

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURG STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21  
No. W.S. 358

ROINN  COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 358.....

**Witness**

Mrs. Geraldine Dillon,  
Ten,  
New Line, Galway.

**Identity**

Sister of Joseph Mary Plunkett,  
executed 1916.

**Subject**

- (a) Events of national importance 1913-1916;
- (b) Biographical notes on her brother Joseph,  
and other members of her family;
- (c) O'Connell St. Dublin, Easter Week 1916.

**Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness**

Nil

File No. S.60.....

# ORIGINAL

TEN NEW LINE

26.2.1950.

GALWAY

Dear Jane,

I enclose the signed and witnessed copy of my statement. Many thanks for the copy.

I wrote to Bulmer Hobson and I enclose a copy of his reply to my questions.

It settles one question, anyway. He did send out messengers. He ~~KNK~~ says (he does not remember if he sent O Rahilly but thinks he did. It may now be possible to trace O Rahilly's journey and find out what messages he brought. It is difficult to believe that he did not know what his messages contained or that he told a positive lie if he did (but almost anything is possible) if he did know what was in them and that they were not countermanding orders for Sunday's parade, <sup>as well as copies of the "document"</sup> why was he so upset? and why did he change his mind about Hobson,? Why did Joe, MacDermot and MacDonagh think that any such orders had been sent out? Is there any information about anyone else having been sent with such orders?

If there is any answer to this last question, I will be very glad to get the information. At the time there seemed to be no doubt that this had been done before MacNeill's official order was sent out. It was a very serious reason for calculating the possible effect of going on with the rising. It might have got to places which MacNeill's order might not have reached. It would also give an impression of indecision at head-quarters which could not be totally counter-acted even if MacNeill decided to go on.

I hope you enjoy Rome. It would be wonderful to be able to go too. Please give my kindest regards to MacWhite and Joe Walsh, when you see them.

Yours sincerely

*Gerardine Dillon*

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
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TEN NEW LINE

26  
28.2.1950

GALWAY

About a week ago I wrote to Bulmer Hobson asking him if he would mind answering a few questions and he kindly consented to do so. The questions were

1. Did he send Michael O Rahilly out to country districts on the Tuesday of Holy Week with countermanding orders for the Easter Sunday parades in 1916? If so, where was he sent? Did he go?

2. When did he know that the Rising was planned for Easter Sunday?

This is his answer.

Errisbeg West

21 2 50.

Roundstone

Co Galway

Dear Mrs Dillon

On Monday and Tuesday of Holy Week I sent a number of people to different parts of the country, not to countermand the Easter parades, but to distribute copies of the document subsequently known as the much debated "Dublin Castle Document". I think O Rahilly was one of them but I do not remember what areas he visited. On Saturday MacNeill sent him with orders to countermand the Easter parades but again I do not know to what areas he was sent.

I first knew that a rising was planned for Easter Sunday on the evening of Holy Thursday. Apparently O Rahilly's two journeys to the country have got mixed up in the account you have received. Neither MacNeill or O Rahilly or I was aware of the intended rising on the Tuesday.

You need not apologise for bothering me. I am always glad to help anyone to get the actual facts as far as I can

Yours sincerely

Bulmer Hobson.

MRS. GERALDINE DILLON (PLUNKETT)

TEN, NEW LINE, GALWAY

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

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**ORIGINAL**

Joe was in the Volunteers from the beginning. He did not join the I.R.B. until Redmond's nominees were on the Executive.

He said that the only decent member of all these nominees was Capt. Willie Redmond. When the split came, he voted against the Redmondites and from that on he was completely with the others. At one of the meetings of the Provisional Committee, Pearse slapped John D. Nugent's face, because he suggested that Pearse had manoeuvred the accounts. Joe was delighted, and said he had wanted all the time to do it himself.

After the entrance of the Redmondites to the Provisional Committee, sub-committees were elected for arms, uniforms and other activities of all kinds. At the nomination of these committees, the usual game was carried on of each side trying to get the majority of these sub-committees. The anti-Redmondite section knew that Redmond was only manoeuvring to get the whole of the Volunteers in blocs into the British Army. One of them, a man called Culhane even proposed a khaki uniform for a motor-bike corps. Joe was on the uniform committee and there was an anti-Redmondite majority on it, so that they were able to defeat this and such like purposes.

