WOMEN, WAR, AND WEARABLE HISTORY: WINIFRED CARNEY, GRACE GIFFORD-PLUNKETT, AND A CLASSICALLY INSPIRED CAMEO BROOCH

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Brooches as Socio-Economic and Cultural Markers

Brooches have been worn as expressions of status and prestige in Ireland since the Bronze Age, while the *Bretha Étgid* (Judgements of Inadvertence), an early Irish law tract from the seventh or eighth centuries, referenced honour price compensation based on societal status if a passer-by became injured by a protruding brooch pin (Whitfield 71-72). Apart from personal adornment, jewellery functioned as a form of currency in medieval economics, representing bullion in bartering societies. In medieval courts, where rich accoutrement was expected, social pretension was also reflected in brooch wearing; expressed as wearable wealth (Deevy 63-66).

Investigating and interpreting the potential symbolism embedded within brooches has been conducted across a range of disciplines incorporating art history, design history, archaeology, and material culture studies. Using modes of analysis including typology, visual rhetoric, and materiality, these small objects offer a view to the past which augments written and oral accounts of personal as well as public events. While this research focuses on one particular brooch gifted between two Irish women involved in the 1916 Rising, Grace Gifford-Plunkett (1888-1955) and Winifred Carney (1887-1943), it also acknowledges the value of brooches and cameos as historical indicators by briefly outlining the importance attributed to both via their inclusion in a number of past eras and events. Cameos, initially created as a form of visual communication, became popular as gifts via their endorsement from notable historical figures, many of whom attributed personal meaning to precious and semi-precious materials by having their likenesses carved into them.

This hermeneutical quality has rendered cameos as enduring fashionable objects for gift giving and exchange, reinforcing them as noteworthy mnemonic devices. French sociologist Marcel Mauss explored gift giving from a number of perspectives, in a variety of unique cultural environments. Viewing gift giving as a form of human transaction, he determined how some were endowed without obligation, while others were reciprocal; actions evident in a number of pre-coinage societies (6-12). Mauss also studied how giving objects as gifts shaped human relationships, noting that while the practice, in the main, focused on reciprocity, some archaic societies (including Greece) clearly defined between “obligatory presentations and pure gifts”, alleviating ambiguity around the act itself (46). In a number of medieval societies, nobles endowed their supporters with brooches as an expression of loyalty and fidelity, while ring brooches bearing inscriptions often symbolized love (lost and regained), as well

as influencing perceptions of chastity and purity; by clasping a garment covering the breast of the wearer (Deevy 66-69).

Cameos: Stylistic Expression and Interpretation

In archaic Greece, between 560 and 480 BC, human and animal forms decorated early cameos which were expressed in a rigid style, while the classical Greek era (480-330 BC) favoured birds, cupids, and winged female figures as subject matter (Miller 255). Although predated by earlier forms of visual communication which used stone carvings (including petroglyphs and the engraved cylinder seals of Mesopotamia), cameo carving is recorded as early as 3100 BC; attributed to the Sumerian civilization, who used high-quality gemstones to demonstrate painstaking precision and detail through skilled craftsmanship, with most early cameos carved in onyx or agate (Clements 33). It is Alexander the Great's love of exotic materials and oriental style, however, that has been credited for the popularity of cameo carving and, later, jewellery spreading to the West. From 332 BC, skilled carvers created intricate scenes on multi-layered stones which were brought into Alexandria from India and Arabia. These layered hard stones included sardonyx, a new medium for bas-relief carving showcasing the skill and dexterity of the carver. A shift from classical Greek to Roman rule during the Hellenistic era included the use of cameos as wearable status symbols (Miller 3-22).

