

W. S. 667
ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913 21

No. W.S. 667

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 667

Witness

Patrick Lawson,
447 Mourne Road,
North Crumlin,
Dublin.

Identity.

2nd Lieut. 1st Battalion, Dublin Brigade, 1917 - ;
Member of the Squad, Dublin, 1921.

Subject.

- (a) National activities, Dublin, 1913-1921,
and Liverpool, 1918.
- (b) The Squad, Dublin, 1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No S.1581

Form B S M. 2

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ORIGINAL

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STATEMENT BY PATRICK LARSON,

447 Mourne Road, North Crumlin, Dublin.

I joined the Irish Citizen Army in the year 1913 under Captain White, but did not remain long in that organisation. Captain White was attacked one evening by a number of policemen. His comrades made no attempt to come to his rescue, and when I saw the type they were I severed my connection with the Citizen Army.

I was not a member of the Irish Volunteers in Easter Week, 1916, but, knowing that the rebellion was on, I reported to the G.F.O. of my own accord and was given the job of helping to erect barricades from the Imperial Hotel across the street to the Metropole. That was my only association with the rebellion.

Following the reorganisation of the Volunteers in 1917 I joined B/Company of the 3rd Battalion, Dublin Brigade. I remained with that unit for about six weeks when I was transferred to F/Company of the 1st Battalion. Liam Archer was Coy. Captain at that period. I cannot recall the names of the other Company officers.

During the years 1917 and 1918 nothing of importance took place other than drilling, attending lectures and collecting funds.

I remained with the company all the time, and in 1920 I was appointed 2nd Lieutenant.

I.R.B. associations.

About June 1919 I was sworn in as a member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood by Martin Conlon. I became a member of the Brothers Sheares Circle, of which Martin Conlon was Centre. Nothing of importance transpired during my association with the I.R.B. I attended all the meetings and listened to discussions

Some of these discussions concerned the military policy of the Volunteer organisation and the progress that was being made in Volunteer circles. Nothing of a controversial nature came up for discussion.

Volunteer activities in England.

In the early months of 1918 I crossed over to Liverpool to take up employment on the erection of a military aerodrome at Aintree. When I arrived there I discovered a number of Irishmen who had served in the Volunteers, and, like myself, had taken up employment in England. These included Frank Gascoigne of Blackrock, Sean Hynes of Lusk, Hughie Early of Dublin, Jack Early, a 1916 man, Jimmy Green of Dublin, and Mick Murphy of Dublin, another 1916 man. After about a fortnight's residence in England we organised ourselves into a Volunteer company with Frank Gascoigne as captain, myself as 1st Lieutenant, and Mick Murphy 2nd Lieutenant. I should mention that before we organised ourselves we had to seek sanction from G.H.Q. in Dublin. This came through in a short time.

We decided that we would not ally ourselves with the prominent I.R.B. men in England, but that we would act on our own initiative concerning the activities of our company.

The first operation we planned was a raid on an Officers' Training Corps camp in the vicinity of Everton football ground. In this raid we captured 13 service rifles and military equipment, including about 10,000 or 15,000 rounds of .22 ammunition and some telescopes. There was only one watchman guarding the place and we succeeded in getting over the wall. We took the stuff away and had it conveyed to Bootle where it was stored in the houses of Miss McNance and Sheila Brown. It was later transferred to Dublin by Neil Kerr.

The raid was given a lot of publicity in the English papers, and Scotland Yard officers were brought in to

investigate the matter. Inquiries led them to the lodgings of some of our men, Messrs. Early, Green and Jackson. These Volunteers were not in their lodgings when the two Scotland Yard men called, but their landlady was told that when the three men returned that evening she was to tell them that they were not to go out again until the Scotland Yard men had a chat with them. When the Volunteers returned and were told by their landlady that two gentlemen had called and wanted to have a chat with them they became suspicious and crossed over to Dublin that very night. When the Scotland Yard men learned of their departure suspicion became general on the remainder of us. We saw then that we could be of very little use and became disorganised.

In my own case, on returning to my digs one evening, I was told by my landlady that two gentlemen who appeared to be police detectives had called and wanted to see me. As a result of this I took the boat to Dublin that night.

Raids for arms.

