

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 290

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 290.....

Witness

Mr. Sean McLoughlin,
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Sheffield,
England.

Identity

½Lieutenant 'D' Coy. 1st Batt'n. Dublin Brigade
Irish Volunteers 1916;

Volunteer Organiser 1917-1920.

Subject

- (a) National activities 1913-1921;
- (b) Easter Week 1916 - Mendicity, Chancery Place;
Independent Offices; evacuation of G.P.O.
- (c) Reorganisation of Irish Volunteers 1917-1920.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

Nil

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STATEMENT BY Mr. SEAN McLOUGHLIN,
77, Lees Hall Road, Sheffield, England.

When I was about 15 years of age I joined the Colcumcille Branch of the Gaelic League which met at Blackhall Street. I met there Michael Staines, Peadar Breslin, the Carrols (father and son) and the O'Beirne girls.

I joined the Fianna about a year before the Howth Gun Running: it was before the start of the Volunteers and then I was enrolled by Padraig Ó Riain. We drilled in Camden Street. I was in Camden Street until the Howth Gun Running. I was associated there with Tom O'Donoghue, now a priest in England. Some of the others were the Houlihans, Dick Barton and Barney Mellowes.

When the Volunteers started in 1913 I formed a Company at Father Matthew Hall, Church Street. We formed the Company in the Hall and we were asked to shift it. We moved to North Brunswick Street to the back of the Christian Brothers School and the first Captain was J.J. Keane. I think he was President at that time of the G.A.A. This was "D" Company of the 1st Battalion of the Volunteers. I carried on there to the "split". We were there at the "split". The Company was meeting there then. At the "split" I think J.J. Keane remained neutral and I led the dissenters and we joined up with "G" Company at Blackhall Street. Michael Staines was Quartermaster of "A" Company. I was Lieutenant when I brought this Company away and I became a Lieutenant in "G" Company. The 1st Lieutenant was Enright, a silversmith (still living). Sean Heuston was Captain. We were

/attached

attached to the 1st Battalion and we carried out drill in Blackhall Street. We carried out manoeuvres in the Phoenix Park and Finglas area and street fighting around Benburb Street.

1915 was an eventful year. The main thing I remember about it was that order to park our arms which was taken very badly then. The British Military got very explosive about then. There were some arrests that year. Monteith left the 1st Battalion about 1915 and Ned Daly took his place as Battalion Commander. It was in 1915 I first learned that there was to be a Rising. I was initiated into the I.R.B. that year by Tom Clarke. I was in the Teeling Circle: Garry Houlihan was in it. I did not attend any meetings because I was too active. I was in charge of the parade at the O'Donovan-Rossa Funeral, which occurred in this period, and this was the first time we carried arms following the banning of them. The main feature of 1915 was scouting, drilling and arming. Some time in the winter of 1915 in the course of a discussion with Sean MacDermott, Sean Heuston and a number of others I asked whether the Volunteers should resist any attempt by the police to disarm them, and Sean MacDermott said that any violent action now would spoil our chances of the Rising. I said later to Sean Heuston "It looks as if we mean business" and Heuston replied "Yes, and before very long you will know more about it." We had a march on the 17th March and this was the first time I was placed on my own to operate without orders - only a directive. On that occasion ^I was given about a half dozen fellows who were armed with revolvers and our job was to watch the detectives at the parade and if they made any attempt to pick up Pearse - in fact any leader - our job was to "bump" them off.

/That

That was the first time we had any action of that kind. We were not in uniform. I was in charge of a squad. We were detached. We followed Detective-Sergeant Bruton. I followed him about until in the end I believe he got frightened. That was the beginning then.

About a fortnight before Easter Week Sean Heuston told me that there was a likelihood of action around Easter. No one was told there was going to be an uprising. We were to get the arms from the continent. There was a consignment of arms coming from Germany and we were told we would be called out in Holy Week and our job would be to collect these arms and in the event of any attempt by the British to interfere, resistance would be offered, which would probably lead to an all Ireland Rising. That was the arrangement. To my knowledge no suggestion was ever made openly to the men that they were to participate in the Rising. On Good Friday I think it was generally known about this arms business.

I think it was early in 1916 that Heuston took over command of "D" Company. Dick Balfe was a Section Leader. There were the Derringtons, Liam Murnane, Liam Staines who was 2nd Lieutenant and Tom Kelly. There was a Brennan and a chap named O'Dea. Paddy Stephenson was Quartermaster. Sean Heuston was the O.C. I was an active Volunteer.

We only ran the Fianna as a sort of side line. I still kept on Lieutenant of the Sluagh but actually it was run by Liam Staines. I was in command in the Sluagh: Liam Staines was next. Others were Shanley and Rooney.

The officers of "D" Company of the 1st Battalion were Sean Heuston, Liam Murnane and myself. Andy Finnucane was never an officer. Dick Balfe was a Section Commander. I think it was the smallest Company in the 1st Battalion. I don't think we paraded over 30 or 40 at any time. We were dominated by "A" Company.

During Holy Week we shifted an amount of those old guns and bombs in wooden boxes. We went to Kimmage for them. We distributed them in houses off Chancery Place. We also got a number of Lee Enfield Rifles. I think we were the best armed unit in the 1st Battalion. I ceased work on Monday on instructions from Sean Heuston, and that was the first intimation I got although we were still thinking in terms of action.

About Tuesday or Wednesday Tom Kelly read out in the Corporation a document to the effect that we were to be disarmed by the British. On Monday I got instructions to take a week off. At that time I was more concerned in raiding ^{FOR} guns. Sean Heuston told me a lot of things. He once asked me who did I think would be the best man in the Company to be fitted out for any special jobs. He began to doubt one or two people in the Company as to whether they would turn out or not.

On Wednesday night I saw Heuston and he told me that on Holy Thursday I should go to the Three Rock Mountain where we had a camping ground and I was to take my Sluagh of the Fianna because it was not possible to get Volunteers, and we were to bring all the arms that we had available. The lads were Liam Staines, Eamonn Rooney, I think. I am not sure if we had Shanley. There were 11 of us altogether. Balfe was not with us.

The people I took along were still going to school. I took with me two Lee Enfield rifles and six revolvers and about a half dozen proper Mills grenades. On Thursday morning we set off from my home at No. 4, North King Street; I am not sure about the time. Sean Heuston saw us off. It was then he told me that in the event of arms being landed and any interference by the British we would form the nucleus of a unit that would move down to overlook Dunlaoghaire to prevent the movement of troops in from England. We stayed at the Three Rock Mountain over Good Friday and until Saturday morning and on that morning I got a message from Heuston that the thing was off and that we were to come back into Dublin immediately, breaking camp. We could not carry the material. I sent the whole of the Sluagh with Liam Staines on the tram carrying some of the material and I carried the Lee Enfield rifle, the bombs and the revolvers on the back of my bicycle to my own home. At this time the military issued an order prohibiting the use of arms, so there was an element of risk in what I did. I made no attempt to cover my cargo. I was being stupid really. Two detectives were watching my house. Arriving at home on the Saturday I had my dinner and the police were watching the house. There was an instruction for me to proceed to Blackhall Street. I stayed in Blackhall Street all the afternoon and in the evening I saw Sean Heuston who told me not to allow the arms to get out of my possession, that something was going to happen on the Sunday and that if necessary I was to use violence to defend the arms.

The police followed us to Blackhall Street and I got instructions to defend the arms I had. On Saturday night we had a scoruigheacht in Blackhall Street and we stayed

all night and about 10 o'clock at night Seán Heuston came to Blackhall Street back again and told me that the rising would take place the following day. I slept at Blackhall Street on the floor with a number of others - Liam Staines, Balfe. We got up at 5 o'clock next morning. Between 5 and 6 o'clock Seán Heuston returned to Blackhall Street and told me I was to accompany him to a meeting to be held at Liberty Hall. Shortly after 6 o'clock in the morning we set off.

Seán and I stood around at Liberty Hall for quite over a half hour and eventually the first man I saw was Connolly who came and shook hands. He was dressed in a green uniform and hat - it was a military hat. He carried a revolver in his belt. We stood talking about. Eventually the Pearses arrived - Patrick and Willie together, carrying swords and both wearing Volunteer hats upturned at the side with the Fianna badge. Connolly asked me to wait, not to go away, and then went into a room with the Pearses, Seán Heuston and himself. In the room were Tom Clarke and Seán McDermott. Before they went in Seán Heuston said to me: "I hope I can keep you with me, Seán". I asked him what he meant but Connolly called him and I never got to know.