Cameos could be used as carved expressions of loyalty, love, and faith, depending on the scene or image portrayed. The Greeks preferred naked imagery while the Romans used drapery to cover their figures, providing possible dating clues. Cameos were worn on breast plates, sword handles, and helmets, and, by 79 AD (according to Pliny the Elder), had become collectible status symbols, worn by nobles as insignias on ceremonial dress. By the eleventh century, classical cameos were highly sought after for use as pendants, while during the early Renaissance, pendants, rings, and badges were set with carved cameos depicting classically inspired mythological divinities due to a renewed interest in the arts of antiquity (Miller 8). During the eighteenth century, cameos were viewed as wearable art, miniature sculptures worn as adornment, buoyed by a sustained interest in Greek and Roman iconography, while a series of nineteenth-century Great Exhibitions increased their exposure to a wider public audience, as did photographs of them appearing in contemporary journals and newspapers, cementing the cameo's popularity with a broader clientele.

Cameos were also given as gifts by a number of high-profile historical figures as a mark of friendship and loyalty. Queen Elizabeth the first liked to give loyal subjects cameo jewellery, including the now famous ring presented to Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, which contained a cameo portrait in her likeness, carved in sardonyx. In the nineteenth century, Queen Victoria commissioned a series of jewel-encrusted cameos carved in her likeness beside that of her late husband, after his death in 1861. These were gifted to members of the Royal order of Victoria and Albert as a mark of their

allegiance and steadfastness towards the royal couple and worn as brooches or badges (Miller 27, 45, 64).

Mauss expands upon gift giving from the perspectives of "personal" and "real" when referencing early laws in Roman societies which addressed people and things, and where the *nexum* (legal bond) applied to both, when exchanged or traded (46). Objects were given value by their prior associations (47), such as Royal likenesses carved in stone, shell, and even lava, which became further reinforced when encased in elaborately jewelled settings, including rings, pendants, ear-rings, and brooches.

Brooches, Women, and National Independence

Brooches have acted as markers of social and cultural affiliation for centuries, while stylistic analysis has linked makers and wearers with specific shapes, designs, and materials. This includes the penannular style (where the brooch is not completely circular or annular), just one of the many types of brooches used to track patterns of migration, trade, and mobility in early Ireland (Laing 15). In late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Ireland, the penannular style brooch also became intrinsically linked with women and Irish independence. The Nationalist organization, Inghinidhe na hÉireann (Daughters of Ireland) used a "Celtic" brooch as their membership badge, based on medieval designs and motifs they felt represented a pure Irish identity, encompassed in a penannular pattern, engraved with the group's name. Founded by Maud Gonne, the aims of Inghinidhe na hÉireann were aligned with those of the Gaelic League; to revive Irish arts and culture, including literature, language, music, dancing, and games. At her first Inghinidhe na hÉireann meeting, Countess Markievicz (later heavily involved in the Easter Rising), offered to sell a diamond brooch in order to secure funding for the group (McCoole 24).

Although it has been acknowledged that dress was used as an overt expression of Irish identity during the Celtic Revival (O'Kelly, "Reconstructing Irishness" and "Dressing Rebellion"; Dunlevy; A. Ward), the women involved in Inghinidhe na hÉireann did not wear an identifiable uniform, opting instead for the penannular style brooch to signify group membership (McCoole 20-22). The brooch offered a less obvious identifier of personal affiliation with nationalist ideals, affording the wearer a flexible form of anonymity, as it was easy to remove or cover quickly. In May 1915, Inghinidhe na hÉireann became a branch of Cumann na mBan (The Women's Council; McCoole 31), a group founded in April 1914, as a women's ancillary to the Irish Nationalist Volunteers (Gosling and Rogers 23). Cumann na mBan (CB) members explicitly displayed their affiliation by wearing a brooch depicting the group's initials interwoven with a rifle. While components of the CB brooches overlap with each other, a variety of designs exist. Although posited as "more imagined than real", various interpretations have been offered relating to the style of CB brooches and the status of the wearer, suggesting that individual styles indicated particular ranks within the organization (Gosling and Rogers 23).

Typological analysis has been used to investigate a number of these brooches (also described as pins or badges) worn by CB members, which not only vary in design, but also in materials. Described as "artefactual heritage" (Gosling and Rogers 22), distinctions in the CB brooch motifs include the use of different makes of rifle, comprising the War Office Pattern Miniature (WOPM), the Short Magazine Lee Enfield (SMLE), and the Skeuomorph; a rifle crossed over a halberd (an axe-type weapon popular in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries), encircled by the words "Cumann na mBan" and "1916", embossed on a green *cloisonné* enamel and brass-coloured metal base (Gosling and Rogers 24).

