

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 416

ROINN



COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S.416.....

Witness

Mrs. James Ryan (Mairin Cregan),
Kindlestown House,
Delgany, Co. Wicklow.

Identity

Wife of Dr. J. Ryan, T.D.
Courier to Kerry, Holy Week 1916.

Subject

- (a) National activities 1916-1921;
- (b) Kerry, Holy Week 1916, including
tragedy at Ballymissane Pier on Good Friday.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

N11

File No. .S.1150.....

Form BSM 2

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913 21

No. W.S. 416

STATEMENT OF MRS. JAMES RYAN (MÁIRÍN CREGAN),

Kindlestown House, Delgany, Co. Wicklow.

As a child in Killorglin, my mother talked a good deal about Douglas Hyde and the language movement. She made her children learn Irish dancing and singing and tried to recall Irish phrases heard from her own parents to teach them to us. A teacher in the Killorglin National School, Una Nic Coluim, a sister of Fionán Mac Coluim, a máinteóir taistil for Connradh na Gaedhilge, definitely influenced my young mind towards the language and Irish history. She was the perfect example of the selfless enthusiast. Later, when at boarding school (St. Louis Convent, Carrickmacross), I met five girls who I found had the same interests - two Buckleys from Kilcock (nieces of Domhnall Ó Buachalla, last Governor General); two McGavocks from Glenarm, (nieces of Eoin mac Néill); and a girl, Teresa Casey, Belfast, whose family also were interested in Irish. The Head Mistress, Sister Stanislaus McCarthy, a Cork woman, encouraged us in every way to speak Irish, but we were limited to the "cúpla focal" and very doubtful pronunciation although our grammar was quite good.

During the holidays my mother again encouraged me to go to two men, one, a shopkeeper in the town, and one in Ballykissane to learn to speak it - a hard task for me. The man in Ballykissane was Patrick Begley. After passing Senior Grade I went to teach in Brigidine Convent, Goresbridge. One of the nuns was Siúir Caoimhghin, a Tipperary woman. She gave me D.P. Moran's "Leader" every week. While there, Miss Margaret Browne (afterwards

Mrs. Seán McEntee) came weekly from Dublin to give lectures to the nuns and as she stayed overnight we naturally became friendly. She had first-class university degrees in Irish and Celtic Studies and was, I found, in close touch with the people in Dublin who were making a national resurgence possible. In September, 1914, I came to Dublin to study music and tried to pay my way by teaching in St. Louis High School, Rathmines. When I got settled into digs in Rathmines, Miss Browne spent all her week-ends with me. Later, we were joined by Miss Kay Brady of Belfast who also taught in St. Louis. Miss Browne introduced me to Miss Kit Ryan (afterwards Mrs. Seán T. O'Kelly), who kept open house every Sunday evening for young and old who were Sinn Féiners, Gaelic Leaguers, Volunteers, etc. Here, we met people like Seán McDermott, Seán T. O'Kelly, Liam Ó Briain (now Professor Romance languages, Galway University), Fr. Paddy Browne (now President, Galway University), Pádraig Ó Conaire. Practically every Saturday night we went to the Abbey Theatre and afterwards to a céilidhe. I was taking singing lessons from Madame Coslett Heller and soon I was requisitioned for singing at the Volunteers' concerts. So I might say that my active association with the National Movement in Dublin before the Rising was singing at Volunteer concerts, which were one of the chief ways of raising money for arms. These concerts were held at various halls in the city, such as 25, 39 and 41 Parnell Square, which were hired for concerts and dances from the organisations which owned them; also the Mansion House and the Antient Concert Rooms. The last one I sang at was advertised as follows, on the ticket (Appendix A) :-

1st Battalion, Dublin Brigade.

A GRAND CONCERT will be held
at the ANTIENNT CONCERT ROOMS

On

Sunday Night, 9th April, 1916.

Doors open at 7.30; commencing
at 8 o'clock p.m.

I intended going to Kerry for the Easter holidays, 1916. On Spy Wednesday afternoon, a message came to me at my digs in 82 Grove Park, from Miss Kit Ryan, 19 Ranelagh Road, that Seán McDermott wanted to see me before I left from Kingsbridge the following morning. Later that evening, a young man, a stranger to me - I heard later his name was Cullen - arrived and gave me some automatics and ammunition, saying that he was told to give them to me for delivery to the Volunteers in Tralee, and that I would be given further particulars that evening. I think it was almost midnight when Seán McDermott and Gearóid O'Sullivan arrived. Miss K. Brady and Jim Ryan, medical student and Volunteer, were with me. Seán took me aside while Gearóid entertained the other two. He told me to go to Father Joe Breen, then a C.C. in Tralee, who would put me in touch with Austin Stack and Paddy Cahill. I was to give them the automatics, etc., and also two or three letters, one for Quinlan. (See letter to Mr. Cremen, Secretary, Military Pensions Board, from Paddy Cahill, Tralee, dated 7th April, 1941, ^{Appendix B}). He told me also to tell Stack that Seán Fitzgibbon was in Limerick and would go to Tralee to join them.

