

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BUREAU STAMPE MILICIA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 49

ROINN  COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. ....49.....

Witness

James Clarke }  
Frank J. Brennan } Joint statement  
Henry McNally }

Identity

Members of Tullamore Coy. I.V. 1916.

Subject

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

File No: ..... S.402. ....

Form B.S.M. 2.

# ORIGINAL

Statement by \_\_\_\_\_

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BUREAU STAIRS MILITARY 1913-21

NO. W.S. 49

I the undersigned was present in the Sinn Fein Hall on Monday night 20th. March 1916, having entered the Hall about 8 o'clock accompanied by Volunteer Thomas Duggan. When I entered the Hall there was a number of Cumann-na-mBan and Irish Volunteers present, which included Capt. Peadar Bracken, I/Lt. Seamus O'Brennan, and 2/Lt. Joseph Wrafter. A few minutes after my arrival in the rooms a mob arrived and took up their positions outside. Capt. Bracken advised the Volunteers not to pass any remarks and suggested continuing with a Dance. The mob then threw bricks and stones through the windows. As the position got very serious at 9-30 Capt. Bracken and Lt. O'Brennan who were armed decided to escort the Members of Cumann-na-mBan to their homes. On the way back to the Hall several attempts were made to assault them. They found it necessary to draw their guns. After they entered the Hall the crowd became more hostile and more noisy. At about 10-15 P.M. I heard a rush being made, I went on to the landing and saw Volunteer Frank Brennan running towards the door followed by part of the mob. When he got to the door he turned around and drew a revolver and fired a shot in the air, he then entered the rooms. After his arrival more stones and bricks came through the windows. Capt Bracken fired a shot through the window. About ten minutes later Co. Inspector Crane, District Inspector Fitzgerald, Head Constable Stewart and Sergeant Ahearne entered the Hall, Inspector Crane carrying a stick and Sgt. Ahearne a Hurley. Inspector Crane asked who fired the shots and Capt. Bracken answered "We did" in self defence", Inspector Crane then said that nobody would be allowed to use firearms and ordered the Volunteers to fall in for a search. Just then a Large number of R.I.C. entered the Hall Peadar Bracken and Seamus Brennan were standing together, drew their revolvers, Capt. Bracken shouted "Volunteers dont allow yourselves to be searched". Sgt. Ahearne and Inspector Fitzgerald rushed towards Bracken confusion reigned and shots rang out. Inspector Crane rushed Seamus Brennan who had his revolver drawn, he struck the revolver in Brennan's hand and the shot went into the ground. This revolver which was a Spanish Automatic and which I saw "jammed" the previous Sunday on the Range Rifle Range when the first shot was fired from it. The Co. Inspector now fell on his knees at O'Brennan's feet, O'Brennan now had the barrell of the revolver in his hand. He struck the Inspector on the forehead and eyes with the revolver and the Inspector fell unconscious on the floor. Vol. Thomas Byrne who seized the hurley in the melee from Sgt. Ahearne struck Head Constable Stewart on the head with it and knocked him on the floor. The other Volunteers were in handgrips with the police. The Police that night succeeded in arresting Lt. Joseph Wrafter, Vol. Thomas Byrne, Vol. Joseph Morris, and Vol. Henry McNally. The other Volunteers escaped from the Hall, but on Thursday the 23rd. March the following were arrested, Volunteers Frank O'Brennan, John Delaney, Thomas Hogan, Thomas Duggan, Joseph Graham, James Clarke, John Spain, John Martin and Edward Downes. All the prisoners were lodged in Tullamore Jail, the Last three named above being released after a month owing to their age. The other prisoners were removed to Richmond Barracks Dublin, after the Rising in May 1916, where we again met Capt. Bracken and Lt. O'Brennan. We were tried collectively at a General Court Martial in the last week of May, or

ON THE FIRST week of June 1916. After the Trial we were removed to  
Kilmainham Prison. Copies of the Original Charge Sheet, which was served  
on each prisoner enclosed. The original of same is in the possession  
of Mr Alo Brennan, Cormac St., Tullamore.

