

Thomas St. John Gaffney

United States Consul General in Germany 1905-1915

by Des Ryan

Thomas St. John Gaffney, born in Limerick in 1864, was the son of the Unionist Alderman and flour merchant Thomas Gaffney, J. P. It is believed that the young Gaffney joined the Irish Republican Brotherhood at an early age. This may have been due to the influence of John Crowe, an employee of his father, who was a senior member of the IRB in the city. The young Gaffney was sent to be educated at the Jesuit college of St. Stanislaus, Tullamore, Clongowes Wood, Kildare and the Royal University of Ireland. It was his father's wish that the young man should enter the legal profession. He emigrated to the United States around 1882 and studied law at the offices of Messrs. Sewell, Pierce and Sheldon in New York.¹ In 1889 he was admitted to the New York legal profession. He returned to Limerick in 1890, describing himself as a Barrister at Law. During that period he accompanied the Irish Nationalist leader Charles Stewart Parnell around the South of Ireland. At that time Parnell was addressing various meetings in connection with the split in the Irish Parliamentary Party due to his affair with the wife of Captain William O'Shea and the divorce proceedings, which followed. Parnell's health deteriorated after getting a bad soaking he received, speaking in the rain, at a meeting in the west of Ireland. After he died in Brighton, England on 6 October 1891, Gaffney returned to America.

In the Summer of 1893 Gaffney left New York, accompanied by Charles O'Connor Hennessy, vice-president of the New York Press Club, on board the Liner *Arizona*, sailing for Liverpool, en route to London. It was stated that his journey was being undertaken on behalf of the families of political prisoners in English prisons. Irish political prisoners were at that time undergoing penal servitude in England in connection with dynamiting and other crimes committed in the years 1883 and 1884. A reporter from the *Daily Independent* interviewed Gaffney on 26 June. He was aboard the Liner, on a stopover at Queenstown [Cobh], while mails were being transferred to a tender. Gaffney told the newspaper correspondent that he had been retained to make an independent investigation of the facts concerning the imprisonment of Dr. Thomas Gallagher, for whom he had been engaged as special counsel to journey to England. He said "he came armed with the full authority, and power of attorney from Dr. Gallagher's family to act for



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them".² Gallagher, a member of the Irish Republican Brother, was from a large family of Irish immigrants and had worked in a foundry as a teenager while studying medicine in his spare time. Around the years 1882/1883 he came from the United States and set up a bomb-making factory in Birmingham, England. It was not long before he and his team were captured. From Liverpool Gaffney travelled to London staying at 12 Craven Street on the Strand, where the Police kept him under surveillance. They noted that he had visited John Redmond at the House of Commons, the United States Legation and Messrs. Walmon & Wolff, American lawyers, in London, who represented Irish interests in the United States concerned in the release of the prisoners.

After he had finished his business in London Gaffney arrived in Limerick, in August 1893 and stayed at Cruise's Hotel. He spent his time visiting his family and on occasions had lunch at his father's residence in George's Street. On 8 October

he attended a demonstration in Dublin in memory of the late Charles Stewart Parnell. He also attended other events including an Amnesty Association demonstration in Cork.

The police believed that Gaffney had brought over a considerable sum of money for the Amnesty Association, founded in 1869 to secure the release of political prisoners. It was also said that he had received a separate sum of money for distribution amongst tenants who were suffering distress after being evicted from their homes during the Land War.³ If these statements were accurate, the report went on to state that, Gaffney did not carry out his orders. He drank freely, kept very quiet, and gave no one the opportunity to comment on his failure to distribute the money with which he was entrusted.⁴ Apparently the police had one of his companions keeping an eye on his movements.

