

W. S. 714

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 714

ROINN  COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

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Witness

Thomas Hynes,
Kilcullen,
Newcastle Road,
Galway.

Identity.

Member Irish Volunteers, Galway 1912-
Member I.R.B., Galway, 1912;
Q.M. Galway Brigade, 1920.

Subject.

National activities, Co. Galway,
1912 - 1921.

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STATEMENT BY THOMAS HYNES,
Kilcullen, Newcastle Road, Galway.

My connection with the Volunteers commenced about 1912-1913. Previous to this I used to be in Dublin very often, nearly every week-end in connection with athletics running at Jones Road (now Croke Park). I was introduced to some men by the late Tom Kenny, Craughwell. In later years I found out those men were all I.R.B. men. I was generally given a bunch of the first Sinn Féin pamphlets and asked to post them up in Galway; this I did faithfully. A short time after this I was introduced to George Nicholls, a young solicitor working in G.C. Conroy's office, Francis Street, Galway, and a Seamus Carter working in the County Council office at the Courthouse, Galway. S. Carter I knew before as a member of the Galway City Harriers.

I was asked to join the Gaelic League and Pipers' Band. There I met John Hosty, Tom Flanagan, Martin Ridge, John Griffin, John Tierney, J. Beatty and several others, also the late Mary Malone, Maggie Melvin, etc. M. Malone was afterwards the most active girl in Galway in the Cumann na mBan, with Mrs. Donegan as Chairman.

There was a meeting held in the Town Hall, 1914-1915, (the late E. McNeill and Sir Roger Casement were amongst the speakers) for the purpose of forming the Volunteers. After the meeting a few hundred joined up but that was all that was heard of most of them.

About 1912-1913 I met Seán MacDermott and was sworn into the I.R.B. George Nicholls was Centre for Galway.

After that we became very active drilling and training generally and practising with a .22 rifle. Nothing very much happened until 1914-1918 war when we tried to break up recruiting meetings but we generally got beaten up ourselves as at least eighty per cent. of the population were hostile to Sinn Féin, for a number of their husbands and sons were in the English army and navy. We organised céilidhes for the purpose of collecting money to buy arms.

In or about September, 1915, there was a big recruiting meeting to be held in the Town Hall. Mr. Stephen Gwynn, M.P., and others were to address the meeting. We were determined to break up this meeting so we decided if possible to cut the wires. We also made stink-bombs. I got a recipe from a Professor in the College where I worked and succeeded in making about 8 or 10 bombs. Now the trouble was get these into the Town Hall, so we organised a crowd from Castlegar to come in shouting occasionally (Up Gwynn!). In the meantime I got M. Allen (now a solicitor) to carry out these glass phials or stink bombs on his way to meet his present wife. He met the Castlegar boys and gave them instructions to throw the bombs on the stage as soon as the lights went out. And now for the wires, Seamus Carter and I did the actual cutting; John Hosty and Michael Kavanagh acted as scouts to guard the approaches to where the cutting was done; it was timed for 8 p.m.; actual cutting at one minute past 8 p.m. This happened within 75 yards of the hall where the meeting was held and which was strongly guarded by

over 25 R.I.C. men inside and out. There was great confusion in the hall. People walked on one another in their efforts to get out. Some people who could not get out in time broke the glass in the windows and put their heads out to get some fresh air until they thought the doors were clear. However, they held the meeting outside in the courthouse square. The gas bombs were harmless but for a horrible smell. The hall could not be used for a fortnight afterwards.

Then on to 1916. About three weeks before, we in Galway were told to be ready at short notice to go to the Clare border, probably Ennis or Portumna, for arms that were expected. We were not told where they were coming from but everything pointed to a scrap in the near future. Then the message arrived.

But before this the I.R.B. had increased in Galway and surrounding districts. In Craughwell there were the late Tom Kenny, the late Eamon Corbett and Pat Callanan (the Hare); in Athenry the late Larry Lardiner (later Brigade O.C.), Jack Broderick, ex T.D., and Stephen Jordan, ex T.D.; in Carnmore the late Tom Ruane, Mick Newell and Brian Molloy; in Spiddal Micheál Ó Driógnean, N.T., Eamon Walsh and the Duignan brothers; in Moycullen John Geoghegan (later shot by Tans), P. Kyne and Michael Geoghegan; in Oranmore Mick Athy, M. Costello and Joe Howley (Howley was shot in Dublin.). This to mention a few of the most active and prominent in each area. At the beginning we all met occasionally in Galway but later each locality formed a centre of its own.

