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COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 488.....

Witness
Jack Plunkett,
42 Upper ~~Newman Street~~ Mount St.,
Dublin.

Identity

Lieutenant Irish Volunteers, 1916;
Brother of Joseph M. Plunkett, signatory
of the Proclamation, 1916.

Subject

- (a) National activities of members of his family 1913-16.
- (b) G.P.O. Dublin, Easter Week, 1916;
- (c) The Volunteer Executive, 1916.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

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ORIGINAL

W.S. 488

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
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Statement of Jack Plunkett,

42, Upper Mount St. Dublin.

Joe Plunkett's appointment to the Military Council
of the I.R.B.;

The chief reason why Joe was appointed a member of the Military Council of the I.R.B., I think, was that he was on the Provisional Committee of the Volunteers and he said what he felt at the meetings. There were several on the Committee who were prepared to take life easy but there were very few who were ready to set to work to produce any constructive plans. Joe, from the very beginning took the work of building up a Military organisation very seriously. Tomás McDonagh was a great friend of his. He started grinding Joe for an exam, Matriculation, in the autumn of 1909. Joe did not pass it. Tomás and Joe collaborated in the work of the Irish Review of which Tomás was editor. Joe eventually took it over from him. They were always arguing about something, either agreeing or disagreeing, they were great pals. I think it was Tomás introduced him to Pearse, - I cannot say what time, it might be 1910 or '11. Tomás was living in a little cottage beyond St. Enda's, where he was teaching.

Joe was not himself a really practical person, but he was able to produce plans and schemes that could be put into practice by other people, and in work done at Military H.Q. he was very keenly critical of proposals put forward including his own. He would be glad to see the faults in his plans shown up as well as those in other people's. There was a common phrase at the time, "We must do something" and when the arms came in the phrase became more urgent. All sorts of people were ready to put forward the wildest schemes and these had to be examined in the most critical fashion. Joe did this most minutely. The Redmondite members were purely obstructive and I well remember our delight when they were thrown out. It seemed too good to be true. They were only an obstacle in the way of getting any real work done.

The Disappearance of James Connolly;

Regarding Connolly's disappearance Joe told me that there would be all sorts of stories going around about it. He gave me an outline. He told me amongst other things that it would be said he was kidnapped. "We talked to him almost continuously for three days" he said - I took it that

it was Seán McDermott, Tomás McDonagh, possibly Pearse and Joe himself. (I do not know where the meeting took place, although I think I heard it at one time). The position was made worse by the fact that somebody said he had gone to Belfast, but a person came down from Belfast and denied that. I think he was taken to a hotel, somewhere comfortable anyway, and if he said when he came back he had walked 40 miles I believe it. I heard from Joe that they had been walking up and down during the talks. He told me that Connolly was very angry in the beginning because for the first few hours of the conversations he did not regard the reasons given in persuading him to come with them for parleying as having been honestly stated.

Connolly's position was that he had made up his mind to start a rising on a certain date which in the opinion of the Military Council was dangerously near - all this recollection on my part is very tenuous and I would not like to be too precise but I think the time fixed would be as early as the end of January. When in the course of the discussions they were able to convince him that they too had fixed the actual date of the Rising and succeeded in persuading him that any earlier date than Easter would cut across their arrangements and would cramp them for time, he agreed to fall in with their plans. I remember

somebody telling me - it might have been Frank Daly - that when the group of Volunteers that were detailed to arrest Connolly - if such a course were found to be necessary - were assembled, they were inclined to be over zealous in the methods they suggested taking and the officer who was instructing them warned them that on no account must Connolly be injured. I was told that this group was standing by for a fairly long period, as it occurred to nobody to disband them. In the first heat of the angry argument with Connolly and later when the talks became more amicable the leaders did not give a thought to the waiting Volunteers. I think somebody must have come out from the meeting place and seen the Volunteers. In fact I think I heard that this person asked "What are these men doing here"? Although I would not now like to state that Joe told me all this, I feel that at a time soon after the event I must have listened to an informed conversation on the matter. Another impression that remains is that one of Connolly's interlocutors had more effect in persuading him than the others and that that person might have been Seán McDiarmuida or Tomás McDonagh.