Gaffney left Limerick on 1 November to return to America. His family and friends, members of the Amnesty Association, the Mayor and the Town Clerk saw him off at the railway station. A report in the *Limerick Leader* stated that while in Ireland, Mr. Gaffney did effective work in the national cause, and helped in a very great measure to forward the Amnesty question during his sojourn, his stay being entirely in the interests of the political prisoners.⁵ On his return to New York, Gaffney said in an interview 'Gallagher was a physical and mental wreck' and that the British government were claiming that he was sane. Although he had not secured Dr. Gallagher's release, he felt that "the shaping of political events in Ireland might result in the freeing of some, if not all, of the political prisoners in the near future".⁶ On 17 August 1894 Gaffney married Mrs. Fanny Humphreys; the marriage ceremony took place at her home in East Summit, New Jersey.⁷ Mrs. Humphreys was the widow of the late Jay Humphreys whose family owned the Humphreys Homeopathic Medicine Co., founded in 1853. Mrs. Humphreys had a son and a daughter by her first marriage, Frederick and Jayta.

The United States went to war with Spain in 1898, when an American ship was blown up in the harbour at Manila in the Philippines. A year later England was at war with the Boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Gaffney,

one of the pro-Boer leaders in America, seemed to see nothing wrong with American aggression in Cuba or the Philippines, but was strongly hostile towards England's aggression in South Africa and made his views known in the American newspapers. In one newspaper he criticised Canadian intervention on the side of Great Britain in the Boer War.⁸ In another he was quoted as saying that a committee was being formed to welcome President Kruger of the Transvaal to America. He denied the fact that some Boer sympathisers did not think it was a good idea for Kruger to come to the United States because they felt that Kruger would not be recognised as President of the Transvaal by the Washington administration and it would be detrimental to the Boer cause. Gaffney was adamant that Kruger was coming and he said "it was a mistake to say that all the friends of President Kruger are not in favour of his coming".⁹ Kruger was an elderly man and he remained in exile in Europe, where he died in 1904. Around this time Gaffney co-authored a book with Joseph Smith called *America in the Orient; The United States, Russia, France and the Anglo-Japanese Treaty*.

In August, 1902, the French Ambassador to the United States, Jules Cambon, presented Gaffney to President Loubet of France. Subsequently upon the recommendation of M. Delcasse, Minister of Foreign Affairs, President Loubet conferred upon him the Legion of Honour.

The ownership of land had been a problem in Ireland for many years. In 1902, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, George Wyndham, responded favourably to a proposal from Captain John Shawe-Taylor who called for a meeting between landlords and tenants. The Conference took place in December with Lord Dunraven, a southern Unionist, acting as chairman. Home Rule MPs John Redmond, William O'Brien and Timothy Harrington acted on behalf of the tenants. Agreement was reached on a fundamental and far-reaching system of land purchase which, in itself, brought an end to the landlord system in rural Ireland.¹⁰ This led to the Wyndham Land Act of 1903 which proved to be a great success. Gaffney had met Shawe-Taylor several months earlier in America and on 7 May 1903 he visited Shawe-Taylor at his home near Ardahan, Co. Galway. A day later both of them dined with the Earl of Dunraven, at Adare Manor, Co. Limerick.

On a trip to Italy, in early June 1903 Pope Leo XIII received Gaffney in audience. Gaffney said:

audiences up to that time had been suspended for two weeks, as his Holiness had not been in the best of health. When I was ushered into the presence of the Pope, I noticed that he was quite feeble. His voice however was strong, and his mind just as clear. Although his physical condition showed that his age was telling on him, his Holiness evinced interest in the Church in America, and spoke with enthusiasm of its great progress. His Holiness also referred admiringly to President [Theodore]

Roosevelt, and requested me to convey to him his sentiments of personal esteem." Leo died that same year.¹¹ The following year Gaffney was in Europe again, with his wife and daughter. They had hoped to return to America by way of the Trans-Siberian Railway but, due to the Russo-Japanese war [1904-1905] it was not possible. They spent the greater part of the winter in Rome, where they were received twice in private audience by the new Pope, Pius X and also by several of the Cardinals. Gaffney said that Americans that he had spoken to in Europe "were all on the side of Russia in this struggle of the white race against the yellow, and for Christian civilization against Asiatic Buddhism."