Then when the message to rise on Easter Sunday arrived, we had a hurried meeting on Friday night and

sent John Hosty to Dublin on Saturday morning to confirm and get final instructions. He did his best to see Pearse but failed. However, he saw Eoin McNeill who told him all was off. McNeill sent Hosty through Tipperary and Limerick to stop everything. I don't know who he saw in Tipperary but he saw Colbert outside Limerick. Then he came on through Ennis to Athenry, saw Larry Lardiner and on to Galway where some of us were waiting for him at the station. Afterwards we dispersed and put away whatever little arms we had, 2 old German rifles, about half a dozen shotguns and 4 harmless revolvers, .32 and .38, with very little ammunition for either of them.

For some time before this Liam Mellows, R.I.P., was in charge of all Galway. Before 2 p.m. on Monday a despatch came to Mellows from Dublin by train to Athenry to say "fight was on". From there despatches were sent to the different places. Maud Kyne brought the despatch to Galway. I collected and sent despatches to Spiddal to Thornton by Mary Malone and to Moycullen to John Geoghegan. There was great confusion. We did not know what to do and, as far as Galway city was concerned, it was late to do anything as R.I.C. and military were already alerted. It was our intention to take a few prominent men - Martin McDonagh (Máirtín Mór), Joe Young, etc., and occupy the Post Office. This was George Nicoll's plan. He seemed to know more about what they intended to do in Dublin than the rest of us did.

There were actually only three men left Galway to join Liam Mellows at Carnmore, a boy named McDermott, J. Corbett and another. The rest of us were acting strictly on I.R.B. instructions from Mellows and he had

more than he could manage, as he had not arms or ammunitions for half his men. When they moved from Carnmore to the Farm at Athenry there was a half-hearted attack on the Oranmore R.I.C. Barracks but the attackers withdrew without taking the barracks.

On receipt of my despatch late on Monday night Micheál Ó Droighnean arrived in Galway on Tuesday morning with a revolver and was arrested immediately. George Nicolls, Tommy Flanagan, Johnny Faller, Seamus Carter, Frank Hardiman, Padraic Ó Máille and Professor Steingeberger, U.C.G. (Professor Steingeberger was a German Professor of Languages) - they were bundled off to a destroyer in Galway Bay somewhere near the Lighthouse. (It was the same ship that shelled Castlegar from the Bay.)

In the meantime the Volunteers had congregated at Tom Ruane's place in Carnmore and sent out outposts or sentries. Next day a crowd of what we called "specials" enlisted for the emergency (mostly ex Redmond Volunteers) and in company with R.I.C. - 13 or 14 cars in all - went out at daybreak to round up all these rebels. The outpost fired a shot to warn the resting Volunteers. All the cars stopped suddenly. Their occupants got out, got under cover and started firing in all directions. An R.I.C. Constable (Whelan), more brave than the rest, went to investigate put his head over a wall and was shot dead by said outpost. Then they returned to Galway. In the meantime a despatch from Liam Mellows told us what was left of us to assemble west of the Corrib, keep in touch and await instructions, also to avoid arrest. This we did.

I forgot to mention that there was an I.R.B.

cell in U.C.G. but it was Easter and they were all gone home on holidays. They included Tom Derrig, John A. Madden, Dr., and M. Brennan, Dr. The only man that came back to offer his service was J.A. Madden. He arrived on Wednesday night.

Meanwhile the Volunteers had moved from Carnmore to the Farm in Athenry and later to Moyode Castle. After the surrender they were nearly all arrested and interned in Frongoch and other English jails. In the meantime we were "on the run" but kept very close to Galway (except Tom Ruane who went to friends in Moycullen parish and was arrested within a week) until such time as some of the prisoners were released. We started to re-organise almost immediately.

In 1917 about August or early September we (I.R.B.) held a meeting in Keane's pub at Oranmore. G. Nicolls, Callanan and S. Jordan and G. Broderick were the most prominent. There was a message from Dublin to send a delegate. I was selected as the least suspected (in other words, I had not been arrested). We met in Fleming's Hotel in Dublin and there I saw Cathal Brugha for the first time. He was carried in to the meeting on a chair. Our instructions were to get a hall under the name of Sinn Féin, organise and drill Volunteers. In September I saw a house agent, A. Roche, Foster Street, got a big house in Prospect Hill (afterwards called Sinn Féin Hall). I had to pay the rent in advance. There was great enthusiasm at this time. We purchased a billiard table, card tables, chairs, etc. I was appointed Treasurer. In the first year I collected from members (not all Volunteers) £172.5.9.; from 1st October, 1917, the date the Hall opened, to the 23rd March, 1918 -

£172.5.9; from 23rd March 1918 to the 8th February 1919 - £225.15.7, including £22.11.0. balance from previous year; and from the 8th February 1919 to September, 1920, £94.17.0. (when Hall was burned by R.I.C. and Black and Tans).