Winifred Carney was a member of Cumann na mBan, and although Grace Gifford was not, she and Carney became intimately linked through their involvement in the 1916 Rising, reflected here through a cameo brooch. The significance of gifting a brooch from one woman to the other is amplified by the use of brooches as nationalist membership markers by Inghinidhe na hÉireann and Cumann na mBan. A note written by Joseph Plunkett (editor of *The Irish Review* and founder of the Irish Volunteers)[1] on 29 April 1916 was delivered to Gifford by Carney (along with a bangle and rings he was wearing), after Carney's release from Aylesbury prison in December 1916 (O'Brolchain 392).[2] The jewellery worn by Plunkett, the note written by him, and the cameo brooch are all objects linking these two women historically, with the note and brooch both bearing the same date inscription, signifying the Irish Volunteers' submission to British forces.

1 Joseph Mary Plunkett has been acknowledged as one of the key organizers of the 1916 Rising. A member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, he was appointed to their military council in 1915. While initially forged through literary interests, his friendships with Thomas MacDonagh and Patrick Pearse, became further established through nationalist beliefs. MacDonagh and Plunkett were two of the seven signatories on the Proclamation of Independence executed for their roles in the Rebellion, including Tom Clarke, Patrick Pearse, James Connolly, Éamonn Ceannt and Seán Mac Diarmada. Roger Casement, Con Colbert, Edward Daly, Seán Heuston, Thomas Kent, John MacBride, Michael Mallin, Michael O'Hanrahan, William Pearse (Patrick's brother and Grace Gifford's contemporary), were also executed for their parts in the Easter Rising. All of them were executed in May 1916, except for Casement, whose execution took place in London, in August the same year (O'Brolchain; White; Donoghue; McGreevy).

2 Winifred Carney was one of the estimated 300 women involved in the Easter Rising, remembered more recently via public exhibitions including the "Proclaiming a Republic: The 1916 Rising" at the NMI, and through a number of published works cited here, including Cullen and Luddy; Clare; McAuliffe and Gillis; McCoole; Finlay; A. Murphy; Pašeta, *Irish Nationalist Women* and "New Issues and Old"; and L. Connolly, which have reviewed women's roles in, and experiences of the now historic event. Much of this research has revealed how women played pivotal roles in the Rebellion, the War of Independence and the Civil War. Carney and Gifford were two of a number of women interned for their activity in the bid for Irish nationalism, including Countess Markievicz, Annie Cooney, Maura (May) Gibney O'Neill, Brigid Davis O'Duffy, Brigid Foley, Madeline Ffrench Mullen, Rose McNamara, Countess Plunkett, Nora O'Daly, Kathleen Lynn, Josie McGowan, Marie Perolz, Brigid Lyons Thornton, Nell Ryan, and Helena Molony.

The Cameo Brooch Gifted to Carney from Gifford-Plunkett

The National Museum of Ireland (NMI) descriptor of the cameo brooch reads:

> Brooch presented to Winifred Carney from Grace Gilford [*sic*]. Cameo brooch in gold frame, engraved on back "To Winifred Carney from Grace Plunkett in Memory of April 29th, 1916". Elliptical convex plate, 2 inches by 13/5 inches, of shell or similar substance, white, opaque with head of female, hair wreathed in flowers and foliage, carved on it in relief; hair, wreath and garment at shoulders coloured buff; the plate mounted in elliptical gold frame, made by Hopkins & Hopkins, Dublin. The frame is a plain band of gold to which a twisted strip of gold is applied. Pin for attachment and guard cord through loop in top back; 1916 (NMI.HE: EW. 1310).

Fig. 1. The cameo brooch displayed beside Winifred Carney's personalized rosary beads case. © National Museum of Ireland

Re-viewing this object beyond its physical description inspires a new dialogue around the cameo as an indicator of social, cultural, and historical events – nationally and internationally. As Lori Ettlinger Gross has stated, "[a] brooch is a very powerful object. Within the confines of a relatively small composition, it is a complete work of art that has its own voice" (9).

