

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILE TA 1913-21
No. **W.S. 264**



BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S....264.....

Witness

Aine, Bean E. Ceannt,
"Inis Ealga",
Dundrum,
Co. Dublin.

Identity

Wid ow of Eamonn Ceannt;
Member of Sinn Fein;
" " Cumann na mBan.

Subject

- (a) Her autobiography;
- (b) Account of period 1905-16, including
Easter Week Rising 1916;
- (c) The Surrender;
- (d) National Organisations post 1916;
- (e) Biography of Eamonn Ceannt.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

Nil

File No. **S.148.. ..**

STATEMENT BY ÁINE B. E. CEANNT.

"Inis Ealga", Dundrum, County Dublin.

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STATEMENT BY ÁINE B. E. CEANNT

"Inis Ealga", Dundrum, County Dublin.PART I

I was born in Dublin on 23rd September, 1880, and was the youngest of the four daughters of Frank O'Brennan and his wife Elizabeth (nee Butler). My father had died about four months before I was born, and so we girls knew little about him. We were told he had travelled from Tipperary to Dublin disguised as a pedlar for clocks (he had been a Fenian).

On my mother's side we were related to Most Rev. Dr. Tobias Kirby, Archbishop of Ephesus, who for over fifty years was Rector of the Irish College at Rome. He was born in Tallow, County Waterford, in January 1804, and my grandmother often told us that the night Uncle Toby was born his father was in hiding, so I presume he was a United Irishman. We appear to have got our Irish tendencies from both sides of our family.

I was educated in Dominican College, Eccles Street, and on leaving school I joined the Gaelic League - Central Branch. I had joined Cumann-na-bPiobairí - the Pipers Club - and was appointed Honorary Treasurer. The Club taught not only pipe playing, but dancing, traditional Irish singing and traditional fiddle playing. Our kindest patron was Eamonn Martyn, who defrayed the costs of the teachers.

In 1905 I married Eamonn Ceannt, and as the ceremony was in Irish I signed the Register "Proinseas Ní Braonain", which was the Irish equivalent of Frances O'Brennan. A few years later I changed my name to Áine - which was the Irish for Fanny, my home name - and since then I sign all documents Áine B. E. Ceannt, i.e., Áine Bean Éamoinn Ceannt.

In 1914 on the formation of Cumann na mBan I joined the Central Branch, the first to be established.

After the Rising of 1916 I was appointed Honorary Treasurer and later one of the four Vice-Presidents, which rank I held until I retired in 1924.

In 1917 I attended as a delegate at Count Plunkett's Convention.

In October of the same year I was co-opted a member of the Standing or Executive Committee of Sinn Féin and was elected annually until I retired in 1924.

In the summer of 1917 I was co-opted a member of the Dublin Board of Guardians. Later I was elected Deputy Vice-Chairman.

In 1918 I contested the Elections in Rathmines Urban District Council and was elected.

In 1920 I was elected Vice-Chairman of the Board, which post I held until I retired in 1922.

When the Irish Courts were established I acted as a District Justice first for the South City area and then for Rathmines and Rathgar. In this area I was appointed Co-Trustee of the funds.

During the Black and Tan regime the Labour Department appointed me to preside at Arbitrations in various parts of the country, and I succeeded in ending disputes. At this period travelling through the country was very difficult, as the engine drivers would refuse to drive a train if Military were on it, and the drivers would be dismissed and no trains ran.

In 1921 I took the place of the Secretary of the General Council of County Councils, who had been arrested, but as this

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work did not entail my giving my whole time, I undertook the task of establishing a line of communication for Sinn Féin. I was engaged on this work when the Truce was declared, so there was no further need of my services.

I attended all the meetings of the Standing Executive of Sinn Féin after the signing of the Treaty and knew all the efforts that were made to ensure that the coming Árd Fheis should reflect the opinions of the delegates. The Pact agreed to by both sides obviated the taking of a vote on the question.

I presided at a Convention of Cumann na mBan which was held in the Mansion House in February 1922 to consider the Treaty. By an overwhelming majority, 419 to 63, the members voted against it. Cumann na mBan was the first organisation to register its opinion. My home was raided on 11 occasions and many articles of historic value stolen, and on three occasions my home was "shot up".

When the Irish White Cross was established in 1920 I was placed on the Council. From 1922-1947 I acted as Secretary to the Irish White Cross Children's Relief Association (Incorporated) which looked after the interests of the child victims of the troubles in Ireland. Upwards of 1,000 children were maintained, educated and started in life from funds set aside by the Central Council of the Irish White Cross (see story of the Irish White Cross by Áine B. É. Ceannt).

During the Civil War I took the Republican side. I acted from December 1922 to April 1923 on the Sinn Féin Peace Committee, which body was endeavouring to find a means of ending the Civil War, and had many interviews with the Papal Legate, Mons. Luzio. Our efforts ceased on the issue of the "CeaseFire Dump Arms Order" in 1923.

STATEMENT BY ÁINE B. E. CEANNTPart II.

After the Parnell split there was no interest taken in politics by the young folk. There were too many divisions. The Gaelic League, where there were no politics spoken, was a mecca for everyone. The people learned that they had a country with a language; they learned the music, the dancing and the games. They were encouraged to use Irish manufactured goods, and in the competitions at the Oireachtas of the Gaelic League the competitors would not be awarded a prize unless they could guarantee that they were dressed in Irish materials.

Sinn Féin came to life in 1905 and that body advocated a policy of self-reliance, the election to Parliament of men who would not sit in the British House of Commons, but would sit in Ireland. The policy was the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland. This organisation did not take on very well throughout the country, but Dublin was a strong centre, some of the most advanced thinkers being members.

At this time there was a big move for Home Rule, and the Irish Parliamentary Party under the leadership of John Redmond firmly believed that they were about to attain it.

In 1912 Sinn Féin issued a circular to be signed by those who demanded that under the Home Rule Bill all taxes should be collected and retained by the National Government set up under that Bill.

In 1911 or probably 1912 there was a big Home Rule meeting in O'Connell Street, to support the Bill which was then before the British Parliament, and one stand at least

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was reserved for Irish speakers. I think John MacNeill spoke at it, and certainly Padraic Pearse spoke at it. Eamonn Ceannt did not speak at the Home Rule meeting, as he had more advanced ideas even then.

The Sinn Féin National Council decided when the text of the Home Rule Bill was issued not to say one word either way as they did not want to be responsible when it would be rejected, and they felt that it would never come into being.

About that period there was a Royal visit, and there was formed a body called the United National Societies Committee, which met at Sinn Féin Headquarters, No. 6 Harcourt Street. On that Committee, to my knowledge, were The O'Rahilly, Sean McDermott, Sean Fitzgibbon and Eamonn Ceannt. They would be all Sinn Féiners or members of the National Council. To one meeting P.H. Pearse came, accompanied by Tomás MacDonagh, and that was the first time that Pearse, to my knowledge, took any interest in Irish affairs outside the Gaelic League. The principal object of this Society was to organise public opinion in an endeavour to prevent the Dublin Corporation presenting a Loyal Address. In that they were not successful. The streets were decorated, flags everywhere, and this body decided to have two poles erected outside Trinity College at the commencement of Grafton Street. As Sean Fitzgibbon and Eamonn Ceannt were in the Corporation they knew how to get the road opened, so one morning the loyal people of Dublin were astounded to see across the road a flag announcing, "Thou art not conquered yet, dear Land". The result was, of course, that the poles were removed by the police. Seán McDermott, who then was not lame - he was in perfect health - consulted with Eamonn Ceannt as to what they should do, and Sean said he would go into College Street Police Station and claim the poles as his property. The

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authorities offered to give him the poles if he would sign a receipt for them. Séan was rather in a fix, he did not know what to do, so he looked at the notepaper that was presented to him, saw that it was foreign, and his reply to them was, "I would not write on foreign notepaper". He left as soon as he could. I do not know what happened to the poles afterwards.

There seemed to be no hope of stopping the Royal celebrations, so the extreme party decided to get out of Dublin, and they organised a pilgrimage to Wolfe Tone's grave in Bodenstown. A great number of people went there. On the return journey the train was held up between Inchicore and Kingsbridge. We were at least half an hour there, and when some of the party said they would leave the carriage Peadar Doyle, who was one of those present, advised them not to do so as very heavy penalties would be attached. The explanation of the hold-up was that the Royal party were visiting Steevens' Hospital, and they did not wish to unload the Rebels in case they might clash. On the journey home along the Quays some of the men were attacked by soldiers' wives.

During the Royal visit this same body of men decided to hold a protest meeting, and they successfully carried this through in Foster Place. They were not arrested. The only incident that occurred was that Miss Helena Molony, when the brakes were driving away, threw a stone at an illuminated portrait of the King which was displayed outside Yeate's in Grafton Street, and, of course, she was arrested. She got the option of a fine, which she refused to pay, but somebody paid it for her. She was let out - as a matter of fact she was put out.

At this time in Ireland the advanced thinkers were in the minority, and they availed of every opportunity to show their disloyalty. For instance, at a concert held by the ^{Catholic A.C.C.} Boys'

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Brigade in the Rotunda, the head of the Brigade, the late Peter Tierney, had invited Lord Aberdeen, the British Viceroy, to be present. Some of the men, Seán Fitzgibbon, Eamonn Ceannt, and, I think, Peadar Harding, went down to the concert with the avowed intention of protesting against the presence of the Royal representative, Lord Aberdeen, at the concert. These men were, of course, ejected. They would have wished to be arrested in order to get some publicity, but they were just detained outside the Rotunda under the guard of a policeman until Lord Aberdeen left. I think Lady Aberdeen was there also but I am not sure.

On 12/12/12 there appears an entry in Eamonn Ceannt's diary - "Is iongantach an lá é seo, is iongantach an lá dom-sa freisin é". My reading of that entry is that on that date Eamonn Ceannt joined the I.R.B.

An Aonach or sale of Irish manufactured goods was being held in that week, and Eamonn Ceannt was a member of the Committee organising it. The O'Rahilly, who owned a motor car, invited Ceannt outside as he said to meet a Russian revolutionary. When Ceannt came out he found Seán McDermott out from hospital. He had grown a beard and was lame. He was lame for life.

Early in the spring of 1913 the Banba Rifle Club was formed, and these men of the I.R.B., I take it, were learning to shoot. A short while after this, probably about February or March, at a meeting of the National Council of Sinn Féin - Mr. Griffith happened to be absent on that night - Eamonn Ceannt proposed and Paidín O'Keefe seconded, "It is the duty of every Irishman to possess a knowledge of arms". He suggested this resolution as the Firearms Act had just lapsed and he thought it was right to let the fact be made public. The Rifle Club used carry out rifle practices at the

Greenmount Oil Company place in Harolds Cross. Mr. Griffith was very indignant over this resolution, and said, when speaking to O'Rahilly, that he wanted no tinpike soldiers. O'Rahilly replied that he need not be afraid, that evidently he did not know Ceannt well, but that anything he undertook he meant to do, and that he was already learning to shoot. Griffith was perfectly satisfied then.

Clubs, probably run under the auspices of the I.R.B. and known as Freedom Clubs, were formed about this period. I think Hobson had something to do with these Clubs. They had one in Dolphinsbarn, where I attended a meeting. Hobson read a paper here, "Ireland a Nation". This was a very learned paper undoubtedly, but not suitable for the audience. This Dolphinsbarn Club lasted for some time, and associated with it was a Mr. Cassidy, who was the manager of the Dolphinsbarn Brick Company. He was a North of Ireland man, I think.

Early in 1913 the Ulster Volunteers, also known as the Carson Volunteers, were formed with the avowed intention of holding Ulster for the British. A document called "The Ulster Covenant" was produced, and anyone subscribing to these ideals was invited to sign it. The women were organised, as were the men. Great publicity was given to them.

On 26th April a cargo of guns was run into Larne, County Antrim, without any opposition. The Home Rule Bill was the burning question at the time, and the Ulster Volunteers formed in the North were pledged to resist the operation of this movement. The officers of the British garrison at the Curragh, County Kildare, mutinied and said that if they were transferred to Ulster to enforce Home Rule they would refuse to go. No genuine disciplinary measure was taken against them. Such was the position in this period that John MacNeill, an Ulsterman himself, wrote to the "Claidheamh Soluis"

recommending the rest of Ireland to follow the example of their fellow countrymen in the North and form Volunteers. I think he wrote that letter on his own initiative and it came as a bombshell. This letter was followed by others on similar lines.

In the summer of that year, 1913, the big sympathetic general strike occurred in Dublin. It was the biggest strike ever seen in Dublin, and there were many casualties.

This was the atmosphere in November, 1913, when on the tenth of that month Eamonn Ceannt received an invitation from The O'Rahilly to meet John MacNeill and others in Wynne's Hotel on 14th November. It was at this meeting that the formation of the Irish Volunteers was decided upon. Eamonn Ceannt was very methodical and correct as to keeping time, but he returned home that night late for dinner. He found the Fire Brigade endeavouring to quench a fire in the yard next door to his premises. This was a malicious fire, six hundred tons of hay being set alight, owing to the fact that the carters were on strike and the owner of the hay was a master carrier.

