

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILITAIRÉ 1913-21

No. W.S. 1053

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COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,053

Witness

Seamus Kavanagh,  
4 Coolevin Road,  
Long Lane,  
Clanbrassil Street,  
Dublin.

Identity.

Signal Officer  
3rd Batt'n. Dublin Brigade, 1917-'18;  
Captain 'C' Company, 1921.

Subject.

- (a) Imprisonment 1916;
- (b) Thomas Ashe funeral 1917;
- (c) Reorganisation of third Battalion  
Irish Volunteers.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

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File No. ...S.570.....

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Second Statement by SEAMUS KAVANAGH

4 Coolevin Road, Long Lane,

Clanbrassil Street, Dublin.

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Perhaps I should here record the names, as well as I can remember, of the officers and men of "C" Company who fought either with us in Bolands or with other garrisons :-

Simon Donnelly, Captain.

Micheál Malone, 1st Lieutenant (killed in action).

George Reynolds, Section Commander (killed in action),

Séamus Grace, Section Commander.

Nicholas Alexander, Section Commander (Jacob's).

Byrne, John (First Aid).

Byrne, Patrick (recruit, Clanwilliam House), - Wednesday.

Byrne, Michael (No. 25).

Clarke, Joseph.

Crofts, Gerard (G.P.O.)

Cooper, Robert (wounded).

Casey, J. (deceased) (with 4th Battalion).

Doyle, James.

Dunne, John

Doyle, Patrick

Doyle, J.H. (deceased)

Brady, James (Jacob's).

Gordon, L.

Green, Owen (wounded)

Hickey, Michael

Irwin, Sam

Hayes, A.

Flanagan, Patrick (deceased).

Kenny, Harry (G. P. O.).  
 Kavanagh, Séamus  
 Kavanagh, Michael  
 Kavanagh, Liam  
 Kavanagh, Peadar  
 Kavanagh, Seán  
 Kirwan, Edward  
 Murphy, Charles (wounded) (deceased).  
 Mooney, P. (deceased).  
 Murphy, Martin (G. P. O.). (deceased).  
 Martin, Joseph (deceased)  
 McDowell, Pat  
 McEvoy, Pat ((deceased) (Jacob's))  
 Murray, F.  
 Nugent, M. (G. P. O.).  
 O'Byrne, Pat (Jacob's) (deceased).  
 O'Connor, Joseph  
 O'Carroll, Richard (killed in action), Wexford Street.  
 Roe, Patrick  
 Ryan, Con  
 Ronan, Willie  
 Venebles, Thomas  
 Rutherford, Alf (Jacob's).  
 Peelo, Denis  
 O'Donoghue, Denis  
 Brown, James: (wounded).  
 Molloy, Joseph (deceased).  
 Graham, James (Four Courts area).

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THE RELEASE FROM FRONGOCH AND AFTER.

While undergoing solitary confinement in Wakefield Prison after the Rising, I am afraid we were rather a despondent lot, sitting on our little stool or pacing the cell practically all the day, we had plenty of time to think. The Rising was crushed and our leaders all executed and it seemed that every able-bodied man in Ireland was in jail, and what of our own comrades of "C" Company? We knew that Lieutenant Malone had been killed, but what of the men of Clanwilliam House? It did not seem possible that any had escaped. Then I had not seen Paddy McDowell from the beginning of the week and I thought that he was in Clanwilliam House also, but when we were allowed to associate with each other and get visitors things brightened up considerably and news soon trickled through that the people were already turning towards us. This was proved when I was released in July, 1916, with a party, and we were overwhelmed by a welcome at Westland Row that fairly took our breaths, and I know it brought tears to at least one man's eyes. We knew at once that the cause was not lost and that the Rising had not been in vain, so we looked to the future with renewed hope.

My first job on release was to visit, as promised, the relatives of some of my pals that I had left behind in Frongoch, to relieve their anxiety and to give messages in some cases. So imagine my joy and surprise when on going to Joe Molloy's place in Palace Street who should I see sitting inside when the door opened but Paddy McDowell and Jimmy Doyle. I said, "Oh, I thought you were dead". Jimmy remained silent but Paddy said drolly, "Maybe it's our

ghosts that you're talking to". I almost forgot the message in the excitement, and we spent the next couple of hours going over our various experiences. It seems that Paddy had been in Judge Johnston's house and was away up the railway line at the time of the surrender and he did not know of the surrender for some hours after it.

