

# **The Declaration of Independence of the Irish Republic**

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## **Irish Republic Born in New York Harbor**

### **Ten Patriots at Daybreak Renounce Allegiance to England Near Statue of Liberty**

#### **Independence is Declared**

#### **Sympathy with Germany, They Say, a Matter of Expediency—Then They Breakfast at Jack's**

As dawn was slowly spreading over the city on the morning of July 3, a thirty-foot launch slipped from the recreation pier at the foot of West Fiftieth Street and glided down the Hudson. On board were ten persons, silent and serious with the consciousness of what was to them a profoundly solemn and significant ceremony.

In the prow of the boat was Aleister Crowley, Irishman-poet, philosopher, explorer, a man of mystic mind—the leader of an Irish hope. Of nearly middle age and mild in manner, with the intellectual point of view colored with cabalistic interpretation, Crowley is an unusual man, capably so to those who believe and feel in common with him. He has spent years exploring in Persia, India, and Tibet, and he is the author of several volumes of translations of the early writings of those countries. He is said to be a close friend of William Butler Yeats, the Irish poet, and he has written several Irish poems himself.

In the boat also was Miss Leilah Waddell, whose mother was an Irish refugee of the last generation and who believes herself an Irish patriot. She is a violinist

and has appeared publicly on several occasions since her recent coming to America. And among those in the exotic party were one J. Dorr, an Irish editor who has published papers in both Ireland and England, and Patrick Gilroy, an Irish agitator. All of those in the launch were Irish. Most of them have come to this country since the beginning of the war.

### **Ready to War on England**

The members of the party consider themselves members of the secret Revolutionary Committee of Public Safety of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic, and their early morning mission of July 3 was to declare the independence of the Irish Republic, which included a declaration of war against England, and to pledge their allegiance to the government of their vision.

The little launch passed from the river into the bay and stopped off Bedloe's Island, under the Statue of Liberty. The time and place chosen for the ceremony were considered brightly propitious. There was the poetic significance of the dawn, the great figure of Liberty enlightening the world was symbolic of the dreamed-of republic, the season was the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the United States. And the leader of the party, Crowley, in whose mysticism there is something of astrology, had read the heavens and found that the conjunction of certain stars was auspicious for Ireland at exactly 4:32 o'clock on the morning of July 3.

So, with the launch a few feet off Bedloe's Island, at the moment of 4:32 o'clock, Crowley rose to begin the ceremony. He said:

*"I have not asked any great human audience to listen to these words; I had rather address them to the unconquerable ocean that surrounds the world, and to the free four winds of heaven. Facing the sunrise, I lift up my hands and my soul herewith to this giant figure of Liberty, the ethical counterpart of the Light, Life, and*

*Love which are our spiritual heritage. In this symbolical and most awful act of religion I invoke the one true God of whom the sun himself is but a shadow that he may strengthen me in heart and hand to uphold that freedom for the land of my sires, which I am come hither to proclaim.*

*"In this dark moment, before the father orb of our system kindles with his kiss the sea, I swear the great oath of the Revolution. I tear with my hands this token of slavery, this safe conduct from the enslaver of my people, and I renounce forever all allegiance to every alien tyrant. I swear to fight to the last drop of my blood to liberate the men and women of Ireland, and I call upon the free people of this country, on whose hospitable shores I stand an exile, to give me countenance and assistance to my task of breaking those bonds which they broke for themselves 138 years ago.*

## **Unfurl Irish Flag**

*"I unfurl the Irish flag. I proclaim the Irish Republic. Erin go Bragh. God save Ireland."*

As the bits of the torn English passport scattered over the surface of the water the Irish flag, a green field supporting a golden harp, flapped free in the breeze from a mast in the bow of the boat.

Solemnly then the Declaration of Independence of Ireland was read. It is:

*We, the secret Revolutionary Committee of Public Safety of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic, hereby authorize our spokesman and delegate, Brother Aleister Crowley, No. 418, in our name and in our behalf, to promulgate the proclamation following:*

*In so grave a circumstance of human affairs as the declaration of war or revolution, it is customary that those whose conscience and free-will alike impel them to take up arms against other men, should state openly the causes of their resorting to so dread efficacy of protest.*

*Peace and good-will are the ruling passions of the better sort among mankind; and for these to turn therefrom argues the existence of a state intolerable to free men. We hold this truth to be self-evident, that all men and women are created unequal; and our justice wills that this prejudice of nature be redressed, so far as is possible to human effort, by assuring to each and every one of them equality of rights before the law, and the right to make, alter, or repeal that law itself; and, by assuring to each and every one of them freedom to develop the powers of the soul, spiritual, moral, mental, or physical without interference from any other person or persons, so far as that development may prove compatible with the equal rights of others.*

### **Right to Rebel**

*To obtain these advantages of security and freedom is the object of all proper government; and it is not only the right of every man for himself, but his duty to his neighbor, to refuse obedience to any authority which does not serve its people to this end with loyalty and fidelity. What then must be the right and duty of every member of a nation not only misgoverned, but governed for the purpose of exploitation by an alien, usurping, and inferior race?*

*For many centuries this particular wrong has been suffered with a patience and gentleness not unworthy of the Saviour of Mankind, by the Irish people; but as to endure oppression with meekness is the pride and prerogative of God, it is not for man to usurp it. The free and independent spirit of the people of Ireland is weary of the continued crimes of the English tyrants; and, seeing no end possible but the success of the oppressors in their systematic annihilation of the people, dares the desperate alternative of revolt.*

*For, as is notorious in every country of the inhabited globe, the deliberate policy of England from the first*

*conquest of Ireland has been endowed with that admirable virtue of consistency which is the spine of good intention, but in this case props the determination to destroy a people.*