Joe Plunkett's visit to Germany in 1915;

I did not know Joe was going to Germany. I knew he was going to Spain and I conjectured he was intending to make some German contacts in Spain. He did not speak to me about it before he went. I spent days copying documents in code for him, but I cannot now be sure whether it was before he went to Germany or before he went to America, but I think the latter because it is unlikely that he would take such voluminous documents to Germany and I heard that the Clan na Gael wanted full reports of everything that happened since the last one they had received. The code was very simple and consisted of an agreed relation between certain figures and certain letters of the alphabet. Joe took to Germany with him a walking stick which I had bored and in which I put back the ferrule; he brought back a hollow walking stick but I think it was not the same one. I know there was an important paper in it, because he would ^{not} let it out of his hands. When he was going in to America, he had a bad moment when the Custom's man or someone like that took it and looked at it. They gave it back to him without closer examination.

I did not hear from Joe while he was in Germany. Even after he came back he kept up the pretence that he had travelled abroad for his health. He sent Geraldine a book with a hieroglyphic showing it was for Pearse. Geraldine had it for a week before she saw the hieroglyphic. It was I pointed it out to her and she then rushed off with it to Pearse. The book was sent through Aidan McCabe of Cavan.

I do not know by what route he came home, but I ~~have~~ ^{had} ~~for~~ a suspicion that he came home by boat from Spain to Dublin, although I do not know what it ^{was} ~~is~~ founded on and it is worth precisely nothing. As far as I can remember, Geraldine, Fiona and I had gone on holidays to Rosmuck in Connemara to Pearse's house a short time before he came back. We found him very busy rushing round when we came back, and he seemed much more normal in health than he had been for a long time.

I have some papers connected with Joe's visit to Germany. He did not bring them back with him. A lady called Una Parry gave them to my mother. As you will see from the envelope in which they are contained they were deposited by Joe in Germany, in the archives of the German Foreign Office in Berlin, to be sent to him in Dublin when the war would be over. I do not know when they came into my mother's possession.

I never met Una Parry and do not know who she is or whether she is still alive. The papers lay in the drawer of a desk belonging to me which was used by my mother. I have not examined them really although I read through the Diary twice. Part of it is in Irish - very bad Irish.

The Gurrins who are referred to in the early part of the Diary were friends of our family. The father, Tom Gurrin and his wife were on very good terms with my parents and used to visit us. When Mimi was working in London first at the Slade School and then at a typing job they were very kind to her and entertained her most hospitably. One of the boys was at school in Stonyhurst with Joe and Seóirse. They had a translating agency in London and were handwriting experts - I think the business is still there. Old Tom Gurrin was the best authority in England on handwriting. Not so long ago we had occasion to consult the firm about an obscure clause in my mother's will.

One thing that Joe told me some considerable time after his return from Germany was that while in Berlin he offered the Germans an idea he had in connection with aeroplanes. The device consisted of two narrow planes mounted a relatively

short distance apart and parallel to one another. A model we made had behaved in the manner of a glider descending at a very slow speed. The suggestion was to reverse the process and use it to provide lift. We made some out of cardboard which we stiffened by bending it in our fingers. One of the officers in the Berlin Aeronautical School to whom Joe explained it said it would not work and I have an idea somebody told me it was later tried out by the Germans but was not successful.

The O'Donovan Rossa Funeral;

Joe was at the O'Donovan-Rossa funeral as was I. The only thing I remember about it was the extraordinary perfection of the organisation and the precautions taken to prevent some person or persons - I cannot now say who they were - from being arrested by the police. I was acting as a messenger with Joe's motor-bike, but I got very little to do.

Seóirse, Fergus, Kelly, Colm O'Lochlainn, Geraldine, Fiona, Mimi and myself went to the 1915 Oireachtas in Dundalk, but I am not certain whether Joe was there. Gerry would be able to check that.

George Plunkett's part in the Rising;

My brother Seóirse it was whose company took the G.P.O. It was known as Headquarter's Company because it took its orders direct from Headquarters. It was Tomás McDonagh who issued the orders and the O.C. of the Battalion which had its headquarters at Larkfield objected to this arrangement, but was overruled. The Company came to Liberty Hall in a tram. Seóirse insisted on paying the fares for all the members. In all there were, as far as I remember 42 or 43. Some of them may have gone on their bicycles.

All the Volunteers were lined up in front of Liberty Hall and Seóirse's company led the parade up Lower Abbey St., crossed O'Connell St. at that crossing, turned right and continued until they arrived in front of the G.P.O. Seóirse received his captain's commission from Tomás McDonagh in Holy Week, but he had been acting captain for some months. I was commissioned Lieutenant in the same week.

