



- 3.0 Iad Siúd a raibh tionchar acu ar an Éirí Amach: Réamhrá
- 3.2 Poblachtánaigh agus iad siúd a chuaigh i muinín na láimhe láidre
- 3.2.4 Eoin Mac Néill agus Óglaigh na hÉireann

Chur Mac Néill go díreach leis an Éirí Amach trí Óglaigh na hÉireann a bhunú, a armáil agus a thraenáil.

Rugadh Eoin Mac Néill (1867-1945) do thuismitheoirí Caitliceacha meánaicme i nGleann Arma ar chósta Aontroma. Cuireadh oideachas air i gColáiste Naomh Maolmhaodhóg, Béal Feirste agus bhain sé céim amach in Ollscoil Ríoga na hÉireann. I 1893, mar aon le Dubhghlas de hÍde agus daoine eile, bhunaigh sé Conradh na Gaeilge, eagraíochta bhí tiomanta do chaomhnú teanga, litríocht agus cultúr traidisiúnta na Gaeilge. Ba é an chéad rúnaí é ar Chonradh na Gaeilge, agus chuir sé An Claidheamh Soluis (the Sword of Light), a n-iris ag a raibh tionchar mór in eagar. Teangeolaí agus staraí iontach ba ea Mac Néill agus d'athraigh sé an léann Ceilteach ó bhun. Fuair sé amach nach ndeachaigh na foinsí siar níos faide ná an cúigiú haois agus go raibh cuntais ar thréimhsí roimhe sin bunaithe ar scéalta a cumadh ina dhiaidh sin. I 1909, ceapadh ina ollamh le luathstair agus stair mheánaoiseach na hÉireann é sa Choláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath.

Cé gur scoláire agus gníomhaí cultúrtha go príomha a bhí ann, in alt dar teideal 'The North began' in An Claidheamh Soluis (an 1 Samhain 1913), thacaigh Mac Néill le bunú fórsa deonach náisiúnta cosúil le hÓglaigh Uladh. Bunaíodh an eagraíocht i mBaile Átha Cliath ar an 25 Samhain, a gcuspóir mar dhea chun an Rialtas Dúchais a chosaint; bhí roinnt den choiste, áfach, ina mbaill de Bhráithreachas Phoblacht na hÉireann agus bhí

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sé mar aidhm acu na hÓglaigh a úsáid chun neamhspleáchas iomlán a fháil, rud a tharla, ba Óglaigh a bhí i bhformhór na ndaoine a bhí páirteach in Éirí Amach 1916. Tugadh an ról mar cheann foirne do Mac Néill ar scarúnaí é chomh maith ach scarúnaí measartha a bhí ann agus bhí an-mheas air go poiblí.

Faoi stiúir Mac Néill, earcaíodh daoine go tapa, sroicheadh 170,000 ar deireadh. Spreag sé chomh maith bunú Chumann na mBan in Aibreán 1914, fórsa ban comhlántach. Mar cheann foirne, bhí sé páirteach i bpleanáil iompórtáil na n-arm i mBinn Éadair. Tar éis an scoilte i Meán Fómhair 1914 agus d'fhormhór na mball a gcúl a thabhairt do Mhac Néill le dul in éindí le Redmond, lean na hÓglaigh a bhí fágtha, timpeall 10,000 agus iad suite i mBaile Átha Cliath go príomha, faoi stiúir Mac Néill. Ní raibh aon mheas ag formhór na ndaoine san arm nua, gearrtha siar seo d'Óglaigh na hÉireann ar an Rialtas Dúchais, ba phoblachtaigh tiomanta a bhformhór.

Ba é straitéis Mhic Néill éirí amach a eagrú dá mbeadh cúiseanna leordhóthanacha agus nuair a bhí cúinsí fabhrach; idir an dá linn, ba cheart go mbeadh Óglaigh na hÉireann armtha, oilte agus réidh le dul i ngleic le haon iarracht chun airm a bhaint den eagraíocht, coinscríobh a chur i bhfeidhm ná Rialtas Dúchais a thréigean. Bhí sé pleanáilte ag roinnt d'fhaicsean an IRB sa cheannaireacht, áfach, tabhairt faoi éirí amach i bhfad níos túisce. D'eagraigh siad inlíochtaí gnácha ar Dhomhnach Cásca 1916 chun éirí amach ar fud na tíre a choinneáil faoi cheilt. Nuair a chuala Mac Néill faoi seo Déardaoin Cásca, labhair sé leis an bPiarsach, duine de na cinn fheadhna san IRB, agus dúirt sé leis nach gceadóadh sé 'd'arm leatharmtha dul i mbun troda'. Ina dhiaidh sin, áfach, chuir an Piarsach, Thomas McDonagh agus Seán Mac Diarmada ar a shuaimhneas é, ag rá leis go raibh long Gearmánach lán le hairm le teacht i dtír san Fhianait, Co. Chiarraí go luath. Nuair a tharla sé tráthnóna Dé Sathairn go ndeachaigh an bád go tóin poill agus gur cailleadh na hairm, thug Mac Néill freasordú do na hinlíochtaí an lá dar gcionn.

Mar thoradh ar fhreasordú Mhic Néill, níor tharla Éirí Amach 1916 i mórán áiteanna taobh amuigh de Bhaile Átha Cliath; agus fiú ansin, ní raibh i láthair ach an ceathrú cuid de na daoine a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ann. Seans maith nach raibh tionchar ag an bhfreasordú ar a toradh deiridh: ní fhéadfadh fórsa iomlán Óglaigh na hÉireann, mar a bhí an tráth sin (10,000

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fear), seasamh leis an gcumhacht mhíleata a d'úsáidfí ina choinne. Sa chás sin, is dóigh gur shábháil gníomh Mhic Neill saoil go leor daoine. Ar an lámh eile, murach an freasordú, seans nach ligfeadh na Sasanaigh don Éirí Amach tarlú, a chinnteodh nach gcaillfí aon duine; nuair a chreid siad go raibh na hinlíochtaí ar ceal, d'éirigh na Sasanaigh bogásach agus déanta na fírinne, cheadaigh siad don Éirí Amach tarlú.

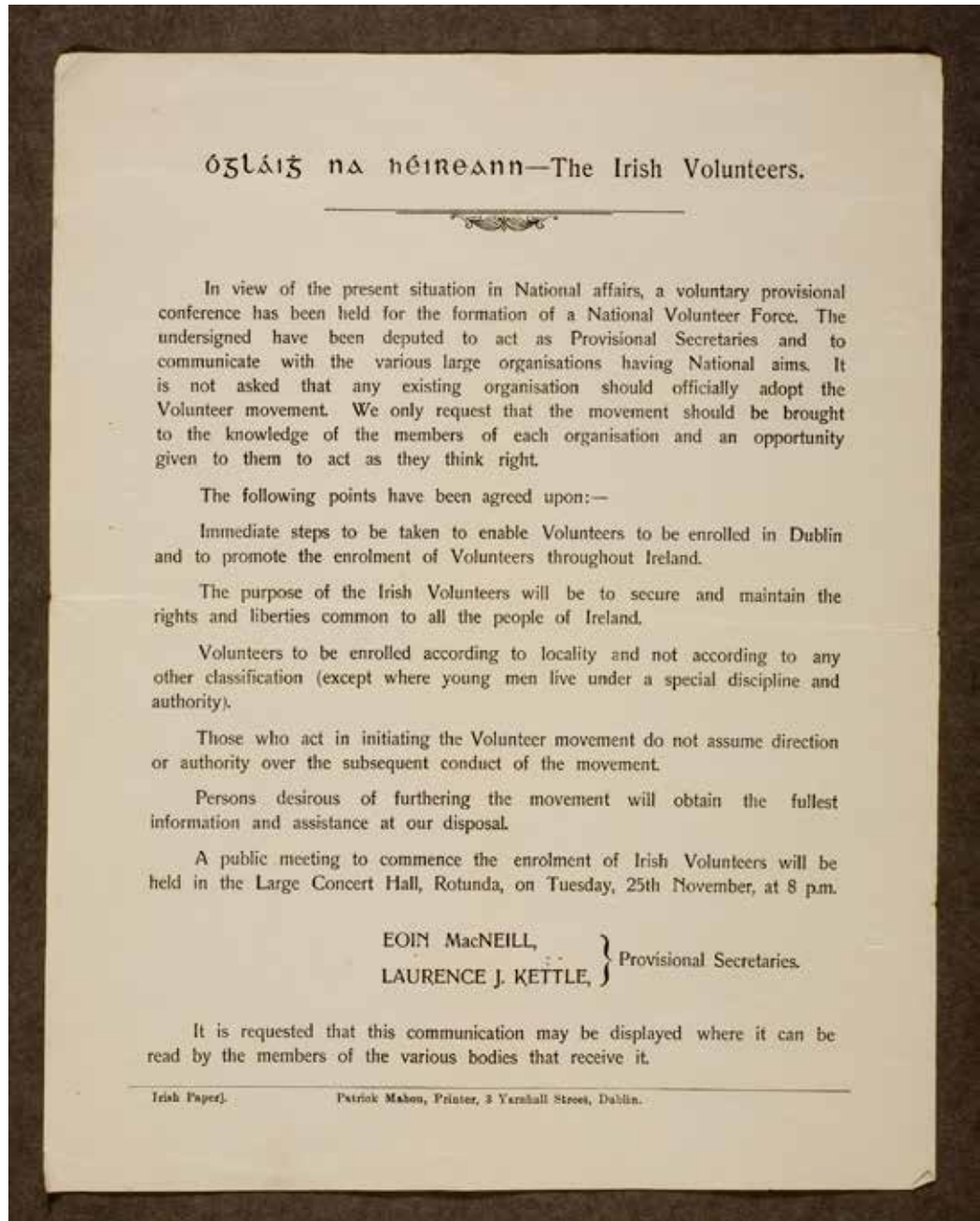
Ní raibh aon pháirt ag Mac Néill san Éirí Amach. Ina ainneoin sin, cuireadh ar thriail armchúirte é agus gearradh pianseirbhís ar feadh a shaoil air; scaoileadh amach é faoi phardún i Meitheamh 1917.

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Eoin MacNeill. (Keogh 77)

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Notice issued by the Irish Volunteers, c.Dec. 1913. (Ms. 8286(2)).

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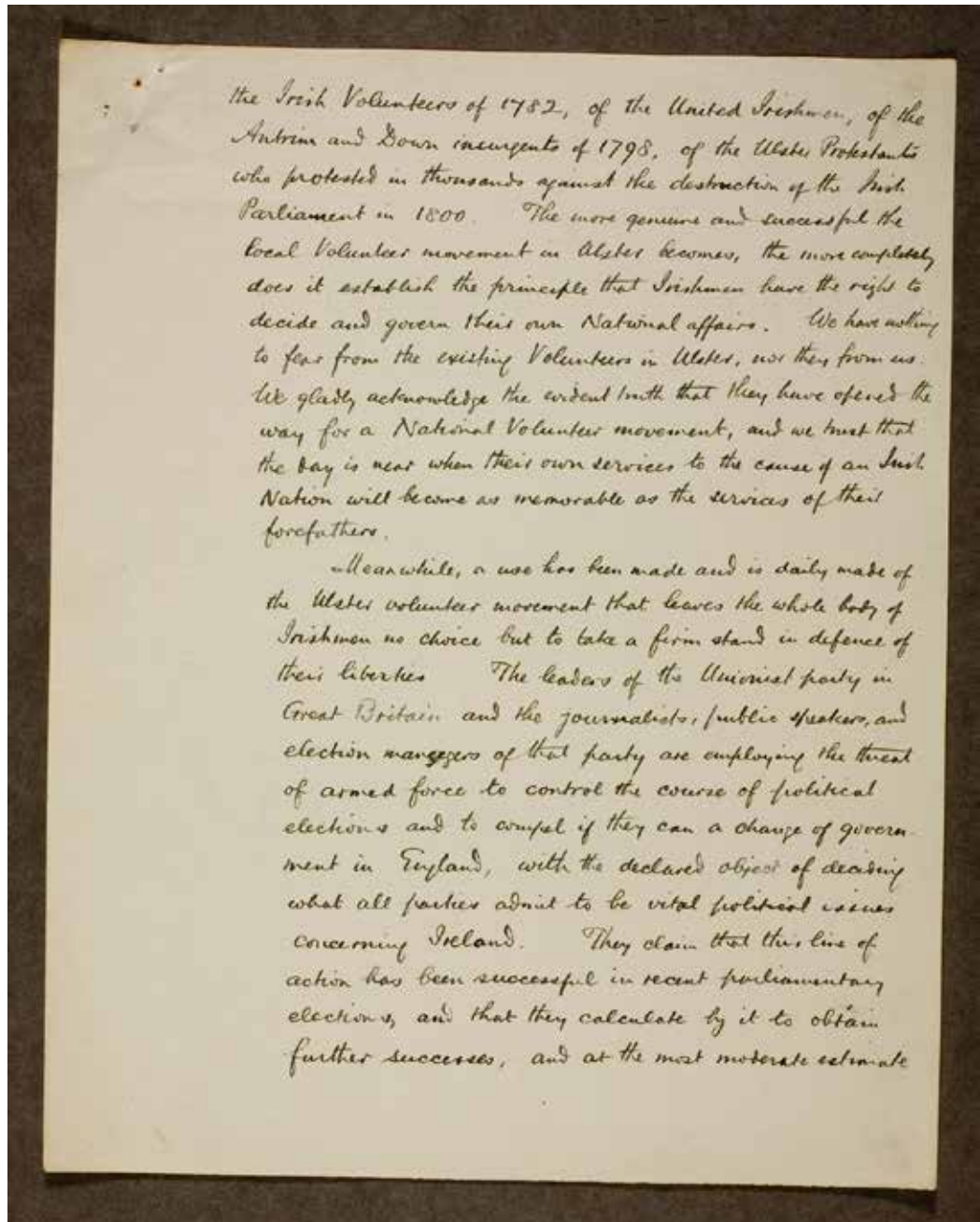
We are meeting in public, in order to proceed at once
 to the enrolment and organization of a National force of
 Volunteers. We believe that the national instinct of the
 people and their reasoned opinion has been steadily forming
 itself for some time past in favour of this undertaking, and that
 all that is now needed is to create a suitable opportunity, to
 make a beginning, and from a public meeting of the most
 unrestricted and representative kind in the capital of the country
 to invite the able-bodied men of Ireland to form themselves into a
 united and disciplined body of freemen, prepared to secure
 and maintain the rights and liberties common to all the people
 of Ireland.