During the month of January 1919, we raided many private houses in our area for arms and ammunition. The majority of the guns taken were obsolete; some of them were merely souvenirs which were of no value to us, although of some sentimental value to the owners. In one case my Company O/C. Paddy Holohan, instructed me to return three or four of these souvenir guns to an ex-British army major from whom we had taken them. The major was delighted to get them back and, in fact, invited us into his house to partake of his hospitality. This we declined, and he said to me "I know that you are Volunteers, and if you want my assistance, I will be only too glad to give it at any time".

I should mention that at least four to six revolvers and ammunition were always stored in my house. When they were

required for company operations I took them to the appointed rendezvous and distributed them to the men taking part.

Rifles and ammunition seized at Collinstown Aerodrome.

Rifles and ammunition seized at Collinstown Aerodrome in March 1919, were packed by myself and others in the basement of 41 Parnell Square and dispatched to the Cork Volunteers.

Planned raid on Anglo-American Oil Co. Depot.

The Anglo-American Oil Company depot at the North Wall was guarded by a party of from 16 to 20 British soldiers. It was decided to disarm this guard and seize their rifles and ammunition. The plan was that about 18 of us under Commandant Paddy Holohan would carry out this raid. Our instructions were to steal up to the sentry at dusk on a given evening and disarm him. By taking him by surprise it was felt that it would be easy to seize the remainder of the rifles lying on the ship. This, however, was conditional on the clear understanding that no attempt was to be made should an armoured car arrive on the scene. It was customary for such an armoured vehicle to be in the vicinity of that place practically all the time.

We assembled as instructed, but when we got near the depot and were getting into position we discovered that the armoured car had arrived. We considered the idea of taking control of the armoured car if the crew left it, but Paddy Holohan said that his instructions were very definite that no action should be taken if the armoured car was there. Accordingly the raid was called off.

Raid for powder on Marks of Capel St.

In the autumn of 1920 a raid was carried out by my company on Marks of Capel St. for a quantity of black powder which was required by headquarters. The manager refused us admission, and said that he had no black powder on the premises. We told him that we could not accept his word and that we would have to

raid the place. The result of our search was that we confiscated one and a half kegs of the powder, which we took with us and stored in Tom Merrigan's in Church St. We later transferred it to our dump in Glasnevin Cemetery.

Documents removed from 44 Parnell Square.

One evening early in 1920, while attending a signalling class at 41 Parnell Square, a messenger arrived and instructed me to report to 44 Parnell Square. On arriving at No. 44 I met Dick McKee, Feadar Clancy and Sean Treacy. Dick McKee told me that he had a lot of documents in a house in Dorset St. and that he had been tipped off that a raid was going to be made on the premises. He asked me to have these documents removed straight away and placed in safe keeping. I mobilised six men and removed the documents to Lourdes House, No. 9 Buckingham St. I knew the cook there and I took her into my confidence. She took over the documents from me and stored them safely. In all there was nearly 1 cwt. of documents transferred. I believe they were brigade and G.H.Q. documents. They were stored in No. 9 for a period of about three months before being removed to another place.

Letter to Company O/C. ~ suspected trap.

Lourdes House, No. 9 Buckingham St. was used as Company headquarters later on. I remember on one occasion going into the billiards room and seeing a letter addressed to Paddy Holohan, Company O/C. on the rack. The handwriting on the envelope looked very suspicious to me and I decided that I would take it to Paddy Holohan's house and deliver it to him there. Curfew was on at the time and it was after curfew when I got to his house. Paddy Holohan was in bed when I knocked at his house. He read the letter and said it looked suspicious. He said that he would hand it over to the proper authorities to see if they could make anything of it. The gist of the letter was that he was to meet some gentleman at a house in Lower Marlboro' Street on the following Saturday afternoon at 2.30. The writer

intimated that he had some information to give, but did not sign his name. Paddy Holohan dismissed me and told me that he would see me the following evening, when he might have further instructions for me. I met Paddy on the following evening and he told me to take six men of the company with me to Marlboro' St. and that we were all to carry arms. He was going to keep the appointment at the house in Marlboro' St.

At 2 o'clock on the Saturday we met outside the Pro-Cathedral. Paddy Holohan was to enter the house with one armed escort, Christy O'Malley. We were waiting there when Holohan arrived and said that the job had been called off as it was too risky. He had been instructed to call it off. We never discovered what was really behind the appointment, but we suspected that it was a trap.

Fish-plates removed from railway line.