When in front of the G.P.O., Seóirse gave his company the order to left turn, charge, and as some of the men could not believe their ears, he had to say "Take the G.P.O." One of them gave such a whoop of delight, that something was actually going to happen that threatened to disorganise the whole plan.

Some thought it was a joke.

At that time in accordance with instructions received from Joe I was pushing my motor-bike near the front of the column and I halted it between the Prince's St. corner and the entrance.

It was Seóirse who found James Connolly in the lane between Prince's St. and Abbey St. lying on the ground unable to move, as he was very badly hurt. He had fired his .45 Colt automatic pistol a few times to attract the attention of those in the Post Office. Seóirse heard the shots and went out to investigate; he found him and carried him in. I saw Seóirse about half an hour afterwards and he told me about it.

My work with the Volunteers;

At the time of the Rising I was not in a company. I was on Joe's staff and was put in charge of a little section first on the ground floor of the G.P.O. towards Prince's St. Then I had a little section on the first floor in front. I knew very few of the people in the Post Office.

I joined the Volunteers in 1913 while I was at school in Clongowes. In 1914 I joined the University College Company, but it petered out because the secretary whose name I cannot remember, joined the British Army. Then I was in B Coy of the 3rd Battn. in Camden Place for a short time. I was in C Coy of the 4th Battn. in the autumn of 1914. Tommy McCarthy was the Captain. He did not take part in the Rising at all. The Headquarters of that Battalion was in Larkfield where my family was living at the time.

In 1915 I went on full time to Joe's staff. I had already missed a lot of the drills of the 4th Battn. as I was working so much for Joe. So I left that Battalion.

The main technical work I was engaged on was trying to rig up wireless sets. We did an awful lot of work with absolutely no results. When we would get one half of a set working, we could not get the other half. Joe was much better than I was. He had sets working at an early date - about 1907 - but at very short range, a couple of miles at the most. They could only be used for Morse and were not portable. That was the position until Con Keating came along. He was a ship's operator and had been trained in the Atlantic College. He had been round the world and used to describe his

journeys to Africa and elsewhere. He was a very fine fellow and everybody liked him.

He put together an incomplete set which we had partly assembled and partially tried out. Neither we nor he achieved anything with it, although he had improved upon our efforts. It had not actually worked because I remember that at least one vital part was missing and could not be procured. He took it with him on the expedition to Kerry on the chance that he might be able to get the missing parts and set it up. But at the best it was only a make shift. I have an idea that Con was expecting to take up a job offered by the Marconi people and when the telegram came for him he would not take it. I think that there was another operator who was to take part in the expedition but the job offered to him by the Marconi people was accepted, although I remember Con actually went to the pier and even to the boat at Dunlaoghaire to persuade him to stay here. His reply was "I'll go on this job this time, but if you still want me when I come back I'll stay with you". Joe was very sarcastic about this.

The Expedition to Kerry;

My opinion at the time - it was only an opinion, because Joe did not give me any precise information about it although he may have told me something hurriedly in the G.P.O., was,

that the objective of the expedition was the equipment at the Cable Stations in Valentia, but if it was, it must have been the intention to use it where it was, as it would be too heavy and the aerial would be too tall to move except in a ship which would be out of the question.

Count Plunkett's mission to Rome;

It was Joe that asked my father on behalf of the Military Council to go to Rome. The way it was put to me - probably afterwards - was that he went to get the approval of the Pope for the Rising. The way it was said to me would suggest that it was Joe told me perhaps in the G.P.O. during the Rising. It probably came up when my father came along to the G.P.O. and asked to be taken on as a Volunteer. Joe sent him home saying that he had done enough by going to Rome. He came back from Rome on Easter Monday morning - or was it on Sunday? He came back with the Pope's Benediction for Gerry and Tommy Dillon who had just been married. It is quite possible that I did not know of his trip before that. I heard that he went to tell the Archbishop about it. I think that was on Tuesday. I know that he had some difficulty in persuading the Archbishop's Secretary that he had to see him, as the time was wrong. It is just possible that he did not see him but that he gave the Secretary a letter to give

him. I know he was in Berne because he spoke on a number of occasions about it. Almost certainly he took the shortest route, that is by Paris. I knew that he had written a letter to Roger Casement but I am afraid I cannot remember any details about it. He was in the German Chancellery in Berne. He certainly explained everything comparatively few years ago, say fifteen, but I am afraid it is gone now from my memory. As far as I remember he got down very quickly to Rome from Berne. I have an idea that before going to Berne he went down into Italy and then turned back to Berne and that he was delighted with the quick trip he was able to make from Berne to Rome.

