

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILÉATA 1913-21
No. **W.S.** 326

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. **W.S.**..... 326.....

Witness

Mr. Maurice Fitzgerald,
(Atlantic College)

1 Leeson Park, Dublin.

Identity

Principal of Atlantic College,
Cahirciveen,
Co. Kerry.

Subject

Description of Wireless Equipment
in Atlantic College, Cahirciveen, Co. Kerry,
1916.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

Nil

File No. **S.1453**.....

Form B.S.M.-2.

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STATEMENT OF MAURICE FITZGERALD, ATLANTIC COLLEGE,
1 LEESON PARK, DUBLIN.

In 1916 my college was in Cahirciveen just at the edge of the town within a few hundred yards of the police barracks. A short row of houses then called Marconi Terrace intervened between the college and the barracks.

At Easter 1916 the college was closed for the holidays and I was away. There was no resident caretaker so it would have been quite easy to enter and remove the equipment.

(Appendix A).

The wireless equipment consisted of two ship's standard Marconi installations for instruction purposes, one being an emergency set. It is necessary to have two sets on a ship. The chief one is run off the ship's mains and the emergency one from batteries. The latter is only used when the ship is in great distress and the main one is not available. Both installations could be operated from batteries. The main set in my college was a $\frac{1}{2}$ kilowatt synchronous spark installation with a range of approximately 300 miles. I'll show you a photo of it (Appendix B). The emergency set consists of a 10-inch spark installation with a range of, say, 100 miles. Both sets were portable. The main transmitter without the batteries would weigh 5-6 cwt. and the emergency one about 1-cwt. without the batteries. I also procured a $1\frac{1}{2}$ kilowatt installation similar to one in use in Valentia, but I think at a later date. To the best of my recollection it had not reached me before the Rising.

The range of any set would be doubled at night when the ionising rays of the sun are absent.

There was one installation in Valentia which could be considered portable. The main one was not. In order to remove the portable one which was very much heavier than my main one, it would be necessary to obtain a boat; also, the staff worked in three shifts, so that there would always be at least three

men on duty. Even if no resistance were offered to the removal of the set it would be difficult to get a suitable battery to operate it in any part of Kerry and the batteries belonging to it were not portable.

Con Keating had been a student of mine, and a good one, and would have been quite familiar with my equipment and could have taken the batteries with either of my sets or could even have operated from batteries procured elsewhere.

Obviously I was not allowed to send out any messages. This was the monopoly of the government, although I once wirelessly the first Zeppelin that crossed the Atlantic and got a reply back.

At the beginning of the war the masts, which were over 100 ft. high, were taken down by order of the P.M.G. to prevent the transmission or reception of messages. At that time transmission or reception was impossible without a good aerial.

In 1919 I opened a second wireless college at Henry St. Dublin, where I taught myself, leaving the Cahirciveen one in the hands of a paid staff. During the subsequent troubles the I.R.A. removed some of the equipment from the Cahirciveen one, so that I was obliged to close it down. The building has since been converted to a hospital.

Signed: *Daniel E. Fitzgerald*

Date: *13th Dec. 49'*

Witness: *J. W. Crossin*

