

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILÉATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 268

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COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 268

Witness

Mr. Liam T. Cosgrave,
Beechpark, Templeogue,
Co. Dublin.

Identity

Lieut. 4th Battalion Dublin Brigade I.V's. 1916;
Ex-President Executive Council Saorstát Éireann.

Subject

National activities 1904-1916, and a
few incidents during period 1916-20.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

Nil

File No. S.541

Form B.S.M. 2.

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The name 'Jno. MacDonagh' in this document
should, in every case, read 'Thomas MacDonagh'.

Signed *A. J. Coogan*
16.8.50.

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My first connection with the National Movement was in 1905, when with my brother Phil and my uncle P.J.Cosgrave, I attended the first meeting of Sinn Fein presided over by Edward Martyn at the Rotunda, amongst those present being Dr.Oliver St.J.Gogarty.

Sinn Fein had a profound influence in arousing the National consciousness, and attracted not only the youth, but men and women of all ages to its ranks. One good result was to develop a spirit of self-reliance which led to active participation in the Volunteer Movement. In 1908 Sinn Fein members of the Dublin Corporation numbered 13 out of a total of about 80. By 1916 this number had fallen to 3 - Alderman Tom Kelly, John T.O'Kelly and W.T.Cosgrave.

I was not at any time a member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. In 1910 Donnchadha Healy suggested that I should join, and in Holy Week 1916, D.O'Hannigan came to see me and asked me about "giving the oath to the men". I told him that the men, if they intended to turn out, would do so without any oath. Later, in Lewes Gaol, Tom Hunter told me that I had been given two opportunities of joining, and that there would not be a third.

At the inauguration of the Volunteers in 1913, I offered my name for membership, and after some time was appointed to "B" Company of the 4th Battalion with the rank of Lieutenant, holding that rank at the time of the Rising.

On the 26th July, 1914, the 4th Battalion marched with the Dublin Brigade to Howth, arriving there about midday. We halted at the harbour for some little time awaiting the arrival of a yacht which was rounding the bar.

Then, although we were tired after a march of some 8 or 9 miles, we went at the double down the pier where MacNeill, Laurence J. Kettle and some others were distributing rifles. MacNeill said to me: "You are a Volunteer, take that", handing me a rifle. We reformed our ranks when we had been supplied with the rifles, and marched back towards the city, deflecting from the Howth road to the Malahide road when we perceived that some battalions in front had been halted by military and police. I saw Volunteer J.J. Burke (later a prisoner in Portland and Lewes) wounded there. There was a scuffle followed by negotiations, but as far as I could see, no attempt was made to disarm the Volunteers at this stage. We were directed to dispose of our rifles locally and get back to Dublin as best we could. We found many people who were willing to help us with the rifles, but during the time we were arranging about their safe custody, word was brought to me that some of them had been given to an unreliable person, and that the sooner he was relieved of them the better for all concerned. I gave instructions that they should be guarded for an hour while I found means of having them taken to a safe place. I rushed to catch a tram and dismounted at O'Mara's licensed premises near Newcomen Bridge. From there I telephoned to the A & B. for a taxi, which arrived in about 10 minutes. As far as I can recall, I loaded the taxi with 8, 9 or 12 rifles; I remember that I had some difficulty in keeping the door of the taxi closed, as the Howth rifles were rather long and heavy. The taxi took me to Drumcondra via Puckstown Road, on to the North Circular Road, then by Island Bridge and Rialto to Alderman Kelly's house in Longwood Avenue. Later that night I called with some friends and took the rifles to the house of Dr. Russell,

M.O.H. Dublin, where they remained until Holy Week. This house was raided after the Rising, and, apparently the authorities were aware that those rifles had been stored here.

About this time the strength of "B" Company was over 100, and included Maurice Healy, K.C., John Ronayne, B.L., and Professor Arthur Clery. The number decreased about 75% after the 1914 split. Among those who remained with us were Captain George Irvine and Lieutenant James Kenny. Comdt. Eamon Ceannt and Vice-Comdt. Cathal Brugha visited the Companies of the 4th Battalion on occasion. Captains, Lieutenants and Section Commanders were generally responsible for drilling, discipline and marksmanship. Some of us attended Officers' Class meetings addressed by Officers and ex-Officers of the British Army. In some matters they were opposed to questions, and on my asking how many shots could be fired from a Lee Enfield rifle before it would become too hot, I was told to find out by experience.

In 1916 I was present at the St. Patrick's Day Parade which took place in the city. This was preceded by Votive Mass in the Church of SS. Michael and John. At College Green John MacNeill took the salute. In the Winter of 1915-16 ^{of} one/the Volunteers told me that the Citizen Army intended to rise very soon. We had some sharp words about this as I contended that such action would be premature, against the interests of the Volunteers and a dis-service to Ireland.

I met Thomas MacDonagh early in the Spring of 1916 when he spoke of a rising within the next month or two, and went on to express a desire to hear my views. I told him it would be little short of madness - as we lacked men and munitions. While there had been some expansion in Volunteer recruiting throughout the country - Dublin did

not share in the increase to any great extent. MacDonagh enquired as to whether my opinion would be affected by such developments as a German naval victory - neutralisation of the British fleet by submarines, importation of arms on a large scale - the landing in Ireland of the 69th Regiment. I agreed that developments such as these would completely alter the situation - that the Volunteers alone were not capable of a sustained conflict. I was not impressed with gaining a moral victory; that while there was a certain glamour in maintaining a succession of risings against British domination, our policy should be directed towards leaving things better than we found them. We felt certain that our cause was a just and righteous one. We had made all possible preparations for the achievement of our object, which was the freeing of our country from alien rule; and there was general optimism that whatever the result, conditions after the event would not and could not be worse than they had been before.

Calling on Alderman T. Kelly at his place of business in William St. a few days before Easter Week, 1916, Comdt. T. MacDonagh came in. I saluted, and, observing that MacDonagh had some business with Alderman Kelly, retired. At a later period it transpired that MacDonagh asked and obtained Alderman Kelly's permission to store some explosives in the cellar, where they were duly lodged without delay. These explosives were left there during Easter Week and the week following - a fact which caused Alderman Kelly, then under arrest, very much anxiety. On hearing of these circumstances Alderman P.W. Corrigan, who was one of the Directors of Kelly's firm, got possession of a handcart, wheeled it to William Street, loaded up the explosives and brought the cargo away safely. He had the materials gradually conveyed to the Liffey. It was a brave and daring feat.

I did not know James Connolly. It had been my impression that the Citizen Army came into being more as a sectional than a national effort. However, harmony was effected between the Citizen Army and the Volunteers, both taking part side by side in the Rising.

Two events took place some time before Easter Week, 1916. One was the carrying out of operations on a large scale in the Finglas area. The 4th Battalion took part in these operations which consisted in exercises designed to accustom the men to street fighting. We had instructions to keep to the roads, while our opponents held positions on the far side of the fields. The operations took some two hours and gave rise to dissatisfaction, as no one was quite clear about their purpose. Later we learned that they were based on plans for attack in city streets - the fields representing fortifications, institutions, etc. in Dublin. The other event is concerned with a meeting held in a house in Oldbawn. Many of those who played a principal part in the Rising were present, and while discussion was going on, one of the party, Captain Douglas French Mullen, discovered a piano and played over and over the 'Dead March in Saul'. Knowing the seriousness of our enterprise, and in the light of subsequent events, it had a prophetic significance. In fact, two-thirds of those present on that evening were dead within a month.

