

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY
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NO. W.S. 270

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 270.....

Witness

Mrs. Eily O'Hanrahan O'Reilly,
12 Northumberland Avenue,
Dun Laoghaire,
Co. Dublin.

Identity

Member of Cumann na mBan 1916;
Sister of Micheal O hAnnrachain
executed 1916.

Subject

1. Took dispatches from McDermott and MacDonagh to Wexford, Holy Week and Easter Week 1916.
2. On duty in Jacob's during Easter Week 1916;
3. Appendix 'A' - ~~Mailing of dispatches to Michael O'hannrachain~~
Cutting from 'New Ross Standard' of 6.8.1948.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

Nil

File No. S. 1354.....

Form B.S.M. 2.

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 270

STATEMENT BY MRS. EILY O'HANRAHAN O'REILLY.

12 Northumberland Avenue, Dún Laoghaire, Dublin.

My brother, Micheál, was not born in Dublin but in New Ross, to which my father moved his family from Wexford town. The family afterwards moved to Carlow. I do not know where my father's people originally came from. He probably did not know much about it himself, as his father died when he was young. Neither do I know the date of Micheál's birth, but he would be about seventy years of age now if he lived. All such particulars about him are to be found in the New Ross Standard of 6th August, 1948, which describes the celebrations connected with the unveiling of a memorial plaque to Micheál at the Tholsel in New Ross about that time. I shall be able to get you a copy of it. (Appendix "A").

I am his sister and, therefore, perhaps should not say it, Micheál had an unusually nice character. He was gentle, quiet and unassuming. He was devoted to his home and loved home life, although he was so active in the Gaelic League movement and the Volunteers that he spent a lot of his time away from home. He spent a lot of time at the Headquarters in No. 2 Dawson Street, where he worked in a room opposite Bulmer Hobson's. He was Quartermaster General and was always busy in the years before the Rising, getting arms and stowing them in safe places. People from the country came to him for arms. I am aware that this position has been claimed as having been filled by Michael Staines, and there was correspondence about the matter in the Press in 1936. One letter by F. McGurk, 8 Palmerston Place, Broadstone, dated 24th June in the "Irish Press" (I think) sets out the position in the matter.

People used to come to our house from all over the

country for arms. On one occasion, a short time before the Rising, a car was halted at College Green. The occupants were from the country and they told the police who held them up and questioned them that they had got the arms from a man in the North side. We were terrified we would be raided after that.

I joined Cumann na mBan at the instigation of my brother in 1914. I knew Mrs. Salkeld, Mrs. Wyse Power, Mrs. Reddin, Mrs. Ceannt and others. The loan of the hall at the back of the Catholic Commercial Club in O'Connell Street was given to us on the understanding that we were working for England as Red Cross workers. Several doctors came to give lectures on nursing, etc.

After the split the Cumann na mBan were asked which side they would follow. They divided into parties on both sides of the room. Not quite half remained faithful to MacNeill. The Redmondite Cumann na mBan left the building and the others kept possession, but when it was discovered what sort of politics we held we were told to clear out. After that we looked out for a place and found two rooms in the Rechabite building. After a short time we went to 25 Parnell Square and took the hall at the back. We held dances, céilís, and concerts to provide rifles for Volunteers.

We lived at 67 Connaught Street. Con Colbert, etc., used to come in and out. Tom MacDonagh was a great friend of Micheál's. We had dumps of arms in our house. John and Tom Meldon, F. Lynch and Gearóid O'Sullivan used to call to Micheál, also Dick Cotter, Eamon Price, Diarmuid O'Hegarty and Peadar MacMahon used to stay in digs a couple of doors from us.

On Holy Thursday night Charlie Monahan and Con Keating were in our house before they started on their journey to Kerry, where they lost their lives. Micheál was more

affected by that tragedy than ever I saw him in my life.