Another company operation that I took part in was the guarding of engineers while they were removing fish-plates from the railway line between Jones's Road bridge and Summerhill bridge. Why the fish-plates were being removed I cannot say. It occurred to us that there was some bigger operation in mind but that it was called off at the last minute.

Armistice Parade 1919.

On the occasion of the armistice parade in 1919 when Lord Franch took the salute, an order was issued by G.H.Q. that companies of the Dublin Brigade were to take up positions with a view to confiscating or destroying any photographs taken by cameramen during the parade. The march-past was in College Green and my company was allotted a position very near the saluting base in Foster Place. As the parade moved up in front of our position, a camera-man operated his camera and we saw that he had succeeded in getting a picture of the march-past. He immediately left with his camera and proceeded in the direction of Lord

Edward St. Three of our men went after him. When he reached a point near the Olympia Theatre they held him up, confiscated the camera and threw it into the river.

Bloody Sunday.

On the night before Bloody Sunday, 21st November 1920, Paddy Holohan, our Coy. O/C., instructed us to be present the following morning at 41 Parnell Square at ten minutes past eight. He told us that we were to carry our guns. Six of us were detailed and we reported next morning at the appointed time. Paddy Holohan arrived and told us to go home as the job had been called off. The only information he gave me was that we were to have gone to some house in Phibsboro'. He just mentioned this in casual conversation afterwards when the results of Bloody Sunday were known.

Raid on Company Headquarters and arrest.

On 23rd November 1920, I got a special mobilisation order to have my half company on parade at Lourdes House at 7.15 p.m. instead of the usual time, 8.15 p.m. I was also told to bring the company rolls, which I always held. The company rolls consisted of a copy-book containing the name of every man in the company, where he worked, what time he usually went to his dinner, or did he remain on the job during dinner-time, and what gun and ammunition he had, if any.

Holohan came to the parade at exactly 7.15 and he gave the order to / all the men to get out as quickly as they could, that there could be some trouble there that night. He told the men that if they had subscriptions to pay they were to pay them and get out.

On Bloody Sunday we had collection boxes in Croke Park for the arms fund. Six of these boxes were already on the premises, and as I was going out I met a member of the company coming in with two full boxes. I wanted him to go home, open and destroy the boxes and return the cash at the next parade.

The Volunteer refused to take the boxes home, so I went down to Ross Mahon, who was 1st Lieutenant of the Company. The Coy. Q.M., The Coy. Adjutant, and the Coy. I.O. were still in the kitchen with Ross Mahon when I arrived there, and I asked them what we would do with this lad and the two boxes. Ross Mahon looked at his watch and said: "It's only half-past seven. It will only take ten minutes to check the boxes we have here and hand the money over to the Q.M.". The Q.M., the Adjutant and myself proceeded to carry out this task. We had four boxes opened and checked when a big force of Auxiliaries and Tans rushed in, held us up and placed us under arrest. There were about six of us in the kitchen, including the 1st Lieut. the I.O., the Q.M. and the Adjutant. We were interrogated there by Captain Hardy from Dublin Castle. Major King was in charge of the British raiding party.

Hardy wanted me to admit that the kitchen was used as a drill hall. This, of course, I flatly denied. When he saw that I would not answer his questions to his liking he treated me rather roughly. He struck me in the stomach with his gun and threatened to shoot me. I said to Major King: "I believe, sir, that you are in charge of this party?". He told me that he was and I said: "I refuse to answer any further questions that this officer puts to me", indicating Hardy. With that, Hardy lost his temper and again rushed at me with his gun, but Major King intervened here, saying "Leave that kid alone. If we had fifty boys like him in this outfit we would clean up the I.R.A. in three months".

All this time I was in a rather precarious position knowing that I had on my person the company roll book.

Ross Mahon and myself were singled out and separated from the others, and, while the remainder were being interrogated, a Tan was put in charge of the crowd in the kitchen. There

was a picture of the Sacred Heart hanging on the wall behind us. The Tan fired at this picture, narrowly missing my right eye. With that, Major King rushed in and said: "Who is doing that shooting?". The Tan answered: "I am, sir", and Major King said to him: "I am in charge here. Any shooting that is to be done, I am quite capable of doing it".

A short time after this incident, we were put on a tender and taken to Dublin Castle, where each one of us was again interrogated. As the officer in charge of the guardroom was interrogating me, Major King appeared on the scene again and said to him: "Leave that boy alone. He is all right". He then unbuckled his belt, threw his revolver on the table and said: "I am not going out on any more raids. When I went out tonight I found that the birds had flown".