Early in Holy Week a priest from Kilkenny came to see me and told me that the Volunteers there were against an early rebellion as they were without arms or ammunition. He said that they were preparing, but needed time and equipment, and that an early rising would be fatal as they were willing to take part but were helpless without munitions.

During this same week Eamonn Ceannt asked me if it would be possible for me to visit Guinness's Brewery with him. We went to the Brewery, the extent of which surprised him, and the only comment he made concerned the area and the usefulness of barrels as barricades. He did not make any mention of the Rising - at least not directly - but he

did say that if a certain report concerning him, which was under examination in the Corporation, was not decided upon soon it would not matter.

Early in the Spring of 1916, Volunteers were directed or requested to submit proposals in writing for a rapid and effective mobilisation. My suggestions were based on the principle of a fan. My recollection is that if this suggestion were not adopted, the plan put into operation was based on it. For many a long day it was said that had mobilisation taken place on Easter Sunday it would have been most successful. However, as far as the 4th Battalion was concerned, there was a fairly good mobilisation, even though no mobilisation direction or order or other communication reached me. Whether I.R.B. circles had suspicions of non-members I could not say.

Hearing from my brothers of their mobilisation instructions, I cycled to Larkfield in the expectation that my company (B) would assemble at the battalion headquarters. Kimmage was empty - Pearse and the London-Irish having left for the G.P.O. and information was freely given that the rest of the 4th Battalion was mobilising at Emerald Square, Dolphin's Barn. Shortly after arriving there we moved off - (time - 20 or 30 minutes before midday) - "A" Company, with some Volunteer officers from other companies, marching to and occupying the Distillery, Marrowbone Lane, and the Brewery - Watkins, Jameson Pim - Ardee Street.

B/Company, C/Company, some Volunteers from A/Company and D/Company marched in the direction of James's Street with the Battalion Commandant, Kent, and the Vice-Commandant, Brugha. Nine days later, a policeman named Walsh, in a sworn statement testified at my courtmartial that I was leading this body of Volunteers. We entered the main gate of the South Dublin Union about midday and proceeded to occupy the institution.

Formerly a foundling hospital, later called a house of industry, then a workhouse, the largest in Ireland - probably in the world - it covered an area of over twenty acres. Bounded on the east by the Basin - in Basin Lane - it extended along the back of James's St. to Pigtown Lane, where it came flush with James's St. and extended to Mount Brown, Old Kilmainham. Its southern boundary is from Rialto Bridge - on the north bank of the Grand Canal - to the Basin, just opposite St. James's Walk.

On entry at the main gate, S.D.U.^(*) traffic must move east or west, as the centre was blocked over two centuries ago by the building of the dining hall, and later by pitching what passes for a Protestant church right in front of the hall, facing the main gate.

I had no information then of the overall plan of or for the 4th Battalion. A section of the party went to the left (or east) for about 200 yards; another section went to the right (west). Some - Captain G. Irvine, Sec. Commander Corrigan and others reached the Rialto Gate - (or back gate -) They were engaged almost on arrival, Corrigan being slightly wounded. There were casualties on the British side; one, a commissioned officer who had 12/18 months war experience in France. It was learned later in the day that this party of Volunteers at Rialto Gate had been captured.

Of the whole or original section which set out for the back gate, probably half the number had been detailed to cross the fields of the McCaffrey Estate (which had not then been developed as a building site and was at this time a market garden). These fields, 8 or 10 acres in extent, were a series of irregular elevations, tapering down steeply to Mount Brown and frontaging practically all Mount Brown (which connected Old Kilmainham with

James's St.) Volunteer instructions were to engage any British military entering the city. They had not long to wait and the story given to us of the fight was that the first fire of the Volunteers caused panic, which was shortly checked by a non-commissioned officer. Numbers were unequal. Volunteers had no cover; the British soldiers had the houses opposite the McCaffrey Estate. Here we suffered our first casualties - Volunteers Owen and Traynor were killed - two of the best Volunteers in B/Company, 4th Battalion, and Volunteer Dan MacCarthy seriously wounded. Nurse Keogh, attached to the hospital, S.D.U., was killed by British fire - it was generally conceded - accidentally.

Vice-Commandant Brugha did not go with this section towards McCaffrey's fields or Rialto. He had taken up a position some 200 yards east of the main gate in a wooden structure, apparently quarters for some of the staff of the workhouse. Having pointed out how vulnerable this position was, he wanted to find better. Eventually I suggested the Nurses' Home, a three-storey stone structure in a commanding position. To this he agreed and we went into occupation; some time afterwards we heard that the enemy had rushed the area first vacated by the Vice-Commandant and that some of our Volunteers carried out a hasty retreat. As far as my information goes, the enemy did not remain in or near the wooden structure - more than likely for the same reasons as prevailed with us in leaving.

At the time these companies of Volunteers were occupying the S.D.U., Captain Thomas McCarthy, C/Company, was detailed to occupy the Malthouse, Mount Brown, situate almost 100 yards from the workhouse main gate. These were extensive premises, presumably without accommodation for troops. We were informed on Easter Tuesday that this

position had been abandoned though no orders had been issued to evacuate. Captain MacCarthy was one of the best officers in the battalion, being painstaking, industrious, efficient, punctual. He was enthusiastic about his work, never shirked any undertaking he was given, and took on some on his own responsibility. He would have served with distinction had he been under the immediate direction of a superior officer.

Having taken up our headquarters in the Nurses' Home, I found that we were faced at once with the problem of defence. Directing a count of all the available ammunition it was found that there were 1560 rounds. I arranged a list of Volunteers for sentry duties and such other duties as arose then or later. We found that owing to the strain on the men it was inadvisable to fix a longer period of sentry-go than one hour.

To the credit of officers and men it should be stated that they all accepted the duties imposed without a murmur and discharged them always with good humour.

I believe that the responsibility of posting sentries was undertaken by an officer with some training or experience. My recollection is that I did not post sentries.

Coming on duty on Easter Tuesday, a couple of hours before dawn, a sentry drew attention to what he called a trench just outside the boundary wall of a small yard attached to the H.Q. and to the noise of digging, which he had heard since 3 a.m. Pointing out to the sentry that the noise of digging came from the window blind, it was seen as day broke that the trench was a path in the garden of a small house on the McCaffrey Estate, a stone's throw from the sentry.

One of the sentry posts was in the corridor of the Nurses' Home commanding a view of the open space, the rectangle of the Protestant church and dining hall. He was a section commander, C/Company - Frank (Gobbon) Burke and particularly keen on his work and duty as a Volunteer. Across the road from where he was on duty a wing of the hospital was on about the same level. An enemy soldier got into the hospital, saw young Frank Burke, took aim and shot him through the throat. He died immediately, R.I.P. ("Gobbon" Burke was brother of Joan Burke, the Irish contralto). He was one of the best Volunteers in the battalion, energetic, untiring and devoted to his comrades with whom he was most popular. This was the only fatal casualty we sustained since our occupation of the Nurses' Home.