One morning a short time before the Rising a ring came to the door very early. I opened it. It was Seamus O'Connor in a terrible state of excitement. He was an excitable man but very nice. He asked me was Micheál up. I said no. He said he heard there was to be a raid on Headquarters, No. 2 Dawson Street. He said that the arms and everything of importance should be moved. Micheál got up and he suggested that I should collect a number of girls. When we arrived we collected the papers and put them in the grate and set fire to them. We took the arms and ammunition, each of us packed up with them, and went out under the noses of the detectives. I had a huge parcel. The only place I could think of bringing them was to Joe McGuinness' shop in Dorset Street. He had a drapery place there. He refused to take it when he discovered it was "stuff". I said, "I can't take it now. I only want to leave it with you until we get a proper dump for it", and I walked out leaving it on the counter. I do not know where the other girls took their stuff.

About ten o'clock Hobson arrived and looked round at us burning the papers, etc. He asked, "What's all the commotion about?" I told him. He merely shrugged his shoulders and attached no importance to the rumour of the raid. He seemed to be indifferent whether there was one or not.

On Spy Wednesday Micheál told me that Sean McDermott wanted to see me in 25 Parnell Square. When I arrived about 8.30 p.m. Sean McDermott, Tom MacDonagh and Micheál were standing at the foot of the stairs, and they gave me a dispatch for Enniscorthy, saying it was very important. I asked to whom I was to deliver it. Tom MacDonagh said, "I don't know, but find the leader of the Volunteers and give it to him, and if you have any relations in the town don't go near them, and don't tell your people at home". I heard

them say to each other, "We know whom we are sending".

I left 25 Parnell Square and went home. I did not see my brother again that night, as I was in bed when he came in. I got up early and went in to Micheál's room and he asked, "Whom will you deliver it to?". "I don't know", said I, "you heard what they said last night. Can you tell me to whom to deliver it?". "I suggest you go to the "Echo" office and ask for Seamus Doyle. Don't give it to anyone else". It was that day I guessed that the Rising₀ was at hand. I had a light breakfast, took a taxi and went by the mail train starting some time after six.

Arriving in Enniscorthy I looked for and found the "Echo" office and asked for Mr. Doyle. A young man in the office asked had I an important message and must I give it to Doyle personally. I said it was important and was verbal and I must give it to him personally. In fact the dispatch was sewn inside the lining of my red fox fur. He asked was I from Dublin and I said yes. He then said he would bring me to Seamus Doyle. He brought me to Hayes' where I saw Seamus Doyle who was brought in to me in the drawingroom. (I think that was Stephen Hayes' house. You remember that he figured subsequently in another incident.) There was someone else with him. They opened the dispatch and two or three of them bent over it. After some time Seamus Doyle turned round to me and asked were things quiet in Dublin. I said they were when I was leaving. He told me it would be better for me not to go out into the town, so I had my lunch and tea in Hayes' and I walked to the station. They also walked along the street behind me, indifferently as if they did not know me, and came into the station after me.

In the train I saw Minnie Ryan, who was coming back to Dublin also. I am certain that was Thursday. She asked

me, "Did you deliver your dispatch?" I said, "I thought all these things were to be kept secret. I did deliver it". In my opinion she had been delivering a countermanding order. I was confirmed in this opinion by a broadcast given by Seamus Doyle on the 25th Anniversary of the Rising, in which he referred to the dispatch delivered by me, adding that shortly afterwards a countermanding order was delivered by someone else. I would like to question Seamus Doyle about that. I thought it very strange that they were not able to give me the name and address of the leader of the Volunteers in Enniscorthy, and concluded that there must have been some sort of split, not in Enniscorthy but at Headquarters, and that McDermott, MacDonagh and Micheál might not have access to the information. I came back and was met at the station by my sister, Cis, and my brother, Harry, who was also in the Volunteers.

Either that night or the next day I went again to 25 Parnell Square and saw the same three. Tom MacDonagh asked me did I deliver the message. I said yes. "To whom?" said he. "To Seamus Doyle", said I. He seemed very satisfied.

On Friday and Saturday things were boiling. Micheál was hurrying here and there. We were busy giving out arms and equipment and foodstuffs to the Volunteers. We bought socks, bandoliers, green collars, hats, etc., at Paddy Gleasons, and water bottles and other equipment at Lawlors in Fownes' Street on these days and for months before.

