

## Arthur Griffith and Patrick McManus

By Rebecca Geraghty (1)

### Abstract

*On 13 June 1912 Irish revolutionary Arthur Griffith wrote to Patrick McManus in Argentina requesting financial aid for the Sinn Féin newspaper. Griffith was a prominent leader of the Sinn Féin nationalist movement that advocated for Irish independence from the British Empire. The newspaper was the forum through which Griffith articulated his views, and a vital lifeline of the struggle for Irish freedom. In an acute hour of need, Griffith appealed to an Irish-Argentine for support. McManus immigrated to Argentina from Ireland in the 1880s, achieving great prosperity and actively promoting Irish cultural activities. McManus's connections to one of the foremost architects of the independent Irish state points to the significance of the Irish-Argentine community in this revolutionary struggle. This transnational connection between Griffith and McManus widens the traditional interpretive lens applied to the early twentieth century, indicating that along with rebels in Ireland and the United States, Argentina was also host to individuals who contributed to Irish freedom.*

The Irish War of Independence relied upon a network of agents that stretched outside of Ireland's borders and across the Atlantic. A standard paradigm portrays this war as the cooperation between the Irish and Irish-American physical-force republicans against the British Empire's domination of its island-neighbour. The wealth of scholarship documenting the Irish-American contributions to this war has placed the branch of revolutionary agitators in the United States at the centre of the independence struggle. Absent from this traditional narrative, however, remain the other outposts of the Irish diaspora across the world.

If we broaden this conventional paradigm, and ask what the implications are of treating this independence struggle in a global context, we can reveal the transnational currents that influenced this conflict. The Irish nationalist struggle invoked a variety of global participants, and these expatriates approached the war with an anti-colonial mentality gleaned from their immigration destinations. At a critical juncture in the nationalist movement, one of Ireland's principal proponents of separatism, Arthur Griffith, appealed to Argentine citizen Patrick McManus (2) for support. McManus's presence within Griffith's network of contacts signals that Argentina played a role in Ireland's revolutionary efforts. By turning our glance to the Southern region of the Americas in the year 1912, the Irish War of Independence can be

seen as an anti-colonial struggle with global resonance.

Emerging from the cultural revival blossoming in Dublin throughout the early twentieth century, Arthur Griffith founded the political party *Sinn Féin* to agitate for an independent Ireland. The movement's title translates from the Irish language as "We Ourselves," and points to the charged cultural atmosphere from which Griffith's vision materialised.

Over the course of British colonial rule, the Irish language had been suppressed and derided as a primitive custom antithetical to the civilised manners of Empire. The language received an additional blow from the 1840s potato famine, as many of the poorer, predominantly Irish-speaking population died of starvation. Associated with poverty and backwardness, at the end of the nineteenth century the Irish language appeared to be a relic of the past. However, conscious that the native language was a unique cultural repository of Irish identity, Douglas Hyde founded the Gaelic League in 1893. Through the League he organised classes to educate the Irish people about their own language, and combined history and songs into these lectures. In his article "The Necessity of De-Anglicizing Ireland," Hyde asserted the inherent value embodied within distinctly Irish customs:

*In order to de-Anglicise ourselves we must at once arrest the decay of the language...We must arouse some spark of patriotic inspiration among the*

*peasantry who still use the language, and put an end to the shameful state of feeling -- a thousand-tongued reproach to our leaders and statesmen -- which makes young men and women blush and hang their heads when overheard speaking their own language (cited in Reid 1999: 143).*

This “patriotic inspiration” indeed took root, as Gaelic Leagues multiplied across Ireland, and were also embraced by Irish-American circles in New York and elsewhere in the United States. Through this cadre of followers, the Gaelic League catalysed a cultural reawakening that permeated across the artistic disciplines. Dublin became alive with theatre, music, and art pieces that celebrated themes and storylines evoking a traditional Irish past (Harrington 1991: viii). Mirroring this cultural reawakening in the title of his periodical, Griffith articulated the corresponding need for Irishmen and Irishwomen to reassert their political rights.