I left Dublin on Holy Thursday morning and

arrived in Tralee at about 7 p.m. I got in touch with Father Breen, who sent two boys with me to the Skating Rink where I met Austin Stack, Paddy Cahill and others. Instead of skating they were manufacturing bombs and bullets. I delivered a violin case full of automatics and ammunition, also the letters, not knowing the contents. Seán McDermott had told me, however, that one of the letters was a request for the help of some Quinlan family re landing arms which were to arrive in Kerry one of these days. I spent that night in the house of Miss Pearl Veale in Tralee.

Seán McDermott had arranged with me that, if Quinlans were prepared to do what they were asked, I was to send a telegram on Good Friday to Miss Mina Davin, 4 Lower Abbey Street, Dublin, saying :- "Delighted to assist at concert". Miss Davin was accustomed to play my accompaniments at concerts, and, as her father was proprietor of "The Ship" in Abbey Street - a lunch-bar where Seán McDermott, Arthur Griffith and all that group met almost daily - it was a convenient address for both of us. On Good Friday morning I told Miss Veale I wanted to see Stack about sending a telegram, but I could not get in touch with him. During the day a messenger - perhaps Paddy Cahill - came to Veale's to tell me not to bother about the wire, as they were sending a special messenger to Dublin with the answer. Anyhow, being a bank holiday, no telegram could be sent. Things had developed overnight: Casement had landed at Banna and so Stack was otherwise engaged. That evening, one of the Volunteers arranged for me to travel to Killorglin in the guard's van of a cattle train going to Cahirciveen. This was necessary because the police were now getting busy about all strangers in the town.

After I had left they called to Miss Veale's house making enquiries about me, but they got no information there. She said I was a friend who had been arranging concert programmes.

At about ten o'clock on Good Friday evening as I was preparing for bed, news spread through the town of Killorglin that a car had gone over Ballykissane Quay. With my sister I went there and managed to get hold of Tommy McInerney, driver of the car, and the only one saved. I took him aside. After much persuasion and only after I had told him that I had been in Tralee myself on special Volunteer work, I got him to admit that he believed his passengers were on Volunteer work. We arranged that he would leave himself in my hands to try steering him clear of the police. Only for the presence of mind of Mr. Patrick Begley, Ballykissane, my former Irish teacher, who took McInerney's revolver and hid it, he would have been arrested much sooner than he was. I got him to a house in Killorglin, where he spent the night and where the injury to his leg was dressed. He remained up all night, dosing occasionally and rather shocked, but on the whole, bluffing his way through police inquiries very well. For a full, detailed description of the accident to the car and McInerney's subsequent arrest, see my article "The Rush to meet the Arms-Ship" in "Irish Press", Monday, April 24th, 1933. I was the "young girl" mentioned in that article (Appendix C) (See also "Carrying the Message in Easter Week", "Irish Press", Christmas Number, 1934", "Volunteer X" in that article was the medical student, Jim Ryan, mentioned above).

When I was leaving Seán McDermott, he told me to

bring back to him on the following Wednesday, a full account of happenings in Kerry over the long week-end and that he would have somebody at Kingsbridge to meet me on arrival. That, of course, never happened as the Rising was on from Easter Monday and the railways were not functioning.

I have no idea which day I left Kerry for Dublin, but it was perhaps Wednesday of Easter Week. At Mallow, with several other passengers, I was told that Dublin-bound trains were only going as far as Ballybrophy or some intervening station, that "the guns from Dublin could be heard in Kildare", etc. So we stayed in Mallow, spending most of our time at the railway station and seizing every opportunity of boarding a likely train.

Rumours were rife and I remember one cold and miserable evening, while in the waiting room of the station, a man came in with yet another that "the military had mown down the Volunteers in front of the G.P.O." . I, being worn out with fatigue and frustration, began to cry. To give an idea of the attitude of the general public at that time, who apparently did not realise the significance of the Rising in Dublin, one of those present turned to console me saying, "It is only the Sinn Féiners that were killed". This enraged me and I turned on them saying, "But it is the Volunteers I am crying for. My friends are among them and fighting too". It was remarkable that in a very short time, first one and then another, began to murmur, and the little crowd began to argue and take sides. This was the first public expression of any sympathy I experienced, however people may have been feeling privately.