I was kept in the guardroom and a Volunteer named P.J.Ryan, the company I.O. was put next to me. We discussed the predicament I was in through having the company rolls on my person, and we decided that there was nothing for it but to chew and eat the pages containing the names. It was a terrible job. We kept on chewing and eating the papers until we had accomplished our purpose. When we had eaten the lot, nothing remained for the Tans to discover but the part of the copybook containing nothing but blank pages. With the aid of another prisoner, Jim Lawless, a Citizen Army man, we succeeded later that evening in getting rid of the remainder of the book by taking it out to the lavatory and disposing of it there.

On the Friday afternoon following my arrest, I was in the lavatory when three Tans came in dressed in civilian clothes. They did not know I was there and I overheard their conversation. They said that they were going to the Broadstone station to get Dan Breen and another Volunteer, whose name was, I think, Crowley, who were due to arrive there on the train

that evening. The three Tans left and returned some time between 6 and 7 o'clock the same evening. They came into the guardroom where a number of prisoners were and stated openly: "We only got one of the so-and-so's, Breen got away". The man who was shot that evening was Volunteer Crowley.

On the following Monday all the prisoners, except one, were transferred to Beggars Bush Barracks. The one prisoner held back was a man named Ingram, a night porter in the Gresham Hotel. He had been badly tortured while in the Castle and was not in a fit state to be moved with us.

Later on in the week, I think it was Saturday, there was an ambush in the vicinity of Beggars Bush, when one Tan was killed and two wounded. At about one o'clock in the morning when all the prisoners were in bed, four Auxiliaries with drawn guns came into the hut and told us to get up. They selected Martin Duffy, being the nearest prisoner to them, brought him out in his shirt to a room where they had the body of the Tan who had been shot in the ambush. Martin Duffy returned to the hut some time later with his head badly injured. He told us the Tans had struck him on the head with a revolver, and that they had chased him round the square, firing shots at him. They accused him of shooting the Tan. Duffy stubbornly replied that he could not have shot him as he was in prison while the ambush was taking place, but the Tans implied that it was the same thing.

About a fortnight later I was transferred to Arbour Hill and was released from there in February 1921.

Ambush at Crossguns Bridge.

A short time after my release from Arbour Hill, an ambush was arranged by the company to take place in the vicinity of Crossguns Bridge. Ten men of the company were selected to take part in this operation.

The men were divided into groups and took up positions in pairs; two at Connaught St., two at Leinster St., two at Munster St. and four at the far side of Crossguns Bridge. P.J. Ryan was in charge at the bridge end and I was in charge at the Connaught St. end.

Our plan was that any military or police vehicles coming from the city would be attacked first by me at Connaught St. and that any coming towards the city from the Marlboro' Hall direction would be attacked first by P.J. Ryan, then, as the enemy parties were passing through our positions, all our men would fire on them. We were armed with grenades and revolvers. The men carrying grenades were not armed with revolvers.

About twenty minutes after taking up our allotted positions, the first Crossley-load of Black and Tans approached us from Doyle's Corner. As they came abreast of Connaught St. I stepped out on the road and let fly my bomb. The bomb struck one of the Tans in the Crossley but did not explode, it fell on to the roadway. I fired a second bomb which I had in my possession and it landed in front of the radiator of the car. The second bomb also failed to explode. The Crossley immediately accelerated and rushed through our position.

In accordance with my instructions I withdrew from my position. Two Volunteers, Owen Donnelly and Johnny Williams, picked up the unexploded grenades and dumped them in the canal.

Raid on Hollybank Telephone Exchange.

Late in April or early in May 1921, a party of us were detailed to proceed to Hollybank Telephone Exchange, confiscate batteries and condensers and cut all the cables leading to the post office.

About ten of us proceeded to the post office at lunch hour on a given date, held up the staff, confiscated the

equipment and dismantled the Exchange. The captured equipment was transferred to a small van that we had with us. I do not know where it was taken to.

Tom Sheerin was in charge of this operation and I was his second in command.

I remember as we were leaving the post office, a British dispatch rider on a sidecar combination was fired on and wounded by another party of Volunteers. However, we had nothing to do with that shooting.

The Squad.

