ORIGINAL

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STATEMENT BY WITNESS

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Witness

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Dublin.

Identity

Member of Irish Volunteers London 1913-1916.

Subject

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(b) O'Connell St. and G.P.O. Easter Week 1916.

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ORIGINAL

STATEMENT BY WILLIAM D. DALY, 188 CLONLIFFE RD., DRUMCONDRA, DUBLIN.

On Saturday evening, 6th December 1913, a meeting was called for St. George's Hall, Westminster Bridge Road, London, for the purpose of inaugurating the Irish Volunteers supporting the Home Rule Bill championed by J.E. Redmond, the leader of the Irish Party in the House of Commons. The Chairman of the meeting, Mr. 'Liam McCarthy introduced Col. Arthur Lynch of Boer War fame. Colonel Lynch made a slashing speech, in parallel to Meagher's speech of the sword, calling it his speech of the gun. In his oration he exhorted all Irishmen to link up with the new volunteers that had just formed in Dublin.

At the conclusion of the meeting over 100 men had given their names to become members and it is significant to note that members of the Gaelic League and G.A.A. took positions of office. I remember Joseph O'Leary taking office of treasurer and others on the committee.

For months after this St. George's Hall and the roof thereof resounded with the drilling of men, we being fortunate in having men who were drill-instructors in the British Army putting us through our paces. One instructor in particular, a Sgt. Major of the Irish Guards, broke bounds every Saturday night from Wellington Barracks to assist in making soldiers of us; his name was O'Connor and he was afterwards killed in the war.

Time swiftly flew past and the Volunteer Split in Dublin immediately had effect in London (South). We were at that time 250 strong. War had broken out and the Volunteers of North London lost their drill hall (the German Gymnasium) while we still retained our H.Q. (St. George's Hall).

We had a small but determined band of Irish-Irelanders in South London who, when the split took place, immediately grabbed control of Hall, money, equipment and anything of value in regard of our progress. Of course, all our instructors left, with one

exception (O'Connor of the Irish Guards, who was at heart a good Irishman in the patriotic sense). Having reorganised ourselves, Mr. Joe Cassidy was appointed Commandant, and a good one he was. Eamon Tierney, another young man who had only just come into the movement like myself, was an earnest worker whose accomplishments were far-reaching; he later became a kind of connecting link between Roger Casement in Germany and ourselves. The brothers O'Leary (Joseph and David) were also trojans in their endeavours to enlist men into the ranks of the Irish Volunteers as we now designated ourselves.

Time passing toward the close of 1915 left us a band of about 60 men and we had a great route march from Clapham to Merton - a distance of 5 miles, with a small pipers' band leading us. The Londoners looked upon us as a body of men who would soon be fighting for England (little did they know). On arriving at Merton we marched on to the football field of the Thomas Davis Club (G.A.A.) and went through all the evolutions of military drilling including bayonet attacks and counter attacks. (There must have been many thousands of English killed in our minds eye at the end of that day). Michael Collins, Matt and Joe Furlong, the Noonans and Johnnie O'Connor belonged to the North London Volunteers.

At a ceili held at Fulham I first made acquaintance with Joe Good who afterwards joined in with us.. Conscription was in the air. How were we to circumvent it? We tried all plans and excuses to avoid it. It brought us to our momentous meeting in the last week of 1915 or the first week of 1916.

Before proceeding, I must make mention of men prominent and otherwise whom I came into contact with. First, Larry Ginnell, who often came to advise and cheer us to the goal before us. He we regarded as one of the greatest of Irishmen of those times in London; Joe and Martin Cassidy who gave of their best and suffered big business losses in the cause; Liam McCarthy, always willing

and wishing to preside at any meeting of Irish in London and always the first with a big subscription to obtain arms or information, or anything of value to the cause.

Coming now to the meeting in Jan. 1916, at St. George's Hall, specially convened for members and their friends. I was posted at the door with rifle and bayonet fixed and instructed not to allow a stranger in; consequently the main discussions were beyond my knowledge, but an incident took place which had a far-reaching effect upon the use of the Hall. A man whom I did not know approached to enter and I naturally challenged him and denied him entrance. He told me his name was Lynch and a friend of Martin Roddy who was in at the meeting. I sent in word and Roddy did not know him. He made an attempt to enter and I thrust the bayonet at his chest and was determined to use it if he persisted. Seeing this he retired from the place and waited outside. I afterwards learned that he was a Secret Service man and was the cause of Larry Ginnell's arrest. He was at one time a pupil of Richmond St. Schools. At the close of the meeting I was called in and told the result of it. It was decided that all single men were to go Dublin and await the Day, it being left to ourselves to decide when to travel, Michael Collins, Joe Cassidy and Joe O'Leary assisting us with our fares &c.

At the meeting I met for the first time Dave Begley and Jimmy Riley and we three settled on going to Dublin on the night of 10th Jan. On the 9th Jan. I went to David O'Leary's house and he gave me a rifle for myself and a rifle to give to Tom Clarke, a tobacconist in Gt. Britain St. Dublin. Now for the turning point in my life. I was not yet 21 years of age and was never out of London (except on a holiday) in my life. My mother was born in Kerry and had never seen Ireland since she was 4 years of age. My father (who died before I was 14 years old) was born in London of Irish parents, and I was born in Dockhead, a rough and ready quarter of London. I knew nothing of Ireland except in a hazy kind of a way until I joined the Gaelic League. So, in a sense, I adopted Ireland as my own country until it adopted me at Easter 1916.

I met Dave Begley and Jimmy Riley at Euston Station at 8 p.m. on 10th Jan. and we travelled to North Wall via Holyhead. I had my rifles with me, one taken asunder and packed in a large portmanteau, the other hanging under my long overcoat and I had to stand the whole distance from London to Dublin. My companions had saloon tickets and got to bed on board, while I stayed on deck through that stormy night, stretching myself occasionally on a big box against the deck rails. The train and boat was packed with soldiers coming to Ireland and I felt that everyone knew I was skipping the country. I managed to get safe and sound to L.&N.W.R. Station, North Wall, without arousing suspicion. I had feelings of fear while walking along the North Wall to O'Connell Bridge as there appeared to me to be a very big policeman every 20 yds. along that route and I had never seen such big men in uniform before; with the possible exception of the City of London Police, the D.M.P. were a body of biggest men I had seen.

At O'Connell Bridge Dave Begley made inquiries of the whereabouts of Seville Place to which we were directed. He had a cousin of his, Dan Begley, lodging at Mrs. Tallon's, 16 Whitworth Row. After making ourselves known to Mrs. Tallon we were invited in. An amusing incident took place; one knock was given at the door when we arrived at No. 16 and Mrs. T. came to the door with a penny and a few crusts of bread to give to the caller, as she explained that one knock at the door was usually a beggar's knock, she thought she was answering a beggar, as we undoubtedly were, but not in abject poverty. We craved hospitality and received it right royally. Only one of us could get accommodation at No. 16 and Dave stayed with his cousin, while Jimmy Riley and myself were introduced to Mrs. Merriman of 14 Lr. Oriel St. who gave us a bedroom.

