

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 160

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 160.....

Witness

Mr. Joseph ^{O'Byrne}~~O'Brien~~,
55 Dartmouth Square,
Dublin.

Identity

O/C. Bolands Mills Garrison,
Easter Week 1916.

Subject

Bolands Mills Area
Easter Week 1916.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

Nil

File No. S.620.....

Form B.S.M. 2.

N.S. 160

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ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRA MILEATA 1913-21

AN ACCOUNT OF

No. W.S. 160



THE EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES DURING
 EASTER WEEK 1916 OF THE GARRISON AT
 BOLAND'S MILLS, RINGSEND ROAD.

Boland's Mill is a large building situated at the South East of the drawbridge, Ringsend Road. This building was in reality an outpost position on the left flank of the main body of the Battalion who held the line Westland Row Station - Boland's Bakery - Lansdowne Road, during Easter Week.

To my Company ("D" Co. Batt. 111) was allotted the task of holding this outpost, and of defending the main body from any attack by enemy troops who might make an advance via Ringsend Road and Brunswick Street (now Pearse Street), with a view to attacking the main body on its left flank.

Besides its importance from a Military stand-point, it had also the advantage of being a food centre, for the Mill was well stocked with flour.

On Holy Thursday, Commandant de Valera had explained to me the scheme of defence of the position and subsequently, on Holy Saturday, I met him by appointment and together we inspected the actual scene of operations, when he explained the plan in greater detail. The plan was as follows:-

When the order for action was given, I was to divide my Company into three sections, of uneven strength; the largest of these three sections was to occupy the Mill Building and put it in a state of defence. Another section was to occupy the Dublin City Distillery situated on the opposite side of the Canal Basin, on the South-West. The third section was to occupy the premises of the Gas Company on the North-West corner of the Bridge. In addition, a small picket was to occupy a position, at the Granaries on the North side of the Basin, and another picket to take up a concealed position at and guard the lock gates connecting the Canal Basin with the River Liffey. The purpose of this plan was to prevent advance of any enemy force which might

a rope to an Ordnance Street of the Mill will be useful in connection with this account
 W.H.

come from the direction of Ringsend - Sandymount or from the River, and in the event of such advance to wait until such force was within range of fire from our several posts specified and then attack it with energy.

On Holy Saturday night I attended at the Battalion Headquarters, 144 Brunswick Street, when Commandant, (then Capt.) Joseph O'Connor gave the several officers full instructions and satisfied himself that each officer clearly understood the details of the task allotted to him.

On Sunday, the day which a general mobilization was to take place, I noticed in the Press ("Irish Independent") an order purporting to be signed by Commandant Eoin McNeill, cancelling the mobilization. The general frame of mind of Volunteers being suspicious of Dublin Castle devices, I was doubtful of the authenticity of this Order and sent a despatch to 144 Brunswick Street (H.Q.) asking if the press announcement was genuine. I remember that Volunteer George Lyons ("B. Co. 111 Battalion) returned with a despatch to the effect that I was to proceed with mobilization in the usual way unless I received orders to the contrary. I mobilized the Company as originally ordered for 3.0'c but before that hour received an order cancelling the mobilization and ordering the Company to stand to arms pending further orders.

All that Easter Sunday and in the small hours, I and a few members of the Company remained in my house awaiting orders and ready to mobilize the Company. We retired to rest in the early morning. Next morning Monday, at 10 o'clock I ^{received} read orders to parade the Company with the Battalion at Brunswick Street. I mobilized but could only get in touch with 15; the remainder of the Company believing that the mobilization had been abandoned, left home to spend the bank-holiday in various ways.

I paraded the Company at the end of Barrow Street and then found to my great annoyance that our Company Transport had failed and that the man deputed to look after Transport

and our pioneering tools had neglected to do so.

Our Company proceeded to Brunswick (now Pearse) Street at 11.15 and formed up at Brunswick Place, (Harmony Row) where Commandant de Valera inspected the Company gave me final orders to take up the allotted positions at 12 noon. I marched the Company back towards the drawbridge with that object. During that march I anxiously considered the question of the personnel who should form the several sections for our operation, since previous plans as to such division which I had decided on were rendered useless owing to the small number on parade. I may say that I felt quite sure that some, at any rate, of the absentees would join us when they became aware that the fight had started; and in this belief, I was not disappointed for these loyal men reported to me later in the day as will appear hereafter. I also was extremely anxious over the unfortunate failure in our pioneering equipment, and sent word to the battalion to let me have what was necessary.

I held a hasty conference with 2 or 3 senior men of the Company and hastily divided the Company ordering 4 to occupy the Distillery, four the GasWorks, a picket of 2 to the Granaries and a similar picket to the Drawbridge. I reserved five of my men for the occupation of the Mill.

At the stroke of twelve I gave the necessary orders and the several sections proceeded to take up their respective positions.

III

Dick Murphy ("B" Co. Batt.) arrived on his bicycle with some sledges and an axe and we hastily effected an entrance through the small door of the Mill in Barrow Street. Two Constables who were near, seeing our actions immediately fled at the double back to their barracks.

The Manager of Bolan's Mill, an English-man named Fowler came out of his house, just inside the gate and commenced to protest. I informed him that we were taking over the building

that he and family should find other quarters and that we would be responsible for the safe custody of the property in his house. I then took over the keys of the premises.