On the Arms Committee, there was a Redmondite majority, and the Redmondite committee thought that they now had complete control of the arms situation. But Casement had already been authorised to buy the arms in Hamburg before the Redmondite nominees had got

on the Committee. That was why Redmond was so surprised when the arms had actually come in. He thought a trick had been played on him. Yet he had to defend the position in the face of criticism, while being speechless with rage.

9A. For about 3 months before the acceptance of Redmond's proposals, his representatives i.e. members of the Party, were attending Volunteer recruiting rallies without invitation, making speeches. The local Volunteers were having guards of honour for these M. Ps. thinking that the speakers all represented the same interest i.e. Irish Nationalist. Orders were given from the Provisional Committee that no addresses were to be presented to anyone and that the only manoeuvres to be carried out were drill and training (i.e. no guards of honour). The M.Ps. then tried to make out that the Provisional Executive were trying to drive a wedge between the people and their chosen representatives. Tom Kettle identified himself with the attitude of the Redmondites from that on, and completely adopted their outlook. When the split came after Redmond's speech at Woodenbridge, the founders and original Committee of the Volunteers announced, that the experiment of taking in Redmond's nominees, had not worked and that they had decided to go back to their original position. Joe was delighted at the turn of events, because he felt from the beginning that the position was a false one, and was turning the Volunteers away from their purpose and making of them a resolution passing body. I would say that it was early in Aug. 1914, that Joe took the I.R.B. Oath. Michael Davitt

was on the first list of Redmondite nominees. John Dillon sent for him and told him, he would be in the position of a puppet, obeying the instructions of the Party and that that would be the beginning of his political career. Michael was indignant and refused. All this he told me himself.

Joe's first really important task for the I.R.B. was the trip to Germany. He told me that the letters from Casement had been unsatisfactory and that the fears of the Supreme Council about him ~~seemed~~ seemed to be justified. He had been unable to come to any definite arrangements with the German authorities. He had told them what he thought necessary to be done for Ireland and they had been unable to agree to his suggestions because he had completely disregarded German interests and plans of all kinds - political and strategic. On the other hand, the groundwork for the agreement had been laid by Casement. When the Germans <sup>afterwards</sup> found that the official I.R.B. demands were reasonable, there was no difficulty, and they agreed to them at once. Casement had asked for a huge invasion force; he had idealised the German point of view, and could not see that they might reasonably expect that they must derive some military advantage over other plans. When they did not accept his dictation, he completely changed his opinions of the Germans, and said they were thinking of no one but themselves. Since Joe was free to leave home and knew the I.R.B. French, they <sup>already</sup> decided to send him and to pay his expenses. Also he <sup>already</sup> knew Casement; they were good friends, and he had a great admiration for him. He took the necessary steps, got his passport, gave out that he was going to

up.

G.D.  
B.D.

Jersey for his health, and had a Spanish visa given him by Ambrose Aliaga Kelly. No Italian or Swiss visa was needed. He thought he could go direct to Spain by sea. I find that my brother Jack has the original of his diary for the journey, a copy of which you have. It shows that he went via London and Paris, to San Sebastian; thence to Barcelona, Genoa, Florence, to Berne in Switzerland. He changed his name in Florence to James Malcolm. There was no official document/for that. In Germany he was introduced to people as Johann Peters. He saw Von Bethmann-Hollweg once only. Apparently Joe completely satisfied him, that he was dealing with a correct representative of Ireland. The Germans had had doubts of Casement's credentials and distrusted his temperament. The problem that then remained was, what was to be done with Casement. Joe asked for orders from home, giving a report as to what he thought about him. His own opinion was that Casement must stay where he was. It was impossible for him to find any place for him to be safe except in Germany. Casement was tubercular, was very lonely, and both his mind and body were in a miserable condition.

Joe did not get back to Ireland until the middle of July; <sup>he</sup> waited for a reply to his report and he may never have got it.// He travelled home via Berne and France and experienced no difficulty on the journey. He brought back, in a hollow cane, a duplicate of the Agreement with Germany. I believe that before leaving Germany he told Casement that he must stay there and <sup>(Casement)</sup> he agreed to it for the time being at any rate. The first day after his arrival, being somewhat worried as to whether

he had been right in insisting on Casement's remaining in Germany, as the messages he had sent were in cipher, he went straight to the Council. He came back greatly relieved to find that he had been correct in his interpretation of the position. He still wore his beard and moustache and he was amused to find that nobody noticed them. It was a small imperial beard and the moustache a silky line on his upper lip.

