ORIGINAL

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STATEMENT BY WITNESS

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Witness

Colonel Thomas McNally,
34 Butterfield Avenue,
Templeogue, Dublin.

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Divisional Quartermaster (3rd Northern Division)
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ORIGINAL

STATEMENT BY COLONEL THOMAS McNALLY.

Recollections of my youth in Belfast are not very defined. My parents were country bred folk who had drifted to the City for a living. The sgruggle for a reasonably comfortable existence was so acute that there was no time for national discussions. My parents had the usual detestation of the R.I.C. My father, when he ultimately realised that I was in the I.R.A. was very pleased and bought me two Steyr Rifles which he presented to the Company.

My early impressions of life in the City were influenced by riots, police baton charges, calling out the military - more charges - the reading of the Riot Act (a most vindictive element of British Law); some unfortunates, usually innocent people, shot; Orange processions, Catholic counter demonstrations with huge bon fires on each side; provocative arches strung across the street from chimney to chimney; A.O.H. - Foresters and election struggles with torch light processions. The church was in some way mixed up in local political factions. The reigning Bishop Henry was very prominent. My father was bitterly opposed to his interference. I was never particularly clear what it was all about but it was very exciting.

The rioting was very interesting. It usually started about the 12th July or a period leading up to that time and was connected with the Orange demonstrations. On these occasions the Orangemen endeavoured to provoke a row with a not unwilling Catholic population. The police were called out and invariably sided against the Catholics. The most dangerous police were the Catholic police who had been sidling about the area previously ingratiating themselves with the people and gathering up information which they used when the participants were ultimately brought to the Courts.

These battles were a lesson in tactics. The police, undoubtedly men of courage and usually outnumbered, had not received anything but "drill yard" instructions. The rioters were in the main corner boys who had, in many cases received military training in the British Army. The streets were paved with a small egg shaped stone colloquially known as "pickers". The area was like a rabbit warren, streets of small houses built back to back criss-crossed each other in a fairly regular formation. The interior streets were barricaded and the women of the area dug up the pickers and left them in heaps to be used as ammunition by the menfolk. The police, armed with batons, were goaded on to charge and when they reached the barricades were usually met with a fusilade of pickers. On retreating they were showered with stones from the adjoining houses. Ultimately the soldiers would be called out. On one occasion I remember as a boy seeing a Unit of the Hussars in action. Their method was simply to canter their horses in formation through the rioting areas using their lances where an opportunity afforded. At this stage the rioting usually subsided, the odds being obviously too great but all sorts of tricks were tried, tying ropes across the street from door to door or dark cord head high with the object of tumbling the horses or catching the riders helmets or faces. The women of the houses in these side streets, I understand, often poured the salubrious contents of the bedroom night equipment on the passing police or soldiery below, much to their annoyance and discomfiture. These then were the conditions under which a great majority of the Belfast youth were reared - an unreasoned hatred of protestants, a detestation of police and a more or less neutral feeling towards soldiers.

At the age of fourteen I made contact with my first G.A.A. associations. There was a football team composed of men from the country areas, usually barmen serving their time in Belfast. I played with them in a team called the Sarsfield Ogs.

On the break up of this team I went to the Mitchels and played for the Mitchel Ogs. This team had an old military hut as a club room and here I learned something of nationality - Seannachí and Ceilidhes were held and national songs were sung and our own dances performed so that I can say the idea of nationalism was taking root. At the age of seventeen I was appointed a clerk on the Great Northern Railway and was transferred from place to place until I was posted to Derry in 1918. I had been lucky enough to keep up my connection with the Mitchel club in the meantime.

While in Derry I was connected in a very limited way with the Volunteers. During the period of the Sinn Fein elections of 1918 there were no particular activities except guarding the Tricolour which was flown from Sinn Fein Election Headquarters during the election. The police, I understood, had threatened to remove the flag and it was decided to guard it. I took part in turn in these guards but nothing happened.

Volunteer activities were not apparent in the City but there was a particularly active and energetic Sinn Fein Committee who worked might and main for Eoin McNeill's election and were successful. My wife, then Eilis McLoughlin, was secretary of this committee and one of its hardest workers. I should like to mention here that she later on refused, as a teacher, to take the oath of allegiance to the Northern Government and was dismissed. While in Derry I played Gaelic football for the Emmetts and attended occasional Gaelic classes I would like to emphasise that there was no volunteer enthusiasm in these local organisations. They merely afforded a pleasant and easy way for the expression of a very latent nationality.

