

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRÉ MILÉATA 1913-21  
No. W.S. 405

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COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 405.....

**Witness**

Patrick Callanan,  
Craughwell,  
Co. Galway.

**Identity**

Brigade Chief of Scouts 1915-1916;  
Brigade Chief of Police, 1919-Truce;

**Subject**

Irish Campaign in America, May 1916 -  
November 1917.

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

Nil

File No. S.1324.....

Form B.S.M. 2.

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Statement by Patrick Galanan,

Craughwell, Co. Galway.

SECOND STATEMENT.

On the Sunday after the disbandment of the Volunteers at Lime Park I went to cousins of mine named Quinns at Tyrone, Kilcolgan, Co. Galway. I remained with them Sunday night. At about 4 o'clock on Monday evening, I crossed to Island Eddy and remained on the Island that night. Next morning I set off in a boat with James Quinn and Willie Burke of Maree who was also "on the run" to Parkmore Quay, near Kinvara. Just as we were about to step off the boat at Parkmore Quay, James Quinn asked an old man if there were any police around. He said, "yes, they are arresting my lad below at the house".

We lay flat in the boat and put out to sea; when we were about twenty yards out the police arrived at the Quay. We returned to Island Eddy. At about 4 o'clock that evening we set out again in a punt to Maolrook where Quinn got a man called Lane to take us to Cavealocha and to bring us to O'Connor's house at Parkmore, arriving there about 10 p.m.

We then went to the house of my uncle named Rooney at Nogera, where we had tea and remained about an hour. Martin Rooney, Burke and I left and went cross country to my aunt's house, Mrs. Purcell, Kealkella, Co. Clare, a distance of about fifteen miles,

and got there about 3.30 a.m. I remained there about two weeks. As there was great police activity in the district I slept out in the fields at night and stayed in the house by day. Burke went to a cousin of his in Co. Galway. After about two weeks I went to Martin Roche's, Boston, Derreen, and remained there about six weeks.

I then went to Peter Kelly's, Ballyvourna. He got me in touch with Eamon Corbett who was "on the run" at Garryland, Ardahan. By arrangement I met Eamon in McInerney's house, Cahermore, Kinvara. He came with me to Kelly's, Ballyvourna, and then went to Walter Kelly's, Boulnevin, who got us in touch with Liam Mellows who was staying near Feacle, Co. Clare, and we maintained close contact with him. We were assisted by Fr. Feeney, Fr. Tom Burke and Patrick Flathly, Kinvara, who kept us well supplied with provisions. I remained with Peter Kelly, Ballyvourna, until about the middle of July, when Fr. Tom Burke called and told us that arrangements had been made for us to escape to America. About the 15th or 16th July we set out on a common cart, the property of Patrick Hardy, Kiltackie, to Terry Crowe's house at Drumore and remained there that night.

The following evening Jack McNamara and Con Fogarty, Crusheen, came along and brought us cross country to Crusheen and arranged for a horse and side car to take us to Fr. Scannell's house at Flagmount, where we stayed for the night. The next evening Fr. Burke, Fr. O'Meehan, Miss Bride Walsh and Miss Barry, Gort, arrived with a motor car and we all set out for Cappoquin, Co. Waterford. On the way, Fr. O'Meehan

enquired the way of a policeman who directed us on our way. We were informed at the hotel that only one bed was available and that the District Inspector of the R. I. C. was also staying at the hotel and <sup>as/</sup> he was not expected back that night, I slept in his bed.

The following day we went on to the Cistercian Monastery, Mount Melleray, where we met Fr. Brennan, a cousin of Seán McDermott. After about two weeks Captain Collins, skipper of a small boat flying between Waterford and Liverpool, called to Fr. Brennan and arranged with him to take us to Liverpool. The next day we went to Waterford and boarded a boat called the 'Taffie' and after a rough passage arrived at Liverpool about 11 o'clock next day. Captain Collins took us to 131 Duke Street, where seamen and firemen usually stayed. A few days later we were joined by Donal Hannigan, Dublin, and Micheál O'Callaghan, Tipperary. We ran short of money and Hannigan got in touch with Dublin and a man called Jack Murphy came across with £20 and remained with us.