I spent a few days with a friend, Miss Gretta Twomey, in Crookstown near Macroom, waiting for trains to start. When eventually we left Mallow, I found again some of my former fellow-travellers, especially two ladies who were returning from a holiday in Killarney. But though they had previously tried to make me one of their party, they now studiously avoided me, making remarks like, "She is one of them"; "Did you ever see such lunacy, daring to fight the British Empire, etc.?"

I can't remember the circumstances or the date of my reaching Dublin, but the executions were already on. I returned to our digs in 82 Grove Park. The others were not back, I think, nor can I remember when they came back. My landlady, Mrs. Doyle, received me with open arms, very sympathetically and reassuring me that she had searched my room and luggage lest the police might raid and find something incriminating, since she guessed that all of us - the two Bradys, Margaret Brown and myself - were very much mixed up in the "movement".

So many people were in jail or internment camps that it was not easy to get in touch with one's friends quickly, but eventually we got together again (those who were left of our particular group) in Ryan's, 19 Ranelagh Road - three members of their family were now absent in jails and most of the people who used to foregather there on Sunday evenings.

A couple of hours before his execution, Seán McDermott asked Min Ryan who was visiting him, to take a memento from him to me as I was a "good girl" and had carried out my mission to Kerry in accordance with his instructions. He took a penny out of his pocket and

asked one of the two soldiers on guard for a penknife. The soldier said it was against orders. Seán quickly appreciated the soldier's position. He scratched his initials and the date with a pin on the coin and Min Ryan brought it to me. It was an indication of the thoughtful person he was, as well as an encouragement to "carry on". See article "Seán McDermott - The Worker" "Irish Press", May 11th, 1954".

Our principal activities after Easter Week were, visiting gaols and sending parcels to the prisoners, as well as working for the Prisoners' Dependents' Fund.

I left Dublin in September, 1916, having been dismissed from my teaching post in St. Louis Convent, Rathmines. Some of the parents of the children were calling to the Reverend Mother, protesting against their children being taught by a friend of "these rebels" and who herself was strongly suspected of having been mixed up in 'this rebellion'.

I took the place of a nun in Ballyshannon, who was coming to University College, Dublin, to do her degree. I found a few sympathetic friends in the town and almost immediately we started evening Irish classes for adults. Fr. Con Tierney (who was one of the first seven priests of the Maynooth Mission to China and later killed by bandits) was a curate in Ballyshannon and he helped with these classes. By this time, people all over the country were anxious to show they approved of what Pearse had done. A flag day for the prisoners' dependents, at a fair in Ballyshannon, was held as a counterblast to the British flag days for "our boys at the front". The Stephens, a well-known family in the town, were particularly good in all this work.

In September, 1917, I went to Portstewart to teach in Dominican High School. I was there till I married in July, 1919. This district was a stronghold of Unionism. At the General Election in 1918, I canvassed for Mr. Patrick McGilligan, having to choose carefully my houses, for I literally dared not enter the vast majority of them. It would be difficult, even amusing, to describe what a forlorn hope it was to expect votes for a Sinn Féin candidate in a town that was swathed in Union Jacks on polling day.

The only incident of interest I recall during that period in Portstewart was getting my pupils to leave a concert hall rather than stand for the singing of "God Save the King". At that time we found it necessary to give public profession of our faith in "heroics" of this kind. I must say, after all these years, I can still remember the nervous strain and the heart-pounding when things of this kind had to be done. They were not easy.

When I married in July, 1919, I went with my husband (Dr. Jim Ryan, now T.D. for South Wexford) to live in Wexford town, where he was practising.

Political activity and organisation were in full swing. I joined the local branch of Cumann na mBan, of which Cissie Whelan, now Mrs. Curran, was President. We took part in every political activity there and took our share of the consequences - raiding was one of these. Raids were made on our house from time to time, with the result that my husband avoided sleeping at home. On one occasion, between 1 and 3 a.m., in December 1920, the military broke in through the dining room window

downstairs; they were fully armed and were wearing light rubber slippers. I awoke hearing some unusual sound and going to the bedroom window I saw the glint of bayonets in the street. When I turned round to dress I was confronted with soldiers who had crept upstairs noiselessly and were already in the bedroom. They rushed into every room in the house looking for my husband and demanded to be told where he was. At the time he was actually standing inside a window on the opposite side of the street watching the raid with his host, Owen Kehoe. Not knowing this, I turned on all the lights as a warning to him in case he should come to the house. I dressed and went down to the drawing room where I found Captain Parke, Lt. John (or Johns) the Intelligence Officer, and another Lieutenant - all regular army officers - going through the letters and papers in my desk. I protested and told them that I feared they would "plant" some papers in the desk. I said this because at the time the "planting" of incriminating documents in republican houses during raids had become a well-known trick. I tried to prevent them opening my letter-case and they ordered me to leave the room. After repeated refusals one of the officers went out and brought in two soldiers who dragged me forcibly from the room. I stood against the wall outside the door and refused to go further. At that point Captain Parke came out of the room. I had already noticed that he was under the influence of drink. He had lost his left hand in the war and usually wore a hook attached to the stump. During raids, this hook was replaced by a dagger. He stood quite close to me now waving his revolver and dagger in my face while we argued. I did not think he intended to kill me, but I certainly feared that the revolver would go off by mistake and I made a most fervent mental

Act of Contrition. Eventually they went away.

