

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAFF 1913-21
No. W.S. 297

ROINN  COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 297

Witness

Miss Annie Mannion,
St. Kevin's Institution,
1 James' Street, Dublin.

Identity

Assistant Matron,
South Dublin Union,
Easter Week 1916.

Subject

- (a) Dublin Union, Easter Week 1916;
- (b) List of names of Volunteers found in South Dublin Union after the Rising Easter Week, 1916.
- (c) Covering letter.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

Nil

File No. S.1375

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY LITERATURE 1913-21

BUREAU OF STATE MILITARY LITERATURE 1913-21

NO. W.S. 297

STATEMENT BY MISS ANNIE MANNION

St. Kevin's Institution, 1 James's Street, Dublin.

During Easter Week, 1916, I was Assistant Matron of the then South Dublin Union.

I remember Easter Monday, 1916. On that day I went on a trip to Belfast, accompanied by a friend. On the return journey I heard, through a conversation, that there was trouble in Dublin. When I got to Dublin I reported back to the South Dublin Union, arriving there some time about half-past eleven or twelve o'clock on Easter Monday night. The place was in darkness. I was refused admission and I spent the night with my sister, who resided quite adjacent to the South Dublin Union.

On Tuesday morning I reported back for duty. I entered the South Dublin Union by the Rialto gate, and saw that the wooden buildings or hutments were occupied by Volunteer forces. The nurses told me all that had happened on the previous day. Then I went up to my own residence. I lived beside the mortuary at the time and a Miss White lived next door to me. Miss White was an official there. Her maid, Rachel Blundell, was a very religious old soul and she gave me the history of what happened at her end of the building. She told me that a group of Volunteers had come to the house. They hammered at the door. She was so frightened she looked out the window and said she could not open the door because there was nobody there but herself, so they ordered her to open the door in the name of the Irish Republic. She opened the door and a crowd of Volunteers came in and took possession. One of them was Ceannt. She said they did not remain very long, evidently it was not satisfactory.

There was no back entrance and there was a wall at the back. There was no means of getting out and I think that was the reason that they vacated it, and went down towards the front towards the Nurses' Home.

I heard also that on Monday another group of Volunteers came in by the James's Street gate, went straight over to the Nurses' Home and occupied it. They were headed, I understand, by Cosgrave. Most of the nurses were in bed because they had been on night duty. They got very little time to get up, gather as many of their belongings as they could, and clear out.

I was also told that the front gate was barricaded on Monday and the Volunteers took possession of the Gate Lodge and the telephone.

On Tuesday we were in a state of panic. We did not really know what we were doing. Our stores were at the front of the house, and our ambition was to get food up to the mental cases at the far end of the house. There was a great deal of dodging about to get to and from the stores. However, the car was fitted up - we had a horse and car, a kind of ambulance - and the man who was driving it was carrying a stick with a Red Cross on it; he also had one on his arm. We were all going around with the Red Cross.

As far as I can remember the buildings held by the Volunteers on Tuesday were the Nurses' Home, the Female Chronic Hospital, the Protestant Hospital, I think they were also in No. 1 Hospital and in what is now the Acute Hospital.

I am trying to recall the dispositions of the buildings held by the British military on Tuesday. To the best of my knowledge the British troops seemed to be

wandering around the grounds at a loose end rather than taking up any definite position. The one building I do remember definitely that they occupied was what is now known as the Acute Hospital, that is the building opposite the Convent where Nurse Keogh was shot by the British military.

A British officer approached me either on Tuesday or Wednesday morning and asked me what the buildings were. One particular building he pointed to was more or less a house, and I told him it was an officer's residence, I think it was the residence of the Assistant Master.

On Wednesday we all stayed in our quarters, but now and again we tried to go out and do something.

Lieutenant Ramsay was shot at Rialto. He came along there with his party, I suppose he was in charge of the group. Previously a young fellow called Poynton was shot there and then Ramsay was shot in return.