Three officials in the South Dublin Union call for special mention - for the co-operation and assistance rendered to the garrison - Laurence Tallon, Smith and William J. Murphy. I assess the relative value of their services at - Tallon 100%; Smith 90%; Murphy 75%.

On Wednesday we received a despatch from the G.P.O. to say that there were 680 men 'out' in Dublin, and that they were holding out successfully. Ceannt was satisfied with this message which, I believe, came from Connolly. This, to the best of my belief, was the only message received in the South Dublin Union during the whole Rising.

On Thursday a sustained attack was made on the Nurses' Home. During the engagement the plaster was shot off the walls and ceilings. Holes were breached in the walls from one room to the next to permit of more freedom of movement when the attack increased in severity. Explosions went on repeatedly and every now and then a shower of bricks would fall from the Nurses' Home. Vice-Comdt. Brugha was on the top floor, while I occupied the ground floor. Late in the evening Captain French Mullen came down to tell me that the Vice-Comdt. had been wounded; that the British were in, and that we were to retire. On being shown that this latter was not true - he said that he had been ordered to tell us to retire - we hesitated to accept this order, regarding it as premature. The attack at this time was easing off - breaking off, having been maintained against the wall and windows of the Nurses' Home facing west, for hours. Tunnelling operations had already ceased. However, we obeyed orders and retired along the passage, until we reached a point which was probably being defended by Ceannt, as he came up directly. We gave him the information at our disposal, and having discussed the situation, he suggested that we would all get back to the Nurses' Home. On the way we heard Peadar Doyle whistle or sing, and Ceannt said we must find him. Peadar turned up safely after a short time. Ceannt and I took each alternate room demanding surrender of anyone in possession.

There was not a single British soldier in the Home. Vice-Comdt.Brugha was suffering from a number of wounds. He got such first-aid treatment as we had available from Volunteer Doolan, whom I assisted for some 5 or 6 hours. Both Doolan and I were much fatigued as Brugha required a lot of attention and was becoming delirious. On the following day Rev.Fr.Gerhardt, O.Carm., wearing a stole, led a procession carrying the Vice-Comdt.to the Union Hospital. We had observed the gleam of many fires in the city from Wednesday, and heavy firing, guns as well as rifle fire and explosions. There appeared to be less firing on Friday and Saturday, and on Low Sunday, only an occasional rifle shot.

On Low Sunday Comdt.MacDonagh with a flag of Truce, and Very Rev.Frs.Augustine and Aloysius came to the South Dublin Union. MacDonagh gave Kent information about the military situation, which briefly was to the effect that Pearse and Connolly had surrendered when it was no longer possible to hold the Post Office nor to escape. My recollection, which is hazy, is that Ceannt was not favourable to surrender, and found support amongst some of the Volunteers. A conference took place and it was pointed out that with the limited resources available, resistance was useless and would involve loss of life to no purpose. While leaders might receive scant consideration, there was at least a prospect of the lives of the general body of Volunteers being saved. Eventually there was a general acquiescence to surrender. Captain Rotheram accepted our surrender.

At Bride Road a British Officer and a Junior Officer came to enquire and to record the names of each Volunteer who was unarmed. This was the method adopted at the subsequent Courtmartial to prove that those whose

names were not on this "unarmed" list were armed. After having deposited arms, orders were issued to march up Werburgh Street, Christchurch, on main thoroughfare to Richmond Barracks. Lieut. Wylie was one of the commissioned officers in charge. There were occasional non-complimentary observations from by-standers, but no evidence of hostility. On arrival at Richmond Barracks some 60 of us were put into a barrack room in which there was no furniture and no ventilation. On opening the door in the morning the British Sergeant was almost overcome by the atmosphere. For breakfast a bucket containing tea and a basket with hard biscuit rations were brought in. The biscuits were tumbled out on the floor; empty corned-beef tins were used as tea-containers. Later, prisoners were marched to the gymnasium, placed on the righthand side of the room and told to sit down. A tall staff-officer, 6'2" came in, looked over everyone and directed most of the younger prisoners to "fall out". They were released later in the evening, marched down from the Barracks to the city. Passing by the South Dublin Union outpost they were signing the "Soldiers' Song".

About midday a number of plain clothes police, belonging to the "G" Division of the D.M.P., entered the gymnasium, walking from one end to the other, studying the prisoners, calling out certain Volunteers to the far side of the hall. Amongst these were Ceannt, MacBride, two Cosgraves, Corrigan, Irvine, Hunter, Peadar Doyle, Downey, etc. This selection, and others made in Richmond Barracks, completed the list of Volunteers from Dublin and the Fingal Battalion for trial by Field General Courtmartial. Volunteers from Wexford, Galway, Kerry and Cork were also tried by Courtmartial, as well as John MacNeill, the only non-participant. Sir Roger Casement

was tried in London for High Treason.

In the afternoon the officers of the Fingal Battalion, Dr.R.Hayes, the Lawless brothers, Tom Ashe, Norton and Wilson, later Noel Lemass, who was suffering from a wound, and then Patrick O'Keefe (Paudeen) and Gerald Crofts, both looking miserable, which was not to be wondered at; they had nothing to eat for 36 hours; were amongst the last Volunteer prisoners to come in. Amongst non-combatant prisoners were J.Quigley, C.E., County Surveyor, Meath, Alderman J.J.Kelly, Kelly's Corner, Edelstein, William O'Brien. On Monday and Tuesday (1st and 2nd May) some Volunteers were paraded under guard to be brought before a Military officer who read out a statement of charge, presumably formal notice of the pending Courtmartial. Rev.T.W.O'Ryan, C.C. Golden Bridge (St.James Parish) visited the prisoners in the Gymnasium. Father O'Ryan heard the confessions of prisoners in our group and blessed us with the Blessed Sacrament which he was carrying.

While in Richmond Barracks prisoners' quarters were locked up at 8 p.m. Shortly after that the Rosary was recited and everyone settled down for the night. This did not require any special arrangement as there were no beds and no bed-clothes, rugs, blankets or other impedimenta. John MacBride told me on one of those nights that his life-long prayer had been answered. He said three Hail Mary's every day that he should not die until he had fought the British in Ireland.

About 9 a.m. on Tuesday morning, a group of prisoners (5 or 7), Ceannt, Corrigan, Cosgraves, P.Doyle, and probably MacBride, were brought to a Guard Room immediately outside the Gymnasium. Here Captain O'Brien, a British Officer, was at breakfast and it appeared to be an Identification parade,

ensuring that everything was in readiness for the Courtmartial. Captain O'Brien (father of Mrs Dyas) was courteous and civil, and rather good-humoured about delaying his breakfast. At an early hour on Tuesday an opportunity arose of sending a message to Alderman Corrigan that his son, Section-Commander W.Corrigan, was in serious jeopardy, as with Captain Irvine and Vol.Downey he had been captured early on Easter Monday after an engagement costing the life of a British Officer (probably Lieut.or Capt.Ramsay). As Corrigan was down for a early Courtmartial, my message was to the effect that the Alderman would require to exert any influence he had on behalf of his son. In the following year Alderman Corrigan informed me that he had approached an M.P. to whom we had rendered some service; that he could do nothing or would do nothing. He then asked a Unionist K.C. if he could assist him. Mr Powell said, "Mr Corrigan, you gave me a brief of your case years ago; I needed it and I do not forget it; anything in my power that I can do you may rely on me". He came to Alderman Corrigan that evening or the following day and said, "Mr Corrigan, I have not been able to secure your son's release but his life is spared".