Early in March 1921, the Battalion O/C., Paddy Holohan, instructed me that I was being transferred in a higher rank to the Headquarters Squad and that I was to report to Paddy Daly at No. 10 Upper Abbey St., known as the Oddfellows Hall. I met Paddy Daly as instructed, and he gave me an outline of my duties. He told me that the Squad was formed to carry out individual shootings of enemy agents and spies, and that in future I was to act under his command.

I reported the following morning at Morelands.

The strength of the Squad at that time was eighteen, and with three new additions, including myself, the strength was brought up to twenty-one. With this strength the Squad was divided into three groups, one under Joe Leonard, one under Tom Keogh, and one under Jimmy Slattery. Paddy Daly was in charge of the entire Squad.

The duties of the Squad were so arranged that six men were always standing-to ready for action at Morelands. Generally our tour of duty was for about six hours daily. There were occasions when the entire Squad stood-to.

One of my first jobs as a member of the Squad was to raid

hardware shops for carpenters' and tradesmen's tools. These were for the purpose of camouflaging the Squad depot in Morelands. We wanted to give the impression to anyone who would raid the place that Morelands was merely a cabinet-maker's factory.

I remember one morning we were greatly disturbed when we discovered that the place was completely surrounded by military. One of our scouts, Sam Robinson, who had been scouting around the main entrance, came back hurriedly and reported the presence of military and Tans. Joe Leonard was in charge of those in residence at the time, and he said there was nothing for it but to fight our way out. I, however, volunteered to go out and see precisely what was taking place. I walked around and saw that the British military had drawn a cordon round Morelands, cutting off our escape route. I delayed for some time and saw a party of military coming down. They had picks and shovels with them and they started digging the waste ground in front of Jervis St. Hospital. I returned to Morelands and closed the gate, but left the small wicket gate open. I reported to Leonard what I had seen. He ordered the men to dump their guns and to carry on with their would-be job of cabinet-making. The place, however, was not raided. We were pleasantly surprised to learn that in a short time the British military withdrew. I believe that they had received some information that a dump was in the vicinity, and that was their reason for cordoning off the place.

Detective Officer Coffey.

Detective Officer Coffey, of Dublin Castle, was believed to be the only man who could identify Michael Collins. The Intelligence Department were very much perturbed about Coffey, and instructions were given that, at all costs, he was to be eliminated. On several occasions at different hours of the day word would come in from a member of the Intelligence Staff

that Coffey had been seen proceeding in a certain direction and, immediately this information was received, we were instructed to proceed at once in the direction Coffey was believed to be going, but each time we got to the appointed place he was not there. Coffey was never got.

We had many similar experiences of going out to get men who were on the list for execution, but unfortunately they escaped our net.

Proposed derailment of train near Croke Park.

Early in May 1921, the Squad had instructions to take up position in the vicinity of Croke Park, where an ammunition train was to be derailed by the Engineers. We were instructed that immediately the train was derailed, we were to open fire on the officer personnel of the train and seize all the revolvers and revolver ammunition that we could lay hands on.

At about 10 o'clock on the morning in question, we had taken up our allotted positions. After waiting there for about twenty minutes, an engine with a couple of carriages attached passed by. We knew that it was not the train we were looking for, and consequently took no action. After a further delay my colleague, Tom McKenna, and I suspected that something had gone wrong and went up to the back of the railway to try and contact other members of the Squad, but they were gone when we arrived there. Just then, we discovered that a cordon had been drawn around that area by military and Tans. Luckily for us, we were outside the cordon and we withdrew straight away. We reported back to headquarters at Morelands and asked there what had happened. Paddy Daly told us that they had withdrawn some time before us, and had forgotten all about McKenna and myself.

Capture of armoured car.

Some time early in May 1921, Paddy Daly assembled the

entire Squad in Morelands and told us that it was proposed to capture an armoured car at the Dublin military abattoir for the purpose of rescuing Sean MacEoin from Mountjoy Prison. MacEoin was then a prisoner awaiting execution. We were ordered to report to Morelands the following morning at nine o'clock.

We turned up, as instructed, on the following morning and Paddy Daly detailed each one of us for his particular job in the capture of the car. My job was to hold up the crew of the car and, in this, I was to be assisted by two others. Other men of the Squad were given various tasks, such as rounding up soldiers wandering around the abattoir, seizing the telephone, etc.

On the first morning that we mobilised to capture the armoured car, the job was called off, as word had come from headquarters that it should not be attempted that morning.