After about half an hour Connolly came out bare-headed and said to me, "Can you get a bicycle?". I said, "Well, I can borrow one." He then handed me a dispatch and said, "You will give this to the Officer-in-Charge at Kimmage. When you deliver this you will report back to your unit". Then he told me to tell him that everything in the way of food and arms that could be carried were to be carried and nothing of any use was to be left behind. I set off for Kimmage on the bicycle and when I got there the Kimmage men were having breakfast. I saw, I believe it was, George Plunkett and handed him the dispatch. He asked me what way I had come and I told him that I had come up

Harcourt Street and the Circular Road. I had a cup of tea with him and recognised some of the 'refugees' as they were called. After spending about twenty minutes I then left. I returned to Blackhall Street. There was no sign of any activity of any kind. This was about 7 o'clock in the morning. When we got some breakfast and then waited the remainder of the unit turned up. About 11 o'clock most of the Company had appeared and our instructions were to report to Beresford Place.

We did not march or take up military formation; we just strolled across but everybody was carrying arms, Lee Enfield rifles and 100 rounds of ammunition. I was carrying a small handbag containing .303 ammunition. When we got to Beresford Place several hundred men were assembled outside in Company formation, all armed. The Kimmage unit ('refugees' as they were known) arrived then.

Heuston went in to Liberty Hall and then came back, formed us up and we set off in a rather ragged military formation across Butt Bridge. It was now getting on for 12 o'clock. We got to O'Connell Bridge and we mounted a tram there that ran to Kingsbridge. Seán Heuston and I sat in the back of the tram and he then told me we were going into action. It had been decided to put the thing to the test and that our job was to seize the Mendicity. I said to him: "What about MacNeill's countermanding orders? Will it be an all-Ireland rising or are we just going out on our own?". He said: "I am afraid we are on our own, at least for the beginning".

We reached Queen Street Bridge where we **dismounted** from the tram. I handed the bag of ammunition to Derrington. Seán Heuston then hurriedly explained to the Company that we were going to seize the Mendicity. Some of them were astonished. He turned to me and said: "Seán, you better have a couple of men and see we are not interfered with from the Royal Barracks".

I went down to the quay wall overlooking the exit from the Barracks while they rushed into the Mendicity Institute. After a lapse of about ten minutes a policeman came along and was about to ask us some questions when we pointed our guns at him and he disappeared rapidly in the direction of Queen Street. Heuston then came out and asked me if I could get barricades erected each side of the Mendicity.

We stopped the trams; ordered the drivers off, told them there was going to be shooting. I then went down to Bridge Street and entered a yard where a number of carts were parked. Drawing a revolver I rounded up some individuals standing in the corner of Bridge Street and with their assistance we pulled the carts across the roadway. I was then summoned back to the Mendicity by Seán Heuston. We heard shouting outside the building. We went outside to see what was the matter and saw the owner of the carts demolishing the barricade. He objected to his carts being used in the rising. After further argument I managed to persuade him to leave them where they were. A crowd was now gathering to see what was up. Liam Staines now shouted to me from the Mendicity to come back, that the military were coming along the Quay in the direction of the Barracks. We got into position. I looked out the windows with Liam Staines. Seán Heuston shouted: "Don't fire until I give you the signal". There would be about thirty or forty men on the far side in khaki marching in military formation towards Queen Street Bridge. As we were getting ready I noticed that the men were carrying shovels and picks and I ran down the passage to Heuston and said: "These men are not armed; they are carrying picks and shovels". I said, "You are not going to shoot them". He said, "No, but we will fire over their heads and scatter them and give them a scare". He then instructed each to fire a couple of shots. We fired in the air over their heads. The shots from the .303 bullets being unloosed seemed to fill the whole place and the military scattered. Stevenson and Balfe were now given the task of organising supplies. Seán

discussed with me the question of food and said that he was very disappointed there was very little in the Mendicity, and asked me if I was prepared to go out and get some. He then mentioned the bombs we left in Bridgefoot Street would be very useful now and suggested that in addition to the food somebody ought to be sent to collect the bombs.

Nobody appeared to be willing. There was about 14 of us there. Eventually I agreed to go for the food and as I knew an individual in a public house in Bridgefoot Street who had been attached to the Volunteers I set off there. I had 50/- in my possession. I got to Bridgefoot Street and suddenly decided that I would collect the bombs. I went into this house and one lot of bombs were in a wooden box like a butter box, very awkward to carry. The people in the house were terribly frightened because by now Ned Daly's men were setting up barricades outside the Four Courts and the Church Street Bridge. I collected the bombs, entered this public house, laid the bombs on the counter and asked the assistant for a quantity of sugar, condensed milk and biscuits and put down £1 on the counter. I was very excited and so was the boy who served me. He made up a parcel containing these materials and handed it to me.

I made my way back along by ^{/carrying the bombs on my shoulder.} the Quays/ I went down through Bridge Street and I entered the Mendicity through the back yards, got in with the material and had to leave down the bombs while I shouted for help. For a long time nobody answered my cries and eventually some of the men appeared and helped me across the wall with the parcels. This expedition seemed to rouse Seán Heuston. He became very enthusiastic about my going out again. The only sign of any military uniform was a pair of leggings, & *green flanne shirt jowl*

We had some of the tea and then Seán Heuston suggested that I should make a journey to his home. I believe some shots were

fired from the Mendicity to scatter the crowds who were congregating on the bridges, mostly on Queen Street Bridge, and shots were heard coming from lower down the Quays.

After a considerable argument between Seán Heuston and myself - he was very concerned in case his home was raided, he had left his mother and his aunt in the house on their own, and in the house were a number of documents and a large quantity of ammunition, the ammunition he required back, the documents to be destroyed - I decided to make the journey to his home. In addition to calling on his mother he handed me a dispatch to take to the Post Office to give to Pearse and Connolly.

I eventually reached Seán Heuston's house and saw his mother. She handed me the ammunition and gave me a parcel containing butter, tea and sugar, and a letter for Seán. I then set out for the Post Office, going down Parnell Square and through the way we were afterwards to retreat - Henry Place - and into the side door of the Post Office. There was a lot of people about; no attempt being made to clear them off the streets.

When I went into the Post Office Connolly and Pearse stood together with their backs to the counter. I went up to Connolly and he said to me: "Where have you come from?", and I handed him the dispatch from Seán Heuston which he then read. He said to me: "What do you think of your chances of staying there?. Have any troops appeared from the Royal Barracks or from Kingsbridge?". I told him about the party we had scattered but apart from that we had seen no movement so far. He said: "Well, you could expect troops from Kingsbridge, there's nothing to stop them coming from the Curragh and you will probably get them somewhere in the early hours of to-night". He then turned to his typist who I believe was Winnie Kearney and gave her some instructions to write down which he folded up and put in an envelope and handed me to give to Seán Heuston. In the discussion Pearse was listening to him but took no part in it. I told him our main difficulty in the

place was food and he said he would arrange for me to have some food later if I came again. I then left the Post Office and went into O'Connell Street. This was about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I saw some dead horses just about the Pillar and one of the guards at the front of the Post Office told me that the Lancers had come down the street and had been fired on.

I walked down O'Connell Street towards the river; big crowds of people were milling round; some windows had been broken. Over the Post Office I noticed three flags flying, as far as I can recollect, 2 Tricolours and the middle one a green flag with a harp. On the opposite side on the Imperial Hotel was also a Tricolour. I crossed O'Connell Bridge and into Dame Street and heard shooting coming from the direction of the City Hall. However, I got near the Dolphin Hotel. I turned round and got into Parliament Street. Several shots were fired over my head. I noticed the Mail Office windows were broken. I could not tell where the firing was coming from. Round the vicinity of the City Hall like the Post Office there was no one to be seen but a green, white and orange flag was flying over the City Hall and I took it that we were in possession and did not investigate.

I went back to Merchants Quay along to the Mendicity, handed over the dispatch and parcels to Seán Heuston and told him we discussed the position as I had seen it. This was about 6 o'clock.

During the night I volunteered to "stand to". As it fell dark we heard the first sound of heavy traffic but could see nothing. Somebody shouted to us through the railings that soldiers were making their way from the Royal Hospital into James's Street. All during the night we heard these sounds but there was no activity.