And now for my business with Tom Clarke. I eventually located the tobacconist's shop in Great Britain St. and told the girl in the shop that I wished to speak to Mr. Clarke. I saw him a minute or so later and explained that I had brought a rifle to

to him to give to whomever he wished and that Mr. O'Leary had sent it. I don't wonder that he was suspicious of me with my strong cockney accent. He did not know anything about rifles or any Mr. O'Leary and I was told to take myself and my rifle away to h... from him. (He thought I was a tout and was trying to walk him into trouble). I was in a quandary. What was I to do with the rifle? Joseph O'Leary had told me where the Volunteer H.Q. was, so I ambled along and got a postman to direct me to No. 2 Dawson St. On going into the hall of No. 2 I saw a slab on the floor with words to the effect "Remember Bachelor's Walk", a reminder also of the Howth gun-running exploit. The general office situated on the 1st floor had only an office boy in attendance when I called, and on explaining my mission he suggested I should bring in the rifle and leave it at the office so that it would get into the right hands. I told him also of my reception from Tom Clarke. He smiled at me and told me to get another accent and I'd be more successful in future. I brought in the rifle the next day. I met Dan Begley that evening at Mrs. Tallon's and asked him what were we to do about getting in touch with a Volunteer Coy. He stated he would bring me into the best company in Dublin and in my opinion he did, as after events proved it to be so. The Coy. was E/Coy. II Battn. Dublin Brigade. Dan brought us to Capt. Tom Weafer who examined our Volunteer cards and told us to come to the Father Mathew Park the next Wednesday evening, 19th Jan. Capt. Tom Weafer was a tall, energetic man, a small dark moustache, and certainly a popular man with his company; his enthusiasm was unbounding and he infused it into his Coy. so much so, that if a test was put to it at that time it would have proved to be the best Coy. in the Dublin Bde. not only in its equipment but also in its zeal. But, coming back to myself and my two companions (refugees, by those in sympathy with us, and flyboys, by those against us) our first night with the Coy. came as a surprise to us, by the cead mile failte we received from officers and men. I quickly struck acquaintance with my section commander No. 1 Section, Jim Lawless, and several

youths who seemed to take us under their wings, so to speak. We were invited the following Sunday night to their club-room in Leinster Ave. and any evening we had nothing to do, go there and enjoy ourselves. We went to the club and nearly every fellow we saw seemed familiar to us, reason being that they also belonged to the one Volunteer Coy. The club was the St. Laurence O'Toole Gaelic Athletic Association Club which have since made a name second to none in the Gaelic Athletic arena. What those youths did for their club in athletic circles they also did for E/Coy. in the greater game. I quickly realised that it was an honour to belong to both Coy. and club. The club had also a pipers' band composed of its members who, when the time arrived, laid aside the pipes and took up the rifle in the sterner times.

Excuses must be made for me when I wander in this relating of facts and events that have happened around me. I got better known at No. 2 Dawson St. after Michael Collins and a number of other wellknown London-Irish came to Dublin during that first month of 1916. It was at No. 2 that Dave Begley and Jimmy Riley made acquaintance of some Fianna scouts, namely, Theo Fitzgerald, Harry Walpole, Leo Murray and Louis Marie, who brought us to the Countess Markievicz's house in Leinster Road, Rathmines. The Countess gave us a welcome to come to the house any time we wished and we took advantage of this invitation. At this time things were bad with us, funds were running low and no prospects of a job. It had been decided that whoever got a job would help to support the others. The Countess, hearing of our plight, offered us a cottage that she had in the Three Rock Mountain, so we had only to forage for food. We did not immediately take advantage of this offer as I had got a job in Maguire and Gatchells, Dawson St. through advice given to me by Sean McGarry of Ediswan's, Brunswick St. My telephone knowledge, gained by my service in the British Post Office Telephone Dept. would get me a job in Maguire's, Sean informed me. Mr. Hough of their electrical department started me immediately and told me to bring in my tools the following day (I had only a penknife towards a kit). The job was easy and the

money good, so we three, i.e. Dave, Jimmy and myself, were in clover. It was too good to last. I was out of it in three weeks, so we decided to accept Madam's offer of her cottage in the Three Rock Mountains. Three days after leaving 14 Lr. Oriel St. the house was visited by G-men looking for us; they were disappointed; we had flown, they knew not where. We were coming in for a rough passage in the mountain, eking out our money as long as possible, walking in from the mountain to Father Mathew Park every Wednesday to drill, and walking back after. We had only the comfort of laying on the next day and tightening our belts. Captain Weafer got to know of our plight, so each drill night held an auction for a bandolier or puttees or something of military value and the money got was passed over to us to keep us going and no one knew anything about it. (I only wish that I could express in words a tribute that our Captain deserves. Tom Weafer did good by stealth and would not accept any thanks from us, saying it was not he, but his company of men that gave us the help we received).

After about 4 weeks in the mountains I got another start in Maguire and Gatchell's and we decided to live again in Dublin, this time at 28 North Frederick St. which was headquarters of the refugees from England who had employment. Jimmy Riley and Dave brought their things on the Friday afternoon and I was to get mine the following day. I went the next day by train to Dundrum and, while walking the only road I knew to Lamb Doyle's where the cottage was situated, I noticed 4 R.I.C. men following me at a distance. The road I took, though I did not know, was the longest route. After a while, glancing back I could see only 2 R.I.C. I quickened my walk and arrived at the cottage and was about to enter when Mrs. Mulligan, of the next cottage, called me and told me she had my bag and that the cottage had been raided by the police in the morning and were hanging around to see who would go in. I then realised what the R.I.C. were after. Mrs. Mulligan directed me the way to Rathfarnham (to avoid the R.I.C.). I climbed the hill beyond Lamb Doyle's, crossed a road and came alon a valley in a field to the main road beyond Ticknock, finally

reaching Rathfarnham and took a tram to the Pillar. Sean Gleeson and Frank Thornton were my O/Cs. at 28 Nth. Frederick St. and, after reporting to them, I settled down in our town residence. During this time we were at all parades with E/Coy. including Sunday mornings when target practice was indulged in. Jimmy Riley and Dave were frequent visitors to Madam's house in Leinster Road and were very friendly with the Fianna lads. It was at Leinster Road I met James Connolly who occasionally spent a few hours' leisure and pleasure there; he seemed to thoroughly enjoy the pranks of the boisterous lads and also have a chat with a citizen army man who had been wounded in Liberty Hall accidentally - James Hanratty. Andy Dunne was a regular visitor also and had a lovely tenor voice which gave us pleasure to hear as all the songs he sang were of an inspiring nature. We also spent a portion of our evenings in the O'Toole clubrooms in Leinster Ave. North Strand. It was there I received a nickname which I do not deserve and was originally intended for Jimmy Riley. It came about in the following manner - a member of the club, Paddy Berney, had been telling a few tall yarns and Jimmy Riley capped these by a story which was beyond belief and insisted that it was true. After we had left the club that evening Berney stated that that Cockney lad was worse than Peter Pepper who was kicked out of hell seven times before breakfast for telling lies. I, being the tallest of the 3 Londoners, was thus christened, and it is certainly a misnomer. I was for a long time referred to as Peter Pepper, but I never got hot about the gills over it.

Around about this time, things with regard to the activities of the Irish Volunteers were being viewed by the British authorities as becoming serious, and on St. Patrick's Day 1916, I witnessed and took part in the most impressive event, I think, in modern Irish affairs, namely the church parade and march past in College Green. I shall endeavour to relate all the incidents of that memorable day, from a participant's viewpoint. I received mobilisation order to attend Father Mathew Park at 9 a.m. on St. Patrick's Day. On arrival and falling in with E/Coy. we formed

