

# MRS. M'SWINEY'S MEMORIES OF HER LATE HUSBAND

The Young Widow of the Lord Mayor of Cork Tells of Her Early Life, Her Strange Courtship, Marriage in Jail and Her Still Stranger Honeymoon and the Final Chapter in Her Tragedy

BY MARGARET CRAHAN JONES

A YOUNG madonna with a smile like sudden sunshine, eyes that have seen a crucifixion, and a mouth to bring the world to her feet—that is Muriel MacSwiney, young widow of Terence MacSwiney, lord mayor of Cork.

Muriel MacSwiney's personality is made up of that compelling combination of youthfulness and courageous sorrow which brings tears to the eyes for its very courage and a smile to the lips for its triumph. She is Sinn Féin's most successful envoy.

When I saw her first she was testifying before the unofficial Irish commission in Washington surrounded by a crowd of several hundred persons, who stood upon each other's toes, upon every seat, and upon any vantage point available to hear and see her.

My first glimpse was of the back of her head.

Its contour was that of a schoolgirl. Her glossy brown hair was parted quietly down the middle from her forehead to the nape of her neck and drawn tightly into braided knobs on each side of her head. Her white neck rose virginally from the round outline of her black chapeau dress. She is 38, but her whole demeanor suggested composed 20. A full view of her face showed it to be remarkably vivid, with blue eyes, a large but beautiful mouth, and very white even teeth.

When I called upon her two days later in the spacious home of Mrs. Peter A. Drury, where she and her sister-in-law, Miss Mary MacSwiney, were guests, her composure was unchanged. She was receiving a continuous stream of visitors and welcoming them with the charming cordiality of a naive girl of 18. Her trust in their attitude toward her was touching.

Her girlish appearance was accentuated by her simple satin dress, with which she wore low-heeled black satin pumps.

"What a lovely blouse!" she exclaimed. "And your hat—you don't mind my mentioning it?"

We chatted of each other's clothes like two schoolgirls.

"Yes, I usually wear blue," she replied to my question, her very blue eyes gazing with friendliness. "It seemed to suit me. This is my American dress," fingering her black frock.

She went back to her childhood in Cork.

"My parents were very comfortably fixed," she said. "My father was a wealthy distiller. They were conservative, as all of the older generation in Ireland were at that time. Terence MacSwiney—whom she did not meet until grown—also came of a well-to-do family. His father was a tobacco manufacturer.

"I went to school in Cork," she told

me, "and later to the convent of the Holy Child in St. Leonard-on-Sea near Hastings in the south of England. As a child I was perhaps fonder of music than of anything else. I have spoken French fluently since childhood—I learned from my governess, who was a French woman. My father died when I was young."

Her fingers are long, almost distended at the knuckles, and square at the ends—characteristic of the artistic temperament.

She studied music when a girl under the best professors that could be found near her home and portraiture and landscape painting under an Irish pupil of the famous Whistler.

"My husband loved music, too," she put in. "That was one of the things that drew us together."

Her smile of reminiscence flashed from the upturning corners of her mouth to her blue eyes, irresistible. But one's eyes flew back to her white forehead, where there are four fine wrinkles which held the gaze of her interviewer. Above, two straight across her brow; below them, two others that meet in a "V." Together they form a little puzzled symbol of some inner smothered feeling. "Why has all this happened to me, young me?" they seem to query. They form her only protest. Her eyes, though suggesting tragedy, are not reproachful.

"What really drew us together, of course," she continued, "was our love of Ireland. Before we were out of our teens we, like all the younger generation, became interested in Ireland's struggle for freedom."

Muriel MacSwiney knows nothing of politics. Her desire for independence for her country seems to be an instinctive feeling combined with conclusions drawn from her observations.

It was at the home of a mutual friend in their native city of Cork that the romance began. Here in 1915 the young woman, eager to help her country, met the commandant—Terence MacSwiney's rank at that time—of the southern forces of the Irish republican army.

"He was very tall and dark, with earnest blue eyes. I thought he was very good-looking," she ended with a little laugh.

Like herself, Terence MacSwiney had been reared by his mother. His father had died while traveling in Australia for his health when Terence was 8 years of age. From his youth he had hated business, seeming to find no interest in occupations which meant only worldly gain.