We did not witness any of the skirmishes between the Volunteers and the British military, as we were more or less confined to our quarters for security reasons, but we could hear a lot of shooting. There was shooting from the (Old Men's House.) *Royal Hospital, Kilmainham.*

The general administration of the South Dublin Union was naturally thrown into a state of confusion during Easter Week. Patients who died during that week were buried in a temporary grave in the grounds, and had to be removed to a permanent place of burial after the evacuation. Ramsay's body was brought into one of the wards and the military came and took away the body in a car. Another British soldier was shot at the bake-house and a soldier was left in charge of the body. The British came and took the body away but they left the guard behind, I suppose they

forgot about him, and to get him out he was put into a coffin, alive, and removed by the military.

At that time both sides had to be fed. The military demanded food from the storekeeper and he supplied it to them as well as to the Volunteers. The bakers were in that week, I think, because we had tons of bread and we were able to supply bread to various people who came and asked for it. One clergyman came and left with a sack of bread for his parishioners and people from the South Circular Road got bread from us. We supplied a good deal of bread from our bake-house to people who were badly off during that week.

I remember that Miss White, who resided next door to me, told me that about a week prior to Easter Sunday, 1916, Eamon Ceannt and his wife paid her a visit to collect a toy gramophone for their little son who was ill. During the visit Eamon Ceannt said that he would like to see the grounds, and Mr. Dooley, a ward master, took him through the garden infirmary. Ceannt simply walked around, and examined the views that could be obtained from the windows. This visit was commented on after the surrender of the Volunteers.

During Easter Week the Nurses' Home was a very bad spot, there was a lot of shooting from and to it. My sister lived on the South Circular Road and her back window looked straight over to the Nurses' Home. I think it was on the Thursday that all the houses overlooking the place were searched by the military. After searching the houses a soldier was left on guard at each house. There was a young soldier left at the front of my sister's house and my brother-in-law said to him, "Look here, boy, that is a hospital. Be careful", and the boy said, "Don't I

know it well. Didn't I often go there to visit my grandmother". He was a Dublin boy we discovered.

At the back of the house there was an officer or a sergeant looking out through the window towards the Nurses' Home. He was told to be careful and he had only drawn in his head when a shot came from the Nurses' Home and the marks of the bullet are still on the window. He only just saved himself.

My brother-in-law had a revolver, a momento, in a nice little case and when the British were searching the house they took it. He made application for it several times but never got it.

After the Volunteers vacated the South Dublin Union the gates were thrown open and crowds went in all through the Nurses Home looking for momentos; and a lot of articles were taken which were not momentos but were things belonging to the nurses. The nurses got compensation afterwards.

I picked up a slip of paper which seemed to have been torn out of a notebook. The names of those who were on guard were written on it. I know French-Mullen was one name that was on it, but I cannot remember any other name.

SIGNED

Annie Mannion

DATE

27th Sept 1949.

WITNESS

Wm. Jerry Barrett.

BUREAU	1913-21
BUREAU OF	1913-21
No. W.S.	297

Guard 12.00 to 3 AM
Lieut ~~Fraser~~ Muller

J. Fogarty
~~W. Moran~~

J. V. Joyce.

J. Mc. Kenna.

J. O'Reilly & J. Tracy

Signed

Lieut Byrne
Officer of Staff

1916 by W. H. Mearns

List of names

1916

found in night
Mearns house
J. H. Redburn
Easter 1916.

DUBLIN BOARD
OF ASSISTANCE,
JAMES'S STREET.

CEANNCAR NA mBOCC IN Át CLIAc.
SRÁID SAN SEAMUS.

27. 9. 49

Dear Commandant:

Enclose signed
Statement re Castle, week 1916.
Also list of volunteers on
guard, which I found in
Missis Home after they had
vacated the Buildings of
the South Dublin Union.

With kind regards,

Yours Sincerely,
A. Wannon.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 297