A forecast of this proceeding appeared in the Dublin
 Press some days ago, and what was stated in it was the truth.
 On the following morning, the statement appeared in a different
 form in an English newspaper, with the addition that ~~the~~ what
 was proposed was to form a Volunteer force of ~~Irish~~ Catholics in
 hostility to Protestants. This was a falsehood deliberately
 invented by its writer. We do not complain of a lie that gives
 us the opportunity of saying that Protestants as well as Catholics
 have been engaged in their preparations, ~~for this~~ and that there
 will be no distinction of religions in the membership of the Irish
 Volunteers or in their ~~aim~~ purpose.

We do not contemplate any hostility to the Volunteer
 movement that has already been initiated in parts of Ulster.
 The strength of that movement consists in men whose kinsfolk
 were among the foremost and the most resolute in winning
 freedom for the United States of America, "descendants of"

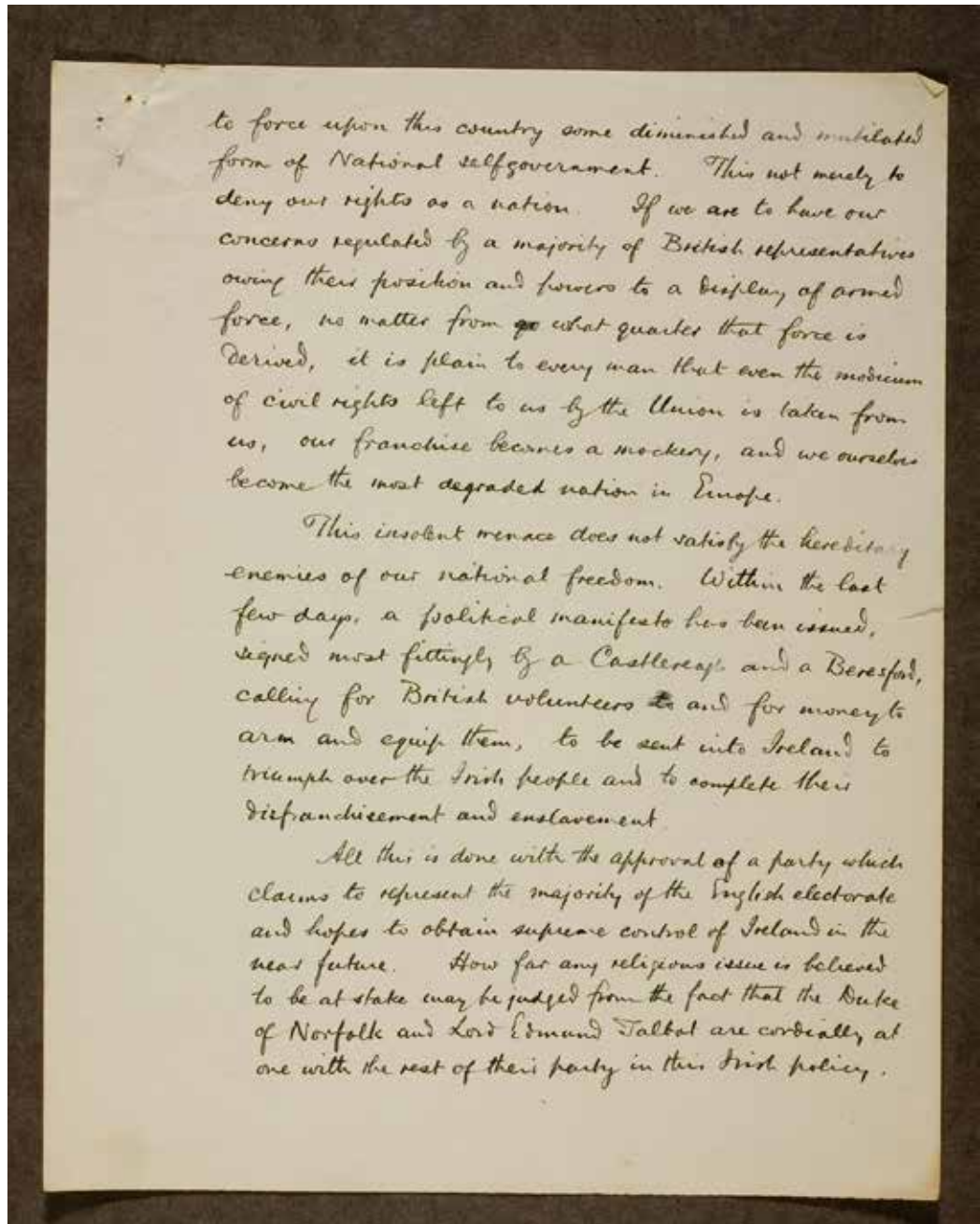
Memorandum by Eoin MacNeill relating to the formation of the Irish Volunteers, Nov. 1913; the text is incomplete. (Ms. 13,174, Hobson Papers).

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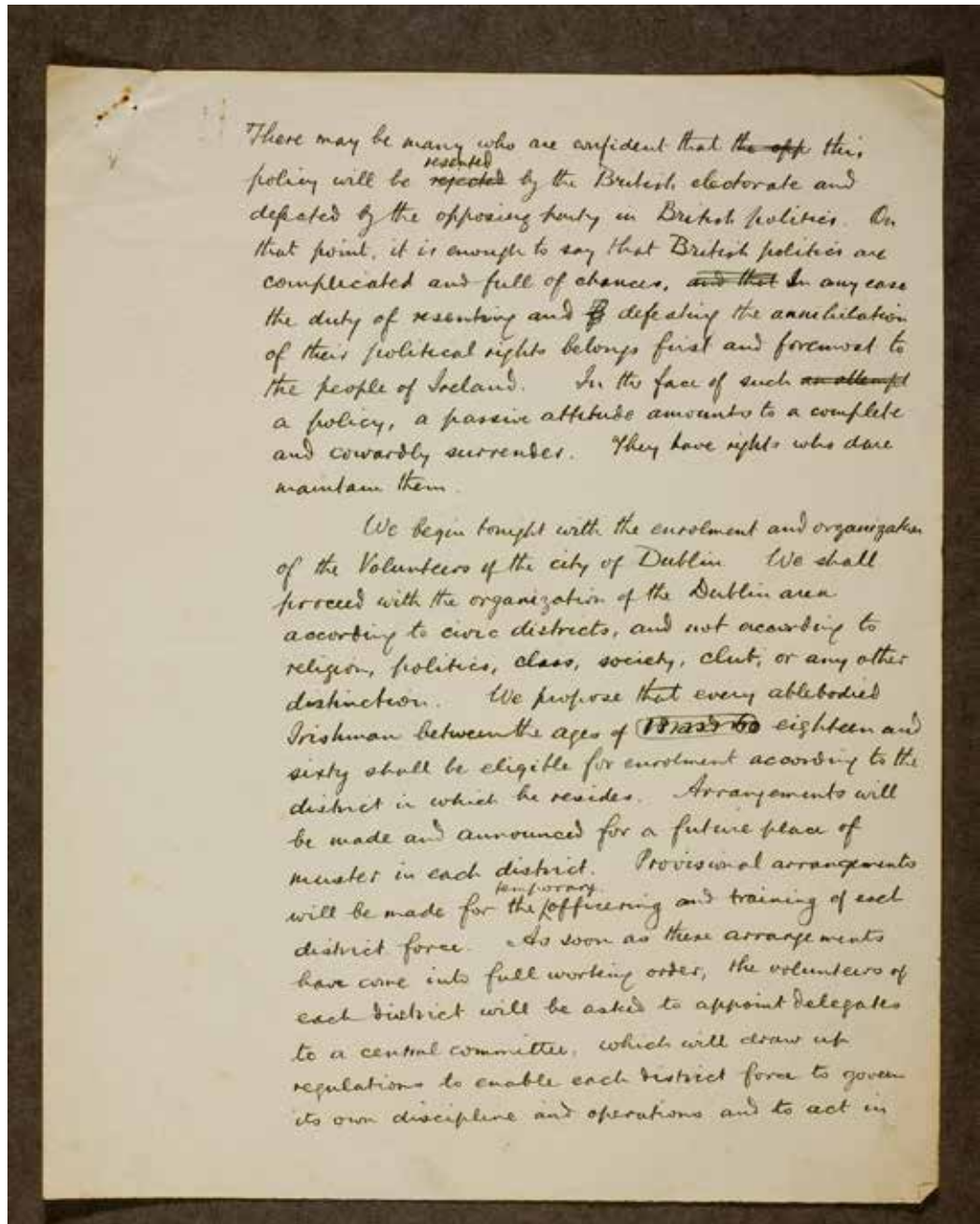
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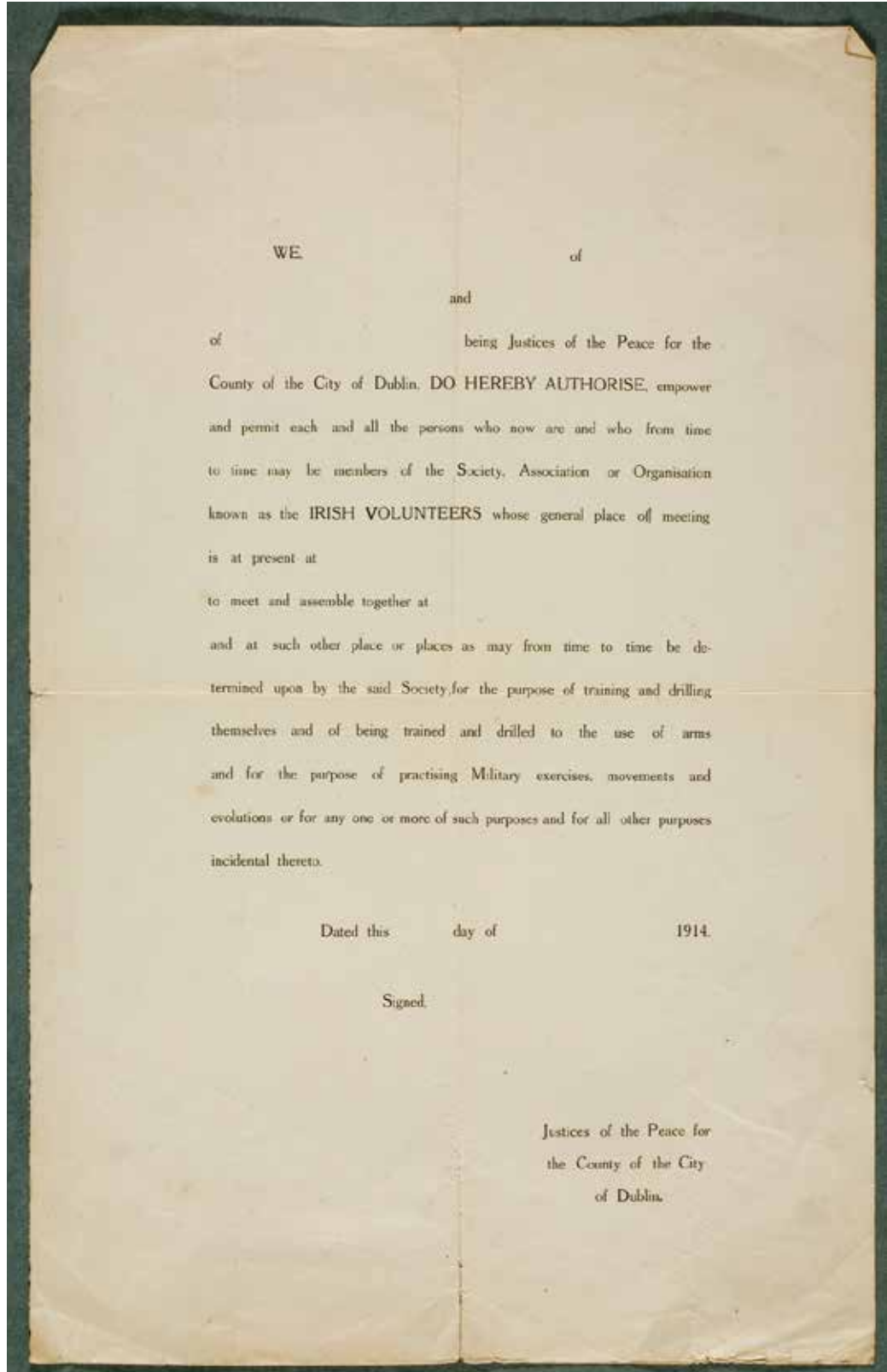
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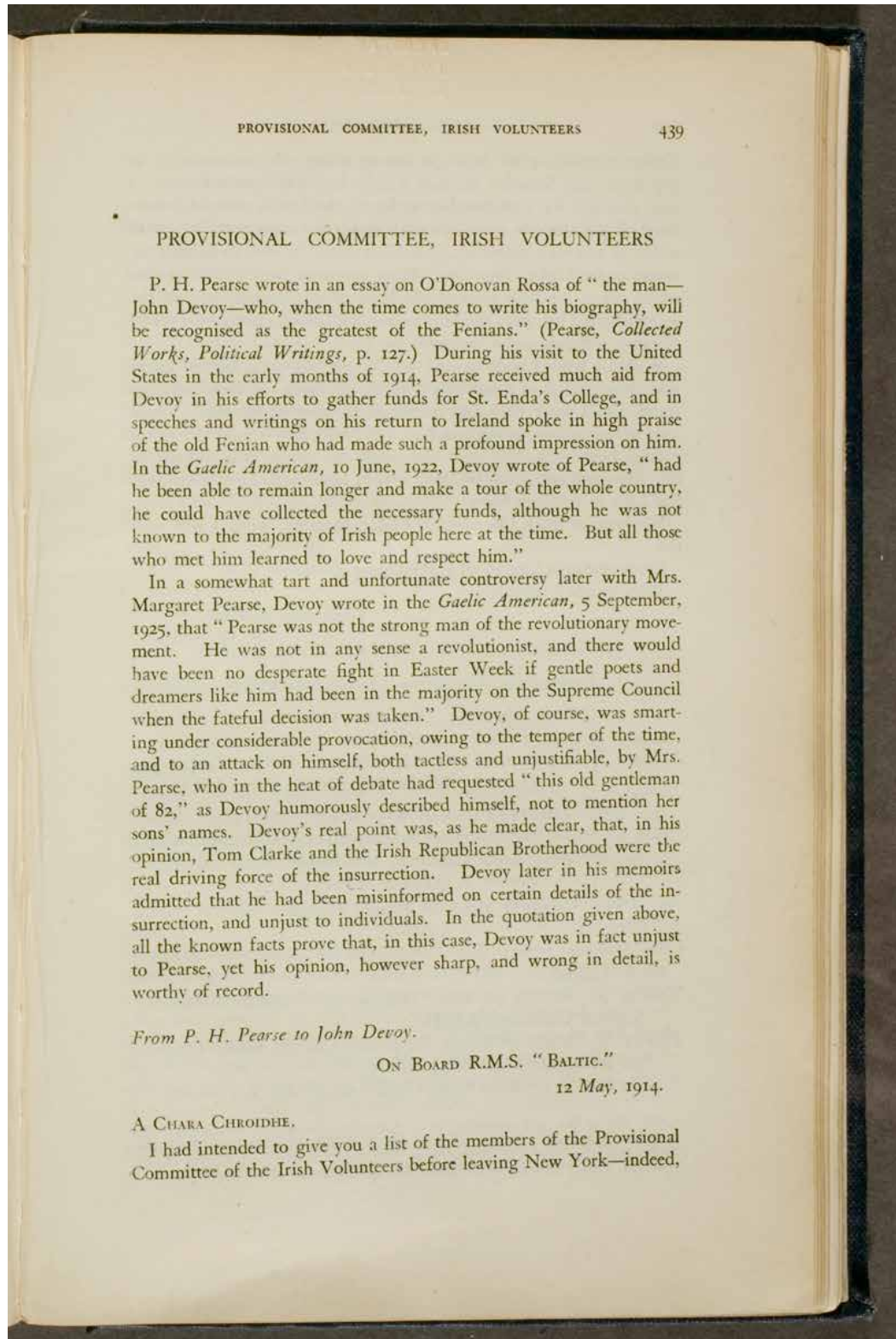
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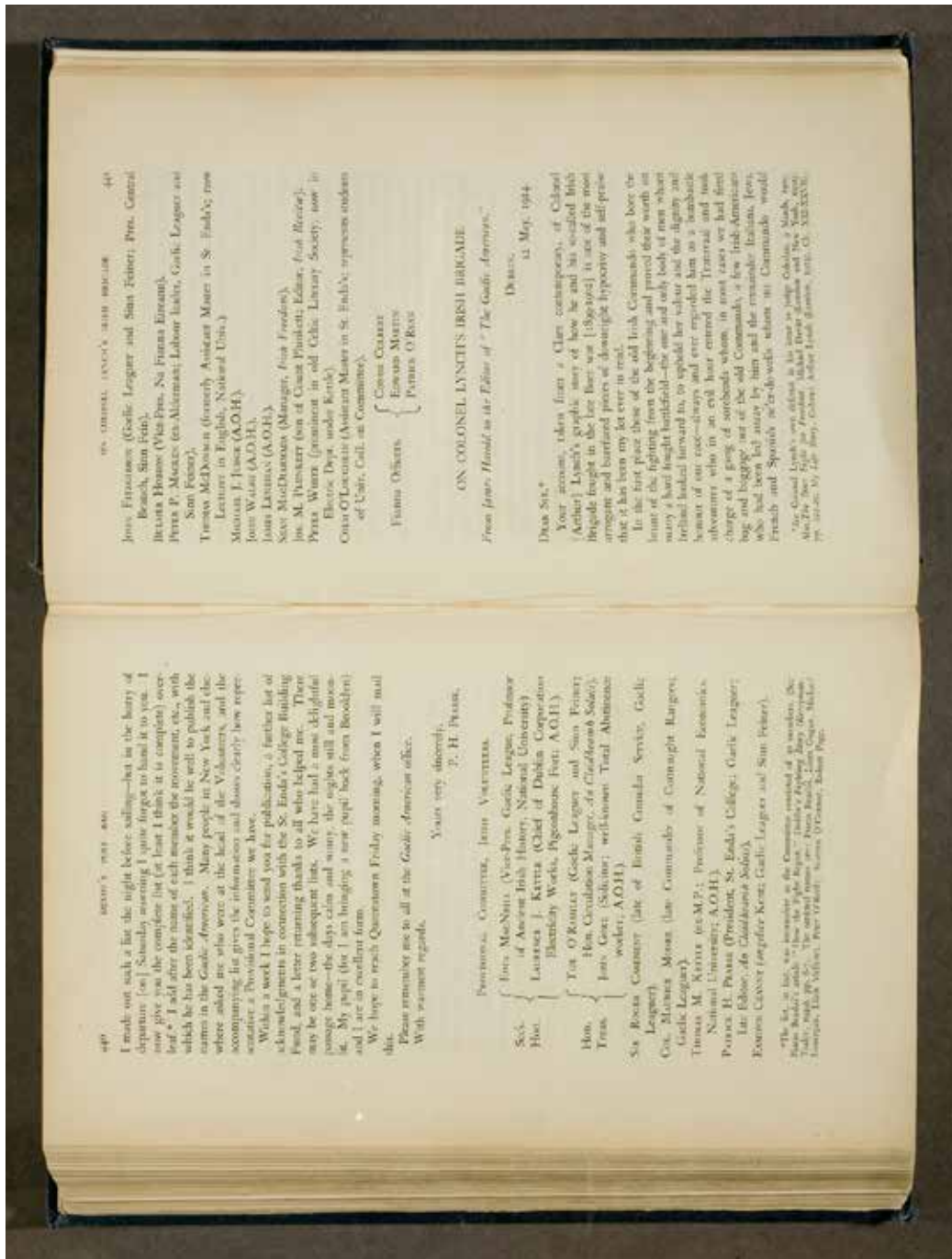
The Irish Volunteers followed the example of the Ulster Volunteers in applying for the permission of magistrates to enable it to carry out drilling. (Proclamations).