During this period there was great activity, drilling, field exercises and route marches, the latter always accompanied by two R.I.C. men. In 1918-1919 one R.I.C. man named McAvinney, stationed at Eglinton Street Barracks, refused to follow us past Bohermore and had to resign a week later. We were very sorry for this, as he was preparing a plan of the Barracks and with his co-operation from inside to show us where the rifles and ammunition were kept.

We held Sinn Féin Courts, divided lands in dispute, sent culprits to unknown destinations, etc. (in other words, took the law into our own hands). I have in mind one particular case of land dispute. Two brothers from Castlegar were quite willing to divide land but the elder brother wanted one particular field and so did the younger also, so the Court (of which I was a member with Tom Ruane and the late Dean Considine R.I.P.) told the older brother to divide the land his way and, when he had it divided, the younger brother was to take his choice first and the older brother was to take what was left. We heard no more about that particular land and both brothers were satisfied in the end.

Then came Easter 1919. We got instructions to destroy income tax and other papers at the Custom House. Seamus Murphy was at this time in charge of Volunteers in Galway; and Galway at the time was one Brigade area. Later (early in 1920) it was divided into North, South,

East Connemara Brigade and Galway Brigade area. Seamus Murphy sent for me and explained what he wanted done (S. Murphy was partly on the run this time). I was to take charge outside, ^I got 16 men, some of them with hack-saws, bit and brace, lock-saws, ropes, paraffin oil, etc., also a lorry to take away books and papers, etc. Charlie Costello was transport officer. I did not call a Company meeting, as S. Murphy usually did, to ask for volunteers. I just selected 16 men with 3 scouts to watch the approaches to Custom House, sent 2 men off at five-minute intervals, 6 with revolvers; Hugh Corvan was inside to admit each pair. Everything was going well until about 10.30 p.m. when Charlie Costello came to me to tell me his lorry was too high and would not go in through Custom House gate. I ordered him to go to Irwin's Garage and get Bill Garvey or Bob St. George (they were trusted though not Volunteers). He got Bill Garvey and a car, went to Custom House, took a full load of papers, books, etc., but left twice as much behind which was set fire to in the yard. Everybody got clear away and, until the fire was observed, not a thing was heard. The motor load was taken back to Rehoon and set fire to there. It might be as well to explain that the men with the bit and brace and lock-saws were let off first. Hack-saws next to cut chain and lock inside gate; they were ready when the others arrived to take out books, papers, etc. It was intended to lower books to yard by means of the ropes but it was found to be too slow so they took off boots and shoes and carried loads of books and papers downstairs and dumped them in a pile in the yard. I would like to mention when sending my selected men and scouts off, Jimmie Folan was one of the scouts selected. He stood up, saluted and said, "I'm long

enough doing scout. Give me a man's job". My answer was, "O.K., Jimmie! Go inside. I'll get another in your place". I got Christy Connell instead.

About this time things were getting very hot. Every movement was watched. The leading Volunteers from Craughwell, Athenry, Tuam, Carnmore, Castlegar, etc., were finding it very hard to meet in Galway. So Fionán Lynch came to Galway (early 1920) and the county was divided into North, South, East, West and Galway Brigades, the latter which included out to Claregalway, Oranmore, Carnmore and, on the west side, Barna and Bushypark. After that each unit acted more or less on their own.

I was re-appointed Quartermaster for the Galway Brigade; not that I was any better than the others, but I worked at the University and it was an ideal place for hiding arms in the building cellars, presses, lofts, garages, etc.

Whenever we could, we bought arms from soldiers. A Canadian soldier home on leave went to Frank Hardiman and offered his rifle for £3.0.0. Frank told me that night, so I sent M. Kavanagh and my brother, Michael, to said soldier and got the rifle. Another man named Crowley, Waterlane, sent John Connor to me with an offer of a rifle for £2.10.0. After that when soldiers came home they were not allowed to bring home rifles. We also contacted two soldiers from Renmore who wanted to desert and they offered us 4 rifles for £10.0.0. provided that we would give them 2 old suits of civvies. George Nicolls and Tom Flanagan supplied the clothes. I supplied the money. Tom Reddington, M. Kavanagh and Mike Hynes collected the rifles just outside Renmore Barracks at 2 a.m. and handed over money and clothes.