On entering the Mill, I posted a sentry at the Barrow Street gate and hastily inspected the Mill, a very large and straggling building. I decided for the present to occupy the top storey as having the best field of view, intending when I should receive reinforcements to place look-out sentries at the most vulnerable points. With the small number of men at my disposal, it was impossible to fortify the building as I would have liked (i.e. on the lines laid down in military text books such as sand bagging, loop-holing etc.) No doubt there were plenty of sacks of flour and bran and such like but with only five men we improvised defensive works as well as we could in the circumstances.

All through that evening the sound of distant rifle fire from the city could be heard. The trams passed to and fro, the passengers looking curious and puzzled. The fact that the actual Rising had started was only beginning to sink into their minds. Some time in the afternoon the tram service on the Ringsend route ceased, not to be resumed until after the surrender. During the late afternoon, six men of my company, who had been out of town when mobilized, reported to me. In addition 2 men who were not members of the Volunteers, offered their services; Jack O'Shea (then a boy of 16 years) and Tommy Coyne, now of the Dublin Fire Brigade. Two of these five men, I sent to the Distillery to reinforce the section already stationed there, the remainder I retained.

Early on Tuesday morning two volunteers were sent me from the Bakery, John Kinsella and Tom Fitzgerald who in addition to his other activities acted as cook for us - a position which did not require much skill, as our food was of the very simplest. At about 2 o'clock on Tuesday two Priests, Rev. Fr. Ridgeway P.P. Sandymount and Rev. Fr. Union C.C. Ringsend, attended at the Mill and heard the confessions of the men,

although I believe most of them had already performed this duty.

On Tuesday evening about 6 o'clock we first received attention from the enemy. Two eighteen pounder 3 inch shells ripped through the wall of the top loft where the most of my men were stationed, scattering lumps of metal and jagged stones around but luckily the only casualty was Sean McGrath (our Redcross volunteer) who received a rather nasty gash on the face and painful blow on the hip-bone. The shells had burst several ~~sacks of flour and dust for quite ten minutes. These shells~~ *(and bran and the loft was smothered in a fog of flour)* were fired from the "Helga" gunboat from the Liffey, and were I believe the first artillery fire discharged in Easter Week. Only the top storey of the Mill was in their field of fire, owing to the intervening buildings. I decided to move most of the men to the next floor which gave nearly as good vantage and greater safety.

All through Tuesday evening and night the sound of rifle fire could be heard all over the city and in our vicinity but I could not perceive that any definite attack was being made on our position.

About half past six on Wednesday morning, we heard a heavy bombardment by artillery in the direction of the city though not far away. This as we afterwards heard was the memorable bombardment of Liberty Hall which left that building a perforated shell of what it had been.

All Wednesday, sniping on our position was incessant; the drawbridge became impassable and our line of communication with the Bakery and the other posts had to be practically abandoned so that we were forced to establish another line via the rear of Barrow Street - Railway - Bakery. I think it was on the third day that a poor woman (a Mrs. Naylor from Ringsend) carrying some bread, ventured across the bridge to be shot through the head by an enemy sniper from the direction of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital in Grand Canal Street. It seemed clear that the enemy were aware of the importance of this line of communication.

The west-side of the building was now subject to unceasing sniping which lasted all the week up to Saturday. The Mill yard in Barrow Street was from time to time showered with ricocheting bullets and splinters of stone which tore up the ground.

My men were now learning the very important lesson of taking due precautions as to cover when going through the fire-swept yard. About 4 o'clock on Wednesday I received orders from Battalion Headquarters to direct heavy fire towards Baggot Street bridge, as an enemy advance was being made in that quarter. We directed a heavy fire as ordered and it was on this occasion that Volunteer Patrick Whelan (R.I.P.) was fatally wounded beside me, being shot in the head just below the eye. He expired in about a minute.

This action continued for some time but gradually the distant firing became less intense and we reduced our fire accordingly, as our ammunition was being seriously being depleted and we had to have regard to our main objective namely the defence of the main road which might become necessary at any moment. This desultory firing continued throughout Wednesday and Thursday.

It was on this evening I received information from one of the patrols which I occasionally sent out, that certain members of the British Home Service Volunteers, (the "G.R.s") resided in a certain house in Barrow Street, less than one hundred yards from our position. It was suggested to me by the patrol that these men might be responsible for such of the sniping as appeared to be close at hand. At 11.0'c that night, I accordingly with two of my men Volunteers Tom Byrne and Jack O'Shea paid a visit to this house and questioned the two men and informed them of our suspicions. Both the men and their wives protested vehemently their innocence in the matter and handed over two Lee-Enfield rifles which they had, swearing that they had no ammunition. I frankly believe and believed at the time, taking all circumstances into consideration that they had taken no

part in the fighting. At any rate we gave them the benefit of the doubt and returned with two extra, badly-needed rifles which proved a very welcome addition to our scanty armament.

