

W. S. 1,006

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BUREAU STAIRS MILITARY 1913-21  
No. W.S. 1006

ROINN  COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,006

Witness

Martin Kealy,  
Freynestown,  
Clifden,  
Co. Kilkenny.

Identity.

O/C. Clara Company Irish Volunteers,  
Co. Kilkenny, 1914 - ;

O/C. 4th Battalion Kilkenny Brigade,  
1918-1921.

Subject.

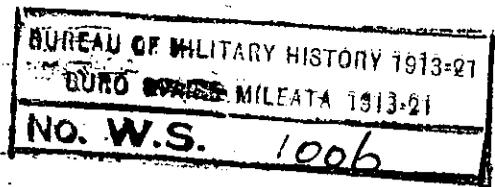
Irish Volunteers, Co. Kilkenny,  
1914-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S. 2308

# ORIGINAL



Statement by Mr. Martin Kealy,  
Freynestown, Clifden,  
County Kilkenny.

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O/C., 4th Battalion, Kilkenny Brigade 1918-1920.

I was born in the year of 1892 at Blanchfield's Park, Gowran, County Kilkenny, just about two miles from where I now reside. My father was a farmer, and in my early youth, that is from about the time I was 6 years old until I reached the age of 18 years, I attended the National School at Gowran. After leaving the National School I continued my education at the City Vocational School, Kilkenny. At that time it was necessary to pass an examination to gain admission to the Vocational School, and my later years in Gowran National School were spent in preparation for this entrance examination. In the year of 1912 I took up a clerical position in the firm of Messrs. Cleere & Son, Builders, Kilkenny.

I joined the Volunteers - then known as the Irish National Volunteers - at a meeting which was held in the City Hall, Kilkenny, on 5th March, 1914. This meeting, which was held for the purpose of starting the Volunteer Movement in Kilkenny, was addressed by Sir Roger Casement and Thomas McDonagh both of whom were executed by the British in 1916.

My connection with the Movement in Kilkenny was, however, soon interrupted as I left Kilkenny shortly afterwards to take up a position in Dundrum Asylum, County Dublin, where I remained for about six months. Acting on my Doctor's advice, who considered that the environment of Dundrum Asylum was not suitable for me, I resigned my position and returned to work on my father's farm at Blanchfield's Park.

The split in the Volunteer Movement took place during the period I was employed at Dundrum Asylum. I have a distinct recollection of a spirited discussion which took place at that time with some other members of the staff on the merits of the Irish Volunteers who followed Padraig Pearse as compared with the Redmondite Volunteers who followed the Irish Party leader, the late John E. Redmond. As far as I can now recollect I was the sole supporter of the Irish Volunteers in that discussion. Mr. Thomas Treacy, Mr. James Lalor or Mr. Edward Comerford, will, I am sure, give the story of the split in the Volunteer organisation in Kilkenny City.

On my return home I formed a Company of Irish Volunteers in the Clara district which was adjacent to my home in Blanchfield's Park. The strength of this Company was about 15 or 20 men. I became O/C. of this Company, and Mr. Patrick Foley, Clara, was the Company Lieutenant. We held weekly parades and engaged in foot drill and elementary field exercises. Our arms consisted of a few shotguns which were the private property of members of the Company. I had a .32 revolver which I obtained from the late Peter De Loughry, Kilkenny.

There was then no Battalion or Brigade organisation in the area, but in some undefined way we, in the Clara Company, looked to a committee which was in charge of the Volunteers in Kilkenny City and County for guidance and instruction. The principal members of this committee, which was known as the governing committee were, as far as I can now recollect, the late Alderman James Nowlan, Peter De Loughry (later T.D. and Senator), Patrick Corcoran, Tom Stallard and Edward Comerford. All these men were, I believe, members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

Sometime in the summer of 1915, I think about August of that year, I was asked at a Volunteer committee meeting to attend a training camp for Volunteer Officers which was then in existence at Galbally, Co. Limerick.

