

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 618

ROINN



COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 618

Witness

Sean M. O'Duffy,
50 Casimir Road,
Kenilworth Park,
Dublin.

Identity.

Member of 'A' Company 1st Battalion Dublin Brigade
Irish Volunteers, 1913-1916;

Second Lieut. do. 1916 - .

Subject.

- (a) His imprisonment and release, 1916;
- (b) Cooperation of D.O. Cavanagh with the
Irish Volunteers 1916-1920.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S.320

Form B.S.M. 2

STATEMENT BY SEAN M. O'DUFFY,

50 Casimir Road, Kenilworth Park, Dublin.

<u>Table of Contents.</u>	<u>Page.</u>
The surrender - May 1st 1916	1
Officer i/c. Volunteers - Comdt. Houlihan	1
Morale of Volunteers	1
Internment in Richmond Barracks	2
Detective Officer Cavanagh	2,14,15,21
Identification of captured Volunteers	3
Embarkation for England	4
Arrival in England	4
Attitude of English people	4
Imprisonment in Stafford Gaol	4
Conditions in Stafford Gaol	5
Friendly British soldiers	6
Smuggling of newspapers	7
Prisoners complain regarding absence of facilities for attendance at Mass. War Office sends representative. English priest appointed chaplain }	8
Order for surrender of uniforms	9
Relaxation of prison restrictions	9
Visitors - Mrs. Pearse, Mrs. Figgis and Miss O'Rehilly	9
Transfer to Frongoch	10
Order for transfer and internment	10 & 11
Transfer to Wandsworth, and interrogation by Commission presided over by Judge Sankey .. b ..	12
Return to Frongoch	13
Release of Prisoners from Frongoch	13
Reorganisation of A/Coy. 1st Bn. Oct. 1916.	13
Coy. officers appointed	13
Training activities 1917,1918, 1919	13 & 14
Detectives Wharton, McNamara and Broy	16

	Page
Volunteer Convention Oct, 1917	16
Armagh Election	17
Mr. T. Gay, Librarian, Capel St. Library	17
Detective Officer Smith	17
Raid on 6 Harcourt St.	18
Return of de Valera, March 1919	18
Harry Boland	18 and 19
Meeting of Detective officers with Michael Collins	19
Plans of Arms Stores, Collinstown Aerodrome	19
Raid for arms, Collinstown, March 1919	19
Dismissal of civilian staff	19
Capture of Engineer company North Frederick Street	20
Death of Detective Officer Cavanagh, 21st October 1920	22
Arrest of Detective Officer Broy, February 1921	22.

1 9 1 6

AFTER THE SURRENDER.

The soldier's hope, the patriot's zeal
For ever dimmed: for ever crossed,
Oh! Who shall say what heroes feel
When all but life and honour's lost?

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURÓ STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 618

STATEMENT BY MR. SEÁN M. O'DUFFY,
50, Casimir Road, Kénilworth Park,
Dublin.

The surrender took place at about 10 a.m. on Sunday, 1st May. This was actually delayed from the previous night, because our leaders would not lay down arms except on instructions from P.H. Pearse.

Commandant Houlihan, who was in charge of the section, shouted in a loud voice, "All men under my command parade with arms and equipment, for we have just received orders that we must surrender unconditionally. That means that we get the death our fathers got in '98."

The officer in charge of the British force ordered our men to "attention" but here again our Commandant intervened, saying, "These are my men and when I am finished with them, then you can do as you please." We marched with arms and equipment to the corner of North King Street, where we deposited them.

During this ordeal a couple of incidents took place. Firstly, a man who was not in the fight jumped up on one of the barricades and shouted in a loud voice, "You are a b---y great lot of men!" We remonstrated with him, pointing out that it was enough for us to be in trouble. The next thing was a rather pathetic scene in which one of the Cumann na mBan girls wept and she was sought to be consoled by one of the Volunteers who said there would be plenty of good men left in Ireland; the assumption was, of course, what we all thought - that we were going to be shot.

Evidence of the spirit of those about to surrender was given by an ardent member of the party who fought in

style, when he exclaimed, "Kiss your rifles, boys!!"

After the surrender we were marched to Dublin Castle and halted outside the Chapel Royal, where we remained for some hours. We were then taken, under armed guard, to the Richmond Barracks - now Keogh Barracks, Inchicore.