He stayed at home a good deal, not going out except to meetings. He was in very good form, having drunk a lot of Bulgarian milk in Germany, which is very good for T.B. He had had bovine T.B. from his second year. It took the form of glands and he began to suffer from it seriously from the time he was 12 years. My mother had taken him to Paris then, after he had pneumonia and had put him to school at the Marist Fathers in Passy. While he was there, he developed tubercular glands. From that time until he was 18 he had many operations at intervals. He attended the O'Donovan Rossa funeral in uniform and drove in the same carriage as Ted Sheahan. It was known at once that on Holy Saturday when Ted was told that the Rising was on, he said he would not be in it, and that he went to America at the earliest opportunity. Seamus O'Connor was reported to have gone in the same boat.

Joe went to America in September, 1915, again sent and paid for by the I.R.B. He saw John Devoy and waited specially to go to Philadelphia to see Joe McGarrity, who happened at the time to be away from home, so he had to wait some time in New York for his return. He

only spent one day in Philadelphia. It was to McGarrity he gave the agreement and not to Devoy. His purpose in going to America was to give the duplicate treaty to McGarrity.

When Joe came back the gland in the centre of his right cheek began to get troublesome. He had to stay in bed a good deal before and after Xmas. I wanted help to look after my mother's business. She had gone to America in September also, and was lecturing on Oliver Plunkett for the purpose of getting funds for the Beatification. She was not in Cumann na mBan, but she had a Cumann na mBan uniform made and took it with her. I presume she used it for her lectures. Joe, if he saw her at all in America had no contacts with her, and told her none of his business. In any case, he would not have trusted her. Her conduct was incalculable and she had a fatal habit of making friends with spies. She did not come back till a week or two before the Rising and then it was to London.

Joe asked in Volunteer headquarters if there was a man who would be able to take a job as clerk to help me with the family accounts. Mick Collins presented himself to me at Larkfield. He had been a boy clerk in the P. O. in England, then in a bank and then a stock Exchange clerk. He had lived with his sister, Hannah, in London. She was also a P.O. clerk, and he told me that Hannah was the only one of his family for whom he had any respect. He had just landed off the boat, when he came to me. He worked with me for 3 months, and then got a job in Craig, Gardiners, the Accountants. He was on Joe's staff. The other members of his staff were,

Fergus Kelly, George Plunkett, Jack Plunkett - who was chiefly employed for messages, as he was very young, - and Con Keating, and Tom Dillon and Rory O'Connor, as advisers in chemistry and engineering. Joe spent the rest of the time till Easter, whether in bed or out of it, on military plans for the Rising, and on wireless plans. He was a wireless expert. He had followed the Marconi experiments from the beginning, and had made model sets, which worked. Con Keating was sent to him in connection with this wireless work. He had been operating wireless work in boats for several years. They made a transmitter set, but it was not powerful enough and they were afraid to call attention by erecting an aerial outside the house.

Some people seem to think that the purpose of the wireless was to get in touch with the German arms' ship. It was really to get the news of the Rising transmitted to the world, especially to America. They knew that their own transmitter was not powerful enough, so they decided to send Con to capture the wireless in Valentia. (On further consideration, and after discussion with Major O'Donoghue, I have decided that it was at Cahirciveen, and not at Valentia the wireless was to be commandeered) Possibly they were to use it first where it was, and then to move it. Joe told me that Colm O'Loughlin did not know the purpose of the expedition. He said that Colm had been left out of everything since he had failed to do a job he had been directed to do with others. Joe trusted that he would rise to this occasion, when he found out what he had to do.

Joe had the plans for the Rising ready, when

Connolly was persuaded to come and discuss business with the Military Council. Pearse, McDermott, Joe, and possibly Tom McDonagh were at the deliberations which, I think, were held at Finglas. I think Jack might know that. There was someone else there; it might have been Clarke. Joe got out of bed to go to the meetings and stayed out all day, returning very late at night. This happened two days. When I protested that he would collapse, he told me it was all right now; that they with difficulty persuaded Connolly to discuss anything. He was very angry at first, but they had come to a complete agreement and Connolly had said afterwards: "I have been beaten at my own game". I took it to mean that this meant not only the military plans, but that the Council were as anxious as he was to put the future of Ireland on a basis of abstract justice.