On my transfer to Belfast at the end of 1918 and at the invitation of Seamus, now Colonel McGoran, I joined the O'Donovan Rossa Gaelic Club. This club was the centre and a cloak for I.R.A. personnel in the Falls Road area

of Belfast and contained many sound earnest men. I mention these details to show the influence of different types of Clubs in the G.A.A. I was only a short time in the Rossa's when I joined "B" Company of 1st Battalion, Belfast Brigade. Here I had the pleasure of meeting and associating with the best types of Irishmen in the country. Possibly due to the fact that I was a Railway clerk and having, therefore, some accounting experience, I was appointed Quartermaster of "B" Company. This meant the recording of cash subscriptions, etc. to the Company and payments for any small number of arms which could be obtained from whatever source available. The records of arms in the possession of the Company had to be kept with details of their location. Duties in this respect were light and meant only occasional inspections of a few houses in which the arms were stored; involved also the preparation of suitable dumps as hiding places. In the main, however, the arms were kept in the homes of their owners or with their friends. Arms were occasionally transferred from one place to another for safety and also for repairs. We had an ex-British Armourer (non-Volunteer) who did this work on payment. None of this duty would be described as risky as we were more or less unknown except through our G.A.A. activities. The usual weekly Volunteer parades with an occasional weekend route march or an exercise on the hills around the city was our chief activity.

About September 1920, it was decided to disarm two armed police who were on duty at Broadway, Falls Road. This was carried out by "B" Company. The actual disarming was done by Wish Fox the Company Captain and Johnny Osborne. Myself and Chas. Ryan were detailed to approach the police from the opposite side of the road as a signal that all was clear and to remain in an adjoining shop and await developments. There had been no intention of shooting the constables but they, courageously enough, refused to give up

their arms, one was killed and the other one wounded. On our way home down the Falls Road we met a young policeman in "civvies" named Fred McGoran (no relation of Seamus McGoran's) whose brother had been a member of the Mitchel G.A.A. but who also had recently joined the R.I.C. and was stationed in the South but was home on leave. Knowing we were Volunteers, he advised us to get away from the area quickly as the police were in a very ugly mood. That night three men were murdered in their homes. Mr. McFadden, Mr. Trodden (father of Lieut.-Colonel Chas. Trodden) and John Gaynor. The latter was a Volunteer, but it is clear that the police were after his brother Liam who was a prominent Sinn Feiner. It was apparent that the police information insofar as I.R.A. was concerned was not up-to-date as the men murdered, except John Gaynor, were not in the movement but were identified with the Sinn Fein movement.

There followed a number of minor jobs holding up a mail van in King Street, Belfast, raids and searches for arms in which I was engaged. I was appointed Brigade Quartermaster, Belfast Brigade, and was therefore responsible for organising dumps for weapons and ammunition throughout the City. The chief method of storage was, of course, the preparation of spaces under floor boards, false cupboards and presses in the houses of well-known sympathisers. The continued transfers of arms from one area to another for safety reasons; the preparation of returns and records; the repair of arms including rifles and shotguns, kept me very busy. My mother's home on some occasions was like a minor arsenal when it was being used as a sort of clearing house during the foregoing activities.

An attack on Crossgar Barracks was carried out. My part on this operation was confined to the transfering from Belfast by taxi a quantity of arms and explosives to a point in the vicinity of the operation and subsequently to

arrange for the return of the residue.

It was on this occasion I had the privelege of meeting Mrs. Woods, mother of Seamus Woods and I would like to record that never in my life did I meet a lady with such a practical, reasoned outlook on the question of the support of Irish industry. There was nothing about the place that had not been manufactured in Ireland - clothing, furniture, bicycles and even the agricultural machinery. In addition, she was a disciple for everything Gaelic and an enthusiastic supporter of the I.R.A. - a keen, intelligent, motherly woman. She did not mind expressing her views in a forthright manner, indicating by word and example how thoughtless the youth of the country had become. God rest her Soul.

The burning of Johnson's Garage was decided upon, this being one of the larger Belfast Garages and containing some military cars. The job was under the control, I think, of Seamus Woods. My part in the operation was to gather a number of the employees at one of the exits and hold them there at the point of a gun until the job was completed. Unfortunately the arson end of the project for some reason failed.

A number of shooting jobs were carried out in the city about this time, usually under the command of Seamus Woods or Roger McCurley, both indeed being the super gun men of the City. A number of other men, acting on these jobs spring to mind. They were Joe Murray, Sean Keenan, Seamus McKenna and Seamus Heron.