Jimmy Doyle could not give a clear picture of how he got out of Clanwilliam House. He knew that our section leader George Reynolds had died in his arms and that Willie Ronan had got away, but he only had a hazy idea of someone taking himself away, changing his uniform for a civilian suit and getting him to Paddy McDowell's place in York Street.

Terence McSwiney who was our room commander in Frongoch, had often advised us that on release we should learn our districts and countryside; so that was the means we adopted to keep together until the remainder were released. On one occasion we walked to the Scalp near Enniskerry, returning by train from Carrickmines, after dancing all evening with a Gaelic League party that we had joined up with.

I got back to my job in August and was sent on night work in September, so I could only go with the boys on Sundays.

#### FIRST JOB AFTER RISING.

Approaching Christmas 1916, we were informed by Captain Donnelly that we had a job to do on Christmas Day. At the appointed time we met in a lane off Lower Baggot Street and proceeded in twos into what was then "The Irish Book Shop". When we were all inside a man produced twenty

shotguns made up in four parcels of ten stocks or ten barrels each parcel. Four of us took a parcel each, and accompanied by a companion for escort, made for the next rendezvous which was the rear of Captain Donnelly's house in Wexford Street; the rear was reached through Liberty Lane, Lower Kevin Street. Those shotguns were afterwards collected singly by the men to whom they were allocated. I received one which I exchanged in 1918 for a Lee Enfield rifle.

From the date of our release to the beginning of 1917, we used No. 6 Harcourt Street as a Headquarters and a place to meet for a game of cards if the weather was bad. It was Sinn Féin Head Office and the words "Sinn Féin Bank" were up in large gold letters across the front of the house, so it was only useful to us while our activities were peaceful or seemingly so. That and the back of a large hall was probably the reason that we were instructed to become members of the Temperance Club at 41 York Street. So back to this already historic hall we went, to add, as time proved, a few more chapters to its history.

#### RE-ORGANISING OF "C" COMPANY.

Here (in 41) we met early in 1917 to re-organise "C" Company, and as I was on night work I was not considered eligible even for my old job of Company Signaller, which was given to Sam Irwin. The other positions filled were:- Captain - Simon Donnelly; 1st Lieutenant - Paddy Flanagan; 2nd Lieutenant - Seumas Grace. I can only remember three section leaders, viz.:- Nicholas Alexander, Michael Hickey, and Joe O'Connor.

About thirty-seven officers and men paraded with the

Company at Easter 1916. There were fourteen men with other garrisons, which made a total of fifty-one officers and men that turned out in 1916, which perhaps was not a bad average considering the circumstances at the time, and as there were two killed and ten others, for one reason or another, did not parade with the Company again, our strength on re-organising was, 39 officers, N.C.Os. and men, and was the nucleus of the future "C" Company.

#### GLENDHU CAMP.

No story of "C" Company would be complete without an account of the camp at Glendhu, and as it was first organised early in 1917, I propose to put it in here.

Around Christmas time and before the Company was re-organised the O/C., Simon Donnelly, suggested the desirability of having a summer week-end camp and about ten of us agreed. So on discussing ways and means I was made first Camp Quartermaster. It was my first job to collect one shilling per week from the others to defray the initial expenses, and by April 1917, we had sufficient in hands to buy a large bell tent and a small marquee. Having negotiated with Mr. Casey in Glendhu (two Mr. Casey's who were brothers, had lands there, and we called our man the upper Casey as he owned the land higher up the hill than the other) we transported the tents out and were all ready to commence by the first of May, 1917.

We had picked a spot beside the small river that flows through the glen, and as we thought away from Mr. Casey's cows, but we did not know the ways of either cows or rivers. On one occasion when we went out we found that the cows had bored holes in the tents with their horns,

and on another occasion when it had been raining all day and had not ceased up to the time we retired for the night, the river rose up and nearly carried the man that was on that side of the tent away. So although we finished out that year there, we made better arrangements for the following years - going lower down and to higher ground on the other side of the river where there were not any cows. That we were not yet experienced campers was soon evident by the fact that one very rainy night the front pole of the marquee fell in on us and while one of us held the pole up inside, Sam Irwin divesting himself of everything but a cap, went out to fix it outside.