At the age of 14 he began to write poetry. Most of it was the musical, dreamy sort of verse woven about ancient Irish legends which is the creation of Irish poetry. He also wrote a number of plays. One of these, "The Wooing of Emir," has received high praise from critics, according to



Mrs. Muriel MacSwiney

was engaged by a large firm in Dublin. He did not follow this vocation, but became a traveling teacher, going from place to place. Then he began

to organize the Irish republican army, traveling about as he had when teaching.

"When I met him I was deeply impressed by his artistic tempera-

ment," Mrs. MacSwiney said. "I have always thought that if he had had the time and opportunity he would have been a great musician."

After their first meeting they did not meet again until Christmas, 1916, when Terence MacSwiney was in prison in Wakefield, Eng., with a number of other Irishmen. Muriel

Murphy—as Mrs. MacSwiney was then—used to go to the prison to take food to her countrymen.

"Terence expected at that time that he would be shot, and when I realized that I might never see him again I knew how much I cared for him," Mrs. MacSwiney explained.

Several successive arrests and releases followed for MacSwiney until in June, 1917, he was arrested and Muriel Murphy, who became Mrs. MacSwiney, was unable to trace him. The authorities refused to tell her where he was, she said, and she was apprehensive until upon visiting a house in England which had been their trying place she found a letter telling her of his imprisonment in Shrewsbury.

She hastened to Shrewsbury and that very night, the ninth of June, they were married in the prison. The ceremony was performed wholly in Gaelic by an Irish priest.

MacSwiney spent the weeks that should have been his honeymoon in a cell. When freed, he and Mrs. MacSwiney went to Ballingarry for three months. This period was the only time they spent together until MacSwiney's final sentence.

After another imprisonment, MacSwiney was released after a short hunger strike just in time to spend Christmas—the only one they had together—with his wife.

He was again in jail, in Belfast, when their baby daughter was born. Mrs. MacSwiney made a tedious journey to their native city of Cork that their baby might also have it as her birthplace. She did this at her husband's request. "It is there she will have her work to do," MacSwiney had said.

The baby was named Maire, a Gaelic name which is pronounced "Myra." She never, in the two years of her life, has heard her parents speak a word of English. It has been their intention that she should know her native tongue before any other. Mrs. MacSwiney herself did not speak Gaelic until a year ago, when she undertook the study of it. MacSwiney was conversant with Gaelic and wrote much of his poetry in his native tongue, which was a difficult task, according to Mrs. MacSwiney, even for one who spoke the language.

When Mrs. MacSwiney speaks of

her tiny daughter there is a glad light in her eyes—as though this little child were a hostage for her future happiness.

As soon as the baby was six weeks old her mother began taking her to the prison to see her father.

"I don't suppose any one so young has ever been in jail so much," Mrs. MacSwiney mused, with a little shake of her head. "I don't suppose it was good for a baby."

Terence MacSwiney was elected to the town council of Cork while his best friend, MacCurtain, was elected lord mayor. After the killing of Lord Mayor MacCurtain in his home early one morning, MacSwiney was elected to fill his place.

"He knew it was a dangerous post, but he accepted it," Muriel MacSwiney said.

During the six months that Lord Mayor MacSwiney held his office he was never able to sleep at home. When he went about in Cork in the daytime he was always accompanied by some one.

During these months Mrs. MacSwiney lived with friends. The lord mayor visited his wife secretly occasionally—always at great risk, Mrs. MacSwiney said—usually early in the morning. She would get up and

meal they had together after he took office.

"He told me then that he intended to die as a protest. He was court-martialed and sentenced to two years. He said 'Never mind, a month will end it.'"

"Then he made his speech," the little widow continued. "He said 'Those who suffer most will triumph in the end.'"

"After that I guess I became resigned, accustomed to what the future might bring. I was proud of his courage. But it was my business in life to look after him and it was hard to see him getting weaker and weaker and do nothing."

Never in those days of tragic waiting which commanded the world's attention did the wife shed a tear; never, she said, did her husband complain.

The Ruling Habit.

In Boston they tell this story of a certain absent-minded professor:

One evening he appeared in the drawing room ready to escort his wife to the theater.

"Dearie," said she, "I am not at all pleased with that tie you are wearing. Please go upstairs and change to a black one."