On Thursday afternoon about 3.0'c the reports of bombing introduced a new note into the medley of distant sound. This was on the occasion of the attack on Clanwilliam House and the general sniping afterwards increased in intensity. About 5.0'clock our attention was drawn to the Western side of the building overlooking the second basin when the shelling of the turret, surmounting the Distillery Buildings across the basin commenced. A green flag with a harp was flying from this turret and we watched this intense bombardment of the turret with keen interest, not unmingled with anxiety for the safety of our comrades there. I remember well that as we counted the shots (over 75 as well as I can recollect), it struck us that each shell bore a message of vindictive if futile hatred against the National emblem for, as far as I could see, the destruction of the turret topped by the National standard certainly could not achieve any real military objective. The effect of this expenditure of shells was to leave the top turret a mere skeleton (still with its flag flying though at an angle) and to smash the slates of the roofs of some of the adjoining out-buildings,. The main building however remained as strong as ever. As bombardment now appeared to be the order of the day, we believed that the enemy would now turn his guns on our building, particularly as the very tall furnace chimney of the Mill on the south side presented an attractive target. Anticipating these attentions I placed my men in such positions in the building as to be reasonably safe in the event of a collapse of this chimney under bombardment. For some reason or other neither the mill nor the chimney were shelled.

On Thursday night heavy rain fell and all through that night we could see the lurid glare of the burning G.P.O. and other buildings in the centre of the city - a thrilling

spectacle indeed. The glow of the conflagration illumined the darkness of the lofts on that side of our building throwing grotesque shadows on the walls around us.

The hours of Thursday night passed slowly, ~~the~~ relief sentries being posted at intervals, ^{and} some of our men getting some rest whilst the others watched through the night. The sound of rifle fire could be heard from various quarters, punctuated now and again by the rattle of machine guns and heavier explosions, probably of bombs. The remains of poor Paddy Whelan still lay in the spot, under one of the southern windows, on the third storey, where he had been shot. We had been unable owing to lack of men and from the pressure of our more urgent duties, general fatigue and the necessity for keeping look-outs at several distant points of the building to do anything about his interment.

Early on Friday morning, my brother Peter Byrne with the help of Volunteer Willie Bruen constructed a rough coffin and we had the body removed to the ground floor and placed in its temporary coffin. We decided to bury the remains under a large heap of clinkers in the yard of the building outside the engine room. I read some prayers, we said the Rosary and performed our sad task about mid-day on Friday, taking cover as well as possible from the showers of splinter and ricocheting bullets. The enemy snipers were growing ever more energetic, although whatever their position may have been they did not appear to have had a direct field of fire into the yard but made up for this drawback by peppering the windows and walls. I remember well my brother suggesting that we should leave some sign to show the people that a body was interred under the heap of breeze and accordingly he constructed a rough wooden cross and erected it on the top of the heap. Intending to write the letters "R.I.P." in the confusion and distress of the occasion he inscribed the words "I.H.S." which though devout, was not quite so appropriate.

It was on this day that I met Vice Commandant Joseph O'Connor and had a short conversation with him. He was directing and assisting some of his men from the Railway to break a better line of communication to our post through the yards at the rear of Barrow Street. He was in excellent fettle, but looked fatigued like the rest of us. Needless, to say throughout the whole of that week we had little sleep and such rest as we snatched, was repeatedly broken by interruptions and false alarms. During the nights the darkness was intense for all the street lamps had been extinguished and of course we daren't show a light for fear of presenting a general target and smoking was strictly forbidden during the ~~day~~ night. Our sentries (as can well be imagined) often imagined suspicious movements at various places within view and fired at the suspected point. This of course roused their slumbering comrades who stood to arms and waited and watched for any developments.

Fridays and Saturday passed in much the same way. Intermittent sniping, keeping watch in the several parts of the building, procuring bread rations from the bakery - a task which became increasingly dangerous owing to the fact that practically the whole of our line of communication was under the fire of enemy snipers. Many times Volunteer Willie Byrne who was our quartermaster and Jack Kinsella, my despatch carrier came back with accounts of hair-breadth escapes from snipers' sharpshooting. This form of attack is extremely exasperating by reason of the difficulty of locating exactly the position of the sharpshooter, for my experience was that owing to the confusing echoes it was often impossible to say whether the reports were on our left or right. Also there was the difficulty of distinguishing between the reports of our comrades' rifles and those of the British.

Some time during Saturday our quartermaster Willie Byrne found a home-made griddle-cake in the manager's deserted house and this helped out our rations which were getting very short,

Speaking of rations as well as I remember our food for the week consisted of bread from the Bakery, margarine, "OXO" cubes, tinned coffee and tea. Volunteer Tom Fitzgerald was our cook but his skill in cookery if indeed he possessed any (which I doubt) was certainly not called into play during the week as our food was of the simplest.

About the evening of Saturday the firing in the city seemed to decrease and finally there came a lull. As well as I remember this evening was heavy and overcast and generally the atmosphere was electric and seemed to suggest a certain breathless expectancy as if something were about to happen.

Later on that evening I received a certain order from headquarters to make ready to fire the building preparatory to evacuating it. When about to take the necessary steps to this end I received a further despatch ordering us to stay ~~our hand~~ ^{our hand} pending further orders. This project was not further proceeded with, and would, in view of the impending surrender, have been a grievous calamity for the citizens already suffering from a serious shortage of food.

About 11.0'clock on Saturday night our patrol brought in a civilian who had been passing the building; he was a Frenchman, - living in Sandymount. I questioned him as to his business abroad and ^{on} our being satisfied with his explanation (I think some of our men recognized and vouched for him); he stated that there were rumours of some negotiations for a truce. The whole situation was extremely bewildering owing to lack of any news; and the lull in the firing across the city seemed to suggest that some unexpected change had taken place, whether for better or worse, we knew not. We certainly were not inclined to put much faith in the Frenchman's rumours as we could not conceive a collapse so quickly, believing that the rest of the country had risen. The local sniping still continued throughout the whole of Saturday night.