During 1918/1919 we found increased use for the Camp. On a hill about 75 yards south of the Camp we found a small ravine partially overgrown with bushes and here we constructed a miniature rifle range. Captain Paddy Flanagan periodically brought out the Company, in parties of half Company strength, for rifle practice. Here too, I brought the Battalion Signallers on a couple of occasions for practice in field telegraphy.

We had one exciting day in 1918. Luckily there was nothing of a military nature scheduled for that day, but we had the Tri-Colour planted on a mound above the Camp, when a party of British soldiers under a Lieutenant, and accompanied by an R. I. C. Sergeant and Constable, raided us. They searched the tents and boxes and asked for our names and addresses. I don't think anybody gave either correctly. They then confiscated the flag and asked us to pose for a photograph. We agreed, with the flag draped in front of us. The Lieutenant in charge then asked the police Sergeant if he wanted us taken away, but the Sergeant said "No", realising that the only charge he could make was, displaying the Tri-Colour.



In 1919 as activities on both sides were being stepped up, our life in the week-end Camp became more precarious. Seumas Grace, the Company's 2nd Lieutenant, was at this time camping with some Fianna boys on a hill above us and about fifty yards to the south.

One Saturday night in June, 1919, Grace was on his way out to the Camp on foot, when somewhere between Rathfarnham and Ballyboden he noticed some R. I. C. men on the other side of the hedge, and, peeping abreast of him, when he came to a dark part of the road near the Woodbrook Laundry a shot rang out and he fell wounded in the thigh; he was able to throw his gun over a wall before being brought to the City of Dublin Hospital, Baggot Street, where he posed as "Joe Fagan" and got away with it.

At this time Captain Flanagan was "on the run" and he was also out of work and as was usual with him on such occasions he lived in the Camp until he commenced work again and found fresh "digs". So shortly after Grace being wounded, Captain Flanagan was awakened one morning to find an R. I. C. Sergeant in the tent and a Constable posted at the door. The Sergeant, having taken Paddy's gun from beneath the pillow before awakening him, played with him for a while like a cat with a mouse, asking him "had he any arms?", and making passes around the bed and towards the pillow. He finally produced Paddy's gun and asked him did he (Paddy) recognise it. Paddy saw at once that the game was up, and sizing up the situation, he dealt the Sergeant a blow knocking him over the bed. He then charged the Constable at the door. The Constable grabbed at him, but as all Paddy had on was a shirt, he slipped out of that and away with him over the hill at the back of the

tent, in the nude. He ran through a couple of fields until he came to a gate leading on to the road. Having jumped the gate, he found himself facing a girl. He turned to get away from her when he heard her up the road screaming as she ran from what she probably thought was a mad man. Paddy then succeeded in getting into Mr. Gasey's sandpits where that good man fitted him out with some of his son's clothes.

The above incident put a finish to our Camp in Glendhu. We succeeded in transferring the tents to Bohernabreena where we finished the season.

It is nice to recall some of the men who were campers in those early years of "C" Company. Many have gone to their reward; the remainder, although over thirty years older, are with us still.

The first year we had: Joe Martin, R. I. P. :  
Mick Hickey, R. I. P. : J. H. Doyle, R. I. P. : Paddy Flanagan,  
R. I. P. : Sam Irwin, Edward Kirwan, Pádraig Ó Dubhghail,  
Jimmy Doyle, Simon Donnelly, Mick Kavanagh,  
Seumas Kavanagh and Liam Kavanagh.

In the succeeding years some of the above having gone to the Engineers, we were joined by Joe Keane, R. I. P. :  
Leo Duffy, R. I. P. : Louis D'Arcy (killed by Black and Tans in Galway): Ben Doyle, Hugh Brady, Leo Laverty.

We were joined in Bohernabreena by some men of the Engineers and a jolly lot they were, with sing-songs every night or at a moment's notice. They sang Benediction after Mass on Sundays and whenever I think of Tommy Bryan (an old "C" Company man, then with the Engineers) that is how I recall him, in that little church in Bohernabreena, not knowing that within eighteen months he would meet his death at the hands of an English hangman.

THOMAS ASHE FUNERAL.