About this time, my sister Mimi was sent to New York with despatches. She delivered them to Devoy and to her surprise he telephoned for Cohalan and told him a good deal of what was in the despatches. This surprised Mimi, because she knew that Cohalan was not in the inner circle of Clan na Gael. I heard her telling this to Joe when she came back. Her second journey, shortly before the Rising, was to tell Cohalan that he was not in a position to be given any information from headquarters, that he could ask the Clan anything he wanted. On her first visit, she brought back to Ireland £2,000 in a chamois bag tied around her thigh. I think the money must have been in bearer bonds or something - not in gold, because altho' she said it was uncomfortable, it was not too heavy. After she left New York, Cohalan sent for my mother and staged an act to induce her to return to Ireland. He said: "I must know, I have a right to know". He seemed to refer to a particular piece of information that had been withheld from him, possibly the exact date of the Rising. He added, in order to put the wind up my mother, that Mimi was carrying a large sum of money, and might be attacked. She wanted to know what Mimi got all the money for. My mother had not the slightest notion of what all the fuss was about, but she decided to travel home. She wired from London to Mimi, but Mimi had left for America. She

*E. D.*

was caught in New York for the Rising and stayed there for six months with the Cohalans.

When it came to settling the exact date when the landing of the arms should take place, it was decided by the Military Council that they must not be landed earlier than Easter Sunday. They sent word of this decision to the German Government and as far as I can make out, the letter doing so was sent through the U.S.A. and carried by a ship's steward named Tommy O'Connor. About this time Joe was worried about a message which he told me was being sent by a man on a boat, that this man usually went on a boat which took three weeks to get to America and that he had sent word that he had been changed to a slower boat. Joe thought, however, that the message would arrive in time. From what Miss Jane Kissane has made out of the dates in Monteith's and Spindler's books, etc., the letter did arrive before Spindler left.

Early in March Casement sent word to the Military Council that he was coming home, that he wanted to be landed from a submarine near Dublin and that he would settle how everything was to be done after he arrived, including date of landing arms, etc. and he would send back word to Germany of how things were to be done (cf. Spindler, appendix, page 244). My evidence of this is that at this time Joe told me that they were getting all the trouble from Casement that they had expected, that he was taking it on himself to be the leader, fixing dates, saying he was coming home and would land in Bray or somewhere like that, etc., and that he kept on telling them that Germany was going to let them down, that they were not going to send an army. Joe thought that Casement made it quite clear that he still thought of the Volunteers as he had when Joe had been in Berlin, as utterly incapable of putting up a fight and that a German invasion in force was their only hope. At this time the message fixing the date of landing arms should have arrived in Berlin and Casement's message seemed

*ed.*

to the Military Council to be the answer to their message, that is, that the fixing of the date was not accepted as absolute and that all arrangements were thrown open to discussion again. Casement had said several times that he thought that time would be necessary for the distribution of the arms. I have no doubt that he said it on this occasion also. If he arrived the whole thing was finished. He would have been impossible to disguise or conceal. This also meant losing the initiative. The Military Council had never, from the start, made their plans on a German invasion, and Casement's obsession about it never seemed reasonable to them, if I am to judge from Joe's expressed views. They were upset at the idea of any last minute changes or discussions of plans. They thought it would be absolutely fatal for the arms to be landed before Sunday, or at least, more than a few hours before then. Landing a large quantity of arms from Germany would have been notice to the English that armed action was intended and such action would have been taken as to render the arms useless. Casement's obsession about an invasion may have well been the reason why the German government did not regard the date of landing as terribly important or he may even have told them that he thought it would be better to be early than late. Perhaps they were just doing their best.

I cannot make out why Casement, in his later message through Berne, said that the arms were to be landed on Good Friday, when Monteith says several times that they two discussed the landing on Sunday as settled. The Military Council dispatched messages by every

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possible means to this effect, and that Casement should stay where he was. Joe told me that Casement had sent several messages, that he was coming to lead the Rising, and that he insisted on the arms coming beforehand, *but* these letters, which came through Berne, are not available.

*did*

I always thought the Rising would take place in the first week in May, as Joe had learned from Von Bethmann Hollweg, that a German offensive was planned for that time. I was to be married on Easter Sunday, and I was dumb-founded when Tom Dillon got his mobilisation orders on Saturday at 12 o'clock.

I had visited Joe several times at Miss Quinn's nursing home during the time - nearly three weeks - he was there. It was about a week before he went in, that we had the excitement in Larkfield. The soldiers and R.I.C. surrounded the triangle containing the house and mill. The Liverpool "lamps" got out their arms. George was their officer, and we barricaded the house. Fergus Kelly, Con Keating, Tom Dillon, George, Jack and Joe prepared for a siege. After about an hour and a half, the military and police moved off. It was only a demonstration in reply to the taking of a gun from a policeman, which had taken place a day or two before. It was during that time that the telegram came, announcing my mother's arrival in London.