The Gaffneys arrived back in New York, on 18 May, aboard the German Lloyd liner *King Albert*.¹²

On 25 February 1905 *The New York Times* reported that T. St. Gaffney had been nominated at a Cabinet meeting, in Washington, for the post of Consul General of the United States at Dresden, in Germany. President Roosevelt wanted him to take a post in South America but Gaffney preferred the European post. He took up the position the following month and was accompanied by his wife and stepdaughter, Jayta. Around this time his stepson Frederick Humphreys was attending the U.S. Military academy at West Point, where he attained the rank of Cadet Captain. When he graduated he was assigned to the Corps of Engineers and posted to Fort Riley in Kansas. He served for a short time in Cuba before returning to Engineering School. From there he was detailed to the Signal Corps and became one of the first military pilots in the American army. On 1 August 1907, the United States Army Signals Corps established an Aeronautical Division to 'take charge of all matters pertaining to military ballooning, air machines, and all kindred objects.' Two years later, on 2 August 1909, the American army took charge of its first aircraft which had been built by the Wright Brothers; 800 pounds of bamboo, wire and cloth, and a 30 hp engine connected to propellers by bicycle chains, costing the government \$30,000.

As part of the contract the Wright brothers were to train and certify two military pilots. The pilots chosen were Lieutenants Lahm and Foulois. Luckily for Humphreys, Lahm received orders to attend an International Congress of Aeronautics in Europe. In the meantime a vacant piece of land near College Park, Maryland, was leased and cleared and a temporary hangar was built. Wilbur Wright began training Humphreys and Foulois in early October.

Just after 8 am on 26 October 1909, a mechanic held a petrol soaked cloth to the aircraft's engine intake while another cranked the engine into life. Wilbur Wright ran to a nearby shed for windowsash weights to replace his weight in the passenger seat. After a little over three hours of actual flying time, Lieutenant Humphreys

became the first military student pilot to be told he was ready to "take her up on your own." A catapult weight was dropped, and plane and pilot were assisted aloft for a three minute flight. Over the next few days Humphreys and Lahm flew practice flights together and on their own, until 5 November when they crashed the plane and American military aviation came to an abrupt and temporary end. Aircraft No. 1, as it was known was eventually donated to the Smithsonian Institution.¹³

Baron Hans Heinrich von Wolf, son of Major General Ernst von Wolf was born in Dresden in 1873. In 1901 he was a Captain with the 4th Field Regiment No. 48, Mounted Section, at Königsbrück, near Dresden. In January 1904, Germany's colonial possessions in South West Africa [Namibia] were plunged into a state of war when the Herero tribe, followed by the Nama tribe, rose up against their German masters. Von Wolf took leave from the army and joined the Schutztruppe, a German military force in South West Africa. He was wounded during the fighting and returned to Dresden to recuperate. While there he resigned from the Schutztruppe and rejoined his old army regiment the 2nd Field Artillery, Regiment 28.

On 8 April 1907 von Wolf married Jayta Humphreys and persuaded her to go to South West Africa, which he saw as a



Frederick Humphreys



Baron Hans Heinrich von Wolf



Jayta Humphreys

land of opportunity.¹⁴ They bought several farms in the Maltahohe area and the construction of their home, Duwisib Castle began in 1908. Most of the materials were imported from Germany and stonemasons were hired from Ireland, Italy and Sweden. When it was finished it had twenty two rooms and resembled some of the other German forts in Namibia.¹⁵ During its construction Hans and Jayta lived on-site, with the construction workers, in tents.

