

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BUREAU STAIRÉ MILITA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 201

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 201

Witness

Mr. Nicholas Laffan,
8 Huxley Crescent,
Cork St.,
Dublin.

Identity

Captain 1st Battn. Irish Volunteers 1916.
Member of I.R.B

Subject

- (a) Irish Volunteer activities prior to 1916.
- (b) The Rising Easter Week 1916, Church St. Area.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

Nil.

File No. S. 206

Form B.S.M. 2

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STATEMENT OF NICHOLAS LAFFAN.

CAPTAIN, G/COY. 1ST BATTALION, IRISH VOLUNTEERS,
1916.

In 1913 I was a member of the A.O.H. in Parnell Square, Dublin. Some of the younger members started a drill class doing foot drill only. I did some foot drill with them, but I found that the people there held different views on the Volunteer movement. I decided on the recommendation of Padraig Ó Riain, who was an officer in the Irish Volunteers in 25 Parnell Square, to join the Volunteers in the Colmcille Hall, Blackhall St., where I knew a number of the men. Later on I joined G/Coy. 1st Battn. We had four companies, A, D, G and H, using the Hall on different nights. All went well until the night of Mr. Asquith's visit to Dublin when the four companies were paraded and asked to go to Mr. Asquith's meeting in the Mansion House. The majority of those present, including myself refused to go. As some of the officers of H/Coy. went, a split occurred in that company. A number of the men who refused to go joined G/Coy. led by Michael Staines, the Q.M. of the Coy. Michael Staines remained with the Coy. until he became Battalion Q.M.

I took the work as a volunteer seriously, sat for an examination for officers conducted by "Ginger" O'Connell and was appointed 1st Lieut. of G/Coy. in August 1915. John Allwright was appointed Captain and A.E. Woodnutt 2nd Lieut. Some time afterwards I was approached by Liam Archer and became a member of the I.R.B., Teeling Circle, being sworn in by Diarmuid O'Hegarty. The Centre of the Circle was Bulmer Hobson. The Circle met once a month at 46 Parnell Square. I paid a subscription of one or two shillings a month towards the expenses of the organisation. At the meetings we usually had a lecture on Irish History and Irish affairs in general. Being an ordinary member I did not take much notice of the other members and beyond those I have mentioned, I cannot recall the names of others. I never heard at any of the meetings any discussion about a Rising.

Just before the Rising in 1916 I recollect the following officers of the 1st Battalion:-

O/C.	Commandant E. Daly.
2nd i/c.	Vice Comdt. Pierce Beasley
Adjutant	Jim Sullivan, Captain
Asst. Adjutant	Eamon Duggan, 1st Lieut.
Quartermaster	Gerald Griffin
Asst. Q.M.	E. Morkan, 1st Lieut.
A/Company.	..McCormick, y, Captain
	D. O'Callaghan, 1st Lieut.
	Liam O'Carroll, 2nd Lieut.
B/Coy.	Jim Sullivan, Captain
	Pk. Whelan 1st Lieut.
	Tom Byrne 2nd Lieut.
C/Coy.	Frank Fahy Captain
	Seamus Brady 1st Lieut.
	Joe McGuinness 2nd Lieut.
D/Coy.	Sean Heuston Captain
	Liam Murnane 1st Lt.
	Richard Balfe 2nd Lt.
F/Coy.	Fionan Lynch Captain
	Jack Shouldice 1st Lieut.
	D. O'Hegarty 2nd Lieut.
G/Coy.	John Allwright Captain
	N. Laffan 1st Lieut.
	A.E. Woodnutt 2nd Lieut.

Three of these officers - Captain Allwright, Captain McCormick and Lieut. Woodnutt did not turn out in the Rising. On Wednesday of Easter Week I was appointed O/C. of G/Coy. in lieu of Captain Allwright, and was promoted Captain. Peadar Breslin was promoted to Lieutenant. by Comdt. E. Daly

The members of G/Coy. drilled in the Colmcille Hall in Blackhall St. and in the Phoenix Park, where we did extended order drill, outpost duty, scouting, night exercises, etc. The 1st Bn. under the command of Ned Daly did night manoeuvres in the Phoenix Park and in the Finglas area, and shortly before the Rising, street manoeuvres in the city.