We were in touch with Phil Callaghan and Tommie Hoare who were officials of the Seamen's Union, who were to fix us up with seamen's papers. We were also in touch with Peter Murphy, Scotland Road, Seán Sullivan, Seaforth, Neal Kerr, \_\_\_ Geraghty, and a man named Moran who was Chairman of the National Foresters in Liverpool. After about five weeks at Duke Street a vacancy occurred for one on a boat and we decided to let Callaghan take it as we considered he was the most wanted man amongst us. Another single vacancy occurred on another boat and it was decided that

Hannigan should take it. A few days later we got word to report to Birkenhead and sign on a boat which was sailing to Philadelphia. We were accompanied to Birkenhead by Tommy Hoare. Only two jobs were vacant, so Eamon Corbett and I signed on as coal passers. Jack Murphy had to remain a little longer for another vacancy. As the boat was not leaving till the following day we returned to Liverpool that night.

Next morning we went back to Birkenhead and went on board at 10 o'clock, and at 12 she sailed. She took 19 days to make the crossing. German submarines were very active. When approaching the mouth of the Delaware instructions were issued to extinguish all lights as submarines were about eight miles away, having sunk three British ships in one day. Next day we got into port; we were not allowed to go ashore until we had washed down the engines. Having done so, we went ashore with the other firemen and went into a saloon for some drinks. When leaving the saloon Eamon and I slipped away from the firemen and boarded a trolley car to a safe distance from the docks. Later that day we travelled to New York, arriving there about 9 p.m., and went to James Hastings who was a brother-in-law of Peter Murphy of Liverpool. He 'phoned 141 West 97th Street, where Hannigan was staying. Hannigan came and brought us to that address.

Next day Eamon and I went to the offices of the Gaelic American where we met John Devoy and discussed plans with him. We told him that Mellows was on his way out, and that we thought it better not to decide on

anything until he arrived. Devoy asked us how we were fixed up and gave us some money. About a week later Fr. Feeney arrived on his way to California.

Eamon Gorbett went on to California with Fr. Feeney. I remained in New York with Hannigan. Shortly afterwards Jack Murphy and Dr. Pat McCartan arrived.

As there was no news of Mellows we became very uneasy as he had left before McCartan. We decided to do something ourselves, so Hannigan got in touch with the German Ambassador; in a short time communications were going back and forward between New York and Germany. The Ambassador got word that Germany was prepared to land arms and men in flat-bottomed boats on the west coast of Ireland. This was done without Devoy's knowledge and he was very angry when he heard about it. That was about November, 1916, and Mellows had not yet arrived.

Shortly after this I was awakened early one morning by someone pulling at me, and to my surprise who was it but Mellows. So we slept together in the same bed that night. Next morning I went with Mellows to the office of the Gaelic American. I introduced Mellows to Devoy. He was very pleased with Mellows and said he was the most capable man who had so far arrived in America. Devoy employed Mellows in the Gaelic American. I remained in New York about three weeks, and Mellows and I spoke at a few meetings. Captain Robert Monteith also arrived in New York.

I told Mellows about the arrangement with Germany to land arms and men in Ireland. He said that it would be better to let the thing hang for the time being, that

it would be better to send a man to Germany and two men to Ireland to make arrangements for the landing and to make sure the people at home were prepared to receive them. We examined maps and decided that near the Martello Tower, Kinvara, would be the best spot to land the arms.

We next heard that Tom Kenny, Craughwell, was on his way to America. This caused us a considerable amount of annoyance. Mellows was worried because owing to his attitude towards the Volunteers for the Rising, he believed that Kenny would create trouble. Knowing that Kenny was going on to Boston, Mellows asked me to go to Boston to Gene Gurrin, Senior Guardian of the Clan na Gael in Boston, and to counteract any statements that Kenny might make.

About five days later Kenny arrived in New York. He met Mellows and asked him to introduce him to Devoy. Mellows refused to do so, saying that he (Kenny) had taken no part in the Rising. Kenny then went to the office of the Gaelic American and introduced himself to Devoy, who told him that he had never heard of him, and refused to have any dealings with him. Kenny then went on to Boston and spoke at a few meetings there. After he arrived in Boston he gave a full account to the Boston Post as to how he succeeded in getting to America and gave the names of persons who had helped him. Shortly after the publication of this account two young Irish Americans working on the boats, one of whom was named O'Rourke, were captured with despatches in Liverpool and sentenced to nine months' imprisonment.