Signed James Clarke Date 18/7/47

Counter Signed Frank J. Brennan  
Henry McNally

The above is substantially correct. one fact,  
however, is omitted viz that Capt. Baden Bracken  
fired at and wounded Sgt. Ahern on the  
occasion. otherwise the statement is a  
fairly accurate account of the happenings  
on the 9th inst 1916,

Signed  
Seamus McKeown

5/8/47

CHARGE SHEET

Ist. Charge.

Defence of the Realm

(Consolidation)

Regulations 1914

Regulation 42.

The accused.

1. JAMES O'BRENNAN of 29 Church Street Tullamore.  
a Clerk in P & H. EGAN'S.
2. PETER BRACKEN of Agh Road, Tullamore.  
a Stonecutter.
3. FRANK BRENNAN of Church Street, Tullamore.  
a Clerk in D.E. WILLIAM'S.
4. THOMAS BYRNE of William Street, Tullamore.  
a Carpenter
5. JOHN DELANEY, of Tullamore. a Blacksmith.
6. JAMES CLARKE, of Clontarf Road, Tullamore.  
a Hairdresser
7. JOSEPH MORRIS, of Crow Street, Tullamore.  
a Blacksmith.
8. HENRY McNALLY, of HIGH Street, Tullamore.  
of no occupation
9. THOMAS DUGGAN, of Clontarf Road, Tullamore.  
a Labourer.
10. THOMAS HOGAN, of Barrack Street, Tullamore.  
a Labourer.
11. JOSEPH GRAHAM, of Whitehall, Tullamore.  
a Labourer. and
12. Joseph RAFTER, of Harbour Street, Tullamore.  
a Stonecutter.

are charged with attempting to cause disaffection  
among the civilian population

in that they  
with the intention and for the purpose of causing  
such disaffection as aforesaid at Tullamore in  
the Month of March 1916, were Members of an  
~~XXXX~~  
Organisation called the IRISH VOLUNTEERS, the  
Members of which on the 24th. April 1916 rose in  
Open and armed rebellion in Dublin and elsewhere  
in Ireland.

2nd Charge.

Defence of Realm

(Consolidation)

Regulations, 1914

666

Regulation 42.

666

Attempting to cause disaffection among the  
civilian population.

In that they  
with the intention and for the purpose of causing  
such disaffection as aforesaid being Members of the  
said IRISH VOLUNTEERS did on the 20th March 1916 at  
Tullamore resist by force the lawful authority of  
Members of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

3rd Charge.

Defence of Realm

(Consolidation)

Regulations 1914

Regulation 32.

Did by the discharge of firearms and otherwise  
endanger the safety of members of His Majesty's  
Forces.

in that they  
at Tullamore on the 20th. March 1916, did fire at  
and otherwise injure certain members of the Royal  
Irish Constabulary.

4th Charge.

Defence of Realm

(Consolidation)

Regulations 1914

Regulation 27.

Having without lawful authority or excuse in certain  
premises under their control in William Street,  
Tullamore, on the 20th. March 1916 certain documents  
likely to cause disaffection to his Majesty.

Note: It is intended to try the twelve  
accused in the charge sheet collectively.

Official Report issued from British Military Headquarters  
in Dublin ,on Thursday 22nd. June 1916

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The following prisoners from Tullamore, viz: - James O'Brennan, Frank O'Brennan, John Delaney, Joseph Morris, Thomas Duggan, Joseph Graham, Peadar Bracken, Thomas Byrne, James Clarke, Henry McNally, Thomas Hogan and Joseph Wrafter, were tried by General Court Martial on the 26th. May. They were charged with attempted ~~of~~ murder of Co. Inspector Crane, District Inspector Fitzgerald, and Sgt. Aherne while an attempt was being made by the police to enter the Sinn Fein Hall on the 20th. March to disarm a number of men who were in possession of the Hall from which shots were being fired and Sgt. Aherne received a bullet wound which placed his life in danger for several weeks. The Prisoners after being ~~dis~~charged before the Local magistrate, were handed over to the Military and at their Court Martial which followed, Mr Healy K.C. who appeared for them, contended that they had being illegally transferred from the Civil to the Military Authorities. The General Officer Commanding in Chief has not confirmed the proceedings, and has ordered their release from Military custody.