The Castle Document;

I remember about the famous document that was made public in the beginning of Holy Week 1916. I knew of it before that because I had seen it in manuscript and Joe asked me did it look all right. In addition I was to check its translation from Morse. I found an error in the Morse but that was not what was worrying him; he was anxious that the translation should be correct. I did not think and I do not think now that the manuscript was in Joe's handwriting, nor was the Morse copy made out by him. I had and still have

an impression that the Morse copy was produced at the same time as the alleged translation and that the Morse was a sort of camouflage. Joe told me certainly - though I cannot say on what occasion - that all the steps described in the document as contemplated by the British authorities were seriously under consideration. My idea was that the use of morse was to disguise the fact that the information had been obtained direct from somebody/in the Castle, who was to be protected. I know that some document was printed in Larkfield in many hundreds. We had a printing-press there and Joe, George and myself used to work it but on this occasion further help was necessary and looking back on it now it can have been nothing else then the famous "document" - that was printed on that occasion. I was much too busy at that time to occupy myself with printing.

Activities in Holy Week;

In Holy Week I did various messages for Joe. I went to Liberty Hall a couple of times, to Tomás McDonagh's in Oakley Road and to some house in Harold's Cross Road. Joe was supposed to be in the nursing home all the time but he wasn't. He went out to meetings.

Two people called for Joe on one occasion - I think it was to the nursing home he was staying at in Mountjoy Sq., for to the best of my recollection he was in another nursing home before that and he moved to the one in Mountjoy Sq. so as to be near the G.P.O. in case he might be too bad to travel a long distance when the time for the Rising came. The two people - one of whom was Tomás McDonagh - talked to him for a long time and he went away with them and stayed away a long time - much too long, about 6 hours. I think that was on Good Friday about 1 o'clock. The people of the house noticed his absence - I think it was when they brought in his dinner they found him gone. The lady of the house - who to the best of my belief was not at all sympathetic to the Rising, described the incident about a year or so after to one of my sisters. She was indignant at the idea of a patient in his condition getting up and walking out without saying a word to her. I came to see him about 6 o'clock and he had not yet come back. I felt a bit windy then that he would not come back at all and that something was going to happen and I would not be in it. As far as I remember I did not see him till next day but I think I got a message from him. He said to me afterwards when we were sitting on the floor in that disgusting gymnasium in Richmond Barracks "Do you know

I don't feel half as bad as I ought to". His enthusiasm for the coming events made him forget his bodily sufferings.

Joe Plunkett's Early Years - Illness - Journeys abroad for Health;

He had bad health since 1905. About that time he was in hospital for ages. His disease - tubercular glands - was brought to a head in St. George's College, Weybridge, where the three of us were at school, when he was struck in the neck with a potato by another ^{boy} _{Joe}. Shortly after George and I got the 'flu and my mother came over and brought us home. Joe had the doctor then and was sent to hospital first to Mrs. Ford's Nursing home in Baggot St. where he was operated on and then to her convalescent home- Delaford at Firhouse where he stayed for some time. He was at Stonyhurst after that for two or three years from 1907. George went with him there and stayed on when Joe came home in 1909 when he must have done Matric. in the autumn. He also spent some time in the Orthopaedic Hospital and had an operation but I can't say whether it was before or after Stonyhurst. From that he went to convalesce in a nursing home in the same street.

While at Stonyhurst he was friendly with a very nice Maltese boy, called Alfred (Taffy) Asphaⁿ and he went for a _{Joe} summer holiday with him to Malta. Taffy was a marvellous

companion for Joe. They were interested in the same things and Joe enjoyed his company and he had a very good holiday with him.

In the early Spring of 1911 Joe went with my father to Algiers for Joe's health, as it was thought the warmer climate would be of benefit. Unfortunately the weather in Algiers was the worst in living memory and it snowed so heavily that the reservoir burst. He had to stay on as he was not fit to travel when my father was obliged to come home and my sister Moya went out to stay with him. She also had to leave him as she had been commissioned to bring home a nun from the continent. Then my mother went to bring him home via Sicily, Italy and Paris. It was probably on that occasion he visited Florence for the first time and became friendly with Dr. Dunn and met the Selvas and other persons who are referred to in his diary.