I gladly accepted the invitation and in company with James Lalor, Edward Comerford and with either Pierce Brett or Tim Hennessy, all members of the Kilkenny Volunteer Company, I cycled to Galbally. The training camp was under the command of Captain J. J. O'Connell ('Ginger' - later Colonel O'Connell, Assistant Chief of Staff of the Irish Army). The course of training lasted for one week, during which we were instructed in foot drill, field exercises, moving in extended formation, manoeuvres and route marches. This course also included lectures on military tactics and musketry. Captain O'Connell was the principal instructor. In addition to the Kilkenny representatives Volunteer officers from various other counties also attended this course. and, in all, I would say that about 100 were present during the week I was there. I was at that time a member of the Kilkenny Pipers' Band and when going to Galbally I brought my set of Pipes along, and on the route marches I marched in front of the Column playing marching tunes on the Pipes as we marched along.

Captain O'Connell (Ginger) was already known to me, as earlier in this year (1915) he had spent some months organising and training the Volunteers in Kilkenny City and County. The instruction which we received in the Camp was a great help to us when we resumed the training of our units.

Early in Holy Week of 1916 I received instructions from the Volunteer Committee in Kilkenny for the Clara Company to parade at Clara on Easter Sunday. I am now not sure at what particular time the parade was to take place on that day. All available arms were to be carried, and in addition each man was to bring along sufficient rations to do him for at least 24 hours. The instructions also stated that the Company should stand-to and await further orders. I duly issued these instructions to the Company, the strength of which at that time was 22, including officers, N.C.Os. and men.

At the time appointed the Company paraded at full strength. Our arms consisted of the few shotguns which I have already mentioned and my .32 revolver. The supply of ammunition was limited, and many of the men had no arms at all. I should mention that at this time I had no idea that any action other than ordinary manoeuvres was intended for this day.

After waiting for some hours, perhaps five or six, and as the expected further orders had not arrived, I decided to cycle to the Volunteer Hall in King Street (now St. Kieran Street) Kilkenny, to find out what happened and to inquire what we were to do. The distance from Clara to the Volunteer Hall in Kilkenny would be about five miles. On arriving at the Volunteer Hall, I saw some members of the governing committee and also Thomas Treacy who was then O.C. of the Kilkenny Company. I then heard of the announcement which had appeared in that day's edition of the Sunday Independent intimating that the Volunteer manoeuvres arranged for Easter Sunday were cancelled. I was told that I could dismiss the Clara Company, but to tell the men that they should hold themselves in readiness for immediate mobilisation at any time. I then returned to Clara and dismissed the parade after warning the men that they should be ready for mobilisation at a moment's notice.

On Easter Monday evening I again cycled to the Volunteer Hall in Kilkenny. On arriving there I noticed an air of tension amongst those who were present, and I then heard for the first time that the Rising had commenced that day in Dublin, and that hostilities had started in many parts of that city. I was told by Thomas Treacy or by some of the members of the governing committee that instructions were expected by either messenger or despatch and that I should continue to hold the Clara Volunteers in readiness. Captain O'Connell (Ginger) was also there, and I understand that he was endeavouring to get in touch with Limerick, and some of the neighbouring counties in an effort to discover the situation in the provinces generally.

I cycled to the Volunteer Hall each day during that week for news and instructions, but beyond the instruction to continue to hold the Company in readiness I received no further instructions. News of the surrender in Dublin reached Kilkenny on the Saturday afternoon of Easter Week.

from Thomas Treacy

I subsequently learned that the manoeuvres planned for Easter Sunday included:

(1) Kilkenny City Company to march via Clara and Borris (Co. Carlow) to the Scallop Gap on the Wexford border to link up there with a party of County Wexford Volunteers.

(2) My Company to join the Kilkenny City Company at Clara on the march to the Wexford border.

(3) Additional arms to be picked up on arrival at Borris, after Dr. Dundon had been contacted there.

(4) Captain J. J. O'Connell (Ginger), then a G.H.Q. officer, would be in the command of the Kilkenny City and County Units.