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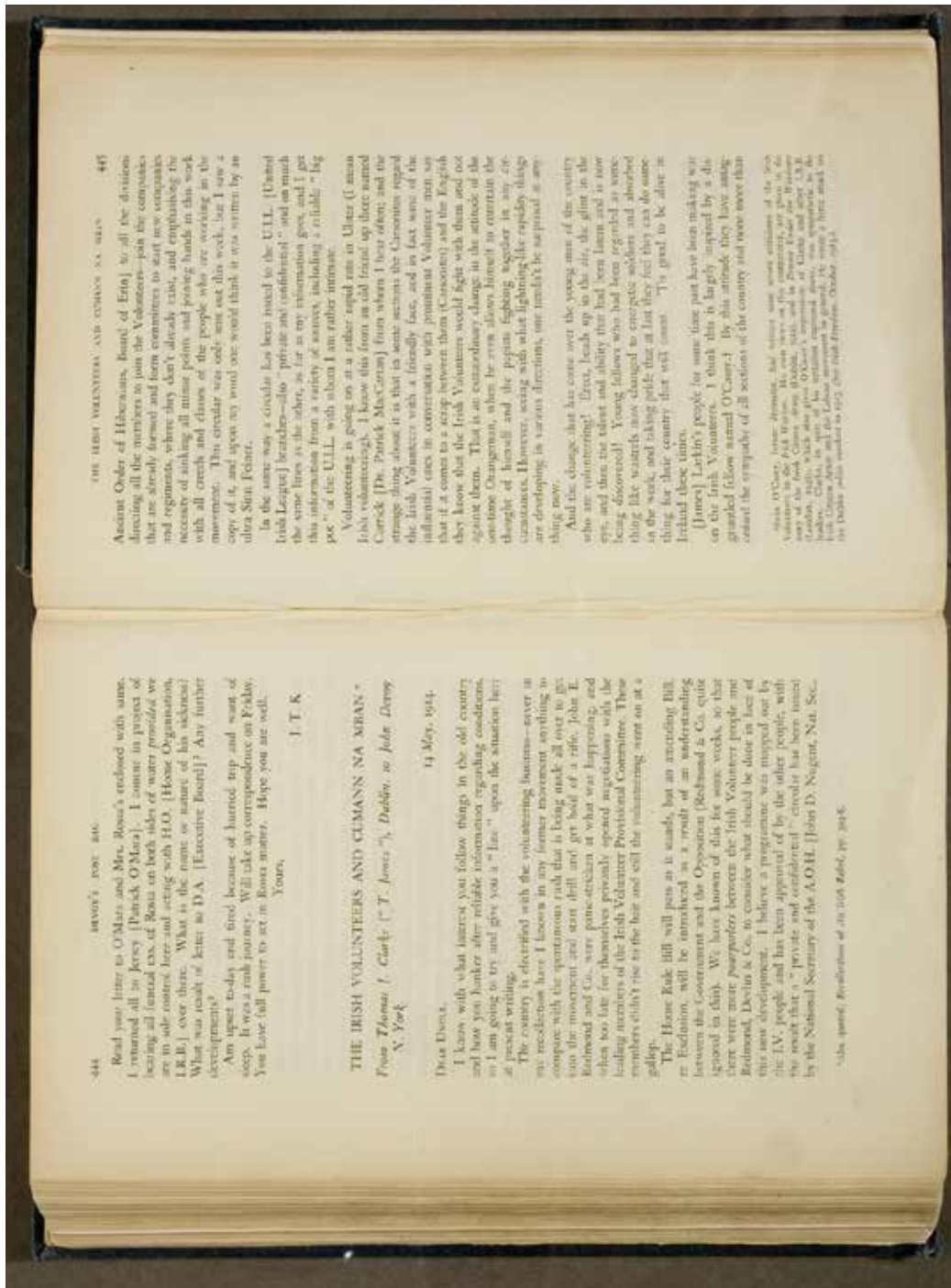
Letter from Patrick Pearse to John Devoy listing the members of the provisional committee of the Irish Volunteers; it includes the names of five of the eventual signatories of the Proclamation, 12 May 1914. (Devoy's Post Bag, 1948).

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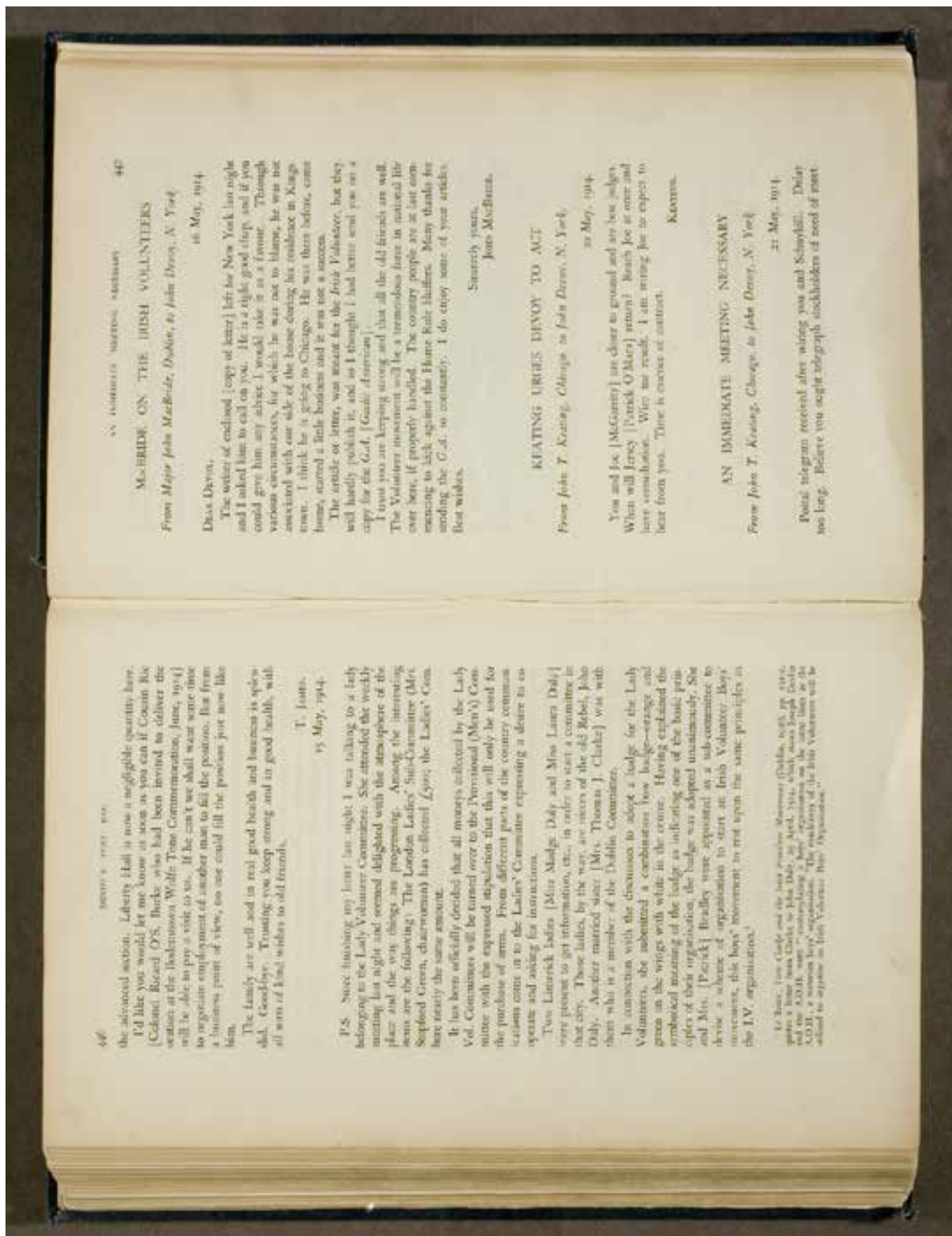
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Letter from Tom Clarke to John Devoy relating to the Irish Volunteers and to Cumann na mBan, 14 May 1914. (Devoy's Post Bag, 1948).