In September, 1917, after a hunger strike during which he was forcibly fed, Thomas Ashe died as a result of the forcible feeding. All Ireland mourned the loss of such a grand man, and cursed and vilified England and her jail system. But we soon realised as was the case of our leaders of Easter Week, Ashe did not die in vain, which was proved by the numbers of young men that flowed into our ranks, and "C" Company was soon up to its normal strength of 120 officers and men.

The Dublin Brigade turned out in strength for the public funeral and a firing party was selected to fire revolver shots over the grave. I was given the job as escort for the firing party, but as the firing party was to get away by motor car and I was on foot, I was in a pickle until someone, whom I did not know, loaned me his bicycle. Having got the owner's name and address I set out after the firing party and on seeing them safely into the car, proceeded to follow them. I managed to keep in touch down the Whitworth Road and into Dorset Street, but as the car was doing about forty miles per hour (which was good for a car at that time) I soon had to give up and proceeded to Pim Street where the man lived that had loaned me the bicycle.

13th NOVEMBER - POLICE RAID ON WHITEHALL, KIMMAGE.

A couple of months after the Ashe funeral we paraded at Whitehall, Kimmage, on Sunday, 13th November. This was additional to the usual Thursday night parades at 41 York Street, which went on summer and winter. Captain Donnelly put us through our paces in company drill and extended

order drill. We had just completed a movement in extended order drill when on looking behind us we saw dozens of police swarming into the field. We were ordered to the opposite hedge and when we reached that our O/C. ordered us to get away if possible. Having got to the other side of the hedge we were able to take stock and found that our 1st Lieutenant, Paddy Flanagan, and thirteen others had been arrested, whereas on our side of the hedge I found poor Willie Ronan with one trouser leg missing; he had left the missing leg on the barbed wire.

Lieutenant Flanagan and his comrades were charged and sentenced to two months each; and as at this time the policy of non-recognition of British rule or the rights of their courts to try Irishmen had been adopted, all the prisoners in the court created an awful din, keeping on their hats or caps, and considerable force had to be used on Paddy Flanagan who gripped the dock, refusing to let go, shouting all the time "Up the Republic", a slogan very popular at that time.

The other prisoners with Paddy were Francis Hannigan, Tommy Atkins, Michael Kavanagh, Joseph O'Carroll, Patrick Farrell, Pat Mooney, Stephen Kirwan, Albert Rutherford, James Graham, Micheál O'Sullivan, Pat McEvoy, Paddy Roe and James Myers.

During this period and throughout 1918, the Company got many splendid recruits in although we did not know it at the time, but many of them attained officer rank in our own Battalion and Brigade and in other Brigades and Divisions throughout Ireland, thus enhancing the reputation of their old Company, and I don't think that any of them that are alive now have forgotten their Alma Mater - "C" Company, III Battalion, Dublin Brigade.

The reason for this digression is that I want to mention particularly one of these splendid fellows, first, because I was introduced to him before he came into the Company and afterwards as he was mounting the ladder to officerdom he often paid me the compliment of asking for my advice on military matters. A third reason perhaps will show how things can be lost and forgotten in Lost Property Offices.

One night in the autumn or early winter of 1917 while walking across town with our Company Commander, Simon Donnelly (off parade we called each other by our christian names) on coming near the Pillar he said, "I have to meet a man here", and when the man arrived he introduced him to me as Mr. Moore. I only caught snatches of their conversation, so when we parted with Mr. Moore I asked Simon what it was all about. He told me that our friend was a clerk in the Tram Company and that he had two rifles in his office that he had taken from the Lost Property Office, and that they may have been there since the Boer War for all he knew to the contrary. He also informed me that I was to meet Mr. Moore a couple of nights later with another man to take home the rifles.

The other man turned out to be Séamus Grace, 2nd Lieutenant of the Company, and we met Mr. Moore near the Pillar at the appointed time. In a short talk with him he told me his name was Robert, and we could call him "Bob". So Bob Moore he always was to us until someone changed it to Rory O'Moore, by which name he was known until his death. Go ndéanaidh Dia trócaire ar a anam.