The following morning about 10 o'clock Seán Heuston

suggested that I should return to the Post Office and collect the food. I went off again; this time again repeating the journey. I stood this time and talked to the lads; all was quiet here as well. I went to the Post Office, saw Connolly and Pearse who expressed great astonishment we were still holding the fort. On my own initiative I suggested it would not be a bad plan if they could allow us have extra men as we were not doing a good deal of work in the Mendicity it might be possible to push further out. Connolly thought that this was a good idea^{as} from his own experience in the Post Office ~~as~~ ^{with} the tendency was for every post to ~~congregate~~ ^{REMAIN} in one place and that it would be much better from a military point of view to push outposts out to the limit. We then discussed the number of men that should be sent and he went away with Pearse and after ten minutes came back and told me a number of men had arrived from Swords. They were utterly unfamiliar with the city. I could take these men. He did not ~~advise~~ ^{advise} the number but I understood in the neighbourhood of 10 to 20, and asked me how I proposed to get them there. I told him I would take them. He disagreed with this. He said, "No, you must not take them. We must get somebody to guard them and you must go on ahead and see the cost^s is clear and on no account get mixed up with them; you are too useful to Seán Heuston and keep coming here as long as ever you can. You are the only authentic source of information we have of what is taking place along that area".

I saw Micheál Staines and Desmond Fitzgerald who gave me a large parcel of food. Connolly had now found a man called J. J. Scollin who knew the city, to take the Mendicity men across and I was to give them the route they were to follow. I also had a word with the leader of the Swords men, Dick Coleman. I gave them the route and then set off in front of them. They eventually reached the Mendicity about half an hour behind me and when I told Heuston I was bringing some extra men he thought I was being humorous and was greatly surprised when he saw the men arrive.
^{/and pleased}

While I was out of the Mendicity I believe some shooting had

taken place in the direction of the Royal Barracks. In the evening it was now possible to extend the screen of men into the houses outside the Mendicity. Again the night was quiet.

The following morning Heuston, now quite cheerful, feeling very confident, instructed me to again set out for the Post Office. I told him it was too much of a strain to continue carrying parcels on my own and that I would have to have somebody else. He gave me a young fellow named Roche. Later on I set out, but on setting out found that Stevenson had arranged to come with me. Stevenson accompanied me and we set out for the Post Office, again collecting food and supplies. Connolly and Pearse now appearing to be waiting for my appearance there were astonished to find that we were still at the Mendicity and that no organised action had been taken against us. Connolly said to Pearse in my hearing: "There could not have been so many men in the country as I thought". (I took it to be British) as I fully expected the Mendicity to have been captured by now.

We set off back coming through Church Street. When we reached the end of Church Street we heard very loud and intensive firing going on in the direction of Queen Street and we realised this action must be taking place around the Mendicity. We went down Smithfield to the Quays and saw a large body of fully equipped armed troops in the shelter of the quay walls obviously getting ready to cross the bridge while others were taking up positions in the windows in the public house on the corner of Queen Street. Terrific firing was going on and a large crowd was assembled at the corner to watch the movement of the troops. I moved into the crowd with the idea that it might have been possible to rush across Queen Street Bridge. When the troops moved further across the bridge some women standing in a group looked at us and some of them recognised me as a volunteer and said "there is one of them". The troops in their immediate vicinity made a rush but were blocked by the crowd and we ran

towards Smithfield as all the arms I was carrying was a small automatic pistol which was useless in such a position, but we were not pursued.

We then went down Hammond Lane to Church Street and went on to the billets where they were all aware of what was taking place, that the Mendicity was being attacked. The firing seemed to reach a very high pitch; loud explosions as if bombs were being thrown and then suddenly it was all over. We were very upset. By now Ned Daly had been sent for and had come down to the bridge. He said to me: "Well, you did not get back this time. You've had a good run and you were fortunate you were not earlier or you would have been with them now".

We then agreed to stay at the Four Courts and Ned Daly asked me to take charge at Chancery Place end. During the night heavy firing took place all along the quays towards the end of the river and it seemed as if O'Connell Street were in action. The only action at the gate was some firing which took place from the houses opposite, and we returned. We stayed there all night and the following morning in a discussion with Daly I suggested to him that it might not be a bad idea if I went back to the Post Office. In the meantime he told me some action had taken place at the top end of his position at King Street and that a friend of mine had been badly hurt. Later I found out an attack had been made on the Broadstone station by a number of men led by Garry Houlihan, Martin being shot through the lungs. ^{I WENT TO THE HOSPITAL SMY} ~~When I went to the top of Church Street I was told I would not be allowed in.~~ ^{SMY} When I got there the hospital authorities attempted to stop me from entering. I pushed my way in and saw Martin lying on the seat to all appearances dying and unconscious. On my way out the House Surgeon called me into his room, as I thought to reprimand me for entering the hospital, and to my astonishment presented me with two pouches of .303 ammunition, with the words: "You will probably need this". I then left the hospital and took the ammunition to

the barricade in King Street. I made my way down King Street towards Capel Street intending to call at home. Under the floor of my bedroom which we put away during Holy Week were 12 single bore new shotguns. I arranged to have them taken away. Then I returned to the Four Courts and collected Stevenson and then set off for the Post Office with Stevenson.

We went down Britain Street and I met some people I knew who were not connected with the movement but who knew I was out. They warned me not to go down Britain Street which I had intended to do, and said troops were coming down from Rutland Square, very large bodies of troops with full equipment and were making their way along. I turned into Denmark Street and saw the troops myself head on Dominick Street and then turned into Henry Street. Now the crowds had disappeared. We walked down towards the Post Office and were admitted after parley through the side door. S. M. G.

I turned down

I turned down Denmark Street with Stephenson and we turned into Henry Street. There was not a soul to be seen and the windows were smashed in Henry Street. Eventually we reached the side door of the Post Office opposite Moore Street and we entered after a parley. It seemed to me that Pearse and Connolly took up a stance in the G.P.O. right in the middle of it facing the outer door. I saw Connolly and I told him what had happened, that the Mendicity was captured and that the men were killed, as far as I knew. He asked about King Street and I told him. I also told him of the British movement down Parnell Street (Britain Street then). I explained the whole situation and then I left him to get a cup of tea. We had the tea and after about an hour an alarm was given and all who were not directly manning the barricades of the front window "stood to". We were lined up in double column and Connolly came down the line and commenced splitting them up into small groups of 6 or 8 and then he marked off a big group of about 30. He called me out of the ranks and said "You come here" adding "These are your men. I want you to come with me". We turned the men and marched out into Princes Street. He then said "I have had word brought in that the British are advancing along Abbey Street and coming across from the Quays up Liffey Street. I want you to go around into Abbey Street and seize the Independent Office, and" he continued, "the building on the opposite corner so that you can command Abbey Street looking towards Capel Street and overlooking Liffey Street. If you require re-inforcements, send a messenger back and let me know". We then went down the laneway that leads from Princes Street into Abbey Street, Connolly and myself leading.

/When

When we reached the corner of Williams Lane linking into Abbey Street, the street was being heavily shelled. Volumes of smoke were pouring down O'Connell Street. I then detached a small party of men, amongst whom was Sean Milroy with a small party, and ordered them to proceed at the double down Abbey Street and dash across into Lucas Lamp Office. They dashed off and all the time the street was being shelled. I remarked to Connolly that he should not expose himself, that he was too valuable to be lost and then I sent my own men off - the remaining men - with instructions to enter the Independent Office at the bottom of the street. I turned, shook hands with Connolly and he said "Don't forget if you are in trouble send back a messenger, I will keep in touch with you." The firing was very hot now and pieces of metal were bouncing off the pavement. I dashed off and got to the Independent Office. Arriving there I found all the men standing outside the door trying to take shelter. I said "Why have you not entered?" They replied "Some men inside have locked the door and refused to let us in." After a few minutes futile recrimination we went around the corner into Upper Liffey Street and taking a rifle off one of the men I smashed a glass window of a furniture shop. We entered through the broken window and found ourselves in a yard leading to the Independent Offices and from a door a number of men emerged who were obviously the caretakers of the Independent Office or employees. I spoke sharply to them on their action in shutting the front door on the teeth of the men and I then told them to clear out warning them to go down towards Jervis Street for safety. We then entered the Independent Offices and took possession.

I placed the men in the top windows overlooking the approaches which Connolly had indicated. Again the same trouble confronted us - there was no food. I went on to the roof of the Independent Office with one of the men who was a member of an organisation known as the Hibernian Rifles. Now we saw the extent of the damage in O'Connell Street. The eastern side of O'Connell Street was in flames. The Imperial Hotel, and Reis's were also emitting huge columns of smoke. It was a terrific spectacle. I realised then that this was probably how the Rising would end - probably being burned to death. We descended from the roof and a messenger arrived at the door with a basket of food. I wrote a short note and told Connolly we were still where he placed us but I think the story that the British were crossing from the Quays and up Abbey Street was not correct. I placed one or two on guard and allowed the remainder to lie down and rest. By midnight the fires seemed to have got worse as the roar of the flames could now be heard quite clearly.