Visits of Joe Plunkett and Mim' Plunkett to America for I.R.B.

It could have been in June or July
~~I had an idea it was the 21st June~~ 1915 Joe came back from his trip to Germany but Gerry might know that more accurately. He was at home probably until early September when he started for America. We were back in Dublin at least a week before the O'Donovan Rossa funeral. We had

Lina Rafferty staying with us for three weeks in Rosmuck. She is now Secretary General of the French Sisters of Charity. Her father who lived in Kiltiernan was a great friend of Joe's although they did not agree in politics. Another friend of Geraldine's - Miss O'Halloran, I think was her name - also stayed at Rosmuck with us about a week.

Joe told me nothing about his experiences in Germany. Secrecy was the characteristic of all the important things connected with the movement at that time and all along up to the Rising. It would shock us to hear anybody speaking at all openly of such things and Joe certainly was no exception in that respect. I remember there was one incident - I cannot now think what it was - in which I and another person were concerned. George was interested in it as a third party. We were working together and living in the same house and it was not until years after when we were discussing the matter that we found out that we had both been occupied in the same undertaking.

With regard to Joe's journey to America I think I stated that the stick he took with him there contained the important document he brought with him from Germany. This may not have been so but I believe ^{some} important document was in

it. It is possible that the important document was taken by a separate messenger for greater safety. I cannot remember when he came back from America but I have an impression he did not stay very long there - 6 or 7 weeks perhaps. I think he told Roger Casement when in Germany that the Rising was fixed for Easter Sunday. As far as I remember Casement wanted it delayed until sometime like June and we know that Connolly wanted it earlier. I have a distinct recollection of hearing - whether before or after the Rising I cannot now say - that that date was fixed, tentatively at least, as long as 18 months beforehand. It is possible that Joe told me in the Post Office. I think his visit to America was for the purpose of making final arrangements for co-operation and to confirm the date. As far as I can understand the Americans wanted to change the date and there were lively discussions about that. Joe brought back whatever conclusions were arrived at and placed them before the Military Council. My recollection of the matter is that Joe consented to bring back the American suggestions although he did not agree with them. The people here were worried at the attempts to alter the arrangements

and I think that was the reason my sister Mimi was sent over to convey the decision of the Council here that the original arrangement must stand. Joe's remark in this connection is clear in my mind. "They don't understand" presumably meaning that alteration at that stage was impossible. I also know that Joe discussed the matter in New York with five persons, but that two of these seemed to be the principals and that of these two one was very insistent in trying to impose his judgement about the thing and I don't think that was John Devoy. I also heard from Joe that somebody - probably Devoy - brought him to see Cohalan and that the general position was discussed but I do not think Cohalan was fully informed. I saw very little of Mimi after her return. I was surprised and slightly disturbed when she went away again to America. My recollection is that when she went again Joe seemed uneasy at the necessity for it.

I have an idea that I left out one journey of Joe's that might be of interest. He was brought over to Paris ^{by} ~~to~~ ₆₀₀₀ my mother in 1900. I think she was ill and that he had had pneumonia and she brought him for a holiday. He went to school there but it must have been only for a short time for his French accent was always atrocious and no better than my own.

Early Expectations of a Rising;

I was interested to note that before the Volunteers were started we knew there must have been something coming on, although I was at school at the time and none of the other fellows knew about it but I did. Joe is the only person who could have told me. Seóirse was at Stoneyhurst until - as far as I can make out-1911. He was a senior boy and all the senior boys were in the O.T.C. He had a natural aversion to being in an English O.T.C. and wanted to get out of it but Joe told him not to, but to get all the military training he could, as he would want it. That shows that Joe must at that time have had some associations here that talked in that strain. I am sure that Tom McDonagh would have been the principal person who turned Joe's mind in that direction and Joe then would have very decidedly influenced Seóirse and me. Joe had always a lot to say on Irish history in general and after he met Tom McDonagh he was particularly interested in the history of the previous hundred years.

Because of his diverse interests he had all the attributes of a man who, you would think, would never undertake anything practical. He took, however, a frightful

lot of pains about his poetry and he put the last ounce of his ability into it.