We also got 2 rifles from Dublin and 500 rounds of ammunition. We had two good men on the Railway, Joe Hennigan, a checker, and M. Kelly, guard's van. We got the two men that gave us the 4 rifles from Renmore to Dublin with M. Kelly and lost them there. They actually kissed the boys that gave them the means of escape.

Late 1920 I got an order to supply 4 rifles and 400 rounds of ammunition, as well as 6 hand-made bombs, to North Galway (Tuam) Brigade for an attack on Castlegrove Barracks. P. White (Rappean) - he is still there - collected them under the railway bridge at Wood Quay. Jimmy Folan, Mike Hynes and myself carried them from U.C.G. over the Corrib railway bridge (not then guarded) to where White was waiting under the bridge. Our big complaint afterwards was that we never got the rifles back when the attack was over.

In the meantime some of the smaller R.I.C. Barracks were evacuated, Moycullen and Killeen, just outside Castlegar, so there was a big concentration of R.I.C. in Galway - Eglinton Barracks, Dock Barracks, Dominick Street Barracks, Salthill Barracks, Renmore Scotch Regiment, Earl's Island (An old distillery warehouse) 500 Lancers, Lenaboy, Taylor's Hill, Auxiliaries, Rockbarton (the Retreat) Auxiliaries, and added to these the Black and Tans. People were turned out of their houses in Henry Street, West, and Eyre Street to allow Black and Tans, their wives and their families to take up residence. As well as that, there were several in lodgings here and there throughout the city. There was also an aerodrome at Oranmore and the planes were continually flying over the city and suburbs.

On two occasions in 1920 we sent a man by the

name of Isaac Conroy to Wales for gelignite, fuses, detonators. Mr Conroy was a brother of the late Padraic Ó Conaire and his wife was a Welsh woman, whose brother was a miner in Wales, and Conroy worked there himself for a while. At this time he had a job as traveller for Messrs. M. McDonagh & Sons, Galway. I was Q.M. at the time and on those two occasions I gave him £36.0.0. to get what he could, as well as pay his expenses. On each occasion he brought back about 14 lbs. gelignite, 200 detonators and several yards of fuse, also an electric detonator and cable and a box exploder. Afterwards he came down to College Club occasionally to instruct a select few (mostly Engineer students) on how to use them.

When the boys were trained and knew how to use the gelignite I had to send one of those trained men to Moycullen one night each week with a few sticks of gelignite, detonators and fuses to show the Volunteers there how to use them, next night to Barna, next night to Castlegar, and so on. I was often waiting at the College (back gate) until 1 a.m. or 2 a.m. for the boys' return to put the stuff away.

As soon as the gelignite arrived we got busy making and filling hand grenades and mines. We got several lengths of gas piping about an inch and a half in diameter and some of it 2½" in diameter. We also got a few hack-saws and whenever the Professor went to lunch or went home in the evening I got a few of the trusted students down to the old kitchen or cellars under the anatomy room and we started cutting the piping into short lengths just what would hold 2 sticks of gelignite and some scrap metal. I got Tom Griffin (a blacksmith) to make tops and bottoms for these and

bolted them on with a hole in the centre at one end to get in detonator and fuse. They were heavy and awkward but very effective and the best we could do anyhow.

In connection with the second consignment of gelignite from Wales, there is something worth recording. There was a tea-party at Taylor's Hill at which Louis O'Dea, Canon Moran (R.I.P.) and several others were present, including several ladies (most of them sympathetic). The discussion was naturally on the present situation. Somebody said, "What can we do? We have no arms or nothing to fight with". Louis O'Dea said, "That is not quite correct. At the moment there is a man sent to England and when he arrives back we expect to have enough stuff to blow up all Galway".

Soon after the above statement was made (5 p.m.) Canon Moran left, cycled home to Claregalway, contacted Nicko Kyne and his sister, Maud, and asked him if he knew anything about the stuff we were supposed to be getting from England. N. Kyne knew nothing, so Canon Moran sent Maud Kyne (a sister of Mrs. F. Hardiman) to warn us of the statement that was made and to take precautions if the statement was correct. Maud Kyne arrived in Galway on a cycle at 8 p.m. and told me what happened. Before 9 p.m. I went up to L. O'Dea and asked him who told him the story of a man being sent to England. His answer was "Seamus Murphy". I said, "He had no right to tell you or anybody else and I am warning you now that if anything happens to Isaac Conroy you are in for it!" (I think he knew what that meant.) There were only three people who should have known, George Nicholls as Head Centre I.R.B., Seamus Murphy as O.C. Galway Brigade and I as Quartermaster who supplied the wherewithal to purchase the stuff.