The first thing I did in the morning was to go through my papers, among which I found three personal letters of Lt. John ? obviously left by mistake when taking some of ours. One was a hotel bill for himself and wife in some place in London; another was a letter either to, or from (I can't remember which, but I think from) a brother officer in Kilkenny about golf clubs, in which the writer deplored the fate that kept him in this country. I forget what the third was. I handed these letters to a local officer of the I.R.A. Next day Lt. John ? and another officer called and asked me for the letters. I said that by this time they would have reached I.R.A. Headquarters in Dublin. It was amusing to see the incredulous expression on their faces at the casual mention of I.R.A. Headquarters. Mr. Frank Carty, now editor of "Irish Digest", then in I.R.A., Wexford, might still have these letters.

The day following this raid my husband was arrested and brought to Wexford Military Barracks where there were other prisoners, I think. I was allowed to spend two hours with him on the afternoon of Christmas Day on condition that I would not bring out any plans - I forget whether for his escape or for ambushes - to the I.R.A. This I could safely promise, indeed. The door of the cell was kept open and a sentry walked up and down in the passage outside while we sat and talked in the cell. Two of the officers arrived while I was there, proffering cigarettes and even commiserating with us and being generally friendly. He remained in this barracks - except for the occasional joy-rides on which he was taken by the military as a hostage in the front of their lorries -

until some time in January when he was transferred to Waterford Gaol with Jim McCormack, a chemist in Wexford town, and Tom Trainor, assistant County Surveyor. They departed in style in a military convoy which was bringing a General on a tour of inspection of the areas, accompanied by lorries, armoured cars, etc. - a procession, doubtless intended to impress the town.

On the 15th February, 1921, there was an ambush on military lorries outside Wexford town and the following morning, as a reprisal for the wounding of some of the soldiers, the military officers decided to make six prominent republican citizens of the town post up on their windows copies of the martial law proclamation, with a provocative display of the words "God Save the King" in large letters at the bottom of the poster. Mine was the first house chosen, I suppose because I was the T.D's wife. After a preamble explaining the cause of this reprisal, the officer held out the poster and told me to hang it in the dining-room window so that passers-by might read it. I refused to take it despite his pressure. Then he threatened me with arrest, if I persisted in my refusal. Eventually he tried gentle persuasion, saying, "If you take it out of my hand, it will do". I kept my hands behind my back saying, "I won't even touch it". At this he went out and had a consultation with somebody in the hall, leaving either a soldier or officer with me. A message was sent to the Barracks and later two lorries arrived. The officers interviewed me again threatening arrest if I did not obey orders. When I still refused they told me to get ready to come with them in the lorry. They asked my sister (Dora Cregan) whom I had left in the Study with my eight-months old baby Eóin, and a priest who happened to call that day, Father James Furlong, to

pack some clothes for me. I asked to be allowed to see my baby before leaving and they sent a soldier with me while I was doing so. I then went out and got into one of the lorries and was driven to the Military Barracks at the other end of the town. I was surprised to notice as I drove through the town that nobody showed me any sympathetic recognition. People were, I suppose, intimidated by the idea of possible reprisals for the ambush the night before.

I was taken upstairs to a room where a kindly young Red Cross orderly offered his help in case of necessity. Later, either he or another came in with hammer and nails and nailed up the two windows lest I should try to escape - a thought, I confess, which had already come to me, and I had been gauging the drop from the back window on to a shed. I think it was an officer who brought in a box of chocolates which some friend had hurriedly sent in after me, and before giving it to me, lifted the rows in a perfunctory search for - documents, I daresay.

I remained a few hours in Wexford Military Barracks and was then taken in a prison van to the South Station. I was to be accompanied to Waterford Jail by an officer and three men. A special first-class carriage with drawn blinds was reserved for us. I got in. There were no good-byes. Shortly after leaving Wexford I dared to raise the blind at my corner. The day was dying, and we were travelling through flat, sedgy, dreary country. I began to think of what I had left behind and suddenly had a bad attack of loneliness, but this was carefully concealed from my fellow-travellers.