Very obediently the professor went up to do as directed. After many minutes of impatient waiting the wife followed. His tie removed, the professor had absent-mindedly continued the undressing process, and as his spouse entered he climbed placidly into bed.

What a lovely blouse!" she exclaimed. "And your hat—you don't mind my mentioning it?"

We chatted of each other's clothes like two schoolgirls.

"Yes, I usually wear blue," she replied to my question, her very blue eyes gazing with friendliness. "It seemed to suit me. This is my American dress," fingering her black frock.

She went back to her childhood in Cork.

"My parents were very comfortably fixed," she said. "My father was a wealthy distiller. They were conservative, as all of the older generation in Ireland were at that time. Terence MacSwiney—whom she did not meet until grown—also came of a well-to-do family. His father was a tobacco manufacturer.

"I went to school in Cork," she told

me, "and later to the convent of the Holy Child in St. Leonard-on-Sea near Hastings in the south of England. As a child I was perhaps fonder of music than of anything else. I have spoken French fluently since childhood—I learned from my governess, who was a French woman. My father died when I was young."

Her fingers are long, almost distended at the knuckles, and square at the ends—characteristic of the artistic temperament.

She studied music when a girl under the best professors that could be found near her home and portraiture and landscape painting under an Irish pupil of the famous Whistler.

"My husband loved music, too," she put in. "That was one of the things that drew us together."

Her smile of reminiscence flashed from the upturning corners of her mouth to her blue eyes, irresistible. But one's eyes flew back to her white forehead, where there are four fine wrinkles which held the gaze of her interviewer. Above, two straight across her brow; below them, two others that meet in a "V." Together they form a little puzzled symbol of some inner smothered feeling. "Why has all this happened to me, young me?" they seem to query. They form her only protest. Her eyes, though suggesting tragedy, are not reproachful.

"What really drew us together, of course," she continued, "was our love of Ireland. Before we were out of our teens we, like all the younger generation, became interested in Ireland's struggle for freedom."

Muriel MacSwiney knows nothing of politics. Her desire for independence for her country seems to be an instinctive feeling combined with conclusions drawn from her observations.

It was at the home of a mutual friend in their native city of Cork that the romance began. Here in 1915 the young woman, eager to help her country, met the commandant—Terence MacSwiney's rank at that time—of the southern forces of the Irish republican army.

"He was very tall and dark, with earnest blue eyes. I thought he was very good-looking," she ended with a little laugh.

Like herself, Terence MacSwiney had been reared by his mother. His father had died while traveling in Australia for his health when Terence was 8 years of age. From his youth he had hated business, seeming to find no interest in occupations which meant only worldly gain.

At the age of 14 he began to write poetry. Most of it was the musical, dreamy sort of verse woven about ancient Irish legends which is the creation of Irish poetry. He also wrote a number of plays. One of these, "The Wooing of Emir," has received high praise from critics, according to

was engaged by a large firm in Dublin. He did not follow this vocation, but became a traveling teacher, going from place to place. Then he began

to organize the Irish republican army, traveling about as he had when teaching.

"When I met him I was deeply impressed by his artistic tempera-

ment," Mrs. MacSwiney said. "I have always thought that if he had had the time and opportunity he would have been a great musician."

After their first meeting they did not meet again until Christmas, 1916, when Terence MacSwiney was in prison in Wakefield, Eng., with a number of other Irishmen. Muriel

Murphy—as Mrs. MacSwiney was then—used to go to the prison to take food to her countrymen.

"Terence expected at that time that he would be shot, and when I realized that I might never see him again I knew how much I cared for him," Mrs. MacSwiney explained.

Several successive arrests and releases followed for MacSwiney until in June, 1917, he was arrested and Muriel Murphy, who became Mrs. MacSwiney, was unable to trace him. The authorities refused to tell her where he was, she said, and she was apprehensive until upon visiting a house in England which had been their trying place she found a letter telling her of his imprisonment in Shrewsbury.

She hastened to Shrewsbury and that very night, the ninth of June, they were married in the prison. The ceremony was performed wholly in Gaelic by an Irish priest.

MacSwiney spent the weeks that should have been his honeymoon in a cell. When freed, he and Mrs. MacSwiney went to Ballingarry for three months. This period was the only time they spent together until MacSwiney's final sentence.

