

**Title of project: Winnie's Typewriter**

**Category for which you wish to be entered (i.e. 1916, World War 1; Women in the Revolutionary Period, local/regional category):**

**Women in the Revolutionary Period**

**Name(s) of class / group of students / individual student submitting the project:**

**Rachel Cummins, Judy Fitzgerald, Sarah Breheny, Alisha McCarthy and Cillian Fox (5<sup>th</sup> Class).**

**School roll number (this should be provided if possible):**

**16677C**

**School address (this must be provided even for projects submitted by a group of pupils or an individual pupil):**

**CBS Primary, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare**

**Class teacher's name (this must be provided even for projects submitted by a group of pupils or an individual pupil):**

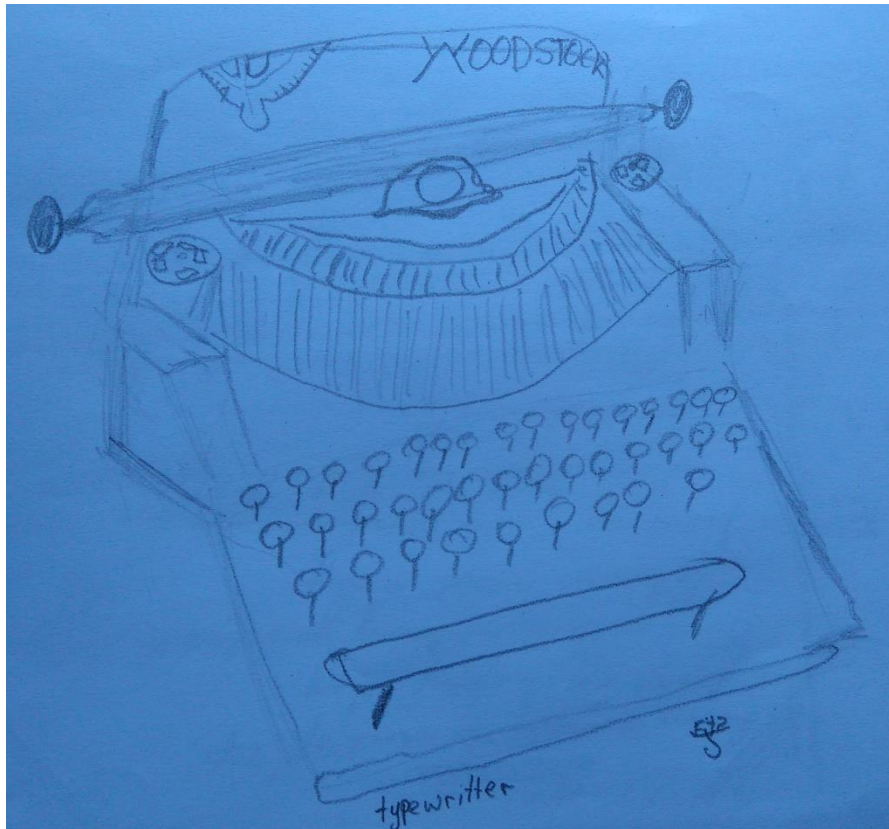
**Brian Spring (Learning Support Teacher: co-ordinator)  
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**W i n n i e ' s   T y p e w r i t e r**



## **I n t r o d u c t i o n**

My great grandaunt Winnie Carney was a secretary to James Connolly in the G.P.O. during the 1916 Rising. She was born in Bangor Co. Down and was called down to Dublin by James Connolly to help with the rising. She was in the G.P.O. with her typewriter. She was known as the typist with the Webley (revolver). She probably typed out the proclamation on her typewriter before it was printed in Liberty Hall. Afterwards the leaders signed it and Pádraig Pearse read it outside the GPO. When the G.P.O. was on fire, Winnie was one of the last people to leave alongside Pádraig Pearse and James Connolly. We did this project because my friends and I wanted to learn more about my great grandaunt. This project is by Rachel Cummins, Judy Fitzgerald, Sarah Breheny, Alisha McCarthy and Cillian Fox.