I have appended herewith a list of the names of the members of the Clara Company who paraded on Easter Sunday 1916 - see Appendix "A".

On the Saturday of the week immediately following the week of the Rising, i.e. on 6th May, 1916, I was arrested at my home by members of the R.I.C. who were, I think, accompanied by British cavalry. Two other members of the Clara Company were arrested on the same day. These were James Carrigan and John Harte. We were conveyed to Kilkenny Prison where about thirty other Volunteer Officers and men who were arrested in Kilkenny and district during that same week were held as prisoners. These included my brother John who was engaged in business in Kilkenny City and who was an active member of the Volunteer Company there. Captain O'Connell (Ginger), whom I have already referred to, Thomas Treacy, Edward Comerford, James Lalor,

Peter De Loughry, Sean Gibbons, Alderman James Nowlan, Laurence Walsh, Denis Barry, Stepher Dwyer, Tom Stallard and Timothy Hennessy were also amongst the prisoners.

After a few days in Kilkenny Prison we (i.e. all the Volunteers who were prisoners) were marched under a heavy escort of R.I.C. and British Infantry and Cavalry to Kilkenny Railway Station where we were entrained on a special train for Dublin. On the way to the railway station I was marching in the front row of the prisoners and my brother John was in the last row. John, who was seriously ill at the time of his arrest, and who received no medical attention in Kilkenny Prison, collapsed in John Street a few hundred yards from the railway station. He died shortly after his collapse. Immediately he fell the British Forces closed up the ranks - in fact the march was never halted - with the result that no one amongst the prisoners knew what happened.

On arrival at the Kingsbridge Station, we were marched to Richmond Barracks, Dublin, where a large number of prisoners, both from Dublin and various parts of the country, were assembled. Naturally I missed my brother, but no one from whom I inquired could give me any information about him. At this time we were not permitted any visits or letters, but the other Kilkenny prisoners learned of John's fate from a newspaper which was smuggled in. Out of consideration for me none of these men told me the sad news, and when eventually I did get the newspaper the portion reporting his death had been cut out.

On 12th May, 1916 in company with a number of other Volunteer prisoners, including 22 of the Kilkenny prisoners, I was removed from Richmond Barracks, Dublin, and brought to Wakefield Prison, England, where I remained a prisoner until 7th June, 1916 on which date I was released. On the train journey back I was accompanied by a number of other released prisoners one of whom, whose name I cannot now recall but who I believed was from the County Wexford, remarked that it was very

sad about the prisoner who died on the way to the railway station in Kilkenny. I immediately replied, "That must have been my brother". He was nudged by the man sitting next to him and no further conversation on the matter took place.

On arrival at the North Wall, Dublin, I was met at the boat by a distant relative who was in the habit of visiting my home at Blanchfield's Park at holiday time. She was a Miss Bollard and at that time she was employed in the G.P.O., Dublin. She took me to her home in Church Street, Dublin and from her I then got, for the first time, the news of John's collapse and sudden death. After a day or two in Dublin, during which I visited the scenes of the fighting during the Rising, I returned by train to my home. What would otherwise have been a happy reunion with my family was, of course, saddened by the circumstances of my brother's untimely death.

By the end of 1916 all untried Volunteers who were prisoners in English prisons or in Frongoch Internment Camp had been released and had returned to their homes, and soon afterwards the work of reorganising the Volunteers commenced.

In the spring of 1917, perhaps in the month of either March or April, I was invited to, and attended a meeting which was held in a cafe owned by a Miss Ryan (later Mrs. Har. Murphy) in High Street, Kilkenny - the object of the meeting being to commence reorganising the Volunteers in Kilkenny City and County. This meeting was of an informal nature. There were not many present, but I distinctly remember that Thomas Treacy, Peter De Loughry and Ned Comerford were amongst those in attendance. The discussion centered around the best means of reorganising the Volunteers in Kilkenny City and County. Treacy and DeLoughry were the principal speakers, and I was asked to reorganise my old Company in Clara and to assist, as far as possible,