Volunteer Executive and Part played by Bulmer Hobson;

As far as I know the Volunteer Executive meetings were held on Tuesdays at No. 2 Dawson St. There were, I understood a long time back, eleven or twelve people on the Volunteer Executive who were responsible for the organisation of the military activities of the Volunteers. ^{Among} These were, I believe, Eóin McNeill, Bulmer Hobson, the O'Rahilly, Tomás McDonagh, Seán McDermott, Joe Plunkett, Padraig Pearse and Seán Fitzgibbon.

After a certain period Eóin McNeill very seldom turned up at the meetings. He was very lazy. Sometimes he named a deputy to act for him. In many cases, but by no means in all, this was Bulmer Hobson who, I would suggest, put himself forward for the role of deputy. It would, perhaps, be an understatement to say that he was only too willing to act as deputy. I remember the indignation expressed by other members on a couple of occasions, when he used his casting vote to carry his point. They said "He can't get away with this, this is a queer state of affairs" etc. They felt that he

was getting too much of a grip by acting so often as chairman as well as secretary. At a certain stage confidence was lost in him by some at least. It was felt that he was taking too much upon himself. For instance; I was sent one day by Joe with a letter addressed to a member of the Executive, I think Tom McDonagh. I was preparing to hand it in to the man to whom it was addressed - I imagine it was on the occasion of a meeting and the letter was either to explain Joe's absence or to make some suggestions on one of the matters to be discussed at the meeting. Bulmer Hobson came out of one room as I was going in to the other and took the letter from my hand saying that he would deal with it.

On another occasion considerable heat arose as a result of the discovery of a letter addressed to a member of the Executive. The letter was found under Hobson's blotter sometime afterwards. I would not go so far as to say he hid it but he obviously intended to treat it as his business instead of that of the addressee. General resentment was felt at his dictatorial attitude. I remember another occasion when the O'Rahilly flared up about a matter of the disposal of arms which certainly was within his jurisdiction and not Hobson's. Somebody, I do not know who it was, said "I'll

attend no more meetings with that fellow". Joe said "If you have him under your eye he is less dangerous". I heard it stated at the time that it was Bulmer Hobson called off the Rising and that Eoin McNeill backed him up by issuing the countermanding order. Bulmer had at some time or other during this period an authorisation from McNeill. As far as I remember it was something in the nature of a permission of a special kind to issue orders on certain matters. I do not know what they were.

I did not know about the arrest of Hobson until someone - Joe, I think - told me about it in the G.P.O. The reason for his arrest was that the leaders feared his influence with Eoin McNeill and those who looked to McNeill for a lead.

The O'Rahilly;

I cannot state whether or not the O'Rahilly went out with a countermanding order from Bulmer Hobson. I remember hearing a discussion about O'Rahilly in 1920 in Dublin and another in Tralee in 1927 when I was working there. On both occasions the opinion was that O'Rahilly did not go to Kerry on any message, this in spite of the fact that one man had said he had seen him at some place south of Tralee, but when/
O'Rahilly's

photograph was produced to him, he said that was not the man he had seen. I know that O'Rahilly went to Limerick with McNeill's message. As to whether O'Rahilly knew that the Rising was to take place on Easter Sunday I find it hard to arrive at an absolute conclusion in the matter.

The following incident might suggest that he knew of it but I agree that it could have a quite different interpretation. About a week before Easter, Tom Weafer asked me to get a car to take a load of gelignite to some place in Wexford. I was to travel I think on the Monday of Holy Week. I immediately thought of O'Rahilly's car and I went to his house twice about it. The second time he told me that he would not lend the car to anyone to drive and he could not go himself because if he was held up by the police on the way, he would have to shoot on account of his well-known expressions of opinion on ^{such} ~~Irish~~ matters and he was particularly anxious to avoid such action at that time. I think the stuff was got down to Wexford all the same probably by a returning empty lorry. I believe I saw O'Rahilly again during the week driving his car in town.

On Easter Monday, as far as I remember, he was at Liberty Hall with his car accompanied by his two sisters and, I believe, Dick Humphries. I think Mrs. Humphries, and certainly Áine tried to persuade him to go home with them and not to go on with the others. I remember Áine saying it would kill his wife if anything happened to him, but she was wasting her time and she should have ^{had more sense} ~~known better~~ ^{for} than to try to persuade him to do anything that was against his principles.