All of those who were taken at the surrender paraded in the Barrack Square and were offered drinks of water by the English soldiers, some of whom were Irishmen. They expressed sympathy - or rather pity - for us. During this period the soldiers came along and asked us to give them any material we had - watches, medals, etc. - for safe custody or, if we so desired, could be brought to our homes. Later it was learned that the articles were not delivered, and during our subsequent custody in Stafford Prison, an officer - by name, Captain Heathcote - came to us for full particulars of our losses. Some months after our return, an Inspector of the Dublin Police force called to our homes with compensation for any articles proved to have been lost.

Detective Officer's Interest:

During our waiting period in the Barrack square, I saw a detective officer looking on, who made his way towards where I was. At the time, I only knew the officer by appearance and I informed my comrades that he knew me. In view of this officer's subsequent interest and work for the I.R.A., I give here the first account of his activity.

The officer's name was Joseph Cavanagh. He was for a long number of years, like other members of the "G" Division, detailed to look after the known members of such organisations as Sinn Féin, Freedom Clubs, G.A.A. and, of course, the Irish Volunteers. It so happened that I first got to know of his activities when I was connected with the Aonach, an annual event which was held in the Rotunda for the purpose of encouraging the manufacture and sale of Irish

manufactured goods. This function was held under the auspices of Sinn Féin, and Alderman Tom Kelly, Arthur Griffith, Seán McDermott, Countess Markievicz, The O'Rahilly and other leading Sinn Féiners were prominently identified with it.

To return to the Barrack square - when I saw Cavanagh approach me, I suspected that his interest was not for my good, and so I informed my comrades. Much to my surprise, however, he shook my hand and said, "Hello, Mr. O'Duffy! How are you?" "Oh! I am game-ball", said I, in reply. "I was speaking to your father this morning." "Is that so?", said I. "Tell him I am all right." "Look!", said he (detective officer). "If you want any message brought out, no matter what it is, I have pencil and paper here, and I will deliver it". "Ah! No", said I, "it is quite all right, Mr. Cavanagh." He, however, insisted, and the more he did so, the more suspicious I was. However, his continued persistence was such that I gave way and wrote a note to my father, saying I was "game-ball" and was in the best of form - not wounded. He now said if there were any others who lived round the "Barn" - Dolphin's Barn district - who wanted a message conveyed to their homes, he was ready to do anything he could, no matter how private. Not wishing to compromise anyone else and feeling that his purpose was ulterior, I replied that it was all right, there was no one else from that district present, and so this interlude ended for the moment.

Later, the whole of the Volunteers were marched to the Barracks and taken upstairs to a large room. Here also were the leaders, Tom Clarke, Seán McDermott, Joseph Plunkett and others. We were closely scrutinised by detective officers, many of whom we knew. They looked at us, one by one, and one of them said, "I am sorry to see you here".

"It's all in good cause", was my reply. Our names, occupations and addresses were taken as we passed from one room to another. After some hours, we were left in a larger room, and one of our number recited the Rosary. The armed sentry at the door put in his head and said, "I am glad to hear you at that, for I'm a Catholic myself". In all probability, he was one of the Irishmen in the ^{British army -} Dublin Fusiliers.

It must have been close on 9 p.m. on the day of the surrender, 1st May, 1916, when we were ordered to move out, and, on emerging from the narrow doorway and much to my surprise, I saw Detective Officer Cavanagh. The first thing I said to him was, "Where are we going to, Mr. Cavanagh?". "You will be all right. You are going to England, but I pity those who are being kept back". He shook me warmly by the hand as we parted for the present.

We were all marched under a strong, armed guard and, on emerging from the barracks, some of the people threatened us and were evidently hostile; none were friendly, of that we were fully conscious. We arrived at the North Wall and were put aboard a boat which contained so many of us that the conditions were deplorable. However, we were not in a complaining mood as anything could very well happen. Lights out was the order. We arrived in due course at Holyhead and entrained for an unknown destination. We eventually arrived at Stafford railway station, from where we were marched to the prison. A number of English people showed their hostility - and "Dirty dogs!" was a typical example of their sayings. The officer in charge of us had to reprimand some of the hostile onlookers and told them that we had fought "which some of you didn't". We were duly lodged in prison.

It was noticed that British army personnel was in charge and, after a day or two, we were examined by an army

medical officer. He was not too courteous and it was a matter of surprise to him that we were not suffering from some of the diseases so prevalent amongst English soldiery at the time.