in the organising of Volunteer units in South Kilkenny. This I did during the coming summer months and, in addition to assisting in the organising of Volunteer Companies in Clara, Paulstown and Graignamanagh, I visited areas such as Inistiogue and Listerlin and discussed with sympathetic men such as James O'Hanrahan of Inistiogue (later Commandant of the 5th Battalion) the question of forming Companies in their areas. Many young men of suitable age were at this time full of enthusiasm for the Volunteer movement, and one of the problems for the organising officer was to select the right man in an area to organise and form a Company in that particular area. By the time the conscription threat came along, i.e. towards the close of the year of 1917 and the early part of 1918 I should say that there was no parish in County Kilkenny but had its Company or Companies of Irish Volunteers.

I should perhaps mention here that about this time I was appointed by Mr. Liam Tobin (now Superintendent of Leinster House, Dublin) as an agent for the then newly formed New Ireland Assurance Company. My work as an Insurance Agent gave me good cover for frequent visits on Volunteer business to areas outside my own, without unduly attracting the notice of the R.I.C.

In August, 1917 Mr. W. T. Cosgrave (later President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State) was elected as Sinn Féin M.P. for Kilkenny City. In this election, which was a bye-election, he defeated the late Alderman McGuinness of Kilkenny, who was the Irish Party candidate, by a large majority. Mr. Cosgrave had been sentenced to death by a British Courtmartial for his part in the 1916 Rebellion. His sentence had been commuted to one of life imprisonment, and he had been released from an English prison about two months before the time of the election. The newly reorganised

Volunteers in Kilkenny City and district, including my own Company in Clara, rendered every possible assistance to the Sinn Fein candidate. We paraded and marched in military formation to the Sinn Féin election meetings, thus helping to swell the attendances. We canvassed from door to door for votes, and on polling day I remember going as far as Coolcullen, about 20 miles from Kilkenny City, to bring in a man, whose name was on the registrar, to vote.

Sometime after the election referred to in the preceding paragraph, a parliamentary bye-election was also held in Waterford City. At this election Dr. Vincent White was the Sinn Fein candidate and, as Waterford City constituency was a powerful Redmondite stronghold, violent opposition to Dr. White was expected. Volunteers were drafted into the City from outlying counties, some came from as far away as Clare, to assist the Volunteers in Waterford in an effort to obtain some measure of fair play for the Sinn Fein candidate.

With Thomas Treacy and ten or twelve other members of the Kilkenny City Volunteers I reported for duty at the Sinn Fein election rooms in Waterford about a week before polling day. We remained in Waterford <sup>until</sup> after the result of the count. During our stay in Waterford we used a large room, situated in the house which had been taken over for use as election rooms, for our billet. Our duties consisted of guarding the Sinn Fein election meetings, escorting Sinn Fein speakers, and protecting the election rooms from the Redmondite supporters. Here I must record that during this election no protection, good, bad or indifferent, was given by the R.I.C. to our meetings or speakers. On the contrary they (the R.I.C.) went out of their way to assist the Redmondite supporters in their efforts to break up the Sinn Fein meetings. These Redmondite supporters consisted chiefly of ex-British soldiers, their wives and the wives (separation women) of British soldiers then serving in the British Army

in England or on the Continent. We had many skirmishes with them during the week. The principal method of their attack was to assemble in large groups and to advance on the Sinn Fein election rooms or on a Sinn Fein election meeting, throwing bottles and stones when they came within range. We repelled those attacks by charging into them using heavy walking sticks or good stout ash plants. Eventually the election was won by the Irish Party (i.e. the Redmondite) candidate, who was the late Captain Willie Redmond.

In the early springtime of 1918 the decision of the British Government to enforce conscription in Ireland brought new life and energy to the Volunteer movement. Men of military age who might not otherwise have joined now came along and handed in their names for membership. In my own area the numbers now joining were inclined to make the organisation cumbersome and unwieldy. Anti-conscription meetings were held in almost every village and town. The principal speakers at those meetings in my area were Seamus Lennon (later T.D. for South Carlow) of Courtnellan House, Borris. All police work at the anti-conscription meetings (regulation of the crowds etc.) was carried out by selected members of the Volunteer Companies. Training was intensified and we managed to procure some more arms, principally shotguns. By the end of the summer of 1918 it became apparent that the British Government would not attempt to enforce the Conscription Act in Ireland, and I regret to say that many of those who joined the Volunteers earlier in the year when conscription was imminent, now withdrew from the movement.