On 4 March 1913 Woodrow Wilson took office as the 28th President of the United States of America. On 30 November 1913 *The New York Times* reported that 'Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Gaffney, after spending eight years in Dresden, had been transferred to Munich. Several months later they had acquired a new apartment in the Arco Palais, Munich. A number of guests were invited to a house warming party at the apartment; these included the Papal Nuncio, Mgr. Frühwirth, Miss Marcella Kraft, the American prima donna at the Bavarian Royal Opera, and a number of well-known members of court society.¹⁶ On 28 June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie, heirs to the Austro-Hungarian throne, were assassinated while on a visit to the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo. Within six weeks the major powers of Europe including England were in conflict; while the United States remained neutral.

Mr. F.A. Hebendeen, an American citizen in Germany at the outbreak of the war, described the problems that existed for American and British subjects when war was declared :-

I was in Munich in August 1914, from Monday August 3rd to Sunday, September 6th, and I went very frequently, as did hundreds, of other Americans, to our Consulates, sometimes daily, and I often saw Mr. Gaffney, and often talked with him. It is only fairness to him to say that with several thousand Americans, and several hundred British, who were in Munich during those trying weeks when there were no cables or

letters arriving and when nearly everyone was distracted on account of not being able to communicate with home, or to draw enough money to live on, Mr. Gaffney, so far as my observation went, did his utmost to help all, and he worked from morning till night, every day, assisting the many English just as freely and fully I should say, as he did the Americans.

On the very evening of my arrival, if I recollect correctly, the British Consulate Office in Munich was closed and dismantled. A few days afterwards, this office was re-opened under the supervision, control, and protection of our Consul in the same building with and on the floor above the American Consulate offices. When the suggestion came from the Munich Police Headquarters for all Americans to wear tiny American flags-these flags, together with the Bavarian colours, were furnished and given out not only to Americans but also to the British, and thereafter they were worn by all of us, American and British. And furthermore, these little flags and ribbons were prepared and presented by Mrs. T. St. John Gaffney the wife of our Consul General, to whom we were indebted for this graceful courtesy. I could write pages of the events of those weeks, but above all, let me say that I as an American felt then, and feel now, proud of and grateful to our Consul at Munich, and know he did much to help us all, Americans and British alike.¹⁷

While war was raging in Europe Gaffney made a short visit to Limerick in early December 1914. The police in Dublin, who were keeping him under observation, noted that he had arrived from Great Britain on 6 December and had signed into the Shelbourne Hotel, signing the register as John Gaffney, U.S.A., Consul General. At 9.30 am that morning he travelled to Limerick where he stayed with his brother James who was the Crown Solicitor in Lim-

erick. Gaffney's pro-German sentiments did not go down too well with his brother James and Gaffney left soon afterwards to return to Munich.

Meanwhile, Hans and Jayta von Wolf were on their plantation in South West Africa, when Kaiser Wilhelm II had ordered the mobilisation of the German Army. Being a reserve officer, the Baron, accompanied by his wife, boarded a German steamship, on 29 July 1914, for the long journey back to Germany. On receipt of a wireless message that war had been declared, their ship put into Rio Janeiro toward the middle of August, and it was two weeks later before they found a neutral vessel travelling to Holland. While in South American waters the ship was stopped and searched by a British cruiser. Although they were many reservists on board the passenger ship and the cruiser was so full of German prisoners, the British Captain decided to let it pass. When the ship reached Vigo, in neutral Spain, Jayta bribed one of the stewards to dress up as her husband and go in the tender that was taking some of the passengers into Vigo, to ensure that the von Wolfs would avoid further searches at sea.

The Baron, with the help of another steward, was hidden in a closet while the ship was leaving the harbour. He was then spirited into his wife's room where he spent the rest of the journey lying under her berth. The steward brought in all his meals, drinks and cigarettes. Due to the subterfuge the Baroness gained a reputation as a heavy drinker and smoker. Not knowing the full story, one lady passenger spread a rumour that the Baroness had a man in her room.