On the Sunday evening, Micheál, Harry, Eamon Price and others were in our house, and Micheál was sending messages. On Sunday night the Meldons, Dick Cotter, Peadar MacMahon, Harry and others were in the dining-room and there must have been a meeting on. About 12 o'clock a knock (with knuckles) came to the door. I hurried to the dining-room door and told Micheál. Immediately all the men jumped up and put their hands to their hips. I think they feared a raid and were prepared to resist

it. "Micheál", said I, "what am I to do?". "Open it", said Micheál. I went and a voice said, "It is all right, Eily. It's me, Diarmuid". I opened the door and let in Diarmuid O'Hegarty. He said, "I have a message for you, Eily, and you are to bring it to the same place where you brought the last one". He evidently did not know where that was. He also had got a dispatch for Máire Lawless (now deceased) to bring to Swords. I went to the door of the dining-room and told Micheál that I would have to go away again. I do not know what time the meeting broke up.

I took the same train in the morning and arrived at Enniscorthy. I went to the "Echo" office again but was told that Seamus Doyle was not there. I was brought by a different man to Seamus Rafter. There were several with him. Bob Brennan may have been there. Seamus Doyle had gone on to Kilkenny, evidently to see how things were going there. Seamus Rafter said to me, "What about Wexford? To whom are you going there?". "I don't know", said I. Minnie Ryan had given me her aunt's address, I think it may have been when we were travelling up together on the Thursday, and I went to her house and she was very kind to me and gave me a nice lunch.

I took the train to Wexford, went up and down the town looking for Sinnott, whose name had been given me by someone without Christian name or address. There are numbers of Sinnotts in Wexford, so I did not know what to do. I went to White's Hotel and had tea and rushed to the station without delivering the dispatch to Wexford. At Enniscorthy I saw police in the station. I had intended to get out there but did not then, but went on to Dublin. Outside Rathdrum the train, which was packed, was held up. People put their heads out the windows and there was shouting that the lines were cut. A man in the train said in answer to an enquiry of mine, "Don't you know that the rebels are out in Dublin, have taken the G.P.O. and a lot of other places, and the streets are running

with blood". Between Rathdrum and the next station, as I had not delivered the dispatch in Wexford - in any case Seamus Rafter had said he would get in touch with the Volunteers there - I went into the lavatory of the train, took the dispatch from my fur and tore it in small pieces. I threw some of them into the lavatory pan and ate the rest.

It must have been after 12 o'clock when I got to Dublin (Harcourt Street station). A man stepped forward to me and asked me had I been away for the week-end. I said I had been in the country with some friends - I thought he was a detective. He whispered to me, "It is all right Miss O'Hanrahan. My name is Williams". He had a brother a Volunteer who took part in the Rising and was afterwards imprisoned. I recognised him then as a man who lived in Blessington Street. It was very late and I was glad when he offered to see me home. We came down by the College of Surgeons and saw the windows barricaded. We were walking over heaps of glass everywhere, especially in O'Connell Street. We saw some dead horses there. When I arrived home I was in a nervous and exhausted condition. There were several people in the house when I got in. Kate O'Doherty and Mrs. Conlon (I think) were there. We decided to lie down, but did not sleep.

The next day the two of us (my sister and myself) went to the G.P.O. We did not know how to contact people. Skeffington passed us on the way in. He was coming out and he had a sheaf of papers and a pencil in his hand. We saw Pearse, and O'Rahilly came to talk to us. He asked me, "Miss O'Hanrahan, are you with us?". Also Tom Clarke. They told me to go to Jacobs. I did and saw some of the men I knew in the window, Eamon Price, Dick Cotter and Charlie Somers. There was also Domhnall O'Riordan. I called up to them and said I wanted to see Tom MacDonagh. There was a mob outside, and when they saw