I was at no time definitely told that a Rising was to take place on Easter Sunday, but it was obvious from the preparations being made as to food supplies to last for some time and first aid equipment, that something was going to happen.

On Good Friday I reported to Comdt. E. Daly at Tom Clarke's shop in Farnell St. His first remarks to me were "Lieut. Laffan you are on active service from now on, and I am making your house, 35 Primrose Avenue, a stores for the 1st Battalion. Your first job is to go to Joe McGuinness's in Upper Gardiner St. and remove all first aid equipment to your home to be left until required". I carried out his instructions, but we had no need during the fighting to draw any first aid equipment from my home.

J.P. Holy Thursday or
On Good Friday night every officer of the Dublin Brigade was mobilised at headquarters, 2 Dawson St. On entering, each officer had to sign a roll giving his name, rank, company and battalion. On this occasion it was obvious something was going to happen as many of the officers present had previously been excused from appearing in drill halls and on parades. P.H. Pearse gave a lecture on the use of hand grenades which had been made by the Volunteers. They consisted of tins containing explosives to which were attached a piece of fuse which had first to be lighted before the grenade was used. Precautions were taken to see that the meeting would not be interfered with by posting scouts all around the area.

On Easter Saturday I assisted in the removal of an ammunition dump from Donagh Healy's shop on Usher's Quay to the Battalion H.Q. in Blackhall St. An armed guard under Sean Heuston was placed over this until Easter Monday morning. Later on Saturday night I removed all the ammunition and food stored at Eamon Morkan's house, Ellis's Quay, to my home at Primrose Avenue. The food supplies included tinned milk, coffee and milk, tinned meat, Oxo cubes and cheese. This was distributed during the week by members of the Cumann na mBan. It took me well into Sunday morning to complete this work as the only means of transport I had was an ass and cart; no carrier would undertake the job.

Each section commander was the mobiliser for his own section. I think the order for the Easter Sunday mobilisation was given at

the Company meetings early in the week. My company was to mobilise at Blackhall Street at 4 p.m. . I was at 8 o'clock Mass. I saw the announcement by Eoin MacNeill in the "Sunday Independent": I determined to get in touch with John Allwright the Company O/C. and I contacted him at Merchant's Quay Church. He told me to wait till further orders were issued.

I went to the Colmcille Hall in Blackhall St. and there saw Comdt. E. Daly. He told me to go home and await the order to mobilise my company. This did not satisfy many of us. We were all on tenterhooks going around to see if we could get further information as to where the mobilisation was to take place. We staged a mock courtmartial in the Colmcille Hall to while away the time, remaining on till midnight, when we left for home.

On Easter Monday morning at about 9.20 a.m. I got a written order from Comdt. Daly to mobilise the company at 10 a.m. at No.5. Blackhall St. I do not recollect who brought me the message. I went and got the four mobilisers and instructed them to warn the members of their sections. On reaching Blackhall St. Comdt. Daly told me to parade my men and get a share of the arms and ammunition which were stored. Sixty nine members of my company of about two hundred paraded. There were about fifteen in uniform. We had forty service and other rifles firing .303 ammunition, twenty Howth rifles, seven rifles of other calibres, and two shotguns, no more rifles being available, and about thirty revolvers and automatic pistols. We had also some hand grenades, which we did not find use for afterwards, and about fifty bayonets for the rifles and shotguns. We succeeded in getting all our available ~~and~~ arms brought out in the Rising, and at no time did my company run short of ammunition. The civilian occupations of the members of G/Coy. were tradesmen, labourers, clerks, railway workers, asylum attendants, etc. Each man carried rations for one day.

Later in the morning Comdt. Daly addressed the whole Battn. assembled in the Colmcille Hall and, reading from some document

he had, which I now think was the Easter Week Proclamation, said that we were going to declare a Republic and were going into action at 12 noon. This announcement was greeted with a great cheer.

RA
P.L. Four. *P.L. A.*
 The ~~these~~ companies, C, F and G, marched out of the hall together. The men were all in good spirits and joked about who would fire the first shot. As my O/C. had not turned out to take charge of G/Coy. I was ordered by Comdt. Daly to take over. When my company turned into Queen St. Comdt. Daly told me to proceed to the Broadstone and occupy it as he was making it his H.Q. We proceeded along North King St. and turned up Red Cow Lane and went along North Brunswick St. On reaching the gate of the North Dublin Union Comdt. Daly told me to halt there and take up positions as he had not enough men to go as far as the Broadstone Station.

