

**ORIGINAL**

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRÉ-MILEATA 1913-21  
No. W.S. 254

ROINN



COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

**STATEMENT BY WITNESS**

**DOCUMENT NO. W.S. ....254.....**

**Witness**

Mr. Joseph Murray,  
58 Lr. Drumcondra Rd.,  
Dublin.

**Identity**

Member of I.R.B. 1911 or 1912.  
" " 'B' Coy. 1st Battn. I.V's. Dublin 1913.  
Intelligence - 1916.

**Subject**

- (a) National associations 1912-1916.
- (b) Intelligence, Easter Week 1916.

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

Nil

File No. S. 1251.....

Form B.S.M. 2.

# ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 254

STATEMENT OF JOSEPH MURRAY,

MEMBER OF I.R.B. AND IRISH VOLUNTEERS 1916.

I joined the I.R.B. in 1911 or 1912 in the O'Leary Circle which met in 41 Parnell Square, being sworn in by Peadar Kearney who was Centre of that Circle. I knew Tom Clarke well, previously, as I had been a frequent visitor to his shop. In the O'Leary Circle I met men named Mick Slater, Byrne, Fitzpatrick, Buggy and McNally and others whom I do not recollect. As I was a traveller for my firm I had not much opportunity for attending meetings of the Circle, and I was always excused from attending.

I remember on one occasion attending a lecture given by Bulmer Hobson at a Freedom Club meeting in Parnell Square and at a discussion after the lecture I suggested the formation of a rifle club under the auspices of the Lord Roberts Rifle Clubs. The suggestion was adopted, the Club was formed and affiliated with the Lord Roberts Rifle Clubs. Harry Nicholls became Secretary of the Club. I obtained permission from the Franciscans and we set up butts in Father Mathew Park. We obtained six miniature Martini rifles and all the ammunition we required. The Club remained in existence up to the Rising.

I joined the Volunteers in 1913 at the meeting in the Rotunda along with Tom Clarke and Sean McDermott. It was decided, however, that, as I was associated with the Rifle Club, I should not drill openly with the Volunteers. Frank Daly was in charge of the Company I joined. I think it was B/Coy. 1st Battalion.

*Before 9/11*  
Shortly after the outbreak of the war in 1914, I ascertained that there were 1,700 R.I.C. barracks in Ireland and that each had five rifles and five revolvers and ammunition. I suggested to Pearse that the Volunteers should on some fixed date organise route marches in the vicinity of each of these barracks and seize the barracks and make off with the arms. Tom Clarke later told me that when this suggestion was brought before the Supreme Council of the I.R.B. a

resolution in favour of doing so was defeated by his casting vote as Chairman. He explained to me that he did so because England was bound to be beaten in the war as she had never been up against a first-class Power before, and that we would get our freedom without any fight. I remember Pearse asking me at a later date if I had any other scheme. I said it was too late now as England

*was getting things on the element of surprise as time*  
 On Easter Sunday afternoon I went round and called off men about

to start to mobilise. I then went to John O'Mahony's, Gardiner's Place and stayed with Sean McDermott from 4 to 8 p.m. I lived in John O'Mahony's at the time. McDermott was very agitated over the MacNeill countermanding order and told me he was so annoyed and upset that his mind refused to act. At 8 p.m. McDermott left for a meeting.

On Easter Monday morning I mobilised the men I had demobilised on Sunday and afterwards had breakfast with Sean McDermott. My firm had a stall at the Show Grounds at Ballsbridge and I had to go there. Jerry O'Leary rang me up and told me "it was on". - I had made that arrangement with him. I left immediately and walked as far as Baggo St. Bridge and then by the Canal to Rogerson's Quay. I crossed the Liffey by the ferry and made my way to the G.P.O. arriving there about 5 p.m.

On Monday afternoon I was sent to the Father Mathew Park to collect any stragglers who did not know where their units were. On my return Pearse asked me to get a doctor. Although I called at two places I did not succeed in getting one - I also paid a visit to the Cabra post. I returned to my lodgings each night.

On Tuesday I directed Captain Jim O'Sullivan and some of his men to the G.P.O. I also took part in a raid on the A.O.H. Hall in Parnell Square where we got twenty guns.

At the request of Pearse I went out and spent most of the day searching for arms. In the afternoon I went to Parliament St. and told Tom Byrne and his party to go to the G.P.O.

On Wednesday I went to Fairview at the request of James Connolly to find out if all were evacuated. I then went to Church St. and saw Ned Daly who asked me to go and observe the Mendicity Institution.

Each day I marked on a map for Joe Plunkett the overnight positions of the British Forces.

On Thursday, at Connolly's request, I went to Ned Daly to consult him about an attack which Connolly thought was being made on the G.P.O. by the British from Capel St. Ned Daly contemplated making an attack on their rear. He decided to wait till the following morning. I returned towards the G.P.O. and found the British in possession of Capel St. and Parnell St.

On Friday I got as far as Dominick St. and sent Donnelly with a message to Ned Daly, to tell him to try and get nearer to the G.P.O.

On Saturday I could make no contact anywhere.

On Monday, when passing Trinity College, with John O'Mahony, we were arrested and taken to the Castle. We were put into the guardroom with Larry O'Neill, <sup>Walter</sup> ~~Tom~~ McSweeney and others. I was detained for about five weeks awaiting trial and was then transferred to <sup>Frongoch</sup> ~~Knutsford~~ Gaol, being later transferred to Frongoch.

Wakefield  
24

Signed: John Murray

Date: 24 May 1916

Witness: D. J. Feely

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURD STAIRS MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 254