into battalion formation with other companies of the II Battalion. E/Coy. were given priority of position in the Battn. owing to being headed by the O'Toole Pipers' Band, as practically every member of the band was also a member of E/Coy. Marching off we proceeded along Philipsburgh Ave to Ballybough Bridge, thence along Summerhill Parnell St. My geographical knowledge of Dublin at this time was practically nil, but I know we came near Linenhall Bks. and in this vicinity we met a party of British soldiers headed by a brass band coming evidently from a church parade. The II Bn. O/C., Tom Hunter was marching in front with his adjutant and second in command, and on nearing the British party, gave orders to the pipers to strike up a quick march tune which they did with such effect as to throw the British out of step with their own band. I felt a thrill of delight when this happened. I should have mentioned that we were with full equipment on the parade and I was proud of my short Lee Enfield which was the latest pattern and, although the majority of us were without uniforms, I may say without boasting that we made a show that was as good as the best that other countries had. We certainly had enthusiasm second to none. Coming back to the parade, we proceeded across one of the Liffey bridges, Queen St. Bridge, I think, thence along the South Quays to SS. Michael & John's chapel. We halted there and were met by the other battns. forming the Dublin Brigade; we were standing at ease for about ½ hour during which time all our equipment was examined by G-men and others in the pay of the British Government. I know my rifle received plenty of scrutiny from sightseers. We received orders drawing us to attention, were filed into SS. Michael and John's to attend the special Mass held for the benefit of the Irish Volunteers. The Rev. Father Nevin, I believe, officiated and the scene had a profound effect on me which will never leave my mind. A guard of honour in full uniform had been drawn up around the altar and the chapel packed to its utmost capacity with Volunteers. At the elevation the guard of honour drew their swords to the Salute while the bugles rang out with a clarity that was astounding owing to the packed condition of the chapel; in the immediate silence that took place the priest on the alter, with the guard in the

attitude of salute, looked like a vision fron another world and in the faces of those near me was the appearance that they also were looking into something wonderful. Patrick Pearse, The O'Rahilly, Sean McDermott and the executive who were in close attendance near the altar, appeared to look in their uniforms as if receiving a special blessing from God, and undoubtedly every man attending that Mass received such a blessing. Suddenly a rich baritone voice burst into the hymn to our Patron Saint "Hail Glorious St. Patrick" and it was taken up by the whole congregation in such a fervent manner that a lump rose in my throat and I wanted to burst out crying or to do something to prove that I was worthy of being in their company. I feel sure that such were the feelings of every man there. At the conclusion of the Mass we were formed into a Brigade formation with pride of place given to the O'Toole Pipers, and started our march to College Green, at which, I think, a horse drawn lorry was used as a saluting base. The II Battn. was drawn up on the Post Office side, the pipers were placed around the lorry and the remainder of the Brigade assembled so as to form a hollow square. All traffic had to be diverted and, indeed, a motor car containing British military officers tried to pass through, but was stopped and had to retire gracefully along Dame St. and reach its destination by another route. Discretion was the better part of valour with these officers as they quickly realised that their lives were forfeit had they attempted to carry on with their intentions, as both the Irish Volunteers and the onlookers were determined to prevent any interference. After Eoin MacNeill had taken the salute my ideas regarding the rest of that day were hazy owing to the earlier incidents making such an impression on me. I know that I spent the evening at Mrs. Tallon's and finished up, I think, at a ceili at the O'Toole Club.

Like the ten little niggers dwindling in number, one of the trio of which I was a member was shortly destined to disappear from among us. The Fianna lads who were always at Madam's house did not confine their pranks to the house, but practised their tricks whenever and wherever possible, and on leaving Leinster Road in the small hours of the morning, would go along Rathmines singing the Watch on the Rhine

and all classes of ~~typical~~ topical songs and, not content with that, would empty dust-bins down areas of houses outside of which they would be placed. Not enjoying this kind of practical joke, I remained away and did not associate with the lads, as unnecessary trouble would be created. On one of these escapades the police made a rush from a side street and arrested Jimmy Riley with the result that he was conscripted into the British Army, while Dave Begley got a lesson he never forgot. At any rate he also cut his associations with the Fianna lads and confined himself to enjoyment at the O'Toole Club. On another occasion I had a narrow squeak from being arrested in the centre of the city. A big meeting had been called at the Mansion House and was presided over by Tom Kelly who made what was considered a seditious speech and in which he held up before the audience a copy of the "London Times" and a copy of "Honesty". There were a few G-men present who were taking notes and, having been detected, were being treated roughly by the crowd, when the Lord Mayor, Larry O'Neill, called order from the balcony, stating that such goings-on "could not take place in my house". He was quickly reminded that it was the citizens' house, not his; in any case the note-takers lost their notes and were lucky to escape uninjured. After the meeting practically the whole audience formed up outside the Mansion House and paraded the Mansion House and paraded the city, being accompanied by a force of about 60 police, marching along Stephen's Green, down Grafton St. and towards College Green. The police were reinforced by about 100 more at the corner of Nassau St. and were edging into the crowd with the intention of making arrests of some of the leaders. Nearing Trinity College, a few noticed the move of the police and an angry murmur passed like a distant roll of thunder and as the police were drawing batons a few shots were fired into the air by some in the crowd, while the police made a rush and the crowd melted in record time. At this time I edged to the path and stood as if I was an onlooker and a policeman made as if to arrest me and then changed his mind and told me to get home out of that, which I certainly did. This meeting occurred about a fortnight before Easter Week and was due to some proclamation issued by the

military authorities. At about this time I again left my employment at Maguire's of my own accord, as I learned that the police were making inquiries about me. When I reported my action to Frank Thornton, O/C., 28 North Frederick St., he reported the matter to Bulmer Hobson who in some way was on a controlling committee of the house. J.J. Walsh and Bulmer Hobson told me to go back to my work but I refused, as I would not risk capture, and I was told to report to Kimmage, which was a refuge for those refugees who were idle. This I was willing to do and in collecting my gear which comprised 7 rifle with plenty of ammunition, 3 shotguns which had just been issued by E/Coy. and 2 revolvers, it was found that "28" was left with very little means of defence, I was then asked to remain as a permanent guard on the place to which I agreed, and remained until Easter Week.

I received an invitation to a lecture on street fighting by James Connolly at 25 Parnell Square, and he gave a vivid description of battles fought in city streets in Mexico and how such fighting should be carried on. I little thought that our time was near.

THE INSURRECTION, EASTER MONDAY, 1916.

The last parade in Father Mathew Park of E/Coy. took place on April 19th. The pavilion in which the men formed up was packed; about 140 men were on parade and the feeling at the beginning was that a big route march would take place on the following Sunday, Easter. Shortly after we fell in Tom Hunter, the Bn. O/C., came in followed by Thomas McDonagh, The O'Rahilly, Dick Mulcahy and one other executive officer whom I cannot remember. Captain Tom Weafer called us to attention and told us that higher officers were going to speak to us on a serious matter. The executive officers were introduced to the men by Tom Hunter and, before they spoke to us, Capt. Weafer called Herbert Conroy and myself from the ranks and gave each of us a revolver fully loaded and instructions to parade in the Park grounds and shoot any stranger loitering or trying to get into the grounds. Immediately the air became electrified and a tingling wave of excitement passed through me. Herbie and I walked out into the dark and were groping around for a few minutes, after which

we were well able to see. Even things that were still seemed to move; we conversed in whispers. "Whst does it mean, Liam" said Herbie. "I don't know" I whispered "but I reckon war will have to break out soon as things are becoming too hot". "Hist" says he "look over there" pointing to a hedge. I could see nothing at first and a little later saw a movement. We both dropped to our hands and knees and crawled towards the low hedge and discovered it to be a horse looking over from the next field. "I was hoping that was a G-man" said Conroy "as I'd love to use this revolver". I asked him to whom did the field belong and he told me it belonged to the Kickham Football Club and explained that they had seceded from the G.A.A. We continued our patrol around the park occasionally conversing in whispers. After about an hour we were relieved by 2 other men and we went into the pavilion just in time to heat Thomas McDonagh say - "and remember men what Capt. Doyle has told you, sew your first aid outfit inside the lining of your coats". After the staff officer had left, a buzz of undertones went through the Coy. and I knew that something serious had been discussed and, chatting with Dan Begley on the way home, he said "Well, Liam, the day must be near now". It was the following day t that excitement was intense throughout Dublin, owing to a speech made at the Corporation Council by Alderman Tom Kelly in which he exposed the British Government intention of placing a military cordon around the Archbishop's Palace, Irish Volunteers Offices, The Refugees Camp at Kimmage and 28 North Frederick St. We refugees (about 20 in number) at 28 Nth. Frederick St. were furiously working the whole night barricading the house and preparing for a siege; meanwhile curious sightseers stood in the street to look at the house that had suddenly come into prominence. The next morning, Good Friday, news arrived that the British military had no such intention, but all the same the excitement continued to grow and we were confined to the house and I was on continual guard. Besides being a haven for Refugees, 28 North Frederick St. was also H.Q. of the Hibernian Rifles, Irish American Alliance, to which also was attached the Girl Scouts. There were

many comings and goings at 28 on Good Friday and Saturday; men coming in up to 3 a.m. in the morning and during all this time I was the guard on the door, and sleeping in my clothes in the room off the hall. On Saturday night a dance was held at 28 by the members of the Rifles, and at 2 a.m. Sunday morning, Frank Thornton asked me to take a message to Stamer St. S.C.R. to a Miss Connolly for Mick Collins. It was a mobilisation order to the I.R.B. in London to come immediately to Dublin as war was about to break out. Sam McGuire was Head Centre for London and was ready with about 60 men to come at a moment's notice. I believe the order never reached him.