It was quite dark when we arrived at Waterford Station. I was conducted to a waiting lorry round which was gathered a knot of people who guessed that a prisoner was expected. They weren't quite sure whether I was the one but they hailed me and I waved back. They cheered and waved. It was encouraging and consoling to see them openly showing their sympathy. On the way to the gaol I had an impression of dark roads and trees and was terrified that a bomb might be thrown at the lorry. It was a relief to find myself inside the gaol gates.

There were the usual formalities at the office. I was a military prisoner being handed over to civil authorities. My particulars were filled in. I was signed for and delivered.

Next thing I remember is the long corridor with cells at one side. I was put into No. 4. The door was left open and the two wardresses were bustling round, getting bed clothes hurriedly out of a kind of linen press almost opposite the cell. I imagine I wasn't expected. They kept saying something about getting me everything right in the morning. Immediately I arrived excitement rose in the other cells and the political prisoners called out asking who I was. For them, the biggest event of any day was the arrival of anyone who would give them news of how things were going outside. (Miss Keogh, Matron, Mount St. Benedict, Gorey, could probably give more details of what happened that night. She was in cell 3 or 5).

While I was in gaol certain members of the House of Commons, Commander Kenworthy, Wedgewood Benn and

Jack Jones. asked Sir Hamar Greenwood awkward questions about my arrest since I had an eight-months old baby at home. I asked the Governor to have the baby sent in to me. He passed my request on to the G. O. C. troops in Wexford. I got no reply. Then I intended asking for him at my courtmartial. Next the courtmartial was postponed. Then I wrote to G. O. C., Waterford, asking him to have arrangements made for Eoin's coming to me.

I got in the Christian Brothers Irish Grammar, Dineen's Dictionary and a few texts and made a determined attempt to work at Irish every day. Miss Keogh joined me and we sat on our stools in my cell, working through the grammar. We also got through some Irish songs and dances with the other prisoners.

On 26th Feb. I was tried in Waterford by field courtmartial (for not posting up the Proclamation) and got seven days to pay a fine of £50. I refused to recognise the court and when sentence was delivered I said I would pay no fine. The President said if the fine was not paid the penalty would be three months without hard labour. I said I'd go to prison and prepared to return with the wardress but she was told to leave me at the gate! We both went back to prison, however, for a few things I had left behind; then I returned to Wexford.

On consultation with my husband who was now in Kilworth Camp (Co. Cork), we decided to auction our house and most of our furniture.

I went "on the run". Soldiers, including Black and Tans, called to Tomcoole, Co. Wexford, my father-in-law's house, looking for me and the £50 fine, but I was not available.

I went to Dublin and joined Bob Brennan's staff when he set up the Foreign Affairs Department. (See the book "Allegiance" by Robert Brennan). We worked (1) in 2 Harcourt Place as an insurance firm, Lewis & Lewis, and (2) as a disinfectant manufacturer's, Iresol Ltd., in 16 (or 19?) Kildare Street. I had charge of files and especially of bringing certain letters and dispatches out of the office every evening. These, locked in a case, were kept by Miss a florist and fruiterer ~~at~~ Charlemont Bridge, for I dared not keep them in 19 Ranelagh Road where I was staying, because of the danger of raids.

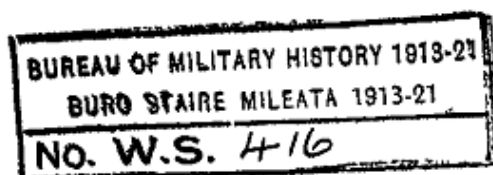
I also acted as courier with special messages to Art Ó Briain in London and Seán T. Ó Ceallaigh, our Envoy in Paris. Arthur Griffith was our first Minister, then came George Gavan Duffy.

When the Four Courts was attacked I joined up with the Irish republican forces and left Foreign Affairs.

SIGNED Máire Bean Uí Rann.

DATE 26th Feb 1950

WITNESS: S. C. Crossin



Appendix A

ÓGLAÍŠ na héireann—IRISH VOLUNTEERS
1ST BATTALION, DUBLIN REGIMENT.

A GRAND CONCERT

will be held in the

ANTIENIENT CONCERT ROOMS

on

SUNDAY NIGHT, 9th APRIL, 1916

Doors open at 7.30 p.m.; commencing at 8 o'clock.

AN ADDRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BY PROF. EOIN MAC NEILL

Ticket

-

One Shilling.