We received an alarm that cavalry were approaching and I ordered the men to "Stand to". The sound of horses' hooves could be heard coming and as I was about to give the order to shoot I suddenly realised that the horses were riderless. They were horses that had escaped from stables.

About 6 o'clock the following morning a messenger came from Pearse stating that I was to return to the Post Office and bring my men. In the excitement of getting back I overlooked the men at Lucas'. We did not get in touch with Milroy and as far as I know he received no instructions. I returned to the Post

/Office

Office. Everybody was gloomy and there was a sense of foreboding that the end was near. After the men had been given food Desmond Fitzgerald told me that Connolly had been wounded. I had not seen him then. I went to see Connolly and he was lying on a stretcher being attended to by a British Army Officer. Sean MacDermott sat with him. He said to me "You did not remain away long." I said "I am sorry; what happened?" He answered "After you left I came out in the street in order to see if you could get into the Independent Office safely when I was hit." I said "It probably was the shrapnel". He said "I don't know". He added "I think I am hit in two places, but" he continued "there is plenty for you to do and we can talk about my trouble some other time." He was very stoical but seemed to be in very great pain. He turned to Sean MacDermott and said "This is the young fellow I told you about. He has seen more of Dublin this week than any of us. We had better keep him with us now." I stayed nearby and heard reports being brought in from the various parts of the building as to the progress of the fires opposite. Orders had now been given that all outposts were to be withdrawn back to the Post Office.

About midday the shelling re-opened. O'Rahilly came up and said "We are moving firing parties on to the roof but there is a large collection of bombs in the basement near the lift." I said to Sean MacDermott "That is a peculiar place to put them. If the roof goes on fire it will travel through the roof into the basement and these bombs may be more dangerous to us than to the British." Sean laughed and said "I have not seen any of them go off yet. I don't think they are the best job in the world." I then agreed to go with

/O'Rahilly

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O'Rahilly, taking the men I had with me, to shift the bombs away from the lift. As far as I recollect Joseph Plunkett accompanied us. He wore a pair of high boots and had a large coloured handkerchief tied around his neck cowboy fashion. We went into the cellar. We had hardly begun to shift the bombs when we were called back by Sean MacDermott who said - and this struck me as remarkable at the time - "Mr. Connolly wants you to go around and have a look at the position from the lift." As we were about to obey, a Volunteer came rushing down shouting that the Post Office was on fire, that incendiary shells were falling on the roof and the men were coming off it. I believe the name of this Volunteer was Kilgallen, a St. Enda's boy. I rushed up towards the lift which was by now beginning to blaze. It was clear now that nothing could be done to stop the fire spreading. I ran back and said "It is hopeless, we will have to get out." In the meantime the women in the Post Office and the wounded were being rounded up and we moved out into the Coliseum theatre next door - a new theatre recently built which was believed to have been fire-proof, but which was not fireproof. Orders were now given that all the men were to be rounded up with their arms and ammunition. It was now a race against time of which I had lost all count. As it was getting dark the Post Office was still alight. Connolly was moved towards the other entrance on a stretcher accompanied by some wounded prisoners and volunteers. I went below stairs with The O'Rahilly and the original squad to complete the task we had been interrupted in carrying out, that is the moving of the bombs. The O'Rahilly turned on the water and the first jet from the hose was directed at the bomb savers.

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We shifted the bombs very hurriedly and rather recklessly. Smoke was now pouring down the lift shaft when we got to the main floor.

I encountered Sean MacDermott who said "I have been looking for you; we are evacuating the Post Office and I want you to stay with us." I said "Where do we evacuate to?" and as I spoke some one said "Williams and Woods". I replied "That is just mad; Williams and Woods is in the hands of the British." I believe Pearse said "Well, O'Rahilly has just gone there." I said "My God! he'll be killed: it is certain death. I then asked "What way have they gone?" Henry Place was indicated. I drew my revolver and dashed across the road into Henry Place. I ran down Henry Place towards Moore Lane. A handful of men were there who had evidently accompanied O'Rahilly. They said "He's gone" which I took literally and did not investigate further. We were opposite to Moore Lane when there was a terrific blaze of fire from the far end and we realised the British were in possession of the barricades. I turned back towards the Post Office and saw the whole garrison coming towards me at the run. There was terrible confusion - almost panic. No one seemed to have any idea what to do. Somebody shouted that we were being fired on from the roof of a mineral water factory. I detailed a number of men to break the door down. Another party entered from the opposite door and they opened fire on each other - one man was killed and several wounded. I was incensed with rage calling "Have you all gone mad - what the hell is wrong!" and I drove them towards the wall threatening them.

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A temporary calm seemed to come over them and then Pearse with Connolly being carried on a stretcher and a little cavalcade of wounded followed with a ^{Few} couple ~~of~~ women - Julie Grennan, Winnie Carney. Sean MacDermott came up to me saying "My God! we are not going to be caught like rats and killed without a chance to fight". I said "There is no need to get into a panic. I can get you out of here but there will be only one man giving orders and I will give them." He spoke to Connolly and Connolly agreed. He said "We have no chance now: this is the end." I then went around to the top of the column and spoke to some of the men in the front saying "We must get out of here at all costs. We are caught like rats." I then moved them across Moore Lane. The British were now alive to what was taking place and were opening up with all they had. Beyond us the Post Office was a blazing inferno and the only light in the lane was the terrible glare in the skies. The wounded were groaning but we could not attend to them. I realised we had got to get past Henry Place. We smashed open the door of a mineral water place and found a motor van. I got a number of men to pull this out and we pushed it across the end of Moore Lane to screen us from view. Some one shouted that we were being fired on from a white cottage which was directly opposite Moore Lane. Smoke could be seen coming from the upper windows. I hurriedly gathered together some of the column amongst whom were Michael Staines, Oscar Traynor, Tom McGrath and others. I forced open the door with my shoulder and we dashed up the stairs but there was no one in the house. I then came back down and gave orders that the men were to be moved across in small groups and they were to move into the houses in Moore Street at the top of Moore Lane and that they were to break their way through from house to house as far as they could go. Then the wounded with

/Connolly

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Connolly were moved across into the place between Henry Place and Moore Street, still leaving them in the open. A woman came to the door to see what was happening and was shot dead by one of our men. ~~We~~^{Some} thought we were being attacked. I disarmed him and struck him and Sean MacDermott went to console the mother and as far as I know I believe later in the night he gave her some of the money which he had been carrying for Headquarters purposes. We now managed to get all the men into the buildings and I decided to move Connolly with the stretcher into the first house which was a grocer's shop at the corner of the lane. He was taken into the kitchen and in the meantime I went into Moore Street to carry out reconnaissance but the British were at the other end in force and opened up with machine guns. I could see then we were in an even worse plight than I had realised. One of the men came out and said that Mr. MacDermott wanted me to come and have some tea. When I got into the kitchen Connolly was laid on a stretcher on the floor. Sitting by him was Miss Carney, I believe Miss Grennan, Elizabeth Farrell, Sean MacDermott, Tom Clarke, P.H. Pearse, Willie Pearse, Joseph Plunkett and several of our own wounded including some British wounded. I was given some tea and we had a meal in silence. Sean MacDermott then spoke saying "Now, Sean, you are going to have a big job. You will have to take charge now. You are the only one that is likely to get us out of here". He added "Mr. Connolly and the others have agreed that you take Mr. Connolly's place and all military commands will be given by you from now on". He continued "I don't know how long this will be". I said a trifle foolishly "While there's life there's hope." Connolly said "Well you seemed to be in at

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the beginning and in at the end. Have you any idea of what you propose to do now?" I said "We are now paying the penalty of not having a line of retreat. We ought to have gone the other way, as I told you earlier, down Henry Street towards the Four Courts and that is what we will have to do as soon as the men are rested but it will be impossible to move them now as the faintest sound will be traced by the British and any movement now will be uncontrolled as it is impossible in a confused situation in the dark to get a weary body of men to think clearly or obey military commands." Pearse said that was very sensible. I said "We shall move as soon as daylight comes: in the meantime I must have a look around." Sean MacDermott, who was the most active man there, said "What shall we do in the meantime?" I said "The most sensible thing you can all do is to have a few hours sleep." I then went out and up the stairs and getting a number of men amongst whom were Tom McGrath, Seamus McGowan, Paddy Murrin and numerous others I told them we must burrow as far as possible before daylight, that to evacuate Moore Street the men would have to be spread out over the widest possible front, that in any movement out of an enclosed position the close bunching of the men was a gift to the enemy as they could be mown down en masse. Scattered they presented a smaller target and offered a greater maximum of safety. Various officers were appointed amongst whom were Dermot Lynch, Henderson, Bulfin and orders were given that the burrowing was to be carried on without cessation all night long without a break in relays each party taking its turn to break through while the others resisted. Each officer would be responsible for finding food and getting the men something to eat and sharing with others who had none where supplies were most plentiful. All that could be spared were to be let

