



## **The McGowan Papers**

**P47**

**The Special Collections and Archives Department  
Glucksman Library  
University of Limerick**

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**Reference Code:** IE 2135 P47  
**Title:** The McGowan Papers  
**Dates of Creation:** 1922-1923  
**Level of Description:** Fonds  
**Extent and Medium:** 37 items (12 files)

**CONTEXT**

**Name of Creator(s):** McGowan, Anne ('Annie') née Browne (1876-1965)

**Administrative/ Biographical History:** Anne (Annie) McGowan née Browne (1879-1965) was the daughter of Patrick Browne, a baker, and his wife Susan, of Clare Street, Limerick. In 1900, she married Michael McGowan (1878-1942) whose father Daniel McGuane (1843-1920) was originally from Poulwillian, Miltown Malbay, County Clare. Daniel, a tailor, had come to Limerick in the 1860s with his wife Mary Anne Foley, a seamstress from Kilkee, to run a business premises on the corner of Catherine Street and Roches Street. When in Limerick, Daniel changed the spelling of his surname from McGuane McGowan.

Michael McGowan worked first on the railway in Limerick and later in Inchicore Works in Dublin. In 1915, he joined the Royal Dublin Fusiliers seeking adventure and an escape from the large family he now had to take care of. Michael was sent to the Western Front where he was poisoned by gas and evacuated to a hospital in Birmingham. He was discharged from the Army in 1919. His wife returned to Limerick during the war and lived with her children in Doyle's Cottages off John's Street, which was not far from Limerick Jail. In order to support her mother, Anne's eldest child Sarah (Sally) got a job as a printer's assistant in McKern's Printing Works in Limerick city and, on her mother's insistence, joined the Transport Union. When Sarah and 11 other girls were offered a pay increase of two shillings and six pence on condition that they leave the Union, Sarah was the only girl to refuse the offer as a result of which she was sacked. She later worked as a waitress in a Catherine Street restaurant.

During and after the Civil War, Annie and Sarah McGowan and Annie's son Timothy (Tadgh) McGowan delivered food and parcels of books, magazines and cigarettes to Republican prisoners in Limerick Jail and continued to send these to prisoners transferred to the Curragh internment camp in County Kildare. Given the family connections with West Clare, most of the prisoners they assisted were from that area. One of the correspondents, Thomas Keane, was from Carrigaholt, where a Keane's pub exists to this day.

**Archival History:** On her death, Annie McGowan's letters passed to her granddaughter Mary Shanahan. She left them to her daughter Patsy Shanahan, who left them to her son Seamus Harrold.

**Immediate Source of Acquisition:** Donated to the University of Limerick by Seamus Harrold on 22 October 2013.

## CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

**Scope and Content:** The archive contains a selection of letters and notes written by Republican Prisoners imprisoned in Limerick Jail and the Curragh Internment camp between 1922 and 1923 during and following the Civil War. They comprise in the main thank you-notes for parcels delivered to or sent to them by Annie McGowan, her daughter Sarah and her son Timothy.

**Appraisal, Destruction and Scheduling Information:** All records have been retained.

**Accruals:** No accruals are expected.

**System of Arrangement:** The documents have been arranged alphabetically by sender's surname and thereunder chronologically by date.

## CONDITIONS OF ACCESS AND USE

**Conditions Governing Access:** Unrestricted access to all items.

**Conditions Governing Reproduction:** Standard copyright regulations apply to all items. For photocopying or reproducing material, please consult with the staff.

**Language/ Scripts of Material:** English.

**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:** Paper documents in good condition.

**Finding Aids:** A hard copy of the descriptive catalogue is available at the Special Collections Department, Glucksman Library, University of Limerick.

## DESCRIPTION CONTROL

**Archivist's Note:** Papers arranged and described by John Harrington under the supervision of Anna-Maria Hajba.

**Rules or Conventions:** This description follows guidelines based on *ISAD(G)* 2nd edition, 2000; *Irish Guidelines for Archival Description*, 2009; *National Council on Archives: Rules for the Construction of Personal, Place and Corporate Names*, 1997; and *EAP Guidance on Data Protection for Archive Services*, 2018.

**Date of Description:** July 2015. Revised in May 2021.

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- 1** [c. 1922-1923]  
From Matt Blake, Limerick Prison, to Annie McGowan, thanking her for a parcel received.  
1 p.
- 2** 4 April 1923  
From J. Fitzgibbon, West Limerick Section, Limerick Prison, to Annie McGowan, thanking her for a cake and asking her to forward a note to his friend.  
1 p.
- 3** [c. 1922-1923]  
From Jim Fitzgibbon, West Limerick Section, Limerick Prison, to Annie McGowan, thanking her for his dinner and a parcel, and promising to out a bag as a present.  
2 items
- 4** [c. 1922-1923]  
From P. Fitzgibbon, B Landing, [Limerick Prison], to Annie McGowan, thanking her for food and books. He expects to be moved any day soon.  
2 pp.
- 5** [c. 1922-1923]  
From Paddie Fitzgibbon, West Limerick Section, Limerick Prison, to Annie McGowan, thanking her for food and parcels and confessing to eating one of the dinners intended for his brother Jim Fitzgibbon (for whom see **P47/3**) who has been transferred to the Curragh.  
6 items
- 6** [c. 1922-1923]  
From Thomas Keane, West Clare Section, Limerick Prison, to Annie McGowan, thanking her for food, books, cigarettes and parcels.  
6 items

- 7 [c. 1922-1923]  
From Thomas Keane, West Clare Section, Limerick Prison, to Tadgh [Timothy McGowan], thanking him and his mother for food, books, cigarettes and parcels and expressing his view that he will soon be moved from Limerick Prison. The reverse of one of the letters contains a message from Tadgh to which Keane's note is a reply.  
5 items
- 8 [c. 1922-1923]  
From Thomas Keane, [Limerick Prison], to Sally [McGowan], thanking her for books and cigarettes and enclosing a small present as a token of his appreciation. He expects to be moved from Limerick Prison shortly.  
1 p.
- 9 December 1922-February 1923  
From Pat McInerney, Clare Section, Limerick Prison, to Annie McGowan, thanking her for food, books, cigarettes and parcels. One of the letters contains a guarded reference to the execution by firing squad of two Republican prisoners, Cornelius McMahan and Patrick Hennessy, which took place in Limerick Prison on 20 January 1923.  
8 items
- 10 [c. March-September 1923]  
From Pat McInerney, Hut No. 3, No. 2 Tin Town Internment Camp, The Curragh, Kildare, to Annie McGowan, giving an account of his transfer from Limerick Prison and the conditions in the Curragh internment camp, and asking for some cigarettes.  
4 items
- 11 18 October 1923  
From Pat McInerney, Dunmore, Doonbeg, to Annie McGowan, informing her of his release from The Curragh. He discusses the harsh conditions in Mountjoy Gaol and the ongoing hunger strike of the prisoners.  
1 p.
- 12 11 June 1922  
From Gretta Talty, O'Connell Street, Kilkee, to [Sarah] McGowan, asking her to deliver a parcel to Pat McInerney, a brother of a friend of hers, at Limerick Prison. She concludes, 'Oh are not the times dreadful'.  
1 p.