I should like to make it clear that I make no claim to be considered as a gunman in the accepted sense. I was not a member of the active Service Unit, i.e. the men selected for the shooting of police. On completion of any such jobs, I would, however, like most others, be detailed for anti - reprisal duties. Parties of men, armed, would be placed in houses in areas where the police or military

reprisal gangs would be expected to operate.

I was as a result of one of these police reprisal actions that one of my best friends and his brother - Dan and Pat Duffin, were murdered. Dan was a Volunteer and a member of "B" Company. Pat, while not actually in the Volunteers, was a keen nationalist. Actually the gang were anxious to get John and Pat who were the oldest of the family and best known to the police as sympathisers. With all my companions I attended the funeral which was controlled by I.R.A. The following morning at 10 a.m. I was handed a pass by my superior on the Railway and a note to say I was transferred from my position in the Accounts Office in Belfast to Dundalk Locomotive Branch. This, of course, was a punitive action recording my superior's objection to my connection with I.R.A. in any form.

A few weeks later the I.R.A. areas were split up and formed into Divisions. Our area was now known as the 3rd Northern Division and consisted of three Brigades - Belfast, Antrim and Down. Joe McKelvey (R.I.P.) was appointed Divisional Commander. He asked me to resign from the Railway and accept the position of Divisional Quartermaster, this I promptly agreed to do.

Just prior to this the famous Belfast Boycott was organised and/was in progress; this consisted of an organisation in the south of Ireland whose object was to prevent the purchase or use of goods having their origin in Belfast and was an antidote to the pogrom. This organisation required details indicating what traffic was leaving the City and its destination - the object being to have the stuff seized and destroyed before receipt by the consignee. It was at this stage that we (Colonel Felix Devlin and myself) were of use. Felix Devlin, now Deputy Quartermaster General in the Regular

Army who was the Divisional Communications Officer, was at that time an invoice clerk in the outwards section of Belfast Goods Station and with the help of a Mr. Quinn, was in a position to get information about certain areas. The invoice section had about six senior clerks, mostly protestant, who each invoiced goods for certain specific areas. Felix Devlin, then a young clerk, was assisting two of these individuals and was in a position, therefore, to get a proportion of the information. On the following morning the copies of these invoices came officially into my possession and with the help of a Mr. Flynn and Mr. Sheils, neither of whom were Volunteers, the remainder of the vital information was obtained. This material was handed over to Mr. F. Crummie, a schoolteacher who was our Intelligence Officer. On the same day the information was in the hands of the Dublin Committee. The messenger was a reliable young man who travelled daily on the G.N.R. Belfast to Dublin dining car. Mr. Michael Carolan, who was a member of the Boycott Committee in Dublin, informed me subsequently, that they were then in a position to go to traders and tell them exactly what they had received and were very often in the position to meet the goods and destroy them at points along the western and southern routes. This, in my opinion, was a very sound and effective piece of organisation.

About this time the Belfast Pogrom was in full swing. Catholics were hunted from their jobs by howling mobs of dervishes armed with sticks, iron bars, stones, bolts, etc. I had the doubtful pleasure of being hunted (with two companions) from my work by one of these wild mobs. My brother on a similar occasion was badly mauled. I was lucky enough to escape by "running the gauntlet". The position insofar as the pogrom was concerned was aggravated by the execution of D.I. Swanzy in Lisburn, a gentlemen who had an active part in the murder of Cork's Lord Mayor McCurtin. Tom Fox and Roger McCurley were the Northern representatives on this

classical job and were driven to the scene by a Volunteer taxi driver named Sean Leonard who was subsequently sentenced to death for his part in the action. He escaped hanging, luckily enough, by the terms of the truce.

Full time volunteering called for more active duties in my position as Divisional Quartermaster and meant the inclusion of the Down and Antrim Brigades.