On 25th November, 1913, a public meeting was called for the Rotunda Rink, the object being to form Volunteers. Overflow meetings were addressed by Seán McDermott and others. There was a special platform reserved for the ladies. The numbers of men attending were quite unexpected and it was evident that the physical force movement appealed to the manhood of Ireland, where the more constitutional movement of Sinn Féin, although revolutionary in character, did not make the same appeal. John MacNeill appeared on the platform and opened the meeting with the following words, "Tosnuighimid anois, in ainm Dé". Then he said, "We will begin now, in the Name of God". All went well, and the various speakers were enthusiastically received until Mr. Larry Kettle stood up to speak. He was then a member of the Provisional Committee of

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the Volunteers, but, owing to the general strike in Dublin, his father, a farmer, happened to be involved in the dispute with his workers and some of the audience objected to Mr. Kettle. A few shots were fired, but there was really no panic and Captain White went on to the platform and addressed the meeting. It had been agreed that members of the most advanced party, who might have come under the notice of Dublin Castle, should not be prominent at the meeting, and so Eamonn Ceannt, Seán Fitzgibbon and others did not address the meeting.

It having been decided that the Volunteers should be formed, the next step was to organise, and this was undertaken at once. 41 York Street was chosen as a centre for enrolment and subsequently other centres, such as Larkfield, Kimmage, were found for the different Battalions.

Shortly after the formation of the Irish Volunteers, P.H. Pearse suggested that a society called "Buachaillí na hÉireann" should be formed, to get together the sons of Volunteers. Undoubtedly the Fianna Éireann were in existence, but, just as the people had not flocked into Sinn Féin similarly only the most extreme families had enrolled their sons in the Fianna. With the influx of thousands into the Irish Volunteers, P.H. Pearse believed that the sons of these men would join Buachaillí na hÉireann.

A small committee, consisting of Mrs. Tom Clark, Mr. Kerry Reddin and myself, undertook to launch this movement. We were promised that the Fianna would not object to the existence of this body and that they would give us every help. We progressed sufficiently far to hold one large meeting in the national schools in Sheriff Street, and this meeting was addressed by P.H. Pearse.

I had occasion to speak to Liam Mellows, who was on the Executive of the Fianna as well as on the Executive of the

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Irish Volunteers, on some points of organisation and he was quite willing to help. Unfortunately, the other members of the Fianna were not satisfied that this organisation should exist, and, sooner than have trouble or dissension, the idea of Buachaillí na hÉireann was abandoned.

In March, 1914, John Redmond, leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party, asked for four nominees on the Executive Committee of the Volunteers. This was refused. On 9th May, 1914, a circular, private and confidential, was issued by the Ancient Order of Hibernians recommending their members to join the Volunteers. Following this circular, Mr. Redmond demanded twenty-five representatives on the Provisional Committee. On 16th June, 1914, the Provisional Committee met. At this meeting the twenty-five nominees were accepted, but nine dissented from this. They were Eamonn Ceannt, M.J. Judge, Con Colbert, John Fitzgibbon, Eamonn Martyn, P.H. Pearse, Sean McDermott, Piaras Beaslai and Liam Mellows. The nine dissentients wrote to the Press advising the men not to leave the Volunteer ranks, to hold fast and to continue to attend their drill centres. Mr. MacNeill also wrote to the Press explaining his position.

A new Executive was formed and very few of the old Provisional Committee were put on it.

In July, 1914, I was informed that on 25th July a cargo of guns was to come in at Kilcoole, County Wicklow, and all arrangements had been made to receive them. That afternoon Eamonn Ceannt was informed, while adjudicating at the Oireachta Piping Competitions, that the boat could not travel over. However, as the cars had been engaged the Volunteers had to utilise them and go joy-riding round the countryside so as not evoke suspicion.

On Sunday, 26th July, the Howth gun-running took place.

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The guns having been distributed, the men started on the return journey, the ammunition being sent by another route. When they reached Howth Road the men were intercepted by the police, supported by the military. Many of the men were being bayoneted so Eamonn Ceannt fired from his Mauser and injured one soldier, Lance-Corporal Finney, in the ankle. This shot caused the soldiers to turn and run, as Darrell Figgis said it was the first time in his life he saw the British soldiers running away. The Volunteers dispersed, retaining their guns. On the way back to the city the soldiers, the King's Own Scottish Borderers, fired on the people at Bachelor's Walk, killing four and wounding fifty. This enraged the population, with the result that the Regiment had to be confined to barracks until it was got out of the country. An enquiry into the whole incident was held, and many of the police who had refused to disarm the Volunteers, knowing that the Ulster Volunteers had been permitted to receive their guns, were suspended. They were subsequently reinstated.

The funeral of the victims of the Bachelor's Walk tragedy was attended by almost everyone in Dublin, and the sympathy that it evoked helped the Volunteers' cause.

On Saturday, 2nd August, 1914, a second cargo of guns was successfully run in at Kilcoole, and on Monday, 4th August, war between England and Germany was declared.

The Executive of the Volunteers was now in the hands of the Redmond nominees, and the Home Rule Bill having been shelved until after the war, Mr. Redmond approached Mr. MacNeill and advocated that the Irish Volunteers be given their own flag, uniform, etc., and be utilised to defend Ireland from the foreign enemy. There were numerous recruiting meetings being held all over the country, and members of the new Executive of the Irish Volunteers were

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speaking on the platforms. At those meetings if a person made even a comment on anything said he was arrested under the Defence of the Realm Act, popularly known as "D.O.R.A."

On 24th September, 1914, a statement was issued from Volunteer Headquarters at 41 Kildare Street, Dublin, which said "Having thus disregarded the Irish Volunteers and their solemn engagements, Mr. Redmond is no longer entitled through his nominees to any place in the administration and guidance of the Irish Volunteers organisation. Those who, by virtue of Mr. Redmond's nomination, have hitherto been admitted to act on the Provisional Committee accordingly cease forthwith to belong to that body, and from this date until the holding of the Irish Volunteers Convention the Provisional Committee consists of those only whom it comprised before the admission of Mr. Redmond's nominees". It was decided to hold a Convention of the Irish Volunteers. Such a Convention was held on 25th October, 1914, in the Abbey Theatre.

Subsequent to this, Redmond's body formed the National Volunteers and he promised to arm these men, and so far kept his promise that a big cargo of Italian rifles was landed. Unfortunately there was no ammunition available for these rifles or ever likely to be available. The rifles were obsolete. Eamonn Ceannt examined one of those rifles which came into his possession through a raid organised by Mr. Joseph McGrath. It was one of a consignment of guns which was being transferred from Harold's Cross to Inchicore for an inspection of the National Volunteers.

At this period Eamonn Ceannt was Director of Communication throughout the thirty-two Counties. He had previously initiated the Volunteer post, An P.G., i.e., "An Post Gaelach". Various houses offered to be reception depots for letters. The sender would leave the letter and a penny, the current postage, at one of these depots, and the postman would collect

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the letters and money and deliver all letters within a certain radius of Dublin. If he failed to deliver a letter, he returned it.

At Easter, 1915, the Irish Volunteers held night manoeuvres in North County Dublin; the area included Ashbourne, where a fight took place in 1916.

In January, 1916, the Military Council started to meet in Eamonn Ceannt's house in Dolphinsbarn. Only on the first occasion did I meet the Council, and I then met Clarke, McDermott and Pearse. I have no recollection of meeting Joe Plunkett at that meeting, although he was probably there.

Shortly after that meeting James Connolly disappeared. I remember - I would say it would be about the end of the month of January or February, pay time in the Corporation - saying to Eamonn jocosely, "Give me some money before the Rebellion starts". Eamonn replied, "It may start sooner than you expect". Then he added, "James Connolly has disappeared". Connolly had instructed his next-in-command that if at any time he disappeared and did not turn up within three days the Citizen Army was to go out and take Dublin Castle. Eamonn said, "We can't let the Citizen Army go out alone, if they go out we must go with them". Three of us are going to see Mallin to ask him to hold his hand". I think Eamonn said McDermott was one, but I am not sure of the names of the three. Eamonn said, "I am going now to see what was the result of the deputation that went over to the Citizen Army, asking them to wait a few days. In the meantime I have ordered all the officers of the Fourth Battalion to report here, and on my return it will be either to give them orders for ordinary manoeuvres, if the situation has cleared, or, alternatively, to tell them their places for the fight". When he returned, at about half-past ten, he dismissed the men rather quickly and told me that Connolly had re-appeared.

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At the next meeting of the Military Council, held at our house, Connolly was present and was a member of that body from that day forward.

On 17th March, 1916, the Dublin Battalions, up to two thousand strong, were inspected by Eoin MacNeill at College Green. They had assembled at St. Michael's and John's Church for a special military Mass at nine o'clock. On this occasion the honour of serving the Mass and of providing the Guard of Honour for presenting arms at the Elevation was given to the Fourth Battalion under Commandant Ceannt. The Volunteers, with rifles and fixed bayonets, swung into College Green from O'Connell Street and formed a hollow square. I viewed the scene from the top of a tram-car at where King Billy's statue used to stand, and below me, on the street, I noticed, as an interested spectator, Viscount Powerscourt. I mention this because immediately after the Rising in 1916 Viscount Powerscourt was appointed Provost Marshal.

After the inspection the various Battalions returned to their headquarters. The Fourth Battalion marched to Dolphinsbarn where they formed up, were addressed by their Commandant, and sang the Soldiers Song before being dismissed. That, I believe, was the last appearance of the Dublin Brigade on the streets of Dublin.

As the Irish in England were liable to be conscripted, many patriotic Irishmen left and came over to Ireland. Amongst those who came were Michael Collins, the two Nunans, Sean and Ernie, the four King brothers, and others. These men were housed at Larkfield, Kimmage, which was the Headquarters of the Fourth Battalion. They remained there until the Rising. Members of Cumann na mBan were requested to obtain old tweed costumes to be converted into sleeping bags

for the men. Friends also contributed such things as baskets of eggs and other articles to help in the catering.

When Eamonn Ceannt told me that the Rising was to be on Easter Sunday he told me that Thomas MacDonagh, who was a Commandant, had only been informed three weeks previously that the Rising was to take place, and that he seemed surprised but very enthusiastic. I cannot say if MacDonagh was a member of the Military Council for the three weeks prior to the Rising. I have no recollection of his being at a meeting of that body in my house, but they may have met elsewhere.

About this period there was in circulation for about six weeks a very advanced paper, written all in Irish and entitled "An Barr Buadh". Eamonn Ceannt contributed to nearly every copy of this, and I think Pearse was Editor.

During the week before Holy Week there were several alarms in the city. On one occasion a ceilidhe was in progress and word came to the men that there was to be a raid for arms, I believe at the place where the arms were stored. The Volunteers immediately left the hall and stood on guard until the danger passed. I had hoped to go to this ceilidhe, but my husband refused to go as he did not wish to be at a social event when there was any likelihood of arms being seized by the police or military.

On Palm Sunday Eamonn returned from a meeting of the Volunteers, probably an Executive meeting, which had been held in the city. He told me that they had been discussing the posts which each of them should hold when the fight was over. "Personally", he added, "I was very pleased that I was chosen to be Minister for War". I asked him, "What of the others?" and although I think he said either MacDonagh or Pearse was to be Minister for Education I am not positive, as I really did not take the matter seriously. I remember he did not make

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any reference to a post for Eamonn de Valera, who was a Commandant, and I asked, "What of de Valera?". He replied, "Oh, he says he'll go down in the fight, whereas Tomás MacDonagh says that he will come through, as he always falls on his feet". The other posts do not come to my memory in any way, not even the position of President.

I asked Eamonn how long the fighting would last, and he replied, "If we last more than a month we will have won". It must be understood that at this period I had no knowledge whatsoever of the date of the intended Rising, nor at any time did I visualise the Volunteers going out to attack. My idea was that they would defend.

That same night I had received an invitation from George Irvine, Captain of "B" Company, Fourth Battalion, to a ceillidhe which was to be held on Low Sunday, 30th April. Having been denied an evening at one ceillidhe, I said to my husband, "We'll go to that at any rate". He looked at the card and merely said, "Perhaps".

About the middle of February, 1916, Liam Mellows had been arrested under D.O.R.A. He was placed in Arbour Hill barracks and ordered to be deported and to reside in England in a restricted area. The Volunteers were determined to get Liam Mellows back to Ireland, and I was deputed to see Mrs. Mellows every other day on her return from Arbour Hill and report as to whether Liam was still in the country. It was arranged that he would reside with relatives in England, and immediately he left Ireland the Volunteers intended to act. About 14th or 15th April his brother, Barney, was sent over to visit Liam. When he reached the house where Liam was staying they both retired to Liam's bedroom and immediately a change of clothes was effected. In the clothes was a ticket for Ireland, with full instructions

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what to do. Liam reached Ireland safely, although the English friends were terrified when they learned of the substitution that had taken place. Barney decided he might as well go home too, and he arrived back in Ireland by a different route.

I was asked to prepare a bed for Liam, and this I did, but I was not called on for my hospitality, as Frank Fahy took Liam in to his house in Cunningham Road.

The problem now was to keep Liam in hiding until he would be required.

On Monday of Holy Week Eamonn informed me that he was taking a week's holiday from his office as he did not wish to be caught like a rat in a trap. He suggested that I and our little son, Rónán, should accompany him to St. Enda's.

(At the risk of repetition I include at this stage an extract, amended slightly, from an article written by me and published in "The Leader" of 20th April, 1946).

Arrived at St. Enda's, now closed for the holidays, we were admitted and sent out to the garden at the rear. It was a glorious morning, sun shining, birds singing, fruit trees in full blossom, and everything promising peace and plenty. In the distance, coming through a vista of trees, I noticed a young cleric approaching. He drew near, all smiles, and soon I was clasping the hand of Liam Mellows disguised as a priest. He shook hands with Rónán, and I said to the child, "An aithnigheann tú é?" and he promptly replied, "Aithnighim". Then Mrs. Pearse and Pat joined us, and while the men chatted, she and I admired the green-houses, and the tree known as Sarah Curran's tree. Soon lunch was announced, and we went into the dining-room.