Sunday was a day of intense excitement at 28 as we were awaiting word and had all our gear and equipment packed ready to go. Word came in that everything had been called off and then came word to carry on; we were on tenterhooks to know the truth. The O'Rahilly had gone to the country to call things off, so we were told, and that Eoin MacNeill was undecided what to do. I had already been since Thursday without removing my boots from my feet and had been practically on continual duty at the door.

EASTER MONDAY, 1916.

I had been relieved in the early hours on Monday and slept in my clothes until about 9.30 at which time I got my breakfast. At about 10 o'clock Peter Martin, a mobiliser of E/Coy., told me to report at once to Father Mathew Park with all my gear and to be in full uniform. I reported that fact to my house commandant, Frank Drinán (Thornton) and he countermanded the order and told me I was to remain under his command, which I did. At about 11.40 we had all our rifles, shotguns and equipment and were on the march to Liberty Hall in Beresford Place where we were met by the refugees from Larkfield, Kimmage, and having assembled in military formation awaited only for a minute or two when a closed horse cab arrived and took up its position at the head of our column, and at about 4 minutes to 12 noon, James Connolly, Patrick Pearse and Sean

McDermott got into a cab and started off into Lr. Abbey St. toward O'Connell St. We were all heavily armed and had our rifles at the slope and, turning into O'Connell St. the traffic slowed down to allow the body of men to pass. Just as the cab reached the portico of the G.P.O. I heard a shrill sound of a whistle and an order shouted "left wheel" which order was carried out by going into the building; an officer immediately in front of the section of men in which I was placed gave us the order "about turn" and leading us into Lr.Abbey St., pointed out shops and houses into which we were to make entranc and to barricade. About 20 yds. down Lr. Abbey St. was a bicycle shop and about 30 yards further was a paper store of a newspaper; in any case we were soon rolling out huge rolls of paper and placing them across the street soon had an effective barricade made, comprising of this paper, a new motor cycle out of the window of the cycle shop, and numerous bicycles and furniture out of houses adjoining. At about 12.30 Frank Drinán led a party of us into the Ship Hotel and ordered, at the point of the gun, everyone out of the place, and going through the public bar into Sackville Lane, began to disperse the crowds which had gathered, which was a difficult thing for us to do and it was only by firing shots over their heads and taking up threatening attitudes that the people realised that we were serious.

In passing, I wish to record with pride that a few of the men I was in company with, although hardened drinkers, were stationed in the Ship Tavern, and had the taking of anything that was there, did not touch anything and refused the offerings of the barmen. We cleared the lane at the rere of the Imperial Hotel and turned into North Earl St. to Nelson Pillar where an element of the crowd became aggressive. George Plunkett, in full uniform with slouch hat, waved a revolver and fired a couple of shots into the air and ordered us to fix bayonets. At this the crowd melted and we proceeded into the Post Office which was already in the hands of our advance guards and was being barricaded strongly. On going through the body of the Main Hall, in preparation for taking up a position aft a window.

James Connolly saw me and beckoned me to go to him. I went up and saluted and waited for what orders he might give me. Patrick Pearse came over to us and Connolly said "This man can fix up a line of communication to the roof for us". He told me to take a man to help me and report to Lieut. Boland on the roof, do what was needed and report back to him. I immediately got Joe Good and told him to recover without damage any telephone cable he saw fixed to the wall outside in the yard of the building. In the meanwhile I took down a telephone in one of the booths and proceeded to find my way to the roof. On the top floor, where the trunk switchboards were situated, was a ladder leading to the roof. Michael Collins was in charge of the room and J.J. Walsh had control of the Trunk Boards. I shook hands with Collins and told him what I was to do. He directed me the way to the roof and gave orders that I was not to be hindered. On the roof I met Lieut. Boland, a Rathfarnham man who had Boer war experience and was certainly very efficient. He gave me every assistance in my work. Having fixed the phone in position I told him to have a wooden cover around it so that he could put in his head and speak and muffle the sound of the firing which at this time seemed to be all over the city. Boland pointed out to me figures of men in the tower of Amiens St. Station and told me that they were British military. I left Boland and rambled round looking for Joe Good to see the amount of cable he had retrieved. On my way I met Herbie Conroy in charge of a prisoner who, he stated, had been sniping at us. I never saw the prisoner after. I found Joe pulling down cable in the yard and went into the basement to see if I could find anything useful. I found a Volunteer vainly trying to stop a gas engine that was running. After a while I got about 100 yards of cable made up in short lengths and, having joined it, proceeded to run it up from a telephone in the Main Hall up to the roof and in about 2 hours had communications made, after which I reported to James Connolly. He told me to wait around a bit as he might want me, so having a roving commission, I found Herbie Conroy and had a chat about the Coy. and where the men were. He, like myself, had not got in touch

with E/Coy. but proceeded to where the fighting was going on and found that the G.P.O. was the nearest place and had no difficulty in getting in. At about 7 p.m. Connolly called and told me to bring an electrician with me and report to Captain Breen, Engineer Officer in Reis's Jewellery shop at the corner of Abbey St. I got another London-Irish lad, Johnnie O'Connor (Blimie), whom I knew was a spark and we proceeded to Reis's. In answer to our knock a fierce-loonking man opened the door. I told him my instructions and he would not believe me, (My strong Cockney accent put me in a bad position and Blimey's accent was even worse), and his red moustache bristled up and he dragged me in, presumably to make a prisoner of me, when suddenly a voice was heard saying "Hallo, Peter"; coming dow the stairs was my own Coy. Capt. Tom Weafer, saying to the man at the door "Its all right, Paddy, that lad is one of us". He brought us upstairs and I explained my mission to him. He introduced us to Captain Breen who was not ready for us as our job was to be done during the night. Tom Weafer said he would borrow me for a few hours, having brought me to the ground floor he showed me an iron de door leading to the jewellery shop which was left intact both by the Volunteers and the looters (looting was wholesale at this time and was unchecked, we having our hands full in fighting and barricading, although care was taken to prevent looting at Reis's as it was an important post). Weafer gave me a pick and two crow-bars, hammers and chisels and told me to break down that iron door a quickly as possible. Working in a confined space I managed single-handed to break down the door by about 11 o'clock and, leaving one of the guards over it, reported to Weafer, who came down with Sean McGarry to inspect my work. Weafer, McGarry and myself went into the shop. I was asked if there was anything I liked, so I selected a cheap luminous watch which I considered of military value and had no qualms about taking it. Weafer did likewise and I suggested that there may be field glasses which could also be taken and used. 3 pairs were found of which Weafer kept 1 pair, the others I presume were given for use to other officers.