My first effort was to contact the Quartermaster General in Dublin for the purpose of getting arms and by so doing I met one of nature's gentlemen and a most efficient Q.M.G. He complemented me on my records but informed me, however, that with the exception of the 1st Southern Division, we were the best armed Division in Ireland. My recollection is that we had, at this stage, about two hundred Rifles and a lesser number of revolvers. The rifles were an assorted lot consisting of Lee Enfields, Martini-Enfields, Steyr (U.V.F. Rifles) and Mausers. The Revolvers were a mixed lot and contained everything from pin fire to Webley. In view of our comparatively small number of arms I realised that either the other Divisions were not forwarding complete returns or that the situation insofar as arms was concerned was extremely poor. At any rate he gave me a fair number of Revolvers and as far as my recollection goes this included a number of Peter the Painters, Automatics and some Grenades. The trouble about arms was to get them home to Belfast as there was fairly consistent searching by R.I.C. at Dundalk and Goraghwood, or indeed, any part of the line. I was lucky enough to get home on that, and indeed on many other occasions, without being searched. I should like to add that I always found General McMahon and all his staff most helpful.

About this time it was decided, on the application of Seamus McGoran, O.C. Cavan Area, to send a Belfast flying column to Cavan for operations there. These had to be equipped with rifles from our strength. The girls of the Cumann na mBan undertook the dangerous mission of bring the arms by rail

from Belfast to Redhills Railway Station in the Co. Cavan and from which area they were transferred to the A.S.U. This unit had an unfortunate experience as their locale was "given away" practically on their arrival. An unequal fight ensued and our arms were lost. Colonel Tom Fox and Colonel McGoran will, no doubt, give complete details of the action. This is an example of the willingness of the 3rd Northern Units to supply A.S. Units and an indication of the difficulties in maintaining a flying column in a countryside where there is not free co-operation from the civilian population. In most areas the people were definitely hostile.

The truce came shortly after this and the Division, for a long time, maintained a firm neutrality to the varying influences being exercised between that time and the Treaty.

The position in the six counties was anything but satisfactory. It was reasonably certain that there was going to be serious difficulties insofar as our area was concerned. Every effort was made to gather in from every source all types of arms and equipment. Many false alarms were raised about the whereabouts of rifles and some of these were traps set by the British. On one occasion a British soldier, giving the name of Corporal Slattery and stating his home address was in the Co. Clare, stated that there were nineteen rifles in a local Barrack to be had for the taking. He gave us the plans of the Barrack and the location of the rifles and assured us there was no guard on them except a soldier equipped only with a cane. The matter was discussed at a Divisional Staff meeting and we were satisfied that there was a strong element of suspicion about the story and that we should try to get some confirmatory evidence. Slattery, apparently not satisfied, contacted some of the rank and file Volunteers who evidently assuming that the Division were acting too cautiously, decided to do the job on their own. I think one of them was killed certainly a number were wounded. Quite a good lesson in care

and precaution.

A different type of case happened when a very high-ranking Southern Division Officer arrived in Derry and informed Joe Doherty (now Co. Manager, Kildare) that if he was informed of the whereabouts of the local Orange Hall he would arrange to attend one of their meetings and would ascertain (how I do not profess to know) just exactly where all the Ulster Volunteer Rifles were stored. Doherty was a well known Volunteer and could not accompany the Officer himself as it would mean that he would be a suspect right away. My brother-in-law, who worked in the area, accompanied our friend and pointed out the Orange Hall. Some time later a big raid was carried out by a party organised in the South on a large house owned by a man named Evans(?), needless to say there were no rifles there. Incidentally, this same person offered to send flying columns from the South for duty in Belfast but was informed by our Division O.C. that if supplied with the arms and ammunition we would do the rest - we never got any arms from him.

An arrangement had been made in the early stages of the Truce whereby some of the Southern Divisions would exchange their own local rifles for an equivalent number handed over from the British and those handed in by these Divisions would be handed over to the Northern Divisions so that they could not be identified if subsequently captured in the North when operations subsequently recommenced there. The Southern Divisions failed to give effect to this arrangement and all I could get was seventeen rusted revolvers from a Division in Trim Area which I declined to accept.

General O'Duffy, who was Chief of Staff, agreed after representations made by O.C. Division (Colonel Seamus Woods) to give us six hundred rifles and sixty