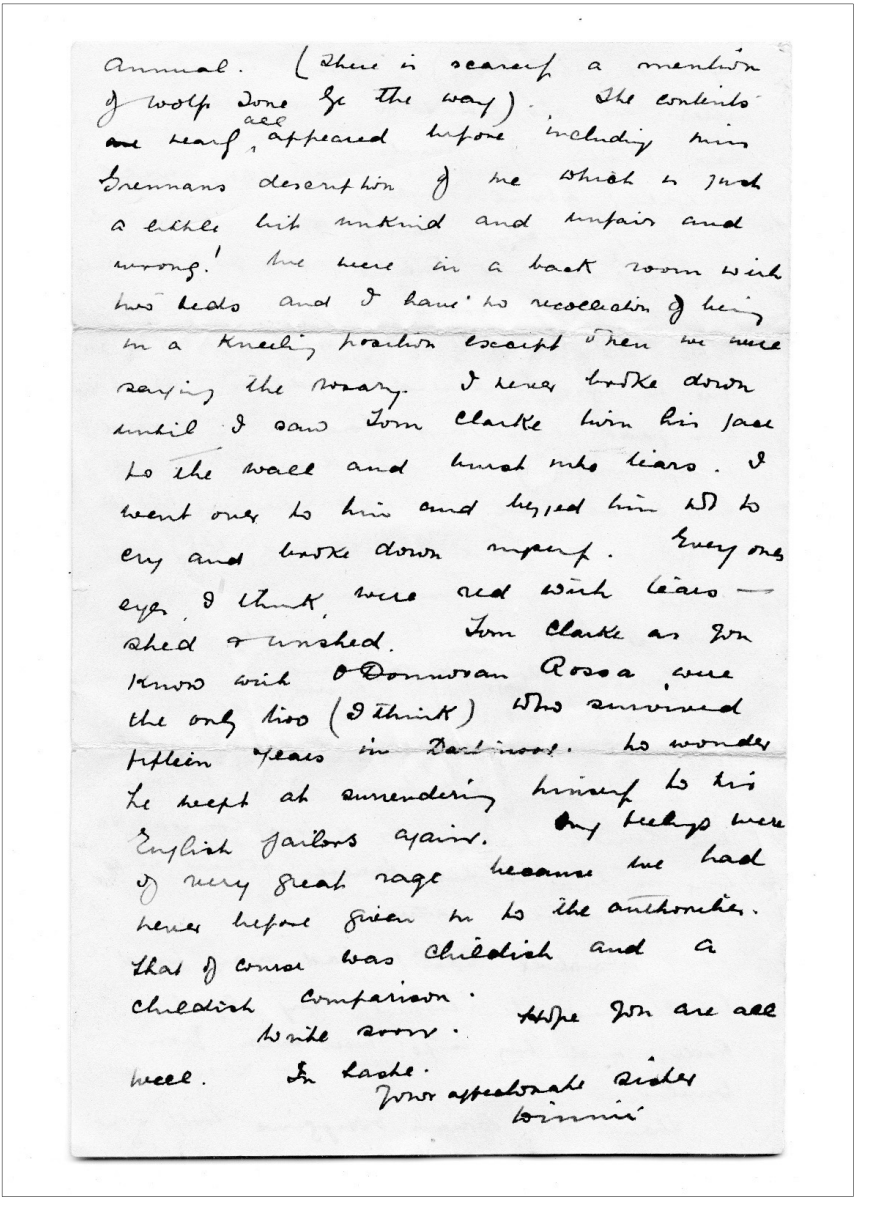
The brooch and letter (Fig. 3), donated to the NMI by Ernest Carney, offer valuable primary source material for this time in Irish history, where women have only recently been remembered for their roles in the bid for national autonomy; accounts of which vacillate between feminism and nationalism (Pašeta, *Irish Nationalist Women* 3). The letter describes how Winifred felt unkindly portrayed in the Wolf Tone Annual of 1935 (currently part of the Sean O'Mahony collection held at the National Library of Ireland), where Brian O'Higgins reflected on the "Spirit of 1916". In her letter, Carney also wrote of Tom Clarke's treatment at the hands of British soldiers while in prison, as well as her own personal experiences. And, while the letter offers documentary evidence of events, the cameo proposes another layer to the existing narrative around women, revolution, and Irish independence by exploring both archival and

cultural sources. Exploring both, therefore, reinforces the merits of adopting multi-disciplinary approaches when interpreting pivotal events (Dyer 282-85).