Somewhere about Monday we were again paraded for Courtmartial, My recollection is that we were assembled in groups and ushered into the Court, consisting of three senior officers. The President of the Court, or the Crown Prosecutor, Lieut.Wylie, informed us we were being tried by Field-General Courtmartial. No person was allowed to appear and speak on behalf of a prisoner, but each prisoner would be permitted to bring a friend with him, whom he could consult and who would be free to advise the

prisoner, but not address the Court. Prisoners ^{marched} ~~marked~~ out again to a green sward and were directed to sit down. Sean McGarry and Dick Davis had just arrived from Kilmainham Gaol. Their Courtmartial had already taken place and there was some astonishment at the sentence - McGarry and Davis 8 years penal servitude. Our information was that Davis was in the Red Cross Section, a non-combatant. An unexpected further unusual state of affairs was now unfolded. In the course of the charges against Volunteer prisoners, the phraseology ran something like this:- "You are charged with having been one of a party atfrom which shots were fired occasioning casualties amongst His Majesty's troops, and you are further charged with conspiracy with His Majesty's enemies". All Volunteer prisoners who had been engaged in Easter week in the South Dublin Union and in Marrowbone Lane Distillery were charged with having been in "Jacobs", Bishop Street, off Wexford St. How this blunder was made did not transpire until the Summer of 1917. Captain Rotheram, one of the best known and most popular sportsmen of the County Westmeath, the best polo-player at No.1 in Ireland, took the surrender of the Volunteers at South Dublin Union and Marrowbone Lane, and marched with the prisoners to Bride Road. He was called upon the following day to give evidence of the surrender in both places. His reply was that he had seen these men yesterday, that he did not know them, not having seen them before, that he would not know them again; that he would not feel justified in giving testimony. It is but fair to say that his sight had become impaired, which was the reason assigned for his relinquishing polo. It was further added that he had he had been reprimanded and that he received no promotion subsequently. As a polo-player he had been

known as Major Rotheram. No change was made in the charge sheet concerning the destination of the 4th Battalion, Irish Volunteers (South Dublin Union and Marrowbone Lane Garrison) other than the original, viz. Jacob's Factory, and no member of the 4th Battalion had any information as to how the mistake was made. Very probably the garrison at Jacob's Factory came in to Bride Road on Sunday at the rere of the 4th Battalion and both were included in the one recording.

It was apparent from the start of all these proceedings that Ceannt had determined to make a fight for his life. MacBride evidently thought he was facing a term of imprisonment, as he expressed to me his anxiety that his position as an official of the Dublin Corporation would be there for him on his release and for those of the Volunteers who were officials or employees of the Municipality. Accordingly they agreed that messages should be sent to a Solicitor, a Barrister Mr J. Ronayne, B.L., and Dr. L. Sherlock, who was at that time the most influential member of the Dublin Corporation. Just as this had been arranged, Mr Michael Corrigan, Solicitor, moved amongst the prisoners to see his brother W. Corrigan. Sir James Gallagher, Lord Mayor of Dublin, with Dr. L. Sherlock and Mr Ronayne, B.L. came within an hour and were escorted to the prisoners' vicinity. Having given Mr Ronayne a description of the charges against Ceannt, I requested that he should hear and advise him generally on his defence, and MacBride also, who did not appear to be keenly interested in his own case. MacBride had been on active service with the Boers in the South African war. He was as cool and collected, we heard, during Easter Week as if he were walking to Church, even when receiving warnings of impending attacks, and there were such, he was steady as a rock.

He had a soldier's mind on "prisoners" when the fight was over, at this time anyhow. There was no more unconcerned prisoner in Richmond Barracks either, as to his fate or to the discomforts prevailing.

My Ronayne, B.L., was most anxious to be helpful, dispensing with the formality of a Solicitor, as the gentleman for whom we sent did not attend. Ceannt's interview with Ronayne appears to be much longer than MacBride's, who saw him immediately after. Mine, which followed, did not last long.

RONAYNE: What do you propose to say?

REPLY: There is no truth in the German charge. I accept responsibility for being in arms. A long term of imprisonment is not attractive.

RONAYNE: That will get you a long sentence. You will not get a firing squad. If you want to shorten your sentence admit nothing. The Lord Mayor and Locan Sherlock came to speak on your behalf.

REPLY: Very well.

Major MacBride was not long at his Courtmartial. I think Ceannt's straddled mine by adjournment. Walsh, a policeman, gave evidence at my Courtmartial of having seen me at Emerald Square, Dolphin's Barn, about midday on Easter Monday. My recollection is hazy on the handing in of the list of prisoners who were not "unarmed". I denied conspiracy with the Germans, saying there was not a word of truth in the charge, and I made no admissions. The Right Hon.the Lord Mayor, Sir James Gallagher, and Dr.L.G.Sherlock, gave testimony on my behalf. I was told sentence would be promulgated and the trial was over in 10 or 15 minutes.

In earlier proceedings Comdt. Eamonn Ceannt had been charged with having been at Jacob's Factory, armed, from which place shots had been fired which occasioned casualties amongst H.M. troops and with having conspired with His Majesty's enemies in Germany. We discussed the terms of the charges the evening before the Courtmartial sat, and at this time we had no knowledge of the dilemma affecting the Crown case concerning the place occupied by the 4th Battalion, Irish Volunteers, during Easter Week, from which shots were fired causing casualties among His Majesty's troops. On Ceannt's return from his Courtmartial, which he been adjourned, he gave me particulars of the charges and of the "evidence" put forward against him.

At this stage in this narrative of the events of a period over thirty years ago I consider it necessary to record that I am writing from recollection, having kept no diary or record of the incidents.

Ceannt described two or three matters against him brought before the Court in respect of which evidence was faulty, inadmissible or unsubstantiated. Having had experience of sworn enquiries and Courts I explained to him that he should have entered an objection to these and that the Courtmartial would be bound to disallow at least two of the unsubstantiated statements. He saw the force of my contention and asked me if I would be willing to attend his Courtmartial as a "Soldier's friend". On the first day of the Courtmartial, Blackadder, President of the Courtmartial, facilitated Ceannt in every way regarding adjournments, that is while we were in Richmond Barracks. The Court refused Ceannt's application for a "Soldier's

friend" on the ground that he had not availed of it on the first day of the Courtmartial. After we left Richmond barracks there was no channel of information on his case other than a rumour to the effect that he had kept the case going as long as he could. Prior to Ceannt's trial, certainly before its conclusion, he told me he had not signed the Proclamation. I want it to be clearly understood that he did not repudiate his signature. He subscribed to his name being put to it. He had been unable to attend at the time the signatures were being put to the Proclamation; but the naked fact is that he did not write his name to the Proclamation. Ceannt did not inform me that he had been charged with having signed the Proclamation, and we were together up to Thursday 4.5.16. No person whose name was appended to the Proclamation escaped the death penalty. Whether it was taken for granted that each person whose name was on it was automatically convicted, is beyond my information.