I was at this time absolutely fagged out and bring brought

to the top of the house, although very hungry I was too tired to eat, and lying down on a mattress I fell asleep immediately. I was awakened at 2.30 a.m. on Tuesday morning and found that someone had put a pillow under my head and covered me over with a blanket and taken off my collar and tie while I was sleeping. A pint jug of steaming hot tea was handed to me while sitting upon the mattress and in another minute a plate with three fried eggs and sausages with plenty of bread and butter was placed before me. I had only two packages of biscuits since 9.30 a.m. the previous day. That early morning breakfast was one of the most glorious meals I have ever had, the memory of it lingered with me for many a day as I was young and healthy and had not a care in the world even in the midst of the events taking place around me. I made short work of that grub both because I was ravenous and had to report to Capt. Breen at 2.45. On reporting he asked me of my knowledge of wireless, which was limited, and explained then the reason of the importance of the building in which we were. There was a wireless school there which had been sealed up by the British Government owing to the war, but all the instruments had been left intact. My job was to re-erect the ~~ariels~~ aerials and poles on the roof in peparation of sending messages by wireless to the outside world and thus break down the wall of silence built by the enemy. On the roof there was about 4 men waiting to push the poles in position when the ~~ariels~~ aerials were fixed to the pulleys. Blimey fixed one pole in the Abbey St. side of the roof which was an easy matter. I had to fix the other on the O'Connell St. end of the roof which was a difficult proposition as there was only a shallow valley to the roof at that point and necessitated clamping the poles to the wall of a higher building adjoining and for which a clamp was already in position. To reach the clamp I had to climb a narrow ledge which exposed me above the ridge tiles and gave me about 10 minutes work unbolting the clamp, fixing the pole into position and bolting up the clamp again. Dawn was breaking at this time and the roof of Dublin made a lovely silhouette for anyone interested in that type of beauty, but I was interested in

my work and wanted to get it done. I had been working for about five minutes when something struck the wall at the side of me. I did not take any notice; then two or three more pebbles struck the wall. I then shouted to the fellows about 8 feet below to stop throwing things. I'll not state the words I used as they were spoken in a strong cockney dialect and I was assured that they were not doing anything. When I had just completed the clamping of the pole a corner brick of the wall was shattered. I then realised that I had been a target for at least half a minute and the pebbles I thought were bullets fired apparently from the tower of Amiens St. Station. I was thankful that it was the last bullet and not the first that made me know the actual conditions of affairs, otherwise I doubt whether I would have carried out my job. I dropped from the ledge into the valley all of a heap and remained there for awhile in a faint as the reaction set in and the fear of being under fire passed away. Some of the lads though I had been hit. After that incident I went and had another feed and slept until about midday. I then took up post at a window facing Mid. Abbey St. and, with the exception of taking an interes in a fire which occurred at Lawrence's toy shop, and in the goings and comings of looters with whom Sheehy Skeffington was remonstrating and appealing to go to their homes, there was nothin of importance occufred at Reis's on Tuesday until about 5.30 p.m. At this time a buzz of excitement and bustle took place. The wireless apparatus was ready for transmitting. Patrick O'Donoghue a wireless operator, was given instructions to send out the Proclamation of the Irish Republic on the ether. This was done twice on Tuesday and three times on Wednesday morning. I was relieved at 6 o'clock, but remained at the window and had a sleep on the floor until 9.30 p.m. when I took up duty again. There was an arc lamp alight in front of us which was a nuisance; we were told to put it out. I fired five shots before I could break the carbon to extinguish it. The firing throughout the city was very heavy at this time. When the light was extinguished Leo Henderson came in and got 12 men to go with him to establish or strengthen

another post on the opposite side of O'Connell St. Nothing more of interest took place in my immediate vicinity that night.

Early on Wednesday morning a party of us were told off to collect all foodstuffs in the Dublin Bread Coy's building next door, our method being to walk across planks from one window to another at rere. Huge quantities of roast beef, cooked meat and hams, bread, confectionery, pastries, sides of bacon, eggs; in fact anything that was edible was transferred to a horse-drawn lorry waiting in Lr. Abbey St. for removal to the Commissariat's Dept. in the G.P.O. In the meanwhile the receiving apparatus of the wireless was dismantled in readiness for removal also to the G.P.O. The driver of the lorry started off to H.Q. with all the grub under an intense fire from the British stationed in McBirney's and Carlisle Building, so there was no hope of his returning to bring over the apparatus. We, therefore, got a large table and, having upturned it, placed in the wireless gear and covered it over with a white table cloth and six of us, of which I was of the number, started off to cross O'Connell St. wit our burden. Immediately we came into the line of fire the firing ceased and not a shot was fired as we went on our journey. We were amazed and for the time being could not understand why we were respected in this manner. The only reason that could be attributed was that it was thought we were carrying a badly-wounded or dead man across to the G.P.O. Having left our burden in the P.O. we started off under heavy fire to get back to our post and got across safely. I did not mind this in the least as I had passed through my baptism the previous morning..

At this time a message was signalled to us to get ready to evacuate the post and to retire to the Hibernian Bank of which Capt. Tom Weafer was O/C. At about 1 p.m. I saw Paddy Mitchell with a Red Cross armlet on, he run round the corner from O'Connell S into the Bank and he came out a few minutes later shouting to us that Weafer was badly hit and he returned to the temporary hospital ~~hospital~~ (which had been a mock auctioneer's shop) to

get a stretcher and bearers to bring Weafer out, but owing to the i intense firing, was unable to get back to the bank. We could hear Weafer yelling with pain and groaning in agony. The bullet struck through the liver and kidneys and the pain must have been terrible.

It was at this time we left Reis's and went into the Bank to bring picks and sledges to break through to the adjoining house which proved to be the hospital. Orders were signalled to evacuate the hospital and bring over the wounded to the G.P.O. but before this could be done, we had to break through the walls into the hospital. A Half hour's hard work sufficed to make a hole through the wall, but the hole on the Bank side of wall was about 3 feet from the floor and 2 feet from the ceiling in the next house. Having made the hole large enough I got feet first through it and completed the attack on the wall from the other side and by means of boxes arranged a rough flight of steps down in the room. Two wounded men were first assisted through (one of them was Ignatius Flynn, a member of E/Coy). Word was brought down to us at this time, 3 p.m., that Poor Tom Weafer was dead. (The Hibernian Bank was his crematorium). Capt. Liam Breen ~~O'Brien~~ was the next in command and ordered the vacating of the bank and was the last to come into the hospital building. We brought along with us the crude grenades as we left each post. The firing eased down considerably while the nurses and wounded made their way to H.Q. We who remained behind in the hospital gathered together all the mattresses and other material of value in preparation for a rush across the road. There were nineteen of us left. Six of us took the grenades and the remainder took a mattress apiece. First of all a couple would rush out for about 3 yards and then run back and immediately we heard the burst of firing, seven or eight would rush across the road and, running in a zig-zag fashion, made us difficult targets. The whole lot of us got across in this manner with only one wounded as he got into Prince's St. I had hobnailed boots on and half-way across I slipped and fell directly behind the statue of Sir John Grey with a mattress I was carrying on my shoulder. I got to my feet instantly and continued

my rush while a cheer went up from the Post Office, but in my haste the rifle had slipped from the mattress and was lying in the centre of O'Connell St. Another man running behind me picked it up and continued on with it. Having left the mattresses down we were ordered off to different posts; so, until the evacuation of the P.O. I was placed at Henry St. end of the building on the 1st floor under the command of Liam Cullen. I was delighted, as at this time I was with other London-Irish lads among whom was Joe Reilly, who was always ready to liven up things with a rousing song or crack a few jokes. I was not in my new abode long when I felt the pangs of hunger and decided to look for grub and found the kitchen in the upper portion of the G.P.O., but found it hard to get food as it was rationed in very small quantities by Desmond Fitzgerald, who was commissariat. Joe Reilly then went through the various openings broken in the walls of the G.P.O. and other buildings along Henry St. until he came to a provision shop and came back with a flitch of bacon and we started a cooking class of our men in Liam Cullen's post. On one sortie we came into the Waxworks Exhibition and after killing a dog which had gone mad in the basement of the house we had an inspection of the wax figures and came away with the effigies of King Edward and Wolfe Tone and brought them to our post. Some genius put the figures at the windows and immediately a fusilade of bullets came through and we had to duck for a few minutes until the firing died down. The idea of the wax figures of Wolfe Tone and King Edward being riddled by bullets amused us a great deal. The room in which we were stationed was the 'dead' parcels office and in the cupboards was a large number of parcels that for some reason or other could not be delivered and were held in safe custody. Among them was a small parcel of spectacles and Thomas O'Donoghue was testing them to replace his own when he must have exposed himself a through the window a couple of bullets came whizzing in and scattered the parcel off the table and he was quite indignant thinking that one of the men in the room had thrown a missle at his prize, and it was fully a minute before he realised that he was under fire. He

was careful after that.