At the last big public meeting before the Rising, about the end of March, which was held in the Mansion House, at which I was present, Bulmer Hobson made a speech deprecating violence of any sort. I knew that he had already persuaded Ginger O'Connell, that no military action could be taken with success, without about 10 years military training. A volunteer in the audience

*did*

pulled out his gun to shoot him. A scuffle ensued, and the men beside him stopped him. There was silence when Hobson ceased speaking. Then a growl arose, and a scene seemed to be imminent. I think it was Fr. O'Flanagan that spoke next, and made everybody forget all about it. Then Pearse gave a wonderful speech. There was a scuffle outside afterwards, which came to nothing. The Press reports as to demonstrations in the streets are incorrect.

Early in April, my father set out for Rome. It was Joe gave him his orders, but I have no doubt he was sent officially on behalf of the Military Council. His main object was to counteract the Statement of the British Envoy to the Vatican, that the Irish were completely satisfied that they were democratically represented by John Redmond, and had accepted Home Rule as a settlement of the Irish question, and that the Volunteers had no moral justification, and should accordingly be condemned by the Church. My father was able to show the Pope, that this was not the case, particularly by telling him, that there had been no elections in Ireland for nine years, and that the Home Rule Act was not in operation as had been represented to the Pope, and might never be put into operation. He told him they intended to fight for their independence, and asked for and obtained the blessing to which all men are entitled to have, who go to fight for what they believe to be a just cause.

On his outward journey, passing through Berne, he left two letters to be sent to Casement, one in the Argentine Consul's, and one in the German Consulate, although he had been ordered not to go into the latter

for prudence sake. I had no information as to the actual contents of the letter until later, when Joe told me on Holy Saturday. As to the discrepancy in published accounts regarding the date proposed for the landing of the arms, I have no information except as to what my father had been originally told to say, and that <sup>40</sup> no earlier than was/Sunday. If in either of the letters he mentioned Friday as the day, it was certainly a slip on his part. He carried no papers, he merely memorised the message. When he arrived back in Ireland on Holy Thursday, he visited various bishops, I think five, and he warned them that if there was trouble in the immediate future, they should not take any action towards condemning it. In one case the bishop opened the door himself, and my father said; "There is going to be trouble, don't you do anything about it." None of the bishops he interviewed condemned the Rising.

Joe told me on Holy Saturday that O'Rahilly had told him he got directions from Hobson, to go to either <sup>GD</sup> various <sup>GD</sup> Kerry or ~~some~~ districts on the South coast, with a <sup>presumably</sup> message/signed by Eoin McNeill countermanding all orders for the Sunday parades. When O'Rahilly came back on Friday, he was told that Hobson had been arrested on Pearse's orders. He went up to St. Enda's. Pearse opened the door and O'Rahilly drew his gun on him, and abused him. Pearse said nothing at all, and O'Rahilly went away. Later in the day, Thomas McDonagh and Sean McDermott got hold of him, and told him the whole situation, for the first time. He had not been told before about Hobson, that he had been opening letters, <sup>GD</sup> was fully aware of the plans ~~for some time~~, and was taking steps to see that they would not be carried out. They had not told O'Rahilly about this before because

he would have told Hobson that he knew it. When he found out that he had been carrying unauthorised orders, he was very unhappy, and completely agreed with the Military Council. The information contained in the latter part of this statement was given me by Joe, partly in Larkfield and for the rest in the Metropole, where Tom (my fiancé) and I visited him after tea on Holy Saturday evening.

Mick Collins who was acting as his guard had brought his bag - I think on Friday night - from Miss Quinn's to the Metropole. We were about an hour and a half with him. Grace Gifford was not there, during that time. Colm O'Lochlann was to come in about nine o'clock. I think he came as we were going out the door.

During our conversation about the actual position I asked Joe what was going to happen, and he said that they had discussed all the possibilities. Under no circumstances would the leaders do the same as James Stephens, and run away, leaving the rank and file. I knew that a week or two previously it had been thought advisable, that any individual man who could get it, should have some money available for possible escape, as at this stage it was thought that if the whole Military Council could get away, they might be able to come back. After further discussion, it was realised that if the leaders went, the whole Volunteer organisation would be betrayed and go to pieces.