After another imprisonment, MacSwiney was released after a short hunger strike just in time to spend Christmas—the only one they had together—with his wife.

He was again in jail, in Belfast, when their baby daughter was born. Mrs. MacSwiney made a tedious journey to their native city of Cork that their baby might also have it as her birthplace. She did this at her husband's request. "It is there she will have her work to do," MacSwiney had said.

The baby was named Maire, a Gaelic name which is pronounced "Myra." She never, in the two years of her life, has heard her parents speak a word of English. It has been their intention that she should know her native tongue before any other. Mrs. MacSwiney herself did not speak Gaelic until a year ago, when she undertook the study of it. MacSwiney was conversant with Gaelic and wrote much of his poetry in his native tongue, which was a difficult task, according to Mrs. MacSwiney, even for one who spoke the language.

When Mrs. MacSwiney speaks of

her tiny daughter there is a glad light in her eyes—as though this little child were a hostage for her future happiness.

As soon as the baby was six weeks old her mother began taking her to the prison to see her father.

"I don't suppose any one so young has ever been in jail so much," Mrs. MacSwiney mused, with a little shake of her head. "I don't suppose it was good for a baby."

Terence MacSwiney was elected to the town council of Cork while his best friend, MacCurtain, was elected lord mayor. After the killing of Lord Mayor MacCurtain in his home early one morning, MacSwiney was elected to fill his place.

"He knew it was a dangerous post, but he accepted it," Muriel MacSwiney said.

During the six months that Lord Mayor MacSwiney held his office he was never able to sleep at home. When he went about in Cork in the daytime he was always accompanied by some one.

During these months Mrs. MacSwiney lived with friends. The lord mayor visited his wife secretly occasionally—always at great risk, Mrs. MacSwiney said—usually early in the morning. She would get up and

meal they had together after he took office.

"He told me then that he intended to die as a protest. He was court-martialed and sentenced to two years. He said 'Never mind, a month will end it.'"

"Then he made his speech," the little widow continued. "He said 'Those who suffer most will triumph in the end.'"

"After that I guess I became resigned, accustomed to what the future might bring. I was proud of his courage. But it was my business in life to look after him and it was hard to see him getting weaker and weaker and do nothing."

Never in those days of tragic waiting which commanded the world's attention did the wife shed a tear; never, she said, did her husband complain.

The Ruling Habit.

In Boston they tell this story of a certain absent-minded professor:

One evening he appeared in the drawing room ready to escort his wife to the theater.

"Dearie," said she, "I am not at all pleased with that tie you are wearing. Please go upstairs and change to a black one."

Very obediently the professor went up to do as directed. After many minutes of impatient waiting the wife followed. His tie removed, the professor had absent-mindedly continued the undressing process, and as his spouse entered he climbed placidly into bed.

## DOLORES CAY By Fredrick Irving Anderson

(Continued From Page 3.)

table, intent on coming here with a little distance a pair of boys, their dusky bodies gleaming, squatted face to face on the ground, clipping the grass to velvety smoothness with scissorlike strokes of their machetes. On the veranda, native girls, on their hands and knees, with little movements scoured the polished floors with split green coconut husks. A giant black with a great machete, like a mameleuke with a scimitar, moved across the lawn and was gone.

Earth, air, and sky seemed to have worked a swift magic. She put down her foot, pushed aside the pillows, rose to her feet surprised and pleased to discover she was perfectly herself again, as if coming out of a sleep of indeterminate duration. Suddenly she caught her breath with a gasp.

"Where are they? Where is everybody?" she cried, sweeping the beautiful park with her eyes. It was empty except for his indolent slaves, who were always a part of the setting. Emile said early.

"None," he said with a careless gesture. "Yesterday last night," he shot a quick look at her. "There is something inevitable about ships," he added. "They come and go without asking one's leave, Mrs.—ah—Thorington."

There was a barely perceptible pause as he pronounced her name. She sank wearily into her chair. She seemed to comprehend him with difficulty. Emile watched her, gently amused.

"But—I should have been put aboard—" she began falteringly, trying to control the vague uneasiness that seized her.