The Volunteers were coming on very fast. Tom Flanagan, Sean Turke, Martin Ridge, Johnny Broderick were drilling and instructing their respective units or Companies. At this time (1919-1920) the Company Captain was elected by vote or acclamation of the Volunteers. 1920 - Johnny Broderick (Seán) was a great favourite. He was a musician and could play the piano, violin or anything in the musical line. He used to play at all our ceilidhes and was very popular with all the Volunteers. He was appointed Battalion Commandant in 1920 and from then on he did practically all Seamus Murphy's work, cycled to see the Company areas, Carnmore, Claregalway, Castlegar, inspecting the Companies and gave drill instructions and conveyed (if any) special messages from Headquarters.

About this time also we were in a bad way for arms, all the Volunteers clamouring for something to fight with (arms). We succeeded in getting George Nicholls, L. O'Dea and Michael Walsh (later shot by Tans) to go to the Munster and Leinster Bank and put their names as security for £200.0.0. O'Kelly Lynch was Bank Manager at this time. We sent the money to Dublin to purchase arms (but we never got any of them) but just about the time we were expecting them a box containing 6 rifles, ammunition for same and 6 bombs or hand grenades arrived at the station goods store, addressed to Ned Taaffe, Shop Street, Galway. Our special man, Hugh Tully, was our principal man at the goods store and he was supposed to notify Sean Broderick when this particular parcel or box arrived. Through some mistake, Hugh Tully did not report. The fact was he was not on duty. Hence the box was delivered to Ned Taaffe along with other boxes (butter, groceries, etc.). Ned opened the boxes containing

rifles and bombs, got a great shock, ran across the road to Paddy O'Connor whom he knew to be identified with the Sinn Féin or Volunteer movement. Paddy O'Connor went to Tom Flanagan, and Mick Kavanagh who was working for Flanagan came to me. I contacted Tom Boyle working for James Behan (a carrier). He had some coal in his light delivery van for Head Constable Killacky, Eglinton Street R.I.C. Barracks. He collected the case containing 6 rifles and ammunition and some hand-grenades went and delivered his coal with the box still in the van, and then went and hid it under the coal in Behan's yard.

Now there is a story about this particular box. Tom Duggan (Baby) was in Dublin when the box containing arms was sent and heard about the fact that it was being sent. The result was that a few days afterwards a man named King was sent in from Castlegar to collect by Duggan. I was Quartermaster and refused to hand over the box. The reason was that we had sent £200.0.0. for arms and naturally thought it was for us in Galway, so we sent a despatch to Dublin to find out who the arms were for. The reply came to say that the arms were for Leo Darcy, Headford. This fact was admitted by Baby Duggan who sent in same man (King) to collect again for the purpose of sending them on to Headford to Leo Darcy. The arms, however, never passed Castlegar, in other words, the Castlegar Company kept them. Now I maintain that Leo Darcy lost his life because of the fact that those arms were not delivered to Headford where they belonged. The reason was why Darcy was captured at Oranmore Railway Station he was on his way to Dublin to contact Michael Collins for the purpose of getting those arms. He was accompanied by a man named Lally. Lally was let off but Darcy was shot

between Oranmore and Galway at a place called Merlin Park while under arrest and his body was dragged along the road after a lorry containing R.I.C. and Black and Tans. At a rigged inquest the verdict was, "Shot while trying to escape".

Early in May, 1920, we were preparing for an attack on Loughgeorge R.I.C. Barracks about 8 or 9 miles from Galway. There must have been over 100 men on the job. Five or six men with saws to cut down trees on Oranmore road, another 6 to build walls on the Headford road, another 8 or 10 men on the Castlegar road, and we had the latter road mined with electric detonators for the first time with a length of cable to explode about 70 yards away in a field in good cover. Captain N. Kyne was ordered to block the approach from Tuam on the far side of Loughgeorge. I supplied the necessary gelignite, etc. The attack was supposed to start at 12.30 midnight. Jimmy Folan and Michael Walsh (nephew of Dr. Tom Walsh), an Engineering student, set the mine and everything was ready on time except Seamus Murphy, Nicko Kyne and his men who did not turn up until after 2 a.m. - in other words, it was too late for the attack. However, the mine was exploded very successfully. There was a big hole in the barrack gable and wall. Then the attack began. But it was daylight in about an hour and they failed to capture the barracks. They decided to withdraw at about 3 a.m. We were ordered to withdraw from the road blocks at about 2 a.m.