After a day or so, we were supplied with underclothing and here it must be admitted that everything was done to ensure that cleanliness was of first ^{importance} account. At the time, we were asked to hand over our clothes and, as I was still wearing my uniform, I thought very bad of this - all the more so when I was supplied with a khaki outfit. However, obnoxious this was to me, the wearing of it was not of long duration, as I got my own beloved uniform back again.

During the first three weeks we were in solitary confinement and were not allowed to speak. The first few nights were of the dead silence nature. This was broken by some of our comrades singing, "The Wearin' Of The Green". The sentry on duty would occasionally shout, "Stop that noise!" My admiration went out to the singers and, for pure devilment, I raised my bed board and let it down with a bang which resounded throughout the otherwise stilled prison. At exercise we walked around the prison ring, ^{like} ~~as was the wont~~ of convicts. Badges with numbers were provided but we refused to wear them. These were worn by convicts. Some of the military personnel were friendly enough, but others were of the arrogant type. I was not long under lock and key till I tried my hand! My guard, a Corporal Webb, was fair enough and, by way of sounding him, I said, "Any chance of getting a postcard sent to my home?" "I can't say", said he. "As far as I know there is a censorship between your country and ours, but I'll see." On his return, he said, "It can't be done". I explained with soft talk that it was "only a scrap" and a postcard would be no harm, as my people did not know where I was. "Well", he said in reply, "it

was more than a riot", and, in a wondering attitude, continued, "I can't make it out. My sister is married to an Irishman and he seems all right!!".

Nothing untoward happened, just our usual exercise, for an hour or so morning and afternoon, and then locked up for the night. A change in guards was frequent, and our Corporal Stow, a Yorkshireman, proved very good to us. From his conversations, it would appear that he worked with many Irish labourers who crossed for harvest work each year and regarded them as his best friends. During this time we had no/^{news or letters from}~~knowledge of what was on~~ at home, and our future, to our minds, was deportation, such as was meted out to John Mitchell and others, or, worse still, we would be put into khaki and sent out to the front line trenches to take part in the war against Germany, now in full swing. The rumour was prevalent that this was to be our impending fate. In fact, one Volunteer with a wife and family suggested that it was the only thing he could do. During the examination of our personal belongings, the cells were visited, one by one. As the doors were banged and locked, a loud thud was heard at regular intervals. This appeared to me as if our comrades were getting shot one by one. At this time I went on my knees and consulted with my Angel Guardian as to whether I would prefer death to wearing British uniform. I ~~clearly~~ decided that death would be my choice. ~~It so~~ happened that My misgivings on the soundings did not materialise.

Corporal Stow was helpful, and it so happened that I had a ten-shilling note hidden in my prayer book. I asked him if he could get me a paper, and he brought in one. At this time we were still without news from home, and the paper, "The Daily Sketch", was a valuable one. It gave all the news of the executions of our leaders, others getting

long sentences, etc.

This was put on paper and, during our exercise period, we passed the valuable information round, in the following terms:-

From paper sent round secretly:

"1,700 prisoners sent to England. 2,500 arrested. Several tried each day. Various sentences, 1 year to 10 and 15. W. Partridge got 10 years. 500 still at Richmond Barracks. Casement and a soldier tried in London. To solve "Irish question", Government is going to give Ireland "Home Rule". Lloyd George to act as mediator. General conscription to be law on June 24th. It is not advisable to apply it to Ireland. McNeill found guilty. A Commission has been sitting to find out the cause or causes of the Insurrection. The government has been reduced to one of government by Liberals from Dublin Castle. Birrell and Nathan blamed. Wimbourne says he was powerless to act though he knew what was going on."

Talking was not, of course, permitted and we were under the watchful eyes of military sentries, who stood on raised exercise yard stones round/~~the ring~~. We adopted a ruse, however, whereby a Volunteer from each of the sections from A. to G. was given the full particulars and, in some instances, written extracts were handed round. Often in the parades I was asked, "When are we getting out?". My reply was it didn't matter as everything was going on well at home.