Fig. 2. The inscription from Plunkett to Carney and the H & H hallmark stamp.

As Toby Barnard points out, material culture dwells on things and, by doing so, can shed light on those who fabricated, bought, and used certain objects (11). Equally, the study of material culture also concerns ideas, which includes the use of objects as symbols of events, capturing a certain time and place in history. This small decorative object not only signals symbolic patriotism between two women connected by such a significant occasion, but illuminates contemporary literary connotations around the Greek and the Gael during this period. It also represents a publicly displayed miniature reminder of women in a city, where a minute amount of the two hundred plus public monuments on display commemorate them, prompting a re-evaluation of monumentality in Dublin (P. Murphy 3).

The cameo gifted from Gifford to Carney is most likely made from shell, due to its translucent nature and pale palette, while the elliptical gold frame has both a loop and a c-shape clasp and pin which allows the wearer the choice of either necklace or brooch. While the classically inspired cameo and engraved frame it is mounted in echo a close bond between the two women, they also provide an alternative view of extended connections during this period in Irish history.



annual. (There is scarcely a mention of Wolfe Tone for the way). The contents one scarf, all appeared before including Miss Brennans description of me which is just a little bit unkind and unfair and wrong.' We were in a back room with two beds and I have no recollection of being in a kneeling position except when we were saying the rosary. I never broke down until I saw Tom Clarke turn his face to the wall and brush his tears. I went over to him and begged him not to cry and broke down myself. Every one's eyes, I think, were red with tears — shed & unshed. Tom Clarke as you know with O'Donovan Rossa were the only two (I think) who survived fifteen years in Dartmoor. No wonder he wept at surrendering himself to his English jailors again. Any feelings of very great rage because we had never before given in to the authorities. That of course was childish and a childish comparison. While Tom are all well. In haste. Your affectionate sister Winnie

Fig. 3. The letter to Ernest Carney from Winifred Carney (page 4 of 4).

Numerous women in Cumann na mBan and the Irish Citizen Army prevailed beyond 1916, campaigning for a liberated Ireland during and beyond the War of Independence.

They have been remembered more systematically during the recent decade of centenaries (see, for example, Mc Auliffe and Gillis; Pašeta, "New Issues and Old"; Ryan and Ward; L. Connolly; Frawley), where primary photographic and other material culture (as well as documentary) sources have been revisited (Rose; Godson and Brück, *Making 1916*), in a bid to elucidate their roles in the Easter Rising, Civil War, and the War of Independence. While a number of scholarly works cited here include accounts of Grace Gifford and Winifred Carney's involvement in Irish nationalism, the cameo brooch displayed at the Reclaiming a Republic exhibition, on the centenary of the Easter Rising in 2016, links these two women on a personal level.

The Giver: Grace Evelyn Vandeleur Gifford-Plunkett

While Grace Gifford (Fig. 4) may be best known for her marriage to Joseph Mary Plunkett on the eve of his execution in Kilmainham Gaol, she was also a talented illustrator who had studied art in Dublin and London, with family connections illustrating a long-established artistic legacy in Ireland. Gifford was a great-niece of Sir Frederic William Burton (1816-1900), artist, Royal Irish Academy council member and director of the National Gallery in London. Burton's father was also an accomplished artist. Marie O'Neill notes how having entered the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art in 1904, at the age of sixteen, Gifford studied under William Orpen who regarded her as one of his most promising students. Her contemporaries included a number of now prominent artists such as Estella Solomons, Beatrice Elvery, Margaret Crilly (later Clarke), and Kathleen Fox. Gifford also met Willie (William) Pearse, Patrick Pearse's brother, in night classes she attended in Dublin, when the former was training to be a sculptor to work in his father's stone-carving firm (O'Neill 5-7).