In the meantime things were happening in Galway. The mail car from Galway to Headford went out as usual, came across the road block on Headford road at Ballinacorney and returned to Galway, telephoned R.I.C. Barracks. They rang up Renmore and in a short time

there were about 12 lorries on the road with military and R.I.C. They went down and removed road block on Headford road, then went on and turned to right at Corrandulla and actually met the Volunteers on the road at Kelly's of Aughacleggan. Fortunately there was a big wood (Cregg Wood and Castle) and most of them succeeded in getting under cover before being observed. Others not so fortunate were within 50 or 60 yards of the first lorry before they knew where they were. They just jumped into the fields and headed towards Tuam (about 10 miles away) and in the opposite direction to where they had arranged to go, namely, Corrandulla Monastery, Lough Corrib. It was two days afterwards before some of them arrived in Galway (including S. Murphy). Some more of them got to Tuam and came in to Galway on the 11 o'clock train the following morning. We learned afterwards that the police were lying on the floor in the barracks waiting for the Volunteers to come in through the hole in the gable-end wall. They were prepared to surrender if anybody came through but Murphy would not allow anyone to enter the barracks. (We were very disappointed.) There were only 6 rifles, 300 rounds of ammunition and a few hand-grenades issued for the attack (all we had of rifles).

After this we concentrated on destroying military stores, such as, barbed wire, hay, anything arriving for Renmore or Earl's Island, also Belfast Boycott. We had a man, Hugh Tully (already mentioned) in the goods store at the railway station and we knew through him when anything arrived before the military did. The barbed wire was generally thrown from the railway bridge down on to Sea Road about 15 feet below and from there on to a boat and dumped at sea. The hay we set fire to. The other goods, cigarettes,

etc., we arranged with Castlegar to meet Behan's van (Carriers), Tom Boyle driving (already mentioned). He was generally relieved of the stuff on his way to Renmore just where the present Sanatorium is. Tom Boyle of course gave us every assistance and he knew nobody. Later on the military provided their own transport but even then we destroyed a lot of their stuff before they arrived.

Hugh Tully was later shot by R.I.C. and Black and Tans in his house at St. Brigid's Terrace, Bohermore, and on same night Christy Folan (brother of Jimmy) was shot also. It was Jimmy they were looking for. He was released from Galway Jail that day. He was sent to jail for having a post-card photograph of Michael Walsh (Old Malt House) in his pocket when searched. Hold-ups and searches were an every-day occurrence at this time. The evening of his release, Sergeant John O'Connell, R.I.C., who was friendly at least to me, told me to "tell Jimmy not to be at home tonight". How right he was is proved by the fact that the R.I.C. and Black and Tans went to look for him that night and, when they didn't find him, shot his two brothers in beds (Christie and Joe). Christie was shot dead but Joe survived after getting 3 or 4 bullets in the back of neck. Sergeant Keane, Dominick Street, was in charge of this party. They then proceeded to St. Brigid's Terrace, Bohermore, and shot Hugh Tully as he was coming downstairs..

Jimmy Folan went on the run then and joined the Column in the Castlegar-Claregalway and Kiltulla area. This Column included Baby Duggan, Brian Molloy, Mick Newell, Seamus Duggan, etc., etc.

Most of them were compelled to go on the run

because, had they stayed at home, they would be shot anyhow. On the run or in Columns in country districts did not mean the same as it did in town. In the country districts there was only occasional raiding and the lorries could be heard and seen miles away.

For instance, there were nights when ambushes were prepared and nothing happened for three nights in succession. But it was dangerous to stay around any particular place too long. Then no sooner had the Columns gone than the lorries appeared next day. Houses were broken into, goods looted and the Black and Tans and R.I.C. were giving silk blouses and other presents to their lady friends in Galway as a result and sending parcels of clothes to their friends in England.

We had a few good men in the Post Office, Joe Togher and Jim Walsh. One or other of these men was usually on night duty and, when letters arrived addressed to the O.C. Black and Tans or other known officers, they were held. When Togher got the letters he gave them to me as I lived not far from him, and when Jim Walsh got them he gave or left them in to Michael Walsh in the Old Malt House on his way home from work towards the docks. Michael O'Sullivan (a brother of Gearóid O'Sullivan) who was working in the 'Connacht Tribune' Office generally gave me such letters as he lodged with Joe Togher's mother. In this way we got several letters from would-be spies. I have in mind one spy namely, Joyce, N.T., Barna (later shot as a spy). In his letters to O.C. Black and Tans he mentioned several men who should be shot - Michael Thornton, N.T., Spiddal, Thomas O'Connor, N.T., Galway, Michael Walsh (Old Malt House), Rev. Fr. Griffin, Galway (later shot