During the first weeks of our imprisonment we were not allowed to go to Mass, and at one period, probably as the result of questions being asked in the House of Commons, a high ranking officer was sent to hear what complaints we had to make. We were summoned to the exercise yard and, as in

all such cases, speculation was rife as to the reasons for this sudden call. When we arrived, the officer addressed us thus - "I have been sent by the War Office to hear of any complaints regarding your conditions other than confinement ^{in this prison} and, if anyone wishes to make a case, he can step forward". There was a general hesitancy on the part of all, but I was urged by my comrades to make a protest. I walked forward, saluted and stated that we protested against not being allowed to hear Mass on Sundays and also against the lack of proper meals. I was informed that the protest would be seen to. Later, we were allowed to attend Mass and, on our first Sunday, Rev. Father Moore, C.C., an English priest, addressing us, said that "while we were incarcerated here for our crimes" There was an immediate general demur from all, but his reverence took the hint and desisted. Later, this same priest became one of our best friends and, like other Englishmen, became aware of the reasons for which we were confined and was most impressed by the religious instincts of all, which naturally were outstanding on each and every occasion. One of our comrades played the organ each Sunday and we sang the various hymns with more than ordinary fervour, and "Hail! Glorious Saint Patrick!", along with others, resounded throughout the prison. It was the custom of the prisoners to recite the Rosary each evening at about 4 p.m., and the military guards were much impressed. One actually asked what was the meaning of it. It was explained that it was a religious custom of the Irish people, and he asked if he could join in and we replied, "Certainly". By this time, our solitary confinement was relaxed and we were allowed to mix freely, going from cell to cell recounting our experiences, receiving letters and parcels, and sending home for any particular things we desired.

One day, we were once again summoned to the exercise yard, and this time it was to hear of an order that all

uniforms had to be given up. We were to receive instead a suit of civilian clothes, which were of the type issued to discharged British army personnel. This was a sudden and, ^{some} to ~~all~~ of us, a distasteful order. But what could we do? Certainly get all the souvenirs possible - and there was a regular rush for buttons, etc. On returning to my cell, I got a label to affix to my uniform, and same was duly parcelled up and ready for delivery. By a fortunate set of circumstances, I said that the parcel was not ready and, since I was not asked again, I held on to the uniform and took it away later to Frongoch Camp.

During our time in Stafford Prison we were fortunate in having a Commandant Allington in charge, and he proved a gentleman throughout. He was a literary, rather than a military man, and he had frequent talks with Herbert Newman (Herbert Pim) and Darrell Figgis who were prisoners. The freedom to exercise and assemble together was fully availed of, and it was possible to get more information from home as well as to receive visitors. I happened to be elected representative of G. landing and, on occasions, would be called to the outer gates. ^{Margaret} Mrs. ~~Mary~~ Pearse, mother of P.H., was one of those who called, and when we expressed our regrets at the fate that befell her great and patriotic son, her reply was typical of an equally great woman when she said, "I must do my bit". Mrs. Figgis was also a frequent visitor, bringing food and clothes to all who were in need. Miss O'Rahilly, sister of The O'Rahilly, was another who was most concerned for the welfare of the prisoners.

During one such visit, it was made known to me that some person was interesting himself in my early release. I at once sent word that I was in no way concerned in this matter and I did not desire anyone to make representations on my behalf. At the time I did not know but, later, I learned

that it must have been Detective Officer Cavanagh.

In due course, all prisoners were transferred to Frongoch Camp, North Wales. Before leaving, I was informed that the Commandant desired to see me. After thanking me for the assistance I had given in the distribution of letters and parcels to the prisoners, he handed me the following letter:-

"The bearer has been most useful to me over post office work for the Irish, the distribution of letters and the opening of parcels for censor purposes. If you wish him to help in such ways I understand he is quite ready to do so.

C. Alington, Capt.
Commandant."

Before we were sent to Frongoch Camp, the following was handed to us:-

"Notice to persons with respect to whom an order is made under regulation 14B.

Name of prisoner: O'Duffy, John.
Address: 7 Reuben Avenue, Dublin.

W.O. Number 15960
H.O. Number 316718.

Notice is hereby given to the above named that an order has been made by the Secretary of State under regulation 14B. of the Defence of the Realm Regulations directing that he shall be interned at the place of internment at Frongoch.

The order is made on the grounds that he is of hostile associations and a member of an

organisation called the Irish Volunteers or of an organisation called the Citizen Army which have promoted armed insurrection against His Majesty and is reasonably suspected of having favoured, promoted or assisted in armed insurrection against His Majesty.