Sunday morning broke fine and sunny; the faint sound of Churchbells could be heard but not with the frequency of an ordinary Sunday morning. Away in the distance we could see men and women who ventured out to Mass after being immured in their homes for the week - a tribute to the faith as well as the courage of our citizens, but the immediate area around us remained deserted. So the time wore on until noon when a message was brought to me which stunned us, and quenched in our hearts the high hopes which had never left us during that week. We were to proceed to headquarters in the Bakery with all our arms and equipment for unconditional surrender to the British, timed for one o'clock. What had happened we knew not but there was the stark reality - unconditional surrender and the destruction for God knows how long of the movement, built up with such skill and sacrifice and in spite of tremendous opposition.

We hastily got all our arms ~~and~~ ammunition and equipment together, and made our way with as much haste as possible along the line of communication. The time was very short, the crucial moment of surrender was rapidly approaching. Over walls and along the rere of Barrow Street, we hastened and mounted the embankment of cinders to the Railway line at Barrow Street bridge. The sniping at this point was intense and it was only by taking cover under some wagons that our party came through ~~wounded~~ *unscathed*. I recollect that on one occasion after a short lull, I put out my hat on the end of a rifle and immediately drew fire. This short stage of the journey (from the Railway factory to the Bakery) occupied the greatest length of time for this portion of our journey was very much exposed to the snipers. However, at last we reached our comrades in the Bakery. Our reunion was sad and disheartening. Our friends like ourselves were deeply depressed. Commandant de Valera who was clearly suffering deeply under the tragedy of the occasion came along and shook each of us by the hands.

The whole garrison (85 in all) formed up in file (two deep). Volunteer John Byrne with a staff on which was a white flag came first, then Commandant de Valera, the officers and men. We marched out through the Clarence (now Macken) Street gate of Boland's Bakery and into Grand Canal Street. Here our spirits were considerably lightened, for a great crowd of the residents in the vicinity, men and women, were out in the street, many weeping and expressing sympathy and sorrow, all of them friendly and kind. This indeed was a consoling sight, for the great mass of the citizens when the Rising broke out in the beginning of Easter Week were anything but friendly to the Volunteers; I certainly believed that the events of the week would, if anything, have the effect of intensifying feeling against us, human nature being what it is and taking into account the great privations which the citizens had undergone for the past seven days.

We proceeded in file up Grattan Street, the white flag borne in front. The Commandant then gave the order "Halt! Right turn! Ground arms!" and we cast down our arms and equipment with resounding crashes on the road in futile anger and disappointment at the unfortunate ending of our bid for freedom and at the thought of having to deliver ourselves as prisoners to an enemy who, we knew, would not acknowledge us as combatants in war, but as outlaws without any of the rights of enemy prisoners. This feeling was but natural although perhaps no one of us would in his cooler moments have questioned the wisdom of our leaders' decision to surrender.

Having grounded our arms and equipment in Grattan Street we were marched by our Commandant with our hands up into Mount Street which was filled with ^a large column of British soldiers all the time covered by their rifles: I believe most of these troops were Sherwood Foresters - the "Notts. and Derby" regiment. We were searched by the troops and allowed to lower our hands to the normal position.

We here remained standing for some time, the British escort taking up position on each side of our column. While waiting here I remember a motor car flew past with some British officers and men and one of the Volunteer leaders - I think it was Thomas MacDonagh. Our impression then was that he was being escorted to outstanding volunteers post who might still be engaged in fighting, to inform them of the position and arrange for their surrender in accordance with the decision of the leaders.

We were then marched off with an escort of British troops on each side of our column along Lower Mount Street, over Mount Street bridge along Northumberland Road to Ballsbridge. I seem to remember when passing the end of Lower Mount Street past Clanwilliam House, then a gutted ruin - that there was a British soldier at the corner outside Clanwilliam House. He was in the prone firing position with his rifle pointing in the direction of the tanks in the railway factory across the Grand Canal basin. The line of our route was practically deserted save for small knots of citizens here and there, who watched with certain curiosity the very dishevelled and begrimed column of prisoners.

Arrived at Ballsbridge, we were marched round to the first Anglesea Road entrance of the Royal Dublin Society.

(continued over)

(continued p.13)

I give below the names and other particulars of the Volunteers in my Unit "D" Company 3rd Battalion, Dublin Brigade who served during the whole of Easter Week up to the surrender:

Lieutenant Joseph M. O'Byrne (Acting Captain)

Section Commander Peter J. Byrne (Pioneer) *since deceased*

" " William Byrne (Quarter-master)

Volunteer Thomas Byrne

" William Bruen

" Thomas Coyne

" Robert Malone (who was afterwards a member of Dublin Fire Brigade and lost his life in the fire at the Exide premises in Pearse Street about 12 years ago.)

" Patrick Whelan (Killed in action)

" Jack O'Shea (aged 16) a member of the Boy Scouts who volunteered for service in Easter Week. He was wounded on Thursday of Easter Week.

" John McGrath (Red Cross man) *wounded. Afterwards a Lieut in the National Army 1922-1926.*

" Thomas Quinn (Belonged to "A" Company but joined our Company as nearest to him)

" Thomas Fitzgerald (acted as cook) *since deceased.*

" John Kinsella (member of E. Company. Donnybrook).