After Joseph Plunkett's execution on 3 May 1916, Grace continued to use her artistic skills to promote Sinn Féin policies during the War of Independence. Following the Civil War, she supported herself with her art, while fighting to secure a military pension. In a witness statement outlining Joseph Plunkett's political activities, Gifford stated: "I have never lived a normal person's life, I have always been in the thick of things" (BMH.WS: 257, 2).

Gifford added how she knew little of Joseph Plunkett's military life, recalling more intimate incidents instead, including how, when he had once gone to Algiers for his health, he was so good at skating, that they had made him manager of the rink there (BMH.WS: 257, 4). Remaining adamant about her lack of knowledge of political events, Gifford stated, "I shall have to read a book on the Rising as I know nothing of the Military History of it" (BMH.WS: 257, 6). Gifford, a Protestant, converted to Catholicism in order to marry Plunkett. Plunkett proposed a wedding date during lent which Gifford felt may be unlucky, suggesting Easter instead. Plunkett's rebuttal of an Easter wedding, however, echoed a direct reference to the impending Rebellion: "We may be running a revolution by then" (BMH.WS: 257, 10).

Fig. 4. Grace Gifford-Plunkett, May 1916. © National Museum of Ireland

Although Grace Gifford was not directly involved in military activity, and claims to have little knowledge of the Rising (BMH.WS: 257, 6), accounts of immediate and extended family members with nationalist connections are well documented. Gifford's sister, Muriel, was married to Thomas MacDonagh, also executed on the same day as Joseph Plunkett for his part in the Rising (McCoole 52). MacDonagh was a firm nationalist, and is depicted wearing traditional Irish style clothing (including the *brat* and *léine*, two items of Revivalist clothing worn by members of the Gaelic League) in

a family photograph taken of him, Muriel, and their young son, in 1913 (NPA/TMD/52 NLI) (O'Kelly, "Dressing Rebellion" 172).

He is also shown wearing a penannular style brooch, as are a number of other members of the Gaelic League, evident in various group photographs (O'Kelly, "Dressing Rebellion" 169). Muriel MacDonagh (née Gifford) was also a member of Inghinidhe na hÉireann and, later, Cumann na mBan (O'Neill 32), while Nellie Gifford, sister to both Grace and Muriel, was a founding member of the Irish Citizen Army (McCoole 52). After Joseph Plunkett's death, Grace Gifford continued to support the idea of a nationalist Ireland, strongly opposing the Treaty.

In 1923, seven years after the Easter Rising, Gifford was one of several female prisoners involved in the Rising, interned in Kilmainham Gaol, including Nora Connolly O'Brien (daughter of James Connolly; McCoole 119-20). Gifford's artistic talent endured even when in prison, evident through a number of drawings created on the walls of her cell – number 10 (M.E. Ward 4). Grace Gifford-Plunkett died on 13 December 1955 and is buried in Glasnevin cemetery in Dublin.

The Recipient: Maria Winifred (Winnie) Carney

Winifred Carney (Fig. 5), described as a "pistol-packing member of the women's Republican volunteer movement", was an ardent supporter of the suffragette campaign and dubbed "the typist with the Webley" because of the revolver she carried alongside her typewriter (Naughton 31). Reports of women relieving snipers in Dublin's General Post Office (GPO) during the Rebellion most likely refer to Carney who was considered a "crack shot" (McCarthy 65). Due to its central location on Dublin's main street (Sackville, now O'Connell Street), the GPO was selected as the proposed headquarters for the Rising (McCoole 35).

Carney, a County Down native, met James Connolly in Belfast in 1912 and became not only his secretary, but also his confidante (A. Murphy 13). Carney was the first woman inside the GPO on Monday, 24 April 1916, and one of the last to leave it, alongside Elizabeth O'Farrell and Julia Grennan; three of the estimated fifty-five to sixty-one women who were recorded inside the building during the event (Finlay 173).