If within seven days from the date of his receiving this notice the above named prisoner submits to the Secretary of State any representations against the provisions of the said order, such representations will be referred to the Advisory Committee appointed for the purpose of advising the Secretary of State with respect to the internment and deportation of aliens and presided over by a Judge of the High Court and will be duly considered by the Committee. If the Secretary of State is satisfied by the report of the said Committee that the order may, so far as it affects the above named prisoner, be revoked or varied without injury to the public safety, or defence of the realm, he will revoke or vary the order accordingly by a further order in writing under his hand. Failing such revocation or variation the order will remain in force."

Needless to say, no prisoner made any appeal against this order.

During our term in Stafford Prison, a form was sent to each Volunteer, suggesting that we appeal against our arrest and imprisonment. ~~Needless to say,~~ All were against such, and our forms were never filled up.

At Frongoch the conditions were not so bad, and we appointed orderlies and various committees to look after the general interests of all. The huts contained about twenty-five persons and each hut was in charge of an officer.

After some time it was learned that we were to be tried by a Commission in London. This Commission was presided over by a Judge Sankey and, as far as I remember, had a representative of the Irish Parliamentary Party present during the hearings. We were informed then by our leaders that this was a "mock" trial. Anyway, I happened to be the only one now in possession of a uniform and wore it in the Camp. It was my intention to wear it when going to London but an order was made that no uniform was to be worn. I immediately set out to secrete the uniform in my gladstone bag which was eminently suited for the purpose. Having done so, it remained there till my release and, though a thorough search was made at the station when leaving Frongoch, it was not discovered. I still have it in my possession, having escaped many raids and searches during the Black and Tan period.

We were escorted in batches of a hundred or so to London and lodged in Wandsworth Prison. When I appeared in due course before the Commission, I protested on my own as well as on behalf of all others at the treatment meted out to us by way of solitary confinement while in London. I pointed out that we were being treated as prisoners of war at Frongoch and we should get equal treatment on this occasion. I was told^{that}/the protest was noted.

During my examination, I was asked if I took part in the fight in North King Street. I answered in the affirmative. I was then asked if I returned to Dublin from England on Easter Sunday. I said, "No, I returned on St. Patrick's Day and remained at home". This was a direct

of the evidence that was apparently contradiction/before the Commission, and it was only when I returned home that I learned that Detective Cavanagh had been making enquiries at my home and, in my opinion, sought to make the case that "I walked into it" on my return for the Easter holidays. After a few further questions which were of no importance, I retired and later we were all back in Frongoch Camp again. Shortly afterwards we were released in batches and returned safely to Dublin.

On our return, we were received with much jubilation by the people, which was in strong contrast with the hostile send-off. There was a complete change which was all in our favour. Naturally, we were of the opinion that the cause which we fought for was not yet at an end. Most of those who ~~returned, returned to~~ ^{came back, took up} their usual employment but many were victimised and were idle for a long period. The National Aid Association came to the ^{assistance} ~~aid~~ of those who were in distress.

A movement was set on foot early in October of that year (1916) to re-organise the Volunteers, and "A" Company met at Columcille Hall, Blackhall Place. There the oath of loyalty to the I.R.A. was administered by Dick McKee and Diarmuid O'Hegarty. The following officers were elected: Liam O'Carroll, O/C; Peadar Breslin, 1st Lieutenant; Seán O'Duffy, 2nd Lieutenant; Section Commanders, Tom O'Brien, Johnny Byrne, Larry Lawlor and Peadar McNulty; Denis Neary, Q.M.; Seán Geraghty, Adjutant.

During the subsequent years, 1917, 1918, 1919, we took part in various activities. Training, arming and recruiting went on, and a large number of prisoners were released from Dartmouth and other convict prisons. We took part in various election activities, notably those of East Clare, North Roscommon and Longford. The death of Tom Ashe in September, 1917, saw a great muster of Volunteers attend

at the funeral, and I was in charge of the party of Volunteers who acted as bodyguard in the City Hall where the remains lay in state. The securing of arms and ammunition by devious ways, principally from British soldiers, raids, etc., was of paramount importance. In April, 1918, the Conscription threat was responsible for a large number of recruits, and we were determined to fight to the death the attempt on the part of the British Government to enforce conscription on the people. We were handed out emergency rations and were armed to defend what freedom we had.