1944



1945

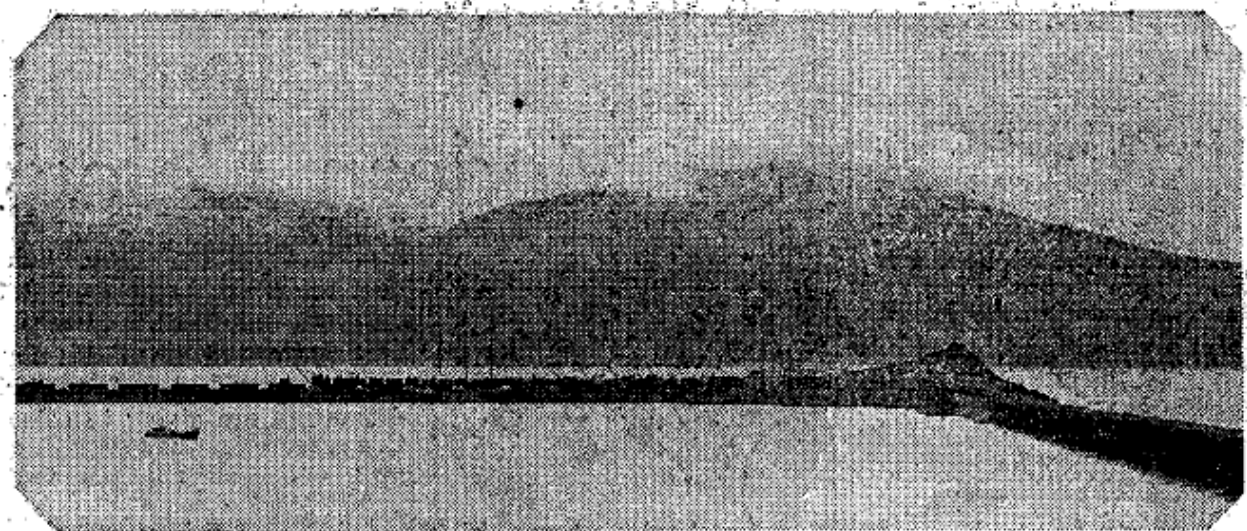
1946

1947

THE IRISH PRESS, MONDAY, APRIL 24, 1933.

"No man ever held on to his gun like Tommy McInerney"

The RUSH To MEET The ARMS-SHIP



Fenit Harbour, Co. Kerry, where the Aud was due to arrive.

ON Good Friday a party of men left Dublin. They were the first combatants of the Rising. They sped to the Kerry coast, where "foreign aid" was to come to them—in the shape of the "Aud" with its 40,000 stand of arms. Tragedy intervened. The "Aud" came and went, carrying her treasure away, for the messengers had met with disaster. In this article the story is told for the first time for daily newspaper readers in Ireland.

THE German boat, "The Aud," was due to arrive with arms at Fenit on Easter Sunday night or early on Monday morning. The Volunteer Headquarters in Dublin arranged that a wireless be installed to get in touch with it. This was to be done in Ballyard (near Tralee) on Holy Satur-

day. It was a piece of Christmas candle and, shading it inside his hat, rushed out shouting, "Face the light! Swim towards the light." MacInerney turned completely round and when Sullivan reached the rough beach he found him still "swimming" through the gravel with bleeding hands and knees and a cigarette between his lips.

"A Strange Man."

They called and waited, but all around was only dead silence. Then they went to Sullivan's house, but before entering the driver threw his dripping overcoat on a fence outside. Sullivan advised him to report the accident at Killorglin police barracks, and he arrived there soaking and exhausted and was given dry clothes.

Meantime, Mr. "Patsy" Begley, who lives near Sullivan, had arrived with car lamp and bicycle lamp, and other neighbours, attracted by the shouting, had gathered into Sullivan's kitchen. A woman came in with the overcoat. She asked them to "feel the weight of the coat the poor boy came out of the tide in." They did so, and one man put his hand in a pocket. He drew out a six-chamber revolver, fully loaded. No one spoke.

Now Mr. Begley was an enlightened man. He had followed every word

of the sergeant's story. The sergeant asked him once again "had he any idea who they were." He said he hadn't a notion. There was a knock at the door and a young girl came in. "She was down from Dublin on Easter Holidays," and was greeted by the people of the house. She went to shake hands with her friend, "Patsy" Begley. His lips said "excuse me for not rising, my legs are stiff with rheumatism," but his eyes sent her a message which made her say "don't stir," quickly enough.

Then the sergeant continued his cross-examination. The driver "thought" they were bank-clerks on their holidays doing the Ring of Kerry. The sergeant thought it was a queer story that he was driving men and he didn't know where he was driving them to. MacInerney said he was wired for a car and his passengers told him they'd direct him where they wanted to go. He didn't ask them any questions. . . . This explanation was more or less accepted.