There were present at that meal: Mrs. Pearse, her

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daughter, Maggie, her two sons, Pat and Willie, Liam Mellows, Eamonn, Rónán and myself. We had a pleasant lunch, the conversation roaming from books to music, but with no word of the impending fight. After lunch, Rónán and I were sent out to wait in the front grounds, and we bade goodbye to our hostess and hosts. I never saw the two Pearse men again.

That wait in the grounds seemed an eternity, but at last Eamonn appeared and we started for home. It was then I got my instructions, and realised that the visit was in reality a business one. I was told that when it was dark I was to accompany Mrs. Mellows to St. Enda's so that she might bid farewell to Liam who, next day, was being moved to Galway.

That night as we started out, I carried a basket ostensibly for eggs, which I occasionally bought at the lodge of the College, and to ensure we were not followed, we changed trams four or five times.

We arrived safely about 9.30. The house was in complete darkness and although we knocked, we could not gain admission. Louder and louder our knocking grew, until I feared the noise would bring every policeman in Rathfarnham around us. At length an upstairs window opened, and two small boys commenced to throw things at us. I recognised one small red-headed lad, and I asked him to tell Mrs. Pearse I was at the door, but he only jeered. My patience was nearly exhausted, and so I said: "I know you..... and unless you immediately get Mrs. Pearse I'll get you the worst caning you ever got in your life". He disappeared and soon footsteps approached, and we were admitted. Even then no light was shown, and while Mrs. Mellows advanced to a back room, I sat in the hall in inky darkness. The next time Liam and his mother met was on his return five years later (in 1921) from U.S.A.

On Tuesday, Eamonn asked me for directions to reach Mount Pleasant Square as he wished to get in touch with Seán Fitzgibbon who, I learned later, was being sent South to arrange the distribution of the guns expected to arrive on the "Aud" from Germany. He travelled South next day. On his return from Rathmines, Eamonn told me of the Secret Document which, he stated, Alderman Tom Kelly would read at the meeting of the Corporation next day, thereby giving publicity to it. The genuineness of this document Eamonn never doubted.

That night as we were retiring, he unearthed his Mauser pistol and placed it beside his bed ready for use, remarking: "We are living in stirring times". The Volunteers had already been ordered to defend their guns with their lives, and so he was prepared. As I silently watched him, he said: "If we live through this night we will have drawn first blood". When I awoke next morning I thanked God that the night had passed peacefully.

Wednesday was an exceptionally wet day, Eamonn left home early, and I went into the city to buy stores for the knapsack in preparation for the coming manoeuvres. I remember as I went along College Green passing Mrs. Sheehy Skeffington accompanied by her little son, Owen, who was tripping beside her all unaware of the tragedy which, within a week, would overtake him.

Thursday was a busy day in Volunteer circles. In the early afternoon an important meeting was held in Woodstown House, Dundrum, where John MacNeill lived in the same house as his brother, James. Eamonn told me that he had walked back from Dundrum with Thomas MacDonagh, who remarked:

^{W.C.}
 Remember "A. Olson" is the evil genius of the Volunteers
 and if we could separate John MacNeill from his
 influence all would be well".

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It was evident that the leaders were endeavouring to induce John MacNeill to agree to the coming fight, and it had taken some persuasion. Another meeting of Volunteers was held in the city later, and then from about eight o'clock onwards several people called to our house and saw Eamonn. I learned later that these were couriers being sent down the country with instructions for the coming Rising. Con Keating, the wireless operator, who was subsequently drowned in the River Laune, and another man had been to the house some days before, and received from Eamonn a lamp which was to be used to signal to the "Aud". I believe they also travelled South on Thursday. They also got a ship's V/S (Visual Signalling) lamp, which they brought to Tralee. This latter lamp was in the care of the Volunteers, and was buried by them when the boat failed to get in. About the year 1918 this lamp was presented to me when I went down to Tralee to speak at a meeting. The Volunteers had resurrected it, painted it in the Republican colours, and put photographs of Roger Casement and Eamonn Ceannt on it beneath crossed flags. This lamp showed a green light. Unfortunately I retained the lamp in my house and it was stolen during a very bad raid by the Auxiliaries in December, 1920.

At breakfast on Good Friday morning, I drew Eamonn's attention to a report in the paper of the arrival of a collapsible boat off Kerry, and the arrest of a strange man. He made no comment, but during the three o'clock Devotions I saw a Volunteer enter the church and look around until he saw Eamonn, to whom he whispered something and then left.

The evening was fine and we went for a walk in the Phoenix Park. We sat on a seat overlooking the river, our backs to the Magazine Fort, and I noticed that there was a continuous stream of lorries leaving the Magazine; evidently the Fort was being emptied of ammunition. Eamonn was rather

silent; the only remark I remember him making was, "You can almost over-organise things".

On Saturday he decided we ought to go to Dalkey to visit a friend, whom he intended to ask for the loan of field glasses. On the way out on the top of the tram he whispered to me: "The man who landed in Kerry was Roger Casement and the man who got away was Monteith. If they catch Monteith they'll hang him". We stayed for lunch at Dalkey but nothing would persuade Eamonn to remain later than four o'clock. He said he had to be somewhere at a definite time and would be forced to take a taxi if we remained, so we returned to the city.

It was on that Saturday night, about six o'clock, that Eamonn told me the news. He said they would strike next day, and his headquarters would be the South Dublin Union. "There are rumours of a secret session of the British Parliament", he added, "and that means either peace with the Liberals in power or Conscription. We Volunteers, an armed body, could not let this opportunity pass without striking a blow while England is at war. We would be a disgrace to our generation, and so we strike tomorrow at six o'clock. I shall not sleep at home to-night in case of accidents, but will stay with John Doherty at James' Terrace". After tea he wrote letters to his two brothers, to be delivered next day by the Volunteer Post service, and then went out to Confession.

Eamonn had stated that he wished to get a flag of Orange, White and Green. My sister, Lily O'Brennan, purchased the material, bunting, at Burgh Quay, Dublin, and brought it to Mrs. Mellows, who made the flag. Came Easter Saturday and the Easter Water, and the flag was brought in and sprinkled with Easter Water.

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Late on Easter Saturday Mr. Phil Cosgrave, who, I believe, was Battalion Quartermaster, was leaving our house, and my husband asked me to give him the flag. This I did, and my husband said to Mr. Cosgrave, "Be sure and turn out the green side". I presume he meant that he did not wish Mr. Cosgrave to be held up carrying a Republican flag.

During the week a note came to me from my husband, in which he said, "D'Árduigh mé bratach na hÉireann indiu. Mé féin do rinneadh é". I am not sure whether it was the flag we had made that was hoisted, or something else.

I still have portions of the bunting and the needle which made the flag.

Eamonn left home for Doherty's about ten o'clock, and I then told my sister, Lily, the facts.

I had asked Eamonn if the men knew the position, and he told me that the Volunteers, certainly his Battalion, had been warned repeatedly that some day they would go out not to return. "In the present case", he said, "we could not risk telling the men that the fight will be on tomorrow, as at the time of the Fenian Rising as soon as the men were told about it they thronged the churches for Confession, and the authorities, knowing a lot of the men, suspected that something was going to happen and immediately took action". I imagine that at the last moment the officers were told what positions they would occupy.

Lily O'Brennan, a member of the Central Branch, Cumann na mBan, had been mobilised to attend on Sunday, and she was ready. My orders had been to take my mother and the child to the home of Mrs. Cathal Brugha who had kindly placed rooms at my disposal, and where I had already sent clothes and food,

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Eamonn remarking: "Our house will be in the line of fire". I retired to bed about twelve o'clock, and at two o'clock I was awakened by a knocking at the hall door. I opened a window and looked out, and a voice in Irish asked for Eamonn. Hearing Irish I was reassured, and came down to find Cathal Brugha. I told him where he would locate Eamonn, and without another word he went away. Within half an hour Eamonn returned with all his equipment, guns, ammunition, etc., which he had brought with him. I was astounded, but he merely remarked: "MacNeill has ruined us - he has stopped the Rising". Keyed up as I was for the fight, I started to make suggestions, but Eamonn replied: "The countermanding order is already in the hands of the paper. I am off now to see if anything can be done".

It was five a.m. when he returned home and said he had failed to contact anyone. His first call had been to O'Kelly's but, in his excitement, Cathal had omitted to say at which O'Kelly's John MacNeill had held his meeting, so Eamonn drew a blank. He had next gone to Liberty Hall, where James Connolly was, but the armed guard refused to waken Connolly. The Citizen Army had been brought into barracks on Saturday night, and the men said they dare not disturb Connolly. Eamonn decided that if Connolly knew the position he would not be asleep if he thought there was work to be done, so he left. His next move had been to call at the Metropole Hotel, where Joe Plunkett was staying. No better luck met him here as Plunkett had left word he was not to be disturbed until 9 a.m., so Eamonn came home. I gave him some hot milk and he went up to his room. The Angelus was striking as he lay down, and he said: "If I sleep now I would sleep on dynamite", and he slept. It was not for long, however. About seven o'clock a courier arrived with a letter from Liberty Hall. I went quietly into a bedroom and as Eamonn was asleep I decided not to waken him,

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as I knew he would have serious decisions to make during the day. I placed the letter beside his bed where he would see it the moment he opened his eyes. Before eight o'clock Mrs. Mellows called on her way to Mass, and I told her we were in great trouble and to pray hard. 8.30 saw Seamus Murphy (Captain "A" Company, 4th Battalion) and he wanted to see the Commandant. I inquired if the matter was important as the Commandant had been out most of the night. He replied it was important and so I wakened Eamonn. He was down within two minutes, the letter in his hand, and, having disposed of Seamus, asked how long the dispatch was in the house. When I told him over an hour he immediately took his bicycle, and without waiting for breakfast or even donning collar and tie, departed for Liberty Hall.

As the morning wore on, our house was besieged by the men of the 4th Battalion seeking an explanation of the countermanding order they had just read in the morning's paper. I could give them no information, merely saying the Commandant had been called out early, but suggesting they wait. Soon our drawing-room was uncomfortably filled and the bicycles were stacked four deep in the front garden. To pass the time they asked Captain Douglas French Mullen, who was a fine pianist, to play for them, which he did - and amongst the airs he chose was "The Dead March".

It must have been one o'clock before Eamonn returned and met the men. He instructed them not to leave the city and if they left home even for a walk they were to state where they could be got at short notice. After dinner Eamonn suggested that we go as far as Howth. I remember him standing silently staring at the Pier where two years previously the famous gun-running had taken place.

Home again and tea over, Eamonn said he wanted to use

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the front room. Having seen that the fire was burning brightly I left him for a while. Then I went in and asked if I could help him. He at once said "Yes", and pushed towards me a bundle of Mobilisation Orders to fill up.

I asked what I was to insert and he replied: "Oh, I forgot to tell you we strike tomorrow - write in Emerald Square 11 o'clock". My task completed, I was next sent to MacCarthy's house nearby, to ask for couriers. On my way I met a young woman, Mrs. Keegan, who was going to Evening Devotions. She clutched me and said: "Oh, what does it mean - Ned got orders to stay near home and he wouldn't even come for a walk with us". I replied: "Pray hard, Millie, there is a lot of trouble". I dared not tell her that her husband was being mobilised for the morrow. Next day her husband, Eamonn Keegan, was shot through the lung while in action in the South Dublin Union. He rallied from the wound and although he lived for years he never really recovered.

Arrived at MacCarthy's, I saw Dan and gave my message. "That will be all right", he answered, "we are Standing To, so to speak, and having a bit of a sing-song, the men will be over at once". I had scarcely reached home when the couriers arrived.

Eamonn slept at home that night, remarking: "I may thank John MacNeill that I can sleep in my own house - the cancelling of the manoeuvres will lead the British to believe that everything is all right".

We discussed the effect of the countermanding order, and Eamonn said that the Volunteers would have agreed to majority rule, but that the order had been issued to the Press without their knowledge and without their having been consulted,

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therefore they felt that they should go ahead with their plans. I understood from Eamonn that at first John MacNeill was tardy about agreeing to the Rising. He then agreed and orders were issued throughout the country. He was inclined to wobble again, but Thomas MacDonagh said to Eamonn, when coming back from the meeting in Dundrum on Thursday, "I believe MacNeill will be all right if we can keep him away from" (Mrs. Ceannt does not wish to disclose the name of this person.) He added, "As soon as we start I feel certain that MacNeill will be with us".

Unfortunately the cancellation order followed on Saturday night, and the Council was forced to go ahead after their meeting in Liberty Hall on Easter Sunday.

In justification, possibly, of Eoin MacNeill's action it must be recorded that the messenger who had been sent down to superintend the distribution of the guns which were to arrive on the "Aud" had returned hastily to Dublin, and reported to Mr. MacNeill that the "Aud" carrying the guns had been scuttled. MacNeill hurriedly called together some sympathisers with the Movement, but I would not put them down as prominent Volunteers. In his haste to prevent, as he thought, a failure, he omitted to call the strong men into consultation.