Detective Cavanagh:

A short time after my return, August, 1916, I met Detective Officer Cavanagh and his welcome was generous and sincere. He asked me if I had any souvenir of the Insurrection and I said that I had only a photo of myself in uniform. He was pleased to get this and suggested that I meet him the following night near our home, when he would give me a souvenir. We met as arranged and he presented me with an automatic pistol and a small box of ammunition for same. He showed me how to use it and said, "Make good use of this when the time comes". He told me that he knew Sean McDermott well and that he was sorry for the fate which he and the other leaders had met. He also said that he had the "doubtful honour" of protecting General Maxwell, head of the British forces during 1916. From this time on, we were in constant touch and I had, quite naturally, some suspicion as to his sincerity, - this despite the fact that his previous interests were all for me. He stated that he had some American papers - the "Gaelic-American", - which was strongly anti-British, - and he would let me have them. Each fortnight they were dropped into my letterbox. These I showed to various leaders of the Volunteer movement, and they were regarded at the time as being of great value. Censorship was the order of the day. The papers were not

opened when I got them, and the address on the wrapper was "Under Secretary, Dublin Castle, Dublin".

He passed on certain information to me and, as there was no real active Intelligence Section that I knew of at the time, I found it difficult to confide in anyone. However, I did mention the matter to my O/C, Peadar Breslin, and we had an interview with Eamonn Duggan, solicitor, at his office in Dame Street when he took a note of what we had to say.

During the year 1917 we had made much progress in re-organising, and I was asked to go to East Clare for the general election, and again to Roscommon. During the following months I was in constant touch with Detective Cavanagh and met him at various hours and almost daily, and at nights.

Part of the detective's business at this period was to pass through his section all alien and shipwrecked sailors. He was able to inform us of the various disasters that befell British shipping - all news of which was censored.

It must have been in May, 1917, that the real and first test of Detective Cavanagh's merit and sincerity was proved. It was as follows: Having met by accident in the back entrance to our homes - we lived in the same street - he asked me if I knew where Barney Mellows lived. I said I thought so. He replied that it was at 21 Mount Shannon Road, South Circular Road. I was to go and tell him not to be at home that night as there was a warrant out for his arrest. I went to Barney's house and asked him in a jocose way if he had recently contravened the Defence of the Realm Act. He replied that he may have sung a song in the country. "Well", said I, "you know I am in touch with a detective?" Yes, he knew that. "He told me that you were to be arrested that night, and advised that you keep away from home. Well", said I, "this is the first test as to whether or not he is all right, and I am giving you the information as I got it." We later walked as far as the

Rialto Bridge and went our respective ways. On the following day I met the detective at 2 p.m. and, when coming towards me, I saw that he had not the usual welcome. We met. His first words were, "You're a nice b----y man! Mellows and the whole lot were arrested last night". He was thoroughly disgusted. I replied, "I told Barney of the proposed raid and it was no fault of mine that he was caught".

From this on, our contacts were frequent, meeting him by day and night. Later, on the release of Countess Markievicz, thousands met her at Westland Row. I met Detective Officer Cavanagh along with another, named *(Wharton)* Wharton, at the Butt Bridge. He informed me of the route he was going to take, and I followed them on to Patrick Street. That same night I sent a full report to Michael Collins and mentioned that I had met "Jim" and also stated that MacNamara (Bad Pill), another detective, was active. I signed the letter, S.M. O'D., and some time later it was found in one of the Republican offices after a raid. There was much curiosity as to who S.M.O'D. was, and it was submitted to Detective Officer Broy who could not, of course, make out the signature - never heard of such a name as Smod, though he was well aware of the initials. He never heard of a person named "Smod".

It is worthy of note that by this time Detective Officers Broy and MacNamara had come round to our side.

About this time, a Volunteer Convention was held (All Ireland) at Jones Road. The evening after, I met Detective Officer Cavanagh and he told me that there was a "wrong 'un in the camp". An almost verbatim report of the proceedings, he said, had been sent to the Castle. This would be dated October 27th, 1917.

During the period, January-February 1918, the Armagh election was on, and a large number of Volunteers were sent

to assist. We met at Dundalk the Director of Elections, Mr. Austin Stack, and from that centre we were dispatched to such places as Crossmaglen, Clady, etc. On my way to the station, I called at the offices at Bachelors Walk and gave some "Gaelic-Americans" to Michael Collins. He immediately saw the importance of them and anxiously queried where I got them. I did not disclose this, but I could see that he was the first so far to have regarded them as of more than ordinary significance.