The original intention was to hold a line running from the Four Courts to Cabra and to link up with the 5th Battn. under Comdt. Tom Ashe in North County Dublin.

I took about 12 men and posted them at the corner of Church St. and North Brunswick St. and posted two men about half-way between Moore's Factory and the bottom of Constitution Hill. *P.L.*
P.L. ~~sent~~ Liam O'Carroll with ^{*A. Company. halted at N.D.*} ten men back to the Richmond Hospital Dispensary opposite Red Cow Lane where he took over four houses, two on each side of Brunswick St. After evacuation the residents to the N.D. Union he fortified these houses. He erected barricades one across Red Cow Lane and two in Brunswick St., one each side of Red Cow Lane. I made Moore's Factory my H.Q. and I also occupied Clarke's Dairy diagonally opposite to Moore's Factory, and also two houses opposite the Convent in Brunswick St. I sent all the occupants to the N.D. Union. When I was placing the men shots rang out. I saw a Lancer riding up Church St. between N. King St. and N. Brunswick St. I saw Comdt. Daly place his revolver on the shoulder of Volunteer Kelly and shoot the Lancer in the leg. He tumbled off his horse. Some of the Volunteers picked him up and brought him to the Richmond Hospital. I had barricades erected one across the end of Brunswick St., one across Church St. at the

King St. side of the crossing, one across Church St. between Moore's Factory and the opposite corner, one across New Lisburn St. at Coleraine St., one across Brunswick St. near St. John's Convent, I built the barricades with farm carts, cabs, lorries and any other material we could obtain locally.

Comdt. Daly made his H.Q. at St. John's Convent in ^{North} Brunswick St. where he remained until Wednesday when he transferred to the Father Mathew Hall. He transferred later to the Four Courts. I took over the gate lodge at the N.D. Union and loopholed and barricaded it. I placed some men in the windows of the Convent, but later withdrew them to avoid disturbing the nuns. I also loopholed the walls of Clarke's Dairy and Moore's Factory and used sandbags and furniture for barricading.

During the day Father Albert, O.F.M. Cap., came and heard the confessions of a number of the men. During the week he and Father Augustine were up and down to the Richmond Hospital and were untiring in the work they did for our men and for the wounded civilians. Late on Monday we discovered that the British military had taken up a position on the N.C. Road and had occupied the ground of the medical officer's house at the Richmond Asylum. I erected a barricade in the tunnel connecting the Asylum and the N.D. Union and placed a guard on it to prevent the British coming through and attacking our flank. The British who later occupied the Broadstone fired on this post and our men returned the fire. At the request of the Master of the Union I stopped our men firing as I did not want to draw the British military fire on the Union buildings or the hospitals which housed hundreds of inmates and sick people, as well as the people we had evacuated from their homes.

Comdt. Daly got a barrel of sand placed in the centre of the crossing at King St. and Church St., fixed a pole in it and placed a tricolour flag about 6 ft. by 5 ft. in it.

In the afternoon a party of the Fianna who had been engaged in

blowing up the Magazine Fort joined us. On Monday evening an armed party of G.Rs. - a British organisation - came down Constitution Hill in single file, but retired quickly when fired on by our men. That day also we took a postman prisoner, seized the mails he had collected and sent them to the G.P.O., Comdt. Daly remarking that it was the first delivery of mails under the Irish Republic. Monday night passed quietly.

On Tuesday we had settled down after hearing various rumours about the landing of arms and about the Volunteers in the country marching on Dublin. These rumours gave us hope that we could at least make a stand for some time. The men were a credit to the Volunteer movement. No job was a trouble to them and they knew no danger, were always on the alert and quickly noticed every small movement of the enemy. It was a pleasure to command such men. During the day we captured a "G" man who was going round our posts dressed in women's clothes, spying out our position and getting information as to the strength and actual positions of our forces. We sent him under escort to the Bridewell where he was detained.

The upper portion of Clarke's Dairy and of Moore's Factory were used for sniping positions and a constant fire was directed on the Broadstone Station which prevented the enemy from coming down the side streets to Constitution Hill. A Lieut. of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers was shot while attempting to get down Prebend St. to Constitution Hill. We assisted a party making an attack on the Broadstone Station and I sent men to cover their retreat. During the attack we were fired on from the Kings Inns and our men had some narrow escapes. Only one, Eamon Martin, was wounded. We succeeded in carrying him back under intense fire from the Broadstone and Kings Inns.

