

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRIE MILITAIR 1913-21  
NO. W.S. 187

ROINN  COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 187.....

**Witness**  
Mrs. Annie Fanning,  
17, Emmet St.,  
Birr,  
Offaly.

**Identity**

**Subject**

Escape of Liam Mellows  
from Ireland.

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

Nil

File No. S.1269.....

Form B.S.M. 2.

1187

ORIGINAL

17 Emmet St.

Paris

offaly

Jany. 29-49

R. Dudley Edwards Esq. M.A. Ph.D. D.Litt.

University College

Dublin

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ-NILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 187

Dear Sir;

In some time, in fact since I got a copy of the "Bureau of Military History" I have been intending to write to some of the members of the Committee about a matter which may be of interest to you. If you find it so well & good if not there is no harm done.

Some years ago the late Mrs Sheehy - Sheffington & an American had a controversy in one of the Irish-American papers with reference to the escape of Liam Mellows from Ireland. I wrote to Mrs Sheehy - Sheffington at the time telling her they were both wrong & that if she wrote to Rev. Mr. Coove P.P. Corofin College he would give her the correct story. Mrs Sheffington wrote me & said she would do so, but she never did. The full details of the escape are not

known to me but briefly what I do know is as follows. Liam Mellors was at St Crowes house at Ruan Collare & from there he went, dressed as a man to Cork. Along with him went St Crowe, Bluebell Powell as a novice, & another girl from Galway whose name I have forgotten, dressed (like Liam) in men's clothing. They went to the Cathedral where St Crowe took away Mellors.

In later years I met Liam Mellors at a banquet in his honor in Gullamon when he confirmed this & was very much put out when told that Bluebell Powell (my sister) was dead, he then said that the Galway girl was also dead & that people who helped him always got into trouble or died, these are not his words but something near.

You might think the matter of sufficient interest to warrant you writing to St Crowe, he is still at Corofin but like all of us who took even a small part in those days, he is getting on in years. However he told me if anyone inquired he would be happy to give all details. I have tried to keep this letter as short as possible as I would not wish to waste your time particularly if the matter should appear to you as trivial.

Yours sincerely  
(Mr) Lennie Fanning

COPY/

17, Emmet St.,  
Birr,  
Offaly.

Jany. 29 - '49.

R. Dudley Edwards, Esq., M.A., Ph.D., D. Litt.,  
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Dear Sir:

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Some years ago the late Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington & an American had a controversy in one of the Irish-American papers, with reference to the escape of Liam Mellows from Ireland. I wrote to Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington at the time, telling her they were both wrong & that if she wrote to Rev. M. Crowe, P.P., Corofin, Co. Clare, he would give her the correct story. Mrs. Skeffington wrote me & said she would do so, but she never did. The full details of the escape are not known to me, but briefly what I do know is as follows: Liam Mellows was at Fr. Crowe's house at Ruan, Co. Clare, & from there he went, dressed as a nun, to Cork. Along with him went Fr. Crowe, Bluebell Powell, as a novice, & another girl from Galway, whose name I have forgotten, dressed (like Liam) in nun's clothing. They went to the Cathedral where Fr. Crowe took away Mellows.

In later years, I met Liam Mellows at a banquet in

his honour in Tullamore, when he confirmed this & was very much put out when told that Bluebell Powell (my sister) was dead; he then said that the Galway girl was also dead, & that people who helped him always got into trouble or died: these are not his words, but something near. You might think the matter of sufficient interest to warrant you writing to Fr. Crowe; he is still at Corofin but, like all of us who took even a small part in those days, he is getting on in years. However, he told me if anyone inquired, he would be happy to give all details. I have tried to keep this letter as short as possible, as I would not wish to waste your time, particularly if the matter should appear to you as trivial.

Yours sincerely,

(Mrs.) ANNIE FANNING.