As they entered the war zone British warships compelled the Dutch vessel to enter Falmouth, Cornwall, England where the authorities searched the ship for contraband and reservists. Knowing that the Baroness was a German officer's wife, naval officials called upon her several times in the course of the two weeks during which the ship was forced to remain at Falmouth, but each time they found her either washing her hair, whereupon they retreated hastily with apologies for the intrusion, or lying in her bunk pretending she was sick. The ship's passenger list, of course, showed that Capt. von Wolf had disembarked at Vigo and the Captain of the Dutch vessel, not knowing the truth, swore that he had seen Capt. von Wolf waving to his wife from the tender as it was leaving the ship. There was a further search at Dover but von Wolfs hiding place was never discovered. Upon reaching Germany Capt. von Wolf took part in the fighting at Ypres, in Belgium. After capturing seven English soldiers, single-handedly and carrying dispatches in an automobile under heavy fire, while his chauffeur and two other officers in a car following behind were killed, he was awarded the Iron Cross.¹⁸ In Munich, Gaffney told his friends how delighted he was by the valour of his son-in-law.

In November, 1913 Sir Roger Casement, an Irish nationalist, was one of the founding members of a paramilitary organisation



Sir Roger Casement drinking tea with Mr. and Mrs. St. John Gaffney and other friends in Munich (September, 1915)

known as the Irish Volunteers. The founding was in response to the Ulster Volunteer Force, founded in 1912, in Northern Ireland. The UVF were pledged to resist the province of Ulster being included in a plan to grant self-government to Ireland. The plan, which was to come into operation in 1914, would have plunged the island into civil war, even though Ireland would be still part of the British Empire. The British government put the project on hold once the conflict with Germany began. Casement was in New York trying to raise funds for the Irish Volunteers when the war in Europe started. While there, he was in contact with the German Embassy in September 1914 about the formation of an Irish Brigade composed of Irish soldiers, serving with the British army, captured by the Germans during the opening months of the war. As a result of these contacts he travelled via New York to Christina [Oslo], Norway, and from there he went to Berlin. In early January 1915, most of the Irish soldiers were gathered at a P.O.W. camp in Dietkirchen about three miles outside the German town of Limburg, where Casement addressed the men. His idea of forming an Irish Brigade in the German army did not go down very well with the men and he was manhandled and assaulted by some of them. A circular distributed to these prisoners on 9 May 1915 promised them good pay and conditions. They were also informed that they would only serve under Irish officers, and at the end of the war, providing Germany won, the men would have the opportunity to emigrate to America. The response to these inducements was that only about fifty-six men joined the Brigade, which meant it never got off of the ground.¹⁹

The United States government was not happy with Gaffney's expression of his pro-German sympathies. There were complaints that, because of his pro-German stance, he should not have been in charge of the British Consulate that he had written anti-British articles and had made statements deflecting from President Wilson's policy on the war. Gaffney had already been warned about making statements of a personal nature that might indicate a lack of American neutrality in the conflict. He was also accused of receiving a letter from a friend in America via the Austro-Hungarian Consulate in New York instead of through the United States diplomatic bag, in order to avoid the American censors.

On 24 August 1915, Gaffney attended a lunch, in Munich, at which Roger Casement was one of the guests. Soon afterwards, at the request of President Wilson, the State Department asked Gaffney to resign from his post as Consul General in Munich.²⁰ Gaffney refuted the charges and stated they were the invention of the British press. He did admit meeting Roger Casement at a dinner to honour the ex-Mayor of New York, George B. McClellan who was on a visit to Munich; Several Ambassadors and other dignitaries also attended the event.²¹ Gaffney arrived back in New York on 28 November from Holland. In a statement he said "I have never disguised the fact that my personal feelings in the war were in favour of Germany, but I did not let them interfere with my official duties in Munich, and I have ample evidence with me to support my statement. If my sympathies in this war had been pro-British I suppose I would have been promoted."²²

In London, Walter Hines Page served as American Ambassador for the whole of

the war. Page was renowned for his pro-British leanings, which ultimately led to a rift between him and President Wilson in the face of Wilson's firm policy of neutrality. He was not removed from office and as a matter of fact Page was one of the key influences in helping to bring the United States into the war against Germany.²³

Meanwhile in Germany, Casement, who was suffering from ill health, became disillusioned with the lack of recruits to the brigade he hoped to form and also the German response to the unfolding events in Ireland. Having learned that there was to be a revolt against British rule in Ireland, Casement felt that it could not succeed without the help of the German army. He decided to return to Ireland and get the rising called off.