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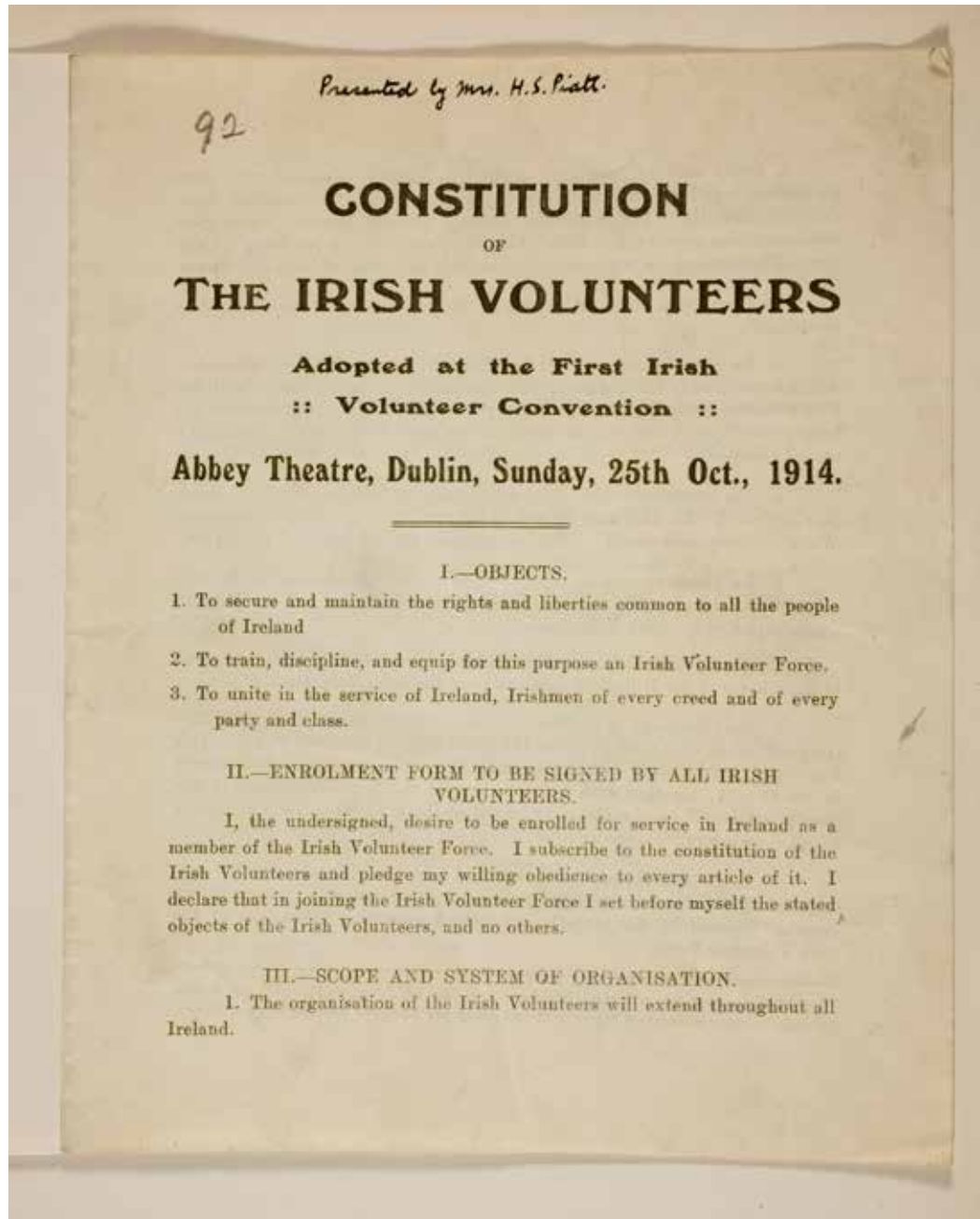
Photographs relating to the importation of arms by the Irish Volunteers at Howth, Co. Dublin, 26 July 1914. The police and military failed to seize the arms. That evening troops opened fire on a hostile crowd on Bachelor's Walk near the centre of Dublin, killing four people and wounding thirty. (Ms. 13,174(7), Hobson Papers).

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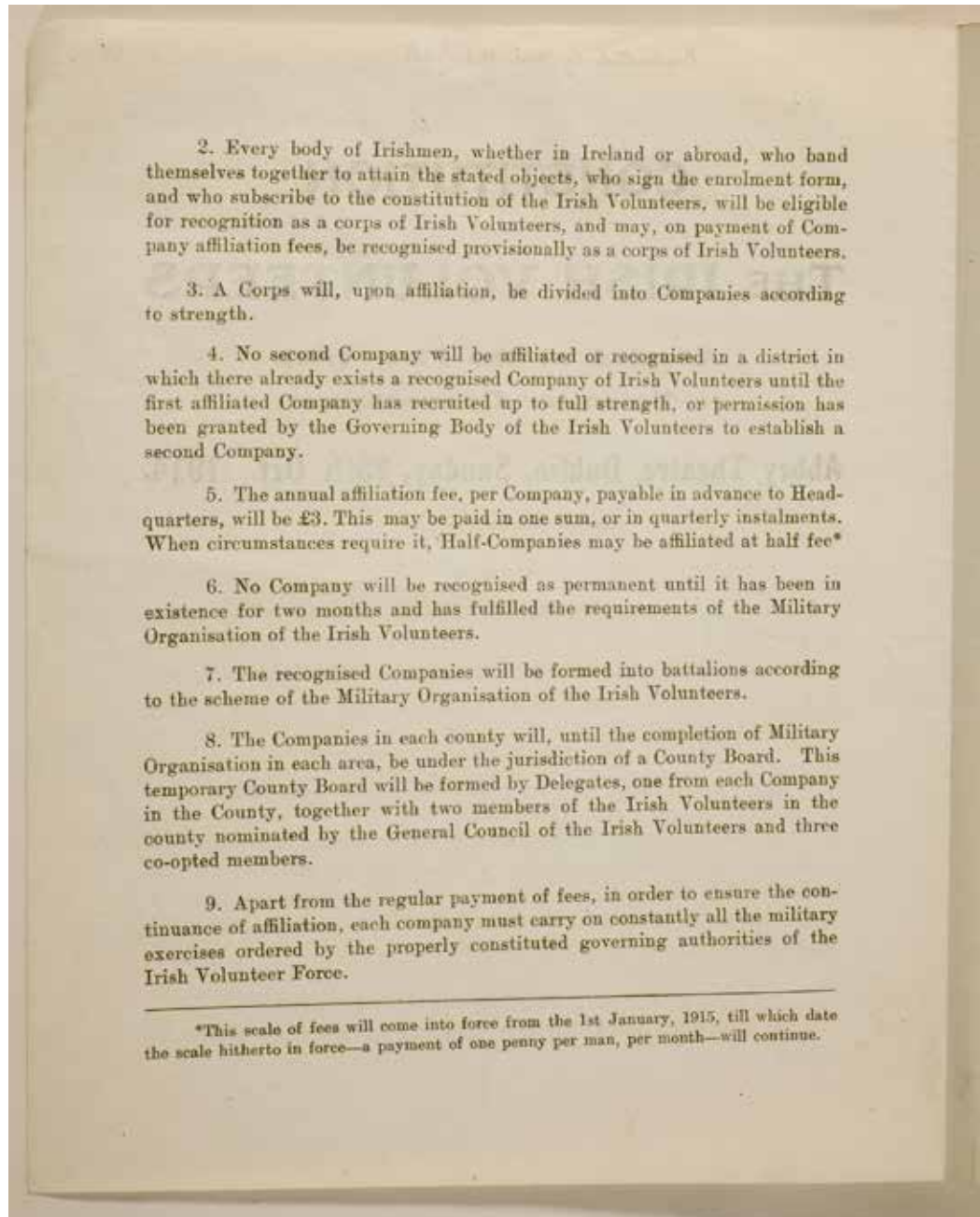
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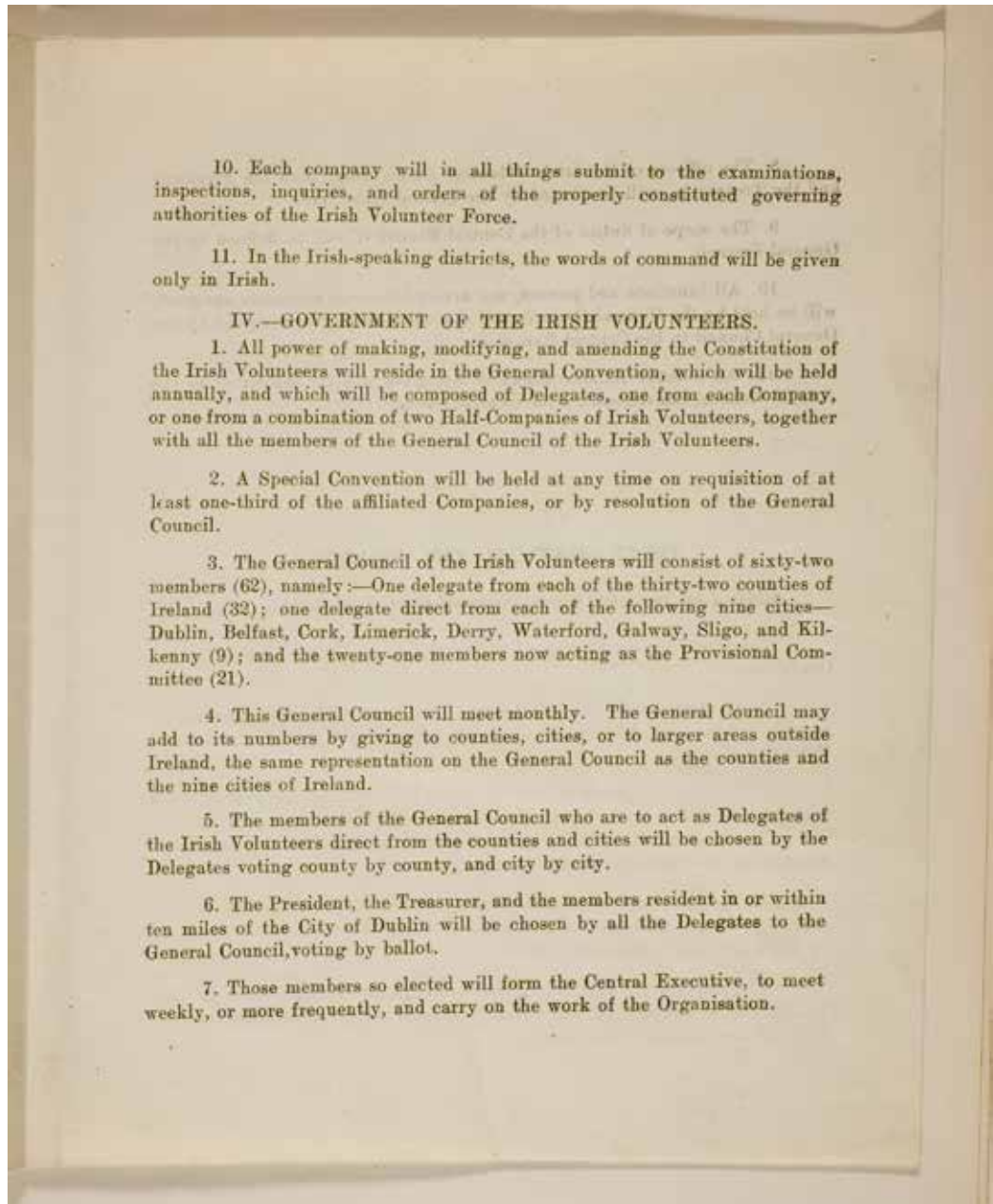
Constitution of the Irish Volunteers.