Each night we received a ten gallon can of hot soup from the Master of the N.D.Union. It was the only hot meal any of my Coy. got during the week. We had to depend on tinned food and bread

from Monks' Bakery. It was very welcome particularly for the men on the barricades of which we had a number to man night and day.

On Wednesday a hole was blown with explosives in the wall of the Linenhall Barracks by Captain Dinny O'Callaghan, but it was not large enough to allow our men to go through. He then burst open the main gate and on entering took about forty members of the Army Pay Corps prisoners. The prisoners were sent to the Father Mathew Hall. As we had been attacked from the Barracks it was set on fire to prevent it from being re-occupied. The fire got so fierce that it became a danger to the nearby houses. We procured a hose from the Hardwicke Hospital and played it on these houses. I had to place a guard on the men firefighting owing to the threatening attitude of the occupants of the houses, who thought we were trying to burn them out. The fire later spread to Hugh Moore and Alexander's Oil Store adding to our difficulties as it lit up the whole neighbourhood showing up our positions, and the intense glare was trying on the eyes of our men. A number of looters were caught during the day but after being detained for some time they were released by Comdt. Daly.

On Thursday we were kept busy as the enemy were using armoured cars rushing up to our barricades at Red Cow Lane firing a few shots and then retiring. About 8 p.m. Comdt. Daly brought up about thirty D.M.P. men and let them go free through the Richmond Asylum grounds. They were very grateful. I remember his last words to them were "Forget all you have seen" and this met with a chorus of "Yes, sir, we will". Apparently, they thought at first he was going to shoot them and were surprised to get away so easily.

On Friday the British military kept up a constant attack on our positions from an armoured car in which they rushed up reinforcements keeping our barricades at Red Cow Lane and Church St continuously under fire. Our men were beginning to feel the effects of the week's strain, but were still anxious to get into closer touch with the enemy. When night fell the firing became

more intense from all sides. The enemy made a sudden attack from Lurgan and Coleraine Streets and from the Smithfield end. This was the worst night we had. With the glare of the fires it was hard to detect their movements, as they could attack, retire and then come in stronger numbers. I remember standing in a corner of Moore's Factory on Friday night and the rifle and machine gun fire from the enemy was so intense that to cross the room was certain death. The windows were so low and afforded so little protection from crossfire that I had to crawl across the floor. The fires were still blazing and were very severe on the men's eyes. They had been without sleep for days, could only with difficulty keep their eyes open, and many dropped off to sleep through sheer exhaustion, and could not be easily awakened.

During Friday, Father Augustine heard the confessions of nearly all the men and arranged for them to receive Holy Communion at Church St. Chapel on Saturday morning from 5 a.m. Owing, however, to Reilly's Fort in North King St. having been evacuated, we could not get to the Church. I got permission from the Rev. Mother of St. John's Convent for them to receive Holy Communion in the Convent. I was the last to approach the altar. I had not had a shave or a wash for a week and I was ashamed of my dirty appearance before the nuns in the Chapel.

Early on Saturday the Volunteers in Clarke's Dairy noticed the British soldiers crossing the barricades at Reilly's Fort. We then realised we were completely cut off. Strengthening our positions we prepared to fight it out. I sent a party of four men through the backyards of the houses between Brunswick St. and King St. to find out if there was anyone left in Reilly's Fort or how far we were cut off from the main body. They reported that we were entirely surrounded. During this reconnaissance Section Commander Phil Walsh was shot dead. A short time later, about 2.30 p.m., when I was in the upper part of Moore's Factory trying to guide the party back I was wounded in the head. I used a first aid dressing on it, but had shortly after to go to the Richmond Hospital. In

addition to Phil Walsh, Peadar Manning was shot dead on Saturday afternoon in the house attached to Moore's Factory.

During the Week we were never short of bread as the bakers in Monks' Bakery kept at work while the supply of flour lasted. To avoid any shortage of water we had all available vessels filled with clean water every day.

When I left for the Richmond Hospital John Ward took over from me. I did not think I would be detained in the Hospital, but I found the wound was serious and I could not leave.