Carney did not think much of Joseph Plunkett initially, according to reports from survivors from the GPO (Clare 160). They had become acquainted through the events of 1916, where Plunkett had initially offended Carney by wearing a filigree bracelet and large ornate rings she felt were misplaced during a rebellion. It was only when he had put these items in an envelope and asked her to make sure his fiancée, Grace Gifford, received them should anything happen to him, that her opinion of him changed. Plunkett told Carney how Gifford's Protestant family had renounced her after she had converted to Catholicism and he wanted her to be taken care of in the event of his death. In fact, Plunkett's request prompted Carney to go around each of the other volunteers to collect their home addresses and any small treasures they

may wish her to pass on to their families should they not make it out alive (A. Murphy 167), underscoring the value of personally charged objects and their role in expanding upon established historiographies.

Fig. 5. Studio portrait of Winifred Carney of Cumann na mBan. 1922. Head and shoulders. 6.5 inches by 4.25 inches. © National Museum of Ireland

Carney was interned in Kilmainham Gaol, and later Aylesbury prison in England, along with Helena Molony and Constance Markievicz until December 1916 (Cullen and Luddy 153). In 1924, Carney, who was a Catholic, married George McBride – a Protestant and a staunch Orangeman – when they met through the Northern Irish labour party. The marriage was criticized by Carney's family, including her brother Ernest who demanded his sister be buried separately from her husband in an unmarked grave after her death in 1943. She is buried in Milltown cemetery in Belfast, where the National Graves Association stepped in and recognized Carney with a marked headstone in 1985, and has tended to her grave to this day (Devine 179-86).

The Brooch Frame Makers: Hopkins and Hopkins Jewellers

The setting in which a cameo sits can also reflect social, political, and economic conditions in a particular historical period (Scarisbrick et al. 10). The "H and H" hallmark stamped on the elliptical base of the brooch provides valuable information about the jewellers who made and engraved it, Hopkins and Hopkins of Dublin. Hopkins and Hopkins are one of many Dublin jewellers who replicated objects based on medieval design antecedents during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. One of their most notable pieces, the twentieth-century Sam Maguire Cup, is modelled on the eighth-century Ardagh Chalice. The cup was commissioned by friends of Sam Maguire, a Cork native heavily involved in the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), after his death in 1927. A talented Gaelic-football player, Maguire also played a pivotal role in Irish independence, recruiting Michael Collins into the republican movement in 1909 (K. Connolly 29). The silver cup commemorating him was made by Matthew Staunton of Hopkins and Hopkins and cost in the region of £300. The cup, a trophy awarded annually to the winning GAA senior football team in an all-Ireland final, was first won by Kildare in 1928 (K. Connolly 8).

Like the penannular style brooches worn by both Inghinidhe na hÉireann and the Gaelic League members, Revivalist metal work (emulating medieval motifs and materials) became hugely popular as material displays of nationalism during the Celtic Revival, and a number of Dublin-based jewellers, including Hopkins and Hopkins, contributed to, and benefitted from, this popularity.

Using the Celtic Revival as a powerful marketing tool, Hopkins and Hopkins advertised their skills as silversmiths and watchmakers in various publications, including newspapers and GAA catalogues. They also advertised in the *Sinn Féin Rebellion Handbook*, published by the *Irish Times* in May 1917. The name Hopkins has a long-standing relationship with Dublin's city centre, recorded as early as 1787, with Myles Hopkins trading as a draper in Sackville Street. Law and Sons, already established as a city centre jeweller, were taken over by Hopkins who later operated on the corner of Sackville Street and Eden Quay. Due to its prime location, the building was one of the first to become occupied by Irish volunteers during the Rising, where, by Saturday 29 April, it had been heavily damaged by fire. The jewellers continued to operate in temporary premises at the same location from September 1916 however, after securing funding from the Property Losses (Ireland) Committee. In 1923, purpose-built premises were erected at the same location and described by *The Irish Times* as a landmark building "executed in the Neo-Grec classic style and designed with restraint" ("Hopkins and Hopkins").