The O'Rahilly was Treasurer, and at the time that he thought it advisable to conceal the money under the name of others, there was £30,000 in-bonds - (there was

*E.D.*

a question in the House of Commons about it and it came out in the Commission of Inquiry). Further sums of money had come in since then, and very little opportunity had been got to buy arms. That money was earmarked for the purposes of the Volunteers and especially the purchase of arms and the leaders would not have considered themselves entitled to touch a penny of it. The money was kept in banks in the names of less prominent members of the Volunteer Executive. They thought first, that it was possible the Castle might decide to take no action against them, but this was unlikely because it was now certain that the man on Banna Strand was Casement. It was known that there was very strong pressure from the British Cabinet on the Castle to take no action. If there was even a month of a respite, the effects of the countermanding orders- I refer now to Bulmer Hobson's activities in this respect - could be ascertained, as no one had the smallest idea how far he had gone. The second possibility was that the leaders would be arrested and interned so swiftly, that it would be impossible to provide against it. The third and most likely possibility was that the Castle would decide on general action against the whole Volunteer organisation. Their only possibility of making any resistance at all would be to start first. Joe was waiting for information from their friend in the Castle. If they found that the Castle was going to move, they decided that they would forestall them. I then asked Joe what he thought of the possible consequences of actual fighting. He said; "I don't suppose that any of the German guns have been saved" - he had no details of what happened the cargo - "We shall have to fight with

what we have and we may capture more. If by any chance, we can hold out for more than a week, people who up to now have not joined us, would come in, in increasing numbers as time goes on. If the German offensive which was <sup>timed</sup> for May comes off, the English would be so much occupied, that it is possible we could hold out one way or another for anything up to three months. At the end of that time the English would have to make peace. I asked what he thought we might get out of it, and he said he thought something like a repeal of the Union. In reply to a question about Grace, he informed me, he had decided not to get married the next day, as he did not think it fair to bring Grace, who knew nothing about politics, into the Post Office. He told my fiancé, that he would be considered to be on duty in the Imperial Hotel, and that he would send him the necessary instructions. I should mention, of course, that Tom and I were to get married the next day. We were married in the Sacristy, as the rule about not marrying in church before Low Sunday still held. There were two G. men present, and the brothers George and Jack, who were in uniform, and Rory O'Connor, who was not, took great pleasure in putting them out. We had breakfast in my mother-in-law's house.

Shortly after we got to the Imperial, a telephone message came from my mother to tell us about the MacNeill countermanding order, which she saw in the Independent. Rory O'Connor came in then, and confirmed that news, adding that it was not settled what was actually going to happen, but that as far as he knew, the Rising was going on next day, at 12 o'clock.

From about 10 o'clock on Monday, we kept looking out

the window of the front sitting-room we occupied in the hotel. We had a complete view of everything. At 12.20 a company of Volunteers, about 100, wheeled round from Eden Quay, walked up the street, halted in front of the G. P. O., and turned left into the P. O. We recognised Pearse, Connolly, McDermott, Willie Pearse and my brother <sup>Joe-</sup> George was with the Liverpool Lamps, and I think they came later. Liam Clark dropped a bomb accidentally on the <sup>new</sup> blue tessellated pavement of the doorway in the centre, and immediately he was carried away on a stretcher. We watched the Volunteers stopping milk-carts, and food carts, and bringing the food into the G. P. O. At the same time, the staff of the G.P.O. began to run out, hysterical girls screaming, clutching coats etc. The tricolour was run up at the South front corner of the building and the recruiting posters ripped off the pillars with the bayonets to the cheers of the crowd at the Pillar. I saw a man driving up, and getting out of a car, and Tom said it was McBride. He was not in uniform, and gave an impression of being casual. He must have gone on to Stephen's Green afterwards. He had told Joe, that he thought he would only bring discredit on the Volunteers if he joined before the fighting started, but he had got a promise that as soon as any fighting started, he would be told at once. Joe had a long conversation with him on that earlier occasion, during which he told him all his personal history.