It was almost midnight and the girl suggested they should go out to the quay again. Mr. Begley's son and some others had wandered along the shore with lanterns watching for what the tide might bring them. It brought a cap, a petrol tin, oranges, an "Oxford Lunch" cake in its silver

paper, however, was for his overcoat and as day was dawning on Holy Saturday morning, he stood at Patsy Begley's door enquiring about the overcoat. "The thing you're looking for" said this wise man "is safer with me than with you." But it was all no use. It had to be handed over.

About 9 a.m. the tide was full out, and a boat with nets arrived. The men cast their net for a downstream haul but came in empty, one man, however, saying he felt the under line jump over some object. So they tried again, travelling very slowly, and in a short time they were lifting the body of Dan Sheehan from the water.

It was placed in a cart and taken to the Courthouse. The boatmen went on casting their nets and again, farther down stream this time, they stopped. The body of another young man, finely built, was lifted into the boat and rowed to the shore. It was laid on the rough gravel and the police searched first the pockets of his light overcoat, and then all his other pockets. Note books, "stickybacks," rosary beads, pencils and penknives. . . . Suddenly the sky darkened and a heavy shower of rain ran the onlookers under the hedges for shelter. The body of

be installed to get in touch with it. This was to be done in Ballyard (near Tralee) on Holy Saturday night. It was also decided that the wireless installation near Cahirciveen must be dismantled on Good Friday night.

The plans were complete and on Good Friday morning a party of five men in charge of Denis Daly (now T.D. for Kerry) left Kingsbridge, Dublin, by train for Killarney. Outside Killarney they were met by two motor cars, which were to take them to Cahirciveen. The second of these cars was owned and driven by Tommy MacInerney, of Limerick. He took up three men, Con Keating, who was the wireless expert, sitting in front.

MacInerney's orders were to keep the tail-light of the first car in view, but as he had to stop his car twice, he lost sight of the first car.

On arriving at Killorglin it was thought advisable not to pass by the town, but to take the road which leads to the church, which would have brought them on to the Cahirciveen road. At the church, instead of turning to the left, they followed the road which ends at Ballykissane Quay.

The Wrong Turn.

After a few hundred yards the driver questioned if they were on the right road. Keating assured him they were, and pointed to "all the lighted houses." But these were the houses at Keel, six miles away, with the river Laune intervening.

Next MacInerney remarked that this was "a shingly sort of road," and in ten seconds his lights flashed on water. He jammed on his brakes and held the car balanced on the coping stone, the front wheels over and back wheels on the pier. The hood of the car was up.

The driver opened the door. The men behind tried to get out and in doing so shook the car. It toppled over into about 18 feet of water. MacInerney's leg stuck in the door, but he wrenched himself free.

Pulling off his gloves and opening his overcoat he started to swim. He felt someone clutching at his heel and heard shouts of "Help!" The night was bitterly cold and dark and he made for the only lights he could see—which were at Keel.

Beside the Quay lives Mr. Thady Sullivan. He heard the cries for help and, realising what had happened, the

a six-chamber revolver, fully loaded. No one spoke. Now Mr. Begley was an enlightened man. He had followed every word

By MAIRIN CREGAN

written or spoken by Pearse. His son was a Volunteer. He knew nothing of "a Rising" but his keen mind was on the alert.

He suggested it should be put out of sight but the others did not like to interfere with the driver's property. He took it from the man who had it and was examining it when the door opened and in out of the darkness walked four policemen "Patsy" Begley quietly sat down on a chair beside the open hearth.

"What the Tide Might Bring."

The police told the silent men and women that a strange man had been "taken" in Tralee. That the men in the car were bent on dangerous work, that it was the will of God they were drowned. Tommy MacInerney, the

LAND AND WATER.

TREE FLOWERS

OFTEN strong sun, always an east wind, mark the coming into bloom in this district of the elms. Early in the month their shapely tops were covered with tiny crimson flowers. To-day these blossoms have given place to their thin membranous, green-papery seed-vessels.

All of us delight in leafing time, but I think we do not welcome the blossoming of the forest trees as they deserve, nor do we realize that the mist of delicate blue, yellow and green, that flutters over the woods at this season, is due to the pollen alone, but to the pollen and the green leaves are still visible in the

shore with lanterns watching for what the tide might bring them. It brought a cap, a petrol tin, oranges, an "Oxford Lunch" cake in its silver wrapping.

Then a policeman found a notebook and the sergeant by the light of the lantern read it gravely. The girl went to the driver and asked if she could help him... that he might be arrested. Finally she asked him if he was a Volunteer and was on Volunteer work?

To Austin Stack.

He didn't understand her at all. "Was so and so in the car," she asked. He didn't know who that was, he didn't know anything etc., etc. In desperation she told him her own secret: that she had been sent by Seán MacDermot to Austin Stack, that she had only just come from Tralee where things had gone badly, etc., etc. She begged him to trust her and hand her over any papers or other articles he might want to get rid of. In the end and very reluctantly he took her about half-way into his confidence. It was enough.