*The land of Ireland has been stolen from the people of Ireland, both by armed aggression and by the chicaneries of unjust law.*

*The labor of Ireland has been sterilized and thwarted by the envy of British industries.*

*The people of Ireland have been enslaved by a ferocious constabulary, militia, and soldiery, enforcing laws intended to weaken the people directly by coercion or indirectly by impoverishment. The right of political action has been denied to them, and the sacrilegious hand of atheistic oligarchy has been lifted even against the freedom of religious thought.*

*The means of private assassination and of public massacre have been freely employed against the people, and when even the soldier turned with disgust from the task of a butcher, famine and pestilence were deliberately brought upon the land by the calculating craft of the robbers, tyrants, and murderers that bear rule over them.*

*So comprehensive, so infamous, and so continuous a conspiracy is unparalleled in the annals of humanity; and were we to precise and to detail the crimes against our people which already overload the scroll of the recording angel, and now bare the sword of the avenging angel of God, we think that not even earth itself could contain the document of their mere enumeration.*

### **"Hatred of Their Tyrant"**

*Nor have the Irish people been inactive in measures directed to appease the unnatural hatred of their tyrant. They have sought by every lawful means to obtain some alleviation of our sempiternal suffering. They have made political overtures only to be rejected, or nullified*

*by the adroitness of the lawyer. They have sacrificed freely their best blood, for their sons have been the best soldiers of the usurper; and England has answered by their deliberate massacre in battle.*

*We believe that earth itself revolts at the recital of these tyrannies and treasons; we believe that God Himself is weary of beholding these intolerable evils; and we believe in consequence that the hour is come when desperation should be transformed into resolution, patience inflamed to wrath, and Peace, folding her wings upon her face, mournfully beckon war.*

*We, therefore, the secret Revolutionary Committee of Public Safety of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic, by the mouth of our trusty and well-beloved delegate and spokesman, Brother Aleister Crowley, No. 418, do decree and proclaim:*

*1. That, we put our trust and confidence in the Judge of the whole world, appealing to Him to witness the righteousness of our intent.*

*2. That, declaring England the enemy of civilization, justice, equality, and freedom, and therefore of the human race, we do hereby lawfully establish the Republic of the Men and Women of the Irish People, free and independent by right human and divine, having full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliance, establish commerce, and to do all other things which independent States may of right do.*

## **Repudiate England**

*3. That we do hereby dissolve all political connection between that Republic and the usurper, absolving of their allegiance to England (a) all free people of good will that are of Irish blood, (b) all free people of good will born in Ireland, (c) all free people of good will who may hereafter desire to partake of the benefits of the Irish Republic, and effectually acquire these rights by the forms provided.*

*4. That, we do hereby declare war upon England until such time as our demands being granted, our rights recognized, and our power firmly established in our own country, from which we are now exiled, we may see fit to restore to her the blessings of peace, and to extend to her the privileges of friendship.*

*And for the support of this declaration, with a firm and hearty reliance upon the protection of God, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.*

### ***Long live the Irish Republic.***

The official copy of this declaration of independence is "signed by order and on behalf of the committee" by "Aleister Crowley, 418," and "attested" by "L. Bathurst, 11."

With the conclusion of the reading of the declaration, the launch headed up the Hudson River, proceeding near the western shore, Miss Waddell playing patriotic Irish airs on her violin. The music and the large Irish flag, now plainly visible in the increasing light, identified the boat to the seamen on the German ships interned at the Hoboken waterfront, and they cheered the small company of Irishmen lustily. The Captain of the Hamburg-American line tug which happened to be standing off with steam up near the Vaterland, turned out into the river and escorted the launch to its landing at Fiftieth Street. Incidentally it was noted by those in the launch that as they passes by the French and English ships at the piers on the eastern side of the river the sailors on them cheered as loudly as the Germans had.

### **Breakfast at Jack's**

The party left the launch and went to Jack's restaurant for breakfast, where a number of late revelers did not seem to disturb the spirit of their gathering.

A touch of comedy to the ceremonies over which Crowley and his companions laughed themselves the next day was that the party had intended to go through their ritual on the steps at the base of the Statue of Liberty, but, giving more mind to the vision of the Irish Republic than to practical details, those who arranged the journey neglected to obtain Governmental permission to land on Bedloe's Island. When the launch stopped at the dock, therefore, a stolid watchman who displayed neither Irish nor English sympathies, but who had fluent command of New York's most emphatic language, refused to let the patriots set foot on the "land of liberty." So the ceremonies were held in the boat while it drifted near the island.

The particular avowed purpose of the representatives of the "committee" in America is to spread propaganda that will contribute, at the end of the European war, to the establishment of the Republic of Ireland. Members of the committee in Ireland, according to information obtained by a representative of the *New York Times* are now engaged in a secret effort to dissuade Irishmen from enlisting in the English Army. But those members of the committee who will talk of their business at all admit that there is no immediate intention of an attempt to wage active war on England by the instigation of an armed rebellion in Ireland. It is said that the present purpose of the formal declaration of war against England is more to enlist the sympathies of Irish and of Americans to the "cause" than to bring about what even the most visionary enthusiasts of the movement recognize as an impracticable war.

Aleister Crowley was displeased when the news of the ceremonies at Bedloe's Island and of the formation of the "committee" came into the possession of *The Times*, and he declined to discuss his plans and purposes further than to acknowledge the fact set forth. An American who is acquainted with Crowley's beliefs and intentions, however, while frankly admitting that the



Irishmen of the "committee" sympathize with Germany in the present war, asserted that this was due to anti-English feelings and not to any natural love of things Germane. The members of the "committee" see in Germany, according to their unofficial spokesman, a factor that will impair the power of England to oppress them. That is all.