After the order cancelling the manoeuvres had actually been issued to the Press, as far as I know, Tomás MacDonagh was summoned to give his opinion on the matter. I was informed that when Mr. MacNeill asked Commandant MacDonagh for his opinion, MacDonagh looked round the room and replied, "I owe no counsel to these men", and left the house. He then sought Cathal Brugha, who lived in the neighbourhood, and I understand that Cathal interviewed MacNeill and was very angry with him. He, Cathal, then made his way to

Eamonn's house and told him what had occurred. In his excitement he omitted to say which O'Kelly's house was the venue for the meeting.

Easter Monday morning saw us up early, and soon there was a constant stream of men to the house. I remember seeing Bertie (Barney) Mellows who, I afterwards heard, was on the Magazine Fort attack. Eamonn had put on his uniform and did not wish to be seen from the street, so I acted as door-keeper. When the last man had gone Eamonn said he must have a taxi to take an urgent message to Rathfarnham. This was not easy to obtain as, being a bank holiday, all the shops were closed and in those times there were no public telephone booths. However, a local shop-keeper kindly allowed me to use his 'phone and the taxi came and delivered the message.

My mother had been to eight o'clock Mass, and on her return I told her she would have to leave home after breakfast and come with me and Rónán to another house. She flatly refused to move, making all kinds of excuses about her "things" not being ready. I replied that her clothes had gone before her to the other house. I did not waste much time arguing, but let her enjoy her breakfast.

Soon it was time for my sister, Lily, to leave, and as she had got no mobilisation order from her own (Central) Branch she decided to join up with the Inghiní Branch, who were attached to the 4th Battalion and were forming up at Weaver Square. Bidding her goodbye and wishing her good luck, we saw her go off complete with haversack and bicycle.

Time was now passing and Eamonn proceeded to collect his equipment. He had a lot to carry - a large bag full of ammunition, an overcoat and a bicycle. I helped him to put

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on his "Sam Browne" belt and then adjusted his knapsack, which was exceptionally large and protruded out beyond his shoulders. While dressing I asked him how long he expected the fight to continue, and he replied: "If we last a month they - the British - will come to terms. We have sent out messages throughout the country, but as the men have already received at least two other orders, it is hard to know what may happen. I have made sure of Galway, where the finest men in Ireland are. My message to Mellows is 'Dublin is now in action!' However," he added, "we will put our trust in God".

Turning to Rónán, who was watching us, he kissed him and said, "Beannacht leat a Rónáin," and the child replied, "Beannacht leat a Dhaide." "Nach dtiubhraídh tú aire mhaith do'd mhathairín?" he asked. "Tiubhrad, a Dhaide", said Rónán, and so they parted for ever.

I would have wished to go to Emerald Square to see the men march off, but Eamonn asked me not to and so I embraced him, bade him Good speed and he went out.

My next duty was to get my mother and the child away, and though still protesting, I induced her to put on her coat and come with me. Then taking our basket of food - a pretended picnic basket - and accompanied by my mother and little son, I crossed the threshold of that house, which would never mean home to me again, and closing the door I said farewell for ever to my ten years of happy married life.

As soon as possible after Eamonn left to join the Fourth Battalion I left my house in Dolphin Terrace and set out for Mrs. Cathal Brugha's house. Mrs. Brugha had kindly offered to house us during the fighting, as my home would be in the line of fire. I had forwarded my clothes and

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food beforehand. I was hurrying with my mother and Rónán and all we possessed in the way of food. All the money I had in the world was in my pocket, and I had two dresses on me. I decided that the quicker we could get across the bridge the better, so I made for Sally's Bridge, as it was then called, and over the canal, where we could see the soldiers at the back of Wellington Barracks. We turned then to the right, round by the Greenmount Oil works, and there we met four or five Volunteers dawdling along in uniform with full equipment. My impulse was to go over and say to them, "Hurry, you'll be late", but I decided not to do so. I do now know whether they reached the point of mobilisation in time or not. I think Eamonn left home about a quarter or ten minutes to eleven to go to Emerald Square. The fight was to start at twelve o'clock. As far as I know Eamonn went into the South Dublin Union by the back gate, that is, the gate at Rialto.

As far as I can remember I took a tram to Kenilworth Road, and another tram to Rathmines, where I took a Dartry tram which left us at the terminus. I did not know then where I was, and had to ask where Fitzwilliam Terrace, my destination, was. It was only about one hundred yards away, but we took the tram that far.

We arrived safely at Mrs. Brugha's house, and soon after our arrival Mrs. Brugha's sister, Miss Kingston, came in. She had been across town getting treatment at a hospital. The first thing she said was, "I heard the shots". This brought home vividly to us the fact that the die was now cast. Miss Kingston and I decided to go out and buy some food in the shops in the vicinity, and we noticed that the trams had ceased to run. That would be about one o'clock. We met a man whom we had known as an assistant in a provision

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shop in Rathmines. This man, like his comrades, was a Volunteer. He was cycling as hard as he could away from the city, and when we stopped him the first words he said were, "Davey's is blew up". Davey's was a public-house at the corner of Richmond Street at Portobello Bridge. I said to the man, "What do you mean blown up? Do you mean the glass windows are broken?" He told us that he was clearing out. Miss Kingston said, "Will you not wait and give a hand to your comrades?" and he replied, "Not likely. I'm getting away". That was our first experience of the Volunteer who did not fight.

I stayed in Mrs. Brugha's house for the week. On Monday evening we looked out the window and saw a Company of Boy Scouts coming down from the mountains, evidently they had been on a route march. Whether they were Baden Powell Scouts or Fianna I do not know, but I think they were Fianna.

A couple of nights afterwards Mrs. Brugha went out late for a walk. She was accompanied by her sister and a friend who was marooned in Dublin, and to whom Mrs. Brugha gave shelter. They were not gone out very long when suddenly the door bell rang, and whoever it was never took her finger off the bell until I opened the door, when the three of them practically fell into the hall. They said they had been challenged to halt up the road, but instead of halting they had run. Mrs. Brugha was expecting her baby at this time.

Early on Friday morning we were awakened by military raiding the premises. Naturally they were wondering at finding so many women in the house and no men, but Mrs. Brugha said that her husband was a traveller and had been held up in the country.

That evening Mrs. Brugha's brother, Father Kingston,

arrived and told us that Cathal had been wounded. He made light of the injuries, and Mrs. Brugha, though anxious, was reassured.

Although we could see the fires burning in the city we noticed on Saturday that there was very little shooting, and we made our way as far as Rathmines. There we were told that there was a truce, but nothing more.

On Sunday at Rathgar Church I met Mrs. Con Murphy, who told me of the Proclamation that had been issued, and that my husband's name had been signed to it. That was the first I knew of the Proclamation.

All day Sunday we waited eagerly for news, and on Monday we tried to cross the bridge but without success. Mrs. Brugha was anxious to see her husband.

We met some priests in Rathmines on Monday. One of them, I think, was Father O'Mahony who told us that the men would be interned and that the leaders were to be tried by Field General Courtmartial. This was rather a shock to me and the priest then tried to make light of it. He knew how deeply I was involved.

Thursday morning's paper brought the news of the execution of Pearse, MacDonagh and Clarke, and I believe in that same paper it said that it was stated in the House of Commons that a sentence of three years' penal servitude had been imposed on Eamonn and three others. I do not know who the other three were. When I read this I was delighted, but at the same time I thought it very hard that MacDonagh, who to my mind had not been so deeply involved until the last moment, should have suffered execution.

On Friday afternoon I piloted Mrs. Brugha to the Union to see her husband. I did not speak to him as we did not

wish to draw the attention of the other patients to him. I met Father Gehardt there.

On my return journey I called at my own home in Dolphin Terrace only to find it a wreck, having been raided by the military. Our food had been spilt, that is to say tea and sugar were inches deep on the floor, our tinned foods had been taken out and evidently a bayonet run through each of them, and doors and windows were smashed, but these had been boarded up by the neighbours. The brass buttons which I had removed from Eamonn's uniform, to replace them by green, had been taken from the place I had left them. When the British came to raid my house the people next door were a mother and daughter, and when they saw the military jumping the railings separating the houses and pointing their guns at my house, the younger woman had a seizure and died immediately.

During this period I was labouring under the delusion that my husband had been sentenced to three years, but my sister-in-law, who lived in Drumcondra, traced me to Mrs. Brugha's home and told me that I need not believe what I saw in the papers, that four more had been executed, Willie Pearse, Ned Daly, Michael O'Hanrahan and Joe Plunkett. She suggested that I come over with her and call down to the priests in Church Street, where the only reliable information could be obtained. She also told me that the military escort sent for Mrs. MacDonagh had failed to reach her, so that Mrs. MacDonagh had no final interview with her husband before his execution. Bearing this in mind I decided to stay up all night, and a young friend of Mrs. Brugha's volunteered to stay with me. Her name was O'Sullivan then, she is Senator Baxter's wife. We stayed up all night, and next day I decided to try and reach Drumcondra. There were no trams running, but I managed to reach, first,

Camden Street, where I called on Mrs. Wyse Power. She told me that her house had been destroyed and that she had nothing but what she stood up in. Herself and her daughter were there.

That evening I went down with my sister-in-law to Church Street, and for the first time met Father Albert. He warned me to take no counsel with anyone I met, and to be very discreet in all I said. I stayed in Drumcondra that night as it was too late to cross the bridges.

Next day, Saturday, I got in touch with a friend, Johnny Foley, who had been Secretary to the Lord Mayor for many years. He went to the Mansion House to see could anything be done, but without success. He was informed, however, that if we procured a taxi and went to Richmond Barracks we would be admitted. As it was very early, about half-past eight in the morning, I decided I would prefer to collect my mother and Ronán, and some of our food at Mrs. Brugha's house and bring them over to my sister-in-law's house. I was half afraid we would be stopped at the bridges, but we managed to get across to Drumcondra.

After he had breakfast, Johnny Foley, my brother-in-law Richard, and myself drove up to Richmond Barracks, and there we met the Provost Marshal, Viscount Powerscourt, who was very amiable. He said he did not know what sentence these "gentlemen" got, but consented to give me a note to the Governor of Kilmainham, which permitted me to interview my husband. I arrived at Kilmainham, was shown in, and found Eamonn in a cell with no seating accommodation and no bedding, not even a bed of straw. The first thing I noticed was that his Sam Brown belt was gone, and that his uniform was slightly torn. A sergeant stood at the door while we spoke, and we could say very little, but I gathered from

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Eamonn that he had heard about the supposed three years' sentence and he felt it would worry me. He suggested that I should see Sir Charles Cameron. I said to him that the Rising was an awful fiasco, and he replied, "No, it was the biggest thing since '98. They told me here that the railway lines were up". Those were Eamonn's words. The rest of our conversation was personal. He gave me Cathal Brugha's watch to give to Mrs. Brugha, and some money which he had on him. I left Eamonn after getting a promise that he would send for me no matter what was going to happen.

On Sunday I interviewed Sir Charles Cameron in Raglan Road, and explained to him that the sentence of three years had been published in the papers and that we did not believe it was genuine. I asked him could anything be done and he promised to do his best. I had asked Dr. Matt Russell where I could get in touch with Sir Charles and he told me Raglan Road, which was a very lonely road. While I was knocking at Sir Charles's door, a crowd of soldiers passed by, it was nearly curfew time, and my heart went down to my boots. When I left Sir Charles there was not a human being on the road but myself, but I got across the city all right.

It was a very wet day and I was sitting in the back room of my sister-in-law's house and my little son was in the front room with his uncle. The uncle Jack came in and said to me, "Don't get a fright. There is a soldier at the door". The soldier turned out to be a man on furlough from Fermoy. The eldest of the Kent family, William, had had a very varied career, and at the time was Quartermaster in Fermoy. He had asked this soldier to call for news, which we gave him. Subsequently William Kent was courtmartialled, and, against all agreements that had been made with him, he was sent overseas to the fighting line and was killed on the anniversary of the Rising. The charge at the courtmartial

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was that he, William Kent, had stolen food out of the canteen to give to a prisoner in Fermoy named Thomas Kent, no relation, who was subsequently executed. William Kent insisted that he had purchased the food, but to no avail.

When the soldier left us we settled down again around the fire, and at about ten o'clock there was a knock at the door, and an Army officer arrived with a note to say that my husband would like to see myself and his sister. We went out to the car and there we found that this soldier had already collected Richard Kent and Michael Kent, brothers. It was a night of fierce rain, and as we travelled along accompanied by a policeman we came across various patrols, where the policeman put his head out and shouted "Command car. King's Messenger". Notwithstanding all this we were held up on several occasions, and the Army officer complained to some of the patrols that they were not standing out where they could be seen, and that some of the men had been fired on during the week. The sentries wore khaki or flesh-coloured leggings and waterproofs, and they were almost unrecognisable.

We reached Kilmainham and had about twenty minutes' interview with my husband. He was in a different cell, and had been given a couple of boards, on which I presume he rested. He also had a soap box, a chair, a candle and pen and ink.

No executions had taken place for some days, I think MacBride's execution had taken place on Friday, and the soldiers were coming in and out in a jocose manner, saying such things as, "It's a long way to Tipperary", and, "You never know what will happen". Eamonn said his mind had been disturbed. He said, "I was quite prepared to walk out of this at a quarter to four in the morning, but all this has upset me". He told me he had sent for Father Augustine

to come to him.

On our way out, Richard, the youngest Kent, spoke to the Commandant, who said to him, "There is no reprieve. Go back and tell your brother". I was not aware of this until the next day.

On the way home the car broke down and we were a long time getting a supply car, but they left us home safely.