Well, on being assured that we had a long screw driver with us to separate the butts from the barrels, we

proceeded to the Tram Company's Offices which were then situated at the corner of Cathedral Street before it was widened, or on the right of where Arus Brugha is now. Having passed us through the clerks in the Hall Office, we went upstairs to his own office where he produced the two rifles, and having taken the butt from the barrel of the first one he gave me the two parts which I went away with at once as it was better to leave the building singly than in a group. I had the rifle parts secured under my overcoat.

Jimmy Grace had not the same luck. They could not get the butt off because the screw was rusted and Grace had to carry it as it was, complete. As it was a long Lee-Enfield and, therefore, hard to hide under an overcoat, Grace's dilemma will be best understood by those that knew him. I think Bob Moore helped him by going some or all the way home with him.

Afterwards when Bob came into the Company he told me that he brought home a similar rifle and that he had no better sense than to go upstairs on a tram, and when he came to his destination he thought everything was fine until the Conductor whispered to him, "It's alright, boss, no one saw it but myself".

I should have mentioned earlier that I was now on day work since September, 1917, and, therefore, able to take part in the nightly as well as the week-end activities of "C" Company.

#### SOUTH ARMAGH ELECTION, FEBRUARY 1918.

At the beginning of 1918 we were able to look back on the previous year as one of achievement, not only in our own "C" Company, but all over the country. "C" Company's

activities were reflected almost in every Company of Volunteers in Ireland.

The country had also made tremendous strides forward nationally. Count Plunkett had been elected for Roscommon; Joe McGuinness for Longford and de Valera for Clare, and now there was an election pending in South Armagh. Dr. McCartan was our candidate and I think a man named Donnelly or Harrison was the Redmondite or Nationalist as they called themselves. As there was every prospect of this election being a very bitter one, with the A. O. H. backed by the Orangemen on one side, and our people on the other side, our Executive called for Volunteers from the Dublin Brigade to go up to South Armagh to counteract intimidation, and "C" Company was not slow in coming forward.

We were forbidden to carry arms but were allowed to carry walking sticks, and our O/C., Simon Donnelly, loaned me a fine blackthorn. So on the appointed day we entrained at Amiens Street Station for Newry and on arrival at our destination we were met by a large crowd that gave every indication of being hostile. We had visions of another Limerick and I do not think that anybody liked the idea of going out among them, when we suddenly heard a woman's voice ring out from the centre of the mob, shouting "Up De Valera, the man they daren't shoot". It is hard to describe the effect that that woman's voice and words had upon us; apart from the words and the personality referred to in them, her voice had a ring of defiance that electrified us. We jumped out of the train, formed up in fours and marched out into the crowd as if we owned the town. What surprised us most was that not one finger was raised against us, so we continued our march to the barracks that

had been prepared for us in an empty mill or warehouse. Having had something to eat, we were about to prepare our sleeping quarters, when we of "C" Company and some others were ordered out and told that there was a fifteen mile march confronting us; we squirmed, yet there was not one word of protest. I often wonder could any regular army of the present day match the discipline of that voluntary one of our time. So out we turned, our destination being a place named Newtown Hamilton, and we did not feel the journey too bad as we whistled and sang; then we were given lifts in motors and horse-drawn cars, the head of the column being taken first for a few miles, set down to continue on foot, while the cars returned for a fresh batch.

In this way we reached the village and were shown to our quarters where we discovered that we were really on active service as there was no sleeping accommodation, but a crowd of us had to sleep on the floor in one small room. Patrols were then formed to patrol the village, changing at regular intervals and excitement was heightened next morning by the advance on the village of a party of Hibs. (A. O. H.) whom we suspected were reinforced by Orangemen. They did exactly as we did, patrolling the village, but on opposite sides of the streets.

Here again, discipline was very marked between the two parties; whereas we moved under a squad or section leader, we were silent and smoked only on his permission and then only while halted and "at ease"; they, although they kept some semblance of military formation, often shouted threatening phrases at us. On one occasion we heard one of them shout: "Not one of them will leave Newtown Hamilton alive", presumably meaning us.

We were amused also by their leader, a small man with



a big stick. He used only two words of command - "Quick March" and "Halt", and whenever he gave one of his commands he would flourish his stick high over his head on the sound of the last word of his command.

The second day was polling day. The Hibernians lined up opposite the Courthouse and remained there for the day while we continued to patrol, but this time we confined our patrolling to the Square where the Courthouse was situated.