Later on Saturday evening, Ward called to the Hospital to see me and told me a truce had been arranged. He wanted to know what he should do as a priest had called on them and informed them that the Four Courts garrison had surrendered. I told him he could only accept orders from Comdt. Daly or a senior officer of the Battalion. I understand that when the priest was so informed he departed and returned later with an order from Pearse to surrender. I was also informed that Paddy Holohan took over charge, told the men about the surrender and that they surrendered on Sunday morning.

I was a patient in Richmond Hospital for twelve days. At the end of that time the Castle Authorities sent a car for Liam Archer, Liam Clarke and myself. As I was the only one fit to be removed, I left the Hospital by the back, and I need hardly say that no obstacle was put in my way, and made my way to Sister Bridget in the North Dublin Union. She locked me in her room for three hours and wanted me to stay in the Union Hospital, but I decided to go home at 11 p.m. where I remained, returning to the Hospital at night ^{after dark J.L.} to have my wounds dressed.

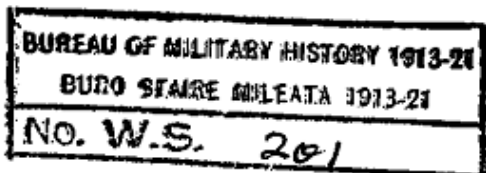
I returned to my employment at the Gas Company where I was

11.

twice *R.P.*
Later visited/by a detective who had found my name among
the list of the wounded. He took a long statement from me
as to my movements and I held to the story that I had been
wounded while going to Monks' Bakery to get some bread.
I was not arrested.

Signed: Nicholas Ruffin.
Date: 1st March 1949.

Witness: R. J. Feely, Cmdt.



BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 201

Ref.: S. 206

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

QUESTIONNAIRE

on
The Rising of Easter Week 1916
and Associated Events

To *Mr. Nicholas Laffan*

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 ✓ *Irish Volunteers* ✓
Irish Citizen Army
Fianna Éireann
Hibernian Rifles
Cumann 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?

5th Co. 1st Batⁿ Dublin Brigade ✓

4. Did you take part in the Rising?

Yes. ✓

5. Were you in uniform?

Yes. ✓

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

1st Lieut. promoted Capt. on Wednesday of Easter week ✓

7. When and by whom were you appointed?

Passed officers exam 1915. with rank 1st Lieut.

8. Was your rank altered during the Rising? *Yes.* ✓

In what circumstances and by whom?

My O.B. did not turn out, promoted Capt. by Comdt. Edward Daly. ✓

9. What posts or offices did you hold previously?

✓ *Q. Major Master of Company.
later 1st Lieut*

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

✓ *Lieut. Edward Daly, Asst. Adjutant. Samon Duggan
Vice Lieut. Pearce Beasley, Ex. Master. Samon McKeon
Adjutant. Capt. Jas. Sullivan*

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

all above

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

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

Yes.

14. If so, what was your position?

only a member

15. When did you join? *1915.*

In what circle? *Keating Branch*

Where did it usually meet? *46 Parnell sq.*

Who was its centre?

How many members were there? *about 40*

Can you give names?

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

introduced by. Liam Aher.

sworn in by. Dermott Hegarty.

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?

I cannot answer

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?

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—

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? *No*

12. How and when were these various posts created?

13. Who were their successive occupants?

C.—PREPARATIONS FOR THE RISING.

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

(a) in the early stages as a possible event;

(b) as a specific project.

✓ *Called on Active Duty by Lordt Dady
on Holy Thursday night and told I was*

2. If at a meeting, who convened it? *on Active Service.*

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?

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

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?

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?

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

How was it exercised?

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

9. Was the date decided on by that body?

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.

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.

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, co-ordinated?

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

We were ordered to purchase all military equipment. Arms & ammunition available

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?

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?

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?

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?

Eamonn 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.

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?

28. Who was to be the President of the Republic, 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 Countermanding 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 Countermanding Order?

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?

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

If so, what were the nature and extent of such surveys, and by whom were they made? *See Lamb. Bawley*

Were the plans in any way modified as a result?

Yes.

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

~~11. Were there street manoeuvres before the Rising?~~ *Yes*

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

Yes. to some extent.

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?