As I was still in doubt as to the outcome of the morning, I remained up all night with my sister-in-law, and each hour we knelt down and said the Rosary. From three o'clock I remained praying until about half past five, when I knew that everything would be over if the executions were to take place. At six o'clock curfew was lifted, and we made our way down to Church Street. It was a glorious summer morning, and when we arrived at the Priory I asked for Father Augustine. He sent down another Friar who told me that Father Augustine had only come, celebrated Mass and had gone to his room, but that if I wished he would get up and come down to me. I said no, that I only wanted to know the truth, and this priest said, "He is gone to Heaven".

We made our way back to Iona Church for eight o'clock Mass, and there we found my brother-in-law Richard, who had sent in Eamonn's name to have him prayed for, because Richard knew from the night before that the execution would take place.

For the few days before the execution, so confusing was the information we were getting that Father Augustine himself had called up to some house in the North Circular Road to ask Sir John Maxwell if it was true that Eamonn was not to be executed and that the executions were finished. Sir John sent out word to say, "No, there is no truth in

"that statement. The executions are going to take place".

At about ten o'clock on 8th May my sister-in-law accompanied me to Church Street, where we met Father Augustine. He gave me full details of Eamonn's last moments, and I think enough praise could not be given to both Father Augustine, O.F.M. Cap., and to his comrade Father Albert, for all they did for the executed men. Micheál O'Hanrahan was, I believe, the first sentenced man to be attended by Father Augustine. After Father Augustine gave the last rites of the Church to Micheál, the Governor of Kilmainham said, "You may go now, Father". Father Augustine replied, "No, my Church can give consolation to the end", and so he accompanied Micheál from the cell to the yard, witnessed the execution and anointed him as he dropped. He did the same for each of the doomed men whom he attended, including Eamonn. It was a very trying experience for both Father Augustine and Father Albert, but they went through it for the sake of the doomed men.

Father Augustine told me that Eamonn had held his, Father Augustine's, crucifix in his hands, and the last words he spoke were, "My Jesus Mercy". In every case it would appear as if it was necessary for the officer in charge of the firing party to dispatch the victim by a revolver shot. Father Augustine thought that this was a dreadful thing. He gave me two letters which he had brought from the jail; one was my husband's personal letter to me, and the other was a letter which he left more or less for the Irish nation. This letter has been published since.

After our interview with Father Augustine, my sister-in-law suggested that we go and purchase some mourning. As the War was raging at the time and there were many young widows, it was easy to procure an outfit.

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We returned to Alphonsus Road, and soon afterwards my sister, Lily O'Brennan, accompanied by Mrs. Seamus Ó Murchadha arrived. They had been released from jail the night before, and looked tired and dirty. They had been some time locating me, as they had expected to find me in Rathgar.

STATEMENT BY ÁINE B. E. CEANNT.PART III.

My sister's story was that on the Sunday of the surrender, Captain Colbert - who had occupied a post at Watkin's Brewery in Ardee St. and who had found his way up to the Distillery with his handful of men - had promised to give the girls a good dinner and a ceillidhe. The garrison had been short of food and the girls left it all for the use of the men.

Eamon Ceannt never anticipated surrender, and they believed that he was prepared to go out and fight in the streets. Consternation reigned at Marrowbone Lane when a British officer named Captain Rotherham, two Capuchin priests, Father Augustine and Father Aloysius, accompanied by Eamon Ceannt and his men, arrived there. The garrison of Marrowbone Lane was lined up and told of the surrender. The Marrowbone Lane garrison marched out behind the South Dublin Union garrison. Eamon Ceannt spoke to my sister, Lily O'Brennan, and advised her to return home, and gave her some money to give to me.

The Cumann na mBan, however, decided that as they had come out with the men they would surrender with the men, and they tailed in behind the end of the Battalion. My sister, Lily, found herself hampered by her bicycle, and, seeing an open door in Cork Street, she rushed over to the people standing at it, handed in her bicycle and said "Mind that for me". She then took her place in the ranks.

Having arrived at Patrick's Park, the 4th Battalion were lined up, and in the distance, nearer to Bride St, I think, my sister saw Thomas McDonagh and his Battalion. Father Augustine was also there. An officer spoke to Eamon Ceannt, and he gave the word of command "Disarm". The men, having laid down all their equipment, took four paces to the rear. Immediately a military lorry came and, as my sister puts it, "swallowed up" the guns and took them away. Most of the men had made untold sacrifices to obtain the guns, and this

was a bitter moment for them.

The men were then ordered to march, and wheeled out into the streets, the 4th Battalion heading and Commandant McDonagh's 2nd Battalion behind. In the rear were the Cumann na mBan. The streets were lined with soldiers, and, going through James's St. the Volunteers had to step over obstacles which had been placed there during the week. The girls decided to keep up a brave front, and they started to sing every rebel song that was known to them. When they seemed to slacken in their efforts, John McDonagh, who walked beside his brother Thomas, turned round and said on several occasions "Keep it up, girls".

Lily O'Brennan had, during the week in the distillery, kept a diary of the individual acts of the Volunteers, but she now decided it would be better to destroy it, so on the way to Richmond Barracks she tore it up into small pieces.

When they reached the Union in James's St. they got the first words of encouragement from the home of the Cosgrave family. Notwithstanding that the family had lost a son - young Gobban Burke - who lost his life in the fight in the Union - these brave people were not afraid to cheer the rebels as they passed. Arrived near Richmond Barracks, there was another word of encouragement when Miss Mulhall, who was a Poor Law Guardian and who conducted a drapery establishment almost opposite the barracks, came and cheered them on their way. She was promptly arrested and lodged with the Cumann na mBan in Kilmainham. The women were housed in the married quarters for the night, and next morning were transferred to Kilmainham jail. During their week there, they made as brave a show as they could, and at recreation time danced Irish dances and sang Irish songs. They were moved on Monday, 1st May, and a few mornings afterwards they were awakened at dawn by a volley of shots, followed almost immediately by a revolver shot. Lily O'Brennan insisted that they were shooting the prisoners, but the other girls laughed her to scorn.

Lily O'Brennan had seen Eamon Ceannt and Con Colbert at Mass on Sunday, and got no further news until Sunday night, 7th May. On that night, at about twelve o'clock, a wardress came and asked for Mrs. Murphy, who occupied a cell with Lily. Mrs. Murphy was taken away and, on her return, she explained that she had been brought for an interview with Con Colbert, Con was about to be executed and did not wish to distress his sister by sending for her. Mrs. Murphy had attended to Con when in the distillery as his feet had been badly chafed, so he thought of her, having seen her in the Chapel. Mrs. Murphy's first words to Con were "What of Ceannt? I would point out that her query was not "What of Seamus?", her husband, but "What of Ceannt"?

I think it well at this point to deny the canard that has gone around about Seamus Murphy where people said because he was not executed that he had permitted Colbert to take his place as the man in charge of the distillery, thereby saving his own life. This is an absolute falsehood.

When Mrs. Murphy returned to the cell she was able to inform my sister, Lily, that Eamon would be executed in the morning, and, naturally, they waited to hear the shots.

Next morning the women were all interrogated, singly, and, although they had made no previous arrangements amongst themselves as to the attitude they would adopt, every one of them stated that she had gone out with the men and would have done anything that she was asked to do. The British military tried to get the girls to say that they were only doing first-aid. However, they were told they would be released, and that they were to wash out their cells. This was accomplished. Mrs. Murphy was told that as a gun had been found on her person when arrested she would not be released. On the doctor's advice, however, she was released, and that night Lily and Mrs. Murphy made their way to the entrance hall where the Commandant's office was situated. The Commandant told them that they could leave immediately, but that curfew was on and they would

be liable to re-arrest. He strongly advised them to wait until morning. Lily felt that she could not spend another night in that place, and they decided to leave.

There was a priest there from James's Street, Father McCarthy was his name, I think, and he said he would lead them out. In the party were Mrs. Partridge, who lived very near, Miss Mulhall, who lived opposite Richmond barracks, Mrs. Murphy, Lily O'Brennan, and some other woman. The priest only left them as far as the cross-roads. Miss Mulhall went to the right to her home, the priest went towards James's Street, and the other two made their way along the South Circular Road. They saw groups of soldiers, but were not interfered with.

My sister, Lily O'Brennan, and Mrs. Murphy made for the home of Mrs. Mellows in Mountshannon Road. The house was in complete darkness when they got there, and it was some time before they gained admission. The fact was that the occupants of the house were only just recovering from the effects of a big raid. Mrs. Mellows extended to them every possible hospitality, and the two ladies stopped there for the night.

Next morning they started out to locate me and travelled out to Rathgar, where they were informed that I was stopping in Drumcondra. They then travelled over and arrived at my sister-in-law's house, No. 13 St. Alphonsus Road.

That finishes my sister's account of her week in jail.

STATEMENT BY ÁINE B. E. CEANNT.PART IV.

Immediately after the surrender, the executions and the deportation of so many thousands of men, a group of public-spirited men and women in Ireland formed a society called "The National Aid Association", which was to look after the material welfare of the widows, children and other dependent relatives of those who had suffered. Two men came from America with a lot of money collected there, John Archdeacon Murphy and Mr. Gill. The late Father McGuinness, General of the Carmelite Order, was also very helpful. It was he who looked after Liam Mellows in America.

A large committee was formed, composed of men and women of various political opinions but all Irish at heart. Mrs. Wyse Power invited Lily O'Brennan to join the staff as a clerk, and she was put in charge of the distribution for the Dublin area. The women who were free spent their nights and days travelling from house to house bringing material help and words of comfort to the bereaved.

Towards Christmas it was decided that the internees in Frongoch should not be forgotten, and many poultry, turkeys, geese and other goods things were prepared and were actually on their way when, without any warning, the men were released. The food which had been forwarded to Frongoch was later returned, but that Christmas Day, 1916, was spent by Lily O'Brennan and others in going from house to house with poultry. My sister did not reach home until about half past seven. The men who lived in the country were unable to get away, as they had only arrived in Dublin on Christmas Eve. These men were housed in such places as St. Enda's, Oakley Road, and in the homes of sympathisers, and it was necessary

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to send food for their use.

As the New Year dawned, Michael Collins appeared on the scene and was appointed Treasurer of the National Aid Association.

At the same time as this organisation was formed, Mrs. Tom Clarke formed a committee called "The Volunteers Dependants Fund", on which were to act not only Mrs. Clarke herself but also the relatives of the executed men. Mrs. Clarke had been entrusted with some money, and felt that it was her duty to see to the dependants. The presence of this Society made things very awkward for those people who were willing to contribute to the National Aid, and before the two representatives, John Archdeacon Murphy and Mr. Gill, had left Dublin, an effort was made to get this body to join up with the National Aid. This eventually was achieved when certain people who were on the National Aid committee were asked to resign from same, they not being acceptable to some of the dependants of the leaders.

The National Aid Association undoubtedly did marvellous work, and the committee room was a centre where all information regarding prisoners could be obtained. Michael Collins was an untiring worker, and most of the women and men who acted were voluntary workers. A gift sale to bring in funds was organised, and brought in a considerable amount of money.

During this period Miss O'Rahilly and Miss Lily O'Brennan went through the graveyards around Dublin and located the graves of Volunteers who had fallen in the fight. They placed small iron crosses on these graves so that they could be easily identified at a later date.

As the men were now home and receiving money weekly

from the National Aid, Miss O'Brennan made every effort to obtain positions for them. The men themselves were more than anxious to get work and not be in receipt of charity. In one particular instance a man who had come back from London and was a possible conscript, undertook to take up harvesting work in the country. He reached the townland safely, but had not got very far before he was arrested and jailed. This man was subsequently a T.D. for Kerry; his name was O'Donoghue.

In February, 1917, Count Plunkett was elected for the constituency of Roscommon. The weather was exceptionally harsh, and the men and women who went down to help in the election had often to clear the roads for the cars to pass through. The night Count Plunkett arrived home to Fitzwilliam Street, he appeared on the platform outside his house and stated that he did not intend to take his seat in the British House of Commons. This was the first authentic statement of absenteeism.

A few months later, May, a vacancy occurred in Longford and Joe McGuinness was put forward as the candidate. He was doing penal servitude at the time as a result of the 1916 Rising. One of the posters for McGuinness read, "Put him in to get him out". These elections were the writing on the wall for the Parliamentary Party.

On 19th April, 1917, Count Plunkett held a Convention in the Mansion House, Dublin. To this Convention he invited representatives of every known Irish organisation, the Gaelic League, Sinn Féin, Cumann na mBan, Labour, and another body which then existed called "The Women Delegates Association"; I went as a representative of that Society.

The Count was in the chair, and from the platform was

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hanging the Republican flag. Mr. Arthur Griffith and his clientele arrived rather late, and received great cheering from their supporters.

The Count wanted to start a Liberty League, and said he would plant a tree of liberty in every parish in Ireland. Immediately Mr. Griffith jumped up and said, "The new organisation must be Sinn Féin". The Count replied that the aim of Sinn Féin was a Parliament of the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland, whereas he stood by the Republic for which his son had died and for which his other two sons were in jail. Matters were getting pretty hot at the time, and it looked as if a split were imminent. The Reverend Michael O'Flanagan, Joe McDonagh and others got together and tried to persuade them to postpone the decision for a while. Mr. William O'Brien, the Labour leader who sat near me on the platform, stood up and said that while Labour was ninety per cent. Republican he personally was one hundred per cent. Republican.

It was decided after some time that a committee would be formed to see in what way the wishes of Count Plunkett and Arthur Griffith could be met.

Sinn Féin was then set going, and it was in being when, on 18th June, 1917, the penal servitude prisoners were released.