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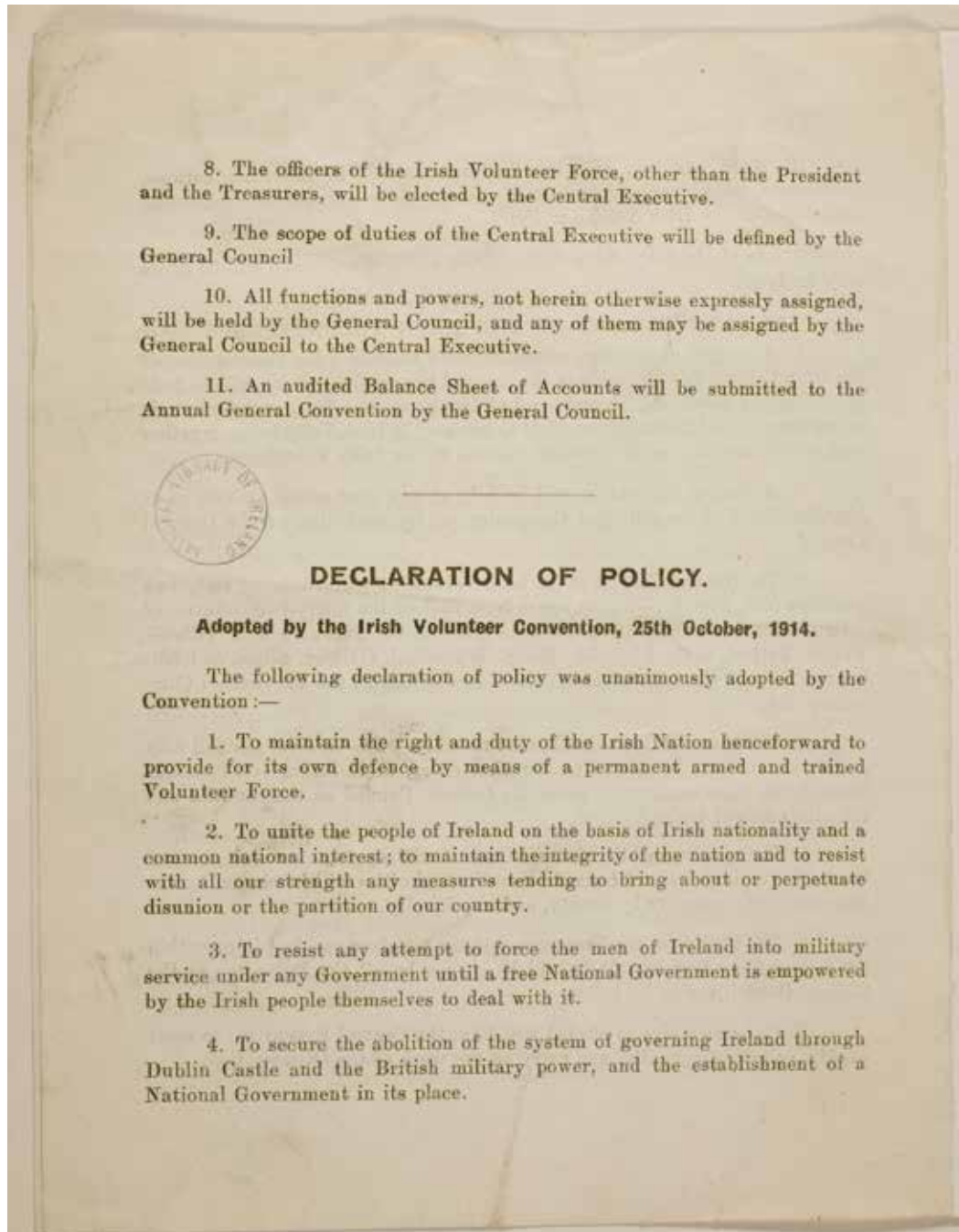
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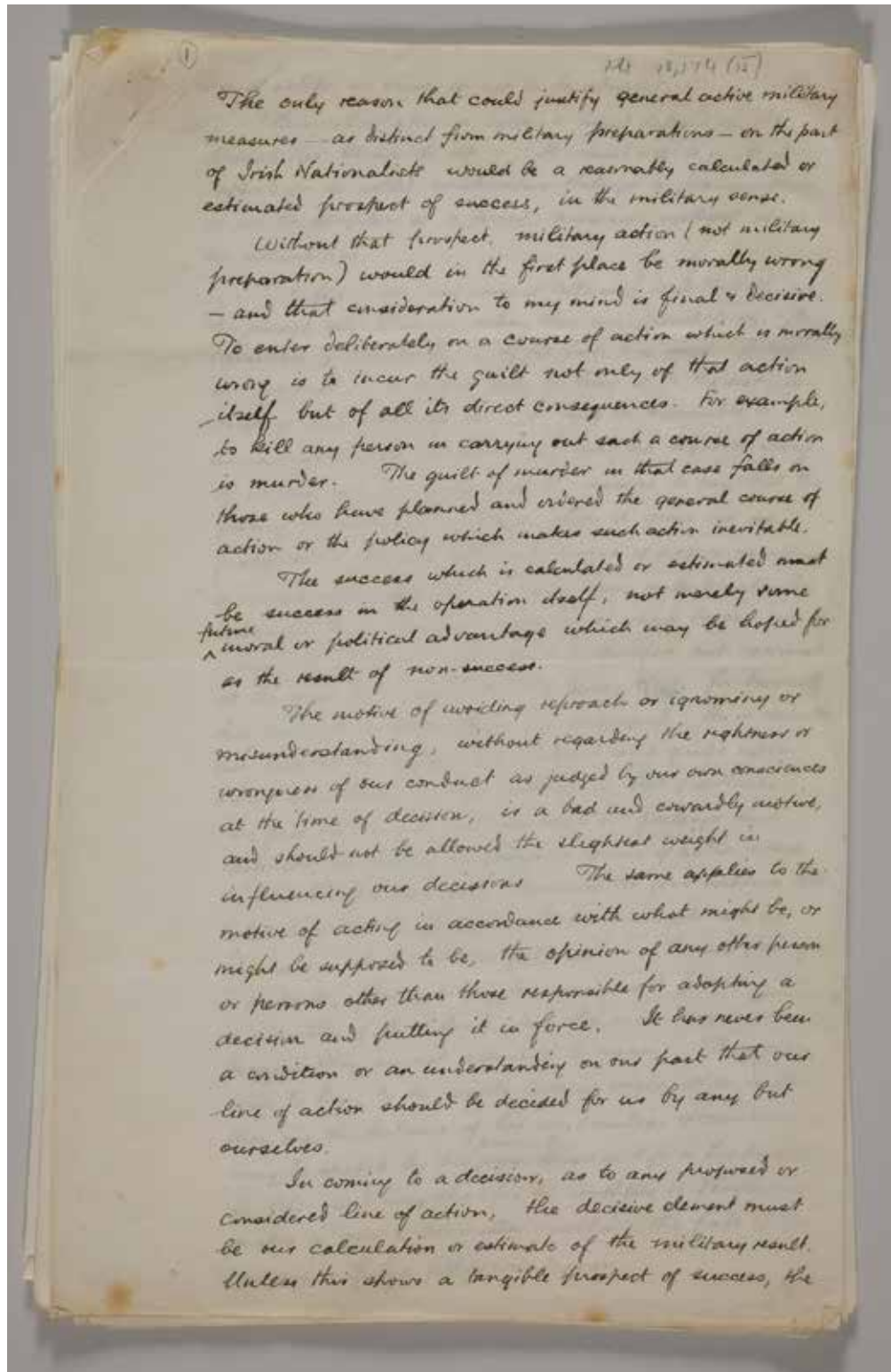
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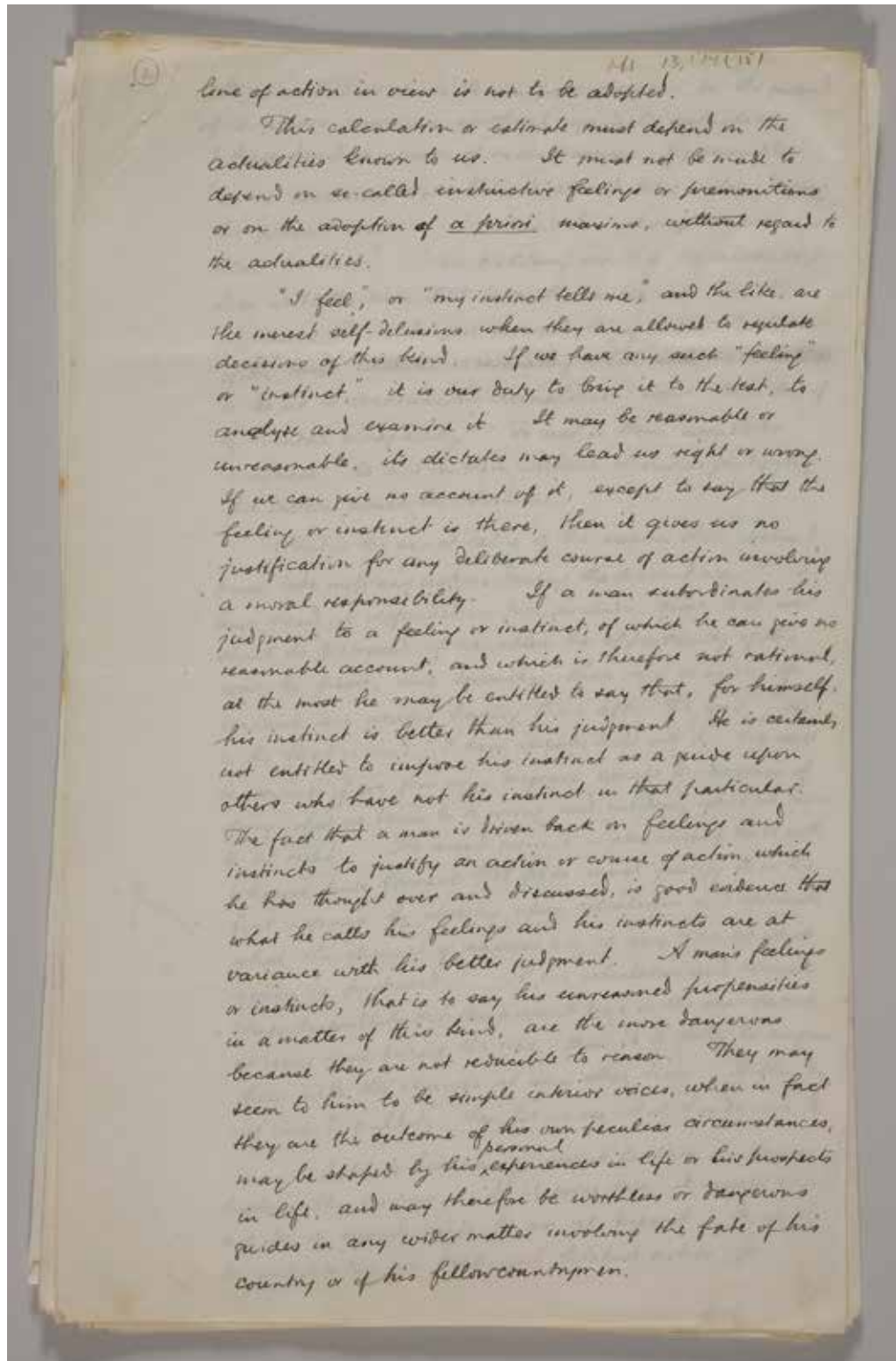
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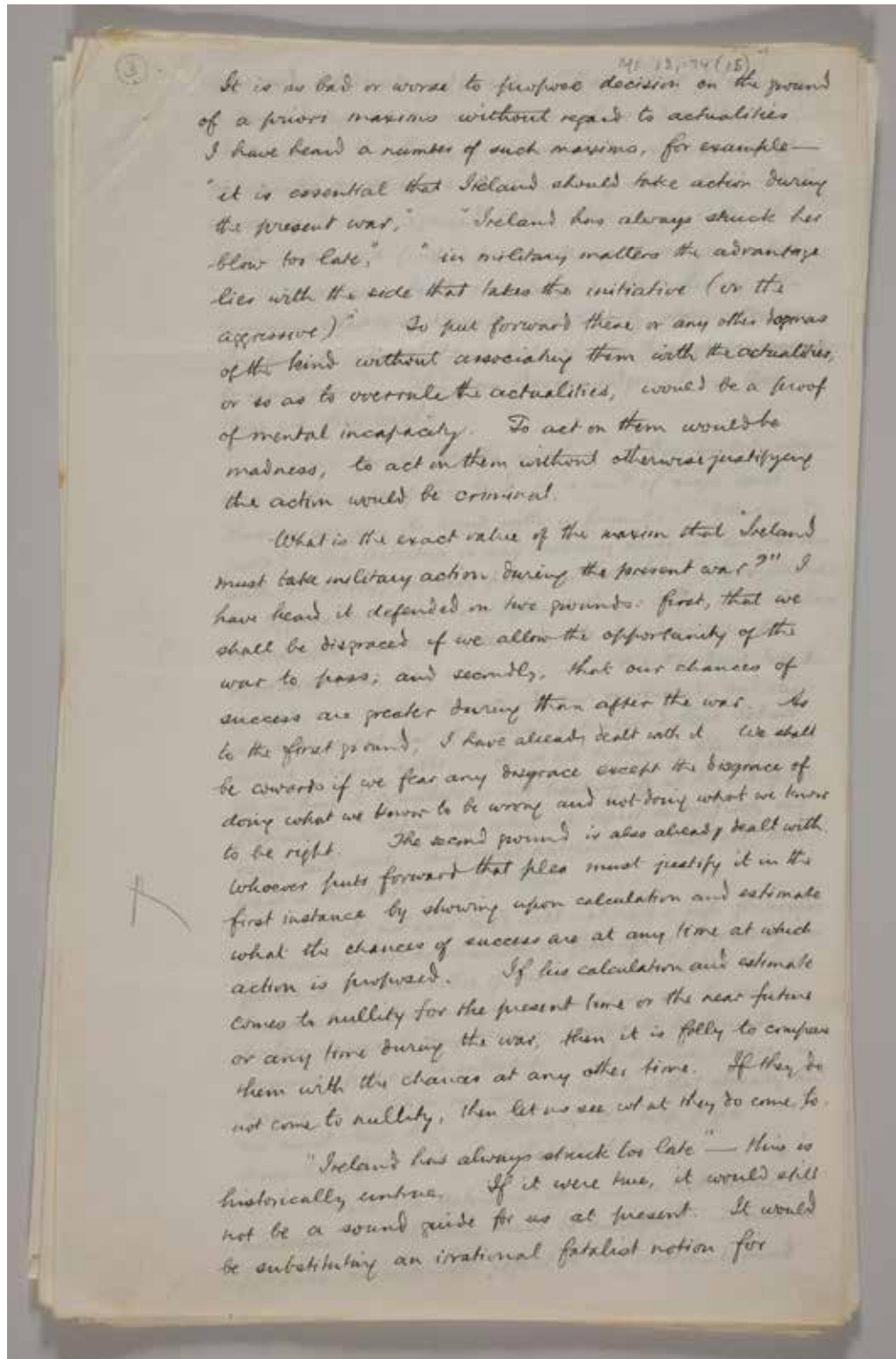
Memorandum by Eoin MacNeill on the circumstances in which the Irish Volunteers would be justified in taking part in an insurrection. The document appears to have been written in March 1916 at a time when he suspected that Pearse and others were plotting an insurrection. (Ms. 13,174(15), Hobson Papers).

