

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21  
No. W.S. 209

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 209.....

**Witness**

Miss Madge Daly,  
Lisadell,  
Avoca Avenue,  
Blackrock, Co. Dublin.

**Identity**

- (1) Founder member of Cumann na mBan - Limerick.
- (2) Sister of Comdt. Edward Daly, executed after Rising 1916.

**Subject**

- (1) Associations with I.R.B. Leaders 1916.
- (2) Present when The O'Rahilly brought Countermanding Order to Limerick Easter Sunday 1916.

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

Nil.

File No. S1275.....

Form B.S.M. 2.

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STATEMENT OF MISS. MADGE DALY

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All I know about the Rising has been written down by me and as those to whom I have shown the manuscript thought it contained so much valuable information regarding the motives, point of view and conduct of those who prepared and took part in the Rising that I gave it to a literary friend of mine to look it over and advise me on it with a view to publication. My friends and I are anxious that the history of the period should not be written solely from the point of view of those who, though they remained in the military organisation and must have foreseen that it could have no other logical issue than a Rising, were unwilling to take part in it. When I get back the manuscript I shall let the Bureau see it. I have already given some documents to the Museum and intend to leave all my papers to the National Library.

I was in very close touch with Tom Clarke and Sean McDermott as my sister was married to the former and Sean McDermott stayed a lot in our house and my sisters and I were constantly used as couriers between my uncle and I.R.B. leaders, Tom Clarke and Sean McDermott. After the Rising had started, one of my sisters carried a message to Limerick and another sister one to Cork with instructions that the Rising was to take place as arranged. My sister, Mrs. Clarke, came down to Limerick on Holy Thursday to leave the children with us. She told me that all the plans for the Rising were complete and that MacNeill had resigned as Chief of Staff, and that Joe Plunkett had been appointed in his place, but that MacNeill was acting with the I.R.B. leaders.

Sean Fitzgibbon came to Limerick on Tuesday before Easter and stayed at our house each night till Saturday morning, when he left for Dublin. I was not aware that he went to Tralee during that week but he could have gone and come back the same evening. He knew that the Rising was to take place on Easter Sunday. He came to "take over" arrangements. He would never have been sent to our house if

he had not been in sympathy with the Rising. He was in touch with the Volunteers every day and, as far as I am aware, he was in the confidence of Tom Clarke and Sean McDermott as regards the military preparations that were in progress. When, on Saturday morning, he saw in the paper about the arrest of the men who landed in Banna Strand, he wondered what effect it would have on the plans for the Rising.

As far as I know there was no question of countermanding the arrangements for the Rising until the O'Rahilly brought the order on Sunday morning. Two lorries arrived from Dublin about the same time to distribute the arms that were to be landed in Kerry. After that there was great doubt and confusion among the Volunteer leaders who kept coming and going to the Volunteer Hall. O'Rahilly asked us if we could get a message to Eamon Dwyer of Tipperary with a view to preventing an outbreak there. We sent a messenger, but he could not be found, so the message was given to Fr. Matt Ryan for him. I afterwards heard that Dwyer tried to get to Dublin, but did not succeed. He is still alive and would, no doubt, be willing to give any information he had.

I was dumbfounded at O'Rahilly's news and asked him who had sent the message. He informed me that there had been a meeting the previous night at which Eoin MacNeill and others whose names he mentioned were present and it was decided that the Rising should be called off. I asked him had any of the I.R.B. leaders who had perfected the details in preparation for the Rising been consulted, e.g., Tom McDonagh, J. Plunkett, P. Pearse, Sean McDermott, J. Connolly or T. Clarke. He said 'No'. He added that Joe Plunkett and Thomas McDonagh had been called to the meeting, but they refused to be bound by any decision arrived at by this meeting. They stated that they were bound only by the Military Council, and so left to consult their own comrades. Then I replied that none but these had any authority to countermand the arrangements made. Moreover, I pointed out that such a course would make a mockery of all these men and expose them to the ridicule of all future generations of Irishmen. Eoin MacNeill had no right to act thus as he had resigned on Holy Thursday his post in the Executive in favour of J. Plunkett stating he was prepared to act with them.

I think I produced some effect on O'Rahilly because I heard afterwards that Sean McDermott mentioned to my sisters in the G.P.O. that I had been very severe with O'Rahilly in my condemnation of MacNeill's efforts to stop the Rising. After breakfast O'Rahilly went back to Dublin and I got the lorries into Geary's yard.

On Sunday night Pierce McCann came to see us. He said the arrangements for the countermanding had been completely carried out. He stated that these arrangements had cost £700. The next time I saw Pierce McCann was on the 4th May. On my way to Dublin I saw him at a railway station in Tipperary. He was being brought under arrest to Dublin. I had a short conversation with him. Pierce had travelled from Dublin with my sister Lauri on Easter Saturday. He said everything was going on well and seemed in great spirits.

I know nothing about the confusion that arose in connection with the date fixed for the landing of arms, but I do know that Casement's arrival was quite unexpected. In fact, his whole mission to Germany was not authorised in any way by the I.R.B. or Volunteer authorities here. When Devoy knew he was going he did all he could to help him in America. I think he, Casement, was not in favour of a Rising unless the Volunteers were so thoroughly equipped that they could face a prolonged struggle with England. It is not true to say there was no organisation in Limerick.

On Easter Monday the Limerick Volunteers assembled about 100 to 150 strong and marched to Killonan, but there was no action.

Reading the accounts of Easter Week, I notice many inaccuracies and misstatements. For instance, D. McArdle's book states that Joe Plunkett was at Berne about the 5th-6th April and sent a message to Casement. I can show you Count Plunkett's signed note on my copy stating that it was he himself was there and that

this/

was the second letter he sent to Casement from Berne.

Sean McDermott and Tom Clarke I knew very well. They were men unflinching in their devotion to the cause and quite inflexible in their decisions. Pearse was not really a military man, although he was able to carry men with him by his eloquence and poetic temperament. Clarke used to say he - Pearse - had little sense of humour. They all thought Joe Plunkett the cleverest from the point of view of military organisation.

My brother Edward had a great admiration for Tom McDonagh and one of the remarks he made to us in gaol before his execution was that McDonagh was a fine fellow. I knew most of the leaders, but not Plunkett. Tom Ashe, Sean Fitzgibbon, Sean McDermott and others used to visit our house often and stayed with us. My brother, Edward, was the youngest of those who were executed being two or three weeks younger than Sean Houston. There were ~~seven~~ <sup>nine</sup> girls in our family and he, the youngest, was the only boy.

A man who was very much in the confidence of the leaders who organised the Rising was Diarmuid Lynch and he should be able to give a lot of information. When Le Roux was writing his book he went to a lot of trouble interviewing persons associated with the Rising, so that his account of matters should be reliable. My sister, Mrs. Clarke, also was in very close touch with all that took place at that period and would have a lot of first hand knowledge. My own memory is good as regards the events of that period and that is why I was anxious to write an account of them, especially when I saw the errors and inaccuracies in some of the published accounts.

Signed: Muirgís ní Dúlaing

Date: March 2nd 1949

Witness: S. M. Curran

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