Before he left he informed the German Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg that his friend Thomas St. John Gaffney, who had returned to Munich soon after his dismissal, would take charge of the Irish brigade. By that time the men had been moved to Zossen, a camp not far from Berlin.²⁴ The Brigade was informed that Casement had commissioned Gaffney to do everything in his power to help them during the rest of their stay in Germany. Casement also asked that the men be given some useful occupations until the war ended.²⁵ Gaffney gave a Limerick flag to Robert Monteith, an officer of the brigade travelling with Casement, and asked him to raise it on King John's Castle, if Limerick was captured.²⁶

On 4 May 1916, George McClellan was interviewed at his home in Princeton, and he recalled meeting Roger Casement in Munich where both were guests of Gaffney on several occasions:



NCOs of Casements Irish Brigade in Zossen, Germany in 1915.

From left: Cpl Peter Golden, Sgt Major Keogh, Cpl O'Mahoney, Sgt Daniel Julien Bailey (alias Beverley), Interpreter Zerhussen, Cpl Kavanagh, Cpl O'Callaghan, QMS H Quinlisk (MS18081)

On August 23rd, 1915, I went to the home of the American Consul where I was introduced to Sir Roger Casement. I met him again the following day, where we were among the guests at what has been termed the 'celebrated luncheon' at which Mr. Gaffney was the host. Over three days I saw much of Casement, wherever I went Casement was always a member of the official party, including a visit to a large German military hospital. During that time Casement did not mention or give a hint that he expected a revolt in Ireland. Casement lived outside Munich, travelling back and forth daily.

McClellan thought Casement was a dreamer and idealist but admitted that he had gained some influence in Germany due to the fact that the Kaiser had issued a proclamation regarding Irish independence, which many attributed to Casement's efforts. According to McClellan, Casement had a special passport signed either by the Kaiser or the German Chancellor. McClellan left Munich on 26 August.²⁷

Gaffney was also suffering setbacks in his personal life. His stepson Frederick Humphreys had taken his mother, Mrs. Gaffney, to court in an effort to stop a personal allowance being paid to her. When Mrs. Gaffney's first husband died the Humphreys family set aside a trust fund for her composed of stock in their patent medicine corporation, which at the time of the court case, in 1915, was valued at

\$120,000. From this fund Mrs. Gaffney received \$7,000 yearly as guardian of her daughter until the latter reached the age of 21, and \$1,500 yearly as guardian of her son until he reached the same age. Then her income would cease. The conditions of the trust further arranged that one half of the accumulated income went to her son and daughter when the son reached twenty one. When Frederick became 30 the entire estate was to be divided between him and his sister. However, in 1903, the children signed an agreement whereby they were to pay their mother \$2,000 a year each during her lifetime, but Frederick was then under age. When he reached the age designated in the will for coming into his half share of the estate, he refused to allow his mother the \$2,000 yearly allowance. He contended that she was amply provided for, and that he was legally incapable of making the agreement when under age. The court ruled in his favour.²⁸ In November 1916 the Gaffneys received news that their son-in-law, Major Hans von Wolf, who had been in the firing line for two months, had been killed on the Somme.²⁹