at Lenaboy and buried in a bog in Rehoon about a mile from Barna). He also mentioned an O'Donnell from Cappa near Barna (O'Donnell's house was later burned by R.I.C.). So some of these letters referred to must have got through. In Galway we decided to send three of these letters to Dublin and ask for instructions. Rev. Fr. Meehan, who stayed with Fr. Griffin at Mount Pellier Tce., brought these letters to and from Dublin with instructions. In the meantime while those letters were going to and from Dublin, another letter arrived. Jim Walsh got this fourth letter and left it at the Old Malt House. Michael Walsh got excited when he saw his own name and O'Connor's in this letter. He sent for T. O'Connor and told him and then he went down to Rev. Fr. Mansfield at the Augustinian Church, told him, but told him to say nothing about it. Then he sent for me. I asked him if he had mentioned the contents of the letter to anybody and he told me about O'Connor and Fr. Mansfield. So I told him to send for O'Connor again and tell him not to mention it to anybody. Our instructions had already arrived from Dublin but we had to wait another week to be sure that nothing leaked out before we carried out the execution of Joyce. This took place in the East Connemara Brigade area.

After this there was great activity. Joyce's son was seen nearly every day in lorries and Lancias with the Black and Tans and Auxiliaries raiding and searching the country for miles around for Volunteers. It is believed that it was Joyce's son who lured Fr. Griffin to his death by asking him to come and attend a dying man. Fr. Griffin and Fr. Meehan had instructions not to leave their house at Mount Pelier Terrace at night with anybody they did not

know well. Joyce's son and his friends believed that it was Fr. Griffin that attended his father before he was shot, but this was not so.

Now it was coming up to fairly late 1920, August-September. Seamus Murphy left Galway without telling anyone and went to England. Louis O'Dea left and went to London. Nearly all the Volunteers were arrested or on the run. George Nicholls was away. I stayed around and for a while did nothing but collect despatches to and from Dublin and sleeping out. Mrs. Dillon, Miss McHugh (a sister of Mrs. Nicholls), Miss Neville (a teacher in the Technical School), Miss Mary Malone, Marie Geraghty, Peg Broderick (sister of Battalion Commandant Seán Broderick), Miss Turke, Miss King and Minnie Lenihan were the most active girl workers in the Cumann na mBan, carrying despatches and feeding prisoners in Galway Jail and Town Hall.

In November Professor Liam Ó Briain, U.C.G., was arrested. John Hosty was arrested and sent to Ballykinlar. J. Hosty was Secretary to Sinn Féin Hall. Secretary was just another cover for Battalion Adjutant, just the same as my position (Treasurer) was cover for Quartermaster.

We got Rate books removed from the Courthouse in Bill Garvey's car. The military were behind sandbags, about 15 yards away, at the Town Hall which was full of prisoners at the time. Bill Garvey drove down Headford Road, turned to the right towards the New Cemetery, handed over books to Castlegar boys by arrangement, then came back home to Irwan's yard, Eyre Street, and was actually standing at Irwan's gate when R.I.C. arrived to know if any of the cars were out. Bill said, "No", but was very much afraid they would go in and see the engine of his car red hot.

The night Crumme was shot at the Railway Station there were several things happening at the same time. For instance, we had a raid for arms in Galway. Micheál Thornton and Tom Reddington were bringing in arms and ammunition from Dublin with a view for an attack on the Spiddal R.I.C. Barracks. (We knew nothing about the latter in Galway.) Crumme and another Black and Tan were drinking in a pub in Abbeygate Street. Crumme was fairly drunk and was brandishing a revolver and bragging to the people in the bar that he would knock the neck off a bottle at a 10-yard range. I was in charge of raid for arms in North Ward. A chap named Dolan came and told me about Crumme's behaviour, so we watched him until he came out about 10.20 p.m. and proceeded to railway station to get evening papers which arrived usually about 10.30. It was our usual meeting place for the Volunteers also on the pretence of getting the papers. I warned Tom Fahy, Joe Cummins and my brother, Michael Hynes about the Tan being drunk and armed. When the train arrived and the people had collected their papers and were coming out near the gate, some of the boys were moving in towards Crumme and his pal. Crumme drew his gun and started shooting. Mulvey was shot dead, Joe Cummins got a bullet in the ankle and another chap got a bullet in the thigh. Seán Turke jumped on Crumme's back and got him down. Both were on the ground when Frank Dowd asked, "Will I shoot?", and somebody said, "Yes!" Now his pal (Crumme's) who had no gun was not interfered with. Tommie Fahy and Mike Hynes took Crumme's gun and went out the back way from the railway and hid the gun at the docks under some timber.