## **L i v i n g i n B e l f a s t**

Winnie was born in Bangor, Co. Down in 1887 but spent most of her time in Belfast. As it was a hard time, her Dad decided to leave the family. Her mother Sarah Carney owned small shop. In the 1901 census Winnie was 13 years old and was living in Perth Street in Belfast. Her Mum Sarah was 50, her sister Maud was 17 and worked as a shop assistant. Mabel was 15 and was a printer's assistant. Around 1907 they moved to 2a Carlisle Circus. Next-door to them was Gilbey's wine and spirit merchants. They are in Carlisle Circus in the 1911 Census. Her Mum Sarah was 60 years old, Maud was 27 years old, Mabel was 25 and Winnie was 23. Maud was still working as a shop assistant. Sarah's grandson Jack Carney was in the house too and he was 11. Winnie also had two brothers, Alfred and Louis. Winnie's sisters Maud and Mabel became nuns and went to Philadelphia and Liverpool.

## New Job

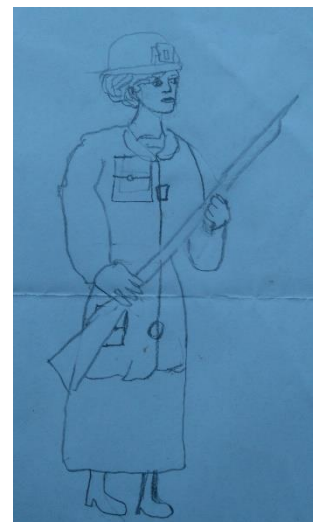
Winnie liked studying and she went to a Christian Brother's School in Donegal Street in Belfast. After that she went to Hughes



Commercial Academy and she trained as a secretary and typist. She was a teacher for a short while too. Winnie was interested in the Gaelic League. She also loved the suffragettes and being a socialist. The suffragettes were women who wanted the right to vote. The Association was founded by a Quaker, Anna Haslam in Dublin in 1876. One of the leaders of the Irish Suffragettes was a woman named Hanna Sheehy Skeffington. James Connolly gave her a secretary's job in the The Irish Textile Workers Union.

## Cumann na mBan

Cumann na mBan was an organisation for both women and girls. They all wanted independence for Ireland. The first meeting was in Wynn's Hotel, Abbey Street, Dublin on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 1914. One hundred women and girls came to the meeting. Agnes O'Farrelly was in charge of the very first meeting. Groups were set up all over Ireland, but Winnie joined in Belfast. The uniforms they wore in Cumann na mBan included a hat, shirt and tie, a skirt, a jacket, a belt, gloves and an ammunition belt. They also proudly wore the Cumann na mBan badge with the rifle going through it.

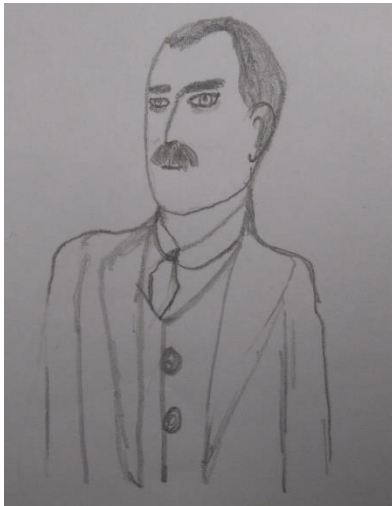


## The Irish Citizen Army

It was James Connolly who set up the Irish Citizen Army. He saw how badly the strikers were being treated by the police. He was not happy. Soup kitchens were set up to help striking workers in Ireland. The Irish Citizen Army was to protect the workers who were on strike. Winnie was in the Irish Citizen Army.

## The Easter Rising

1916 was a very important time in Irish History. The fighting went on for only one week. However, in that week 496 people were killed and 2614 were badly wounded. It was all about Ireland trying to get freedom from Britain. Weapons were brought to Ireland in two ships, the Aud and the Asgard. The Aud came from Germany and carried weapons and ammunition. The Aud was captured in the Shannon Estuary by the British Navy, who were on patrol. The sailors on the Aud deliberately sank the ship with explosives and were later arrested. Then there was the Asgard. This mission was successful. The boat landed at Howth and had 900 Mauser Rifles and 29,000 rounds of ammunition when it landed.



It was James Connolly who asked Winnie to come down to Dublin. She arrived in Liberty Hall early in the morning with her typewriter and her Webley revolver. She became known as the typist with the Webley. She was Connolly's secretary and typed orders for the rebellion. When Connolly was hurt she stayed with him. She refused to leave his side. Connolly told Winnie his final orders.