*Sinn Féin* served as a forum for Irish nationalist dialogue through which Griffith emphasised the need for both political and economic independence. Irish nationalism had divided into two factions: physical-force republicanism and constitutional nationalism. Whereas the first faction proclaimed that independence could only be achieved with violence, the latter intended to secure sovereignty through purely constitutional means (Kenny 2006: 289). Mediating between these divergent poles of nationalism, Griffith’s views provided an alternative. He developed a sophisticated political programme to restructure the relationship between Ireland and Britain. Drawing upon the model of Austria-Hungary, he proposed that Ireland remain united with the British crown - but function separately in every other respect. For instance, he demanded that the Irish Parliament of the late eighteenth century be restored, thus enabling the Irish people to compose their own legislation (Lyons 1971: 252).

Along with these political proposals, Griffith was also keenly aware that true independence could only be gained with economic sovereignty. Colonial domination by Britain, the birthplace and nursery of the Industrial Revolution, had impeded Ireland from developing any notable manufacturing base. (3) Griffith thus wrote

extensively on the need to redress this dearth of industry as a prerequisite to national growth. He advocated a series of tariff barriers that were designed to force British manufacturers to grant Ireland the right to trade freely, and thereby enable self-sufficiency in the economy (Lyons 1971: 253).

In addition to Griffith’s commentary on political and economic affairs, he also mobilised various nationalists to protest against King Edward VII’s visit to Ireland in 1903 (Lyons 1971: 255). Upon visiting Argentina a year earlier, the monarch had been greeted with numerous festivities, and Buenos Aires had been “...decorated with the Union Jack...which flew above railway stations, British-owned banks, corporate buildings...” (4) (Graham Yooll 1998: 9). Although a similar outward façade gleamed across the Dublin streets, Griffith and his core of loyal followers did their best to puncture the king’s visit with furious verbal protests.

*Sinn Féin* consolidated itself into a political movement that was crucial in securing the independence of the Irish state. Around 1905 the *Sinn Féin* sympathisers began to solidify into a political party, and after 1907 consistently backed their own candidates in the parliamentary elections (Lyons 1971: 258). Although *Sinn Féin* would later become the standard-bearer of Irish nationalism, in 1912 Griffith’s efforts remained embryonic. Competing brands of nationalism captivated Irish attention, and *Sinn Féin*’s message was overpowered by the prospect of Parliamentary Home Rule.

Although most individuals felt a general sympathy towards Griffith’s dream of an independent Ireland, they were attracted to the debates occurring within the walls of the British Parliament. British legislators discussed an arrangement whereby Ireland would receive greater autonomy and a degree of self-government. Although the two previous attempts to extract the concession of Home Rule had been thwarted by the Conservatives in the House of Lords, by 1912 the Irish Parliamentary Party had gained an edge on these Tory opponents. The passage of the Parliament Act had significantly curbed the power of the

Lords, with greater clout resting with the House of Commons. The successful alliance of the Irish Parliamentary Party with the Liberal majority in the Commons appeared to give Home Rule a fighting chance (Reilly 2006: 113). With such a promise of peaceful independence in the air, the public withdrew their support for the separatist platform proposed by Arthur Griffith.

The supposed inevitability of the Home Rule Bill paralysed *Sinn Féin's* activity. This constitutional arrangement appeared to present an immediate solution that Griffith could not offer. His demands for separation were more extreme, and would require protracted negotiations before they could materialise. More importantly, Griffith's ability to publicise his platform was limited in contrast to the Imperial Parliament, and at this point *Sinn Féin* devotees were a minority in the country (Reilly 2006: 109). However, in spite of the perceived inevitability of Home Rule, the advent of the First World War in 1914 prompted Britain to cast Irish affairs aside. Finding themselves reduced again to a mere colony with no prospect for advancement, the Irish people subsequently gravitated back towards the *Sinn Féin* platform after 1916.