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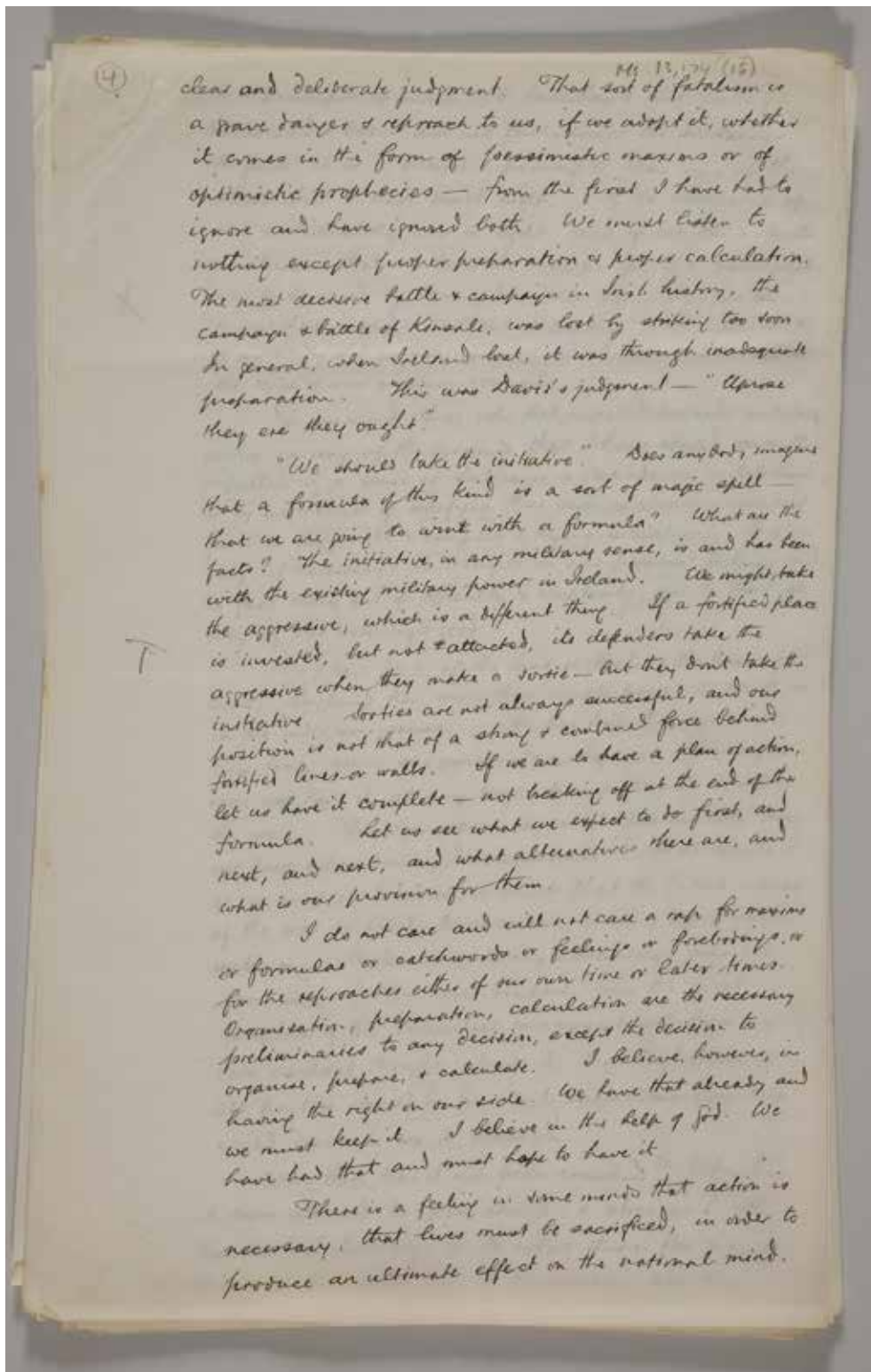
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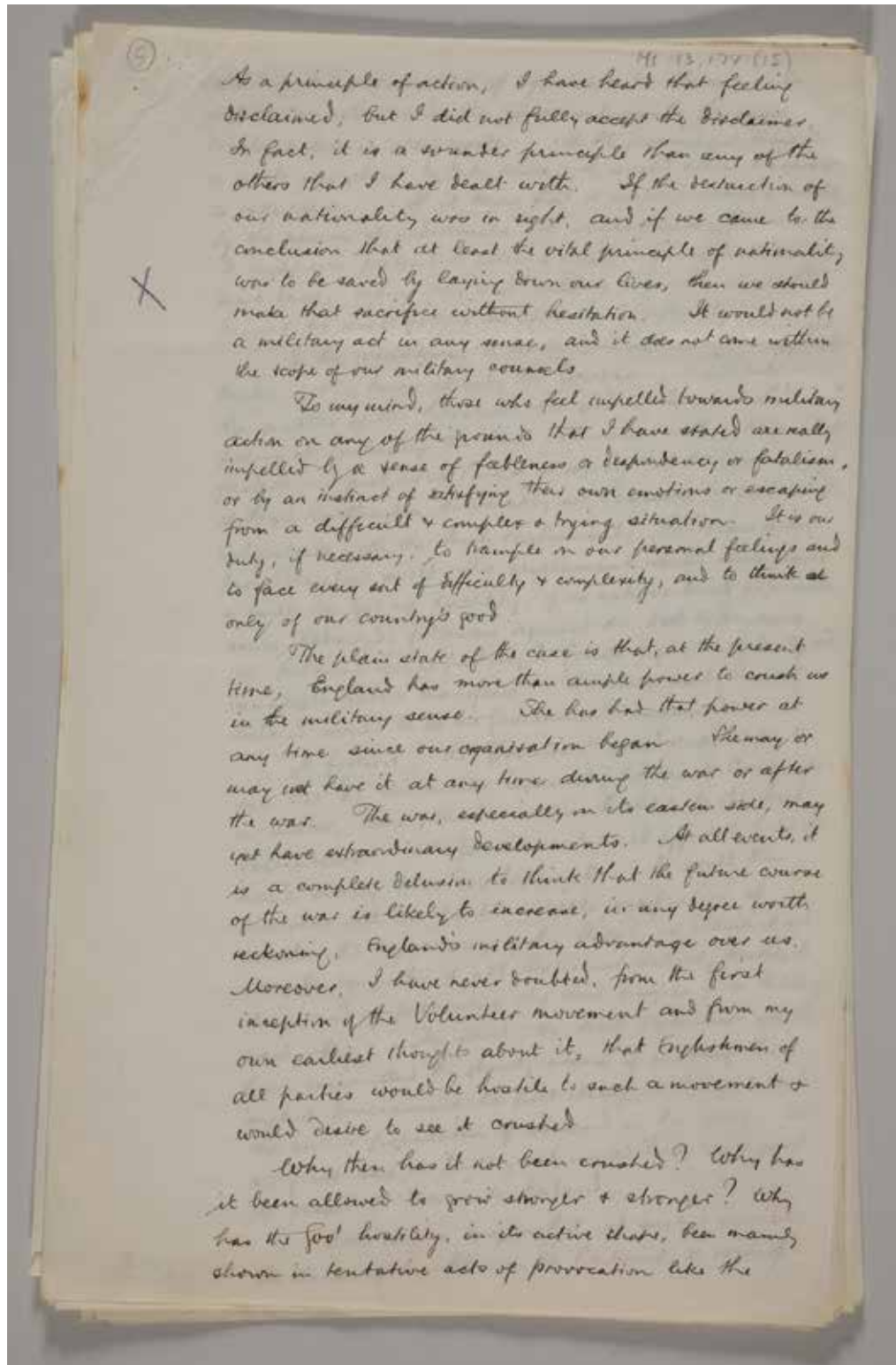
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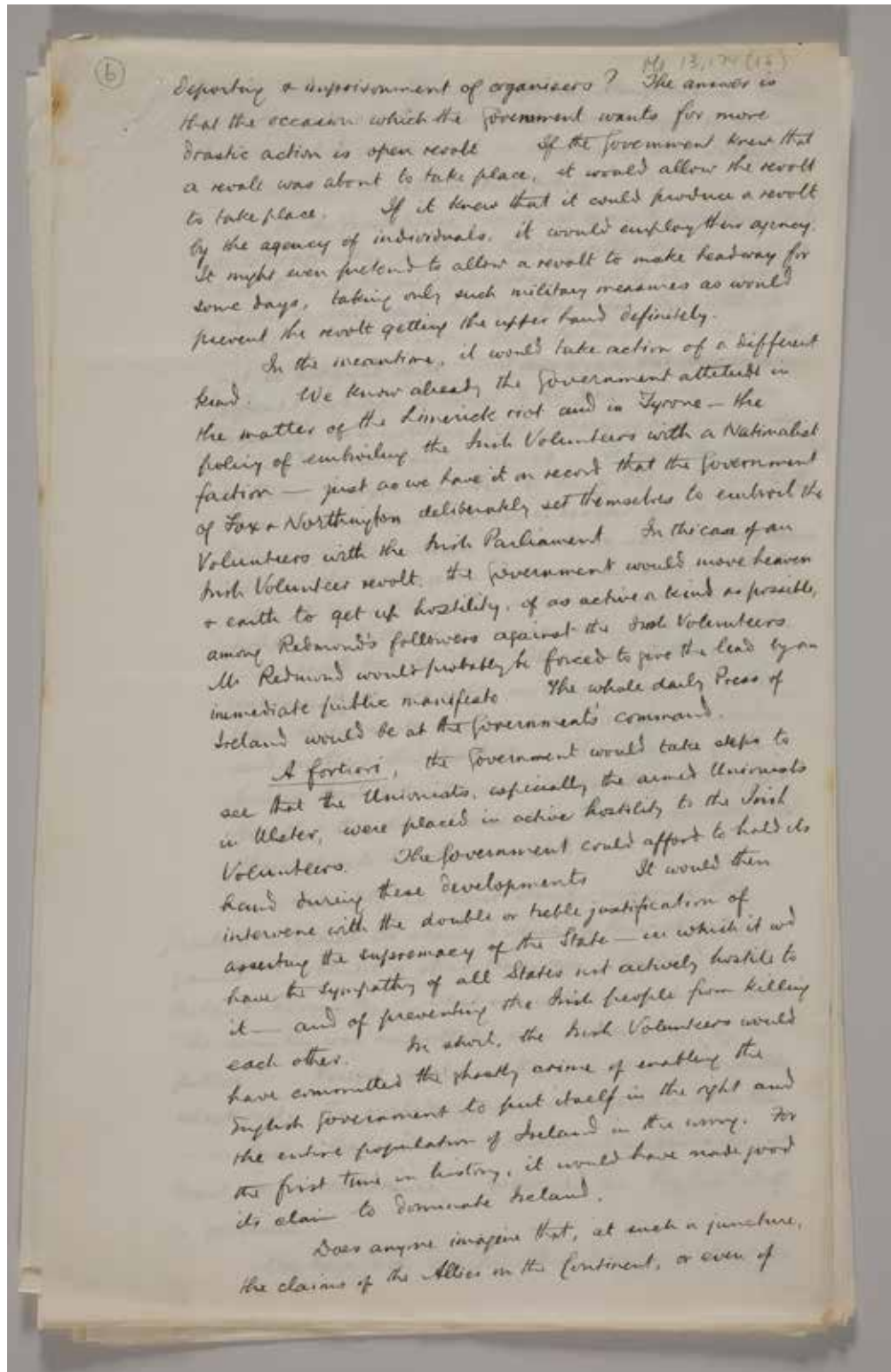
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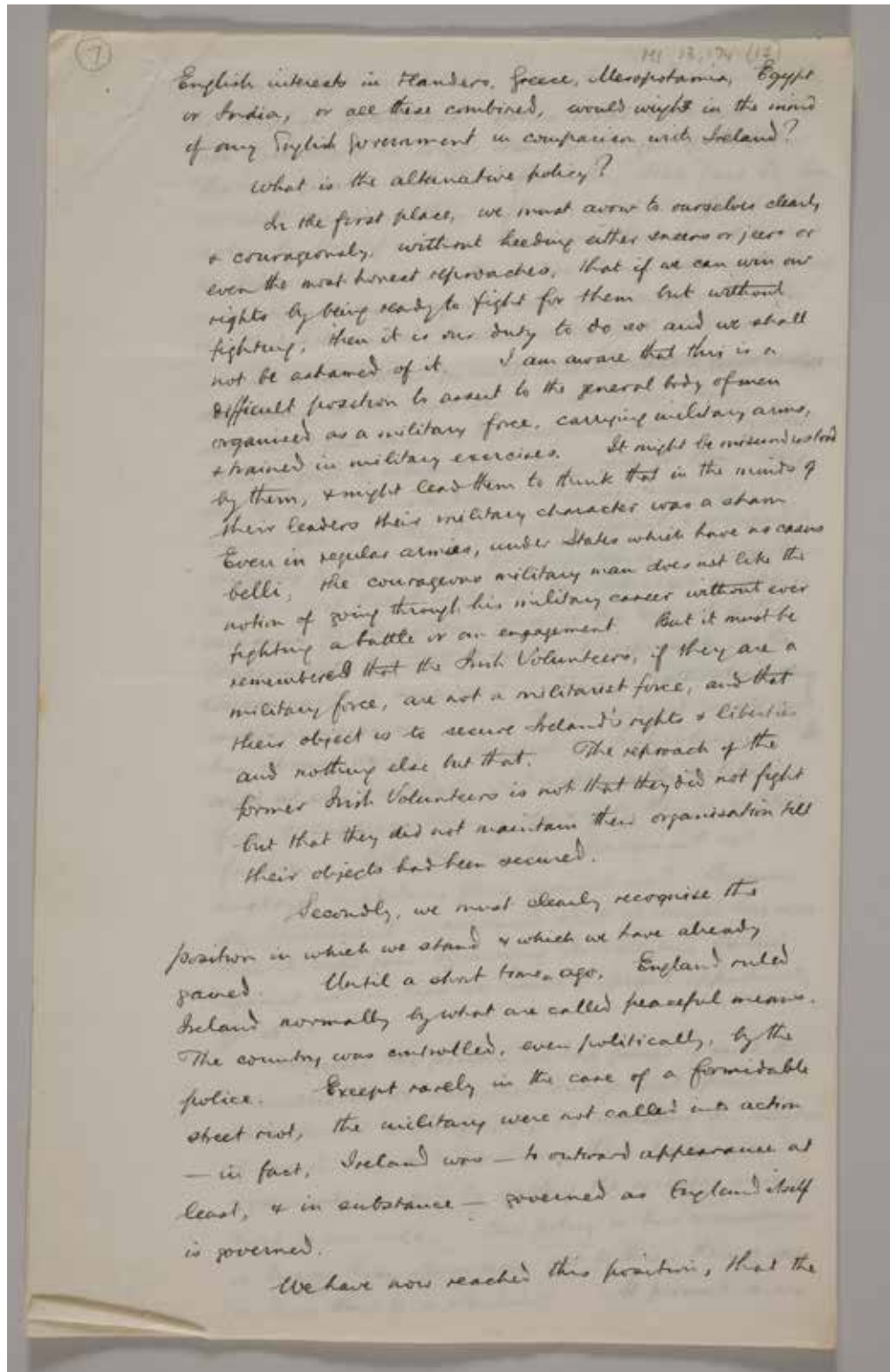
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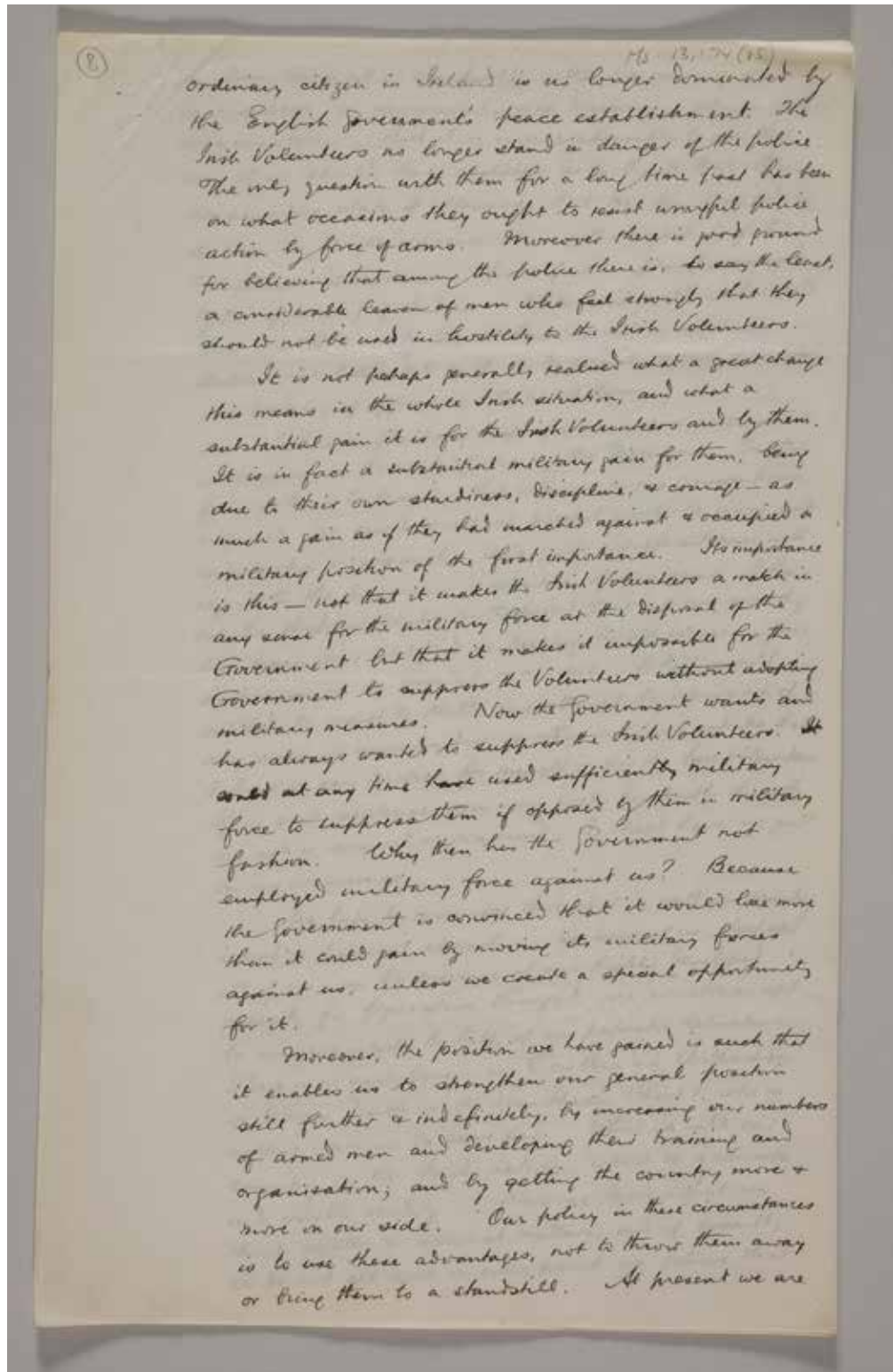
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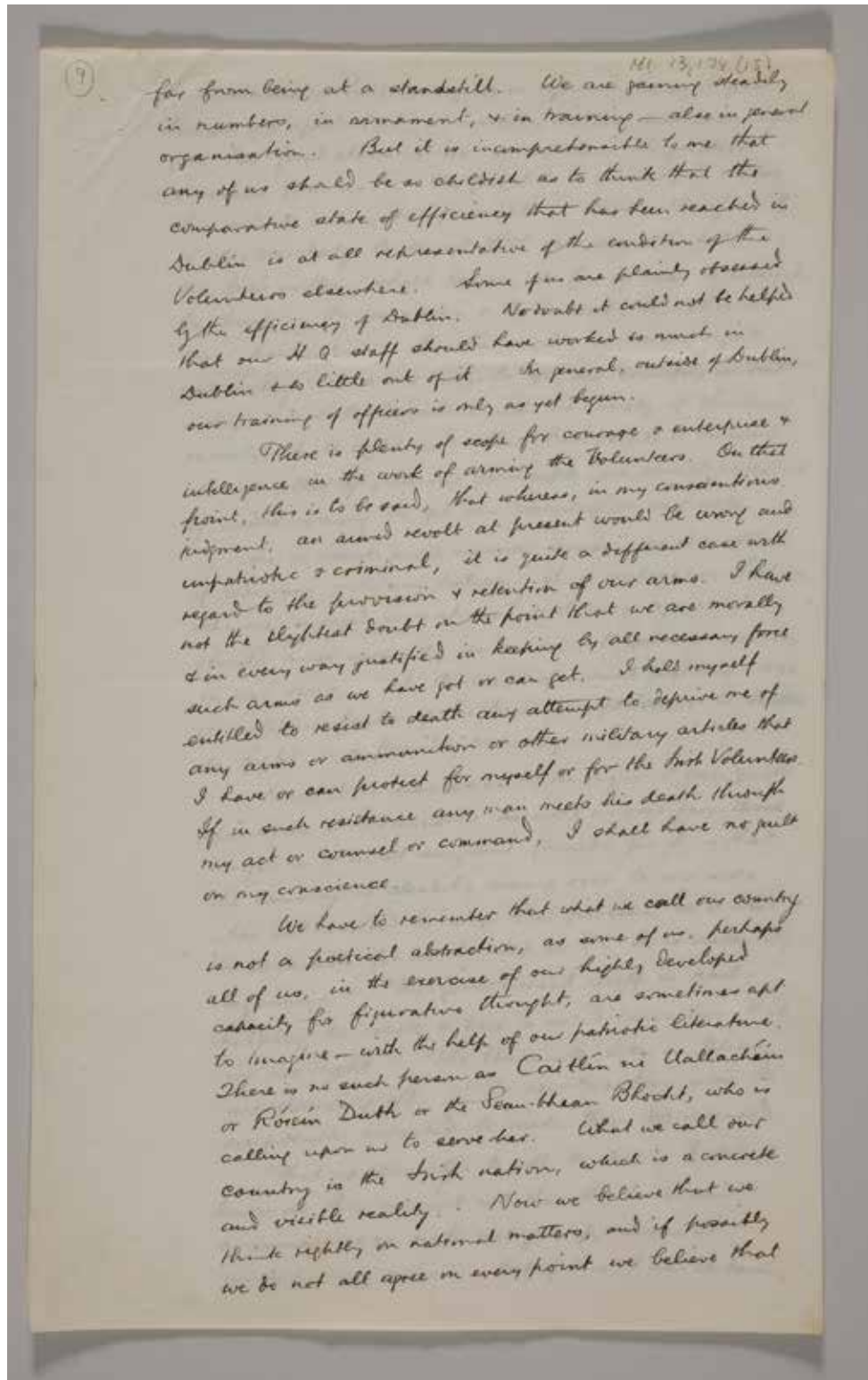
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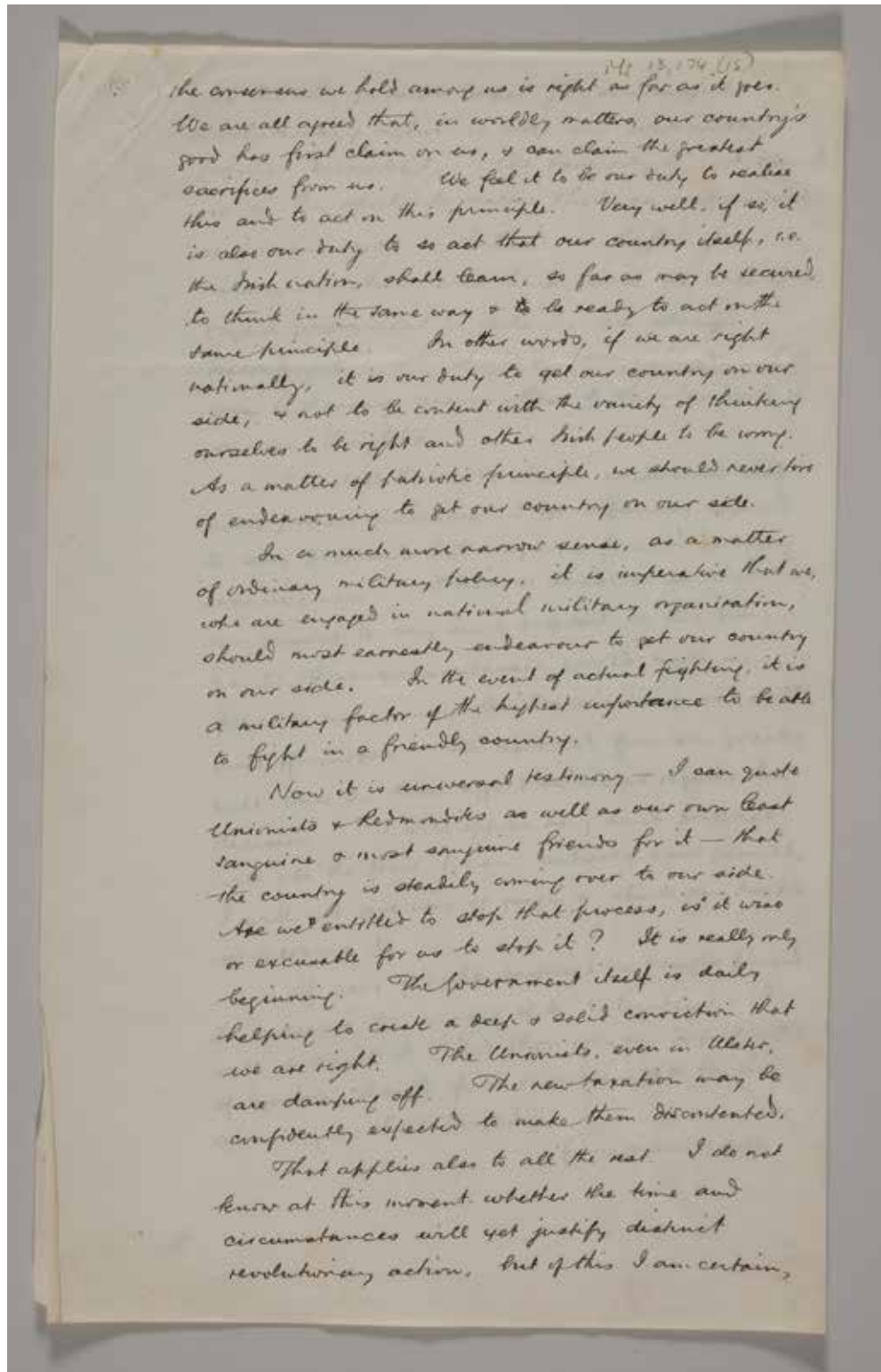
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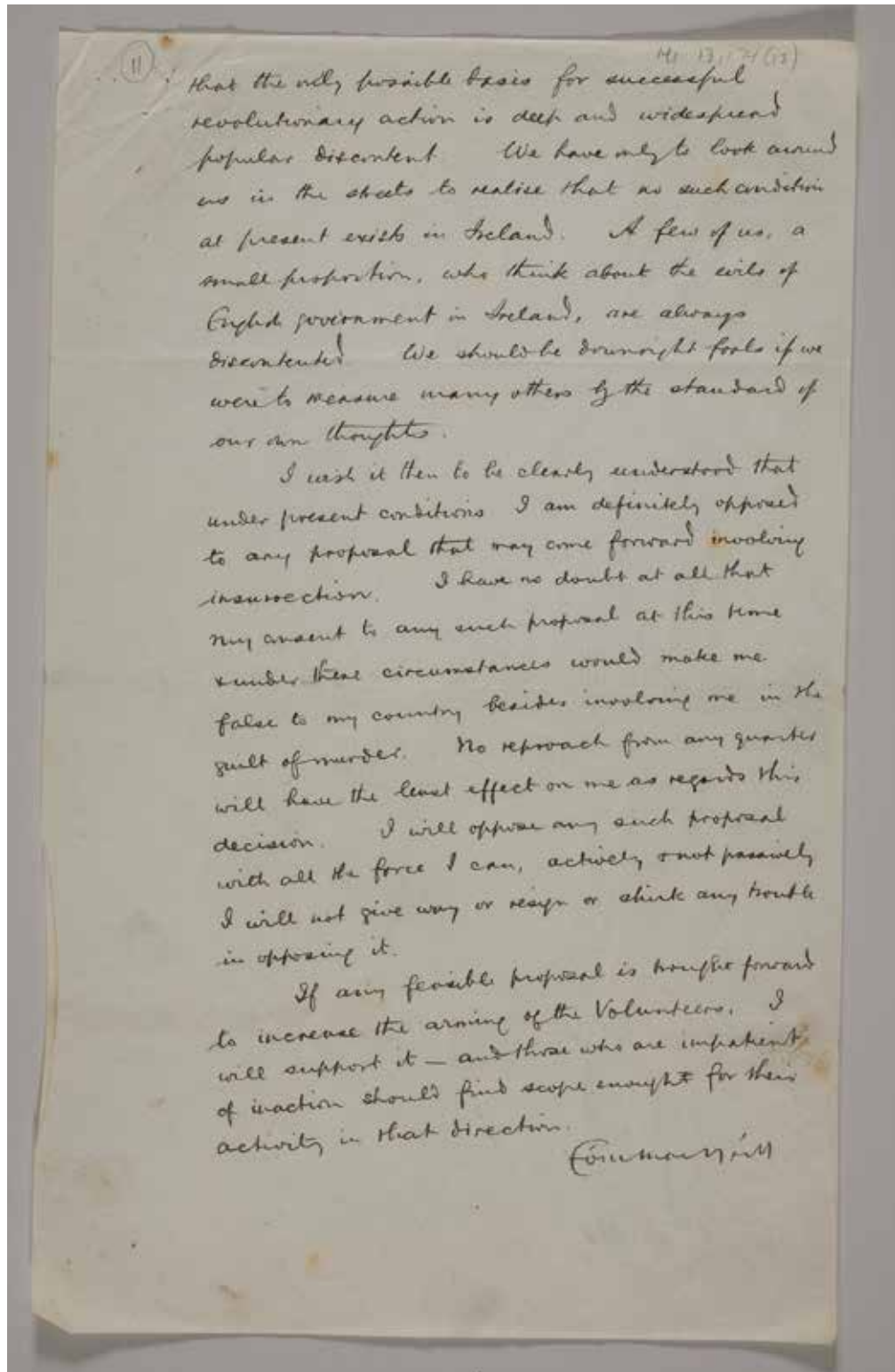
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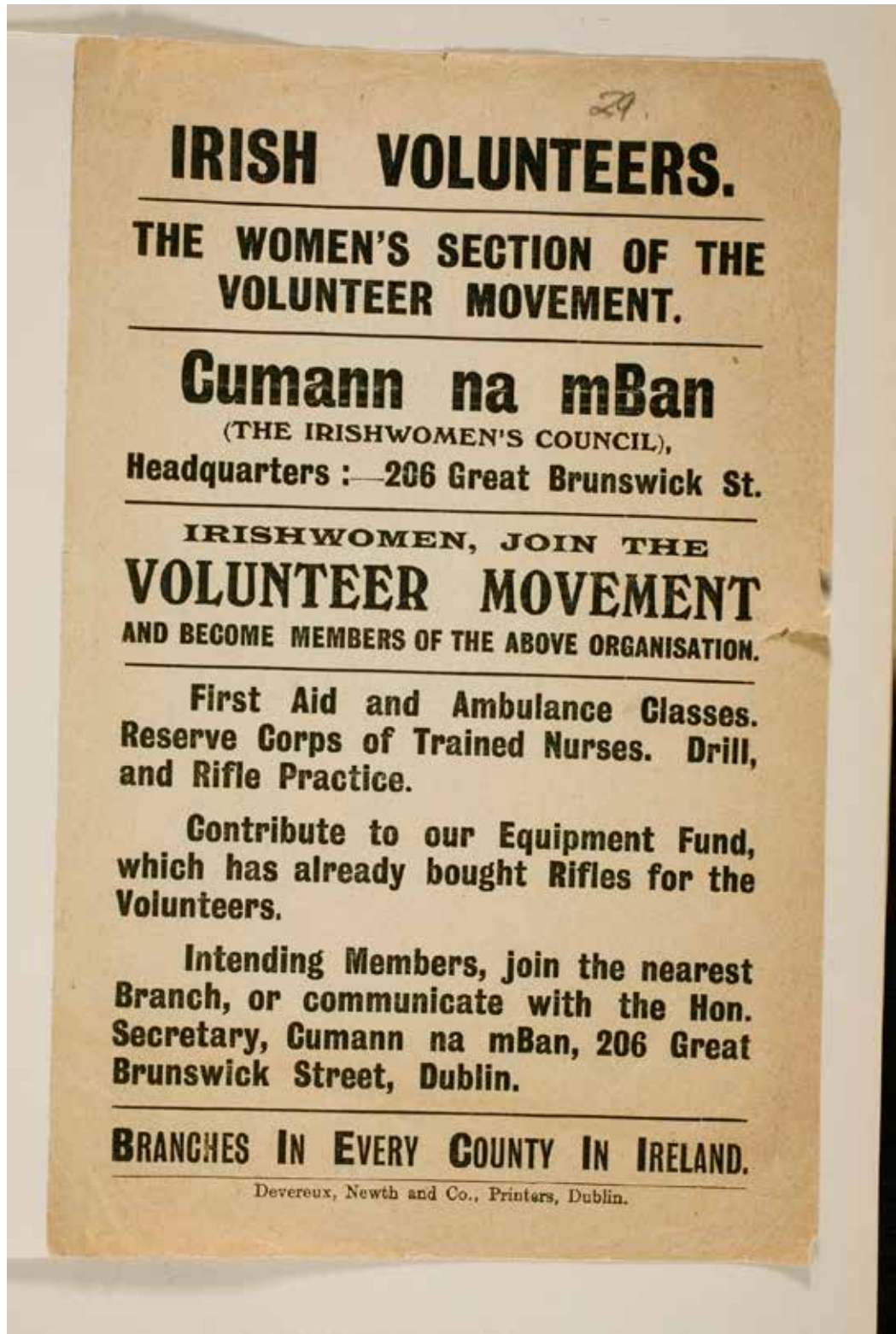
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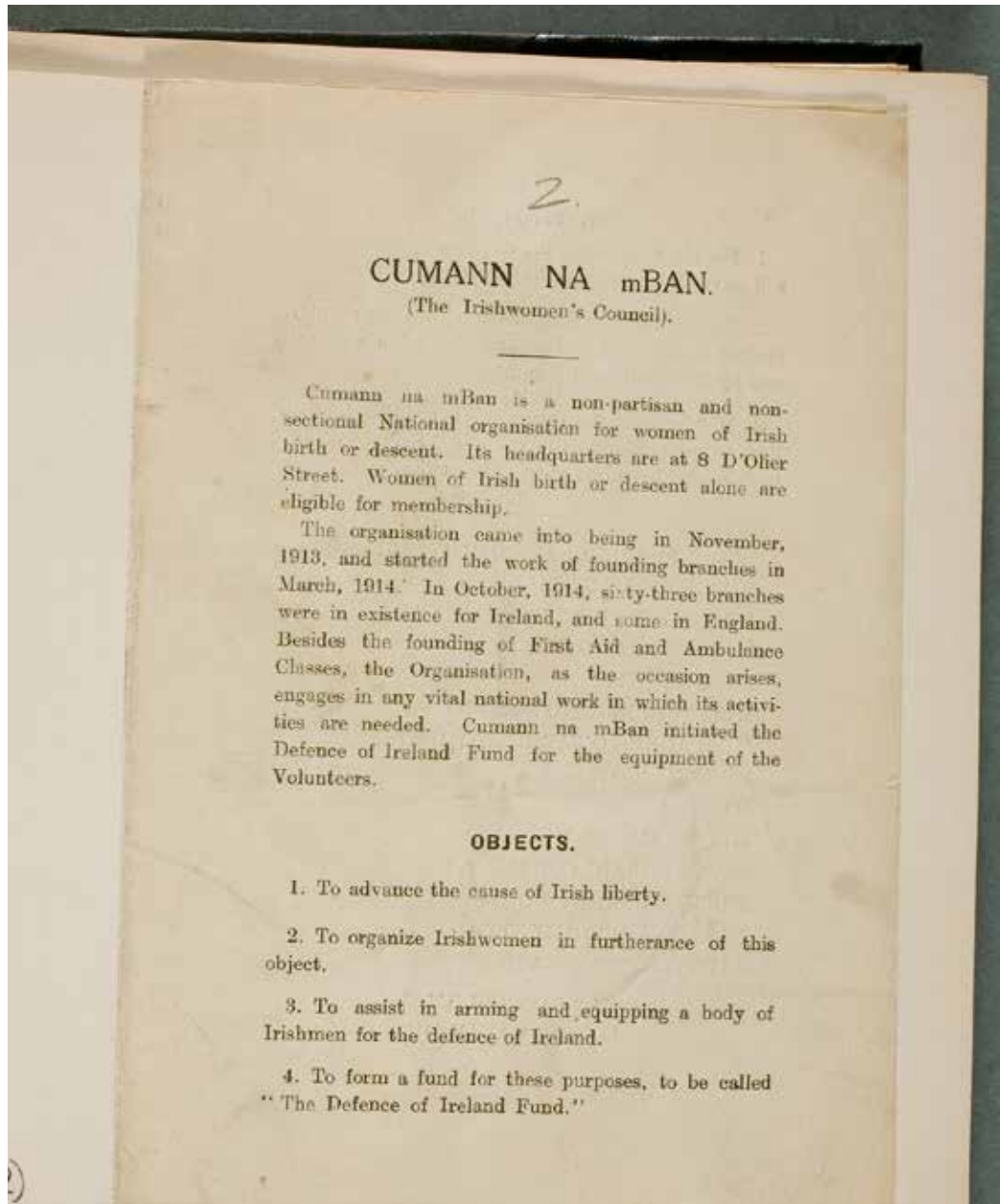
Irish Volunteers parading in Cork City on Saint Patrick's Day, 1916. (Manchester Guardian History of the War, 16 Aug. 1916).