At about 8 o'clock in the evening it came to Bob Moore's turn to take out a patrol. He was already a squad leader in the Company, but he was not feeling well and he asked me to take it out in his place, and as I was now Company Signaller and a similar rank to Bob I consented.

We moved out, having relieved the patrol that was going off, we paced slowly up and down opposite the Hibernians ranged outside the Courthouse. Except for the stars and lights from some of the houses, the village was in absolute darkness. When we were patrolling for about fifteen minutes and moving back towards the Courthouse, a shot rang out from one of the houses on our left and opposite the Courthouse. We did not pay any attention to it, but I moved the patrol back sooner than I normally would have done to see if we could locate the house from where the shot came. All the houses were in darkness, however, and all the windows were closed, so we took it that someone was merely trying to scare us. Nothing further happened and the ballot boxes were taken away eventually. The Hibernians also went off and we were left in sole possession of the town. The patrols were then called in and we retired to our makeshift barracks to

rest if it were not possible to sleep.

We had been living on bread, jam and tea for the past two days, so on the morning of the third day when someone said that a good breakfast could be had in the town for 2/6d. per head, there was a charge made for the restaurant where we got ham rashers, eggs, tea, bread and butter for our 2/6d. I was never so glad that I had 2/6d. than I was on that morning.

After breakfast we commenced our homeward trek, first the fifteen miles to Newry where we learned of some of the experiences of our comrades that we had left behind.

On the night that we left for Newtown Hamilton, a party was sent down town with Séamus Grace in charge to guard the "Sinn Féin" Committee Rooms, and another small party which included Jimmy Doyle (shelmaliar) was sent to guard some motor cars that were to be used on election day. Sabotage was feared, but nothing was attempted, perhaps because of the guard.

#### RE-ORGANISATION OF BATTALION AND COMPANY.

The spring of 1918 saw many changes in the Company and Battalion. The Battalion for the first time since 1916 was organised on a proper basis, which in turn entailed a re-organising of "C" Company and some other Companies of the Battalion.

Captain Joseph O'Connor of "A" Company was made Battalion Commandant. Captain Seán McMahon of "B" Company became Battalion Vice-Commandant, and Captain Simon Donnelly of "C" Company became Battalion Adjutant.

Engineers, small arms, first aid and signalling classes were organised, the Engineers later being made into a separate Company.

I became Battalion Signaller with the rank of 1st Lieutenant and a place on the Battalion staff. A man from "A" Company named Farrell, became Battalion Quartermaster, but he was succeeded later by two "C" Company men - first, by Micheál De Búrca and then by Leo Duffy.

At the election of officers that followed this re-organisation, Paddy Flanagan was elected Captain; Séamus Grace, 1st Lieutenant, and Nicholas Alexander, 2nd Lieutenant. But a few months later Nicholas had to resign for health reasons, and Matty Connolly became 2nd Lieutenant. Liam Kavanagh was Adjutant until he too went to the Battalion, when Joe Keane became Adjutant. Jimmy Doyle took over the duties of Quartermaster from Sam Irwin.

#### IRISH REPUBLICAN BROTHERHOOD.

Simon Donnelly, who was now Battalion Adjutant, approached some of us to join a secret organisation, 1918. I can remember some of those that joined with me - our O/C. Captain Paddy Flanagan; Sam Irwin and Joe Martin, but others from the Company came in later. We were sworn in by the Centre, Martin Murphy, another old "C" Company man, who is lately deceased.

When the glamour had worn off I became rather disappointed with it all because we did nothing but swear in new members or approve prospective members, whose names were sent around by the other Circles. Each branch was

called a Circle, the Chairman of which was known as the Centre. Our Circle was known to outsiders as the "Brothers Pearse Football Club", and as we were forbidden to mention the name of the organisation in conversation, we usually referred to it as the Brothers Pearse. We remained in it until 1922 when after a stormy meeting following the split and the Treaty debates, we broke up, never to meet again as a Circle.

RAID ON 41 YORK STREET - 14th JUNE, 1918.

Being now a staff Lieutenant and responsible for the training of the signallers in the different Companies of the Battalion, for which I used the hall at 34 Camden Street, and when available, 41 York Street, I was not always able to be with "C" Company on Thursday nights, but I usually paid them a visit some time during the night if at all possible.