Jumping forward in time for a moment, it is important to emphasise that *Sinn Féin* and its founders were crucial protagonists in the fight for independence from 1916 onward. In fact, Griffith himself was a signatory to the Anglo-Irish Treaty of December 1921 that dissolved the majority of colonial ties and founded the Irish Free State. As a result, 1912 represented a decisive year in which public apathy threatened *Sinn Féin's* message with extinction. If *Sinn Féin* had collapsed, it is conceivable that Irish freedom might have remained a dream. In this hour of acute need, Griffith called upon his allies around the world to appeal for financial support. Directing his words towards Argentina, Griffith expressed the grave situation of Irish nationalism in the face of the dwindling readership of the newspaper.

Griffith appealed to Patrick McManus, an individual of Irish descent who had immigrated to Argentina in the 1880s. Within Argentina, McManus was a vocal proponent of Irish

nationalism, and had amassed great prosperity through agricultural work (Meehan 1998: 52). Manager and editor of his own newspaper *Fianna*, McManus shared Griffith's fondness for journalism as a medium of political expression. Speaking to this fellow reporter, Griffith explicitly laid out the challenge that the *Sinn Féin* movement faced. Addressing the Home Rule situation, he explained:

*I wish to set before you the position of the Sinn Féin paper and seek your help.*

*The new lease of power which the proposal of a Home Rule bill has given Parliamentarianism has reacted on the paper... and will continue to do so until the Bill passes through or is rejected. I believe it will pass through. During the last eighteen months the paper has been sustained by great sacrifices and for another twelve months it cannot hope to get into smooth water.*

In the context of these "great sacrifices" that he was forced to perform, Griffith thus communicated the urgency of *Sinn Féin's* situation. Having weathered eighteen months of declining circulation, Griffith expected the newspaper to undergo yet another year of difficulty:

*If S. F. [*Sinn Féin*] can be carried over this crucial year, I feel pretty safe about the future, both of it and the movement. If it be forced to stop publication now it will be very difficult to resuscitate [*sic*] the natural movement when Home Rule comes into operation.*

Although he was expressing the gravity of the upcoming year, Griffith simultaneously told McManus that he was hopeful about the newspaper's "future." In the course of one paragraph Griffith thus transformed the tone of the situation. Having captured McManus' attention with the opening sentences of gloom, he then signalled that there was reason for hope. Acknowledging that the newspaper faced a troubling year ahead, Griffith also asserted that this period of time might nonetheless culminate in the triumph of *Sinn Féin*. He therefore portrayed this as a watershed for Ireland's future. If sufficient energy could be infused into the paper at this make-or-break moment, Ireland might embrace the vision of *Sinn Féin* after all. Such a hopeful prophecy thus hinted

that McManus himself possessed a degree of agency to transform Ireland's fortunes. Griffith then turned the conversation towards financial matters, and appealed to McManus for aid:

*Two hundred pounds would, I think, save the paper, taking it over the interval between now and the defunctive passage or rejection of the Home Rule bill. In either event Irish politics would enter on a new era and our opportunity would come.*

Griffith thus laid out in no uncertain terms how much money he hoped to receive, and the expected benefit of "a new era and our opportunity" that such a financial outlay would provide. He also warned McManus that he could not repay the money for at least three years. Reinforcing the gravity of his situation, Griffith closes the letter by saying: "I am sorry that the first letter I write to you after your return should be of this nature, but I am face to face with the worst crisis in the history of the paper" (National Library of Ireland, Bulfin Papers). From one journalist to another, Griffith thus solicited McManus' cooperation in his crusade for Irish independence. By linking McManus into his web of *Sinn Féin* beneficiaries, Griffith thus engaged Irish-Argentine aid to sustain the vital dialogue of nationalism. While Griffith's motivations were confined to a purely Irish context, he may have unknowingly tapped into a unique opportunity for the Irish in Argentina.