/sleep

sleep to be fresh for the morning. I then returned to Headquarters and told them that for the time being we were safe. Our only danger now was if the British discovered we were there in force and they started to burn down Moore Street it would be a case of every man for himself and that we as a group would try to stick together as long as possible. As long as there was a direction you had a headquarters and as long as you had a headquarters you had a command and we were still a unit and not a disorganised mob which was now our greatest danger. A scattered body of men flying before the firing worn out with exhaustion, would simply become a panicky unruly mob and would be killed like sheep without benefit to anyone. Tom Clarke said "What a hopeless prospect!" I then repeated my original advice to them to try to get some sleep. Pearse and his brother went up stairs and made their bed on a wide table, lying on top of it, and I lay underneath on the floor. I was awakened as daylight crept into the sky and I went to see how far the digging had gone.

We had now reached Hanlons. There was an open space between there and the next houses. We got as far as Hanlons and I instructed them to continue the digging until, if possible, they reached what is now O'Rahilly Street, then Sackville Lane, and gave orders that discipline was to be restored as quickly as possible and officers were to gather around the men they knew best, that all those who had bayonets were to be moved and formed into a separate section, and were to follow the digging until Sackville Lane was reached. I then decided that the only way left open now was to leave

/Moore

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Moore Street in a frontal wave, cross to the opposite side and into the back lanes, re-form again in Denmark Street near to the top of Henry Street and that, for the moment, was as much planning as could be done in the circumstances where everything was in the nature of a gamble. I was quite convinced that we should never emerge from this place intact. It was only a question of hours with the British assuming activities later in the day when we would be completely smashed to pieces. The nerve of most would be broken: those who were not immediately killed would either be captured or surrender and only a small handful, of which I hoped to be one, would ever reach the objective - the markets in the Four Courts alive.

Later word came through that we were now into Sackville Lane through a yardway with a big wide door. Sean MacDermott now came to see how I was getting on and I took him with me into Sackville Lane. Arriving there we were still screened from the British who had no idea of our ~~precincts~~ ^{PRESENCE S.M.}. I saw a number of bodies lying on the foot-path and roadway - our own men. One familiar one I approached and this was O'Rahilly lying on his back, his arms outstretched, blood oozing from his body in a pool under him and flies buzzing about his head. Two or three others lay dead near him. I called Sean MacDermott over and some of the men followed. We knelt for a few minutes and said an Act of Contrition. I then took my handkerchief out of my pocket and covered O'Rahilly's face; the same was done for the other three. That was all we could do. We then returned to the houses. We went down towards Hanlons. Pearse, Connolly and the others had now been moved into houses in the middle of Moore Street. Connolly then asked me to state the position. I told him

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of the foregoing and what I proposed to do was we would now assemble a small body of men in Sackville Lane numbering from 20 to 30. Everyone else would be brought down to the doorways which would be open ready in all the houses in Moore Street. I proposed on a signal to rush the 20 or 30 men towards the barricade at the end of Moore Street. I would throw a bomb from the corner towards the British and immediately the whole body in Moore Street would dash across the street into the laneways on the opposite side and re-form. Only one wounded man would be taken and that was Connolly himself. We could not be burdened with the prisoners and wounded. When we were re-formed we would do so at Denmark Street near the Henry Street Warehouse as the road turns at that point and we would be screened from Britain Street. We would make our way down a laneway at the back of Todd Burns. We would break through into Todd Burns, move towards Capel Street to enable us to make our way to the Markets and if possible to the Four Courts and fight it out with Daly there. There was less possibility in my opinion of us being burned out as there were more open spaces in that part of the town than around where we were and by keeping towards Henry Street in our retreat we would avoid the thickly populated areas of Lower Denmark Street and Britain Street. Pearse said "The only difficulty with this is that more innocent people would be killed." I said "I am sorry: I cannot help that. This is a military operation and I can only make it successful if I don't think about these things." He agreed. I said the zero hour for the move would be at 12 o'clock as just about then the British being "British" and methodical would begin their operations and we must be prepared to leave before then. I then went out and formed the men into the "Death or Glory Squad" - 20 men with
/bayonets.

bayonets. In these were the Hendersons, McGrath, Lynch, Bulfin, Murrin, Sean^{us, 1944} Robinson, Sam O'Reilly and some others. I moved them up to Sackville Lane and "stood" them in the yard and each man was given instructions what to do. Bayonets were fixed. As I was preparing Sean MacDermott came and said I was to come back to Headquarters as Mr. Pearse wanted to see me. I returned to the dump which had two beds laid end to end. On the one nearest to Moore Lane was a wounded British soldier groaning in agony. On the bed nearest to Moore Street lay James Connolly. Pearse sat on the end of the bed. Sean MacDermott and Tom Clarke were seated on chairs beside the bed and I think Plunkett was seated on the floor in the corner. There was also a Doctor serving in the British Army. Connolly spoke now and seemed to be much brighter. He said "Now Sean, will you tell us your plans?"

I then explained all the preparations I had made and was almost ready to move now. Connolly said, "I am afraid you will be a little disappointed. Mr. Pearse wishes to say something". Pearse then said: "I wish you to postpone all action for one hour. I am very worried over the loss of civilians and the number of people dead in the street and I will acquaint you later with what we propose to do". I then said: "An hour! and do I understand that you don't want me to do anything more?" He said: "Oh no! I only want from you one hour's postponement of your action. You may still have to carry it out. Do not worry. It is nothing to do with your plans". I then left to give the orders to stand-down for one hour.

I brought the boys^{s. 1944} back into one of the

houses and we had some tea. I sat with the men; a great deal of argument was taking place and I listened with some grim amusement to the various comments on the purpose of the charges which I had not then disclosed to them, but most of them seemed to have a suspicion that they were going to be bothered. It was remarked by somebody how quiet it had become and then seemingly as if from nowhere something I cannot understand, a rumour was wafted through the various buildings that we were about to surrender and I was hotly questioned. I said quite truthfully at that moment that I knew nothing about any surrender and I then went back to Headquarters.

When I came back Julia Grennan was making arrangements to leave. Pearse said to me: "I am sending a message to the British to end this fight". I said: "Does it mean surrender?". He said: "I don't know until we have heard from the British". He then went out of the room, I believe with Julia Grennan to see her off. I went and sat with Tom Clarke and said somewhat bitterly: "that's a curious way to act". He patted me on the back and said: "Don't take it like that, Seán; there are bigger things involved, you did your best".

We were given a cup of tea each and then Connolly beckoned to me from the bed and said: "You must not take it so ^{HARDLY} heartily; you are young, you will see a lot more struggles before you die". I said, "I know". He said: "There is no hope for me; all those who signed the Proclamation will be shot". I said: "Are you sure of that?". He said: "Certain. The British can do no worse and we do not expect any mercy", and I said: "What about the rest of us?". He said: "The rank and file will probably be imprisoned and later released. ^{Just} ~~Some~~ you must keep quiet about the part you played. You will still be needed; you will have plenty to do in the future if you keep quiet about what you have done now". He said: "We have tried our best; it was better than we hoped and it has not ended as it might have done, in disaster". ^{SML} He said:

WITH ELIZABETH FARREL SML

"Our great testing time was in that lane that you took us out of".
No more was said.

Later Seán MacDermott came and took me away. He said:
"don't get gloomy; let's go and have a wash and clean up".
As we both left the room we were called back. Pearse came in.
~~ELIZABETH FARRELL~~
~~Julia Connolly~~ had returned with a note and instructions from the
British. As far as I could make out the British refused to treat
until Pearse himself surrendered and he would have to go and meet
the British at the British Headquarters in Britain Street. He then
shook hands with each of us in turn and went out with ~~Julia Connolly~~^{ELIZABETH FARRELL}.
I formed the opinion that he intended or expected to come back,
but he never came back. Instead a note was received by Connolly
which was afterwards passed to me, to the effect that we were to lay
down our arms as the fight was over.

