

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ/MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 218

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 218.

- (a) Mr. R.H. Walpole, ^{Witness} "Brookfield",
Meath Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.
- (b) Mr. Theo Fitzgerald,
4 Leeson Park Ave., Appian Way,
Ranelagh, Dublin.
Identity

Members of Irish Volunteers.

Subject

- (a) Hoisting of Flag, together with the late
Seán Hegarty, on the G.P.O. Easter Monday 1916.
- (b) Description of Flag.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

Nil

File No^s: S.187 and S.163

Form B.S.M. 2

ORIGINAL
THE FLAG.GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY,GENERAL POST OFFICE - DUBLIN - 1916.

A statement appeared in the daily papers 30th March 1948, reporting the funeral of the late Lt.Gen. Gearoid O'Sullivan. This statement was that General O'Sullivan put the Tri-colour on the G.P.O. in 1916. It gave the impression that this (the Tri-colour) was the original flag of the Irish Republican Army. This is incorrect; here are the facts:

At approx. 11.50 a.m. on April 24th 1916 (Easter Monday) some sixty men left Liberty Hall in column of fours. Commandant General James Connolly was in charge. Turning into Abbey Street at his command and later on to the General Post Office. The Command left turn, charge, was again given by James Connolly and the Post Office was taken. It was a complete surprise. Many names (prominent and otherwise come to mind) Padraig Pearse, Joe Plunkett, Sean McDermott, Tom Clarke, The O'Rahilly, Sean McGarry, J.J. Walsh, Mick Collins, M.W. O'Reilly, Roddy Connolly, Blimey O'Connor, Seamus McGowan, etc. come to mind. Some 15 minutes after the taking of the position, say 12.15 p.m., Commandant General Connolly, who was a personal friend, said "Here is a job for you". I asked "What is it". "Take this parcel, it is the flag, put it up". On the roof of the G.P.O. I met the late Sean Hegarty, R.I.P. He asked me where I was going and what was in the parcel. I told him it was the flag and that I was going to unfurl it. He asked to come and help. I said certainly and we went to the Princes St. end of the General Post Office. Here there was a flag pole and Sean Hegarty pulled the flag half way. I pulled the flag to the top and tied it. It flew all through the week and after the surrender when Louis Marie and I were walking by the Post Office it was still flying. The pole had been hit at the height of the parapet and the flag flew out over O'Connell Street. Gearoid O'Sullivan, so far as I know, was in Cabra this morning and did not come into the G.P.O. till the evening. Liam McGinley can vouch for this.

J.J. Walsh

THE FLAG, type, etc.

*my impression
is flag material
was bought
was Fitzgerald*

The Flag was a Standard made of green poplin. On it was painted Irish Republic in white and orange letters. *The flag had a fringe of Gold Lace.*
The Flag was made in Fry's Poplin Factory, Cork St., Dublin. (A.P. (Percy) Reynolds got it made. Theobald Wolfe Tone Fitzgerald (late of Brunswick St. - at present Pearse St.) painted it in Surrey House, Leinster Road, Rathmines, Dublin. This was the home of the late Countess Constance de Markievicz. The flag was on the wall of the top back bedroom for about a week previous to Easter 1916. The Flag was captured by the Royal Irish Regiment when the English were leaving. Capt. Theo Fitzgerald asked Sir Arthur Cope (Under Secretary) to return the flag. Sir Arthur promised he would, but found it was a Regimental Trophy, and could not be interfered with. When this regiment was disbanded this, with other trophies, were presented to the late King George V. I understand it is in the present King's collection. Any officer of the Royal Regiment of the period will remember this flag. It flew upside down in the Regimental Mess.

10/24/49 Robert Henry Waco's
11/4/49 Theo. Fitzgerald

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