## Witness Statements

Catherine Rooney Byrne saw Winnie in the G.P.O. This is what she said in statement 648:

"Other members of Cumann na mBan arrive in G.P.O. A number of Cumann na mBan members came into the Post Office in the afternoon between 5 and 4 o'clock, I should think. I saw Statia Toomey and Mollie Reynolds coming in with several others. I should have mentioned that after I arrived I noticed Winifred Carney, a member of the Citizen Army, sitting working at a desk in the main hall towards the Henry St. side".

Seán Nunan (1744) saw her too:

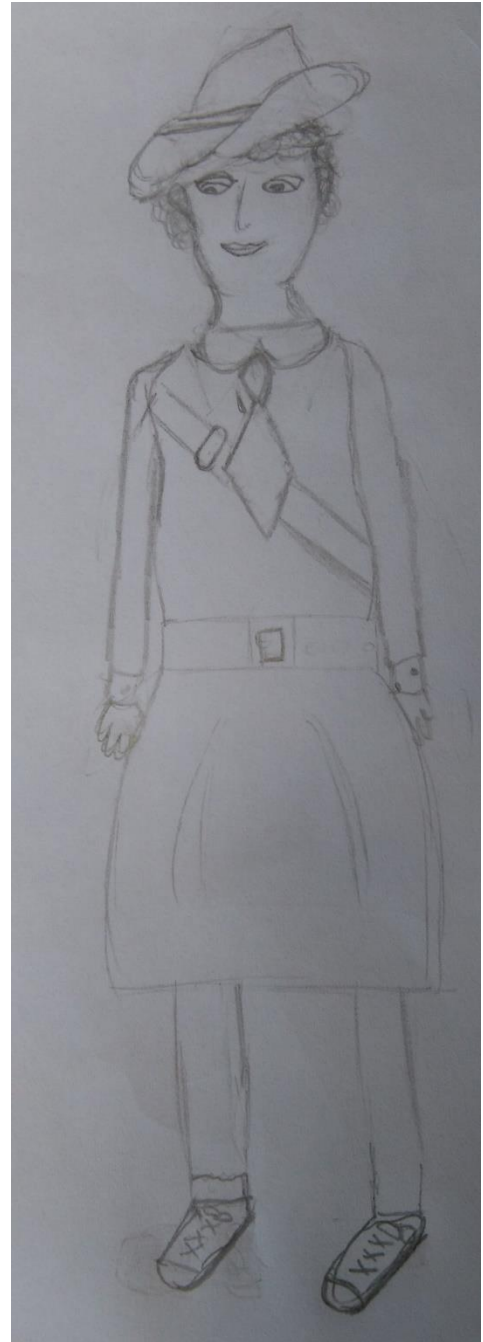
"On Easter Thursday, as I was passing through the ground floor, I was caned over to James Connolly who was on a stretcher, badly wounded. He said to me, "Take this message to Commandant Pearse! Trust Miss Carney (Winifred Carney, his secretary) as you would trust me!" I duly conveyed the message."

Joseph Mary Plunkett gave a note to Winnie in Moore Street during the Rising. This is what his wife Grace wrote in statement 257:

"In one of the notes, he suggested that we would be married by proxy. I could not understand it at all at the time, though I see his reason now. He wanted me to be secure.

These notes are in the National Museum. They would be very interesting to you, especially one that he wrote from Moore Street, to say that he stood by all his deeds and would not wish them undone. It was headed, "Somewhere in Moore Street". He gave it to Winifred Carney. She was in jail after the Rising".