15. What military posts were decided upon for occupation, and what was their military purpose?

16. Were all these posts occupied and if not, why not?

My company was to occupy Broadstone Ry Station. but we had not sufficient men

17. What units of the various organisations were allotted to each post?

18. In the event of inability to hold the city, were there any plans for withdrawal to the country?

If so, to where, in what manner and to what purpose?

19. How were the activities of Dublin and the rest of Ireland linked up?

20. How were the country units made aware of the plans?

What orders were carried to the country from

(a) The Volunteer Executive;

(b) The I.R.B.

on Thursday, Friday, Saturday of Holy Week, and on Easter Sunday and Monday?

Who brought them?

By whom, to whom and where were they sent?

On what dates?

How did the couriers travel?

21. Were there written despatches?

If so, are copies available?

If not, can you recollect or reconstruct what any of them contained?

22. When the Volunteers were mobilised for "manoeuvres" on Easter Sunday, were you aware that a Rising had been planned for that day?

Yes.

23. To what extent did Eoin MacNeill's Countermanding Order disorganise or disrupt the plans:

(a) generally?

(b) as far as you were concerned?

24. How did you deal with the situation so created?

*Told to await further orders by Eoin MacNeill
Daly*

25. In view of the fact that Eoin MacNeill's Order was issued by him as Chief of Staff, what was your personal reaction to it in your capacity as a Volunteer or as a member of any of the other organisations?

On what grounds did you make your decision?

accepted order from Chief of Staff.

26. To what extent were the rank and file of the Volunteers as a whole, and of other organisations which took part in the Rising, aware that they were going into action—

(a) when they actually mobilised on Easter Sunday before the publication of the countermanding order and again on Easter Monday after the publication;

(b) beforehand. *We did not mobilise on Easter Sunday. not until Easter Monday morning.*

27. Had the Leaders of the Rising any real hope of a military victory

(a) Before the Countermanding Order?

(b) After that Order?

or were they satisfied that a serious effort should be made, even if it were doomed from the beginning to be a military failure?

28. What was the strength of the Volunteers in Ireland at the date of the Rising?

29. In the event of the Volunteers throughout the whole country being mobilised, what percentage was it expected would turn out?

30. What was the arms situation generally throughout the country?

Were any units wholly or partly armed with Pikes?

Was there a standard Pike prescribed?

31. How and to what extent was it hoped to remedy lack of arms by—

(a) Landings.

(b) Captures.

E.—MISSIONS ABROAD.

1. When and where was the decision to seek external aid first mooted?

By and to whom was it made, and in what circumstances?

What were the original proposals and in what way were they subsequently altered or developed?

What action was taken?

2. Were there missions at any stage to the United States or elsewhere in connection with the proposals for the Rising, either with information or in search of aid?

If so, who were the envoys?

3. By whom and to whom were they sent?

4. What messages did they carry?

Were they written, and, if so, are originals or copies extant?

5. What were their instructions?

What reports or material were they expected to bring back or secure and what did they bring back?

6. How did they travel?

How did they secure passports and for what ostensible purposes?

7. Were any of these envoys intercepted or arrested?

If so, what are the facts within your knowledge?

Was there any leakage of information as a result, and what were the results?

8. Were there any communications between the I.R.B. and the Clan na Gael in America regarding Roger Casement?

If so, to what purpose?

Are there any originals or copies of correspondence extant?

9. Did Roger Casement know of negotiations for external aid when he went to America in 1915?

10. Was Roger Casement a member of the I.R.B.?

If so, by whom, when and to what Circle was he sworn in?

11. Was his visit to Germany authorised or approved by the Volunteer Executive, by the Supreme Council or the Military Committee of the I.R.B., by Clan na Gael in America, or by any other body in Ireland?

12. To what extent were the I.R.B. or the Volunteer Authorities aware of his intended mission to Germany?

13. Did they approve?

14. Where did he get his funds?

15. Who arranged his transport to, and his contacts in Germany?

16. Did he carry with him any credentials, and, if so, by whom were they signed and to whom were they addressed?

If there any authentic copy available?

17. To whom did he report on his mission, and how were his reports transmitted?

18. Have you any other information on that matter?

19. What did those who sent him, if he was sent, hope to secure as a result of his mission, whether the form of:

(a) arms;

(b) a military and/or naval expedition;

(c) personnel to train or direct the Volunteers either before or during the Rising?