They started to make a barricade in Princes St. with motor cars commandeered from people going to Fairyhouse Races. When Rory came over afterwards he told us stories about some of the owners - Army officers saying they would complain to the military authorities etc. They then started to make a barricade in Earl Street by driving a

tram into it. The tram-man could not get up enough speed around the corner to turn it over, though he tried several times. It was at that stage that some cavalry men appeared up near the Rotunda and the crowd in the Street who were getting rather excited, started running about. A number of priests suddenly appeared from Marlborough Street, and started to shoo the people off the streets. Most of them went, but a few refused to go. Then the Cavalry charged down the street. The G.P.O. men had orders to hold their fire- Rory told me this- until they were opposite the building. But the Volunteers could not hold their fire, some of them fired before the Cavalry got level. One man fell off his horse, killed by a bullet. We could see others being held on their horses by their comrades. Among the civilians was a tall man, dressed in black at the foot of the Fr. Mathew Statue. He stood for what seemed a few minutes, and then dropped dead. A horse dropped dead too, and the rider ran off down the street with the rest of the cavalry, towards the quays. I think it was then Pearse came out of the G.P.O. and read the Proclamation right in the middle of the street.

I should mention that Joe told me that barricades were not intended as part of their defence plans. They were simply intended to interrupt free communication for the enemy, and facilitate it for us, to enable us to cross the street. The tram I mentioned, was still in Earl Street and they put a bomb into it, but it did not go off. They put another one inside it, and Joe came out of the G.P.O. and shot at it with his Mauser from about 30 yards. The shot exploded the bomb and smashed the

chassis which now could not be moved, and served the purpose intended. Joe was always engaged in keeping the efficiency of the organisation up to standard. He was never done reading history, in order to have the theoretical and technical knowledge necessary to avoid errors, and to take advantage of the conventional errors made by soldiers and governments. He made his plans always with an eye to the mistakes the enemy would make.

The bomb that exploded in the tram smashed Noblett's window, and the crowd started to take out the sweets. They then started to break the other windows and general looting started. George came out of the G. P. O. and asked for civilians to volunteer help to stop the looting. Some did volunteer and George handed them white sticks. It was no use. The separation allowance women began to gather in the street. They crowded round the Post Office, and abused the Volunteers inside, throwing the glass from the broken windows at them. They knelt down in the street to curse them. I remember one woman kneeling with her scapular in her hand, screaming curses at them. George came out again, and waved a big knife at them, which produced some effect.

Rory came over to us with a message from Joe, that I was not allowed to go into the Post Office, there were enough women there, and that Tom and Rory were to go back to Larkfield to try and get the big tar still running, so that if it should happen that things turned better than was now anticipated, the phenol could be used for munitions. There were all sorts of excitement in the Imperial, a clamour about the destruction of property. We got our bicycles and with a small bag strapped on to

one of them, we cycled without any opposition across O'Connell Street Bridge, along D'Olier Street, Brunswick Street, Westland Row, the Green, Harcourt Street up through Belgrave Square to 13, Belgrave Road, where my mother-in-law lived. (she was a daughter of W. K. Sullivan, First President of Queen's College Cork). The bulk of our luggage was left in the hotel, and was of course burnt with the rest. In addition, about £1,000 worth of property belonging to different members of the family was looted from 26, Upr. Fitzwilliam St. and Larkfield. No compensation was ever paid for this, as we were informed that our case did not come under the 1923 Act.

On Tuesday morning, we went to Larkfield, and while we were there, Rory and my sister Fiona arrived. The still would not work, although the Glasgow firm was working at it at the time. The Larkfield Chemical Company (Tom, Rory and two sleeping partners called Supple, of the glove shop in Grafton Street) claimed and obtained compensation afterwards in respect of this.

Fiona had come from Fitzwilliam Street, where she was with my father and mother, and Dr. Kathleen Dillon, my sister-in-law, and she went back there. Rory went to his home in Monkstown, whence he kept coming in to the G.P.O. by Ringsend as long as he could. The news was uniformly bad, and Joe told him it was no use bringing any more men into the G.P.O. <sup>the week was over and</sup> When/he thought it likely that George and Jack would be shot as well as Joe, Rory got his father, who was solicitor to the C.D.B. to write a letter to some high official in the Castle, pleading for their lives on the score of youth. Rory brought the letter to the top of Grafton Street, and was asking a

policeman how he would be allowed to get to the Castle with his message, when a sniper's bullet aimed at the policeman, hit Rory in the ankle. This was just after the surrender. He was brought to Mercer's Hospital. He had a crucifix in his pocket, and the nurses baited him for being a Catholic and a Sinn Feiner, so that his Doctor, Dr. Robert Maunsell, took him away to a nursing home in Leeson Street.

My father had managed to get to the G.P.O. on Tuesday of Easter Week and had a long conversation with Connolly, who told him that he would like to re-write everything he had ever written in the light of what he now thought. He talked affectionately and enthusiastically of his comrades.