thousand rounds of ammunition and two Lewis Guns. The numbers were obliterated from the rifles before being handed over to us. In addition, General McMahon gave me five Thompson Guns, as the Lewis Guns were not so suitable for our type of action as Thompsons. I swapped the Lewis Guns for Thompsons with Major General R Hogan, O.C. 5th Northern Division. I brought these guns home by rail and was met at the G.N.R. terminus in Belfast by Joe McKelvey (R.I.P.) and some other armed volunteers. Luckily I escaped search en route and the guns were delivered safely. Many transfer of arms were made in this manner and I remember Pete Corvin taking a very active part in this work. The six hundred rifles and ammunition I had transferred by lorry to Dundalk Barracks which was then held by Frank Aiken, O.C. 4th Northern Division. Some other equipment, revolvers, rifles and ammunition, was taken across the border by some of the Quinns (a grand Newry family) and stowed in one of their grocery sheds in Newry as a case of bacon. I transferred the consignment, including a large"box of bacon", by road to Belfast, the lorry being loaded by the Quinns. We were stopped at Banbridge by a Cockney R.I.C. man who complained about the dirty condition of the lorry's number plate. The driver, who was not a volunteer, and who did not know what he was carrying, and who incidentally had no driving licence, gave the policeman quite an amount of impertinence. The policeman let us through after taking the driver's name. The incident goes to show how necessary it is to ensure that all details and precautions, no matter how trivial, are covered, before undertaking a job of this nature. The stuff, including the box, was duly delivered at St. Mary's Hall, Belfast. The driver expressed surprise at the extraordinary weight of the box and made it very clear that he had been deceived at the type of journey he had been asked to undertake. It is possible that a reaction had set in after his interlude with the policeman in Banbridge. Needless to say the box of bacon really contained rifles.

We had arranged to divide equally the six hundred rifles and ammunition received from Army Headquarters between the three Brigades of the Division and these rifles, as already stated, had been brought to Dundalk Barracks where Frank Aiken was in charge. Two hundred rifles and 20,000 rounds of ammunition, some explosives and sundry equipment were segregated for Co. Down Brigade. The Brigade Quartermaster of that Unit arranged to obtain a motor boat locally and bring it to Dundalk. On arrival it was loaded with the stuff and in company with the Brigade Quartermaster and a boatman we set off at 2 a.m. from Dundalk Harbour for Co. Down. The distance, of course, is comparitively short but we desired to land the guns in the dark at 12 p.m. so that we had twenty-two hours to spend on a journey that would normally only take six or seven hours. After leaving Carlingford Lough, in which incidentally there was a British Gunboat, the boatman decided it would be better to go out to sea and more or less drift back to the Co. Down coast. On our way, in the dark, we were passed by a trawler which hailed us but passed on. We arrived in the vicinity of Ardglass and decided to stretch our legs around the coast, but what appeared to be two R.I.C. men coming across the headland decided us to continue the "voyage". We had suspected that the trawler may have commented on our presence at that early hour of the morning. We proceeded out to sea again and drifted about until darkness set in and timed our arrival at the appropriately named "Guns Island" at 12 p.m. that night. We entered a quiet little harbour and awaited some signal from the Volunteers whom we were expecting to be there and I heard the welcome voice of Pat Woods (a brother of Seamus) quietly asking who we were. A number of the lads then unloaded the rifles, etc. into a small row boat which was used to ferry the stuff to the mainland. Some trouble was caused with one small boatload. The boat sank but the guns were recovered at low tide. The guns were quickly transferred by the Co. Down men to their respective destinations and I spent a happy night in

the home of Seamus Woods. The remaining occupants of the motor boat returned to their homes leaving the motor boat at the points from which it had been commandeered. It was an eerie experience chiefly because of the long time at sea in this type of boat and particularly for me as I was very conscious of my complete lack of swimming ability. I should like to add that Frank Aiken gave us every help on this occasion. He arranged to have the quay at Dundalk patrolled during loading operations and nobody was allowed near the area. He gave me a pair of Field Glasses for the journey which are still in my possession. I had, as events turned out, no opportunity to return them to him. I explained the position years afterwards when he was appointed Minister for Defence and he permitted me to retain them.

It had been intended to transfer the Antrim Brigade rifles by boat also but Felix (Colonel) McCorley tried without success to get a boat either on Antrim or Donegal coast to do the job. Failing this, it was decided to transfer the guns, etc. by road. An arrangement was made to get a large petrol tanker in Dublin. This was obtained through the good offices of Seán McMahon (Q.M.G.) and his staff. The tanker was loaded up in Dundalk. Precuations were taken to have everything in order even to ensuring that there was some petrol in the outlet pipe so that if it was tested the petrol would flow. Two journeys north were made, one to Belfast and one to Antrim. Rory McNicholl and Paddy Downey were in charge of the Belfast run and Paddy Downey and, I think Felix McCorley, were on the Antrim run. These journeys were full of interest and I am sure Downey, who is now a member of the Garda stationed in Roscommon and Rory McNicholl, who is in the E.S.B., will give the story in detail.