While we were waiting for Pearse's messenger or himself to
return all activity was suspended. A great deal of recrimination
was going on among the men in various parts of the street. My own
chief concern was the fate of what we called the "refugees".
Earlier I urged this on Pearse the danger to these men in the event
of a surrender; however, nothing came of it. Seán MacDermott
and myself both washed and Seán shaved and then went back to see
Connolly and the others. The message had now come back -
"surrender was the order". It was now my job to arrange the
details. The instructions were that we were to go out into Moore
Street, unarmed, line up, carry three white flags, an advance party
was to be sent on five minutes ahead of the main body to proceed
through Henry Place, Henry Street into O'Connell Street, cross the
street towards the Gresham Hotel and proceed along to Findlater's
shop. This party was to carry the first white flag and announce
that the main body was following. The main body was then to follow,
taking the same route, with a white flag in front and a white flag
at the rear.

I gave instructions to Willie Pearse and Sam O'Reilly to get the flags ready and then gave orders that all the men were to be brought in to the yard behind Hanlons. When they were all assembled I spoke to them and told them that it had been decided to surrender and that Seán McDermott would read out the orders and explain why. Seán then spoke, complimented the men on their bearing, thanked them for all they had done and told them that while many would think what they had done now was foolish, in the years to come perhaps what we had done would be appreciated. I don't think he himself had the faintest idea of how or when. I then pointed out to the men that in all probability the town would now be under martial law and I warned all present to make religiously certain that they carried no property or money or any articles of value on their possession that did not belong to themselves, and anything however legitimately acquired that was not the normal property of the individual concerned must be discarded now, otherwise the British would show short shrift to anybody in possession of property they should not possess and probably would be shot out of hand.

I thereupon ordered the whole body to parade with arms in Moore Street. We lined up all the men in Moore Street. I detailed a small party and handed them over to Sam O'Reilly and Willie Pearse to arrange for the advance party to move off. Some confusion arose here. I definitely understood that Sam O'Reilly had moved off and in subsequent conversation here later he informed me that he had carried out the instructions but had gone on to O'Connell Bridge where he was taken prisoner. Later I learned that M.W. O'Reilly carried the white flag of the advance party.

The main body were lined up, numbered off and formed fours. I counted them, roughly about 320 people were on the parade, including a few women. Against the wall outside Hanlons were placed the wounded, including James Connolly. Michael Staines came to me and wanted to act as stretcher bearer and take charge of the party with

Connolly to which I agreed, going to the head of the column with Seán MacDermott, Willie Pearse and I think Plunkett. I gave the order "quick march".

We turned into Henry Place and as we did so a British Sergeant came rushing up, carrying a revolver and told us to hurry that the walls of the Post Office were falling in, but we kept on our steady pace, turned into O'Connell Street across to the Gresham and the head of the column rested at Findlater's. I halted them, gave them "left turn", formed two deep and then shouted: "Front line, two paces march, down arms. Rear line, two paces back march, down arms". At this a tall officer carrying a whip came forward. I did not see who it was but afterwards I learned it was General Lowe, and shouted at me: "Who the hell gave you the authority to give orders here? I told you to leave your b..... arms in Moore Street. I'll have you damn well shot". I was carrying a sword for effect which I pulled out of the scabbard and threw it on the ground in front of him and then moved back into the rank. He seemed astounded and did nothing further.

After a short delay an officer came forward and gave us an order to "quick march, fall in". A guard fell in around us and we were marched into the Rotunda Gardens. We were immediately told to sit down on the grass, not to move, the first person to do so would be shot. An officer made quite a speech, interspersed with violent abuse and told us we were covered from all corners and that any man who moved during the night without permission would be shot. A number of officers then came forward. Tom Clarke was made sit on the edge of the grass in the front, then Seán MacDermott; then myself, as I was wearing orange tabs on my coat; then Plunkett. We were then left alone. Later an officer came up, kicked me on the feet. He also kicked Plunkett on the feet and said: "I suppose you looted those boots". I was wearing a pair of ^{socks} ~~TOP BOOTS~~ as was Plunkett. He said: "You should be shot out of hands for that, you may be later".

We lay on the ground for some time, what seemed hours. The grass was wet although it was a fine night. There was dead silence, nobody spoke. We huddled together for warmth. I lay with my back towards Tom Clarke. After what seemed hours another body of men was seen entering the gardens. An officer which proved to be Ned Daly was thrown on the ground beside us. He sat there and then recognised me and then he spoke to me first. He said: "What! you again. What on earth happened, Seán? Why have we surrendered?". I said: "Don't ask me. Ask Seán McDermott here, he will tell you", but Seán would not speak. We carried on a desultory conversation in low tones. Every time this officer saw us make a move or speak, he swore and cursed and threatened us. I had a conversation with Daly; told him all I could about what happened. He said, "Well I thought this would finish us - ^{WHEN SHALL} you left us together to ^{Go to S.M.H.} Headquarters - but I don't think we were beaten. I think we ^{HAD SHALL} have plenty of ^{FOUR COURTS S.44} fight left in us yet". During the night the ^{Few} men came. This was the only sign of life we had from any quarter.

Next morning we were allowed to stand for a while. We were stiff after the wet grass, and then we were moved out into Parnell Square. The men went on in front of the main post of the Post Office. ^{FOUR COURTS} The ~~Fairview~~ men and our little group were told to fall in behind the main body. I was with Seán McDermott and Ned Daly; behind us Tom Clarke and I think Joe Plunkett and one or two others. We marched up O'Connell Street, detoured the Pillar, crossed the debris over O'Connell Bridge and into Dame Street. By this Seán was sweating with the pace. We tried to slow down, went on through Thomas Street, turned down from James Street through the Royal Hospital into Kilmainham and round into Richmond Barracks. We were then lined up. We had to pass among a line of officers and "G" men, among whom were Henry Bruton, Barton, etc. First of all we passed through the British military, then through some civilians who I understand were Castle Authorities, and finally a third section of "G" men.

As I moved through a Captain caught me by the shoulder and pulled me out and said "how old are you?". I said, "Why?". "You are young to be an officer", he said. I made no reply. He thereupon tore the tabs from my coat. "You are no longer an officer now", he said. I passed through the second line without comment. When I reached the third ^{JOHANNY SULL} ~~line~~ Barton slapped me on the back and said, "Here's one of the gallant scouts". I was shoved then into what I believe was the Gym. Eventually an officer came in and said, "there's far too many people in this place, some will have to go". I was in luck. The Detective had gone away to have a breathe ^{vs SULL} and the troops moved ^{vs SULL} nearer to the door.

We were taken out and brought across the yard and when I got on to the barrack square all our men were lined up in line. I immediately went straight on and joined the line. I had hardly been stood ten minutes when a number of soldiers came along carrying baskets containing bully beef and bread, A tin of beef was to be shared between every two men and two hard biscuits, and we were told that we were to be careful with them that it might be a long time before we good food. One of the soldiers grumbled about the way we had behaved, we could have waited till the war was over, and commented that he had been fired on.

We were then marched out between two of troops carrying fixed bayonets and full equipment, back the way we had come. When we got to O'Connell Bridge we turned up down the quays to the North Wall to what was then the London North Western. We were brought into the London North Western premises through the subway. I asked for a drink of water for one of our wounded men. We were then marched into the hold of the ship where they kept the cattle. A rumour was quickly circulated that we were to be taken out into the Irish Sea and the ship sunk. Later they dished out life ^{BELTS SULL} ~~boats~~ and eventually we reached Holyhead. We were put on board a train and eventually landed at Knutsford near Manchester where we were promptly put into separate cells.

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On my return to Dublin from internment at Frongoch after a period of rest and recovery activities began, first of all by contact with Michael Collins through the Prisoners Aid Society in Exchequer Street. Collins told me that for the time being I would be well advised to try to restore the Fianna. In the meantime the Volunteers were being re-organised and a job for me in keeping on my activities would be found. We were working with the Fianna for a time and an All Ireland Convention was held in St. Enda's early in 1917 at which I was elected Commandant General for Ireland. Various activities were held including a parade at St. Enda's. At this parade I was approached by Eamonn Bulfin who told me the I.R.B. was being re-organised. I told him that I had already been initiated by Tom Clarke and he said "In any case we will re-initiate you now and I will do it", and it was forthwith done behind the house at St. Enda's.

