

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRS MILITARY 1913-21
NO. W.S. 131

ROINN



COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 131

Witness

George O'Flanagan

Identity

Member of C/Coy. 1st Dublin Bn. I.V.

Subject

Four Courts Area, Easter 1916.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

File No. S. 962

Form B.S.M. 2.

NAMES OF VOLUNTEERS MENTIONED BY
GEORGE O'FLANAGAN.

Ned Daly	O/C. 1st Battalion
Frank Fahy	Captain C/Coy. 1st Battn.
Joe McGuinness	Lieut. do. do.
Joe Reid	Quartermaster
Sean Prendergast	
Seán Kennedy (Armourer)	
Mark Wilson	
Farrelly (two brothers)	
Sean Howard	
Sean Flood	
Peadar Clancy	
Barney Mellowes	
Lieut. Sullivan.	

ORIGINAL

STATEMENT OF GEORGE O'FLANAGAN

C/COY. 1ST BATTN. I.V.V.

I joined the Irish Volunteers in 1914 shortly after the Howth gun-running. I was then 15 years of age. I joined at 41 Parnell Square. Frank Fahy (Capt.) was O/C. the Company and Joe McGuinness (afterwards T.D. for Longford), who owned a drapery store in Dorset St., was a Lieutenant. Other members I recollect were Joe Reid, the Q.M., Sean Kennedy, Armourer, Sean Prendergast and Mark Wilson and the Brothers Farrelly who were provision merchants in Dorset Street. Sean Kennedy repaired all our weapons in a store in Dawson St. I remember bringing a shotgun to him there to get a bayonet made to fit it.

On joining I was issued with a membership card and I paid 3d per week subscription. I also paid money for the purchase of equipment. I finally had a full uniform and equipment and was armed with a Martini Henry rifle and a .32 revolver for which I also paid.

We did rifle drill in 41 Parnell Sq. with dummy rifles. We did open air drill in the Drumcondra and Finglas Districts under the command of Ned Daly, including route marches to Swords.

I first received a rifle when we went to Limerick for a demonstration for Capt. Monteith. I remember we had to fight our way out of Limerick as the people were very hostile and the police made no effort to interfere.

My company had Howth Mausers, shotguns, Martini rifles and revolvers.

I do not recollect attending any meeting at which the Company decided which side it would take at the "split".

I remember parading with my Company at Parnell Square on Easter Sunday, 1916. We were drilled on the Square by Sgt. Major Williams. The parade was dismissed about 5 p.m. That

night I went to a party at Irishtown. When coming home along Pearse St. at about 6 in the morning I met my brother Frank going into No. 196. He said "Get home quick, get ready, the time is come, meet in Blackhall Place before 12 o'clock". I went home, got an hour's sleep, dressed in uniform, got shotgun and .32 revolver and paraded in Blackhall Place (in the Volunteer Hall) along with my two brothers who were also in uniform. We had rations, also iron rations, which we had purchased in Lawlor's of Fownes St. I had 6 rounds .32 ammunition and about 10 cartridges for shotgun.

Ned Daly addressed us from a platform at one end of the hall and said "Now, boys, the time has come which you are all wishing for when you have the chance of striking a blow for Irish Freedom". As well as I can remember.

We marched to the Four Courts at 12 noon. I was posted with another volunteer at one end of Bow Lane with instructions to make a barricade with all cars that came along. We did so with trap, farm carts, motor car, etc. We remained on duty there until 6 p.m. when we were relieved. When I went into the Four Courts and after a meal I was posted as sentry on a gate of the Four Courts which opened on Church St. The only person who approached the gate while I was there was Sean Howard with a dispatch. I was relieved at 6 a.m. on Tuesday morning. While at the barricade and while on my post at the Four Courts I heard no shooting.

I slept in a room in the Four Courts on my coat on the floor for a couple of hours. I then went with Sean Flood to Heathers' on Arran Quay where we got underclothing for the garrison. Sean Flood gave a written note on Volunteer paper for them. I was then with my brother posted at a window facing the Medical Mission in Charles St. There was some shooting from the windows of the Mission. Some of our men threw home made hand grenades in through the windows of the Mission. After a few hours I was relieved.

We had beds then in the basement and I remained there until Wednesday morning. There was a party of Cumann na mBan in the Four Courts. They did the cooking and attended to injuries. I went with Lieut. McGuinness with food for people in Arran St. There was plenty of food in the Four Courts, mostly tinned. We also had plenty of fresh meat.

I was then posted on Church St. Bridge with Bob Carroll and a few more to keep a watch on Bridge St. I think Peadar Clancy was in charge. We were instructed not to shoot without orders. A house on the corner of Bridge St. was set on fire. I remained at the Bridge until 6 p.m. and then returned to the Four Courts and got another rest until Thursday morning.

I was then posted at the top windows, right hand corner of the Four Courts facing the quays. Along with me were Bob Carroll, Peter Farrelly (decd.), Spud Murphy, Peter McNally, Con Donovan and Seamus Byrne. We all had Martini Henry rifles with 30 rounds .303 for each rifle. The windows were barricaded with ledgers, the only material available. Things were quiet for a while and then an armoured car came up the quays from the direction of O'Connell Bridge. We fired a few shots at it. There was also heavy firing from the front of the building. Our fire was returned by the armoured car which went on towards the Park.

In the afternoon we saw British troops come out of Essex St. on the opposite side of the quays. We fired at them. They retaliated with machine gun fire and pushed a field gun into position. The first shot from the field gun hit the top of our window, the second under the window, the third the right hand side of the window. The fourth hit the top of the window and blew it away, the fifth hit the bottom and blew it away. They continued to use the machine gun and we retaliated. We were hampered as the quay walls acted as a barricade for them. It got too hot for us and we were ordered to retire to the

yard. I was posted at a barricade facing the Medical Mission with instructions to watch for a sniper in the Mission. While I was there Dinny^{O'}Callaghan came along, took my rifle, fired at the sniper and killed him. During the whole of my time in the Four Courts I never saw a single man of ours killed or wounded. Barney Mellowes issued more ammunition to us. I slept throughout Thursday night. There was never any talk about evacuation. On Friday morning I was posted with Mark Wilson and four or five others on top of a building which gave us full view of Church St. as far as Reilly's Fort at the corner of King St. and Church St. We could see our men retiring down Church St. from barricade to barricade. We kept firing at the "Fort" to cover their retreat. We remained in that position until Saturday morning when we were withdrawn. We then heard there was a truce - next we heard there was a surrender.

We were all lined up in the Four Courts yard. Commandant Daly addressed us and told us that Pearse had issued orders for surrender and told us we had to give up our rifles. We piled them in the yard. Some broke theirs. We remained there for an hour or two when a British officer came in. At Commandant Daly's request he allowed us to fall in and march out. We were taken to the Rotunda Gardens. We remained there until Sunday morning. We got no food or drink. On Sunday morning we were taken to O'Connell St. and searched and marched to Richmond Barracks. We got a very bad reception from the people. Men fell from exhaustion on the way. We stood for about two hours on the square in Richmond Barracks, men continually falling down from exhaustion. We then got a drink of water, the first for 24 hours. The weather was very hot. We were then put into dormitories and got tinned beef and ^{hard} biscuits. We slept on the floor. On Monday

we were marched to the Quays and put in the holds
of a cattle boat and taken to Staffordshire Gaol.

Signed: George O. Morrison

Witness: R. J. Feeley, Const.

Date: 24th June 1948.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 131