I cannot now recall the exact time, but I think it must have been about October or November, 1918 that the various Companies of Volunteers in County Kilkenny were organised into Battalions and the Kilkenny Brigade was formed. Mr. Thomas Treacy was elected Brigade O/C., and I am sure he will be able to give particulars of the work

of organising the nine battalions which comprised the Brigade. I was appointed O/C. of the 4th Battalion. Other members of the 4th Battalion Staff at that time were :-

Vice Commandant,	William Carrigan, Clarabricken, Clifden, Co. Kilkenny.
Adjutant	Patrick Lawlor, Castlekelly, Gowran.
Quartermaster	John Morrissey.

Subsequently, on the formation of the Republican Police, Mr. Michael Piert, Castlecreeen, Gowran, was appointed Battalion Police Officer.

My battalion (i.e. the 4th Battalion) comprised seven Companies as follows :-

<u>Designation:</u>	<u>District:</u>	<u>O/C.</u>	<u>Approx. strength.</u>
"A" Coy.	Clara,	Michael Fitzgerald	58
"B" Coy.	Bawnafea,	Richard Power	30
"C" Coy.	Paulstown,	Patrick Pender	62
"D" Coy.	Uppergrange,	John Murphy	30
"E" Coy.	Dunbell,	Edward Mulrooney	22
"F" Coy.	Blanchfields Park	John Hoban	33
"G" Coy.	Gowran,	Pierce Bolger	21

The year of 1919 was, as far as I can now recollect, rather a quiet period so far as Volunteer activities in the area were concerned. The work of organising and training was, however, pushed ahead. Brigade and Battalion Council meetings were held at regular intervals. During the latter part of this year and the early part of 1920 I assisted in collecting subscriptions for the First Dáil Éireann Loan. The Loan was well supported in my Battalion area.

In March, 1920, Hugginstown R.I.C. Barracks was attacked and captured by a party of Volunteers under the command of the Brigade O/C.,

Thomas Treacy. While my battalion was given no active part in the attack on the barracks - it was not in my Battalion area - the captured arms, six rifles and a quantity of ammunition, were handed over to my battalion for safe custody. On the instructions of the Brigade O.C., I cycled, in company with the late Laurence Medlar and John Hoban, to Bennetsbridge on the night or a few nights after the attack. There by arrangement I met at the bridge of Bennetsbridge a small party (three or four perhaps) of the Stoneyford Volunteers who had brought the rifles from the temporary hiding place <sup>at</sup> ~~of~~ Stoneyford where they lay from the night of the attack on the barracks. We took over the rifles from the Stoneyford party and conveyed them on our bicycles to Clara. We did not prepare any particular dump in which to hide these arms, but handed over one rifle to each of six trusted members of my battalion for safe keeping. None of these rifles was ever recaptured by the British Forces.

As a result of the successful attack on Hugginstown R.I.C. barracks a number of rural R.I.C. stations in the brigade area were closed down by the British Authorities, and their garrisons withdrawn to strengthen the garrisons of other stations. It was decided at a Brigade Council meeting to destroy all those evacuated R.I.C. barracks so as to prevent their re-occupation by enemy forces at a later date. I distinctly remember being in the Inistiogue district and discussing with James O'Hanrahan, then O/C. of the 5th Battalion and in whose area Inistiogue was situated, the arrangements for the destruction that night of the evacuated barracks in Inistiogue. After leaving O'Hanrahan I cycled to Paulstown and supervised the work of the destruction of the evacuated barracks there. This was, I think, on 4th April, 1920. Paulstown R.I.C. barracks was then the only evacuated barracks in my battalion area.