Section Commander John Cullen. *since deceased*

Volunteer Eamonn Lalor.

All the above were under my personal control in Bolands Mills at the end of Barrow Street up to Canal Basin.

The following members of my Company were posted to Dublin City Distillery:-

Section Commander Michael Cullen *since deceased*

Volunteer Cathal MacDowell *since deceased*

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILÉANTA 1913-21
No. W.S. 160

Seosain Ó Broin
(Joseph M. O'Byrne)

Acting Capt
"D." Company
Battalion III
Dublin Brigade
Unit R. L. 11

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILITÁ 1913-21
No. W.S. 160

Ref.: S. 620

BURO STAIRÉ MILITÁ 1913-21
(Bureau of Military History 1913-21)

QUESTIONNAIRE

on

The Rising of Easter Week 1916
and Associated Events



To *Joseph Byrne*
Acting Capt
"D" Company
Battalion III
Dublin Brigade
of Bolands Mills Garrison
Easter Week 1916.

This questionnaire is the property of the Bureau. Any statement or information given on any matter with which it deals will be treated as confidential.

26 Westland Row,
Dublin

Phone: 61018

A.—PERSONAL FACTORS.

1. At the commencement of the Rising were you a member of any of the five organizations which took part, viz.:

The Irish Volunteers

Yes.

~~Irish Citizen Army~~

~~Finnia Éireann~~

~~Hibernian Rifles~~

~~Gumann na mBan~~

2. Were you a member of the Executive, H. Q. Staff, etc.?

No

3. To what unit, e.g., Brigade, Battalion, Company, etc., were you attached?

*"D" Company 3rd Battalion
Dublin Brigade.*

4. Did you take part in the Rising?

Yes.

5. Were you in uniform?

No.

6. What was your rank or office at the commencement of the Rising?

Acting-Capt (1st Lieut)

7. When and by whom were you appointed?

*Commandant de Valera
after election by Co.*

8. Was your rank altered during the Rising?

No

In what circumstances and by whom?

No

9. What posts or offices did you hold previously?

Section Commander

10. Who were the officers of your Brigade, Battalion and/or Company immediately prior to and during the Rising?

*Commandant de Valera
Capt Begley OTC D Co.
~~Lieut Jones~~*

11. Which of your Unit officers took part in the Rising?

D Co. & E Co being of weak strength were grouped as one Co. B Co was under Lieut Jaraam.

12. Who were appointed to replace those who did not turn out, and by whose authority?

Nil.

13. At the time of the Rising were you a member of the I. R. B.?

No.

14. If so, what was your position?

/

15. When did you join?

In what circle?

Where did it usually meet?

Who was its centre?

How many members were there?

Can you give names?

By whom were you introduced and by whom were you sworn in?

NIL

B.—THE VOLUNTEERS PRIOR TO THE RISING.

1. To what extent and in what way were the I.R.B. responsible for—

- (a) the formation of the Irish Volunteers, and
- (b) the direction of its policy?

2. What were the channels through which it exercised its influence?

3. What members of the I.R.B. held key posts in the Volunteers, and how was that arranged?

4. Did the circumstances leading to the expulsion of Mr. John Redmond's nominees from the Executive of the Irish Volunteers on 24th September, 1914, have any bearing on the holding of the First Annual Convention on 25th October, 1914? If so, how?

5. Had arrangements been made to hold the Convention before the expulsion?

6. Did the First Convention clarify or develop the stated policy of the Volunteers in any way?

7. How many delegates at that Convention were members of the I.R.B.?

How many were supporters of the Irish Party?

How many were supporters of Sinn Féin, i.e., Arthur Griffith's policy?

How many had no affiliation with any political party?

Can you give names?

*See answer to # 13.
No information*

8. Between the First Annual Convention on 25th October, 1914, and the Second on 31st October, 1915, how often did the General Council meet?

Are the minutes of these meetings available?

9. Was general policy discussed at these meetings?

How far was there unanimity of outlook within the Council on policy?

10. Did the Second Annual Convention on 31st October, 1915, consider policy, or clarify it or develop it in any way?

Can you give particulars?

Who led the discussions?

What decisions on general policy were made?

11. Seven G.H.Q posts are mentioned in the report of the Second Annual Convention of the Volunteers of 31st October, 1915. According to information given in various issues of the *Irish Volunteer* and elsewhere, these posts and the occupants of some of them, were:

1. Chief of Staff—Eoin MacNeill.
2. Director of Arms—The O'Rahilly.
3. Director of Training—Thomas McDonagh.
4. Director of Military Organisation—P. H. Pearse.
5. Quartermaster—Michael Staines.
6. Director of Military Operations—
7. Director of Communications—

no
information
see answer to question 13.

According to a Headquarters Bulletin of 19th December, 1914, this organisation was approved by the General Council on 5th December, 1914, and put into operation at once.

Two other posts are mentioned in the same paper as also having been created, possibly, at a later date, viz.:

8. Director of Recruiting—Vice-Comdt. Seán Fitzgibbon, appointed 14th April, 1915.

9. Chief of Inspection—Capt. J. J. O'Connell, appointed November, 1915.

Were there other posts of this type on G.H.Q. Staff, e.g.:-

10. Director of Engineering.

11. Director of Intelligence.

Can you give a complete list?