us talking to the Volunteers they called out all sorts of insulting remarks to us. MacDonagh told some of the men to put out a ladder for me. I had to climb up. My sister, who stayed outside, was afraid she would be torn to pieces by the mob of women. When I got up to the window I saw the same group and John MacBride. The latter did not know me and said he would not let me in, but the men vouched that I was Micheál's sister. I was getting very nervous as there was a lot of sniping outside. I jumped down inside off the window. I was angry with MacBride and told him that he behaved in an unmilitary manner, that he could have placed me under arrest if I was found doing wrong. I told him also that I had business with MacDonagh. I was brought to him to Headquarters, which was a table up a few steps. I told him what had happened in Enniscorthy. I told him that Seamus Doyle had not been there. "What did you do with it then?". "I gave it to Seamus Rafter". "Excellent", said he, and he took both my hands. I then told him about the non-delivery of the dispatch in Wexford, but that Seamus Rafter said he would get in touch with the Wexford Volunteers. I asked him whether I should go back to Wexford. He said that was not necessary. He looked very placid. I said I would remain in Jacobs, but Micheál, who was present during the conversation, said he would prefer that I would go back and look after things in 67 Connaught Street, as there were arms still there. Tom MacDonagh then told me to do that and give out any of the stuff that was asked for, and anyway to get rid of all the stuff as we might be raided.

They let me out a side street, and Tom MacDonagh asked me to go to the G.P.O. and tell Pearse that they wanted hand-grenades and that he had commissioned MacBride in Jacobs. Micheál and Harry and MacDonagh were seeing me off when the barricades had been taken down. Micheál's eyes were filled with tears and so were mine. Tom MacDonagh said, "Eily, you'll see Micheál again". I did the night before his execution.

While I was in Jacobs Micheál took advantage of an opportunity when MacDonagh went away to say to me, "Is O'Doherty out with us?". I said at random, "Yes, of course", as I naturally concluded he was, he being so deeply involved in the movement. I afterwards heard from Harry when he came home from Portland that he had gone to Seamus O'Doherty, who lived on our road, on Easter Monday to find out where he was. Mrs. O'Doherty said he had gone out to find out what all this was about. "All what?", said Harry. "All this commotion", said she. Harry replied, "Isn't this what we have been working up to in the last few years, and what we have all been wanting", and he walked away. He must have told Micheál, who must have had a doubt in the matter as implied by his question. I called on Tuesday, but got no answer. A neighbour who heard me knocking told me the family had gone away.

We got back to the G.P.O. and we saw Pearse, O'Rahilly and Clarke again. I gave the message, and, as I was worn out with nerves and fatigue, I was brought to where the women were. There was a nurse that I knew there and she helped me to bathe my face and got me a cup of tea. I came back again to Pearse and asked him whether he remembered my message. He said "yes" in a vague tone, as if he were up in the clouds, so I went to O'Rahilly and repeated the message to him, so as to be sure the grenades would be sent. Then I went home. This would be evening.

While I was away on the Monday, my sister was sent by Micheál with various big books with military information to some address in Clonliffe Road, and before Micheál went out to take part in the Rising he told my sisters to burn all documents and records. Liam Archer's brother, later Father Eddy, helped us to remove any revolvers and ammunition that were left, to his father's house, as well as any foodstuffs that we had not issued. When the detectives - Halley was one

them - raided our house on the Monday or Tuesday after the surrender, some of the water-bottles and about 100 pairs of socks were found by them. Halley said, "Fancy all this taking place under our very noses. Two quiet inoffensive fellows like them! Where were these things bought?" he asked. "I don't know", said I. "But surely you were always with your brother and should know?". "I don't", said I. "Well, the boyos who made their fortunes by selling these things to the Volunteers will get off scot-free, while the fellows who fought will pay with their lives". This was the first inkling we got that our brothers might be put to death. One of the detectives opened a press in the dining-room and to my horror I realised that there was still ammunition and revolvers in it that we had forgotten about. He saw it certainly, but he just shut the press without taking out anything, or pretending he saw it. He remarked, "I never thought to be raiding ladies' homes". Halley was not like that, very sweet but would stab you in the back. All Micheál's manuscripts, cuttings from papers that he had written for, and all such things were seized and never returned.