During the summer months meetings had been held to demand the release of the penal servitude men, and every section of the community was represented on these platforms. At one of these meetings, held in the Mansion House, I remember reading out the charge that had been handed to Eamon Ceannt prior to his execution.

News was coming through that the prisoners in England

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were being very severely treated, and a letter had been picked up on the street in London and forwarded to Mrs. Boland, the mother of Harry Boland, which gave some idea of what was happening. It was decided, therefore, to hold a protest in the city. There was to be a big platform, amongst the speakers being Count Plunkett and Cathal Brugha.

At this time there was a convention sitting in Trinity College called the Plunkett Convention - Sir Horace Plunkett. These men were endeavouring to find some way of giving Ireland a measure of Home Rule which would satisfy the people. One of the secretaries to this Convention was Erskine Childers.

The night before our protest meeting was to be held at Foster Place, word came to me that the meeting had been proclaimed, and I was invited to attend at the rooms of the National Aid in Exchequer Street to discuss the situation. Michael Collins insisted that it would be madness to hold the meeting, that the men were unarmed and that if they were attacked there would only be a riot, and there would be no glory attached to it as there had been in the fighting of Easter Week. Others present, whose relatives were amongst the penal servitude men, protested against this change, but we left at about half past eleven with the knowledge that we would not hold the meeting.

On Sunday about midday a member of the Fourth Battalion, Jerry Murray, called at my house and said that, notwithstanding our decision of the night before, Count Plunkett and Cathal Brugha intended to hold a meeting against the bogus convention in Trinity College and other matters. Naturally I made my way to Foster Place, and my sister, Lily O'Brennan, went in her Cumann na mBan uniform complete with first-aid equipment.

As is usual with Dublin people, the fact that the meeting had been proclaimed brought a large crowd to Foster Place. Early in the afternoon a sidecar drove across Butt Bridge, and on it were Count Plunkett and Cathal Brugha. They were immediately surrounded, pulled off the car and arrested. During the excitement that ensued a Fianna boy raised a hurley which he carried in his hands and made a blow at a policeman called Inspector Mills. The lad did not really intend to harm the Inspector, but he struck him a fatal blow and the Inspector dropped to the ground. My sister, Lily O'Brennan, was nearest to the Inspector when he dropped, and she was in two minds what to do. As she said to me afterwards, "Wasn't it a nice thing that the first person I was to give first-aid to was a policeman?" However, she took out her first-aid equipment and said "First-aid". Cathal Brugha, who was going limping by in the grip of a policeman, said, "Yes, first-aid". A policeman came forward, lifted the bandages which my sister had dropped and made an effort to render assistance to the Inspector. Unfortunately the blow proved fatal.

I was quite unaware of what had happened, but a Volunteer who saw me there in widow's weeds and therefore rather prominent, advised me not to stay. He brought me as far as O'Connell Bridge, whence I made my way home. That Volunteer was Bob Price.

Some hours afterwards my sister Lily arrived home and told me about the incident. She had scarcely taken her tea when a message came that she was wanted to take charge of the Fianna boy who had done this deed, and that she was to bring him to a place of safety. Lily O'Brennan went, took charge of the Fianna boy, linked him along and discovered to her horror that she was well acquainted with

him, which would have put her in an awkward position, had she been called to give evidence of the incident. The boy was subsequently got away to America.

On 17th June, 1917, word came that the penal servitude men were being released, and each person who was told this news sent word to several other families, so that soon all Dublin was mobilised.

We left the house at about half past eleven. It was a fine summer night. Having roused the girl students in St. Enda's, we called at the home of Miss Phyllis Ryan in Ranelagh Road to give the news. As we passed along through the streets we could hear doors closing here and there, and the patter of feet, all making for the North Wall.

We spent the night at the North Wall, singing all the songs we could think of, and resting as best we could on bales of rope, etc. To any boat coming up the river we would shout, "Have you the prisoners?", and the reply would be, "Only cargo". At a quarter to six word came that the men were not coming in by the North Wall, but by Westland Row. There was a general stampede to Westland Row, where we waited until nearly ten o'clock before they arrived.

After the death of Inspector Mills, the carrying of hurleys in Ireland was prohibited, and on the morning of the 18th June a gangway was kept on the station by the small Fianna boys, who linked hands. Down on the street the Volunteers were openly drilling. Policemen endeavoured to move the crowd, and one policeman asked a Fianna boy, "Who is in charge?". This pert lad replied, "The fellow with the hurley". However, we were left in undisputed possession of the railway station.

Trains began to come in, but no prisoners. Eventually

they came, and as the men rushed almost on to the tracks I feared there would be an accident, but everything passed off smoothly.

I saw Father Joe Breen, from Kerry, walking along beside a tall, clean-shaven man with, of course, his hair cropped tight. I asked the priest if this man was Austin Stack. I had never met Austin Stack, but he interested me on account of the gun-running in Kerry. The priest replied, "No, this is John MacNeill". I really got a shock, as I had known John MacNeill as a patriarchal-looking gentleman with a long beard. "God bless us", said I, turning away. Then I decided that this was a very unchristian thing to do, even though he had ruined the Rising, so I turned back and said to him, "Fáilte romhat", and he replied in Irish. I then left him.

The men had a triumphal procession up to O'Mahoney's Hotel in Gardiner's Row. This was a different scene to what had been presented when they were being smuggled out of Ireland in the dead of night, and sent on cattle boats to England.

When the penal servitude men were released, Eamonn de Valera, Austin Stack and others joined the Sinn Féin Committee. Shortly after de Valera's release he joined the Executive Committee.

The women decided that they also should have representation on the Executive Committee, and asked that a deputation be received by the Standing Committee. This request was acceded to, and in October, 1917, four women were co-opted - Mrs. Wyse Power, Miss Mimi Plunkett, Mrs. Eamon Ceannt and Miss Helena Moloney. After a short time Miss Plunkett retired, as there were so many of her

family on the Committee, and I believe that Dr. Kathleen Lynn was substituted for her.

The new Constitution and the scheme of organisation of Sinn Féin were now considered, and some of the meetings were rather stormy. Mr. Griffith occupied the chair. Mr. Cathal Brugha had one scheme and Mr. Griffith another. Mr. de Valera acted as peacemaker. Eventually all were satisfied, and it was decided to call an Árd Fheis in November.

As the new Sinn Féin organisation was teetotally different from the original Sinn Féin, I asked that this Árd Fheis be called the First Árd Fheis, but I was over-ruled and it was called the Sixth Árd Fheis. At the Árd Fheis the new Constitution was adopted. At this Árd Fheis, Mr. Griffith, who had been the guiding brain in establishing Sinn Féin and who had been its President, voluntarily retired from that office in favour of Eamon de Valera. It was a gracious act, and avoided a contest as both names had been proposed. Mr. Griffith consented to act as Vice-President.

An Officer Board was appointed, consisting of de Valera as President, Griffith as Vice-President, Austin Stack and Darrell Figgis as Honorary Secretaries, Mrs. Wyse Power and Eamon Duggan as Honorary Treasurers, and Harry Boland. Some of the Officer Board were whole-time members.

The Sinn Féin Standing Committee during this period was, to all intents and purposes, the Government of Ireland.

In 1918 it was decided to hold a plebiscite. This took the form of a document left at all the houses, asking the people if they wished Ireland to be an Irish Republic (this may have read Self-Determination).

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In 1918 we had the general election, at which Sinn Féin candidates had a victory. Eamon de Valera was elected for Clare in the autumn of 1917.

About this time also, Ireland was visited by an epidemic of flu, and Cumann na mBan members helped to nurse the sick, gratis, as nurses were impossible to obtain.

In 1918, before the general election, England had stated that she had discovered evidence of a German Plot, and, under the authority of D.O.R.A., had arrested many of the prominent men and women. The result was that when, on 21st January, 1919, the first meeting of Dáil Éireann was held in the Mansion House, many of the men were absent in jail.

At the meeting of Dáil Éireann there were three distinguished guests from America - ex-Governor Dunne, Mr. Walsh and Mr. Ryan. These men listened with interest to our appeal to the nations of the world, and all three addressed the Dáil.

Cathal Brugha acted as the Speaker, and on that night gave a dinner in the Mansion House to which were invited, in addition to the T.D.'s, the widows and relatives of the executed men, representatives of Cumann na mBan, and staunch friends of Ireland in the persons of Dr. Patrick Brown and the Rev. Michael O'Flanagan, who had read the prayers at the start of the meeting of Dáil Éireann.

After the formation of the Dáil, Departments were set up to deal with the various works, such as Labour, Home Affairs, Justice, Finance, etc.

The fact that we now had a Government in Ireland raised doubts in the minds of some of the Executive of Sinn Féin

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as to our relative positions. Mr. de Valera replied that Sinn Féin Executive was in charge of Sinn Féin, which organisation was pledged to the Irish Republic. He added, "I wish Sinn Féin to be an independent organisation so that it does not become, as did the U.I.L., controlled by the Parliamentary Party. Sinn Féin will be there to see that we, the elected representatives, carry out the wishes of the people. We do not wish the position to be that the tail is wagging the dog".

To further safeguard this, it was decided that only a limited number of T.D.'s could be on the Standing Committee, as it was called, of Sinn Féin, so as to leave that body free to criticise the actions of the Government. On looking back over the matter now, I recall to mind that the Officer Board were almost all members of the Dáil, which fact defeated its own object of leaving Sinn Féin independent of the Dáil, as the Officer Board had power to make decisions if it was not possible to call the Executive together.

To prove the efficiency of Sinn Féin, it is enough to say that an order issued from the Cabinet of the Republic, which, of course, was in hiding, was carried out immediately through the Branches of Sinn Féin. As an instance of this, I cite the time when it was decided to call in the silver currency then in circulation. Within ten days, so efficiently was this order carried out, through Sinn Féin, Cumann na mBan and the Volunteers, that the British Government found it necessary to issue a proclamation that it was illegal to have more than a small amount of silver in a person's possession.

At a meeting of the Árd Comhairle held in the spring

of 1919, it was decided to drop the question of the plebiscite, although about three-quarters of Ireland had been covered by this; the reason given being that now we had an elected Parliament and Cabinet it was no longer necessary. Personally I objected to this, but I was overruled.

About this time an incident occurred at Soloheadbeg, County Tipperary, where the I.R.A. captured a quantity of explosives and some of the R.I.C. were shot. At a meeting in County Wicklow which Robert Barton was addressing, it being his constituency, he advised the men that if the police interfered with them to "give them a touch of Tipperary medicine".

A few weeks afterwards, Robert Barton was arrested leaving the Mansion House, where he had been attending a meeting of the I.A.W.S. He was lodged in Mountjoy, and on 16th March he escaped. About a week later he came to my house and remained with us until his arrest nine months later. Robert Barton was at that time Minister for Agriculture in Dáil Éireann.

The Labour Department, which was in charge of Madame Markievicz, called into being Arbitration Courts, and I was sent to various parts of Ireland to settle disputes.

In the summer of 1919 elections were declared for the Dublin Corporation, the Rathmines Urban District Council, and other places, and Sinn Féin contested them. The Rathmines Council consisted of twenty-one members, all of whom up to date had been Unionists. Sinn Féin won nine seats, the Parliamentary Party representative, Mrs. Tom Kettle, secured one seat, and the remaining eleven went to the Unionists. Mrs. Kettle invariably voted with the Sinn Féiners.

At the outset one of the elected Sinn Féin members was unseated on the motion of the Unionist members, the question being one of undischarged bankruptcy. The Sinn Féin members were determined that this would not pass unheeded, so they prevented any work being done at the Council meeting until a truce was declared, and it was agreed that in future should a Sinn Féin member drop out, a Sinn Féin member would be co-opted. Peace was restored.

In January, 1920, there was a big round-up of T.D.s and others. It took place as a military raid, that is to say the houses were all surrounded, and Mr. Barton, who was called Mr. O'Connor by us, was arrested. All his papers in connection with his Department were in the house, and at about six o'clock in the morning my sister, Lily O'Brennan, and I removed them to a place of safety. We sent word to Mrs. Mulcahy about the raid.

The Minister for Justice appointed members to act as Parish Justices and District Justices. Appeals from the latter court had to be heard by a Circuit Court Judge, who was a qualified lawyer. These courts were held in various places, and as District Justice I sat in such varied areas as the dispensary in Castle Street, right opposite Dublin Castle where the Black and Tans were located, the dispensary at Ballsbridge opposite the R.D.S., another home of the Black and Tans, and in the Rathmines Town Hall.

We managed to do our work efficiently and satisfactorily, and our own police carried out our orders. These police were very efficient, and in cases where even the R.I.C. were unsuccessful, they succeeded. An instance of this would be the famous Mill Street robbery, where a considerable amount of money had been stolen. It was

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recovered through the efforts of Father Joe Breen, who got a hint as to the whereabouts of the money and put the I.R.A. police on to the matter. The money had been nailed underneath a kitchen table in one of the houses. The British authorities were rather astounded at the success of this "illegal" police force.

I acted as Trustee of the funds, and the balance in hand was subsequently handed over to Mr. Sean MacEntee when he was Minister for Finance. These funds consisted of fines imposed for breaches of the Law.

In November, 1920, the famous action of the I.R.A., known familiarly as Bloody Sunday, took place. In writing of this matter to a friend in London, the Reverend Father Dominic, O.F.M., Cap., referred to me and to the fact that he had been to visit me as I was suffering from a broken leg. This letter, having been tapped in the post, drew the attention of the Black and Tans to my existence, and in December my home was raided, nine lorry-loads attending. This was the night on which Father Dominic was arrested and detained, and Father Albert arrested but released.