12. How and when were these various posts created?

13. Who were their successive occupants?

no information say from Sean O'Connell about confirms these appointments
No

C. PREPARATIONS FOR THE RISING.

1. When and in what circumstances did you hear first of the intended Rising?

of a special report
on Tuesday 20 April 1916
generally from 1915.

(a) in the early stages as a possible event;
(b) as a specific project.

2. If at a meeting, who convened it?

see answer to 1 above.

Where did it take place?

Who were present?

Who gave the information and in what capacity?

On what authority was he acting?

3. Did he show you, or read from, a document?

If so can you say if a copy can be obtained?

If not, can you reconstruct its text from memory or otherwise?

no.

4. Were there any comments from those present by way of approval, dissent or otherwise, and by whom?

not as far as can recall.

Did any discussions follow?

5. Were the Brigade, Battalion or Company O/CS consulted at any time before the decision for the Rising was made?

If so, what form did that consultation take?

What was the consensus of opinion?

Was there any opposition or dissent, and, if so, by whom?

see answer to 4.

6. Was the question of confining the Rising to Dublin ever proposed or considered?

If so, when, where, who were present, and what was the result?

If such a decision was made, when and in what circumstances was it altered?

no

7. What was the influence of the I.R.B. in bringing about the Rising?

see information

How was it exercised?

8. Were the plans specifically approved by the I.R.B.?

9. Was the date decided on by that body?

yes to both.

10. What Authority decided upon the Rising, and of whom did it consist?

When, where and who were present?

11. What was the relation of that Authority to:

(a) the Supreme Council of the I.R.B.;

(b) the Military Committee of the I.R.B.;

(c) the General Council of the Volunteers;

(d) the Central Executive of the Volunteers, and

(e) G.H.Q. Staff of the Volunteers.

see information

12. Did that decision commit the Volunteers alone, or did it bind also the four other independent bodies which took part;

- The Irish Citizen Army
- Fianna Éireann
- The Hibernian Rifles
- Cumann na mBan.

*No information
I was a
member
of the
I.R.B.*

13. If so, how was this unified decision arrived at?

14. If not, who decided separately for these four bodies?

When, where and how were the separate decisions and the organisations to which they applied, coordinated?

*Committee
& Dr. Miller*

15. What steps were taken in your Brigade, Battalion or Company to prepare for the Rising?

16. Was the approval of Clan na Gael in the United States sought for the Rising or any aspect of it?

If so, what are the particulars and what was the result?

No information

17. Can you give any information as to funds or any other form of help sought from or provided by Clan na Gael or any other body in the United States or elsewhere?

No

18. Were any proposals made or considered for the importation of arms from Germany or the United States as part of the preparation for the Rising?

If so, where, when and in what circumstances?

No information

19. According to available information, the following was

- (a) the composition of the Supreme Council, and
- (b) the personnel of the Military Committee of the I.R.B. immediately before the Rising;

(a) *Composition of the Supreme Council:*
Chairman.

A representative of each of the following seven areas, one of whom was Chairman

- Leinster
- Munster
- Ulster
- Connacht
- North England
- South England
- Scotland

The Secretary and the Treasurer

Can you say who were the Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer respectively?

Who was the representative of each of the seven areas just before the Rising?

When were they appointed or elected?

It is understood that there were certain co-options. Can you give any information, including the dates of co-option?

(b) *Personnel of the Military Committee:*

The following is believed to have been the personnel. Can you confirm or correct this?

- Éamonn Ceannt—Appointed by the Supreme Council, May, 1915.
- Pádraig Pearse—Appointed by the Supreme Council, May, 1915.
- Joseph Plunkett—Appointed by the Supreme Council, May, 1915.
- James Connolly—Co-opted January-February, 1916.
- Thomas McDonagh—Co-opted April, 1916.
- The Secretary of the Supreme Council, Seán McDermott, and the Treasurer, Tom Clarke.

These seven signed the Proclamation of 1916.

*No information
I was a
member
of the
I.R.B.*

20. Was it the Military Committee of the I.R.B. which decided upon the Rising?

21. Was it in any way responsible or subordinate to the Supreme Council of the I.R.B.?

22. Had its decisions to be approved or ratified by the Supreme Council?

23. How did it secure compliance with its decisions by--

(a) the Irish Volunteers, who were technically an independent organisation, subject only to their Central Executive and their General Council, and

(b) the other independent bodies which took part in the Rising, viz.:-

- The Irish Citizen Army
- Fianna Éireann
- The Hibernian Rifles, and
- Cumann na mBan.

24. Who drafted the Proclamation of 1916?

25. On what authority was this done?

26. On what authority did the seven signatories purport to sign on behalf of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic?

27. Who were the members of the Provisional Government?

Did they include the seven signatories?

How were they appointed?

See information

28. Who was to be the President of the République, or the head of the State under any other title?

29. How was he selected, and how was he appointed or to be appointed?

30. Have you any information as to the circumstances in which the Countermarching Order was issued by Eoin MacNeill?

31. Did he at any time consent to be associated with the Rising either before or after the issue of his Countermarching Order?

See information

no

no

See information

D.—PLANS FOR THE RISING.

1. Do you know if there was any general plan for the whole country?

2. If there was one, was it ever committed to writing?

3. Is there a copy extant?

If not, can you recollect what it was?

4. Who drew it up?

When and where?

