - In - Chief</p> <p>With reference to the President's letter of 18<sup>th</sup> inst., herewith further letter received by him in connection with the case of Miss Dorothy Macardle. Would you kindly let him hear from you at your convenience.</p> <p>Runaidhe Aire</p>
26 <sup>th</sup> April,	Father to president	St. Margaret's, Dundalk

1923.		<p>My dear President,  I enclose you copy of letter which I have sent to the Commander - in - chief.  I also enclosed him my daughter, Mona's letter and one from Madame Gonne MacBride who says she does not like Dorothy's health. For God's sake do something.  With much respect,  Yours sincerely,  Thomas Callan Macardle</p>
30 <sup>th</sup> April, 1923	Father to Mulcahy	<p>General R.Mulcahy,  Commander - in - Chief,  Portobello Barracks,  Dublin.</p> <p>Dear General Mulcahy,  I had the honor of seeing President Cosgrave three times last week, and he promised to bring my daughter, Dorothy Macardle's case again before you for review. I called on Friday and saw Major - General O'Sullivan, who was also good enough to say he would call your attention to this case. Of course I know the terrible responsibilities you have, and I hate to encroach on your time, and only absolute urgency would compel me to write to you direct now.  I enclose you letter from my younger daughter, Mona, who is in London, stating that her mother is in a Nursing Home, that my younger son Donald, who is in London, is also laid up with influenzas. She herself is going through a course in the London University and is afraid of missing her examination on account of attending to these two invalids. My wife's health is very precarious. I am tied up her in Dundalk with a very troublesome business, the work of which has been much increased by the frontier barriers, and on top of all this I get a letter this morning from Madame Gonne MacBride stating that Dorothy's health is very precarious.  Dorothy has lost her position in the Alexandra College, and the 'Manchester Guardian' told the President they are willing to give her employment in London. She asserts in writing that she never was militant, never had anything to do with the military, and that no papers were found to lead to this conclusion. Personally, if I could see her I would recommend her to sign the simple undertaking,</p>

		<p>but she won't.</p> <p>Taking a broad view of the whole situation, I with much respect ask you to grant her immediate release. You will never be sorry, and you will confer a great obligation on yours.</p> <p>With much respect,</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Thomas Callan Macardle</p> <p>Ps if our mutual friend, Father Flood of the Dominicans (who is now in Trinidad) was here, he would go and see you and save all this trouble and correspondence.</p>
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research notes