"You were," said Emile, and he met her bewildered look with a nod. He tossed away his cigarette and stretched himself lazily as he thrust his hands into his pockets. "We stung you aboard the last thing," he rambled on vaguely. "I think you will approve when I tell you. I rather flatter myself I did it well."

"I don't think I can understand," she said with an effort, she brushed a hand over her brow, and murmured: "I have been ill—"

"No, you haven't been ill," he said, shaking his head. "Ferret merely removed your sense of time and space for a few days with that stuff he stirs in tumbblers. He is quite an adept. Useful little monkey, that."

She lay back in her chair and closed her eyes, trying to think clearly. It seemed to her this must be merely an illusion of sound to match the phantasmagoria that had haunted her during the night. After minutes had passed she opened her eyes again. The old lady sat there serene; Emile was smoking another cigarette; the black boys on the grass were indolently pursuing their endless task; from the veranda came the swish of coconut husks; out to sea a deep blue rain squall swung along the horizon. The scene, full of peace and content, reassured her.

"Now, tell me just what has happened," she said, speaking low. Emile seemed to consider his words for a moment. Then he said in a matter of fact tone:

"You shot yourself at the last minute. We had to break in the door. You were dead when we found you. He stopped to note the effect of these words on her. She made no move, gave no hint that she heard.

"Awful, yes," he said with a queer smile. "But that thing will happen strange to say," he interpolated, "it was the one contingency I overlooked

when I planned this island. Ferret, when he persist in coming here with a sea serpent, he went on dryly. "One can't guard against it. When it happens we simply see that everything is decent and regular. Ferret attends to that. We soldier them up tight in a lead box and ship them back on the same boat. Somebody buries them, says a few words of grace. Nobody ever turns up curious enough to open the box. The poor devils take precious good care to let themselves completely before they start out. That ends it. And a rather good end, I suppose, if one goes in for that sort of thing."

He paused, studying her. She was dead white. Still she made no move.

"When I came aboard your ship last week at Havana," he began again, picking at the grass absently, "I wondered who you were. I saw something was wrong, of course. We have been going over your things here. I find you have destroyed every possible mark of identification. It seems a great pity a woman like you."

I took matters into my own hands. We made a play about the passkey and the door being locked on the inside in front of Corson, the ship's doctor. That was all that was necessary. You see how simple it is—no really asks questions, Ferret," he went on after a moment's silence, "made out the papers. We stung an empty lead box aboard, with your name on it. Now you're bound back home. When you arrive some volunteer domine will say a few words over the empty box and rattle down a few words of earth. Think of it! An empty box—a name named for somebody who never existed. Do you think anybody will be curious enough about this?"

Thorington to ask questions or open that box? I think not." He leaned toward her to rearrange her pillow, which had fallen to one side. "It gives you a respite," he said. "It gives you a chance to reconsider. You have lost your identity. You are an unattached soul. Many a dead man would give eternity for that chance."

He smiled, pleased at the philosophical turn.

An onlooker would have been struck by the tranquility of the little group by the awning. The old crone over her work wore the pensive smile of reverie; Emile, now risen to his feet, leaned against a stanchion, and in what seemed a moment of preoccupation idly turned the ratchet of his watch. Sylvia, her head thrown back among the pillows, was looking out under her lashes at the sea, whose indigo surface reflected a thousand facets to the sun. The awning stirred, drooping leaves moved with soft rustlings; from the veranda came the hum of a half wild chant of the girls over their husks.

Sylvia covertly examined Emile. It was prodigious, impossible, that any man, no matter how powerful and invulnerable in his kingdom, could thus erase a fellow creature from its world of living things by a simple wave of the hand. Yet this man, with his island, his slaves, was boasting that he had done just that with her. He even seemed to expect some sort of commendation. She was conscious of the instinctive tensing of all her faculties for the combat. But her listless attitude gave no hint that she stood at bay.

"We stung carefully," said Emile, breaking the full silence. "Our patrons are rare apart—you, a woman of the world, must have recognized the species. Occasionally an outsider, worth

—like that young Ellsberry—slips in; but rarely. There were several things unexplained about you. I have my private sources of information. I admit I was not prepared for what I learned."

She turned her head on the pillow and regarded him.