(d) military or naval aid elsewhere to relieve pressure in Ireland;

(e) post-war diplomatic or other advantages.

20. Was Casement aware of the mission of the German arms ship the "Aud," when he decided to return to Ireland for Easter Week?

F.—THE VATICAN.

1. Was there any proposal to approach the Vatican beforehand in regard to the Rising?

2. If so, where, when, by whom and in what circumstances was it made?

What decision was arrived at?

3. What approaches, if any, were made? In what form, to whom, and when?

4. Were they made by letter or by envoy?

5. If by letter, to whom was it addressed, and by whom was it signed?

Could you say if a copy is extant, or if the text could be reconstructed?

6. If by envoy, who was he and what were his instructions?

7. Had he credentials or any other document?

If so, what was it?

By whom was it signed?

To whom was it addressed?

Is a copy extant?

If not, could you reconstruct its contents?

8. Are copies of any other relevant documents available?

9. There is evidence that Count Plunkett was in Rome from 13th to 17th April, 1916.

Had this any relation to the question of an approach to the Vatican?

G.—THE FRAMEWORK OF THE RISING.

1. How and when were you first mobilised? *Easter Monday morning 9.30 a.m.*
- Was your unit subsequently dismissed and re-mobilised?
- Was there a falling off in the attendance at the remobilisation?
- If so, to what extent?
2. Were you aware of the purpose for which you were mobilised, viz., an armed rising? *Yes.*
3. In what military post or outpost were you in the Rising?
*Held post at 104 Brunswick St Church St to Smithfield
not King St to top of up Church St Constitution Hill*
4. Were there with you any members of organisations other than your own, e.g.:
- The Irish Volunteers? *Only Volunteers*
- The Irish Citizen Army?
- Fianna Éireann
- The Hibernian Rifles
- Cumann na mBan
- In each case who was their O.C.?
- Were there any members of the National Volunteers? *No.*
5. How did such a mixing of forces arise?
6. What was the total garrison of your post? *69.*
- How many were in uniform and of what organisations?
About 15 in Volunteer uniform

7. To what Battalions, Companies or other units did they belong?

8. From whom, and in what manner did you receive your instruction to occupy the post or posts you did?

Verbal. From Comdt. P. Daly.

9. Was it in writing? *No.*

If so, have you the order or a copy of it, or can you reconstruct it?

If verbal, what were its terms?

Occupy 104 Brunswick St Church St till further orders.

10. What was the military purpose of your post?

What steps were taken to put that purpose into effect?

My company was on flank of 'Bet'

11. What steps were taken to fortify and defend the post itself?

Barricades erected, and houses occupied.

12. What street barricades were built, where, and of what materials?

Mostly old farm carts

For what particular purpose?

To prevent attack from Broadstone & Stoney Batter end

13. How were communications to be maintained between your post and outposts and with other posts?

We had lines of communication made through the houses and yards to reach post at 104 King St

14. Were they put into operation and were they effective?

Yes.

15. If there was a breakdown, what was the cause?

*We were cut off owing to next unit having to
retire. no notice was sent to me*

16. What were the consequences?

*We were left to fight it out. being
completely cut off*

17. Can you say what were the civilian occupations
of the members of your unit who were out in the
Rising?

*Trades men
Labourers
 clerks.
Railway workers
Asylum attendants.*

H.—ARMS.

1. How were the members of your unit armed in
Easter Week? *Mostly Rifles*

Could you give an estimate as to the numbers
who were armed with—

(a) Service or other rifles firing .303 ammunition,
including carbines; *40*

(b) Howth rifles; *20*

(c) Other rifles of calibre other than .303; *4*

(d) Shotguns; *2*

(e) Revolvers and automatic pistols; *30*

(f) Pikes. *None*

2. How many had bayonets? *About 50*

Were there any shot-gun bayonets? *No*

3. What types and quantities of explosives including
grenades were in your unit?

How were they intended to be used? *Hand Made Grenades*

How and when were they actually used? *Not used*

4. If any members were armed with shotguns, was
that due to shortage, of other weapons, or were they
so armed for a particular purpose?

only arms available

5. Were there any ammunition or grenades made
during the Rising? *Not that I am aware of*

If so, how, when, where, by whom and with what
equipment?

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

100 per cent

7. Did shortage of ammunition occur during the Rising?

Not with my men

If so, what weapons were affected by the shortage?