When the O'Rahilly met his death he was leading an attack on the barricade on the top of Moore St. One or two groups had been collected for this purpose. I was to be of the number as they wanted Volunteers with magazine rifles or bayonets and I had acquired a magazine rifle during the week when some of us went out in a motor over to a house in Parnell Square which was the headquarters of the National Volunteers and took all the rifles that were there - about a dozen - and an enormous amount of .22 ammunition. I understood that O'Rahilly refused to take more than the first group numbering about eleven. He said "If that many can not do it, it could not be done and a greater number would be too big a target". He was riddled with bullets; I saw his dead body and that of a second and I think a third

Volunteer. This was when we were coming down Moore St. after the surrender.

Incidentally although the other fellows were going to leave that rifle behind I was awfully glad to get it because I had only a Howth rifle which was very heavy and I was going about a lot in the G.P.O. I had ^{found} in the Q.M.G.'s ~~shop~~ store in the P.O. a quantity of 7 millimetre mauser ammunition, so I counted myself lucky that I found one rifle in Parnell Square to suit it. The other rifles there were Martini - Enfields. We had enough 303 for them. The real reason I was glad to have that rifle was that I was able to knock off a British sniper from the top of the burnt-out wall of the Imperial Hotel. He fell down so hard that his rifle broke in two. Gearóid O'Sullivan saw that ^{had} ^{ed} happen and told me. That sniper was firing at the ~~shop~~ Volunteers who were trying to put out the fires in the G.P.O., one of whom was my friend Fergus O'Kelly.

Activities in G.P.O. and Evacuation;

Joe's position at the time of the Rising was Director of Military operations. He was not appointed Chief of Staff in place of Eoin McNeill - nor can I say that McNeill was ever formally deprived of that position at any meeting of

the Military Council before the Rising. If I heard that he was I have forgotten it now. I have an idea that somebody was named officially Chief of Staff after the Rising started but I really cannot say who it was. Connolly would be the man that I would call the Chief of Staff. The only argument I would put up against that is that the Chief of Staff should be familiar with his subordinates and Connolly was not. My opinion is strengthened by the fact that Connolly several times left the Post office to go and see how the fighting was progressing elsewhere.

The Chief of Staff would be enjoined to get in touch with other areas and we know that Connolly got out of the G.P.O. a few times to explore the surrounding areas.

The Dublin Brigade had been progressing towards the Four Courts. It was recognised that it would be impossible to cross Capel St. because it was ^{infested} ~~occupied~~ by the British _{BoR} Guns.

I never could understand the countermanding of the original plan to go up Henry St. I myself went down through

the houses as far as Arnotts. We were then ordered back probably on Connolly's instructions. It took me very few minutes to get as far as Arnott's. There was one corporation official, a labouring man, who was able to get them ~~down~~ ^{walls bored} by fairly easy means. The opening of the walls was very judiciously done and did not entail a frightful lot of labour. Seán McGloughlin was a very ^{un} ~~im~~practical man who made himself prominent by strutting about the place. He had no military experience. He was moving round freely but at no time did I see him leading the men. I was one of the latest to leave the P.O. because I was worried about a couple of prisoners - two British tommies, I think - and I ran around the building to see if they were still there. When I came up there was only one man left behind, an officer whose name I do not remember and whose job it was to see that everybody was evacuated.

When we got out my chief recollection is that we were very thirsty and some of the men broke into the mineral water factory. One man tried to break into the door at the back of a house in O'Connell St. with the butt of his gun.

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The gun went off and wounded him. A D.M.F. man was wounded as he rushed across the opening of Moore Lane where a sort of barricade was erected with a cart or something. We entered the house at the corner of Henry Place and Moore St.

When in the G.P.O. Joe discussed with me matters of which I had been in ignorance or had not fully understood, though at this distance of time it is difficult to separate out explanations received in the G.P.O. and those received previously or subsequently in Richmond Barracks. What I mean is that it is difficult to believe that having regard to the short time at our disposal in the G.P.O. and Richmond Bks. he could have told me very much; but as there was now no need for secrecy he dropped his reticence and spoke openly. I was not near Joe in the Rotunda Gardens on the Saturday night of the surrender and I did not have an opportunity to talk to him until we were in the Gymnasium of the barracks on the Sunday morning. He said to me "Here are some things you must remember" but unfortunately I cannot remember what they all were. He said very definitely that they were going to shoot him but would not shoot us. He also said they would shoot the signatories to the Proclamation

He was worrying a lot about Tomás McDonagh.

Witness: *Sam Croghan*

Tomás McDonagh
8/1/57