Just prior to the Truce and during the Truce we had got instructions from G.H.Q. describing the manufacture of explosives, mainly war-flour and cheddar. The constituents of the former were,

Powdered resin.
Ordinary flour.
Nitric and Sulphuric acid.
Potassium Chlorate.

Because of its simplicity in manufacture and the availability of the ingredients, we were able to make comparitively large quantities of this explosive throughout the Division and it was utilised extensively in some of the big burning jobs carried out in the City. We had a very active and enthusiastic Divisional Chemist with a very willing assistant. These men were most optimistic on the question of manufacturing gun-cotton which, needless to say, would have been of inestimable value to us. The Divisional Chemist came very near to his ambition and was always reporting progress - a slightly better explosion than the last time. He was a very small, pale, earnest man dressed soberly and always wearing a hard black hat. This form of headgear was the normal garb worn by the Protestant elements and was rarely favoured by Catholics. The Chemist lived in a Catholic area in Ardoyne surrounded on all sides by Protestant areas. There were many scares in the area because the Unionist elements were very keen to clear the vicinity of all Catholics. The result was that the people were in a constant state of jitters. One day there was a loud explosion and the neighbours gathered together looking for the signs of the bomb which they had believed was thrown by Unionists. Suddenly one of the women saw our Divisional Chemist running from his back yard in his shirt sleeves but still wearing his hard hat and in the greatest relief yelled to her friends, "it is alright neighbours, its only the 'wee bastard in the hard hat'". From then onwards he was always known by this distinctive nickname. He was ultimately wounded - accidentally - in the stomach during a visit by General Mulcahy to St. Mary's Hall, Belfast, I never heard what became of him after, suffice to say that his explosion was the nearest he ever got to the manufacture of his beloved gun cotton.

About this time the police were patrolling the area in Lancia and Crossley tenders fitted with standards to carry galvanised mesh. These vehicles were known as 'cages'. This was a method of protection for the occupants against Mills Grenades. Our Divisional Engineer, Johnny McArdle (now deceased) conceived the idea of making a contact bomb as a method of overcoming the cage idea. A sample was made and tested and although there was an accident the Division was satisfied that the experiment of making grenades was worth a trial. Premises were obtained in the Falls Road and staff was organised. John McArdle, our D.E., was director, helped by his brother, ~~Pat~~ Frank, now an eminent architect in the North. Incidentally these two men were considered the most brilliant and competent in their profession so that the idea of making a contact bomb was not any hare-brained scheme but most people were very sceptical as to the possibility of making a suitable contact bomb. The British were, I believe, very keen on such a missile.

The staff was as follows:-

Divisional Engineer	John McArdle (Architect).
Foreman Fitter	Dan Magill.
Assistant Fitters	Pete (Now Captain) Corvin. Joe McNally (now Lieut.-Colonel).
Moulder	Tommy Cillen.
Assistant Moulders	Paul and Joe Cullen.
Pattern Maker and Carpenter	Seamus (now Lieut.-Colonel) Timoney.
Labourers	Barney Mullen, Sam McMenemy George Heuston.

The supply of materials provided no difficulty except on the matter of a crucible for melting the scrap iron. One of our Volunteers worked with a firm named McCartons, Smithfield, Belfast, (Tom Gunn, now Lieut.-Colonel,) at considerable risk of drawing attention to himself procured this crucible for me and the work was got under way. The greanade was shaped exactly like a Mills, same size, same corrugations but different mechanism.

A detailed description, with drawing from memory, of its mechanism and action has been prepared by Pete Corvin

and Joe McNally and is attached as an appendix.

The moulding end of the job progressed vigorously but the fitting of the internal mechanism was a comparitively slow process. This was done by hand and was precision work requiring great accuracy in workmanship. The work of filing the rocker was a most delicate operation as the fitting of this component was of the highest importance to the future grenadiers.

In passing I should like to pay a compliment to these men. They worked under the worst possible conditions from 8.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. They lived under a continual strain, they were armed and knew that if they were caught on the job nothing would save them. It should be borne in mind that in the preparation of an ambush, a raid, or on execution, plans can be made for protection, for the most suitable executive moment and for a safe get away. These men could make no such preparations but would have been caught like rats in a trap. They had not the excitement which is developed in any operation to sustain their nerves but remained all day and every day surrounded by the evidence of their work and waiting and dreading the inevitable informer. I feel that these men, living under this strain, compare favourably, insofar as Volunteer duty is concerned, to the more spectacular and very efficient A.S.U.