So it turned out that on Thursday, 14th June, 1918, I found that I had a free night and used it by visiting my old Company. Having spoken to Captain Paddy Flanagan about his signallers and their attendance at classes, I was about to go upstairs to the Billiards or Card Room when I was joined by Sam Irwin and Joe Martin. Sam, who was now with the Engineers, required something that he thought he might find in the cellar, so he asked Joe and I to help him find it.

Having rooted around the cellar for a while we heard a commotion up in the street and on looking up through the area window we saw two tenders full of police draw up to the door. Sam and Joe immediately made a dash for the stairs to warn the Company in the hall. I called to them

that they were already too late, but they did not heed me. I then followed them but at a slower pace. They were both caught by the police at the door of the drill hall and were taken away with the party that were taken from the drill hall.

I walked slowly up the stairs through the police in the outer hall and into the card room on the ground floor. Seeing that a few elderly men that were in the room, were frightened-looking and my appearance among them did not improve matters, I left this room and went upstairs to the room directly overhead, again passing through the police in the outer hall en route.

The windows of the upstairs room looked out upon York Street and we had a good view of what was happening in the street. A crowd had gathered and our old O/C., Simon Donnelly, was coming to the hall, and while trying to get through the crowd he was accosted by a big D.M.P. man twice as big as himself. I have no knowledge of what words passed between them, but I do know that Simon commenced to lash out with a light stick he was carrying, on the policeman, which was effective enough to make the policeman give way. The crowd thereupon grew a bit threatening and the police drew their batons, but they did not use them as by this time the party that had been taken from the drill hall were being put into the police tenders and were driven away.

I would like to mention some of the men that were taken that night, but as there were Engineers as well as "C" Company men there, if I omit to mention any "C" man it can be understood that I thought he was with the Engineers.

I have already mentioned Sam Irwin as being with the Engineers. Noel Lemass who was in charge of the Engineers and whose riddled body was found on the Featherbed Mountain late in 1923, was also taken.

Prominent among the "C" Company men were, Louis D'Arcy, who was afterwards murdered by the Black and Tans in Headford, County Galway; Andrew Cooney (now Dr. Andrew Cooney) who later as Vice Brigadier of a Tipperary Brigade, carried through successfully a train ambush on his O/C. becoming a casualty.

Others taken were, M. White, John Bannon, John Dunne, Thomas Malone, J. Graham, and as already mentioned Joe Martin.

#### CONSCRIPTION.

During the summer of 1918, England threatened to enforce a Conscription Act on Ireland. This threat was met by the people of Ireland standing up to it to a man.

A pledge was signed at all church doors in the country to resist conscription by every means if it were enforced and the ranks of the Volunteers were increased by one hundred per cent.

It was found necessary, therefore, to make two Companies of "C" Company, the new Company being known as the Recruits company, being trained and organised by officers and N.C.Os. of "C" Company.

With the passing of the threat of conscription many of those recruits went back to their former occupations, but as some remained and became good soldiers of the

Republic, perhaps the time lost on the new Company was not entirely wasted.

England answered the anti-conscription campaign by suppressing four organisations on the 4th July, 1918, viz.:- Sinn Féin, Cumann na mBan, Irish Volunteers and Gaelic League, by issuing the following proclamation -

"Under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887, Section 6, The Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council are satisfied that ..... said associations in parts of Ireland encourage and aid persons to commit crimes and promote and incite to acts of violence and intimidation and interfere with the administration of the law and disturb the maintenance of law and order. They are also satisfied that the said associations are a grave menace to, and are designed to terrorise the peaceful and law-abiding subjects of His Majesty in Ireland".

There was no reaction to the above proclamation by the members of the organisations named. They had of necessity to find fresh meeting rooms and drill places. The Gaelic League was somewhat upset because they claimed to be non-political and non-belligerent, and it was palpable that the British meant the G.A.A. when they named the Gaelic League. As proof of this they (the British) stopped several games throughout the country and the Gaelic League functioned practically without hindrance.

"C" Company met in the Phoenix Park, Milltown Golf Links and sometimes out on the mountains on Sundays.

But as it was dangerous to use the same place too often they used the following places from time to time - Turf Bank, Charlemont Street Bridge; Canal Bank, Leeson Street Bridge; rere of Millar & Beatty's, Long Lane; William's Place, Long Lane; Gas Company Yard, Sir John Rogerson's Quay; Kevin Barry Memorial Hall, Parnell Square; small hall opposite Harold's Cross Park.