We were armed at the time of the elections and, on my return to Dublin, I had to go to the country on business.

This caused me a certain amount of concern because, in the first place, I did not know of anyone whom I would entrust with such an important job, and to lose the work of Detective Officer Cavanagh was something that could not be thought of. However, after consideration, I decided on getting Mr. T. Gay, Librarian, City Library, Capel Street, to carry on the work. He and Harry Boland were introduced to Detective Officer Cavanagh, and I may say in passing that my choice of Tomás Gay proved to have been an excellent one. From this on, far-reaching results of the greatest importance to the I.R.A. took place and I am sure that records of such will have been given by others.

About October, 1918, I again met the Detective and he informed me that a raid would take place that night at 46 Parnell Square, where a Volunteer Convention would be held. I immediately got going and, on my way by tram, saw Tom Cullen who was then a member of Michael Collins' Staff. He did not know of my mission nor did I know of his. However, I told him of my business. we met at 46 and I immediately set out to find Mick Collins. I noticed that I was followed by Detective Officer Smith (afterwards shot, July 1919). It took me some time to find Collins but eventually I located him at Fleming's Hotel,

Gardiner Row. He instructed me to tell Cullen to carry out the instructions he got. This I did, and later learned that the Convention was held in Columcille Hall, Blackhall Street.

A raid was to take place at No. 6 Harcourt Street, and I was informed of this. It was our business to get in touch with Diarmuid O'Hegarty, and I met him in O'Connell Street. Returning to Harcourt Street, we removed all important documents. The raid was made by the British military the following day but, of course, nothing was found.

On March 6th, 1919, Eamonn de Valera was to return from prison. He was to be received at Leeson Street Bridge and presented with the keys of the city of Dublin by the Lord Mayor. All Volunteers were to attend the reception, and it was generally known that the British were to use force and suppress it. Those who would attend were in imminent danger of death.

It was at five o'clock on the evening of that date that I met Detective Officer Cavanagh in South George's Street. He asked me to come along and, as we walked up South William Street, Mercer Street and Cuffe Street, he told me to "take this in". As we walked along, he gave me the whole story. A large force of military had been drafted into the city. One hundred Cavalry were posted at the North Circular Road. A machine gun unit here, there and everywhere. Many other detachments were posted in the vicinity of Leeson Street, ^{etc.} I went at once to 6 Harcourt Street, where I told Harry Boland of all I had just learned of the military preparations to suppress the entry of de Valera. He was smiling as usual and remarked that "a king would not get such a reception". The reception was called off.

By this time a full Intelligence Staff must have been recruited, and frequent meetings and conversations took place in various places throughout the city. The house of Mr. Gay at Haddon Road, Clontarf, was a regular meeting place, and Michael Collins along with Detective Officer Cavanagh, Eamonn Broy, James MacNamara and David Nelligan often attended.

During my work as charge-hand electrician at Collinstown Aerodrome, which was being built for the R.A.F., I had access to all parts, and sent plans of positions where arms and ammunition were kept.

My O/C, the late Commandant Houlihan, and the late Peadar Breslin were also employed on the job. As my hours were long, I along with other members of the Staff had to live in huts specially provided for us. On the morning of March 20th, 1919, imagine my surprise and pleasure when I learned that 75 rifles and 4,000 rounds of ammunition were captured. Later I knew that this was carried out by members of my Company and also F. Company. After the raid, all the building and engineering staff were discharged. On returning from the Aerodrome, we held a public meeting in O'Connell Street, protesting in the strongest possible manner at the action of the Government (English) in victimising the eight hundred innocent men who were discharged. We suggested that the arms and ammunition were taken as a result of "a plot hatched in Whitehall"(London).

During my time at Collinstown Aerodrome, Detective Cavanagh asked me if I knew a man named Backman. He was my foreman and held a permit to work here. He was evidently an alien and I think a native of Sweden. After the meeting in O'Connell Street, Detective Officer Cavanagh told me to "lie low" for a while. This, of course, I did not do.