As a result of my experiences I developed a weakness in the left lung which began to bother me and at an interview with Collins at Exchequer Street he was quite concerned about my condition. He suggested that while we were awaiting the re-organisation in the South I should proceed on a tour of the North of Ireland for which my expenses would be covered, and he particularly wanted me to find out what the possibilities were of organising Down and Antrim and particularly Belfast. I stayed at Newcastle, County Down at the home of Mrs. Bella Burns who was a sister to Garry Houlihan's mother - in other words his aunt. Using that as a pass I visited every village in Down likely to contain organisers. There was very little response. I then went to Belfast where I contacted Rory Haskins, McCullough and various other ex-prisoners from Frongoch at

/the

the Gaelic League Headquarters I think near the Great Northern Railway Station. At this Gaelic League Headquarters I was introduced to some McCamphill girls from Dunboy in the County Antrim who agreed to take me to their home in Antrim to give me an opportunity to make contacts. I was not impressed with the possibilities of Antrim any more than the County Down and returned to Belfast. I spoke at what I believed to be a private gathering at St. Mary's Hall and a fortnight later I found a warrant had been issued for my arrest because of the speech I had made and that the police were looking for me in Belfast. I also contacted Patrick Ryan and stayed with him for some time in Belfast. He was employed by a firm of bookmakers.

My period of usefulness in Belfast was over as it was impossible at that period for any stranger to continue around once a warrant had been issued for his arrest.

I returned to Dublin and was by now completely recovered and the blood sputum had disappeared. When in Dublin I was taken by Barney Mellowes and Eamonn Martin to a house in Fairview where I met Bulmer Hobson who was anxious to justify his conduct prior to the Rising. I refused to have anything to do with him and somewhat strained relations ensued between the Fianna and myself as a result. Collins now sent for me and told me he wished me, if I was willing, to tackle the job of organising the South beginning probably with Tipperary. We were now convinced at this stage that the Great War would not end without a definite offer being made to complete the subjugation of the country by conscription. In spite of the resurgence occasion by Easter Week, the

/bulk

bulk of the country was still unconvinced and certainly there was no overt sign of any desire to start a physical force movement. I agreed to go and fortunately about this time the impetus was provided by a tour made by the Countess Markievicz on behalf of the Fianna in County Clare. I accompanied her as Chief Officer of the Fianna and brought with us as Adjutant Theo Fitzgerald who is a brother-in-law of Sean McMahon who later became, I believe, first Chief of Staff in the National Army. This was late in 1917.

^{5.11.17}
(COUNTRESS) Markievicz and I spoke in Ennis and in various other towns in Clare. She returned to Dublin and I contacted a local Gaelic League teacher in Ennis who was not very hopeful of starting anything at that stage but promised to do his best. I then proceeded to Nenagh, County Tipperary, where I contacted Frank McGrath - an all-Ireland hurler - and several others who went with the Free State. McGrath found me lodgings in Nenagh and I remained there for at least six months in which time I organised Volunteer Companies from the Limerick Border to Limerick Junction and up in the hills as far as Upper Church and down to Templemore and Toomevara - Widger Maher, a famous hurler, was Captain of that Company. The procedure in organising was to bring together a number of men - from 20 up to 50 - in a particular village or town. I addressed them on the aims and objects of the Volunteers and the need for organising in view of the possibility of conscription, and then proceeded to drill them and to teach them military evolutions. An officer in charge was appointed and a Quartermaster. I carried out training operations openly in Nenagh and on many occasions outside the Town Hall in Nenagh lined up my own men while on the opposite side British troops lined up for Church Parade.

/During

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During my stay in Nenagh I was introduced to the proest in charge of Silvermines and I went to Silvermines on his invitation. We formed a good Company there which was later to go through some difficulties. The growing need of the hour being for arms, some of the boys in this Company, with my permission, took it on themselves to raid the home of ^a British ex-Serviceman who defended himself and was killed. He was shot dead. This nearly crippled all our activities. Troops were rushed in and large forces of the R.I.C. brought from Templemore under D.I. Wilson, and a series of arrests were made. Eventually they were tried. The police attributed this particular incident to me and they were very anxious to lay hands on me. At this time a number of incidents took place which brought no credit on us. A number of Volunteers got it into their heads that they had been organised to seize ~~ranches~~ ^{RANCHES s.u.v} and to engage in cattle driving and this gave me a very difficult time in suppressing. Each Company, as it was organised, had to pay a registration fee of 10/-. I forwarded these ten-shilling notes with the Companys' names by post to Collins at Batchelors Walk where he had a little office then: he had two offices there.

I returned to Dublin to see Collins to report on my success in North Tipperary which was fairly considerable because we had managed to bring in a large number of Companies some of whom ~~thought I had~~ been in the Volunteers previously.

Collins now told me that I had been appointed Official Organiser and that my expenses and a salary would be paid to me. He now suggested that I should continue with Mid-Tipperary and I proceeded to Thurles in the beginning of 1918. I contacted Lahey and Matt Butler. Lahey was employed as an assistant in the publichouse of a Micky ^{CONNELL s.u.v} Gannon. / I contacted

I contacted various other people whose names I cannot now remember. I proceeded on the same lines as at Nenagh using Thurles as headquarters and numerous Companies were formed, the same procedure being adopted, open drilling and speeches. After one particularly large parade the first order was made by the British G.O.C. against the Volunteers - all drilling being prohibited in the Counties of Tipperary, Limerick and several other places which I forget. I persisted in continuing my activities and efforts were made by D.I. Hunt to arrest me. Part of his efforts consisted in spreading reports amongst the local population that the police had no desire to capture me as I was a Castle Agent which, however, did not work. Failing to get me they attempted to arrest Lahey at the shop of Micky Connolly ^{C-44} On marching into the street Lahey ran down ~~to~~ into a river and left the police behind. He escaped and went on the "run".

Shortly after this Lahey introduced me to Sean Tracey at the home of the Mahers outside Thurles. I told Tracey that I would shortly be in South Tipperary and he was not to concern himself with any overt action until I had arrived. Unfortunately I believe he was arrested and I think he went to Belfast gaol.

After organising the Thurles area I again returned to Dublin and saw Collins and after a short holiday I proceeded to South Tipperary. Here I met Con Moloney who was working in his father's chemist shop. I later met Dan Breen who was working on the Railway and later still I met Denis Lacey who was I understand a clerk in a grocer's shop. In South Tipperary things were warming up. The British Government had announced their intention of carrying out conscription and there was a sense of

/urgency

urgency and feverishness which increased in tempo. An attempt was made to arrest me at a house in Tipperary where I had been provided with lodgings by Con Moloney, but this was unsuccessful. I then proceeded to carry out a series of exercises in street fighting in Tipperary town. It must be remembered that at this stage people like Dan Breen, Lacey and Moloney were known only to a little circle of their own immediate friends and had not been heard of outside their own locality. Dan Breen was appointed Quartermaster.

At this stage in the proceedings feeling that conscription was approaching I was definitely opposed as an individual to any attempt to repeat in the South of Ireland what I considered to be the mistake made in Dublin, i.e. the formation of Volunteers into Brigades and Divisions. I held the opinion that in the event of conscription any attempt to operate the Volunteers in the country on such a basis could only lead to disaster. Insufficiency of arms, lack of time to produce discipline, lack of fighting experience and no armoured or mechanised forces whatever would render us easy prey in open combat to a British Army now commencing to utilise bombing, aircraft and tanks in warfare. I was of the opinion that small guerrilla units comprising 40 men, at least 20 of whom would be armed and the remaining 20 to be split into sections for First Aid, quartermastering and demolition would be more feasible. I had now reached out into East Limerick and North Cork, down into Ballylanders. I contacted a young man named Liam Lynch from Ballylanders, also John Joe Crawford, Liam Managhan, Tadh Crowley, Peadar Clancy and Moloney. Hospital, Kiffinnan, Doon - most of East Limerick now had been drawn in.

I convened a meeting of all Company Officers at

/Galbally

Galbally in the County Tipperary in the summer of 1918 at which I outlined to them the possibility that if conscription was enforced they could look for no help from anyone but themselves. I was now of the opinion that any stand offered by ^{us to sell} the British would mean we might have to act independently of Dublin. I believe I carried this idea a little too far. At this conference I explained the idea of guerrilla warfare and my conception of fighting in companies of 40 and I believe it was Liam Lynch who suggested that these units should carry a number of Cumann na mBan and with this I agreed. At this conference I issued without authority or on my own authority an order that was to have drastic consequences - that all arms in the hands of private individuals should be seized. This led to great abuses but there was no other source open to us.