On Wednesday night some time after we went to bed, probably between twelve and one, a lorry with military drove up to the door accompanied by a car with a policeman in it. They banged on the door, and at once the people living opposite, Green was their name, put their heads out the window. The military told them that if they did not shut their windows and put out their lights they would do it for them. We opened the door and the policeman gave in a letter from the O.C. of Kilmainham, to the effect that Micheál would like to see his mother and sisters before his deportation to England. We decided we would not let Mother come, as we thought it meant our arrest. The policeman said we would be sorry if we did not take her. We left Máire with Mother, and Cis and I went, under the impression that we were under

arrest. All the streets had military on duty, who held us up frequently. We did not know where we were, as it was pitch dark. At last we arrived at Kilmainham. This was the first time we knew where we were. We were shown into a little white-washed room off the hall, with two candles. We were sitting there for a while. I went to the door once or twice and asked the soldiers in the hall why we were not being brought to my brother. I heard a woman's voice in the hall. "That seems to be Mrs. Clarke", I said to Cis. I went to her and she said, "What brings you here, Eily". "I don't know, except that we were told Micheál was being deported." I said to Mrs. Clarke "Is there anything you want to tell us?" as she seemed to hesitate. "They are executing the men", she said. I said, "Could it be possible that Micheál would be executed?". She then told us that she had been there the night before to see her husband before his execution, and she had been called this night to see her brother, Ned Daly.

After a short time some soldiers came and brought us up the dark iron stairs and along the iron corridor to Micheál's cell. There was nothing in it, no light even, but an old bag thrown in the corner, and a bucket, no bed, no chair, no table, a place in which you would not put a dog. Micheál was standing in the cell. When we rushed forward he caught us in his arms. He asked us did we know the circumstances that brought us, and where was Mother. We told him why we had not brought her and we said/^{we}knew now why we had been sent for. He said he would have loved to see Mother and Máire, but that it was better after all Mother had not come. He was not in any way agitated. The only thing that worried him was what was to become of my mother and us. He said he did not know where Harry was. They were devoted to each other and did everything together. He told us not to fret, and we tried to reassure him that we would be all right and that the women of '98 had

to endure that too. There were six soldiers and two officers, and any time we said anything referring to the Volunteers and the Movement, one of the officers came forward and said we must speak of nothing but personal matters. I mentioned that Tom Clarke and Pearse were gone and one of the officers interrupted me. Again in the course of conversation I mentioned that MacDonagh was gone and again I was stopped. We told him that Ned Daly and two others were going with himself. We rushed in all this information in a hurry and with the greatest difficulty. We were left there only a short time, although we had been told that the interview would be for 20 minutes. We asked to be permitted to stay to the end, but the officers said that would be out of the question. I asked Micheál if he had anything to eat. He said some bully-beef had been left in to him in a billycan, but he had not eaten it. I asked had he not had a bed. He said no. Then one of the officers said to Micheál if he had any affairs to settle he should do so without delay. I said, how can anyone situated as he is without a table or chair even settle anything. A table and chair and a candle in an old candlestick were brought. It was then we saw how bad the cell really was. Micheál wrote his will on paper headed with the Kilmainham stamp. He left all he had - which was only his books - to Mother and to his sisters after her death. Only for that will we would not have afterwards got his medals, as a brother of ours who had married early and had no sympathy with Ireland applied for them, and the affair went on for months. The record of this is in the Department of Defence.

When he had finished the will he said he would be seeing father in a few hours. We asked him had he seen a priest. An officer said his clergy had been sent for and would be here presently. Micheál said he had asked for Father Augustine and Father Albert. These priests were marvellous. They saved the reason of many people whose sons and brothers were executed.

Father Aloysius and Father Sebastian were very good too. The two former used to come and see us regularly, sometimes they came twice a day in a cab. The two officers witnessed the will. Although these men did their duty they were not aggressive.

We said goodbye to Micheál. He did not weep, but kept up his courage. We did not give way either then. He kissed us several times and told us to give his love to Mother and Máire and to Harry when we found out where he was. I think he was afraid Harry would be executed too. We came downstairs and I got weak, and when I got to the ground floor I fainted. A stretcher was brought and I was laid on it. One of the soldiers, ~~and~~ an Irishman, made himself very objectionable and seemed to gloat over the executions. When I became conscious again I was brought back to the same room we had been in before. One soldier - an Englishman - was very kind, he brought water and tried to console us. He said, "After all, ladies, your brother is getting the death he would have wished for". As we were passing into the room Cis asked me, "Who is that girl sitting in the hall?". I said, "That is Grace Gifford", and while we were in the room we heard an officer ask her who she was. She answered, "I am Mrs. Plunkett". We did not know she had been married.