5. What was its original form and what changes were made in it before it reached final form?

(a) Prior to Eoin McNeill's Countermanding Order;

(b) Subsequently.

6. What was the plan for Dublin city and county? Is it on record?

If not, can you reconstruct it?

7. To what extent, if any, was it inspired by that of Robert Emmet?

8. Did the plan contemplate immobilisation in buildings?

If not, was such immobilisation the result of the Countermanding Order or what was the purpose?

*no info so
I believe*

no info

9. Before the Rising were there any surveys of the buildings and areas to be occupied?

If so, what were the nature and extent of such surveys, and by whom were they made?

Were the plans in any way modified as a result?

10. Before actual occupation in Easter Week were these buildings or any of them reconnoitred?

11. Were there street manoeuvres before the Rising?

If so, did the experience gained from them prove of value during the Rising and in what way?

12. In drawing up the plans was information secured and kept up to date as to British military dispositions.

If so, from what source and in what manner?

Was the information so collected reliable?

13. What distinct functions, if any, were allotted to the five separate organisations which took part in the Rising?

The Irish Volunteers

The Irish Citizen Army?

Fianna Éireann

The Hibernian Rifles

Cumann na mBan.

14. What was the system of liaison or consultation by which this was arranged?

*no info
de Valera
himself
inhabitants
area to
planned
operation
of to plan
hills area*

*no
was secured
were often
all other
cones.*

no info

*no
information*

6. What percentage of the total available arms in your unit was actually brought out in the Rising?

About 70%

7. Did shortage of ammunition occur during the Rising?

Yes.

If so, what weapons were affected by the shortage?

*revolvers
rifles
for the event
for the effect.*

What was the effect on the military effectiveness of your post?

8. Were any arms lost in action?

No.

9. Were any arms captured from the enemy?

*2 for an
2 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*

10. What, and through what channel, were the contacts with Germany which led to the despatch of the arms ship, the "Aud"?

11. What was the extent of its cargo?

12. What areas or units was it intended to arm with the weapons which it carried?

13. If these arms had been landed, what do you think would have been the result of the military effectiveness of the Rising?

No information

I.—WIRELESS.

1. Were arrangements made before or during the Rising to use wireless for the purposes of:—

- (a) Broadcasting news of the Rising to the world ;
- (b) Contacting the German arms ship ;
- or
- (c) for any other purpose.

No information except what appears in papers at the time

2. Who was responsible for these arrangements?

3. How was equipment procured or to be procured?

4. Was there trained personnel to operate it?

Can you give details?

5. It is understood that the mission of the party which met with the accident at Ballykissane Pier, Killorglin, on Good Friday night, 21st April, was to remove the equipment from the Wireless School at Cahirciveen for use elsewhere and to set fire to the building.

Have you any information on this mission?

J.—ENGINEERING.

1. In Dublin, party walls between houses were broken through to facilitate communication and movement, and loopholes were also made.

Who selected the points for these purposes, and who did the actual work?

2. What training was there in preparation for this?

3. Were these communication or loophole points, or any of them, selected before the Rising, or were decisions made on the spot?

4. What equipment was used? How and where was it acquired? Was any of it prepared beforehand and brought in?

5. It has been stated that an effort was made to blow up Nelson Pillar.

Is this true?

If so, was it part of any plan?

What was the purpose?

What precautions were taken to prevent damage to the G.P.O. and other occupied buildings in the immediate vicinity?

6. What was the reason the attempt failed, if it were, in fact, made?

Did we expect party walls being blown up?

K.—FLAGS.

1. Was any flag hoisted over any building or elsewhere in your area?

2. If so, what was its design, e.g., tricolour of green, white and orange, or green flag with harp, etc.?

3. If a tricolour, were the bands

(a) vertical, or

(b) horizontal?

In the case of (a), which colour was next to the pole?

In the case of (b), which colour was on top?

4. Where was the flag obtained, or who made it?

5. What were its approximate dimensions?

6. Of what material was it made?

7. Who brought it into the Rising, and to what organisation or unit was he or she attached?

8. Who hoisted it?

9. Where exactly was it hoisted?

In the case of a building, give the exact spot if possible.

These were a hoary flag with a harp as being suggested on details at Drang's house in Carranah?

we,

Cap information

Hoisted by Volker and Cullen by order of Benedict de Valera of London

On tower of Dublin City Distillery, Roane

10. Was there an existing flag pole, or had one to be improvised?

One to be improvised

11. What happened to the flag at the termination of the Rising?

It was taken away

Was it left flying, and what was its ultimate fate?

Shelburne was hoisted

Was it taken away, and if so, by whom?

Byans

Is it still in existence, and can you say where it is now?

26 Redmond Square

Remembrance Can find

Some information as to its subsequent history.

L.—RAILWAYS AND SHIPPING.

1. Were there any plans to immobilise the railways in Dublin or other various points in the country?

B. Co. occupied Dublin roads & points from the Lanes to Rosditch

By what means was it proposed to do this?

To what extent were the plans carried out and to what extent were they effective?

2. Was it proposed in any circumstances to use the railways as part of the Rising?

3. Were there any plans to seize or immobilise shipping, or to prevent the approach of shipping during the Rising?

If so, what were they and to what extent and to what effect were these plans put into operation?

no info

M.—FOOD.

1. Were the Volunteers and others instructed to bring rations or food with them when mobilised for the Rising?

Yes.

2. Was this order generally complied with?

Yes.