In this connection a good story is told about one of the workers - a "Robey" Gillen who was our moulder. He had to report earlier each morning than the others for the purpose of lighting the furnace fires. Judge of his surprise when he found a police sergeant nosing around the inside yard - the outer door had been left opened or forced by him - and he was undoubtedly investigating. There were, as far as I can recollect, three compartment in the yard- our foundry, a balcksmith's shop and a claypipe factory. The latter, fortunately was open, and the owner was absent. "Robey" invited

the policeman into the pipe factory, assumed ownership and explained in detail the manufacture of pipes - a subject about which he was completely ignorant, but apparently talked convincingly enough to satisfy the policeman. He dismissed any reference to the adjoining department by describing it as a storeroom for the pipes. He gave the policeman a half-dozen pipes and bade him good-bye. Needless to say this entailed an immediate shift and we transferred the foundry to a new and specially prepared place in Arizona Street in the upper Falls area. It had been decided already to make this change but the inquisitiveness of the police hurried on the transfer. The new factory was a large hut formerly used as a repair garage. The benches contained motor parts and a few old cars were strewn about; special camouflaged receptacles were around to hold the grenades and parts. The transfer was made without incident and the manufacture continued for about two months, when, owing to the general situation, it was decided to abandon production. The grenades and components were then buried.

The Volunteers did not take too kindly to the grenade, first of all because it was experimental; secondly because it was made by their own pals and by hand; thirdly because of a few accidents due to faulty and probably nervous handling. There were some thousands of shells made but only about one thousand were fitted with the mechanism. It had been the intention, if there had been no Treaty, to supply all Ireland with the grenades.

As already stated the Belfast pogrom was in full swing prior to the Truce. This persecution was continued through part of the Truce period. The position, as explained, had been aggravated due to the execution by the Volunteers of D.I. Swanzy in Lisburn. Practically every Catholic was hunted out of that particular town. The pogrom entailed practically full time duty for the Volunteers for, while not anxious to

become mixed up with any sectarian activities, it was found necessary to afford protection against the determined efforts of the Unionists who were aided by the Specials. There were some very interesting sniping duels. On one occasion when passing through Raglan Street I saw that one such duel was in progress. The special was under cover on a balcony in Cupar Street, (a Protestant area) and had been firing down Panton Street which was a Catholic area. Some of our chaps were providing fleeting targets so that he would expose himself, but without result. One foolish man stood out from the corner, thus making a target of himself, while his pal awaited the enemy raising himself to have a shot, and fired using his friend's shoulder as a rest. Judging from the exultant screams of the women, who were watching the duel from their bedroom windows, our people were successful in hitting the special or Unionist sniper. While not a very intelligent method, it showed a great spirit of dare-devilry. During this period there were some gruesom happenings on both sides. If a trusting Protestant passed through a Catholic area and if there were no Volunteers in the area at the time, he was liable to be murdered and brutally butchered. The Volunteers took no part in these butcherings but acted purely in a defensive capacity for the protection of the area. The Volunteers had many and varied experiences dealing with the raids by specials during curfew hours. The organisation was such that these marauders usually got more than they bargained for. Needless to say there was always the possibility that some elements of them would reach their objective but the women of the area had an answer. Realising that these murderers needed peace and quietness for the nefarious work, the women created the greatest possible noises, one of which became recognised as a signal. It was a process of rattling the dustbins and the amount of din created made secrecy out of the question and warned Volunteers in the area so that the specials usually beat a hasty retreat.

As well as this protection for the areas the I.R.A. also provided guards to protect Catholic institutions situated in danger areas - places like convents, churches and schools. Armed men were placed in most of these with good results. I recollect being on guard on one occasion in St. Malachy's college. I was on sentry duty at a window looking out to the front of the school. The Bishop, Dr. MacRory, who was passing along the corridor, stopped, discussed the situation generally and was particularly interested in the mechanism of my rifle. The next occasion on which I saw him was in Collins Barracks, Dublin eleven or twelve years after when he was attending the Eucharistic Congress. He was then Cardinal. I was in the Army and in uniform and strange as it may seem, he recognised me and recollected the last and only occasion we had ever met - a wonderful tribute to his memory and thoughtfulness.