Wednesday night was rather uneventful in our quarters, except of course the heavy firing throughout the city and the terrific reports of the Howth Mausers whenever fired. (I'm certainly glad I was hit with a .303 in comparison to one of those Mauser bullets) On Thursday morning at about 9.30 Thomas Clarke came to our post to cheer us up. We did not need it, we had Joe Reilly with us, who was always singing and making desperate efforts to learn the new marching song, The Soldier's Song. Mr. Clarke gave us all bars of chocolate and had a chat with each of us before going round the rest of the garrison. That was the last time I saw Tom Clarke. The weather was remarkably fine for the time of the year and we had no rain at all and to a certain extent it was rather unfortunate, as the event that occurred later on that Thursday proved. The firing grew more intense as the day got older, and the impression was (at our post) that the British had got artillery in position and was getting the range of the P.O. from the Parnell monument. In any case, late that evening a terrific bombardment took place and a shell evidently went into the Imperial Hotel opposite and in the course of about ½ hour the whole building was in flames. Then Hoyte's went up and flames went about 60 feet in the air. We could only hope that the garrisons of those buildings escaped safely. The sight of the Imperial in flames was a thing I shall never forget. I could distinctly see the wall papers burning off the walls and look like figures of people rushing hither and thither trying to get away and then to see the floors crashing one by one into the inferno. All during this time the firing of the British was becoming more intense and during the night a rather unusual spectacle of riderless horses rushing apparently from O'Connell Bridge brought shouts of "don't fire" from different points of the G.P.O. and Metropole Hotel, which were still intact. There were among us some old Boer War veterans who saw through the ruse, which was to cause us to fire on the horses and immediately bring an intense fusilade on ourselves. I was glad at this time to have my luminous watch as my companions were continually asking the

time. In the early hours of Friday morning word came to us of the condition of different parts of the G.P.O. There had been a struggle going on during the night to prevent the roof from going on fire as the sparks from the Imperial were lying inches thick in a red mass on the roof above our heads and we were losing in the struggle against the demon fire, and had we any rain or even if the breeze had been blowing away from us, we could have saved the building. It soon became essential for a greater part of the garrison to do nothing but combat the flames. The hydrants were useless and the water pressure was reduced to such that only a small trickle of water came from the hose. By about 4 p.m. the whole portico of the building was a mass of flames and a general retreat would have to take place. All posts were ordered to assemble in the Main Hall. The wounded were collected together ready for evacuation. Patrick Pearse called the men to order and brought us to a side door leading on to Henry St. When 40 of us had got into the street he lined us up, leaving the remainder for the time within the building. He used words to the effect that having to leave the G.P.O. we were an advance party to establish a new H.Q. at Williams & Woods Factory and that our Engineer Officer would be Captain Breen, and that we would be led by The O'Rahilly. At this point my connection with the main garrison ended. We started off with a cheer for The O'Rahilly, fixed bayonets and started over the barricades and, if I rightly remember, we came into Moore St. from Henry St. and had proceeded more or less as a crowd about 30 yards into the street when a terrific burst of firing took place. A man close to me did a sensible thing and I did likewise. He ran to the left hand side of the street and advanced along on that side and I did the same. While crossing the road my hat was carried off by a bullet and my overcoat was perforated in three or four places, and to hear the whine of the bullets is an experience I don't wish to have repeated.

Meanwhile, the British were firing into the mass of the

men, leaving us individuals who had extended to be picked off later I had advanced along the left hand side of the street and had got nearly opposite Price's Stores when I felt struck with something which numbed my left arm. I still ran on and caught up on my companion in front and told him I was hit and he suddenly dropped and crawled into a doorway. He was also hit. There was for a few seconds a lull in the firing and I turned round to see where the remainder were and found that I was alone in the street. I ran back to a laneway and saw that some of the men were down the lane. I still had my rifle and I had not thought of firing it. Turning round and seeing soldiers at Parnell St. end of Moore St. I went on my knee and fired at them, emptying my magazine . As I put the butt to the ground and was raising myself with the aid of the rifle a bullet struck it and scattered both myself and the rifle on the cobbled roadway leading to the lane. I immediately ran down the lane to the other lads. There were eight of us left and one of them, Clinch ~~Clynch~~, assumed leadership and decided that we continue to Williams and Woods. We started to turn into Cole's Lane and a terrific machine gun burst of firing opened up and we got back quicker than when we started. It was decided to break into some stables off the lane and await events. In the meantime I was getting weak with the loss of blood which felt like hot water running down my arm. My rifle barrel was bent a little by the impact of the bullet. After one of the men climbed over a yard gate and opened it for us our wounded then received attention. The first aid outfit inside the lining of my coat was open and the wound was crudely dressed; not knowing if an artery or a vein had been severed it was decided to bind my arm tightly both above and below the wound; subsequently my arm and hand swelled to an enormous size. I settled down to rest on some straw in the stable while a couple of lads went on outpost in the loft. During the remainder of the night desultory firing took place and one of the lads came down for more ammunition. I told him to go through my pockets and take all he could get; unfortunately for me he did not.

I slept on and off until about 9 a.m. Saturday morning. Clinch gave me a few biscuits and a drink of water. The firing had greatly died down and only an occasional shot could be heard and at about 11.30 a young man with glasses in a Volunteer slouch hat came along the lane and down by the stable bearing a white flag calling on all volunteers to leave their posts. I had a wild belief at the moment that the British had retired and that we were to rally again. I got a bitter disappointment on arrival in Moore St. to see the men lined up two deep and the wounded standing and lying by the shops on the right hand side of the street. I was placed with the wounded and my companions of the previous night lined up with the remainder. What became of them I did not at the time know as I, along with the rest of the casualties, had been brought to the lorries and ambulances in Parnell St. where our names and addresses were taken. We were then taken to Dublin Castle to have our wounds dressed. The military doctor who dressed my wound was a gentleman and admonished me for being so foolish as to take up arms against the Government and destroy the good work that J.E. Redmond was doing I naturally disagreed with him and took it all in good part. When he finished he asked for a souvenir and I offered the penknife which he refused, but asked me for any ammunition or anything that would incriminate me, as he would destroy any evidence on me. I told him my friends had taken my stuff from me. He wished me luck on leaving him.