During the many raids that took place, and especially during "curfew", it occurred to me that Michael Collins might be surrounded and captured. I thought of the idea of getting a pass which would be useful in such an emergency. I happened to be Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union and, as such, had to supply men for the electrical work in various Barracks. I was in touch with Major Campbell, Royal Engineers, and, on making my application for a pass, he brought me to the Provost Marshal. Here I was questioned at the Headquarters in Parkgate Street and it was suggested that a pass issued from that source would be a "most extraordinary one" but, in any event, I was asked what would I do if I were attacked by "Sinn Feiners" and the pass taken from me. Assuming a strength - physical and moral - I suggested that that would be impossible and, in any case, said how could anyone know if I had a £5 note in my pocket. The ruse worked, and I got a letter to the Assistant Provost Marshal at Dublin Castle. I purposely got surrounded in a "curfew raid" in O'Connell Street and, producing my pass to the O/C, British patrol, I was allowed to proceed.

During the many raids, one of our Company of Engineers was captured at North Frederick Street. All the prisoners appeared the following day in the Dublin Police Courts. The Courts were locked and no one, except those on business, was admitted. It was suggested that we get in by every or any means and, after some attempts, success was achieved. The magistrate, after the case for the Crown was heard, asked if any of the prisoners had anything to say, or one could speak on behalf of the lot. As the dock was fairly crowded, I was sitting nearby at the bench reserved for solicitors, counsel, etc. The spokesman said, "We are here to do what the Belgians sought to do - to drive out the

invader". "Hear! Hear!", said I. I applauded further statements and the magistrate asked if I was one of the prisoners. "Not yet", said I. "Leave the Court, sir!", said he. "Not for you or the best man in it!" was my rejoinder. Immediately there was a scurry of police and detectives towards me, when the Captain of the prisoners said, "You should leave now, Seán". "Yes", I said, "I will leave for you but for no other one". I was immediately caught by the collar of my coat and bundled unceremoniously out of the Court. I was met on the stairway by another policeman who asked what was wrong. I said I was fired out, so I got out by the main gate without further trouble. I was highly satisfied with the fact that I achieved my objective and let the prisoners see that they had at least one friend in court and that I got off free, despite the presence of a large force of police and detectives.

Another incident for which Detective Officer Cavanagh was responsible was a warning of a raid in Donnybrook on the house of Batt O'Connor. I met the officer and he asked me if I had a bicycle. I replied that I had. He told me to inform the people concerned of a raid that was to take place early the following morning. This was at twelve o'clock midnight. I immediately got going and visited Cathal Brugha at his home in Rathmines. He did not know of the whereabouts of Mick Collins. So I went on to T. Gay of Haddon Road, Clontarf. Here, I was directed to seek others at the North Circular Road and, after many nocturnal visits, I found Mick Collins at the hotel in Mountjoy Street, where he usually put up. I informed him of the facts, and it was close on 5 a.m. when I was finished with the job. The raid took place, but the occupant, J.J. Walsh, was gone.

It was with feelings of deep and genuine regret that we heard of the death of Detective Officer Cavanagh. The

sad event took place after an operation at Jervis Street Hospital on October 21st, 1920. Some of us attended at the funeral but we walked on the footpath as a precautionary measure, when the remains were being removed to Mount Argus.

Some time after his death, a representative body of Republicans met and considered what could be done for his wife. A subscription list was opened and some men^{such} as T.M. Healy, Kevin O'Higgins and others subscribed. The work of Detective Officer Cavanagh was only known to a comparatively few people. In sending my subscription to Eamonn Duggan, Secretary, I remarked that "if there was a monument erected in every town in Ireland, it would not be too good for Joe Cavanagh". Here ends my part of the story.

About February, 1921, Detective Officer Broy was arrested and confined in Arbour Hill Barracks. It was suggested to me that I should ascertain his whereabouts, with the object of securing his release. I called at Arbour Hill Prison and made enquiries as to whether or not electricians were working in the precincts. I was brought to the guardroom, and the Sergeant in charge questioned me as to my business. Having told him, he put on the usual superiority authority airs/associated with British soldiers and called for the "handcuffs". He suggested that I was one of the people they wanted, but a pretence of fear on my part at such an idea had removed all traces of suspicion as to my quest.

The Sergeant became quite affable and took me to the exit, going out of his way to show me where the "electricians for whom I was looking were to be found. My mission failed but some time later Detective Officer Broy was released, and I was with him on the day of the Truce, July 11th, 1921.

SIGNED: Sean M. O'Duffy
 DATE: 13 November 1951

WITNESS: M. F. Ryan Com'dt. (Sean M. O'Duffy) 1951.
 (M.F. Ryan, Com'dt.) 13 November, 1951.