3. For how long was this supply expected to last?

How long did it last?

3 rations for one day

one day

In addition we had about a week's supply of "Ox" Cakes.

4. How were bread and other food obtained during the Rising?

but coy got its bread from bakery.

5. How was cooking done?

The only cooking was with regard to tea & coffee.

6. Who were detailed for this work?

Volunteer Regt Coy. Wabk II.

7. In general what type of meal was provided?

see typed account.

8. Were there any difficulties about water supply?

What precautions, if any, were taken against failure of supply? No.

N.—FIRE.

1. What measures were taken to deal with fire?

see typed account.

2. Did occasion arise to use them?

If so, were they effective?

If not, why were they ineffective?

see typed account.

O.—CLERGY.

1. Was your garrison or unit visited at any time by Clergymen of any denomination?

Yes. see typed account.

2. If so, can you give their names, parishes, Orders or other identification particulars?

*1. Rev Father Rudgway, St. Peter of the Sea Church.
2. Rev. Father Guon, S.C. St. Peter's (Kuppan).
They heard confessions.*

3. What did they do?

4. How often did each visit, and how long did he stay?

Once. About 3/4 hours.

5. Were any of them present at the surrender?

If so, what part did they take? No.

P.—CASUALTIES.

1. Have you any information as to casualties which occurred in your post or unit, with names, etc.?

What were the chief causes?

Volunteer Post (Wabk) killed in action. Volunteer Co. (Wabk) killed in action.

2. Were there any casualties due to accidents or other non-military activity?

Volunteer Officer was wounded.

3. What arrangements were planned beforehand to deal with casualties?

One red cross man, Volunteer & the hospital.

4. What proportion of the participants carried first-aid equipment?

Were they trained to use it? One Red Cross man.

About 6 had some training in first aid.

5. What medical and surgical aid was provided for in advance as regards equipment, supplies and personnel?

Were these arrangements carried out?

Were they effective?

None.

6. Was any medical or first-aid assistance sought or received from outside organisations, or from individual doctors or first-aid personnel?

Was it refused in any instance?

Not from any aid.

7. Were there first-aid stations set up in your area?

Where were they located?

How were they equipped?

How were they manned?

Did they serve their purpose?

No.

8. Were there any efforts to contact hospitals, and with what result?

Were there any refusals by hospitals to receive casualties or otherwise to render aid?

No information.

9. Was there any instance of failure on either side to respect the Red Cross through misunderstanding or otherwise?

10. Were any wounded volunteers or members of the other organisations taken in for treatment by the British Army Medical services?

Were there any cases of refusal to give medical aid?

Q.—LOOTING.

1. Did looting occur in your area to an extent which required action by the garrison?

2. If so, what action was taken?

No.

R.—PRISONERS.

1. Were any prisoners captured by the British?

If so, how and where and in what circumstances?

To what units did they belong?

What were their ranks?

Were any of them wounded?

See typed account. All of my unit were taken were two who escaped in the course of our march of the 20th. The flight was before the firing.

2. Were any British military captured?

Develop this as in 1.

Where were they kept until the surrender?

No.

S.—VOLUNTEERS FROM GREAT BRITAIN.

1. To what extent was the Conscription Act in Great Britain responsible for the coming to Ireland of volunteers from Liverpool, Glasgow, London and other centres in Great Britain?

2. Are there any figures and names available?

3. Did they come to Ireland on instructions?

If so, from whom?

None.

- 4. How were they absorbed into the general body of the Volunteers in Ireland?
- 5. What was their relation to the Kimmage garrison in Dublin, which seems to have been comprised largely of such men?
- 6. What was the purpose of that garrison?
What were its relations to the general organization?
- 7. When they decided to come to Ireland, were the plans for the Rising so far advanced that they could have had knowledge that the Rising was to take place and the approximate date of it?
- 8. How did they learn these things?

no information

T.—THE SURRENDER AND AFTERWARDS.

- 1. How did you first learn of the surrender of posts other than your own?
To whom was it given?
If in writing, is it extant?
If not, is there a copy available or could you reconstruct it?
- 2. Who brought the message?
To whom was it given?
If in writing, is it extant?
If not, is there a copy available or could you reconstruct it?

see typed account beneath

- 3. Is the story of the surrender or demobilisation of your Unit on record?
If so, where?
If not, could you put it on record for the Bureau?
- 4. Is the story of subsequent events up to the general release from prison on record?
If so, where is it to be found?
If not, could you put it on record?

see my typed account beneath

I have published a book of "Prisoners of War" giving description of prison & treatment & interview (I have only one copy left).

Leanne.

U.—CONVERSATIONS, etc., WITH EXECUTED LEADERS.

- 1. Had you any conversations or correspondence with any of the executed Leaders prior to or during the Rising, or after the surrender, which, in your opinion should be placed on record as part of the history of the period?
Have you any of the correspondence, or do you know where it can be obtained?

V.—THE STORY OF YOUR UNIT.

- 1. Is there any authentic account of the happenings in your area in 1916 published or unpublished, or elsewhere on record?
If so, where is it and would you consider it necessary, in the interests of accuracy, completion or clarification, to supplement it or comment on any aspect of it?
- 2. If there is no such record extant, would it be possible for you to prepare such a record for the Bureau?

see typed account which I have prepared with the help of Mrs. O'Brien of Co. Wick, who is a member of my Co.

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