It can be accepted that no signatory to the Proclamation gave testimony that any other person signed, (1) because such testimony would have to be given at the Courtmartial and it would be known; (2) where such accommodating testimony is given the authorities invariably gave a consideration, viz. the life of the informant is spared.

There was probably not one "innocent" man brought up for Courtmartial. Rumour had it that a few persons joined in the march of prisoners to Richmond, but none of these were brought to trial. Volunteer prisoners were tried generally in accordance with British legal forms as applies to Courtsmartial. These Courtsmartial are historical in one respect up to the time we left Richmond barracks - all persons charged

were convicted; there was not a single acquittal.

Definite information regarding the fate of prisoners who had been tried by Courtmartial was not available to us but we knew on Wednesday 3.5.16 that some executions had taken place. We were not aware of arrangements, if any, which were made by the British Military to provide the consolations of their religion and the rites of the Roman Catholic Church to those condemned to death. MacBride, Ceannt, Phil Cosgrave, P.Doyle and I had been in close collaboration from Monday 1.5.16 until Thursday 4.5.16, and we heard that we were being escorted to Kilmainham Gaol, all except Ceannt, who was still on trial. A few words with the "Major", as MacBride was called, told me he was of the same mind. Father Augustine came on the scene at that moment and I asked him to attend at Kilmainham, should the necessity arise; that we had no knowledge of what was going to happen. I do not remember his reply, but we left satisfied that when and if we required his priestly offices he would be with us.

We were escorted to Kilmainham Gaol, arriving about 8 p.m., each prisoner being locked in a separate cell. Phil Cosgrave got the cell on my left, the Major on my right. At daybreak on Friday morning I heard a slight movement and whisperings in the Major's cell. After a few minutes there was a tap on his cell door. I heard the word "Sergeant", a few more whispers, a move towards the door of the cell, then steps down the ~~the~~ corridor, down the central stairs. Through a chink in the door I could barely discern the receding figures; silence for a time; then the sharp crack of rifle fire and silence again. I thought my turn would come next and waited for a

rap on the door, but the firing squad had no further duty that morning. Early in the afternoon Very Rev. Fr. Augustine came into my cell. He told me that Major MacBride was shot at daybreak. He had prepared him and was with him at the last. He died like the soldier he was, R.I.P. Father Augustine told me he had done the same for James Connolly, R.I.P., who had to be presented to the firing squad sitting in a chair (he was unable to stand upright because of his wounds). Father Augustine anointed him before life was extinct.

Father Eugene McCarthy, C.C. St. James', came in to the cell about 2 p.m. He was on most friendly terms with my family and myself. He expressed wonder as to why we had asked for a Franciscan to attend us instead of the Parish Clergy, with all of whom I was on most intimate terms. He was quite satisfied when told we did not know they would be available. It appeared that Kilmainham Gaol was always supplied with Roman Catholic Chaplains by the Parish of St. James'. Father McCarthy told me that sentence of death had been commuted in my case, and that of Phil and the others tried with us, with the exception of the Major. Father McCarthy said we would not be kept in after the war. Having told him that a change of clothing would be very welcome, he went off to my home and brought a complete change for Phil and myself, taking away our uniforms. Mine survived until 1920, the Black and Tans taking it during one of their many raids on our home in James' Street. In the course of the Autumn, Fr. McCarthy came to Portland Prison and was permitted to visit Phil Cosgrave and myself.

About 3 p.m. two officers came to the door of the cell; enquired if my name was William Thomas Cosgrave, and on being told it was so, one of them said, "the decision of the Courtmartial is that 'you William Thomas Cosgrave have been found guilty and have been sentenced to death or to be shot'. Then a pause to see what the effect of the sentence would be. I remained silent. Then the officer continued, "the sentence has been commuted to penal servitude for life". I still think that they were surprised to find that my first reaction was an enquiry as to when I might be permitted to consult my solicitor.

We were two days in Kilmainham, travelling by Black Maria to Mountjoy on Saturday evening. Here a grey uniform was provided, until Thursday of the following week. Again by Black Maria to North Wall en route for Portland. On the train journey to Portland we got newspapers, deriving some satisfaction from Mr Dillon's denunciation of the Courtmartial, executions, etc.

In 1917, after the general release from prison, Sir Francis Vane (who was in charge of the attack on the Union on the Thursday) enquired if he might come and see me. He said that he had reported that the position held by the rebels in the Nurses' Home was impregnable, and that following this report the attack was called off. He congratulated me very cordially on the defence we put up in the South Dublin Union.

Having written the foregoing I looked up Sir Francis Vane's book in which he states that the South Dublin Union garrison was reduced to silence on Easter Thursday and surrendered on the following day. This is not correct as the surrender took

place at 3 p.m. on Low Sunday and in accordance with the direction from our own Head Quarters, G.P.O. Brugha and Ffrench Mullen were our only casualties in Thursday's engagement.

During the occupation of the South Dublin Union by the Irish Volunteers no British troops passed to or from the city by Mount Brown and James' Street from Easter Monday at noon until 3 p.m. Low Sunday.

Signed:

M. J. Cosgrave

Date:

18th May 49.

Witness:

J. V. Joyce.
Colonel.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 268

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRA MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 268

APPENDIX "A".

This is a copy of a document in manuscript which I believe was written in Lewis Prison in 1917 and smuggled out, and taken back to Dublin where it was transcribed in its present form.

I may have written this myself ~~by myself~~

~~by myself~~
N. J. Conroy
18.5.49.

APPENDIX A.

On May 1st in Gymnasium at Richmond Barracks the Irish Volunteers (i.e. those who surrendered in the Rebellion) were inspected by a number of D.M. Police in plain clothes, who passed up and down the hall peering closely into each man's face, and in two instances asking "is your name -----"; "Are you one of the -----" Identification according to which form being complete, those selected, viz. Jno. McDonagh, E. Kent, T. Hunter, Major McBride, Hanrahan Bros., Cosgrave Bros. Jas. Hughes, Jas. Mallin, P. Doyle, were separated and the remainder marched out after being relieved of all portable property including money.

The names of the selected men being taken, they in turn were stripped, save Jno. MacDonagh, of all belongings, save religious emblems and their wearing apparel and watches - pencils, fountain pens, cigarettes etc. being searched in all cases but one or two. At 6 o'clock p.m. those men were marched from Gym. and escorted by soldiers to an office in the Barracks, and left standing under the Guard of escort until 9 p.m. having at breakfast at 7 a.m. consisting of 1 tin of beef and some biscuits which each man was told was his daily ration and subsequent $\frac{1}{2}$ pt. tea, which was comparatively innocent of sugar or milk.