When coming to my house they stated that they were looking for Michael Collins.

Curfew had been in existence for some months at this period, and on this particular night it started at ten o'clock.

My sister, Lily O'Brennan, who was working in the Labour Department, Dáil Éireann, had been in the habit of carrying home the documents connected with Dáil Éireann, more especially particulars of the positions she was obtaining for the Listowel policemen who had mutinied, and who were being looked after in Dublin by Jeremiah Mee.

She had scarcely reached home and was unable to secrete her case of papers when the Auxiliaries broke the glass doors and made their way in. She handed me the case, and told me in Irish to hide it if possible. I was then a semi-invalid with my broken leg, and I endeavoured to hide the case by sitting on it. A few moments afterwards two Auxiliaries rushed into the room and behind my chair they pushed a man. I was mystified as I did not know where this man had come from. It turned out that he was a musician and had a permit to be out. His name happened to be Collins.

A woman searcher was brought in and everything possible was examined. When they were tired searching, they removed everything of value on which they could lay their hands. During this raid was stolen the lamp which had been sent to Tralee for the "Aud". They also stole a Howth baton and the hat that was given to me by the Commandant of Kilmainham as having belonged to my deceased husband.

At a later date I was present at the court-martial of the men in charge of this raid. Before attending this court-martial, of course, I consulted Michael Collins, who advised me that as I had complained of the conduct of these troops I should show that I was not afraid to bear out my statements by attending. The court-martial took place in Beggars Bush, but all I got of my property was a child's music case.

While waiting to be called, the lady who accompanied me, Mrs. Seamus Murphy, and myself were offered a seat which we accepted. We were shown into, above all places, the armoury where before us lay trays of ammunition of various sizes. My companion immediately drew my attention

to this, and said, "I am perfectly certain we are being watched and that they hope we will take some of this stuff".

Owing to the activities of the I.R.A. they had many wounded men, some burnt and disfigured. At this period it was dangerous for a man to be seen with any sign of wounds on him, as the Black and Tans would immediately arrest him. To deal with this situation the members of Cumann na mBan took the wounded men out for walks at night to give them the necessary exercise. On occasions I have known word to come to my sister, Lily O'Brennan, that a hospital was about to be raided for wounded men. When the word would come, a cab would be procured and herself and another girl would remove a wounded man to a place of safety outside the city, travelling on the outskirts of the city to avoid being held up.

The people who took in these wounded men undertook a grave risk, and the doctors who operated on them were equally to be praised.

In no case, to my knowledge, did the Black and Tans capture a wounded man.

The services of the Cumann na mBan were invaluable, and many a man owes his life to their unselfish work.

In 1920/21 Ballykinlar was full of the I.R.A. and Sinn Féiners, and the Government of Ireland Act was passed in Westminster.

In the early summer of 1921 a general election was called under the Government of Ireland Act, 1920.

The Government of Ireland Act stipulated a Parliament for Southern Ireland, twenty-six Counties, and a Parliament

for Northern Ireland, Six Counties, with the Council of Ireland to act as a link between both. Dáil Éireann having been established in January, 1921, we did not recognise the Parliament of Southern Ireland. It must be remembered that some of our representatives were elected for constituencies in the Six Counties, and they attended the Dáil. We, therefore, regarded Dáil Éireann as Parliament of all Ireland, although the Unionist members never recognised us. It must be remembered that the Justices, the I.R.A., etc., had taken an oath to the Irish Republic just as the T.D.s had, and it was, therefore, a great surprise to us when we found that as soon as the British Government declared an election Sinn Féin answered the whip.

The Comhairle Ceanntair of Rathmines Sinn Féin decided to send a deputation to headquarters, 23 Suffolk Street. I was one of the deputation, and we demanded an explanation of the position, stating that as we recognised Dáil Éireann as our Government we expected that they, and no one else, would order a general election. We went further, and stated that unless the Dáil called an election, Rathmines Sinn Féin would put up no candidates. After a few moments we were reassured that Dáil Éireann would announce an election, and this was decreed immediately. The result of this election was the calling together of the Second Dáil, and it was this Second Dáil who considered and voted on the Articles of Agreement for a Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland.

In 1921 my home was again raided, this time by Cadets. It was during the opening of negotiations between Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. de Valera. There was a fair amount of damage done to the house in this raid.

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Some weeks later I was again raided, and on this occasion I imagine they expected to find some very special documents, as the men who took part were a different type, and two of them at least were in plain clothes. Again the glass doors were broken, and these men promised to see that they were paid for, which they did not do.

At this time I was employed as a director to endeavour to make a line of communication for Sinn Féin. Mrs. Skeffington was acting in a similar capacity endeavouring to organise Sinn Féin throughout the country. We had a room in Westmoreland Street, which years ago had been the Women's Franchise rooms. We held that office until the Truce in 1921.

The Labour Department declared a boycott of Belfast goods, and it was extended later to other Northern Counties and to England and Scotland. Even notes from the Northern Bank were not accepted as tender. It was started here in December 1920 or January 1921. Lily O'Brennan was in charge of the Dublin area. There were four girls employed in Dublin, and there were others sent throughout the country.

In Dublin there was a Black List published, and any shop known to be dealing with the North, or with the prohibited areas, was entered on this list. A representative of the Labour Department of Dáil Éireann called at the shop and warned the proprietor. If he, or she, did not remove the articles boycotted he, or she, was heavily fined, in addition to which the goods were confiscated. Before a raid took place, the person in charge had to be perfectly certain of the facts. These were then sent to the I.R.A., who sent a raiding party to remove the boycotted goods. Heavy fines, in some instances up to £50, were inflicted for flagrant breaches of the boycott. The matter was carried

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so far that even at fairs a Northern bank note would not be accepted. This boycott had a big effect on subsequent events in Ireland.

When, in the early summer of 1921, King George V came to Belfast to open the Parliament of Northern Ireland, as constituted under the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, the people of the South were fighting hard. What, under that Act, would be called the Parliament of Southern Ireland was recognised by the Irish people as the Second Dáil. It had been decided that there would be no Senate in the Irish Republican movement, although it was provided for in the Government of Ireland Act, and this Senate was to have representatives on the Council, which was to act as a link between the two parts of the country. As many of those who would have had a vote to elect the Senate were now in Ballykinlar or other jails, and of recent years the various local bodies had ceased to forward their minutes to the British Local Government Department, but, having pledged their allegiance to Dáil Éireann, had sent their reports to our Department of Local Government, it was difficult for the Government representative, Mr. Gerald Horan, K.C., Clerk of the Crown and Hanaper, to issue the voting papers to these people.

At that time I was Acting Secretary to the General Council of County Councils, and Mr. Horan approached me in that capacity to furnish him with a list of those elected at the recent elections, promising that no matter where a man was, be he in Ballykinlar or elsewhere, he (Horan) would guarantee that he would get his voting paper. As I believed that Dáil Éireann did not visualise having a Senate, I got in touch with a Minister on the subject, and later wrote to Michael Collins explaining my difficulty. If we

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were having a Senate, better get all our votes; if we were not having a Senate, refuse the information. With this Michael Collins agreed, so the Senate was never elected. I asked Mr. Horan to call to see me and I imparted the information to him.

Early in 1921 the Sinn Féin organisation employed a Presbyterian Minister to get in touch with the Presbyterians in the North in an endeavour to explain the position of Dáil Éireann. The Presbyterians of the North, having suffered so much in '98, were always sympathetic.

As there had been tentative negotiations in 1920 between Lloyd George and Archbishop Clune, it was not long until a move was made to contact the people in Dublin. Mr. de Valera was back in Ireland by this time, and on several occasions he had interviews with Sir James Craig. At this time Sinn Féin Executive was in the process of approving of the candidates selected for the election which was shortly to take place, and Father O'Flanagan at one meeting asked would it not be well and fair to the members on the Executive who were not T.D.s to tell them of the negotiations. I imagine that Mr. de Valera would have been prepared to tell us something, but other members of his Cabinet were against it, so we were not informed.

Further communications with Mr. Lloyd George took place, but Mr. de Valera very rightly said that the negotiations would have to be in the open, and nothing happened until Mr. Lloyd George publicly addressed a letter to Mr. de Valera in June, 1921.

The next thing was to arrange the question of a truce, and Sir Neville McCreevy and others had interviews at the Mansion House with Mr. de Valera. Eventually the Truce

was proclaimed at about twelve o'clock on 11th July, 1921. Some people were inclined to take the matter quietly, but the young folk and many others believed it was peace, and bonfires burned in several of the streets on the night of the Truce.

Before entering into negotiations, Mr. de Valera had insisted that certain people be released from jail. These included three Cabinet Ministers - Arthur Griffith, Constance Markievicz, who was interned in Dublin, and Robert Barton, who was doing penal servitude in an English jail. This was agreed to, and they next decided that Sean MacEoin, who was under sentence of death, should also be released. At first Mr. Lloyd George's Government had said that they would give pardons to all but certain people, but Mr. de Valera replied that under no circumstances could peace be made between the two countries if any of these men were to be penalised.

Eventually it was decided to send representatives to London to discuss peace terms. Those chosen to go were Eamon de Valera, Austin Stack, Robert Barton, Erskine Childers, Count Plunkett and Arthur Griffith. Lloyd George then made his proposals, subsequently known in Ireland as the July proposals. These were so unacceptable that they were immediately rejected.

Further correspondence then took place between Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. de Valera. Couriers went backwards and forwards to Gairloch and other places. Eventually, in October, it was decided to send a further deputation. This deputation consisted of the five men who afterwards signed the Articles of Agreement for a Treaty.

STATEMENT BY ÁINE B. E. CEANNTPART V.Propaganda.

During the fight for independence after 1916, which culminated in the Truce in 1921, propaganda was one of the strongest weapons used by Dáil Éireann. A special section was set aside for this purpose, but the head of the section changed very often, for the simple reason that the man in charge would be arrested by the British and put into jail. My knowledge of it was mostly during the period when Erskine Childers was in charge, and my sister, Lily O'Brennan, was his private secretary. They occupied an office in a private house on Terenure Road, and each day it was essential for Erskine Childers or his representative, sometimes Miss O'Brennan, to travel into the city and there meet a representative of the I.R.A., generally Piaras Beasláí, who gave accurate information of all military activities. Erskine Childers was a born publicist and would take nothing from hearsay; all information had to be guaranteed to him.

At this time the "Irish Bulletin" was the official organ of the Government and was produced and issued from a house in Rathgar Road. This house, a furnished house, was rented for the use of the clerks, and to avoid suspicion Mrs. Seamus Murphy and some of her children lived there, apparently the tenants. There was a side entrance to this house, which had a long garden in front, and the side entrance was used by the staff. The house was never raided.

As it was essential that our position should be known abroad the Propaganda Department had contacts in various countries, Spain, Italy, France, South America, etc., and to these countries were sent copies of the "Irish Bulletin" and other pamphlets. England, of course, got a big share of propaganda leaflets. In this way, especially in foreign countries, our aims were known.

In 1918 Miss Kathleen O'Brennan of Dublin was in the United States and organised a section of women, all Americans, who were willing to parade in the various centres in America demanding the recognition of the Irish Republic. These women paraded outside the White House, Washington, and in other centres, New York, etc., carrying banners such as "Freedom for all but Ireland". They were mostly people of leisure, and on occasions were arrested. At this time the Peace Conference was the topic of the day and these people claimed that Ireland should be represented at the Peace Conference, which had as its basis of discussion President Wilson's Fourteen Points. Many photographs of these ladies were taken, and represent people of prominence from Boston, New York, and other centres. I append some of the names of those who were enlisted in the "Militant Women's Army":-

Miss Maura Quinn, Captain of Boston Pickets.
 " Helen O'Brien (Boston)
 " Kathleen Savage do.
 " Mary do.
 " Ella Keena (New York).
 " Mary Keena do.
 " Mary Duffy (Newark)
 Mrs. Gertrude Corless, who read Washington's Farewell Address from the steps of Lafayette Statue outside the White House and then compared Washington's policy with that of Wilson's pro-English ideas.

Miss O'Brennan also lectured to University women and to other gatherings on the literature, culture and music of Ireland. In this way she aroused the interest of the educated people of America in the cause of Ireland. She travelled from East to West on several occasions, giving these lectures. Miss O'Brennan told me that at one of these meetings she had met the lady who was afterwards Mrs. Simpson and who subsequently married Edward VIII and became Duchess of Windsor. This lady was deeply interested in Ireland and was, Miss O'Brennan said, a charming person.

In 1921 there was also established Cumann Léigheacht an Phobail, which was a committee set up to compile booklets on various subjects for distribution to the Sinn Féin Clubs under the headings:-

Economics,
Industrial Development
Social Problems
History
Biography
Art.

These booklets were issued both in Irish and in English.

The committee consisted of:-

President: Mrs. Alice Stopford Green
Vice-President: Erskine Childers
Hon. Treasurers: Mrs. Erskine Childers, and
James MacNeill, CoC.

Members:

Piaras Beaslai, T.D.
Professor Art Ó Cleirigh, LL.D.
Maire Ni Comathur
Rev. Prof. Corcoran, S.J., D.Litt.
Ref. T.A. Finlay, S.J.
Mrs. Ceannt
Sean Milroy, T.D.
Professor T.F. Ó Raithile.

They met at the residence of Mrs. Erskine Childers,
12 Bushy Park Road.