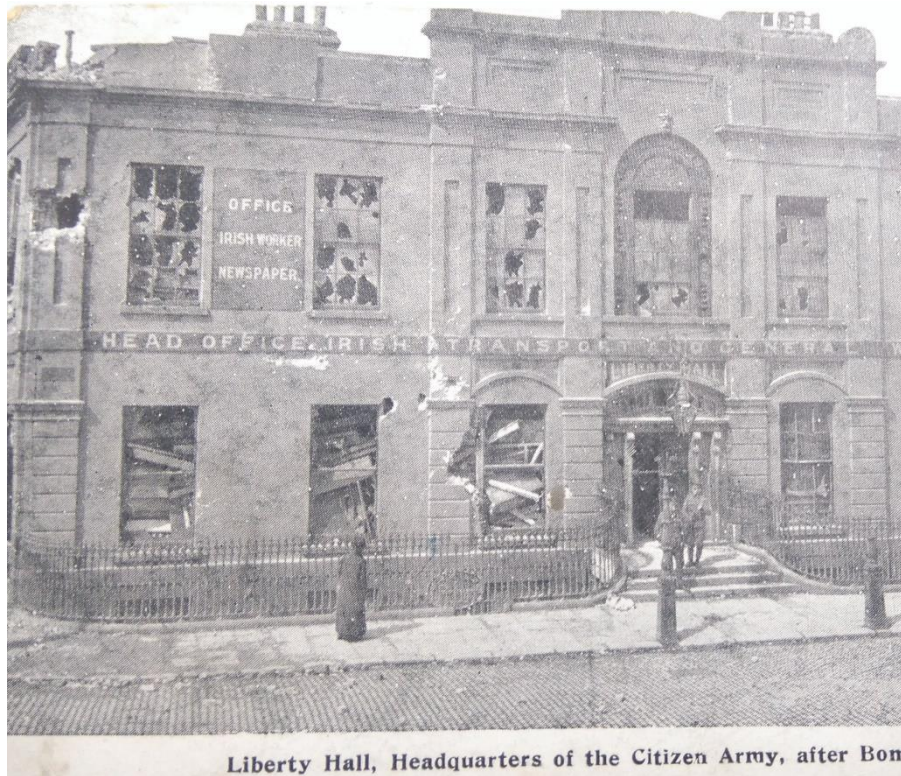
This is a postcard of Liberty Hall after the Rebellion. It is absolutely destroyed. Liberty Hall was the headquarters of the citizen army, led by James Connolly. Winnie would have been







typing there before the G.P.O. The postcard was sent on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 1916, a couple of weeks after the rebellion. The writer wrote, see you have helped this mad rebellion.



Liberty Hall, Headquarters of the Citizen Army, after Bon

## Arrested

After the G.P.O. went on fire, Winnie was arrested and brought to a jail in Kilmainham, Dublin. After a while she was moved to a different jail in Dublin, called Mountjoy. She was moved to Aylesbury jail in England and was released two days before Christmas in 1916. Her health was bad.

## Life after the Rising

After the Rising, the Police kept raiding her home. They found various different things such as: Pictures of her family, a letter from Sinn Féin, a note-book of all her weekly meetings, receipts printed in Irish and memorial cards of executed rebels. She had loads of letters too from people like Michael Collins, P. Plunkett, M. French-Mullen, Maud Gonne, Joseph McDonagh and Sylvia Pankhurst. Like Eamonn deValera (in 1917) she went for election with the Sinn Féin Party in 1918. She

lost the election getting 4.05% of the votes. It was unfair as only women of the age of 30 could vote at the time. She got married to George McBride in 1928. Winnie died in 1943. She is buried in Milltown Graveyard.

## **I maginary Letter Typed by Winnie about James Connolly**

I am the secretary of James Connolly, the leader of the Citizen Army and many other groups.

He was both a husband to Lillie Reynolds and Father to a lot of children. Sadly, Mona his eldest daughter died in a house fire whilst looking after her younger siblings.

James Connolly always fought for Irish rights. One day he gathered 200 people, known as The Citizen army and marched them down the streets of Dublin where he set up headquarters in the G.P.O for several days. They eventually had to surrender to the British Army and James Connolly was badly injured.

Later, James Connolly was strapped to a chair, blindfolded and shot by all of the British firing squad. I never saw him again, but James Connolly (1868 - 1916) will always be remembered as a leader, a rebel a husband and a Dad.

- Signing off, his secretary, Winifred Carney.

### **If Winnie had a diary it could have looked like this:**

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April: I arrived at the G.P.O. armed with my typewriter my Webley revolver. Patrick Pearse read out the Proclamation of the Republic. The British Flag was taken down off the roof of the G.P.O. and two Irish flags were put up instead. Other volunteers are taking over buildings around Dublin. The G.P.O has become the headquarters of the Rising. I'm feeling nervous.

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April: It was all normal and calm here in the GPO until Pearse came in and announced that we were short of ammo. The British Army have surrounded the city and are closing in.