The same lorry and the same car brought us home, and the same soldier who had been so kind in the prison to us came forward and said he would like to shake hands with us, and that we had his deepest sympathy. It must now have been about two o'clock. When we arrived home, the friend Máire O'Byrne who had come to stay with us when she heard we were in trouble came to us and asked for news. We whispered that Micheál was being executed. We went in to Mother in her bed and told her that Micheál was being sent to England. She said again and again, "I wonder when I'll hear from him", and "Where is Harry?" We brought in our beds to her room and stayed there that night.

We did not sleep and we got up at six and told Mother we were going to Mass. She said it was very early to be going to Mass. We went out and went over to Archers in Shandon Road. Liam was not there, nor Claire - later Mrs. Diarmuid O'Hegarty. - she had gone to Mass, but her two sisters were there. We broke down completely there, and they asked us what was the matter. We told them. They tried to console us, as did Patrick Carroll who lived opposite them and had seen the state we were in. But the kindest of all was Máire Byrne, who sustained and comforted us during that crisis. There would not have been a cup of tea made in the house but for her.

We then went to Church Street to try and see Father Augustine so that he would come and tell Mother that Micheál was executed. The minute he saw us he knew what we wanted. He brought us into the sitting-room of the Monastery. We told him what we wanted him to do. He came back with us. He told us not to come in with him. We did not come in for some time and when we did we found him in the sitting-room with Mother and Máire. Mother was crying as she had heard all about Micheál from Father Augustine. Shortly after on the same day Leslie Price came in, and I need not tell you it was a house of mourning as there was now no necessity to keep up any pretence. Leslie Price and the Foleys tried to get news of Harry for us. The wife of a warder in Mountjoy, named Frawley, told us that Harry was a prisoner in Mountjoy and that Father McMahon, the chaplain, had a message for us. We hastened to Clonliffe to Father McMahon, who at that time was not at all sympathetic. He said, "I have no message. Pray for him". I had a couple of pounds in my pocket and I gave it to him for Masses for Micheál and Harry.

On our way back we wondered whether we could see Harry and we rang boldly at the gate of Mountjoy, and we were brought in. We saw Harry for a few minutes through a grating, and told him all about Micheál. He already knew he was executed.

I asked the warden where the men were going, but he did not know. When we were coming out through the gate we saw some other warders. One of them told us the men were to be sent away. On the Circular Road I saw Frawley and asked him as I passed - I did not stop for fear of calling attention to him - when the men were being sent away. He said, "This evening". We rushed home and told Mother the men were being moved to England that evening.

I collected the Foleys and some other sympathisers as quickly as I could and we all hastened to Mountjoy. Just as we arrived we saw two Black Marias full of prisoners leaving. The prisoners saw us and recognised us. We ran beside the Black Maria down to the North Wall. They were drawn up there and a cordon of soldiers was drawn up around them. We got through the cordon and spoke to some of them - Tom Hunter was one of them. We shouted to them all. They threw us five shillings to get cigarettes, but the officers pushed us back and said we could not communicate with the men. From a distance we saw the men being embarked in a cattle boat. Harry, who was sent to Portland, afterwards told us their horrible experiences in the hold of the boat where they had to lie on the floor.

A few days after Micheál's execution Elizabeth O'Farrell called to see Mother and gave her money that Harry and Micheál had given her for Mother. I do not know how much it was. We had a constant stream of visitors after that and we were in a state of misery and exhaustion.

Some time after that we were advised by the Church Street priests to go to Howth for a change. We felt very lonely, and an artist friend of ours, Sean Maxwell, came out to stay with us. He was like a brother to us and on the instructions of Father Augustine helped us in every way he could. We had engaged a furnished flat with some people named Campbell and

paid a deposit and left our card. The following day we got back by post the deposit and card, with a note of regret that we could not have the flat. We then thought we would not go at all, but at length the priests and Sean Maxwell said we would have to and Sean Maxwell went to search for lodgings, telling everyone who we were. Finally we got a suitable place at Juverna, a guest-house kept by Mrs. Cleary. There were people called Hughes and two very nice Englishmen, fish salesmasters at Howth pier, staying there. They treated us very nicely and the Englishmen used to give Mother presents of choice fish.