In the meantime Micheál Thornton and Tom Reddington were getting the arms and ammunition out

the opposite side from the guard's van. Shortly afterwards there were military with armoured cars, Black and Tans and R.I.C. all over Galway, raiding and shooting. S. Quirke was taken from his bed, brought towards the docks and shot by R.I.C. He was attended by Fr. Griffin before he died. Seán Broderick was taken from his house in Prospect Hill, brought towards the railway, put up against a gate and shot at. He was wounded in the head but it wasn't serious. It was a miracle that he escaped as there were at least 20 shots fired at him from about 10 yards range. He was left for dead. When the Crown forces retired (leaving him for dead), he managed to get to Tom Brown's house in Foster Street. From there he went to Mayo for a while. He came back to Galway on two occasions to try and contact Seamus Murphy or somebody to see if anything could be done. He met or at least sent for Fr. Meehan who advised him to leave Galway as soon as possible. He went to Mayo again where he contacted Tom McGuire and later he went to Connemara. Seán Broderick's father's house was set on fire but it was extinguished before any serious damage was done.

Later there was the Scrobe ambush and then the Kilmilkin ambush. In the Kilmilkin ambush after about 13 or 14 hours' fighting at long range, there was only one R.I.C. Rutledge wounded and it was Eamon O'Malley (recently left U.C.G.) who shot at him from about 400 yards range. What really happened was a man named Joyce (a cousin of the Ó Maille's who were in the ambush) was passing in his car. Rutledge jumped on the running board and in this position he was carried to Maam where he rang the military at Galway. It was the first time any of the R.I.C. were visible. After this the Lancers, about 200 of them, went out by the

Moycullen-Oughterard route, another 200 by the Headford-Kilmaine route for the purpose of encircling the Kilmilkin column. The day being very warm, several of them on the Headford side took off their coats when climbing the mountains. The result was the military on the Connemara side thought the soldiers in the opposite direction were Volunteers (when they saw them without coats) and shot at them and there was a pitched battle for some time until they found out their mistake. There were several casualties but we never found out the exact number, but the train was stopped at Earls Island and later four or five square boxes or coffins were sent to England.

November and December, 1920, what was left of us in Galway were sleeping out under bushes and hedges listening to the shooting. Next morning we heard of some other shops being broken into and looted. Moylett's at Eyre Square and Joe Grehan's at Salthill were visited more often than the others.

Professor T. Dillon and I slept a few nights on top of 15-foot high bookcases or presses in U.C.G. Library. My brother and I slept several more nights in front of the fire-place (where the fire had been all day) in the Physiology department in U.C.G. Towards the end of December, 1920, I got very ill but still kept making and filling those hand-grenades (already mentioned) and sending them out to the different Companies. During Christmas week I had to go to St. Bride's Nursing Home. On New Year's Day, 1921, Dr. O'Malley removed my appendix. I was very weak for about a month.

While in hospital Mrs. Dr. Dillon had some important despatches to send to Dublin. She came to

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me and I revealed Joe Togher's name in the G.P.O. for the first time. I was not long out of hospital when Mrs. Dillon asked me to meet a Captain Jim Byrne who had important messages from Dublin. I met him in the house of Miss Neville (lodgings already referred to), now the C.Y.M.S. That would be about February, 1921. While we walked, he wrote despatches for Micheál Thornton, Tom McGuire and Mr. Kilroy, Mayo. James Thornton (Gunnie) took the despatches across the lake to Mayo. John Geoghegan whom I met by accident that evening took the despatch to Michael Thornton. Geoghegan was taken out of his bed and shot on Clydagh Bridge that very night by R.I.C. and Black and Tans. I was very uneasy for a few days until I heard that the despatch was delivered, as I thought that the despatch was found on him and was possibly responsible for his death. However, later I discovered that he had given the despatch to his brother, Michael, who delivered it next day.

About this time too we had a few scouts watching movements at Lenaboy where Auxiliaries were stationed. One Thursday evening a chap called Hickey (an apprentice at Anderson's, Dentists) and a pal were pretending to be hunting for rabbits just outside Lenaboy. An aeroplane appeared overhead, circled around a few times and dropped a parcel just outside the wall. They picked it up. It contained very important despatches about a meeting to be held in Athlone. All D.J.'s. and Captains of the different units were to meet there. We sent the despatch to Dublin and were complimented on its capture by the late G. O'Sullivan.

SIGNED: *Thomas Hynes*
(Thos. Hynes)DATE: *17/7/52*WITNESS: *Larry Hynes**23 William St Galway*