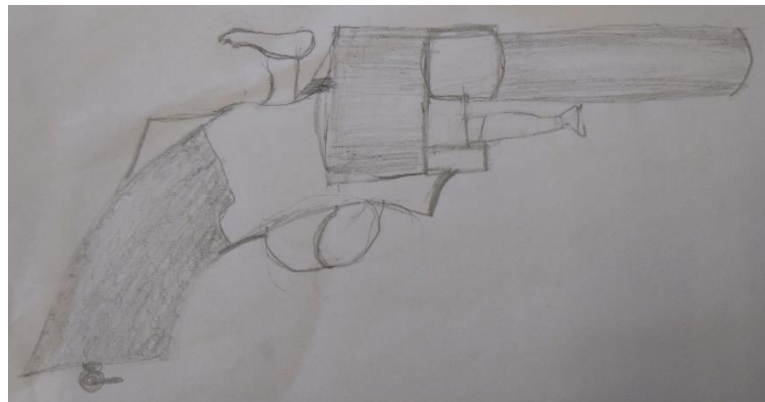
Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April: British Soldiers have been firing at the G.P.O. for ages now. British soldiers arrived by boat and 234 have been killed.

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April: James Connolly has been shot in the shoulder and the ankle. I am refusing to leave his side as he is very badly wounded. The shooting is still going on.

Friday April 28<sup>th</sup>: The G.P.O. is on fire. We have to break through many walls to escape. Connolly, Pearse and I are the last to leave the building. We are moving to More Street.

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April: Pearse has decided to end the Easter Rising. We have surrendered to stop the injuries and deaths increasing. Elizabeth O Farrell brought out the white flag. The leaders and I have been arrested. As we are taken away to Kilmainham Jail people are throwing all sorts of things at us.

- Wnifred Carney.



“The Typist with the Webley”

## **Bi bl i ogr aphy**

### **Pr i mar y Sour ces:**

Oglai gh na hEi reann / National Archives - Witness Statements  
Numbers; 257, 648 and 1744 Bureau of Military History:  
<http://www.bureauofmilitaryhistory.ie/bmhsearch/search.jsp>

1901 Census:

[http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1901/Ant\\_rim\\_Court\\_Vard/Perth/946971/](http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1901/Ant_rim_Court_Vard/Perth/946971/)



1911 Census:

<http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/AntrimClifton/CarlisleCircus/144725/>