My home, like many others, was raided many times but not until near the Truce period, which indicates that it was not until very late on that the R.I.C. intelligence was functioning successfully. On the other hand, it was quite clear to me that some of our Catholic neighbours were not reliable - particularly the A.O.H. brand and this is a point which I should like to emphasise. The 3rd Northern were always up against a situation where the Unionist elements, plus the A.O.H. elements, plus the very large ex-British soldier family type were antagonistic and were prepared to give information to the authorities. In support of this I should like to state that I only stayed in my home twice over a particular period. I was 'on the run' and on each occasion the house was obviously under notice. On the first occasion I had just come back from Dublin and I had two Thompson guns which I had received from General McMahon, Q.M.G. and was during the later part of the Truce. On the same day two bags of shotguns and seven revolvers were delivered to my home from

the country Brigade areas for repairs. It was too late when I reached home, or I was too careless to shift the stuff to recognised safe dumps and my brother Joe and myself went off to bed. About twelve midnight I wakened, hearing what appeared to be loud knocking on our door. My brother Joe was stationed at the bedroom window with a Thompson gun. On looking out I saw a number of soldiers and a tender with R.I.C., some in uniform and some in civies. Needless to say, we feared the worst. My mother went off down stairs and opened the door but a soldier told her to close the door as they were not raiding this particular house. The next day a neighbour informed us that their house had been raided and the police asked if Menallys lived here. They asked who lived next door and were given the anme of the family who lived lower down from our house. Our neighbours, a family of girls from the country, were very sound nationally and this was fortunate for us. Otherwise we might have fared very badly.

The other occasion was after the Treaty. I had not joined the Army at this stage but when passing through Dundalk on some occasion I called into the Barrack Mess and was given a Mess Card. On reaching home I stayed all night and the house was raided by police. A young D.I. and a Sergeant of the R.I.C. questioned us. My brothers, John and Joe, were also at home, bu my brother John, who was not in the Volunteers was not interrogated, whereas myself and Joe were and the Sergeant knew us by name which showed that the police were at last bringing their Intelligence up to date and possibly with local help. It also proves, I think, that the 3rd Northern Division were working against factors which were not apparent in the southern parts of Ireland. I am introducing this point to show and to emphasise the position and perhaps to show cause why operations on a grand scale, comparable say to ambushes in the south, could not be carried out in the north. There were no safe rallying points before or after any such operation. This is not put forward as an alibi but the effort at Lappenduff,

Co. Cavan, where the A.S.U. from Belfast were captured practically on their arrival at a meeting point. They were informed on by a local Protestant. Bearing in mind that this area is not by any means predominantly Unionist, it gives an idea of what would happen in like circumstances in parts of Antrim and Down.

Treaty.

The Treaty period in Volunteer history is, needless to say, the saddest and most difficult to deal with. Up to that there was a wonderful one aim spirit amongst the Volunteers. There was nothing in the world, seemingly, could split or disunite men who had been banded together so long. We had been warned of the dangers of a truce, mixing with the enemy, giving away precious information, etc. Norwithstanding efforts of secrecy, it can be realised that the enemy did bring their information and intelligence up to date and that they were acquainted with the fact that our arms supply was a comparatively negative factor. Due to our association with General O'Duffy, who acted as Liaison Officer in Belfast, we all became well known to the police.

The big factor, as far as the 3rd Nothern Unit was concerned was the promise of help in the supply of arms and equipment with which the fight in the North could be continued. The various conferences held confirmed, we were told, that the fight would go on and that the Treaty would be the stepping stone to ultimate and complete freedom. Michael Collins was our sheet anchor and we were convinced that if he had not been killed there would have been an acceleration in the movement for final independence.

I am afraid there was a good deal of muddled thinking at Government Headquarters at the time. The boundary question seemed to be handled in a 'go as you please' type of effort and I believe if it had not been for the determined efforts of some prominent Northern politicains, it would have been even worse than it is.

The Department of Education seemed to be in serious difficulties as to its responsibilities. In the first place they advised the Northern teachers not to accept any salary from the Northern Government and only to accept payment from

the Free State. Practically without notice the latter ceased making payments and the teachers had to go back, hat in hand, to the Northern Government. The latter promptly introduced the "Oath of Allegiance to the King". The Free State Government, during the period in which they paid the salaries, made the usual pension deductions but refused to make any refund of these amounts, notwithstanding that they had no moral right to retain the cash.

One way and another the North got a bad deal, but with God's help the day may come when we will have the six counties included in the Irish Republic. I am afraid, however, it is still a long way off.

Signed; T. Malley

Date; 18th July. 1950

Witness;-
John McEvoy.
18/7/50.