I was brought along a dark corridor at the end of which I met pals in distress like myself; among them was Liam Cullen whom I was delighted to see again; he told me we were about to be searched and was glad he had nothing on him. I thought I was in the same position. Alas, I was brought into an office before a Major, a notetaker and a sergeant. My name and address were taken again (by the way I was still under the name of Liam Doyle). Then the sergeant began his search; he took my watch which my sister had sent for my 21st birth day, a luminous watch; then out came a wire gauge and wire cutters which, when exhibited, caused the Major to ask me if I did any of

wireless work. I told him to find out; he did not answer, but nodded to the sergeant who continued his search, and in the left hand pocket of my coat (which owing to my wound I had been unable to reach) drew out 15 rds. of .303 in clips. This exhibit finished me with any gentleness from those in that office. The sergeant opened a jack knife and inserted the blade into my puttees , ripped them off me and in the process ripped the legs of my trousers and cut my legs in two or three places, after which he cut the buttons off my trousers and pulled my braces away and flung them into a corner. What with having over a week's growth on my face and having to hold up my trousers with my right hand and trying to support my left arm by gripping the lapel of my coat, I suppose I looked the most miserable and felt the most miserable man in the corridor after the searches were completed. There was another ordeal awaiting me and that was to be scrutinised and questioned by detectives. A citizen Army man named O'Toole told me that Johnnie Barton was going among the men and warned me against him as he was dangerous. As the corridor was dark he went among us with a candle and, after giving me a searching look, asked me where I worked. I tried to put on an Irish accent and said I was like himself - it was only fools and horses that worked. He smiled and went on. After this we were crowded into what had been the barbers shop and began to converse as to what next would happen. Liam Cullen had been wearing a long scarf. This he tied around my waist to keep my trousers up and another lad put his scarf around my neck and made a sling for my left arm.

There were two windows in the shop which looked out into the yard and on Sunday morning at about 12 o'clock we saw some high military officers and Mr. Birrell in the yard carrying on a conversation. Some food was brought up to us after which we were brought to the yard, lined up and marched off to Kilmainham Jail to join other prisoners there. The route from the Castle to the jail was lined with people, a great number of whom were very hostile to us and used filthy expressions at us. Our sacrifices

at that time were not appreciated, at least by the people living in the vicinity of the Castle; some of the women in shawls spat at us. Kilmainham Jail is certainly a gloomy place and had a depressing effect on every one of us. In my batch which numbered about 30 were a few old soldiers who were members of the Citizen Army. As we were brought into a room a sergeant of the guard, an Irishman, struck some of the old soldiers on the head with the heavy door keys and a complaint was lodged with the sergeant-major who had the sergeant removed. We were exercised in the yard and brought back after about ½ hour, and a sergeant when bringing the food to us told us that a trench 100 yards long had to be dug and that several barrels of quicklime were alongside of it ready for use and we were all being finished off at dawn next morning or the day after. We recited the rosary and prepared ourselves for whatever was to take place. During the night I heard a shout of a sentry and then a shot and that left us wondering what had taken place. It appears that Batt O'Connor, who was in the room on the far side of the corridor, put his head near the window to look out at the yard very nearly got shot for his trouble. In the early hours of the next morning we heard some volleys take place and when a guard opened our room we were told that some of our leaders were shot. We immediately recited the Rosary for the repose of their souls. In the early afternoon we were allowed to exercise in the yard and there, walking alone, was Joseph Mary Plunkett in full uniform and, being a very frail figure, was a very tragic character of that sad time. Sean O'Hegarty, a Glasgow Irish lad, went over and had a chat with him and gave him a few handkerchiefs. as poor Joseph was in the last stages of T.B. and had got out of a sick-bed to take part in the Rising. Joseph was separated from us immediately and that was the last we saw of him. He was executed at dawn on the following day. One of my batch was taken out on the day of Plunkett's execution - Jack Larkin, a painting contractor - and we expected to hear of his execution, but he came safely back to us. He was questioned as regards to James Larkin, the Labour Leader, who had no act in the Rising whatsoever.

After being in Kilmainham for 4 days we were brought to Richmond Barracks where we saw a large number of prisoners, were placed in large rooms awaiting and wondering what was to happen next. On Friday, 5th May, I, along with about 300 prisoners, were marched down to the barrack square and were each given a tin of bully beef and any eatables that our friends brought us; were numbered off and again names and addresses taken ; were informed that a deportation order had been made against us and were to be transported to England. We started our march on a very wet day, but on marching down the quays were delighted in the change of attitude of the people since the previous Sunday; girls and women rush to shake hands; some of them crying and the crowds getting larger as we neared the North Wall sheds. We were herded on to a cattle boat and rumour started that we were to be torpedoed and the Germans were to be blamed. I'll not forget that sea-trip in the cattle boat. We were packed into the pens and if we wanted to sleep we had either to lie down in the dung or hang across the barrier. I asked a man to open my tin of bully beef and started satisfying the inner man. No matter what condition I was in I could always eat and I could also hunger with patience, and for hours on that journey I was seated, holding the beef tin between my knees and scooping out the meat with my finger, while the boat was being tossed like a cockle shell and the vast majority of my companions violently seasick. It must be remembered that since Easter Saturday I had not shaved and I must have looked a proper vagabond. The boat eventually arrived at Holyhead and we were lined up on the platform of the station with about a company of soldiers guarding us. After being packed with 12 prisoners and 2 guards to each compartment, the train started off to various places in England. I happened to be in that portion of the train destined for Wakefield in Yorkshire. The guards in our compartment were very sympathetic to us and treated us to tea and bread and butter. On arrival at Wakefield the populace mistook us for German prisoners, but soon we heard the talk going on the the Yorkshire dialect "They be the Irish Rebels, the pro-Germans".

Inside the prison gates we were searched and all our belongings were taken from us, including the bully beef that a large number of the men had been saving for the next hungry pangs. I was lucky in having consumed mine on board. We were each given a number and a tag to tie to our coats, a mug and plate and then were dispatched to a cell a man; were not allowed to speak, but there were a good number of bold spirits in our band and all the British Authorities in England could not stop them from speaking and many a clash between us and the prison authorities took place and many an amusing incident occurred. The following ~~story~~ incident occurred at Stafford and caused great amusement to both prisoners and guards. ~~I had been transferred to the hospital at the time~~. One day there was great bustle in the prison and we were asked to be on our best behaviour as a high official of the War Office was to inquire personally into any complaints that we had, which were many. We were lined up in the prison yard and the official explained his mission and asked the men who had complaints to stand forward and he would listen to them. Needless to say nearly all the prisoners stood forward and this rather nonplussed our visitor, but still good to his word he started going from man to man. The main complaint was against the food given us. After a while he stood out and told us that as the food question was a critical one for the whole of England, he could not listen to more complaints about food, but would listen to other grievances. Paddy Breslin, an E/Coy. man, stood forward and the official asked him what was his complaint. Paddy rubbed his chin with his hand and asked if the men could be provided with razors to shave with. The official laughed and said that razors were too dangerous for us to have and we could do a lot of damage with them. Then Paddy said "Why not give safety razors, we could do no harm with them". The official said "Oh, yes, you could". "How" asked Paddy "Well, you could fix the blades on the ends of sticks and do an enormous amount of damage". Paddy immediately answered "Where in the name of ..... are we going to get the sticks". The official gave Paddy a surprised look and, realising his mistake, burst into a fit of

laughter. Little episodes like these helped greatly to lighten our worries and shortly after the visit of the War Office official there was a great relaxation of the prison rules and we were allowed greater freedom to smoke and receive parcels of food, cigarettes and newspapers. One thing at which I was astounded and still marvel at - and that is, how news got into us of various happenings of which the general public, including our guards, were totally ignorant; one outstanding case being the drowning of Kitchener off the Shetlands, north of Scotland. The whisperings of the event passed among us in the morning and our guards would not believe us until the stop press news came in the afternoon of the following day. I have often wondered how our people got the information, but then we are an extraordinary race.