Belfast Trade Directories: <http://www.lennonwylie.co.uk/>

Curmins Family

## **Secondary Sources:**

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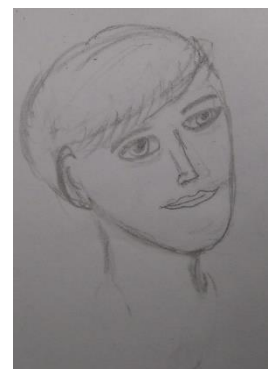
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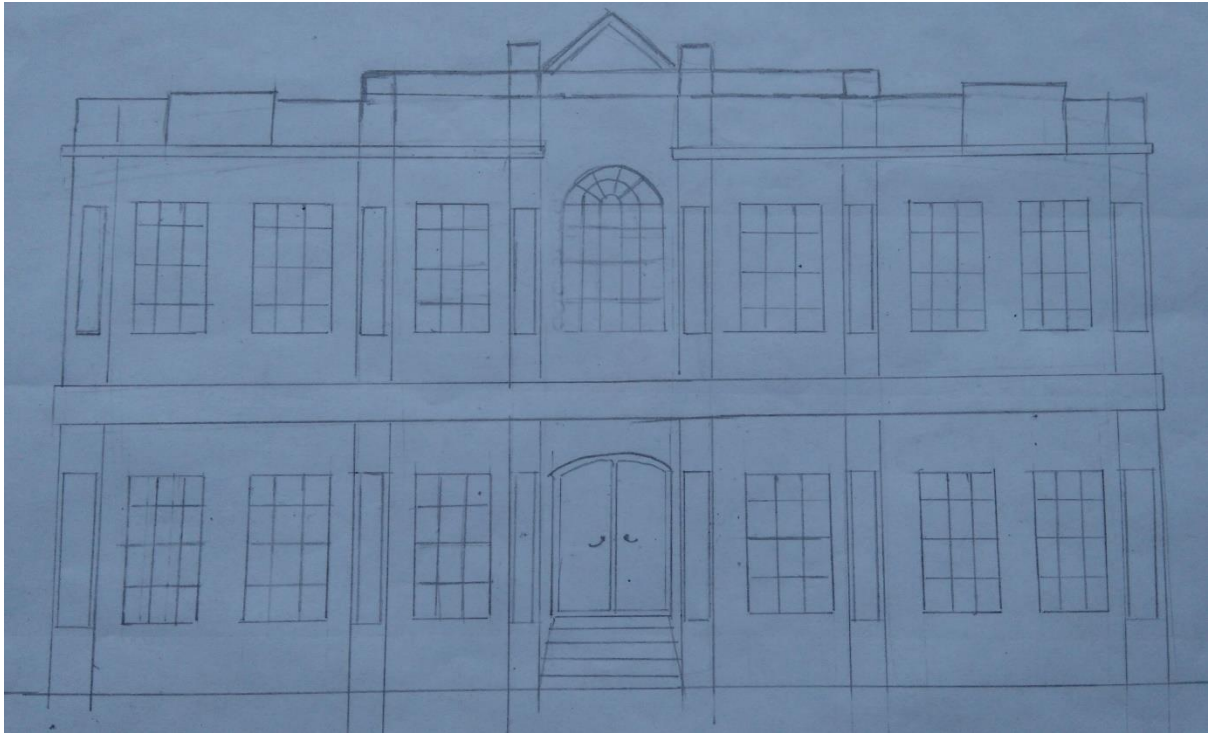
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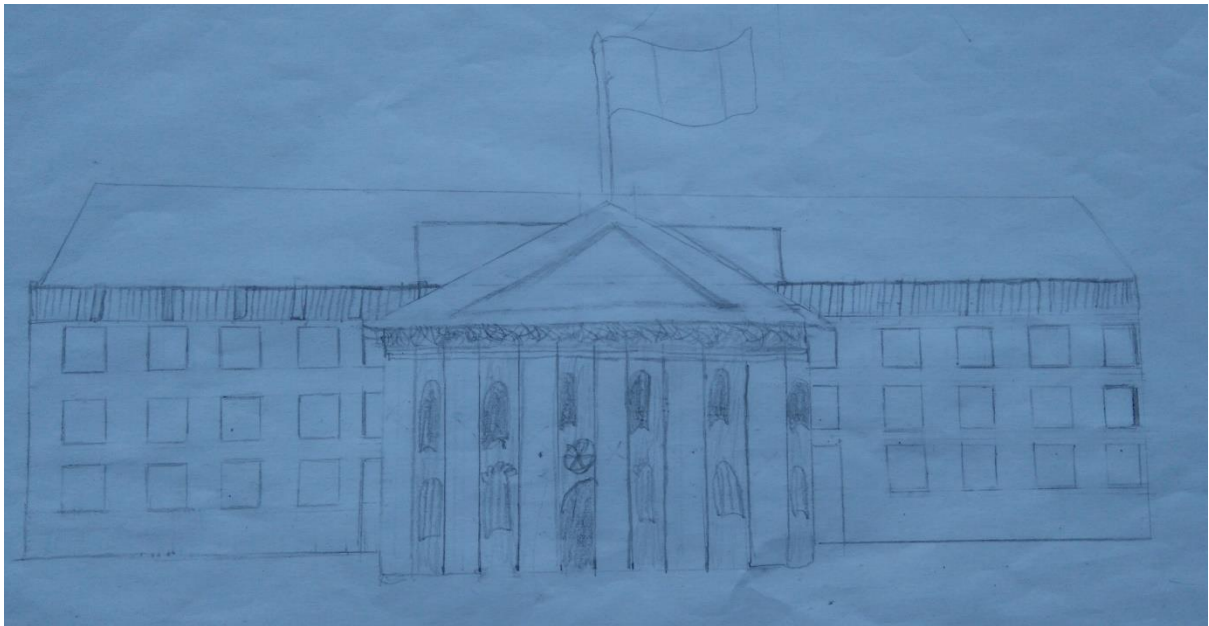
Wikipedia: [Wikipedia.org/wiki/Winifred\\_Carney](http://wikipedia.org/wiki/Winifred_Carney)

WINIFRED CARNEY from Northern Visions NvTv:  
<http://video.com/147590901>





Liberty Hall, Dublin.



The G.P.O., Dublin.

May 10.16

The Chaut  
Dublin

I thought this would in-  
terest you! especially the  
right hand corner! I hope  
have helped this Mad Reuben  
on a bit. Just to think of  
all the poor editors that  
have gone under! It is well!  
Love as from this week. L.P. 7

POST CARD.

Printed and Published by Hely's Limited, Dublin.



Miss Waring  
11 George's Square  
London  
S. W.

Back of Original Post card Sent May 10<sup>th</sup> 1916