John McDonagh was first called into the office and after deposition of Major Armstrong had been read, was looked to for corroboration, E. Kent and Major MacBride following. In Kent's case he enquired if that were a court and if he were bound to answer. Major Armstrong appeared to be amazed at the question and answered "no" to both questions, Kent replying that in that case he would reserve his defence. Major Armstrong's deposition was to the effect that -

"E.Kent was in a party which surrendered at St.Patrick's Park on April 30th at 5 o'clock p.m. which had come from Jacobs, from which shots had been fired at His Majesty's troops causing some casualties. That E.Kent was armed".

On next following day May 2nd (?) Kent, MacBride, Bros.Cosgrave etc etc. were ushered into a room in another part of the Richmond Barracks, in which there were four officers, three of whom were seated at a long table - one junior, Lieut.Wylie, on left of prisoners, halfway between the aforesaid three and the Volunteer prisoners. The officer in centre informed the prisoners that they were about being tried by a Field General Courtmartial and that it was the right of a prisoner to object to any member of the Court which would consist of himself (possibly Lord Blackadder) and a Commander and a Col.of Artillery. On being questioned as to whether there was any power to object to the Court or if there were any alternative to the Court the President replied "no", the only valid objection being to the constitution, i.e. to any one or 2 or even 3 members of it - as individuals. On that point being made clear the prisoners waived objections and enquired if legal assistance were permitted, a question which seemed to puzzle the Court not a little, and even Lieut.Wylie, who by the way was a young K.C. and who on the Sunday evening of surrender at St.Patrick's Park when the Volunteers grounded arms, produced his revolver and waved it continually on the march to Richmond whenever he saw a crowd of spectators. During the journey to barracks the Lieut.K.C. ran up and down the line as if he feared a rescue. He did not appear more at ease at the Courtmartial - first declaring that prisoners had the right to have a friend, legal or otherwise, beside him at the trial, who

however, would not be allowed to speak save to the prisoner, which he later on amended by allowing the prisoners outside interviews, that is, legal or other assistance was not permitted inside the room where Field General Courtmartial was held.

The cases opened with that of E.Kent. Major Armstrong swore his deposition "That prisoner was one of a party which surrendered at St.Patrick's Park from Jacobs"; "That he was armed" etc. etc. Kent produced witnesses to prove conclusively that he was not at Jacob's, and the Court accepted the proof.

Regarding the Major's evidence as to his being armed - the Major swore that he had taken the names of all the men who surrendered - that he then took a list of those who were not armed, and subtracting same from the larger list, he gave evidence that the remainder were armed because their names were not amongst those who were unarmed. He admitted some discrepancies between the two lists of three names, which he afterwards corrected. He did not say what arms Kent had - he could not say what arms he had, but he did say he was and must have been armed because his name was not on the list of unarmed men. The next point urged against Kent was that his name was on the Proclamation. No evidence was tendered as to his acquiescence to same, as to his signature, as to his publishing, seeing or reading out of same; save that his name was printed on the document no further evidence was submitted in respect of the charge - no evidence was given as to his having taken part in Rebellion "to assist or for the purpose of assisting the enemy", nor was any evidence furnished as to his having been in the Rebellion at all. The sum and substance of the "evidence" against E.Kent was

the argument of Major Armstrong that "because his name was not on an imperfect list of unarmed men he must have been and he was armed". By the way, it was a Capt. Armstrong who gave evidence in 1798 against the Brothers Shears. It was proven at the trial by Mr (subsequently Lord) Plunkett, who in after years was Lord Chancellor of Ireland, that Armstrong was a scoundrel, who had been in gaol, had been disgraced and who actually seduced one of the Brothers Shears to join the United Irishmen but who could never get the younger brother to do so (vide Lord Plunkett, senate and Bar speeches, published by Duffy & Co. Dublin).

The softening influences of time have had no effect upon some things in Ireland.

The night of the day of Kent's first trial (May 3rd), Kent, MacBride, Cosgrave Bros., C. Donovan, J. Shouldice and V. Poole, were placed in a room at the top of Barrack's staircase - the second-last night Major MacBride spent on earth. They were locked in at 8 o'clock and got no tea and were refused even a drink of water, repeated application to the guard being laughed at.

The trials were conducted upon the same plan as those of '98, the D.M.P. and Constabulary taking the place of Yeomen and informers. The members of the Court-martial were pleasantly polite. Their knowledge of law was most elementary, so much so that the Crown Prosecutor had on several occasions to insist upon prisoners' rights. Shaun MacDermott complained bitterly of being cooped up in a small room with 63 others - 64 in all. Sanitation laws were suspended. 10/- was paid for a few articles of clothing to use as blankets, which had to be returned at 5 o'clock a.m. The following morning one officer asked Kent for a souvenir.

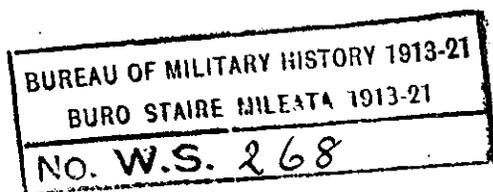
The Germans could not learn anything from the standard of culture, education or civilisation from the Officers in Richmond Barracks in May 1916.

Con Colbert - found guilty; sentence - death, and he was shot. In the course of his trial he said he could prove that he was not at Jacob's. The President said it did not matter whether that was proved or not. Colbert said, "very well, if you say it does not make any difference I need not call a witness to prove it". Colbert was not at Jacob's during the Rebellion. He did not expect that a maximum penalty would be enforced. Davis and Patk.Sweeney were amongst those already mentioned.

The deposition of Major Armstrong was read out to Cosgrave who enquired if he were bound to reply, The answer being in the negative., T.Hunter's case was next taken up by the Major with same result.

Cosgrave had demanded a number of witnesses - some of whom were produced - to prove that the Major's deposition "that he was one of a party which had surrendered from Jacob's (the same as Kent's)". Cosgrave enquired from the Court whether the decision would be based upon evidence given in the Court in the same way as ordinary civil Court of law. Lieut.Wylie answered in the affirmative. The case would be decided upon the evidence given. Cosgrave further enquired if any other matter would be taken into consideration but the evidence. Lieut.Wylie said "no - your mind can be completely at rest; the Court will not allow any other matter except the evidence, to influence their decision". Major Armstrong then deposed "that prisoner surrendered at St.Patrick's Park with a number of others; that he was armed". Cosgrave pointed out that the Major's deposition was amended and Lieut.

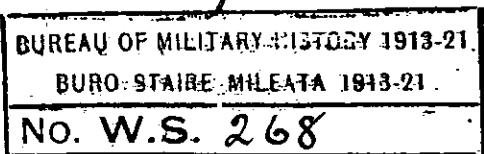
Wylie replied that was so; that "they" discovered a mistake had been made. No evidence was tendered that Cosgrave was in Rebellion. Evidence was put in that he surrendered. Major Armstrong under cross-examination said he could not say what arms the prisoner had but he must have been armed because his name was not on the unarmed list. Under cross-examination, which was written down by the Colonel, it was appearing that the Major's evidence was an argument. The President of the Court intervened and said "the Court was satisfied as to the question of arms and it was not material". A policeman named Walsh gave evidence slightly from his deposition - "that he saw Cosgrave at Emerald Square in uniform at 11 a.m. Easter Monday and that he 'led' a party of Volunteers down Cork St". Under cross-examination he admitted that what he meant by leading was being in front. The President here intervened and said whoever was in front was leading. In the original deposition the policeman Walsh deposed "Cosgrave was armed". In his sworn evidence he eliminated this and gave no evidence of being armed. The evidence against Cosgrave was that of a policeman who saw him in uniform one hour before the Rebellion. Result - found guilty; sentence - death; commuted to penal servitude for life.