While we cannot be sure of his precise answer to Griffith's letter, McManus' overt sympathies with the nationalist movement would appear to suggest that he responded favourably. If we assume that McManus did extend his support, we can question the unique motivations that may have guided his actions. As a member of the Irish-Argentine diaspora, McManus related to the colonial context in a different way than his North American counterparts. In the early twentieth century, Britain exerted a form of commercial imperialism that constricted the Argentine economy to serving the exclusive interests of the Empire. In the context of this informal dominance of Argentina, Griffith's appeal may have been infused with an additional layer of colonial associations that informed McManus's republicanism. The traditional depiction of a republican cooperation confined to Ireland and the United States fails to account

for this wider anti-colonial framework embedded within the struggle for Irish freedom.

The time period surrounding the revolutionary struggle is typically portrayed with New York City as the base from which Irish-Americans provided key financial and organisational support. Irish-Americans invested in the bonds of the anticipated Irish Republic in amounts ranging from ten to ten thousand dollars, anticipating that they would be paid back once sovereignty had been achieved. In 1920, for instance, American citizens raised an estimated \$5 million for the Irish cause (Kenny 2006: 295). These monetary flows funded the arms, transport, and propaganda campaigns that were essential to the guerrilla operations waged against the crown forces. This vital financial backing was augmented by a core group of Irish-Americans who prepared a formidable cadre of paramilitaries for combat. Republicans such as John Devoy trained a new set of agitators through the secret Irish Republican Brotherhood to join their ideological brethren in Ireland in conducting military operations against the Crown (Reilly 2006: 100). As the contributors of both financial and organisational support, the Irish-Americans have come to be viewed as an appendage to the republicans back in Ireland.

As residents of the "land of the free," the Irish-Americans had been exposed to the democratic rhetoric of the United States. Although they were primarily confined to the working classes and at the lower end of the bargaining table in labour negotiations, they nonetheless lived in a formidably democratic system. Like Argentina, the United States had been founded upon an anti-colonial legacy that expelled the tyranny of an imperial power to establish an independent republic. In addition to the democratic discourse of the country's foundation, many Irish-Americans had also served as Union soldiers in the fight against an exploitative system of slavery in the Civil War of 1861-1865. Finally, the American dream of social mobility for the deserving had enabled various Irish-Americans to enter the prosperous middle classes, and extended the prospect to many more (Kenny 2006: 291). As residents of this bastion of democracy, the Irish-Americans

bypassed an informal colonial situation that may have informed how other branches of the diaspora related to the independence question. In other immigrant destinations, where freedom may not have been heard to “ring” in the same tones, alternative motivations may have informed an enthusiasm to undermine the British Empire. Although in pursuit of an escape route from the colonial paralysis of their homeland, the Irish that immigrated to Argentina had encountered a unique version of imperial domination.

The British influence in Argentina had originated in the nineteenth century as a mutually beneficial trade circuit between the two countries. Facing limits to its geographical resources, yet equipped with superior industrial capacities, Britain was in search of both raw materials and new outlets for its manufacturing exports. Conversely, Argentina was seen as both “under-populated” and in need of the infrastructure to transform its natural resources into commodities with exchange value (Cain 2001: 206). With each country in demand of what the other had to offer, Britain and Argentina teamed up as intimate partners in trade. By investing heavily in the construction of Argentine railroads, British capital accelerated the time required to transport goods across the vast countryside of the Pampas. As a result, this investment granted Argentina entry into the international trade community. Enjoying inflows of British capital, Argentina ascended as prosperous exporter of wool, grains, and meat. These activities heightened the demand for manpower, and attracted a steady flow of immigrants from Southern Europe. Although by the early twentieth century Argentina had asserted itself as a world power, the shadow of dependence nonetheless lingered, and the country remained beholden to its patron of capital.