I used to be late in town at meetings of the National Aid, and these gentlemen often saw me home.

While we were at Juverna we paid the month's rent for 67 Connaught Street and the landlady came out with the receipt and at the same time gave us notice to quit, saying she was afraid the house would be blown up. We wanted to contest it, but Mother did not want any trouble and, as at the time her health was very poor, we yielded to her.

Some time after that our kinsman from Wexford, Wattie Hanrahan, called to us at Connaught Street, to which we had gone back, not having yet decided whether to go to law or not about the notice of eviction. He proposed to help us to buy the house if we wanted to stay in it. We thought it would be better to start a business to keep ourselves and Mother. We took a place in 384 North Circular Road and started business, living over the premises.

During the subsequent period of trouble, the Black and Tans, etc., our house was the centre for communications for Mountjoy and other places. I think it was during the Ashe hunger-strike, Arthur Griffith asked us for a room and we gave over our dining-room for their Headquarters. A guard was placed outside the house. There was a dump for arms in the house under the roof, and although the Black and Tans raided

us several times they never found them. Colonel Broy, who was then employed in the Castle, used to send all the messages to our house to be delivered to us personally.

On one occasion Diarmuid O'Hegarty brought us a heavily sealed document from the Castle - I think it had been stolen from there, and he asked us to mind it. We asked could we destroy it in case of a raid. The reply was in the negative, but we were informed that our lives would be forfeit if it was found. We held it for ages in the dump and it was never found. Evidently they forgot in their excitement where they had deposited it. When eventually we had a visit from Greg Murphy we asked when they were going to take it away. He said, "Heavens! Is it here it is! We forgot where we left it". He took it away then.

On one occasion, through a post office clerk I knew, we got certain important information which we passed to Mick Collins. On that night we had the worst raids we ever had - two in succession - which lasted all night long till 6 a.m. In all those raids the military and police used to take away everything, including the stock of the shop. They practically ruined us. Harry was on the run at the time I speak of, and when he came in at 7 a.m. he found the place wrecked and us prostrate. We were in our dressing-gowns, and I got a dreadful cold, from which I did not recover until I went away for a long period.

Mother and I went down to the Longford election. We knew Joe McGuinness well, and a very nice fellow he was.

I was a member of the Prisoners' Dependents Committee, which met at No. 1 College Street, and attended the meetings. We organised Flag Days to raise money. I can show you a typed letter signed by General Maxwell, banning a Flag Day that was to be held in June, 1916. There were two organisations

founded immediately after the Rising. The second one was the National Aid Association. The two organisations were bitterly opposed to each other, although they were both doing exactly the same work. Mrs. Clarke and the Dalys approached all the families of the executed men and got members of each on the Prisoners' Dependents Committee. Two delegates from the Clan na Gael in America came over for the purpose of uniting the two organisations, as the funds that were being collected in America and elsewhere were all for the one purpose. Hitherto the chief obstacle in the way of unification had been Mrs. Clarke's and the Dalys' desire to maintain the Prisoners' Dependents' Committee as a separate organisation, because the Committee consisted mainly of the relatives of the executed, and the other Committee was made up of business and professional and other influential people. The American delegates, after a few meetings at the Gresham and elsewhere, succeeded in uniting them, and the funds began to pour in. The united committee used to meet in Bachelor's Walk. In spite of occasional bickering it worked very well. Everybody in need was relieved indiscriminately. On one occasion Mr. Keohane brought us a sum of money which had been given to him. We gave it to two families off the North Strand, who had been described to us as in difficulties, and they used it to go to Lewes where they spent a fortnight! When Mr. Keohane heard it he was angry, and he said he had meant it for ourselves. He was too nice and sensitive to tell us that bluntly when he was giving us the money, for fear we might be offended.

*67 man - means was executed from the cell 67 (Kilmainham) & Larry was afterwards put in to that same cell.
E.O'K. O'K.*

It was a curious coincidence that Father was a

SIGNED *Billy O'Donoghue O'Reilly*
DATE *29th June '49*

WITNESS *Sw Cousins*

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
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