Our second visit to the abattoir was on 15th May 1921. We took up positions in the vicinity of the abattoir and awaited the pre-arranged signal for us to enter. As the armoured car did not arrive on time we were told to disperse. We were making our way to Morelands and, as we arrived at a point near Aughrim St. Church, "Specky" Griffin arrived hurriedly on a bicycle and told us that the armoured car had gone into the abattoir and that we were to go back at once and effect its capture. We returned and entered the abattoir just as the driver and crew, who had already dismounted, were coming to the front of the car. Tom Keogh and myself shouted to them to put up their hands. One of the gunners attempted to run for the car, but was shot as he was doing so. Another soldier, who was a telephone orderly, was also shot. The car was captured within a few minutes. There was some difficulty about getting the car to start and Tom Keogh made the army driver start it. Then Pat McCrae drove the car out.

When we were leaving the abattoir Paddy Daly had arrived and he warned the military personnel there that they were not to leave for half an hour. Daly saw us safely out of the abattoir before he closed the gates and left.

We were making our way back to Morelands and when we got as far as the North Dublin Union, a route that we should not have travelled, we saw a Tan on duty outside the Union. Myself and my comrade, McKenna, expected to be held up and were prepared for action, but the Tan simply bade us good-morning and we passed him by.

Burning of the Custom House.

On the morning of 25th May 1921, the entire Squad was mobilised for 35 Lower Gardiner St. where Paddy Daly informed us that the Custom House was to be burned at one o'clock on that day. He told us that the Squad were to be given the job of holding up the entire staff, assembling them in the main hall, and that we were to prevent unauthorised people from entering or leaving the building until it was set alight. The task of burning the Custom House was the responsibility of the 2nd Battalion.

We entered the main building at five minutes to one o'clock and proceeded to our allotted task of collecting the staff. My particular part in the operation was to take up a position at the rear of the building on the ground floor, collect any of the staff coming downstairs and direct them to the main hall. We collected the staff and had them all in position, but at about a minute to one o'clock, I saw a man coming down the staircase; I just saw his feet. I covered him with my gun. He happened to be the caretaker, who had always boasted that he would not put up his hands for the I.R.A. He came on down the stairs, but when he saw that I had him covered he turned to go back up again and I went after him, but before I had gone far Jimmy Conroy appeared on the scene and said to me:

"Hold on, Pat, you have enough to do down here. I'll get him down to you". There was a struggle at the head of the stairs and I heard a shot, and the next thing I saw was the caretaker being brought down on a stretcher. He was wounded and was taken away.

The Volunteers now entered the building and proceeded to sprinkle the place with petrol and set the rooms alight. Before that happened, there was an explosion outside; somebody had fired a bomb and it caused some confusion among the Volunteers, but they continued with their job. When the all-clear signal was given for the inside, we discovered that the building was completely surrounded outside by British military and Tans.

As I was about to lead out the staff one of them mentioned to me that there was still another man upstairs and that/^{as}the building was now alight something should be done to get him down. I ran up the stairs as quickly as I could, and on the first floor I found a gentleman sitting at his desk. I said to him: "Get out quickly, the building is alight". He did not seem to believe me at first, but after a time he said: "I must get my umbrella and my hat". I ordered him to come down immediately and told him that the two of us would be caught in the flames. He came down, joined the rest of the staff and got out of the building.

I was the last to leave by the Gardiner Street door. I walked in the direction of an armoured car which was firing at the Custom House and I was allowed to pass through as far as Abbey Street. There I found that a lot of my comrades had been captured and were lying on the ground. Some members of the Custom House staff were with them. When I dropped on the ground I discovered that I was lying on two guns, both fully loaded. I thought to myself that as Brooks Thomas's door was open I should make a rush for it with a view to escaping. I decided that,

if necessary, I would shoot the Tan who was on guard at the door. As these thoughts were running through my mind the door was closed.

After about a quarter of an hour lying in this position, we were told to stand up. A party of military and Tans came down amongst us and separated the Custom House staff from the rest of us. A short time later we were taken under arrest to Arbour Hill barracks and, after about ten days there, we were transferred to Kilmainham, where I was held prisoner until the Treaty was signed.

Signed: *Patrick Lawson*,
(Patrick Lawson)

Date: *8th January 1932*

8th January 1952.

Witness: *William Ivory Comdt*
(William Ivory) Comd't.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21 BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21 No. W.S. 667