Kenny spoke at a meeting in Walton at which he said that he was the only person alive who knew what happened in Dublin as he had a long talk with Tom Clarke the night before the Rising. I was told later by Mellows and Eamon Corbett that Kenny called on Tom Clarke on Holy Saturday night and told him that Galway would not fight, that they were only a mob. Clarke replied that whatever Galway would do, Dublin was going to fight.

At a meeting held in Walton about January, 1917, addressed by Gene Curran, Senior Guardian of the Clan na Gael in Boston, Curran refused to allow Kenny into the meeting on the grounds that he was not a member of Clan na Gael and that he had not taken part in the Rising. Kenny blamed Mellows for this although Mellows knew nothing about it. Kenny continued his campaign to ridicule Mellows. He said Mellows refused to attack the R.I.C. Barracks in Craughwell and stayed in Moyode Castle and did nothing.

A great spirit prevailed at this time, especially among those of Irish descent. They were all very anxious to hear about the happenings of Easter Week. I addressed several meetings in Boston, Walton and Manchester. Mellows addressed several meetings in Roxbury Hall, Boston, and held conferences with local leaders. Nora Connolly and Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington also addressed meetings in Boston. At this time rumours were current in America that there would be no more fighting in Ireland and that all we wanted was to be represented at the Peace Conference. Mellows resented this very much and he stated at several meetings that Ireland would fight again, and what we wanted was arms.



During this time I was in constant touch with Mellows. I usually went to New York every Saturday to discuss matters with him. Mellows sent word to me to make sure and go to see him the following Saturday. I found Mellows in a very serious mood. He told me that he had contacted a German lady in one of the Western States, who owned a ship, and that she would place it at our disposal if we could get enough men to man it. He said it was proposed to send the boat to Germany via Russia, that it was to keep well out in the Arctic so as to avoid the British Navy. He also said that arrangements had been made with Germany to load her with arms and ammunition, and to land them in Ireland. He said he was going on the trip and asked me to get four or five men as firemen and coal passers. I said I would go, and I got four others who agreed to come. They were, Michael J. Rooney and John Morrissey, both Galwaymen, and Hamill and Toal who were from Sligo. The following Saturday night Mellows came to Boston and informed me that the project had to be abandoned as he could not get sufficient Engineers for the boat.

At this time I got several letters from Kenny in which he abused Mellows. I sent the letters to Mellows. In one of them he wrote: "Fairheaded Bill you are good for nothing only drinking tea over at Walsh's of Killeeneen, and going up to Pádraig Fahy's, Ballycalahan". Mellows told me afterwards that he mislaid the letters and never located them.

A conference was arranged to be held at the United States Hotel, Boston, at the request of Gene Curran and W. Fitzpatrick, a journalist on the staff of the Boston American, between Mellows, Kenny and myself in an attempt

to fix up the differences. Kenny arrived at the hotel three-quarters of an hour before the time appointed, but left before the conference was due to start. Matters became worse now; this was about the end of August 1917, with the result that the Clan intervened and set up a Committee in New York to investigate the trouble. Mellows, Kenny and I were summoned to appear before the Committee. The three of us went before the Committee and having heard short statements from us, the Committee adjourned to another room. After a short time the Committee returned and informed us they were not the proper party to investigate things that happened in Ireland. They requested us while in America to be friends and show a united front. This we did, and matters eased greatly. Kenny dropped out and took no further part. He then became associated with the Socialist Party.

When Lloyd George announced the setting up of the Irish Convention about June 1917, Mr. W. Fitzpatrick of the Boston American rang me about 1 a.m. and informed me of it, and asked for my views on it. I told him that Mellows was at the United States Hotel and I suggested that we should go there and tell Mellows about it. When I arrived at the hotel, Fitzpatrick was already there, and Mellows was getting out of bed. Fitzpatrick explained Lloyd George's suggestions in detail. Mellows and I were against having anything to do with it. That morning Lloyd George's proposals and our opinions against it appeared on the front page of the Boston American. Mr. Fitzpatrick who was a member of the Clan na Gael, was one of our greatest supporters in Boston, and on account of his connection with the Press was a tremendous help to us. We had to take matters easy as

America had already declared war on Germany. Many of our supporters became rather cool, and some of them resented our activities, as they feared they might get into trouble. As a result, relations between Mellows and Clan na Gael became somewhat strained.