At this time, from I should say about May or June 1920, selected members of Volunteers in each Company area were carrying out police duties. They were known as the Republican Police. Sinn Fein or Republican Courts were also functioning, and from time to time I acted as a Justice on these Courts. One particular case at which I presided comes to mind. A report reached Brigade Headquarters from the Volunteer Company in Graignamanagh (4th Battalion area) that after the evacuation of that town by the R.I.C. a local magistrate named Hughes was threatening that he would use his influence to have the R.I.C. brought back again to the town. The local Volunteer O/C. was of the opinion that Hughes should be punished in some way for using such threats. I was deputed by the Brigade Council to investigate the matter. I arranged for a Court to be held in Graignamanagh at which Hughes was to attend, and as I have already mentioned, at which I presided. I appointed William Carrigan, Vice O/C. of my Battalion to act as defending Counsel for Hughes. The evidence for the prosecution was weak, none of the witnesses being able to swear that they actually heard Hughes make such threats. They all had more or less the same story, that they heard it from someone else. In the circumstances, Carrigan was able to make a good case for the defendant. Accordingly, after issuing a warning to Hughes to be very careful of his future conduct, I dismissed the case. Shortly after Hughes resigned his J.P. ship, and no further complaints of this nature were received. My reason for mentioning this case in detail is to show the meticulous care in which cases were investigated before a decision was given. Needless to remark these Courts were held at great risk and danger from the British Forces to all taking part in them.

From 1918 to August 1920 I avoided arrest by sleeping at night in various neighbours' and relatives' houses.

One night in August of 1920, after an inspection visit to the Paulstown Company, I returned to Blanchfield's Park to inspect the local Company who were on parade in a local field. Having cycled a lot that day I was feeling very tired, so I rested for a short period in an empty house on my father's out-farm. After a brief rest, I proceeded along the road in the direction of the field where the Company was assembled. It was dark at the time, and I had not gone very far when I was called upon to halt. A shot was fired over my head almost simultaneously and immediately I found myself surrounded by a party of Auxiliaries. The men on parade, who were unarmed, had scattered in various directions on the approach of the Auxiliaries but five or six of them were captured. I am convinced that the enemy forces were brought that night to the place of the parade by a local man whom we suspected of giving information to the enemy.

We were put into the Auxiliaries' lorries which were parked on the road a short distance away, and conveyed via Gowran to Woodstock House, Inistiogue, which was then garrisoned by Auxiliaries. When going through Gowran my suspicions of the suspected spy were more or less confirmed, as the lorry in which I was sitting suddenly stopped. One or two Auxiliaries jumped off and arrested Pierce Bolger the O/C. of the Gowran Company who chanced to be passing along the street at the time. Certainly someone who knew the locality and the residents of the district well, was with the Auxiliaries that night.

After a few days in Woodstock we were transferred to Kilkenny Military Barracks, and after a further two or three days we were removed under a heavy escort of British Military to Cork Prison. After about a week or ten days in Cork Prison, we were charged with being members of an illegal organisation, and tried by a British Courtmartial. Needless to remark we refused to recognise the Court.

I was sentenced to two years imprisonment and the men arrested with me received sentences varying from three months to six months.

Soon we were back in Kilkenny again, for a few days after our trial, ~~we~~<sup>we</sup> were transferred from Cork Prison to Kilkenny Prison to serve our sentences. The average number of prisoners in Kilkenny Prison at the time of our arrival there was thirty. This number varied from time to time as some were released and others were brought in. About October of 1920, however, a large batch of approximately eighty prisoners were transferred there from Spike Island.

I was elected by the prisoners as their Commandant and in this capacity I had several interviews with the Prison Governor. I soon realised that he was anxious to avoid anything in the nature of prison disturbance or hunger-strikes, and before long we had the Rules and Regulations of the Prison modified and altered to our satisfaction. We also had our own rules and regulations which the prisoners generally complied with. A number of the prison warders were sympathetic towards us and were very helpful with the result that we were able to procure from outside sources messages and articles which would not be allowed through the regular channels.