Appendix B.

During the early stages of the Black & Tan war, the leading personalities of Dublin Castle were summoned by a meeting of the British Cabinet at Downing St. They were questioned generally on the situation & invited to express their opinions. Mr. Mylne K.C. was one of the last to make a contribution - and he was opposed to a continuance of the terror program. There was a and had been a request for a month or more to allow the Government to suppress the National movement. This was not the first time - the Castle Government had asked for a month. Mylne saw he understood that after suppressing the National movement it was proposed to make a settlement of the Irish question. If that were so & he believed it was - he advised an immediate settlement. Further repressive measures made a final settlement more difficult. As was Law is alluded to have required - if he were a Papist - Mylne replied that he was the son of a Presbyterian clergyman.

Source given. Most Rev. Dr. Fogarty
Lord Bishop of Killaloe



(written about mid April 1919)

APPENDIX "B"

I have written this
and desire that it be read in conjunction
with Appendix "A", as I consider it is
due to the individual concerned, in the
light of subsequent events.

N. J. Conzani
18. 8. 49

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRA MILITARIA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 268

APPENDIX B.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 268

During the early stages of the Black and Tan war the leading personalities of Dublin Castle were summoned to a meeting of the British Cabinet at Downing Street. They were questioned generally on the situation and invited to express their opinions. Mr Wylie, K.C. was one of the last to make a contribution, and he was opposed to a continuance of the terror program. There was and had been a request for a month more to be allowed the Government to suppress the national movement. This was not the first time the Castle Government had asked for a month. Mr Wylie said he understood that after suppressing the national movement it was proposed to make a settlement of the Irish question. If that were so, and he believed it was, he advised an immediate settlement. Further repressive measures made a final settlement more difficult. Bonar Law is alleged to have enquired if he were a papist. Wylie replied that he was the son of a Presbyterian clergyman.

Source of above - Most Rev. Dr. Fogarty,

Lord Bishop of Killaloe.

Note 1,

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILÉTA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 268

In the year 1920 I was Minister for Local Government in the first Dáil, and Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Dublin Corporation at the same time.

The British Local Government Department was making it extremely difficult for local bodies to finance the many services for which they were responsible, and the local bodies throughout the country were looking to the Dublin Corporation for a lead in all these matters. It was obvious that if the Dublin Corporation failed to maintain the public services, I, as Minister for Local Government, would find great difficulties in supervising County Councils and other Corporations in their administration and financial problems. It became necessary for the Corporation to obtain money, and for this purpose I approached the Munster and Leinster Bank, which was regarded as the most National of all these institutions, although their colour of green could never have been described as pronounced as ours was at the time. I was met with a blank refusal by this Bank; they refused to give any accommodation.

Following a consultation with Mr. E.W. Eyre, who was the City Treasurer, and who introduced me, I went to the

Bank of Ireland and there interviewed two of the Directors, H.S. Guinness and Andrew Jameson. They eventually gave the accommodation so urgently required for the Corporation. It was for this reason that when President of the Executive Council at a later stage, I nominated these two gentlemen as Senators.

I had been arrested on 25th March, 1920, but, through the intervention of a friend, had been released on parole some 14 days later, on the clear understanding that I would not engage in politics. However, it became necessary for me to have further dealings with the Bank regarding monies required to enable the Dublin Corporation to pay wages and other charges pending the collection of the rates.

My parole precluded taking part in political matters. The Governor of the Board of Directors said the Bank and its business had nothing to do with politics. This was interesting to me as the Bank's objection to an overdraft was based on the refusal of the Corporation to strike a Criminal and Malicious Injury Rate. That of course was political, but must have escaped their observation. Eventually the Directors agreed to grant the usual overdraft.

Note 2.

The British tried to avoid military measures in this country as far as possible, and suppress the National Movement by police, hence the Black and Tans were introduced as police in their efforts to restore order. This was the first time in history that British civil administration broke down, and it was beaten by public opinion, responding generously to the lead given by the different Ministries of Dáil Éireann.

Note 3.

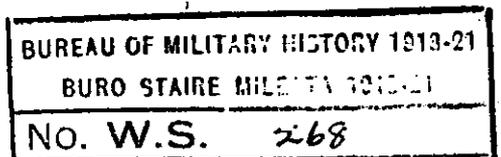
Representations having been made to me that the coffin containing Thomas Ashe should lie in state in the City Hall, I directed the Secretary to the Finance Committee Dublin Corporation, to hold a meeting for the purpose of granting the necessary permission to occupy the City Hall. There were soldiers on guard outside and inside the City Hall. At the meeting of the Committee it was suggested that the Lord Mayor should approach the authorities to facilitate the Lying-in-State. The Lord Mayor met with a blank refusal. Meantime the cortege with Volunteer guard was on its way. Mr. E.W. Eyre asked me if I thought he should go over to the Castle and see General Sir Bryan Mahon, G.O.C. I said certainly. He and the General were friends and following the interview General Sir Bryan Mahon and Mr. Eyre inspected the Hall Guards, etc. General Sir Bryan Mahon said he would withdraw the military pending the Lying-in-State, which he did.

During the period that the body of Thomas Ashe was Lying-in-State in the City Hall, Dublin, an order was issued by the Chief Secretary, I think, to the British Officer Commanding forbidding the holding of processions and the

carrying of arms in connection with the funeral, which was to have taken place on Sunday 30th September, 1917.

Meanwhile the Chief Secretary left for England. Sir Bryan Mahon, acting on his own initiative, confined troops to barracks, and the funeral of Thomas Ashe took place as arranged, without interference.

It was as a token of appreciation for this that I subsequently nominated Sir Bryan Mahon as a Senator.



On May 1st in Gymnasium at Richmond Barracks (i.e. those who surrendered in the Rebellion) were inspected by a number of D.M. Police in plain clothes, who passed up & down the hall peering closely into each man's face, and in two instances asking - "Is your name -" "Are you one of the -" identification according to which form being complete those selected viz. Mr. McDonagh, E. Reut, Hunter, Major MacBride, Harrahan Bros. Cosgrave Bros. J. Hughes, J. Mallin, P. Doyle were separated & the remainder marched out after being relieved of all portable property including money.

The names of the selected men being taken - they in turn were stripped, save Mr. McDonagh of all belongings - save Religious emblems. Their wearing apparel watches - Pencils, Fountain pens, Cigarettes etc. being searched in all cases but one or two - At 6 o'clock P.M. these men were marched from Gym & escorted by soldiers to an office in the Barracks - left standing under the guard of a Scot until 9 P.M. Having had breakfast at 7 A.M. consisting of 1 lb of Beef & some biscuits which each man was told was his daily ration - & subsequently $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Tea - which was comparatively innocent of sugar or milk -

Mr. McDonagh was first called into the office & after deposition of Major Armstrong had been read - was looked to for corroboration. E. Reut & Major MacBride following. In Reut's case - he inquired if that were a court & if he was bound to answer. Major Armstrong appeared to be amazed at the questions & answered "no" to both questions. Reut replying that in that case he would reserve his defence. Major Armstrong's deposition was to the effect that -

"E. Reut was in a party which surrendered at St. Patrick's Park on April 30 at 5 o'clock P.M. which had come from Jacobs, from which shot had been fired at His Majesty's troops causing some casualties. That E. Reut was armed."