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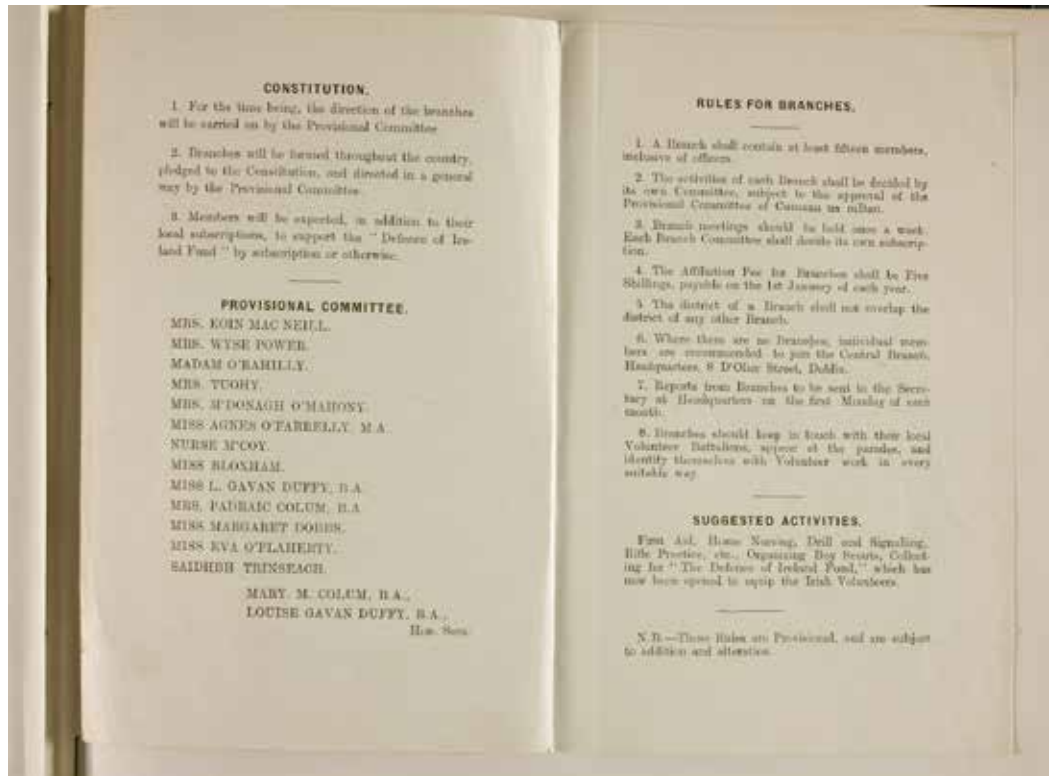
Cumann na mBan was established in April 1914 to complement the Irish Volunteers. Some of its members took part in the 1916 Rising but generally in a non-combatant role.