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

We held off enemy who held Broadstone Pier until we were cut off from Main Body

8. Were any arms lost in action?

No

9. Were any arms captured from the enemy?

*Yes
about 8 Rifles + Ammunition*

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?

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.

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?

Company officer. work done by members of company.

2. What training was there in preparation for this?

None

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

No

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?

K.—FLAGS.

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

Yes. at Junction of Art's King St and Church St

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

The Tricolour

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?

About 6 ft x 3 ft.

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?

Leond. P. Daly.

9. Where exactly was it hoisted?

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

In the centre of the road on a pole which was stuck in a barrel of sand.

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

A flag pole was obtained.

11. What happened to the flag at the termination of the Rising? *I cannot say*

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

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

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

L.—RAILWAYS AND SHIPPING.

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

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?

M.—FOOD.

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

Yes. A Days ration.

2. Was this order generally complied with?

Yes.

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

How long did it last? *one day*

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

✓ We had *Montes Bakery* *St. King St.* in our area. where we got some supplies

5. How was cooking done?

✓ We got a 10 Gal. can of Hot Soup each day from the *Master of the City Dublin-Union*

6. Who were detailed for this work?

our own men

7. In general what type of meal was provided?

✓ only Soup & Bread

8. Were there any difficulties about water supply? *No.*

✓ What precautions, if any, were taken against failure of supply?

All available vessels were filled with clean water daily.

N.—FIRE.

1. What measures were taken to deal with fire?

✓ We got a hose from *Hardwick Hospital* *St. Brunswick St.*

2. Did occasion arise to use them? *Yes*

If so, were they effective? *Yes*

If not, why were they ineffective?

O.—CLERGY.

1. Was your garrison or unit visited at any time by Clergymen of any denomination? *Yes, all during week*

✓ by *Frs. Albert O.F.M. cop. & Augustine O.F.M. cop.*

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

✓ *Frs. Albert O.F.M. Cap. Church St.*
Frs. Augustine do do

3. What did they do?

✓ Heard confessions of the men and visited the wounded in *Richmond Hospital*.

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

✓ They were up and down all the week. some visits lasted for hours.

5. Were any of them present at the surrender? *Yes*

If so, what part did they take?

They brought the order to surrender, from *Leant, Genl. Pearas.*

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?

Shot in action.

2 Killed ✓
Peter Manning ✓
Philip Walsh ✓

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

No

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

Arrangements were made to remove them to Richmond Hospital.

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

Each man had one First Aid Pack.

Were they trained to use it?

Yes
one was used on myself when wounded in the head.

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?

Each man carried first aid packet
First aid equipment was stored at my home 33 Primrose St but was not called on

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? *No*

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

Where were they located? *Church St. Hall*

How were they equipped?

How were they manned? *Bumman Na' Ban*

Did they serve their purpose? *Yes.*

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?

Yes. Good attention at - Richmond - Hospital
No

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?

Not in my area
No

Q.—LOOTING.

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

No

2. If so, what action was taken?

R.—PRISONERS.

1. Were any prisoners captured by the British? *No*

If so, how and where and in what circumstances?

To what units did they belong?

What were their ranks?

Were any of them wounded?

2. Were any British military captured? *about 40.*

Develop this as in 1.

Where were they kept until the surrender?

40 elements Army Pay Corps taken out of Sunnall Barracks. and sent to Four Courts

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?

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 organisation?

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?

T.—THE SURRENDER AND AFTERWARDS.

1. How did you first learn of the surrender of posts other than your own?

I was wounded on Saturday evening and was not present at surrender on Sunday - morning

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?

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?

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?

W.—MISCELLANEOUS.

1. Would it be possible to give any estimate of the proportion of the members of the Irish Volunteers who took part in the Rising who were also members of non-military National organisations, such as the Gaelic League, G.A.A., etc.?

2. To what extent was written or oral Irish used in the Volunteer and allied organisations:
 - (a) in official communications or orders;
 - (b) in training;
 - (c) in ordinary conversations;
 - (d) at meetings of the General Council, the Executive, G.H.Q., or of Brigade, Battalion and Company officers.

X.—DOCUMENTS.

1. Have you any original documents or photographs of such documents, bearing on any aspect of the Rising?

In this connection see the Bureau's Leaflet of January, 1948.

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