Mellows sent word to me to visit him in New York. I met him there the following Sunday after 10 o'clock Mass. With him were Donal Hannigan, Eamon Corbett, Frank Robbins and a few others. Mellows appeared rather upset. I asked him what was the matter. He said most the Clan had eased off and had thrown in their lot with the Government, and that the only two men he could rely on were Joe McGarritty, Philadelphia, and Peter Golden, New York; that Devoy was not as good as previously and that Major Nolan had gone over completely to the Allies. He also said there was now no hope of getting arms or any support worth while in America, and that the best thing for us was to go back to Ireland and that he intended to go to Germany. Donal Hannigan and I agreed to go home immediately. I went back to Boston that night and returned to New York the following Thursday. I met Mellows again. He told me he had a great chance of going on a Belgian relief ship which was lying out in the Bay, and from Belgium he could get to Germany through Holland.

Devoy called that night and we told him of our plans. He said that he did not think that Hannigan and I would get going as it was very difficult to pass the Sailors and Firemen's Delegate - a man named Lynch, but he believed Mellows would get going alright.

We had got in touch with Paddy Donnelly, who was a seaman. Donnelly told us that the 'Saint Paul' would be sailing on Monday and that we should try to get someone on her. I remained with Donnelly that night. He went to the docks about 1 a.m. or 2 a.m. to find out how matters were going. He came back and said "the 'Saint Paul' is signing on her crew and we haven't a man on her". Donnelly gave me his seaman's papers and book and I went to the docks to sign on. When I entered the office to sign on, I saw two detectives close by with the sailors' delegate - Lynch. All the crew was nearly signed on, and Lynch had his eye on me. When I went to show my papers to the officials, Lynch snapped the book out of my hand, and having looked at it said, "you are not Paddy Donnelly". I said, "no, I am not". "Where did you join the union?", he said. "Liverpool", I replied. He then asked me what fee did I pay to join. I said, "£1". He said, "that's right, four dollars". He further questioned me about what ships I had been on. I then said I was not on any ship except the 'Straitfillan', the one I came over on about a year ago, and that I never joined any Union. He asked what brought me over here. I told him I had taken part in the Rising, and had escaped to America, and that I wanted to go back. He said, "why didn't you tell me at first you wanted to go back". I said, "I was told to be cautious of you". He asked who told me that. I said, "Devoy told me it would be impossible to get past you". Lynch said, "I am as good an Irishman as Devoy ever was; I never prevented any Irishman from going back to fight for his country. He then passed me through and I signed on as a coal passer. I made arrangements

with Lynch to meet Hannigan and Mellows that night. They met, and Lynch arranged for Hannigan and Synott to travel on the 'Saint Paul'. He advised Mellows not to travel as he intended as he was bound to be caught.

We worked our passage on the 'Saint Paul' as coal passers and arrived safely in Liverpool. A day or two after we arrived in Liverpool we heard that a few days after we sailed, Mellows left New York to join his ship and was arrested while crossing the Brooklyn Bridge. Lynch was afterwards one of the best men in America as regards helping men in and out of the country.

I remained in Liverpool, and Hannigan came on to Dublin. After a week or so he sent word to me to come to Dublin. We found things unsatisfactory in Dublin. There was a difference between the Volunteers and the I. R. B. We had brought a good many communications with us from Devoy, to be delivered in Dublin. I think Hannigan gave them to Diarmuid Lynch. We were told by Diarmuid Lynch not to give any information to De Valera. However, we decided to see De Valera and tell him how matters stood in America. Hannigan later saw De Valera in Dublin alone.

I met him in Nevins Hotel, Loughrea, on 2nd November, 1917, and had a discussion with him lasting three hours on how things stood in America. He asked me if there was any chance of his getting to America, as he would like very much to meet those people.

I told him there was no chance of his going like us as coal passers as his appearance would be against him. On that occasion I also told him that if he went to America, that from my experience there I was convinced that it would be necessary for him to break with the Clan, and appeal to the American people in general.

SIGNED Patrick Ballinan

DATE June 28<sup>th</sup> 1950

WITNESS

Sean Brennan, Comdt.

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