Despite the perceived prosperity of the economy, the British exerted a two-pronged dominance over Argentina through financial and social control. First, in order to sustain economic growth, Argentina depended on the continued influx of British loans (Cain 2001: 208). Without this extensive borrowing, the country could not have financed its

development. As a result, the control over the means of production remained in British hands. For instance, the British investors responsible for the railway lines retained their control over these capital fixtures. Similarly, the thriving meat exports had to pass through the British-owned refrigeration companies before they were free to enter world markets (Graham Yooll 1998: 12). The economic hegemony held by the British was mirrored on a social level through the veneration of these Anglo elites. The British investors and merchant families who based their operations in Buenos Aires reigned over the social pyramid as the privileged classes. Through an English school system, cricket leagues, and the construction of the sole Harrods department store outside of London, they recreated the British culture in this environment (Ibid). Allying themselves with the local landowning elites, the “ingleses” successfully permeated the country with a two-pronged financial and social hegemony.

By the early twentieth century, Argentina had transitioned from a position of relative equality in its trade relationship with Britain towards that of a dependent partner within a definite power structure. This is not to say that Argentina did not derive some benefit from the relationship with Britain. Indeed, the historiography of this period comprises a spectrum of distinct interpretations, and different historians assert a range of arguments that either defend or denounce the British presence (Cain 2001: 243). However, even if some Argentines did benefit from the British presence, the country was nonetheless characterised by a tangible backdrop of imperial dominance. Functioning as an informal colony, Argentina suffered not from a political state of subservience - but a commercial imperialism (Graham Yooll 1998: 13). Within this continent of romance languages, those who spoke English commanded the highest currency.

Amidst the migration of European peoples into Argentina in the nineteenth century, a distinct group of English-speakers arrived. The Irish looked for outlets from an agricultural economy paralysed by a repressive colonial rule that eliminated the possibility for social mobility. Their experience in sheep-farming, as well as

adherence to the Catholic religion, presented transferable skills of use in Argentina. They comprised a much smaller migrant flow than their counterparts who travelled to the United States, and prospered through agricultural work on the Pampas. One example is Patrick McManus, whose success in farming enabled him to buy three ranches that equalled the geographical area of the entire county of Donegal - his place of origin (Meehan 1998: 52). Describing his compatriots who united in Argentina, McManus noted the diversity of their origins:

*Some of them like yourself came from their castellated homes in the Bog of Allen, some from fisher cabins on the Atlantic coast of Donegal, some from the smiling plains of Westmeath, some from the heather blooms of the Galtees, some from the city counter, some from the teacher's desk, some from the plough, some from the sheepfold, some from the forge, the beach, the shop, the school, the field (McManus 1913: 98).*

From this array of Irish places and occupations, this migrant pool settled in a land where the Spanish language reigned, the seasons were reversed, and there were many opportunities to prosper. Overturning the dispossession and poverty that had characterised his life in Ireland, McManus nonetheless resented the colonial echoes that he continued to experience in the Argentine Republic.

In marked contrast to his English-speaking counterparts, McManus pioneered Irish culture within Argentina. Although oceans away from Ireland, he helped to found a branch of the Gaelic League (Murray 2005). With the goal of instilling a linguistic pride amongst the Irish diaspora in Argentina, McManus transferred Douglas Hyde's dream to Latin America. As a result, the Irish in Argentina blended Gaelic into the horizon of languages particular to their community. Additionally, in 1910 McManus launched a newspaper entitled *Fianna* in which he commented on international events of relevance to both Ireland and Argentina. The newspaper often focused on the evils of Empire, and the threats that the British posed to both his homeland and current place of residence.

In *Fianna*, McManus referenced the politically-charged questions of territorial ownership in South America. In fact, "[t]he paper never missed an opportunity to attack Britain's occupation of the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands" (Marshall 1996: 9, cited in Murray 2005). For example, in one issue he included photographs of the Malvinas Islands - known to the British as the Falklands (McManus March 1910: 8). This was a hotly disputed region off the east coast of Argentina to which numerous European powers, including Britain, laid claim. Given its close proximity to the islands, the Argentine government also pursued a rival claim of ownership, and this issue burned at the forefront of the political discussions of the era. Weighing in on this controversial issue, McManus included these photographs amidst a collection of poems written in the Irish language. The juxtaposition of Gaelic and Malvinas was not accidental, since the language resonated as a symbol of cultural resistance against the foreign coloniser within Ireland.