Meanwhile, in June 1916, the soldiers of the Irish brigade were informed that they were being re-deployed to Danzig-Troyl, in East Prussia, where they would be used as camp guards at a Russian P.O.W. Camp, or for agricultural or industrial duties.³⁰ One of the men wrote that 'our new chief, T. St. Gaffney, came to see us [off] and sang a song. In fact we had a concert in a small way as a result of the visit

of the American ex-Consul to Munich'.³¹ In Danzig members of the brigade were free to leave the camp and visit nearby villages. After a while they began to complain about conditions in the camp, such as lack of opportunities and the poor pay they received for working on farms. A few of the men were arrested for petty crimes like being drunk or for stealing. Gradually they began to lose their privileges. Eventually those who were considered to be of bad character or were causing problems were moved to other camps.³² Gaffney was kept informed of these events and even sanctioned the removal of some of the men to other camps.³³

Gaffney left Germany, for the United States in August, and remained there until early December. During the journey he was stopped and searched by the British authorities at Kirkwall, in the Orkney Islands. Gaffney said the Allies had taken great interest in his movements and while he was in New York they had confiscated bank drafts, which had been sent to Mrs. Gaffney. On his return trip to Germany he travelled via Gothenburg in Sweden, to join his family in Munich; he told a reporter, on 3 December that there was still six months to run on the lease of his house and that he would stay there until it expired.³⁴

In February 1917 a social revolution took place in Russia, which resulted in Tsar Nicholas II being replaced by a democratic provisional government. Encouraged by the events in Russia, Socialist parties in neutral countries made plans to hold an international conference in Stockholm,

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Thomas St. John Gaffney and Kaiser Wilhelm II

(Courtesy of Special Studies Library UL)

Sweden to encourage workers solidarity in an effort to bring an end to the war.³⁵ All the major belligerents involved in the fighting barred their socialist parties from attending the conference. Gaffney, though not a socialist, arrived in Stockholm towards the end of June. In a statement issued to correspondents, he said he was there to represent the cause of Irish freedom. He intended to appear before the Dutch-Scandinavian committee as the representative of Ireland.

Camille Huysmans, the Secretary of the International Congress, pointed out that Thomas O'Brien was the only authorised representative of the Irish Socialists to the conference. Gaffney, he said, "will have no standing here".³⁶ However, Gaffney did meet with Huysmans and other members of the committee and put Ireland's case before them. The conference eventually degenerated into a series of visits from visiting socialists; conflicts between reformist and revolutionary socialists stopped the conference from reaching any major policy agreement.³⁷

At 11 a.m. on the morning of 11 November 1918, after the Germans had signed an armistice, the war in Western Europe came to an end. A week later several members of the Irish Brigade went to Gaffney's villa in Munich, but he refused to help them. In February 1919 Gaffney was asked if the Germans would honour the agreement

they had made with Casement, which guaranteed that the men of the Irish Brigade would be taken to America, now that Germany had lost the war. Gaffney, although sympathetic, he replied "the Germans are not in a position to honour the agreement." Shrugging his shoulders he said "What can I do? You know that the English are here, the men must look out for themselves".³⁸ A month later the Gaffneys were given permission to enter Switzerland as they were, at that time, persona non grata in the United States. When they applied for American passports officials were adamant that Gaffney and his wife return to the United States together. Gaffney told them he had to return to Germany and sort out their affairs as their furniture and household effects, which they had gathered over the previous fifteen years, were stored in Munich. American officials relented and allowed Mrs. Gaffney to return home. She sailed via Cherbourg in April 1920. Five months later her husband followed when the American Commissioner in Berlin granted him a certificate of identity to travel. Gaffney made his way to Hamburg where he left for the United States on the S.S. *Mongolia*. When he re-applied for a passport it was given on condition that he abstain from political writing or activities while abroad.³⁹ In later years Gaffney went on to write a memoir of his experiences during the war and his time in Germany.

He also visited Kaiser Wilhelm II, on several occasions, while he was in exile in Doorn, in Holland.⁴⁰ Thomas St. John Gaffney died on 15 January 1945.

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