"I found you were the wife of Bonanza Macaulay, the copper king," he said, in the same casual tone in which he had informed her of the demise of the late Mrs. Thorington. He watched her narrowly as he went on: "He cast you adrift—divorced you through that easy, secret form the French courts have. The first you told your world knew of it was when he married the other woman. He shook his head impatiently. 'Why is it,' he asked, 'a man of that stamp takes such pride in his indecencies? He holds them up for all the world to admire. That woman was your best friend, wasn't she?'"

She quivered under his stare like a snared bird. When she at last trusted herself to speak her tones were level and clear.

"First you gibbered portion out death to me," she said, her eyes following the far away rain squalls on the horizon. "Then you turn me on the spot. Is it humor? No, surely your sense of humor would not carry you so far. I find it very easy to delude myself with the thought that it isn't real, that the fever is still in my blood. What is it all about, and why?" she demanded, turning suddenly full on him.

"It is not an illusion," he said. "It is all true. Take your time. Make your decision. Another ship will be here tomorrow night with another carrier of this species—the Bonanza Macaulay type," he interjected dryly. "You will be invisible to them. You have ceased to exist for your old world. I am purposely frank, probably brutal," he added. "It is better that you should be under no misapprehension as to my part."

"Just what is your part?" she asked; she was amazed at her calm. "I am about to step out myself," he said. "I am through with all this. It has given me what I wanted—money, a great deal of it." He waved a hand airily to include his perfect island. "Let the amateurs finish it. And then what?" She was consciously that her finger tips were icy cold.

"And then, he said sententiously, "the next incarnation. I am rather an adept at this sort of thing. I am hoping you will join me." He turned on her and coldly surveyed her with an appraising look that made her blood run cold. "You please me," he said, holding his head approvingly. "You are a wonderful creature. No, I am not in love with you. That is beyond me." He laughed cynically. "The half of my kingdom in yours for the taking. I have a cap of invisibility that will fit us both. We will have the whole world before us. He straightened up abruptly, preparing to leave. "Think it over. It's worth while," he said as he turned away.

He had gone only a few steps when a boy ran up and thrust a wireless message into his hand. Emile stared at it for a moment, then retraced his steps and sat down beside Sylvia, pencil in hand. It was in code, and calmly, as if unconscious of her, he began slowly to decode it.

"Who is this old woman?" asked Sylvia, indicating the oblivious old crone who had sat through the scene, apparently without understanding a

"What is it, auntie?" Sylvia turned into two figures, the old woman and another, crouching there. The second figure suddenly straightened up, stepped back, and the apparition of the other night stood revealed. Mendoza! It was a man of flesh and blood. She stifled a scream. The three stood facing each other. The ape Mendoza! His head was swathed in bandages, and at a slight movement he groaned in pain. Then she understood. The old woman had been tending his hurts. He turned as if to flee, but the old woman put it off a swift, detaining hand.

After a pause that seemed an age the old woman reached out and touched the glittering rings on Sylvia's fingers. She held out her hand, and Sylvia, dumbly understanding that she must surrender the precious gems, stripped them off and tossed the brooch at her throat, thrust them all into the outstretched bony hand. The ape watched it all motionless. The old woman thrust them into his hands, smiling. These two understood each other. She reached down to the man's boot, touched the hilt of a knife with her finger, and turned, that caused the creature to turn his stupid glare from the gems to the knife. For a long time he seemed wrestling with the idea. Then he leered, shaking his head. The old woman nodded insistently. He took off the leather cord that bound his blouse, and with a horrid gesture he made a loop of it in the air, twisting it and drawing it shut in a awful manner about the neck of a human hand, and not this crushing roar, had brought destruction to that body. Faulkner stooped down, straightened up with a jerk.

"I thought you went up to Costa Rica to raise hogs," said Scott.

"I did. I came back," said Faulkner, staring at the desolation. Ellsberry stepped into view, and Faulkner, seeing a cut not as he jerked his head over his shoulder. "The O. & Q. boat—the Althea—she went by at sunset," he went on vaguely. "I was out to hail her. I was coming by and saw the boat. I had a couple of passengers for her," he rambled on, studying Jim Scott, puzzled.

Powder, the skipper, wanted to know if I thought he was a blasted milk cart or a trolley car." Faulkner laughed uneasily. "I told