I visited Dublin during this period and saw Collins. I had now committed to paper a definite plan of organising as to what should be done in the South of Ireland in the event of military action being taken against us over conscription. This scheme was very comprehensive. I sent it to Dublin by Liam Managhan who took it to Mulcahy. Mulcahy arranged an interview for Managhan with De Valera which took place in the Municipal Gallery in Harcourt Street. I was summoned to Dublin to a meeting of the Volunteer Executive which was held at 44, Parnell Square. At this meeting were Collins, Dermot Hegarty, Cathal Brugha and others whom I have forgotten. No-body objected to my plan and there seemed no suitable alternative, but all expressed great concern about two things, the policy of the seizure of arms and what I proposed to do against tanks and aeroplanes. I pointed out that that was their
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problem as much as mine and that we could only do our best but there were ways and means of meeting at least tanks. No conclusion was reached at this meeting and I had the unhappy, though perhaps erroneous idea that I would have to solve these problems myself. Before I left Dublin, however, I saw Michael Collins at Batchelors Walk and he promised to try to provide me with some arms. He, himself, had managed to secure a consignment of Lee Enfield rifles which, he informed me, would be sent to Longford. Later I heard that in the event of fighting he was to be in Longford and I was to be appointed to take charge of South Tipperary, North Cork and East Limerick.

I now moved into the hills above Galbally. Conscription was now getting nearer. I decided to organise a conference of all Volunteer units whom I had helped to organise from North Tipperary to North Cork and from East Limerick to Waterford. I decided to bluff the authorities by organising meetings in different towns including the town of Tipperary and then secretly instructing the Volunteers to proceed to Thurles. The meeting at Tipperary at which I was to have spoken was addressed by P.J. Moloney who read to the audience a letter I had written. This was published in the local Press. I proceeded to Thurles with Con Moloney and Dan Breen and I am not sure if Lacey accompanied us on this trip. I held a conference of all the officers to the number of over 100 in the Sinn Fein Hall at Thurles which was behind Micky Connors' ^{public-house} public-house in a yard and then held a parade of Volunteers through the town numbering over 1,000 from all over the south - the biggest demonstration of Volunteers then seen up to that date carrying arms. I addressed them in the Main Street at Thurles. I vèry
/melodramatically

melodramatically produced a revolver and showing it to the assembled Volunteers said "Only in this way can we prevent the British from making slaves of us." This parade caused a terrific sensation and was discussed in the Thurles paper of the period. I then returned to South Tipperary. I set up Headquarters in a small house in the Galtees in the home of a man named Power - ^{MALONE'S S.M.} ~~the daughter of the family~~ was a University student who acted as Secretary. ^{WAS MISS POWER S.M.} I now appointed Liam Managhan as Adjutant, Maloney, Breen and Lacey being put in charge of the town of Tipperary. I now advised Lacey to leave his work as there was a danger of us being arrested.

It must be understood that even now I resolutely refused to form Brigades or Divisions or to confirm high rank on any individual as I believed it would militate against effective action by creating dissension and weakness.

The conscription crisis passed with an easing off in the temper of the country and a corresponding slackness of activity amongst the Volunteers.

Now the lull developed and Volunteer Headquarters summoned me back to Dublin. Michael Collins informed me that a new scheme of reorganisation would now come into force and in the meantime a new job had been found for me. At first I believe I was being ^{SHELDON S.M.} ~~shelled~~. He told me that the Executive decided to send me to the County Wicklow to do in Wicklow and Wexford what I had done in the South. I made all arrangements to leave when I was struck down with a disease which was known then as "war ^{FLU S.M.} ~~fever~~". I was conveyed to the Whitworth Hospital in North Brunswick Street in a dying condition believed by those who took me there. I was in this hospital until after

the European War ended. When I came out I was in a very weak condition but agreed to re-start Volunteer organising.

I attended the meeting in the Dáil for the American delegates. This was early in 1919 in the Mansion House. Afterwards an attempt was made by Bruton and Hoey to arrest me but I eluded them. I now saw Dick Mulcahy and his wife (Minnie Ryan) in a house in Molesworth Street. I was now going to Leitrim to organise that county and Mrs. Mulcahy gave me the address of ^{DERMOT'S S.M.C.} Seán McDonnell's family in Drumshambo and asked me to visit them. I spent three months or more in Leitrim doing the same kind of thing as I had done in the South, forming Volunteer Companies and forwarding the affiliation fees to Dublin. I returned to Dublin when this was finished.

I went to a meeting in the Mansion House - the Commemoration of the Manchester Martyrs. De Valera and others had now been arrested and incarcerated in Lincoln Jail from which they escaped, and it was arranged that one of the escaped prisoners would appear on the Manchester Martyrs' meeting platform. Frank Mullings was the singer and after his third or fourth song Seán McGarry came on the platform, he being one of the escaped prisoners, amidst terrific ^{S.M.C.} enthusiasm. As he left the hall an attempt was made to arrest me by Bruton and Hoey but I carried a revolver and threatened them and got away in the confusion. They then made an attempt to arrest Pierce Beasley and J.J. Walsh, finally succeeding in arresting Pierce Beasley at the corner in the doorway of the now Government Publications Office, College Street. The following morning I was arrested in bed. I was now beginning to have a recurrence of the previous illnesses. I was taken by Hoey and Bruton to the Bridewell and put in a cell with

Pierce Beasley and J.J. Walsh.

I was brought to trial first. I was charged with drilling Volunteers at the town of Bansha, County Tipperary. The man who gave evidence against me was Sergeant Donohoe of the R.I.C. who stated he had seen me on numerous occasions giving orders and commands in various towns in Tipperary. The "Evening Herald" published a report of my trial and the heading of it was "Prisoner's Outburst in the Dock - ^{OUT} ~~Get~~ out ^{THE FARCE AND GET ON WITH THE} ^{SAY} fact, you know the sentence". I was given two months and taken to Mountjoy in a horse drawn caravan with Beasley and Walsh who got heavier sentences.

In Mountjoy I was examined by the prison doctor and promptly sent to the hospital. While I was in prison I received from the Lord Lieutenant a permit for four hours' leave of absence to see my brother who was dying at the Mater Misericordiae Hospital. While out I met ^{MICHAEL STAINES AT} Volunteer H.Q. and was told they proposed to organise an escape from prison but that I should remain in view of the shortness of my sentence. I returned to Mountjoy (where the warder refused to admit me). A couple of days later a number of prisoners went over the wall, including Robert Barton. With me remained Hugo MacNeill and his younger brother, and a man named Fleming who was a brother of the Flemings of Drumcondra. I was released shortly afterwards.

I was now in a very bad state of health and Collins was quite concerned. He took me to see Dr. O'Carroll of Merrion Square who said the only hope of saving my life was that I should be immediately sent to California. Collins strongly urged on me the necessity to carry out this advice but I remained in Dublin until after the killing of Comor, Clune and Dick McKee at the Castle. I was at Croke Park the morning of the shooting.

In the meantime I carried out routine jobs such as the distribution of arms, and was in one shooting affray in Dawson Street, when another attempt was made to arrest me. Several Detectives were shot during this period, the first one being Detective Smith. Things began to warm up now and the Black & Tans were arriving in the country. It was now clearly evident that a fight was impending and I was most anxious to be allowed to return to a military command. I saw Collins and Cathal Brugha at St. Enda's and they put up to me a startling proposition and that was to the effect that I should become active in the labour movement and proceed to Britain. Two purposes were intended: one was that I should become associated with all likely elements in the Left Wing movements who would be prepared to supply arms or carry out sabotage work, and the other was to attend at public gatherings to produce a favourable atmosphere for the Irish cause. I was most reluctant to go and most hostile to the proposal, but I had very little alternative as my home now became impossible for me to ^{live} leave in. Our house at 8 St. Ignatius Avenue was raided twenty times in one day, my younger brother being brought into Mountjoy so often as myself that as soon as he arrived at the gate the warder said "you got the wrong man again".

Collins insisted this work was most important and there was no one else on whom they could rely to carry it out. I left Dublin three days after the killing of the British Intelligence Officers, November 21, 1920, and went to Sheffield where I contacted members of the Irish Clubs. I proceeded to organise activities all over the country. I visited every big town in England and Scotland. I organised unemployed demonstrations riots and with the aid of the unemployed at Dundee broke up a Council meeting at which the Council proposed to pass a resolution condemning

the terrorist activities of the I.R.A. I was in touch with every revolutionary element in Britain, Dr. Satkya Murtha and Mansendra Nath Roy who were active in the Indian Movement, and anyone likely to be of any assistance in stirring up conscription. Smuggling arms was also a feature of our activities.

I kept in touch with Cathal Brugha and was most anxious to join any activities he would conduct in London, but it was thought best I should continue on the lines I was working. I was in Edinburgh when the Truce was declared. I was again in hospital.

SIGNED Seamus Heughlin
DATE 26/8/49

WITNESS: A. J. Feely, Londt.

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