**Letter to Irish Times**

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[**http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/letters/kathleen-clarke-and-roger-casement-1.2401967**](http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/letters/kathleen-clarke-and-roger-casement-1.2401967)

Dear Editor,

The remarks on Roger Casement made by Kathleen Clarke (21 October) that have just been revealed in the Father Louis O'Kane archive in Armagh, were inaccurate if understandable. She was plainly not happy with his behaviour in Germany and the reason for his submarine journey to Ireland just before the Rising.

However even though before the war, Casement was seen as a leader of the separatists, that was not his choice but the fact that he was already well known where others hugged the shadows. He had been Treasurer of the Irish Volunteers and helped organise and finance the Howth gun running.

Far from being an aristocrat having left school at 15, he was however classless in the way the Irish can be seen in England. He was certainly a gentleman and a scholar despite never attending university. His relatives in Co Antrim, in both Ballymena and Ballycastle, were prosperous professionals and manufacturers although he was largely brought up in England.

A good assessment of Casement's actions in April 1916 is provided by John Devoy who had certainly sent him over as an official envoy of Clan na Gael:

"Casement admitted that he deceived the Germans into the belief that he wanted to go to take part in the fight but that his real purpose was to reach the leaders and get them to put off the rising and that if he failed in this he would "go out and die with them." He had no military knowledge whatever and his judgment in this matter was wholly valueless and his presense would have added nothing to the force of the insurgents." (*Gaelic American* 4 October 1924)

Yours faithfully

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