"ARMISTICE" - 1918.

On Monday, 11th November, 1918, an armistice was signed by the countries that had been at war for the previous four years, and within two hours of the signing the pro-British element in Ireland broke loose.

In the afternoon of that day a party of students from Trinity College, Dublin, after demonstrating outside Sinn Féin Headquarters, 6 Harcourt Street, made an attempt to rush the building. They were held up by the people who were on the premises - the caretaker, Joe Clarke, officials and, perhaps, a visitor or two - who beat back the intruders with their fists and finally ejected them. Thus forewarned, it was deemed prudent to call on the Volunteers for protective help. As No. 6 was situated in "C" Company area, the Company was mobilised for the same evening, for the lane off Montague Street leading to the rere of 6 Harcourt Street. The lane was used for entrance and exit throughout this trouble.

About 7 o'clock in the evening of November 11th, a mob of British soldiers and civilians, including women and girls, wearing red, white and blue ribbons and waving Union Jacks, marched through the principal streets,



singing pro-British songs. This mob at intervals made sorties against No.6, but on each occasion they were repulsed by the garrison. The same tactics were tried again on the next night, Tuesday, with the same results.

Wednesday, 13th November, was by far the worst night for the garrison of No.6. On that night the British soldiers and their hangers-on organised assaults, not only on Sinn Féin Headquarters, but on the Mansion House, Liberty Hall and several public buildings in the city. Shortly after 8 o'clock the soldiers, accompanied by their civilian friends - male and female - marched from St. Stephen's Green into Harcourt Street. A halt was called outside No.6, when cheers were raised for the Allies and "Rule Britannia" was sung. While this demonstration was in progress a number of soldiers tried to effect an entrance. The door was shut against them and one of their number, armed with an iron bar taken from an adjoining shop, tried to force open the door. They were repulsed by the garrison, who used water, kitchen utensils, or whatever came nearest to hands. A second attempt was made to force the door, which was also repulsed. A fusillade of stones was directed at the windows of the house, smashing the glass to fragments.

A crowd of civilians on the street raised sympathetic cheers for the defenders of the house and were at once set upon by the soldiers and badly mauled, blows being freely exchanged. The police came on the scene and quelled the disturbance. It was observed that the police interfered only when Sinn Féin sympathisers were involved.

The soldiers and their friends remained for some little time, demonstrating. Then some of their number moved off towards St. Stephen's Green, leaving a big portion behind.

Meanwhile the small garrison of about twenty men under Captain Paddy Flanagan, with the late Harry Boland and Seán McMahon could hear the shouts of the mob along St. Stephen's Green after 7.30 p.m. They decided to leave the hall door open with the lights switched off, and then lined one side of the hall in the dark. They were armed with sticks and ashplants. Harry Boland had a pair of "knuckledusters" on. When the mob arrived they rushed into the hall. Somebody switched on the lights and the ructions started. The garrison drove the mob, consisting of soldiers and civilians, out of the hall and continued the fight on the steps, Joe Martin being wounded at this time.

As the mob's numbers increased, the garrison had to retreat back into hall, closing the hall door. The soldiers then tried to force the door, using iron bars from nearby shops, but Rory O'Moore saved the situation by firing one shot from his revolver. The mob then smashed the windows of the house with bottles and stones. The garrison replied with the caretaker's (Joe Clarke's) coal. Phil (Onion) Quinn, "B" Company, was wounded by a bottle at this stage and was attended to by a Miss Hoey who was in the building at the time. The garrison was now greatly reinforced by more men from "C" Company and from other Companies, including the Fianna.

Sometime later, Seán McMahon and Simon Donnelly, who were Battalion Officers, arranged with Captain Flanagan to have most of the garrison brought out by the rear and lined up Montague Street. They then charged down Harcourt Street and into the mob outside No.6, using their sticks, right and left. The soldiers, who did not have trench tool handles, took off their belts,

but after about five minutes they broke and ran. The ambulance was called and cleared some soldiers and civilians from off the streets. The garrison was left with four soldiers' caps and three belts. Later in the night the military turned out armed and patrolled Harcourt Street.