The Government by this time must have found us an awkward proposition as we were demoralising all other prisoners and conscientious objectors in the different prisons in which we were placed and had decided to put us into a concentration camp with our own leaders to control us. Then began the draftings to Frongoch, an old German concentration camp in the mountains of North Wales. (I had happy memories of this district while on a tour in 1913). There were already 130 men in the distillery portion of the camp when the first Wakefield contingent arrived, the O/Cs. being Joe Connolly and Seamus Kavanagh. Our party were 120 strong, bringing the total to 250. On arrival, we were lined up by the British Military Commandant and his staff. After all particulars had been taken of us, our names were taken again and numbers given to us;my number being 135. The commandant told us that inside the compound we were our own masters and could appoint our leaders and were to keep the camp in proper order. In warning us of going near the barbed wire barriers of the compound he informed us of the fact that the 14 armed sentries around the compound were armed with shotguns loaded with buckshot,"and you know what buckshot is!" A Corkman standing next to me shouted "Yes, your men found out all about buckshot in Dublin". The commandant demanded to know who shouted

and the sergeant major rushed up and down the ranks to find the culprit. After this the commandant was known as Buckshot and the sergeant major was known as Jack Knives. The assistant commandant was known as Rubberfaces, owing to his facial expressions. Jack Knives, although stern, became very popular with us. He tried very hard to discipline us and we defeated him on every occasion and he took his defeats in good part, although his whiskers reminded me of the flapping wings of a bird when he was in a rage, and that was the state we enjoyed to see him in. On one occasion he had to call the names and numbers of every man in the camp and it was laughable to hear him trying to pronounce some of the Irish names and some of the men in response to their names being called would reply in Gaelic and say "Annso". Jack would take his eyes off the list and glare at the men and shout "Yus, that"s what I want you to do, to bl.....y well answer". While in Frongoch we were to do our own washing and, having the use of only one arm, this was a difficult job for me. A Citizen Army man named Brady once helped me to wash my greyback shirt which was issued from the Army Stores. Brady and myself, after washing the shirt in soapy water, doubled it round an iron pipe and began twisting it to wring out the water. We kept twisting until we twisted it into two halves. I can still see him doubled up with mirth at my surprised expression.

Each night a military officer with a guard came to count us to make sure that none were missing and one night, after we had recited the rosary and were bunking down on our plank beds, we heard the usual sentry calls from Sentry No. 1 to No. 2 and so on. When Sentry No. 4 shouted "All's well, No. 5", No. 5 did not answer him but shouted "Halt!" we prisoners immediately raised our heads wondering who could be in the compound. "Halt!" was shouted the second time, and again "Halt", after which there were two loud reports from a shotgun. We were all agog early next morning to find what had happened and discovered that a shirt that had been left to dry in the compound was riddled with holes by the buckshot. Someone had forgotten to take his shirt in the previous night. That stopped

all clothes-lines in the outer compound after that incident. Another incident which had a direct bearing on my own particular position shows the loyalty of the Volunteers to each other. The British Government knew that a large number of men who had taken part in the Rising had come from various parts of England and Scotland and were wanted for conscription which had become law about January 1916. The various roll calls at the camp were used as a means of finding out the men wanted for conscription and a few were got by that manner before our Camp O/Cs. realised it. Three that I knew, Sean Nunan, Ernie his brother and Thomas O'Donoghue were taken from the camp and efforts were made to force them into the British Army, without success. The Camp O/Cs. issued orders that in future no names were to be answered at future roll calls and this order was carried out to the letter although it meant privations in the way of correspondence and visitors. In this the refugees owe a debt of gratitude to the Volunteers for the support given. We were now in full control of our internal affairs and were organising ourselves as a disciplined community. Each man had his allotted work to do either manual or administrative and many, who afterwards became national figures to a greater or lesser degree, carried out menial work without demur, proving that the ability to command must go with alacrity to obey. Our postman was Mick Brennan (afterwards Commander in chief of the Army). Jimmy Mallon was our barber; still for all that a good number remained "Holy Pictures" as those with beards were called. "Comrades" O'Mahony was a kind of welfare officer who, on the gradual releasing from the camp, saw that the released prisoners were equipped with sufficient money to carry them to their destination.

I slept in the dormitory on the 1st floor of the Distillery Camp. Next to me was Tomas MacCurtain (afterwards Lord Mayor of Cork and murdered by the Black and Tans). Many amazing incidents took place in Frongoch too numerous to mention, but sufficed to make life endurable at any rate to the younger members. A

Committee of Inquiry under the chairmanship of Jistice Pim was formed by the B.G. to investigate the causes of the insurrection and in the same way justify (in the eyes of the world) the execution of our leaders. In functioning the Committee held its court in Wandsworth Jail, London, and to this court every inmate of Frongoch was brought at different periods to undergo interrogation from its members. To look after our interests and advise us a solicitor named McDonald was in attendance at the jail on each occasion a batch of us were sent to London. Our finger prints, heights and other items of our descriptions were recorded in Frongoch and in selected batches were sent off to London. On arrival at Euston we were packed into omnibuses and were given a tour across London to Wandsworth on the south side. I made the journey interesting to my companions by pointing out places of interest on the route. By the way, the London Irish on all occasions met the trains, bringing us and gave us good cheer and often delicacies and sweetmeats and cigarettes were left for distribution among the prisoners at Wandsworth. I felt very homesick when my bus brought me to within 200 yards of my home on that journey. My mother did not know I was so near. At Wandsworth we were placed in cells and next day at about 11 a.m. brought into a reception hall ready to appear before the Court.

I had for some days before asked some of my intimates to occasionally call me Liam Daly to see if it would affect my demeanour and so I had steeled myself against being suddenly addressed in my real name. Each man, before appearing before Justice Pim and his members, was asked to speak to our solicitor for his advice on his own particular case. I did not like the advice McDonald gave me as it seemed unsound. He asked my name which I gave as Doyle and then told me I did not know that the Rebellion was going to take place and that I was to say so. I asserted that I knew what was to take place and if asked by the Investigating Officer would state the truth. He said I was a fool. I gave my view that if each followed the advice he gave it would

lead the world to believe that the followers were led into something they did not know of and justify the action of the B.G. in the executions. He told me to get out and I got. Immediately after I was ushered by a warder into what seemed a boardroom with a long table at which on one side sat the chairman, Mr. Justice Pim, two others with him and a male shorthand writer at a small side table. I was invited to sit down and looking nervous I was encouraged to take my ease. Mr. Justice Pim was a big stout man with a benevolent face perpetually smiling, but a shrewd look in his eyes. With my record before him he seemed fully conversant with my case. My accent seemed to puzzle him; he asked me several questions about myself and I gave him to understand that I received my education in England and was for some years past with my people in Ireland. I then gave a brief resume of what had taken place during Easter Week leaving out facts dealing with the erection of the wireless and anything incriminating me further. He asked me if I knew what was to take place. I said yes and "Did you shoot anyone"? I said I shot but could not say if I hit anyone. He asked me if I was sorry. I did not answer. After a few more questions of small importance I was dismissed to get ready for return to Frongoch. (There is a story worth repeating of a Galway man's experience at the Court. In the course of questions Mr. Justice Pim asked the Galwayman if he was a member of a secret society. He said yes. Pim asked what was the name of the society. He said he was a member of the Sacred Heart Sodality thinking that it was a sacred organisation he was asked about). The following day we were dispatched back to our home in the mountains, i.e., Frongoch.

Being small fry I was let slip through the net and in September was released and with me another companion in the same plight as myself, that is, without home or habitation in Ireland. My companion, Bob De Coeur, better known as Bob Stout, was attached to the Citizen Army and the Labour movement.

On the morning of the release we were searched to prevent bringing out letters, etc. and Jack Knives telling us not to get

into trouble again. Comrades O'Mahony, the Welfare Officer, slipped a few shillings to each of us and wished us luck. We had an uneventful journey to Dublin and, being at the early stage of releases, there were few to notice us. Bob Stout and I, being homeless, made our way to 28 North Frederick St. and met Mrs. McMullen. whose son was still in Frongoch. How she managed to exist in that house from Easter Week without any money was a mystery to me. The first job I set about to restore myself to civil routine was to rid myself of vermin and it was practically impossible to remain clean under the conditions that prevailed in Frongoch. This was about the middle of September 1916.

Signed: Liam Daly

Date: 17th Sept. 1949.

Witness: M Bourne Lamb