Connections between the Dublin jewellers and 1916 extend beyond the building's occupation and damage during the Rising, however. Hopkins and Hopkins are included in witness statements regarding the event, provided by Seán T. O'Kelly, president of Ireland from 1945 to 1959 and one of the founders of Sinn Féin (BMH.WS: 1765, 1). Myles R. Hopkins is recalled by O'Kelly as a great benefactor of

the *Sinn Féin* newspaper, often providing loans of up to £500 in order to see it published. Diarmuid O'Leary, a managing director of Hopkins and Hopkins, is also mentioned in O'Kelly's witness statements. O'Leary is listed as one of the Irish Republican Brotherhood members who travelled by train to Kilcoole in County Wicklow, in order to secure arms for the Rising, due to arrive there by a boat owned by Thomas Myles, a well-known Dublin surgeon. These associations underscore Gifford's choice of Hopkins and Hopkins as the jewellers commissioned to make and engrave the cameo base dedicated to Carney.

The Cameo, the Greek, and the Gael

The iconography in the cameo gifted to Carney most likely references a bacchante maiden or female votary of Bacchus, symbolising bounty, harvest, and fertility. These allegories could symbolize Carney and Gifford's connection as women, committed to the fruition of Irish independence, while the fact that a classically inspired cameo was chosen as a gift during a period in Irish history where literary connections between 1916 and ancient Greece and Rome are well documented, is also noteworthy.

In 1897, Patrick Pearse revealed nationalist tendencies described as "more mystical than revolutionary", by distinguishing the Gael from other men. He further declared, "what the Greek was to the ancient world, the Gael will be to the modern" (Thornley 13). Fiona Macintosh observes how Pearse's statement reflects a long-standing belief that Ireland and ancient Greece fostered a "special relationship", where Irish sagas were deemed reminiscent of Greek heroic tales, including a reference to Cú Chulainn as the "Irish Achilles" (189). Thomas MacDonagh and Joseph Plunkett taught with Pearse in St Enda's School in Dublin, before becoming three of the seven signatories on the Proclamation of Independence. All three were also published poets, and parallels drawn between classicism and nationalism are evident in the writings of Plunkett, Gifford's husband, and MacDonagh, her brother-in-law, further augmenting her choice of a classically inspired gift, with a known visual rhetoric.

Brian McGing has studied Pearse and MacDonagh's commitment to the Gaelic movement and 1916 Rising, arguing how a marked interest in classical culture, including the reception of classical rhetoric in political oratory, informed Pearse's own writings on Irish independence. MacDonagh translated ninth-century poems by Roman poet Catullus, and MacDonagh and Joseph Plunkett were also co-editors of *The Irish Review*, a short-lived monthly magazine dedicated to Irish literature, arts, and science. MacDonagh also set Gaelic literature against the great works of Greek and Latin in his *Literature in Ireland: Studies Irish and Anglo-Irish*, published in 1916 (44-47).

Conclusions

While Grace Gifford-Plunkett and Winifred Carney are just two of the many women who contributed to Irish independence, they are remembered here through a

personal act of gift-giving. This act has shed light on a number of historic events, highlighting how cameos and brooches are both potent markers of such, reiterating how objects are not only central to the construction of memory, but that they also have life cycles which become intertwined with people (Godson and Brück, "Approaching the Material and Visual Culture" 8-10).

This argument becomes further established when brooches are viewed as membership badges; worn by a number of nationalist groups including the Gaelic League, Inghinidhe na hÉireann, and Cumann na mBan. When considering the symbolism of a classically inspired object in conjunction with contemporaneous literature, analogies between the Greek and the Gael – including the question of how this influenced ideas around rebellion and nationalism – become further revealed. Carney and Gifford became allies during a period of significant political and personal turmoil, reflected through the gifting of an object which has been historically established as signifying loyalty and commitment. The mounting of this carving in an engraved frame fashioned by Dublin-based jewellers with established connections to 1916, underscores the value of investigating objects as primary sources, both independent of and in conjunction with documentary examples, augmenting the advantages of adopting multidisciplinary methodologies when attempting to add to established historiographies which consider women, war, and national identity. Encased in a framework punctuated by socio-economic and cultural practices around gift giving, brooches, and cameo carvings are valuable case studies, each warranting further investigation and evaluation.

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