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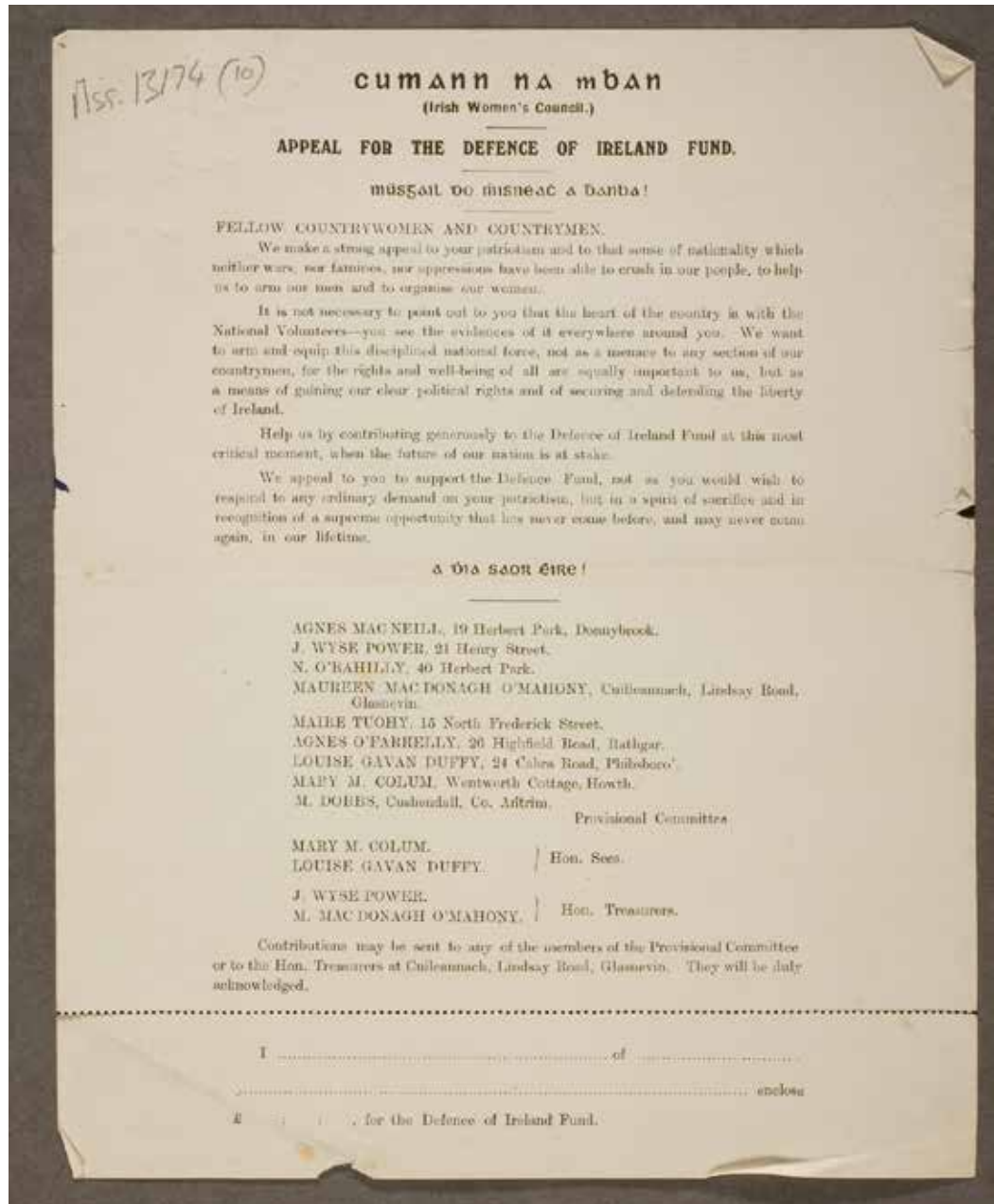
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The Defence of Ireland Fund was intended to finance both the Irish Volunteers and Cumann na mBan, which mainly administered it. (Ms. 13,174(10), Hobson Papers).