From time to time various plans of escape were contemplated and considered. Eventually about August or September, 1921, it was decided to try the tunnel idea. For the success of this plan it was necessary to get down to an underground cell which, I understand, was formerly used as a place of punishment for refractory prisoners. The entrance to this cell was a narrow stone stairway from the end of the prison corridor, and this entrance was completely fenced off with barbed wire.

A hack-saw was procured with the assistance of a sympathetic warder, and by sawing off a few feet of three or four of the flooring boards of the cell directly overhead, entrance was gained to the underground cell. The bars of the window of the underground cell were next removed by sawing them through at the top and the bottom with the hack-saw. As this window was only about two feet below the ground level it was necessary to burrow downwards first for a further few feet so as to ensure that sufficient earth was overhead to withstand any traffic that might pass over the tunnel.

The tunnelling was very tedious and fraught with difficulties. The principal instrument which we had for removing the earth was a small trowel which we managed to pinch from the prison tool house. Unused bedboards which were found in the underground cell were sawn into suitable lengths and used as props as the work progressed. The displaced earth was piled up in the underground cell which, owing to the entrance being fenced off with barbed wire, was never inspected by the Prison Authorities. Only a few prisoners could be engaged on the work at a time, and only a limited number of the prisoners were aware of the fact that the tunnel was being constructed. Again, it will be appreciated that a man could only remain working in the tunnel for a short period. The distance from the window of the underground cell to the nearest point outside the prison walls was approximately 40 feet. With perseverance, however, the tunnel was completed on or about 20th November, 1921. To the best of my recollection immediately after night-fall on that date we decided to make our exit. About 27 or 28 prisoners, including myself, succeeded in getting safely away. Probably a considerably greater number would have got away were it not for the fact that the tunnel got blocked by falling debris from overhead. Amongst those who escaped were the Rev. Father Delahunty, C.C., Callan, and James O'Hanrahan (now Colonel J.J. O'Hanrahan of the Irish Army).

I regret that I am now unable to give a list of the names and addresses of the prisoners who escaped.

At the time of our escape from Kilkenny Prison the Truce with the British Forces was on and negotiations with the British Government, which eventually led to the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of December, 1921, were taking place in London.

I returned to my Battalion area which, during the period of my imprisonment, was under the command of the Vice Commandant, William Carrigan. I inspected the various Companies, renewed old acquaintances, familiarised myself with the position of the Battalion generally, and assured myself that organisation, training and discipline were kept up so as to be in a position to renew the struggle should the necessity arise.

Signed:

Martin Kealy

Date:

9th September 1954

(Martin Kealy)

9th September 1954.

Witness:

J. Grace

(J. Grace)

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRS MILITARY 1913-21
No. W.S.

APPENDIX "A".

Names of the members of the Clara (Co. Kilkenny) Company  
of Irish Volunteers who paraded on Easter Sunday, 1916.

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<u>Name:</u>	<u>Rank in 1916.</u>	<u>Address in 1916.</u>
Martin Kealy,	Captain,	Blanchfield's Park, Gowran, Co. Kilkenny
Patrick Foley,	Lieutenant,	Clara, Co. Kilkenny
Michael Fitzgerald,	<i>Volunteer.</i>	Freynestown, "
James Carrigan,	"	Clara, "
John Harte,	"	" "
Patrick Byrne,	"	Ballysalla, "
John Moore,	"	Ossory Hill, "
Michael Moore,	"	" " "
Patrick Kelly,	"	Kilderry, "
Thomas Lonergan,	"	Kilmogar, "
Michael Murphy,	"	Kilderry, "
Thurlough Hoban,	"	Johnswell, "
Martin Hoban,	"	" "
John Hoban,	"	" "
Patrick Brophy,	"	" "
James Quinn,	"	" "
William Carrigan,	"	Clara, "
James Harte,	"	" "
James Campion (Senior)	"	" "
James Campion (Junior)	"	" "
John Kelly,	"	Kilderry, "
Martin Kelly	"	" "

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21  
No. W.S. 1006