My father was arrested on the Monday following Easter Week, and my mother filled her handbag with Woodbines, and with this passport got through cordon after cordon, and got to the vicinity of the Castle with a view to making a row and getting the boys off. But she failed to reach it. She was arrested next day, and Fiona was sent to us in Belgrave Road; Dr. Kathleen Dillon came to us the following day, so we had a full house.

During Easter Week from Wednesday morning Rathmines was completely cut off from all other areas, and there was no question of getting out of it. Tom and I went down every day to Muriel McDonagh's in Oakley Road, to exchange news. Mrs. Skeffington was there on Wednesday and told us she was searching for Frank, who was missing since Monday. She told us in Muriel's when she heard from Fr. O'Loughlin of Portobello Barracks, that she might as well make up her mind that he was dead.

The night before Tomás McDonagh was shot, Muriel

got a message brought by a private soldier, that it was thought her husband was to be shot. She tried to get a 'phone message to the Castle to ask permission to see him, and Dr. Hennessy helped to find a 'phone. The only one working was at Du Cros' and they refused to let her use it. On the Wednesday evening Muriel came down to Belgrave Road about 11 o'clock<sup>p.m.</sup> with her brother Liebert who had turned up from the British Navy, and was staying with her. Fiona had gone to Muriel during the week, and left when he came. Muriel told me that Tomás had been shot that morning, and Joe was to be shot the next morning. Grace had gone to try and see him, and was not yet back. Joe and she had arranged previously that if he was arrested they would try to get married with a view to protecting her from her mother, who would not allow her to exercise her religion and was trying to marry her to a Protestant. Mrs. Gifford came down to Muriel's and brought her and Grace and the two children to her house in Palmerston Road, but she could not resist making insulting remarks about Tomás. So Muriel left and came back home with the children and Fiona went to help her with the housekeeping.

It took me two to three weeks to locate my father. One night after curfew two army officers arrived, and brought me a letter from him from Richmond Barracks. They told me they would call for me at 8.30. the next morning to bring me to him. He asked me in the letter for food, towel and soap. Next morning when I brought these things, Fiona and myself were kept waiting a long time in the office of the Provost-Marshal, Col. Foster. We were inspected by <sup>Major Dudley Heathcote</sup> ~~Dudley Heathcote~~, the Intelligence Officer. We met Fr. Augustine there, and he gave us an

account of Joe's death. We were brought up to a guardroom where my father had been brought to and where he was alone. He was extremely dirty and miserable and his beard had practically all fallen off. After a few days of bringing him food, he told me that his dinner was being sent in to him every day from the Officer's mess. A few days later, I learnt that the cook-sergeant of the officers mess of the Black Watch arrived in full regimentals in my father's cell and asked were the dinners satisfactory. My father said they were. Then the Cook said; "I have a message for you. Mr. Dewar told me to say "Remember". My father was mystified. After a lot of cogitation my father remembered that Mr. Dewar (whiskey) was a Jacobite, and my father who had met him on Tommy Lipton's yacht, had made friends with him on the basis of his having deciphered and published the diary of an officer in the Jacobite army. Mr. Dewar had evidently instructed a friend in the Black Watch to do whatever he could for my father. After a few weeks in barracks, my parents were offered deportation to England and given a choice of two or three towns. The alternative was continued imprisonment for both. My mother was then in Mountjoy, where she was raising Cain. He accepted deportation for her sake. He chose Oxford because he wanted to read in the Bodleian Library. He was not admitted to it as the man to whom he applied for admission, head of one of the colleges and brother of Dr. McCann, the obstetrician in Merrion Square, refused to sign a ticket for him. He probably could have got someone else to sign, but he did not bother further.

During my first visit to Richmond Barracks, my father told me that the day Joe was courtmartialled, he

saw him standing in the rain below his window in the barrack square. He knew he was to be shot, and they gazed at each other for about half-an-hour before Joe was moved off. My father was weeping as he told me this.

I have been preparing with a view to publication in the Galway Tribune, an account of the circumstances surrounding the murder of Fr. Griffin by the Black and Tans. I had been living there since 1919 as my husband got a post in University College, Galway that year. I shall send the Bureau copies of the articles if and when they are published. ~~The editor has at last consented to publish the first one next week.~~

Signed; Emaline Dillon

Date; 26. 2. 1950

Witness;

Tommy O'Sullivan  
Ollamh Ceimiochta  
Gaillimh

Sam Crossan  
28. 3. 1950

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