In giving a short history of the origin and scope of
Cumann Léigheacht an Phobail, Mrs. Stopford Green writes:-

"In the early summer of 1920 a small group of
friends of Irish Education began to discuss privately
a scheme of lectures to meet the growing desire for
knowledge in the country districts of Ireland. They
drew up a list of short pamphlets on various subjects -
economic and industrial, Biographical, Historical,
Artistic.

"It was hoped that these pamphlets might be used
wherever there were frequent meetings of Irish people

"for lectures or discussions; in Sinn Fein clubs, scattered over the country, and among any other groups of students interested in any of the subjects on our preliminary list.

"The Committee prepared to issue their first lectures in January, 1921. In a state of war, however, public meetings were impossible, and all efforts had forcibly to be suspended in the spring of 1921. At this moment there is a renewed opportunity for work, and a special need for it. A great reorganisation of Sinn Fein Clubs has taken place, and there is an increased demand, both among them and in other circles, for education and information if they are to take a worthy part in affairs of national concern. The lectures have been promised to the Clubs, and in many cases the Committees depend on them if they are to do a useful winter's work. The Committee recognise the immense importance under these conditions of giving them every possible assistance in educating their members. The temporary set-back to the work of the Committee has been a disappointment to many, and nearly exhausted the funds set apart for its work. It now hopes in its renewed effort to have the earnest support of the Clubs, of any other lecture societies and groups of students, so that it may renew its funds and meet the expenses of further printing.

"The accompanying list indicates the lectures we hope to publish in Irish and English during the year 1921-1922.

"The object of the whole series is to build up the sense of national life and duty, and to encourage

"interest in the problems which concern every one of us, if we are to make a new Ireland industrially and economically.

"It is earnestly desired that the lectures should be read at Club meetings, and that those who attend the meetings should procure copies at the low prices, so as to make the debates which it is expected will result well considered and useful.

"We ask the Secretary of each Comhairle Ceantair and of each Club to see that suitable readers are provided for the Lectures, and that the weakest clubs be specially helped, both by providing suitable readers and by encouraging and organising discussions.

LIST OF LECTURES FOR 1921-1922

Series A. - Economics.

No.

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------|
| 1. | National Finance | E. Childers. |
| 2. | The foreign drain in the form of Taxation, etc. | E. Stopford. |
| 3. | Banking and economic development | L. Smith-Gordon |
| 4. | How the State may directly assist industrial development | |
| 5. | Irish industries | A. S. Green. |

Series B. - Industrial Development

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|-----|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. | Intensive Culture of Crops | H. de Courcy. |
| 1a. | Forsail Barraí | H. de Courcy (Liam O Rinn do chuir i nGaedhilg). |
| 2. | Afforestation | Professor A. Henry. |
| 3. | Utilisation of raw material | Alec. Wilson |
| 4. | Utilisation of Peat | Professor Hugh Ryan. |
| 5. | Utilisation of Water | |
| 6. | Fisheries | |
| 7. | Shipping | Liam de Roiste T.D. |
| 8. | Inland Transit | Rev. E. Coyne, S.J. |
| 9. | Co-operation | Rev. M. O'Flanagan |

Series C. - Social Problems.

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|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Local Administration | James MacNeill |
| 2. Public Education | Professor Magennis |
| 3. Public Education. Physical. | |
| 4. Character and Citizenship | Rev. W.P. Hackett, S.J. |
| 5. Labour | Rev. J. Kelleher, D.D. |
| 6. Hygiene | R. Ó hAodha, T.D. |
| 6a. Cosaint na Slainte | R. Ó hAodha, T.D.
(Liam Ó Rinn do chuir
i nGaedhilg). |

Series D. - History.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Gaelic Period | Professor MacNeill, T.D. |
| 2. Norman Period | |
| 3. Tudor Period | |
| 4. The Irish and the Armada | A.S. Green. |
| 5. Irish National Tradition (Part I) | A.S. Green. |
| 6. Irish National Tradition (Part II) | A.S. Green. |
| 7. Legal Oppression | J.W. Good. |
| 8. Colonial Nationality | K. O'Shéil. |
| 9. Nineteenth Century Effects
of Union | P.S. O'Hegarty. |

Series E. - Biography.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Columcille | A.S. Green. |
| 2. Brian Boru | "Sceilg", T.D. |
| 3. Art MacMorrough | |
| 4. Hugh O'Neill | |
| 5. Owen Ruadh | |
| 6. Henry Grattan | P.S. O'Hegarty. |
| 7. Ulster United Irishmen | F.J. Biggar. |
| 8. O'Connell and Young Ireland | P.S. O'Hegarty. |
| 9. Michael Davitt | J.W. Good. |

Series F. - Art.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Early Christian Art | E.C. Armstrong |
| 2. Irish Music | Carl Hardebeck. |
| 3. Literature in Irish | Piaras Beaslai, T.D. |
| 4. Anglo-Irish Literature | Susan Mitchell. |
| 5. Drama | Susan Mitchell. |
| 6. Irish Architecture | C. MacNeill. |
| 7. Irish Decorative Art | Sir J.R. O'Connell. |
| 8. Modern Aspects of Irish Art | J.B. Yeats. |
| 9. Elements of Archaeology | Rev. C. Scantlebury, S.J. |

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STATEMENT BY ÁINE B. E. CEANNTPART VI.The Irish White Cross.

During the fight for freedom funds were naturally of the greatest importance. In December, 1920, when the Black and Tans were running all over Ireland and ambushes, shootings, burnings, reprisals, etc., were the order of the day, the Irish White Cross was established in Dublin, so that funds could be got together for the relief of the victims.

It can well be understood that where a factory was destroyed by the British forces, generally as a reprisal for an ambush, the men were consequently out of work and their wives and families suffered. Also it was not unknown that the home of some member of the I.R.A., who was not available when the Black and Tans called, would be wrecked and his wife and children left homeless. That is what prompted the Right Honourable Alderman Laurence O'Neill, Lord Mayor of Dublin, to call together men and women of good will, irrespective of politics or religion, to promote a fund to succour the victims. His Eminence, Michael, Cardinal Logue, consented to be President of the Society. Trustees were appointed. A Standing Executive Committee, a Managing Committee and a General Council were formed.

The Committee was not long in being when our friends in America came to our assistance and started a fund under the title of "The American Committee for Relief in Ireland". Names of prominence appeared on the list, and the then President, Harding, sent a message of recommendation of the work of the White Cross. In a very short time every

section of American life decided to help. His Holiness the Pope sent a subscription. The American Red Cross Society, Jewish Societies of America, the Society of Friends subscribed, in fact all threw in their lot with the distressed people of Ireland. If I might mention one man who did a considerable amount to increase the funds it was our famous tenor, Count John McCormack. The amounts subscribed were as follows:-

By subscription through American Committee for Relief in Ireland ...	£1,210,627 : 11 : 3
By U.S.A. direct	62,619 : 4 : 8
" Canada	<u>8,659 : 4 : 5</u>
	£1,281,906 : 0 : 4
" Ireland	62,643 : 19 : 2
" England	9,517 : 3 : 4
" Scotland	3,814 : 6 : 1
" other countries	8,253 : 16 : 0
" His Holiness Pope Benedict XV ...	<u>5,149 : 6 : 8</u>
TOTAL ...	<u>£1,371,284 : 11 : 7</u>

I have already mentioned that His Holiness subscribed. The amount from the American Red Cross was £100,000.

All this resulted in a total gain to Ireland of £1,371,284:11:7. One can well realise what this money meant to Ireland when she was fighting so desperately for freedom. We should never forget those who helped us in our hour of need.

Without going into detail as to how the funds were administered, suffice it to say that one section alone was set aside for reconstruction of business premises, factories, etc., so that the people could get back to work. Of course, private houses were not forgotten, and later a sum was set aside for children deprived of their

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breadwinners. Funds were sent to the dependants of the prisoners, and, pending the various Pensions Acts at a later date, help was given not only to the widows and children but also to the wounded, and artificial limbs were supplied where necessary.

STATEMENT BY ÁINE B. E. CEANNT.PART VII.

Eamonn Ceannt was born on 21st September, 1881, in the town of Ballymoe, which is on the borders of Galway and Roscommon. He always insisted he was a Galway man. He was the sixth son of James Kent and Johanna Galway.

When Eamonn was only a small child the family moved to Drogheda, but as Drogheda did not agree with Mrs. Kent they moved out to the country districts of Ardee, where Eamonn attended the De La Salle Brothers' school. When Eamonn was about twelve years of age most of the family came to Dublin, one of the boys being left in Drogheda to study for the Civil Service. The younger boys then attended the Christian Brothers Schools, North Richmond Street, where Eamonn had a very fine career.

At this period, judging by his school diary, Eamonn had very definite ideas of what he should do and what he should not do. For instance, at that time, as the Intermediate Examination approached, the Brothers would ask the boys to return to school on Sundays for special coaching. Eamonn absolutely refused to do this, stating that as he had worked conscientiously all the year he would not comply with this request.

He had a great taste for languages. One of his school companions was a French boy, with whom Eamonn conversed freely, which accounted for his fine French accent. Right through, up to Senior Grade, Eamonn won Exhibitions and in the lower grade he won a special prize for French composition.

He refused to enter the Civil Service, on the plea that it was British, but he consented to enter for the Corporation remarking that the funds for the Corporation came from the Citizens of Dublin. Having passed the examination for the Corporation, Eamonn was some time waiting for his appointment, and during this period he taught at Skerry's Academy.

One St. Patrick's Day, when he was about nineteen years of age, Eamonn stopped to look into the window of Gills, the booksellers, in O'Connell Street, and there he saw a book entitled "Easy Lessons in Irish". I may mention that at this period St. Patrick's Day was not a Bank Holiday. Eamonn purchased a copy of the book, brought it home, started to read it, and then he found to his amazement that his own father knew Irish. Learning the Irish language from O'Growney's books it was an easy step to joining the Gaelic League, where he soon became one of the hardest workers both on Committees and as a teacher. I believe he was the first in the Gaelic League to start the direct method for teaching Irish.

In the Corporation at this time was a man called Patrick Nally, who was interested in the Irish pipes, the Union or Uileann Pipes, and Eamonn contacted him, as he, like the other members of the Kent family, was intensely musical. Eamonn played both the fiddle and the whistle beautifully. Mr. Nally arranged for Eamonn to purchase a set of these pipes, and he at once began to study them. At this time also, Eamonn spent all his holidays in the West of Ireland, where he met Martin Reilly, the blind piper. Cumann na bPiobairí, or the Pipers' Club, was then in existence and Eamonn was the Honorary Secretary. That would be about 1901 or 1902, and as far back as that

he insisted on writing all the Club minutes in the Irish language. He was in constant demand as an adjudicator at both pipes and fiddle competitions, and occasionally he entered for competitions such as teaching Irish.

Eamonn was the first Registrar of Coláiste Laighean, but resigned from it so that he might have more time to give to Sinn Féin. For many years he was a member of the Coisde Gnótha of the Gaelic League.

Although Eamonn was one of a large family he was, one might say, distinct from them all. To explain what I mean, the other members of the family might be dancing and amusing themselves downstairs while Eamonn would be closeted in his room reading. Notwithstanding this, he had a great sense of humour, but people meeting him casually would imagine that he had little to say.

As soon as he joined Sinn Féin he worked hard in the organisation and undertook the anti-recruiting side of the work.

Eamonn was never known to be late for an appointment, and in the seventeen years that he worked in the Corporation only once was he late, and that was a day on which he started from home on a bicycle and the storm blew him off it.

In 1905 Eamonn married Proinsias Ní Bhreanáin, who had been a pupil of his in the Gaelic League, and who had been the Honorary Treasurer in Cumann na bPiobairí when he was Honorary Secretary. The marriage took place in James's Street, and was in Irish. Father Anderson hurried back from Fontenoy, where he had been present at some celebrations, so that he might perform the marriage ceremony. At his marriage Eamonn refused to use British

coins and used French five-franc pieces for the silver. These coins, unfortunately, were stolen during a raid in later years.

When his son, Ronán, was born in 1906 Eamonn Ceannt insisted on having the Baptism in Irish, and also registered the birth in Irish. This created a furore, and many letters passed between the Registrar and himself, but Eamonn held to his point and insisted on the Irish. To show the anti-Irish feeling that existed, suffice it to say that the post-office refused a lodgment from Eamonn because he was giving his name in Irish. He never lay down humbly under any of these reverses but fought them out to the bitter end.

In 1908 Eamonn accompanied the C.Y.M.S. Pilgrimage to Rome. They were competing in the sports which were being held to mark the Sacerdotal Jubilee of Pope Pius X. Eamonn determined to speak no word of English outside of Ireland, so he spoke either French or Irish, or German at which he was not so proficient, and he had learned a few words of Italian. The costume which he wore was an eleventh century costume which created rather a stir in the streets of Rome. His Holiness heard of the Irish piper and Eamonn was invited to play before Him. In the audience for the Irish people Eamonn appeared, and, marching up the room and back again, played many Irish airs. Some of the priests present, who had been in Rome for years, were visibly affected. I believe the last time that the Irish pipes were heard in Rome was the time of O'Neill and O'Donnell.

Eamonn contributed many articles to the Press, and on one occasion he lectured in Liberty Hall, as he was interested in the working classes.

In 1913 when the Volunteers were started Eamonn was one of the original group who met in Wynn's Hotel.

SIGNED *Lige E. Clann*

DATE *27th beirre 1949*

WITNESS

J. V. Joyce
Colonel.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 264