On following day, May 2nd (?) Reut, MacBride, Bro. Cosgrave etc. etc. were ushered into a room in another part of the Richmond Barracks in which there were four officers. Three of whom were seated at a long table, one prior. Lieut. Wolfe on left of prisoners halfway between the aforesaid three & the volunteer prisoners. The officer in centre informed the prisoners that they were about being tried by a Field General Court-martial that it was the right of a prisoner to object to any member of the Court which would consist

of himself (possibly Lord Blackadder) - a Commander & a Col of Artillery. On being questioned as to whether there was any power to object to the Court or if there were any alternatives to the Court. The President replied "No". The only valid objection being to the Constitution i.e. to any one or 2 or even 3 members of it - as individuals - on that point being made clear - the Prisoners waived objections, & requested if legal assistance were permitted - a question which seemed to puzzle the Court not a little - seen Lieut. Wolfe, who by the way was a young R. C. who, on the Sunday Evg of Surrender at St. Patrick's Park when the volunteers furnished arms - produced his revolver & waved it continually on the March to Richmond whenever he saw a crowd of Spectators. During the journey to Barracks the Lieut. R. C. ran up & down the line as if he feared a rescue. He did not appear more at ease at the Court-martial - first declaring that prisoners had the right to have a friend legal or otherwise beside him at the trial who however would not be allowed to speak save to the Prisoner - which he later on amended by allowing the prisoners outside interviews - that is legal or other assistance was not permitted inside the room where Field General Court-martial was held.

The cases opened with that of E. Kent - Major Armstrong stated his deposition "that prisoner was one of a party which surrendered at St. Patrick's Park from Jacobs" "that he was armed" etc. etc.

Kent produced witnesses to prove conclusively that he was not at Jacobs. The Court accepted the proof.

Regarding the Major's evidence as to his being armed - the Major stated he had taken the names of all the men who surrendered. That he then took a list of those who were not armed - & subtracting same from the larger list - he gave evidence that the remainder were armed because their names were not amongst those who were unarmed. He admitted some discrepancies between the two lists of these names which he afterwards corrected. He did not say what arms Kent had. He could not say what arms he had, but he did say he was & must have been armed because his name was not on the list of unarmed men.

The next point urged against Kent was that his name was on the Proclamation. No evidence was tendered as to his acquiescence to same as to his signature as to his publishing, seeing or reading out of same - & since that his name was printed on the document no further evidence was

Submitted in respect of the charge - no evidence was given as to his "having taken part in Rebellion" to assist or for the purpose of assisting the enemy." nor was any evidence furnished as to his having been in the Rebellion at all. The substance of the "evidence" against R. Reut was the argument of Major Armstrong that "because his name was not on an imperfect list of unnamed men he must have been there as armed."

By the way, it was Major Armstrong who gave evidence in 1798 against the Bros. Theats. It was proven at the trial by Mr. (subsequently Lord) Plunkett, who in after years was Lord Chancellor of Ireland, that Armstrong was a scoundrel - who had been in jail - had been disgraced who actually seduced one of the Brothers Theats to join the United Irishmen but who never could get the younger brother to do so - (vide Lord Plunkett's Senate & Bar Speeches - published by Duffy & Co. - Dublin.)

The softening influences of time have had no effect upon some things in Ireland.

The night of the day of Reut's first trial (May 3rd) - Reut, MacBride & Cosgrave Bros. - G. Donovan, J. McDonnell & P. Poole were placed in a room at the top of Barracks staircase. The second last night Major MacBride spent on earth. They were locked in at 10 o'clock got no tea & were refused even a drink of water. Repeated application to the Guard being laughed at.

Trials were conducted upon the very same plan as those of '98. The S. M. P. & the Constabulary taking the place of yeomen & informers. The members of Courts martial were plebeian & polite. Their knowledge of Law most elementary so much so that the Crown Prosecutors had on several occasions to insist upon Prisoners rights.

Thomas MacDesmet complained bitterly of being cooped up in a small room with 63 others - but in all - sanitation laws were suspended - not was paid for a few articles of clothing to use as blankets which had to be returned at 5 o'clock AM the following morning.

One officer asked Reut for a souvenir. The Germans could not learn anything from the Standard of Culture, Education or civilization from the Officers in Richmond Barracks in May 1916.

Colon Colbert found guilty - Sentence - Death - he was shot. In the course of his trial he said he could prove he was not at Jacob's.

The President said it did not matter, whether that was proved or not. Colburn said "very well. If you say it does not make any difference - I need not call a witness to prove it". Colburn was not at Jacobs during the Rebellion. He did not suspect that the maximum penalty would be enforced. Davis, Pate, Sweeney were amongst those already mentioned.

The deposition of Major Armstrong was read out to W. Cosgrave who refused if he were bound to reply. The answer being in the negative. J. Hunter's case was next taken up by the Major with same result.

Cosgrave had demanded a number of witnesses - some of whom were produced to prove that the Major's deposition "that he was one of a party which had surrendered from Jacobs - (the same as Keats -)" Cosgrave refused from the Court whether the decision would be based upon evidence given in the Court in the same way as ordinary civil Court of law - Lieut. Wolfe answered in the affirmative - The case would be decided upon the evidence given - Cosgrave further inquired if any other matter would be taken into consideration but the evidence - Lieut. Wolfe said "no - your mind can be completely at rest - The Court will not allow any other matter except the evidence to influence their decision." Major Armstrong then

deposed "that Prisoner surrendered at St. Patrick's Park with a number of others that he was armed." Cosgrave pointed out that the Major's deposition was amended Lieut. Wolfe replied that was so that "they" discovered a mistake had been made. No evidence was tendered that

Cosgrave was in Rebellion. Evidence was put in that he surrendered. Major Armstrong, under cross examination, - said he could not say what arms the prisoners had - but he must have been armed because his name was not on the numbered list. Under cross examination which was written down by the Colonel - it was appearing that the Major's evidence was an argument.

The President of the Court intervened & said "The Court was satisfied as to the question of arms it was not material." A policeman named Walsh gave evidence slightly mutilated from his deposition - that he saw Cosgrave at Emerald Square in uniform at 11 A.M. on the Monday that he led "a party of volunteers down Cork St. Under cross examination he admitted that what he meant by leading was being in front. The President here intervened & said whoever was in front was leading. In the original deposition the policeman Walsh deposed - Cosgrave was armed - in his sworn evidence he eliminated this & gave no evidence of being armed.

The evidence against Cosgrave was that of a policeman who saw him in uniform - on the night of the Rebellion.

Result - Found Guilty - Sentence - Death - Commuted to Penal Servitude for life.