She brought him to a house in the town but he would not go to bed and sat on a chair all night dozing and jumping up alternately. He had a long sleep in the car on his leg and this

penicils and penknives. Suddenly the sky darkened and a heavy shower of rain ran the onlookers under the hedges for shelter. The body of Con Keating lay alone on that shingly beach. his hands fixed for a breast stroke and the rain beating pitilessly on his face.

The First Casualties.

A girl suggested putting her coat over him, but an old man beside her said, wisely, perhaps, "Leave it go. 'Tis all the same to him now." His body was brought to the Courthouse too, and laid on the straw beside his comrade, till his kinsmen from Iveragh came for him and bore him reverently and proudly to be laid among his own in the churchyard beyond Cahirciveen. They tried hard to get the body of Sheehan, but this the police would not allow, and he was buried in Dromavalla, Killorglin.

The driver, who was present at these operations, said there were three men, and the boats kept searching all day, and for several days afterwards, but the third body could not be found.

In the afternoon Mr. Begley again beseeched the driver to give him his revolver, for he might be arrested any minute, and by the hints of the police was found in the pocket of the driver. Tommy MacInerney, who gave him at last, and then had only changed hands a few minutes when police arrived arrested him.

He was taken to Tralee, Cork and Frongoch, and afterwards released in the city. Almost two years after the Friday night the sun shined on him in perfect order and safety.

Copy of letter (carbon copy) in the possession of Mrs. Máire Ryan (née Creegan) from Mr. Paddy Cahill, Kerry Champion, Ltd., Tralee.

7th April, 1941.

M. Cremen, Esqr.,
Secty.,
Military Pensions Board,
Office of the Referee,
Glasnevin, DUBLIN.

Dear Mr. Cremen,

Replying to yours of the 4th instant to hand, I have pleasure in stating that I have had personal knowledge of Mrs. Jim Ryan's visit to Tralee on Holy Thursday night, 1916. She and Con Collins of Limerick arrived at the Tralee Rink - the Tralee hall of the Volunteers - on Thursday night about the same time. Both had messages from Seán McDermott to Austin Stack, dealing with the Rising and erection of a wireless plant in Tralee to get in touch with the Aud. I know that Miss Maureen Creegan, as she then was, brought down a number of automatic revolvers in a violin case on that occasion, and a letter from Seán MacDermott, advising Austin that a wireless apparatus was to be taken over at Ballygamboon, about six miles on the Tralee-Castlemaine road, from a party specially sent down from Dublin to dismantle the plant at Waterville. For the information of yourself and the Board, this plant was to be erected at Quinlan's, Ballyard, Tralee, on Easter Saturday. This Quinlan was a particular friend of Austin, not outwardly

attached to the Movement, and a relation of Mrs. Dr. Quinlan who was, I think, friendly with Seán MacDermott. This may explain his reason for the latter assuming that it was at her husband's place the set would be erected.

I arranged for Mrs. Ryan to stay with a friend of Austin, Fr. Joe Breen and myself - Miss Pearl Veale, Boherbee, Tralee - on that night, as she could not very well remain at any of the hotels in town. I escorted her to the Tralee station on Good Friday evening and saw her off to Killorglin, and, in the course of our conversation, she informed me that she would be going to Dublin in a few days after getting confirmation of a message from Dublin. This evidently refers to the message for Alderman Davin. This word was, of course, never sent, for the reason that it referred to the wireless set erection at Ballyard and, as the Board is well aware, the tragedy at Ballykissane Pier upset the arrangements for which Denis Daly of Cahirciveen was sent down from Dublin. I was aware of the tragedy on Good Friday night, as I had sent two of the Volunteer Cycling Corps to intercept Daly's car at Glanbeigh, but when they had reached Killorglin, they were informed of the accident at Ballykissane, and whilst they waited at Dooks for Daly's car, this never passed, as it went direct from Cahirciveen to Killarney and, of course, S. MacDermott had direct information from Denny Daly on Saturday evening of the occurrence. Mrs. Ryan was immediately on the scene of the accident in Killorglin, and her good

service there to the rescued driver - Tommy McInerney - your Board is no doubt aware of. This accounted for her stay in Killorglin for a few days before trying to get back to report to Dublin and, as I informed your Board in the case of Miss Thornton, train services from Limerick Junction and Mallow made it impossible for Mrs. Ryan to reach Dublin or get in touch with S. MacDermott.

Any other information in this matter I will only be too pleased to give, especially so, as from my conversation with Mrs. Ryan on that eventful Good Friday, I am well aware how keenly she felt in getting back to deliver her message.

Mise, le meas,