Combining these Irish and Argentine questions, McManus thus strategically deployed the Malvinas to suggest that the British Empire's insatiable territorial hunger also posed an acute threat to Argentina. By situating the language of a formal colony next to an image of a *desired* British colony, McManus was able to underscore the sense of imperial encroachment on Argentine possessions. Additionally, referring to the Torre de los Ingleses in Buenos Aires, he suggested that returning the Malvinas would "...be a more graceful act than the construction of an absurd clock tower" (McManus March 1910: 6). McManus found an opportune chance to reinforce these charges on the occasion of the monarch's death - mirroring the distaste that Griffith had displayed in 1903.

While some might have been at a loss for words upon hearing of the king's death, McManus had much to say and dedicated an article in *Fianna* to the topic. Launching into the issue, he denounced "The grabber of the South Orkneys, Edward VII of England..." (McManus July 1910: 20). The Orkneys, another controversial section of territory located near Argentina in the Antarctic region, were indeed at risk of being "grabbed" by British territorial initiatives.

McManus then proceeded to mock the deceased king by sarcastically expressing condolences to the bereaved palace dog named Caesar. He explained that although he wanted to unleash a vitriol of comments against the land-hungry king, "...out of consideration for Caesar we will say none of many truths welling up in our bosom" (Ibid). Waging a double attack on Britain, McManus thus disparaged not merely the imperial ambitions towards the Orkneys, but even the king himself.

In addition to his anti-monarchical comments, McManus made no secret of his sympathies with the Irish republican movement. Speaking on behalf of the republican elements within the Irish-Argentine community in 1910, he professed: "We owe loyalty and fealty to the Republic and we freely tender it in unstinted measure" (McManus July 1910: 24). Invoking fallen Irish heroes, he also declared, "[t]he heritage of Tone, Emmet and Mitchell is ours. The Gaelic heroes beckon to us from afar off. We need scarce make a sacrifice, although who would not do so, if need demanded, is not a faithful son of Ireland" (McManus March 1910: 10). These strident republican tones transmitted back to Griffith in Ireland, and enveloped McManus into the network of global nationalist activity. For McManus, Griffith's appeal contained an implicit opportunity to voice more issues than those particular to the Irish case.

Due to their close proximity to Empire, a pro-Ireland stance may have assumed a different set of implications for the Irish-Argentines in contrast to their North American brethren. The struggle presented an opportunity not merely to strike a blow for their homeland, but also to leverage their domestic fortunes within Argentina. An Irish victory would fracture the invincibility that the Empire appeared to command, and cast the elevated members of the social pyramid in a different light. Ireland in 1912 thus served as a vehicle whereby Irish-Argentines could renegotiate their fortunes within their Latin American country of residence. Channelling these hybrid motivations towards an independent Ireland, by overturning the Irish colonial past, the Irish-Argentines looked towards a brighter future in Argentina.

The connections between Arthur Griffith and Patrick McManus reveal an exciting new layer of the history of the Irish in Argentina. The fact that such a prominent figure, and a founding father of the Irish state, composed this direct and detailed appeal suggests that Argentina has connections to the central events in the struggle for independence. The letter is reproduced in full below. While the historiography of this period has focused exclusively on the diaspora in the United States, Griffith's letter provides indisputable evidence that other migrant destinations also contributed tangibly to the independence movements. The only other reference to this document that I have uncovered is Helen Meehan's brief comment on page 153 of her piece "Patrick McManus (1864-1929)" in a folklore publication *Sinsear* in 1995. Since Meehan's intention was to provide a panoramic view of McManus's life, she did not examine the letter in detail, but simply explained the content:

*In 1912 Griffith wrote to him [McManus] again, this time seeking funds or a loan for the paper Sinn Féin. In the letter, Griffith said the paper was experiencing financial difficulty— since the introduction of the Home Rule Bill, support for the paper was dropping. He also stated that it would be three years before he could repay the loan, but by then he hoped to have the paper on a firm financial footing (Meehan 1995: 153).*

Meehan therefore takes inventory of the content of the letter but does not flesh out the possible implications of this connection. As a result, this letter is a source of historical richness waiting for researchers like myself. Although I have advanced a particular viewpoint in this paper, I am both open and enthusiastic to alternative views and interpretations on this document.

Rebecca Geraghty

Thank you to the members of SILAS who continue to excavate any and all evidence about this forgotten section of the diaspora, and I hope that this letter may generate further scholarly inquiry.

**Arthur Griffith to Patrick McManus,**  
**13 June 1912**

This document can be found in the National Library of Ireland in the Bulfin Papers collection. I have reproduced the letter in full here so that it may assist other researchers' quests for information on the Irish in Latin America. There were a few instances while transcribing this document from its original handwritten form where I had trouble reading the writing. I have noted such cases with underlining, and look forward to further research that may decipher the precise content of these words. As a whole, however, these instances do not detract from an overall comprehension of the document, and I hope that this may be of use to enthusiasts of the Irish-Argentines.

*A chara, (5)*

*I wish to set before you the position of the Sinn Fein paper and seek your help.*

*The new lease of power which the proposal of a Home Rule bill has given Parliamentarianism has reacted on the paper. It has forced us to make time and will continue to do so until the Bill passes through or is rejected. I believe it will pass through. During the last eighteen months the paper has been sustained by great sacrifices and for another twelve months it cannot hope to get into smooth water.*

*If S. F. [Sinn Fein] can be carried over this crucial year, I feel pretty safe about the future, both of it*

*and the movement. If it be forced to stop publication now it will be very difficult to resuscitate the natural movement when Home Rule comes into operation.*

*The weekly \_\_\_\_\_ [illegible] on the paper is small, and might be met by us but there is a legacy of debt from the days of the "Daily" which threatens to crush it, for the paper, at present, cannot pay its \_\_\_\_\_ expenses and the debts of a former date which press on it.*

*[Page 2] Two hundred pounds would, I think, save the paper, taking it over the interval between now and the defunctive passage or rejection of the Home Rule bill. In either event Irish politics would enter on a new era and our opportunity would come.*

*I have \_\_\_\_\_ which was purchased a few months ago for £300. With the improvements I have made I daresay it would sell at any time for £350 or more. There is no debt on it save one of £30. If you would lend me £200 on the security of the home I believe I could pull the paper successfully through.*

*I could not attempt to repay the money for at least three years.*

*I am sorry that the first letter I write to you after your return should be of this nature, but I am face to face with the worst crisis in the history of the paper.*

*of my le mear mór*

*Arthur Griffith*

## **Notes**

1 Rebecca Geraghty is a student in her senior year at New York University studying History and Spanish. Hoping to combine her interests in these two subjects, she embarked on a semester in Buenos Aires. To her delight, she found a vibrant community of Irish-Argentines proud of their ancestry and eager to share their stories, and hopes that this piece may shed further light on their history.

2 Patrick McManus's name is found with both spellings of "MacManus" and "McManus." Simply to establish continuity I have opted for the latter spelling.

3 Aside from some shipbuilding and factories in the North, the island as a whole had remained predominantly agricultural with no manufacturing capabilities.

4 "...embanderada con la Union Jack...que flameaba en estaciones de ferrocarril, bancos de propiedad británica, edificios de empresas..."

5 Irish greeting for "my friend," equivalent to "Dear" when used in letter. Although the original document was written in the Old Irish script, for the purposes of reproducing it in typed form I have used the modern convention of replacing the c with a dot above it with a simple "ch" to denote the same sound.



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